GENDER DISSONANCE IN LANGUAGE ATTITUDES: A CASE OF HONG KONG

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This study examines gender effects in attitudes towards the three major languages of English, Cantonese, and Putonghua in the multilingual society of Hong Kong. It focuses on analyzing gender effects in individual components and factored dimensions of language attitudes. 635 secondary students from 17 schools across Hong Kong were randomly selected to participate in the study. They were administered a written questionnaire and a listening Matched-Guise Test. The findings indicate significant gender effects in the attitudes held by the students towards the different languages in different components and dimensions of attitude. The results show that significant and rather complex gender effects exist in attitudes towards the language varieties used in the multilingual society of Hong Kong, and points to many possible implications and interpretations. For example, it was found that students of both genders affectively preferred male speakers in Cantonese and female speakers in English and Putonghua. In addition, it was found that cognitively, female students were overall more favourable to the foreign languages of English and Putonghua as compared to male students, but these differences in gender preferences did not show up affectively.

**Keywords:** Gender effect, Affective attitudes, Cognitive attitudes, Factored dimensions, Inherent community language.

**INTRODUCTION**

Gender differences in language use and language attitudes have been repeatedly witnessed across communities and societies (e.g. Sharp, Thomas, Price, Francis & Davies, 1973; Powell & Batters, 1985; Harvey, 1994; Gal, 1978, 1998; Kobayashi, 2002; Bilaniuk, 2003; Innes, 2006; Lai, 2007; Wang & Ladegaard, 2008), positioning gender as an important issue in investigating and discussing attitudes and language/variety choice in bilingual or multilingual contexts such as Hong Kong. The goal of this study is to analyze the effect of gender in several conceptual dimensions and components of language attitudes towards three languages – Cantonese, English, and Putonghua – based on data collected from secondary school students in Hong Kong. Through such empirical analysis, it will try to describe the structure of gender effects in language attitudes in the context of multilingualism in Hong Kong. More specifically, this study attempts to answer empirically the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of secondary school students in Hong Kong towards the three languages of Cantonese, Putonghua, and English? How is gender reflected in these attitudes?
2. Is gender reflected in the different components (affective and cognitive) of language attitudes?
3. Is gender reflected in the factored dimensions of language attitudes?

As gender differences in language attitudes are unlikely to be biological or maturational, some researchers have presumed that they are located in the socio-cultural behaviors of the two genders (Baker, 1992:42). Thus, the detailed gender differences from this study contribute to understanding the complex social psychological perspectives of gender in Hong Kong.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Components of attitude

Attitude, in its simplest definition, refers to a reaction towards an object that can be favourable, unfavourable, or in between. Studies of attitude tend to divide attitude into cognitive, affective, and conative (or readiness for action of) components and then examine each individually (e.g. Gardner, 1985:8; Baker, 1992:12-13). This study also adopts this framework.

Gardner (1985:8) explains that “The cognitive component refers to the individual’s belief structure, the affective to emotional reactions, and the conative to the tendency to behave towards the attitude object”. Thus, the cognitive component refers to one’s subjective beliefs about the world, an example being the belief that English is useful in international trade. The affective component refers to one’s feelings and emotions, an example being the feeling that a particular language is sophisticated or beautiful. The conative component refers to a readiness for action, such as the choice and willingness to communicate in a specific language when the speaker can use other languages.

One of the most troubling and interesting aspects of attitude research to mention is that these three components can and do oppose each other in the same individual (e.g. Wicker, 1969; Hanson, 1980; Baker, 1992; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Edwards, 1994). Baker (1992:12) argues, for example, that the cognitive and affective components of attitude may not always be in harmony. For example, a person may hold favourable cognitive beliefs to Irish language education, but at the same time that same person may have negative affective feelings about such education. Eagly & Chaiken (1993) also explain that a person with certain beliefs may not reveal those beliefs through emotional responses or open behaviour. Similarly, one may engage in open behaviour without necessarily having an emotional affective attitude attached to the act. One may interpret such occurrences of inconsistency across the attitude components in a variety of ways, but the most simple of which is to say that the individual is “ambivalent” towards the issue at hand. In this regard, Festinger (1957) proposes the theory of “cognitive dissonance” as a driving force between cognitive, affective, and conative alignment. That is, in states of conflict, people will try to change one of the three components of attitude to be in harmony with the others.

By way of survey, this study only examines the cognitive and affective components of attitude. The conative component, though highly interesting, is not emphasized due to methodological constraints. Specifically, this study adopts this tripartite framework of attitude to examine the specific case of language attitudes.
Dimensions of language attitudes

In addition to the attitude component separation into affective and cognitive attitudes, the response data from this study are also grouped into more coherent content dimensions via manual and automatic factor analysis.

This procedure allows easier and more intuitive interpretation of results. The interpretation comes from categorizing and labelling the attitude content dimensions appropriately. Lambert et al. (1966) and Lambert (1967) were the early studies that measured language attitudes using fifteen or eighteen items and grouped these items into three logically distinct content dimensions and labelled the dimensions personal integrity, personal competence, and social-attractiveness. That is, these dimensions were considered separable aspects of attitude content. The of personal integrity dimension represented items such as kind, gentle, trustworthy, and considerate. The personal competence dimension represented items such as intelligent, self-confident, and wise. The social attractiveness dimension represented items such as amusing, pleasant, friendly, interesting, good disposition, and good looking.

A number of other scales have been used in studies since Lambert et al. (1966)’s study, and have yielded different dimension labels depending on the foci of the studies. The data from this study appear to naturally correspond to at least two of the original dimensions of Lambert et al. (1966)’s and Lambert (1967)’s model and thus the results will be interpreted along the same lines.

