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(IJEPC)**www.ijepec.com**THE EXPOSURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN EAST COAST
AND WEST COAST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA AND ITS
IMPACTS ON SOCIAL, IDENTITY AND CULTURAL BUILDING
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DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.1059052This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

Malaysia, a country which is rich with cultures, languages and identities, embraced English as its second language. With English as its second language, this language also represented the language of empowerment, educational, social integration and other purposes. This paper aims to study English language exposure to the undergraduate students and its impacts on constructing their social and cultural identities as a Malaysian. Thus, Norton and Darwin's Model of Investment is employed as the framework and thematic analysis is done on data collected by interviewing undergraduate students from East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. The findings of this study revealed that the exposure of English language to the undergraduate students are through family, schools or educational institutions and community. However, the students from the West Coast of Malaysia added individual effort and official matters are two other methods of exposure of English language. In addition, the impacts of the exposure on their social and cultural identity can be divided into their (1) identity as a student along with their national identity and race, their (2) ideology on English language and their mother tongue which somehow shaped their social and cultural perspectives and identities, and their (3) capital on future demand from employers and experience as a consumer due to English as a tool to conduct business or transaction. Finally, this study proves that the exposure and impacts of the English language traverse beyond the surface level as they vastly influence an individual. Although Malaysians embrace their identity as a Malaysian with Malaysian values and national language, the micro scrutiny revealed more details due to the unique multicultural, multi-language, and multi identities of Malaysians.

Keywords:

Language and Culture, Language and Identity, Norton and Darwin's Model of Investment, Sociolinguistics

Introduction

As English language becomes global, it also gives a new definition to the language and identity to the non-native speaker of English. Ajmal et al. (2020), in their study, agreed that in the modern era, the English language, supported by global education systems, plays a central role in fostering cultural interconnectedness, facilitating the exchange of ideas and knowledge, and promoting social integration within the context of globalization. Graddol (2006) highlighted that despite this language going global and more people speak English as second language or foreign language, the impact of this language on culture and identity are still in a dim light as this area is less probed compared to others. According to Rezaei (2017), the significance factors such as language, culture, gender, race, and ethnicity in the global community or among diasporic populations have escalated the urgency to study the correlation between language and identity in today's world.

In addition, Agha (2007) states, in every human society, certain employments of language make a distinct kind of social impact to indicate a person relationship to the persons spoken to or spoken about, or the presentation of themselves as in belonging to some identified social group, class, occupation or other classification of personhood. This can be linked to the employment of language in determining an identity in the society especially in a multilingual society as Malaysia. As Ali (2022) had an extensive study specifically on Malay cultural identity in Malaysian society, she found that Malay identity rooted on the language itself and the religion. This makes it intriguing to study on English language exposure on the identity of certain races.

Thus, Malaysia which is rich in cultures and identities, embraced English as its second language aside from other languages that make up the whole multilingual society in Malaysia. From that, Holmes and Wilson (2022) stated that by examining the way the language is used in different social contexts, it will provide a richness in information about how the language itself works, the knowledge about the social relationship in a community and the approach people use to convey and construct the aspects of their social identity through their language. In the study by Iloponu and Hanafi (2025), they observed that enhanced English proficiency can contribute to students' self-identity development, enabling them to perceive themselves as members of a global community and fostering new perspectives on their personal identity.

However, the English language in Malaysia had a unique history before this language gained its status as the second language. This language also represented the language of empowerment, educational purpose, social integration and other purposes. The unique history of the English language in Malaysia, however, uncovered the perception in which English language is seen as a threat to the national language and local culture (Lee, 2003; Lee, 2008). Consequently, this language and its impact on Malaysian cultural identity are still being probed (Siew-Eng & Muuk, 2015). Thus, this paper aims to study how the English language is exposed to the undergraduate students from the East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and its impact on constructing their social and cultural identity.

