

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE AND ATTITUDE OF  
INTERNATIONAL CHINESE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA**

**NING JING**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITI MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

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**NING JING**

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# ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE AND ATTITUDE OF INTERNATIONAL CHINESE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

## ABSTRACT

The choice of Chinese university students' language attitudes as the research topic stems from language contact and language competition in China's rapid development. China is one of the countries with the most language assets. The researcher has determined from these phenomena that Chinese people have different opinions about English and its use and attitudes. Language attitude reflects social psychology, which is people's feelings and evaluations of language variants of a particular language or dialect. The study of language attitude is a subject of theoretical value in sociolinguistics and great practical value in understanding the psychological characteristics of a nation, a group, or an association. Therefore, in this study, the researcher found that there is a low level of English language use among Chinese university students in Malaysia. In comparison, Chinese university students have a moderate attitude towards the English language. Furthermore, the researcher also found out that there is a significant relationship between English language use and attitude towards English among Chinese university students, which the previous studies have not included. In order to have detailed knowledge regarding this topic, the researcher has analyzed the significant difference between all five variables and English language use and attitude. Findings show that only one age group has a significant difference in English language use among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** English language use, Language attitude, Chinese university students

# **PENGUNAAN DAN SIKAP TERHADAP BAHASA INGGERIS PELAJAR ANTARABANGSA CHINA DI MALAYSIA**

## **ABSTRAK**

Pilihan sikap bahasa mahasiswa yang datang daripada China sebagai topik penyelidikan berpunca dari hubungan bahasa dan persaingan bahasa dalam perkembangan pesat China. China adalah salah satu negara di dunia dengan aset bahasa yang paling banyak. Pengkaji telah menentukan dari fenomena ini bahawa orang Cina mempunyai pendapat yang berbeza mengenai bahasa Inggeris dan penggunaan serta sikapnya. Sikap bahasa mencerminkan psikologi sosial, yang merupakan perasaan dan penilaian orang terhadap varian bahasa dari bahasa atau dialek tertentu. Kajian tentang sikap bahasa adalah subjek nilai teori dalam sosiolinguistik dan nilai praktikal yang besar dalam memahami ciri-ciri psikologi bangsa, kumpulan, atau persatuan. Oleh itu, dalam kajian ini, pengkaji mendapati bahawa terdapat tahap penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris yang rendah dalam kalangan mahasiswa China yang belajar di Malaysia. Manakala, terdapat tahap sikap sederhana terhadap bahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan mahasiswa China yang belajar di Malaysia. Selanjutnya, pengkaji juga mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris dan sikap terhadap Bahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan mahasiswa China yang tidak termasuk dalam kajian sebelum ini. Untuk mempunyai pengetahuan terperinci mengenai topik ini, pengkaji telah menganalisis perbezaan kepentingan antara kelima-lima pemboleh ubah dan penggunaan dan sikap Bahasa Inggeris. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa hanya kumpulan umur yang mempunyai perbezaan yang signifikan dengan penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan mahasiswa China yang belajar di Malaysia.

**KATA KUNCI:** Penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris, Sikap Bahasa Inggeris, Mahasiswa yang belajar di Malaysia.

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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the background, objectives, motivation, and significance of this study.

## **1.1 Research Background and Motivation**

The choice of Chinese university students' language attitudes as the research topic stems from language contact and language competition in China's rapid development. China is one of the countries in the world with the most language assets. There are 135 languages and seven Chinese dialects belonging to five primary language families: Sino-Tibetan, Altai, South Island, South Asia, and Indo-European (Chen, 2008). These languages are the cultural accumulation of the Chinese nation and play an essential role in communication at different levels, such as family, society, education, and the transmission of culture and the knowledge, wisdom, and experience of the people in different regions of China. Since 1949, when the People's Republic of China was established, China has actively carried out a nationwide campaign to promote Mandarin to facilitate exchanges among people of different ethnic groups and regions with different dialects, maintain social stability, and promote China's economic development (Wang, 2017). The current "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard and Written Chinese Language" came into effect on January 1, 2001, thus establishing the legal status of Mandarin and standardised Chinese characters as the "standard and written Chinese language" (Wei & Su, 2008). At present, the popularity rate of Mandarin in China has reached over 70%, and Mandarin has become a standard communication tool among all ethnic groups and regions in China (Wang, 2017). The popularisation of Mandarin has played an essential role in maintaining national unity,

strengthening national cohesion, and enhancing cultural exchanges among different ethnic groups and regions (Wei & Su, 2008).

However, in the 21st century, foreign languages have entered the Chinese people's studies, work, and lives due to globalization. According to Bolton (2003), English is the most-studied foreign language in China, with 470 million people enrolled in classes. However, English and other foreign language students vary enormously, and foreign language teaching is almost synonymous with "English teaching" in China (Wei & Su, 2008). The ongoing rise of foreign language instruction in China and the mutual effects of globalisation and localization have spawned a number of language justice concerns. How to cope with the relationship between a foreign language and the native tongue is the most important issue. For example, in 2012, nearly 100 scholars wrote to state authorities to defend the purity of the Chinese language after the sixth edition of the Modern Chinese Dictionary included words with foreign letters (Chinese Development Gateway, 2012).

Furthermore, since 2013, public opinion that foreign languages should not be included in the university entrance examination has aroused widespread concern at home and abroad. For example, one of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference members named Xu Jin has recently suggested that the government abolish English as a critical topic in primary and secondary schools. This was causing great upheaval among numerous opponents and supporters (Sohu News, 2021). In contrast, Lin and Zhan (2006) have pointed out the importance of English in China. Furthermore, Ma (2011) also pointed out that English has become increasingly crucial after China acceded to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The researcher can determine from these phenomena that Chinese people have different opinions about English and its use and attitudes towards it. In addition, language attitude reflects social psychology, which is people's feelings and evaluations



of language variants of a particular language or dialect. Thus, people's attitudes towards language reflect the social status of a specific language. Therefore, the study of language attitudes has both theoretical and practical importance in sociolinguistics for understanding the psychological features of a nation, community, or organisation. Furthermore, the study of language attitudes is significant for the language policy design and theoretical investigation of language planning, which can also provide future reference information for language education (Su, 2003). Therefore, there was a need to study English language attitudes, and language use among Chinese citizens has its significance and necessity. Apart from this, through the observation of the researcher, the present study found that on the CNKI database, Scopus, and Google Scholar, current research has focused more on Chinese students' use of Chinese and dialects, and not much research has been done on the relationship between attitudes to language use in English. Thus, this study investigates English language use and their attitude toward language learning among Chinese university students in Malaysia. The main reasons for choosing Chinese students in Malaysia are: 1) When Chinese students come to Malaysia, they must speak and study in English, so it's a better reflection of how Chinese students see English; and 2) In recent years, more and more Chinese students have come to Malaysia to study (Sina News, n.d.), so it make sense to study Chinese international students.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

These are the objectives of this study's research:

1. To investigate the level of English language use among Chinese (international) students in Malaysia.
2. To identify the level of English language attitude among Chinese (international) students in Malaysia.

3. To explain the relationship between English language use and language attitude of Chinese (international) students in Malaysia.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The research questions are formed:

1. What is the level of English language use among Chinese (international) students in Malaysia?
2. What kind of the level of English language attitude among Chinese (international) students in Malaysia?
3. How is the relationship between English language use and the language attitude of Chinese (international) students in Malaysia?

### **1.4 Research Significant**

This paper examines the correlation between language usage and attitude among Chinese(international) students in Malaysia to discover the characteristics and rules of language use and language attitude and further explore the relationship between the two. Therefore, this study can enrich and deepen the research and theory of Chinese university students' English language use and attitude.

Chinese university students are the main force of China's construction and development, the future of their community as higher education in China, the thoughts and attitudes toward Mandarin and English to the other members of society's ideas and attitudes have a significant impact and can also have specific guidance, so their language attitude system analysis. Therefore, the conclusion of this study can help us from the perspective of the learner's current situation, the Chinese language teaching for

the sustainable development of English education in China to provide a theoretical basis and a new angle of view, and can provide a Chinese language policy and planning for reference and illumination.

This study also helps identify the problems existing in English language use and cultivates a positive attitude among Chinese students studying in Malaysia. Also, guide the students to set up the correct concept of ethnic identity so they can appreciate and accept the other ethnic groups, build friendly relations with them, and gradually build a harmonious, positive ethnic identity. It promotes the stability of the whole country and has crucial practical significance.

Language is vital to maintaining a Chinese citizen's feelings and communicating with other ethnic groups. By investigating university students' language, we can objectively, accurately, and reasonably analyse this group's language use and attitude. Therefore, this study has important social significance and practical value.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

This chapter explains the purpose and concept of this research to the reader. The outcome of this research allows the reader to understand the significance of the pertinent topic. The following chapter review previous literature on this study to help the reader comprehend the subject's patterns better.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter defines some concepts essential to this research. In addition, previous research on related topics discuss in this chapter.

### **2.1 Language Attitude**

A substantial and expanding body of literature has examined the topic of language attitude; in the subject of sociolinguistics, what people believe about language is of great importance.

#### **2.1.1 Definition and Concepts**

“Attitude” is of interest to many theorists from various fields. Richards & Schmidt (2010) have made definition in *the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* that language attitude refers to the attitude of people who speak different languages or language variants towards their mother tongue or other languages. This attitude is mainly manifested in the impression of the difficulty of learning a certain language, emotional experience and social status. It will have certain influence on the learning of second or other languages. Many scholars have made their definitions from different perspectives. There are two theoretical approaches of attitude: behaviorists’ view and mentalists’ view.

The behaviorists indicate that attitude is an apparent behavior or responses (Bain, 1928). Therefore, “the only way to determine attitudes is by observation and statistical treatment of behaviour in social situations”(Bain, 1928). Language attitudes reflect social psychology, according to Baker (1992), they reveal the feelings of people and an assessment of a particular language or variety, and they also show the social status and attitudes towards speakers. Fasold (1984) points out that language attitudes

frequently reflect the attitudes of the members of certain ethnic groups. The responses of people to different languages convey their perception of the speakers.

If the definition were extended further, it could be used for all sorts of behaviours that refer to languages. According to Richards et al. (2000), different speakers of distinct languages have different attitudes regarding the languages or emotions of one another. Positivity or negativity might indicate language complexity and simplicity, ease of learning, the value of graduation, elegance, social position, etc. Attitudes about a language can also reveal how individuals feel about its speakers. Language attitudes can influence language learning or foreign language acquisition (Richards et al. 2000, pg. 248). This definition was relatively detailed and shows that many factors can affect the language attitudes of people.

In contrast, the typical mentalists is postulated by Allport(1935) that attitudes are “mental and neutral state of readiness” and attitude is “an experience-organized psychological preparatory state that directs or dynamically affects an individual’s response to all associated objects and situations.” (Allport,1935); or “a tendency to react favorably or unfavorably to a stuff, human being,organization,or event”(Ajzen,1988); Crystal (1992) explained that "language stance is what people feel about their language or the language of others." For instance, native speakers may experience safe and proud to use their language. On the other hand, they may want their spelling to be very different from the other country's language. The definition considers linguistic attitudes to be human feelings. Thus, it posed methodological problems, the most common one is not easy to measure. However, “the advantage of this approach lies in the fact that attitudes remains an independent variable in the latent psychological constant which is not tied to the specific external stimulus situations in which the responses are made” (Agheyisi & Fishman,1970).

In addition to Western scholars, Chinese scholars also give their own opinions on the term "language attitude." Dai (2013) points out that the primary language attitude offers a social education foundation in sociolinguistics and social psychology. According to Wang (1999, 2002), language attitude is a complex social psychological phenomenon that combines cognitive, emotional, behavioural patterns, and other factors. Moreover, the communication, function, population, social, economic, and cultural status of the group that uses the language in a specific community of a language variety has a significant influence on linguistic attitude. Furthermore, language speakers' communicative needs, emotions, and interests also affect language attitudes. In the course of sociolinguistics, You and Zou (2004) argued that language attitude refers to an individual's value and behavioural tendency towards a particular language or dialect. There are two corresponding explanations in *Linguistic Methodology* by Gui and Ning (1997). One is mentalism, which views linguistic attitude as a state of preparation and as an intermediate variable between the stimulus of the original person's way of life and the response of the individual. An attitude, therefore, is an internal state caused by a stimulus. The other view, according to which language attitudes come only from people's reactions to social circumstances, is the behaviourist view. Dai (1996) defined language attitude as "people's views on the use-value of language, including the position, function, and development prospects of language." Zhang (1988) believed that "language attitude refers to an individual's evaluation of the value of a certain language and its behavioural tendency, which includes three components: cognition, emotion, and intention." Throughout many discussions on the definition of language attitude, this paper accords with Dai's sociolinguistics definition of language attitude: Language attitude refers to a person's perspective on the utility of language, including its position, function, and future possibilities.

### **2.1.2 Element of language attitude**

Regarding the components of language attitudes, numerous academics have their own opinions. Long (1999) suggests, for instance, that affinity and social status are two fundamental components of language measurement. Affinity refers to the positive emotional expression of a specific object. The response also reflects the objects' contents. From his perspective, this perspective is commonly associated with social advocacy. Similarly, Ryan (1982) emphasised that affinity is a harmonious interaction. Commonalities always make people feel at ease, and member acceptance is essential. In addition, Ryan (1982) noted that social status, socioeconomic status, and concepts such as prestige are closely related to standardisation and normalisation. According to Edwards (1982), language attitudes can be broken down into three main categories: Cognitive refers to a person's language proficiency; Affective relates to how an individual feels about language; Behavioural, which refers to the manner in which our language attitudes influence our language conduct. Additionally, Wang (2002) argues that language attitudes are a natural combination of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural tendencies.

According to Wu (2007), the two constituent parts of language attitudes are affective (melodic and affable) and cognitive (useful and social powers); affective (melodic and affable) and cognitive (useful and social powers) are the four elements of language attitudes. Consequently, this study also investigates the language use of Chinese university students in Malaysia based on this categorization.

