LANGUAGE CHOICE OF CHINESE MIGRANTS IN SINGAPORE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and it has been written by me in its entirety. I have duly acknowledged all the sources of information which have been used in the thesis.

This thesis has also not been submitted for any degree in any university previously.

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Loo May Eng
July 2016

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Although it has been challenging, writing this thesis has helped me to understand and appreciate my Father's world a little more. He speaks to us everywhere.

> This is my Father's world,
> The birds their carols raise,
> The morning light, the lily white,
> Declare their maker's praise.
> This is my Father's world,
> He shines in all that's fair;
> In the rustling grass I hear him pass;
> He speaks to me everywhere.
> (Babcock 1901)

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of Mainland Chinese immigrants in Singapore, a nation with a majority Chinese population. In this study, I explore how Mainland Chinese living in Singapore perceive their language choices compared to Singapore Chinese, focussing on how the participants perceive the politeness of their language choices during service encounters as well as on identifying the factors that affect the participants' language choices more generally.

Through a questionnaire and interviews with 30 Mainland Chinese and 20 Singapore Chinese participants, I found that overall, both groups perceive their language choices similarly in terms of politeness during service encounters and that a common language, language proficiency and a desire to improve their English are factors that influence Mainland Chinese participants' language choices towards Singapore Chinese. Furthermore, I argue that, instead of age and length of residence, differing levels of in-group identity and orientation towards Singapore among the two groups of Mainland Chinese participants (20 Mainland wives and 10 Mainland students) account for the variation in their language choices. Although we would expect the Singapore Chinese participants who report negative feelings towards Mainland Chinese to non-accommodate according to Howard Giles' (2009) Communication Accommodation Theory, some of these participants expressed that personal values and pragmatic concerns would lead them to accommodate to Mainland Chinese addressees. Among the linguistic models that seek to explain/predict language choice, I show that Myers-Scotton's (1998) "markedness model as a rational actor model" is best able to explain some of the findings of this study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Singapore is an island-nation in Southeast Asia with bilingual/multilingual citizens of different ethnicities and cultures. In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of immigrants. As the growth of the local population is not able to keep up with the demand for workers, the government has increased its import of foreign labour and allowed an unprecedented number of foreigners to live on this small island-state. In 2014, foreign non-residents make up almost 30% of Singapore's total population of 5.47 million and foreigners who have become permanent residents make up another 10%[1] (The Straits Times, 2014). Despite the government's effort to explain the economic benefits of its open-door policy and encouraging Singaporeans to be good hosts, it has been observed that some Singaporeans continue to perceive this foreign presence as a threat and it seems like these anti-foreigner sentiments are being felt by the migrants as well (see Rubdy & McKay, 2013; cf. Today, 2015).

Among the foreigners in Singapore, one of the largest and most visible communities are the Mainland Chinese. There are no available official statistics on the number of Mainland Chinese immigrants but an estimate in 2008[2] puts the figure at "close to one million" (The Straits Times, 2008a). Interestingly, although they share a cultural and linguistic connection to the majority Singaporean Chinese population, they are the group that seems to be the subject of most contention with the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, especially those working in the service industry, bearing the brunt of this sentiment (see Yeoh & Lin, 2013). Singaporeans have lamented about the 'Sinicization' of public spaces and service encounters (The Straits Times, 2008b). One of the ways this negativity is expressed is through complaints about their English language skills.

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1. These figures do not include foreigners who have become citizens. The number of people living in Singapore who were not locally born is presumerably even higher.
2. In 2008, Singapore's population growth was at its peak of 5.47% mainly due to the influx of non-resident migrants made up of mainly workers. Subsequently, the government took steps to slow down the growth of the foreign workforce.

For example, a Malay lady expressed online her dissatisfaction with a Mainland Chinese McDonald's employee who could not understand her order (Temasek Times, 2012):

> "I was pretty mad just now when the cashier at McDonald's Jcube didn't really catch or understand what I've ordered!! OMG..I used SIMPLE ENGLISH…".

In an article "Why Chinese nationals and Singaporeans don't always get along", Yang Peidong suggested that one of the reasons for the current tension could be the nationalistic ideology of the Mainland Chinese leading them to assume that the culture of Singapore does not differ from that of China. For instance, Mainland Chinese might make assumptions regarding Singaporean Chinese willingness to speak Mandarin or their tolerance of certain behaviour (The Straits Times, 2013).

Other than the complaint that Mainland Chinese migrants speak Mandarin too much, there is also an impression among Singaporeans that the Mainland Chinese do not have the same politeness standards. Some Singaporeans feel that they speak too loudly (Sam's Alfresco Coffee, 2012):

> "I was taking a bus to holland v today… I noticed how loud a mainland Chinese people was speaking to another… WHY MUST THEY TALK SO LOUD? Are they deaf? Why huh? MAYBE IN CHINA…The city is heavily populated and noisy. People need to yell to get noticed."

Some Singaporeans have also expressed disapproval towards certain behaviour of Mainland Chinese migrants in Singapore. Commenting on Facebook (All Singapore Stuff, 2015) about an argument involving a Singaporean man and two Mainland Chinese women, a Singaporean woman felt that Mainland Chinese need to be more courteous and civilized. Another Singaporean felt that their behaviour was unwarranted regardless the situation:

> "I have encountered nice PRCs, but I have to say that they have a lot to catch up in terms of courtesy and being civilised…. If we are at their lands, we give in to their ways. But if they are in our land, please keep your wayward ways and behave!"

"Not condoning the women's behaviour….But there's often 2 sides to every story…but I definitely agree that their uncouth behaviour was uncalled for."

It could be that these two perceptions are related: speaking Mandarin too much could also be seen as an instance of rude behaviour. Hence, this study is an attempt to understand how Mainland Chinese living in Singapore and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices in terms of politeness. The first part of this study focusses on the service encounter domain. Do Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices differently in terms of politeness? Does the nationality/ethnicity of the service person and the class/location of the service affect the choice of language that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese consider polite? Do different groups of Mainland Chinese differ among themselves in their perception of their language choices in service encounters? The second part focusses on identifying the factors that might affect Mainland Chinese language choices in general. Would perceived similarities between Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese cause Mainland Chinese to choose Mandarin when speaking to Singapore Chinese? I would also like to understand how Singapore Chinese view Mainland Chinese and their language choices. Does negativity towards Mainland Chinese cause Singapore Chinese to non-accommodate at the expense of communicative efficiency?

Some studies on language choice have been conducted in Singapore but to date, how Chinese migrants perceive their language choices has not been studied in detail. Such a study could be a step towards understanding the factors that influence the language choices of Mainland Chinese as well as Singapore Chinese in Singapore. Given the growing negativity between Singaporeans and Mainland Chinese immigrants, with language being a possible source of tension, this study could help both groups understand each other a little better.

In the following chapter, I provide details of relevant literature. In chapter 3, I describe my data collection methods. The data will then be presented in chapter 4 followed by a discussion of the findings in Chapter 5. A final chapter will be the summary of my findings. But before moving on to the next chapter, I will give a sketch of the current sociolinguistic environment of

Singapore as well as some background on the local Chinese and Malays[3] as well as the Chinese migrant community in Singapore.

1.1   The current sociolinguistic environment of Singapore

"One kopi-o-siew-dai-peng!' This is what a Singaporean would recite to order a cup of coffee at a local coffee-shop. Just in this simple act of ordering, the Singaporean would have invoked a few languages or dialects since "kopi" is Malay for coffee, "o" is black in Hokkien, "siew dai" means not-so-sweet in Hock Chew and "peng" means ice in Hokkien again. This is an everyday example of Singapore's linguistic diversity.

The most obvious reason for this linguistic diversity is Singapore's multi-ethnicity. The city-state divides the population into four ethnically based categories: Chinese, Malay, Indian and Others, with the Chinese being the majority at 74%, Malays at 13% and Indians 9.1% (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2014). These categories obscure further diversity within and across each group; in particular, the Singapore Chinese population is made up of descendants of immigrants from different dialect-speaking areas in Southern China. While each of the main ethnic groups has their own official mother tongue, English is the main working language. However, it is often Colloquial Singapore English, or Singlish, a contact language with an English lexifier and substrate influences from the Chinese languages and Malay, that is commonly used at home and during informal interactions.

Dividing Singapore's history into four socio-historical eras from her colonial days to the time of writing, Lim (2010: 21) showed how the dominance of the various languages in Singapore is affected by the interplay of migration and policies. The colonial era (c. 1800s to 1960s) was characterized by natural

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3.   I am including a description of the Malay community in Singapore because the first part of this study explores language choices towards Malay service people.

immigration and the maintenance of vernacular languages. During this period, Bazaar Malay, a Malay-based pidgin, was the *lingua franca* used in many service interactions. The independence era (1960s to late 1980s) saw Singapore's population stabilizing and the institutionalization of English as a compulsory language in schools; it was during this time that Singlish replaced Bazaar Malay as the preferred lingua franca. The late modernity era (late 1980s to 2000) was characterised again by immigration but this time due to Singapore's reliance on foreign manpower to cope with labour shortages; during this time the local Singapore Chinese population rapidly shifted from speaking Chinese dialects to Mandarin at home as a result of government Mandarin-promotion policies, while English also simultaneously expanded, becoming a significant home language. Finally, the fourth and current era is seen as an extension of the third where the government continues to promote immigration. It is against the backdrop of this "fourth era" that my study is conducted.

1.2   Local Chinese in Singapore

The local Chinese are mainly descended from immigrants who came to Singapore during the colonial era (see previous section). The majority of these Chinese immigrants came from the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong in southern China; they grew to become the largest ethnic population in Singapore. While their forefathers spoke the vernacular languages (mostly Hokkien, Teochew or Cantonese) of their hometowns in China, the current generation of Singaporean Chinese, especially the younger ones, primarily speak English and Mandarin. According to the 2015 Census of Population (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2015), 37.4% of Singaporean Chinese aged 5 years old and above spoke predominantly English at home and 46.1% spoke Mandarin. Those who spoke other Chinese languages most frequently at home fell significantly from 19.2% in 2000 to 16.1% by 2015. Leimgruber (2013) gives an overview of the factors that effected these changes. The Singaporean government has pursued a bilingual education policy since 1987 in which the primary medium of education is English with compulsory mother tongue education in Mandarin for those of Chinese ethnicity. As a result, virtually all younger Singaporean Chinese have at least some competence in both languages.

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1.3 Chinese migrants in Singapore

Unlike the local Chinese in Singapore, the Chinese migrants being studied in this research have come to Singapore in a later wave during the late 1980s to the present time. As mentioned earlier, they numbered close to one million in 2008 according to the press (The Straits Times, 2008a). While some are in Singapore as students, many have immigrated to work. Among the students, there are those who are given full scholarship by the government of Singapore and there are those who study in public or private schools and are self-funded. Parents of these students may also apply for long-term visit passes to stay with and care for their children in Singapore. Among the workers, the lower-skilled fill blue-collar jobs (e.g., working as bus drivers or in retail) and the higher-qualified ones are employed as professionals. The Singapore government allows this latter group of high-salaried workers to bring their family members to Singapore as well (Ministry of Manpower, 2015). This has resulted in a class of "trailing spouses," primarily wives who accompany their husbands to Singapore. Last but not least, there are also Mainland Chinese who are living in Singapore because they are married to a Singaporean. My study focusses on two of these groups: Mainland Chinese wives and Mainland Chinese female students.

1.4 The Malays in Singapore

The Malays have inhabited Singapore as early as the 13th century AD but most of the Malays in Singapore today are descendants of immigrants from Malaysia and Indonesia who came during the "colonial era". Today, they make up 13% of the local population and are the second biggest group after the Chinese. According to the 2015 Census of Population (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2015), 21.5% of Singaporean Malays aged 5 years old and above spoke predominantly English at home and 78.4% spoke Malay.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The theoretical background of this study comes from the work of Joshua Fishman, John J. Gumperz and Carol Myers-Scotton on language choice, and Howard Giles on accommodation. I will elaborate on how accommodation theory is applied in intercultural encounters, including service encounters where interethnic tension is present. This chapter will also provide a review of previous studies on language choice in Singapore and work on politeness and impoliteness relevant to this study. This chapter ends with a brief section on the relationship between language choice and politeness.

2.1   Language choice and accommodation

According to Fishman (1972), language choices of individuals in stable multilingual speech communities are predicted by the domains in which they occur. In other words, it is social structure that broadly determines language choice. Rubin (1968) is an example of a researcher who adopted a domain analysis. She studied Spanish/Guarani bilingualism in Paraguay. Through the device of a decision tree, she showed that language behaviours were an outcome of an ordered series of binary choices determined by the social context. She found that location was the most important predictor of language choice. Closer to the service encounter context of this study, Gardner-Chloros (1985) collected quantitative data on the use of French and Alsatian by shoppers in Strasbourg. In line with existing information on language use in Alsace and expected norms of the situation, one of her findings was that more French was spoken in stores of higher social standing.

Despite recognizing the importance of domains, Gumperz (1971) argued that people choose to use a particular language to express their identity in relation to their interlocutors. Similarly, Gal's (1979) influential study on a bilingual region of Austria focussed on the social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria. She concluded that the participant variable is more critical than the other dimensions of contexts like topic and setting. More

recently, Goetz (2001) studied Dai/Chinese bilingual speakers in Southwest China and showed that social network characteristics, rural lifestyle, occupation, and place of residence accounted for language choice.

Myers-Scotton (1983, 1998) has proposed that linguistic code choices are a function of negotiation instead of situation. Conversations are governed by a negotiation principle and its set of maxims which are in turn patterned after Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and its maxims. Although Brown and Levinson (1975) claim that speakers use conversation to preserve social relationships and to maintain "each other's face", Myers-Scotton argues that speakers use code choices more generally to negotiate their wants about relationships. In other words, speakers choose one linguistic variety over another based on the benefits anticipated from that choice compared to the costs.

An example of a negotiation maxim is the "unmarked choice maxim" which is used in a conventionalized exchange (e.g., a typical service encounter or an interview). An unmarked language choice is made when, for example English is used when the specific role relationship clearly calls for its use. Conversely, when another language other than English is used in this case, then it is considered marked or inappropriate. Myers-Scotton suggests that a marked choice could also be used by the speaker to disidentify himself with the current role relationship and to negotiate another.

The "exploratory-choice maxim" is also one of the negotiation maxims. It is followed when speakers start with a neutral or "safe" language in a non-conventionalized exchange (e.g., a conversation with a stranger). Speakers then explore other language choices in order to make a possible transition to a more appropriate language choice.

