Standard Singapore English : evaluating Singapore's standard English variety

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**NANYANG
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SINGAPORE

***STANDARD SINGAPORE ENGLISH:*
EVALUATING SINGAPORE'S STANDARD
ENGLISH VARIETY**

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SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

2021

STANDARD SINGAPORE ENGLISH:
EVALUATING SINGAPORE'S STANDARD
ENGLISH VARIETY

VANESSA ELLEN NAH MEI YIN

School of Humanities

A thesis submitted to the Nanyang Technological University in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

2021

Statement of Originality

I certify that all work submitted for this thesis is my original work. I declare that no other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement. Except where it is clearly stated that I have used some of this material elsewhere, this work has not been presented by me for assessment in any other institution or University. I certify that the data collected for this project is authentic and the investigations were conducted in accordance with the ethics policies and integrity standards of Nanyang Technological University and that the research data is presented honestly and without prejudice.

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ABSTRACT

What is Standard Singapore English (SSE)? This thesis unpacks SSE in two parts: one, SSE is a *standard* variety of English; and two, it is English used in *Singapore*. The aim is to break down the ideological “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness” of SSE to better understand what it is in the minds of its users. Following an extensive review of past studies on Standard English, seven features of Standard English were identified and reviewed in both the global context and in terms of how they have been discussed in past literature on SSE. These seven dimensions were examined in a 29-item questionnaire designed to handle three attitudinal components – Affect, Behaviour and Cognition. Twelve speech samples were used as stimuli, varying factors of speaker Age, Ethnicity and whether English was their first (L1) or second language (L2). A total of 305 participants responded. Findings for “standardness” suggest that how people think, feel and behave in response to the concept of Standard English is chiefly predicted by L1/L2 English of the speaker; L1 English speakers sound more “standard”, are looked upon more favourably, are believed to have more desirable speech, and are perceived more likely to be selected for higher paying and higher prestige jobs. This finding belies Singaporeans’ exonormative standards of English that conceive of the true native English speaker as traditional speakers of Inner Circle Englishes, contributing to a sense of linguistic inferiority among Singaporeans. Perceived “Singaporean-ness” was predicted by two perceptual factors. Firstly, speakers perceived to be ethnically Chinese, Malay and Indian sounded the most Singaporean, while those judged to be European/White sounded the least. Secondly, “standardness” evaluations positively affected perceived “Singaporean-ness”, supporting the existence of SSE as simultaneously standard and Singaporean; in fact, speakers were more likely to sound Singaporean if they sound standard. Future research can

investigate the influence of ethnic identity on national identity in multiracial and multicultural Singapore and Singaporeans' linguistic insecurity due to exonormative standards in order to better understand how SSE is not just *a* standard variety, but *the* standard variety of Singapore.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

What is Standard Singapore English (SSE)? This thesis unpacks the term in two parts: one, SSE is a *standard* variety of English; and two, it is English used in *Singapore*. English is a language of local importance in Singapore as an interethnic lingua franca among citizens, and a language of global importance as a language for international communication. Notably, for the latter, it is a globally recognized and standardised form of English that holds weight. Given the diversity of Englishes in the world, English as a global lingua franca refers to:

“...[n]ot the pidgin and creole ‘Englishes’ scattered throughout the world, or the ‘fractured’ or ‘broken’ English that other commentators have called (more conventionally) the lingua franca of world business. The answer in these instances has to be *Standard* English – an haute cuisine lingua franca if ever there was one” (McArthur, 2001, p. 1).

If English is the definitive lingua franca of the world as “the first truly universal language” (McArthur, 2003, p. 54) and “[t]he language with the highest currency today” (Chew, 2010, p. 83), Standard English is the form in which it manifests. In Singapore, the value of English is mediated chiefly by its utility. This makes the global “standardness” of English pragmatically important, given its connectedness to the world and global economies, as well as the socioeconomic mobility and prosperity it promises for Singapore citizens (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010; L. Lim et al., 2010). A globally understood English serves as a common global communication channel, enabling Singapore to engage in overseas trade and negotiations (Abugohar & Yunus, 2018) in a multitude of sectors: from “technology, economic and

scientific know-how” to “service, fashion, advertising and entertainment industries” (Chew, 2010, p. 83). In short, internationally, English is the linguistic bridge that connects the island nation to the world. Locally, English serves as an interethnic lingua franca that connects Singapore’s citizens to each other and nurtures social bonds (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010; L. Lim et al., 2010; Pakir, 1991b; Stroud & Wee, 2010), thus helping to unite the country (Gupta, 2006; McArthur, 1992).

Singapore English is usually distinguished as two main forms: the colloquial variety, Singapore Colloquial English (SCE) or Singlish, and the “standard” variety, Singapore Standard English (SSE). These two varieties have been described as constitutive of a lectal continuum (Platt, 1975; Platt & Weber, 1980), as a situation of diglossia (Gupta, 1991, 1992, 1994), in terms of a cultural orientation model (Alsagoff, 2007, 2010b) and using an indexical approach (Leimgruber, 2011, 2012). In reality, SSE and SCE vary along a continuum, but academic research and language policies are based on their polarization as distinct varieties (Cavallaro & Ng, 2009; Wee, 2008). Placing them in opposition to each other, even if such categorizations are only theoretical, sets up parameters to analyse the fuzzy-edged spectrum they constitute. Generally, SCE is used in more informal contexts among family and friends as the language of everyday interaction, while SSE is used in more formal settings such as in news media, governance, politics and pedagogy as the “desired and officially prescribed norm” (Cavallaro & Ng, 2009, p. 146). The Singapore government frequently encourages the use of SSE over SCE, perhaps most evident in the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) launched in 2000, which has become “one of Singapore’s trademark campaigns” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 92). Thus, while both SCE and SSE are used widely in Singapore, it is the latter that is seen as desirable – both locally and internationally.

Despite its importance both within and outside the country, SSE has been met with relatively less academic and public interest compared to SCE in terms of both linguistic properties and sociocultural politics. In the context of its linguistic system, SCE has been analysed in terms of its grammar (L. Lim & Foley, 2004), tone (L. Lim, 2011), ethnosemantics (Aniroh, 2009) and its substrate languages and conception (Bao & Lye, 2005; Tan, 2017). Its pragmatic particles are of particular interest; past literature has given an overview of their functions (Gupta, 1992), their origins (L. Lim, 2007), and a number of studies have been singularly devoted to examining a single particle (Erlewine, 2018; Hiramoto, 2012; Leimgruber, 2016; Wong, 2005). SCE has also been widely contested in terms of its socio-political implications as “an icon of national identity” (Rubdy, 2001, p. 347) and “a well-established and deeply entrenched cultural category” (Wee, 2018, p. 4) that reflects the identity of Singaporeans in cultural and linguistic flux (Ho, 2006). Described as “the antagonist in a cultural war of linguistic prescription” (R. B. H. Goh, 2016, p. 748) and criticised as “English corrupted by Singaporeans” (Rubdy, 2001, p. 348), SCE has been surrounded by debates on its “brokenness”, and its subsequent effects on pedagogy (Rubdy, 2007).

On the other hand, SSE “is spoken of with far greater tentativeness than Singlish” (Wee, 2018, p. 4), receiving relatively less interest compared to SCE both in academic literature and in the public eye. When SSE is mentioned in public discourse, it is simply identified as “good”, “correct” or “grammatical” English – especially with the SGEM in place. These are terms that the SGEM applies and hence terms that Singaporeans have come to accept as the standard to aim for in order to speak a desirable form of English in Singapore. This “good English” in the SGEM is often contrasted with “‘broken/bad’ English, often using Singlish as a bogeyman” (Wee, 2014, p. 97). Scholars, too, contrast the two varieties. In research, where SSE does

feature, it often appears as the opposing side of an SCE-focused debate (Hoon, 2003) or one half of an SSE-SCE discussion (Bokhorst-Heng, 2005). Hoon (2003) discusses the “Singlish-Standard (Singaporean) English debate”, but with an emphasis on Singlish and whether it is problematic for the nation as a linguistic resource. Bokhorst-Heng (2005) does not emphasize Singlish, but neither does she emphasize SSE in her examination of the sociolinguistic ideology behind the “English-Singlish debate”. Others have downplayed the singularity of SSE, arguing that it does not differ greatly from other standard varieties outside of Singapore (Gupta, 2010; Pakir, 1991b). Despite dedicated research looking at SSE as a standalone variety in the 1980s (Gupta, 1986; Tay, 1982; Tay & Gupta, 1983), Gupta (2010) revisited SSE and posited that it is not a variety in itself, but merely a constituent of a broader concept of Standard English that encompasses “standards” from all over the world.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty of describing SSE lies in its struggle for recognition – an ideological challenge rather than a functional deficiency. Functionally, Singaporeans are acquiring English much like native Inner Circle English speakers, and it has gone beyond the status of mere lingua franca in Singapore (L. Lim & Foley, 2004). English is the mother tongue for a growing number of Singaporeans and is increasingly used in both public and private domains – sometimes even exclusively (Tan, 2014). Especially among younger generations, it may even be “the only language spoken confidently” (L. Lim & Foley, 2004, p. 6). Yet, ideologically, English speakers in Singapore continue to grapple with issues of linguistic insecurity and language ownership (Foo & Tan, 2019). They struggle to accept themselves as native speakers of English, much less accept that a local standard exists and “even considering such a notion to be chimerical” (Wee, 2018, p. 4). If we speak of a Standard English used in Singapore, why has SSE proved elusive to define, much less be accepted among Singaporeans?

This thesis aims to break down the ideological “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness” of SSE in order to better understand what it is in the minds of its users. In particular, this thesis questions how Singaporeans construct SSE in terms of ideological “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”. To answer the above question, the thesis aims to investigate:

1. What/which dimensions make SSE *standard*?
2. What/which dimensions makes SSE *Singaporean*?
3. What is the relationship between “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”?

The thesis will therefore be in the following order. In the next chapter, I will outline seven features that past research has found to characterise Standard English. Chapter 3 will look at how these seven conditions have been discussed with regard to SSE. Chapter 4 will present the study’s methodology, including the rationale behind the Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive attitudinal components of the questionnaire design. Of these, the final Cognitive component of the questionnaire design comprises 17 statements built upon the seven dimensions identified in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 5 will present results from the Affective, Behavioural and first parts of the Cognitive questionnaire component, while Chapter 6 will address the results from the final 17 Cognitive statements that were based on the seven features of Standard English and SSE. Finally, Chapter 7 will discuss the research findings, situate their implications in the context of past research and put forth suggestions for directions that future research on SSE can take.

CHAPTER 2: STANDARD ENGLISH IN THE WORLD

What makes Standard Singapore English (SSE) a *standard* English? What makes it *Singapore's* Standard English? The following two sections describe, respectively, how Standard English is defined at large in the world and how *Singapore's* Standard English is defined in Singapore. As Ryan (1979) asks: "Do judges distinguish between standard and nonstandard speakers along separable dimensions, or does one overriding factor (e.g., social status) dominate to the exclusion of others?" (p. 153). Similarly, we may ask: Is SSE distinguished from Standard English along several separable dimensions, or does one factor eclipse all others? The following two chapters will identify seven conditions that characterise Standard English, providing a feature-based overview of how it has been described and defined in the global and local context. These features from the literature will then be tested in later chapters for their relevance to the users of SSE as an indication of how it is understood on the ground, with the ultimate aim of bringing us closer to a definition of SSE.

There is a wealth of past literature that have, in many different ways, tried to arrive at a definition of the standard. The "standard" has also been discussed in terms of its associated attitudes, phonological features, cultural roles and standing in the global and local context. This chapter presents an overview of what I believe to be key features commonly associated with Standard English that, arguably, play a role in characterising or defining it. There are seven key features, and they are: uniformity; universality or non-localisability; the importance of phonology and accent; notions of correctness and its identification as an educational target; formality; prestige; and the importance of native and non-native speakers. I will discuss them

in more detail first in the global context as a World Standard English (WSE), and then, in the following chapter, in the local context as *Singapore's* Standard English.

2.1 Uniformity

Does “Standard English” entail a uniform English? Standardisation, by primary definition, implies uniformity; it “relates to the internal structure or physical shape of standardised objects: standardisation consists of the imposition of uniformity upon a class of objects” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 531). The concept of “standardness”, with a departure from linguistic notions, expects a degree of consistency and “sameness” – but is this true for what we think of as Standard English?

One view sees uniformity as merely an abstract notion that forms part of the standard language ideology. As this view argues uniformity is not a real-world characteristic of an actual English variety, the existence of any Standard English variety is denied (e.g. Milroy, 2001; Milroy & Milroy, 1999). In the real world, speaker variation is unavoidable and the process of using language is inexact; it is an imprecise art that performs imperfect communicative functions. Thus, according to James Milroy and Lesley Milroy, fully standardising any spoken language is impossible (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999) and standard languages exist only in our minds as “fixed and uniform-state idealisations—not empirically verifiable realities” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 18). Theoretically, Standard English should only be “an abstract linguistic object, characterised especially by uniformity of internal structure” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 32).

Another view holds that Standard English is uniform insofar as it is defined by its grammar and lexicon. Strevens (1981) posits that Standard English is a dialect defined grammatically

and lexically, of which variations in these areas are, on a global scale, “statistically few and relatively unimportant, at least in the sense of whether they impede comprehension and communication” (p. 5). According to Strevens, Standard English can be spoken in any accent, but such phonological variation only differentiates accents and does not define a dialect of Standard English. Since areas of grammar and lexicon are most consistent when written, some argue that Standard English is thus defined by its written form. Quoting The Kingman Report from 1988, a report on the teaching of the English Language in England and Wales presented to the British government, Standard English has been said to refer to:

“[...] the written form used by all writers of English, no matter which dialect area they come from. It is the fact of being the written form which establishes it as the standard. And it is the fact of being the written form which means that it is used not only in Britain but by all writers of English throughout the world, with remarkably little variation” (quoted in McArthur, 1992, p. 983).

A question that then arises is one of number: Is there one uniform, narrow-veined standard for the entire world? Or do we allow multiple national standards, each uniform within themselves, but divergent across the board as far as an international standard is concerned? This was the paradox that emerged in the 1990s: the possibility that there could at the same time exist multiple national standards and one overarching “single broadly recognizable international standard that subsumes them: a standard of standards” (McArthur, 1992, p. 984). While some supported the more plural view of “various national standards: an indefinite number of distinct centres of gravity for a vastly complex world language” (McArthur, 1992, p. 984), others rejected such multiplicity. From as early as the eighteenth century, there has

existed a view of extreme uniformity that “there can only be one kind of English, the standard kind, and that all others should be eliminated” (Crystal, 2003, p. 175). This is the view held by Quirk, who viewed variation as error created and borne by non-native speakers of English, and who argued for “a single monochrome form that looks good on paper as it sounds in speech” (1985, p. 6).

In contrast, others argue that new Standard Englishes have emerged in various countries all over the world, and the concept of Standard English needs to account for this new sociolinguistic reality by recognising the non-native speakers who brought it about (Kachru, 1985). This approach emphasizes inclusivity and pluricentricity for Standard English in recognition of the fact that English is a world language (Bolton, 2006). As McArthur (1994) describes, regional standards can therefore be viewed as “well-defined but overlapping registers of the same worldwide linguistic artefact” that converge on one global standard form, a “hard-to-define but nonetheless real global space that we can call the “international standard,” which is preeminently associated with print, broadcasting, and the media at large” (McArthur, 1994, p. 235).

Differing opinions on the extent to which uniformity defines Standard English give rise to divergent views on how many “Standard Englishes” there are in the world. On one hand, viewing uniformity as purely abstract and ideological entails that there is no Standard English (e.g. Milroy, 2001; Milroy & Milroy, 1999). On the other hand, accepting a degree of uniformity in Standard English allows for many regional Standard Englishes around the world, convergent on an international linguistic space. This thesis assumes uniformity in Standard English enough to accept SSE as one such regional Standard English worthy of investigation.

2.2 Internationalism and non-localisability

Although Standard English varies from place to place amongst native English speakers (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982), it is often described as non-localisable because of its perceived worldwide applicability. On a smaller regional scale, non-localisability can also apply to countries and regions. For example, the term “Standard American” has been said to refer to “the two-thirds of the American population who do not have a recognizably local accent” (Wells, 1982, p. 118). Kretzschmar & Meyer (2012) even assert that its lack of regional or social distinctiveness within America is the best way to define Standard American English (Kretzschmar & Meyer, 2012). Similarly, Standard English of the UK and the associated accent Received Pronunciation (RP) have been defined in terms of its general locality in Britain. As Wells (1982) states, “[a]n important and defining characteristic of RP is thus its non-localizability within England” (Wells, 1982, p. 14). Along the same vein, Schneider (2011) describes speakers of what he calls “Standard British English” as “probably educated ones from anywhere in the British Isles” (Schneider, 2011, p. 16).

The UK and US strands of Standard English in particular are localisable to the UK and America, but are recognized as “international varieties” of English. Considered the most prominent national Standard Englishes in the world, they are identifiable as “the two main strands of a single World Standard English” (McArthur, 2003, p. 56). It follows that they also lead international broadcast media, with CNN International (US) and BBC World Service (UK) existing as part of a “dual US/UK mode” (McArthur, 2004, p. 10). According to Crystal (2003), the US and UK Standard English varieties have attained international intelligibility while still retaining local flavour. They express and retain national identities through their way of speaking and share an “intelligibility bond” that is “reinforced by the existence of a common

written language” (Crystal, 2003, pp. 144–145). This delicate balance is a result of global and local forces:

“[t]he pull imposed by the need for identity, which has been making New Englishes increasingly dissimilar from British English, could be balanced by a pull imposed by the need for intelligibility, on a world scale, which will make them increasingly similar, through the continued use of Standard English.” (Crystal, 2003, p. 178).

Though World Standard English is largely a global concept, regional Standard Englishes prevail through a complex interplay of global intelligibility and local identity. Paradoxically, Standard Englishes strands such as those of the US and UK are recognisably local enough to be regional, yet non-localisable enough to cross international boundaries and sound “standard”.

2.3 Phonology and accent

Of the numerous areas of contention associated with defining the term “Standard English”, the debate about whether spoken norms should be accounted for “remains the most controversial” (McArthur, 1992, p. 983). Most, if not all, scholars agree that Standard English is more uniform written than spoken; what McArthur (1987) describes as “the common text-linked tradition of a standard” (McArthur, 1987, p. 10). However, scholars differ on how pivotal the role of phonology is in defining Standard English.

Some argue that phonology has no bearing on how “standard” an English variety is. Stevens (1981) asserts that Standard English has “no inherent pairing relationship with any single accent, but may form a non-exclusive pair with virtually every accent of English” (p. 4).

Echoing this view, Stubbs (2013) argues that “[t]here is, in fact, no standard English accent, and standard English may be spoken with any accent” (Stubbs, 2013, p. 73). McArthur explains that accent, along with other aspects of language such as jargon and slang, is “necessarily apart from the standard” (McArthur, 1999, p. 167) because of the status of English as a world language:

“Insofar as Standard English is non-accentual (and to exist as a worldwide medium it must, apparently, be unbounded by any particular accent), it is a system of grammar and vocabulary well established in text” (McArthur, 1987, p. 10).

Schneider (2011) also acknowledges that “accent” relates only to pronunciation and does not officially play a role in defining “standard English”. However, he explains that the definition of “accent”, like those of “variety”, “dialect” and “register”, does “also cover the language forms usually labelled “standard”” (Schneider, 2011, p. 16). There thus appears to be an overlap between English “accents” and “Standard English”. Furthermore, Englishes around the world are clearly distinguished and identifiable by the way they are spoken, since “[m]ost of the variation between varieties of English in the world are to be found at the level of pronunciation” (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982, p. 4). This makes accent a prime candidate for distinguishing different regional Standard Englishes – “an important source of both interest and difficulty” (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982, p. 4).

Whether or not accent is a distinguishing feature of Standard English, accents do carry social meaning (Wright, 1996), and there are accents more closely associated with Standard English than others due to notions of prestige associated with such speech. These associations are

often many years in the making – on RP, for example, Strevens comments that “the pairing of Standard English dialect with RP accent has been associated for almost a century with a social and educational elite” (Strevens, 1981, p. 7). Attitudinal evaluations of the RP accent have continued to find that RP is associated with higher levels of prestige and class as its pronunciation features are “connect[ed] by a convention [...] with gentility or elegance or culture” (Gimson, 1977, p. 156).

Many view phonology and accent as distinct from Standard English, playing little to no role in defining it (McArthur, 1999; Schneider, 2011; Strevens, 1981; Stubbs, 2013). However, even if accents are not formally definitive of Standard English, we must acknowledge the accentual associations made with Standard English on a social level, such as Standard English being more desirably linked with accents that are met with respect, admiration and prestige.

2.4 Correctness

Strevens (1981) declares: “[t]he assertion that Standard English dialect is universally accepted as the appropriate model for educational use is a verifiable fact” (p. 6). There is a consensus among English speakers that there does exist a standard, canonical form of English (McArthur, 1992; J. Milroy, 2001), a superordinate variety that constitutes the “correct” and “genuine” form of English that we see in education (J. Milroy, 1999, 2001). Standard English is alone accorded value that makes it worthy to be described and codified, taught and learnt because it is seen as English in its purest form – “only the standard is really English” (McArthur, 1999, p. 165). It is a form of “modern wisdom” that it is “our ‘standard form of speech’ that alone merits the name of ‘the English language’” (Bailey, 1991, p. 355). This is evident in the naming of our grammar books and dictionaries as guides to the “English Language”, and not the

“Standard English Language”. Such “powerful markers of autonomy” (McArthur, 1987, p. 10) are “objective indicators that a language or a variety of a language has a standard form” (McArthur, 1992, p. 984). They promote grammatical norms that are widely believed to be ‘correct’ and that should be followed in order to use English well (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982). As the only “legitimate language code in education” (Watts, 1999, p. 42), Standard English thus serves as the foundation for English-medium education around the world (McArthur, 1992).

Despite the view that “Standard English” is the “correct” form for use in education, there are also arguments against such a mindset. These arguments assert that the choice of educational models for English is often not based on educational grounds, but on rationale founded on politics and ideology (Kirkpatrick, 2006). In authoritarian tradition, users in standard language cultures subscribe to the standard language ideology – the belief that there exists one standard that is the best and only correct usage of language. This has been criticised as an “overtly authoritarian” view that “accepts that the standard canon must be vigilantly maintained by guardians who have privileged access to transcendental norms of correctness and that all should obey” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 22). As language users place a high level of importance on linguistic “correctness”, the codification and promotion of the standard as the only correct form devalues other varieties as illegitimate forms (J. Milroy, 2001). This degradation is, from a purely linguistic and communicative perspective, unfounded – “[a]s a communicative system [...] standard English is not inherently superior to or “better” than any regional dialect” (Schneider, 2011, p. 16).

Yet, socially speaking, the view that the standard is superior persists due to long-held societal norms; the result of “a deeply entrenched tradition, one which might even be called a ‘social institution’ with its own long historicity” (Watts, 1999, p. 66). So socially ingrained is this ideology that speakers take it as common sense, a powerful appeal that perpetuates the standard language culture and “implies that any debate on the matter is superfluous: everyone must surely know that the view expressed is the correct – responsible, decent, moral – view” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 536).

Due to societal tradition, Standard English continues to be perceived by many English speakers as analogous to “correct” English (Bailey, 1991; McArthur, 1999; J. Milroy, 1999, 2001). Such a view is a social construct; based purely on communicative function, this perceived “correct” Standard English is no better nor worse than regional English dialects (Schneider, 2011).

2.5 Ownership

Who speaks and who creates the standard? Do they own it? To whom does Standard English belong? Perhaps the most well-known dispute over standards is the debate between the authority of native and non-native speakers (Acar, 2007). It began in the 1980s with Randolph Quirk, who believed that only the English of native speakers is standard:

“The relatively narrow range of purposes for which the non-native needs to use English (even in ESL Countries) is arguably well catered for by a single monochrome form that looks good on paper as it sounds in speech. There are only the most dubious advantages in exposing the learner to a great variety of usage, no part of which he will

have time to master properly, little of which he will be called upon to exercise, all of which is embedded in a controversial sociolinguistic matrix he cannot be expected to understand” (Quirk, 1985, p. 6).

Quirk (1985) saw the variation of non-native English speakers from the “standard English” of native speakers as erroneous deviation. Thus, in order to better communicate and “link themselves with the wider English-using community throughout the world” (Quirk, 1990, p. 9), non-native speakers should aim to alter their English to model the standard English of native speakers (Acar, 2007). Quirk (1990) argues that the superiority of the latter means allowing non-native speakers to continue using their local English varieties does them an injustice: “It is neither liberal nor liberating to permit learners to settle for lower standards than the best, and it is a travesty of liberalism to tolerate low standards which will lock the least fortunate into the least rewarding careers” (Quirk, 1990, p. 9). Thus, local deviations from what Quirk identifies as Standard English are unjustified and unacceptable – even if they are meaningful, perfectly understood, and “h[ave] currency in an English dialect” (Quirk, 1990, p. 9). Instead, they are viewed as discrepancies resulting from failures of the education system, diminishing the standards of English in the country and thus undermining their international communicative competence.

The view persists today among both native and non-native speakers that only native speakers are proper speakers of English (Seidlhofer, 2011). Regarded as the arbiters of correctness, they are the “custodians over what is acceptable usage” (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339). This foundational belief leads to the endonormative and exonormative dichotomy: to speak “Standard English”, non-native speakers default to codified norms which are largely based on

exonormative standards (Bamgbose, 1998), referring to “usages which are standardised by external reference to a native variety”, instead of endonormative standards, pertaining to “usages which are standardised within a particular non-native variety of English” (Bex & Watts, 1999, p. 5). For non-native English speakers in Kachru’s Outer and Expanding Circles who are learning English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL), “a standard form for the EFL classroom” is thus equated with “standard inner circle English”– “the variety of English that, as much as is possible, is understood throughout the world in international contexts of communication” (Baratta, 2019, p. 44). Contrastingly, local varieties are viewed with a critical eye – Canagarajah comments that “all communities equally despise their local varieties in deference to ‘native’ or ‘standard’ varieties” (cited in Rubdy & Saraceni, 2006, p. 206).

On the other hand, many linguists argue that native speakers are not the arbiters of Standard English – even Quirk himself. Before he “assumed the role of a guardian of international ‘standards’ of English” (Bolton, 2006, p. 189), championing a single “Standard English” borne of native speaker norms for the whole world, he began in academia as a “linguistic liberal” (Bolton, 2006, p. 189). In 1962, Quirk argued:

“English is not the prerogative or “possession” of the English ... Acknowledging this must – as a corollary – involve our questioning the propriety of claiming that the English of one area is more “correct” than the English of another. Certainly, we must realize that there is no single “correct” English, and no single standard of correctness” (Quirk, 1962, pp. 17–18).

Standards of correctness are not innate, but the product of formal education. As Standard English is closely associated with being “correct” English, some argue that Standard English is but “a creation of people who write school grammars and reference books, and apply their own impressions of what is standard to their works” (Kretzschmar & Meyer, 2012, p. 142). This renders meaningless the term “native speaker intuition”, since grammar is not borne naturally in native speakers, but learnt externally through education in schools (J. Milroy, 2001). Native speakers do not possess any innate advantage when it comes to language; they are not “pre-programmed with a language faculty that enables them to acquire (or develop) ‘competence’ in language without being formally taught” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 537).

On a global stage, research on World Englishes and English as a lingua franca (ELF) belie a common “pluricentric assumption that ‘English’ belongs to all those who use it” (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 236) – both native and non-native speakers alike. Considering community size, non-native English speakers today outnumber native ones (Bex & Watts, 1999; Crystal, 2003), with between two to four non-native English users for every native one (Kachru, 1996). Most users of English are non-native speakers in Kachru’s (1985) Expanding Circle (Lowenberg, 2002), not native speakers of the Inner Circle. Numbers aside, non-native users are also the main forces driving the spread of English throughout the world beyond traditionally English-speaking countries in education, society and modes of communication. In non-Western countries, English is spread as a means of communication between two non-native users instead of between a non-native user and a native one, as one might expect (Kachru, 1996). In terms of use, speakers in both the Inner and Outer Circle share a common need to convey and articulate their respective cultures, and so adapt English accordingly to reflect their identities. Thus, it is argued that English functionally belongs to Inner and Outer Circle speakers to the

same degree (Gupta, 2006). If non-native speakers play such an instrumental role in the proliferation of English worldwide today, and use English similarly to native speakers, why should the notion of Standard English as global concept not accept their English? Many point out that not only do these non-native users “surely have a right to be heard” (Bex & Watts, 1999, p. 5), they have the power to create. As Lowenberg (2000) states, “the authority to create standard English no longer resides solely with its native speakers” (Lowenberg, 2000, p. 81). And with creation comes ownership – Standard English is not the sole possession of native speakers, delimited geographically, politically or institutionally, but the shared possession of all its users worldwide.