Language attitudes and language communities

The general conception is that language attitude is an attitude towards the language community and the world view shared by those in the particular language community. Thus, attitude towards a language reflects attitude towards the people represented by that language as opposed to the language itself. Studies, for example, have shown that people cannot differentiate unfamiliar languages as favourable or unfavourable in the absence of any social context or predisposition; in contrast, familiar languages with previous social exposure do result in people being able to make favourable or unfavourable distinctions (Edwards, 1982: 21). Thus, it can be inferred that there is nothing inherent in a language to have a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards. Most researchers agree that, at least cognitively, language attitude is really a manifestation of stereotypes about a language community. “Linguistic forms, varieties and styles can set off beliefs about a speaker, their group membership, and can lead to assumptions about attributes of those members” (Garrett et al., 2003: 3).

However, in recent years, the concept of the language community has been challenged by some applied linguists. For example, along with the global spread of English, the ownership of English does not necessarily rest with a specific well-defined community of speakers (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009: 2-3). Indeed, after 155 years of British colonial rule, the boundary of language communities in Hong Kong is not always clear. Sometimes it is not easy to identify a specific target reference group of speakers in the multilingual context of Hong Kong. Therefore, it seems questionable whether attitudes to the three main languages of Hong Kong are equal to attitudes towards their communities. On a practical level, all three languages can be used to some extent by large portions of the Hong Kong population. It is important to keep in mind that this study is conducted under circumstances where ownership of a language is less closely related to an identifiable language community.
Past studies of language attitudes and gender

Due to the complexity and different components of attitude, past studies do not paint an overall coherent conclusion with regards to gender and language attitude because the studies are conducted based on different structural conceptions. Nonetheless, some significant insights from past studies are reviewed.

A large body of literature suggests that women prefer so-called “High” languages, which refer to languages with more social prestige. This may be linked to the community and social interaction roles that many societies assign to women. It has been proposed that the success of women in many societies is based more on symbolic community factors than on material goods or skills. Thus, women seek symbolic membership in high status communities via language (Trudgill, 1974; Eckert, 1989, 1990, 1998; Bilaniuk, 2003).

Evidence for this comes from Gal (1978), which describes the German-Hungarian language situation in Austria, where young peasant women were leading a shift from Hungarian to German, the High language. Gal (1978) believed that Hungarian was associated with a Hungarian peasant lifestyle that women were trying to distance themselves from by moving up into higher levels of status, whereas men preferred the independence of a farming career. In a follow-up study, Gal (1979) discovered that women were more attracted to the non-local language because it gave them better opportunities for social advancement. Thus, in terms of language attitudes, women “favour prestige norms while males vernacular norms” (Milroy & Milroy, 1998:55).

Bilaniuk (2003) concluded in a study in Ukraine that had similar results. Women had more positive attitudes than men toward English, which is the High language and the result is consistent with Gal’s findings that women are more attracted to a non-local language because it gives them greater opportunities for social advancement. One further example is Wang & Ladegaard’s (2008) study of language attitudes and gender in China focusing on Guangzhou secondary school students’ language attitudes towards Putonghua and Cantonese. In that study, females seemed to be leading a gradual change towards increased use of Putonghua, which is the High language. This again supports the trend reported in numerous sociolinguistic studies of a female preferential attitude towards the prestigious standard variety of a language.

However, the female preference for High status languages is not universal if measured on factors such as language fluency, and some studies have discovered that, in bilingual post-colonial societies or societies with diglossia, men are more likely to be fluent than women in the former colonial language or the high status language, whereas women are more likely to be monolingual in the local or low status language. This may suggest latent female preferences to acquire and use the low status language due to a higher integrative attitude possessed by females towards their local community. For example, Sharp et al. (1973) studied attitudes towards Welsh and English among schoolchildren in Wales and found that girls had more favourable attitudes towards Welsh than boys did. Alternatively, the reason may be based much more on circumstances. Harvey (1994) investigated a local population in Peru, which had once been colonized by Spain. He discovered that while the majority of men were fully fluent in Spanish, almost half of the women were monolingual in Quechua, the local language. This difference may be due to the different exposure levels to the high status language of Spanish – women were less likely than men to be educated, or had less contact with Spanish for career purposes. A flaw in using exhibited competence in a language as a measure of attitude is that the measure cannot separate the attitude effect and the circumstance effect.
So far, the discussion has been on the differences in attitude towards language by people of different genders. There is also the effect of the gender of the *speaker* of a language on language attitudes when the language is heard. As a mark of social identity, gender in a speaker conveys information about the social background of the speaker. Lambert (1967) discussed a study by one of his students on Canadians’ views of French and English in Montreal that concluded that the same English-Canadian listeners tended to evaluate female speakers more favorably when speaking French but male speakers more favorably when speaking English. The gender of the *listeners* had effects on the sizes of the preferences, but not the directions. Female listeners did not show as much difference in opinion as male listeners did on the gender differences of the speakers. English, in this case, was the High language and thus females were rated lower when speaking the High language by both female and male listeners.

**Study of language attitudes and gender in Hong Kong**

Hong Kong is linguistically complex with three principal languages: English, Cantonese (a dialect of Chinese), and *Putonghua* (the modern standard variety of Chinese). Up to 95% of the population of Hong Kong regard themselves as “Chinese” (Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, 2006) and the community of Hong Kong, as a whole, is typically seen as a predominantly “Cantonese-speaking community” (Bolton & Luke, 1999). However, during the period of British colonial rule, the English language had the status of the official language of government, the official language of law, and was *de facto* the most widely-used medium of secondary and university education. The functions of English “included its use as an official language, its use in education, its use in industry, trade, business, finance, and communications” (Bolton, 2000). In the early 1990s, due to the imminent transition of sovereignty, Chinese (referring to Cantonese in most cases in Hong Kong) gradually increased in importance in political and economical situations in Hong Kong. At the same time, the increasing use and importance of *Putonghua* that accompanied the transition have increased the complexity of the linguistic ecology of Hong Kong.

