Title:	"I know that's not a Real English":
	Language Ideologies and Hong Kong English
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Abstract

The study adopts a qualitative approach to investigate English as a Second Language (ESL) learners' language ideologies of Hong Kong English (HKE). Four ESL learners from local universities, ranging from Year 3 to Year 4 in their undergraduate studies, were interviewed. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed through implementing thematic approach. The findings show that the participants share multiple and contested ideologies regarding HKE. Some common language ideologies include HKE as self-identification as Hongkongers and language of in-group identity. On the other hand, some participants have shown individualized language ideologies regarding HKE. For instance, some perceived HKE solely as a tool of communication while some saw HKE as inclusive of "Kong Girl accent" which is derogatory. One participant questioned whether HKE is a "Real English".

Overall, the study shows that the choice of HKE includes ideological dilemma. On the positive side, HKE can represent the local identities of Hongkongers. It can make young people feel WE-ness (Kachru, 1996) among the users of HKE. It is also used in daily practices because the participants feel "comfortable" and "convenient" to express their personal emotions via HKE. However, the participants still question whether HKE is a legitimate accent. Indeed, some youth embrace negative ideologies, which considered HKE as neither a standard nor a native accent. These lead to a struggle between local solidarity and the uncertain status of HKE. The study implies that in the broader sociolinguistic climate of Hong Kong, where British English and American English have strong symbolic and cultural values, the ideologies of HKE are contested and dilemmatic. I conclude that language ideologies about HKE are not fixed, but rather they are dynamic, flexible, and open-ended.

Reflection

"Language ideology" was once a new term to me. As I was working on this capstone project, I realized that such a concept had always related to my bits and pieces as an English major. In the four-year journey of my undergraduate studies, I was taught to look beyond the literal meaning – for the implications and rationalizations behind each choice in language usage. This inspires me to appreciate different varieties of English and become aware of how contexts shape up one's accent preferences.