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What We Know about Chinese English: Status, Issues and Trends

Zhichang Xu, David Deterding, and Deyuan He

Abstract Research on Chinese English (CE) synchronizes with studies on World Englishes. Since the late 1970s, Chinese scholars have been studying Chinese English and at the same time introducing World Englishes theories into China. Over the years, Chinese English research has been gaining momentum, particularly since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Previous research on World Englishes has discussed the status of individual varieties of English, particularly whether they constitute independent and stable linguistic systems that have their own features and norms of usage independent from those found in Inner Circle varieties (Kachru 1985). Research on Chinese English encompasses a wide range of issues, including whether it exists, how to name it, how to define it, what its linguistic features are, how people perceive it, and what people's attitudes are towards it. In this chapter, we report on the current status and major issues concerning research on Chinese English, based on a vigorous review of relevant research literature and the chapters within this volume. We also provide a background to this volume and an overview of all the chapters that it contains, and point out trends for researching Chinese English. The overall aim of this chapter, alongside all the chapters of this volume, is to showcase the current state of research on Chinese English.

Keywords Chinese English • Status • Issues • Trends • World Englishes

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1 Introduction

New paradigms, involving globalization, World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, and English as an International Language, all play a significant role in shaping our understanding of the global, dynamic and amorphous nature of English and the ways in which we conduct relevant research on varieties of English. While Chinese English research aligns itself closely with the World Englishes paradigm, it has also benefited from alternative perspectives, e.g. those proposed by [Blommaert \(2010\)](#), who suggests that named, independent languages do not exist, by [Pennycook \(2007\)](#) about transcultural shifts, by [Jenkins \(2015\)](#) about the limitations of territorial varieties, and by [Sharifian \(2015\)](#), who calls for World Englishes to be examined from the perspective of Cultural Linguistics in order for us to gain a better understanding of how English is used by communities of speakers around the world to express their cultural conceptualizations, including their worldviews.

Substantial research on Chinese English has been undertaken over the past three to four decades both in China and worldwide. However, issues regarding the nature of Chinese English still remain unresolved. A current review of one hundred research papers on Chinese English published in journals within the People's Republic of China between 1980 and 2013 (Xu, this volume) shows that Chinese scholars have been studying a wide range of issues, including:

- whether Chinese English exists
- how it should be named and defined
- whether it is different from Chinglish
- how people perceive it and to what extent it can be accepted as a standard
- what its features are
- how it functions in intra- and inter-cultural communication
- what implications it has for English language teaching (ELT) in China

The current volume aims to build on this foundation. In particular, we hope:

- to provide an updated review of current research
- to contribute to studies of World Englishes, informing English learners, teaching professionals, language and education policy makers, researchers, and World Englishes specialists both in China and around the world of the status, issues and trends of research into Chinese English
- to promote a sustainable dialogue among Chinese and international scholars who are interested in studying Chinese English

The chapters cover a full spectrum of research into Chinese English, including investigations into its features, attitudes towards it, and the cultural linguistics of Chinese English. All of the chapters represent original research, and the majority of them are empirical studies on certain aspects of Chinese English.

We hope that this volume successfully shifts the focus from researching how people in China learn and use standard varieties of English to a wider consideration of the newly emergent varieties of English that occur in China, and we believe that

it provides an impetus towards a new way of conceptualizing Chinese English, thereby refocusing research on phenomena regarding how English is actually used in China, and in Chinese diasporas and beyond.

2 “Conversations” about Chinese English

As we set out to review and edit the chapters for this volume, the three authors of this chapter (also the editors of this volume) have been engaged in conversations through email correspondence about Chinese English. Here we present three extracts from our ongoing ‘conversations’ to illustrate various issues pertinent to the current volume of researching Chinese English. Conversation 1 is concerned with the Chinese zodiac signs of the three editors.