After the handover of sovereignty in 1997, Hong Kong instituted a formal language policy of “bi-literacy and tri-lingualism”. Tri-lingualism refers to English, Cantonese, and Putonghua, whereas bi-literacy refers to Chinese and English, reflecting the fact that Cantonese and *Putonghua* have essentially the same written form. It was said that this policy was implemented in order to reflect better the political situation and the future direction of Hong Kong (Tung, 1999, 2000, 2003). Since then, the policy of “bi-literacy and tri-lingualism” has taken effect in schools. It is clear that this language policy has brought new language prospects, in which English, Cantonese, and Putonghua are to find a new equilibrium with one another.

However, even though “tri-lingualism” refers to each of the three languages equally, the languages are not linguistically equal for Hong Kong people, particularly for school students. For most, Cantonese is the inherent community language or “mother-tongue”, while English and Putonghua are languages that need to be learned.

Both practical government policy and cultural adoption of languages are reflections of language attitudes in the population. There has been interest in language attitudes in Hong Kong over the past 30 years along with the rapid changes the region has seen. Some more studies

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1 Cantonese and Putonghua are two of the varieties of Chinese and are not always thought of as different languages when compared to English. However, the term “language” used throughout this paper equally indicates English, Cantonese, or Putonghua as it is commonly used in Hong Kong, such as with respect to the “bi-literary and trilingualism” concept. This paper uses the term “language” in this broad sense for simplification.
Generally, studies conducted before 1997 focused only on the attitudes of secondary and tertiary students towards English and Cantonese, while closer to and after 1997, studies included attitudes towards Putonghua in their research objectives. This may be representative of the language attitudes of the researchers themselves. The most consistent findings of these studies show a high regard for English as a pragmatic and instrumental language and for Cantonese as a source of identity and community. The attitudes towards Putonghua appear complicated. Several studies (e.g. Boyle, 2000; Pierson, 1992; Lai, 2005) found that Putonghua tended to be rated low both integratively and instrumentally compared to English and Cantonese even after 1997. However, nobody can ignore the increasing influence of Putonghua in Hong Kong in view of the sovereignty handover of 1997. Some research (e.g. Lung, 1996; Evans et al, 1998) has found that Putonghua has been acquiring more instrumental value than Cantonese and is even becoming a high status language alongside English.

Few studies in Hong Kong have considered gender differences in language attitudes. Lung (1996) may be the only one to be found pre-1997, and Lai (2007) may be the only one to be found post-1997 in this field. Both studies lend support to the sociolinguistic findings on gender differences in language attitudes in general. Lung (1996)’s study investigated language attitudes in Hong Kong during the pre-97 political transition with 103 subjects from different social and occupational backgrounds who participated in a combination of a matched-guise test (MGT) and an interview. Findings of the study indicated women’s general preference and higher solidarity ratings for the prestige language of the society, in this case, Mandarin/Putonghua. Lai (2007), in a study of 1048 secondary school students’ attitudes towards the three languages, obtained similar findings to those of Lung (1996) in that the female respondents in the study held consistently more positive attitudes towards the non-native languages, while the male respondents were inclined more positively to the vernacular language.

As seen, little attention on language attitudes in Hong Kong has been paid to gender, and the subject has been severely underserved by a lack of research-based understanding of the nature of the gender effect in attitudes towards the languages learned and used in Hong Kong. Gender differences in language attitudes in Hong Kong should be explored in their own right, and studies in this field will help provide a better picture of language practice as embodied in language attitudes so as to address issues such as language education.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study collected data from participants via a written questionnaire for cognitive attitude responses and a listening Matched-Guise Test (MGT) for affective attitude responses. Thereafter, the responses were factored into dimensions and the effects of gender were analyzed via ANOVA methods.

**Participants**

A total of 17 secondary schools yielding 635 students (297 males; 314 females; 24 with missing gender data) ultimately participated in the study. The students were from Secondary 3, and were 14 to 15 years old.
The 17 secondary schools were randomly selected from an official list of local Hong Kong day schools. Each school then again randomly selected a class of students to participate in the study subject only to administrative availability.

**Instrument**

Cognitive language attitudes are commonly measured via explicit questionnaires and affective language attitudes are commonly measured via the Match-Guise Test (Lambert, Frankel, and Tucker, 1966; Lambert 1967; Garrett, Couplan and Williams, 2003; Giles and Billings 2004).

This study used a written questionnaire to elicit participants’ cognitive attitudes and a listening Matched-Guise Test to elicit participants’ affective attitudes. Both were administered in one session and the written research instrument was done in Chinese.

**Written questionnaire**

The written part was designed to obtain a measure of belief or *cognitive* language attitude. As such, one can simply ask the participant about such held attitudes and the cognitive portion was intended to be done entirely as a written exercise. The written questionnaire asked six explicit language attitude questions about each of the three languages: English, Cantonese, and Putonghua. The questions were:

1. How much do you like the language?
2. How much will the language help your future studies?
3. How much will the language help your future career?
4. How highly is the language regarded in Hong Kong?
5. How much do you wish to master the language?
6. How much do you like the speakers of the language?

