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ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION: THE LEARNING OF ACROLECT MALAYSIAN ENGLISH AT A PRIVATE COLLEGE

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ABSTRAC

This study investigated the reasons as to why the foreign students at Inti College Malaysia did not show good performance in the English language that is being used as the medium of instruction. It addressed the students' attitudes towards Acrolect Malaysian English and their motivation to learn the English language. A survey questionnaire was utilized to gather the data from students who were involved in the English Improvement Programme. Frequency analysis was performed on the data. The findings revealed that the students showed negative attitudes towards Acrolect Malaysian English. The preferred models were the native English speaker models, for instance Standard American English and Standard British English. In terms of motivation, the students were instrumentally motivated; more students indicated "strongly agree" and "agree" responses towards most of the items on this aspect than those on integrative motivation. In order to overcome the problem of students' negative attitudes, it is suggested that the administrators and lecturers emphasize the native speakers' variety in the classroom. Nevertheless, the Acrolect Malaysian English should also be made known to students through informal lessons such as during drama practices. This is important because the foreign students are exposed to the Acrolect Malaysian English in their dealings with officers from the various administrative departments at Inti College.

Keywords: *acrolect, attitudes, motivation*

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia hopes to be the centre of excellent education in the region in the twenty-first century. As a result, the legislative amendments of the University College Act and Private Higher Education Act received approval in 1997 (Kamal 1997). Private colleges in Malaysia began to mushroom. According to Zuraimi (2001), an unofficial statistic indicates that there are over 400 private colleges operating nationwide. These colleges do not only attract Malaysians but also foreigners and the number of international students has increased to 210,000. INTI College President, Mr. Tan Yew Sing stated that the main reason for the increase is due to the use of English as the medium of instruction (Zuraimi 2001). Therefore, in order to sustain drawing more foreigners to study in this country, the English language programmes at private colleges must meet foreign students' needs and expectations.

The variety of English used in Malaysia's educational institutions is the acrolect Malaysian English. Malaysian English is one of the 'englishes' in the outer circle of Kachru's (1994) concentric circle. First, the inner circle consists of the native speakers of English for instance, people staying in USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where English is used in almost all functions (Kachru 1986). The second circle, the outer circle, represents colonialisied countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, India where English is used as a second language in education, administrative and legal systems (Kachru 1986; Kachru & Nelson 1996). Finally, the expanding circle consists of non-native users who consider English as a foreign language and is used to perform specific purposes. Countries such as China, Indonesia, Iran and Japan belong to this category (Kachru 1994; Kachru & Nelson 1996).

The negative attitude and low motivation of students to learn another language is a global problem. Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that students' attitude and motivation to learn another language are important factors in language learning. Foreign students at INTI College who are involved in the English Improvement Programme (EIP) have been exhibiting poor performance in the English language. The usage of the acrolect Malaysian English, a variety of 'english' in Malaysian classrooms may affect foreign students' attitude and motivation in learning English. An investigation in these areas is needed so that the English language programme could be improved. There are several studies conducted on Malaysian students' attitudes and motivation towards learning Malaysian English among university students (e.g. Nair 1994; Crismore, Ngeow & Soo 1996; and Soo 1990), but none on foreign students. At INTI College,

lecturers often report that the EIP students seem to show no interest in English. Sometimes three-quarter of the students do not attend English classes. Further, students are not attentive during most of the lessons. Probably students have negative attitudes towards acrolect Malaysian English and lack the desire to learn it. Thus, the purpose of the study is to investigate the nature of attitudes exhibited by the English Improvement Programme students towards acrolect Malaysian English and other varieties of English. In addition, the study also aims to find out the English Improvement Programme students' motivation towards the learning of English. This study attempts to answer the following research questions: (1) What attitudes do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the Acrolect Malaysian English and Standard American English?; (2) What attitudes do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the other varieties of English?; and (3) What type of motivation do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the learning of English?

