



Research Article

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The distinction between ‘Singapore English’ and ‘Singaporean English’ is interesting. It appears that small places tend to use the bare name of the country, while larger countries use the derived adjective. So we find: Singapore English, Hong Kong English, Brunei English; but American English, German English, Malaysian English. On this basis, we might favour Chinese English over China English, because China is big.

(David Deterding, cited in Xu, He & Deterding, 2017: 5)

[R]egarding the Cambridge University Press series into Lesser Known Varieties of English, including Maltese English and Palauan English, (. . .) some ‘small’ varieties of English can also get adjectivized.

(Andy Kirkpatrick, cited in Xu et al., 2017: 6)

Introduction

Few new varieties of English have attracted more than one name label in the form of ‘xxx English’, where *English* is premodified by either a noun denoting the territory (*China English*, *Singapore English*), or the adjective form derived from it (*Chinese English*, *Singaporean English*). Are they semantically identical and conceptually co-extensive? The excerpts quoted above suggest that either may be used. This is probably why the three co-editors of *Researching Chinese English: The State of the Art* (Xu et al., 2017) decided that both China English and Chinese English should be accommodated depending on individual contributors’ predilection. It is unclear, however, whether such terminological variation, if allowed to persist, is conducive to the healthy development of academic deliberations. Newcomers to the field may find it perplexing whether the two terms should be kept distinct and wonder which one they should follow. In this paper, I approach this issue from a linguistic perspective. By examining the naming of other varieties of English, I investigated whether there is any collective preference with regard to the choice of premodifier for the attribute, namely a noun (e.g., *Singapore English*) versus an adjective (e.g., *Singaporean English*). According to a well-known Chinese adage, ‘if the name is not right then speech will not be in order, and if speech is not in order, then nothing will be accomplished! [名不正則言不順, 言不順則事不成!]’ Based on the survey results of the nomenclature of new varieties of English reported in this study, I believe the time is ripe for China English to give way to Chinese English, in line with the world’s many other indigenized varieties of English, established or emerging.

The impetus for this study was the observation that the choice of terminology might not be a trivial issue. We may begin with the observation that, with few exceptions, neither premodifying attribute – the adjective or noun form – is used in reference to the countries or territories falling within Kachru’s Expanding Circle (i.e., ‘xxx English’ is uncommon in EFL countries). And, where a premodifying attribute is used, the adjective form is preferred (e.g., Japanese English and Korean English, rather than *Japan English or *Korea English). This made me curious whether there is any underlying linguistic explanation for such a preference.

Upon closer scrutiny, there appears to be a fine linguistic distinction between the choice of a noun denoting a country or territory and an adjective derived from it. To illustrate, when a (head) noun is premodified by the adjective *Chinese*, it may be glossed as ‘pertaining to the Chinese people and/or China’. Thus, Chinese culture may be understood as referring to the culture of China as a nation or its people. Grammatically, a noun may function as a premodifier of another (head) noun, which semantically may be glossed as ‘a type of’ (e.g., a glass door is a door made

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of glass). Collocations of the same two nouns in an N1 + N2 structure are not rare, though with distinctive meanings (compare *boat race*, *race boat*; *music therapy*, *therapy music*; *machine translation*, *translation machine*).

China serves as a premodifying attribute in *China expert/watcher/basher/critic*, where the head noun denotes a person, while *China* defines the scope of the person's activity, as shown in the paraphrase (i.e., expert on China; watcher/basher/critic of China). Similarly, if the head noun denotes a thing, as in *China news/trade/threat/complex¹/challenge²*, a similar semantic relationship may be deduced (i.e., news about China; trade in or with China; complex involving China; challenge or threat posed by China). Notice that in all of these examples, none makes reference to its people, the Chinese. In sum, when an adjective premodifies a noun denoting a place, it carries the meaning 'pertaining to the people of the place and/or the place itself'. By contrast, when a noun premodifies another noun that denotes a place, strictly speaking it denotes the place per se, without making reference to its people.³ We will discuss the implications with regard to the choice between *China English* and *Chinese English* below.