Conversation 1: Sat. 10, Jan. 2015¹

ZX: [...] I look forward to a collaborative and productive 2015 (the Year of Goat/Sheep/Ram) with both of you. I’m a hard working ‘horse’, what about you?

PH: [...] We know ZX is a hard working ‘horse’, but I may not say I am a hard working ‘tiger’ since people seldom say it in this way. Speaking of ‘horse’ and ‘tiger’, I am very glad that we have David as our third editor, or our volume may get a ‘horse horse tiger tiger’ editor team. ^_^

DD: Does that make me a horse? Or a tiger? Or both? Or maybe just ma-ma hu-hu!

PH: [...] I mean the team would be ‘*ma ma hu hu*’ without you. Since we have got you in our team, we will never be a ‘horse horse tiger tiger’ team, but a ‘horse tiger monkey’ team. You know monkey symbolizes a very clever animal in Chinese, so our team will be very clever and successful because of you.:-)

ZX: Wow ... impressed by our ‘Chinese English/Culture’ discussion here, about the Chinese zodiac! No wonder we’ve been working as a team. We’re a ‘family’! What a coincidence! My other half is a monkey, and my daughter is a tiger! [...] ‘A monkey on a horse back’ has a very auspicious meaning in Chinese: D!

DD: [...] As the monkey in the team, I just hope I don’t cause too many problems!

ZX: Hahaha, after a whole day’s hard work, I do enjoy your great sense of humor, and a big LOL... [...]

PH: I cannot agree with you more. Humor plays a very important role in our life. [...] no worries, DD, you will not cause problems to us, instead, you will bring good luck, since monkey has the same pronunciation as *marquis* in Chinese.

In Conversation 1, it is worth noting that we were partly communicating in ‘Chinese English’, specifically by assuming certain shared cultural knowledge about Chinese, and this kind of conversation typifies the use of Chinese English. First, it can be noted that one of the participants is not Chinese; and this shows that Chinese English is not necessarily limited to people who are Chinese. Anyone with knowledge of the language or experience with Chinese culture can participate. It can also be observed that there is extensive reference to the Chinese zodiac in Conversation 1. When ZX says ‘I am a hard-working horse’, he feels there is no need to explain that he was

¹ZX = Zhichang Xu; PH = Paul Deyuan He; DD = David Deterding.

born in the Year of the Horse due to the shared knowledge among the three participants about Chinese culture.

Secondly, this conversation shows that the three participants encode additional Chinese meanings into otherwise common English words. Crucially, there is the use of *mǎ mǎ hǔ hǔ* (马马虎虎), which literally means ‘horse horse tiger tiger’ but is actually a common four-character Chinese idiom meaning ‘careless and sloppy’. Note that all three participants in the conversation assume this shared knowledge, and this type of code-mixing and reference to shared cultural understandings typifies many interactions in Chinese English.

One might also suggest that Conversation 1 seems to reflect the implicit adoption of Chinese politeness principles (cf. Gu 1990). For example, PH responded to ZX’s ‘hard working horse’ statement by saying that ‘I may not say I am a hard working tiger ...’, which indicates his use of the ‘self-denigration’ maxim to show politeness. Another example is when PH responded to DD’s statement ‘As the monkey in the team, I just hope I don’t cause too many problems’. PH replied ‘you will not cause problems to us, instead, you will bring good luck, since monkey has the same pronunciation as *marquis* in Chinese’. In addition to the cross-linguistic sharing of the fact that *hóu* (猴, monkey) is a homophone with *hóu* (侯, marquis), this example shows PH’s use of the ‘other elevation’ maxim. Finally, ZX’s statement ‘We’re a family’, which proposes that a *horse*, a *tiger* and a *monkey* can work harmoniously as a team, demonstrates his positive face and politeness strategies through expressions of mutual engagement and group solidarity.

Are the politeness strategies exhibited in this conversation unique to Chinese interactions? Or are they actually typical of interactions in Englishes around the world? It may be difficult to determine this with any degree of certainty, but we believe that this conversation is typical of the way in which people interact in Chinese English.

