CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Status and Role of English in Malaysia

English, a British legacy, was once the official language in Malaysia. It gained prestige as the language of the colonial 'masters' through education. In the colonial past, English was instrumentally even if not sentimentally the high variety, the standard British English, which led to higher status occupations and higher income.

Malaysia gained its independence in 1957. In 1967, the position of English was challenged when Bahasa Malaysia – the National Language, was given greater importance. Bahasa Malaysia began to substitute English as the medium of instruction at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. English was then "relegated to the status of a second or foreign language" (Wong, 1983 : 125).

Nonetheless, in the National Education Policy, English is still viewed as a prominent language, next to Bahasa Malaysia. It is described as the second most important language *(The Teachers' Handbook for the English Syllabus for Tingkatan/Forms I-III).* Malaysian students are expected to leave school with an overall communicative proficiency in the language, although the use of Bahasa Malaysia in most areas of *real life* communication has increased. Thus. it results in English being taught only as one of the subjects in schools and only for its "utilitarian purpose" (Wong, 1983 : 126).

2.1 Emergence of the Malaysian Variety of English

Malaysia is a multi-racial country whereby the Malay community is the largest group (47%), followed by the Chinese (24%) the Indigenous (11%), the Indian (7%), the non-Malaysian citizens (7%) and others (4%) (Khoo,1995).

Malaysia's independence had resulted in the withdrawal of the native speakers, who had the position and authority to instill the need for English prior to independence. Nonetheless, the English language is still used widely in the aspects of economics, social and education. Malaysian English, thus, developed because there are bilingual and trilingual speakers and the transfer of linguistic features and concepts from native language to English is inevitable (Platt and Weber, 1980).

2.2 Nativisation, acculturation and inter-language

Features of an English variety have occurred mostly through the process of nativisation and acculturation of English (Kachru, 1981). According to Kachru (1981), these two processes describe the divergence of a language in which a language gives rise to unique features in the numerous and diverse non-native cultures and societies in which it is used. This can only take place in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society, like Malaysia.

Another definition for acculturation was provided by Richards et al (1992) where he refers it to the process in which changes in the language, culture, and system of values of a

group happen through interaction with another group with a different language, culture, and system of values.

Pertaining to that, Lowenberg (1986) said that a major acculturative function of such shifts in Malaysia is the establishment of a national identity for all Malaysians through the lexicon of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language.

The Malaysian English variety came about mainly through the transfer of intriguing linguistic features from the Malay, Chinese and Indian speech community to English. In relation to the emanation of the English variety, it is almost impossible not to look at inter-language. Platt and Weber (1980) viewed inter-language as another reason for the emergence of Malaysian English. Inter-language here refers to the stages of progressive approximation towards the target language, which is English in this case.

According to Kachru (1990), inter-language is the type of language produced by second and foreign language learners who are in the process of learning a language. It is "a developmental process, [as opposed to] fossilisation which is a static condition. [This is so] because [inter-language] is model or target oriented, and suggests directionally in terms of attaining stages toward a goal" (Kachru, 1990 : 14).

Inter-language involves the processes in the learner towards achieving native-like proficiency in the target language, in this case, English. The "combination" of the mother tongue and the English language results in the terms "influence" and "interference"

(Richard, 1982). "Interference" can be defined as viewing the mother tongue as deterrents in an individual's mastery of the English language. "Influence" on the other hand, perceives the elements from the mother tongue as merely prominent features that make a variety unique.

For example, interference may be viewed in a negative way, as the transference of elements of one language to another at various levels including:

1. Phonological – includes foreign accent such as stress, rhyme, intonation and speech sounds from the first language influencing the second.

2. Grammatical – the first language influencing the second in terms of word order, use of pronouns and determinants, tense and mood.

3. Lexical- the borrowing of words from one language and converting them to sound more natural in another.

4. Orthographical- includes the spelling of one language altering another.

(Berthold et.al, 1997).