### **2.1.3 Previous study of language attitude**

The definition, composition, and formation mechanisms of language attitude are thoroughly discussed by both domestic and international scholars. According to Osgood et al. (1957), language attitude is a judgement of a language's meaning in the entire semantic space. According to Agheyisi and Fishman (1970), language attitude is a

significant response to the psychological, cognitive, and behavioural responses of various languages and language users. Fasold (1984) argues that language attitude is initially directed toward language, including attitudes toward specific language users, so that it can be extended to any behavioural attitudes associated with a specific language. According to Trudgill (2003), a person's language attitudes are their feelings toward different languages, dialects, accents, and speakers. Individuals express these attitudes through their subjective evaluations of the speaker's personality traits, language, and variants. The discussion of language attitudes by domestic scholars is also founded on the fundamental criterion of "value evaluation." For instance, Dai (1996, p.144) asserts that "language attitude, also known as language concept, refers to people's perspectives on the use-value of language, such as its position, function, and future development." Language attitude, as defined by Wang (1999), "in a bilingual and multilingual society (which includes bilingual and multilingual speakers). According to Gao (1998) and other researchers, "language attitude reflects social psychology." People who speak different languages have different ideas about each other's languages and feelings. The way people feel about a language variation (language or dialect) shows the social status of that language variation (language or dialect) and the "stereotypes" that community members have about that language variation (language or dialect).

The majority of sociolinguistics research has focused on language attitudes. In the 1930s, the first studies of language attitudes were conducted. In a 1931 study conducted in Britain by Pear, subjects listened to the BBC and inferred personality traits based on the manner in which radio hosts spoke. Even though Pear's research was not intended to examine linguistic behaviour, it was the first study of linguistic attitudes because it was based on what the participants believed about language. Since then, researchers in multilingual regions such as Canada, the UK, and US have focused more on language diversity, differences in attitudes toward non-standard varieties and



standards, social stratification, and bilingualism. For instance, Garnder and Lambert (1960) conducted multiple studies in Montreal, Canada. They discovered that the type of attitude is strongly correlated with the age, gender, socioeconomic status, and headers of the speaker. The development of bilingual skills requires a positive social attitude, motivation, and competence. When individuals are torn between their values and their ethnic allegiance, they adapt their attitudes to meet the requirements of both cultures. Lambert was the first researcher to use the Matched-Guide Technique and the Self-Report Questionnaire in this series of studies. These were crucial steps in the language attitude study.

Since the 1980s, language attitude research has experienced exponential growth. In 1982, Ryan and Giles published "Attitudes Toward Language Variation: Social and Applied Contexts," which examined multilingual and multiregional language attitudes. For instance, Edwards (1982) examined how people of various social classes and races from North America, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Middle East felt about English as a language. It was discovered that all social groups accord a high status value to the standard version of English. In various locations, however, non-standard varieties of English were more prevalent, particularly in terms of group identity and social appeal. In 1982, Bourhis investigated how Canadians and other French-speakers felt about the French language and its various forms. Regarding the methodology, he stated that language analysis should incorporate a participant evaluation of sociocultural factors that influence linguistic variation and language use register. Carranza (1982) also investigated how Latin Americans, Spaniards, and Americans felt about Spanish. He emphasised that the study of language behaviour, communication formalities, and the communication field should incorporate indirect evaluation methods such as direct calculation and variant combination. These researchers conducted extensive research on language attitudes, language policy, and

the outcomes of second-language acquisition. They conducted extensive research on language attitudes and worked to innovate language research methods. However, insufficient consideration was given to how language was taught and how it was used in the micro context.

In the 21st century, language analysis has entered a period of robust expansion. Several influential works have been published, including "Language Attitudes" by Peter Garrett, "English as a Universal Language: Attitudes and Identity" by Jennifer Jenkins, "English Attitudes and Identity Construction in Spain" by Marco Pellegrinelli, and "French Paris: Language Attitudes and Language Awareness" by Christopher Stewart. Multiple times, the International Sociolinguistics Symposium addresses "Multilingualism and emotion in an urban context," "Language, place, and identity," and "Language use and social identity." In 2016, Spain hosted the 21st International Symposium on Sociolinguistics. The theme was "Attitude and Prestige," which demonstrated the growing significance of language attitudes. Numerous academic studies have been undertaken on linguistic attitudes, including research on multilingualism, globalisation, the spread of English, second-language acquisition, language policy, and a variety of other related topics that have helped to advance this field.

The interaction between language and society has developed as a new issue of globalisation and urbanization-related language studies in recent years. Foreign academic circles have conducted extensive empirical research on language attitudes, yielding fruitful results in terms of research content, methodologies, and theory. Its research content focuses primarily on the following:

The focus of the majority of studies on "standard" and "non-standard" language varieties is English. Shamsuddim (2019) examined the attitudes of three hundred and forty Malaysian undergraduates toward the two most prevalent English dialects and

found that the participants prefer American English over British English because they are more exposed to American media. Based on the theory of social identity and self-categorization, Abrams (1987) utilised variant matching to examine the language attitudes of Scottish adolescents. The study revealed that the respondents' attitudes toward the Dundee accent, Glasgow accent, and RP English were primarily motivated by in-group preference. In Dailey (2005) et al. (2005), the linguistic attitudes of Anglo and Hispanic adolescents in the United States were examined, with the participants rating Anglo and Hispanic speakers, respectively. The results demonstrated that the linguistic environment of the Hispanic participants had a significant impact on their language attitudes. Living in a language environment with a large amount of Spanish input caused Anglo speakers to receive lower ratings. The language environment had no effect on the Anglo-raters. Metz (2018) chose students from high schools in the San Francisco Bay area to conduct an investigation of the linguistic abilities, values, and social and cultural surroundings of English-speaking users. The results indicate that ethnic and linguistic backgrounds do not significantly influence students' evaluations of the notion that "standard English is the only correct form."

In contrast, the most influential factors on students' language beliefs are their parents' language beliefs and their language awareness of "various language variants." In addition, Kaur (2014) utilised a questionnaire to examine the attitudes of pre-service teachers in Malaysia towards the English language with regard to the use of "outer circle" and "extended circle" in English. According to the research, these teachers prefer the accents of native speakers and believe that non-native accents are inaccurate. The research revealed that these teachers favoured a focus on native speakers and had incorrect accents. Ahn (2014) investigated the attitudes of Korean English teachers toward Korean English and discovered that, at the cognitive level, the respondents had a positive attitude toward Korean English, but at the behavioural level, they displayed a

"confused" and "conflicting" attitude. On the behavioural level, they displayed a "confused" and "contradictory" attitude.

Second, attitudes toward language acquisition. The social-communicative characteristics of a nation or region may be reflected in the attitudes of its citizens toward English. These studies concentrate primarily on the English "extension circle." For instance, Shi and Cui (2020) surveyed factors affecting the multilingual attitudes of college students and found that gender, grade, primary language, and ethnicity all affect learners' attitudes. They suggested that the needs and preferences of students warrant additional consideration. Saito (2014) employs the constructivism psychology paradigm and theme analysis method to examine the English discourses of Japanese college students through their everyday expressions. He discovered that young Japanese view English as a "problem" due to the identity breach. However, it benefits both itself and the "wealth" of the nation. Sometimes, these two attitudes coexist in the object of discourse study, which is connected to Japan's social and cultural background.

Even though their English proficiency and access are limited, villagers in rural Bangladesh view English as a vital resource for social participation, self-expression, and personal development, according to surveys. These studies on language attitudes also investigated the connection between the spread of English and national identity. Seargeant et al. (2016) did not discover that the popularity of English posed a clear threat to Bangladeshi identity. Nguyen and Hamid (2016) demonstrated, however, that the expansion of English in Vietnam has a significant impact on the student's ability to maintain his or her native language. Some researchers investigated the relationship between students' emotional comprehension, personality traits, and attitudes toward language acquisition. Oz (2015) examined the relationships between EQ and the attitude of English students in Turkish universities and found that those with a high EQ had a more optimistic outlook on cognitive and compartmental learning. Pourfeiz (2015) and

Babakhani (2014) investigated Iranian and Turkish college students. Both studies found that personality traits such as affinity, extroversion, and a sense of duty had a direct effect on how language learners felt about the process.

Thirdly, it examines language attitudes' concepts, principles, and analysis techniques. This type of research focuses on expanding related theories and enhancing language attitude research methods. Through their study of the language attitudes of trilingual speakers in Luxembourg, Lehnert et al. (2018) demonstrated that language attitudes and ethnic attitudes are distinct concepts at both the implicit and explicit levels. Each factor influences the evaluation of speakers. In the future study of language attitudes, these two concepts should therefore be distinguished. Chakrani (2014) used natural dialogues, personal interviews, and ethnographic observation of conversation language convergence and divergence phenomena in the study process to investigate Arabic variant users in the United States. The results indicate that, for some variants of language attitudes, the speaker is the most important factor influencing the adaptive strategy of using words to expand the theory of communication interpretation. Speelman (2013) introduced the "emotional paradigm" in experimental psychology (affective priming) and language attitude research methods in the field of research methods. In this study, the researcher used "standard" Dutch regional variation auditory stimulation experiments, and the research automatically activated language attitude. Therefore, language attitude research offers a fresh perspective on the future. Using a bottom-up methodology, Cid (2009) and colleagues designed and validated a survey on the attitudes and learning objectives of Spanish middle school students regarding foreign languages. The study yielded a survey of three attitude factors, including language attractiveness, language teaching attitudes, and confidence, as well as a survey of three learning objectives, including professional, functional, and preference for foreign cultures. This study also challenges the traditional dichotomy between

"instrumental motivation" and "fusion motivation," avoids overlapping classification, and offers a new research paradigm for the study of language attitudes.

The influence of speech characteristics, speaker, listener, and situational factors on language attitude in verbal communication is investigated in the fourth step. For instance, Levin et al. (1994) demonstrated that the source of a speaker's words influences how others perceive his or her personality. Germanic source words are more accommodating and helpful than Latin source words. Bradac (1990) demonstrated that word variety and speed in verbal communication influence people's judgmental attitudes. People who use a larger vocabulary and speak faster are regarded as more competent. Class, age, and gender of the speaker all influence their judgments (Gallois & Johnstone). Researchers have also paid considerable attention to the listener factor, such that listeners with strong ethnocentrism are more likely to agree with familiar sounds (Giles, 1971). Situational circumstances, such as the gender of the researcher and the language of the interview, have a significant impact on interviewees' language attitudes (Familiar, 1996). In different registers, individuals also demonstrate distinct attitudes toward the language in use. For instance, Carranza and Ryan (1975) demonstrated that British and Mexican American bilingual students evaluated Spanish in the family domain more highly than English in the school domain. In addition, studies on language attitudes in professional fields such as law, medical care, and education have garnered the interest of academics, such as Klinge (2004) and Giles (2006).

In addition, students have a good attitude toward speaking and learning English as a second language, as well as a clear and suitable instrumental orientation, according to Abdul Ghafoor (2018). This enables the researcher to categorise student language attitudes as pleasant, kind, friendly, elegant, simple, convenient, correct, versatile, and authoritative.. Wu Meili (2007) found that these ten language attitudes can effectively

predict the language attitudes of English learners. This investigation adopted Wu Meili's classification scheme.

The findings of Najwa Ahmad and Noor Raudhiah (2017) indicate a positive relationship between language attitude and English language learning. This result has inspired the researcher to investigate language attitudes in greater depth, as previous research has demonstrated a positive correlation between learning English and language attitudes.

In addition to foreign scholars who have conducted similar research on language attitudes, Chinese scholars have also conducted research on similar topics. The following subjects are addressed by Chinese scholars:

Initially, attitudes toward minority languages, national lingua franca, and foreign languages were examined.

Prior research has shown that research on the language attitudes of Chinese ethnic minorities focuses primarily on three aspects: language attitude and its influencing factors; language attitude and identity; and language attitude and language acquisition. According to the research of Qu (2014), the evaluation of the affinity of the native language among ethnic minorities in the Xiang Xi region is significantly higher than the evaluation of the practicality of the native language, and the specific results of various social influences are the result of their language attitudes. The ethnic minorities in the Xiangxi region identify strongly with Mandarin, and their bilingual skills are crucial. Differences in language skills are primarily due to differences in gender and age. Mandarin has become the primary language of communication for ethnic minorities in the Xiangxi region, and Mandarin is frequently used on special occasions. In addition, Wu (2007) conducted a survey of students at Minzu University of China and discovered that the majority of minority college students have a positive attitude towards bilingualism. They had a strong psychological sense of identity with their motherland

and ethnic group. Their bilingual attitude was influenced by the type of admission, their gender, and whether or not their parents belonged to the same ethnic group and lived in the same environment. Yang (2013) found in a survey that ethnic minority college students in Yunnan had a favourable view of ethnic Chinese and Chinese languages. Their familiarity with Chinese was greater than with their native languages. They are highly regarded for their utility, social influence, and the affinity and pleasure of the national language. Gender, grade level, nationality, and other factors influence linguistic attitudes. Wang (2017) discovered that despite learning the national standard language, Students in Uyghur universities have a limited sense of identity and are devoted to their mother tongue. Their language attitudes are influenced by their gender, political standing, their parents' language attitudes, and Chinese appellations.

Second, the study of the differences in attitudes between Mandarin and Chinese dialects and foreign languages includes adolescents, university students, new immigrants, migrant workers, and public servants, among other groups. Similar to Tian, Zeng and Yuan (2021) surveyed middle school students in the Yunnan-Sichuan region and found that female students' attitudes are more positive than male students' (2017). In addition, students in lower grades and better schools take initiative on their own. Zhang and Wei (2020) conducted research on minority college students against the backdrop of new media. They discovered that Mandarin is their primary online language and that students have a strong sense of national identity. Tong's (2012) research revealed that immigrant groups remained faithful to their native tongue. In the order Mandarin>Chongqing dialects>Local dialect, there was a correlation between local words and subjective evaluations of emotion, status, and applicability. Age, level of education, and occupation are the most influential aspects of their language attitudes. Xu et al. (2016) demonstrated that the current state of language use among adolescents in Guangzhou involves "equal emphasis on Mandarin and the Cantonese dialect."



Teenagers in Guangzhou favour the Cantonese dialect slightly and identify with it strongly on an emotional level. Furthermore, gender is a significant factor that influences language attitudes. This field provides a theoretical foundation for maintaining language vitality, language management, language education, and language policy formulation. In her research, Liu (2011) found that students at Sichuan University maintain their language loyalty to the Sichuan dialect and acknowledge Mandarin's central role. However, the study found that college students have a nebulous attitude toward English, believing that English is essential but having a poor grasp of its practical application. As evidenced by the aforementioned literature, university students exhibit a high degree of identification with Mandarin, language loyalty to dialects, and a vague identification with foreign languages such as English. With the acceleration of China's urbanisation process and the intensification of globalisation, the majority of college students were born after the year 2000. Compared to college students of the post-80s and post-90s, do their attitudes toward dialect, Mandarin, and foreign languages (English) indicate that the focus of college students' language attitudes remains a prevalent dynamic trend?