The idea that only native speakers truly own English leads to non-native speakers defaulting, unnecessarily, to exonormative standards. Given that non-native speakers are now both plentiful in number and powerful in influence, accepting Standard English as the property of both native and non-native speakers alike is a crucial part of defining it – one so important that Crystal identifies it as “probably the best way of defining a genuinely global language” (Crystal, 2003, p. 141).

2.6 Prestige

Standard English is often thought to be a prestige variety (Bex & Watts, 1999; J. Milroy, 2001). Its use is associated with being “accorded a degree of respect within society as a whole” (Bex & Watts, 1999, p. 7). One reason has to do with its social utility. McArthur (1992) describes “a single form held to be superior to all dialects: the social, literary, and educational standard” (McArthur, 1992, p. 355) that all languages possess. This means that, paradoxically, the English language simultaneously comprises its dialects while being independent of them in its

most “pure”, “standard” form. As a resolution, linguists tend to consider Standard English the “standard dialect” of English, arguing that its “generally assumed superiority and prestige are not attributable to intrinsic merit but rather to social utility” (McArthur, 1992, p. 355). The currency of this utility is not just in the acceptability and intelligibility of Standard English in everyday English-speaking social spheres (McArthur, 1992), but also in its prestige. Standard English is the variety associated with both official and public prestige (Schneider, 2011) and can be thought of, among other lects, as the acrolect (McArthur, 1992). Hence, when it comes to defining Standard English, its models and norms, “[t]his is essentially a question of attitude and power, and the controversy over its answer has a long history” (Kachru, 1992, p. 8).

Narratives of legitimisation have historically associated the standard language with prestige and social class. Playing a pivotal role in the history of English and how it was standardised, legitimisation is an important aspect of the standard ideology of English. From the Victorian era, there emerged a strong movement to codify and establish a standard form of English thought of “as the language of a great empire – a world language” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 29) and an “ancient pedigree [...] a thoroughbred of noble line” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 29). Since the eighteenth century, the language used by nobility, the upper classes and in judicial, educational, governmental and administrative settings has been perceived as not only more prestigious, but also more legitimate. Their language was thought of as “more proper, polite, legitimate, and ultimately real than anything used by other English-speakers” (McArthur, 1999, p. 165).

Those belonging to upper classes thought to speak Standard English were also associated with being highly educated – an association that persists till today (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982). This

class of educated speakers “who are not just literate, but for whom literacy is a significant part of their professional identity” (Crystal, 2003, p. 149) have traditionally been the users controlling English in both local and international settings. This has linked Standard English closely with “educated usage” and defined it as the “educated” variety of English spoken by “educated” people (McArthur, 1999). Though not inherently more “correct” or better than any other English dialect, Standard English, like its speakers, is considered “more equal than the others” (McArthur, 1992, p. 355). Even today, in all English-speaking countries to varying degrees, Standard English is “still quite clearly a social dialect” (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982, p. 2). As Crystal (1985) observes, “all discussion of standards ceases very quickly to be a linguistic discussion, and becomes instead an issue of social identity” (Crystal, 1985, p. 9).

Others posit that Standard English has nothing to do with class and prestige. Stevens (1981) comments:

“It is not necessary to invoke the concept of class in order to define and describe Standard English. It is not true that Standard English is ‘a class dialect’: there is no possibility of defining class by reference to the use or non-use of Standard English” (Stevens, 1981, p. 6).

Though he acknowledges that the RP accent has long been associated with the educated and the elite, Stevens (1981) also clarifies that this is not relevant to defining Standard English, which is independent of and can be spoken with any accent. Similarly, Milroy (1999) argues that it is an ideological and conceptual error to assume that “a scale of prestige parallel to a scale of social status is the same thing as a scale from non-standard to standard” (J. Milroy,

1999, p. 37). While prestige is an “unanalysed social category”, a standard language is “an abstract linguistic object” (J. Milroy, 1999, p. 32). It is thus theoretically unsound to equate a standard language with a prestige one, or to include prestige in the definition of a standard (J. Milroy, 1999). This holds true even if the prestige variety and the standard one happen to coincide; prestige does not define or identify the standard – uniformity does (J. Milroy, 2001). The reason prestige is often attributed to language varieties is not because the varieties have prestige in themselves, but because their speakers do. After all, prestige is “not a property of language” but a “socially evaluative category” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 532) of its speakers. Any prestige accorded to particular social groups is thus a social act, and not an innate belonging.

Even if prestige is not definitive of Standard English, we cannot deny that Standard English is commonly associated with prestige. It is crucial to understand that Standard English is not inherently more prestigious than other language varieties, but gains status due to positive social evaluation and the ascription of social worth. Prestige is a construct of speakers, not the language variety it is associated with.

2.7 Formality

Formality has long been a “potential source of confusion” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 533) as a criterion for defining Standard English. Situations and domains of use that tend to greater levels of formality are often used to define the standard. For example, in *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, McArthur (1992) defines “Standard Language” in terms of the contexts in which it is used: “the form of a language used, for example, in general publishing, the news media, education, government, such professions as law and medicine, and by especially the middle classes” (McArthur, 1992, p. 984). Schneider (2011) describes

Standard British English as “a certain speech form shared by certain speakers for use in *certain situations* – probably educated ones from anywhere in the British Isles performing in *formal or public contexts* in this case” (Schneider, 2011, p. 16; emphasis added). Formal contexts are associated with Standard English to the point where they have become definitive of it.

However, many argue that Standard English is not formal English on the grounds that language variety is often confused with language style. Formality manifests in language as style, which is a matter of choice influenced by social norms. Users choose an appropriate style to speak or write in to serve different purposes in different contexts (Trudgill & Hannah, 1982). Though this decision is influenced by formality, style is not formality itself nor is one style definitive of Standard English. Standard English may be spoken with different styles; Milroy (1999) argues that “Received Standard” as described by English philologist H.C. Wyld, often associated with a careful and formal style, can also be spoken in a casual, conversational one. The speech of the latter would differ little from the casual speech of any other English variety. Wyld’s idealisation sees Standard English as “depend[ant] on ideologies of social status and what is desired in public and formal non-conversational language—carefulness and clarity of enunciation” (J. Milroy, 1999, pp. 32–33). Due to social convention, careful speech styles are socially desirable in formal contexts and linked with Standard English, which is thus also associated with formality “often implicitly and without explanation” (J. Milroy, 2001, p. 533). The latter association has been strengthened by the growth of the sound broadcasting industry, which often positively associates formality with a “good” standard variety speaker, described as one with “a rich voice, a good microphone manner and wear[ing] a dinner suit even when you can’t be seen” (J. Milroy, 1999, pp. 32–33). Although, “[a]ll communities agree that [Standard English] is the 'proper' medium for formal writing and public communication”

(Labov, 1969, p. 15), this does not mean Standard English is definitively only used in formal contexts, but that its users tend to use it in formal contexts out of social tradition.

Schmidt & McCreary (1977) argue that we may confuse Standard English with extremely formal language uncommon in everyday usage. There is often a mismatch between the everyday usage of Standard English speakers and the “formally standardized norms” (Schmidt & McCreary, 1977, p. 415) prescribed by grammar books. For example, speakers more often produce the sentence “There’s five minutes left” instead of the “correct” form “There are five minutes left”, but one would not say that the first usage does not count as Standard English. They thus argue that there exists a super-standard form of English that is “either not followed by speakers or restricted to only the most formal level of style” (Schmidt & McCreary, 1977, p. 415). Their argument emphasizes the importance of sociolinguistic competence for practical use:

“Super-standard English, however admired and perhaps admirable, is simply not functional in all situations. The non-native speaker who succeeds in learning “non-standard” forms has increased his (or her) sociolinguistic competence in English. After all, “mistakes” are not always mistakes” (Schmidt & McCreary, 1977, p. 429).

Although some define Standard English in terms of the formal contexts in which it is most commonly used (McArthur, 1992; Schneider, 2011), Standard English at its core is still a language variety, not a language style. Formality is not a defining characteristic of Standard English, but only an association created by social norms.

CHAPTER 3: STANDARD ENGLISH IN SINGAPORE

In Chapter 2, I examined seven conditions of Standard English that arguably help to define it. In Chapter 3, I will discuss a “Singaporean” perspective to SSE in terms of how these seven features of Standard English have been addressed in the context of Singapore’s own Standard English variety. Each of the seven sub-sections below will mirror the seven in Chapter 2, but will more specifically draw from past literature on SSE instead of Standard English in general.

3.1 Is SSE the same as Standard English of the world?

The first feature in Chapter 2 was a discussion of the uniformity of Standard English(es) around the world. SSE is one such variety of Standard English that comes under such scrutiny. Thus, before one can begin to describe its features, a more preliminary concern must be addressed: Is SSE a variety in its own right? Or is it the same as, or subsumed by, a general Standard English of the world?

Some argue that SSE is its own standard English variety. In their description of Singapore Standard English in 1983, Tay & Gupta concluded:

“Research on Standard Singapore English has at last begun. A start has been made to collect examples of non-standardisms but a data bank on deviations from General Standard English needs to be built up. By engaging a team of competent researchers, the data can be built up and by testing these deviations with several subjects for their acceptability, a fuller description than what has been presented in this paper will emerge” (Tay & Gupta, 1983, p. 188).

Their paper was a landmark publication that accorded recognition to SSE as a legitimate variety, instead of just labelling it as “bad” English or someone else’s English that Singaporeans were borrowing for use locally. For example, the Standard English used in Singapore has been said to be Standard British English, which “permit[s] Singaporeans of different linguistic backgrounds to communicate with each other and with people abroad” (Crystal, 2003, p. 176). Tay & Gupta’s (1983) acknowledgement of SSE was the first step towards its further description and legitimization. As Foley (1988) remarks: “Tay and Gupta’s paper was important because it pointed in the direction of a possible codification of what could be Standard Singapore English [...] a variety of English having an existence in its own right, with subvarieties and its own registers to be used according to the context of situation” (Foley, 1988, pp. 17–18).

In contrast to Tay & Gupta (1983), others posit that SSE is merely part of a “Standard English” of the world and not a variety in itself. A chief motivation behind this is the observation that SSE does not deviate greatly from other Standard Englishes in the world (Gupta, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992; Leimgruber, 2011; Pakir, 1991b). In their lectal model for Singapore English, Platt & Weber (1980) describe the acrolectal variety that is associated with SSE as resembling a general “Standard English”. Years after her 1983 paper with Tay, Gupta reversed her argument that SSE is its own variety and posited that it is merely a component of an international, broader concept of Standard English. This Standard English spans nations as “a single dialect of English” (Gupta, 2010, p. 59) that is the shared possession of the English-speaking community around the world. Thus, on the whole, its regional differences are neutralized, making it “local to nowhere and local to everywhere” (Gupta, 2010, p. 60).

Is SSE akin to one form or constituent of Standard English? The likeness between SSE and Standard English(es) is most apparent in grammar (Gupta, 2010) and when it is spoken with the highest level of formality (Pakir, 1991a). With regard to grammar, Gupta (2010) argues that grammatical disparities only differentiate standard from non-standard. They do not distinguish different regional Standard Englishes, since “[i]mportant areas of grammar, including inflectional morphology and the structure of the verb, are unified in Standard English across all regions” (Gupta, 2010, p. 58). On formality, Pakir (1991a) asserts that “[h]ighly educated English-knowing bilinguals” in Singapore are capable of speaking a highly formal English that is “identifiably Standard English, almost no different from the variety used by knowledgeable speakers of English elsewhere” (Pakir, 1991a, p. 174). This English that is spoken “elsewhere”, to which formal SSE shares a high degree of similarity, refers to countries in the Inner Circle. SSE is thus a fairly accurate match with Standard English in the Inner Circle, the “object” that it “attempts to characterize, picture, or imitate” (Pakir, 1991a, p. 176).

If we accept that a common grammatical core and similarities at high levels of formality allow SSE to fit closely with Standard English(es) of the world, what aspects make it distinct? One area is phonology – this will be discussed in greater detail later. Another is lexicon, which Gupta (2010) identifies as the main aspect responsible for the “small number of minor regional differences” of Standard English as a global dialect (Gupta, 2010, p. 59). There are a number of local lexical items that are generally accepted as part of the SSE lexicon, including terms stemming from initialisms like HDB “Housing Development Board” and PIE “Pan-Island Expressway”, as well as words that demonstrate characteristics of the climate in Singapore, such as “slippers” to refer to “flip-flops”, footwear appropriate for warm and humid

environments (Leimgruber, 2011). Local lexicology has also been acknowledged by the state. At the media briefing for the SGEM 2007, then SGEM chairman Professor Koh Tai Ann noted:

“Singapore Standard English [...] contains accepted words, phrases and idioms, some of them words for local concepts, and some of them informal. Singapore has HDB estates, the UK has council houses. Where the British have mobiles and the Americans cells, Singaporeans have handphones. Some concepts may become locally acculturated, e.g., “heartland” in Singapore is taken to mean HDB estates collectively” (T. A. Koh, 2007).

While SSE has been viewed as merely a component of a global Standard English due to its grammatical similarities with other regional standards (Gupta, 2010), especially at high levels of formality (Pakir, 1991a), it does differentiate itself in areas of lexicon and phonology – arguments supporting the counter claim that SSE is its own distinct variety (Tay & Gupta, 1983). The subsequent sections treat SSE as plausibly a variety in its own right and discuss the features that help to define it.

3.2 International intelligibility

The similarity between SSE and Standard English(es) of the world (Gupta, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992; Leimgruber, 2011; Pakir, 1991b), is a major factor that helps SSE to succeed as an International Standard English (Pakir, 1991b). The international intelligibility of Standard Singapore English may be said to be one of its defining characteristics, observable both in the literature describing actual use and ideologically in the state’s rhetoric of what “Standard English” should be.

The Singapore government has always been critical of the standard of English in Singapore, advocating for the improvement of Singaporeans' English via the acquisition and regular use of what they term "Standard English". But what is this "Standard English" that is being referred to? The notion of being internationally understood is a recurring thread. In his speech at the second SGEM in 2001, then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong emphasized that knowing and using English is not enough. Specifically, Singaporeans should "speak good, standard English, which will be understood not only by Singaporeans, but by English speaking people all over the world, rather than Singlish, a local dialect unique to Singapore" (Lee, 2001). He describes Standard English as "an international language of business and science" and "a form of English that is readily understood by people all over the world" (Lee, 2001). Similarly, in his 1999 National Day Rally speech, then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong described the Standard English one must speak in order "to become an engineer, a technician, an accountant or a nurse" as "a form of English that is understood by the British, Americans, Australians, and people around the world" (C. T. Goh, 1999). The state thus heavily promotes Standard English as an internationally intelligible variety valuable for its participatory and communicative functions in the global context. To the Singapore government, English holds merit when it is "standard" enough to be understood outside Singapore. This external reception thus deeply impacts how "standard" an English is internally in Singapore.

Notably, the government is mainly concerned with "Standard English" and not necessarily "*Singapore* Standard English". This illustrates a second aspect to the concept of international intelligibility with respect to the English used in Singapore: Standard English is international and far removed from local English, the latter of which usually refers to Singlish. We can see evidence of such a mindset in the SGEM, described as "a systematic attempt to influence the

English language as used locally by steering it away from indigenized adaptations and closer to something internationally recognizable as standard English" (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 92). The assumption is that Singaporeans are unable to switch between the varieties in their repertoire, and that the betterment of one variety will lead to a deterioration in proficiency of the other. This makes Singlish problematic – it jeopardizes Singaporeans' ability to acquire the standard form seen as "good English" (Bruthiaux, 2010; L. Lim et al., 2010; Wee, 2018), impeding external communication with foreigners (Bruthiaux, 2010) and closing Singapore off from participating in the global economy. As then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong explained in his speech at the launch of the second SGEM in 2001, "[b]ecause our language habits are in transition, we must make a special effort to get people to speak standard English...We have to make a choice — either to switch to standard English, or to switch to Singlish" (Lee 2001). Singlish is so heavily condemned that there is little attempt to marry the "standard" and the "local" in a middle ground, combinatory form that is SSE.

From a scholarly perspective, the speech of Singaporeans using the local standard variety has indeed been evidenced to be intelligible and perfectly understood by outsiders (Pakir, 1991a; Tan & Castelli, 2013). International intelligibility is thus also often invoked in academia to define SSE. For Gupta (2010), SSE is by definition internationally intelligible because it is part of Standard English as a widely encompassing global concept, comprising "standard Englishes" in different regions of the world united mainly by a common core of grammar and orthography (Gupta, 2010). In her cultural orientation model for Singapore English, Alsagoff (2007) refers to SSE as International Standard English (ISE) to emphasize that this is "an international brand of English", and to reflect its "close association with a global cultural perspective, and its need to be exonymatively defined by global forces that also shape

Singapore's economic success" (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 35). In short, this is the English variety that looks outward and that is used to bring the Singaporean speaker to the world (Alsagoff, 2007).

3.3 Sounding Singaporean – Does phonology count?

On one hand, Singaporeans' use of SSE, or ISE (Alsagoff, 2007) is fuelled by a desire to be internationally understood and speak in a way that earns them a place in the wider economic, commercial and social space of the world. This desire to "go global" has prompted research on the phonology of Singapore English to focus on finding out which locally used pronunciation norms enable or hinder global participation (Low, 2010). On the other hand, Singaporeans also desire to "sound local", looking inward to express local culture and identity (Alsagoff, 2007). It thus becomes crucial to examine "issues beyond the realm of intelligibility" (Low, 2010, p. 250), that of "sounding local and going global", as Low (2010) titles her paper. Can Singaporeans do both? If Singaporeans associate the standard variety with going "global", how "local" can Singapore Standard English be?

The state has accepted a Singaporean accent as part of Singapore English in the past. In the 1980s, English in Singapore was taught as British Standard English with an RP accent – in theory. In practice, with almost no teachers being native RP speakers, a local accent emerged instead. Along with it came the realization that local words were essential to convey aspects of local Singapore culture and identity. Thus, after sociolinguistic research on Singapore English, the end of the century marked a shift in mindset that led to the acceptance of local accents and local vocabulary – a brand of Standard English unique to Singapore (Gupta, 2010). In the 1990s, "a generally confident, tolerant, and empowering approach to Singapore English"

(Gupta, 2010, p. 57) was observed, with Singlish even being celebrated in books and on websites.

Subsequently, the promotion of Standard English began to undermine the acceptance of a local accent. Towards the end of the 1990s, then Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew and then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong began promoting “Standard English”, and in 2000 the SGEM was launched to discourage Singlish and advocate for the use of “Standard English” – including its phonological features. Officially, the state’s stance is that a Singapore accent is acceptable for Standard English so long as it is internationally intelligible. At the launch of the second SGEM in 2001, then Deputy Prime Minister Lee emphasized that “Singaporeans must speak a form of English that is readily understood by people all over the world” (Lee, 2001). He also explained how to do this: “We must make the effort to learn proper English grammar, sentence structures and pronunciation. We need not speak with a British or American accent; a Singaporean accent is fine” (Lee, 2001). This is echoed by 2007 SGEM chairman Koh Tai Ann, who clarified that SSE, “like other varieties of Standard English, such as those from Britain, the USA, Australia and India, is spoken in a local accent” (T. A. Koh, 2007). Yet, despite claiming that Standard English in Singapore aims for intelligibility and “is not about a “correct” accent” (T. A. Koh, 2007), the state has in practice continued to “attack the Singapore accent” (Gupta, 2010, p. 71) – even for use locally among Singaporeans. The SGEM, for example, defines Standard English narrowly and to such strict endonormative standards that “[e]ven the notion that a Singaporean accent is wrong has been resurrected” (Gupta, 2010, p. 58). Its educational materials label local pronunciation norms as “errors” and correct local pronunciation features to RP forms (Bruthiaux, 2010; Gupta, 2010). While the state previously accepted a Singapore

accent, and today it continues to do so in theory, in practice it condemns the accent as wrong and unacceptable for speaking Standard English.

Linguists posit that Singaporeans can speak Standard English with a Singapore English accent – or as Gupta (2010) believes, any accent since “[t]here is no standard accent of English” (p. 60). Taking into account the importance the government places on international intelligibility, functionally speaking, a Singaporean accent is sound for international communication – Singaporeans speaking in their local accents have been found to be perfectly intelligible to foreigners (Pakir, 1991a; Tan & Castelli, 2013). In fact, bearing in mind that the prestige variety RP is “at one extreme of English accents, with a great deal of reduction” and the accent of Singapore English is “at the other extreme, with very little” (Gupta, 2010, p. 73), Singapore English would actually enjoy greater worldwide intelligibility since fuller pronunciations have been found to be more clearly understood (Gupta, 2005, 2010; Jenkins, 2000, 2007).

Furthermore, linguists refute the state’s rejection of the Singapore accent for internal use among Singaporeans. Even if the Singapore accent was not internationally intelligible, and the government’s aim was to allow Singaporeans to be understood internationally and “[n]ot [o]nly in Singapore, Malaysia and Batam” (Speak Good English Movement, n.d.-b), there is no reason for an external accent to be adopted locally. Even General American, the most heard accent in the world due to American mass media, has no grounds to be promoted for local use in other countries. After all, “[v]ariety is something to celebrate rather than deplore” (Gupta, 2010, p. 85), and such a diversity of accents means that “to impose a particular foreign accent on a population is unnecessary, unpopular and impossible” (Gupta, 2010, p. 57). Inner Circle Englishes have no innate advantage or authority over local English varieties. Any English

that is used by and intelligible to all Singaporeans succeeds communicatively, so “it is not immediately clear why an internationally intelligible variety of English should become the norm internally” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 93). In fact, the Singapore accent is ideal internally because the most easily understood accents are the ones heard most often and associated with the highest degree of familiarity. For Singaporeans, this is “almost certainly a Singaporean accent” (Gupta, 2010, p. 85).

We return to the original question of whether phonology – the “Singaporean accent” – has a role to play in defining SSE. Although general Standard English could plausibly be spoken with any accent (Gupta, 2010; Lee, 2001; Stevens, 1981), *Singapore* Standard English specifies a standard English variety of a particular nation and its people. The English in Singapore is unique to Singapore (Alsagoff, 2010a; Deterding, 2007), and “[i]t is obvious from the moment a conversation between a Singaporean and a non-Singaporean starts that Singapore English sounds different” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 93). As much as SSE is a standardised variety that must share similarities to Standard English(es) of the world, there must also be something about SSE that brands it as “Singaporean”. One possible area is phonology. Grammar tends to more standardised across the world; Standard English in general has been said to be “strongest in writing” (Gupta, 2010, p. 65) and less uniform in speech, where “there is more opportunity to express the self, more room for playfulness, and more regional and personal variation” (Gupta, 2010, p. 60). SSE is no exception. Although it may be “standard” in writing, like the Standard English(es) of the world, its phonology is locally distinguished. Deterding (2005) writes that “a standard Singaporean pronunciation is emerging, a style of speech that is quite independent of any external standard, and furthermore that some aspects of it are idiosyncratic in that they cannot be predicted by reference to BrE or any other external variety” (Deterding, 2005,

p. 194). While we have no single reason to accept that SSE is in part defined by the accent with which it is spoken, neither do we have a reason to reject phonology as a defining localising feature – no more than we do for accepting its grammatical similarities with Standard English(es) of the world as a “standardising” feature. Even if we accept that Standard English can be spoken with any local accent (Gupta, 2010), we need not reject that phonology plays a part in identifying, if not defining, a local standardised variety of English.

3.4 Correctness

Although few researchers today associate SSE with “correct” English, early scholarly attempts to describe “Singapore English” began from prescriptivist mindsets (L. Lim & Foley, 2004). According to Bloom (1986), research into Singapore English occurred in three phases, the first of which continuously challenged the English used by Singaporeans for being “bad” and “incorrect” and focused on finding and documenting “errors” in Singapore English (Bloom, 1986). This proved ineffective to describe the variety; as L. Lim & Foley (2004) observe: “[p]erhaps the failure lay in the fact that it was an unconscious attempt at getting rid of anything that was ‘Singaporean’, meaning non-standard, in the language” (L. Lim & Foley, 2004, p. 7).

Most linguists do not pin correctness to SSE but recognize that the state does, and that this has great influence in shaping how Singaporeans understand and think about “correct” English. Schools and other educational institutions are important arbiters of “correct” language, and in Singapore their position is regulated directly by the Ministry of Education in a “highly centralized top-down manner, with little input from or involvement on the part of teachers (let alone the students) working at the frontline of the implementation process”

(Rubdy, 2010, p. 219). Such authoritarian control of educational policies and reforms is driven by “the single-minded push for economic growth and the intensely pragmatic approach towards its realization” (Rubdy, 2010, p. 227), a motivation that is unlikely to ever allow a decentralization of control in the area of education. The Singapore government’s decisions therefore have a profound impact on how schools, teachers, students, and society at large conceive of the notion of what standard English is.

The state, like early researchers, has associated what is more “Singaporean” with being less “standard” and less “correct”. Since the launch of the SGEM in 2000, the Standard English promoted in Singapore has rejected local features of language. At the inauguration of the SGEM, then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong used the word “English” 40 times in his speech – nearly half of which occurred in the expression ‘good English’ and four of which were used in the associated phrases ‘proper English’, ‘excellent English’ and ‘elegant English’. All of these references were contrasted with Singlish. Clearly, the connotation is that Singlish is the antithesis: bad English (Bokhorst-Heng, 2005, p. 203). Although the SGEM has more recently recognized Singlish as “a cultural marker for many Singaporeans”, it remains neither “correct” nor “standard”. “Standard English” persists as the target variety that Singaporeans should aim for to speak “good” English (Speak Good English Movement, n.d.-a).

The correctness of English in Singapore is founded on exonormative standards, and “good”, “correct” English is localised outside of Singapore: “Singaporeans are being told to look overseas for correction of their English, and are being given advice that is often based on the strictest possible concept of correctness” (Gupta, 2010, p. 58). British English is the traditional educational target in Singapore (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, 2010; Gupta, 2010). This is why

the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate is considered the ruling authority in Singapore on what constitutes correct and good spoken and written English (Rubdy, 2010). However, American Standard English is also accepted as correct, standard English – interestingly, because of the economic strength of its country of origin. In his speech given at the launch of the SGEM 2001, the second year of the campaign, Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong commented:

“The US is the most powerful economy on earth, and they have a big influence on the way English is spoken around the world, through Hollywood movies, internet sites, books, music, business and social contacts. They can set standards for the rest of the world” (Lee, 2001).

In Singapore, whether British or American standards are followed, the emphasis remains on teaching “correct” forms based on exonormative standards. This is also evident in how the majority of the SGEM’s learning materials are based on speakers imagining themselves to be conversing with a foreign interlocutor – despite the fact that in practice most Singaporeans use English primarily for communication between Singaporeans (Gupta, 2010).

Worldwide intelligibility for economic progress remains the government’s underlying central goal and the key motivation for pegging “correct”, “standard” English in Singapore to exonormative standards. According to SGEM 2007 chairman Koh Tai Ann, Standard English “is about pronunciation and using grammatically correct English that is generally acceptable as “standard”, and is thus intelligible to other speakers of English, both locally and internationally” (T. A. Koh, 2007). The “correctness” of Standard English is valuable because

it enables one to communicate globally. In Singapore, “[g]ood English, global English and intelligibility are all intertwined” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 139). The intelligibility of Standard English is defined by grammatical correctness as determined outside of Singapore and equated to “what is globally understood” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 140). The state views correctness as a prerequisite for the core objective of international intelligibility and as a defining quality of “the native speaker ideal” – notions which are “consistently evoked, linking them explicitly to economic interests to justify insistence on this variety of ‘standard’ English to be learnt and used by all” (Rubdy, 2010, p. 218).

3.5 Language ownership – Is English our own? Does it matter?

Is SSE considered standard enough to be *Standard* Singapore English while also “Singapore” enough to be Standard *Singapore* English? As Bloom (1986) asks, “can [Singapore English] be simultaneously Singaporean enough to inspire national pride, and international enough to keep Singapore in the mainstream of the English speaking world?” (Bloom, 1986, p. 436) To accept that SSE is one variety of numerous Standard Englishes (Tay & Gupta, 1983), or part of a global Standard English (Gupta, 2010), suggests a degree of internationalism. At the same time, Standard *Singapore* English accepts that SSE “belongs” to Singaporeans inasmuch as it is Singapore’s indigenised, local English variety. It is the latter that sets it apart as *Singapore’s* Standard English instead of just a Standard English of the world. But do Singaporeans accept SSE as their own standard variety? This section discusses Singaporeans’ language ownership of SSE and how important it is in defining the variety.