However, according to Kachru (1990:4), it is essential to identify the features involving use of the mother tongue as positive, "subtle creative processes" – to mean that they are dynamic and innovative rather than to criticise the features as being the contrary.

This is also supported by Lowenberg (1986 : 6) who said, the traditional assumption made in theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) especially with regard to English is that the goal of non-native acquisition is "to develop proficiency in the linguistic norms

of native speakers of the target language". Thus, there is a widespread bias to interpret all deviations from such norms as "deficient approximations".

Also, Skiba (1992) in his study, supported that features evident in bilingual speeches are positive. According to him, code-switching is not a language interference on the basis that it supplements speech. Switching actually helps to sustain a conversation provides continuity rather than "interfering" the discourse. The socio-linguistic benefits have also been identified as a means of communicating solidarity, or affiliation to a particular social group, whereby code-switching should be viewed from the perspective of providing a linguistic advantage rather than an obstruction to communication.

Hence, it is in the interest of this study to view the inclusion of elements of the mother tongue as positive. Since it is hoped that the reasons for code-switching can be determined at the end of the study, it is needful in this study to look at code-switching as a form of strategy to supplement an interaction, rather than an element of interference.

2.3 The Two Varieties of Malaysian English

Malaysian English is peculiar to its own region and yet intelligible overall to English speakers everywhere (Wong, 1983). Wong has generally categorised Malaysian English into two: the local dialect and a more prestigious form modeled after the Standard British English.

Another researcher, Richard (1982) has also divided Malaysian English into two categories. First, is the rhetorical style, which is more suitable for writing purposes. The acrolect or the standardised variety used in formal situations. Second, is the communicative style, which is the mesolect of the communicative norm that is accepted in informal situations.

Tongue (1980) differentiates between the formal style which represents the standard English of Singapore and Malaysia which is close to Standard English and the informal style. He added that anyone who has been in these countries will note that a speaker who has been conversing in a near-native discourse suddenly switches to a very informal variety when he speaks to someone familiar only with the substandard form, in which grammar, vocabulary and gestures seem to change.

2.4 Features of Malaysian English

Malaysian English has been found to have its own identity and can be distinguished from other varieties of English. Tongue (1980), Platt and Weber (1980), Augustin (1982) and Wong (1983) have all looked at the various aspects of the Malaysian variety, especially the informal variety. While Augustin (1982) described the differences of a variety of English as "deviations" which imply the connotations of non-acceptability, whereas Wong (1983) defined them as "features", which imply the features as creative and unique.

According to their research, the differences are evident in terms of phonological, syntactic and lexical aspects. This will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.4.1 Phonological features

Any individual during the first contact with a person using Malaysian English will notice that it has an even and staccato rhythm (Wong, 1983). The most prominent difference between Malaysian English and Standard English is the accent. Malaysian English has "syllable-timed rhythm" (Platt and Weber, 1980), compared to Standard English which is stress- timed. It was also found that most pronunciation is spelling based, for example, words like "postage, Wednesday, medicine, plumber and so on" (Wong, 1983 : 126).

Wong (1983) mentioned that there are three main areas of simplifications and reductions in the Malaysian English pronunciation, they are the simplification of:

a) consonant clusters – one or more of the consonants are dropped.

   E.g. the word 'tests' is pronounced as merely [tes] and 'risks' pronounced as [ris]

b) difficult words – the inter-dental fricative [Y] which is often simplified to [d] or [t].

   E.g. breadth – bred   ([Y] to [d])

   clothes – clodz   ([Y] to [d])

   three – tree   ([Y] to [t])

c) stress patterns – speakers overgeneralise and place the stress in the same position regardless of its part of speech.

   e.g. "the noun 'technology' and 'technologist' should be stressed on the second syllable but the adjective 'technological' receives its primary stress on the third syllable instead" (Wong, 1983). However, Malaysians tend to place the stress on the same syllable, regardless of the change of form or function the word may have.