According to another negotiation maxim, the "virtuosity maxim", speakers make a marked language choice when they are not proficient in the unmarked language choice. Immigrants who are not proficient in the language of the host community might follow this maxim. Speakers in the host community could also make a marked choice when their addressees are

immigrants and it is clear that these addressees are unable to understand or respond to them in the unmarked choice. Explaining what might motivate speakers to follow this maxim, Myers-Scotton suggests that:

> Following the virtuosity maxim allows speakers to present themselves as *enablers* in that they make it possible for a conversation to take place; in this way they put themselves in a good light. (Myers-Scotton, 1998:26)

Like Myers-Scotton's negotiation maxims, the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) of Giles (see Giles et al., 1973; Giles & Coupland, 1991; Giles, 2009) stresses personal motivation strategy. CAT is built on the idea that speakers are motivated to lessen communicative differences between themselves and their listeners because they desire to be approved of or they seek for more effective communication. When such approval or effectiveness is deemed less important, speakers may not "accommodate" and may even emphasize difference. "Convergence" is a strategy in which people adapt to each other's communicative behaviours in terms of linguistic-prosodic-nonverbal features, whereas "divergence" refers to the way in which speakers accentuate speech and nonverbal differences between themselves and others. "Maintenance" is a strategy where people persist in their original style regardless of the communication behaviour of their interlocutors. Building on the concept of convergence, Trudgill (1986) has proposed two types of linguistic accommodation: long term and short term accommodation that might take place between accents that differ regionally.

In its early days of development, accommodation theory used "social identity theory" (Tajfel, 1974) where social identity refers to our knowledge of ourselves as group members within our categorization of the social world, to explain the motivations behind divergence and maintenance in intergroup contexts. These two strategies are used to reinforce a particular social identity by signalling group distinctiveness. An example of how a group considers its language as a dimension of comparison with outgroups is given in a study by Bourhis and colleagues (1979), which found that Flemish students adopted strategies of "psycholinguistic distinctiveness" and resisted accommodating

when in "ethnically threatening" encounters According to the researchers, this process takes place in encounters between groups instead of at the individual level.

On the other hand, accommodation theory has relied on similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971) to explain the motivation behind the strategy of convergence. This theory suggests that convergence allows a person to become more similar to another and therefore more likeable to this other person. Studies have shown that the greater the speaker's need to gain another's social approval, the greater the degree of convergence there will be. An example of a study of intergroup convergence is that of Wolfram (1973) in New York where it was found that Puerto Ricans adopted the dialect of blacks because blacks held more prestige in this city. In a study by Platt and Weber (1984), native English speakers tried to converge towards what they believed Singaporeans sound like in order to "build rapport" or to "break down social barriers." Likewise, Singaporeans in the same study tried to converge to native English speakers in an attempt to create a good impression. However, it has been shown that it is not always the case that one group accommodating to another group is motivated solely by social approval. Shockey (1984) argued that American migrants in England adopted certain British pronunciations of sounds so that they could be more clearly understood. Cohen and Cooper (1986) also claimed that the mutual convergence between tourists and hosts in Thailand was primarily motivated by interpretability.

Combining accommodation theory and ethnolinguistic identity theory (ELIT; Giles & Johnson, 1987), Gallois and Callan (1988) proposed an integrated model of communication in intercultural settings. Drawing on social identity theory, ELIT proposes that members of subordinate ethnic groups are more likely to retain their linguistic style and hence are less likely to accommodate to the dominant group's language if they see language as an important dimension of their group, if their group boundaries are hard and closed, and if their group has high ethnolinguistic vitality. Drawing also from the model of Coupland et al. (1988) as well as from the work of Hewstone and

Brown (1986) on intergroup encounters, Gallois and colleagues' model incorporates the notions of initial orientation, situational factors, speaker variables and listener reactions. Initial orientations of subordinate group members are influenced by individual differences in the way these speakers view their sociolinguistic situation. On the other hand, members of dominant groups are likely to see their ingroup as enjoying high vitality (although they may feel threatened if they feel that a subordinate group's status is rising or many of them are passing into their group). The authors suggest that situational variables like formality also modify a person's initial orientation toward a conversational partner in influencing the addressee focus taken and hence the strategies used and evaluations made. In my study, the subordinate group is the Mainland Chinese migrants and the dominant group Singaporean Chinese, although the situation in Singapore might be more complex since both groups actually share the same ethnicity and are ethnically affiliated with the same language, Mandarin Chinese.

In Canada, where intergroup conflicts have been centred around language, Genesee and Bourhis (1982, 1988) conducted two similar service encounter studies, one in the bilingual setting of Montreal and the other in the monolingual French setting of Quebec. In both studies, subjects listened to a French-Canadian speaker and English-Canadian speaker who took turns playing the role of salesman and customer in dialogues where they alternated between English and French. Although the sociocultural status of French in Quebec influenced the results in the second study, both studies found that subjects' judgements of the speakers were influenced by a combination of situational norms, speech accommodation and ingroup favouritism. These studies also argued that adhering to situational norms in bilingual contexts characterised by intergroup conflict is a safe way of interacting with outgroup members to minimise tension.

Sometimes interethnic tensions are heighted by differences in people's expectations and judgements of the outgroup, as well as by what they consider to be appropriate accommodation strategies. Studying the interactions of immigrant Korean shopkeepers and African American customers in Los

Angeles, Bailey (1997) found that the African American customers perceived the restraint of the Korean shopkeepers as being hostile and racist while the Korean shopkeepers perceived the personable involvement of African Americans as being disrespectful.

Studies on language choice and accommodation have been conducted in Singapore. Focussing on the societal dimensions of language choice, Platt (1985) studied language use in major shopping centres and Yong (1987) examined language choice in the context of service person-customer exchanges at hawker centres[4]. Yong found that ethnicity was the overriding factor that determined customers' language choice to service people (and vice versa). Platt concluded that while location tends to influence language choice, this is sometimes challenged by other factors: class, age and ethnicity of the participants, configuration of the individual's personal verbal repertoire and by personal preferences. For example, the ethnic Malays in all shopping areas, including high prestige ones, used only Malay and did not accommodate to the language of non-Malays. This behaviour likely reflects a time period when Bazaar Malay was more commonly used as a *lingua franca* among non-Malays than it is today, when it has been entirely eclipsed by English[5].

Eliciting reported language use in Singapore in the 1980s via a questionnaire, Altehenger-Smith (1987) also found that the Malays did the least accommodating in terms of language choice towards non-Malays in the areas analysed: language choice at the market, when eating out and when using public transportation. The Malay respondents reported choosing a variety of Malay about two times out of three when interacting with Singapore Chinese. Altehenger-Smith suggests the reasons for this phenomenon:

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4. Hawker centres are big (open air) complexes usually located in within public housing estates. The various stalls in a hawker centre sell a variety of relatively inexpensive food compared to restaurants in Singapore.
5. According to Bao and Aye (2010), many older Singaporeans can speak Bazaar Malay fluently although it is no longer a lingua franca in Singapore.

The position of the Malays in the Singapore population is not that of the dominant culture, having the most political power or the strongest economic force, factors from the macro-level which could influence language accommodation at the micro-level. Malay's importance in Southeast Asia as the national and official language of Malaysia, the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Singapore, its historical position as a lingua franca (See Asmah Haji Omar 1982), and its symbolic value for group identity (See Gumperz 1982; Gal 1972) via language choice for the Malays are some of the main elements which have helped it achieve and retain its position at least in the 'traditional' areas of Singaporean interaction. (Altehenger-Smith, 1987:89,90)

More recently, Lee (2007) studied how the Mainland Chinese in Singapore construct their identities in relation to Singapore Chinese speakers and how such negotiation of identities related to their language behaviours. One of her findings was that most of her 21 Mainland Chinese participants (who were professionals and not unskilled migrants) were "linguistically secure" in their language use and did not aspire to align fully with Singapore Chinese speakers. She concluded that although the participants found value in the use of local resources in Singapore (e.g. Singapore English), their native Mandarin varieties bore more significance to them. This suggests that some differences may be identified in the politeness norms and accommodation strategies of Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese living in Singapore.

2.2   Politeness and Impoliteness

A lot of research on politeness has been conducted since Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) first proposed their model of politeness. Leech (2014) gives an updated survey on the theories and models that have been influential since that time. This section describes work on politeness in China and Singapore that is most relevant to the present study and concludes with a brief overview of the concept of impoliteness.

Chinese politeness has been extensively researched (see Kadar and Pan, 2009 for a survey). Written as a challenge to Brown & Levinson's (1987) universalist approach to facework, Gu (1990) discusses the concept of

politeness in modern China and demonstrates that what counts as polite behaviour is often culture-specific and language-specific. He illustrates how, in a dinner invitation talk exchange where the speaker insists on inviting and the hearer declines although he would like to accept the invitation, the speaker might be seen as imposing and the hearer seen as hypocritical by a non-Chinese observer.

As China grows in global importance, cross- cultural and intercultural research on Chinese politeness has also increased. For example, Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2003) studied Chinese-British business interactions. Comparing two welcome meetings hosted by a British company for Chinese delegates, the study explored the differences in the way the meetings were evaluated in terms of rapport management. Observations and interview data suggested that politeness is a social judgement and that contextual factors like expectations and assumptions, played a big role in the management of relations.

More recently, Kadar and Pan (2011) overview Chinese politeness from a "discursive" perspective. Analysing linguistic behaviour in unrelated and asymmetrical interactions, they argue that in contemporary China the practice of politeness behaviour that we can define as "normative" is not adhered to in many interpersonal relationships. Three service encounters taken from two large datasets recorded in two separate time spans were analysed. It was argued that when the interactants are unrelated and/or there is a power difference between them, the hearer usually does not evaluate a lack of politeness as "impolite". This finding suggests that personal relationships and power differences may both significantly influence the evaluation of language choice politeness by Mainland Chinese living in Singapore.

As for research on politeness in Singapore, most studies have focused on the expression of politeness in Singapore English (e.g., Tan's (1992) study of politeness in requests for information). Focussing on Singaporean Chinese politeness, Lee (2011) discusses the issue with specific examples of social interactions in Singapore. She shows that many of the norms of politeness are often not adhered to in Singaporean discourse. To illustrate this point, she

provides a sample interaction between a food vendor and a customer. In this example, the customer puts up with the rude behaviour of the vendor so as to get his order. My study further explores how Singaporean Chinese as customers view the politeness of their language choices at different types of eating places and towards various types of service people.

Unlike politeness research, work on impoliteness that does not treat theories of impoliteness as being merely the opposite version of politeness models is a more recent field. Various definitions of impoliteness have emerged, incorporating a range of concepts. For example, in Mill's (2003) definition of impoliteness, the concepts of face, appropriateness and intentionality are included whereas in Bousfield's (2007) definition, only the concepts of face and intentionality are present:

> Impoliteness can be considered as any type of linguistic behaviour which is assessed as intending to threaten the hearer's face or social identity or as transgressing the hypothesized community of practice's norms of appropriacy. (Mills, 2003: 135)

> Impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face threatening acts (FTAs) which are purposefully delivered. (Bousfield, 2007: 72)

Like researchers of politeness, most researchers of impoliteness either adopt the classic approach or the discursive approach. Watts (2003) terms them first-order politeness and second-order politeness respectively. While the classic approach analyses politeness and impoliteness as theoretical concepts, the discursive approach focuses on the interpretations and evaluations that the interactants make. Culpeper (2011) is an example of a researcher who combines both approaches. He proposes that impoliteness is "a negative attitude towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts" and that such "situated behaviors are viewed negatively when they conflict with how one expects them to be" (2011:23). Including non-linguistic expressions in the term 'situated behaviors', Culpeper emphasizes that it is the evaluation of such behaviour by those who are involved in the interaction that is important. Furthermore, he argues that intention is one of the factors that causes offense: "Various factors

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can exacerbate how offensive an impolite behaviour is taken to be, including for example whether one understands a behaviour to be strongly intentional or not." (2011:23).

Building on Culpeper's argument, Koh (2013) suggests that impoliteness attitudes arise when certain stances are perceived in an interaction and that interpretations of impoliteness are dependent on the interaction between perceived norms and interlocutor relationship. By investigating perceptions of impoliteness across various service encounters in Singapore and Japan, she found that it was interlocutor stance more than behaviour that was important for her informants' evaluation of impoliteness. From the data obtained from her Singaporean respondents, she found that social distance and power are the contextual variables influencing interpretations of impoliteness during service encounters, with social distance as the greater influence. The Singaporean respondents perceived impolite statements in a given scenario as less impolite when the customer and service person are close friends as compared to when the customer and service person are complete strangers.

Findings from politeness research in China and Singapore both suggest that social distance and power are primary contextual variables that influence perceptions of politeness. Power and perceptions of politeness are directly correlated. Kadar and Pan (2011) as well as Lee (2011) have shown that many politeness norms are not adhered to in China and Singapore when there is a perceived[6] or actual power difference between the interactants. However it seems like perceptions of impoliteness and social distance are inversely correlated for Mainland Chinese while directly correlated for Singaporeans. Kadar and Pan (2011) have argued that in China, when the interactants are unrelated, the hearer usually does not evaluate a lack of politeness as impolite. On the other hand, Koh (2013) found that in Singapore, when the interactants are unrelated, the hearer would evaluate a lack of politeness as more impolite as

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6. Lee's (2011) example of customers accepting the rude behaviour of a food vendor so as to receive their food order suggest that the food vendor might be perceived as someone in a position of 'power' or control.

compared to when the interactants are related. These findings imply that politeness standards in China and Singapore might not be significantly different, except for the influence of social distance on perceptions of politeness.

2.3 Relating politeness to language choice

In Singapore, the choice of language in certain situations is not always straightforward. Although English is the working language, more Singapore Chinese and Singapore Malays speak primarily Mandarin and Malay at home respectively than those who speak primarily English (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2015). Hence it may be more appropriate to use Mandarin or Malay during service encounters in some situations. Moreover, Yong (1987) and Altehenger-Smith (1987) both found that the Malays did the least accommodating in terms of language choice towards non-Malays. Although these studies were conducted about 30 years ago, not using Malay when addressing a Singapore Malay service person may still be deemed inapproapriate. Moreover, a recent study in Singapore found that hearers would evaluate a lack of politeness as more impolite when the interactants are unrelated then when they are (Koh, 2013). Hence, during service encounters in which the customer and service person are usually unrelated, an inappropriate or marked language choice might be perceived as impolite by locals in Singapore especially if "situated behaviors are viewed negatively when they conflict with how one expects them to be" (Culpeper, 2011:23). Unlike the locals in Singapore, the Mainland Chinese in Singapore might not be familiar with these local social norms and hence might unintentionally make inappropriate language choices and be perceived as impolite. Furthermore, it is possible that even if Mainland Chinese do make the same language choice as locals in a service encounter, they might be perceived as less polite, because they are seen as outsiders with greater social distance.