The significant of this research is to fill in the gap of the study in social and cultural identity of Malaysian; specifically, the user of English as a second language. However, this study will be focusing on the construction of social and cultural identity of students from East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia as previous studies did not focus on the specific demographic aspect. In addition, some of the previous studies only focused on certain ethnic group and their culture in Malaysia as, for an example, Ting (2013) studied the perspective of Malaysian Chinese youth on their language and identity as Malaysia. Furthermore, a study by Lee et al. (2010) did not probe on the difference in English language exposure to the participants although this study focused on the impact of English language on the social and cultural identity of Malaysian's youth. Additionally, Granhemet and Nadzimah Abdullah (2017) only focused on the relationship between gender, ethnicity, ethnic identity and language choices in the family domain and did not exclusively scrutinizing English language as a second language.

Literature Review

Language, Society and Identity

To communicate, language is needed to convey the means of communication. Holmes and Wilson (2022) stated that sociolinguistic concerns on the relationship between language and society, in which it involves the explanation on why different people speak differently in different social contexts as well as classifying the social function of the language and its usage in conveying social meaning. It is crucial to say that a society cannot be established if there is no language present. As Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021) stated, language associates with a system of linguistic communication either spoken, written or signed mode to a particular group. Sharkar (2025), in his study, explored the significance of language in fostering social cohesion and cultural identity within India's highly diverse linguistic landscape, where over 1,600 languages are spoken. It highlights language as both a communicative medium and a defining element of personal and communal identity. Thus, it is obvious that a society works with a presence of language or languages to accomplish its purpose.

Based on Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021), the system of two or more people communicating is called code where the speaker that is bilingual or multilingual has more access for more than one code that also allows the speaker to transfer back and forth between the languages in some mode of multilingual discourse. According to Atobatele and Mouboua (2024), the existence of the interrelationship between multilingual identities, social belonging, and political participation, enabling how individuals negotiate their linguistic identities across varying sociopolitical contexts and how these processes shape their sense of inclusion and civic engagement.

In addition, bi/multilingualism is seen as a norm especially in countries that vary in races and languages where the speakers can speak more than a language. As Holmes and Wilson (2022) pointed out that the interaction that has been identified within the community is relevant in determining the patterns of code choice in the certain speech community, bi/multilingualism also can construct its own community where it is called a bilingual speech community. However, this is not only restricted to spoken speech but also includes written and sign mode. In dealing with bi/multilingual community or speaker, domains of the language use can be highlighted. Holmes and Wilson (2022) also stated that certain social factors become the deciding factors for the language choice in different varieties of speech community. The

domain involves typical interactions between typical participants in a typical setting where a relevant description for patterns of code choice can be identified.

Fishman (1972) illustrated five different domains that can be identified in many communities that utilize more than one language, in which the first language (L1) and second language (L2) cater different domains respectively. Table 1, taken from Fishman (1972), illustrates the five domains that can be identified in many communities that speak more than one language where first language (L1) and second language (L2) can be utilized in different ways based on the domains. The addressee, settings and topics of conversations also playing a huge role in determining whether L1 or L2 are being spoken.

Table 1
Domains of Language Used

Domain	Addressee	Setting	Topic	Variety/Code
Family	Parent	Home	Family activity	L1
Friendship	Friend	Playground	Games	L1
Religion	Priest	Church	Religious study	L1
Education	Teacher	School	Studying	L2
Employment	Employer	Workplace	Daily task	L2

Source: Fishman (1972)

In addition, humans as a social being are always bound with a community formed by a group of people. As Holmes and Wilson (2022) stated, the interaction that has been identified within the community is relevant in determining the patterns of code choice in the certain speech community. In addition, the domain of the language use also varies as it depends on the typical interactions between its typical participants in a typical setting that can be identified in the community itself (Holmes and Wilson, 2022).