Participants were asked to provide responses to each question on a 4-point scale, with 4 indicating “very much”, 3 indicating “quite”; 2 indicating “not much”, and 1 indicating “not at all”.

The six questions were mainly borrowed from previous studies (e.g., Lai 2005) and modified accordingly. They included general attitudes toward the three languages (Question 1), instrumental or usefulness attitudes (Questions 2 and 3), attitudes in the context of Hong Kong society (Question 4), personal motivation (Question 5), and personal opinions concerning the speakers of the different languages (Question 6).

**Listening Questionnaire (MGT)**

The listening questionnaire (MGT) was used to obtain a measure of *affective* language attitude, because affective attitudes are emotional responses in response to contact to a language.

Participants were told to listen to a tape recording of 12 voices relating the same 35-second complaint about getting stuck in a traffic jam during morning rush hour in front of a tunnel in Hong Kong. The participants were told to imagine they were listening to the story on the telephone and were then asked to judge different characteristics of the speaker based on any information they could obtain from the voices. After each voice, the students answered the
questionnaire section corresponding to that voice. The voices were numbered 1 to 12 on the questionnaire.

While listening to the recorded material, students were asked to rate the speaker on 22 character traits, which included (“I think the speaker is…”): Intelligent, of High Social Status, Comely, Fair, Self-Confident, Reliable, Likeable, Open-Minded, Charismatic, Empathic, Religious, Compatible, Responsible, Sincere, Competent, Polite, of High Leadership, Modest, Sophisticated, Diligent, Kind, Wealthy.

The listening questionnaire adopted a 4-point Likert rating scale: 4 indicating “strongly agree”; 3 indicating “agree”; 2 indicating “disagree”, and 1 indicating “strongly disagree”.

The character traits used in this test were borrowed from previous studies (e.g. Feifel, 1994; Lambert, Giles and Picard, 1975; Carranza and Ryan, 1975; Woolard, 1989). To make sure students had a commonly accepted understanding of the traits, straightforward words in Chinese (as the questionnaire was presented in Chinese) were used in the questionnaire.

**Participant background information**

As part of the study, background information on the students was also collected, including gender information.

**DATA SUMMARY AND RESULTS**

**Data Summary**

The raw data for the project involved 635 questionnaires collected from the students. Of the 635 questionnaires received, 16 were handed in without any responses and 376 of were completed with valid responses to all questions. The rest of the questionnaires contained answers to some of the questions, but not all. For any particular question, the number of valid responses ranged from 504 to 611.

Overall, the response rate can be considered excellent, given that 97.48% of the participants were responsive and 59.21% responded fully. Furthermore, any individual item on the questionnaire had a response rate of between 79.37% and 95.91%.

The cognitive attitude data are summarized as the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Valid N (of 635)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much do you like Putonghua?</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>0.0356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you like Cantonese?</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>0.0270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you like English?</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>0.0354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much will Putonghua help your future studies?</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>0.0338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much will Cantonese help your future studies?</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>0.0319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much will English help your future studies?</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.488</td>
<td>0.0201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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How much will Putonghua help your future career?  588 3.54 .710 0.0293
How much will Cantonese help your future career?  588 3.21 .732 0.0302
How much will English help your future career?  591 3.90 .377 0.0155
How highly is Putonghua regarded in Hong Kong? 592 2.92 .824 0.0339
How highly is Cantonese regarded in Hong Kong? 591 3.09 .803 0.0330
How highly is English regarded in Hong Kong? 593 3.87 .401 0.0165
How much do you wish to master Putonghua?  592 3.33 .793 0.0326
How much do you wish to master Cantonese? 591 3.60 .645 0.0265
How much do you wish to master English? 589 3.48 .755 0.0311
How much do you like speakers of Putonghua?  591 2.93 .884 0.0364
How much do you like speakers of Cantonese? 590 3.52 .624 0.0257
How much do you like speakers of English? 590 3.34 .803 0.0331

The data above show a mean that is above 3.0 for most of the responses, with standard deviation that can also vary depending on the question. The standard errors are rather low.

The affective attitude data are summarized next as the table below. In this case, each student responded to 12 voices, so the dataset is larger.

Table 2: Affective data summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Valid N (of 7620)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>6377</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>0.0108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Status</td>
<td>6409</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>.899</td>
<td>0.0112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comeliness</td>
<td>6401</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.957</td>
<td>0.0120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>6181</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>.831</td>
<td>0.0106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>6348</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.879</td>
<td>0.0110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>6308</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.868</td>
<td>0.0109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likeability</td>
<td>6299</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>0.0115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-Mindedness</td>
<td>6233</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>.896</td>
<td>0.0113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charisma</td>
<td>6243</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>.881</td>
<td>0.0112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>6382</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.899</td>
<td>0.0113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiousness</td>
<td>6050</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>.918</td>
<td>0.0118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>6519</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.917</td>
<td>0.0114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>6390</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.887</td>
<td>0.0111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincerity</td>
<td>6351</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.902</td>
<td>0.0113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>6261</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>0.0113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness</td>
<td>6748</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.947</td>
<td>0.0115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can be seen that the average response to all variables was between 2.00 and 3.00 – between “Agree” and “Disagree”, with low standard errors and a standard deviation of around 0.9. This indicates a rather balanced range of responses between “agree” and “disagree”.

RESULTS

The results are presented visually using error charts. ANOVA results are included in the appendix to numerically corroborate the results. It is important to note that, due to the design of the questionnaire and the factor treatment, the results are best interpreted in relative and not absolute terms.