Adopting the first-order politeness approach, my study compares Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceptions of the politeness of their language choices as customers during service encounters. My study also

investigates broader issues of language choice and politeness, including Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceptions of their language choices towards a bilingual friend. In the process, I explore how these groups perceive politeness towards strangers versus towards friends and whether Singapore Chinese perceived Mainland Chinese migrants as 'rude'[7].

I describe my data collection methods in the next chapter.

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7. Watts (2008) suggested that lay people would probably use the term 'rude' rather than 'impolite'.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The data for this study was collected over five months between May 2015 and September 2015. I obtained data from 50 female participants, specifically 10 Mainland Chinese wives, 20 Mainland Chinese students and 20 Singapore Chinese. In this chapter, I describe my study design and data collection methods.

3.1   Participants and Recruitment

As discussed in chapter one, there are various groups of Mainland Chinese migrants in Singapore. As mentioned earlier, there are various groups of Mainland Chinese in Singapore. I have chosen to focus on Mainland wives and Mainland female students. The language choices and perceptions of Mainland wives could be different from Mainland students since their reasons for being in Singapore are quite different. While some in the former group might not have chosen to immigrate if not for their spouse, most of the latter are in Singapore by choice.   I have also decided to include only female participants across all groups in the study as I wanted to avoid having gender as a variable in data analysis.

Most of the participants, especially the Mainland Chinese students and Singaporean Chinese, were recruited via personal contacts. Some of the Mainland Chinese wives were contacted via introductions by friends and notices on social media. Participants were reimbursed for their time with a small gift certificate. All participants gave their informed consent. Codes are assigned to each participant to protect their confidentiality. Table 1 shows the biographical variables of the participants and Table 2 shows the list of participants, some brief information about them and the codes assigned to them.

Table 1. Biographical variables of participants

Participants	N	Age (years)	Length of Residence (months)
Mainland wives	10	36.7(6.2)	83.5 (57.1)
Mainland students	20	23.5(2.8)	27.7 (24.7)
Singaporean Chinese	20	38.4 (16.7)	NA

Note: Age and Length of Residence showed in means (with SDs).

Table 2. List of participants

Mainland wives			
Assigned Code	**Age (approx.)**	**Length of Residence (Months)**	**Hometown in China**
MW01	42	15	Guizhou
MW02	39	24	Shandong
MW03	28	34	Dalian
MW04	30	111	Shanghai
MW05	47	71	Jilin
MW06	36	116	Hainan
MW07	32	120	Anhui
MW08	31	76	Shaanxi
MW09	37	52	Shandong
MW10	45	216	Jilin
Mainland students			
MS01	20	42	Guizhou
MS02	22	42	Shandong
MS03	30	11	Dalian
MS04	26	11	Shandong
MS05	27	11	Jiangxi
MS06	24	11	Hubei
MS07	23	42	Shandong
MS08	20	23	Zhejiang
MS09	21	43	Hubei
MS10	28	53	Henan
MS11	23	81	Helongjiang
MS12	23	65	Tianjin

MS13	23	65	Hubei
MS14	24	10	Shaanxi
MS15	18	38	Hubei
MS16	25	1	Hunan
MS17	22	1	Henan
MS18	24	1	Jilin
MS19	25	1	Jilin
MS20	22	1	Jiangsu

Singapore Chinese

Assigned Code	Age (approx.)	Highest level of education	Profession
SC01	65	High School	Customer service officer
SC02	37	University	Youth Worker
SC03	28	University	Social worker
SC04	37	University	Chemist
SC05	37	High School	Church worker
SC06	36	High School	Sales Executive
SC07	33	University	Engineer
SC08	36	University	Administrator
SC09	38	University	Financial Advisor
SC10	32	University	Administrator
SC11	57	Secondary School	Homemaker
SC12	24	High School	HR Executive
SC13	21	High School	Student
SC14	72	Sec School	Retiree
SC15	68	Sec School	Retiree
SC16	23	High School	Student
SC17	21	High School	Student
SC18	63	Secondary School	Production Supervisor
SC19	22	High school	Youth worker
SC20	18	Secondary school	Student

3.2   Data Collection

Data for this study was collected via written questionnaire and structured interviews conducted with each of the 50 participants individually. The interview followed directly after the questionnaire. Participants were given the

choice of their preferred language for the interview. For the questionnaire, however, all Mainland Chinese participants were given the form in Mandarin while all Singaporeans, except one who was more comfortable using Mandarin, were given the form in English. This was to ensure that the participants were clear about the instructions of the questionnaire and could complete it with ease. All the participants except two agreed to have their interview audio-recorded. The duration of the sessions usually ranged between 20 minutes to an hour and took place in a location that was convenient for the participants and quiet enough for them to be audio-recorded.

3.2.1 Written questionnaire

Participants were presented with different service encounters scenarios and asked to rate the choice of each language (English and Mandarin) on a 4-point scale from "very rude" to "very polite". Here are the instructions given on the questionnaire:

> "Consider the following scenarios involving a service person and you. You will be asked to rate the politeness of giving your order in Mandarin and English. For each case, circle the rating you think is appropriate on the scale from "very rude" to "very polite"."

The scenarios varied in the class/location of the service (hawker centre, fast food restaurant, high-end restaurant)[8] and the nationality/ethnicity of the service provider (Chinese from China, Singaporean Chinese, Malay), yielding nine scenarios. This design allows us to tease apart the roles of setting and ethnicity in language choice and to identify gradient politeness differences between English and Mandarin in these scenarios[9]. The service encounter scenarios were designed to reflect a salient, everyday activity in Singapore involving language choice:

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8. Pictures of each location was inserted in the questionnaire form to reduce the possibility that participants are not considering the same given scenarios.
9. Unlike some of the interview questions that had the neutral option, participants were not given the neutral option in the questionnaire so as to avoid the possibility of having them give neutral options all the time.

ordering food at common public eating areas[10]. Figure 1 shows an example of a scenario (See Appendix A for full questionnaire).

Figure 1. Example of a scenario

Location A: At a hawker centre	Please select			
If the service person appears to be <u>from China</u>:				
A1. If I order in Mandarin it is…	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
A2. If I order in English it is….	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

After the participant has completed the questionnaire, I would ask her to explain some of her answers.

3.2.2   Structured interview

I decided to supplement the relatively limited data provided by the questionnaire with a structured interview. An interview guide with some open-ended questions (see Appendix B) was designed to provide structure to the interview and obtain the information that would help answer my research questions. While there was some overlap, the interview questions for the Mainland Chinese participants were different from those for Singapore Chinese. All participants were asked questions about their background (namely birthdate, birthplace, education, profession and language). Participants were also asked to share their views about the importance of politeness towards strangers versus friends since, according to Kadar and Pan (2011), personal relationships and power differences may also influence Mainland Chinese evaluation of language choice politeness.

In addition, Mainland Chinese participants were asked to talk about their aspirations as well as their views about Singapore, including how similar they think the Chinese in China and Singapore are. Singapore Chinese participants

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10. In Singapore, 'dining out' is a salient cultural activity and the hawker centre in particular is an icon of Singaporean culture.

were asked to share their views towards Mainland Chinese migrants both in general and more specifically about their language and politeness standards. For the Singapore Chinese participants, I included a question to understand how they viewed the politeness of Mainland Chinese migrants. I also included a question about their willingness to accommodate to a Mainland Chinese salesperson with low English proficiency.

The interviews were conducted one-on-one. Since interviews might be perceived as formal and cause some participants to be nervous, especially with the audio-recording, I took steps to allay their anxiety. I chatted briefly with participants who were new to me to get to know them before conducting the interview so that they might be more comfortable with me. I also placed the audio recorder out of the participants' view.

Overall, the whole process of data collection, spanning almost five months, was smooth. There were very few rejections when I approached my contacts to participate and there was minimal change of dates when the appointments were fixed. Most of the participants took the interviews seriously and answered the questionnaire and interview questions thoughtfully. The interview session, including the administration of the questionnaire, took about 30 to 45 minutes for most participants. The data collected and the analyses of the data is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Data and Analysis

In the first part of this chapter, I present an overview of the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews. In the second part, I present a synthesis of these findings in light of my research questions.

4.1 Overview of questionnaire data

After data from the questionnaires had been collected and collated, analyses with Microsoft Excel and Rbrul (Johnson, 2009) were performed.

4.1.1 Analysis with Excel

Figure 2 shows the overall difference between English and Mandarin politeness ratings. English was given a higher rating overall than Mandarin by all three participant groups. Mainland wives gave the highest rating for the politeness of English followed by Mainland students. Mainland wives also gave the highest politeness rating for Mandarin while students gave the lowest.

Figure 2. Overall difference between politeness ratings
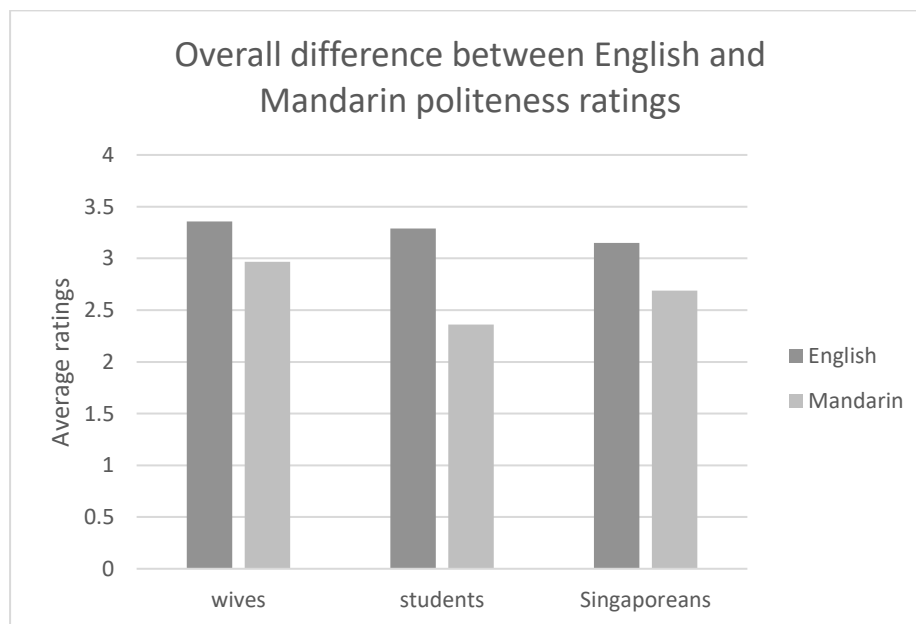
Figures 3 to 5 show the politeness ratings given by the three participant groups for location and service person separately. They show that the only situation when Mandarin has a higher politeness rating than English is when the service person is a Mainland Chinese.