A second interaction that similarly encodes extensive shared knowledge and some code-switching is Conversation 2.

Conversation 2: Mon. 16, Feb. 2015

- ZX: May I take this opportunity to wish us all a Happy Chinese New Year of the... (hehehe, here comes the question: would it be the Goat, the Ram, or the Sheep?)... see how complicated Chinese English is! Some suggest that it should be the Chinese New Year of the *Yang*, or Young... but this does not seem to be aligned with the *Horse*, the *Dragon*, and the *Tiger* very well.
- DD: Congratulations and Get Rich (as you Chinese people say).
- PH: I also wanna wish you two *yang yang de yi* in the year of Yang. *Kung Hei Fat Choi*.
- DD: Happy Year of the Ovicaprid!

There are two salient translanguaging expressions in this conversation. The first of these involves *yáng yáng dé yì* (洋洋得意), which literally means ‘ocean ocean get satisfaction’, but is actually a four-character idiom in Chinese meaning ‘elated, in high spirits’. The pun here is that *yáng* (洋, ‘ocean’) is a homophone with *yáng* (羊, sheep/goat/ram, or ‘ovicaprid’), and this conversation took place at the beginning of the Year of the Goat. The second expression is the common greeting used by Chinese people at the beginning of the Chinese lunar New Year, *gōng xǐ fā cái* (恭喜发财),

or *kung hei fat choi* in Cantonese. It literally means ‘congratulations and get rich’, and DD uses the literal translation or loan translation into English to wish the two Chinese editors a happy New Year. This shows that Chinese English expressions can be shared in some contexts among all speakers of English, and such expressions are not necessarily used exclusively by Chinese speakers of English.

In addition, for Conversation 2, we might note the use of *ovicaprid*, a term that is not widely used but has been suggested by Mair (2015) as a suitable cover term for *ram*, *sheep* and *goat*. This illustrates the developmental nature of Chinese English, as interactants need to create new terms as well as establish newly contextualized meanings for existing words.

One more conversation between the editors that is pertinent to the issues of researching Chinese English is Conversation 3, in which two of the authors discuss the use of terms such as ‘Chinese English’ and ‘China English’.

Conversation 3: Mon.-Tue. 16–17, Feb. 2015

- ZX: I’ve been reading your book “Dialects of English: Singapore English”. It was a brilliant one. The discussion on the variation between ‘educated Singapore English’ and ‘colloquial Singapore English (popularly known as ‘Singlish’)’ is of great relevance to the naming of Chinese English/China English and Chinglish. It’s also interesting to know whether there’s any discussion on the name of Singapore English (and whether it can also be named Singaporean English).
- DD: The distinction between ‘Singapore English’ and ‘Singaporean English’ is interesting. It appears that small places tend to use the bare name of the country, while larger countries use the derived adjective. So we find: Singapore English, Hong Kong English, Brunei English; but American English, German English, Malaysian English. On this basis, we might favour Chinese English over China English, because China is big. However, there is a competing trend to favour the bare name of a country. Increasingly, in football commentaries, I hear ‘the France team’ and ‘the Spain team’ rather than the expected ‘the French team’ and ‘the Spanish team’. So maybe ‘China English’ is following the modern trend.
- ZX: Yes, DD, what you said about the names of the varieties and the sports teams makes very good sense to me! [...] Regarding the names of Chinese English, I tend to take ‘Chinese English’ more or less as an umbrella term, while China English as its ‘academic’ name, and Chinglish its nickname ... I know a lot of people may not agree with me:). Personally, I prefer Chinese English (as a name of a broad sense, as a continuum, or even a matrix). However, as I review lots and lots of academic papers on Chinese English, it seems that the majority of the researchers, who published their articles in the 1990s, and the first decade of the Century, take the term ‘China English’ as the most appropriate name, mostly because of the deep-rooted association between Chinese English and Chinglish, and that’s why they avoided using ‘Chinese English’. However, younger researchers do not seem to have that historical baggage, and they don’t even think that Chinglish has a very negative connotation, so they use the term Chinese English more commonly and ‘naturally’.
- DD: That’s an interesting comparison between China English and Chinese English. Surprisingly, I don’t hear anyone objecting to Malaysian English, suggesting it is similar to Manglish, or recommending that Malaysia English would be better. On the other hand, Brunei English seems well-established, and nobody seems to refer to Bruneian English. So I think that the big place vs. small place is the usual desideratum. For example, we would expect Canadian English but Bahamas English.

