Names | A Journal of Onomastics

Uniqueness and Agency in English Naming Practices of Mainland Chinese Students

Shih-Ching (Susan) Picucci-Huang
The University of Nottingham Ningbo, CHINA

Robert Weekly
The University of Nottingham Ningbo, CHINA

ans-names.pitt.edu
ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web) Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413

Abstract

In diaspora and post-colonial communities, ethnic Chinese people tend to adopt names that are common in majority English-speaking countries. Compared to these communities, less attention has been paid to mainland Chinese, where the practice of adopting an English name is in the process of becoming normalised among the current generation of fifteen to thirty-five-year-olds. This paper is part of a wider project to examine the English naming practices of Chinese students from mainland China. It focuses specifically on name choices and the reasons for these choices. A 44-item questionnaire was completed by 357 mainland Chinese students, and this paper reports the quantitative data relevant to name choices and the reasons behind them. The results display an array of preferred English names and suggest that one of the key aspects of name choice is the uniqueness of the name, which served multiple purposes: distinguishing themselves from the peers, enabling them to be remembered, and expressing their identity. Additionally, Chinese students demonstrated a high degree of agency in their name choices, which was evident in the creative approaches used in name selection.

Keywords: English names, namegiver, Mainland China, agency, identity, first name.

Introduction

It is common for English language teachers to bestow Chinese students an English name, request them to choose one, or ask what their English name is at the start of a new class (Henry 2012). These students could be young English learners in China or pre-sessional/foundation year in Western countries or within China. However, the experience of Chinese students being persuaded to adopt an English name is not only instigated by Western English language teachers. English language teachers who are ethnically Chinese may also encourage their students to choose an English name to embrace an English language environment (Edwards 2006), while Western English language teachers may prefer students to accept having an English name because of their difficulties in pronouncing and remembering students' Chinese names (McPherron 2009; Edwards 2006).

A further issue involves the different cultural practices within Western and Chinese educational institutions in relation to naming practices. Adopting a new name for identity construction and to align with different contexts is not unusual in Chinese cultural traditions, and many Chinese people seem accustomed to being addressed by different names over their lifespan (Huang & Ke 2016; Henry 2012; Scollon et al. 2011; Edwards 2006). Edwards (2006) notes that Western teachers may interpret Chinese students' compliance to adopt an English name as having a weak sense of identity rather than being reflective of Chinese cultural traditions. This misconception can serve to perpetuate stereotypes of Chinese people in the minds of English language teachers. Furthermore, Scollon et al. (2011) assert that Westerners expect symmetrical solidarity while Chinese people tend to expect symmetrical deference in naming practices, which is evident in how teachers refer to students by their name. For instance, traditionally in Chinese educational institutions, teachers call students by their family name (surname) first, followed by their given name (first name). However, in Western countries, teachers predominantly call students by their given names. If Western teachers were to call Chinese students by their given name, it could be perceived as overfamiliar by students who tend to reserve this name for family members and close friends (Edwards 2006).

Overall, the nature of Chinese students' English naming practices in mainland China has been under-investigated in onomastics, which we have sought to rectify. The results of this study demonstrate that although many Chinese students had changed their English names, they showed a high degree of agency in the naming process and identified with their chosen English name. This paper, which is part of a wider study examining the cultural practices of Chinese students adopting English names, specifically focuses on name choices and their underlying reasons by mainland Chinese students in higher education.

English Names

The adoption of English names by ethnic Chinese people has been a particular focus of research about diaspora communities (Reyes 2013), post-colonial regions (Cheang 2008; Tan 2004, 2001; Li 1997; Mathews 1996), student sojourners (Cotterill 2020; Sercombe et al. 2014; Heffernan 2010), and Taiwan (Huang & Ke 2016; Gilks 2014). For example, Cheang (2008) notes a cultural hybridising in Macau, with English names being chosen because of their similarity to either Chinese names or the names of a cultural icon. Several participants

DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413 Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web)

chose unique English names—or ones which reflect current trends—,and, therefore, their English names enabled them to signify their current identity positioning (Cheang 2008). At the same time, English names are also transient for them, both in terms of adopting a new name and discarding their old name and on the basis of using different names with different people and in different contexts (Cheang 2008).