Figure 3. Wives' politeness rating by location and service person
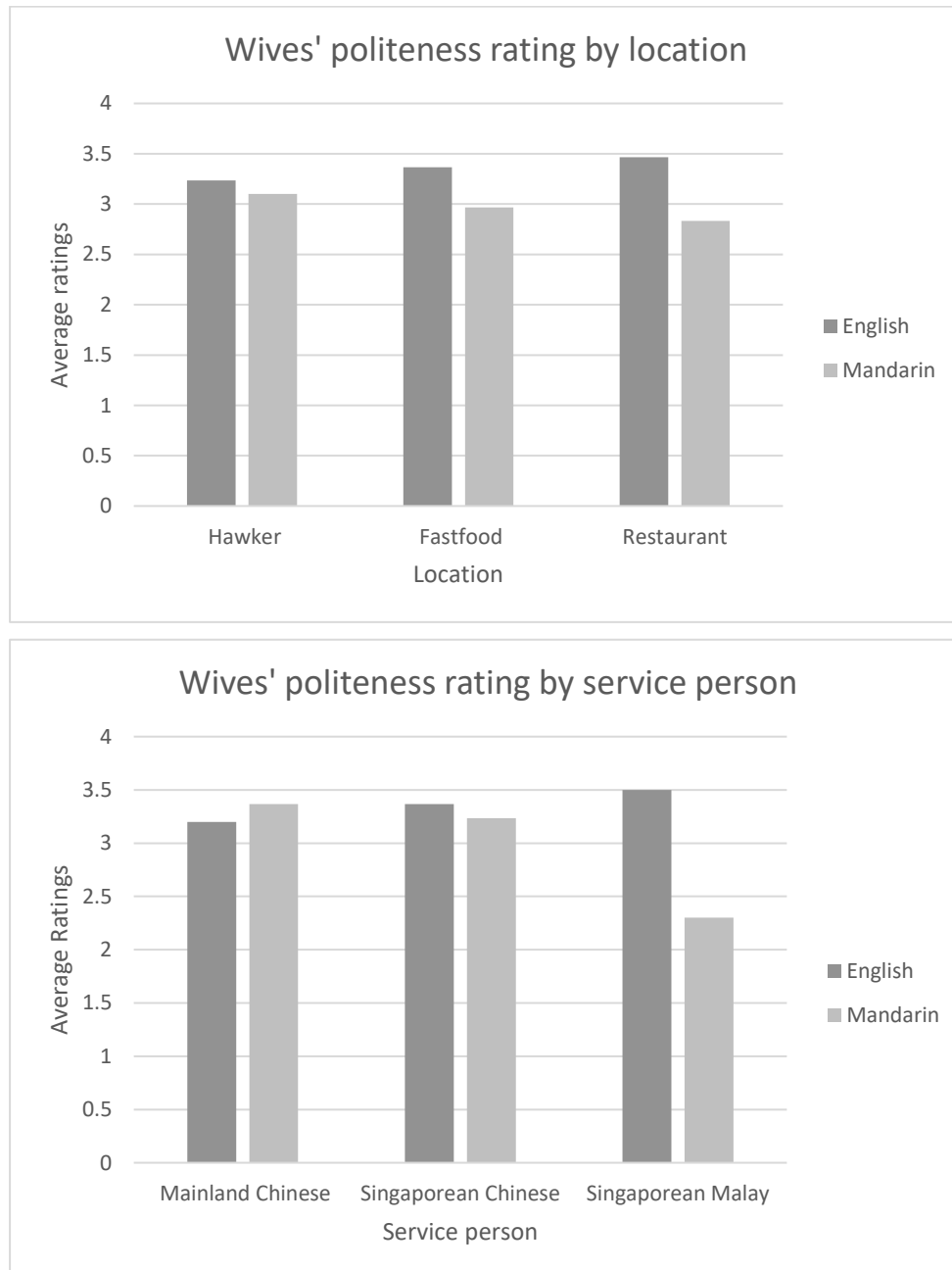
Figure 4. Students' politeness rating by location and service person
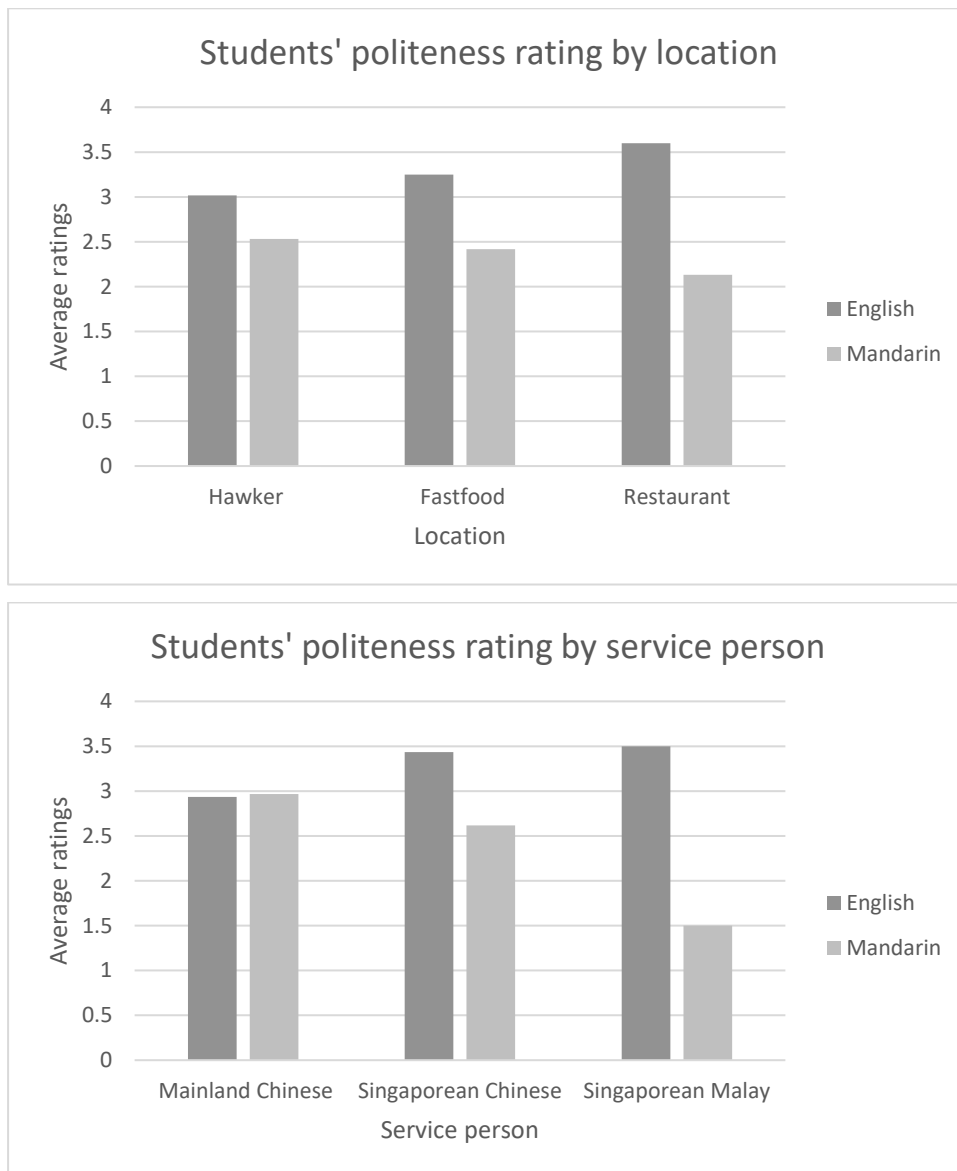
Figure 5. Singapore Chinese' politeness rating by location and service person

Singapore Chinese' politeness rating by location

Singapore Chinese' politeness rating by service person
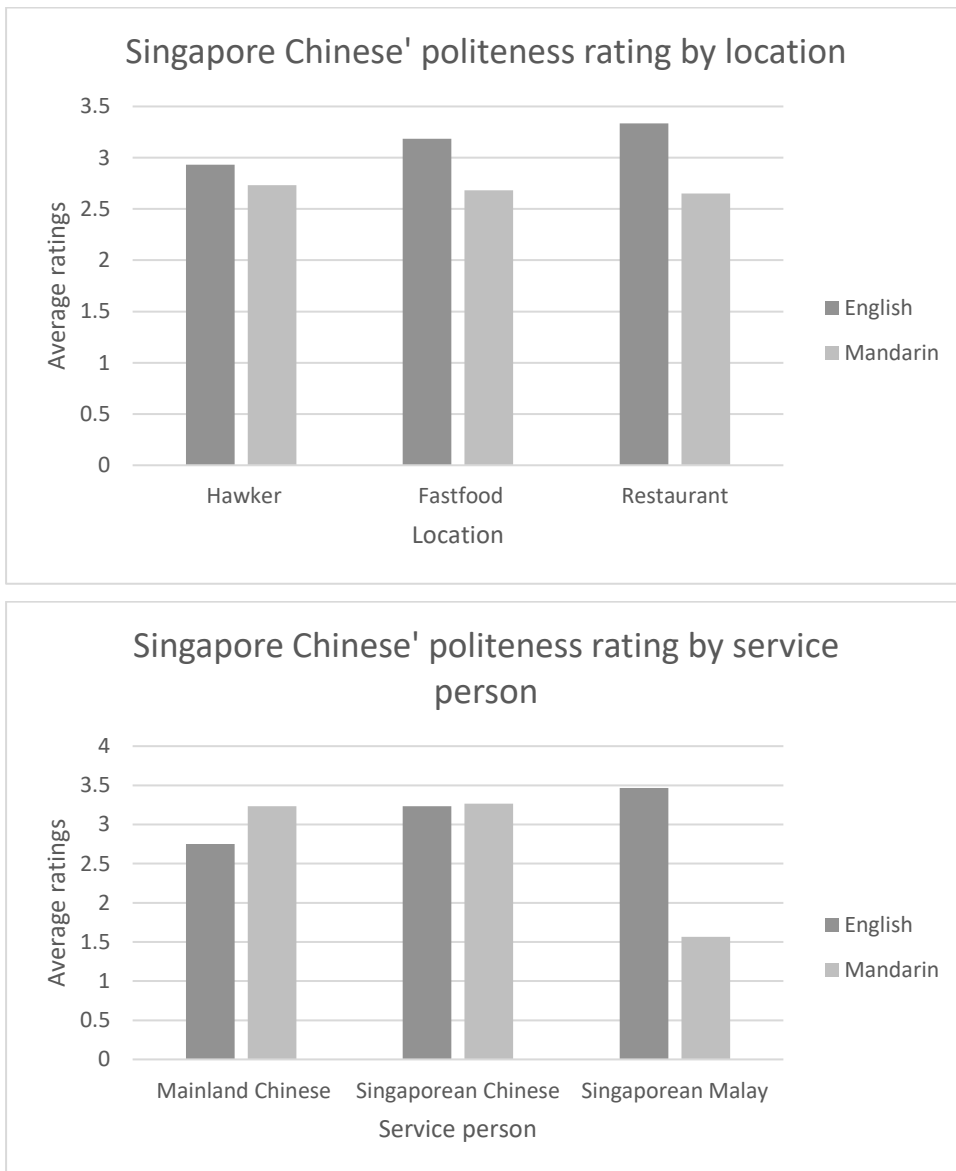
Unpaired-samples t-tests[11] were conducted to compare the overall English and Mandarin politeness ratings among the three participant groups. For English, there is a significant difference in politeness ratings for Mainland wives (M=3.36, SD=0.61) and Singapore Chinese (M=3.15, SD=0.67); t(268)=2.4459,

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11. An unpaired t-test compares the means of two independent populations to ascertain the probability that the results obtained are not due to random chance. In tests where p<0.05, there is a high probability that the results are meaningful.

p =0.0151. There is also a significant difference in politeness ratings for Mainland students (M=3.29, SD=0.62) and Singapore Chinese (M=3.15, SD= 0.67); t(358)=2.0361, p =0.0425. These results show that Mainland wives and students rated the politeness of English significantly higher than the Singapore Chinese participants.

For Mandarin, there are significant differences in politeness ratings for all three groups: for Mainland wives (M=2.97, SD=0.94) and Singapore Chinese (M=2.69, SD=0.99); t(268)=2.2124, p = 0.0278; for Mainland wives (M=2.97, SD=0.94) and Mainland students (M=2.36, SD=0.99); t(268)=4.8141, p = 0.0001; for Mainland students (M=2.36, SD=0.99) and Singapore Chinese (M=2.69, SD=0.99); t(358)=3.1444, p = 0.0018. These results reveal that Mainland students rated the politeness of Mandarin significantly lower than the Singapore Chinese participants who in turn rated Mandarin significantly lower than the Mainland wives.

4.1.2 Analysis with Rbrul

For mixed-effect linear regression analyses with Rbrul, the dependent variable was first the rating for English and then the rating for Mandarin (1=very rude; 2=a bit rude; 3=rather polite; 4=very polite). Using separate models for the three participant groups, the fixed variables were location, service person, age (continuous), length of residence (for Mainland wives and students), self-reported English proficiency (for Mainland wives and students) and participant number (random variable). Tables 3 to 8 show the significant constraints on participants' perception of English and of Mandarin as polite. Finally, Table 9 shows a comparison of the results.

4.1.2.1 Rbrul results for Mainland wives

Table 3 shows that Mainland wives are more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants and fastfood places and towards Singapore Malay and Singapore Chinese service person. On the other hand, Table 4 shows that they

are more likely to perceive Mandarin as polite towards Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese service person. Age, length of residence and English proficiency are not found to be significant predictors of Mainland wives' perception of the politeness of English or Mandarin.

Table 3. Significant constraints on Mainland wives' perception of English as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Location			
Restaurant	0.111	30	3.467
Fastfood	0.011	30	3.367
Hawker	-0.122	30	3.233
Service person			
Singapore Malay	0.144	30	3.500
Singapore Chinese	0.011	30	3.367
Mainland Chinese	-0.156	30	3.200

Participant

        intercept tokens mean

 std dev   0.499   90 3.356

 n df intercept grand mean

 90 7   3.356   3.356

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

  89.564 122.426 123.792   0.062   0.633   0.695

Table 4. Significant constraints on Mainland wives' perception of Mandarin as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Service person			
Mainland Chinese	0.400	30	3.367
Singapore Chinese	0.267	30	3.233
Singapore Malay	-0.667	30	2.300
Participant			
intercept tokens mean			
std dev 0.661 90 2.967			
n df intercept grand mean			
90 5 2.967 2.967			
deviance AIC AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total			
161.136 179.279 179.993 0.244 0.469 0.713			

4.1.2.2 Rbrul results for Mainland students

Table 5 shows that the Mainland students are more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants and towards Singapore Malays and Singapore Chinese. Unlike Mainland wives, they are less likely to perceive English as polite at fastfood places. Table 6 shows that the Mainland students are more likely to perceive Mandarin as polite at hawker centers and fastfood places and towards Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese service person. This is also unlike Mainland wives' results for Mandarin. Age, length of residence and English proficiency are not found to be significant predictors of Mainland students' perception of the politeness of English or Mandarin.

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Table 5 Significant constraints on Mainland students' perception of English as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Location			
Restaurant	0.311	60	3.600
Fastfood	-0.039	60	3.250
Hawker	-0.272	60	3.017
Service person			
Singapore Malay	0.211	60	3.500
Singapore Chinese	0.144	60	3.433
Mainland Chinese	-0.356	60	2.933

Participant

　　　intercept tokens mean

 std dev   0.233   180 3.289

n df intercept grand mean

 180 7   3.289   3.289

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

 253.619 288.745 289.396   0.311   0.139   0.45

Table 6. Significant constraints on Mainland students' perception of Mandarin as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Location			
Hawker	0.172	60	2.533
Fastfood	0.056	60	2.417
Restaurant	-0.228	60	2.133
Service person			
Mainland Chinese	0.606	60	2.967
Singapore Chinese	0.256	60	2.617

Singapore Malay	-0.861	60	1.500

Participant

intercept tokens mean

std dev   0.569   180 2.361

n df intercept grand mean

 180 7   2.361   2.361

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

   310.43 343.386 344.037   0.421   0.324   0.745

4.1.2.3 Rbrul results for Singapore Chinese

Table 7 shows that like Mainland wives, Singapore Chinese are more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants and fastfood places and towards Singapore Malays and Singapore Chinese. Table 8 shows that they are more likely to perceive Mandarin as polite towards Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese service person. This is also like Mainland wives' results for Mandarin.

Table 7. Significant constraints on Singaporean Chinese perception of English as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Location			
Restaurant	0.183	60	3.333
Fastfood	0.033	60	3.183
Hawker	-0.217	60	2.933
Service person			
Singapore Malay	0.317	60	3.467

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Singapore Chinese	0.083	60	3.233
Mainland Chinese	-0.400	60	2.750

Participant

intercept tokens mean

std dev   0.362   180 3.15

n df intercept overall mean

180 7   3.15   3.15

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

266.329 300.797 301.448   0.253   0.283   0.536

Table 8. Significant constraints on Singaporean Chinese perception of Mandarin as polite

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Service person			
Singapore Chinese	0.578	60	3.267
Mainland Chinese	0.544	60	3.233
Singapore Malay	-1.122	60	1.567

Participant

intercept tokens mean

std dev   0.25   180 2.689

n df intercept overall mean

180 5   2.689   2.689

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

303.809 325.474 325.818   0.645   0.064   0.709

4.1.2.4 Comparison of the three participant groups

Table 9 shows a comparison of the Rbrul results for the three participant groups. All three participant groups are likely to perceive English as polite at the same locations and towards the same service people, with the exception that Mainland students are not likely to perceive English as polite at fastfood restaurants. Mainland students are also likely to perceive Mandarin as polite at hawker centres and fastfood restaurants while for Mainland wives and Singapore Chinese, location was not a significant predictor.