In Conversation 3 ZX and DD discuss a number of specific varieties of English, including Chinese English, Brunei English, Singapore English, and Malaysian English. This conversation reflects the fact that naming is variety-specific, as there is no universal consensus on what term should be used for a variety of English. Seargeant (2010, p. 98) suggests that in relation to World Englishes, ‘the exact nature of the act of naming will depend on the context in which it occurs’ and that naming a particular variety of English is ‘providing a term of reference for a concept, which is a key aspect of conceptualization’. Although the ‘big place vs. small place’ criterion may lead to ‘Chinese English’ being preferred, the sports teams’ example suggests ‘China English’ can be justified. Andy Kirkpatrick, in an email correspondence with ZX on 6–7 July 2015, has provided interesting examples regarding the Cambridge University Press series into Lesser Known Varieties of English, including Maltese English and Palauan English, where some ‘small’ varieties of English can also get adjectivized. While the issue of naming varieties of English is beyond the scope of this chapter, for further discussion on the naming of Chinese English see Xu’s chapter in this volume. Given its nature and complexity, both ‘Chinese English’ and ‘China English’ are used interchangeably in this volume depending on individual authors’ own preferences.

3 Fallacies about Chinese English

Chinese English currently finds itself in a liminal space of waiting and not knowing what the next step is. As shown in the cases of the uncertainty in the naming of the year (e.g. ram/goat/sheep/ovicaprid), and of the variety (e.g. Chinese English/China English/Chinglish), Chinese English is apparently between an exonormative mindset of conformity and an endonormative propensity for self-identification.

At this juncture, it is crucial to unpack what Chinese English is and what it is not by scrutinizing a number of fallacies that we now outline:

- that Chinese English is Chinglish or a hybrid of Chinese and English with English words in Chinese syntax
- that Chinese English is an interlanguage that is characterized by learners’ mistakes and errors
- that Chinese English is exclusively used in China by Chinese people
- that Chinese English is used only for international communication instead of intra-national communication
- that Chinese English is only reflected in pronunciation, lexis and discourse
- that Chinese English is a norm-dependent variety of English

Our email conversations discussed in the previous section testify that these are indeed fallacies. Chinese English is not Chinglish, but it may include code-mixing and loan translations, such as *horse horse tiger tiger*, when the contexts are appropriate. Furthermore, non-Chinese people may also use Chinese English expressions when they interact with Chinese or other speakers of English. Chinese English is not

an interlanguage, nor is it a pidgin, but it is developing its own norms of usage. In addition, Chinese English is not restricted to pronunciation, lexis and discourse in English, but it can also be reflected in Chinese cultural conceptualizations ([Sharifian 2009, 2014](#); see also Xu and Sharifian's chapter in this volume) and pragmatic norms ([Kirkpatrick and Xu 2002](#)), such as the application of politeness principles and maxims of self-denigration and other-elevation as shown in 'Conversation 1' in the previous section. Finally, Chinese English is not only a norm-dependent variety, as is suggested by Kachru (2005, p. 14) when he places it in the Expanding Circle, but it can be regarded as a norm-developing variety of English, as is proposed by Jenkins (2015) and also by Seidlhofer (2011). The semantic broadening of the connotations of *horse*, *tiger* and *monkey* according to Chinese zodiac traditions illustrates the norm-developing nature of Chinese English, as these connotations are not restricted to Chinese people.