Part One: Cognitive response by written questionnaire

(a) General results

In general, the cognitive responses indicate that Putonghua is rated lowest and English rated highest. Cantonese is rated in between Putonghua and English, as shown above.
It can be seen from the gender breakdown above that female students rated English and Putonghua relatively higher than male students did, but there is no gender effect with respect to Cantonese.

(b) Factored results

The written questionnaire asked students explicit questions regarding Cantonese, English, and Putonghua. These concerned cognitive attitudes towards each language. The explicit questions of this questionnaire could be manually grouped into more fundamental dimensions. There were 6 questions asked for each language, and a visual inspection of the data as well as a qualitative examination of the questions reveal that three dimensions were apparent.

Students tended to provide similar answers to questions that related to integrative attitudes: “How much do you like the following languages”, “How much do you wish to master the following languages”, and “How much do you like speakers of the following languages”. The answers to all three questions ranked the languages Cantonese, English, and Putonghua from high to low. The responses to these questions can be averaged and, in line with Lambert et al. (1966), Lambert (1967), Gardner (1985) and Feifel (1994), can be labeled the cognitive integrity dimension.

Another group of questions were related to instrumental attitudes towards the languages. Students tended to answer the following questions similarly: “How much will the following languages help your future studies” and “How much will the following languages help your future career”. The rankings to these questions were English, Putonghua, and Cantonese, from high to low. The responses to these questions can be averaged and, also referring to Lambert et al. (1966), Lambert (1967), Gardner (1985) and Feifel (1994), can be labeled the cognitive competence dimension.
The remaining question that did not fall into the patterns observed for integrative and instrumental attitudes was the general question: “How highly are the following languages regarded in Hong Kong”. The rankings for this question were English, Cantonese, and Putonghua, from high to low. This question was taken as a separate case for further analysis and was called the cognitive esteem dimension as the question referred to the general level of regard for a language in society.

**Cognitive Integrity**

The general ranking can be shown above as Cantonese, English, Putonghua from high to low.

The gender breakdown shows that females had higher English and Putonghua cognitive integrity than males did.
The general ranking can be shown above that the ranking is English, Putonghua, and Cantonese.

The gender breakdown above for cognitive competence reveals that females rated Putonghua higher than males did. In fact, females rated Putonghua higher than Cantonese but males rated Putonghua at the same level as Cantonese.
Cognitive Esteem

The general ranking can be shown above for cognitive esteem.

The gender breakdown for cognitive esteem above shows that males rated Cantonese higher than females and females rated Putonghua higher than males.
Part Two: Affective response by listening questionnaire

(a) General results

The results of the listening questionnaire ranked the languages English, Putonghua, and Cantonese. However, the difference between Putonghua and Cantonese is not statistically significant at the 5% level.

In the case of affective overall attitudes, the student gender breakdown above shows that student gender does not play a role according to the data.
However, speaker gender does play a significant role. It is clear that female speakers are preferred in English and Putonghua whereas male speakers are preferred in Cantonese.

The result of speaker gender is not affected by student gender.
(b) Factored results

The original dataset contained 22 items from the listening exercise. Analysis could be performed for each one of these items or the items could be grouped using factor analysis. Unlike the cognitive items, it may not be completely clear how the 22 items should be grouped or how many groups there should be. Therefore, computational factor analysis was run to determine if these 22 variables could be suitably reduced or attributed to fewer factors. The result from the analysis provided a positive answer, and the grouped items represent a rather distinct structure.

The results show the original 22 variables to be broadly categorized into three fundamental groups or dimensions. In other words, the 22 items yield three dimensional factors of evaluation, which accounted for about 55.5% of the variance in subjects’ ratings of how the speaker “sounded” to them. The explained variance is comparable to Feifel (1994), and can be considered very high, as 22 items were reduced to only 3 major dimensions. The three dimensions from factoring the affective responses can be shown as the Table 3 below.

Table 3. Factor analysis of affective attitudes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Integrity</th>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Attractiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politeness</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincerity</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modesty</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophistication</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-Mindedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.725</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comeliness   .669  
Likeability   .636  
Charisma   .604  

Factor analysis of affective attitudes (correlations above 0.6) Rotated Component Matrix

The first dimension was most correlated with the original items of *politeness*, *sincerity*, *compatibility*, *kindness*, *modesty*, *sophistication*, *responsibility*, and *empathy*. These items bear similarity to integrative attitudes from previous literature, and this dimension is thus labelled the *affective integrity* dimension.

The second dimension was most correlated with the original items of *social status*, *leadership*, *self-confidence*, *wealth*, *competence*, and *intelligence*. These items bear similarity to instrumental attitudes and so this dimension is labelled the *affective competence* dimension.

The third dimension was most correlated with the original items of *open-mindedness*, *comeliness*, *likeability*, and *charisma*. This is a unique dimension that best appears to be reflective of an *affective attractiveness* dimension.

The factor analysis process loses the original scale, but relative rankings can now be analyzed in the three factored dimensions and gender effects can also be analyzed.

**Affective Integrity**

![Bar chart showing mean affective integrity across languages.](image)

The integrity dimension shows no statistically significant differences across the three languages.
The breakdown by gender also does not reveal any differences by student gender.

Speaker gender, however, does show a gender effect. Most notably, male speakers are higher than female speakers in Cantonese. Male speakers are lower than female speakers in English and Putonghua.
Further breakdown by gender of speaker reveals that male speakers are preferred in Cantonese and female speakers are preferred in English in general, although female students do not appear to differentiate between male and female speakers of Putonghua.

Affective Competence

The overall ranking on the competence dimension is English, Putonghua, and Cantonese from high to low.
The gender of the student does not indicate any noticeable gender effect in each language. However, female students rated Putonghua above Cantonese but male students rated Putonghua at the same level as Cantonese.