Table 9. Comparison of Rbrul results

	English more likely rated higher for politeness		Mandarin more likely rated higher for politeness	
	Location	**Service Person**	**Location**	**Service Person**
Wives	Restaurant; Fastfood	Sg Malay; Sg Chinese	Not sig.	Mainland Chinese; Sg Chinese
Students	Restaurant	Sg Malay; Sg Chinese	Hawker; Fastfood	Mainland Chinese; Sg Chinese
Singapore Chinese	Restaurant; Fastfood	Sg Malay; Sg Chinese	Not sig.	Sg Chinese; Mainland Chinese

Thus far, I have considered the politeness ratings for English and Mandarin separately. To compare the English ratings with the Mandarin ratings, the dependent variable for regression analyses with Rbrul was changed to the

rating for both English and Mandarin (See Tables 10 to 12). Using separate models for the three participant groups again, the fixed variables were language, location, service person, age (continuous), and participant number (random variable). After checking for interactions between language and location and interactions between language and service person, I found that all three participant groups were likely to perceive English to be more polite than Mandarin towards a Singapore Malay service person. Singapore Chinese and Mainland wife participants were likely to perceive English to be more polite at restaurants and fastfood places and Mandarin to be more polite at hawker centres whereas Mainland students were more likely to perceive English as more polite than Mandarin only at restaurants. These results show that overall, the participants perceived the relative politeness of English compared with Mandarin similarly, except that the Mainland student participants perceived Mandarin as more polite than English at fastfood places.

Table 10. Significant constraints on the combined English and Mandarin politeness ratings of Mainland wives

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Language			
English	0.194	90	3.356
Mandarin	-0.194	90	2.967
Location			
Fastfood	0.006	60	3.167
Hawker	0.006	60	3.167
Restaurant	-0.011	60	3.150
Service person			
Singaporean Chinese	0.139	60	3.300
Mainland Chinese	0.122	60	3.283
Singaporean Malay	-0.261	60	2.900
Language:Location`			
Mandarin:hawker	0.128	30	3.100

English:Restaurant	0.122	30	3.467
English:fastfood	0.006	30	3.367
Mandarin:fastfood	-0.006	30	2.967
Mandarin:Restaurant	-0.122	30	2.833
English:hawker	-0.128	30	3.233
Language:Addressee`			
English:Sg Malay	0.406	30	3.500
Mandarin:Mainland Chi	0.278	30	3.367
Mandarin:Sg Chinese	0.128	30	3.233
English:Sg Chinese	-0.128	30	3.367
English:Mainland Chi	-0.278	30	3.200
Mandarin:Sg Malay	-0.406	30	2.300

Participant

    intercept tokens mean

std dev   0.512   180 3.161

 n df intercept overall mean

180 12   3.161   3.161

deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total

 292.461 356.164 358.032   0.242   0.376   0.618

Table 11. Significant constraints on the combined English and Mandarin
politeness ratings of Mainland students

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Language			
English	0.464	180	3.289
Mandarin	-0.464	180	2.361
Location			
Restaurant	0.042	120	2.867

37

Fastfood	0.008	120	2.833
hawker	-0.050	120	2.775
Service person			
Singaporean Chinese	0.200	120	3.025
Mainland Chinese	0.125	120	2.950
Singaporean Malay	-0.325	120	2.500
Language:Location`			
English:Restaurant	0.269	60	3.600
Mandarin:hawker	0.222	60	2.533
Mandarin:fastfood	0.047	60	2.417
English:fastfood	-0.047	60	3.250
English:hawker	-0.222	60	3.017
Mandarin:Restaurant	-0.269	60	2.133
Language:Addressee`			
English:Sg Malay	0.536	60	3.500
Mandarin:Mainland Chi	0.481	60	2.967
Mandarin:Sg Chinese	0.056	60	2.617
English:Singaporean Chi	-0.056	60	3.433
English:Mainland Chi	-0.481	60	2.933
Mandarin:Sg Malay	-0.536	60	1.500

Participant

    intercept tokens mean
std dev   0.292   360 2.825

   n df intercept overall mean
360 12   2.825   2.825

 deviance   AIC   AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total
 654.597 723.98 724.879   0.535   0.094   0.629

Table 12. Significant constraints on the combined English and Mandarin politeness ratings of Singapore Chinese

	Log-odds	Tokens	Mean
Language			
English	0.231	180	3.150
Mandarin	-0.231	180	2.689
Location			
Restaurant	0.072	120	2.992
Fastfood	0.014	120	2.933
hawker	-0.086	120	2.833
Service person			
Singapore Chinese	0.331	120	3.250
Mainland Chinese	0.072	120	2.992
Singapore Malay	-0.403	120	2.517
Language:Location`			
Mandarin:hawker	0.131	60	2.733
English:Restaurant	0.111	60	3.333
English:fastfood	0.019	60	3.183
Mandarin:fastfood	-0.019	60	2.683
Mandarin:Restaurant	-0.111	60	2.650
English:hawker	-0.131	60	2.933
Language:Addressee`			
English:Sg Malay	0.719	60	3.467
Mandarin:Mainland Chi	0.472	60	3.233
Mandarin:Sg Chinese	0.247	60	3.267
English:Singaporean Chi	-0.247	60	3.233
English:Mainland Chi	-0.472	60	2.750
Mandarin:Sg Malay	-0.719	60	1.567

Participant		
intercept tokens mean		
std dev	0.293	360 2.919

n df intercept overall mean			
360 12	2.919	2.919	
deviance	AIC	AICc R2.fixed R2.random R2.total	
567.557 639.258 640.157	0.552	0.111	0.663

4.2   Overview of interview data

In this section, I give an overview of the interview data. Table 13 gives an overview of Mainland wives and Mainland students' interview data while Table 14 gives that of Singapore Chinese. Both tables present the answers to the closed-ended questions in the interview. Descriptive statistics are used to express the answers as a percentage of the number of participants in the respective group. Contrasting answers for Mainland wives and Mainland students are bolded.

Table 13. Overview of Mainland wives and Mainland students interview data

	Mainland wives	**Mainland students**
Mean age in years (std dev)	36.7(6.2)	23.5(2.8)
Mean length of residence in months (std dev)	83.5 (57.1)	27.7 (24.7)
Self-reported language proficiency	Very poor-10% Fairly poor-30% Ok-50% **Good-10%** Very good-0%	Very poor-0% Fairly poor-0% Ok-55% **Good-45%** Very good-0%
Importance of improving English	Neutral-20% Somewhat important-30% **Very important-50%**	Neutral-0% Somewhat important-5% **Very important-95%**

Opinion about the similarity of Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese	Similar-40% Different-60%	Similar-50% Different-50%
Opinion about speaking more English since it is the official language	Agree strongly- 30% Agree somewhat – 50% Neutral - 20%	Agree strongly- 55% Agree somewhat – 30% Neutral - 15%
Language choice towards Singapore Chinese friend	**Mandarin-100%** **English-0%**	**Mandarin-45%** **English-55%**
Importance of being polite to strangers	Very important- 90% Somewhat important-10%	Very important- 85% Somewhat important-5% Neutral-10%
Importance of being polite to people they know	**Very important- 60%** Somewhat important-30% Neutral-10%	**Very important- 30%** Somewhat important-35% Neutral-20% Not important – 15%

Table 14. Overview of Singapore Chinese interview data

Mean age in years (std dev)	38.4 (16.7)
Language use	More English-45% More Mandarin-40% Equal frequency-15%
Opinion about Mainland migrants being rude	Agree-45% Neutral-50% Disagree-5%
Opinion about Mainland migrants speaking too much Mandarin	Agree-50% Neutral-35% Disagree-15%
Language choice towards Mainland friend	Mandarin-55% English-35% Both-10%
Willingness to accommodate to Mainland Chinese service person	Yes-95% No-5%
Attitude towards Mainland Chinese	Positive-20% Neutral-65%

	Negative-15%
Importance of being polite to strangers	Very important- 80% Somewhat important-20%
Importance of being polite to people they know	Very important- 75% Somewhat important-25%

Table 13 shows that there are a few obvious differences between the Mainland wives and Mainland students participants. The Mainland students reported an overall higher level of English proficiency and stronger desire to improve their English. While all the Mainland wives indicated that they would speak Mandarin to a Singapore Chinese friend, only 45% of the Mainland students would. Being polite to people they know is very important for 60% of the Mainland wives but only very important for 30% of the students.

The interview data for the Singapore Chinese participants reveal that almost half of them think that Mainland Chinese migrants are rude and half think that Mainland Chinese migrants speak too much Mandarin. 55% of them indicated that they would speak Mandarin to a Mainland Chinese friend and 95% would accommodate to a Mainland Chinese service person. Only 15% indicated negativity towards Mainland Chinese.

4.3   Synthesis of findings in light of research questions

The previous two sections gave an overview of the findings from the questionnaire and interviews respectively. Here, I present a synthesis of these findings in light of my four research questions presented in Chapter 1.

4.3.1 RQ1: Do Mainland Chinese perceive their language choices differently in terms of politeness?

The questionnaire data on the whole suggest that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices similarly in terms of politeness. The results show that both Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese

rated English higher in terms of politeness than Mandarin at all locations and towards Singapore Malay service people. Compared to Singapore Chinese, Mainland Chinese gave higher overall ratings for the politeness of English. Mainland wives were, like Singapore Chinese, more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants and fastfood places while Mainland students were more likely to perceive English as polite only at restaurants. This is similar to Platt's (1985) finding where shoppers chose English in shops of higher social standing.

Furthermore, Mainland Chinese were more likely to perceive English as polite towards Singapore Chinese and Singapore Malays. According to CAT, speakers accommodate to the language of the person from whom they desire something or wish to gain approval. In this case, migrants might be converging towards the host community in order to be approved. The exploratory-choice maxim (Myers-Scotton, 1983) may also come into play here. English might become a 'safe' language choice for service encounters involving Singaporeans since English is the lingua franca here. Interview data shows that 80% of the Mainland wives and 85% of the Mainland students participants agree that they should speak more English since it is the official working language in Singapore.

On the other hand, the questionnaire results show that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese alike gave Mandarin lower overall politeness rating than English. Although location was not a significant predictor for Mainland wives and Singapore Chinese, all three participant groups were likely to perceive Mandarin as polite when speaking to Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese service person.

Moreover, interview data shows that less than half (45%) of the Singapore Chinese participants feel that Mainland Chinese migrants are rude and 50% feel that they speak Mandarin too much. These interview responses show that, while there are many complaints in the media and online about Mainland Chinese language choices and rudeness, this perception is not universal among Singaporeans.

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The questionnaire data on the whole does not suggest that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese evaluate their language choices very differently in terms of politeness. If Mainland Chinese migrants do in fact use more Mandarin during service encounters, it is not because they have a different perception of politeness and language choice compared to Singapore Chinese.

Do Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese then have similar politeness standards? According to the interview findings, the importance of being polite depends on the situation. In response to the interview question 'How important is it for you to be polite during encounters with strangers?', almost all of the Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese participants indicated that it was either 'very important' or 'somewhat important'. Only two Mainland student participants indicated 'neutral', giving the reason that basic politeness would suffice since this is usually a one-time meeting. Interestingly, these two Mainland students are the only ones who appear to support the argument of Kadar and Pan (2011) that, in China, a lack of politeness might not be evaluated as impolite when the interactants are unrelated. Based on this same argument, we would also expect the Mainland participants to indicate that it is important to be polite to people that they know. While 90% of the Mainland wives indicated so, only 65% of the Mainland students did. This group of Mainland students also appears to differ overall from the Singapore Chinese participants who indicated that it is important to be polite to people they know as much as to strangers. Most of the Mainland students viewed being polite with people they know as creating 'distance' between themselves. Given that the students represent a younger generation of Mainland Chinese, this may indicate a changing trend in politeness standards

4.3.2 RQ2: Do different groups of Mainland Chinese differ among themselves in their perception of their language choices in service encounters?

The questionnaire findings show that the two groups of Mainland Chinese participants differ in their perception of their language choices in

service encounters. Compared to Mainland students, Mainland wives gave higher overall ratings for the politeness of English, although this difference was not significant. However, Mainland wives were more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants and fastfood places while Mainland students were more likely to perceive English as polite only at restaurants. For the politeness of Mandarin, Mainland wives gave the highest ratings among the three participant groups and Mainland students gave the lowest. This difference is statistically significant. Moreover, location was a significant predictor for Mainland students' Mandarin rating but not for Mainland wives.

Comparing the views of individuals in the two groups from the interview data could also throw some light on how these two groups differ. For example, Mainland student participant MS03 gave the same politeness ratings for English and Mandarin at 'hawker centre' and 'fastfood restaurant' but gave higher politeness ratings for English at 'restaurant'. When asked to share why her responses for the two locations 'hawker centre' and 'fastfood restaurant' differed from that of 'restaurant', MS03 explained that she could go to a hawker centre and fastfood restaurant every day but not to an expensive restaurant. Hence to her, English being more formal is more appropriate. Another Mainland student MS06 responded that Mandarin is not a very polite language in Singapore. She said that she would speak English to a Mainland waiter because she thinks he might not want to be treated 'different from other Singaporeans'. To her, English is a 'safer' language during service encounters since she's not sure if the service person is from China or if he is a Singaporean who might not be able to speak Mandarin.

On the other hand, for Mainland wife participant MW07, location doesn't affect her language choice towards the different service people. She gave the same politeness ratings for all three locations and towards Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese. She explained that she thinks Mandarin is more appropriate towards a Mainland Chinese service person even at a restaurant because of a common Mainland Chinese identity:

(1) MW07: 我个人认为说华语比较适合。。。比较舒服。。。大家都是中国人。

"I personally think that speaking Mandarin is more appropriate…more comfortable…we are all Mainland Chinese."[12]

(Mainland wife from Anhui)

MW07 could represent a group of Mainland migrants who have a high degree of in-group identity such that it overrides the social constraints of language choice.

Could some of these differences be due to the biographical variables of these two groups of Mainland Chinese or their level of English proficiency? According to Table 1, the average age of the Mainland wives participants is 36.7 years and their average length of residence is 83.5 months (or about 6.9 years). The average age of the Mainland students is slightly lower at 23.5 years and length of residence is relatively lower at 27.7 months (or about 2.3 years). The Mainland students also reported an overall higher level of English proficiency. However, analyses with Rbrul show that neither age nor length of residence were significant predictors for the Mainland wives and Mainland students' language proficiency perception of the politeness of their language choices in service encounters. Hence, the differences among the Mainland migrants in this study could be due to other factors including their degree of in-group identity and solidarity. The Mainland migrants' orientation towards Singapore could be another possible factor. As mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the Mainland wives might not have chosen to immigrate if not for their spouse but most of the students are in Singapore by choice.

4.3.3 RQ3: Would perceived similarities between Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese cause Mainland Chinese to choose Mandarin when speaking to Singapore Chinese?