Third, the investigation of the linguistic attitudes of Chinese in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and abroad. Long (1998), Chen (1999), Xu (1999), and other scholars conducted early research on language attitudes in Hong Kong and Singapore's bilingual communities. Their innovative research methods and findings laid the groundwork for the study of language attitudes in their nation. After the turn of the century, Pan (2008) discovered that the majority of Chinese in Singapore believed English to be the most authoritative language. Gao (2019) and several other researchers compared various geographical regions. On some items, Hong Kong was rated higher than Beijing and Guangzhou, while on others it was rated lower. Because of globalisation and localization, their attitudes are changing. Zhang (2020) examined the language attitudes

of Macao youth using the matched disguise technique. He discovered that Macao youth continue to hold a high regard for Cantonese dialects while their regard for Mandarin and Portuguese is growing. However, the new generation in China has the same attitude toward Chinese and English; they do not have an emotional preference for Chinese over English. Regarding both languages as tools for daily communication and information absorption, the "ethnic cultural plot" of the older Chinese generation is abandoned. This phenomenon exemplifies the pragmatic nature of Singapore Chinese and highlights the utilitarian value of language. Nonetheless, You (2015) demonstrate that college students in Taiwan prefer Mandarin to English on average. In terms of language expectations, they have the highest expectations for English, followed by Mandarin and Minnan, regardless of their native language. The Hakkasan have a stronger commitment to their native tongue than the Minnan.

## **2.2 Language Use**

There exists a considerable amount of literature on the exploration of language use, because the use of language is a vital reference for language learners.

### **2.2.1 Definitions and concepts**

According to Verschuren (1999), language use is "a process of continuous choice of language, whether the choice is conscious or unconscious and for internal or external reasons" (Verschuren, 1999, pp.55-56, quoted from He and Yu, 1999). Language selection refers to a language behaviour in which users continuously select languages or language forms to communicate (Tian and Zhang, 2007).

This study asserts that language selection is a characteristic of language use by referencing the aforementioned perspectives. Continuous language selection occurs in language use, which may be conscious or unconscious. This study investigates the connection between language selection and speech attitude..

### **2.2.2 Previous study of language use**

Since the 1990s, with the popularization of university students, scholars have gradually paid more and more attention to the investigation and study of university students' language attitudes and language use. Some have used the paired variable experiment to study local students' language attitudes in a small school. For example, Dai and Shang (1996) analysed the evaluation of a group of university students on Mandarin and Shanghai dialect variants and the language attitudes and values of the participants in the community. Zhang et al. (2003) looked at how university students in Guangdong felt about Mandarin and Cantonese. Liu (2013) looked at how Hong Kong and Qiao Kou students at Guangzhou Business School thought about and used Cantonese dialect and Mandarin. Zhang (2005) looked into how university students of Yu nationality felt about Han dialects and Mandarin. He found that university students of Shu background thought Mandarin speakers were great.

In order to understand the language used by the students in the school, there were also questionnaires conducted to investigate the language of business schools, which is conducive to promoting their work and further deepening their understanding. For example, Chang (2000, 2007) conducted a questionnaire survey and analysis on university students' understanding of Mandarin and dialects in Henan Province; Yin (2002) investigated and analysed the students' language attitudes towards their mother tongue and Mandarin, and predicted the development prospects of dialects and Mandarin in the school; Chen (2006) explored the situation of university students in Guangdong dialect areas learning Mandarin on campus; Chen (2007) investigated university students in Suzhou and analysed their attitudes towards Suzhou dialect and Mandarin; Feng (2010) studied the language attitude, language behavior, and language competence of Kunming university students; Ao and Lan (2013) focused on the respondents of small-town college students in Guizhou Higher Education University,

and concluded that improving the language life quality of small-town college students and establishing their language consciousness were one of the crucial tasks in the urbanisation of towns.

He and Wu (2021) noted that the number of Chinese speakers is constantly declining in Singapore's Chinese community. With the gradual withdrawal of traditional Chinese school students from the historical stage and the increasing frequency of English use by new immigrants, the scale of the Chinese-speaking community in Singapore may continue to shrink. Consequently, the Singapore government has taken corresponding measures to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to attach importance to their native language. Nevertheless, a long-term strategy cannot be formed, and language maintenance is still an issue. Multilingual countries are confronted with the same problem. Thanalachime (2017, 2019) has paid continuous attention to Malaysian Tamil students' language choice and use in Malaysia. She investigated undergraduates' language choices on Facebook and put forward some strategies to maintain the Tamil language in Malaysia. After that, she found that the usage of Tamil is on the decline in the family domain among the younger generation, which is a worrying situation in Malaysia.

Furthermore, some research relies on Mandarin-level test work in China. For example, Yang (2001) studied the students from Sichuan dialect areas on a modern narrow language usage survey. Yang points out that students' language ability in Mandarin can genuinely become a teaching language, a working language, and an advertising language, such as Mandarin, plays a decisive role. In addition to He's (2014) study, researchers have found other things that affect how people use language. For example, personal background factors like age, gender, family background, and register (daily objects and events) affect language use directly or indirectly.

Apart from that, according to Chih-I Liao (2020), the results shown in this research show that not only English but also Mandarin are required skills for study in Australia by analysing language use and language attitudes among overseas Chinese Malaysian students. According to the survey, the five participants involved in Chih-i Liao's research said they were fluent in both Mandarin and English, both needed and spoken in their daily lives in Australia. It has enlightened researchers that language use is essential in students' daily communication.

The results made by Abdul Ghafoor (2018) showed that only 1% of students use the English language to communicate when they are at home compared to other languages such as Punjabi dialect, Urdu dialect, and Saraiki language. Furthermore, Abdul Ghafoor also found that the favourite language used by students at home is the Urdu dialect. The English language is the minor favourite language that students choose when communicating at home. The researcher has realised that language use among Chinese students in formal and informal situations is crucial as it can indicate the different situations of language use among students in formal and informal situations.

In addition, some investigations and studies on the language status and language attitudes of high school students have achieved concrete results. For example, Han (2012) detected bilingual and similarity among He Bei College students, and Hu (2012) wrote a survey report on foreign college students' attitudes toward the Shanghai language. Zhang (2013) wrote a survey report on the campus language life of Northwest Normal University. These studies analysed university students' language attitudes and usage in their dialect areas, the relevance between the students' understanding of the findings and their operation, and their practical significance.

## **2.3 Relationship between language use and language attitude**

Mentalist and behaviourist approaches to linguistic attitudes are described by Agheyisi and Fishman (1970). According to mentalists, attitudes are "a mental and

neutral state of preparedness that cannot be directly witnessed but must be deduced from the subject's introspection" (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970, pp.138). By analysing actual behaviour, behaviourists see attitudes as a dependent variable that can be statistically analysed. Attitudes vary from person to person, yet they all come from anticipated conduct. When native speakers of two or more languages assemble, they must choose which language to use.

Furthermore, the decision-making elements are not as few and straightforward as people imagine. Nobody can typically explain why speakers make such decisions. Certain bilinguals may prefer to use one of their languages whenever the situation calls for it because they believe they are fluent in it. Thus, bilinguals may pick one language to express ideas and concepts when the other is more suitable. Considerations of utility may also impact language use and language selection. A speaker may believe that adopting a certain language gives him an advantage in a group or broader social context.

In recent years, there have been numerous discussions about the function and maintenance of positive attitudes toward languages. In attitudinal research, surveys, interviews, and open-ended questions are typically used to collect data. It is difficult to ensure that when people are asked, they reveal their underlying beliefs or emotions. As a result, people's words and actions may not always correspond. We can claim to be incredibly proud of our culture and language, yet we could utilise a more beneficial dairy life. The preservation of the language and its distinctive culture was undesirable. Consequently, it is necessary to analyse the connection between language attitudes and language usage.

Additionally, Dede (2004) researched the language attitudes of the province of Qinghai. He analysed Xining's views about the Qinghai dialect using a quantitative approach. Residents were requested to complete a questionnaire to assess "the emotive, cognitive, and behavioural components of their attitudes towards their dialect and

Standard Chinese" (Dede, 2004, pp. 1). Although the following does not follow from this study's findings: "the behavioural component is negative, the cognitive component is positive, and the affective component is mixed," this is not the case (Dede, 2004, pp. 2). Brudner and White (1979) found that even though many Irish people like their mother tongue, this isn't something they teach their children at home very often.

People believe that their dialect is essential, but they rarely use it. For instance, Ling (2020) researched the strong sense of ethnic identity among Tai undergraduates; yet, Mandarin was the most often used language, and the younger generation's Dai language proficiency is gradually dropping. Therefore, when conducting surveys to explore language attitudes, researchers must not overlook language use. Bennett (1995, p. 7) states, "The questions of language maintenance attitude typically occur within the framework of surveys of the actual frequency of language usage." It was not sufficient to conduct an attitude survey by merely inquiring about respondents' linguistic attitudes; actual language use was also required.

Through the review in 2.1 and 2.2, it was found that previous studies have more often treated language use and language attitudes as distinct individuals and discussed them separately. There is still a gap in the research on the relationship between English use and attitudes among Chinese students, and therefore the present study examines Chinese (international) students in Malaysia from two perspectives: language attitude and language use.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study examines the English language attitudes and usage of Chinese international students in Malaysia. Using the classifications of Chen (1999) and Wu (2000), the language attitude was classified into a number of groups for this study (2007). Their classifications of language attitudes are more specific to the Chinese population and therefore more in line with the object of this study. In addition, their

classifications is clearer than previous, which only classified language attitudes in an abstract way, e.g. Wu (2007) classified language attitudes as affective (melodic and affable) and cognitive (useful and social powers). It is difficult for the participants to understand our questionnaire, so the classifications of Chen (1999) and Wu (2000) were chosen as one of the frameworks for this study. In addition, based on the researcher's assessment of the aforementioned works of literature, He (2014) serves as a point of reference to examine the language use from two perspectives: the scene and the object. Scenes are classified as formal or informal, and objects are classified as related or non-related. Such a classification allows the researcher to better analyse whether there is an effect between the different variables, so this study will also use He's study as one of the framework.

Although advancements have been made in the research of language attitudes in China, there are still deficiencies. Recent study indicates that China is experiencing a substantial phase of rapid urbanisation. Population migration and language contact brought forth by societal transformation create unquestionably new options for the selection and application of language. Studies have shown that social factors like different social groups, population, cultural background, age, gender, occupation, and level of education affect how people feel about language and how they use it in China. However, few studies have put these social factors into a single theoretical framework.

English is currently the most studied foreign language in China, with 470 million people studying it. There was a substantial gap between the number of English-language learners and learners of other foreign languages. Since the number of English learners in China far outnumbers those of other languages, "foreign language instruction" in China is synonymous with "English instruction" (Wei & Zhi, 2008). Moreover, the prior research in China focused more on the language attitudes between Chinese and Chinese dialects and less on the attitudes of Chinese language users toward



English, particularly Chinese students studying abroad. Also, it was hard to get a good idea of what people were thinking from surveys alone.

In terms of theoretical achievements, Chinese research focuses more on the study of language attitudes and less on merging language attitudes with other theories. The researcher believes a correlation exists between linguistic attitude and language usage (language choice). So, this study also looks into how people who speak Chinese feel about English as a language. This is done to find out what people think about English.

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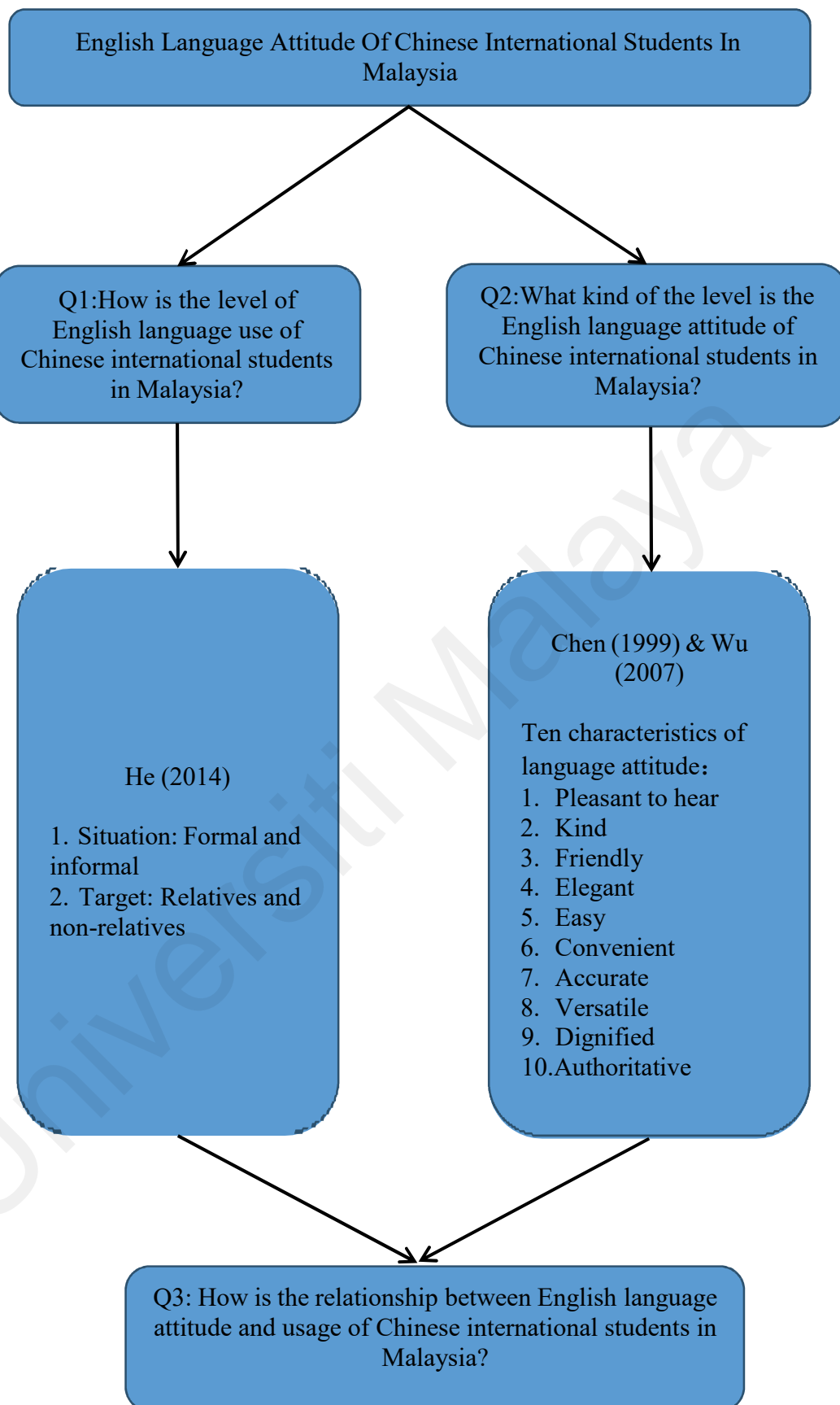


Diagram 2.1: *Theoretical framework of this study*

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presents a summary of current academic developments pertaining to the pertinent areas. In addition, the reader is able to comprehend the component of the study that analyses the connection between language attitudes and language use. Following is a discussion of the research methods employed in this study to assess language attitudes and language use.