Moreover, these findings are also evident in studies of names in Hong Kong. Both Li (1997) and Mathews (1996) observed that Anglicised names have become integral to their participants' Hong Kong identity. Particularly, Mathews (1996, 403) notes a plethora of different name choices, which include "mundane" names, as well as ones with "a bit of flair," such as *Myth*, *Freedom*, and *Wellington*. The unique design of some Chinese English names stems, in part, from Chinese traditions in naming practices. While in traditional Western cultures, names are generally selected from a restricted set of acceptable signs, in Chinese traditional culture there is no such restriction on what words can be chosen as a name (Huang & Ke 2016; Tan 2001). Similar to name choices in Macau, individuals from Hong Kong might choose an English name because of its similarity to their Chinese name, or the choice might be based on a movie star or a brand name. Alternatively, they may discard their English name and adopt a new one either because they learn the name has a negative connotation or simply due to their personal preferences. As well as being related to identity, both Li (1997) and Mathews (1996) assert that the adoption of English names in Hong Kong is part of a socialisation process where English names are preferable for use in a work setting.

These notable patterns have also been observed in Taiwan and Singapore. Parents with a college degree are more likely to have an English name in Taiwan; and, in particular, females are more likely to have one due to working in the service industry (Huang & Ke 2016). Moreover, in Singapore, Tan (2004, 2001) notes a substantial increase in Chinese parents registering additional names and an increase in English-based given names, which is associated with modernisation and indexing a linguistic identity. Thus, in Singapore, English given names are increasingly official names, whereas in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan such names are adopted mostly for specific contexts. Although there are examples of uniqueness and creativity in Singaporean English names, Tan (2004) notes that this phenomenon has a low prevalence, which is perhaps a consequence of the normalisation of English names in Singapore.

In contrast, there appears to be a greater tolerance for creative and 'bizarre' names on the Chinese mainland (Heffernan 2010; McPherron 2009). Some of McPherson's (2009) respondents assert that their students adopted "strange" names as they are easier to remember. Yet, students might be advised to change their adopted names if their teachers perceive them as being strange and not conforming to their expectations of what a proper English name is—thereby impinging on the students' agency in their name choice. At the same time, students are aware that their names might be ridiculed; and, if teachers highlight this strangeness in class, it might cause them to abandon their name, indicating a normalising process within English language teaching (ELT) contexts.

While "strange" names might be unpalatable for some English teachers, the students themselves deemed these names appropriate, as noted by Gilks (2014). The majority of respondents in Gilks' (2014) questionnaire considered the English names *Venox*, *Gobby*, *Fanny*, and *Samanfa* appropriate in a study of English naming practices in Taiwan. Some teachers may assume that the adoption of a "strange" English name could be related to deficiencies in the linguistic ability of a student, with students trying but failing to "mimic native English pragmatic practices" (Henry 2012, 108). However, Henry (2012, 108-109) argues that "the pragmatics of English naming have been adapted to Chinese contexts of use and therefore inflected by appropriate Chinese linguistic ideologies." Naming is a social process in China and parents may consult family members or be informed by their religion to find a name with symbolic meaning that would bring fortune to the bearer of the name (Henry 2012).

Based on the literature, it would be reasonable to assume that, as some Chinese students grow older, they might seek out English names which have greater symbolic meaning to them and are more reflective of their personalities rather than ones that were bestowed on them by a teacher who taught them English for a short period of time. In other words, this would seem to indicate a high degree of agency among Chinese students in their English naming practices, and it is this area that we investigate in this study. Therefore, the study is formulated around the following research question: What factors influence the name choices of mainland Chinese students learning English in higher education?

Methodology

This study, guided by qualitative methodologies in understanding Chinese students' English naming practices, used a questionnaire to gather data. The purpose of choosing a questionnaire was to capture a wide range of opinions from respondents. The questionnaire was constructed predominantly using a combination of closed

ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web) Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413

and open (short answer) questions (for a total of 46 questions). In this paper, we specifically focus on the following questions to identify name choice and its meaning.[1]

1 Do you have an English name?
2 If yes, what is it?
3 Do you use your English name on your social media profile?
4 Who chose this name?
5 Why did you choose this name?
6 Does the English name have a meaning for you?
7 If yes, what does it mean to you?
8 If no, why not?
9 Have you had previous English names? If yes, what were they?
10 Why did you change your name?