Yang Peidong in his article "Why Chinese nationals and Singaporeans

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12. Interview excerpts are presented verbatim, without linguistic transcription conventions, and translated by me. Repeated periods indicate an ellipsis.

don't always get along" (The Straits Times, 2013) suggested that Mainland Chinese might make assumptions regarding Singaporean Chinese willingness to speak Mandarin because they might think that the culture of Chinese Singaporeans does not differ from that of Mainland China. The interview findings show that quite a high percentage of Mainland Chinese participants (40% of Mainland wives and 50% of Mainland students) don't think that they are very different from Singapore Chinese. For example, participants MS04, MS09 and MS12 think that Singapore Chinese are similar to them in terms of language, tradition and culture (see Excerpts 2-4).

(2) MS04: Language makes us feel more similar. Some similar traditions.

(Mainland student from Shandong)

(3) MS09: Somewhat similar. Because the culture. You also have Chinese lunar new year, you also have hongbao.

(Mainland student from Hubei)

(4) MS12: Some of our views and opinions are similar. Language and taste of food may not be the same. Deep inside is the same.

(Mainland student from Tianjin)

The other Mainland Chinese participants (60% of Mainland wives and 50% of Mainland students) who think that they are different from Singapore Chinese, feel that Singapore Chinese are different in terms of 'quality' or 'class', attitudes and way of thinking (see Excerpts 5-9).

(5) MW01: 有点不一样。 素质方面不一样。新加坡华人比较有礼貌，说话声音比较轻。。。比较讲卫生。。。友好友善。。。你没去过中国你不知道。
"A little different. Different in terms of 'quality' or class of a person. Singapore Chinese are more polite, speak more softly…more hygienic…friendlier. You wouldn't know this if you haven't been to China."

(Mainland wife from Guizhou)

(6) MW02: 有所不一样， 毕竟生活的国家不一样。。。人的思想和做事的态度。
"Somewhat different, after all different countries… different thinking and attitudes."

(7) MS01: I think very different. The same point just we are yellow-skinned and can speak Mandarin. The sense of belonging is different. History is different.

(Mainland student from Guizhou)

(8) MS06: Somewhat different. At first I thought quite similar, but when I get closer to my Singapore friends, I think different. I got the idea that language will influence thinking style 思维模式）….you speak Chinese I speak Chinese, maybe we have the same thinking style or logic. But actually because most Singaporean's first language is English, so they may prefer to think in a Western way. They may seem to have outgoing personalities, they are very traditional deep inside. My Singapore Chinese friends are even more traditional than us.

(Mainland student from Hubei)

(9) MS08: Very different. I think the culture is quite different. My roommate is Singaporean. After exam, Chinese students want to have a hotpot eat together. My roommate wants to go to Clarke quay, bar to celebrate all the night until the next morning. Singaporean are more 开放 (open, less conservative). Chinese students will study harder than local students.

(Mainland student from Zhejiang)

The difference that is often mentioned is 'way of thinking'. Even those Mainland Chinese who think that there are more similarities than differences between themselves and Singapore Chinese qualify their responses by saying Singapore Chinese' thinking is different. For example, Participant MW09 feels that although Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese have a similar cultural background, their way of thinking is different. Likewise, Participant MW10 feels that Singapore Chinese' thinking and values are not similar even though their lifestyle (e.g. cuisine) is similar. A few of the participants (MW03, MS06, MS13) have also noted that Singapore Chinese are in fact more traditional in their thinking (see e.g., Excerpt 8).

Nevertheless, interview data reveal that factors that influence language choice are related to perceived similarities like a common language. All the Mainland wife participants said that they would speak Mandarin to a bilingual Singapore Chinese friend. Most of them reasoned that Mandarin is a better

choice because of the Mandarin speaking ability of Singapore Chinese (MW03, MW04, MW08, MW09, MW10) and their own lack of proficiency in English (MW02, MW05, MW06). Participant MW02 went to the extent of saying that she does not even dare to speak English:

(10) MW02: 英语比较弱。。。不敢去说。
"My English is weak…I don't dare to speak."

(Mainland wife from Hubei)

For the Mainland students, only 45% of them (compared to 100% of Mainland wife participants) would choose Mandarin when speaking to a Singapore Chinese friend. Those who say that they would use Mandarin focus more on their view of Mandarin being 'more comfortable' for them, facilitating expression and communication (see Excerpts 11-14).

(11) MS02: Mandarin is friendlier. Sense of familiarity. English is like a working language.

(Mainland student from Shandong)

(12) MS03: Some words are easier to express in Mandarin.

(Mainland student from Dalian)

(13) MS07: Mandarin more comfortable for us. But when we do our projects we will use English. I will follow.

(Mainland student from Shandong)

(14) MS09: Mandarin is my mother language. My English is not so good so I speak Mandarin. Helps communication. I try to improve my English speaking. You speak English to me, I reply to you in English. If I cannot use the proper English, I will speak Mandarin.

(Mainland student from Hubei)

Like Participant MS09 (see Excerpt 14), Participants MS12 and MS16 mentioned their low proficiency in English as a contributing factor to choosing Mandarin. MS12 shared that sometimes she starts a conversation in English but ends up speaking in Mandarin because she can't express herself clearly. She also thinks her Singapore Chinese friend can practice Mandarin if she speaks Mandarin. MS16 is of the view that Singapore Chinese' Mandarin proficiency is better relative to her English. Although the other Mainland students did not

refer to their English proficiency, it can be inferred that they are not confident in their ability to communicate clearly using English.

Hence, more than perceived similarities between Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese, the reason for these Mainland Chinese choice of Mandarin often boils down to their evaluation of their own English language ability. In this sense, this group of Mainland participants is following the virtuosity maxim: they perceive themselves as not proficient in English and therefore do not use it as the unmarked choice.

On the other hand, 55% of the Mainland students would use English when speaking to a Singapore Chinese friend. Some of them (MS05, MC11, MS14, MC18, MC19, MC20) shared that they do so because they think Singapore Chinese are more used to or proficient in English (see Excerpts 15-19).

> (15) MS05: Some of them are not very proficient in Mandarin. If they are proficient, I will use Chinese.
> (Mainland student from Jiangxi)

> (16) MS11: Because sometimes some Mandarin words they don't understand.
> (Mainland student from Heilongjiang)

> (17) MS18: They always use English.
> (Mainland student from Jilin)

> (18) MS19: Singaporeans' Mandarin not so fluent.
> (Mainland student from Jilin)

> (19) MS20: English is Singaporeans' native language.
> (Mainland student from Jiangsu)

Interestingly, the situation here is the reverse and this other group of Mainland participants choose English because they think their addressees are not proficient in Mandarin. These participants could also be following the virtuosity

maxim but here, they are choosing English because they think their addressees are unable to understand Mandarin sufficiently.

The other Mainland students (MS08, MS14, MS15, MS17) reported choosing English because they want to practice or improve their English, for example:

(20) MS08: On one hand, because we are in school so we need to communicate in English to talk about some problems in the subjects. On the other hand, I think I want to practice more about my English so I will purposely speak English.

(Mainland student from Zhejiang)

This is consistent with the interview findings that 95% of the Mainland students viewed improving English as 'very important'. In contrast, only 50% of the Mainland wives considered it 'very important'. The rest of them considered improving their English 'somewhat important' or are neutral about it. For example, Participant MW06 thinks that it is not that important for her to improve her English because she can still communicate with people, even Singapore Malay:

(21) MW06: 在新加坡不会讲英语也 ok。。。也可以去跟人交谈。。因为这里的人基本上都会讲华语。 马来人也会说。。。这里附近很多马来人，你一开口他们就马上应你了！

"In Singapore, it is ok if one does not know how to speak English… one can still communicate with people…because everyone here basically can speak Mandarin. Even Singapore Malays… there are some Malays living nearby, if you start speaking to them in Mandarin, they can immediately reply in Mandarin!"

(Mainland wife from Hainan)

Like Participant MW06, Participant MW01 in the questionnaire segment, thinks speaking Mandarin to a Malay Svc person is not impolite. When asked why she thinks so, she explains that Singapore Malays can understand Mandarin and cites an encounter with a Malay sales person:

(22) MW01: 我说："这个"，他说："还有呢？"

"I said, "this", he said, "anything else?""
<div align="right">(Mainland wife from Guizhou)</div>

Participants MW01 and MW06 are potential examples of the Mainland Chinese in Singapore that Yang writes about, who presume upon Singaporeans' (in this case, Singapore Malays[13]) ability and willingness to speak Mandarin. Singaporeans who are willing to speak Mandarin could also be following the virtuosity maxim when they recognise the lack of proficiency of these Mainland Chinese, resulting in what is known as "foreigner talk".

However, the interview findings also reveal that there are Mainland Chinese migrants who would prefer to use English because they see it as an opportunity to improve their English proficiency, as discussed above. Hence, the motivation to improve becomes a crucial factor in language choice as well.

4.3.4 RQ4: Does negativity towards Mainland Chinese cause Singapore Chinese to non-accommodate at the expense of communicative efficiency?

Out of the twenty Singapore Chinese participants, three expressed that they felt 'negative' towards Mainland Chinese migrants (see Excerpts 23-25):

(23) SC03: They sometimes don't know how to respect Singapore culture. They talk very loud... they behave like they are still in their country.
<div align="right">(Singapore Chinese, social worker)</div>

(24) SC17: There are some not very pleasant experiences...
<div align="right">(Singapore Chinese, student)</div>

(25) SC18: 他们靠不住。。。
"They are not truthful"
<div align="right">(Singapore Chinese, production supervisor)</div>

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13. That Singapore Malays are willing to accommodate Mainland Chinese by speaking Mandarin stands in interesting contrast to the 1980s findings of Altehenger-Smith (1987), Yong(1987) and Platt (1985) where Malays were the Singaporean group that were the least willing to accommodate.

According to Giles and colleagues (2007),

> Speakers will (other interactional motives notwithstanding) increasingly *non*-accommodate (e.g., diverge from) the communicative patterns believed characteristic of their interactants, the more they wish to signal (or promote) relational dissatisfaction or disaffection with and disrespect for the others' traits, demeanor, actions, or social identities. (Giles, 2007:148)

If this CAT principle is followed, we would expect the three Singapore Chinese participants who expressed negativity towards Mainland Chinese to non-accommodate. However, in response to this interview question (Q19),

> Q19) A Singaporean Chinese insists on speaking English to a mainland Chinese salesperson who has difficulty understanding him. How do you view this situation?
> ☐ It is reasonable for the Singaporean Chinese to expect the salesperson to be able to speak English. If I were him, I would continue to speak in English too.
> ☐ It is not very reasonable for the Singaporean Chinese to expect the salesperson to be able to speak English. If I were him, I would switch to Mandarin so that I can communicate effectively.

Participants SC03 and SC18 said that they would accommodate to the salesperson by switching to Mandarin; only participant SC17 said she would non-accommodate. Participant SC03 explained why she thinks it is not very reasonable for the Singapore Chinese customer to expect the Mainland Chinese salesperson to be able to speak English (see Excerpt 26).

> (26) SC03: The salesperson might have just come here and his command of English is not very good….after talking really have difficulty understanding then we can give in…give some grace…Maybe they need some time to adjust.
> (Singapore Chinese, production social worker)

Hence, although SC03 had expressed her dissatisfaction with some of the traits of Mainland Chinese, she was willing to 'give in' and accommodate.

On the other hand, Participant SC18's reason for accommodating despite her negativity towards Mainland Chinese is due to her own low English

proficiency and preference for using Mandarin. Hence, a person's values or language proficiency could influence the decision to accommodate or not. Nonetheless, it is still possible that in an actual situation, SC03 might non-accommodate if these values are not governing her decision at that time whereas SC18, limited by her language proficiency, might still accommodate.

In response to another interview question (Q18):

Q18) With a mainland Chinese migrant friend who is bilingual, what language would you mainly use with him/her?
- ☐ English
- ☐ Mandarin

Participants SC03 and SC18 chose 'Mandarin' although we would expect them to choose to non-accommodate by choosing 'English'. SC03 thinks that by speaking Mandarin, she could improve her Mandarin and SC18's reason is again her own proficiency level. Participant SC17's response is also pragmatic:

(27) SC17: Depends on who is more bilingual….depends on the person's proficiency relative to me. And the topic. If it's academic, I'll use English. If it's an everyday topic, I suppose Mandarin. But if I'm too tired, I'll just use English!

(Singapore Chinese, student)

It would seem then that the pragmatic considerations given by Participants SC03, SC18 and SC17 play a main role in choosing whether to accommodate as well. This supports Myers-Scotton's argument that speakers consider the benefits and costs of choosing a particular linguistic variety over another.

A further discussion of these findings follows in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss some of the implications of my findings. This is a summary of the findings in view of my four research questions:

1) The Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese participants do not differ significantly in their perception of the politeness of their language choices during service encounters, despite the perception among some Singapore Chinese participants that Mainland Chinese speak Mandarin too much and have different politeness standards.

2) The Mainland Chinese participants differ to some extent among themselves in the perception of their language choices in service encounters. Instead of the influence of age and length of residence, I argued that the degree of in-group identity felt by Mainland Chinese is one of the main factors underlying these differences.

3) Perceived similarities, specifically a common language, between Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese cause some Mainland Chinese participants to choose Mandarin when speaking to a Singapore Chinese friend. The low English proficiency of some Mainland Chinese is another factor. Other Mainland Chinese participants would choose English when speaking to Singapore Chinese because of their evaluation of the low proficiency of Mandarin among Singapore Chinese and because it is an opportunity to improve their English.

4) Although we would expect the Singapore Chinese participants who are negative towards Mainland Chinese to non-accommodate according to CAT, some of these Singapore Chinese participants did not indicate that they would non-accommodate towards Mainland Chinese. Instead, personal values and pragmatic reasons would cause them to accommodate.

Among the linguistic models that seek to explain/predict language choice (and its evaluation by addressees), I found that Myers-Scotton's (1998) "markedness model as a rational actor model" is best able to explain some of the findings of this study, especially why the participants make the choices they do. The rational actor model posits that language choices are made rationally by speakers to achieve the best outcome. More crucially, unlike other cognitively-based models, Myers-Scotton argues that speakers seek to optimise their own outcomes, not those of their addresses.