In addition to demystifying Chinese English through unpacking fallacies surrounding it, we also acknowledge that it is not yet an established variety of English, so it can currently still be regarded as a 'developing variety of English' (Xu 2006, 2008, 2010). It is 'developing' in the sense that features of Chinese English are yet to be systematically codified, and people's perceptions of it and their attitudes towards it are markedly divided ([Chen and Hu 2006](#); [He and Li 2009](#); [Hu 2004, 2005](#); [Kirkpatrick and Xu 2002](#); [Yang and Zhang 2015](#)). Chinese English is also a developing variety of English in the sense that it has not reached all the criteria put forward by researchers such as Butler (1997), including:

1. a recognizable pronunciation
2. a vocabulary that is specific to the variety
3. a history of the variety being part of a speech community
4. a literature written in that variety without apology
5. the existence of reference works.

Kirkpatrick (2007, p. 151) argues that 'Chinese English meets criteria 2, 3 and 4, but the first criterion may not be applicable to Chinese English, given the different dialect mother tongues of its speakers', and the observation that 'Chinese English already meets these criteria is quite remarkable given the relatively short time in which the Chinese have embraced the learning of English on a wider scale'. Therefore, Chinese English may still be placed in one of the early phases of the five-phase dynamic model proposed by [Schneider \(2007, 2014\)](#).

4 Researching Chinese English: Status, Issues and Trends

What is Chinese English and what is the value of researching Chinese English? These are fundamental questions to be asked at this stage of researching Chinese English and more broadly in research on World Englishes. Schneider (2014, p. 9) points out that 'while the twentieth-century expansion of English predominantly transformed Outer Circle countries, in recent years attention has increasingly been directed towards the Expanding Circle, where the demand for and the spread of

English have been growing dramatically'. In addition, one of the anonymous proposal reviewers for this volume points out tellingly that 'the "Chinese English" concept itself is very much a contended construct. The very existence of Chinese English or the very need to study Chinese English is disputable'. However, rather than seeing this as a weakness, the reviewer sees it as 'an opportunity for this team of researchers to produce the argument for its existence and significant research value'.

Indeed the authors of the chapters as well as the editors of this volume have seized this opportunity to describe the current status and explore many issues surrounding Chinese English. The wide range of research presented in the chapters of the current volume therefore allows us to reflect on the current status, issues and trends of Chinese English research and also to suggest some predictions about how it is likely to continue to develop in the near future.

In addition to a foreword and this introductory chapter, this volume contains five major parts: (1) researching Chinese English pronunciation; (2) researching Chinese English lexis, grammar and text; (3) researching perceptions, reactions and attitudes towards Chinese English; (4) researching Chinese English cultural conceptualizations and identities; and (5) researching Chinese scholarship on Chinese English.

The first part begins with a chapter entitled "[The Pronunciation of English in Guangxi: Which Features Cause Misunderstandings?](#)", which presents a study analyzing the salient features of pronunciation of speakers of English in Guangxi, China, with particular attention to those features giving rise to misunderstandings. The chapter shows that the speakers are able to express themselves reasonably clearly, and some of the most common non-standard features of their pronunciation rarely contribute to misunderstandings. It argues that 'there is no need for speakers in China to imitate native speakers in order to be understood'.

The chapter entitled "[The Hong Kong English Syllable Structure](#)" probes into Hong Kong English (HKE) syllable structure through a language game in which speakers of HKE participated in a form of ludling involving backwards syllable manipulation. The findings include: (i) HKE allows diphthongs as the nucleus of a syllable; (ii) the HKE coda prefers plosives or nasals; (iii) the HKE onset allows clusters but fricatives tend to be treated as syllabic; and (iv) HKE allows syllabic obstruent segments.