English in China

Where do we find the largest number of learners and users of English as a 'non-native' language? According to a recent 'most reliable estimate' in 2020 cited by Kirkpatrick (2021: 1), there are no less than 276 million 'current users of English' in China. This is not surprising. According to China's Ministry of Education (Li, 2020), over nine million college graduates would be looking for employment in 2021, while that figure would exceed ten million by 2022. With millions of university graduates added to already hundreds of millions of active users of English in the workplace, beyond any doubt China tops the list of nations with the highest number of non-native users of English in the world. Regardless of the onset school year from Primary One (age six) to Primary Three (age eight) when English is introduced into the local curriculum⁴, all college graduates in mainland China must have learned English for 12 to 15 years. They must also have survived dozens of (some really high-stake) English tests as they moved up the education hierarchy, including compulsory tests that meet the university-level graduation requirement, namely the Test for English Majors (TEM 4, TEM 8) and the College English Test (CET 4, CET 6) for non-English majors.

Following China's accession to the WTO in December 2001, the last two decades have witnessed burgeoning economic growth and phenomenal sociocultural and technological development, as reflected in the nation's widely acclaimed hosting of the summer 2008 and winter 2022 Olympic Games; successful space ambitions including sending robot rovers to the moon and planet Mars; multiple manned missions to construct a permanent space station; the expansion of the high-speed rail networks to break the urban-rural divide by extending and enhancing connectivity with second-tier cities and their hinterland; and world-

class infrastructure landmarks like the opening of the Guangzhou-Zhuhai-Macao bridge in 2019. Another achievement that made headlines in both national and international media in 2020 is the elimination of abject poverty on the part of hundreds of millions of rural inhabitants, which has won the recognition of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (Cao, 2021). Since the new millennium, driven by forces of globalization, economic activities nationwide have been progressively integrated into the intricate transnational networks of multilateral trade and supply chains of myriad products on demand world-wide in a scale that befits 'the world's factory' title. In 2010, China overtook Japan to become the second-largest economy as measured by GDP. In terms of the language of communication with the outside world, English continues to be the most commonly used lingua franca, interactionally in speech, or through email and a variety of social media apps mediated by the internet.

There are millions and millions of bilingual users of English in the second-most populous nation of the world after India – total population estimated at about 1.4 billion (<https://www.un.org/en/desa/india-overtake-china-world-most-populous-country-april-2023-united-nations-projects>). After some 40+ years of open-door policy since the late 1970s and active engagement with foreigners essentially using English, Kachru's (1985) categorization of China within the 'Expanding Circle' countries seems anachronistic as it would hardly do justice to the ways English is learned and used by its citizens. To calibrate the functions and status of English in China in a reliable manner, nothing short of a rigorous national survey is required. Until that happens, we may never be sure which of the traditional labels ESL or EFL, or a more recent contender ELF, best reflects where and how English is used by its Chinese-English bilingual speakers across myriad business and cultural domains. To this end, one fundamental issue that needs to be addressed is how to refer to the English, spoken and written, of the largest group of non-native users of English in the world.

Chinglish, China English, and Chinese English

A quick review of the relevant literature, including the preference as found in various handbooks of World Englishes, reveals a nomenclature with rather distinct denotations and connotations: *Chinglish*, *China English*, and *Chinese English*. Of these, the conceptual affinity between *Chinglish* and *Chinese English* is unmistakable. One instructive example may be found in a Wikipedia website (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinglish>), which begins as follows:

This article is about Chinese English. (...) Chinglish is slang for spoken or written English language that is either influenced by a Chinese language, or is poorly translated. In Hong Kong, Macau, Guangdong and Guangxi, the term 'Chinglish' refers mainly to Cantonese-influenced English. This term is commonly applied to ungrammatical or nonsensical English in Chinese contexts, and may have pejorative or deprecating connotations. Other terms used to describe the phenomenon include 'Chinese English', 'China English', 'Engrish' and 'Sinicized English'. The degree to



Figure 1. Undated photo used for illustration of Chinglish, among many others (adapted from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinglish>)

which a Chinese variety of English exists or can be considered legitimate is still up for debate.

The Wikipedia website also contains several undated photos; one such illustration of Chinglish shows a bilingual warning sign to hikers (Figure 1):

雷雨天气 请勿登山	Lightning-prone area Please do not climbing 山
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The intended meaning may be glossed as follows:

‘(When there are) thunderstorms / Please do not climb the mountain.’