The gender of the speaker clearly indicates that male speakers are rated higher than female speakers in all languages.
Further breakdown by gender of speaker as well as by gender of student repeats previous general results.

**Affective Attractive**

The affective attractive dimension ranked the languages English, Cantonese, and Putonghua from high to low. The difference between Cantonese and Putonghua is barely statistically significant.
Student gender breakdowns show significant higher preference for Cantonese and Putonghua for male students than female students.
Gender of speaker effects show females higher than males for all languages.

Breakdown by gender for both student and speaker repeat previous results.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Gender in language attitude is a complex mental object. The results from the study relate to the two main components of cognitive and affective language attitudes associated with gender differences. The written questionnaire was designed to measure students’ (evaluators’) cognitive attitudes, which involved beliefs that the students consciously held, and the relations between these beliefs and the students’ gender. The listening portion was designed to measure affective attitude. The basis for the listening portion was that hearing speakers of a particular language elicits feelings towards that language, which involved the relations between the feelings and the speakers’ gender, as well as relations between the feelings and the listeners’ (students’) gender.

The major finding of the study was a dissonant gender difference between cognitive and affective attitudes, as well as between factored dimensions of attitudes. Then, the study found that there also was a dissonant gender effect between attitudes towards speakers and attitudes held by listeners.

It was revealed that affectively, both males and females rated the male speakers speaking Cantonese significantly more favourably than the female speakers speaking Cantonese, and cognitively, males held more positive attitudes towards Cantonese than did females, indicating that while both genders were showing the same preference in male speakers’ Cantonese guises rather than other languages, males also favour Cantonese more than did females. This result could be interpreted as a reflection of a stereotype of males as relatively representative of their own cultural community, a view shared by many ethnic groups in the world, and thus males using the inherent community language rather than females can be perceived to be better.
embodiments of the community values. The following is relevant discussion about the findings of the study.

**Differences in listeners’ affective attitudes towards speakers’ gender**

The study found that, from the speaker’s gender perspective overall, males are preferred when speaking Cantonese, but females are preferred speaking English and Putonghua. Furthermore, from speaker’s gender perspective, males are preferred in the integrity dimension. In competence, male speakers are preferred in every language. In attractiveness, female speakers are preferred in every language.

Focusing on the relative rankings of affective attitudes towards the speakers of the languages, the following Table 4 shows affective attitudes towards male speakers as compared with female speakers towards the three languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective Dimension</th>
<th>Cantonese</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Putonghua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: H: ranked higher than female speaker. L: ranked lower than female speaker. N: ranked without significant difference.

Table 4 above shows the ratings on affective attitudes towards male speakers of the three languages in factored dimensions in comparison with female speakers. Male speakers of Cantonese were rated higher than female speakers of Cantonese on the *integrity* dimension, whereas male speakers of English or Putonghua were rated lower than female speakers of English or Putonghua on the *integrity* dimension. Male speakers were rated higher than female speakers on *competence* in any language, and male speakers were rated lower than female speakers on *attractiveness* in any language. Overall across all dimensions, male speakers of Cantonese were rated higher than female speakers but male speakers of English or Putonghua were rated lower than female speakers of English or Putonghua. Thus, the speaker’s gender has effect on listeners’ affective attitudes towards languages in different ways depending on the language spoken. The decomposition of affective language ratings into *integrity, competence,* and *attractiveness* makes the effect of speaker gender on listener affection even more distinctive. From the regressions, a male speaker increases attitude responses toward *competence* and decreases attitude responses toward *attractiveness* for all languages. However, a male speaker increases *integrity* attitude responses for Cantonese but decreases *integrity* attitude responses for English or Putonghua.

This fits in with the view that gender effects on language attitudes are closely linked to *integrity* aspects, but in the Hong Kong case, it is the male speakers that are rated more for *integrity* than females for the inherent community language of Cantonese. In contrast, the High language of English (and maybe Putonghua) shows female speakers to be the more favourable embodiment of *integrity*.
This finding may represent the different roles of gender and attitudes towards gender in Hong Kong society, in which Cantonese male speakers are viewed as more the embodiment of the local Cantonese speech community. With regards to the speaker gender effect, Lambert (1967) had concluded that in Canada, females speaking French were preferred and males speaking English were preferred by the English-Canadian listeners. This result is surprisingly echoed in the case of Hong Kong if we consider English to be the most common language in Canada particularly for the English-Canadian, and Cantonese to be the most common language in the equivalent Hong Kong context. The findings of this study show that, in Hong Kong, males speaking Cantonese were preferable to females speaking Cantonese and females speaking English or Putonghua were preferable to males speaking English or Putonghua. Thus males speaking the language of their own cultural group or inherent community language were preferred by most listeners who were Cantonese (92.4% of listeners spoke Cantonese at home in this study).

Similarity in affective attitude responses by listener gender

Focusing on the listeners’ ratings of affective attitudes towards the speakers based on the listeners’ own gender, the following Table 5 shows gender effects of listeners in each language and in each factored dimension based on the results of the listening portion. The results hold the speakers’ genders constant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective Dimension</th>
<th>Cantonese</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Putonghua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: H: ranked higher than female student. L: ranked lower than female student. N: ranked without significant difference.

As seen in Table 5, affectively, males do not differ from females in any factored dimension of attitudes towards English speakers. That is, listener gender plays no role in any affective attitudes towards speakers of English. This suggests an agreement between males and females on the English speakers in Hong Kong. Further evidence of gender agreement is the lack of student gender effect on affective competence for any of the three languages. The males and females agree on affective competence attitudes to speakers of the three languages in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, while females do have higher affective integrity attitudes towards both Putonghua and Cantonese, in affective attractiveness dimension, males favor more Putonghua and Cantonese than do females, and have the same view on English.