In giving reasons for their language choices, the participants in this study were concerned not only about politeness or the effects of their language choices on their addressees but more so about how their choice achieves their goals. For example, some of the Mainland Chinese participants gave more consideration to their own language proficiency or their desire to improve their English while a few of the Singapore Chinese participants made their choices based on their values and relational goals. As a type of rational actor model too, CAT was able to explain the accommodation strategies of some participants but it was not able to 'customize' the explanation for other participants. Highlighting the difference between her markedness model (MM) and other rational actor models, Myers-Scotton suggests that these other rational models "explain linguistic choices more as instances of blanket strategies than does the MM" (Myers-Scotton 1998: 20). She further explains:

> For example, such a strategy as accommodation or politeness has a certain uniformity in the source of its explanation of choices. Under the MM, speakers may well accommodate to the addressee's style or may use politeness strategies, but they also may not. Choices depend on the strategy that would *optimize for self*. Thus, making choices is necessarily see under the MM as very customized. Often it will mean putting together combinations of choices; it will always mean taking account of all available evidence regarding the best strategies for the specific exchange at hand and considering the internal consistency of a set of choices. (Myers-Scotton 1998: 20)

That speakers take account of "all available evidence regarding the best strategies for the specific exchange" and consider "the internal consistency of a

set of choices" is demonstrated in this Singapore Chinese participant's response to the question about her language choice towards a Mainland Chinese friend:

(28) SC02: It's a way to establish familiarity. If I'm concerned more about establishing the friendship and relationship, I will use the language the person is more comfortable with. Some of them may reply in English because they want to practice, then I'll speak in English.
(Singapore Chinese, youth worker)

SC02's deliberation of which language to use gives an insight into her consideration of various strategies based on the situation she might find herself in, lending support to the validity of the MM model.

One interesting finding of this study is related to the Mainland wives' perception of the markedness of their language choice towards Singapore Malays. Two of the Mainland wives indicated that speaking Mandarin to Singapore Malays is 'very polite' in the questionnaire segment and one other participant during the interview also expressed that she considers Mandarin as a possible language choice towards Singapore Malays. In contrast, all of the Singapore Chinese participants indicated that Mandarin was 'a bit rude' or even 'very rude' when used with a Singapore Malay service person. If the perception of the Singapore Chinese participants of the politeness of their language choices during service encounters is a reflection of the markedness of these language choices, then Mandarin would be not be considered an unmarked choice when used with a Singapore Malay service person. As this finding is also supported by an earlier study by Yong[14] (1987) who found that Mandarin was not used at all at Malay hawker stalls in Singapore, Mandarin appears to be a relatively marked language choice in such situations. However, some of the Mainland Chinese participants could be unaware of this situational norm. There are a few possibilities why this may be so.

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14. Yong's data included non-participant observation of 480 exchanges between service people and customers at six hawker centres.

According to Myers-Scotton (1998), the "markedness evaluator" that people possess as an innate cognitive faculty develops as they are exposed to the use of marked and unmarked choices in actual interaction. Hence, it is quite possible that because some of the Mainland Chinese who have not been exposed to such language-in-use experiences (perhaps due to a short length of residence), their "markedness evaluator" has not developed the ability to evaluate the markedness and consequences of the relevant language choices. Another possibility could be the exposure to experiences where Malay service people were able and willing to accommodate to these Mainland Chinese customers by speaking Mandarin, such that Mandarin is registered as unmarked and therefore perceived as not impolite by a few of the Mainland Chinese participants. These possibilities could be further explored.

Other than a number of Mainland wives who might be making marked choices (i.e., using Mandarin with Singapore Malay addressees) not expected in actual situations, the findings reveal that the majority of the Mainland participants do not differ from the Singaporean participants in the perception of their language choices and hence might be making unmarked choices which are predicted by community norms. Nevertheless, marked language choices when they occur could still trigger a negative response among Singaporean addressees especially if these Singaporeans are already unhappy about the presence of immigrants in Singapore and perceive the Mainland migrants as not making enough effort to adapt to Singapore's multi-racial environment.

In a recent speech[15], Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong spoke about maintaining a cohesive society and a strong Singapore identity. He stressed that the presence of many Singapore Chinese does not make Singapore a Chinese society.

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15. Mr Lee was speaking at the at the 8th S Rajaratnam Lecture in November 2015 about maintaining an effective foreign policy and one of the strategies is to maintain the unity of Singapore's domestic society so that she will not be weakened by internal divisions and taken advantage of in the international arena.

Take for example our relations with China, which are very good. But it is quite clear that we are Singapore, they are China, and we are different countries. We are not as President Xi Jinping said of Taiwan – two countries where you can break the bones, but the sinews are joined together – 打断骨头精相连. When Singapore leaders meet Chinese leaders in formal meetings, we speak in English and use interpreters, even though many of our leaders understand and can speak Mandarin.

It is an important point of principle. Other countries may not realise this, and may think that because many Singaporeans are of Chinese descent, so Singapore is a Chinese society. For example, at international meetings, sometimes the leaders are provided with guides who wear national dress, so you can know whom to follow, where to walk to. Sometimes the guide assigned to Singapore, not so infrequently, will wear a red, Chinese cheongsam. A cheongsam is elegant, but it is not our national dress!

I once explained to a Japanese Prime Minister that a Singapore Chinese is different from a Chinese Chinese. I expounded why this was so. He listened to me carefully. He turned in puzzlement to his interpreter to ask, "What does Chinese Chinese mean?" It was an alien concept to him. Chinese are Chinese. What is a Chinese Chinese? But there are different ethnic Chinese groups and the distinction is critical to us in a multi-racial society. (Lee, 2015)

This study has shown that while many countries might perceive Singapore as a Chinese society, some Mainland Chinese in Singapore do recognize that 'a Singapore Chinese is different from a Chinese Chinese'. About half of the Mainland Chinese participants (see Table 13 in Chapter 4) recognize the difference in Singapore culture and they would prefer to use English in Singapore, despite contrary media portrayal and public perception. Nonetheless, for those Mainland Chinese migrants in Singapore who might presume that Singapore is a Chinese society, there is a need for them to understand the distinction between different ethnic Chinese groups and that Singapore is a multi-racial nation. This could be a crucial step in integration. Improving their English proficiency and speaking more English, especially when addressing non-Chinese Singaporeans, could also go a long way in demonstrating to Singaporeans that they are making the effort to integrate and in avoiding being perceived as rude.

Beyond perceiving language choices as polite or rude in various situations, the participants in this study discussed their perceptions of polite or rude behaviour in general. While many of the Singapore Chinese participants associated rudeness with loudness of speech, others linked rudeness with non-linguistic behaviour like spitting or not queueing up. Most mentioned a difference in culture as a consideration for evaluating Mainland Chinese behaviour as rude or otherwise, hence highlighting the salience of local social norms when making their evaluations.

Disagreeing that Mainland Chinese are rude, a Singapore Chinese participant (SC16) commented:

(29) SC16: I think if you compare to Singaporean norms, then I think sometimes they are rude. But I don't think it's their intention to be rude. Maybe culturally they are not expected to be so friendly in that sense. I've heard of some who are conscious of it and they purposely make the decision 'I'm not going to bother to communicate in English', then their attitude is kind of quite rude. Like my neighbour, I would say hi to her and she wouldn't say anything, doesn't even smile. But it's not that she wants to be rude. It's just her.
(Singapore Chinese, student)

In line with Mill's (2003) and Bousfield's (2007) definition of impoliteness, SC16 did not interpret her interlocutor's non-response as impolite because she did not assess it as intentional: that is, as "intending to threaten the hearer's face" (Mills, 2003: 135) or "purposefully delivered" (Bousfield, 2007: 72). However, although she recognised that such behaviour went against local norms of appropriate behaviour, SC16 justified it as a cultural difference between Singapore and China. The main factor determining her interpretation of the behaviour as not impolite was ultimately the intention of her interlocutor. This seems to diverge from Mill's definition of impoliteness which gives equal weight to intention and appropriateness. Koh's (20134) definition, which incorporates the concept of 'stance', offers a way of looking at impoliteness as a consequence of particular stances or positions adopted when enacting the behaviour. Hence, SC16 could be responding to her interlocutor's stance (which she assessed as not intentionally 'unfriendly'), rather than the behaviour per se.

This exploratory study contributes to work on language choice by relating it to politeness within the context of Singapore and the negativity of locals towards the influx of Mainland Chinese migrants. In giving reasons for their language choices, the participants in this study were concerned not only about politeness or the effects of their language choices on their addressees but more so about how their choice achieves their goals. Myers-Scotton's "markedness model as a rational actor model" seems best able to explain some of the findings of this study. On the other hand, Koh's (2013) definition of impoliteness, which incorporates the concept of 'stance', offers a way of understanding how some Singapore Chinese participants viewed the socially marked behaviour of Mainland Chinese migrants.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this thesis, I have explored how two groups of Mainland Chinese living in Singapore perceive their language choices compared to Singapore Chinese. I focussed on how the participants perceive the politeness of their language choices during service encounters in the first part of the study. In the second part of the study, the focus was on identifying the factors that affect the participants' language choices in general.

I found that overall, both groups did not perceive their language choices differently in terms of politeness during service encounters and that a common language, language proficiency and a desire to improve their English are factors that influence Mainland Chinese participants' language choices towards Singapore Chinese. Furthermore, I argue that, instead of age and length of residence, differing levels of in-group identity and orientation towards Singapore among the two groups of Mainland Chinese account for the variation in their language choices.

Although we would expect the Singapore Chinese participants who report negative feelings towards Mainland Chinese to non-accommodate according to Howard Giles' (2009) Communication Accommodation Theory, some of these participants expressed that personal values and pragmatic concerns would lead them to accommodate to Mainland Chinese addressees. Among the linguistic models that seek to explain/predict language choice, I show that Myers-Scotton's (1998) "markedness model as a rational actor model" is best able to explain some of the findings of this study. . On the other hand, Koh's (2013) definition of impoliteness, which incorporates the concept of 'stance', offers a way of understanding how some Singapore Chinese participants viewed the socially marked behaviour of Mainland Chinese migrants.

6.1 Limitations of the study and future directions

Self-report and structured observations are two methods used by sociolinguists to collect data on language use. Although both methods can be used in a complementary combination, I opted to only use self-report because of time constraints. Given that self-report relies on what the informant thinks he or she should use instead of actual language use, the data collected for this study might not give a true picture of actual language choice in the given scenarios. However, since my research questions focussed on the perceptions of the participants towards the politeness of their language choices, self-report in the form of a questionnaire sufficed. Self-report was also useful for obtaining background information of the participants as well as their views on Singapore and Singaporeans (for Mainland Chinese participants) and on Mainland migrants (for Singapore Chinese participants). While obtaining background information like age and length of residence of the Mainland Chinese participants was relatively straightforward, obtaining their level of language proficiency was a problem because of the subjectivity of its measurement, especially since it was evaluated by the participants themselves. Instead of obtaining self-rated language proficiency, a language proficiency test like Tremblay and Garrison's (2010) cloze test could be used. Even so, language proficiency has been frustratingly difficult to measure and quantify despite it being an important concept, especially in second language education research (Zhao, 2005).

It is also possible that Mainland Chinese participants' responses to this particular interview question might not reflect actual language usage: "With a Chinese Singaporean friend who is bilingual, what language would you mainly use with him/her?" The same goes for Singapore Chinese participants who were asked a similar question: "With a Mainland Chinese friend who is bilingual, what language would you mainly use with him/her?" In future work, structured observations could be conducted to reveal actual language choice in these situations.

The interview question posed to the Singapore Chinese participants regarding their attitude towards Mainland Chinese migrants might also elicit responses that the participants think they should give instead of how they might really feel. While the vignette method was employed to further explore this sensitive topic in a less personal and hence less intimidating way, the participants could still give socially desirable responses. Again, structured observations have the advantage of allowing the researcher to observe what actually happens.

Future work could also take into consideration the problem of an essentialist notion of culture. Although it is often assumed that there are clear boundaries between cultural groups, there has been a growing uncertainty about what defines culture. Studies have shown that individuals in a cultural group do not necessarily show uniform characteristics or use the language 'expected' of that group. An example of such a study is that of Garrett and colleagues (1991) where they found that Welsh teenagers identified different cultural profiles across the regions, showing that Welsh teenagers do not define nor assign a uniform cultural identity to themselves and other Welsh teenagers. Other examples which show that a group does not necessarily use the language expected of it are Rampton's (1995) study of 'crossing' as well as Otsuji and Pennycook's (2009) study on 'metrolingualism'. Rampton described how multiracial teenagers in a British working class community code-switched into varieties that are not generally thought to belong to them: Anglo and Asian teenagers' use of Creole, Anglo and African Caribbean teenagers' use of Panjabi and all three groups' use of Indian English. In an effort to reconceptualise multilingualism, Otsuji and Pennycook studied how people from different cultural backgrounds interacted with each other without assuming a fixed connection between language and culture. They gave the example of a conversation in mixed Japanese and English where none of the interactants are in fact Japanese. One other interesting example is Jasper's (2014) study of a French teacher's use of stylised language in his teaching and norm-enforcing practices, crossing into the languages associated with his students.

Recognizing that culture or ethnicity has been a difficult concept to define with precision and that there's a need to avoid categorization of individuals on the basis of 'objective' ethnic criteria, Giles and Coupland (1991) proposed a useful definition of an ethnic unit as: "those individuals who say they belong to ethnic group A rather than ethnic group B, are willing to be treated as A rather than as B, allow their behaviour to be interpreted and judged as A's and not B's, and have shared systems of symbols and meanings, as well as norms and rules for conduct, normatively associated with community A." (p.106) Their definition allows for a person to feel they belong to a group in certain situations but not in other contexts. This study has shown that the two groups of Mainland Chinese in Singapore, the wives and students, do not necessarily show uniform characteristics. The two groups differed in their perception of the politeness of their language choices during service encounters and they also differed in their language choices towards friends who are Singapore Chinese. In addition, many of the Mainland Chinese in this study have also commented on the differences between themselves and the Singapore Chinese, identifying their 'way of thinking' as being the main difference. Most of the Singapore Chinese participants also expressed that 'the culture' of Mainland Chinese is very different. When future studies take into consideration that ethnicity is not necessarily an *a priori* category and that people negotiate multiple identities, cultural stereotypes can be resisted and communication processes better understood.

Finally, future work could take the direction of clarifying some of the issues arising from this exploratory study. The relationship between perceptions of language choice and politeness can be further explored by including more settings beyond the food service encounter and also by examining the perceptions of Singapore Malay respondents.

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Appendix A

Language Choice of Chinese Migrants in Singapore

Questionnaire

Consider the following scenarios involving a service person and you. You will be asked to rate the politeness of giving your order in Mandarin and English. For each case, circle the rating you think is appropriate on the scale from "very rude" to "very polite."