Acrolect Malaysian English. Standard Malaysian English or Acrolect Malaysian English is a standard language because it fulfills the criteria of standardness. It is used in writing and speaking by the educated speakers of the language. It is systematic and consistent in its grammar, and is used for a wide range of functions such as in the local education, administrative, legal system and mass media (Lowenberg 1986; Platt & Weber 1980). Acrolect Malaysian English is one of the varieties of Malaysian English. Platt, Weber & Ho (1984) propose a *post-Creole speech continuum*. In the speech continuum, societies can choose speech varieties, which are close to Standard English to the heavily accented localized, or the nativatised variety. The speech, which is closest to the standard British English, is known as an acrolect while the speech, which is heavily accented, is identified as a basilect. The type of speech in between an acrolect and a basilect is known as a mesolect. Thus, there are three types of Malaysian English: Acrolect Malaysian English, Mesolect Malaysian English and Basilect Malaysian English. Platt & Weber (1980: 23) describe Malaysian English as “a continuum, ranging from the acrolect; the educated variety or the near native like variety, going down to the mesolectal level (which vary more from the acrolect) to the basilectal level which is less comprehensible (situated at the end of the continuum).”

Attitudes and motivation. According to Gardner (1985: 8), “attitude” refers to an “individual's beliefs, emotions, reactions and behavioural tendencies towards the objects of the attitude.” Attitude objects here refer to anything, which people can react to, either positively or negatively. Language attitudes are distinguished from other attitudes because they are precisely about language. Attitude towards language will influence students' motivation to learn a second language (Gardner 1982). According to Crystal (1992), language attitudes are the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others. Some studies of language attitudes are limited to attitudes towards language itself, while in other studies, the definition of language attitude includes attitudes towards speakers of a particular language. Gardner (1985) states that students' attitudes towards another language and views of the ethnicity and community of the second language would determine the success or failure of language learning. In general, positive attitudes towards the second language, its speakers, and its culture can be expected to improve and enhance learning and negative attitudes to impede learning and hinder progress (Ellis 1994; Gardner 1985).

Motivation, according to Gardner (1985: 10), refers to “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language.” Effort alone does not depict motivation. Motivation requires learners to strive to acquire the language because the learners desire to feel satisfied when he finally succeeds acquiring the language. Gardner and Lambert (1972) indicate that there are two types of motivation: (i) integrative motivation refers to the students' interest to acquire the cultures of the target language as he wishes to communicate with the target community for socio-emotional purposes and eventually to be accepted as a member of the group, (ii) instrumental motivation reflects the pragmatic reasons for studying another language for instance obtaining a better job or becoming a better-educated person (Gardner & Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985). Gardner and Lambert (1972) claim that students with an integrative orientation are more successful in second language learning than those who are instrumentally orientated.

Previous Studies. Several studies on language attitudes and motivation towards the varieties of English have been conducted. For instance, in a survey by Forde (1995), Hong Kong Chinese students were requested to listen to five accents, which were Standard American English, Australian English, Hong Kong English, Standard British English (RP), and a regional British English accent (Yorkshire). Students evaluated the speakers in terms of friendliness, comprehensibility, level of education, competence in English and the teaching of English. The outcome showed that students showed negative attitude towards Hong Kong English. These students remarked that Hong Kong speakers were less educated, less friendly and less

competent to teach English. They preferred British and American accent, exhibited less favourable attitude towards Australian and Yorkshire and rejected Hong Kong English. In terms of comprehensibility, these students failed to identify and comprehend the native speakers, as they did not score well for their listening comprehension tests. They were able to identify and understand more the familiar Hong Kong English.

Shaw (1978) carried out a survey on Singapore, India and Thailand students in order to study their attitude and motivation towards learning English. His study touched on topics such as students' reasons for studying English, the present and future use of English and their opinions regarding the varieties of English. One of his findings was that all students were found to be highly instrumentally motivated. The desire to assimilate into the culture and to become more like the native English speakers was not the reason for learning English. Thus, Gardner and Lambert's (1972) notion of the integrative motivation being essential in attaining success in second language learning was not portrayed here. With regard to the issues on the varieties of English, the three groups of students were aware of their local variety. Indians and Singaporeans showed positive attitudes towards their local educated variety (Indian English and Singaporean English). In general, Singaporeans were proud of their Singaporean English variety. The Thais, on the other hand, portrayed a negative attitude towards the Thai English variety.

Crismore, Ngeow and Soo (1996: 319) indicate that "attitudes determine the growth or decline of a variety of English." They carried out a survey on lecturers and university students' attitude towards Malaysian English. One of the findings revealed that Malaysians only accepted the spoken form of Malaysian English and it should be used locally among them. Nevertheless, they still perceived Malaysian English as "wrong English" created by Malaysians who were less proficient in English. Standard British English is still perceived to be the prestige model and should be preserved for international comprehensibility.