Overall, the findings from analysis of listener’s gender indicate that there is no significant gender effect in listeners’ views on language speakers overall. In other words, there was a gender similarity on listeners’ views on the speakers of the three languages in multilingual Hong Kong, when speaker effects are controlled for.
Comparing Table 4 and 5, the major implication of the findings is that a conflict between two aspects of examination of gender effects in affective attitudes towards the three languages. Overall, male and female listeners have the same or similar feelings to each of the language speakers, but the speakers of each language are evaluated differently based on their genders. In other words, the gender of listeners has less frequent effect on evaluating languages affectively on one hand, but the gender of the speaker has systematic effect on such evaluation. Thus, affective attitudes towards language groups/communities in Hong Kong appear to be more speaker-gender-based rather than evaluator-gender-based. The findings are comparable to some studies of other communities, e.g. Lambert (1967) for English speech community in Canada, but are also somewhat contradictory with the cognitive attitudes found by this study, which is discussed in the next section.

**Gender difference in evaluators’ cognitive language attitudes**

In terms of gender effect on cognitive language attitudes, based on the results of the written portion, Table 6 below may facilitate the discussion to follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Dimension</th>
<th>Cantonese</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Putonghua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: H: ranked higher than female student. L: ranked lower than female student. N: ranked without significant difference.

Table 6 shows that the ratings of males’ cognitive attitudes towards the three languages as compared to females. Viewing the ratings in each dimension of the cognitive component for each language, some notable features can be found which are distinguished from those in affective component towards the speakers. In integrity dimension of the cognitive attitudes, males had a lower rating than females had for English, which is in disagreement with the affective results in the integrity dimension. Males also have no significantly different cognitive attitudes from females towards Cantonese on integrity and lower attitudes than females towards Putonghua on competence, the results not seen in the affective results. Thus, the beliefs (cognitive attitudes) of male students are shown to be not always consistent with their feelings (affective attitudes), and gender differences in the dimensions of integrity and competence between components are inconsistent as well. As for cognitive esteem, while there is no gender difference on English esteem, females have higher attitudes on Putonghua esteem but males have higher cognitive attitudes on Cantonese esteem. This is a unique pattern and sheds light on the cognitive esteem dimension, and is evidence that Putonghua may be seen differently from Cantonese.

As a summary of the comparison, analysing speaker gender indicates that affective integrity attitudes were thought to be better embodied in the male for Cantonese and in the female for English and Putonghua. Affective competence was better embodied in the male for all languages and affective attractiveness was better embodied in the female for all languages. When shifting
the perspective from speaker gender to student gender, the cognitive results show that there was no relation on English except female had higher cognitive integrity attitudes towards English. Student gender had no relation on Cantonese except males had higher cognitive esteem attitudes towards Cantonese, and had significant relation on Putonghua. Male students had lower attitudes towards Putonghua in all dimensions of cognitive component.

In competence, from student gender perspective overall, cognitively and affectively, Putonghua is considered the same level as Cantonese by males but Putonghua is considered more favorable than Cantonese by females. However, female students cognitively prefer foreign languages (English and Putonghua), but do not affectively prefer foreign languages than male students overall.

Apparently, there is conflict or dissonance in the two components of language attitude. The gender difference exists in evaluators’ cognitive attitudes towards the three languages when attitude questions are asked directly, but the difference does not appear in the evaluators’ (listeners’) affective attitudes during the listening exercise. These may imply, again, that the cognitive component of attitudes is crucial to producing a gender gap in language attitudes. So, it draws an inference that language practice for a community cannot change unless gender difference in cognitive attitudes, particularly in cognitive esteem dimension has been changed by males. Although females tend to pursue the language with social prestigious status that may start the changing process of language use in a community, as some previous studies showed (e.g. Gal, 1978), females’ preference could not change the status for use of inherent language for the community until males change their attitudes towards the language cognitively. Whether gender difference in language attitudes towards the languages in Hong Kong will change from where they are now depends on the future changes of language practice and gender status in the society. For example, factors may include the implementation of language policy, the change of population structure as a result of the growing immigration from outside Hong Kong, the change of social position and employment for women, and social and educational influences on language development in Hong Kong.

Attitudes towards inherent language of community – the representative role of males

It is interesting from the perspective of attitudinal structure that the findings of this study show that overall results of speakers’ gender effect on affective attitudes are not necessary the same as the overall results of students’ gender effect on cognitive attitudes, as seen in Table 7 below, which shows the male students’ overall attitudes towards the three languages compared with female students’ attitudes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Cantonese</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Putonghua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective Speakers</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Listeners</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Students</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: H: ranked higher than female student. L: ranked lower than female student. N: ranked without significant difference.
As seen in Table 7, the results from the listening portion of the study indicate that female speakers are viewed more favorably in their English and Putonghua guises while male speakers are viewed more favorably in their Cantonese. There is no significant gender difference in listeners’ affective attitudes towards any of the three languages overall by gender. In the cognitive component overall, female students evaluated English and Putonghua higher than male students did, but there found no significant different attitudes between female and male students towards to Cantonese cognitively overall.

Overall cognitively, it is clear that males have lower ratings than females for English and Putonghua, but no significant difference ratings than females for Cantonese, which are not consistent with the overall results from the listening portion for affective attitudes towards male speakers of the three languages. That is, on an overall basis, gender effects in cognitive attitudes towards the three languages are not all in line with the effects of speaker gender in affective attitudes towards the three languages.