2.4.2 Syntactic features

One of the simplifications used in Malaysian English is the use of the tag "isn't it" for every tag question, regardless of "the subject and auxiliary used in the main clause" (Wong, 1983 : 128). An example of this is, "We are in agreement, isn't it?"

It is within the Malaysian English variety that one is able to find lexicals like *lah, ma, loh, one* and *man.* These are also known as "fillers" according to Wong, and are used to indicate emotive, affective attitudes of the speaker or sometimes simply to fill a pause or a moment of hesitation or reflection during a conversation.

Wong included other simplifications of grammatical rules like the use of modals. For example, can is used to illustrate varieties of functions :

You *can* have this book for a week	- permission
You *can* drive ah ?	- ability
Sure *can. Can* also.	- agreement
You come with me*lah. Can* or not ?	- affirmation

Other simplifications of grammatical rules include the disregard of agreement between subject and verb, simplification of the modal auxiliary system and question structures.

One of the common fillers, the particle *lah,* is used as a marker in informal style, as a signal of intimacy and for persuading, rejecting and deriding. Some examples of "fillers" cited by Wong (1983) are as below:

What for want to disturb, *man* ?

Why not you come, *ah* ?

He go there first, *one*.

Come on *lah*, let's go.

You very clever, *what*.

The "Lah" particle is further illustrated by Jamaliah, where the "lah" (or sometimes pronounced as "la") is observed to have has different pragmatic functions. For example in,

1. emphasizing support – "I agree *lah*"

2. listing out points – "I don't think so. It's not as simple saying, ah..   ah counseling *la,* talk *la,* "

3. persuading – "You must do it in a proper way *laah*"

4. avoiding conflict – " I see the situation is not like that anymore, anyway not so *la*, there are also cases of working women *la*".

5. compromise – "Okay, okay *lah*"

6. complimenting – "That's a good idea, good *lah* !"

<div align="right">(Jamaliah, 2000)</div>

2.4.3 Lexical features

There are some words that are peculiar to Malaysian English, which has absorbed words and phrases from other languages like Bahasa Melayu, Chinese and Tamil into its vocabulary. Baskaran (1994) prefers to use the term "borrowings" or "substrate lexemes", instead of "loan" and has identified certain institutional and cultural expressions adopted to

the Malaysian English. For example words like *"towkay"* to mean "boss", *"ulu"* to mean "not hip" and *"stylo"* to mean "stylish" (Baskaran, 1994).

2.5 Bilingualism

Bilingualism occurs when an individual is able to write in more than one language, i.e. his mother tongue and a second (or third or more) language(s). This mostly takes place in multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual countries.

A person who is bilingual may also be defined as one who is able to communicate, to varying extents, in a second language. This includes those who make irregular use of a second language, those who are able to use a second language but have not for some time (dormant bilingual) or those who have considerable skill in a second language (Crystal, 1987).

2.6 Code-switching and code-mixing

Crystal (1987) suggests that code-switching occurs when an individual who is bilingual, alternates between two languages during his/ her speech with another bilingual person. Berthold et al (1997) supplements the definition of code-switching with the notion that it occurs when speakers change from one language to another in the midst of their conversations.

In a multi-racial country, code-switching in everyday conversations is evident most of the time. In a study done by Cook (1991), he concluded that code-switching in normal

conversation amongst bilinguals (in a recorded conversation) consists of 84% single word switches, 10% phrase and 6% clause switching. Also, according to Skiba (1990), code-switching between languages occurs commonly amongst bilinguals and may take a number of different forms, including alternation of sentence phrases from both languages succeeding each other and switching in a long narrative.