Most studies on language attitudes mentioned earlier involve the locals' perception on their own variety. Only one researcher conducted her study on non-Malaysian subjects. Khaw's (1999: 32) sample consists of teachers from the inner circle (e.g. U.K., Australia, New Zealand) and outer circle (e.g. Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thai, Indonesia,). Khaw (1999) accessed the non-Malaysians' attitudes and perceptions of the intelligibility of the two sub-varieties of Malaysian English, namely the *acrolect* (the Standard form of Malaysian English) and the *mesolect* (colloquial form of Malaysian English). It was found that teachers showed negative attitudes towards the *mesolect* but positive attitudes towards the *acrolect*. Having said that, they did not think that the *Acrolect* Malaysian English was on par with the inner circle variety (e.g. U.K., Australia, New Zealand). On the whole, teachers favoured and perceived the British English as the best variety in terms of standardness, clarity and originality. However, teachers from Korea, Japan and Vietnam preferred American English. Khaw (1999: 66) suggests that Malaysian English teachers stress on *acrolect* Malaysian English and "Malaysian language learners should always be reminded of the fact that English is not only used for intranational communication but also for wider-international communication."

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This survey research investigated on the English language learning of students from INTI College Malaysia, which is situated in Nilai, Negeri Sembilan. The School of Languages and Liberal Arts (SOLLA) assigns one of its departments, the Language House to run an English Improvement Programme (EIP) that aims to improve students' language proficiency. In this study, the subjects were the students from the August 2000 semester. Fifty EIP students were randomly selected of which 25 students were from China and another 25 were from Indonesia. The data were collected in November 2000 during class sessions.

Survey questionnaires were used to measure students' language attitudes and motivation towards language learning. With respect to measurement of attitude towards Malaysian English and other varieties of English, questionnaires from Khaw (1999) were adapted. Students' attitudes towards the *acrolect* Malaysian English were examined in terms of five aspects such as standardness, formality, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Questionnaires on motivation were designed based on the work of Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. Students' motivation towards English learning was examined from two motivational aspects, namely integrative and instrumental. The questionnaires for this study are divided into five sections: A, B, C, D and E. Section A deals with students' background such as students' country of origin and mother tongue. Section B consists of two main sections. The first section measures students' attitude towards the *acrolect* Malaysian English. The subjects were required to listen to the reading of Passage 1, which represented the *acrolect* form of Malaysian English. Based on the passage, participants have to react to statements which examine students' attitudes towards the five aspects mentioned above that

are rated on a five point Likert type agree-disagree continuum (i.e. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Agree). The second section measures students' attitude towards standard American English. The students listened to an American speaker's reading of Passage 2, and then responded to statements which examine students' perspectives towards the above five aspects. Section C measures students' attitude towards other varieties of English for instance the Acrolect Malaysian English, American English, British English and Australian English. Students were required to rank the varieties from one to four according to their preference and then state their reasons. Section D and E seek students' orientation towards learning English. For Section D, students were required to respond to statements which examine students' attitudes towards the English native speakers' cultures and habits (integrative orientation). For Section E, students were required to respond to statements which examine their practical purposes of learning English (instrumental orientation). Each statement is rated on a five point Likert scale. The responses obtained from Sections A, B, C, D and E were analysed by conducting frequency count. Responses were counted and then converted to percentages.

The materials used for this study were two passages. The first passage was taken from a Malaysian English Form 5 textbook which represented the acrolect Malaysian English. The first passage was read by a Chinese Malaysian lecturer of the Language House. The passage was a report of a policeman being chased up a tree by an angry buffalo. The second passage was more geographical and historical in nature as it described Florida's historical and tourist sites. The text was taken from *INTI College Preparation Workbook for the TOEFL Test* by J. Allen (1997) and it represented the Standard American English. The reader was a native American speaker. Both passages were recorded in the language laboratory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are presented in three main parts. Firstly, students' attitude towards acrolect Malaysian English is compared to that of standard American English. Next, students' attitude towards the other varieties of English is discussed. This is followed by the types of motivation exhibited by the EIP students.