While most of the questions were either Yes-No or open-ended, question 4 was multiple choice. Respondents could select one of the following options: myself, teacher, parent, or other.

The questionnaire was piloted with three Chinese first language speakers who have English names and was followed up with individual discussions. After this, modifications were made to the questionnaire, changing the wording of some questions and removing redundant ones to ascertain a degree of internal validity. Yet, there were certain overlapping and repetitive questions intentionally designed to elicit important, stable themes in relation to English name choice and obtain a degree of internal consistent reliability. The questionnaire was then distributed to 1067 undergraduate and 678 postgraduate students at a Sino-British university in China, and to 80 postgraduate students on pre-sessional courses in the UK in 2019 via email. This purposive sample was chosen because this population is representative of mainland Chinese students in an immersive English learning environment. Therefore, we envisaged that they would be knowledgeable about the topic and have direct experience of it. At the same time, this also limits our results in explaining the phenomenon to students at Sino-British and Sino-US American universities in China, and Chinese students in a study abroad context.

The questionnaire was uploaded to the online Chinese program Tencent Questionnaire Platform. The program generated a QR code for students to scan that it distributed via email. A total of 357 questionnaires were completed, meaning a relatively encouraging return rate of 19.56%. The survey was returned by 278 (77.87%) undergraduate students and 30 (8.40%) postgraduate students at a Sino-British University in China, and 49 (13.73%) students on a pre-sessional course in the UK. The reason for the relatively high return from the Chinese students in the UK can perhaps be explained by the distribution method. While the students at the Sino-British University received the email via mass distribution, those in the UK received the email personally from their current EAP tutor, and thus were arguably more likely to complete the questionnaire. No noticeable differences were found between the three groups in their responses, and they were therefore treated as one homogenous group of 357 respondents in this study in order to gain some macro understanding of the English naming practice in this educational context.

One significant factor at this stage, which would later influence the data generalizability, was that just under three quarters of the questionnaires (73.11%) were returned by female students, meaning that males are underrepresented in the study. Most of the respondents were 18-23 years old (94.68%) while the remaining 5.32% were 24 years old or older. Due to the nature of the research, the questionnaire was not completed anonymously, requesting respondents to provide their English name, or previous English names, though not their Chinese name. However, the data presented was anonymised in reference to the majority of the responses in the questionnaire, except when discussing English names. The responses to the closed questions were calculated according to percentages, whereas the open questions produced short answers that were transferred into Word documents accessible for NVivo software version 10 for content coding and categorising.

Data Analysis and Discussion

A majority of respondents (94.68%) had English names, and of this group, just over two thirds (67.46%) used their English names on social media. This finding suggests a preference for using English names on social media among the young generation of Chinese students learning English in English Medium Instruction (EMI) educational environments; however, further investigation would be required to testify this claim. Considering that most Western social media is blocked in China, albeit accessible using VPN, it is highly likely that the students use their English names on Chinese social media. This can perhaps be interpreted as a sign of identifying with their English name on social media. Among the younger generation, this onomastic identification can be used to introduce themselves and demonstrate their naming preferences for their online

DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413 Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web)

presence. The reason(s) why Chinese students chose to have an English name on Chinese social media was not explored in this study but this is a question that would be worthwhile addressing in future research.
Only 5.32% did not have an English name. This finding contrasts with Cotterill's (2020) survey of 330 Chinese students at three UK universities where only 77.27% of respondents have English names. Based on this data, it was extrapolated that between 72.76% and 81.79% of Chinese students have English names. It is perhaps to be expected that Chinese students in the UK would be more likely to have English names than those in mainland China. However, Cotterill's study recruited Chinese-speaking students from different regions in UK universities. Our study, by comparison, focused more specifically on mainland Chinese students.