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## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains in detail the research design, objects, questionnaire design ideas, and research steps so that readers can comprehend the complete study procedure.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study includes both quantitative and qualitative evaluations. The researcher has followed the survey method of sociolinguistics, using a questionnaire survey method to explore the attitudes of Chinese university students who come to Malaysia to study. Their language usage and the relationship between the two were also included in this study. The collected data from surveys were transferred into numbers. This study utilizes quantitative design because quantitative research methods were objective, systematic, and more scientific, and the statistical data analysis can make the research results precise and convincing. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to present further details as a supplement to the survey.

### **3.2 Research Object**

This study employed a non-probabilistic convenience sampling methodology. Due to the epidemic, this survey was distributed via an online questionnaire. In addition to the convenience of data collection, the subjects of this study included 19 to 40-year-old Chinese university students from Malaysian public universities (UM, UPM, UKM, USM), who can be the research objects of this study. The researcher publicly distributed the questionnaires to all significant online social groups of Chinese students on a fixed number of days, with an expected return of 100 questionnaires or more.

The number of Chinese university students studying in Malaysia is huge, and a convenient sampling method was employed. In addition, this was only a preliminary

survey, and convenience sampling was the best method to use due to its ease and convenience. Focused interviews were utilized to attain the objectives.

Also, according to Li (2016), university students were selected for this study in the best phase for foreign language learning and for the sensitive time they are in language training. Additionally, they have different socio-economic backgrounds and growing environments, making them the most suitable objects for language study and its factors (Guo, 2013).

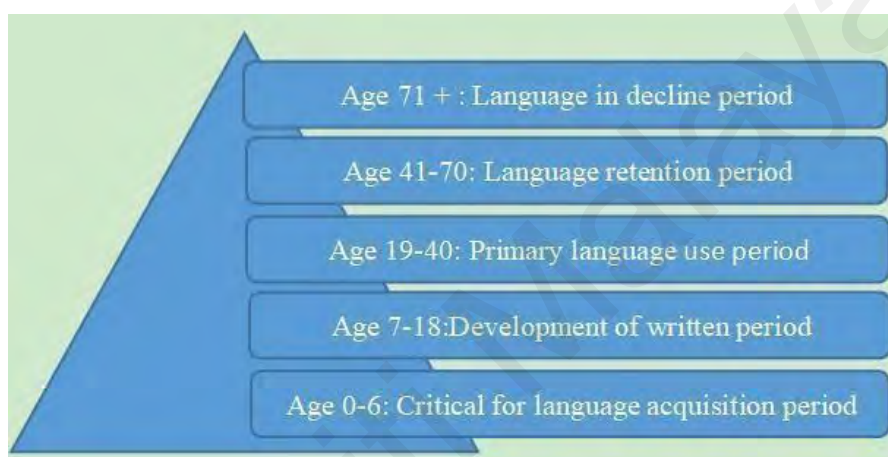


Figure 3.1: *Age space of language (Adopted from Li, 2016)*

### 3.3 Research instrument

In this study, questionnaires and interviews were conducted to collect data. Based on the statistics, an analysis of language use and attitude was found with the help of SPSS26, within the theoretical framework of language use and attitude, it was a study using a mixed-mode approach.

The items in the instrument for this study have been obtained from several previous researchers' instruments in the same field. For the part of language use, researcher has adapt from He Jiabe (2014). Whereas, the part of language attitude, researcher has adapt from Chen Songling (1999) and Wu Meili (2007). Some amendments have been made to the original item. For the purpose of the instrument validity of this study, a few expert was asked to make an review of the instrument.

Comments received from all panels were used to make improvements to the study instrument. The original instrument was written in Chinese, so for the purpose of this study, the items selected to be used in this study were translated into English. For that purpose, the translation process (back to back) was carried out. For language verification, language expert has also been asked to evaluate and validate the accuracy of the language used and verify the translation work that has been carried out.

The questionnaire's content was divided into three parts: background information, language attitude towards English, and language use of English. The respondent must answer all three parts.

The first part of the questionnaire design focuses on the research object's basic situation and background information with six questions. Both an analysis of language use and an assessment of language attitude require key personal information. Questions 1 to 5 are used to know the respondent's general information such as gender, age, department, and academic year. Question 6 is used to understand the respondent's English proficiency.

The second part consists of sixteen questions, which mainly analysed the language use of Chinese university students when they meet “different people” and in “different situations/place”. Questions one to eight focused on the language usage of Chinese students when they meet “different people”; Questions nine to sixteen focused on the language usage of Chinese students when they at “different situations/place” . In the questionnaire, the Likert scale set four options (1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, and 4= Very often) to ask about the language situation chosen by the research subjects in different situations and environments.

The third part mainly discussed the subjects' attitude towards English, i.e., their feelings and evaluation of English. There were 20 questions in total. These questions are based on the ten characteristics of language attitudes selected by Chen (1999) and Wu

(2007) (pleasant to hear, kind, friendly, elegant, easy, convenient, accurate, versatile, dignified, and authoritative). In the questionnaire, the Likert Scale set 4 options (1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree and 4= Strongly agree) to ask the research subjects to agree with these 10 characteristics. It is worth noting that the relevant component was divided into two sections: the first collects respondents' intuitive attitudes toward English, and the second establishes a setting for respondents to evaluate their attitudes toward English. The combination of the two parts was suggested to be the most effective method for determining Chinese students' genuine views toward English.

The current study also utilized only positive English attitudes and excluded negative ones. The reason for this was that a negative option would have a detrimental effect on respondents' responses, resulting in erroneous results, a claim supported by prior studies such as Marsh, Barnes, Cairnes, and Tidman, 1984; Johnson, 2004; and Colosi et al.; Chyung et al., 2018.

Interviews were conducted to give a more comprehensive answer to the research questions. After the questionnaire was distributed, semi-structured interviews were carried out to strengthen the quantitative conclusion. Twenty participants were invited to the interview session, and nine of them agreed to participate in the interview. All of the participants came from public universities in Malaysia because the language admission requirements were similar. The interviewer gave the interview one by one between the interviewees, which lasted about two hours. Also, interviews were given in Chinese and translated into English. The interview questions included items such as i) participants' opinions on English ii) why they study a second language iii) language preference and choice iv) whether they agree to cancel the primary course status of English. Interviews would help the researcher explore further details and drill deeper into the data.

### 3.4 Normality Test

To conduct a study, one of the primary conditions for inference testing was a Pearson correlation test where the data needed to be normally distributed (Chua, 2011). Several statistical methods can be used to determine the normal distribution of the data that has been collected. The Skewness and Kurtosis statistics were selected to run the normality test of the collected data, as suggested by Cox (1993). Skewness and Kurtosis values were acceptable if the values were between -1.96 and +1.96. If the value was within an acceptable range, then the data was usually used to conduct this study. Therefore, the researcher used the parametric test method and the Pearson correlation inferential analysis method to answer the third research question.

Table 3.1: *Results for the Normality Test for each item*

| Item                      | Skewness | Kurtosis | Result |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|--------|
| English language use      | -.159    | -.641    | Normal |
| English language attitude | -.075    | -1.171   | Normal |

Based on the table above, the Skewness and Kurtosis scores for English language use were -0.159 and -0.641. It has been shown that English-language use is commonly dispersed.

Next, for the aspect of English language attitude, the values of Skewness and Kurtosis are -0.075 and -1.171. It means that the constructs of English-language attitude are typically scattered.

Finally, the scores for the items for English language use and English language attitude were usually distributed. Thus, both groups can conduct parametric tests for conceptual knowledge data.



### 3.5 Validity and Reliability

Also, the researcher was advised to conduct a pilot study in this study. The total sample for a pilot study was usually not less than 30 sample people (Chua, 2006). The number of samples required to conduct a pilot study was 10% of the study sample (Abdul Ghafar, 2003). The researcher has distributed 35 questionnaire but received a total of 30 questionnaire for the pilot study on 30 respondents of Chinese university students at random to get those students who have characteristics that entirely match the actual respondents of the study. Cronbach's Alpha was utilised to get the dependability coefficient (Mohamad Najib, 1999). The discussion begins with the following Reliability.

Validity and reliability play an essential role in a study. Validity is a crucial factor in the formation or selection of research instruments (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2012). Validity of research instruments refers to their precision, veracity, and usability in collecting reliable data for a study. Validity refers to the validity of a research instrument in research. Fuad Mohamed Berawi (2017) said that an item was valid if the instrument was measured with the right application tool.

Furthermore, reliability was used for quantitative studies concerning the accuracy of statistical data (Hardy, M. & Bryman, A., 2004). In this study (Creswell, 2005), reliability was defined as the consistency that must be possessed by an instrument. The items' scores are related to each other, referring to consistency.

The items in the instruments used by the researcher were adapted from several items of several previous researchers' instruments in the same field. The researcher has translated the English items into Chinese. For the validity of this research instrument, the researcher has requested assistance from the supervisor to review the questionnaire form. The feedback received from supervisors was used to make improvements to the study instruments. In the meantime, the responses from respondents concerned the

dependability of the research instrument and the research instrument. The reliability of the research instrument was evaluated by calculating Cronbach's alpha using data from a pilot study done on 30 samples of Chinese students studying in Malaysia.

The Cronbach's Alpha test is one of the statistical tests used to identify the coefficients for the reliability of research instruments (Mohamad Najib, 1999). According to Mohd Majid (1998), the value of the appropriate reliability index to be used as an item in the study instrument is not more than 0.6. Therefore, alpha values that exceed 0.6 gave meaning to the developed item and were suitable for use because they obtained a high-reliability value.

### 3.5.1 Language Use

Table 3.2: *Alfa Cronbach for language use*

| Variables    | Item | Corrected Item-<br>Total<br>Correlation | Cronbach's<br>Alpha if Item<br>Deleted | Alpha Value K<br>for each domain |
|--------------|------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Language Use | Q1   | .682                                    | .941                                   | .944                             |
|              | Q2   | .725                                    | .938                                   |                                  |
|              | Q3   | .766                                    | .941                                   |                                  |
|              | Q4   | .628                                    | .941                                   |                                  |
|              | Q5   | .736                                    | .938                                   |                                  |
|              | Q6   | .765                                    | .937                                   |                                  |
|              | Q7   | .747                                    | .941                                   |                                  |
|              | Q8   | .727                                    | .946                                   |                                  |
|              | Q9   | .701                                    | .938                                   |                                  |
|              | Q10  | .838                                    | .937                                   |                                  |
|              | Q11  | .726                                    | .938                                   |                                  |
|              | Q12  | .795                                    | .937                                   |                                  |
|              | Q13  | .604                                    | .940                                   |                                  |
|              | Q14  | .815                                    | .937                                   |                                  |
|              | Q15  | .768                                    | .937                                   |                                  |
|              | Q16  | .719                                    | .938                                   |                                  |

Table 3.2 illustrates that each item developed for language use found a strong reliability index value where its value ranged from 0.937 to 0.946. The present study discovered that the Cronbach's alpha value for the language use item was 0.944%. Thus, the researcher uses all the items developed in reviewing the true study later.

### 3.5.2 Language Attitude

Table3:3: *Alfa Cronbach for language attitude*

| Variables         | Item | Corrected Item-<br>Total<br>Correlation | Cronbach's<br>Alpha if Item<br>Deleted | Nilai Alfa<br>Ksetiap domain |
|-------------------|------|---|--|------------------------------|
| Language Attitude | Q17  | .712                                    | .908                                   | .919                         |
|                   | Q18  | .739                                    | .907                                   |                              |
|                   | Q19  | .746                                    | .906                                   |                              |
|                   | Q20  | .706                                    | .916                                   |                              |
|                   | Q21  | .694                                    | .911                                   |                              |
|                   | Q22  | .701                                    | .908                                   |                              |
|                   | Q23  | .732                                    | .915                                   |                              |
|                   | Q24  | .755                                    | .915                                   |                              |
|                   | Q25  | .747                                    | .915                                   |                              |
|                   | Q26  | .760                                    | .919                                   |                              |

Table 3.3 illustrates that each item developed for language attitude found a strong reliability index value where the value is between 0.906 and 0.919. The researchers found that the overall Cronbac's alpha value for the language attitude item was 0.919. Thus, the researcher uses all the items developed in reviewing the true study later.

### 3.5 Research Procedure

After determining the scope and object of the study, the researcher formulated and designed a questionnaire based on the research questions in the Chinese language.

Subsequently, the researcher sent out a single questionnaire (English version) to 30 Chinese university students and input the data into SPSS 26.0 system for validity and reliability tests. The researcher then decided the questionnaire of this study has validity or reliability. After conducting the pilot study, researcher published the questionnaire in electronic form (Google form) and invite the Chinese university students to answer.

Next, this research encoded the data from the valid questionnaire and input it into SPSS 26.0 for statistics. Then, the researcher used the SPSS 26.0 system to conduct independent sample t-test, paired sample T-test, the single factor analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA, Pearson's Correlation and statistical), and the results drawn into charts began to make a comprehensive discussion and analysis of the language of Chinese university students' attitudes and usage.

Focused interviews were constructed to verify the conclusion of quantitative research eventually. Due to the limited number of closed-ended questions in the questionnaire, open-ended questions were included in the interview to supplement the prior explanation.