With this, each domain represents each identity the participant holds when the language is being used. Moreover, Holmes and Wilson (2022) pointed that the general concept of domain focuses on three important social factors in code choice, as in the participants, setting and topic, in which these factors are defining the identity of the participants in each domain and their construction of social and cultural identity in each domain.

East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Dialects and Identity

Malaysia is divided into two; Peninsular Malaysian and West Malaysia. Peninsular Malaysia consist of Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, Selangor, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory of Putrajaya, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor, Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan while West Malaysia is referring to Sabah, Sarawak and Federal Territory of Labuan. According to the Department of Statistics of Malaysia (2024), Selangor, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory of Putrajaya, Negeri Sembilan and Melaka are the states listed as the states in West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia while Terengganu, Pahang and Kelantan are listed as the states in East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia.

In this study, the geographical situation between East Coast and West Coast are taken into consideration in studying the exposure of English language to the students due to the rapid growth of the West Coast compared to the East Coast might be one variable to the exposure of English language. Additional condition in which the West Coast is where the capital city of Malaysia might be taken into consideration as well. Plus, in studying the identity and language, dialectal language embedded into one's identity is also taken into consideration as the states in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia are known for their distinct dialects and cultural values compared to the West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. For an example, a study by Jalaluddin et al. (2021) specifically focused on Terengganu dialect as the dialect itself is very prominent due to its unique linguistic properties.

English Language and Identity in Malaysia

In studying language and identity in Malaysia, Granhamet and Nadzimah Abdullah (2017) conducted a large scale of quantitative study of 500 participants to learn about the correlation between gender, ethnicity, ethnic identity, and language choices of Malaysian youths within the domain of family. This study found five codes of language choice in the family domain but gender did not influence any choice of language used. The five codes of languages found were Malay, mixed use Malay and English, Chinese, mixed use of Chinese and English and English. However, this study did not specifically mention the demographic information of the location or hometown of the participants as they focused on the ethnics instead. Thus, it is believed that if this study took into consideration of the participants' locations, the results might have a slight change.

Additionally, Ting and Abidin (2023) also focused on the ethnic language and ethnic identity of the university students. Their study focused on the language use in six different domains and their ethnic identity was scrutinized. As a result, this study, focusing on ethnic and ethnic language, found a strong correlation between the extent of ethnic language use and the strength of the ethnic identity. However, this study did not focus on the ethnic and their identity as Malaysian.

In addition, in Fei et al. (2012), they studied the impact of English language in the construction of young adult Malaysians in using English language as an identity marker. This identity marker enhances the perception of their personal perception and social status although English language is also being viewed as the factor of 'othering' when the language is being used in their ethnic community. This study singled out English language user but no specific geographical location of the participants was taken into consideration as well.

In addition, Fei et al. (2012) also discussed how the change in policy of the education system in Malaysia also changed the role of English language in students' life as some of the changes were made to accommodate the students from 'rural areas'. From this, the distinct growth of modernisation in East Coast and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia might give the title of 'rural area' to the East Coast and the policy changes, in which English language no longer being taught in Mathematics and Science might affect the exposure of the language. In addition, Fei et al. (2012) also states that the role of English language in Malaysian education is also being affected by the political sentiments that are always changing but somehow, the language itself as a dominant language in the world also influences the socio-cultural setting of the country.

Furthermore, with the various races in Malaysia, the identity somehow embedded in their own mother tongue as well. In addition, Lee (2008) also added that multiple identities occur with the multiple languages of an individual, allowing the individual to 'switch identity' per the language used. With this, it is essential to research on the issue of language and identity in Malaysia as this country is rich with multiple languages and also multiple dialects, thus making Malaysia a country full of identities along with the multiple languages this country fostered.

Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment

Peirce (1995) developed the theory of investment in language learning as her study centralised on a few participants that learned English with different aim or goal. Peirce (1995) believed that the investment theory is different from motivation as her study proved that motivation in learning another language did not last as long as investment in learning the language as her participant with motivation to learn the another language without investment ended up forgetting or did not practice the language. However, the participants that invest in their language learning, as in learning the language with a future goal, managed to maintain the learning process and mastered the language.