Uniqueness

As this study found, it is informative to examine the uniqueness of the names completed in the survey (see Question 2). For some of the respondents, this aspect appears to have been an important factor when choosing a name. Of the 338 survey respondents who reported having an English name, 125 (36.98%) shared the same English name with another person, and 213 (63.02%) had unique names which were not shared with another individual who completed the questionnaire. However, these figures are based on related names such as *Elizabeth*, *Liz*, *Lizzy*, and *Beth* being classified as the same name; and names with different spelling such as *Crystal* and *Krystal* being categorised as the same name as well. For many Chinese students, derivatives of base names and different spellings are seen as an important for differentiation. When these onomastic variations are considered, 98 students (28.99%) shared names in this population and 240 (71.01%) names are unique. Those respondents who shared names had relatively common names within English-speaking countries (e.g., *Christine*, *David*, and *Cathy)*; though some were less common or modern (e.g., *Flora*, *Eleanor*, and *Yillia*).

To better examine the wide range of names reported in the survey, the respondents' adopted names were divided into four groups of uniqueness. This methodological decision contrasts starkly with previous research (e.g., Gilks 2014; Henry 2012; McPherron 2009; Mathews 1996) that has tended to examine adopted English names in terms of binaries, categorising the names documented as "normal", "common", or "Biblical" as opposed to "strange", "bizarre", or "unusual". Using four categories of uniqueness, the names documented in this study exhibited the following distribution: "Common Names" (78.10%), "Unique Design" (11.54%), "Names of Things" (5.92%), and "Names from Other Countries" (4.43%). Once the names were classified, interesting within-category patterns were observed.

The sub-grouping of "Common Names" included instances where more than one respondent shared the same name such as *Adam* and *Amanda*. However, even within this group, there were rather unexpected. For example, 3 of the respondents varied between 2 English names. Another had first and middle English names; and still another reported a doubled English name: *Alex Alex*. If not a mistake, this pattern might reflect the Chinese naming practice of reduplication. Additionally, one respondent reported having adopted an English first name and a surname, while another spelt their name *QJoyce*. It is unknown whether or not this name is a typo; and if it is intentional, how the Q is pronounced.

The second sub-group of names is "Unique Design" (e.g., *Uyoung*, *Ciel*, *Innogen*, *Medivh*, *Sedna*). These names may have originated from English names and show the respondents' creativity. Alternatively, these names may be the result of typos or instances of names that were initially misspelt and later maintained.

The third sub-group was "Names of Things". Reported examples include *Bamboo*, *Echo*, and *Summer*. Their chosen names were identical to a common or abstract noun and referenced an object or concept. Such name choices are probably quite common among Chinese mainland students. However, it is important to recognise that in many Anglo-Saxon countries, there has been an increasing use of common or abstract nouns as baby names by parents who want select unique names for their children (Twenge et al. 2010). Official statistics of baby names registered for boys and girls in the United States and England/Wales can give some indication of current trends in naming practices in these countries (Gulla 2021b, a; Weiss 2021b, a). When this trend is taken into consideration, some of the names in this sub-group could also be regarded as "Common Names", being popular inside and/or outside of Western countries. Some examples of these names are *Hope*, *Paris*, *Summer*, *Zion*, *Seven*, *Lyric*, and *Crystal* (Gulla 2021b, a; Weiss 2021b, a). However, the situation is complex. While *Crystal* is a common name, its alternate spelling of *Krystal* does not appear to be common in many countries (Gulla 2021b, a; Weiss 2021b, a). Some names enjoy greater popularity outside of Anglo-Saxon nations. For example, *Latika*, *Yuki*, and *Mao* are popular names in India, Japan, and China, respectively. They do not appear in lists of popular names in either the United States or England/Wales (Gulla 2021b, a; Weiss 2021b, a).

ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web) Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413

The different sub-groups of names found in the data also allude to the fact that some students had maintained names which could be considered inappropriate by some English teachers in the learning environment (e.g., *Neptune, Yogurt,* and *Wasabi*). These names were maintained by just under a quarter of the 3 sub-groups: "Unique Design" (11.54%); "Names of Things" (5.92%); and "Names from Other Countries" (4.43%). The retention of these names may suggest a degree of agency exercised by students in their naming practices. Indeed, overall, the naming practices of the respondents demonstrated not only the creativity of the Chinese mainland students in choosing and adapting their name to suit their own preferences but also students' desire for a certain level of uniqueness among their peers. For instance, one respondent commented on the reason for changing her name:

> Alice is the name my first English teacher gave me. I was very nervous that many of my classmates [were already] called Alice. Teacher [sic] even needed to add Alice1, Alice2 for distincting [sic] different students. It annoyed me so I changed my English name.