How “Singaporean” is SSE? As an ethnically neutral language in multiracial and multi-ethnic Singapore, English is the prime candidate to forge the national identity that identifies one as

Singaporean instead of Chinese, Malay, or Tamil (Richards & Tay, 1981). However, it is not just any variety of “Singapore English”, but SCE that gives Singaporeans a sense of identity – not SSE. While SSE is meant for international intelligibility and gives Singaporeans “a globalised sense of citizenry” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 35), it is Singlish that “provide[s] a sense of local identity” (Crystal, 2003, p. 176). This is problematic for Singapore Standard English: the “Standard” part is fulfilled, but not the “Singapore” aspect. SSE may be standard, but only Singlish is Singaporean.

The state has a significant role to play in creating and reinforcing the belief that English is not and cannot be the native language of Singaporeans. This in turn prevents a sense of national identity with or ownership of SSE. One reason has to do with how English has always been taught in Singapore. Through its educational materials in schools and the SGEM, the state constantly corrects the English Singaporeans use by taking exonormative norms as “standard” and “correct” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010; Gupta, 2010). Although worldwide intelligibility is the underlying motivation for the state’s English language policies and the “supposed aim of the SGEM” (Gupta, 2010, p. 73), what the government aims for is not just intelligibility, but an emulation of Inner Circle norms. The term “Standard English” in Singapore is “usually a synonym for Standard American English or Standard British English” (Wee, 2018, p. 4). Singaporeans are fed a rhetoric that frames Inner Circle British and American speakers as “true” speakers of “proper” English – native speakers whom they contrast themselves against (Fong et al., 2002). Exonormative standards situate “real” Standard English in the Inner Circle such that “the centre of English is outside of Singapore [...] Singaporeans are not native speakers of English” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 140). Therefore, Singaporeans do not think of themselves as native speakers of English – those are already established overseas.

Another reason Singaporeans struggle to accept English as their native tongue is that Singapore's bilingual education policy denies English such status by framing Mandarin, Malay and Tamil as the official "mother tongues" against which English is inadvertently contrasted. As Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew declared at the launch of the 1984 Speak Mandarin Campaign: "One abiding reason why we have to persist in bilingualism is that English will not be emotionally acceptable as our mother tongue" (quoted in Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 136). Even though it serves as an interethnic lingua franca, English does not provide Singaporeans with a sense of "pan-ethnic national identity" (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 136) because it simply "cannot be a Singaporean's mother tongue" (Fong et al., 2002, p. 25). As Bokhorst-Heng et al. (2010) explain, "while the ethnic languages are owned, English is used" (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 136). Therefore, each ethnic group maintains an emotional connection with their own "mother tongues" and through this process, "a national multicultural identity will emerge" (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 136). This "national multicultural identity" is reflective of what Crystal (2003) describes as "the 'something special and precious' in the Singaporean way of life" (Crystal, 2003, p. 176) – an inward-looking ideal for Singapore to preserve. At the same time, Singapore also looks outward for cultural and economic progress. According to Crystal (2003):

"A bidialectal (or bilingual) policy allows a people to look both ways at once, and would be the most efficient way of the country achieving its aims. Fostering Standard English is one plank of such a policy. Condemning Singlish is not" (Crystal, 2003, p. 176).

The invalidation of Singlish denies Singaporeans ownership of both SSE and SCE, even if the attack is made on SCE alone (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010). Many Singaporeans see value in both standard English and Singlish, believing that “Singlish offers uniqueness in an English-dominant globalized world; while English is used by ‘everyone’, Singlish is owned by Singaporeans” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 141). In other words, Singaporeans perceive SSE pragmatically only in terms of its utility, while Singlish is both used and owned as a language of national identity. This causes confusion because the state claims that “Singlish need not be, as is often claimed, the only linguistic marker of national identity. We can also claim ownership to Singapore Standard English” (T. A. Koh, 2007). Official discourse continues to deny Singlish recognition and legitimacy, while Singaporeans see Singlish as the only form of English they can claim as their own. The result is that English in Singapore on the whole remains an entity distant and removed – a “language of the so-called native speaker, and a language to only be used” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 141). Ultimately, this “den[ies] Singaporeans ownership (both in usage and positioning) of both standard English and Singlish” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 141).

Instead of a language of ownership and identity, English is framed as a language of purely instrumental value for Singapore citizens in official discourse, refusing Singaporeans the recognition of being native speakers (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007; Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010). Constructed as an instrument of global connectedness defined by its utility, English is seen as a borrowed tool from the West that allows Singaporeans to take part in the scientific, technological and economic opportunities they offer (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010). This is evident in then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew’s speech addressing the Singapore Teachers’ Union in 1972, when he commented on why Singaporeans learn and use English:

“Then the facility of the English language gives us access to the science and technology of the West. It also provides a convenient common ground on which [...] everybody competes in a neutral medium” (quoted in Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 135).

As a tool externally sourced and brought in for pragmatic purposes, English continues to be “essentially a Western language” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 8) in Singaporeans’ minds, the property of Inner Circle native English speakers. Singaporeans who speak a local variety do not speak real, proper English – a mindset compounded by the adoption of exonormative standards in education. As C. Lim (1986) observes, “in the models of description used, is implied the deficiency of indigenised English” (C. Lim, 1986, p. 69). The result is a two-pronged denouncement: the state “is not only able to maintain that Singapore English and its speakers are inferior, it also simultaneously blocks any possible claim of linguistic ownership of English from Singaporeans” (Foo & Tan, 2019, p. 6). Therefore the English spoken by Singaporeans, even if acquired natively, is used but not owned (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010) and “[b]ecause of its widespread use, [...] has assumed a kind of corporate identity” (C. Lim, 1986, p. 70). Singaporeans are therefore “not generally expected to develop a sense of identification with the language” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 6).

Although the state has a significant role to play in shaping how Singaporeans feel about their English, it is common for “non-traditional native speakers” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 8) like Singaporeans to feel linguistically insecure themselves. There is an assumption held by English users all around the world that the “native speaker” knows best (Fong et al., 2002). In Singapore, where majority are by definition native speakers of English, there is a deference

to native speakers in the Inner Circle who are seen as traditional users and owners of English and the true arbiters of the language (Kachru, 1985). It also renders Singapore, as with other formerly colonized nations, unable to move on from ideology carried over from its colonial past – that the English of Britain is superior and sets the standard to follow. This perpetuates the “operation of a British-style standard language ideology in Singapore” (L. Milroy, 1999, p. 173) that holds British English and the RP accent as educational targets (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, 2010; Gupta, 2010).

Singaporeans are not confident of their English and are unsure of what standards should be adopted. The local community is continuously concerned about the current standard of English in Singapore and how this can be raised. This constitutes the “root of the problem” (Fong et al., 2002, p. 26) of Singaporeans’ linguistic insecurity, which casts doubts on what right Singaporeans have to “own” English and how much authority they possess to influence what constitutes correct or appropriate usage. Standardisation is an important issue – not in the sense of eradicating variation (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999), but “the more commonplace notion of what sorts of standards non-traditional native speakers ought to have in mind” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 8). While some argue for an exonormative standard, usually Standard British English, others argue for the endonormative norms of a local standardised variety “as exemplified by educated locals” (C. Lim, 1986, p. 69). Acceptance of a local standard, however, is hindered by an unfavourable opinion of local English. Non-native or “non-traditional native speakers” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 8) such as Singaporeans often carry “a negative attitude to their own speech, which may range from mild amusement to shame” (C. Lim, 1986, p. 70), and that may ultimately result in the denial of their own variety’s existence. The unwillingness to acknowledge their own distinct English variety stems from the desire to speak like the “true”

native speaker. As Moag (1982) comments, “speakers of the new Englishes are loath to recognise the distinctive character of their English and rather, insist that they speak one or another of the major ENL (English as Native Language) varieties” (p. 32).

In Singapore, those involved in language planning and education are especially reluctant to accept the existence of SSE (Foley, 1988) due to a lack of description of the variety and, more importantly, due to language attitudes (C. Lim, 1986). Singaporeans remain divided on which norms should be standardised and feel a sense of inferiority and insecurity with regards to their English – no matter how proficient they are. As Fong et al. (2002) notes, “[t]he irony is that, however fluent Singaporeans may be in English, they never quite feel completely secure linguistically” (Fong et al., 2002, p. 25). Compounded by the rhetoric from the state that promotes exonormative standards while denouncing local English, Singaporeans thus develop a negative perception of the correctness and legitimacy of their English, especially the colloquial variety. Such self-disapproval not only “point[s] to a degree of linguistic self-flagellation”, but also “suggest[s] that this continuing anxiety over issues of standards and intelligibility may well encourage an attitude of exonormativity” (Wee, 2008, p. 265). Unable to accept local norms, Singaporeans look outward to Britain and America as the authorities on proper English.

This section has thus far dealt with how Singaporeans ideologically reject English and SSE as their own varieties. However, on the ground, English is increasingly being used habitually at work and at home. From this, Bokhorst-Heng et al. (2010) observe a “growing, albeit uneven, sense of ownership, in the way they position themselves as judges and arbitrators of English usage, and their willingness to rely on their intuitions, and the way they identify themselves

with a broader community of English speaker” (p. 152). They suggest that such a sense of authority and ownership will only increase with usage and with time, nurturing a “growing endonormative stabilization of English in Singapore, and with it a sense of there being a community of speakers with which to identify” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 152) – the first steps to Singaporeans being confident in owning their own (Standard) English. Similarly, Foo & Tan (2019) found that Singaporeans possess linguistic ownership while simultaneously, and somewhat paradoxically, being linguistically insecure. They attribute this to the discrepancy between what is advocated and pushed for by the state and what citizens experience and feel on the ground. National language and education policies ensure that Singaporeans are competent speakers of English. These speakers are self-assured of their own English proficiency yet believe that Singaporeans as a whole are not good English speakers due to a constant deluge from various channels that carry this message – including the SGEM, public speeches and mass media. Therefore, Singaporeans conclude that it must be other Singaporeans who are the poor English speakers they hear and read about, not themselves. The result is “a speaker who is secure in their use of the language and exercises ownership of the language, but feels that the other speakers in their community are inferior to himself/herself” (Foo & Tan, 2019, p. 21). This points us to what Foo & Tan (2019) describe as “an unusual form of artificial linguistic insecurity, one not borne from the internal psyche of the speakers themselves, but one that has been administered to them through external discourse” (p. 21).

3.6 Education and prestige

Several scholars use educational attainment as the main defining characteristic of SSE. Tongue (1974) identifies the standard English used in Singapore and Malaysia as one used in certain

contexts by educated Singaporeans usually schooled in the English medium schools of the past. Platt & Weber's (1980) model, perhaps the most well-known model of Singapore English based on education and proficiency, describes Singapore English as a lectal continuum varying on a cline of proficiency. At one end is the basilect, a less educated variety that demonstrates features of creoles and that is associated with speakers of lower education and socioeconomic standing. At the other end is the acrolect, spoken by the educated and that can be approximated to Standard English as the superstrate form (Platt & Weber, 1980).

However, the idea that educational attainment is a key indicator of standard language has been refuted on the grounds that language is also a matter of choice. Platt & Weber's (1980) model has been contended for its hierarchical rigidity, correlating proficiency with educational level. Framing the superstrate variety as the educated, "superior" target that lower educated basilectal and acrolectal speakers aim for (Wee, 2008), the model suggests that "the variation in Singapore English is not one of choice, but one of access and opportunity" (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 27). Language choice, and not just ability, is an important factor of language use. The model "obscures the fact that speakers switch back and forth all the time" (Pakir, 1991a, p. 174), altering their speech styles based on their audience, the content of their message, and environmental factors such as the level of formality (Deterding, 2007). For example, SCE may be used both by those with lower levels of proficiency as well as by highly proficient English speakers who elect to use it in informal contexts (Low & Brown, 2005). The model thus fails to differentiate between "uneducated speech and the informal variety of an educated speaker" (L. Lim & Foley, 2004, p. 9).

Though they may not define SSE, education and proficiency play a role in explaining variation in Singapore English. The group of speakers in Singapore who are unable to access the standardised variety and possess only a “rudimentary command of English” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 39) are either learners or older speakers who have had limited access to formal education that would have taught them English (Alsagoff, 2007). Such English proficiency is key to granting an individual access to a wider range of employment, including higher-paying jobs. Thus, education and English proficiency are inextricably linked; as Alsagoff (2007) comments:

“In modern Singapore, proficiency in English can be equated with educational attainment. This means that a speaker who is more proficient in English is also likely to have a wider macro-cultural repertoire, resulting from a greater ability to participate in a wider range of vocational choices. Access to jobs in higher positions in almost all private and public sectors of business and commerce are associated with high educational levels, and consequently a higher degree of proficiency in English” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 39)

Alsagoff (2007) thus proposes the cultural orientation model (COM). The model links what she terms International Standard English (ISE) to a cultural orientation borne of a “globalist perspective” that is “associated with educational attainment and economic value” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 42). ISE thus provides an “economically defined” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 35) sense of global citizenry – but may not be fully accessible to all due to differing proficiency levels.

Proficiency also lends more prestige to SSE. L. Lim et al. (2010) observe that in Singapore, those who are thought to be proficient English users speaking “good”, “standard” English are

better able to gain employment in higher tier sectors. They earn higher incomes, enjoy greater luxuries in their homes and daily lives, and belong to the upper socioeconomic bands of society – evidence for the existence of a “class divide between the English ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’” (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 5) in Singapore today. Referencing the lectal continuum model, Deterding & Hvitfeldt (1994) name the acrolect as “the most prestigious variety [...] generally spoken by highly-educated people” and the basilect as “the least prestigious variety [...] more often spoken by primary school leavers or those with relatively little English language education” (Deterding & Hvitfeldt, 1994, p. 98).

As Leimgruber (2013) observes, “[t]he Singlish used by the lesser educated hawker is quite unlike the polished Standard English employed by a minister when addressing parliament” (p. 64). Many scholars combine both education level and formality to explain variation in Singapore English and hence define SSE. Tay (1982) defines “Educated Singapore English” as “English spoken by English educated Singaporeans in a formal context” (p. 135). Echoing this is Low & Brown (2005), who describe SSE as “the variety of English (spoken and written) used by educated Singaporeans for formal purposes, that is, for education, law and the media” (p. 11); and Rubdy (2010), who points to the existence of “a local standard variety” she describes as “widely used by educated Singaporean speakers in formal environments” (p. 218). This brings us to the next feature of SSE – formality.

3.7 Formality

SSE and SCE have often at least partially been defined by formality since the 1970s. Crewe (1977a, 1977b) distinguishes two forms of English in Singapore based on differences of formality. The formal variety he considers fairly standard, although not used with high

proficiency by all Singaporeans because Singapore English was to him a “non-native” dialect (Crewe, 1977a). The informal variety is decidedly non-standard, but spoken by a large number of Singaporeans (Crewe, 1977a, 1977b; L. Lim & Foley, 2004) and thus used as a lingua franca in informal situations (Tongue, 1974).

Gupta’s (1994) diglossic model distinguishes two separate high (H) and low (L) varieties based on formality and function. The high variety is associated with prestige and literary or formal domains, while the low is linked to informal contexts and social functions like friendliness and solidarity building (Gupta, 1994). This framework allows for choice – SSE corresponds to the H-variety that speakers opt to use in formal discourse, while SCE as the L-variety is no longer the low class variety that the uneducated have no choice but to use, but a variety that even educated speakers may prefer in informal contexts for solidarity building. Gupta’s (1994) model of diglossia thus “imbues social and linguistic credibility” (Alsagoff, 2007, p. 29) to Singlish. However, although the model accounts for formality and function, it fails to factor in language proficiency in the overall analysis (Alsagoff, 2007). Pakir’s (1991a) expanding triangles model combines both Platt & Weber’s (1980) and Gupta’s (1994) models and proposes that Singapore English varies along two clines, one of proficiency and one of formality. SSE is spoken by those with higher proficiency and in more formal speech situations; it is not used by speakers with lower levels of proficiency – who are limited to more rudimentary, casual speech – nor does it appear in more informal contexts (Pakir, 1991a).

Alsagoff’s (2007) cultural orientation model (COM) does not restrict any SSE or SCE features to situations clearly defined as formal or informal, but posits that using ISE “indicates a globalist perspective which necessarily implies formality, distance and authority” (Alsagoff,

2007, p. 42). However, the COM regards speakers' choice of cultural orientation to the localist or glocalist perspective as a more important factor affecting language choice than formality. The COM sees language constantly in flux; Singaporeans choose to use LSE to express local culture and identity, and ISE for pragmatic purposes, bearing in mind global forces at work and the need for an exonormatively defined English to participate in the global economy.

The Singapore government appears to view more formal English as more standard English – in fact, the SGEM has been criticized for its promotion of a Standard English that is overly and unrealistically formal. SGEM educational materials have been said to be of “extreme formality” that is “stiff, like the English that learners of English, rather than speakers, might use in the classroom” (Gupta, 2010, p. 72). Gupta (2010) criticizes the SGEM's promotion of “a stilted, colourless, over-formal kind of English, in situations where the Singaporean expected something more informal” (p. 72). Echoing this view is Bruthiaux (2010), who argues that while SSE is justly used in “multinational professional settings” (p. 95), it is neither sensible nor realistic to expect it to be used in informal, private domains where Singlish, or a mixture that includes shades of SCE, is the norm.

Why does the SGEM promote an overly formal standard English in both formal and informal domains? The issue may be one of social identity and language attitudes:

“[...] the suspicion remains that the main concern of SGEM is not intelligibility but respectability. Singaporeans, SGEM seems to be suggesting, need to see themselves and be seen as ‘industrious, obliging, and of exemplary character’, and this is

incompatible with speaking Singapore English, let alone Singlish” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 96).

To be virtuous and respectable, Singaporeans must avoid speaking Singapore English, especially Singlish, which is viewed as “uneducated, uncouth, and unworldly” (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, p. 133). Contrastingly, formal “standard” English is associated with being an honorable Singapore citizen in possession of great economic competitiveness in the world (Rubdy, 2010). The importance of worldliness in Singapore is so profound that the formal English it is ideologically associated with penetrates into every domain of use and every level of formality. That being said, this is in practice unrealistic – switching between varieties to suit different situations is a “sine qua non of inclusion in social networks” and “a defining characteristic of every socially well-adjusted human, which no amount of intervention by language planners will suppress or even modify substantially” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 102). Thus, Gupta (2010) writes:

“It is foolish to expect that stilted, unreal English, of a kind associated with foreign learners, could replace a living dialect. Even if Singlish does diminish in use over the years, it will be replaced by a form of speech that allows its users to express a Singaporean identity, and to express degrees of formality.” (Gupta, 2010, p. 74)

Could the latter form of speech referred to by Gupta (2010) be fulfilled by SSE? Perhaps – SSE, like many language varieties, is often associated with a range of formality within which it varies. However, it is not and cannot be strictly delimited to occur in it, nor can its users be compelled to adopt SSE for use in domains where another variety would be more socially

appropriate. Although the formality of SSE may be situationally flexible, any concept of a Singapore “standard English” continues to be constructed as a worldly “formal English” due to rhetoric from the state.

As we have seen across all the World Standard English and SSE dimensions that may help to define a Standard English, there are opposing views amongst and between scholars and the state that make definitions of standardness “contradictory and occasionally tautological” (Garrett et al., 2003, p. 143). Yet, despite the difficulty of arriving at a definition, “there is much agreement in the literature that a ‘standard’ needs subjective, and hence evaluative, definition” (Garrett et al., 2003, p. 144). Thus, instead of trying to reconcile the often-conflicting views of sociolinguists and the state, this thesis turns the focus on the viewpoint of the users of SSE with emphasis on what Ladegaard (2010) calls “folk linguistic awareness”. Referring to “non-linguists’ perceptions of what language is, where it is spoken and by whom, and what it means socially and psychologically” (Ladegaard, 2010, p. 25), this is a valuable resource for linguists to describe and define a language.

The next chapter details the methodology used to investigate perceptions of SSE, by way of a questionnaire designed to examine the dimensions that make it standard and the factors that make it Singaporean.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the concept of language attitudes, how the research questionnaire was constructed, the procedure for data collection and methods of statistical analysis.

4.1 Language attitudes

This research employs language attitudes as a means to answer the research question: **How do Singaporeans construct SSE in terms of ideological “standardness” and “Singaporeanness”?** As the focus of this research is on the attitudes that Singaporeans hold towards SSE, which in turn help determine how they perceive and define it, I will first give a broad overview of the concept of language attitudes.

Among others, an attitude may be defined as “a summary evaluation of an object of thought” (Bohner & Wanke, 2002, p. 5) or “a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event” (Ajzen, 2005, p. 3). Language attitudes situate language as the attitude object, and may thus be defined as “evaluative reactions to language” (Dragojevic et al., 2021, p. 61). Many studies on language attitudes have adopted the expectancy-value model of attitudes (Fishbein, 1963; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), which describes an attitude as a function of one’s *beliefs* about the attitude object and one’s *evaluation* of those beliefs. For example, one may form the *belief* that Singlish is uncouth, and *evaluate* uncouth as bad. Based on this model, a large number of language attitude studies have investigated language attitudes in terms of evaluative beliefs, which can be broadly classified into two categories: evaluative beliefs about language varieties, and evaluative beliefs about the speakers of language varieties (Dragojevic et al., 2021). Like the majority of studies on language attitudes, the present study focuses on the latter, examining evaluative

beliefs about speakers of SSE as heard in the speech stimuli. However, this is not to say that the study describes only SSE speakers and not SSE itself. Evaluative beliefs about language varieties and those about their speakers are strongly interrelated (Dragojevic et al., 2021), and this study uses evaluative beliefs about SSE speakers as a vehicle to shed light on attitudes held towards SSE more generally.

Three types of responses are generally used to infer an attitude: *affect*, referring to emotions and feelings towards an attitude object; *cognition*, referring to evaluations and beliefs; and *behaviour* or *conation*, which may examine either overt behaviour or behavioural intent (Rosenberg et al., 1960; Bohner & Wanke, 2002; Garrett et al., 2003; Ajzen, 2005; Monfared, 2019). Although attitudes are expected to help us predict, understand and interpret social behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000; Gawronski, 2007) as “an important mediating link between the social information we perceive in our environment and how we respond to it” (Bohner & Wanke, 2002, p. 14), it is important to note that attitudes and behaviour do not always directly correlate. Discrepancies between evaluative beliefs about an attitude object and behavioural action towards that object arise due to intervening factors. One such factor to consider is the existence of beliefs about behaviour – beliefs not pertaining directly to the attitude object, but that are concerned with and thus affect behavioural intent. These beliefs include notions about the repercussions of certain actions, perceived social expectations that lead to social pressures, and beliefs about whether there are factors out of one’s control that may affect the difficulty of doing something (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000). All of these behavioural beliefs create a behavioural intention, thought to be the “immediate antecedent of behaviour” (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000, p. 17) – but not actual behaviour. As intention does not always

translate to action, in this thesis, I discuss behaviour with a focus on behavioural intent rather than actual performance.

The questionnaire is designed to handle the three attitudinal components with regard to perceptions of SSE. The rationale of including three components of an attitude is to avoid neglecting any single attitudinal response category and refraining from assuming false correlations between them. Many attitudinal studies, including matched guise studies that employ evaluative scales of status and solidarity, elicit only cognitive type of responses (e.g. Bayard et al., 2001; Cargile & Giles, 1998; Cavallaro & Ng, 2009; Ladegaard, 2010; Podberesky et al., 1990; Tsurutani, 2012). Although the tripartite structure of attitudes is often acknowledged, attitude scales are often built upon affective or evaluative components without attention to behaviour. While this could, understandably, be due to the difficulty of predicting behaviour from attitude scores alone, leaving out a behavioural component leads to the cognitive and/or affective components being “measured and treated by researchers as the essence of attitudes” (Fishbein, 1965, p. 108). Furthermore, if those cognitive and affective scores are then used to interpret or predict behaviour, the problem of a “low degree of consistency between attitude measures and overt behaviour” (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970, p. 150) emerges – an issue that is often overlooked in the analysis of results.

On the other hand, some studies tap only into the behavioural component of attitudes in order to predict actual behaviour, using commitment measures that investigate one’s willingness to perform an action. However, this has the disadvantage of neglecting intervening factors between language evaluation and actual language use (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970; Hesbacher & Fishman, 1964). More importantly, akin to the observation that

purely evaluative or affective measures may not be consistent with behaviour, discrepancies have been found between measures of actual behaviour and reported “attitudes” from a cognitive or affective perspective (Corey, 1937; LaPiere, 1934; Wicker, 1969, 1971).

Another issue associated with using only one or two of the three attitudinal components is that these three response classes are not always distinct, and each has a possibility of overlapping with another. Furthermore, attitudes may comprise each component to different degrees (Bohner & Wanke, 2002). Several studies that constructed questionnaires with items from the affective, behavioural and cognitive components have found higher reliability for all component items as a whole compared to each component subset individually (Abidin et al., 2012; Kazemi Malekmahmudi & Kazemi Malekmahmudi, 2018), while others have found certain components carry greater weight (Carrie, 2017). In either case, all components are worth including, and thus all three attitudinal components are included in the study’s questionnaire for evaluation.

In summary, this study will view a language attitude as accrued from evaluative beliefs about a language variety and evaluative beliefs about its speakers, both of which are interrelated. To infer these evaluative beliefs, the study assumes affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses are all equally necessary and should be examined together. Thus, the study’s questionnaire elicits responses in all three components. Behavioural responses are assessed with a focus on behavioural intent instead of actual performance in light of the difficulties associated with using attitude measures to predict behaviour.

4.2 Questionnaire construction

All data for this research was accrued from responses to a 29-item questionnaire that sought to answer the research question: **How do Singaporeans construct SSE in terms of ideological “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”?** As the research question takes a user-specific attitudinal perspective to understanding SSE, the questionnaire structure too was based on an attitudinal framework designed to elicit or infer the internal-state attitudes of respondents that are otherwise not directly observable (Ajzen, 2005; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Lasagabaster, 2008), based on three response categories: Behaviour, Affect and Cognition.

The seven features of Standard English discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 lay out the foundations for 17 Likert type items in the questionnaire’s Cognitive component – a key section of the questionnaire design. The Cognitive component works in conjunction with the Affective and Behavioural components to present a holistic evaluation of all aspects of an attitude. The questionnaire items constructed for each of these three attitudinal response categories, Behaviour, Affect and Cognition, are described in the next three sub-sections in order of their appearance in the actual questionnaire.

4.2.1 Behavioural component

The Behavioural component comprises three questions that examine the conation or behavioural intentions of participants. The first two present respondents with hiring decisions, while the third is a statement that investigates participants’ desire to emulate the speaker heard (Table 1). For the latter, participants were asked to respond to the statement on a 5-point Likert scale – the use of which is explained further in the Affective section that follows.

No.	Question/Statement	Item type
1	I would hire this speaker to work as a...	Multiple choice
2	I would hire this speaker to work at...	Multiple choice
3	I would like to speak like this speaker.	5-point Likert scale

Table 1: Items in the Behavioural component of the questionnaire

The multiple choice options for the first and second items are summarized in Table 2. For Item 1, “I would hire this speaker to work as a...”, participants were presented with three job type options: *English news presenter on TV*, *English teacher (post-secondary level)*, and *Food and Beverage (F&B) service crew member*. Item 1 is linked to dimensions of Correctness, Formality, and Education and Prestige, assuming more correct, formal and prestigious English is associated with the higher tier jobs. For Item 2, “I would hire this speaker to work at ...”, participants were presented with one pair of options that corresponds to the job type selected in the preceding question. Each pair comprised one local setting (e.g. Jurong Point shopping mall) and one international setting (e.g. Jewel Changi Airport). Item 2 is linked to dimensions of Uniformity, Internationalism, and Ownership, with the local setting associated with lower conformity to exonormative norms of Standard English and a higher degree of a sense of local ownership.