Part II consists of chapters on "[Lexis-Grammar Interface in Chinese English: A Corpus Study of a Prototypical Ditransitive Verb GIVE](#)", "[Researching Collocational Features: Towards China English as a Distinctive New Variety](#)", "[A Corpus-Based Study of Syntactic Patterns of Nominalizations Across Chinese and British Media English](#)", "[A Study on Modified-Modifying Sequence in the Compositions by Chinese Advanced Users of English](#)", and "[Pragmatics in Chinese Graduate Students' English Gratitude Emails](#)".

The chapter entitled "[Lexis-Grammar Interface in Chinese English: A Corpus Study of a Prototypical Ditransitive Verb GIVE](#)" investigates the lexis-grammar interface of Chinese English from a corpus linguistics perspective. The authors have analyzed 500 randomly-sampled uses of the prototypical ditransitive verb GIVE, which suggests that there exist certain associations between specific lexical items and grammatical constructions in Chinese English. The relationship between lexis

and grammar can be taken as a concrete instantiation of structural nativization in local varieties of English.

The chapter on “[Researching Collocational Features: Towards China English as a Distinctive New Variety](#)” demonstrates how evidence-based innovations are supported by statistically salient patterns of collocational features in Chinese English (CE). The authors argue that a comprehensive understanding and coverage of CE lexical features, and grammatical preferences to a lesser extent, cannot be obtained without attending to CE-specific collocational patterns. The chapter suggests that collocational patterns represent an important source of innovation in CE.

The chapter entitled “[A Corpus-Based Study of Syntactic Patterns of Nominalizations Across Chinese and British Media English](#)” reports on a corpus-based study of syntactic patterns of nominalizations across Chinese English and British English. It shows that Chinese and British Media English differ markedly in the syntactic patterns of nominalizations. The former has comparatively complex nominalizations and develops a reliance on compressed and phrasal types of modification while the latter tends to use simple nominalizations and develops a reliance on expanded and clausal types of modification.

The chapter on “[A Study on Modified-Modifying Sequence in the Compositions by Chinese Advanced Users of English](#)” focuses on syntactic structures in the writing of Chinese advanced learners and users of English. It examines the pattern of the positions of four subordinate clauses, *because-*, *although-*, *if-* and *when-*, which Chinese users of English tend to place in the initial position, though they can be in an initial, medial or final position. It further claims that such preference may be due to transfer from Chinese, and can be considered as an instantiation of syntactic nativization in Chinese English.

The chapter entitled “Pragmatics in Chinese Graduate Students’ English Gratitude Emails” examines pragmatic features of Chinese English by investigating and comparing gratitude emails written by Chinese English users across two different proficiency levels. Findings include that the more advanced group wrote significantly longer emails than the less advanced group; that there was no significant difference, however, in the frequency of both overall and individual pragmatic strategies; and that the two groups displayed similarities regarding email openings and closings.

Part III consists of chapters on “Perceptions of Chinese English and Pedagogical Implications for Teaching English in China”, “An Investigation of Attitudes Towards English Accents – A Case Study of a University in China”, “Chinese and Non-Chinese English Teachers’ Reactions to Chinese English in Academic Writing”, “The Prospect of Teaching English as an International Language in a Chinese Context: Student-Teachers’ Reactions”, and “The Nativization of English in China”.

The chapter entitled “Perceptions of Chinese English and Pedagogical Implications for Teaching English in China” explores college teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the ideal pedagogical model of college English in the Chinese mainland. The study reveals that the preferred teaching model is a native-speaker-based variety of English supplemented with salient, well-codified, and properly implemented features of Chinese English. It also argues that college English should be taught by both local non-native-speaking English teachers and native-speaking English teachers.

The chapter on “An Investigation of Attitudes Towards English Accents – A Case Study of a University in China” investigates Chinese university students’ attitudes towards their English accents and the extent to which their attitudes have been influenced by standard language ideology. It shows the significance of researching attitudes towards local accents in terms of pronunciation teaching for the development of a potential variety of English. The chapter calls for a shift in perspective on the teaching of pronunciation in English-language higher education.