In the bilingual sign, however, the English translation contains a spelling mistake (‘lightning’ rather than ‘lighting’ should have been used) and is clearly ungrammatical (misuse of the *-ing* form of the verb *climb*).

From a global perspective, the derogatory connotation associated with a portmanteau expression like *Chinglish* (from *Chinese English*) conforms to a pattern elsewhere in the world. Perhaps the best-known example is *Singlish* which, unlike *Singapore(an) English*, has been socially constructed as indexing unsuccessful or incomplete learning of ‘good English’. Despite decades of evidence-based critique by sociolinguists, advocates of *Singlish* continue to be on the defensive, struggling for recognition of its everyday solidarity function and identity-driven usage among its vernacular speakers. Much the same may be said of other portmanteau name labels like *Danglish* (Denmark), *Denglish* (from German *Denglish* < *Deutschland Englisch*), *Japlish* (Japan), *Kongish* (Hong Kong), *Konglish* (South Korea), *Spanglish*, *Taglish* (Tagalog of the Philippines), and *Vinglish* (Vietnam). In view of such unwanted pejorative associations, *Chinglish* cannot be considered as the name label or conceptual demarcation of a new variety of English actively used by multiple millions of Chinese speakers, one that is clearly coming of age after over four decades of continual development.

There has been some debate on the most appropriate terminology in reference to English in China, which was triggered by patterned deviations in pronunciation and lexico-grammar from the traditional standard Englishes (notably BrE, AmE) among educated Chinese users of English (see, e.g., Eaves, 2011; He & Li, 2009; Xu, 2017). There is general consensus that such deviations should not be confused with lexico-grammatical errors or inaccuracies resulting from proficiency problems that reflect the users’ poor grasp of the target language (for more examples of Chinglish, see ‘Chinese Language Blog’ at <https://blogs.transparent.com/chinese/chinglish-pictures/>).

In his book *English in China*, Dzau (1990) makes use of a postmodifying prepositional phrase (in China) rather than a premodifying attribute, Chinese (adjective) or China (noun). As suggested in the book title, the structural deviations from standard English varieties were characterized as typical features produced by Chinese EFL users. Among mainland scholars, Ge Chuangui (1980a, b) was generally credited with the first attempt at naming the emerging and developing variety of English in their motherland as *China English*. His view was subsequently echoed by many others who similarly preferred *China English* to *Chinese English* (see, e.g., Hu, 2004), out of concern that *Chinese English* tended to be perceived nation-wide as a synonym of Chinglish.

Eaves (2011), among others, argues that to avoid confusion, *Chinese English* should be used to designate interlanguage features at various linguistic levels, or ‘errors made by learners as they advance in fluency level’ (p. 66) such as wrong use of tense, erroneous word choice, marked word order resulting from transfer of their L1 Chinese, etc. Unlike *Chinglish*, however, such interlanguage outputs are generally intelligible to proficient users of English as L1 or L2. Eaves’s (2011) reasoning may be summarized as follows:

- Given its derogatory connotation, *Chinglish* was not useable as the name label for an emerging variety of English.
- Most researchers, especially those who published in English, labeled that new variety *China English*, a trend that seemed difficult to reverse.
- To characterize a host of linguistic features due to negative transfer from the students’ first language, *Chinese English* would seem to be a reasonable label.

To my knowledge, Eaves’s (2011) suggestion – let ‘Chinese English’ designate the set of substandard linguistic features produced by Chinese learners – has no precedent anywhere in the world. I can’t think of an EFL country or territory where the typical linguistic features of English produced by its (especially young) learners are so labeled. For this meaning, a term like ‘learner English’ would be sufficient and more precise.

As for *China English*, it is indeed more commonly used in the World Englishes literature to date, especially among ‘Chinese language scholars’ (McArthur, 2005: 62). A few years ago, I published a paper entitled ‘China English coming of age: Implications for new Englishes’ (Li, D. C. S.,

Table 1. Nomenclature of ENL varieties

'English' premodified by the adjective form of the territory name	'English' premodified by the noun form of the territory name
American English	*America English
Australian English	*Australia English
British English	*Britain English
-- English English	*England English
-- Irish English	*Ireland English
-- Scottish English	*Scotland English
-- Welsh English	*Wales English
Canadian English	*Canada English
	New Zealand English

Note: Name labels marked with an asterisk* are either not attested or have no currency.