		(1) Job type		
		English news presenter on TV	English teacher (post-secondary level)	F&B service crew member
(2) Job setting	Local	Mediacorp's Channel News Asia, looking to hire a TV presenter for local news	A local school	Jurong Point shopping mall
	International	An international news media company, such as CNN or BBC, that wants to hire a Singapore correspondent for TV	An international school	Jewel Changi Airport

Table 2: Multiple choice options for Items 1 and 2 of the Behavioural component

The three job types in Item 1 are arranged in decreasing levels of educational requirements, expected salaries, status and prestige, moving from English news presenter on TV to English teacher and finally F&B service crew. The design of this item draws from previous research that used hypothetical jobs to test language attitudes. Bolton & Kwok (1990)'s study of Hong Kong citizens' attitudes towards the Hong Kong accent involved playing tape-recordings of six speakers reading a news item to 131 participants, who were told that each of the speakers had applied to be a radio announcer with Radio Television Hong Kong, a government-run public broadcasting service (Bolton & Kwok, 1990). The option of English news presenter represents the highest level of "Standard English" as news broadcasts are "a reflection of current language use of the standard language" (Mol, 2003, p. 127) and "the embodiment of standard speech" (Bell, 1983, p. 29).

The English teacher option was motivated by past research that examined the perceived suitability of a speaker to be a teacher, such as the study by Tsang (2010), which asked 97

participants to respond to questions after hearing recordings of 10 different English accents. The questions investigated six dimensions of learners' perceptions of one's teaching: attention, favourability, model for learning, nativeness, suitability as an English Language teacher and comprehensibility (Tsang, 2020). Other studies played participants recordings of actual teachers delivering a lecture and investigated perceived teaching quality (Hendriks et al., 2018), while still others played recordings of different English accents and asked participants to imagine the occupations of each speaker (Tsurutani, 2012).

For Item 2 on job settings, several of the options provided use specific names that Singaporeans can identify with: Mediacorp's Channel News Asia, Jurong Point Shopping Mall, and Jewel Changi Airport. Mediacorp is Singapore's "largest content creator and national media network" and reaches 98% of Singaporeans through television, radio and digital platforms (Mediacorp Pte Ltd, 2021b). Mediacorp runs Channel News Asia (CNA), a English language news network which mobile app is Singapore's most used news app (Mediacorp Pte Ltd, 2021a). Though based in Singapore, CNA's reach is regional, and it is among the top 10 news brands in the Asia Pacific (Mediaweek, 2017). To situate CNA as a local news setting for the purposes of this questionnaire, it was specified that the role was for a local news reporter. While not ideal, as CNA is still a regional news platform to a certain extent, this was the best option when brand familiarity and relevance to the hypothetical job role are considered. The two major local news outlets in Singapore that citizens are most familiar with are CNA (Mediacorp) and The Straits Times (Singapore Press Holdings). The latter would have not have been ideal as The Straits Times is chiefly a print and digital newspaper; their TV news does not broadcast on TV channels in Singapore, and is only released digitally as on online television service.

Jurong Point Shopping Mall and Jewel Changi Airport were selected to contrast their respective local and international characteristics in terms of their tenants and customer base. Jurong Point is a large suburban mall located in Jurong West, Singapore. It has a relatively lower hierarchy level of retail products, with more convenience goods and lower-end brands. Jurong Point is also located close to several housing estates and thus services relatively more residents, for whom access to the mall is convenient (Ibrahim et al., 2003). In contrast, Jewel is a “10-storey mega retail and lifestyle development” where “The World meets Singapore, and Singapore meets the World” (Chong, 2019). Situated inside Singapore’s Changi Airport, its location alone makes it arguably Singapore’s most internationally oriented shopping complex. Jewel targets both local visitors and travellers transiting in Singapore and houses over 280 shopping and dining outlets, with roughly half of its tenants being international brands (Tang, 2018).

The final item in the Behavioural component investigated the extent to which participants desired to speak like the speaker they heard in the form of a 5-point Likert scale of agreement to the statement, “I would like to speak like this speaker.”

4.2.2 Affective component

Standard English has been generally found to evoke more positive affect than non-standard speech (Cargile & Giles, 1997; Hosoda et al., 2007; Ryan & Bulik, 1982; Sebastian et al., 1980; Stewart et al., 1985). To investigate this, the affective component comprises seven statements that probe into the emotions and feelings of participants in response to the speech stimuli. These statements constitute Items 4 to 10 of the questionnaire and are presented in the order seen by participants in Table 3. Participants responded to the items on

a 5-point Likert scale. Forming the bulk of the questionnaire items in the Affective and Cognitive sections, the Likert scale was chosen for its appropriateness and relevance to studying patterns or theories of attitudes (Oppenheim, 1992). Each scale was a fully labelled 5-point scale inclusive of a midpoint to reduce the directional biases of extreme response style and misresponse to reversed items (Weijters et al., 2010).

No.	Statement	Polarity
4	I admire this speaker.	+
5	*I feel comfortable listening to this speaker.	+
6	I respect this speaker.	+
7	* I like this speaker's accent.	+
8	I enjoy listening to this speaker.	+
9	* I feel interested to hear what this speaker has to say.	+
10	This speaker's voice annoys me.	-

Table 3: Items in the Affective component of the questionnaire, before item reversals

Item 7 was included to find out if participants instinctively found the voice quality of speakers to be disagreeable or unpleasant, should this bias responses to other items. Items number 2, 4, and 6 (marked with asterisks in Table 3), were reversed for two main reasons. Firstly, the substantial length and large number items in this questionnaire subject it to the possibility of “mindless response behaviour” (Drolet & Morrison, 2001, p. 200) from respondents. This behaviour tends to increase with the number of items in a questionnaire, as reported by Drolet & Morrison (2001). Reversed items act as “cognitive ‘speed bumps’” (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 884) to disrupt non-substantive responding, cue respondents to consider multiple

perspectives, and enhance the coverage of the scope of a construct (Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012). Secondly, item reversals were employed to reduce biases. One-sided directional questions may bias results in that direction due to biased retrieval (Kunda et al., 1993; Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012), and respondents are more likely to agree than disagree with an assertion (Klayman & Ha, 1987; Krosnick, 1999). Such directional and acquiescence biases are arguably mitigated with reversed items. Thus, half of the statements were reversed (Table 4) in an effort to create approximately equal proportions of positive and negative statements in this section (Oppenheim, 1992).

No.	Statement	Polarity
4	I admire this speaker.	+
5	*I feel uncomfortable listening to this speaker.	-
6	I respect this speaker.	+
7	* I dislike this speaker's accent.	-
8	I enjoy listening to this speaker.	+
9	* I feel disinterested to hear what this speaker has to say.	-
10	This speaker's voice annoys me.	-

Table 4: Items in the Affective component of the questionnaire, after item reversals

4.2.3 Cognitive component

The Cognitive component comprises the last 19 items of the 29-item questionnaire. The first examines the perceived personalities of participants, the second elicits participants' predictions or guesses of each speaker's ethnicity, and the remaining 17 items survey participants on the dimensions of WSE and SSE as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

The first item in the Cognitive component (Item 11 of the questionnaire) presents participants with a list of 20 personality descriptors. Participants were instructed to listen to the speech sample and select 1 to 20 descriptors that they thought described the speaker they had just listened to. This “checklist” format for the personality item draws from Chun (2014), who presented participants with a checklist of 31 adjectives and asked them to select those that described a native English-speaking teacher. Instead of 31 adjectives, this study presents participants with 20 descriptors and asks them to select the adjectives that they feel describe the speaker, choosing as many as they wish.

The list of 20 descriptors that described personality draw from the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), which serves as a brief measure of the Big-Five personality dimensions. One of the most widely used models of personality, the Big-Five framework is based on a classification of personality traits into five broad domains: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience. The TIPI was chosen because it is appropriate for situations in which brevity is important and personality is not the main research focus (Gosling et al., 2003).

In the TIPI, each of the five broad personality dimensions are expressed with two items – one of negative polarity and one of positive polarity. These hence make up the 10 items of the TIPI, each of which in turn comprises two descriptors. For example, as shown in Table 5, the Extraversion dimension has a positive pole item and a negative pole item. The positive item comprises the descriptors “Extraverted” and “Enthusiastic”, and its negative pole counterpart comprises the descriptors “Reserved” and “Quiet”.

	Personality dimensions	+	-
1	Extraversion	Extraverted; Enthusiastic	Reserved; Quiet
2	Agreeableness	Sympathetic; Warm	Critical; Quarrelsome
3	Conscientiousness	Dependable; Self-disciplined	Disorganized; Careless
4	Emotional Stability	Anxious; Easily upset	Calm; Emotionally stable
5	Openness to Experience	Open to new experiences; Complex	Conventional; Uncreative

Table 5: Descriptors for perceived personality questionnaire item

The present study separates each pair of descriptors to attain a total of 20 descriptors to form a checklist of adjectives from which participants can select as many as they deem appropriate. This method allows for a reduction of the number of questionnaire items that are devoted to examining personality. As personality is not the primary focus of this study, asking a single checklist type question on personality out of 29 items in total is preferable to the TIPI's original 10 Likert scale items that would have brought the total questionnaire length to 38 items. The perceived personality item thus draws from Gosling et al. (2003) for content and from Chun (2014) for question format.

The second item in the Cognitive component (Item 12 of the questionnaire) elicits participants' predictions of each speaker's ethnicity. Participants are given seven options presented in random order to choose from, including an "Other" option allowing them to input their own guess. This item was included because of the importance of ethnic identity in the context of Singapore, a multi-racial and multi-cultural nation that emphasizes racial plurality and racial harmony (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008; Liu et al., 2002).

The seven ethnicity prediction options provided in the questionnaire are as follows:

- a) Chinese
- b) Malay
- c) Indian
- d) Eurasian
- e) European/White
- f) I cannot identify the ethnicity
- g) Other (please specify): _____

For the final 17 items in the questionnaire (Items 13-29 of the questionnaire), a deductive scale development approach was employed in which the theoretical foundation of a domain is used to generate the questionnaire items. An advantage of this approach is that it ensures content validity and is appropriate in contexts where a depth of past literature on the domain is available (Hinkin, 1998). Following the review of past literature in Chapters 2 and 3, 17 statements were crafted, each reflecting one or more of the seven possible defining characteristics of WSE and SSE identified (Table 6). As discussion points from WSE literature and SSE literature do not always coincide, several statements are in pairs within the same dimension with one statement derived from WSE literature and another related statement derived from SSE literature (Items 1-6, 8-11). The other statements are representative of discussion points present in both WSE and SSE past research (Items 7, 12-17). The last item, “The speaker is speaking Standard English”, tests how standard the speaker is on the whole and subsumes all seven dimensions. Five-point Likert scales were used to elicit responses to all 17 items, being an appropriate measure when analysing patterns or theories of attitudes (Oppenheim, 1992).

	Statements		
No.	WSE-winged	SSE-winged	Dimension
13	This speaker's speech is exemplary of Standard English of the World.		(1) Uniformity
14		This speaker's speech is exemplary of Standard English of the UK or USA.	
15	I cannot identify which country this speaker is from.		(2) Internationalism
16		People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English.	
17	This speaker has a standard accent of English.		(3) Phonology
18		This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English.	
19	This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.		(4) Ownership
20	This speaker is a native English speaker.		
21		This speaker is Singaporean.	
22	This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.		(5) Correctness
23		This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore.	
24	This speaker is speaking correct English.		
25	This speaker is educated.		(6) Prestige
26	This speaker's English sounds prestigious.		
27	This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.		(7) Formality
28	This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.		
29	This speaker is speaking Standard English.		All dimensions (1-7)

Table 6: Statements testing the seven dimensions derived from WSE and SSE literature

The 17 items in Table 6 are the final items in one full 29-item set for one speaker. Participants were randomly assigned 6 out of 12 possible speakers and answered the full set for each speech sample. After completing 29 items each for 6 speakers, participants were asked to provide personal details. The questions on personal information were situated at the end of the questionnaire rather than the start so as to make the questionnaire less off-putting from the onset (Oppenheim, 1992).

A summary of the 29 questionnaire items across the three components to which they belong is presented in Table 7.

Component	No.	Item	Question type
Behavioural	1	<i>Job type</i> : I would hire this speaker to work as a...	Multiple choice, single answer
	2	<i>Job setting</i> : I would hire this speaker to work at...	Multiple choice, single answer
	3	I would like to speak like this speaker.	5-point Likert scale
Affective	4	I admire this speaker.	5-point Likert scale
	5	I feel uncomfortable listening to this speaker.	5-point Likert scale
	6	I respect this speaker.	5-point Likert scale
	7	I dislike this speaker's accent.	5-point Likert scale
	8	I enjoy listening to this speaker.	5-point Likert scale
	9	I feel disinterested to hear what this speaker has to say.	5-point Likert scale
	10	This speaker's voice annoys me.	5-point Likert scale
Cognitive	11	<i>Perceived personality, select from 20 descriptors</i>	Multiple choice, multiple answer
	12	<i>Ethnicity prediction, select from 7 choices</i>	Multiple choice, single answer
	13	This speaker's speech is exemplary of Standard English of the World.	5-point Likert scale
	14	This speaker's speech is exemplary of Standard English of the UK or USA.	5-point Likert scale
	15	I cannot identify which country this speaker is from.	5-point Likert scale
	16	People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English.	5-point Likert scale
	17	This speaker has a standard accent of English.	5-point Likert scale
	18	This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English.	5-point Likert scale
	19	This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.	5-point Likert scale
	20	This speaker is a native English speaker.	5-point Likert scale
	21	This speaker is Singaporean.	5-point Likert scale
	22	This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.	5-point Likert scale
	23	This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore.	5-point Likert scale
	24	This speaker is speaking correct English.	5-point Likert scale
	25	This speaker is educated.	5-point Likert scale
	26	This speaker's English sounds prestigious.	5-point Likert scale
	27	This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.	5-point Likert scale
	28	This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.	5-point Likert scale
	29	This speaker is speaking Standard English.	5-point Likert scale

Table 7: Summary of the 29 questionnaire items and their components

4.3 Data collection

This section describes how the speakers and speech stimuli were selected, a brief description of the pilot study, and finally an overview of the questionnaire participants.

4.3.1 Speaker profiles and speech sample selection

Speech samples from a total of 12 were used. The speakers differed along three independent variables: Age (Young/Old), Ethnicity (Chinese/Malay/Indian) and whether English was their first or second language spoken at home (English L1/English L2). The Young age group comprised individuals aged 20 to 39 years, while individuals belonging to the Old age group were aged 40-59 years. The ethnicities of the Ethnicity variable represent the three main ethnic groups of Singapore. As this study did not aim to investigate sex or education level, all speakers were standardised as female Singaporeans with minimally a bachelor's degree. At the time of recording, all were employed in tertiary industries such as media, management, consulting, administration or sales, or quaternary industries such as education and research and development. An exception was the younger English L1 Chinese (YC1) speaker, who was a student but was selected regardless due to a lack of choice of other speakers available who fit the independent and dependent variable requirements. Table 8 summarises each speaker's profile.

	Independent variables			Constant variables	
Speaker	Age	Ethnicity	First language	Employment sector (tertiary/quaternary)	Education level (Bachelors and up)
OC1	50s	Chinese	English	Media	Bachelors
OC2	40s		Teochew	Educator	Bachelors
OI1	50s	Indian	English	Editorial	Bachelors
OI2	40s		Tamil	Operations	Bachelors
OM1	50s	Malay	English	Media	Bachelors
OM2	40s		Malay	Consultant	Bachelors
YC1	20s	Chinese	English	Student	Bachelors
YC2	20s		Mandarin	Executive	Bachelors
YI1	30s	Indian	English	Educator	Bachelors
YI2	30s		Tamil	Teacher	Post-graduate degree
YM1	30s	Malay	English	Human resource	Bachelors
YM2	20s		Malay	Administration	Bachelors

Table 8: Speakers' profiles

To maintain anonymity, speakers were given a label formed from the three aforementioned factors: age, ethnicity, and whether English is their first or second language. Under the factor of Age, “Y” represents the younger sub-group (20-39 years old) and “O” the older one (40-59 years old). For ethnicity, “C” represents the Chinese sub-group, “M” the Malay sub-group, and “I” the Indian sub-group. Finally, the number “1” was used to label speakers for whom English was their first language spoken at home, and the number “2” for speakers for whom English was their second language spoken at home. Thus, Speaker OM1 refers to the speaker of the older age group who is ethnically Malay and who spoke English as her first language.

Of the 12 speech samples, 10 were obtained from the Building the Singapore English National Speech Corpus (J. X. Koh et al., 2019) and two (OC1 and OM1) were radio broadcast clips from Mediacorp's news and information station, CNA938. Recordings of two news presenters were used in the study to see if participants would respond differently to the radio samples relative to the speech corpus samples, which may indicate that Singaporeans discern local news presenters based on factors beyond the study's independent variables. Among CNA938's news presenters, all were above 40 years old and learnt English as their first language at home. However, only Chinese (OC1) and Malay (OM1) speakers' samples were used as the station did not have a suitable ethnically Indian profile at the time of data collection. Both OC1 and OM1 are radio news presenters with over 10 years of experience in the field.

Each speech sample was of read speech of neutral content that avoided controversial topics, polarizing statements or comments of extreme negative or positive polarity. Audio samples comprised two sentences and each speech sample was between 7 seconds and 9 seconds in duration. All were normalized and standardised for volume. Participants were allowed to playback each recording as many times as they wished.

4.3.2 Overview of participants

A total of 305 participants took part in the study, of which 205 were female and 100 were male. Equal sample sizes for males and females were not ensured because participant sex is not a variable of central interest in this study. All participants belonged to one of the main ethnic groups in Singapore – 215 Chinese (70.5%), 44 Malay (14.4%), and 46 Indian (15.1%). The majority of participants were aged between 19-34, though the full age range is between 19 to 74. The breakdown of the participants' ethnicities and ages is given in Table 9.

Ethnic group	Age range (in years)						Total
	19 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	
Chinese	121	68	7	10	9	0	215
Indian	25	16	0	1	2	0	44
Malay	19	22	1	1	2	1	46
Total	165	106	8	12	13	1	305

Table 9: Age and ethnic breakdown of participants

The questionnaire was administered to participants via the online survey tool Qualtrics. Participants were approached via social media and mobile messaging platforms. Snowball sampling was also employed, particularly for the Malay and Indian ethnic groups which were relatively underrepresented. Despite keen outreach to Malay and Indian individuals and groups, these two ethnic groups remained relatively lower in sample count compared to Chinese participants. However, relatively even numbers between both were attained (44 Malays and 46 Indians) and the proportion of Malay participants (14.4%) neared the proportion of Malays in Singapore's citizen population (15.0%), while the proportion of Indians participants (15.1%) exceeded the proportion of Indians in Singapore's citizen population (7.5%). As of June 2019, Singapore's citizen population by race is 76.0% Chinese, 15.0% Malay, 7.5% Indian and 1.5% belonging to the category "Others" (Government of Singapore, 2019).

4.4 Statistical analysis

Statistical analyses were carried out using mixed effects logistic regression, mixed effects ordinal regression or mixed effects linear regressions, depending on the suitability of the data to each regression type as summarised in Table 10.

Questionnaire component	Statistical analysis method (All mixed effects regressions)		
	Linear regression	Ordinal regression	Logistic regression
Behavioural		(1): Job type (2): Job setting	
	(3): Likert-type, desire to speak like speaker		
Affective	(4)-(10): Likert-type		
Cognitive			(11): Perceived personality (12) Ethnicity prediction
	(13)-(29): Likert-type, WSE and SSE statements		

Table 10: Summary of the type of mixed effects regression used to analyse each of the 29 questionnaire items

All three types of mixed effects regression models were fitted using packages in R (R Core Team, 2021). The linear regression models were fitted using the *lmer* function in the *lmerTest* (Kuznetsova et al., 2017) package, the ordinal regressions with cumulative link mixed models fitted with the function *clmm* in the *ordinal* package (Christensen, 2019a), and the logistic regression models with the *glmmTMB* function in the package *glmmTMB* (Brooks et al., 2017).

All Likert type items were analysed with linear mixed models to determine the significance of three fixed effects, Age, Ethnicity and English Language on Likert ratings. The models were fitted using restricted maximum likelihood and p values were derived from t tests using Satterthwaite approximations to degrees of freedom, which have been found to “produce the most consistent Type 1 error rates, being neither anti-conservative nor overly sensitive to sample size” (Luke, 2017, p. 1500). For the Affective component, participant ratings for the four items that were negatively worded were reversed. This was done to facilitate a more straightforward analysis, such that higher ratings for all the items in the Affective component consistently correspond to a measure of a positive attribute.

Cumulative link models for ordinal regression were used to analyse the hiring decision items because the job type and setting options were ordered along latent variables such as educational requirement, salary and prestige. Cumulative link models are recommended “if the response can be understood as the categorization of a latent continuous construct” (Bürkner & Vuorre, 2019, p. 23) and are appropriate for data in which “categories have an ordering, but the psychological distance between the categories is not known, nor if the distances are the same across participants” (Bürkner & Vuorre, 2019, p. 3). In this case, the three job types F&B service crew, English teacher and news presenter are ordered with increasing prestige, educational requirements and salary expectations, and the outcome variable is to select a higher category job type in the order specified above. Similarly, each pair of Local and International options for the job setting item are ordered categories of an underlying latent continuous variable such as prestige or globalism. Thus the outcome variable entered was that of selecting an ordinally higher job setting, specified as "Local" and "International" in increasing rank order.

Logistic regressions were selected for the ethnicity prediction item and the perceived personality item as this form of analysis is best suited for dichotomous data (Hosmer Jr et al., 2013; Sathian, 2011). For the ethnicity prediction question, the outcome variable was the accuracy of the ethnicity prediction – either a correct prediction or an incorrect one. Similarly, for Item 11 on perceived personality, participants had a choice of either selecting or not selecting each personality descriptor.

Mixed effects models with both fixed and random effects were chosen to account for both random effects and fixed effects in the data. The fixed effects entered were that of speaker Age (comprising two levels: Young and Old), Ethnicity (three levels: Chinese, Indian and Malay) and the status of the speakers' English Language (two levels: whether English was their first language, L1, or second language, L2). Random slopes were also tested for these three fixed effects to account for the fact that speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language could affect survey respondents differently. Two random effects were entered in the models by way of random intercepts for respondent and speaker. Respectively, these accounted for baseline differences across individual participants and variation across the different stimuli.

All random slopes and intercepts were tested for significance and included in the final model for each item if found to be significant ($p < .05$). In the event that model convergence was not reached at this stage for a random effect, the random effect was excluded to allow the final model used to test for fixed effects to converge. Significance testing of the fixed effects was then carried out using *anova*. In the event that a model with more than one significant random slope and intercept did not converge, the random slope and intercept models were compared using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) values. The random slope or intercept

of the model with the lower AIC value was then retained. The fixed effects that were not significant ($p > .05$) were removed and the adjusted models were refitted to the data to obtain the final p values and estimates (Seltman, 2009). For each level of the significant fixed effects, estimated marginal means were calculated using the *emmeans* function in the package *emmeans* (Lenth, 2021) in R (R Core Team, 2021), taking into account random effects, and also plotted in individual charts. Level means were not estimated for items found to have no significant fixed effects at the 95% confidence level. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the significant fixed effects and show their estimated marginal means, while the complete tests for all fixed effects are shown in full detail in Appendices A, B, C and D.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

This chapter details findings from the data collected, organized by the three attitudinal components: Behaviour, Affection and Cognition. Three speaker-inherent factors, speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, will be examined for the extent to which they affect item responses in all three components. Under the Behavioural component, I will examine how these factors affect job hiring decisions for job type and setting in Items 1 and 2 respectively. Item 3 will be analysed to find out what affects participants' desire and willingness to speak like the speaker heard. Under the Affective component, I will analyse Items 4-10 to determine how admiration, comfortableness, respect, likability, enjoyment of listening and interest felt towards the speaker are affected by speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language. Finally, analysis for the Cognitive component in this chapter will comprise two sub-sections. The first deals with Item 11 to address how speaker personalities are perceived, while the second considers Item 12 on ethnicity predictions to find out how different speakers' ethnicities are perceived and the factors influencing these perceptions. Analysis of the final Cognitive sub-section, Items 13 to 29 derived from SSE and WSE dimensions, will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.1 Behavioural component

5.1.1 Job type

The first item in the Behavioural component asked participants to select the most suitable job for each speaker heard, among the options of F&B service crew, English teacher at the post-secondary level, and English news presenter on TV. Among the fixed effects of Age, Ethnicity and English Language tested, only English Language was found to have a significant effect on

participants' hiring decisions for the type of job, $X^2(1, N = 1830) = 13.04, p < .001$. L1 English speakers were more likely to be selected for job types associated with higher salaries, prestige and education levels than L2 English speakers. Specifically, for each unit increase from L1 English speakers to L2 English speakers, the ordered log-odds of selecting an ordinaly higher job type decreased by 4.86 (Christensen, 2019b; Szumilas, 2010).

The estimated probabilities of L1 and L2 English speakers being selected for job type are summarized in Table 11. L2 English speakers were most likely to be selected to be F&B crew (.794), followed by English teachers (.198) and finally news presenters (.007). Comparatively, L1 English speakers were most likely chosen as English teachers (.490) followed closely by English news presenters (.480), with F&B service crew the least probable selection (.029). L2 English speakers had a higher probability of being selected as F&B crew than L1 English speakers, while L1 English speakers had a higher probability of being selected to be English teachers and English news presenters than L2 English speakers.

English Language level	Job type	Estimated probability
L1	F&B service crew member	.029
L2	F&B service crew member	.794
L1	English teacher	.490
L2	English teacher	.198
L1	English news presenter	.480
L2	English news presenter	.007

Table 11: Estimated probabilities of English L1 and English L2 speakers being selected for each job type

Turning our attention from overall trends to speaker-specific observations, Table 12 shows individual speaker trends in terms of the percentages of participants who chose each job type for each speaker. This data is also represented as a stacked percentage bar chart in Figure 2. Based on a visual assessment, L1 English speakers were predominantly selected as English news presenters or English teachers, while L2 English speakers were mostly selected as F&B crew members. This corroborates with the findings from the ordinal regression analyses.

Speaker	English news presenter on TV	English teacher	F&B service crew member
OC1	89.4%	9.3%	1.3%
OI1	42.3%	53.7%	4.0%
OM1	96.1%	2.6%	1.3%
YC1	17.4%	75.2%	7.4%
YI1	22.9%	63.1%	14.0%
YM1	2.7%	66.9%	30.4%
OC2	1.9%	8.2%	89.9%
OI2	0.0%	12.7%	87.3%
OM2	2.0%	24.8%	73.2%
YC2	0.6%	16.7%	82.7%
YI2	6.5%	41.6%	51.9%
YM2	6.8%	50.0%	43.2%

Table 12: Job types selected for each speaker, by percentage of participants

Cells containing values over 40% are shaded.

Figure 1: Stacked percentage bar chart of job types selected for each speaker

Although Age was not found in statistical analyses to have a significant effect on the selection of job type, it can be observed that the L1 English speakers of the older age group were the speakers most selected to be news presenters. These three older English L1 speakers received notably higher percentages for the English news presenter option than all other speakers, especially OC1 (89.4%) and OM1 (96.1%), who are in fact English news presenters in real life. OM1 in particular was unanimously selected as a news presenter at 96.1% – the highest percentage across all speakers and all job types. The final older L1 English speaker, OI1, was predominantly chosen to be hired as an English teacher (53.7%) followed by an English news presenter (42.3%), but the latter figure for English news presenter was still markedly higher than that for other speakers. Among the L1 English speakers of the younger age group, all three were mostly selected as English teachers, at 75.2% for the Chinese speaker, 63.1% for the Indian speaker and 66.9% for the Malay one.

Among the L2 English speakers, four were predominantly selected to work in F&B, and two were selected mostly as English teachers or F&B crew. In contrast to the older L1 English speakers, the older L2 English speakers were mostly chosen to be hired as F&B service crew members, at 89.9% for OC2, 87.3% for OI2 and 73.2% for OM2. This trend was seen also for another L2 English speaker of the younger age group, YC2, for whom 82.7% of participants selected the F&B service crew option. The other L2 English speakers of the younger age group were most often selected as either English teachers (41.6% for YI2; 50.0% for YM2) or F&B service crew members (51.9% for YI2; 43.2% for YM2).

5.1.2 Job setting

This section looks at trends of the selection of local or international job settings for speakers. Similar to the job type results, among the fixed effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, only English Language was found to have a significant effect on the choice of job setting, $\chi^2(1, N = 1830) = 6.81, p = .009$. Per unit increase from L1 English speakers to L2 English speakers, the estimated ordered log-odds (Szumilas, 2010) of a participant selecting an international job setting was found to decrease by 1.51.