From that, Darvin and Norton (2015) revised the theory to build the model of investment in applied linguistic. This model consists of three main components; identity, capital and ideology. According to Norton (2013), the identity in this model is defined by the various, a source of struggle and can continuously changing over time and space. In this model, Darvin and Norton (2015) states that the identity is a struggle in habituating and desire to accomplish the ideology and perceptive identities as different ideologies and lead by difference in capital, the difference in context and identity happened to the language learner.

In addition, the ideology in language, as mentioned by Darvin and Norton (2015), is an important property in constructing the understanding in linguistic exchanges. Darvin and Norton (2015) also highlighted that the learner of a language can be an individual that hold their identity by race, ethnicity, gender and social class as this identification also might be where the learner is allowed to speak or not as the power within the communication in the language learned occur. The learner might experience the power distance with the native speaker as the ideology of learning a new language create this barrier.

Furthermore, the capital also can influence the language learner as Bourdieu (1986) stated that there are three types of capital; economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Economic capital refers to the wealth, property or income, while cultural capital refers to the knowledge, educational purpose, appreciation of the culture, and social capital is all about the connection and power dynamic within the society. Darvin and Norton (2015) also added that each capital holds different value and the difference is determined by the ideology of the language learner as they embedded the ideology with the struggle they obtained within the period of language learning.

Thus, with the model consist of identity, ideology and capital, Darvin and Norton (2015) highlighted that the difference in power flow within the spaces contributed to the language learners' ability in various field to perform multiple identities as their own development shaped by a certain ideology. This ideology then rules the way they think and act but with the desire and imagination to invest or practicing the language, they can transform their life as the investment is actually made with a certain desire or benefits as they realised that the capital

they are in can move parallel with their language learning. Thus, these three components complement each other in learning the identity of language learner which is very crucial for this study to utilize this framework in learning about the English language exposure and its impacts on the learners' identities.

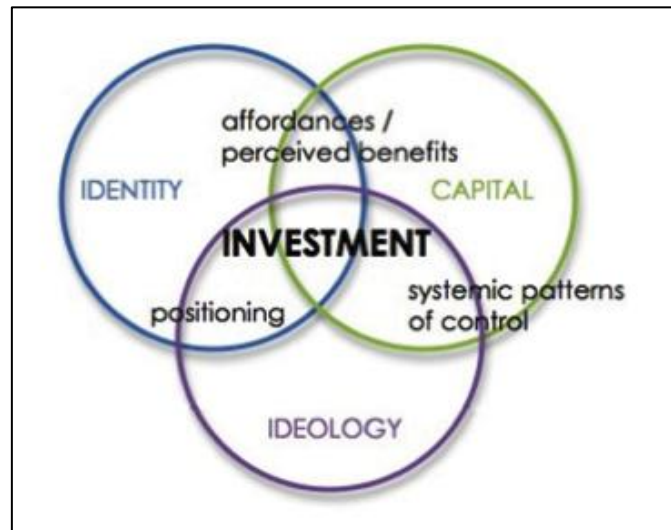


Figure 1: Darwin and Norton's Model of Investment

Source: Darwin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015)

Methodology

Research Design

This study contains the approach of qualitative method in order to understand and explore the exposure of English language on the students from East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and its impact on the construction of their social and identity. The participants described their own experiences based on the semi-structured interview questions. In addition, according to Lune and Berg (2009), there is a critical procedures done in qualitative research to probe the answers to the questions by scrutinising various social settings and the individuals that associated with such settings.

Instrument

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research practices several kinds of data collection such as (1) observations, (2) interviews, (3) documents and (4) audio-visual materials. In this study, a few instruments were used such as semi-structured interview, audio recording, field text note and observation which aligned with the practices in qualitative research.