The causes of the gender effect have been believed to be rooted in society, for example, social positions of women and men. However, in Hong Kong, the social conventions and norms of gender are difficult to determine. On the one hand, compared to many other places of the world, women are highly represented in business and government, suggesting a preference for High languages and an acceptance of women speaking High languages. On the other hand, women labour force participation is quite low overall (indeed, over 40% of mothers in our study sample do not work), suggesting more inclination towards Low languages for both women speakers and listeners since one would imagine non-working mothers to take care of more domestic affairs. This may reflect a problem with the traditional definition for High and Low language.

The gender effect in attitudes towards Putonghua can be seen as an example for this conception. This also creates the inconsistency of how Putonghua is seen. From the speaker gender, effects on Putonghua are consistent with the High language English, but from listener gender, effects on Putonghua are more consistent with the Low language of Cantonese. This may be some evidence of the potential, yet still unknown, triglossic stable state of Hong Kong that is emerging.

The gender results mostly reveal that, as discussed, males are preferred to present in Cantonese and that male listeners can have the same such affective feelings as female listeners. If Cantonese is seen as the language most representative of the community, the results indicate that both males and females see the values of the Cantonese language community as being embodied by male speakers. This tendency compares with other communities. For example, in Lambert (1967)’s study, the French-Canadian (FC) women appear to be guardians of the FC culture at least in the sense that they favored male representatives of their own cultural group. And the reason given by Lambert (1967: 97-98) for this is that the FC female may be safe-guarding the FC culture through a preference for FC values seen in FC men. Similarly, males in Hong Kong appear to be the representatives of Cantonese community at least in the sense that they view their own linguistic cultural group as superior to both the English and Putonghua groups, and they are favored by members from both genders in presenting Cantonese, their own community language. These results may call for a better socio-cultural study of the roles of gender and language practice in the multi-lingual context of Hong Kong.

As mentioned earlier, although there is a “bi-literary and tri-lingual” policy for language education, Hong Kong is basically a “Cantonese-speaking community” (Bolton & Luke, 1999). Cantonese is the inherent language for most members in the local community. For example, 92.4% of the participants’ home language is Cantonese in this study. As English and Putonghua
are learned languages to most students in secondary school in Hong Kong, attitudes towards English and Putonghua are not related to only language use, but also to motivation and agency for learning the language.

CONCLUSION

This study uses structural components and factored dimensions to analyze gender effect in language attitudes for secondary school students in Hong Kong. The findings of the study indicate that gender difference does not universally exist in all dimensions and components of language attitudes, and highlight the importance of gender effects in cognitive components of attitudes as well as in affective components of attitudes towards language speakers/users. As opposed to females, males view Cantonese, the inherent community language, more favorably. This is embodied especially in the cognitive esteem dimension. And, both males and females view more favorably to males speaking Cantonese and females speaking English and Putonghua. These findings of the study indicate that there is little evaluator (listener) gender effect in evaluating speakers affectively, but there is speaker gender effect in the evaluation of affective attitudes. The evaluators’ gender effects exist significantly in cognitive attitudes towards the three languages in Hong Kong, though. Apparently, gender effects are in dissonance between the affective and cognitive components of attitudes, and also in factored dimensions of attitudes.

The findings of this study demonstrate that males in Hong Kong are viewed by both genders more favorably than females as the representative of Cantonese, the inherent language of their own cultural group, and males’ cognitive attitude is determinative to the gender gap in language attitudes. Though females in this study view their own community language as inferior to both English and Putonghua, implying that although females tend to favour English or Putonghua, they still favour male representatives of their own cultural group. With this implication, it suggests that the study of gender effect in language attitudes with more focus on gender differences of cognitive attitudes may help in discovering the processes of language practice and attitudes changes. These fields need to be further explored from community socio-cultural and socio-psychological perspectives.

The Hong Kong linguistic landscape is complicated by the tri-lingual structure of the region. While English is certain to occupy the status of the post-colonial language and Cantonese is certain to occupy the status of the local and inherent community language, the status Putonghua, and the role of gender in Putonghua especially is unclear. The role of gender in language of a much younger generation who mostly grew up under Chinese governance, the subjects of this study, is further complicated. Gender has been approached not as a set of traits, a variable or a role, but as a product of social doings, “a system of culturally constructed relations of power, produced and reproduced in interaction between and among men and women” (Gal, 1991:176), thus, it comes as no surprise that normative masculinities and femininities, as well as beliefs and ideas about relations between the genders, may vary across cultures as well as over time within a culture (Pavlenko and Piller, 2001:22).

With the reference of the finding for that gender difference in cognitive attitudes towards languages is not always similar to affective attitudes towards the speakers of languages, a methodological issue will be therefore raised that if gender effect in language attitudes could be measured by either direct questionnaire for evaluators’ gender effects in cognitive attitudes or by listening MGT for speakers’ gender effect in affective attitudes, which needs more follow-up studies to examine this ideal.
As cognitive attitudes towards languages are relatively stable and are less private reactions to the contrasting group than MGT do (Lambert et al., 1965), which was used in listening portion of this study, the findings appear to reveal that gender effect cognitively may be determinative and methodologically, gender difference in cognitive attitudes may be measured instead by affective attitudes towards speaker gender, if further research in this field could provide more proven evidences.

The approach of using structural components and factored dimensions to analyze gender effects shows that it is helpful for drawing meaningful results on gender effects in language attitudes in a multilingual society, and may contribute to our understanding of the relationship between gender and language attitudes as socio-psychological constructs.

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