Code-switching and mixing have generally been studied in terms of one of the following approaches: (a) the linguistic constraints that determine the form of code-switching and mixing, and (b) the socio-linguistic functions which determine when, with whom and why code-switching and mixing take place (Tay, 1989). Nevertheless, relatively little is known about how they are used as a communicative strategy in multilingual communities among proficient speakers.

The "creativity" and ability to "switch" from one language to another reflects the terms code-switching (CS) and code-mixing (CM) :

1. CS refers to the switching within languages and varieties (inter-sentential)

   e.g "….got people inside↓ *meh ? Tipulah, awak ingat saya apa ?"*

2. CM refers to the mixing of linguistic elements from various languages (intra-sentential)

   e.g. "……*salah, bah* ! It's always the opposite, *kan…tengok ni..* "

(Morais, 1999)

22

In relation to "creativity", Kachru (1990) proposed the multiple dimensions of creativity. There are four exponents of creativity:

1. mixing : linguistic elements from various languages

2. trans-creating : discourse strategies and styles

3. switching : within languages and varieties

4. acculturating : culturally dependent acts of interaction

Based on the exponents above, it is noted that the acts of mixing and switching in language usage are viewed as positive developments in language acquisition (Kachru, 1990).

A research was also done by Crewe and Shields (1976) in categorising words, phrases and expressions into these subheadings:

a) lexical items from the background language

   - loanwords from which there are no equivalents in English (e.g *ang pow*)

   - local borrowings – undergo lexical shifts and can be replaced with English words (e.g. *dungu* which means stupid)

b) lexical items of English origin which are used differently in Malaysian English (e.g. *duit kopi* for bribe) and those that acquire new meaning (e.g. *terror* as an adjective to describe someone who is skillful).

c) Local coinages / neologisms formed by truncating or suffixation such as *bluffology* to indicate the art of lying.

Many studies were made on code-switching and code-mixing. In view of what has been discussed, this study will view code-switching and code-mixing as two different

means of variation in the level of formality in their speech, bilinguals can convey the same by code-switching. Crystal (1987) also suggests that where two bilinguals are accustomed to conversing in a particular language, switching to the other is bound to create an effect; code-switching is then used as a socio-linguistic tool by bilingual speakers.

2.7.1 Non-verbal communication / gestures

Communication is established through both verbal and non-verbal aspects. A non-verbal message basically, functions in three ways – it replaces, reinforces, or contradicts a verbal message (Tubbs and Moss, 1994). The emergence of important features linked to non-verbal communicative behaviours while regulating the flow of conversation, also signals the search for feedback during the interaction. For example, gazing at the listener to see how he/she follows the point, looking for information, expressing emotion (looking downward, attempting a satisfied or cynical smile), or influencing the other person's behaviour (establishing eye contact). As a consequence, in a bilingual group, all these details develop not only linguistic influence, but also cultural attitude (Stubb, 1983).

D'Acierno (2000) said that the difference between formal and informal language is not the same as controlled and uncontrolled gestures. He explains that while controlled gestures can serve to help disambiguate or make clearer what is being said, uncontrolled gestures might betray the speaker's communicative intention. Thus, in the light of this research, a distinction between controlled and uncontrolled gestures is maintained as follows:

a) controlled gestures refer to the speaker's personal creation

b) uncontrolled gestures refer to the speaker's cultural context.

(D'Acierno, 2000)

Within these two categories, it is distinguished that, while hand gestures often accompany linguistic expressions in order to focus better on the meaning of utterances, facial expressions, head movements and eye gaze may often indicate other messages. Specific motions of the head for example, give the equivalents of certain verbal messages such as "yes" or "no" but these movements may vary from culture to culture (Tubbs and Moss, 1994). Mehrabian (1967) found that when a speaker moves his head a lot, he conveys more positive feelings.