Furthermore, the semi-structured interview adapted the interview's questions from Fei et al. (2012)'s research. The questions adapted from Fei et al. (2012) were based on their findings. Moreover, the questions were divided into main and minor questions. The main question was asked first before the minor questions as the minor questions served as prompts for the participants to construct their answers and encouraged them to share more of their insights. There were also other questions added during the interview as it was a semi-structured interview.

During the interview, observations were also made as field notes were taken throughout the interview. The notes taken were the major or important points that needed to be focused on. In addition, the interviews were also recorded. The recorded interviews were around 20 to 35 minutes per participants.

Participants

The sampling of the participants for this paper was a purposive sampling. 12 undergraduate students from University Malaya were selected. 6 of the participants are from East Coast (EC) of Peninsular Malaysia and another 6 from West Coast (WC) of Peninsular Malaysia. All of the participants were volunteers. In order to obtain a valid data, the participants must be born and grew up in East or West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia as well as receiving primary and secondary education in respective places. Moreover, no specific gender, faculty or race were taken into consideration.

In addition, to ensure a balanced knowledge on their English language proficiency, the participants should at least have obtained Band 4 in Malaysian University English Test (MUET). Finally, ethical procedures were also applied to the participants in collecting the data. The participants remained anonymous in this study and they signed the consent forms as an evidence of their willingness to participate and all of their data were solely for the purpose of the study.

Data Analysis

With the instruments utilised in this study, content analysis was used to analyse the data collected in the interview in initial stage. After that, the data was catalogued into themes as thematic analysis was done to the content of the data. The data was sorted out into a few recurring themes to see patterns or consistency in the interview of the participants. As what Boyatzis (1998) stated, thematic analysis actually gives more space for interpretation to grow especially in social science field as the social construction of meaning can be articulated based on the themes found in the data.

Findings and Discussion

In findings and discussions, two main focuses will be highlighted namely, (1) the exposure of English language and (2) the impacts of English language exposure. Each main focus will be divided into their respective themes as the findings had been studied and analysed.

The Exposure of English Language

After a thorough analysis was done to the data, a few recurring themes can be found in determining how English language was being exposed to the undergraduate students from East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. However, there are similarities and differences in the themes to determine the English language exposure when East Coast (EC) and West Coast (WC) are being compared where both of the students from EC and WC stated three factors, (1) family, (2) school or education and (3) community helped in the exposure of English language. However, only WC had two more medium of exposure to the English language; (4) individual and (5) official matters.

Family

The data from the participants from EC stated that their parents contributed to the English language exposure because of the constant code-mixing for daily activities in their life. They grew up knowing verbs and nouns in English instead of Malay. However, one of the participants also stated that her family did not use English at all at home and did not stress on the usage of it, making English language exposure within her family was non-existence. She also added that she solely depending on school and education to learn English.

On the other hand, the participants from WC stated that their English language exposure started at home as their parents stressed on the importance of that language as well as pushing to excel English language exam. In addition, one of the participants also stated that she uses English with her siblings at home and her mother also set a rule to speak English for a day whenever they could when she was younger. Moreover, another participant also stated that his family are always willing and open to use English language in their home because his parents prefer the children to speak more than one language. Their family even uses English to joke around themselves.

From both of the data collected on the participants from EC and WC, the roles of family are different in English language exposure. A contrast can be seen as WC's family played a more active role in English language exposure compared to EC's. As Holmes (2013) states, the relevance in interaction that have been identified can determine the patterns of code choice in the certain speech community. In related to this findings, the code choice chosen by each family domain from EC and WC are different as in family in WC used both code choice; Malay and English actively while a passive interaction to none of both languages in EC family.

School or Educational Background

In determining how English language were exposed to the participants, all six EC participants credited Mathematics and Science subjects as one reason of exposure to the English language. They stated that these subjects actually helped them to grasp English language. In addition, they also added that English class in school only conducted the lesson within the classroom and majorly only happened one-sided from the teacher to the students. For them, having English in Math and Science helped a lot in exposing them to more English.