2018). I now feel that 'China English' should be replaced with 'Chinese English'. I make this recommendation after comparing the nomenclature of other new Englishes, the results of which are reported below.

As a naming practice, 'China English' is the odd one out

Among the hundreds of new varieties of English in the world that are labeled using a noun phrase 'xxx English', is there a preference, statistically speaking, in favor of using the noun denoting the place (e.g., *China English*) or the adjective form derived from it (i.e., *Chinese English*)? With this question in mind, I did a survey of the name labels where English (i) is used as an official language or a co-official language, and (ii) has no official language status. The former corresponds with those places within the Kachruvian Inner Circle and Outer Circle, the latter in the Expanding Circle. In the process, the list of 76 countries or territories presented in David Crystal (2003: 57–60; also cited in Jenkins, 2015: 3–4) turned out to be a convenient starting point.⁵ Where English has official language status in a country or territory characterized by multilingualism, the chance for English to be used by its people – for lingua franca or intra-ethnic communication, as L2 if not L1 – is higher (cf. Sung, 2020, 2022). Given that English is used as everyday language locally, a greater sense of ownership is to be expected: English is arguably a language of the locals. The unmarked assumption is that such a condition, broadly definable as the use of English as L1 (ENL) or L2 (ESL), favors the use of an adjective as the attribute, if available. This assumption is clearly borne out with regard to the traditional ENL varieties (Table 1).

Of the nine ENL varieties in Table 1, *New Zealand English* is the only exception, being premodified by a compound noun denoting its country name. This is not unlike the four indigenous varieties of English (IVEs) which are indexed by a compound noun, with *English* being similarly premodified by the name of the territory (*Cayman Islands English*, *Cook*

Table 2. IVEs indexed by an NP, with 'English' premodified by the adjective form of the place name

Territories where English is an official language (L2)	'English' premodified by the adjective form of the place name
American Samoa	Samoan English (compare Western Samoa listed below)
Bahamas	Bahamian English(es)
Bangladesh	Bangladeshi English
Bermuda	Bermudian English
The Gambia	Gambian English
Ghana	Ghanaian English
India	Indian English
Jamaica	Jamaican (Standard) English
Kenya	Kenyan English
Liberia	Liberian English
Malawi	Malawian English
Malaysia	Malaysian English
Malta	Maltese English
Namibia	Namibian English
Nigeria	Nigerian English
Pakistan	Pakistani English
Palau	Palauan English
The Philippines	Philippine English / Filipino English
Puerto Rico	Puerto Rican English
Sierra Leone	Sierra Leonean English
Singapore	Singaporean English / Singapore English
South Africa	South African English
Sri Lankan	Sri Lankan English
Tanzania	Tanzanian English
Tonga	Tongan English
Trinidad	Trinidadian English (Trinidad English Creole)
Uganda	Ugandan English
Western Samoa	Samoan English (compare American Samoa listed above)
Zambia	Zambian English
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwean English

Islands English) or a linguistically more specific label (*Dominica Creole English*, *New Guinea Pidgin English*).

In the majority of the countries or territories where English is used as an (additional) official language, the name labels adopt an adjective rather than a noun as the premodifier (compare Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 3. IVEs indexed by an NP, with 'English' premodified by the noun form of the place name

ESL territories where English is an official language	'English' premodified by the noun form of the place name (adjective form within brackets)
Botswana	Botswana English (Botswanan/Botswanian)
Brunei	Brunei English (Bruneian)
Cameroon	Cameroon English (Cameroonian)
Fiji	Fiji English (Fijian)
Gibraltar	Gibraltar English (Gibraltarian English also attested)
Guam	Guam English (Guamanian)
Hong Kong	Hong Kong English (Hongkongese)
Montserrat	Montserrat English (Montserratian)
Nauru	Nauru English (Nauruan and Nauruan pidgin English also attested)

With indigenization towards an IVE being evidenced to different degrees (i.e., some still exhibit characteristics of a pidgin or creole), 43 are labeled 'xxx English', including the four (9.30%) containing a premodifying compound noun mentioned above; while 30 (69.77%) make use of an adjective derived by suffixation (e.g., *-n*, *-an*, *-ian*, or *-ese*, Table 2). A few have alternative adjective forms, for example, *Philippine English* versus *Filipino English*, with the former sounding more standard. *Singaporean English* seems to be giving way to *Singapore English* probably because it is shorter (e.g., McArthur, 2002: 339–41), while Trinidadian English is sometimes given a gloss within brackets: '(Trinidad English Creole)'.