The estimated probabilities of being selected for each job setting for the levels of English Language (Table 13) show that L2 English speakers had a higher probability of being selected for a local job setting (.870) than an international one (.130). L1 English speakers were also more likely to be selected for a local job setting (.596) than an international one (.404), but with a less pronounced contrast. Comparing L1 and L2 English speakers within each job setting option, the probability of an L2 English speaker being selected for a local job setting was

higher than that for an L1 English speaker, while the probability for an L1 English speaker to be selected for an international job setting was higher than that for an L2 English speaker.

English Language level	Job setting	Probability
L1	Local	.596
L2	Local	.870
L1	International	.404
L2	International	.130

Table 13: Estimated probabilities of L1 and L2 English speakers being selected for each job setting

Aside from the statistical significance of the fixed effects, trends for the selection of job setting can also be observed by examining the percentages of each speaker being selected for each job setting. As the job setting question was a follow-up to the job type question, each of the three job types had one local and one international setting option. Therefore, the overall choices of each job setting for each speaker is a sum of three values. For example, OC1's overall local job setting percentage (34.4%) is derived from adding up "Mediacorp's Channel News Asia" (30.5%), "A local school" (3.31%) and "Jurong Point shopping mall" (0.66%). The overall percentages in the bottom two rows of Table 14 are also represented graphically in Figure 2.

	OC1	OI1	OM1	OC2	OI2	OM2	YC1	YI1	YM1	YC2	YI2	YM2
English news TV presenter	89.4%	42.3%	96.1%	1.89%	0.00%	1.96%	17.5%	22.9%	2.70%	0.62%	6.49%	6.85%
An international news media company	58.9%	27.5%	60.5%	0.63%	0.00%	0.00%	2.01%	9.55%	0.68%	0.00%	3.25%	3.42%
Mediacorp's Channel News Asia	30.5%	14.77%	35.5%	1.26%	0.00%	1.96%	15.4%	13.4%	2.03%	0.62%	3.25%	3.42%
English teacher	9.27%	53.7%	2.63%	8.18%	12.7%	24.8%	75.2%	63.1%	66.9%	16.7%	41.6%	50.0%
An international school	5.96%	24.2%	1.97%	2.52%	1.33%	1.96%	6.04%	21.7%	5.41%	0.00%	7.79%	16.4%
A local school	3.31%	29.5%	0.66%	5.66%	11.3%	22.9%	69.1%	41.4%	61.5%	16.7%	33.8%	33.6%
F&B service crew member	1.32%	4.03%	1.32%	89.9%	87.3%	73.2%	7.38%	14.01%	30.4%	82.7%	52.0%	43.2%
Jewel Changi Airport	0.66%	2.68%	0.66%	10.1%	12.0%	12.4%	5.37%	9.55%	12.2%	5.6%	13.0%	14.4%
Jurong Point shopping mall	0.66%	1.34%	0.66%	79.8%	75.3%	60.8%	2.01%	4.46%	18.2%	77.2%	39.0%	28.8%
International setting total	<u>65.6%</u>	<u>54.4%</u>	<u>63.2%</u>	13.2%	13.3%	14.4%	13.4%	40.8%	18.2%	5.56%	24.0%	34.2%
Local setting total	34.4%	45.6%	36.8%	<u>86.8%</u>	<u>86.7%</u>	<u>85.6%</u>	<u>86.6%</u>	<u>59.2%</u>	<u>81.8%</u>	<u>94.4%</u>	<u>76.0%</u>	<u>65.8%</u>

Table 14: Job settings, arranged by corresponding job types, selected for each speaker

Values are given in percentages of participants who chose that option. Underlined values in the bottom two rows show the higher percentage option between Local and International for each speaker.

Figure 2: Percentage stacked bar chart for job setting per speaker

On the whole across all three job types, although there was a significant difference between the choice of job setting for L1 and L2 English speakers, speakers were generally selected for local job settings more frequently than international ones. The only exceptions were the three L1 English speakers in the older age group, who were overall more often selected for international job settings: OC1, 65.6%; OM1, 63.2%; and OI1, 54.4%. These three speakers were notably also the top three speakers to be selected as English news presenters.

5.1.3 Behavioural intent to emulate speaker

The final behavioural item “I would like to speak like this speaker” was a Likert scale item measuring participants’ willingness and desire to emulate the speaker heard. English Language had a significant effect on how much participants wished to speak like the speaker ($p < .001$), while Age and Ethnicity were not significant ($p > .05$). L1 and L2 English speakers received significantly different ratings on average, with a drop of 1.06 in mean ratings for L2

English speakers relative to L1 speakers. L1 English speakers received higher ratings than L2 English speakers, with an adjusted mean rating of 3.55, 95% CI [3.34, 3.75] compared to 2.48, 95% CI [2.27, 2.70] for L2 English speakers (Table 15, Figure 3). As can be seen in Table 16, the difference in mean ratings between L1 and L2 English speakers was significant ($p < .001$). This shows that speakers whose first language was English received significantly higher ratings from participants compared to speakers for whom English was their second language.

Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.55	0.10	14.2	3.34	3.75
L2	2.48	0.10	17.2	2.27	2.70

Table 15: Estimated marginal means for English Language, with Satterthwaite's method at 95% CI, for "I would like to speak like this speaker."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.06	0.13	12.3	8.15	<.001

Table 16: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "I would like to speak like this speaker."

Figure 3: Estimated marginal means for levels of English language, showing upper and lower limits at 95% CI, for “I would like to speak like this speaker.”

5.2 Affective component

The Affective component elicited emotion-based responses from participants on feelings of admiration, comfortableness, respect, likeability, enjoyment of listening, interest level and annoyance with the speaker’s voice. As results for all seven items showed a common trend, they will be discussed together.

Among speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, only English Language was found to have a significant effect ($ps < .001$) on participant ratings for all seven statements. Effects of speaker Age and Ethnicity were not significant ($p > .05$) at the 95% confidence level. The difference between mean ratings for L1 and L2 English speakers ranged from 0.43 for respect for the speaker to 0.97 for enjoyment of listening to the speaker, and were all highly significant ($ps < .001$) (Table 18). Across all seven items, mean ratings for L1 English speakers were significantly higher than that for L2 English speakers (Table 17, Figure 4) – so much so

that the lowest mean item rating for L1 English speakers, 3.38, 95% CI [3.19, 3.56], was still higher than the highest mean item rating for L2 speakers, 3.29, 95% CI [3.16, 3.42].

	English Language level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower limit	Upper limit
Admiration for speaker	L1	3.38	0.09	12.8	3.19	3.56
	L2	2.72	0.09	13.8	2.54	2.91
Feeling comfortable	L1	3.85	0.10	11.3	3.63	4.06
	L2	3.11	0.10	13.1	2.89	3.33
Respect for speaker	L1	3.72	0.06	18.4	3.60	3.85
	L2	3.29	0.06	24.6	3.16	3.42
Likability of speaker accent	L1	3.75	0.09	11.9	3.56	3.93
	L2	2.98	0.09	15.0	2.79	3.17
Enjoyment of listening to speaker	L1	3.56	0.11	10.9	3.31	3.81
	L2	2.59	0.12	11.6	2.34	2.85
Interested to listen	L1	3.59	0.09	12.1	3.39	3.79
	L2	2.86	0.09	13.0	2.66	3.06
Not annoyed by voice	L1	3.76	0.08	13.4	3.59	3.92
	L2	3.21	0.08	15.4	3.04	3.38

Table 17: Estimated marginal means of English Language levels for Affective items using Satterthwaite's method, at 95% CI

Item	L1 - L2 contrasts				
	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
Admiration for speaker	0.65	0.12	11.5	5.59	<.001
Feeling comfortable	0.73	0.14	10.9	5.25	<.001
Respect for speaker	0.43	0.08	13.3	5.64	<.001
Likability of speaker accent	0.77	0.12	11.6	6.44	<.001
Enjoyment of listening to speaker	0.97	0.16	10.7	6.02	<.001
Interested to listen	0.73	0.13	11.3	5.67	<.001
Not annoyed by voice	0.55	0.11	11.8	5.19	<.001

Table 18: Table of English Language L1-L2 contrasts for Affective items

Sig. codes: 0 '***' .001 '**' .01 '*' .05 '.' .1 ' ' 1.

Admiration for speaker

Feeling comfortable

Respect for speaker

Likability of speaker accent

Enjoyment of listening to speaker

Interested to listen

Not annoyed

Figure 4: Estimated marginal means for English L1 and L2 levels for items in the Affective component

5.3 Cognitive component

The Cognitive component comprises an item on speakers' ethnicity prediction, an item on perceived personality, and 17 Likert-type items on the WSE and SSE dimensions identified in the literature. The next two sections elaborate on results for the first two items, while the final 17 items are discussed in Chapter 6.

5.3.1 Ethnicity prediction

Factors of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language were tested to examine the extent to which these influenced ethnicity perceptions. Among these three fixed effects, only English Language, $X^2(1, N = 1830) = 8.27, p = .004$, and Ethnicity, $X^2(2, N = 1830) = 8.73, p = .013$, were found to have a significant effect on the accuracy of speakers' ethnic predictions. I will discuss each in turn below.

Whether English was a speaker's L1 or L2 had a significant effect on how likely a speaker's ethnicity could be predicted accurately. The probability of accurately predicting speakers' ethnicities was higher for L2 English speakers relative to L1 English speakers. Looking at the estimated probabilities for each, the probability of predicting the ethnicity of the speaker correctly was lower for L1 English speakers at 0.12, 95% CI [0.02, 0.49] compared to that for L2 English speakers at 0.74, 95% CI [0.29, 0.95] (Table 19). As can be seen in the table of contrasts (Table 20), this difference between L1 and L2 English speakers was statistically significant ($p = .030$). The relative risk for L2 English was calculated to be 6.11, suggesting that the ethnicity of L2 English speakers was approximately 6 times more likely to be accurately predicted compared to L1 English speakers.

				95% Confidence Interval	
English Language	Probability	SE	df	Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	0.12	0.11	1826	0.02	0.49
L2	0.74	0.19	1826	0.29	0.95

Table 19: Estimated probabilities for accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction for English Language levels for full dataset ($N=1830$)

Contrast	Odds ratio	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 – L2	0.05	0.07	1826	-2.17	.030

Table 20: Contrasts, in terms of odds ratios, for English Language levels for accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction, full dataset ($N=1830$)

Examining Ethnicity, the probability of predicting the ethnicity of the speaker correctly was highest for Chinese speakers at 0.80, 95% CI [0.28, 0.98] followed by Indian speakers at 0.42, 95% CI [0.07, 0.88] and finally Malay speakers at 0.07, 95% CI [0.01, 0.46] (Table 21). However, while the level contrast for Chinese-Malay was marginally significant ($p = .058$), the contrasts for Chinese-Indian ($p = .584$) and Indian-Malay ($p = .390$) were not shown to be statistically significant (Table 22). Derivable from the odds ratios (Table 22), relative risks for the Indian and Malay groups were found to be 0.53 and 0.09 respectively. Inversing the relative risks, we can deduce that the likelihood that Chinese speakers' ethnicity was accurately predicted was 1.87 times greater than that for Indian speakers and 10.75 times greater than that for Malay speakers.

				95% Confidence Interval	
Ethnicity level	Probability	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	Lower limit	Upper limit
Chinese	0.80	0.19	1825	0.28	0.98
Indian	0.42	0.29	1825	0.07	0.88
Malay	0.07	0.08	1825	0.01	0.46

Table 21: Estimated probabilities for accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction for Ethnicity levels for full dataset ($N=1830$)

Contrast	Odds ratio	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> ratio	<i>p</i>
Chinese – Indian	5.26	8.82	1825	0.99	.584
Chinese – Malay	48.60	82.46	1825	2.29	.058
Indian – Malay	9.24	15.70	1825	1.31	.390

Table 22: Contrasts, in terms of odds ratios, for Ethnicity levels for accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction, full dataset ($N=1830$)

We will also examine the raw data for possible trends or unusual observations across speakers. Table 23 shows the participants' predictions of each speaker's ethnicity, in terms of the percentage of participants who predicted that ethnicity for each speaker. Target ethnicities that correctly match each speaker's actual ethnicity are shaded. For example, in the row for OC1, the "Chinese" cell is shaded; for YM2, the "Malay" cell is shaded. These percentages are also represented in bar charts in Figure 5, and the accuracy of the predictions shown in Fig 6.

Speaker	Chinese	Indian	Malay	Eurasian	European/White	I cannot identify the ethnicity	Other
OC1	17.9%	3.3%	1.3%	13.2%	24.5%	37.7%	2.0%
OI1	11.4%	14.1%	5.4%	14.1%	19.5%	34.9%	0.7%
OM1	23.7%	0.7%	0.7%	16.4%	21.7%	33.6%	3.3%
YC1	82.6%	–	–	1.3%	–	15.4%	0.7%
YI1	45.2%	3.2%	1.9%	12.1%	4.5%	31.2%	1.9%
YM1	58.1%	0.7%	26.4%	2.0%	–	12.8%	–
OC2	89.9%	0.6%	–	1.3%	0.6%	5.0%	2.5%
OI2	3.3%	68.0%	12.7%	0.7%	–	14.7%	0.7%
OM2	4.6%	19.0%	64.1%	1.3%	0.7%	9.8%	0.7%
YC2	94.4%	–	0.6%	–	–	4.3%	0.6%
YI2	0.6%	96.8%	1.3%	–	–	–	1.3%
YM2	1.4%	91.1%	1.4%	–	–	5.5%	0.7%

Table 23: Predictions of speaker ethnicity by speaker, given in percentage of participants per speaker

Figure 5: Percentage bar chart of predictions of speaker ethnicity

Figure 6: Percentage bar chart of accuracy of speaker ethnicity predictions

The ethnicities of L1 English speakers were generally predicted incorrectly, with the exception of YC1, for whom 82.6% of participants predicted correctly as Chinese. YM1 (58.1%) and YI1 (45.2%) were also most often predicted – incorrectly – to be Chinese. The speakers rated to have the most ambiguous ethnicities, corresponding to the option “I cannot identify the ethnicity”, were all L1 English speakers – OC1 (37.7%), OI1 (34.9%), OM1 (33.6%) and YI1 (31.2%). These four speakers were also the ones most often predicted to be Eurasian or European/White, especially the three L1 English speakers from the older age group: OC1 (24.5% for European/White, 13.2% for Eurasian), OM1 (21.7% for European/White, 16.4% for Eurasian) and OI1 (19.5% for European/White, 14.1% for Eurasian).

In contrast to the L1 English speakers, the ethnicities of L2 English speakers were generally predicted correctly, with the notable exception of the Malay speaker from the younger age group (YM2). Majority of participants (91.1%) predicted her ethnicity as Indian.

Investigating the effect of participant ethnicity on ethnicity prediction

As the demands of this questionnaire item directly link to speaker ethnicity, the factor of participant ethnicity was also investigated to determine its influence on the accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction. For this purpose, a subset of the data ($n = 810$) was drawn comprising all the responses from all 46 Malay participants ($n = 276$), all the responses from all 44 Indian participants ($n = 264$), and a representative sample of responses from 45 Chinese participants ($n = 270$).

Following significance testing of participant ethnicity alongside the fixed effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, participant ethnicity was not found to have a significant effect on the accuracy of ethnic prediction, $\chi^2 (2, N = 810) = 2.82, p = .244$. Similar to the full dataset comprising responses from 305 participants ($N = 1830$), among all the fixed effects tested, only speaker Ethnicity, $\chi^2 (2, N = 810) = 7.63, p = .022$, and speaker's English Language, $\chi^2 (1, N = 810) = 9.22, p = .002$, were found to have a significant effect on the accuracy of speakers' ethnic predictions. The effects of Ethnicity and English Language, their estimated means (Table 24), and level contrasts (Table 25) will presently be discussed.

				95% Confidence Interval	
Level	Probability	Std. Error	df	Lower limit	Upper limit
Ethnicity: Chinese	0.83	0.17	805	0.32	0.98
Ethnicity: Indian	0.48	0.31	805	0.08	0.91
Ethnicity: Malay	0.12	0.13	805	0.01	0.61
English Language: L1	0.15	0.12	806	0.03	0.54
English Language: L2	0.82	0.15	806	0.40	0.97

Table 24: Estimated marginal means for levels of significant fixed effects, at 95% CI, for representative data subset ($n=810$)

Contrast	Odds ratio	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
Chinese – Indian	5.47	9.45	805	0.99	.587
Chinese – Malay	36.80	63.88	805	2.08	.095
Indian – Malay	6.72	11.71	805	1.09	.518
L1 – L2	0.040	0.05	806	-2.37	.018

Table 25: Contrasts, in odds ratios, for levels of significant fixed effects for accuracy of speakers' ethnicity predictions, representative data subset ($n=810$)

Examining speaker ethnicity, Chinese speakers were the most likely to be accurately predicted, with a probability of 0.83, 95% CI [0.32, 0.98]. The next highest probability belonged to Indian speakers at 0.48, 95% CI [0.08, 0.91] and finally Malay speakers at 0.12, 95% CI [0.01, 0.61] (Table 24). This order was the same as that for the full dataset. Also similar to the full dataset, the contrasts between levels for Chinese-Indian ($p = .587$), Chinese-Malay ($p = .095$) and Indian-Malay ($p = .518$) were not shown to be statistically significant (Table 25). Overall, the

results for the data subset indicate an ordering of Chinese, Indian and Malay speakers in order of highest to lowest probability of being predicted correctly, but to a low degree of statistical significance.

Examining the English Language of the speaker, the probability of participants accurately predicting the speaker's ethnicity was lower for L1 English speakers at 0.15, 95% CI [0.03, 0.54] than for L2 English speakers at 0.82, 95% CI [0.40, 0.97] (Table 24). This contrast between L1 and L2 English speakers was statistically significant ($p = .018$) (Table 25), once again mirroring the results from the full dataset.

Two observations suggest that Participant Ethnicity did not have a significant effect on the accuracy of ethnicity prediction. Firstly, the low statistical significance of the fixed effect of Participant Ethnicity ($p = .244$) is a strong indication. Secondly, the results for the data subset are similar to the results obtained from the full dataset. In terms of the significance of fixed effects, speaker Ethnicity and English Language were statistically significant for both the full data set ($p = .013$ for Ethnicity and $p = .004$ for English Language) and the representative data subset ($p = .022$ for Ethnicity and $p = .002$ for English Language).

Looking first at Ethnicity, the ethnicities of Chinese speakers were more likely predicted accurately compared to Indian and Malay speakers for both data sets. The order of probabilities of an accurate prediction, from highest to lowest, was the same for both data sets: Chinese (0.80, 95% CI [0.28, 0.98] for full data set and 0.83, 95% CI [0.32, 0.98] for data subset) followed by Indian (0.42, 95% CI [0.07, 0.88] for full data set and 0.48, 95% CI [0.08,

0.91] for data subset) and finally Malay speakers (0.07, 95% CI [0.01, 0.46] for full data set and 0.12, 95% CI [0.01, 0.61] for data subset).

In terms of English Language, the ethnicities of L2 English speakers were more likely to be correctly predicted than that for L1 English speakers for both data sets. The mean probability for L2 English speakers was 0.74, 95% CI [0.29, 0.95] for the full data set and 0.82, 95% CI [0.40, 0.97] for the data subset – significantly higher than that for L1 English speakers, at 0.12, 95% CI [0.02, 0.49] for the full data set and 0.15, 95% CI [0.03, 0.54] for the data subset.

5.3.2 Personality

The second Cognitive item elicited responses from participants on the personality traits they associated with each speaker, and the data was analysed to determine the significance of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language in shaping perceived personality. A summary of the results for each of the 20 personality descriptors is presented in Table 26.

Personality dimension	(+) Positive valency items		(-) Negative valency items	
	Item	Results	Item	Results
Extraversion	Extraverted	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .279$) • Ethnicity ($p = .171$) • English ($p = .487$)	Reserved	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .238$) • Ethnicity ($p = .998$) • English ($p = .437$)
	Enthusiastic	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .953$) • Ethnicity ($p = .737$) • English ($p = .201$)	Quiet	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .607$) • Ethnicity ($p = .179$) • English ($p = .624$)
Agreeableness	Sympathetic	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .612$) • Ethnicity ($p = .451$) • English ($p = .763$)	Critical	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .625$) • Ethnicity ($p = .252$) • English ($p = .065$)
	Warm	2 significant fixed effects • Ethnicity ($p = .048^*$) • English ($p = .021^*$)	Quarrelsome	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)
Conscientiousness	Dependable	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)	Disorganized	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)
	Self-disciplined	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)	Careless	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)
Emotional Stability	Calm	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)	Anxious	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)
	Emotionally stable	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)	Easily upset	1 significant fixed effect • English ($p < .001^{***}$)
Openness to Experience	Open to new experiences	No significant fixed effects • Ethnicity ($p = .056$)	Conventional	No significant fixed effects • Ethnicity ($p = .086$)
	Complex	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .055$) • Ethnicity ($p = .395$) • English ($p = .588$)	Uncreative	No significant fixed effects • Age ($p = .574$) • Ethnicity ($p = .779$) • English ($p = .081$)

Table 26: Summary of significant results from tests of fixed effects for personality items¹

Shaded cells indicate items with at least one significant fixed effect.

Sig. codes: 0 '***' .001 '**' .01 '*' .05 '.' .1 ' ' 1.

¹ For *Open to new experiences* and *Conventional*, the first logistic regression model fitted to the data indicated Ethnicity was the only significant fixed effect. After the non-significant fixed effects and their associated random slopes were removed, Ethnicity was no longer significant in the final model. The p values reported in Table 26 are obtained from the final model, hence only the p value for Ethnicity is given.

As seen in the shaded cells in Table 26 indicating items with at least one significant fixed effect, the 10 personality items for which significant fixed effects were found all belong to the dimensions Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability. For all these items, English Language was a significant fixed effect. Most had English Language as the only fixed effect, with only one item, *Warm* with two significant fixed effects: Ethnicity ($p = .048$) and English Language ($p = .021$).

The probabilities of each personality descriptor being selected across the English Language and Ethnicity levels are shown in Table 27, and their level contrasts in Table 28.

						95% Confidence Interval	
Dimension	Item	Fixed effect level	Probability	Std. Error	df	Lower limit	Upper limit
Agreeableness +	Warm	English: L1	0.23	0.04	1826	0.17	0.31
		English: L2	0.15	0.03	1826	0.11	0.21
		Ethnicity: Chinese	0.16	0.03	1825	0.10	0.23
		Ethnicity: Indian	0.26	0.05	1825	0.18	0.36
		Ethnicity: Malay	0.16	0.03	1825	0.11	0.24
Conscientiousness +	Dependable	English: L1	0.40	0.04	1826	0.33	0.48
		English: L2	0.12	0.02	1826	0.08	0.16
	Self-disciplined	English: L1	0.26	0.04	1826	0.20	0.33
		English: L2	0.07	0.01	1826	0.04	0.10
Emotional Stability +	Calm	English: L1	0.55	0.04	1826	0.48	0.62
		English: L2	0.25	0.03	1826	0.20	0.31
	Emotionally stable	English: L1	0.31	0.04	1826	0.24	0.39
		English: L2	0.11	0.02	1826	0.08	0.15
Agreeableness -	Quarrelsome	English: L1	0.01	< 0.01	1826	< 0.01	0.01
		English: L2	0.02	< 0.01	1826	0.01	0.04
Conscientiousness -	Disorganized	English: L1	0.01	0.01	1826	0.01	0.03
		English: L2	0.10	0.03	1826	0.06	0.16
	Careless	English: L1	0.01	< 0.01	1826	< 0.01	0.02
		English: L2	0.10	0.03	1826	0.06	0.17
Emotional Stability -	Anxious	English: L1	0.03	0.01	1826	0.01	0.05
		English: L2	0.11	0.02	1826	0.07	0.16
	Easily upset	English: L1	0.01	0.00	1826	0.01	0.02
		English: L2	0.05	0.01	1826	0.03	0.09

Table 27: Estimated probabilities for levels of significant fixed effects at 95% CI for personality items

Dimension	Item	Contrast	Odds ratio	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
Agreeableness +	Warm	L1 – L2	1.72	0.50	1826	1.89	.060
		Chinese - Indian	0.53	0.18	1825	-1.83	.159
		Chinese - Malay	0.95	0.33	1825	-0.16	.985
		Indian - Malay	1.78	0.61	1825	1.67	.218
Conscientiousness +	Dependable	L1 – L2	5.16	1.18	1826	7.22	< .001
	Self-disciplined	L1 – L2	4.99	1.32	1826	6.08	< .001
Emotional Stability +	Calm	L1 – L2	3.72	0.75	1826	6.47	< .001
	Emotionally stable	L1 – L2	3.78	0.92	1826	5.48	< .001
Agreeableness -	Quarrelsome	L1 – L2	0.25	0.08	1826	-4.57	< .001
Conscientiousness -	Disorganized	L1 – L2	0.12	0.05	1826	-5.07	< .001
	Careless	L1 – L2	0.09	0.04	1826	-5.26	< .001
Emotional Stability -	Anxious	L1 – L2	0.23	0.09	1826	-3.90	< .001
	Easily upset	L1 – L2	0.21	0.07	1826	-4.54	< .001

Table 28: Contrasts for levels of significant fixed effects for personality items

Across the 10 descriptors, those belonging to the positive personality dimensions (*Warm*, *Dependable*, *Self-disciplined*, *Calm*, *Emotionally stable*) were less likely to be selected for L2 English speakers relative to L1 English speakers. In contrast, all the items belonging to the negative personality dimensions (*Quarrelsome*, *Disorganized*, *Careless*, *Anxious*, *Easily upset*) were more likely to be selected for L2 English speakers relative to L1 English speakers. This is evident from the estimated probabilities in Table 27 and the odds ratios for L1 and L2 English in Table 28, for which all the positive personality items were >1 and the negative personality items were <1. This reflects L1 English speakers' higher odds of having personality items for the positive dimensions, and lower odds for the negative dimensions. With the exception of the descriptor *Warm*, the contrasts between L1 and L2 English speakers for the

aforementioned personality descriptors were significant. In terms of Ethnicity for *Warm*, Indian speakers had the highest probability of having *Warm* selected, followed by Malay and Chinese speakers. However, as seen in the level contrasts presented in Table 28, the level differences for *Warm* for both Ethnicity ($p = .159$ for Chinese-Indian, $.985$ for Chinese-Malay, $.218$ for Indian-Malay) and English Language ($p = .060$ for L1-L2) were not significant.

In summary, English Language had significant effects on whether the personality descriptors were selected for all the positive and negative items in the dimensions Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability, and one positive and one negative item in the dimension Agreeableness. Ethnicity had a significant effect only for *Warm* in the dimension Agreeableness, but no significant level contrasts. Age had no significant effects on any of the descriptors. The effect of English Language was the greatest and most salient trend, with L1 English speakers significantly more associated with the four positive personality descriptors: *Dependable* and *Self-disciplined* from the Conscientiousness dimension, and *Calm* and *Emotionally stable* from the Emotional Stability dimension. In contrast, L2 English speakers were significantly more associated with five negative personality descriptors: *Quarrelsome* from the Agreeableness dimension, *Disorganized* and *Careless* from the Conscientiousness dimension, and *Anxious* and *Easily upset* from the Emotional Stability dimension.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS – SSE AND WSE DIMENSIONS

The last 17 questionnaire items are based on the dimensions of WSE and SSE derived from past literature. Their analysis aims to shed light on the dimensions that make SSE standard and the factors that make SSE Singaporean, as well as the speaker-inherent factors that motivate different beliefs along these lines. The next seven sub-sections discuss the results for each item in terms effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, thus contributing to an overall perception of “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness” of SSE.

A final sub-section in this chapter contrasts key “standard” and “Singaporean” items for a focused perspective on the relationship between sounding “standard” and sounding “Singaporean”. For the latter, two items, “This speaker is Singaporean” and “This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English”, were tested for an additional factor of perceived ethnicity of the speaker to examine the extent to which ethnic perceptions influence how Singaporean one is perceived to be, in light of the significance of ethnicity in multi-racial Singapore (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008; Liu et al., 2002). Perceived ethnicity was not tested for the other items, for which only absolute qualities inherent to each speaker (Age, Ethnicity, English Language) were investigated rather than perceptual-based factors. This is because this research does not aim to delve deep into the complexity of ethnicity perceptions. Ethnic identity and its implications on perceived “standard-ness” and national identity are considered in Chapter 7.

The results discussed below are grouped by the dimensions from which each item is derived, in the following order: Uniformity, Internationalism, Phonology, Ownership, Correctness, Education and prestige, Formality, and overall “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”.