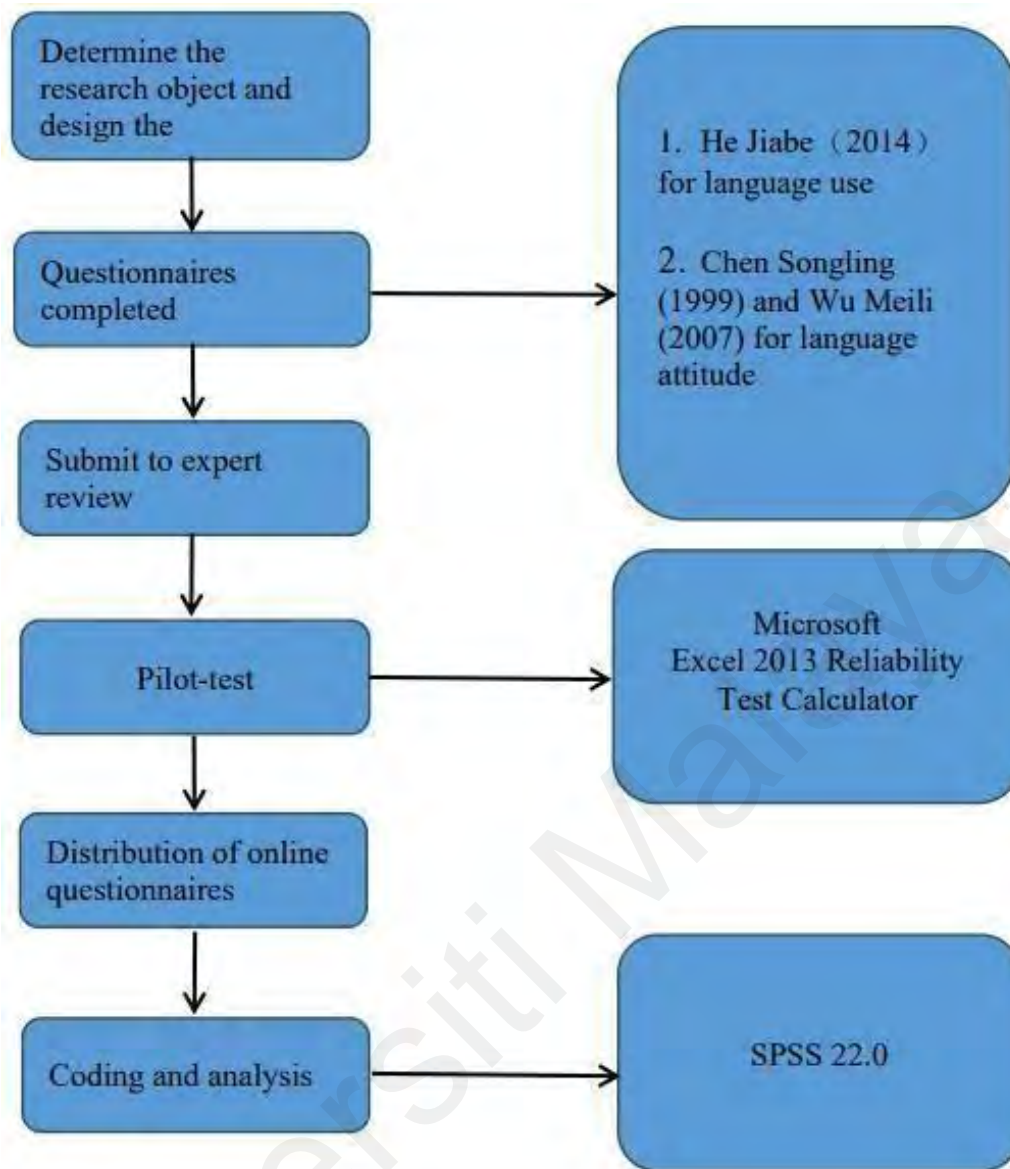


Diagram 3.1: Research procedure of the study

### 3.5 Conclusion

This chapter enables the reader to comprehend the analytical techniques utilised in this study. The subsequent chapter discusses the analysis and findings of the present study.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter is to report the study's findings based on the questionnaire data collected. Researcher has distributed a total of 300 questionnaire for this study but received only 239 questionnaire from the respondents. Thus, there were a total of 239 participants in this study. The acquired data were analysed using Version 26 of the SPSS.

### **4.2 Respondents' Demographic Profile**

The present study collected the profile of the respondents, such as age, gender, faculty, education level, and time spent learning English.

The data collected shows that female university students are the significant respondents in this survey, with 152 respondents from 239 respondents, representing 63.6%. In contrast, the remaining respondents are the male university students, contributing 36.4% or 87 respondents.

Demographic background of the respondents such as gender, age, faculty, education level, period of time learning English in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: *Descriptives Summary of Respondents' Demographic Profile*

| Demographic Variable     | Classifications   | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| Gender                   | Male              | 87         | 36.4           |
|                          | Female            | 152        | 63.6           |
| Age                      | 19-29 years old   | 199        | 83.3           |
|                          | 30-40 years old   | 40         | 16.7           |
| Faculty                  | Art               | 102        | 42.7           |
|                          | Science           | 61         | 25.5           |
|                          | Business          | 76         | 31.8           |
| Education level          | Bachelor's Degree | 94         | 39.3           |
|                          | Master            | 116        | 48.5           |
|                          | PhD               | 29         | 12.1           |
| Period of time in        | Less than 1 year  | 22         | 9.2            |
| Learning English         | 1-5 years         | 78         | 32.6           |
|                          | 5 years above     | 139        | 58.2           |
| <b>Total Percentage</b>  |                   |            | <b>100</b>     |
| <b>Total Respondents</b> |                   | <b>239</b> |                |

The age gap of the respondents was categorized into two categories. The majority of the respondents were between 19-29 years old, with 199 respondents (83.3%), while the remaining respondents were 30-40 years old, contributing to the remaining 16.7% or 40 respondents.

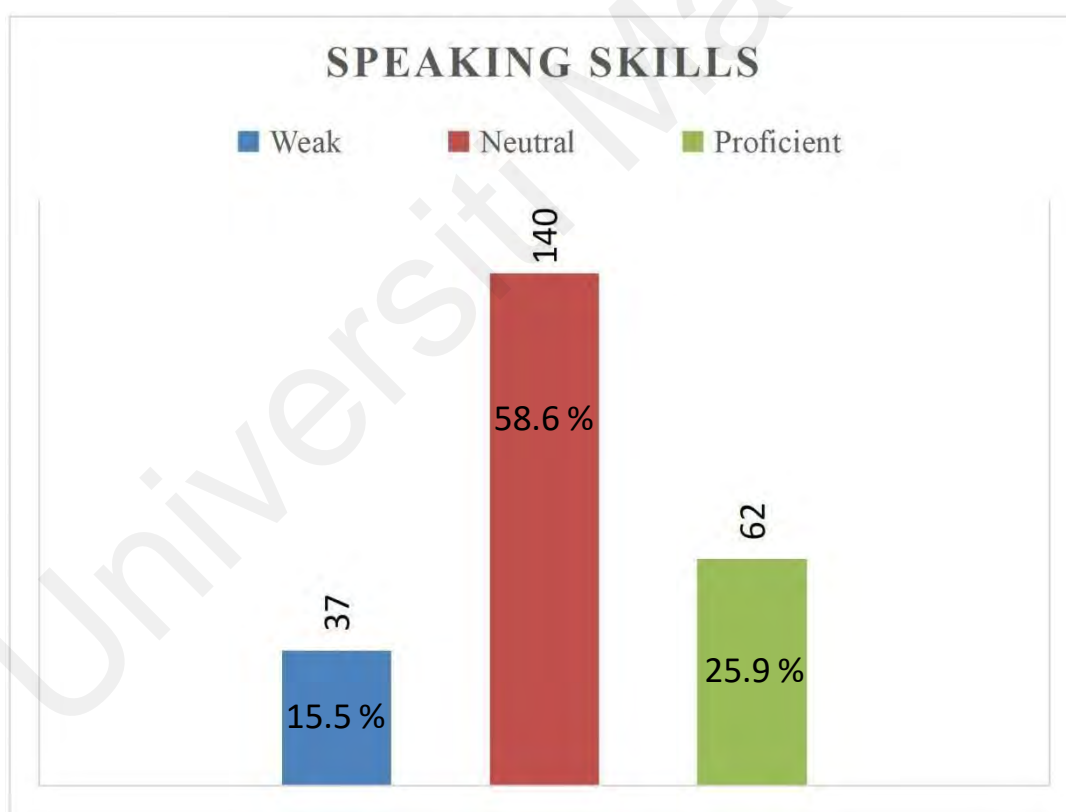
Furthermore, most respondents come from the faculty of art, which contributed 102 respondents (42.7%), followed by the respondents from the faculty of business, which

contributed 76 respondents (31.8%). A minor group was the respondents from the faculty of science, which is 61 respondents (25.5%).

Regarding respondents' education level, the majority were Master's holders, which contributed 48.5% (116 respondents), and the following the Bachelor's Degree holders, 94 respondents (39.3%). The least was the Ph.D. holder, 29 (12.1%) respondents.

Most respondents learned English 5 years ago, 139 respondents (58.2%), and the following were the respondents that have learned English within 1 to 5 years, 78 respondents (32.6%). The least period spent learning English is less than one year, with 22 respondents (9.2%).

#### 4.2.1 Speaking Skills

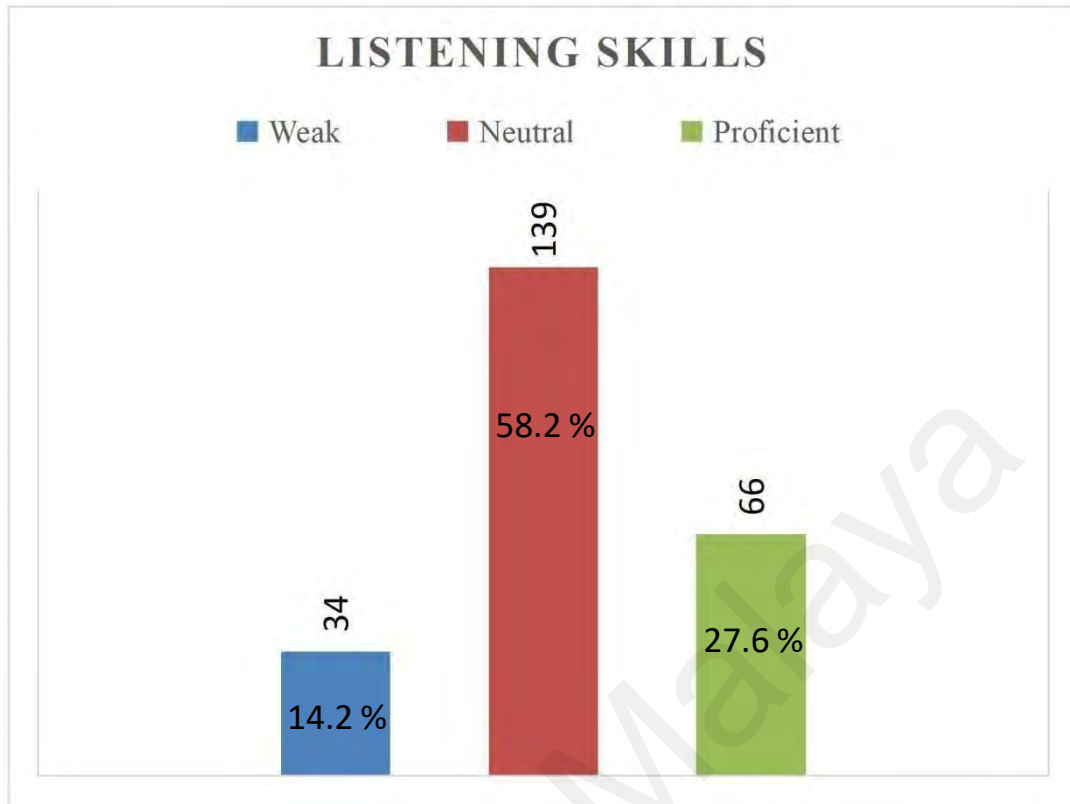


BarChart 4.1: *Chinese university students' speaking skills*

According to bar chart 4.1, most Chinese university students agree that their speaking skills are at a neutral level, with 140 respondents (58.6%). Whereas there was 25.9%, 62 respondents think that their listening skills are at a proficient level. The least number of respondents, 37 (15.5%), agree that they were weak in speaking skills.



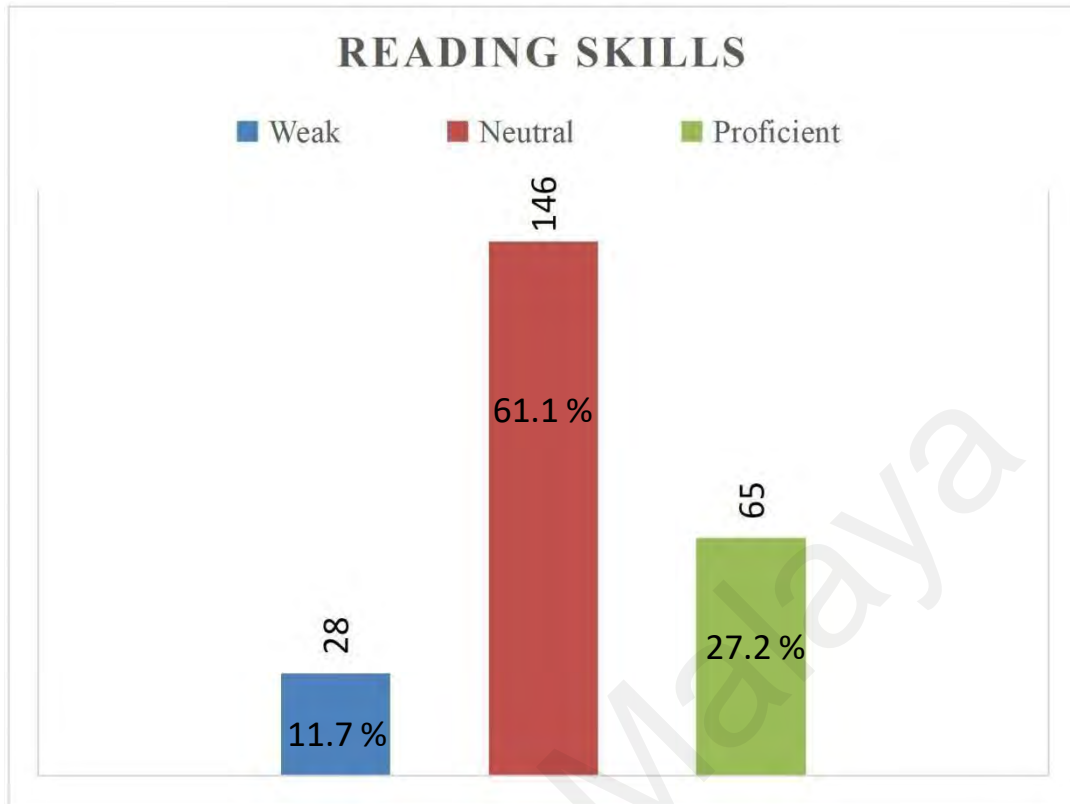
### 4.2.2 Listening Skills



BarChart 4.2: Chinese university students' listening skills

Bar chart 4.2 clearly showed that most Chinese university students' listening skills are at the neutral level for 139 respondents (58.2%). Whereas 66 respondents (27.6%) thought their listening skills were proficient. The least respondents, which was 34 respondents (14.2%), agree that they have weak listening skills.