The remaining nine IVEs (20.93%) adopt the noun form as the name label (e.g., Fiji English) even though a corresponding adjective form exists (e.g., Fijian, see Table 3).

What about the countries or territories where English has no official language status? Probably as a correlate of English being used as a foreign language, the designation 'English in xxx' is clearly preferred and, in nine of the 29 countries (31.03%), such a designation appeared to be used exclusively, with two-thirds in Latin America: Argentina, Columbia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru (the other three being France, Norway, and Saudi Arabia). For the rest of the 20 EFL countries (68.97%), the premodifying adjective form is also attested (Table 4). Two methods were used to ascertain whether the premodifying 'xxx English' collocation is attested: a simple Google search and cursory check of the first 50–100 items returned, followed by a systematic search in the indexes of six handbooks of or reference works on World Englishes (Kirkpatrick, 2021; McArthur, 2002; Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008; Nelson, Proshina & Davis, 2020; Schreier et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2015). The collocation was counted even if only one occurrence was found, hence 'attested to different extents'.

From Table 4, it can be seen that 'China English' is the odd one out. The name label or structure, '[country name] English', is not found in the rest of the 28 EFL countries. Consider the countries in Northeast Asia and Latin America. If '[country name] English' is a viable naming principle, one would expect to find similar NPs as *Korea English, *Pakistan English, *Vietnam English; *Argentina English, *Paraguay English, *Peru English, etc., and yet neither Google search nor a scrutiny of new varieties of English in six handbooks of and reference works on World Englishes have yielded any such name labels.⁶

Discussion and conclusion

For a new variety of English to be labeled 'xxx English', English must be actively used by the local people sufficiently frequently to make it their English. Ownership is clearly implicated. Conversely, in a place where English is not so commonly used by the local people – a veritable foreign language so to speak – the label 'xxx English' would seem to be out of place, for the argument that English is their language does not sound so convincing. This is probably why few EFL countries or territories where English is not used as an official language have attracted such a label. What about China, where English is a compulsory school subject from lower primary school as well as a university graduation requirement despite no official language status? With over nine million English-knowing and English-using first-degree holders entering the workforce every year, the accessibility of a medley of print-based information and video-clips in English at one's fingertips, plus the intensity of its use across a wide range of work and educational settings, that label 'xxx English' is well justified. The question is: should it be called *China English* or *Chinese English*?

As shown in the brief survey of the nomenclature of various varieties of English above, the labels of the majority of such L1 and L2 varieties (69.76%) are referred to by an NP with the head noun 'English' premodified by an adjective (see ENL varieties in Table 1; IVEs in Table 2). A much smaller percentage of the IVE name labels (20.93%) adopt a noun form (Table 3). As for the countries where English has no official language status (Kachru's Expanding Circle), *China English* appears to be the odd one out (Table 4). One wonders why, and cannot help asking, what implications does that have on the naming of the indigenized variety of English in China?

When first coined by Ge Chuangui (1980a,b; see Xu, 2017), *China English* was essentially an attempt to distinguish China-specific English usage such as Four Books (四書, *sì shū*), Five Classics (五經, *wǔ jīng*), the May Fourth Movement (五四運動, *wǔsì yùndòng*), and the Four Modernizations (四個現代化, *sìgè xiàndàihuà*) from the kinds of non-standard English usage commonly found among its learners, whose numbers nation-wide were still rather small. Fast forward four decades later to 2022, however, that name label can no longer do justice to the intricate ways English is used by the huge numbers of English-knowing and English-using speakers and writers in China today.