In addition, a thorough study on specific non-verbal behaviours was conducted by the American Psychological Association in 1975 that classified behaviours as being either "warm" or "cold" (Appendix 18). Knapp's (1978) summary of research indicates which cues are usually associated with "warm" or "cold" people – the use of facial expression, eye contact and body movements. Through these cues, we can judge a person's "warmth" or "coldness" while we speak, for example, a person who leans toward the subject, smiling, and looking directly at the listener enables the speaker to feel appreciated. Whereas, looking away from the speaker, leaning away from him, not smiling, and intermittingly drumming the fingers on the table indicated to the listener that the speaker is "cold".

Pertaining to the non-verbal cues that signal "coldness", Ruben (1992) identified hugging oneself, supporting the chin or cheek with an arm, touching one's mouth as signals

of discomfort and anxiety. He also stated that facial expressions are universal and facial muscular movements will help determine the emotions of the speakers or listeners. For example, a frown would indicate disagreements whereas a smile is a sign of concurrence. The difference arises in regard to events and circumstances when gestures are compared between cultures.

While bilingualism affects linguistic choice, cultures affect gestures, facial expressions, postures, as well as the proportion of all kinetic details. In this study, the semantic and pragmatic relationship between gesture and speech will be evaluated through the analysis of a spontaneous piece of conversation.

People produce gestures spontaneously and such details support, expand or conceal information conveyed by words (D'Acierno, 2000). As a matter of fact, the production of gesture and speech are so intimately linked, that one cannot say which one is dependent on which. It would therefore be interesting to evaluate the influence of kinetic and prosodic details in bilingual situations.

2.8 Duetting, Philharmony and Turn-taking strategies

The basic unit of interaction, where the participants in a conversation take turns in contributing their ideas or opinions, is called a turn. Allwood (1992) defined a 'turn' as a right to communicate and is a normative rather than a behavioural unit. The best known model by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (SSJ) (1974) shows how a current speaker in a conversation may select the next speaker to speak and that person is expected to respond.

Failure to do so would result in the selected speaker "losing a turn" and lose out in contributing to the conversation.

A reexamination of the SSJ model by Jamaliah (2000) reveals another phenomenon, that is duetting and philharmony, that appears to contradict the turn-taking theory. These take place in a multi-party talk where:

a) a duet involves two persons sharing a role either as auditor or speaker whilst

b) a philharmony involves more than two participants.   (Jamaliah, 2000)

In both contexts, the speakers and participants "work closely together, co-operating and monitoring each other's performance" (Jamaliah, 2000). The speakers process what the others have said and make their contributions when needed to achieve the same communicative goal or completion of a task.

Duetting and philharmony may be perceived as relevant examples of interactional co-operation. For example, as the conversation develops and grows, "the utterances produce the effect of single speaker unity where meaning is concerned" (Jamaliah, 2000: 92). This is in contrast to the SSJ model, in which the turns take place when the speakers are "competing for the floor", and interruptions or overlaps should not take place at all (Schegloff et.al, 1974 : 93-94). Below is an example of duetting and philharmony:

S(m)   : we must expose both sexes in the same roles/ er/ situation

H(c)   : another thing/ sorry/ men are always seen ah/ portrayed in places of
              authority especially in books/ the headmaster is always a male/ doctors/
              engineers/ [ARE ALL MALES]

O(c)	: [AND school prefects too]
W(m)	: mm/ mm
H(c)	: Outdoor activities are always for boys/ like playing kites/ sewing buttons are for girls =
O(c)	: = indoor activities are for girls/ that's it
W(m)	: You've made some important points/ all these while we take things for granted [ha]
S(m)	: [Ye:s] / this is important/ women are always seen as the weaker sex/ playing passive roles/ we've not focused our attention on this/ here is an effect through textbooks on our children //

(Jamaliah, 2000)

In the above example, speakers H and O are in agreement with one another. When H gives the impression that men are always portrayed in places of authority, citing positions such as doctors and engineers, O overlaps by adding "and school prefects too". H then introduces new information when he says that outdoor activities are for boys, O latches by saying "indoor activities are for girls". The two speakers are "speaking in unison and in tandem with each other, they are conjointly and symmetrically responding to S" (Jamaliah, 2000: 103) who initially debates that both sexes should be portrayed in the same role.