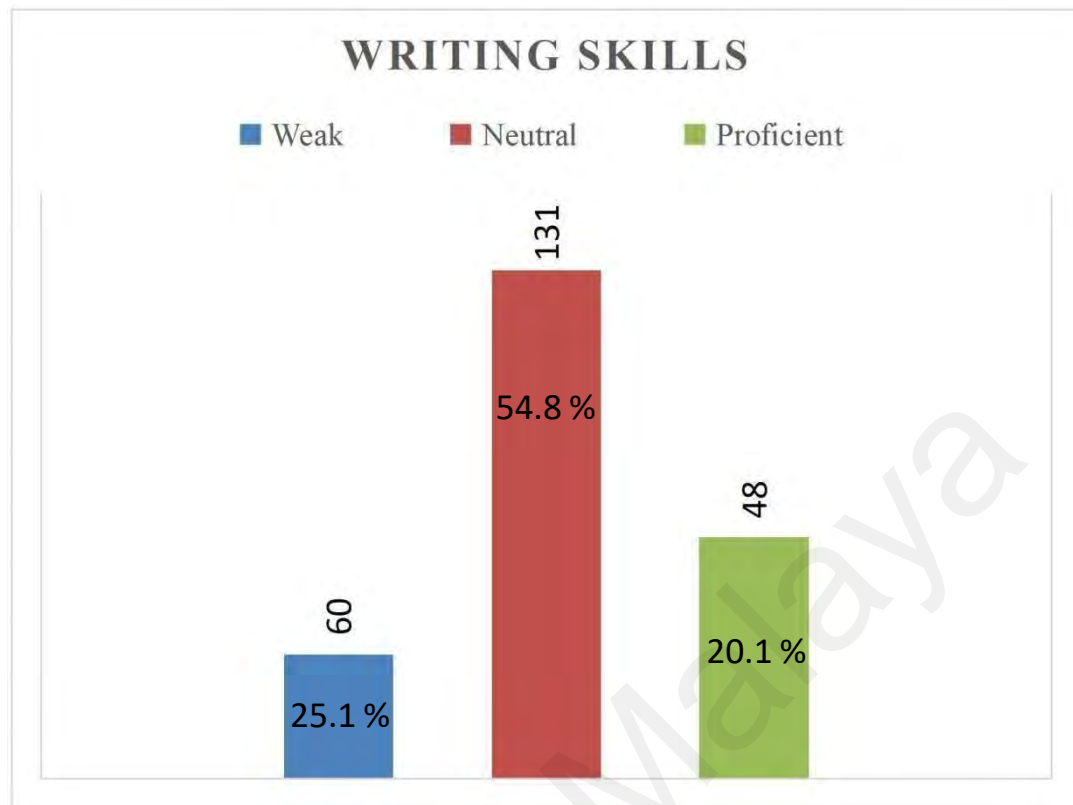
### 4.2.3 Reading Skills



BarChart 4.3: *Chinese university students' reading skills*

The bar chart above clearly shows that most Chinese university students agree that their reading skills are in the neutral stage, which is 146 respondents (61.1%). Whereas there was 27.2%, 65 respondents thought that their reading skills were in the proficient stage. The least respondents, 28 respondents (11.7%), agree that they have weak reading skills.

#### 4.2.4 Writing Skills



BarChart 4.4: *Chinese university students' writing skills*

The bar chart above clearly shows that most Chinese university students agree that their writing skills are at the neutral level, which is 131 respondents (54.8%). In contrast, 48 respondents (20.1%) thought that their writing skills were at the proficient level. The least respondents, 60 respondents (25.1%), agree that they are weak writing skills.

#### 4.3 The level of English Language Use of Chinese university students in Malaysia

Sixteen items have been identified in the "English Language Use", classified into two domains: different people and different situations. The domains of different people can be divided into relatives and non-relatives, while the domains of different situations are divided into formal and informal situations. The questionnaires were conducted on the respondents that studied in Malaysia by using the "Likert Scale" method given

rather than "never (1)" to "very often (5)" on their opinion about the level of English language use. The level of English language use of Chinese university students in Malaysia is analyzed accordingly in Table 4.2.

The descriptive statistics of the mean score, *M*, were used to establish the level of English language proficiency for each of the domains listed in Table 4.2. The frequencies (*F*), mean (*M*), percentages (%), and standard deviation (*SD*) have been calculated.

The interpretation of mean scores is classified into five levels, as done by Rani (2016). According to the interpretation chart, the mean scores in Table 4.2 are deficient or not implemented (*M*=1.00-1.80), low (*M*=1.81-2.60), and moderate (*M*=2.61-3.40), high (*M*=3.41-4.20), and very high (*M*=4.21-5.00).

Table 4.1: *Mean score Interpretation for Five Likert Point Scale*(Sources: Rani, 2016)

| Mean Score | Interpretation |
|------------|----------------|
| 1.00-1.80  | Very Low       |
| 1.81-2.60  | Low            |
| 2.61-3.40  | Moderate       |
| 3.41-4.20  | High           |
| 4.21-5.00  | Very High      |

The domains of "different people" can be divided into relatives and non-relatives (strangers). For the relatives' domain, item 4, "Friends," scored the highest with *M*=2.49, *SD*=0.98; whereas item 3, "Neighbours," scored the lowest with *M*=2.02, *SD*=0.99. Furthermore, for the non-relatives domain, the item with the highest mean value is number 5, "teachers" (*M*=2.74, *SD*=1.02), while the item with the lowest mean value is number 7, "shopping mall/restaurant service employees" (*M*=2.31, *SD*=0.97).

In the domain of different situations using the English language, it can be divided into two domains, which are formal situations and informal situations. For the

domain of formal situations, the highest mean score for question 10, "In Schools," was  $M=2.74$   $SD=0.97$ . The item with the lowest mean value is number 9, "At home," with  $M=2.15$  and  $SD=1.00$ . Moreover, in informal contexts, item 14, "At a roadside stand," had the highest mean value ( $M=2.21$ ,  $SD=0.99$ ), while item 16, "In a clinic," had the lowest mean value ( $M=2.14$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ).

Table 4.2: Mean score for each domain in language use

| S/N                       | ITEM               | MEAN<br>(M) | LEVEL      |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1                         | Relatives          | 2.20        | Low        |
| 2                         | Non-relatives      | 2.46        | Low        |
| 3                         | Formal situation   | 2.37        | Low        |
| 4                         | Informal situation | 2.16        | Low        |
| <b>Average mean score</b> |                    | <b>2.30</b> | <b>Low</b> |

From the table, there are two domains in language use. Using English when facing different people shows that the higher mean score is the domain for non-relatives, which indicates  $M=2.46$ ,  $SD=0.75$  compared to the domain for formal situations, whose mean score was showed  $M=2.20$ ,  $SD=0.91$ . Both domains mean the score is at a low level. Moreover, for the domain using English as a language when facing different situations, the formal situation shows a higher mean score ( $M=2.37$ ,  $SD=0.79$ ) than the informal situation, which indicates a mean score of  $M=2.16$ ,  $SD=0.90$ . Hence, the researcher can conclude that respondents use English more often when communicating with non-relatives than in formal situations.

The results show that the average mean score for English language use is  $M=2.30$ ,  $SD=0.77$ , a low level of English language use among Chinese university students.

## **4.4 The level of English Language Attitude of Chinese university students in Malaysia**

For the language attitude, item 17 is related to item 27, which goes the same for the remaining items, in which item 18 is related to item 28, and so on.

In the domain of general attitude toward the English language among Chinese university students, The item with the greatest mean value ( $M=3.08$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ) was "kind," whereas the one with the lowest mean value ( $M=2.80$ ,  $SD=0.61$ ) was "authoritative".

According to the following situation, item number 34: "In domestic work and social interaction, English is used in many ways, and "Better job opportunities occur." scored the highest mean value in the attitude towards the English language domain  $M=3.26$ ,  $SD=0.62$ . Whereas item number 33 says, "When I want to express something accurately, I choose to speak in English." scored the lowest mean value,  $M=2.64$ ,  $SD=0.78$ .

Table 4.3: *Mean score for each domain in language attitude*

| S/N                       | ITEM  | MEAN<br>(M) | LEVEL           |
|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1                         | 17+27 | 3.01        | Moderate        |
| 2                         | 18+28 | 3.01        | Moderate        |
| 3                         | 19+29 | 3.05        | Moderate        |
| 4                         | 20+30 | 3.04        | Moderate        |
| 5                         | 21+31 | 2.80        | Moderate        |
| 6                         | 22+32 | 2.92        | Moderate        |
| 7                         | 23+33 | 2.72        | Moderate        |
| 8                         | 24+34 | 3.15        | Moderate        |
| 9                         | 25+35 | 2.96        | Moderate        |
| 10                        | 26+36 | 2.77        | Moderate        |
| <b>Average mean score</b> |       | <b>2.94</b> | <b>Moderate</b> |

Table 4.3 shows that the highest mean score is item 24+34, which refers to versatility. That means that most respondents have a versatile attitude towards the English language. The lowest mean score for English language attitude is item 23+33, referring to "easy." Most study participants felt that English could not express information accurately.

The results show that the average mean score for English language attitude is  $M=2.94$ ,  $SD=0.43$ , a moderate English language attitude level among Chinese university students.

## 4.5 The relationship between English Language Usage and Attitude of Chinese university students in Malaysia

A bivariate statistical analysis was undertaken to determine the relationship between Chinese university students' usage of the English language and their attitude toward the English language. This included correlation tests and tests of statistical significance. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used to find out what kind of relationship there was between the independent variable, Chinese university students' use of English, and the dependent variable, their attitude toward English. Table 4.4 shows the strength of correlation values,  $r$ , in correlation analysis that can be categorized according to Chua (2006).

Table 4.4: *The Strength of the Correlation Coefficient Values*(Sources: Chua, 2006)

| Correlation Coefficient Values ( $r$ ) | Correlation Strength        |
|--|-----------------------------|
| .91 to 1.00 or -.91 to -1.00           | Very strong                 |
| .71 to .90 or -.71 to -.90             | Strong                      |
| .51 to .70 or -.51 to -.70             | Average / medium / moderate |
| .31 to .50 or -.31 to -.50             | Weak                        |
| .01 to .30 or -.01 to -.30             | Very weak                   |
| .00                                    | No correlation              |

Through the analysis, language use variables positively correlate with English language attitude ( $r=0.253$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ). Table 4.8, as the  $r$ -value, which indicates the strength of the correlation coefficient, is 0.253, this means that the English language use has a very weak correlation with English language attitude. Hence, English language use significantly correlates with English language attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia.



## 4.6 T-test between English Language Use and gender, age group, faculty, education level, and time spent learning the English language

### 4.6.1 Gender

Table 4.5: Gender Descriptive Statistics Scale of Language Use

|              | Gender | N   | Mean (M) | Standard<br>Deviation<br>(SD) |
|--------------|--------|-----|----------|-------------------------------|
| Language Use | Male   | 87  | 2.22     | 0.88                          |
|              | Female | 152 | 2.35     | 0.69                          |

Table 4.6.1 shows that the mean for males in English Language use is  $M=2.22$ ,  $SD=0.88$ , while the mean for females is  $M=2.35$ ,  $SD=0.69$ . This shows that most women use the English language more often than men.

Through the analysis, the T-test for Equality of Means indicates no significance of two variables is more significant than 0.05, which is 0.217. Hence, these data imply that there are no significant gender disparities in English language usage.

### 4.6.2 Age Group

Table 4.6: Age group Descriptive Statistics Scale of Language Use

|                 | Age             | N   | Mean (M) | Standard<br>Deviation<br>(SD) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----|----------|-------------------------------|
| Language<br>Use | 19-29 years old | 199 | 2.37     | 0.76                          |
|                 | 30-40 years old | 40  | 1.95     | 0.70                          |

Table 4.6.2 indicates that in the English Language use, the age group of 19-29 years old shows the highest mean,  $M=2.37$ ,  $SD=0.76$ ; whereas the respondents aged between 30-40 years old indicate the lower mean score,  $M=1.95$ ,  $SD=0.70$ . It shows that most respondents who use English daily were between 19 and 29 years old.

The T-test for Equality of Means indicates a sign of two variables is less than 0.05, which is 0.002. Therefore, it also shows that the age group variance is not equal. From the perspective of the two-tailed t-test, the significance probabilities of the two-tailed t-test for the age groups are 0.002 and 0.001, respectively, and both values are less than 0.05. This result indicates significant differences in the use of the English language between the age groups of 19-29 years old and 30-40 years old.

### 4.6.3 Faculty

Table 4.7: Descriptive statistics of faculty differences in language use

|              | Faculty  | N   | Mean (M) | Standard<br>Deviation<br>(SD) |
|--------------|----------|-----|----------|-------------------------------|
| Language Use | Art      | 102 | 2.19     | 0.79                          |
|              | Science  | 61  | 2.30     | 0.80                          |
|              | Business | 76  | 2.44     | 0.69                          |

Table 4.6.3 shows that most students come from the faculty of business, which contributes to the highest mean score,  $M=2.44$ ,  $SD=0.69$ . The second-highest mean score is for students from the faculty of science, which indicates the mean score,  $M=2.30$ ,  $SD=0.80$ , and following to the least mean score, which is for students from the faculty of art,  $M=2.19$ ,  $SD=0.79$ . Hence, this shows that most of the respondents who use English as a language come from business faculty.

Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 4.14, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.267, which is more than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is valid.

According to the One-way variance test, the F value is 2.394, and the significance is greater than 0.000, which is 0.094, suggesting that there is no substantial difference between the averages of each group in Malaysian Chinese university students' English language use.

#### **4.6.4 Education level**

Through the analysis, most respondents have a P.h.D level, which contributes to the highest mean score,  $M=2.41$ ,  $SD=0.79$ . The second-highest mean score is for respondents with Master's holders, with a mean score of  $M=2.36$ ,  $SD=0.59$ , and the least mean score is for respondents with degree holders, which indicates a mean value of  $M=2.19$ ,  $SD=0.93$ . Therefore, the results indicate that most respondents with P.h.D use English to communicate in their daily life.

Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 13, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are not equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is not satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is not valid.

Besides, the one-way variance test shows that the F value is 1.557, and the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.0213, indicating that there is no substantial

difference between the averages of each group with English language use among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

#### **4.6.5 Time spent learning English**

This study discovered that respondents who study English for less than a year contribute significantly to the highest mean score,  $M=2.45$ ,  $SD=0.83$ . Whereas respondents who have been learning English for between one and five years have the second-highest mean score ( $M=2.31$ ,  $SD=0.79$ ), respondents who have been learning English for five years or more have the lowest mean score ( $M=2.27$ ,  $SD=0.75$ ). As a result, most respondents who have been learning English for less than a year converse in English daily.

Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 16, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.850, which is more than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is valid.