On the other hand, there was an issue of bias raised by one of the participants from EC. She remembered that in Biology, Chemistry and Physics that were conducted in both Malay and English, the Malay students were told to use Malay while Chinese students needed to use English. For her, it was a discrimination because she did get the equal opportunity to learn those subjects in English.

In addition, another participant also stated that there was a huge difference in English classes being conducted when she was in primary and secondary schools compared to when she enrolled to pre-university of Form 6 after finishing compulsory five years secondary high school. For her, there was not much English on going when she was in primary and secondary school but a pressure was made when she entered Form 6 because she needed to sit for Malaysian University English Test for university. The teachers suddenly stressed on English when initially, all English lessons were not a major focus in schools.

In WC, one of the participant mentioned that the usage of English was both in and outside of classroom and the teacher was actively engaged with the students. The teacher also stressed on English for their future usage. In addition, the participants also credited Mathematics and Science in English for their language exposure.

Another participant also mentioned that in her school setting, all topics related to study used English. She also attended an English-based kindergarten. The same goes to other participants. It is obvious that the participants from WC were exposed to English language in early age compared to the students from Ec.

From all of these, although the same domain was connected to their English language exposure, differences can be found in EC and WC. One of them was, the students from EC were exposed to English language during primary school, compared to kindergarten for WC students. All of them, however, mentioned how much Mathematics and Sciences helped them to get closer to English language during their schooling.

Community

As Holmes and Wilson (2022) stated, the interaction that have been identified within the community is relevant in determining the patterns of code choice in the certain speech community. In this part, participants from EC stated that there was no English language in their community, which was dominated by one race that used Malay. One of the participants added that when she entered secondary school and interacted with classmates from another race, she then used English language. Thus, this make it clear that the code choice in EC community is Malay instead of English, making the exposure of English language in the community is limited.

However, in WC, all of the participants used English within their community. One participant added that she used English with her non-Malay neighbours since young. Another one said her community used both Malay and English because of the various races in her community. In addition, another participant added that his community used dominantly Malay but used English when interacting with another race in the community or outside of the community.

All of these showed a stark contrast on both communities in EC and WC as there was no exposure of English in EC community at all while WC was exposed to English in their community. In fact, a highlight can be made that a heterogonous community will have more English language exposure compared to homogenous community.

Individual Effort

This theme cannot be found on EC participants. WC participants were proud to say that their English language exposure was because of their own drive to learn the language because they were exposed to that language since young. They felt the need to master the language because it was important for them in various manner. In comparison to EC, none of this were mentioned by the participants as they were only associated English language as a subject at school.

Official Matter

This interesting theme was extracted by one of the participants from WC. She stated that since young, she used English language when she entered any government premises for any tasks related to government. She felt the need to use that language there as she was used to that since

young; following what her parents had been doing. This finding cannot be found in EC but the participants from EC only mentioned that there is the need to know English as government servants because they were expected to interact with many races during their service.

The Impacts of English Language Exposure

To study the impacts of English language exposure on the undergraduate students' social and cultural identity, Darwin and Norton's Theory of Investment (2015) had been used to scrutinise the data. Based on this framework, three main features are (1) identity, (2) ideology, and (3) capital are scrutinized. According to Darwin and Norton (2015), the difference in power flow within the spaces, the language learner in various field is able to perform multiple identities as their own development shaped by a certain ideology. In this study, the connection between all three focuses can elaborated deeper as all three of them, more or less, are intertwined with each other.

Identity

The impact of English language exposure towards the undergraduate students on their identity can be divided into two; their identity as student and their identity as Malaysian and/or their ethnicity. From these, both of EC and WC participants agreed that English language made them more open-minded as a student. For them, English language both test and boost their confidence level.