It is clear from Alice's comment that the uniqueness of the name was important in distinguishing herself from others in her English learning environment. Additionally, the crude method used by the teacher highlights the impact teachers may have on the student's naming and renaming practices. In Alice's case, her agency in her naming choice was undermined by the teacher's approach of affixing a numerical suffix to her existing name. It is certainly not uncommon for Western students to share the same name in a class, and it would be worthwhile to investigate how and why teachers differentially address students when they share an English name. More research on teacher naming practices in learning environments in mainland China is also needed.

Agency

It appears that the respondents exercised their agency in choosing whether to have an English name. When asked who gave them their English names, the majority answered "Myself" (71.60%), followed by "Teacher" (17.16%), "Parents" (4.73%), and "Other" (6.50%). In particular, as shown in Table 1 below, many of the selected English names were associated with a positive attribute of an object and/or a person —many of which are prominent in Western media. For instance, respondents reported that their name had been chosen because they wanted to "be kind and successful like Natalie Portman", or like "[t]he prince in *The Little Mermaid*". In the answers to the short answer section, another study participant indicated their name choice was because "it's my idol Lionel Messi's nickname". Through the adoption and use of their name, the respondents felt closer to their ideal and desirable attributes, such as bravery, kindness, and/or independence. This desire reflected the respondents' purpose in selecting names, that is, choosing names that have a positive meaning and show their (desired) identity as well as personality.

Table 1: Reasons for Choosing an English Name: Responses to Question 5 (N=338)

Reason	Frequency	Percent
Like the sound or related to something I like	92	27.21
From media	83	24.56
Similarity to my Chinese name	54	15.98
Easy to remember	26	7.69
Given by tutor	13	3.85
Other individual reason	70	20.71

Moreover, as indicated in Table 1, 15.98% of the respondents decided to adopt an English name that matched either the sound or the meaning of their Chinese names, while 7.69% reported the same answer in another question as can be seen in Table 2. The difference between 15.98% for the 'reason for choosing the name' and 7.69% for the 'meaning of the name' suggests that, although the choice of an English name was initially related to its similarity to their Chinese name's pronunciation or meaning, it might have taken on new symbolism for the respondents and become detached from its relationship to their Chinese names. The latter percentage is, to a certain degree, similar to the percentage of respondents who do not have an English name, which may demonstrate their attachment, respect, and loyalty to the Chinese name their parents bestowed them.

As shown in Table 2, the respondents who indicated that they had chosen their English name because it was "easy to remember" (26 respondents) or it was "convenient" (25 respondents), again, indicates the respondents' agency. Based on the short answers, "easy/convenient" names were chosen not only for their foreign friends and teachers, but also for themselves. However, approximately 15.68% of the respondents perceived their names to be "just a name" which resonates with a theory of direct reference for proper names

DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413 Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web)

(Chandler 2017). Explained shortly, this finding suggests that these respondents, at the time of completing the questionnaire, might have had a weak relationship with English, and had not viewed their English name as representing an alternative or complimentary identity but instead as a pragmatic symbol for use in certain social contexts. Nonetheless, while 53 (15.68%) respondents asserted that English names were "just a symbol" or "just a name", only 8 of those respondents had changed their name at least once. It is possible that the other 45 respondents did not re-name themselves out of convenience, but it also may have been due to the fact that they had acquired a certain attachment to the name, despite reporting that their name was just a symbol.

Table 2: Meanings of English Names: Responses to Questions 6 - 8 (N=338)

Meanings	Freq	Percent
Positive attributes	79	23.37
Just a name	53	15.68
Related to an object	45	13.31
Represent myself	32	9.47
Similarity to my Chinese name	26	7.69
Convenience	25	7.40

Whereas these respondents did not give much meaning to their English name beyond the classroom context, other respondents, who perhaps had been given their name by someone else and later decided to change it, might consider the naming process part of their self-identification. Actively considering whether or not to change an English name may stimulate feelings that that name being part of their self-positioning. Interestingly, 207 (57.98%) respondents had had previous English names, with some respondents reported having had up to five previous English names. Based on the respondents' answers, there seemed to be four main reasons why those who changed their name did so. First, 85 (41.06%) stated they no longer liked it. Different reasons were given for this opinion change. They included the name becoming outdated, having negative connotations, or not matching their personality. Second, 71 (34.30%) respondents felt the name was too common; and third, 28 (13.53%) changed their name to fit in a new environment. Fourth, 23 (11.11%) students stated that they changed their name because it had been given to them by a teacher when they were young and the name no longer fit them as adults.