Table 4. Nomenclature of EFL varieties

Region	Countries where English is <u>not</u> an official language	'English' premodified by the <i>adjective</i> form of the country name (attested to different extents)	English premodified by the <i>noun</i> form of the country name
Northeast Asia	China	Chinese English	China English
	Japan	Japanese English	
	Korea	Korean English	
South and Southeast Asia	Indonesia	Indonesian English	
	Nepal	Nepalese English	
	Pakistan	Pakistani English	
	Thailand	Thai English	
	Vietnam	Vietnamese English	
The Middle East	Egypt	Egyptian English	
	Iran	Iranian English	
	Israel	Israeli English	
	Saudi Arabia	--	
Non-Anglophone Europe	Denmark	Danish English	
	Finland	Finnish English	
	France	--	
	Germany	German English	
	the Netherlands	Dutch English	
	Norway	--	
	Russia	Russian English	
	Spain	Spanish English	
	Sweden	Swedish English	
Latin America	Argentina	--	
	Brazil	Brazilian English	
	Colombia	--	
	Honduras	--	
	Mexico	Mexican English	
	Nicaragua	--	
	Paraguay	--	
	Peru	--	

Such bilingual Chinese speakers of English, whether functioning as EFL, ESL or ELF depending on the individuals and contexts, are counted by multiples of millions, all with at least 12–15 years of classroom instruction experience. Upon graduation from university, most would actively put that knowledge to meaningful use in increasingly bilingual work settings, receptively but also productively, day in day out, within China and beyond, including via the cyber world thanks to rapid advances in ICT and the Internet. As Li Wei (2018) has observed, in the hands of creative bilinguals in China, knowledge of English spawns translanguaging, a communication practice that mirrors Chinese-specific cultural values or practices. This he

exemplifies with plenty of ingenious lexical innovations, such as coalescing 'smile' and 'silence' to produce 'smilence', referring to 'the stereotypical Chinese reaction of smiling without saying anything' (笑而不語, *xiào ér bù yǔ*, p. 12), or substituting *chin-* for *con-* in the word 'consumer' to produce 'chinsumer', mocking mainland tourists who characteristically buy huge quantities of luxury goods overseas (p. 12). In these and many other innovative translanguaging improvisations⁷:

ordinary English utterances [are] re-appropriated with entirely different meanings for communication between Chinese users of English as well as creations of words and expressions that adhere

broadly to the morphological rules of English but with Chinese twists and meanings. (Li, W., 2018: 11–12)

To my knowledge, Xu Zhichang (2017; see also Xu et al., 2017) and his research associates are keen advocates of Chinese English, but they seem to belong to the minority. One possible reason is that China English has been used for so long by so many researchers within and beyond China's borders (McArthur, 2005: 62) that switching to another term may meet with resistance, at least not without a sound reason. Xu's (2017: 241) meta-analysis of 100 journal articles on this topic in Chinese published from 1980 to 2013 shows that *China English* was preferred in 68 articles (including eight using a literal translation 中国英语 *Zhongguo yingyu*), compared with only 11 in favor of *Chinese English*, the latter being outnumbered by *Chinglish* (13). Eaves (2011), among others, subscribes to this view, suggesting that any phonetic and lexico-grammatical deviations produced in the process of learning English – learner English features so to speak – may be collectively referred to as *Chinese English*, on the assumption that whatever anomalies that surfaced in the Chinese learners' outputs result from adverse influence or negative transfer from their first language. Such an assumption or attribution is clearly untenable given that English is much more widely available and easily accessible today – barely a few taps or clicks on one's smart phones, tablets or computers, not to mention that linguistic interference from one's earlier acquired language(s) may not be the main, let alone the only, factor leading to non-standard language output.

Does the size of the place matter? There seems some evidence that what matters is not the size of the place or population so much as the number of additional syllables entailed in the adjectival form. Compared with Fijian English, Fiji English may be preferred for this reason (see Table 3). The dispreference for Guamanian – the adjectival form of the single-syllable Guam – also seems obvious. Interestingly, except for 'Hongkongese', eight of the nine dispreferred adjectival forms end with a suffix *-n*, *-an* or *-ian* (Botswana/Botswanian, Bruneian, Cameroonian, Fijian, Gibraltarian, Guamanian, Montserratian, Nauruan). It is unclear whether phonology plays any role here. In any case, so long as referential identity is a non-issue, it seems that the shorter form is preferred over time. Apart from Singapore English, which is more commonly used than Singaporean English, the English of Gibraltar is another instructive case. In 2008, David Levey published a book chapter entitled 'The changing face of Gibraltarian English: TH-fronting on the Rock' (cf. Gibraltarian Spanish). Seven years later, in 2015, the same author published another book chapter entitled 'Gibraltar English'.