However, there are some differences that can be found on EC and WC participants. EC participants felt left behind as a student without English language because for them, English language gave more opportunity for them to learn more and explore the world. In addition, EC participants considered being exposed to English language was equal to break free from any stereotypes embedded in their identity before being assimilated with English language. On the other hand, they also considered that fluency in English could not be reflected via exam or test result because it was solely on the paper and did not apply to real world. For their identity in the aspect of nationality and race, they incorporated the Malay identity with speaking Malay. Their idea of being Malay required you to speak Malay. Moreover, even without English, they considered their local dialect reflected their community because for them, English was not needed in their community. Thus, EC participants were more rooted on their identity as they put a stress on being Malay and speaking Malay language. Plus, they also stressed on their usage of dialectal languages that are widely used in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia as these dialects might be neglected due to the exposure of English language. They also added that by stressing too much on English language, their dialectal language might be forgotten behind as English language and standard Malay language dominate their daily life.

In contrast, WC participants and their identity as a student made them felt the importance of having English language to establish friendship among their peers and classmates. They also added that with English, competitive traits were born and create a healthy relationship in classroom. For them, there were no such thing in Malay context. As for the identity for the nationality and race, WC participants said English was important but Malay still needed to reflect their identity as Malaysian. In addition, as a Malaysian, English accommodated a lot of races and within the community, English was supposed to be use moderately to ensure Malay language was not going to be eliminated. In short, they considered each language represented their identity as multiracial Malaysian.

From all of these, both EC and WC have similarities and differences in defining their social and cultural identity because their expressions of identity are different.

Ideology

With English, the ideology associated with it diverse from EC and WC participants' perspective. Both of them displayed similarities and differences in ideologies assimilated with English language. The similarities that can be discovered were, both EC and WC participants agreed that English broaden their view and offered more knowledge to them. An example given by them was, a broad search result could be obtained by using English language instead of their mother tongue. In addition, the participants acknowledged that the information offered in English language was more reliable compared to their mother tongue. Furthermore, English was regarded as a communication tool. The participants added that with English as communication tool, it was easier for them to make friends with international students. On the other hand, English was also labelled as a language of higher status. By speaking the language, the perception of other will lean towards positive instead of negative.

In comparison, their ideology on English language also differs because EC participants viewed English language as a threat to their mother tongue. For them, speaking mother tongue was important to establish solidarity. However, WC participants pointed that English language was good but not as a dominant language because if it was dominant, national language will be threatened. Besides, EC participants also added, with English language, is equivalent to be able to move forward, be the first in classes, confidence level, point of arrogance and a measure for intelligence level. Parallel to that, WC's ideology on English language was, the language is a need in higher education, boundless, and give positive impression. In addition, with the usage of English language, they receive nicer treatment from people, believe that it is a prestigious language, and cater to their daily interaction and extremely important in certain context and environment. From all of these, it was obvious that EC and WC participants have different ideologies on English language which somehow shaped their social and cultural perspectives and identities.

Capital

For capital, EC and WC participants also demonstrated both similarities and differences. The similarities are how the English language is perceived as a demand by employer in working industries. In addition, with English, a broad job opportunity is available for them. Furthermore, English language was also a demand tourism industry because it is a communication tool to communicate with the tourist.

In comparison to the similarities found in the data, the differences are also found. EC participants mentioned that with migration for work happened, more young people moved to WC, leaving old people at EC. Thus, this resulted in English language is not being used because the major user of English is the younger generation and EC's younger generation will be using more English when they are in WC and none is being used when they went back home. Hence, migration for work did give an impact to the capital. In addition, to establish the capital in the government sector, English is needed to interact with another races while conducting any government-related task. Furthermore, EC participants believed that English will give them a social mobility in life as more resources are available in English language and limited in Malay. On the other hand, WC participants stated that as a consumer, usage of English guaranteed them a nicer service when it came to shopping purpose. They also needed English for travelling

purpose. Lastly, they agreed that the root of the capital, education for future's job opportunity, required them to master English language.