Through the analysis, it shows that the F value of Descriptive statistics of time spent learning the English language in language use is 0.555, and the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.575, indicating that there is no substantial difference between the averages of each group with English language use among Chinese universities students in Malaysia.

#### **4.6.6 Summary**

The preceding tables demonstrate the study's findings of significant discrepancies between English language use and gender, age group, faculty, education

level, and length of time spent learning English. Regarding gender differences in attitudes about the English language, the researcher discovered no statistically significant difference between males and females. The T-test for Equality of Means indicates that no two variables have a significance greater than 0.05, which equals 0.217.

The study revealed that women used English more than men,  $2.35 > 2.22$ . This study also discovered a significant variance in attitudes regarding English language use by age group. The T-test corroborates this for Equality of Means results, which indicate that the significance of the two variables is less than 0.05, or 0.002. Additionally, the survey revealed that students aged 19-29 used English at a higher rate than students aged 30-40, i.e.,  $2.37 > 1.95$ .

Additionally, the study discovered no significant differences in faculty attitudes about English language use. The results indicate that the significance level is more than 0.000, or 0.094, suggesting no statistically significant difference in the averages of each group concerning English language use. This study found that students in the Faculty of Business utilised English more frequently than those in the Faculty of Science, who utilised English more frequently than those in the Faculty of Arts, i.e.,  $2.44 > 2.30 > 2.19$ .

In addition, in terms of the connection between educational level and usage of the English language, this research found no substantial relationship between educational level and English language usage. The results suggest that the significance level is more than 0.000, or 0.005, indicating no statistically significant difference in the averages of each group concerning English language attitude. Although there was no statistically significant relationship between them, the survey discovered that Ph.D. students used English more frequently than Master's students, who used it the least frequently, i.e.,  $2.41 > 2.36 > 2.19$ .

There is also no significant difference between the two variables regarding time spent learning English and time spent using English. The results indicate that the

significance level is more than 0.000, or 0.0.575, suggesting that there is no statistically significant difference in the averages of each group concerning English language use. The study demonstrates that the shorter the time spent studying English, the more likely pupils are to use it, with a mean value of  $2.45 > 2.31 > 2.27$  for respondents who acquire English in less than a year, 1-5 years, and more than five years.

In conclusion, only one variable, age group, significantly affects English language use. The remaining variables in this study, such as gender, faculty, education level, and time spent learning English, have no significant effect on English language use among Chinese students studying in local universities.

## **4.7 T-test between English Language Attitude and gender, age group, faculty, education level, and period of time learning English**

### **4.7.1 Gender**

This study shows that males have a higher mean score of  $M=2.98$ ,  $SD=0.46$ , compared to female mean score, which indicates  $M=2.92$ ,  $SD=0.40$ . This shows that most women have a higher English language attitude than men.

The T-test for Equality of Means indicates no significance between the two variables is more than 0.05, which is 0.265. Hence, these results indicate no significant differences in English language attitudes between males and females.

### **4.7.2 Age Group**

From the perspective of the English language attitude, the age group of 19-29 years old shows the highest mean,  $M=2.95$ ,  $SD=0.43$ , whereas the respondents between

30-40 years old indicate the lower mean score,  $M=2.91$ ,  $SD=0.41$ . This shows that most respondents aged 19-29 have a higher English language attitude.

Besides, the T-test for Equality of Means indicates that there is also no significance between the two variables is more than 0.05, which is 0.654. Hence, these results indicate significant differences in English language use but no significant differences in English language attitude between 19-29 years old and 30-40 years old.

### **4.7.3 Faculty**

This study discovered that most students come from the faculty of business, contributing to the highest mean score,  $M=3.01$ ,  $SD=0.31$ . The second highest mean score is for students from the faculty of art, which indicates the mean score,  $M=2.93$ ,  $SD=0.46$ , and the least mean score, which is for students from the faculty of science,  $M=2.88$ ,  $SD=0.47$ . Hence, this shows that most of the respondents with a high attitude towards the English language come from the business faculty.

Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 23, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.158, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is valid.

The one-way variance test result shows that the F value is 1.549, and the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.215, indicating no significant difference between the averages of each group with English language attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

#### **4.7.4 Education level**

Most respondents have a degree holder, contributing to the highest mean score,  $M=3.03$ ,  $SD=0.41$ . The second-highest mean score is for respondents with Ph.D. holders, with a mean score of  $M=3.00$ ,  $SD=0.26$ , and the least mean score is for respondents with Master holders, which indicates a mean value of  $M=2.85$ ,  $SD=0.45$ . Therefore, the results indicate that most degree respondents have a positive attitude toward the English language daily.

Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 26, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.135, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is valid.

The one-way variance test result shows that the F value is 5.441, and the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.005, indicating no significant difference between the averages of each group with English language attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

#### **4.7.5 Time spent learning English**

Most respondents have master holders, contributing to the highest mean score,  $M=2.36$ ,  $SD=0.59$ . The second-highest mean score is for respondents with a degree, with a mean score of  $M=2.19$ ,  $SD=0.93$ , and the least mean score is for respondents with a P.h.D., which indicates a mean value of  $M=2.41$ ,  $SD=0.79$ . Therefore, the results indicate that most of the respondents with Master's use English to communicate daily.



Based on the homogeneity of variance test, it shows the Levene test results of homogeneity of variance. The one-way variance test requires the variances of each group to be equal. From table 29, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.252, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variances of the three groups are equal, and the variance homogeneity condition of the one-way variance test is satisfied. The result of the one-way variance test is valid.

The descriptive statistics shows that the F value is 0.152, and the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.859, indicating no significant difference between the averages of each group with English language attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

#### **4.7.6 Summary**

Above show the results of this research regarding whether there are significant differences between English language use and gender, age group, faculty, education level, and time spent learning the English language.

Regarding gender towards English language attitude, the researcher found no significant difference between males and females. The T-test for Equality of Means indicated that there was also no significance between the two variables is more than 0.05, which is 0.265. Despite this, the study discovered that men had a more favorable attitude toward English ( $M=2.98$ ) than women ( $M=2.92$ ).

Furthermore, in terms of age group towards English language attitude, the researcher found that there was also no significant difference between age groups. It can be supported by the results, which indicate that the T-test for Equality of Means indicated that no significance between the two variables is more than 0.05, which is 0.654. Additionally, the study discovered that students aged 19-29 had a higher rate of language attitude toward English ( $M=2.95$ ) than students aged 30-40 ( $M=2.91$ ).

Moreover, in terms of faculty toward English language attitude, the researcher found no significant difference between faculty. The results show that the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.215, indicating no significant difference between the averages of each group with English language attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia. According to the present study, students in the Faculty of Business had a higher rate of language attitude toward English ( $M=3.01$ ), While the attitude of students in the Faculty of Arts ( $M=2.93$ ) and the Faculty of Science ( $M=2.88$ ) had lower attitudes than Business students.

The results show no significant difference between education level and English language attitude the education level towards the English language attitude. According to the findings, the significance level is higher than 0.000, which is equal to 0.005, suggesting that there is no significant difference between the averages of each group about their attitude toward the English language. Although there was no significant relationship between them, the study discovered that the Degree students toward the English attitude most higher ( $M=3.03$ ), followed by Ph.D. students ( $M=3.00$ ), and Master's students ( $M=2.85$ )

Regarding time spent learning the English language towards the English language attitude, there is also no significant difference between the two variables. The results show that the significance is more than 0.000, which is 0.859, indicating no significant difference between the averages of each group with English language attitude. Although there was no significant relationship between them, the study discovered the respondents who learned English for less than one year had a higher attitude toward English ( $M=2.97$ ), followed by respondents who learned English for more than five years ( $M=2.95$ ), and between 1-5 years ( $M=2.92$ ).

In conclusion, the researcher can conclude that variables such as gender, age group, faculty, education level, and time spent learning English have no significant difference with English language attitude in this research.

#### **4.7.7 Result of the interview**

To strengthen the result of this study, nine students were interviewed to find out their situation of, language use and attitude. The participants are from Malaysian public universities, including Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti of Malaya (UM), Universiti Sain Malaysia (USM), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). All the interviews are carried out with the agreement of every interviewee.

According to the thematic analysis of the interviews conducted, the important topics among participants are concluded as: i) the purpose of studying, ii) better job opportunities, iii) daily communication.

##### **Extract 1**

*We use English as our language of instruction , so only after I learn English can I communicate with my classmates, understand what teachers say, and also read a few academic papers, I think it is mainly helpful to my study. In the long term, if a student is good at English, he or she will have more job opportunities. These may be the two main reasons, one is education, and the other is future occupation.*

*Although many people are learning Chinese, even foreigners are learning Chinese, English is still the most mainstream language and is the most widely used language.*

All the students admit that they mainly use English to accomplish their study tasks. Naturally, they are increasingly aware of the importance of English and tend to use it.

Except for the pursuit of knowledge, many of them believe they can get a better career development if they are good at English. It is widely considered that being able to speak other languages benefits them in their future study and work. Although participants think highly of Chinese, English as an international language will not be replaced in their opinion. Such phenomenon is called Language Competition (Dai,2006), which is also the reflection of one's attitude towards language choice.

### **Extract 2**

*As long as others teach me, I will try my best to remember this expression and use it repeatedly. If condition permits, I will review and use this expression again.*

In the interview, most students indicate they are not afraid of communication barriers. As Agheyisi & Fishman (1970) stated cognitive aspect, affective aspect and behavioural tendency are three elements of attitude. The cognitive component posits the knowledge and perception of the object. The affective component is about the evaluation and feeling of the object. The behavioral component refers to the tendency of behaviours towards an object. Especially as international students, they had already made a mental preparation before deciding to go abroad. Thus it can be seen that Chinese international students have a positive attitude toward English.

### **Extract 3**

*I think it has a relatively significant influence on China, everyone's enthusiasm for English will certainly not be so high. For instance, if you want to learn English,your classmates or other people will say something unpleasant.China has canceled the primary subject status of English, and you are still learning. Does this mean that you do not respond to the appeal of your country? This is a tiny aspect, but if English learners make a deeper reflection on this matter,perhaps they will waver and treat English just as their hobby. If he likes learning English, this hobby will disappear. The policy*

*advocates that we should not learn English, which will discourage students from learning English.*

Whether abolish English belongs to foreign language education policy which can be regarded as a subsystem of language education policy, belonging to the category of public policy. Looking back on the foreign language education policy of New China in the past 70 years, the policy objectives of foreign language testing have changed under the influence of social environment. Foreign language testing represented by college entrance examination language has surpassed the original intention of promoting the development of foreign language teaching and cultivating national foreign language ability, and has become a policy tool for social stratification. However, research on basic foreign language education policy in China is still in its infancy. It emphasis on description over demonstration, especially lacking of exploration of the foreign language life of social groups( Zhao, 2019).

Thus, it is noteworthy that none of the interviewees support the abolition of English as the main course in China's educational system. They perceive that this measure will further discourage Chinese students from learning English. Even under the pressure of academic stress, the students do not necessarily learn English actively. Once out of the school's control, their learning initiative will quickly decline.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

The data indicate that English language use is low, although they hold a moderate English language attitude. Additionally, Pearson correlation analysis reveals a weak but significant association between English language use and attitude toward the English language. Additionally, the researcher used the t-test and ANOVA to determine the difference in significance between the variables. This study discovered that only one age group differs significantly in English language use, whereas no variables differ

significantly in English language attitude. The interview findings provide insight into the language use and attitude toward English.

Based on the results collected, researcher has found that there is a weak but significant association between language use and attitude toward the English language. These results are in line with the theory of language attitude which introduced by Wang (1999, 2002) who considers that language attitude is a complex social psychological phenomenon that combines cognitive, emotional, behavioral patterns, and other factors. Moreover, Dai (2013) stated that the concept of language attitude in Sociolinguistics is that language attitude refers to people's perspectives on the use-value of language, including its place, function, and future growth. In addition, Zhang (1988) thought that linguistic attitude refers to a person's appraisal of the worth of a particular language and its behavioural inclination, which consists of three components: cognition, emotion, and purpose. According to the results collected, researcher agreed that the study discovered that various factors, including psychological and social concerns, can influence Chinese students' English usage and language attitudes among University students. Therefore, this research is similar with the theory of Wang (1999, 2002), Dai (2013) and Zhang (1988) which the statement are supported.

The processing and interpretation of data obtained using questionnaires as instruments are discussed in this chapter. The following chapter will explore the present study's data summary, discussion, limitations, suggestions, and findings.

## **CHAPTER5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter will discuss all of the data collected and analysed in Chapter 4 in order to reach a conclusion that is more comprehensive and clear. The purpose of the discussion was to respond to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. In the presence of the analysed data, the researcher conducted a pertinent discussion.

### **5.1 RO 1: The level of English Language Use of Chinese university students in Malaysia**

Based on these findings, the initial research question has been answered. The researcher discovered that Chinese university students in Malaysia have a  $M = 2.30$  level of English language use. Zhang (2019) studies indicated that Chinese people in general have a lower use of English. Zhang research's also supports a finding of the present study that although Chinese university students study abroad, they do not frequently use English to communicate. This is because Chinese university students studying abroad require time to adjust to a new environment. A dynamic shift in personal identification is regarded as a cultural shift (Tran, 2011). The process involves both psychological and cultural transformation. Many international Chinese students viewed this adaptation as a beautiful opportunity, but it could not have been simple. Participant Z indicated that there was a communication barrier and that adapting to the local culture and religion was challenging, but the situation improved after two or three years of instruction. Additionally, Z can now communicate joyfully with international classmates, indicating that he has completed the cultural adaptation process and improved his cultural exchange abilities. Lillyman and Bennett (2014) see cultural

adaptation as a process that helps Chinese international students learn how to communicate with people from other cultures.

The language use of Chinese university students who study abroad is influenced by several factors.

First, cultural distance is synonymous with power distance. The "power distance" indicates the extent to which cultural members recognise the authority of organisations and groupings (Ladum, A. M., 2019). Although interviewee F is currently in Malaysia, Chinese films and music are the most popular pastimes. In addition, speaking English could make F feel insecure. The degree to which members of a culture found vagueness and uncertainty unsettling. Individualistic cultures emphasize individual goals more than collectivist cultures, which emphasize group objectives. This indicates that Chinese university students in Malaysia use English moderately due to the ambiguity in their daily communication. Second, Chinese university students in Malaysia experience a cultural shock, negatively impacting their English language proficiency. As participant W demonstrated in the interview, Chinese students prefer to interact with those of the same ethnic background to avoid unnecessary religious conflicts. It is difficult for Chinese students to adapt to the local culture and make friends in that country. International students studying abroad experience culture shock. This is likely to occur when they encounter a culture that is very different from their own. Chinese university students are new to Malaysia, their host nation, and they aim to stay for only a short time. They might suffer from homesickness (Tsai et al., 2000). Thus, Chinese university students experience cultural shock, which may impair their English language proficiency. (Renan Saylag, 2014).