The chapter entitled “Chinese and Non-Chinese English Teachers’ Reactions to Chinese English in Academic Writing” examines the reactions of Chinese and non-Chinese English language teachers to features of CE in texts written by Chinese university students. It shows that most loan words and loan translations are not widely rejected by the participants, and that some non-Chinese participants reject a possible semantic shift in the meaning of the word *outside* while Chinese participants appear to accept it. In addition, possible instances of adjacent default tense and null subject are widely rejected by participants.

The chapter on “The Prospect of Teaching English as an International Language in a Chinese Context: Student-Teachers’ Reactions” presents a case study exploring four Chinese student-teachers’ views on the importance and practicality of teaching English diversity, including Chinese English, in a Chinese context. The results suggest that Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL) in a Chinese context seems to have a good prospect of being accepted. Suggestions for English language teacher education in China are offered in light of the (potential) challenges in TEIL mentioned by the participants.

The chapter entitled “The Nativization of English in China” starts with a review of key literature on the history, current status and functional use of English in China. It then argues that English has been nativized in China and undergone several stages of development, and it will become a nativized variety in World Englishes. This chapter also discusses some key issues concerning the future development of Chinese English, such as the on-going codification of Chinese-specific features.

Part IV contains chapters on “Cultural Conceptualizations in Chinese English and Implications for ELT in China” and “Through English as a Window: Defining ‘Being Chinese’ in the 21st Century”.

The chapter entitled “Cultural Conceptualizations in Chinese English and Implications for ELT in China” is about cultural conceptualizations in Chinese English and the implications for English language teaching in China. It explores Chinese English with a Cultural Linguistics approach and it exemplifies cultural schemas, categories, conceptual metaphors and cultural blends using diversified empirical data on Chinese English. It concludes that Chinese English varies from other varieties of English both linguistically and culturally in terms of cultural conceptualizations that it embodies.

The chapter on “Through English as a Window: Defining ‘Being Chinese’ in the 21st Century” explores the idea of ‘being Chinese’ in China today through examining the impact of learning English on Chinese students. It shows that the idea is less constrained by previous ideologies about learning English and more defined within Chinese people’s own imagination of ‘being modern’ and ‘being global’. English does not seem to threaten the sense of ‘being Chinese’, but rather, it leads Chinese people to reflect on their Chinese identity and to explore other dimensions of their identity.

Part V contains chapters entitled “Researching Chinese English: A Meta-Analysis of Chinese Scholarship on Chinese English Research” and “New Directions for Researching Chinese English”.

The chapter on “Researching Chinese English: A Meta-Analysis of Chinese Scholarship on Chinese English Research” provides a state-of-the-art review of Chinese English research scholarship through a meta-analysis of 100 selected articles on Chinese English. The meta-analysis shows that Chinese English research falls into four distinct periods: the ‘enlightenment’ (1980–1997), the ‘great leap forward’ (1998–2001), the ‘renaissance’ (2002–2012), and the ‘open-door’ (2013 onwards) periods. Major research themes have been teased out and research findings within each of the themes have been reviewed.

The chapter entitled “New Directions for Researching Chinese English” is the concluding chapter. It points out possible future directions for research into Chinese English while referring to some of the chapters in this volume and other recent research in the field. The major issues covered in this chapter include the following: linguistic features; cultural conceptualisations; rhetoric; attitudes towards Chinese English; Chinese English and identity construction; multilingual creativity; and the overall extent of Chinese English use across China.

