

Slow but Sure: Ownership of English among Asian International Undergraduate Students in a Multilingual Context

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The present study examines Asian international students' attitudes and practices that blur the normative binaries between native and non-native speakers of English. Focusing on four case studies of Asian undergraduate students studying in a US university, the study shows that their ownership of English is not limited to the existing language ideologies that confine them to being non-native speakers of English. It reveals that each individual student's first language (L1) and culture as well as second language (L2) learner identities simultaneously underpin her/his own perception of English. The cases of female students underscore their distinctive investment in English and provide important insights into English language education in Asian English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, which urgently needs to focus more on diversity and equality in supporting English language learners.

Introduction

I speak Chinglish. I am not kidding. I am Chinese...so I speak Chinglish. Chinglish always goes [with] me well. We say...American English and... British English. Just...it just...the same thing happens to me. Chinglish is here. Nothing is bad in Chinglish...because I can combine English and my Chinese spirit...My pronunciation and my tone...can show me. [...] That's Chinglish. I think...actually...I don't need to try to sound closer to American friends. (Tao, 06/03/2013)