Thirdly, Chinese university students face language barriers due to the widespread use of the English language. A lack of language proficiency may discourage international students from participating in class. Participant L notes that most of his or



her classmates are Chinese. Therefore, Chinese students spend more time with their peers than with international peers. There is a possibility that students from other countries have difficulty reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English. In addition, it is probable that international students will require additional time to read and write, which may have a negative effect on their overall academic achievement. Some international students have cited English as a significant obstacle (Glory Gatwiri, 2015; Nara et al., 2015; Eunjin et al., 2015; Reubenson et al., 2015). According to the interview, most participants acknowledge that communication barriers exist in their daily lives. Therefore, language barriers are one factor that affects the English language proficiency of Chinese university students.

When studying abroad, stress and anxiety also affect the English language use of Chinese university students in their daily communications. Many interviewees admit that they prefer to hang out with their Chinese classmates, and F explains that speaking English with others can make them feel insecure. Chinese university students studying in Malaysia experience stress and anxiety as a result of their high expectations prior to arrival. However, their expectations were not met when they arrived, and they were disappointed. Yuerong, Susan, and Samantha (2017) backed this up. Results reveal that when studying overseas, Asian immigrant adolescents usually have high expectations of the host nation. Students with unrealistic expectations of their abilities and lives may experience a profound sense of loss and agonizing feelings of inferiority (Hsiao, Esther & Norma, 2015). Therefore, Chinese university students studying in Malaysia have a low level of English proficiency.

Aside from that, the researcher can conclude from the findings that English language usage can be divided into two groups: "different people" and "different situations." According to the findings, Chinese university students have a high level of English proficiency when communicating with teachers and in the classroom. The

teacher is a role model for the students and ensures they speak fluent English. This assertion is backed by Saraswathy and Azlina (2021). Students are strongly encouraged to work together on group projects and stay in touch with their classmates and teachers. In order to produce proficient English speakers, the ultimate goal of the national government's educational policy is to ensure that students can communicate more effectively. This will enable them to compete in the global market (Arif & Amin, 2021). In addition, the researcher found that the Chinese university students had a favourable attitude towards learning English in the classroom. School is a formal environment that requires students to speak formally. English is a formal language that is used worldwide. According to Jabbar (2020), English as a worldwide language has become the pride and privilege of the elite, who view it as a means of identifying and recognizing their professional and social status. In addition, it is evident that almost everyone, regardless of formal English study, has begun communicating using a combination of English, their native language, and vernacular languages. Therefore, it indicates that Chinese university students frequently speak English with their teachers in the classroom.

In conclusion, Chinese university students studying in Malaysia communicate in English less frequently. The outcomes of this study indicate that Chinese university students do not utilise the English language regularly.

## **5.2 RO 2: The level of English Language Attitude of Chinese university students in Malaysia**

In answer to the second research question, the findings indicate that Chinese university students who are currently enrolled in Malaysian universities have an attitude that can be described as moderate ( $M = 2.94$ ), regarding the English language. It implies that they have neither a positive nor negative attitude toward the English language. This result also found in Zhou and Ding's (2015) study. Based on their observations, they

stated that this is because at a practical level, Chinese students understand the usefulness of English in the world and therefore they need to learn English in order to have a better development or to be better connected to the world, yet they instinctively resist foreign languages, especially English in Western countries, due to their own mother tongue and national sentiments. Attitudes can be characterised as feelings towards language use and social standing. Learners' attitudes can be defined in this way. The feelings might be categorised as either pleasant, negative, or neutral. They have the ability to either foster or stifle the process of learning.

One argument asserts that innovations have always been severely constrained by western cultural standards and a lack of social context awareness. A lack of understanding of the social context could also be a factor. According to Shameem (2015), students' learning will be influenced by the teaching environment even if they are not majoring in English but are studying it because of educational or professional necessity. Consequently, while they are involved in educational endeavours in Malaysia, they have no strong affection for the English language.

Apart from that, Chinese university students studying in Malaysia have a moderate attitude towards the English language because English has become one of the mediums of instruction in Malaysia's educational system. This means they must learn by communicating using the English language in university. This is reinforced by Shameem (2015), who asserts that the English language has played a crucial role in education and other facets of life, especially business and education. The entire nation and its people are now acutely aware of the necessity of knowing English in order to adapt to and meet the demand for English as a worldwide language (Foo & Richards, 2004).

In 2002, Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad broadened and enhanced this approach by deciding that mathematics and science will be taught in English

beginning in the first grade (Nor Ain M. R., 2020). Consequently, when Chinese university students study in Malaysia, they will learn by using the English language as their medium of instruction, compared to their own country, where they use Chinese.

In addition, Chinese university students have a moderate attitude towards the English language because it is vital for them to nurture their Chinese culture in the future. The evidence for this can be found in Gu (2010) and Xu (2010). According to He and David (2017), if the English curriculum is well integrated with Chinese culture and customs, then increased exposure to English would assist the Chinese people to maintain their cultural and national identities, and it might even make them more patriotic.

According to Sung (2014), "accent is leveraged [...] as a resource for creating a hybrid identity that expresses both global and local orientation" (p. 53). Furthermore, Xu, He, and David (2017) used a questionnaire and interviews to investigate the attitudes of Chinese students' toward English accents. They found that some students hoped to be perceived as successful English speakers based on their accents. Therefore, this shows that Chinese university students see English as an essential language for their future and have a neutral attitude towards the English language when they study in Malaysia.

Additionally, Zukiflei and Said's (2020) results align with this study, in which upper secondary students have a moderately favourable view about the English language. They understand the significance of English and aspire to become fluent in the language. The findings of this study are also in line with Sekharan et al.'s (2014) study, in which the respondents are well aware that English is an essential language in both studies.

Among the ten language attitude options in the questionnaire stated, Chinese university students that study in Malaysia generally believe that the English language is

a versatile and multi-purpose language. It indicates that the English language has been very important to them throughout their lives. In today's modern environment, English offers numerous advantages to everyone. Many professions, including politics, business, and education, rapidly adopt English as their worldwide language (Clement & Murugavel, 2018). English is used by both native speakers and people who don't speak it as their first language. It is also studied and used by people for whom English is a second language. A common language is used in encounters among non-native speakers (Yang, 2014). Students who can speak the English language can allow them to communicate socially with people from many other nations. It provides a glimpse into other cultures and viewpoints on the globe. It also provides access to foreign films, TV shows, music, and news. As a result, Chinese university students have a moderate level of English language proficiency when they study in Malaysia, as they believe that the English language is a multi-purpose and versatile language.

Furthermore, the English language is fundamental to everyone in the world. This can be backed by the findings of Rajathurai Nishanthi (2018), who noted that the significance of English in the global world could not be questioned or ignored due to the fact that it is the language that is spoken by the most people on the planet. One of the languages that is spoken the most frequently all across the world is English. Outside of countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, there are a great number of people that are able to speak and comprehend the English language. It is estimated that one billion individuals around the world, including those who speak it as a second language, are able to communicate in English. Also, English is used a lot in Malaysia, for example, in education, engineering, medicine, and many other fields.

In addition, Chinese university students have a moderate level of English language proficiency because they think that people who know English tend to get more job opportunities in China. This can be supported by Niyozova Aziza (2020), who says

that English can assist students in pursuing and obtaining additional professional prospects. The job market is worldwide. These days, many firms require personnel who can communicate with partners and clients worldwide. Often, this entails locating personnel who are fluent in English. By learning English, students who can communicate in English may become translators, language teachers, or English marketing specialists for multinational corporations.

Besides that, according to Rajathurai Nishanthi (2018), large corporations will hire professional staff after determining whether the hiring people are fluent in English. Companies that want to operate on a global scale only consider their employees adequately educated if they are proficient in English as speakers, writers, and readers. Therefore, learning English is a vital step toward achieving a high-paying job in the future.

### **5.3 RO 3: The relationship between English Language Usage and Attitude of Chinese (international) students in Malaysia**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has found a significant relationship between English language attitude and usage among Chinese university students studying in Malaysia. According to Chua (2006), the  $r$ -value, which indicates the strength of the correlation coefficient, is 0.253, indicating that English language use has a very weak correlation with English language attitude.

Based on the literature conducted by previous researchers, those researchers (Long & Su, 2021, Chen, 2021, Zhang, 2021 and so on) did not focus on the two variables together in order to find out their relationship. In contrast, they separate the variables to investigate the relationships between language attitude and students' motivation and between language attitude and academic achievement. However, the findings obtained from the researcher show a weak relationship between the two variables in this study. These findings were not included in previous studies. Therefore,

through a literature review, the researcher found that language use is not the main factor influencing students' language attitudes. This can be supported by Mariani Mohd (2015), who stated a significant relationship between attitudes toward English and motivation to learn English. This means that, besides English language use, a student's motivation is also one factor influencing a student's language attitude.

Furthermore, Gardner and Lambert (1972) defined attitude as part of the motivation that influences the success of the language learning process. Gardner (1985) states that language attitude is a significant factor determining the success of language mastery in the classroom. This is because of the descriptive attitude of what a person feels about something, whether positive or negative and includes a person's evaluation of something. A positive attitude can motivate a student and be a motivation to achieve a goal. Negative attitudes hinder teaching and learning (Rahmah A. S. and Abdul S. S., 2010).

In addition, besides students' motivation, academic achievement is also one-factor affecting language attitude. Previous studies that have been conducted show that students who have excellent academic achievement are more likely to show a positive attitude towards English than students who are weak and constantly strive to improve their English proficiency (Thang, Ting, and Nurjannah, 2011). In other words, English language achievement is expected to be related to students' attitudes towards the subject. This indicates that English-language attitudes relate to students' academic achievement.

Apart from that, findings obtained from the researcher in this study show a weak relationship between the two variables. These findings were not included in previous studies. Therefore, through a literature review, the researcher found that language attitude is not the main factor influencing students' language use. In contrast, language attitudes have a relationship to language use. Azizah (2010) shows that university students' English language attitude and English language use are at a moderate level,

and There is a considerable connection between one's attitude toward the English language and their level of usage of the English language. This means that the better a student's level of English proficiency, the more often the student uses the English language and vice versa.

Najwa and Raudhiah (2017) stated that most students felt that using the English language in technical subjects could improve their proficiency. One of the other ways to master English is by taking a course and instilling a sense of interest in the language itself and then never stopping trying to master the language. Therefore, English proficiency can affect English language use.

Based on previous studies, the researcher has concluded that English language use is not the only factor influencing English attitude. However, in this study, the researcher has proved a weak relationship between English language usage and attitude among Chinese university students in Malaysia.

#### 5.1.4 Language use and language attitudes between variables

The researcher believes that the two variables will affect each other indirectly. Therefore, after referring to previous studies, the researcher decided to use the T-Test and Anova analysis method to analyse the five categories of gender, age group, faculty, education level, and period of time learning English for further discussion.

Table 5.1: *Significance difference between age group and language use*

| Language use | Sig - 2 tailed |
|--------------|----------------|
| Age group    | 0.002          |

This study found that, among many factors, only age group significantly affects how people use English. This means that different age groups will affect the frequency of English language use among Chinese university students in Malaysia.



The present findings are compared to past investigations into the same phenomena. However, the findings change slightly. First, the current age group finding was consistent with earlier studies which showed that the age group significantly differs in English language use among students. Both Chen (2014) and Sepasdar and Soori (2014) conducted research that led them to the conclusion that younger and older language learners utilise the English language in significantly different ways. In addition, they thought that older language learners used English more often than younger language learners.

Students in junior high school and seniors in high school greatly differ from one another in terms of their age group and their use of the English language (Finaty Ahsanah, 2020). The students who are younger tend to make more frequent use of the English language compared to the students who are older. This is due to the fact that younger people who are learning a language are more passionate about the process, and they are also less anxious about making mistakes than older people who are learning a language. They have a significant advantage over people of earlier generations when it comes to language learning.

Elsadig Mohamed (2012) discovered that age group influences English language use. The results indicate a significant difference at level 0.01 between Saudi male students who began studying EFL at the age of 5 - 6 years and those who began learning EFL at the age of 12 - 13 years, in favor of the younger students. This means that different age groups can affect English language use among students.

In conclusion, the age group factor not only affects primary school and high school students but can also affect Chinese university students that study in Malaysia.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Based on these phenomena, the researcher has determined that Chinese individuals hold differing opinions about English and its use. Linguistic attitude

represents social psychology, or how individuals perceive and evaluate language varieties of a given language or dialect. In sociolinguistics, the study of language attitudes is both theoretical and practical, as it aids in understanding the psychological characteristics of a nation, group, or organization.

The use of a questionnaire survey in conjunction with semi-structured interviews allowed for the generation of a full and in-depth picture of the perspectives held by Chinese international students in Malaysia on the English language. As a consequence of this, the researcher came to the conclusion that Chinese university students in Malaysia have a favourable attitude toward English, despite the fact that they do not perform particularly well in English.

In addition, the researcher discovered a previously unrecognized correlation between Chinese university students' English language proficiency and their attitudes toward the English language. To understand this topic comprehensively, the researcher examined the relationship between all five characteristics and the use and attitude of the English language. According to the findings, only age significantly affects the English language use of Chinese university students in Malaysia.

In conclusion, the study found that various factors, such as psychological and social concerns, can influence Chinese students' English usage and language attitudes. However, there is an indirect relationship between English usage and linguistic attitudes. This study hypothesizes that factors other than language use should influence the relationship between linguistic attitudes and language use. However, because the objective of the study was not to identify the mediating variable, this section does not delve into the mediating variable factor. At the end of the study, suggestions are made for the Chinese government and educational institutions about how English should be used in China's school system.

In conclusion, the researcher believed that this study will help increase awareness and provide the Ministry of Education and universities with information that will assist them in emphasising how essential it is for students to be able to speak English.

### **5.3 Limitations and suggestion**

The researcher admits that there are several constraints. First, this study is limited to the current epidemic issue. Both questionnaires and interviews are conducted online. Another research method is hard to implement in the study. As a result, this is one of the study's drawbacks.

Second, the sample size is limited. The data sample was chosen using a basic random sampling technique and only consisted of Chinese university students in Malaysian public universities. A larger study scale would be better to present the findings.

The researcher recommends that future research could be conducted from an interdisciplinary perspective. Innovative research methods would be able to explore language use and attitude further. This study suggests finding "mediating factors" like how motivated students are, which may affect how students use English and how they feel about it.

The research may result in recommendations for future professionals to better understand the factors that influence students' English language usage attitudes in Malaysia and assist future teachers in improving students' English language use and language attitudes.

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