5 Road Map for (Researching) Chinese English

The future of Chinese English is so far still an uncharted territory in the same way that researchers in World Englishes are uncertain about the future of Englishes. Pennycook (2010, p. 673) proposes three scenarios for the future of Englishes: ‘one, many or no Englishes’, which refer to ‘the continuation of English, the plurality of Englishes or the demise of English’. The ‘one English’ scenario refers to a supranational model of English, or the ‘worldliness of English’; the ‘many Englishes’ scenario refers to English becoming mutually unintelligible local forms or varieties; and the ‘no Englishes’ scenario refers to English being replaced by other languages as world lingua francas. Pennycook (2010, p. 673) argues that the ‘answer’ is dependent on ‘mapping out the possibilities of real-world conditions: language use, demographics, economic change, globalization, and so forth’, and the ‘answer’ is also dependent on the ‘epistemological lenses through which we consider these questions’, or on ‘global economic and political changes and theoretical approaches to how we think about language’.

In terms of the future of Chinese English, the first author of the chapter had an interesting discussion among his 23 Chinese postgraduate Applied Linguistics students who were taking a course on World Englishes in May 2014 in Suzhou, China. One of the discussion topics was the future of Chinese English. The majority of the students were positive about Chinese English, and their ‘voices’ echo the future of Chinese English: ‘Chinese English will become a standard variety of Asian Englishes, and it will be an associate official language in China’; ‘there will be Chinese English dictionaries and Chinese English-based exams’; ‘there will be a more favorable attitude towards Chinese English’; and ‘in the future we can be

Table 1 The future of Chinese English (CE)

Current	In 5 years' time	In 10 years' time	In 50 years' time
Exonormative stablization	Nativization	Endonormative stablization	Differentiation
A literature	More literature written in CE	Developing norms	Basilect: Chinese pidgin English
Words and phrases	More expressions of CE widely acknowledged	Codification: Dictionaries of CE	Mesolect: Chinglish
Recognizable pronunciation			Acrolect: CE
A history			

“native speakers” of Chinese English’. One of the students adopted Butler’s (1997) five criteria for an established variety of English, and Schneider’s (2003) five stages of nativization of English when predicting the future of Chinese English (see Table 1).

It can be noted from Table 1 that Chinese English has a history, recognizable pronunciation, words and phrases and an emerging literature (in English) and it is at the stage of exonormative stabilization. In 5 years’ time, there will be more books written in Chinese English, and more expressions of Chinese English will be widely recognized, reaching the stage of nativization. In 10 years’ time, there will be more Chinese English norm development, and in the meantime, there will be more codification work done, leading to reference works such as dictionaries of Chinese English. It will then be at the stage of endonormative stabilization. In 50 years’ time, there will be basilectal, mesolectal and acrolectal varieties of Chinese English, and it will be at a stage where there are varieties within a variety, or what Schneider terms ‘differentiation’.

The authors of this chapter believe that Chinese English is a developing variety of English. It will become more widely used in China and therefore nativized in different aspects of the Chinese society. In 50 years or even less than 50 years, Chinese English will be duly codified, and it will be differentiated within the variety itself. In addition, Chinese English will be widely acknowledged and used across the Chinese diasporas around the world. As far as researching Chinese English is concerned, apart from identifying and codifying linguistic features of Chinese English based on corpus data, more research will be conducted in the areas of awareness, attitudes, identities, functions, norms and practices, as well as cultural conceptualizations embedded in Chinese English.

6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have provided an overview of Chinese English research, including major issues involved in researching it since the 1980s. Through the analysis of three ‘conversations’ among the authors, we have demystified what Chinese English is, what functions it serves, and how it is used in authentic contexts. We have also

pointed out six fallacies surrounding it. In terms of the status, issues and trends of Chinese English, we have summarized all the chapters included in this volume, so that readers may have a clear picture of the state of the art of Chinese English research.

To end the chapter, we quote something expressed by one of the proposal reviewers for this volume: 'I hope to see not just conceptualization, but also operationalization, and robust research methods that will guide future researchers on the topic of Chinese English'. This is precisely what this chapter and the entire volume are about: status, issues, trends, conceptualization, operationalization and forward-looking directions and predictions for researching Chinese English.

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