The brief survey of the nomenclature of new varieties of English shows that for those places where English has (co-) official language status and is used by locals, it is far more common for the name label in reference to the IVE to adopt the collocation 'xxx English', where 'xxx' is more likely an adjective derived from the place name. Such a preference is also consistent with all the ENL varieties except New Zealand English, where the premodifier is made up of

a compound noun. In both L1 and L2 settings, the preference and choice of an adjective form is natural and understandable given that ownership of English by its users is clearly implicated. On the other hand, for countries where English has no official language status, the collocation '[country name] English' is uncommon, with China English being the odd one out.

The term China English was coined over 40 years ago at a time when English as a school subject started being introduced into the mainstream curriculum nation-wide. Today, that same name label can no longer do justice to the IVE with the largest number of educated bilingual users of English in the world. To bring home the argument, that English in China is no longer 'just a foreign language' and that its use by educated bilingual users is far more sophisticated than 'a performance variety', it is time for the communities of World Englishes scholars and teachers at large to stop referring to English in China as China English and start embracing Chinese English instead. Whereas China English only makes reference to the nation in abstraction of its users, Chinese English conveys the meaning 'pertaining to both the nation and its people'. Where ownership of English matters, Chinese English is clearly the right term if the emphasis is on its use by educated bilingual users of English within its borders, including in spontaneous Chinese-Chinese interactions.

Notes

- 1 See <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/the-big-picture/2019/12/10/the-china-complex>.
- 2 Book title; see <https://wnorton.com/books/The-China-Challenge/>.
- 3 One exception may be found in international football commentaries in English, where commentators may refer to national teams by their country names rather than their adjective forms (e.g., 'the France team' and 'the Spain team' rather than 'French' and 'Spanish', David Deterding, see Xu et al. 2017: 5). As the contestants represent specific countries, the foregrounding of country names is understandable for it is first and foremost a match between two nations. Notice that in other competitions based on individual merits, such as the Nobel Peace Prize, it would be odd to refer to a nominee or candidate by his or her country name (e.g., *the China nominee/candidate). This shows that the context at large has a crucial bearing on the semantic constraints of a premodifying country name in an 'N1 + N2' NP.
- 4 Minor regional differences exist, due in part to increasing local tolerance of young schoolchildren's access to English-rich kindergartens in metropolises like Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.
- 5 About three dozen where English is characterized as a regional creole or pidgin were excluded, except when (i) a collocation 'xxx English' with a premodifying noun or adjective has been found through Google search, or (ii) if such a collocation is found in the index of one or more handbooks of or reference works on World Englishes (e.g., Bahamian English, Gambian English, Ghanaian English, Liberian English).
- 6 Mexican English is a frequent collocation, but that is because New Mexican English is a cover term for the dialect (and sub-dialects) of American English spoken in the state of New Mexico in the United States. This is similar to New Mexican Spanish in the US, which apparently is unrelated to the state of Mexico.
- 7 Much the same may be said of Cantonese-English bilingual contributors and readers of the linguistically creative and often ludicrously multimodal posts on *Kongish Daily*, a social media e-platform based in

Hong Kong (<https://www.facebook.com/KongishDaily/>) (Lee, 2022). The typically sarcastic and ludic effects, driven typically by whim-and-fancy impulse and spur-of-the-moment creativity through translanguaging, are made possible by the deployment of multiple semiotic resources, from scriptal systems (including written Chinese and English), special fonts, typeface and numerals to symbols, punctuation marks, romanized Cantonese emojis, colours and images. As Lee (2022) has demonstrated, Kongish-as-praxis may be seen as semiotic action symbolizing resistance on the part of Cantonese-dominant grassroots netizens equipped with varying degrees of literacy skills in English rebelling against the hegemony of Standard English – an invisible wall that stands in the way of many young bilingual Hongkongers relative to their aspiration for higher education and access to decent jobs, for which ‘good English’ is a key albeit frustrating and gate-keeping must-have.

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