6.1 Uniformity

Statement 1: This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.

The first item of the 17 items based on SSE and WSE dimensions is the WSE-winged statement “This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally”, $M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.19$. After speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language were tested for significance, only English Language was found to have a significant effect on ratings for this item, $F(1,10.28) = 29.98$, $p < .001$.

To compare the ratings given to L1 and L2 English speakers, mean ratings for L1 and L2 English speakers for this item were estimated and are shown in Figure 29 below. There was a significant drop of 1.27 in mean speaker ratings from L1 to L2 English speakers ($p < .001$). The mean rating for L1 English speakers, 3.44, 95% CI [3.07, 3.80], was significantly higher than that for L2 English speakers, 2.17, 95% CI [1.80, 2.53] (Table 29, Figure 7).

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.44	0.17	10.6	3.07	3.80
L2	2.17	0.17	10.8	1.80	2.53

Table 29: Estimated marginal means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for “This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.”

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> ratio	<i>p</i>
L1 - L2	1.27	0.23	10.3	5.48	< .001

Table 30: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method ,for “This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.”

Figure 7: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for English Language levels for “This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.”

Statement 2: This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA.

The SSE-winged item under Uniformity is “This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA”, $M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.22$. Similar to its WSE-winged counterpart, this item also saw a significant effect of English Language on ratings, $F(1, 10.25) = 21.07$, $p < .001$. As can be seen from the contrasts between mean ratings received by L1 and L2 English speakers shown in Table 32, ratings for L2 speakers were again significantly lower than that for L1 speakers, with a drop in mean ratings of 1.22 ($p < .001$) from L1 to L2 English speakers.

L1 English speakers' mean rating of 3.14, 95% CI [2.72, 3.56] was markedly higher than the mean rating received by L2 English speakers at 1.92, 95% CI [1.50, 2.34] (Table 31, Figure 8).

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.14	0.19	10.7	2.72	3.56
L2	1.92	0.19	10.6	1.50	2.34

Table 31: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.22	0.27	10.2	4.59	<.001

Table 32: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA."

Figure 8: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for English Language levels for "This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA."

6.2 Internationalism

Statement 3: I cannot identify which country this speaker is from.

This sub-section discusses the Internationalism dimension, beginning with the WSE-winged statement "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from", $M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.05$. Following analyses of the fixed effects of Age, Ethnicity and English Language, Age was found to be the only significant fixed effect, $F(1,10) = 7.52$, $p = .021$. This is a unique finding; the item "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from" is the only one out of the 29 in the questionnaire to show a significant effect of Age on participants' responses. Ethnicity and English Language were not found to have a significant effect on ratings for this item, although the latter was marginally significant $F(1,6.97) = 4.63$, $p = .069$.

Examining the Old and Young age groups, there was a fall of 0.52 in mean ratings for speakers in the Young age group relative to those in the Old age group (Table 34). As can be seen in the estimated means in Table 33 and represented also in Figure 9, older speakers received mean ratings of 2.86, 95% CI [2.56, 3.17], while younger speakers received lower mean ratings of 2.34, 95% CI [2.03, 2.64]. This difference was statistically significant ($p = .021$) (Table 34).

Age Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
Old	2.86	0.14	11	2.56	3.17
Young	2.34	0.14	11	2.03	2.64

Table 33: Estimated marginal means and contrasts for levels of fixed effect of Age, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
Old - Young	0.52	0.19	10	2.74	.021

Table 34: Estimated marginal means and contrasts for levels of fixed effect of Age, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from."

Figure 9: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for Age levels for "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from."

Statement 4: People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English.

The second item in the Internationalism dimension is SSE-winged: "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English", $M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.11$. Unlike the WSE-winged item in this dimension previously discussed, Age did not have a significant effect on Likert ratings. Significance testing of the fixed effects revealed only English Language had a significant effect on ratings, $F(1, 10.6) = 50.9$, $p < .001$. As indicated by the contrast estimate in Table 36, there was a fall in mean ratings of 1.24 for L2 English speakers relative to L1 English speakers. L1 English speakers received significantly higher ratings of 4.15, 95% CI [3.88,

4.42] compared to that for L2 English speakers at 2.90, 95% CI [2.63, 3.18] ($p < .001$) (Table 35, Figure 10).

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	4.15	0.12	10.3	3.88	4.42
L2	2.90	0.13	11.9	2.63	3.18

Table 35: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.24	0.17	10.6	7.14	< .001

Table 36: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English."

Figure 10: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for English Language levels for "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English."

6.3 Phonology

Statement 5: This speaker has a standard accent of English.

The Phonology dimension comprises two items and shares its third with the Ownership dimension. The first Phonology item is the WSE-winged statement "This speaker has a standard accent of English", $M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.13$. Significance testing showed that among speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, English Language was the only significant fixed effect, $F(1,10.6) = 57.2$, $p < .001$. Estimated marginal means of the ratings for the levels within English Language (L1 and L2) are presented in Table 37, with level contrasts shown in Table 38 and a plot of the adjusted means and confidence limits in Figure 11. As the contrast estimate in Table 38 shows, there was a significant drop in mean ratings of 1.26 for L2 English speakers compared to L1 English speakers ($p < .001$). L1 English speakers received mean ratings of 3.62, 95% CI [3.36, 3.88], which was significantly higher than that for L2 English speakers, who received an average rating of 2.36, 95% CI [2.10, 2.63].

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.62	0.12	10.8	3.36	3.88
L2	2.36	0.12	12.1	2.10	2.63

Table 37: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker has a standard accent of English."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.26	0.17	10.6	7.57	< .001

Table 38: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker has a standard accent of English."

Figure 11: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for English Language levels for "This speaker has a standard accent of English."

Statement 6: "This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English."

The second item in the Phonology dimension is the SSE-winged statement "This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English", $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.17$. Significance testing of the fixed effects showed none was significant at the 95% confidence level: speaker Age, $F(1, 7.00) = 1.56$, $p = .252$; Ethnicity, $F(2, 7.00) = 0.12$, $p = .890$; and English Language, $F(1, 7.00) = 0.25$, $p = .634$. There was a slight, but not significant increase in mean ratings from older to younger speakers ($p = .252$) and from L1 to L2 speakers ($p = .633$), and a small, also not significant decrease for Indian ($p = .643$) and Malay ($p = .789$) speakers compared to Chinese ones. Due to a lack of

statistical significance for any fixed effect, estimated marginal means were not calculated for this item. Perceived ethnicity was an additional effect tested for this item, the results of which are examined in Section 6.8 of this chapter.

Statement 7: This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.

The final item under Phonology, also under the next dimension of Ownership, examined how inauthentic speakers were perceived to be: "This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own", $M = 2.59$, $SD = 1.10$. Similar to the previous item, significance testing showed no fixed effects were significant among the three tested: Age, $F(1,7.01) = 0.96$, $p = .360$; Ethnicity, $F(2,7.01) = 0.28$, $p = .760$; and English Language, $F(1,7.00) = 1.46$, $p = .266$. Although there was a fall in ratings for speakers in the Young, Indian, Malay and L2 English groups relative to the Old, Chinese, L1 English baseline, the high p values for Age: Young ($p = .360$), Ethnicity: Indian ($p = .499$), Ethnicity: Malay ($p = .892$) and English Language: L2 ($p = .266$) indicated low statistical significance. Due to the lack of significance for any fixed effect, estimated marginal means were not calculated.

6.4 Ownership

Statement 8: "This speaker is a native English speaker."

The dimension of Ownership comprises one WSE-winged item and one SSE-winged item. This analysis begins with the WSE-winged item, "This speaker is a native English speaker", $M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.17$. For this item's ratings, only English Language was found to have a significant effect, $F(1,10.4) = 41$, $p < .001$. Similar to the other items in this chapter that have shown a significant effect of English Language, L1 English speakers fared better than L2 English

speakers. There was a significant drop of 1.19 in mean ratings received by L2 English speakers compared to that for L1 English speakers ($p < .001$), as can be seen from the contrast estimate in Table 40. Table 39 shows the estimated marginal means for the levels of English Language and their confidence limits, also represented graphically in Figure 12. These show the mean rating for L1 English speakers was higher at 3.82, 95% CI [3.52, 4.11], compared to that for L2 English speakers at 2.63, 95% CI [2.33, 2.92].

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.82	0.13	11.0	3.52	4.11
L2	2.63	0.14	11.8	2.33	2.92

Table 39: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker is a native English speaker."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.19	0.19	10.4	6.40	< .001

Table 40: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker is a native English speaker."

Figure 12: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker is a native English speaker.”

Statement 9: This speaker is Singaporean.

The SSE-winged item in the Ownership dimension examined how Singaporean speakers were perceived to be: “This speaker is Singaporean”, $M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.98$. Unlike this item’s WSE-winged counterpart in the Ownership dimension, none of the fixed effects was significant at the 95% confidence level: Age, $F(1,7.00) = 1.27$, $p = .298$; Ethnicity, $F(2,7.00) = 0.07$, $p = .933$; and English Language, $F(1,7.00) = 0.20$, $p = .671$. A slight, non-significant fall in ratings was also observed for L2 speakers relative to L1 speakers ($p = .671$), and for Malay ($p = .884$) and Indian ($p = .721$) speakers relative to Chinese ones. There was also a small increase in ratings for younger speakers relative to older ones, although this was also not significant ($p = .296$). Marginal means for the levels of the fixed effects were not estimated due to the lack of statistical significance for any of the fixed effects to justify further analysis. A fourth effect of perceived ethnicity was tested for this item, the results of which are examined in Section 6.8 of this chapter.

6.5 Correctness

Statement 10: This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.

Within the dimension of Correctness, three items are investigated. The first is the WSE-winged statement “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world”, $M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.19$, examining the speaker’s fit for educational models internationally. Following significance testing, the only significant fixed effect found was that of English Language, $F(1,10.3) = 34.7$, $p < .001$. As indicated by the contrast estimate in Table 42, there was a decrease of 1.39 in mean ratings given to L2 English speakers relative to ratings for L1 English speakers. Taking random effects into account, the levels of English Language were investigated further using by estimating the marginal means for L1 and L2 levels (Table 41), a plot for which is given in Figure 13. L1 English speakers received significantly higher mean ratings of 3.56, 95% CI [3.19, 3.93] compared to that for L2 English speakers at 2.17, 95% CI [1.80, 2.54] ($p < .001$). This shows that the speech of L1 English speakers is perceived to be significantly better suited for international models of English than that of L2 English speakers.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.56	0.17	10.4	3.19	3.93
L2	2.17	0.17	10.8	1.80	2.54

Table 41: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.”

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.39	0.24	10.3	5.89	< .001

Table 42: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.”

Figure 13: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.”

Statement 11: This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore.

The second item in the Education dimension is SSE-winged and examines the speaker’s fit for local educational models: “This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore”, $M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.19$. Results were similar to the item’s WSE-winged counterpart. Among the fixed effects of Age, Ethnicity and English Language, only English Language had a significant effect on ratings, $F(1,10.7) = 64$, $p < .001$ (Table 79). Examining the

estimated means for L1 and L2 English speakers (Table 43 and Figure 14), L1 English speakers received significantly higher mean ratings of 3.73, 95% CI [3.44, 4.02] compared to 2.26, 95% CI [1.97, 2.55] for L2 English speakers ($p < .001$) (Table 43). As indicated by contrast estimate in Table 44, the difference in mean ratings was 1.47 between L1 and L2 English speakers. This shows that the speech of L1 English speakers is viewed as significantly more acceptable as an educational model locally – just as it is internationally, as seen from the findings from the previous WSE-winged statement.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.73	0.13	10.6	3.44	4.02
L2	2.26	0.13	11.3	1.97	2.55

Table 43: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.47	0.18	10.7	8	< .001

Table 44: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore."

Figure 14: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for "This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore."

Statement 12: "This speaker is speaking correct English."

The third and final item for the dimension of Correctness is derived from both WSE and SSE, asking participants to respond to the statement "This speaker is speaking correct English", $M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.02$. English Language of the speaker was found to have a significant effect perceived correctness, $F(1, 10.4) = 17.3$, $p = .002$. The contrast between the L1 and L2 English levels was investigated further by estimating the levels' marginal means (Table 45) and level contrasts (Table 46), with the adjusted means and confidence limits plotted in Figure 15. As indicated by the contrast estimate in Table 46, there was a fall of 0.83 in mean ratings for L2 English speakers relative to L1 English speakers. This difference was statistically significant ($p = .002$). L1 English speakers received mean ratings of 4.00, 95% CI [3.69, 4.31], markedly higher than that for L2 English speakers, 3.17, 95% CI [2.86, 3.49] (Table 45). This shows that L1 English speakers are perceived to speak significantly more correct English than L2 English speakers.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	4.00	0.14	10.3	3.69	4.31
L2	3.17	0.14	11.5	2.86	3.49

Table 45: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for " This speaker is speaking correct English."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	0.83	0.20	10.4	4.16	.002

Table 46: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for " This speaker is speaking correct English."

Figure 15: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for "This speaker is speaking correct English."

6.6 Education and prestige

Statement 13: This speaker is educated.

The first item of this dimension examines perceived education level, while the second explores perceived prestige. The former item is worded as the statement, "This speaker is educated", $M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.80$. Similar to the findings of majority of the statements in this chapter, among all fixed effects entered, only English Language had a significant effect on ratings, $F(1, 10.4) = 21.3$, $p < .001$. English L2 speakers were rated lower than L1 English speakers by 0.72 on average, as seen in the English L1 and L2 contrast in Table 48. This difference in ratings was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level ($p < .001$). L1 English speakers received higher mean ratings of 4.10, 95% CI [3.85, 4.34] compared with that for L2 English speakers, 3.38. 95% CI [3.14, 3.63] (Table 47, Figure 16), indicating that L1 English is a significant factor for sounding educated.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	4.10	0.11	10.6	3.85	4.34
L2	3.38	0.11	11.1	3.14	3.63

Table 47: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker is educated."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	0.72	0.16	10.3	4.62	< .001

Table 48: Contrast for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker is educated."

Figure 16: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for "This speaker is educated."

Statement 14: This speaker's English sounds prestigious.

The second item in this dimension examines perceived prestige: "This speaker's English sounds prestigious", $M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.15$. The mean for this statement is lower than that for the previous statement on perceived education level, suggesting that, although related, prestige is harder to demonstrate through speech than educational attainment.

Among the fixed effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, English Language was once again found to be the only significant fixed effect, $F(1, 10.3) = 21.5$, $p < .001$. There was a large, significant drop of 1.23 in mean ratings for L2 English speakers compared to L1 English speakers, as seen in the English Language level contrasts in Table 50 ($p < .001$). L1 English speakers received mean ratings of 3.41, 95% CI [2.99, 3.83], compared with that for L2 English speakers, 2.18, 95% CI [1.76, 2.60] (Table 49, Figure 17). Although ratings for this item on perceived prestige were overall lower than that for the previous item on perceived education

level, results for both items were similar in that there was a main effect of English Language of the speaker, with higher ratings predicted by L1 English.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% confidence interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.41	0.19	10.5	2.99	3.83
L2	2.18	0.19	10.4	1.76	2.60

Table 49: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for “This speaker's English sounds prestigious.”

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.23	0.27	10.3	4.63	<.001

Table 50: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for “This speaker's English sounds prestigious.”

Figure 17: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker's English sounds prestigious.”

6.7 Formality

Statement 15: This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.

The Formality dimension comprises two items; the first is elicits responses on formality and stiffness, while the second is contextually framed in terms of situational formality. The first item is worded as the statement, “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff”, $M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.07$. Among the three fixed effects tested, only English Language had a significant effect on ratings at the 95% confidence level, $F(1, 10.9) = 10.2$, $p = .009$. The means for English L1 and L2 were estimated for further analysis and showed that L1 English speakers received significantly higher mean ratings of 3.17, 95% CI [2.96, 3.38] compared to 2.75, 95% CI [2.54, 2.96] for L2 English speakers (Table 51, Figure 18). The difference in mean ratings of 0.42 between L2 English speakers and L1 English speakers was significant ($p = .009$) (Table 52). On the whole, statistical analyses of this item show that L1 English speakers are perceived as significantly more formal than L2 English speakers, even to the point of stiffness.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.17	0.09	11.7	2.96	3.38
L2	2.75	0.09	11.6	2.54	2.96

Table 51: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.”

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	0.42	0.13	10.9	3.20	.009

Table 52: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.”

Figure 18: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.”

Statement 16: This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.

The second item in the Formality dimension investigated the appropriateness of the speakers' speech to formal and informal contexts: “This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings”, $M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.16$. Taking the confidence level at 95%, among speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, only English Language was found to have a significant effect on ratings for this item $F(1, 10.4) = 23.5$, $p < .001$. Comparing L1 and L2 English speakers, L2 English speakers received significantly lower

ratings than L1 English speakers, with a mean difference of 1.09 ($p < .001$) (Table 54). L1 English speakers received mean ratings of 3.75, 95% CI [3.40, 4.10], much higher than that for L2 English speakers at 2.66, 95% CI [2.30, 3.01] (Table 53, Figure 19). Results from this item echo results from the previous item in the dimension of Formality, and suggest that L1 English is a significant predictor for speaking English deemed fit for formal contexts.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	3.75	0.16	10.4	3.40	4.10
L2	2.66	0.16	11.1	2.30	3.01

Table 53: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for "This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings."

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	1.09	0.22	10.4	4.85	< .001

Table 54: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for "This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings."

Figure 19: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.”

6.8 Comparing “Standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”

Statement 17: This speaker is speaking Standard English.

The final item among the statements that were based on WSE and SSE dimensions asked participants to rate how standard the speaker’s English sounded on the whole: “This speaker is speaking Standard English”, $M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.00$. Similar to the results for the majority of the items based on WSE and SSE dimensions, only English Language had a significant effect on ratings, $F(1, 11) = 30.7$, $p < .001$. Comparing L1 English speakers and L2 English speakers, the former received significantly lower ratings by an average of 0.86 ($p < .001$), as indicated by L1-L2 contrast estimate in Table 56. As can be seen in the estimated marginal means in Table 55 and represented also in Figure 20, L1 English speakers received a higher mean rating of 4.00, 95% CI [3.76, 4.24], compared to L2 English speakers at 3.14, 95% CI [2.89, 3.39]. This indicates that overall, L1 English speakers are perceived as significantly more standard than L2 English speakers.

English Language Level	Estimated marginal mean	Std. Error	df	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
L1	4.00	0.11	10.5	3.76	4.24
L2	3.14	0.12	13.2	2.89	3.39

Table 55: Adjusted means for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method and at 95% CI, for “This speaker is speaking Standard English.”

Contrast	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t ratio	p
L1 - L2	0.86	0.16	11	5.54	< .001

Table 56: Contrasts for levels of fixed effect of English Language, with Satterthwaite's method, for “This speaker is speaking Standard English.”

Figure 20: Estimated marginal means and confidence limits for levels of English Language for “This speaker is speaking Standard English.”

Examining the highest and lowest rated speakers for “This speaker is speaking Standard English”, the six highest rated are all L1 speakers. In particular, the two highest are OM1 ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.56$) and OC1 ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.62$) – the two speakers out of the 12 in the study who are English news presenters at a local radio news station. In contrast, the six lowest rated speakers for speaking Standard English were all L2 English speakers, the lowest two being YC2 ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.14$) and OC2 ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.08$) (See Appendix E for full list of speaker means and standard deviations).

To compare perceived overall “standardness” and overall “Singaporean-ness”, items that used the word “standard” and “Singaporean” respectively were assessed together – these being the items that alluded directly to Standard English or the idea of being or sounding Singaporean. A graphical representation of ratings given to each speaker for these items is shown in Figure 21, in the form of stacked percentage bar charts for Likert ratings for the items “Standard English”, “standard accent”, “Singaporean” and “Singaporean accent”.

Figure 21: Percentage stacked bar charts for “Singaporean”, “Standard English”, “Singaporean accent” and “standard accent”.

For “standardness”, the item “This speaker is speaking Standard English” was considered with its phonological counterpart, “This speaker has a standard accent of English”. Both showed similar results. Firstly, L1 English speakers received significantly higher mean ratings than L2 English speakers, with a contrast between L1 and L2 English speakers of 0.86 ($p < .001$) for speaking “Standard English” and 1.26 ($p < .001$) for speaking with a “standard accent”. Secondly, the highest two rated speakers, OM1 ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.77$) and OC1 ($M = 3.82$, SD

= 0.86), and lowest two rated speakers, OC2 ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 0.86$) and YC2 ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.90$), for speaking with a “standard accent” were the same as those for speaking “Standard English” highlighted previously.

Similarly, “This speaker is Singaporean” and “This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English” were examined together to assess overall “Singaporean-ness”. Both statements did not show any effects due to speaker Age, Ethnicity or English Language of the speaker; none of these fixed effects affects how Singaporean they sound. Looking at highest and lowest ratings, YC1 was the top ranked Singaporean speaker for both being “Singaporean” ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.63$) and speaking with a “Singaporean accent” ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.78$). Interestingly, the lowest two rated for being “Singaporean” were L2 English speakers, YM2 ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.89$) and OC2 ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.09$), while the lowest two rated for “Singaporean accent” were L1 English speakers, OC1 ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.10$) and OM1 at ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.07$). The latter two were also the highest rated for speaking Standard English and having a standard accent.

To evaluate the association between how standard and how Singaporean speakers were perceived to be, ratings were compared for “Standard English” and “Singaporean”, as well as for “standard accent” and “Singaporean accent” respectively. First, the “Singaporean” items were tested for their influence on the “Standard” items, alongside the previously used fixed effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language. Following this, the “standard” items were tested for their influence on the “Singaporean” items, inclusive of the fixed effects of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, but also with an additional fixed effect for perceived ethnicity.

Looking first at the “standard” items, “This speaker is speaking Standard English”, the item “This speaker is Singaporean” was a marginally significant predictor, $F(1, 1699) = 3.33, p = .068$, with an estimate coefficient of 0.04 for the “Singaporean” parameter indicating a positive association. Similar to the model run with only Age, English Language and Ethnicity as fixed effects, English Language remained the most significant fixed effect, $F(1, 11) = 30.69, p < .001$, with a contrast estimate of -0.86 for English Language L2 indicating that L2 English speakers were perceived as less standard.

Turning to the phonological “standard” item, “This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English” was not a significant predictor for “This speaker has a standard accent of English”, $F(1, 1715) = 1.28, p = .258$. The estimate coefficient of 0.02 for the “Singaporean accent” parameter also indicated a very small effect of “Singaporean accent” on ratings for “standard accent”. English Language was again the most significant fixed effect, $F(1, 10.62) = 57.24, p < .001$, with a contrast estimate of -1.26 for English Language L2 indicating that L2 English speakers were perceived to have a less standard accent.

On the whole, the speakers’ English Language remains the main predictor of perceived “standardness”. Being perceived as Singaporean only had a marginally significant positive effect on perceptions of Standard English in general, while phonologically, having a “Singaporean” accent did not significantly correlate with having a “standard” accent.

Next, the “Singaporean” items were evaluated with the “Standard English” items as additional fixed effects. Due to the importance of ethnic identity in relation to the Singaporean identity (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008; Liu et al., 2002), the fixed effect of perceived ethnicity was also tested

for the two “Singaporean” items. Significance testing showed “Standard English” was a significant predictor for “Singaporean”, $F(1, 1578.3) = 8.12, p = .004$, with a contrast estimate of 0.06 indicating a positive relationship with “Singaporean”. Perceived ethnicity had a highly significant effect on “Singaporean” ratings, $F(6, 1544.9) = 60.97, p < .001$, while Age, $F(1, 7.03) = 0.26, p = .624$, Ethnicity, $F(2, 7.15) = 0.02, p = .979$, and English Language, $F(1, 7.43) = 1.43, p = .268$, were not significant fixed effects for “Singaporean” ratings.

Looking at the phonological “Singaporean” item, “Singaporean accent” was significantly predicted by “standard accent”, $F(1, 480.56) = 7.22, p = .007$, with a contrast estimate of 0.08 indicating a positive relationship. Perceived ethnicity also had a significant effect on “Singaporean accent”, $F(1, 1617.19) = 24.01, p < .001$, while Age, $F(1, 6.97) = 0.99, p = .352$, Ethnicity, $F(2, 7.07) = 0.02, p = .981$, and English Language, $F(1, 7.32) = 0.17, p = .691$, were not significant fixed effects.

Owing to the high significance of perceived ethnicity on ratings for the “Singaporean” items, estimated marginal means for each perceived ethnicity level were calculated for “Singaporean” ratings (Figure 22) and “Singaporean accent” ratings (Figure 23).

Figure 22: Estimated marginal means of perceived ethnicity levels for “This speaker is Singaporean” ratings

Figure 23: Estimated marginal means of perceived ethnicity levels for “This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English” ratings

Although means for the “Singaporean accent” ratings have a slightly wider spread, both showed similar trends². The most stark observation is “European/White” having the lowest mean ratings, markedly lower than all other ethnicities for both “Singaporean”, 2.27 , 95% CI [1.99, 2.54], and “Singaporean accent”, 2.16 , 95% CI [1.8, 2.52]. For both ratings, all ethnicity level contrasts with European/White were highly significant, $ps < .001$.

Chinese, Malay and Indian ethnicities were highest rated for sounding Singaporean and having a Singaporean accent. For “Singaporean”, the contrasts between Indian and Chinese ($p < .001$) and Indian and Malay ($p = .004$) were significant, while that for Chinese and Malay was not ($p = .997$). This suggests that speakers predicted to be Chinese or Malay were perceived to be significantly more Singaporean than speakers predicted to be Indian. For “Singaporean accent”, all contrast pairs for the three ethnicities were not significant at the 95% confidence level: Chinese and Indian ($p = .107$); Indian and Malay ($p = .300$); Chinese and Malay ($p > .999$). The next highest means belonged to the option “I cannot identify the ethnicity” and Eurasian, although the contrasts between these two were not significant for both “Singaporean” ($p = .996$) and “Singaporean accent” ($p = .998$). Mean ratings for the option “I cannot identify the ethnicity” also did not contrast significantly with mean ratings for the highest level following it, Indian, for both “Singaporean” ($p = .573$) and “Singaporean accent” ($p = .966$).

On the whole, evaluating the “Singaporean” and “Singaporean accent” data with the “Standard English” and ethnicity predictions data reveals three key observations. Firstly, there

² The option “Other” is not discussed due to a low number of occurrences in the data.

is a significant positive effect of being perceived to speak Standard English on being perceived to be Singaporean ($p = .004$) and have a Singaporean accent ($p = .007$). Secondly, there is a significant negative association between being perceived to be European/White and being perceived to be Singaporean and have a Singaporean accent ($ps < .001$). Finally, the ethnicities perceived to be most Singaporean and speak with the most Singaporean accent are the three main ethnic groups in Singapore: Chinese, Malay and Indian.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

Consolidating the results from the Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive components of the survey, this section summarises key findings and how they answer the research question and aims. This thesis began by asking how Singaporeans construct SSE in terms of ideological “standardness” and “Singaporean-ness”, and did so by investigating the dimensions that make SSE standard, the features that make SSE Singaporean, and the relationship between ‘standardness’ and ‘Singaporean-ness’.

The questionnaire designed looked at three components. The Affective component explored emotions and sentiments felt in response to the twelve samples of read Standard English. The Behavioural component asked participants to make hiring decisions on what and where to hire the speaker, and elicited responses on behavioural intent to speak like the speaker. Finally, the Cognitive component investigated perceived speaker personality, perceived speaker ethnicity and participants’ agreements with 17 statements based on seven dimensions identified from the WSE and SSE literature: Uniformity, Internationalism, Phonology, Ownership, Correctness, Education and Prestige, and Formality.

Drawing from data from all three questionnaire components, this chapter will first examine the factors that make SSE standard followed by the features that make SSE Singaporean.

7.1 How is SSE standard?

The most important predictor for sounding standard across the Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive components was having L1 English – in other words, English being one’s native

tongue. Indeed, L1 English speakers also received higher mean ratings than L2 English speakers for the statement “This speaker is a native English speaker.” At this juncture, it is imperative to dissect what we mean by “native speaker” of English. Does this refer to an individual whose first language is English, or does the term call to mind the traditional owners of English in the Inner Circles (Kachru, 1985), such as the UK or US?