Location A: At a hawker centre

Please select

If the service person appears to be <u>from China</u>:

A1. If I order in Mandarin it is...	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
A2. If I order in English it is....	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Chinese Singaporean</u>:

A3. If I order in Mandarin it is...	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
A4. If I order in English it is....	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Malay</u>:

A5. If I order in Mandarin it is...	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
A6. If I order in English it is....	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

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Location B: at a fast food restaurant

u28500274 fotosearch.com

Please select

If the service person appears to be <u>from China</u>:

B1. If I order in Mandarin it is…   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

B2. If I order in English it is….   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Chinese Singaporean</u>:

B3. If I order in Mandarin it is…   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

B4. If I order in English it is….   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Malay</u>:

B5. If I order in Mandarin it is…   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

B6. If I order in English it is….   Very rude   A bit rude   Rather polite   Very polite

Location C: At an expensive restaurant
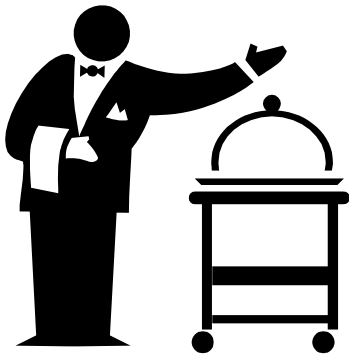
Please select

If the service person appears to be <u>from China</u>:

C1. If I order in Mandarin it is…	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
C2. If I order in English it is….	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Chinese Singaporean</u>:

C3. If I order in Mandarin it is…	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
C4. If I order in English it is….	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

If the service person appears to be <u>Malay</u>:

C5. If I order in Mandarin it is…	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite
C6. If I order in English it is….	Very rude	A bit rude	Rather polite	Very polite

中国移民在新加坡的语言选择

问卷调查

以下是你跟服务员对话的情境。请你评估你在分别使用英语和华语点餐时的礼貌程度。请针对以下各个情境在不同的选项中选择最适合的答案。

地点 A：在小贩中心

请选

如果服务员看起来像是<u>从中国来的</u>:

A1. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

A2. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>新加坡华人</u>:

A3. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 　有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

A4. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 　有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>马来人</u>:

A5. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 　有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

A6. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌 　有一点不礼貌 　　相当礼貌 　　非常礼貌

地点 B：在快餐店

u28500274 fotosearch.com

请选

如果服务员看起来像是<u>从中国来的</u>:

B1. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

B2. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>新加坡华人</u>:

B3. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

B4. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>马来人</u>:

B5. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

B6. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。非常不礼貌　　有一点不礼貌　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

地点 C：在高级餐厅

请选
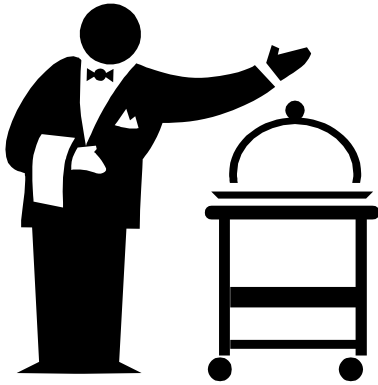
如果服务员看起来像是<u>从中国来的</u>:

C1. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

C2. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>新加坡华人</u>:

C3. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

C4. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

如果服务员看起来像是<u>马来人</u>:

C5. 如果我用华语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

C6. 如果我用英语点餐，这是。。 非常不礼貌　有一点不礼貌　　　相当礼貌　　　　非常礼貌

Appendix B

Language Choice of Chinese Migrants in Singapore
Interview Guide
(For Chinese Migrants)
Background

1) What is your date of birth?

……………………………………………

2) Where were you born?

Country: ....
Province and town/village: ....

3) Did you speak standard Mandarin while you lived in China or a dialect or both?

- ☐ standard Mandarin
- ☐ a dialect, namely:………………
- ☐ both

4) What is the level of education you have completed and in what country?

- ☐ primary school   Country:
- ☐ secondary school Country:
- ☐ high school   Country:
- ☐ higher education   Country:
- ☐ university, degree   Country:
- ☐ postgraduate degree   Country:

5) When and why did you come to Singapore?
.... (year), at the age of ....

……………………………………………………

6) Apart from Singapore, have you ever lived in a country other than China for a long period of time (that is, more than 6 months)?

- ☐ no
- ☐ yes,
  in:...
  for the period of: ……years…….months

7) What is your current profession?……………………………………

8) If you have had several professions, could you indicate each one of them in chronological order?

1. ....
....
2. ....
....
3. ....
....
4. ....
....

中国移民在新加坡的语言选择
采访指南
(中国移民)

1) 您的出生日期

………………………………………………

2）您在哪出世？

国家：   省：

3）您在中国时的语言是:

- ☐ 普通话
- ☐ 方言, 就是:………………
- ☐ 两者

4) 您最高的学历是：

- ☐ 小学   国家:
- ☐ 初中   国家:
- ☐ 高中   国家:
- ☐ 大专   国家:
- ☐ 大学   国家:
- ☐ 硕士/博士   国家:

5）您几时来到新加坡？为什么来？
.... (年) ,...............岁

....

6) 除了新加坡，您有在哪个国家长期居住过吗？

- ☐ 没有
- ☐ 有,
  在:...
  时间段: ……年…….月

7) 您现在的职业是？………………………………

8）如果您之前有其他职业，请按顺序列出：

1. ....
....
2. ....
....
3. ....
....
4. ....
....

Language and proficiency

9) When did you start learning English?
.... (year), at the age of ....

10) Did you attend any English classes before coming to Singapore?
- ☐ no
- ☐ yes, for the duration of: ……years…….months

11) Are you attending/Did you attend English classes in Singapore?
- ☐ no
- ☐ yes, for the duration of: ……years…….months

12) In general, how would you rate your English language proficiency at present?
- ☐ very poor
- ☐ fairly poor
- ☐ ok
- ☐ good
- ☐ very good

13) In general, do you have more Mandarin- or English-speaking friends in Singapore?
- ☐ only Mandarin-speaking friends
- ☐ both, but more Mandarin-speaking friends
- ☐ as many Mandarin- as English-speaking friends
- ☐ both, but more English-speaking friends
- ☐ only English-speaking friends

14) How many Singaporean friends do you have?
- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 10-20
- ☐ More than 20

15) With a Chinese Singaporean friend who is bilingual, what language would you mainly use with him/her?

- ☐ English
- ☐ Mandarin

Why? …………………………………………
16) On a scale of 1(never) to 5(always), how often do you speak Mandarin now?

1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
  Never   Always

17) On a scale of 1(never) to 5(always), how often do you speak English now?

1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
  Never   Always

9) 您在几岁开始学英语
 …………年；…………岁
10）您在来新加坡之前有参加英语课吗？
- ☐ 没有
- ☐ 有, 时间段: ……年…….月
11) 在新加坡，您正在参加英语课或之前有参加英语课吗？
- ☐ 没有
- ☐ 有, 时间段: ……年…….月
12) 您如何评价您目前的英语水平？
- ☐ 非常弱
- ☐ 相当弱
- ☐ 还好
- ☐ 好
- ☐ 非常好
13) 您在新加坡有多一些说华语或英语的朋友？
- ☐ 只有说华语的朋友
- ☐ 都有，但多一些说华语的朋友
- ☐ 说华语和说英语的朋友人数一样
- ☐ 都有，但多一些说英语的朋友
- ☐ 只有说英语的朋友

14) 您有几位新加坡朋友？
- ☐ 没
- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 10-20
- ☐ 多过20

15) 跟新加坡华人交谈时, 您主要会用什么语言？

- ☐ 英语
- ☐ 华语

为什么? …………………………………………

16）从1(从不) 到5(总是), 您经常用华语吗？

1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
从不   总是
17) 从1(从不) 到5(总是), 您现在经常用英语吗？

1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
 从不   总是

Motivation and aspirations

18) How important to you is improving your English?

☐ Very Important
☐ Somewhat important
☐ Neutral
☐ Not important

Why? ……………………………………………

19) "Coming to Singapore is a good opportunity to develop my English skills." Do you agree?

☐ Disagree Strongly
☐ Disagree Somewhat
☐ Neutral
☐ Agree Somewhat
☐ Agree Strongly

Why? ……………………………………………

20) What are your aspirations and future plans?

……………………………………………………
…………………………………………………

View of Singapore and Singaporeans

21) How similar do you think Singaporean Chinese and Chinese from China are?

☐ Very similar
☐ Somewhat similar
☐ Somewhat different
☐ Very different

Why? ……………………………………………

22) Is "坡县" a suitable nickname for Singapore?

☐ Very suitable
☐ Somewhat suitable
☐ Somewhat unsuitable
☐ Very unsuitable

Why? ……………………………………………

23) In general, how do you find Singaporeans' English standard?

☐ very poor
☐ fairly poor
☐ ok
☐ good
☐ very good

Why? ……………………………………………

18) 对于您来说，提高英语水平有多重要?

☐ 非常重要
☐ 相当重要
☐ 中立
☐ 不重要

为什么? ……………………………………………
19) "来新加坡是提高英语水平的好机会." 您同意吗?

☐ 非常不同意
☐ 有一些不同意
☐ 中立
☐ 有一些同意
☐ 非常同意

为什么? ……………………………………………
20) 您有什么理想与计划?
……………………………………………………
21）您觉得新加坡华人和中国华人有多相似?

☐ 非常相似
☐ 有点类似
☐ 有所不同
☐ 非常不同

为什么? ……………………………………………
22) 新加坡适合叫"坡县"吗?

☐ 非常适合
☐ 有点适合
☐ 有点不适合
☐ 非常不适合

为什么? ……………………………………………
23）在一般情况下，你如何评价新加坡人的英语水平?
☐ 很差
☐ 相当差
☐ OK
☐ 好
☐ 非常好

为什么? ……………………………………………

24) In general, how do you find Singaporeans' Mandarin standard?

- ☐ very poor
- ☐ fairly poor
- ☐ ok
- ☐ good
- ☐ very good

Why? ………………………………………

25) "Since English is the main official language in Singapore, I should speak more English." Do you agree?

- ☐ Disagree Strongly
- ☐ Disagree Somewhat
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree Somewhat
- ☐ Agree Strongly

Why? ………………………………………

View on politeness
26) How important is it for you to be polite during encounters with strangers?

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not important

Why? ………………………………………

27) How important is it for you to be polite during encounters with people you know?

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not important

Why? ………………………………………

You have come to the end of this questionnaire. Is there anything you would like to add? This can be anything from language-related comments to remarks about the questionnaire or research itself.

....
....

24）在一般情况下，你如何评价新加坡人的华语水平？

- ☐ 很差
- ☐ 相当差
- ☐ OK
- ☐ 好
- ☐ 非常好

为什么? ………………………………………
25) "既然英语是新加坡的主要官方语言，我应该多讲英语。" 您同意吗?

- ☐ 非常不同意
- ☐ 有一些不同意
- ☐ 中立
- ☐ 有一些同意
- ☐ 非常同意

为什么? ………………………………………

26) 对于您来说，对陌生人有礼有多重要?

- ☐ 非常重要
- ☐ 相当重要
- ☐ 中立
- ☐ 不重要

为什么? ………………………………………
27) 对于您来说，对熟人有礼有多重要?

- ☐ 非常重要
- ☐ 相当重要
- ☐ 中立
- ☐ 不重要

为什么? ………………………………………
你已来到这份问卷的末尾。你有什么想补充的? 这可以是任何东西，从语言相关的意见到对问卷调查或研究本身的言论。

....
....

Language Choice of Chinese Migrants in Singapore

Interview Guide
(For Singaporeans)

1) What is your date of birth?

………………………………………

2) Where were you born?

Country: ....

3) What languages do you speak?
- ☐ standard English
- ☐ "Singlish"
- ☐ Mandarin
- ☐ Others, namely:………………

4) What is the level of education you have completed and in what country?

- ☐ primary school   Country:
- ☐ secondary school Country:
- ☐ high school   Country:
- ☐ higher education   Country:
- ☐ university, degree   Country:
- ☐ postgraduate degree   Country:

5) What is your current profession?………………………………………………………………………….

6) If you have had several professions, could you indicate each one of them in chronological order?
1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....

7) In general, do you have more Mandarin- or English-speaking friends?
- ☐ only Mandarin-speaking friends
- ☐ both, but more Mandarin-speaking friends
- ☐ as many Mandarin- as English-speaking friends
- ☐ both, but more English-speaking friends
- ☐ only English-speaking friends

8) On a scale of 1(never) to 5(always), how often do you speak Mandarin?

     1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
Never   Always

9) On a scale of 1(never) to 5(always), how often do you speak English?

     1----------2-----------3------------4-----------5
Never   Always

10) How similar do you think Singapore and China is?

- ☐ Very similar
- ☐ Somewhat similar
- ☐ Somewhat different
- ☐ Very different

Why? …………………………………………….

11) Some mainland Chinese migrants call Singapore "坡县". Do you think it's a suitable nickname for Singapore?

- ☐ Very suitable
- ☐ Somewhat suitable
- ☐ Somewhat unsuitable
- ☐ Very unsuitable

Why? …………………………………………….

12) In general, how do you find mainland Chinese migrants' English standard?

- ☐ very poor
- ☐ fairly poor
- ☐ ok
- ☐ good
- ☐ very good

Why? …………………………………………….

13) "Mainland Chinese migrants are rude." Do you agree?

- ☐ Disagree Strongly
- ☐ Disagree Somewhat
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree Somewhat
- ☐ Agree Strongly

Why? …………………………………………….

14) "Mainland Chinese migrants in general speak Mandarin too much." Do you agree?

- ☐ Disagree Strongly
- ☐ Disagree Somewhat
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree Somewhat
- ☐ Agree Strongly

Why? …………………………………………….

15) "Since English is the main official language in Singapore, mainland Chinese migrants should speak more English." Do you agree?

- ☐ Disagree Strongly
- ☐ Disagree Somewhat
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree Somewhat
- ☐ Agree Strongly

Why? ………………………………………………….

16) How important is it for you to be polite during encounters with strangers?

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not important

Why? ………………………………………………….

17) How important is it for you to be polite during encounters with people you know?

- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not important

Why? ………………………………………………….

18) With a mainland Chinese migrant friend who is bilingual, what language would you mainly use with him/her?

- ☐ English
- ☐ Mandarin

Why? ………………………………………………….

19) A Singaporean Chinese insists on speaking English to a mainland Chinese salesperson who has difficulty understanding him. How do you view this situation?

- ☐ It is reasonable for the Singaporean Chinese to expect the salesperson to be able to speak English. If I were him, I would continue to speak in English too.
- ☐ It is not very reasonable for the Singaporean Chinese to expect the salesperson to be able to speak English. If I were him, I would switch to Mandarin so that I can communicate effectively.

20) How do you feel about Chinese migrants in general?

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Negative

Please elaborate: ....

You have come to the end of this questionnaire. Is there anything you would like to add? This can be anything from language-related comments to remarks about the questionnaire or research itself.

....