From all of these, English language did give an impact to the capital, either individually or via organisation because English served as a tool to conduct a business or transaction among the people involved.

Exposure and Impacts of English Language

With two different regions, East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia, being studied on English language exposure and the impacts on undergraduate students' social and cultural identity, a lot of can be derived out from the findings. One, there are similarities and differences in how English language was being exposed to the participants in each region. The similarities, however, only occurred on the surface level because with deeper analysis, a lot of differences can be found. Family, school or education, and community might be the similarities in domains but when a deeper analysis was done, each of them contained different content and context on how English language was being exposed. This also include the focuses of individuality and official matter that only can be found on the data by WC participants, which were not found in EC at all.

Secondly, after the exposure of English language was scrutinised, the impact can be seen based on their identity, ideology and capital. All three of them are interconnected either directly or indirectly because all three of them determined how the participants perceived their social and cultural identity as their identities tied together the ideologies and capitals as these three become the main focuses This also brings highlight that the students held a few identities within them; their identity as a student, a Malaysian and their race. Another unique identity that can be found is their identity tied to the states they were born and this unique trait only can be found on EC participants.

All of these disclosed the existence of gap in education between two social environments; EC and WC, as this gap highlights the difference in education and ideologies. In addition, the findings showed that a homogenous community prefer their mother tongue or local dialect as the interaction with another race resulted in the usage of another language. This also brings into concern that the idea of solidarity is different in each social context as EC's definition of solidarity is all races speak the local dialect; because they are proud of it, while WC's definition of solidarity is by using languages that can accommodate every race within the community. In conclusion, these two regions, despite being in the same country, shaped different identity, culture and ideology within their social environments.

Limitations, Recommendations, Contributions and Conclusion

This study was conducted with a small sample size, which made this impossible to generalise the findings to represent each region of East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. In addition, there were some challenges in selecting the participants of this study because some students did not attend secondary school within their state or community; some of them went to secondary school far away from home, thus, the selection of participants required a lot of time to make sure all the participants had all the characteristics needed.

On the other hand, this study did not focus on certain race, gender or states; only focusing on East Coast and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia's states in general. For future studies, these should be taken into consideration as to enrich the findings. The same thing also can be said to the social environments or geographical settings as only two were selected; East and West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Further research should add other region as well including West Malaysia because their diversity on languages, dialects and races were more challenging compared to East Malaysia, especially in studying the exposure of English language.

As a personal reflection on the contributions made by this study, there are more spaces that needed to be filled in as this study revealed that geographical differences build barrier in English language exposure. Although all Malaysians have the access to the same education system, this study exposed that there is a visible gap on the education received especially in English language learning. This also highlighted the reality of the education gap experienced by people from different regions and states in Malaysia. In addition, the differences in the development for each state in Malaysia also influenced the usage and exposure of English language which resulting in the imbalance in development, social and cultural identity. From these, this study gives a new insight on the reality of what is happening within our own nation without we realised.

Thus, by citing Agha (2007), in every human society, certain employments of language make a distinct kinds of social impacts to indicate a person relationship to the persons spoken to or spoken about, or the presentation of themselves as in belonging to some identified social group, class, occupation or other classification of personhood. Finally, this study proves that the exposure and impacts of the English language traverse beyond the surface level as they vastly influence an individual. Although Malaysian embrace their identity as Malaysian with Malaysian value and understand the important of national language, the micro scrutiny revealed more details due to the unique multicultural, multi-language, and multi-identities of Malaysian as English language that had been exposed to the individuals from various sources actually impacting their own identity; be it the identity as a student and as a Malaysian. This study also found a unique finding which is the exposure of English language also influenced the identity of individuals from the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia due to the unique background of the states in the East Coast. The exposure of English language had subtly became a threat to the local dialects of the East Coast's states. Thus, a detailed study should be done in the future to scrutinize this.

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