The study results seem to suggest both hold true. On one hand, the sense of the “native” that contributes to a perception of Standard English appears to be borne of a factor inherent to the speaker – L1 English. This is evident from the finding that L1 English speakers received higher ratings than L2 English speakers for the majority of the items assessing dimensions of standardness. On the other hand, the study results also suggest that it is a purely cognitive concept of “native” in the minds of hearers that allows a speaker to give off the impression of standardness. This is an exonormative conception of the “native” English speaker that assumes Kachru’s (1985) Inner Circle Englishes as the native model to base judgments on, evident from the Uniformity dimension data and the ethnicity prediction results. Participants showed strong agreement for L1 English speakers not just as exemplary of Standard English out of the UK and US, but also more generally Standard English of the World. In other words, UK and US Standard English is perceived as just as standard as a universal concept of Standard English fit for the world stage. This illustrates the unique position of the UK and US Standard Englishes – identifiably British and American, yet also global enough to be understood and recognized worldwide as World Standard English (Crystal, 2003; McArthur, 2003). Similarly, the ethnicity prediction results showed L1 English speakers have more ambiguous ethnicities than L2 English speakers and sound less Asian. Not only were the ethnicities of L2 English speakers accurately predicted approximately six times more frequently than that for L1

English speakers, but the speakers perceived to have the most indeterminate ethnicities were also all L1 English speakers – OC1, OI1 and OM1, who were also evaluated as the most standard sounding speakers of all presented. This parallels the finding that L1 English speakers are the best examples of a general Standard English of the World that is not specified to any particular country or region. At the same time, the L1 English speakers OC1, OI1 and OM1 sounded the most Eurasian or European/White, echoing the finding that L1 English speakers are the best examples of Standard English from the UK or USA.

This study's results suggest that at least at the level of social perception, the concept of Standard English is closely associated with Standard English of the UK and US, if not equitable. This also points to another important finding – Standard English is localisable. Some argue that Standard English “is not associated with any particular locality, and therefore occurs in any and every locality with very little variation” (Strevens, 1981, p. 4). However, this study's results suggest otherwise. The item “I cannot identify where this speaker is from” did not show any effect of L1 English, which was found to be the primary factor for being perceived as standard. Thus, contrary to arguments that the inability to localise Standard English is one of its defining features, results from this study suggest that a lack of localisability could make one's speech sound *less* standard. The notion of the “native speaker” situates Standard English in the Inner Circles of English, and a lack of such traceability diminishes standardness.

Compared to English L2 English speakers, L1 English speakers succeeded in sounding more standard along numerous dimensions. As previously mentioned, the speech of Singaporean L1 English speakers is more readily accepted as an example of Standard English in the context of the UK, USA as well as the world at large, pulled towards greater similarity with established

UK and US varieties by the demands of international intelligibility (Crystal, 2003). This is perhaps also why survey respondents judged L1 English speakers as more effectively understood outside of Singapore than L2 English speakers. Yet in practice, following Inner Circle English norms is not necessary for intelligibility; Singapore English has been found to be just as intelligible as American English by both English speakers in South East Asia and traditional speakers of the Inner Circle English varieties (Tan & Castelli, 2013). Defaulting to the traditional strands of American and British Standard English is not a requisite to be understood in the world, and instead belies a deep-rooted linguistic insecurity associated with non-traditional native Englishes.

The false equation of exonormative standards with international intelligibility is motivated by perception and belief – or rather, a *lack* of belief in the legitimacy of traditionally non-native English varieties such as Singapore English. The traditional forms of Standard English, the UK and US strands, remain the varieties most highly prized, idealised and sought after as the English varieties of status, education and prestige. As this study's results show, the speech of L1 English speakers is perceived as better emulations of British and American Standard English varieties, more educated and more prestigious. This accords their speech with more respect and social utility (Bex & Watts, 1999; McArthur, 1992), granting it access for use in formal settings and as a model for learning English both locally in Singapore and overseas. We can thus see how notions of correctness, prestige, and formality are all tied to the core belief that exonormative standards are superior, which I argue is the foundational mindset that informs hearers' perceptions and acceptance of Singapore English in any form. The closer SSE gets to British or American Standard English, the more legitimate it becomes in the minds of its users.

The outward-looking mindset of Singaporeans when it comes to English Language norms is demonstrated in the findings from the Behavioural component of the study. L1 English speakers were more likely selected for international job settings and job types of higher prestige and socioeconomic standing, while L2 English speakers were more likely selected for local job settings and job types of lower prestige. The selection of L1 English speakers for international job settings and alongside more prestigious jobs is not coincidental, and suggests a connection between a sense of internationalism and perceived status and education level of the speaker. Hearers evaluate L1 English speakers as closer to the American or British Standard English ideal, and thus believe in the ability of L1 English speakers' English to cross overseas borders. They then link this perceived ability for international communication with suitability for higher prestige jobs. In contrast, L2 English speakers sound relatively further from the British and American archetypes of Standard English and are thus deemed more suitable for local job settings. The L2 English speakers are then relegated to lower tier jobs, with an overwhelming majority of L2 English speakers being selected for the lowest end job of an F&B service crew member. This job, the most likely choice for L2 English speakers, was at the same time the least probable option for L1 English speakers.

On the whole, the hiring decision results from this study support the notion that the core reason L1 English speakers are perceived as of higher status and more deserving of higher end jobs has to do with associations of prestige and education with an exonormative Standard English. As L1 English speakers in Singapore tend to sound closer to the Inner Circle English varieties, English being one's L1 is an important factor for sounding more educated, recognised as of higher status, and perceived to be overall more "standard". This aligns with past research that found more "standard" speakers were associated with greater competence,

education and prestige (Coupland & Bishop, 2007; Giles et al., 1992; Seggie et al., 1982) and are thus more likely selected for higher status jobs (Giles et al., 1981) and employment training programmes (Seggie et al., 1982). One societal implication of this is the creation of socioeconomic class boundaries based on one's "standard" of English (Alsagoff, 2007). Those who acquired English as their L1 are more likely perceived to speak "good", "standard" English, enabling them to more easily be hired in higher tier sectors, earn more, enjoy greater luxury, and sit comfortably in the upper echelons of society. This leads to a "class divide between the English 'haves' and 'have-nots'" (L. Lim et al., 2010, p. 5) in Singapore, evidence of the interconnectedness between language proficiency, perceptions of social class, prestige, and standardness.

Arguably, the assumed superiority of traditional Inner Circle English varieties and resultant inferiority associated with non-traditional Englishes like SSE is also the underlying reason that L1 English speakers were regarded with more positive affect and judged to have more positive personality traits than L2 English speakers. In terms of affect, L1 English speakers were found to be associated with more positive feelings of admiration, respect, likability, comfortableness, interest, and enjoyment of listening to the speaker than L2 English speakers. As L1 English speakers were also the group evaluated as more standard sounding, this finding is in line with past studies that found Standard English tends to evoke more positive affect than non-standard speech (Cargile & Giles, 1997; Hosoda et al., 2007; Ryan & Bulik, 1982; Sebastian et al., 1980; Stewart et al., 1985). In terms of personality, L1 English speakers were more associated with positive traits across the personality dimensions of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability, corroborating with past research on personality evaluations for a standard variety (Ryan & Carranza, 1975; Seggie et al., 1982). In contrast, L2

English speakers were linked with negative personality traits within the same dimensions. As these speakers were perceived as more deviant from British and American Standard Englishes, this finding is perhaps testament to the sense of linguistic inferiority and insecurity Singaporeans hold towards their own English variety (Foo & Tan, 2019; Tan & Castelli, 2013). With L1 English speakers perceived to have more positive personality traits and invoking more positive affect, it is also no surprise that participants expressed a greater willingness to emulate L1 English speakers over L2 speakers. This is a reflection of an underlying preference for more standard sounding speech, an inclination that originates from an affiliation of the standard variety with status (Cavallaro & Ng, 2009). Standard speech is thus endowed with greater social desirability and instils in hearers a readiness to reproduce a similar form of English.

At the beginning of this section, I identified two symbiotic conceptualisations of the native English speaker: the speaker-inherent feature of L1 English, and the psychogenic situating of the native English speaker in the traditional Inner Circles of English (Kachru, 1985). Reconciling the two, does this mean that L1 English speakers in Singapore are better off, standardness wise, if they closely emulate British and American Standard English? If so, is it still possible to sound both standard and Singaporean? In the next section, I discuss the features that make SSE Singaporean.

7.2 How is SSE Singaporean?

Before we examine the factors that make an SSE speaker sound more Singaporean, it is noteworthy that all speakers were judged to sound authentic. None sounded like they were trying to put on an artificial English accent that was not their own, and each speaker's accent

was perceived to be as natural as any other. Not only did speakers sound authentic, but they were mostly all also perceived to be authentically *Singaporean*. The reported behaviour of participants suggests that almost all the speakers sounded more Singaporean than not – majority of the speakers being selected for jobs in local contexts more often than international ones. This suggests that, other perceptual factors aside, most speakers do sound Singaporean – or at least Singaporean enough to warrant such a choice. The only exceptions were the three older L1 English speakers OC1, OM1 and OI1 – the only speakers chosen for international job settings more often than local ones, and also the three most often predicted to be European/White – the ethnicity with the lowest ratings for sounding Singaporean. This is discussed at greater length in the paragraphs that follow.

This study varied three speaker-inherent factors, speaker Age, Ethnicity and L1 or L2 English, to find out if these influenced affective, behavioural and cognitive responses on evaluations of how standard and how Singaporean speakers sounded. While judgments of standardness proved to be largely influenced by L1 English, perceptions of “Singaporean-ness”, chiefly indicated by results from the “Singaporean” and “Singaporean accent” items, were not dependent on any variables inherent to the speaker and set out in the study design. Instead, perceptions of how Singaporean a speaker sounded were motivated by other perceptual qualities: perceived standardness and perceived ethnic identity.

The finding that standardness evaluations positively affected “Singaporean-ness” ones is important evidence to support the claim that SSE can exist as both standard and Singaporean. Though the Cognitive component items “This speaker is Singaporean” and “This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English” were not significantly influenced by Age, Ethnicity and

English Language, they did show significant effects of the “Standard” items. “Standard English” was a significant predictor for “Singaporean”, while “Standard accent” was a significant predictor for “Singaporean accent”. This evidences that Singaporeans can sound simultaneously Singaporean and standard. These two notions are not mutually exclusive, nor does one hinder the success of the other; in fact, speakers are more likely to sound Singaporean if they sound standard. However, the inverse is not true; “Singaporean accent” was not a significant predictor for “Standard accent”, and “Singaporean” was only marginally significant as a predictor for “Standard English”. For both items on standardness, English Language remained the main predictor.

A second variable was also found to affect the “Singaporean” items – perceived ethnicity. This was tested for significance for the “Singaporean” items due to the close link between ethnic identity and national identity in multiracial and multicultural Singapore (Barr & Skrbis, 2008; Liu et al., 2002). Perceived ethnicity had a significant effect on ratings for both “Singaporean” and “Singaporean accent”, from which emerged two key findings. Firstly, speakers perceived to be European or White sounded the least Singaporean and were perceived to speak with the least Singaporean accent. This may seem at odds with earlier findings: on one hand, speakers perceived as European or White are perceived as the least Singaporean. On the other hand, these same speakers perceived as European or White sound the most standard, which was found to be a significant predictor for sounding Singaporean. The most “standard” speakers, OC1, OM1 and OI1, were also perceived as the least Singaporean. I propose that this could be a reflection of an underlying notion of internationalism, which has different effects on evaluations of standardness and evaluations of “Singaporean-ness”. Being perceived as European or White is connected to speaking Standard English of the UK or US,

which was suggested at the beginning of this chapter to be a manifestation of exonormative standards motivated by international intelligibility. This sense of the international is also what makes speakers perceived as European or White to not sound very Singaporean, but the sense of standardness it invokes sits apart from this association. Outside of perceived internationalism, there could be other more subtle elements to sounding standard that positively influence sounding Singaporean.

The second key finding that emerged from the perceived ethnicity results is that those judged to be Chinese, Malay and Indian sound the most Singaporean and were perceived to have the most Singaporean accent, in the specified order. This has implications on the development of national identity from ethnic identity, as described also in sociological and psychological studies investigating the relationship between the two. Ethnic identity is arguably an increasingly crucial factor in shaping national identity in Singapore, a “multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-lingual secular state that combines a modern concept of citizenship with practices that essentialise and emphasize ethnic identity” (Barr & Skrbish, 2008, p. 4). From their study on social representations of national history and the implications on national and ethnic identity, Liu et al. (2002) found a positive correlation between ethnic identity and national identity in Singapore. Ethnic identity was slightly stronger than national identity across all three major ethnic groups, with the Chinese having the highest levels of both national and ethnic identity. Alongside the Indians, the Chinese were the ethnic group that most preferred to describe themselves with the national label “Singaporean” instead of an ethnic label (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian). Thus, the researchers suggest the Chinese hold “the highest stake in maintaining the national identity of Singapore, and they do so by supporting the official political milieu of multiculturalism” (Liu et al., 2002, p. 18).

The importance of the Chinese ethnic identity for Singapore's national identity is also described by Barr & Skrbiš (1980), who argue that since the 1980s, Singapore has been moving away from a "civic model of nationhood" and toward "a more ethnic-cum-racial form" (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008, p. 5), in which Chinese ethnicity and values, as understood by Singaporeans, are key. They write:

"We suggest that since about 1980, Chinese ethnicity and 'values' have surreptitiously come to occupy a similar place in Singapore society to that which Malay ethnicity occupies openly in Malaysia: it is the bases of full identification with the nation, but allows the other communities to live and prosper in a relatively comfortable communion with the centre." (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008, p. 5)

The present study only reports on the effects of perceptions of ethnic identity for two items in light of the relevance of ethnic identity for the multi-racial and multi-cultural Singaporean identity (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008; Liu et al., 2002), keeping in mind that delving into ethnic perceptions and their implications is not the aim of this study. However, the significance of perceived ethnicity found and its congruence with social psychology studies in the Singapore context (Barr & Skrbiš, 2008; Liu et al., 2002) suggest that this is an area worth exploring. Furthermore, speech perceived as strongly "ethnic" may influence or be influenced by stereotypes. Accents have been found to prompt ethnic stereotypes (Nesdale & Rooney, 1990, 1996) even in children as young as 10 years old, who were influenced by accent ethnicity and accent strength in their evaluations of speakers along scales of status, solidarity and stereotype traits (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996). Context- and situation-specific characteristics like ethnic stereotypes may form part of a language attitude, alongside basic and universal

aspects such as status and solidarity (Ryan, 1979). Ethnic accents may also cue different judgments of the status of the speaker, which in turn affect evaluations of speaker influence and performance (Riches & Foddy, 1989). Hence, the ethnicity prediction item asked in this study could be a springboard for future research to investigate stereotypes and status cues borne of ethnic perceptions, or examine how national identity is affected by perceived ethnic identity, based on speech stimuli.

As this study's speech stimuli content was kept neutral, judgments of how Singaporean speakers sounded were based on phonology. In evaluations of speech, the importance of phonology and accent cannot be understated. From audio cues alone, hearers form impressions of one's social and personal attributes whether they are aware of it or not, making accents robust indicators of identity (Cargile & Giles, 1998; Llurda, 1995; Luk, 1998). Phonology may even rank most important among linguistic cues; in a study that presented undergraduates with videotaped speech samples of non-native teaching assistants and asked them to identify the most salient problematic communication areas, pronunciation emerged top among 12 sub-categories affecting performance. Grammar was in seventh place and vocabulary in eighth (Hinofotis & Bailey, 1981).

Furthermore, in Singapore, the gravity of accent as a defining quality that makes or breaks one's speech is weighted also by rhetoric from the state. Officially speaking, the SGEM accepts a Singaporean accent and even suggests we can own it as part of owning SSE (T. A. Koh, 2007). However, in practice, the state continues to "attack the Singapore accent" (Gupta, 2010, p. 71) in its education materials and media. In its "Content Code For Radio Services", the Infocomm Media Development Authority specifies that news programmes should use

“Standard English” while music and entertainment programmes should use “Local English”, specified as “also grammatically correct but pronounced with a Singaporean accent and which may include local terms and expressions” (Infocomm Media Development Authority, 2020, p. 7). In other words, what sets “Standard English” and “Local English” apart is the use of a Singaporean accent and local lexicon. There is no allowance made to admit the possibility of an English that is both standard and local; once Singaporean phonology and lexical items are included, the standardness is lost and at best, grammatical correctness remains.

The struggle to marry local phonology with grammatically correct English that is seen as standard can be attributed to issues of exonormativity and the continuous variation of the Singapore accent. Future research could benefit from examining these issues to uncover the depth and layers by which such factors influence Singaporeans. The state’s official rationale in promoting Standard English is and has always been international intelligibility for the sake of economic progress, which lies at the core of the SGEM’s rationale (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010; Rubdy, 2010). However, perhaps the message Singaporeans are taking away is one of respectability instead of intelligibility: “Singaporeans, SGEM seems to be suggesting, need to see themselves and be seen as ‘industrious, obliging, and of exemplary character’, and this is incompatible with speaking Singapore English, let alone Singlish” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 96). Indeed, Cavallaro et al. (2014) found that participants were concerned with “projecting a positive image of Singapore internationally” (Cavallaro et al., 2014, p. 393). This is achieved by avoiding SCE, which “ghettoizes its users” (Wee, 2014, p. 92), brands its speakers as second-rate global citizens, and “is considered to be a stumbling block to Singapore’s ability to blend seamlessly into the first world” (Cavallaro & Ng, 2009, p. 146). Over time, this aversion to exposing the world to SCE could have had trickle down effects to incite a general

disinclination towards any “indigenized adaptations” (Bruthiaux, 2010, p. 92) and anything Singaporean, including a Singaporean accent – not the first time anything “Singaporean” has been taken to mean “non-standard” (L. Lim & Foley, 2004).

The issue of confounding international intelligibility with the rejection of local language features is compounded by the difficulty of separating SSE from SCE phonologically. Like both main varieties of Singapore English, the “Singaporean accent” also varies on a continuous spectrum. SSE and SCE are thought to exist on a continuum (Platt, 1975; Platt & Weber, 1980) or be produced with some overlap in conversation (Alsagoff, 2007; Leimgruber, 2011) even if they exist in a diglossic situation (Gupta, 1994). This has relevance phonologically too, resulting in a high degree of internal variation for the Singapore accent. Although all are considered accents of Singapore English, an “SSE accent” differs from an “SCE accent”, with a range of “mixed” accents in between. Bloom (1986) comments that generally, “the Singapore pronunciation is treated as directly derivable from another model of pronunciation, British “RP” as described by Gimson” (p. 426). In particular, the phonology of SSE has on numerous occasions been described with RP as a referent (Bloom, 1986; Deterding, 2005; Tay, 1982). SSE has also been observed as “rather closer to BrE than the colloquial variety” (Deterding, 2001, p. 220) and is almost always linked to international intelligibility (e.g. Alsagoff, 2007, 2010; Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010; Gupta, 2010). In Singapore, international intelligibility remains paramount, and is judged based on exonormative standards. Thus, the state is possibly not trying to “attack” a general Singapore accent, but finds fault only with the accent (or range of accents) more closely associated with SCE, the variety that strays further from Inner Circle norms. The core issue is not intelligibility and perhaps not even respectability (Bruthiaux, 2010), but exonormativity.

We return to a pertinent question on the dichotomy that could make or break the success and acceptance of SSE: “Can [Singapore English] be simultaneously Singaporean enough to inspire national pride, and international enough to keep Singapore in the mainstream of the English speaking world?” (Bloom, 1986, p. 436) This study has shown that native speakers of English in Singapore whose L1 is English fulfil the “international” aspect and are believed, felt and treated as “standard” speakers. However, the same cannot be said for the “Singaporean” part of SSE due to issues of language acceptance and ownership. Ultimately, can Singaporeans own their own Standard English? The odds are against it: the government promotes exonormative English norms, constructs English as solely a pragmatic tool, and denies ownership of English through its bilingual education policy. Singaporeans themselves as “new” native English speakers often feel insecure compared to traditional Inner Circle speakers and think of local Englishes as inferior.

Yet, Singapore has progressed greatly in many areas (C. Lim, 1986), including a standard of English that “has risen steadily since independence, is still rising, and has, for some years, been excellent by any reasonable measures” (Gupta, 2010, p. 75). Although Singapore continues to look exonormatively to British English and the RP accent as superior educational targets to emulate (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2010, 2010; Gupta, 2010), Gupta (2010) argues this was never founded and in modern times has been made redundant: “The world has moved on, and the colonial cringe is over. Singapore is one of the success stories of the world, and can be confident about its English as well as about other areas of its success” (p. 74).

Although we have discussed the impact of the lack of ownership of the “Singaporean-ness” of SSE, it is also important to remember the influence of the other half. Processes of

standardisation on a regional or even global level can shape local acceptance. After all, “in English, usage is all” (Gupta, 2010, p. 66), and the concept of standardness is constructed from the “unclear process of the interaction of the gatekeepers (such as newspapers) with the body of users. Standardness *emerges*; it is not predetermined” (Gupta, 2010, p. 67). In practice, Singapore English is not only as intelligible as an Inner Circle variety (Tan & Castelli, 2013) but is also increasingly well-received internationally. In the voiceover industry for example, the Singaporean English accent has been described as “crisp and easily understood by Asian business leaders who travelled the world” by award-winning sound designer and mixer Kenn Delbridge, who leads top Asian voiceover talent database *voiceovers.asia*. He claims that unlike accents like the Filipino accent which is too easily recognized as from the Philippines, the Singapore accent sounds Asian without sounding identifiably Singaporean. This gives it the potential to be marketed internationally not just while retaining Asian flavour, but specifically because of its Asian sound. This has made it “the go-to accent for Pan-Asian English campaigns” and “one of the most highly desired accents in Asia” (Delbridge, 2019).

A local standard English in Singapore could be accepted if the state moves away from exonormative standards, or if external forces that affirm the worth of SSE to its users legitimise it from outside in. As Singapore English gains more recognition regionally and globally, and Singaporeans continue to participate in “a circularity here that cannot be avoided” (Gupta, 2010, p. 64) between agencies and users, just like the rest of the English-speaking world, larger processes of standardisation could be the next step toward the local ownership and eventual acceptance of SSE. Ultimately, this comes down to the complex interplay between authorities of language, such as publishing houses and makers of dictionaries and grammars, and language users. No single body controls “standardness”; all

are vulnerable to reacting and responding to innovations, and together influence the evolution of what is accepted as SSE. With the usage of English in Singapore on the rise and its acceptance growing in international spheres, it may only be a matter of time before the linguistic insecurity of Singaporeans, whether artificially induced (Foo & Tan, 2019) or innately felt, gives way to acceptance of a standard variety they can call their own.

7.3 Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations to be acknowledged, alongside suggested directions that future research could take. Firstly, the study's design was limited to female speakers and did not examine effects of participant sex due to uneven male and female participant sample sizes. Though sex was not intended as a variable in this study, other studies have found sex of the speaker (Gallois & Callan, 1981) and participant (Callan et al., 1983; Gallois et al., 1984; Podberesky et al., 1990) to be a significant factor in evaluations. Future research could take the sex of both participant and speaker of the speech stimuli into account to see if judgments vary across males and females, and under same-sex and different-sex conditions between speaker and hearer.

Another possible limitation in the study design is the use of reversed-polarity items. While item reversals were employed to reduce unidirectional bias (Klayman & Ha, 1987; Krosnick, 1999; Kunda et al., 1993; Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012) and disrupt non-substantive responding (Drolet & Morrison, 2001; Podsakoff et al., 2003; Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012), it must be acknowledged that the effectiveness of such a strategy has not yet been met with universal consensus. Some posit that reverse-scoring has not been proven to be effective in

reducing response acquiescence bias, and may even introduce greater error due to participant inattention or confusion (Schriesheim & Hill, 1981; Sonderen et al., 2013).

Following the results from the Behavioural component of this study, future research could investigate the influence of the media on perceptions of what is understood as Standard English. This study found that the L1 English speakers of the older age group were the ones most often selected as news presenters – especially OC1 and OM1, who are English news presenters in real life. Perhaps there are other more covert qualities of the speech of local news presenters that lie outside of the variables tested in this study, but that set them apart from other L1 Standard English speakers. Future research could investigate the subtle qualities that define the speech of newsreaders on radio and other local broadcast media outlets. Secondly, the L1 English speakers of the older age group were also most often selected for an international job setting. Possibly, the job of an English news presenter or even the very nature of broadcast media in Singapore is seen as something befitting an international audience or channel. This could have biased participants to select an international job setting after selecting the job type of English news presenter, invoking questions of media perceptions in Singapore and how this affects evaluations of job suitability based on a speaker's "Standard-ness" and "Singaporean-ness". Future research could explore the role of the media in shaping expectations of Standard English deemed fit for broadcast, both in the local and international context. The latter can also be investigated from outside in, such as in terms of the influence of mainstream American media channels that contribute to "Pax Americana", a phenomenon of dialect hegemony that biases individuals to American English (Bayard et al., 2001).

The factor of Age is another area worth considering for further study. This study examined factors of speaker Age, Ethnicity and English Language, out of which English Language was found to be a significant predictor for standardness, and perceived Ethnicity was found to be more influential than actual ethnicity for evaluations of “Singaporean-ness”. For speaker Age, there was a significant effect for only one questionnaire item: “I cannot identify which country this speaker is from,” for which older speakers received significantly higher mean ratings than younger ones. As aforementioned, the older L1 English speakers stood out in the Behavioural component of the study as well, although Age was not shown to have a significant effect for the hiring decision items. There may be subtle effects of Age on perceptions of SSE that more age-targeted studies could ascertain. Although studies on age and evaluations of Standard English are limited, older-sounding standard speakers have been found to fare best on competency evaluations (Giles et al., 1992), which is often itself positively associated with “standardness” (Coupland & Bishop, 2007; Giles et al., 1992; Seggie et al., 1982). The item that showed an effect of speaker Age could suggest that “standardness” evaluations can be improved by older ages, at least in one respect. However, it is unclear if participants were reacting based on accurate estimations of speakers’ ages, which has been shown to be predictable from voice cues alone (Sebastian & Ryan, 1985), or if there is a discernible quality associated with older speakers that affects ratings, even if their ages are unknown to hearers. Future research may explore the effect of speaker age – both perceived age and actual age – on speech evaluations.

While the results shed light on what is believed, felt and acted upon as Standard English, less is known about what it means to sound “Singaporean” – what grounds SSE as not just any Standard English, but *Singapore’s* Standard English. Standard English, the Singaporean

national identity, ethnic identities in Singapore and issues of exonormativity in the linguistic context of Singapore are complex concepts. This study's findings arguably illustrate attitudes towards Standard English with greater success than *Singapore's* Standard English, and point to the need for a deeper dive into "Singaporean-ness" in language and societal reasons why a local linguistic identity proves difficult to accept. There may also be beliefs about "Singaporean-ness" too covert to be realized in this study, similar to how Cavallaro et al. (2014) suggested that the prestige associated with SCE may "be entirely too covert for matched-guise detection" (p. 395). Uncovering such covert attitudes is an undertaking future research may find worth investigating. By decoding the linguistic DNA of the Singaporean national identity, we bring ourselves one step closer towards a better understanding of what makes SSE not just *a* standard variety, but *the* standard variety of Singapore.

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APPENDIX A: Detailed statistical analyses for Behavioural component

The following significance codes are used: 0 '***'; .001 '**'; .01 '*'; .05 '.'; .1 ''

Job type

Model with all fixed effects				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
Age	1.06	1	0.302	
Ethnicity	0.76	2	0.683	
English Language	14.18	1	< .001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
English Language	13.04	1	< .001	***

Table A1: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table) for cumulative link mixed model for job type, full dataset ($N=1830$)

Model with all fixed effects					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
Age: Young	-0.99	0.94	-1.05	.292	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.13	1.15	-0.11	.912	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.81	1.15	0.71	.480	
English Language: L2	-4.87	0.95	-5.12	< .001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
English Language: L2	-4.86	1.01	-4.80	< .001	***

Table A2: Estimates of fixed effects for job type hiring decision, full dataset ($N=1830$)

Job setting

Model with all fixed effects				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
Age	2.41	1	.121	
Ethnicity	2.20	2	.333	
English Language	8.74	1	.003	**
Model with significant fixed effects only				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
English Language	6.81	1	.009	**

Table A3: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Deviance Table) for cumulative link mixed model of job setting for full dataset ($N=1830$)

Model with all fixed effects					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
Age: Young	-0.68	0.42	-1.63	.103	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.70	0.51	1.37	.172	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.68	0.52	1.31	.189	
English Language: L2	-1.51	0.43	-3.51	< .001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
English Language: L2	-1.51	0.50	-2.99	.003	**

Table A4: Estimates of fixed effects for cumulative link mixed model of job setting for full dataset ($N=1830$)

Likert item: “I would like to speak like this speaker.”