To answer Research Question One: "What attitudes do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the Acrolect Malaysian English and Standard American English?", section B of the questionnaire was analysed. The students' responses towards the Acrolect Malaysian English are presented in Table 1 while students' responses towards the Standard American English are presented in Table 2. Most English Improvement Programme students, that is 68% disagreed and strongly disagreed that the Acrolect Malaysian English is a standard language (60% disagreed while 8% strongly disagreed). Only a handful strongly agreed and agreed (i.e. strongly agree = 4% and agree = 10%) that the Acrolect Malaysian English is a standard language. The remainder 9 students or 18% chose to be neutral with this statement. The findings also revealed that 18% of the students strongly agreed and 44% agreed that Acrolect Malaysian English is a formal language. On the other hand, 13 students, of which 2% strongly disagreed while 12 (24%) disagreed that the Acrolect Malaysian English is a formal language. The remainder 6 students or 12% chose to be neutral with the statement. In terms of the sentence structures, most students that is 22 or 44% agreed and strongly agreed that the Acrolect Malaysian English sentence structures are grammatical. On the other hand, quite a large number of the students, 32% strongly disagreed and disagreed that the Acrolect Malaysian English sentence structures are grammatical (i.e. strongly disagree = 4% and disagree = 28%). Majority of the students, 52% disagreed (i.e. strongly disagree = 22% and disagree = 30%) that the words in the passage are understandable. On the other hand, only 2% strongly agreed and 14% agreed, that the words are understandable. In addition, a large number of the students, 27 students or 54% disagreed (i.e. strongly disagree = 12% and disagree = 42%) that the Acrolect Malaysian speaker's pronunciation is clear. On the other hand, 4% and 24% of the students strongly agreed and agreed with this statement respectively.

Table 1. Students' attitudes towards the Acrolect Malaysian English

No.	Question Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	The language is Standard English.	2	4	5	10	9	18	30	60	4	8
2.	The language is formal.	9	18	22	44	6	12	12	24	1	2
3.	The sentence structures of the language are grammatical.	2	4	20	40	12	24	14	28	2	4
4.	All the words in the passage are understandable.	1	2	7	14	16	32	15	30	11	22
5.	The pronunciation is clear.	2	4	12	24	9	18	21	42	6	12

Most English Improvement Programme students, that is 26 (52%) agreed while 4 (8%) strongly agreed that the Standard American English is a standard language. A handful of 9 or 18% disagreed (i.e. strongly disagree = 12% and disagree = 6%) that the Standard American English is a standard language. The remainder 11 students or 22% chose to be neutral with the statement. Majority of the students, that is 16% strongly agreed and 42% agreed that the Standard American English is a formal language. However, 13 students, that is 8% strongly disagreed while 18% disagreed with this statement. It was found that 16% of the students chose neutral for this statement. In terms of the sentence structures, most students agreed and strongly agreed that the sentence structures of Standard American English are grammatical; specifically 12% strongly agreed and 48% agreed with this item. Nevertheless, 11 or 22% disagreed and strongly disagreed with this statement. Majority of the students that is 66%, of which 34% strongly disagreed and 32% agreed that the words in Passage 2 are understandable. On the other hand, 16% strongly agreed and 4% agreed with this statement. In addition, a large number of the students, that is 10% of them strongly agreed while 38% agreed that the American English speakers' pronunciation is clear. It was also found that, an equally large number of students that is 24 of them strongly agreed (2%) and disagreed (44%) that the Standard American English speakers' pronunciation is clear.

Table 2. Students' attitudes towards the Standard American English

No.	Question Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	The language is Standard English.	4	8	26	52	11	22	3	6	6	12
2.	The language is formal.	8	16	21	42	8	16	9	18	4	8
3.	The sentence structures of the language are grammatical.	6	12	24	48	9	18	10	20	1	2
4.	All the words in the passage are understandable.	2	4	8	16	7	14	16	32	17	34
5.	The pronunciation is clear.	5	10	19	38	3	6	22	44	1	2

To answer Research Question Two: "What attitudes do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the other varieties of English?", section C of the questionnaire was analysed. The results for this question are presented in three parts, of which Part I consists of one section, Part II consists of three sections and Part III consists of one section; these are shown from Tables 3 through 7.

(I) Please rank the following English varieties according to their superiority from your point of view.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Malaysian English | (3) British English |
| (2) American English | (4) Australian English |

The results for this question are presented in Table 3. It was found that most students (38 students or 76%) ranked the American English variety as the number one (first rank). Ten students or 20% chose the British English variety to be first place in terms of superiority, while 2 students or 4% chose Australian English variety to be in this rank. The Acrolect Malaysian English is the least preferred variety, of which none placed it in the first rank but instead majority of them (28 students or 56%) chose it to be in the fourth rank.