Summary and Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the adopted English names of the mainland Chinese students in this investigation are—to a certain degree—unique, creative, and flexible. This result is consistent with other studies that have examined English names (Sercombe et al. 2014; McPherron 2009; Cheang 2008; Edwards 2006; Li 1997; Mathews 1996). Additionally, the popularity of using an English name amongst our respondents also suggests that English naming practices of mainland Chinese students may be in a process of normalisation that has already progressed further in diasporas and post-colonial Chinese communities. However, there is the potential that, with the increasing political, cultural, and economic strength of China on the global stage, this process could be halted. This change may become evident in English naming practices among mainland Chinese students, with the continuing adherence to uniqueness found in this study, and/or the increasing retention of their Chinese names in English education environments.

The data collected in this study reflects the experiences of a group of students who study in English-speaking universities/campuses inside and outside China. However, it is not possible to extrapolate to the wider population of mainland Chinese students in English Medium Instruction (EMI) contexts. In addition, the study is limited by a gender imbalance in the sample, given that most of the study respondents (73.11%) were female. This imbalance could perhaps overemphasise the proportion of mainland Chinese students adopting English names in the educational environments and distort their reasons for doing so. Despite these limitations, the data gathered did yield important results worthy of further investigation. These include the relatively high degree of agency felt by the respondents in naming and re-naming themselves; and the variety of names and underlying motivations for name choices. This study also provides important food for thought.

ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web) Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413

The authors believe that expecting Chinese ethnic groups to adopt an English name may, to a certain degree, indicate a disrespect for students' agency and empowerment in the classroom. Enabling Chinese students' greater agency in retaining their Chinese names in classroom contexts would contribute to decolonising ELT and challenging westernisation tendencies (Pennycook 2021; Kumaravadivelu 2016; Morgan & Ramanathan 2005). Indeed, the fact that the uniqueness of the adopted English names was very important for the Chinese students to distinguish themselves could also be interpreted as a way of their resisting the notion of "a proper English name". Given our findings, we recommend that future studies examine the use of students' own name in English learning in mainland China and teachers' naming practices in the classroom.[2]

Endnotes

[1] Further discussion of the detailed qualitative results in relation to identity, agency, and investment can be found in Weekly & Picucci-Huang (2022).

[2] Another issue suggested for further investigation involves Chinese people's use of English names on social media.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Yixuan Wang for providing research support. We are especially grateful for the detailed and useful comments from Professor I. M. Nick, Editor-in-Chief, and the three anonymous reviewers.

References

Chandler, Daniel. 2017. *Semiotics: The Basics*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Cheang, Justina. 2008. "Choice of Foreign Names as a Strategy for Identity Management." *Intercultural Communication Studies* 17, no. 2: 197–202.

Cotterill, Simon. 2020. "Call Me Fei: Chinese-Speaking Students' Decision Whether or Not to Use English Names in Classroom Interaction." *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 33, no. 3: 228–241. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2019.1614598.

Edwards, Rachel. 2006. "What's in a Name? Chinese Learners and the Practice of Adopting 'English' Names." *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 19, no. 1: 90–103.

Gilks, Peter. 2014. "'Just Call Me "Ocean"...': How the Chinese Practice of Adopting English Names Facilitates, but Sometimes Violates, Cross-Cultural Discourse." *International Journal of Arts and Commerce* 3, no. 6: 94–104.

Gulla, Emily. 2021a. "The Top 1,000 Baby Boys' Names in the UK." netmums.com. Accessed October 3rd, 2021. https://www.netmums.com/pregnancy/top-1000-baby-boy-names-uk

Gulla, Emily. 2021b. "The Top 1,000 Baby Girls' Names in the UK." netmums.com. Accessed October 3rd, 2021. https://www.netmums.com/pregnancy/top-1000-baby-girl-names-uk

Heffernan, Kevin. 2010. "English Name Use by East Asians in Canada: Linguistic Pragmatics or Cultural Identity?" *Names* 58, no. 1: 24–36.