In 1967, Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson wrote *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, which provided a general view of communication on the basis of psychiatric study and therapy. The Watzlawick-Beavin-Jackson model, portrayed communication as a process involving a give-and-take of messages between individuals. The perspective stressed the view that communication is not something that occurs only when a source intentionally chooses to send messages. Rather, they asserted that because we are always behaving, "one cannot not communicate". Individuals exchange messages

through behaviour, the meaning of which varies with each person depending largely upon the communicative relationship between them. The directional flow of the conversation would be two-way and the major factors stressed in explaining communication outcomes are receiver, meaning, process and metacommunication.

Another model introduced by Dance (1967) viewed communication as a process, in which individuals encode and decode messages based on previous communication experiences. Dance's perspective added a concern with the dimension of time, suggesting that each communicative act builds upon the previous communicative experiences of all parties involved.

Having discussed the above models and processes of communication, the researcher finds the model used by Jamaliah (2000) is the most relevant to this study.

2.9 "Budi Bahasa"

The "budi bahasa" system or finesse in behaviour would indirectly indicate proper upbringing. Some of the behaviour considered being polite or "berbudi bahasa" in the cultural contexts of Malaysia are:

a) not being forthright or assertive or aggressive;

b) not responding to a request with a direct 'no': even if a 'no' is used. this only temporary (Jamaliah, 1991);

c) not being blunt or direct in expressing one's views;

d) not causing interpersonal conflict or avoiding "loss of face".

In relation to the "budi bahasa" system, an understanding of face and politeness has to be achieved based on previous researches. Understanding these two concepts would enable the reader to perceive the relationship between the nature of an individual, the influence of the environment on his behaviour and how such behaviour affects the outcome of a discourse or conversation. Goffman (1959) introduced the idea that every individual is concerned with how he or she is perceived by others. An individual strives to maintain the identity he or she creates for others to see, particularly during a social interaction. Maintaining face, and not losing one's face is accomplished by protecting or preserving another speaker's face. This can be achieved through a number of politeness strategies, such as hedges, compliments and apologies (Goffman, 1967).

Using the concept of face, the concept of politeness was introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987). They discussed the two types of faces which are the negative and the positive faces. The definitions for both are as follow:

> The negative face is defined as the need to have one's will imposed upon, in which the want of every competent adult member in that his action be unimpeded by others. Positive face, on the other hand is the perennial desire that his or her wants (or actions/acquisition/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable.
>
> (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 37)

In other words, being polite is seen as accounting for both the negative and positive face. The behaviour that accounts for negative face needs is called negative politeness and the one that accounts for positive face needs is known as positive politeness.

Pertaining to relationships between communication, gestures and culture, studies have shown how these influence the interaction that takes place (Ruben, 1992). The researcher has found that the study done by Jamaliah (2000) is the most relevant to date. The study has looked at politeness and turn taking strategies as they are incorporated into the culture and attitudes of Malaysian speakers.

2.10 Communicative Strategies among Malaysians

As mentioned earlier, it is known that few studies have been conducted to identify the communicative strategies used by Malaysians, particularly in how the English language is used.

Nevertheless, a study conducted by Jamaliah (2000) was successful to a certain extent, in establishing the patterns Malaysian speakers use in the English language to achieve their intended meaning. The existence of the frequently used "you know", "you see", "lah", "ya" and the use of personal names (by using participants first names in conversation) in Malaysian talk is evident. It was also discovered that the most prominent principle in the Malaysian verbal communication is the "spirit of mutual accommodation" -- the understanding and respect each participant has towards the other participants involved in the discourse, regardless of whether the intention of the speech is to make suggestions, voice out opinions, clarify a point or emphasize an idea (Jamaliah, 2000). Jamaliah's study also reveals that the consistency of playing down of disagreement can be done in various ways, for example, to indicate the recourse to indirectness, the expression of soft disagreement and the use of softeners such as "lah" are employed (Jamaliah, 2000).