Table 3. Ranking of English Varieties

Varieties \ Ranking	First		Second		Third		Fourth	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Malaysian English	0	0	4	8	13	26	28	56
American English	38	76	9	18	1	2	2	4
British English	10	20	30	60	4	8	3	6
Australian English	2	4	7	14	32	64	17	34

(II) Explain your number one ranking, i.e. why is this variety the most superior?

Students' ground of choosing the most preferential English variety (especially the inner circle variety, e.g. American English, British English and Australian English), were analysed in this section. This is shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6. There were some students who gave more than one reason. Most students (17 students) stated that American English is superior because of its influence through movies and music. This is followed by the popularity of the American English (11 students). In addition, four students perceived that the Standard American English is easier than British English. Aspects such as intelligibility (3 students), clear pronunciation (2 students) and good grammar (1 student) are also some of the reasons of students' preference for American English. .

Table 4. Reasons for choosing American English as the superior variety

Reasons	No.
Easier than British English.	4
It is used widely in movies and music.	17
Well known in the world, popular.	11
Easy for me to understand.	3
Good and clear pronunciation.	2
Has a good grammar.	1

With regards to the reasons for choosing British English as their superior variety, majority of the students (7 students) indicated that English originates from Britain. Six students chose good and clear pronunciation. Good grammar (3 students), the desire to further their studies in Britain (2 students) and intelligibility (1 student) are the other reasons for choosing British English as their first rank.

Table 5. Reasons for choosing British English as the superior variety

Reasons	No.
English originates from Britain.	7
Easy for me to understand.	1
Good and clear pronunciation.	6
Has a good grammar.	3
I want to study there.	2

Most students (2 students) stated that Australian English is superior because they want to further their studies in that country. This is followed by intelligibility (1 student) and clear pronunciation (1 student).

Table 6. Reasons for choosing Australian English as the superior variety

Reasons	No.
Easy for me to understand.	1
Good and clear pronunciation.	1
I want to study there.	2

(III) Explain your number four or last ranking, i.e. why is this variety the most inferior?

Students' justification of choosing the acrolect Malaysian English as the last ranking is scrutinized in this segment; this is shown in Table 7. Some students gave more than one reason. Majority of the students did not favour the acrolect Malaysian speakers' pronunciation. In addition, students found Malaysian English unintelligible as they could not understand or speak the language fluently. The other reason for the choice was unpopularity as it is used only in Malaysia. In addition, they did not like the language.

Table 7. Reasons for the last ranking

Reasons	No.	%
Pronunciation is not good.	23	46
Difficult to understand and speak.	10	20
Not popular.	16	32
I don't like it.	3	6

To answer Research Question Three: "What type of motivation do the English Improvement Programme students exhibit towards the learning of English?", sections D and E of the questionnaire were analysed. The findings are presented in Tables 8 and 9. In the aspect of integrative motivation, majority of the students, that is, 8% strongly agreed while 40% agreed that most native English speakers are very sociable, friendly, warm-hearted and easy to get along with. Nevertheless, quite large number of students, 21 students or 42% chose to be neutral with this statement. Only a handful of students, that is 6% strongly disagreed while 4% disagreed with the statement. Twenty-seven students or 54% (i.e. 8% strongly agreed and 46% agreed) would like to know the English speakers' culture while 13 students or 26% chose to be neutral. However, 14% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed with this item. Majority of the students, that is 40% of them chose to be neutral towards the third statement. Only 17 students or 34% agreed that they learn English so that they would be able to understand English literature and arts better. Most students, 62% agreed that they learn English so that they can meet and converse with varied people. Ten students or 20% disagreed and strongly disagreed that they would be able to meet and converse with varied people through English. The findings also showed that 14% of the students strongly agreed while 50% agreed that they want to use English when they travel to an English speaking country. Only 12 students or 24% disagreed that they want to speak English when they travel to an English speaking country.

Table 8. Students' Integrative Motivation

No.	Question Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	Most English native speakers (for instance people from the USA, Australia, UK, Canada and New Zealand) are very sociable, friendly, warm-hearted and easy to get along with.	4	8	20	40	21	42	2	4	3	6
2.	I would like to know about the English speakers' (for instance people from USA, Australia, UK, Canada and New Zealand) culture and custom.	4	8	23	46	13	26	7	14	3	6

3.	I learn English so that I can understand and appreciate English literature and art better.	0	0	17	34	20	40	10	20	3	6
4.	I learn English so that I can meet and converse with more and varied people.	6	12	31	62	3	6	8	16	2	4
5.	I want to use English when I travel to English speaking countries (for instance USA, Australia, UK, Canada and New Zealand).	7	14	25	50	6	12	12	24	0	0