Henry, Eric S. 2012. "When Dragon Met Jasmine: Domesticating English Names in Chinese Social Interaction." *Anthropologica* 54, no. 1: 107–117.

Huang, Chiu-Yen, and I-Chung Ke. 2016. "Parents' Perspectives on Adopting English Names in Taiwan." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 37, no. 8: 849–861. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2016.1144760.

Kumaravadivelu, B. 2016. "The Decolonial Option in English Teaching: Can the Subaltern Act?" *TESOL Quarterly* 50, no. 1: 66–85.

Li, David CS. 1997. "Borrowed Identity: Signaling Involvement with a Western Name." *Journal of Pragmatics* 28, no. 4: 489–513.

Mathews, Gordon. 1996. "Names and Identities in the Hong Kong Cultural Market." *Dialectical Anthropology* 21, no. 3–4: 399–419.

McPherron, P. 2009. "'My Name is Money': Name Choices and Global Identifications at a South-Chinese University." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 29, no. 4: 521–536.

Morgan, Brian, and Vaidehi Ramanathan. 2005. "Critical Literacies and Language Education: Global and Local Perspectives." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 25, 151–169.

Pennycook, A. 2021. *Critical Applied Linguistics: A Critical Re-Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Reyes, Angela. 2013. "Corporations are People: Emblematic Scales of Brand Personification Among Asian American Youth." *Language in Society* 42, no. 2: 163–185.

Scollon, Ron, Suzanne Wong Scollon, and Rodney H Jones. 2011. *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*. Malden: John Wiley & Sons.

Sercombe, Peter, Tony Young, Ming Dong, and Lin Lin. 2014. "The Adoption of Non-Heritage Names Among Chinese Mainlanders." *Names: A Journal of Onomastics* 62, no. 2: 65–75.

Tan, Peter K W. 2001. "Englished Names? An Analysis of Naming Patterns Among Ethnic-Chinese Singaporeans." *English Today* 17, no. 4: 45–53.

Tan, Peter K W. 2004. "Evolving Naming Patterns: Anthroponymics within a Theory of the Dynamics of Non-Anglo Englishes." *World Englishes* 23, no. 3: 367–384.

Twenge, J M, E M Abebe, and Campbell W K. 2010. "Fitting in or Standing Out: Trends in American Parents' Choices for Children's Names 1880-2007." *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 1, no. 1: 19–25.

Weekly, R, and Shih-Ching (Susan) Picucci-Huang. 2022. "Identity, Agency, and Investment in Chinese Students' English Naming Practices." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, doi: 10.1080/01434632.2021.2023554

Weiss, Robin Elise. 2021a. "Top 1,000 Baby Boy Names in the U.S." verywellfamily.com. Accessed October 3rd, 2021. https://www.verywellfamily.com/top-1000-baby-boy-names-2757618#toc-special-considerations

Weiss, Robin Elise. 2021b. "Top 1,000 Baby Girl Names in the U.S." verywellfamily.com. Accessed October 3rd, 2021. https://www.verywellfamily.com/top-1000-baby-girl-names-2757832

Notes on Contributors

Shih-Ching (Susan) Picucci-Huang is a Business, Humanities and Social Science (BHSS) tutor at University of Nottingham Ningbo and she received her EdD from Durham University, UK. She was previously an EAP lecturer at Xi'an Jiaotong-liverpool University (XJTLU), China and an English lecturer at Lung Wha University of Science and Technology, Taiwan. Her research interests revolve around the issues of identities and cultures, identity communication and language teaching/learning.

Robert Weekly is Assistant Professor in the School of Education and English at the University of Nottingham Ningbo. He has worked as an EAP tutor in the UK, Turkey, and China, before joining the school of Education and English in 2018. He currently teaches in the areas of Sociolinguistics, World Englishes and Critical Language Awareness, which are reflective of his current research interests.

Correspondence to: Shih-Ching (Susan) Picucci-Huang, CELE, University of Nottingham Ningbo, China. Email: susan.huang@nottingham.edu.cn

ISSN: 0027-7738 (print) 1756-2279 (web) Vol. 72 No. 1, Spring 2024 DOI 10.5195/names.2023.2413