In a nutshell, Malaysian speakers generally attempt to maintain mutual respect towards one another a discourse with the hope that confrontations can be avoided by having a similar objective towards the "joint" and "collective" end of the discourse.

2.11 Role Playing

Role playing/simulation is an extremely valuable method that it encourages not only thinking and creativity, but also allows the students to develop and practice new language and behavioural skills in a relatively ***non-threatening setting*** (Tompkins, 1998). This is essential in order to gather authenticity in the subjects' use of the language. When they are relaxed, they are able to say whatever is on their minds without feeling they are right or wrong especially when they know they are not being evaluated.

Role plays allow subjects to be familiar with the situations given through either personal experiences or those experienced by others. They are able to use their creativity and make the situations as real as possible. This adds fun and enjoyment as opposed to the rigidity of other forms of discourse, for example, a debate or forum that has protocols and registers. As stated by Scarcella and Oxford (1992), role-playing [encourages] the participant in representing and experiencing some character type known in everyday life. This is further supported by Kaplan (1997: 28), who argued, "coping with unpredictability and building confidence cannot happen solely through discrete exercises, but require real and complete events".

A study done by Bonnet (2002) revealed that role-plays used among students improved the students' confidence as well as their debating skills. The results of the study showed that a few children (25%) reached the point of being able to make a choice immediately after the game. The goal of the discussion was achieved only at the end and some comments given by the experiment-takers were that they had learned "to have new ideas", "not to be afraid" and "not to fear". This further emphasises how role-plays can be non-threatening situations that encourage authentic speech.

2.12 Transcription Standards

Transcribing the discussions is essential for this study because, as opposed to an interview, the data collected does not have set elements such as frames or forms that the speakers needed to adhere to. 'Tape recording' can be described as containing "a full record of what was said throughout" and in this case, throughout the whole discourse (Buszi, 1997). While to a casual listener, the recordings may sound like a mere stream of words; to a researcher, the tapes contain a lot of information scattered throughout the discussion.

Using transcriptions to study the data collected provides many advantages. As mentioned by Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, (1993), this method provides naturally occurring data because :

1. the data is spontaneous

2. the data reflects what the speakers say rather than what they think they would say

3. the speakers are reacting to a natural situation rather than to a contrived and possibly unfamiliar situation

34

4. the communicative event has real-world consequences

5. the event may be a source of rich pragmatic structures

2.13 Conclusion

The need to use Standard English or the "correct" form of the language has been mentioned many times. However, inadequate exposure and knowledge have caused many basic deviations that can even be found in the speech of educated users of the language.

The deviations from the Standard English is now being tolerated and overlooked, as long as they do not interfere too greatly with the communicative process. This is evident in the spoken mode, especially in which Malaysians seem to feel quite free incorporating the features of the local dialect in both formal and informal situations.

Many studies have been done to understand the reasons for code-switching and code-mixing. Nevertheless, very few studies have been done to examine these strategies as well as other strategies that can be linked to the emergence of the variety of the Malaysian English – which is an identity of its own and has its own distinct features. This study would be significant as it will be able to contribute to the understanding of this aspect of the language from a group of Malaysian students' point of view, since most sources of reference come from other countries and not Malaysia.

Apart from verbal messages, non-verbal messages and gestures are contributing factors in making a discourse successful or unsuccessful. The studies done on these aspects

have been found to be helpful in understanding and interpreting non-verbal messages and gestures, particularly the one conducted by the American Psychological Association (1975). Nonetheless, references on non-verbal communication within the Malaysian context are few. On this note, this study hopes to give a new insight in understanding the other communicative strategies that help to make Malaysian English unique.