With regard to instrumental motivation, the results showed that 18% of the student strongly agreed while 52% agreed that English is an international language. On the other hand, 10% strongly disagreed while 20% disagreed that English is an international language. Thirty of the students or 60% strongly agreed and agreed that English is a medium of trade and communication, but there were 17 students (34%) who strongly disagreed and disagreed with this item. Thirty-six students with 22% strongly agreed and 50% agreed that English is useful in getting a good job, while 4% strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed with this statement. It was found that 28% strongly agreed and 52% agreed that they study English because it is a compulsory subject and a requirement to enrol in the regular academic courses. A handful of 5 students or 10% disagreed that they study English because it is a compulsory subject. It was also found that 44% agreed and 12% strongly agreed that knowing English is equated to being educated. Fourteen students or 28% showed disagreement to the last item.

Table 9. Students' Instrumental Motivation

No.	Question Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	English is an international language.	9	18	26	52	0	0	10	20	5	10
2.	English is a medium of trade and communication.	9	18	21	42	3	6	13	26	4	8
3.	English is useful in getting a good job.	11	22	25	50	6	12	6	12	2	4
4.	I study English because it is a compulsory subject and it is a requirement to enrol in the regular academic courses.	14	28	26	52	5	10	5	10	0	0
5.	One will be labelled as an educated person if they know English.	6	12	22	44	5	10	14	28	3	6

It can be concluded that most students exhibited negative attitude towards the Acrolect Malaysian English compared to the extreme positive attitude towards the Standard American English. In terms of standardness, formality, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation the American English is more preferred than the Acrolect Malaysian English. However, most students also agreed that the Acrolect Malaysian English is a formal language. This is because this variety is used as a medium of instruction by most local lecturers in their English classes. With regard to the vocabulary of the Acrolect Malaysian English, majority of the students indicated that they did not understand the words used. When students were asked to rank their preferences towards the varieties of English, the Standard American English was the most popular variety. This preference was probably due to America's mass media and entertainment. This was followed by British English. This favouritism was based on good grammar and originality. Two students chose Australian English as the superior variety due to their desire to further their studies in Australia. On the other hand, students perceived that Malaysian English speaker's pronunciation was difficult to comprehend and was not popular in the international scene. Thus, the Acrolect Malaysian English was the least preferred variety. In terms of motivation, students were more instrumentally motivated rather than integratively motivated. For instance, more than two-third of the students indicated that English is useful in getting a good job and that English is a compulsory requirement in their college. Further, less than two-third indicated wanting to know more about English speakers' culture and art.

In the international context, the native speaker is still the preferred intelligible model (Kachru 1986). Kachru (1983: 84) is correct when he claimed that while the institutionalised standard varieties "are linguistically identifiable, geographical definable and functionally valuable, they are still not necessarily attitudinally acceptable." Parallel with Kachru's statement, this study showed that although the Acrolect

Malaysian English is intelligible, the Chinese and Indonesians rejected the Acrolect Malaysian English. This is due to their prejudice towards the non-native variety. According to Khaw (1999), the non-native variety will only be given recognition if the linguistic powers held by the American English and the British English were revamped, inserting the non-native variety. Khaw (1999) suggested that the teaching materials, framework, methodologies and curricula should be developed into acknowledging these varieties. Norrish (1997), in the conclusion of his article, "english or English? Attitudes, Local Varieties and English Language Teaching" advised teachers to find out their students' needs before making the decision to teach the types of English varieties without feeling guilty. Likewise as McGroarty (1996: 32) stated, teachers need to seek and discover students' language need in the present as well as in the future before deciding on which language variety/varieties to use in class. The choice will vary depending on the different instructional settings.

Although foreign students' may reject the Acrolect Malaysian English, this variety should be made known to them. This is because the foreign students are exposed to this variety through the dealings with other officers from the various administrative departments in INTI College for instance the Accommodation Office, Admission and Record Department, Finance Department and many others. The Acrolect Malaysian English could be taught indirectly through informal lessons for instance during drama practices. Acrolect Malaysian English should be taught to Malaysian students too for both intra and international purposes. Currently, only a handful of Malaysians are proficient in the acrolect variety. Acrolect Malaysian English should be made known to Malaysian students because according to Gill (1993) Malaysian English belongs to Malaysians and it is our duty to utilize the language for both international and local purposes.

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