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i> value	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.05	0.05	1	7.01	0.09	.773	
Ethnicity	0.17	0.09	2	7.01	0.15	.862	
English Language	28.37	28.37	1	8.17	50.42	< .001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i> value	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	37.38	37.38	1.00	12.28	66.43	< .001	***

Table A5: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for “I would like to speak like this speaker.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.52	0.17	7.82	21.24	< .001	***
Age: Young	-0.04	0.14	7.01	-0.30	.773	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.05	0.18	6.98	0.29	.778	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.10	0.18	7.00	0.55	.599	
English Language: L2	-1.06	0.15	8.17	-7.10	< .001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.55	0.10	14.18	37.05	< .001	***
English Language: L2	-1.06	0.13	12.28	-8.15	< .001	***

Table A6: Estimates of fixed effects for “I would like to speak like this speaker.”

(Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

APPENDIX B: Detailed statistical analyses for Affective component

The following significance codes are used: 0 '***'; .001 '**'; .01 '*'; .05 '.'; .1 ''

Item	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	Num. df	Den. df	F value	Pr(>F)	Sig. code
Admiration for speaker	11.99	11.99	1	11.46	31.20	< .001	***
Feeling comfortable	16.66	16.66	1	10.90	27.59	< .001	***
Respect for speaker	8.27	8.27	1	13.28	31.76	< .001	***
Likability of speaker accent	23.23	23.23	1	11.64	41.53	< .001	***
Enjoyment of listening to speaker	16.68	16.68	1	10.73	36.25	< .001	***
Interested to listen	19.95	19.95	1	11.36	32.11	< .001	***
Not annoyed by voice	15.47	15.47	1	11.81	26.94	< .001	***

Table B1: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for Affective component items, showing results for fixed effect of English Language

Item	Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t)	Sig. code
Admiration for speaker	(Intercept)	3.38	0.09	12.82	39.64	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.65	0.12	11.46	-5.59	< .001	***
Feeling comfortable	(Intercept)	3.85	0.10	11.27	38.57	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.73	0.14	10.89	-5.25	< .001	***
Respect for speaker	(Intercept)	3.72	0.06	18.42	63.47	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.43	0.08	13.28	-5.64	< .001	***
Likability of accent	(Intercept)	3.75	0.09	11.94	44.04	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.77	0.12	11.64	-6.44	< .001	***
Enjoyment of listening	(Intercept)	3.56	0.11	10.91	31.24	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.97	0.16	10.73	-6.02	< .001	***
Interested to listen	(Intercept)	3.59	0.09	12.12	38.65	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.73	0.13	11.35	-5.67	< .001	***
Not annoyed by voice	(Intercept)	3.76	0.08	13.37	48.92	< .001	***
	English Language: L2	-0.55	0.11	11.81	-5.19	< .001	***

Table B2: Estimates of fixed effect of English Language for Affective component items

(Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

**APPENDIX C: Detailed statistical analyses for Cognitive component's ethnicity prediction
and perceived personality items**

The following significance codes are used: 0 '***'; .001 '**'; .01 '*'; .05 '.'; .1 ''

Ethnicity prediction, full dataset

Model with all fixed effects				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
Age	0.53	1	.467	
English Language	8.78	1	.003	**
Ethnicity	9.17	2	.010	*
Model with significant fixed effects only				
Source	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
English Language	8.27	1	.004	**
Ethnicity	8.73	2	.013	*

Table C1: Test of fixed effects: Analysis of Deviance Table of the mixed effect logistic regression for speaker ethnic prediction accuracy for full dataset ($N=1830$)

Model with all fixed effects					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
(Intercept)	-0.54	1.15	-0.47	.637	
Age: Young	0.75	1.03	0.73	.467	
English Language: L2	3.07	1.03	2.96	.003	**
Ethnicity: Indian	-1.67	1.25	-1.34	.182	
Ethnicity: Malay	-3.85	1.27	-3.02	.003	**
Model with significant fixed effects only					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
(Intercept)	-0.16	1.04	-0.15	.880	
Ethnicity: Indian	-1.67	1.28	-1.31	.191	
Ethnicity: Malay	-3.84	1.30	-2.95	.003	**
English Language: L2	3.04	1.06	2.88	.004	**

Table C2: Estimates of fixed effects for accuracy of speaker ethnicity prediction, full dataset

(N=1830)

(Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

Ethnicity prediction, data subset

Model with all fixed effects				
Source	Chi-sq	<i>df</i>	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
Age	0.53	1	.465	
English Language	9.72	1	.002	**
Ethnicity	7.97	2	.019	*
Participant Ethnicity	2.82	2	.244	
Model with significant fixed effects only				
Source	Chi-sq	<i>df</i>	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Significance code
English Language	9.22	1	.002	**
Ethnicity	7.63	2	.022	*

Table C3: Test of fixed effects: Analysis of Deviance Table (Type II Wald chi-square tests) of the mixed effects logistic regression model of speaker ethnic prediction accuracy for representative data subset ($n=810$)

Model with all fixed effects					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
(Intercept)	-0.64	1.16	-0.55	.581	
Age: Young	0.75	1.03	0.73	.465	
English Language: L2	3.25	1.04	3.12	.002	**
Ethnicity: Indian	-1.72	1.26	-1.37	.171	
Ethnicity: Malay	-3.59	1.27	-2.82	.005	**
Participant ethnicity: Indian	0.28	0.32	0.86	.387	
Participant ethnicity: Malay	0.54	0.32	1.68	.093	.
Model with significant fixed effects only					
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Significance code
(Intercept)	0.02	1.04	0.02	.981	
Ethnicity: Indian	-1.75	1.28	-1.36	.173	
Ethnicity: Malay	-3.58	1.30	-2.76	.006	**
English Language: L2	3.23	1.06	3.04	.002	**

Table C4: Estimates of fixed effects for representative data subset ($n=810$)

(Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

Perceived personality

Dimension	Item	Parameter	Chi-sq	df	Pr(>Chi-sq)	Sig. code
Agreeableness +	Warm	Ethnicity	6.061	2	0.0483	*
		English Language	5.3538	1	0.021	*
Conscientiousness +	Dependable	English Language	52.08	1	< .001	***
	Self-disciplined	English Language	36.9	1	< .001	***
Emotional Stability +	Calm	English Language	41.86	1	< .001	***
	Emotionally stable	English Language	30.06	1	< .001	***
Agreeableness -	Quarrelsome	English Language	20.899	1	< .001	***
Conscientiousness -	Disorganized	English Language	36.35	1	< .001	***
	Careless	English Language	39.5	1	< .001	***
Emotional Stability -	Anxious	English Language	35.36	1	< .001	***
	Easily upset	English Language	20.64	1	< .001	***

Table C5: Tests of fixed effects for personality descriptors, showing significant fixed effects only.

Dimension	Item	Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	Sig. code
Agreeableness +	Warm	(Intercept)	-1.41	0.24	-5.92	< .001	***
		Ethnicity: Indian	0.63	0.29	2.21	.027	*
		Ethnicity: Malay	0.05	0.29	0.18	.854	
		English: L2	-0.55	0.24	-2.31	.021	*
Conscientiousness +	Dependable	(Intercept)	-0.40	0.16	-2.57	.010	*
		English: L2	-1.64	0.23	-7.22	< .001	***
	Self-disciplined	(Intercept)	-1.05	0.18	-5.73	< .001	***
		English: L2	-1.61	0.26	-6.08	< .001	***
Emotional Stability +	Calm	(Intercept)	0.20	0.15	1.38	.168	
		English: L2	-1.31	0.20	-6.47	< .001	***
	Emotionally stable	(Intercept)	-0.79	0.18	-4.51	< .001	***
		English: L2	-1.33	0.24	-5.48	< .001	***
Agreeableness -	Quarrelsome	(Intercept)	-5.24	0.48	-10.86	< .001	***
		English: L2	1.39	0.30	4.57	< .001	***
Conscientiousness -	Disorganized	(Intercept)	-10.19	1.28	-8.00	< .001	***
		English: L2	8.09	1.34	6.03	< .001	***
	Careless	(Intercept)	-9.49	1.10	-8.60	< .001	***
		English: L2	7.24	1.15	6.29	< .001	***
Emotional Stability -	Anxious	(Intercept)	-8.85	1.07	-8.31	< .001	***
		English: L2	6.66	1.12	5.95	< .001	***
	Easily upset	(Intercept)	-4.49	0.36	-12.41	< .001	***
		English: L2	1.58	0.35	4.54	< .001	***

Table C6: Estimates of fixed effects for personality descriptors, showing significant fixed effects only
(Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

APPENDIX D: Detailed statistical analyses for Cognitive component's WSE and SSE items

The following significance codes are used: 0 '***'; .001 '**'; .01 '*'; .05 '.'; .1 ''

Where applicable, (Intercept) represents English Language (L1), Age (Old), Ethnicity (Chinese).

Statement 1: This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.46	0.46	1	7.00	0.75	.415	
Ethnicity	0.27	0.14	2	7.00	0.22	.806	
English Language	15.07	15.07	1	7.16	24.63	.002	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	18.35	18.35	1	10.28	29.98	<.001	***

Table D1: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for

"This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.44	0.29	7.13	12.03	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.22	0.25	7.00	-0.87	.415	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.21	0.31	6.99	0.67	.526	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.10	0.31	7.00	0.33	.750	
English Language: L2	-1.27	0.26	7.16	-4.96	.002	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.44	0.17	10.59	20.77	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.27	0.23	10.28	-5.48	<.001	***

Table D2: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.”

Statement 2: This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	1.52	1.52	1	6.99	2.63	.149	
Ethnicity	0.22	0.11	2	6.99	0.19	.828	
English Language	12.22	12.22	1	7.18	21.10	.002	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	12.20	12.20	1	10.25	21.07	<.001	***

Table D3: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA".

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.28	0.30	7.20	11.00	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.43	0.26	6.99	-1.62	.149	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.19	0.32	6.99	0.59	.573	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.04	0.32	6.99	0.13	.902	
English Language: L2	-1.22	0.27	7.18	-4.59	.002	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.14	0.19	10.74	16.48	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.22	0.27	10.25	-4.59	<.001	***

Table D4: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA."

Statement 3: I cannot identify which country this speaker is from.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	6.49	6.49	1	6.98	9.69	.017	*
Ethnicity	0.83	0.41	2	6.98	0.62	.566	
English Language	3.11	3.11	1	6.97	4.63	.069	.
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	5.04	5.04	1	10.01	7.52	.021	*

Table 57: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.93	0.19	7.33	15.36	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.52	0.17	6.98	-3.11	.017	*
Ethnicity: Indian	0.23	0.21	6.96	1.11	.304	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.10	0.21	6.97	0.50	.634	
English Language: L2	-0.36	0.17	6.97	-2.15	.069	.
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.86	0.14	11.00	20.64	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.52	0.19	10.01	-2.74	.021	*

Table D6: Estimates of fixed effects for "I cannot identify which country this speaker is from."

Statement 4: People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.0002	0.0002	1	7.00	0.0003	.986	
Ethnicity	0.50	0.25	2	7.00	0.48	.637	
English Language	21.40	21.40	1	7.35	40.80	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	26.72	26.72	1	10.63	50.93	<.001	***

Table D7: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.02	0.22	7.06	18.68	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.003	0.19	7.00	0.02	.986	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.23	0.24	6.99	0.97	.366	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.15	0.24	6.99	0.62	.553	
English Language: L2	-1.24	0.19	7.35	-6.39	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.15	0.12	10.29	33.96	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.24	0.17	10.63	-7.14	<.001	***

Table D8: Estimates of fixed effects for "People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English."

Statement 5: This speaker has a standard accent of English.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.44	0.44	1	7.00	0.83	.393	
Ethnicity	0.21	0.11	2	7.00	0.20	.821	
English Language	25.03	25.03	1	7.35	47.40	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	30.22	30.22	1	10.62	57.24	<.001	***

Table D9: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for

"This speaker has a standard accent of English."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.02	0.22	7.06	18.68	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.003	0.19	7.00	0.02	.986	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.23	0.24	6.99	0.97	.366	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.15	0.24	6.99	0.62	.553	
English Language: L2	-1.24	0.19	7.35	-6.39	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.62	0.12	10.78	30.66	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.26	0.17	10.62	-7.57	<.001	***

Table D10: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker has a standard accent of English."

Statement 6: This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English.

Model with random slope for English Language							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	1.35	1.35	1	7.00	1.55	.253	
Ethnicity	0.20	0.10	2	7.00	0.12	.892	
English Language	0.22	0.22	1	7.03	0.25	.632	
Random intercept-only model							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	1.40	1.40	1	7.00	1.56	.252	
Ethnicity	0.21	0.11	2	7.00	0.12	.890	
English Language	0.22	0.22	1	7.00	0.25	.634	

Table D11: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for

"This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English."

Model with random slope for English Language						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.01	0.44	7.02	6.77	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.49	0.40	7.00	1.25	.253	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.23	0.49	6.99	-0.48	.647	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.14	0.49	7.00	-0.28	.788	
English Language: L2	0.20	0.40	7.03	0.50	.631	
Random intercept-only model						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.00	0.45	7.03	6.75	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.50	0.40	7.00	1.25	.252	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.24	0.49	7.00	-0.49	.643	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.14	0.49	7.00	-0.28	.789	
English Language: L2	0.20	0.40	7.00	0.50	.633	

Table D12: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English."

Statement 7: This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.

Model with random slope for English Language							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.78	0.78	1	7.01	0.84	.389	
Ethnicity	0.52	0.26	2	7.01	0.29	.760	
English Language	1.32	1.32	1	7.24	1.44	.268	
Random intercept-only model							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.93	0.93	1	7.01	0.96	.360	
Ethnicity	0.55	0.28	2	7.01	0.28	.760	
English Language	1.41	1.41	1	7.00	1.46	.266	

Table D13: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for
 “This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.”

Model with random slope for English Language						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.84	0.20	7.20	14.26	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.16	0.18	7.01	-0.92	.389	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.16	0.22	6.99	-0.72	.495	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.03	0.22	7.01	-0.16	.878	
English Language: L2	-0.21	0.18	7.24	-1.20	.268	
Random intercept-only model						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.84	0.20	7.21	14.24	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.17	0.18	7.01	-0.98	.360	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.15	0.22	7.00	-0.71	.499	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.03	0.22	7.01	-0.14	.892	
English Language: L2	-0.21	0.18	7.00	-1.21	.266	

Table D14: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.”

Statement 8: This speaker is a native English speaker.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. df	Den. df	F	Pr(>F)	Sig. code
Age	0.06	0.06	1	7.01	0.10	.763	
Ethnicity	0.54	0.27	2	7.01	0.47	.641	
English Language	18.93	18.93	1	7.25	33.08	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. df	Den. df	F	Pr(>F)	Sig. code
English Language	23.43	23.43	1	10.44	40.95	<.001	***

Table D15: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "This speaker is a native English speaker."

Model with random slope for English Language						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.84	0.20	7.20	14.26	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.16	0.18	7.01	-0.92	.389	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.16	0.22	6.99	-0.72	.495	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.03	0.22	7.01	-0.16	.878	
English Language: L2	-0.21	0.18	7.24	-1.20	.268	
Random intercept-only model						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	2.84	0.20	7.21	14.24	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.17	0.18	7.01	-0.98	.360	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.15	0.22	7.00	-0.71	.499	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.03	0.22	7.01	-0.14	.892	
English Language: L2	-0.21	0.18	7.00	-1.21	.266	

Table D16: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker is a native English speaker."

Statement 9: This speaker is Singaporean.

Model with random slope for English Language							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.80	0.80	1	7.00	1.28	.296	
Ethnicity	0.09	0.04	2	7.00	0.07	.933	
English Language	0.12	0.12	1	7.04	0.20	.671	
Random intercept-only model							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.83	0.83	1	7.00	1.27	.298	
Ethnicity	0.09	0.05	2	7.00	0.07	.933	
English Language	0.13	0.13	1	7.00	0.20	.671	

Table D17: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for
 "This speaker is Singaporean."

Model with random slope for English Language						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.53	0.34	7.04	10.52	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.34	0.30	7.00	1.13	.296	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.14	0.37	6.99	-0.37	.721	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.05	0.37	7.00	-0.14	.891	
English Language: L2	-0.13	0.30	7.04	-0.44	.671	
Random intercept-only model						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.53	0.34	7.04	10.47	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.34	0.30	7.00	1.13	.298	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.14	0.37	6.99	-0.37	.721	
Ethnicity: Malay	-0.06	0.37	7.00	-0.15	.884	
English Language: L2	-0.13	0.30	7.00	-0.44	.671	

Table D18: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker is Singaporean.”

Statement 10: This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.36	0.36	1	7.00	0.64	.449	
Ethnicity	0.35	0.17	2	7.00	0.31	.741	
English Language	15.97	15.97	1	7.19	28.78	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	19.25	19.25	1	10.34	34.70	<.001	***

Table D19: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.54	0.29	7.09	12.29	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.21	0.26	7.00	-0.80	.449	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.25	0.31	6.99	0.79	.456	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.11	0.31	7.00	0.34	.742	
English Language: L2	-1.39	0.26	7.19	-5.37	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.56	0.17	10.42	21.32	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.39	0.24	10.34	-5.89	<.001	***

Table D20: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.”

Statement 11: This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.03	0.03	1	7.00	0.06	.812	
Ethnicity	0.18	0.09	2	7.00	0.16	.853	
English Language	26.67	26.67	1	7.35	47.69	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	35.80	35.80	1	10.69	64.01	<.001	***

Table D21: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.67	0.24	7.12	15.51	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.05	0.21	7.00	-0.25	.812	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.14	0.26	6.99	0.54	.606	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.11	0.26	7.00	0.43	.681	
English Language: L2	-1.47	0.21	7.35	-6.91	<.001	***
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.73	0.13	10.59	28.68	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.48	0.18	10.69	-8.00	<.001	***

Table D22: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore."

Statement 12: This speaker is speaking correct English.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.00	0.00	1	7.00	0.00	.953	
Ethnicity	0.98	0.49	2	7.00	0.97	.426	
English Language	7.81	7.81	1	7.25	15.46	.005	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	8.73	8.73	1	10.41	17.27	.002	**

Table D23: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for "This speaker is speaking correct English."

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.80	0.23	7.07	16.22	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.01	0.21	7.00	0.06	.953	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.34	0.26	6.99	1.34	.222	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.25	0.26	7.00	0.99	.357	
English Language: L2	-0.83	0.21	7.25	-3.93	.005	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.00	0.14	10.31	28.46	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-0.83	0.20	10.41	-4.16	.002	**

Table D24: Estimates of fixed effects for "This speaker is speaking correct English."

Statement 13: This speaker is educated.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.04	0.04	1	7.00	0.14	.723	
Ethnicity	0.27	0.13	2	7.00	0.43	.665	
English Language	5.26	5.26	1	7.19	17.13	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	6.55	6.55	1	10.35	21.34	<.001	***

Table D25: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker is educated.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.95	0.19	7.13	20.49	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.06	0.17	7.00	0.37	.723	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.19	0.21	6.99	0.88	.406	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.15	0.21	7.00	0.69	.511	
English Language: L2	-0.72	0.17	7.19	-4.14	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.10	0.11	10.61	37.15	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-0.72	0.16	10.35	-4.62	<.001	***

Table D26: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker is educated.”

Statement 14: This speaker's English sounds prestigious.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.54	0.54	1	7.00	1.00	.351	
Ethnicity	0.27	0.13	2	7.00	0.25	.786	
English Language	9.86	9.86	1	7.15	18.28	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	11.59	11.59	1	10.26	21.47	<.001	***

Table D27: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker's English sounds prestigious.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.43	0.32	7.11	10.65	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.29	0.29	7.00	-1.00	.351	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.25	0.35	6.99	0.71	.503	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.12	0.35	7.00	0.35	.738	
English Language: L2	-1.23	0.29	7.15	-4.28	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.41	0.19	10.46	18.03	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.23	0.27	10.26	-4.63	<.001	***

Table D28: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker's English sounds prestigious.”

Statement 15: This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	2.30	2.30	1	6.98	2.70	.144	
Ethnicity	2.96	1.48	2	6.99	1.74	.244	
English Language	11.34	11.34	1	7.85	13.30	.007	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	8.71	8.71	1	10.89	10.22	.009	**

Table D29: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.28	0.13	7.61	25.65	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.18	0.11	6.98	-1.64	.144	
Ethnicity: Indian	-0.15	0.14	6.94	-1.09	.314	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.11	0.14	6.97	0.78	.462	
English Language: L2	-0.42	0.12	7.85	-3.65	.007	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.17	0.09	11.68	33.54	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-0.42	0.13	10.89	-3.20	.009	**

Table D30: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.”

Statement 16: This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	0.17	0.17	1	7.00	0.25	.631	
Ethnicity	0.20	0.10	2	7.00	0.15	.865	
English Language	12.29	12.29	1	7.19	17.84	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	16.22	16.22	1	10.37	23.55	<.001	***

Table D31: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.74	0.29	7.08	13.03	<.001	***
Age: Young	-0.13	0.26	7.00	-0.50	.631	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.05	0.31	6.99	0.15	.886	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.17	0.31	7.00	0.53	.614	
English Language: L2	-1.09	0.26	7.19	-4.22	.004	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.75	0.16	10.38	23.60	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-1.09	0.22	10.37	-4.85	<.001	***

Table D32: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.”

Statement 17: This speaker is speaking Standard English.

Model with all fixed effects							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
Age	< 0.001	< 0.001	1	7.00	0.01	.945	
Ethnicity	0.60	0.30	2	7.00	0.66	.548	
English Language	11.74	11.74	1	7.58	25.73	.001	**
Model with significant fixed effects only							
Source	Sum Sq.	Mean Sq.	Num. <i>df</i>	Den. <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Pr(> <i>F</i>)	Sig. code
English Language	14.00	14.00	1	11.00	30.69	<.001	***

Table D33: Test of fixed effects (Type II Analysis of Variance Table with Satterthwaite's method) for “This speaker is speaking Standard English.”

Model with all fixed effects						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	3.87	0.19	7.11	20.68	<.001	***
Age: Young	0.01	0.17	7.00	0.07	.945	
Ethnicity: Indian	0.23	0.20	6.99	1.13	.297	
Ethnicity: Malay	0.15	0.20	7.00	0.74	.482	
English Language: L2	-0.86	0.17	7.58	-5.07	.001	**
Model with significant fixed effects only						
Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> value	Pr(> <i>t</i>)	Sig. code
(Intercept)	4.00	0.11	10.49	36.79	<.001	***
English Language: L2	-0.86	0.16	11.00	-5.54	<.001	***

Table D34: Estimates of fixed effects for “This speaker is speaking Standard English.”

APPENDIX E: Means and standard deviations per speaker for WSE/SSE items

Table E1 lists and numbers the 17 statements based on dimensions from WSE and SSE literature. The statement numbering is used to denote the statements in the first column of Table E2.

No.	Statement
1	This speaker's speech sounds like the type of Standard English spoken internationally.
2	This speaker's speech sounds like Standard English spoken in the UK or USA.
3	I cannot identify which country this speaker is from.
4	People outside of Singapore can understand this speaker's English.
5	This speaker has a standard accent of English.
6	This speaker has a Singaporean accent of English.
7	This speaker sounds like she is trying to put on an English accent that is not her own.
8	This speaker is a native English speaker.
9	This speaker is Singaporean.
10	This speaker's English is a good international model for learning English for countries around the world.
11	This speaker's English is a good model for learning English in schools in Singapore.
12	This speaker is speaking correct English.
13	This speaker is educated.
14	This speaker's English sounds prestigious.
15	This speaker's English sounds formal and stiff.
16	This speaker is speaking formal English that is more appropriate for formal rather than informal settings.
17	This speaker is speaking Standard English.

Table E1: List of the 17 items based on dimensions from WSE and SSE literature

No.	Mean/SD	OC1	OI1	OM1	YC1	YI1	YM1	OC2	OI2	OM2	YC2	YI2	YM2
1	Mean	3.87	3.56	3.89	3.04	3.50	2.64	1.91	2.17	2.05	1.93	2.42	2.61
	SD	0.86	0.99	0.91	1.01	0.95	1.06	0.87	0.90	0.98	0.85	0.99	1.04
2	Mean	3.64	3.51	3.68	2.54	3.13	2.24	1.87	1.85	1.84	1.69	2.08	2.22
	SD	1.04	1.06	1.06	1.10	1.16	0.96	0.99	0.79	0.91	0.77	0.90	0.96
3	Mean	3.19	3.31	3.13	2.17	2.72	2.14	2.53	2.52	2.49	2.07	2.37	2.55
	SD	1.05	0.98	0.99	0.86	1.07	0.89	1.03	0.98	1.03	0.83	1.02	0.95
4	Mean	4.32	2.60	4.21	3.01	4.32	2.76	4.15	2.49	4.10	3.27	3.74	3.41
	SD	0.66	1.06	0.73	0.95	0.57	1.09	0.61	1.09	0.65	1.00	0.91	0.98
5	Mean	3.82	3.73	3.97	3.50	3.66	2.95	2.11	2.39	2.42	2.17	2.45	2.66
	SD	0.86	0.85	0.77	0.84	0.78	1.04	0.86	0.95	1.00	0.90	0.99	0.98
6	Mean	2.48	2.62	2.50	3.97	3.15	4.05	2.94	3.80	3.59	4.01	2.90	2.72
	SD	1.10	1.04	1.07	0.78	1.12	0.73	1.23	0.92	1.03	0.92	1.07	1.04
7	Mean	2.69	2.85	2.68	2.35	2.89	2.72	2.99	2.10	2.73	2.54	2.14	2.38
	SD	1.10	1.17	1.11	0.94	1.14	1.09	1.22	0.81	1.17	1.11	0.89	0.99
8	Mean	3.99	3.87	4.14	3.73	3.87	3.20	2.00	2.84	2.62	2.68	2.84	2.84
	SD	0.85	0.92	0.68	0.87	0.80	1.05	0.86	1.16	1.05	1.15	1.04	1.03
9	Mean	3.17	3.19	3.30	4.24	3.71	4.19	3.08	3.87	3.82	4.05	3.19	3.00
	SD	0.97	0.93	0.92	0.63	0.95	0.62	1.09	0.79	0.81	0.83	0.95	0.89
10	Mean	3.93	3.74	4.00	3.57	3.30	2.73	1.85	2.19	2.06	1.81	2.49	2.64
	SD	0.81	0.94	0.81	0.89	0.91	1.02	0.83	0.83	0.96	0.79	1.02	0.97
11	Mean	3.92	3.77	4.03	3.69	3.79	3.11	1.92	2.23	2.25	1.94	2.53	2.71
	SD	0.84	0.89	0.84	0.86	0.73	1.05	0.89	0.87	0.94	0.89	0.96	1.00
12	Mean	4.17	3.98	4.22	3.99	3.97	3.63	2.75	3.29	3.10	2.64	3.72	3.58
	SD	0.62	0.72	0.61	0.67	0.67	0.92	1.08	0.99	1.14	1.12	0.87	0.92
13	Mean	4.21	4.10	4.27	4.07	4.13	3.74	3.09	3.33	3.21	3.13	3.72	3.86
	SD	0.66	0.67	0.63	0.50	0.57	0.69	0.77	0.75	0.78	0.78	0.63	0.64
14	Mean	3.85	3.72	3.95	2.96	3.37	2.55	1.94	2.07	2.08	1.86	2.51	2.66
	SD	0.88	0.96	0.82	0.93	0.97	0.97	0.85	0.71	0.89	0.77	0.94	0.96
15	Mean	3.40	3.04	3.53	2.90	3.11	3.00	2.91	2.51	2.92	2.64	2.68	2.89
	SD	1.03	1.10	1.10	0.98	1.08	0.99	1.15	0.89	1.11	1.04	0.96	0.96
16	Mean	4.09	3.81	4.24	3.53	3.61	3.11	2.52	2.33	2.69	2.38	3.01	3.18
	SD	0.77	0.95	0.73	1.00	0.92	1.07	1.05	0.92	1.19	1.07	1.04	1.05
17	Mean	4.11	4.08	4.18	4.00	3.99	3.59	2.84	3.16	3.07	2.80	3.49	3.57
	SD	0.62	0.69	0.56	0.56	0.57	0.92	1.08	1.02	1.10	1.14	1.01	0.89

Table E2: Means and standard deviations, by speaker, for the 17 WSE/SSE items