

## **CHAPTER 4 Data Analysis**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the analysis of the data from the news items collected at random from the National pages of the New Straits Times from 19 August 2001 to 1 September 2001. This discussion involves an analysis of the statistical breakdown of each category of lexical items and is an attempt to exemplify the use of these items.

This study intends to show that there is lexico-semantic variation in Malaysian English. This will be done by categorizing these lexical items. An attempt will also be made to exemplify the use of these items. This chapter discusses each category of the lexical items. This study attempts to show some characteristics of English used in a Malaysian newspaper.

The lexical items consist of data derived from the New Straits Times over a consecutive fourteen- day period. Some of these lexical items are commonly used by Malaysians and they have also been quoted by other researchers such as (Baskaran 1987, Wong 1981, Tongue 1974, Platt and Webber 1980 and Lowenberg 1986) in their papers. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English (CIDE) was used as a norm of reference to verify meanings. This dictionary has been chosen because it is

an established and reputable dictionary. In this study, lexical items refer to words, expressions and phrases used in Malaysian English.

#### 4.1 Coinages

Coinages refer to the creation of new lexical items with meanings, which are peculiar to the local environment. Adejiba (1987: 174) terms this innovation process as coinages. The process of coinages conveys the socio-cultural experiences in the Malaysian context. These lexical items are created to complete the lexical gaps caused by the absence of pre-existing lexical items in Standard English. Even when lexical items exist in English, the coinages are deemed more appropriate than the Standard English equivalents.

This study recorded 124 examples of coinages. These items are divided into three main types of innovations, as discussed in chapter 3. They are as follows:

- i. Existing lexical stock in English, which has produced new items or meanings such as the expression State Assemblyman in Malaysian English, which refers to a member of the State Legislative assembly.
- ii. Existing lexical stock in the mother tongue, like the word kampong in Malaysian English.
- iii. A hybrid of lexical stock of native or local languages plus English like the term peddling dadah in Malaysian English.

Table 4.1 shows details of the breakdown

Innovations	Number of items
1. Existing lexical stock with new meaning	29
2. Existing lexical stock in mother tongue	66
3. Hybrid of lexical stock of local languages and English.	28

Table 4.1

**4.1.1. Existing Lexical stock With New Meaning**

Lexical items from examples 1 to 29 in Appendix A are existing lexical stock in English which have been given new meaning. These are English words, which have meanings that depict the Malaysian scenario. Some of these examples are discussed below.

Example 1:

We care...Kebun Bunga State Assemblyman Dr Teng Hock Nan helping Ho Seng Yee (second from left) and Khoo Kay Chee (third from left) to prepare Penang's famous delicacies – rojak – at a charity fair held at St Nicholas Home in Jalan Bagan Jermal yesterday. (NST p 6, 19 August 2001)

The term State assemblyman refers to a member of the State Legislative Assembly. One has to understand the administrative system of Malaysia to appreciate why the term State Assemblyman has been coined. In addition to Parliament, which operates at the Federal level, each state in Malaysia has its own State Legislative Assembly, which has elected members and functions as the State government. The members of this assembly are referred to as State assemblymen as opposed to Members of Parliament.

#### Example No. 6

UMNO member Datuk Faisal Abdullah who was found guilty by the party's disciplinary board for indulging in money politics has accepted the decision "with an open heart" but wants the board to be more transparent. (NST p 2 23 August 2001).

In Malaysia, the term money politics refers to the use of corrupt practices to win positions of influence in political parties. This term is probably used instead of the word corruption to avoid hurting the sensitivities of the individuals involved since the word "corruption" carries harsher connotations.

#### Example No.10

"He was also believed to be involved in an armed robbery of a finance company in Ayer Keroh in January and a four digit outlet in Batu Berendam in February," he said. (NST p 15, 24 August 2001).

In Malaysia, the term four digit outlet has been coined to refer to shops which sell a four digit based lottery which is drawn thrice a week. This term is widely used by punters who buy this lottery.

#### Example No. 11

The Wang Kelian Traders Association has called on either, The federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) or the Kangar Municipal Council to manage the day market at the border outpost. (NST p 15, 24 August 2001)

The term 'day market' is used in Malaysia, to distinguish these mobile, roadside markets from similar ones held at night.



Example No. 12

Abdullah said to achieve Vision 2020 Malaysia was moving towards k-economy and teachers must meet the expectations and face the task of turning out students who are computer literate. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

In Malaysia, the term 'Vision 2020' does not refer to eyesight but to the government's policy of achieving developed nation status for the country by the year 2020.

Example No. 13

13 Social problems such as the Black Metal phenomenon and the moral decay among the country's Muslim youth were some of the challenges, which the ummah must overcome in the struggle to maintain independence of thinking among Muslims, he said. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

This example illustrates that in Malaysia, the term Black Metal does not refer only to music, but to immoral activities.

Example No. 14

Mithiran added that it was illogical for a bungalow, which usually consumes about RM 300 to RM 400 of electricity a month, to have a radically low bill instead. (NST p 4 26 August 2001)

The CIDE defines "bungalow" as "a house that has only one storey (floor)".

In Malaysia, the term "bungalow" is used to refer to any big house, with any number of floors, which is not attached to any other house.

Example No. 15

When they reached their flat on the third floor of Block C, a man wearing a motorcycle helmet with his face covered with a white towel told them to hand over their valuables. (NST p 4, 26 August 2001)

In Malaysia, all motorcyclists and their pillion riders are legally required to wear crash helmets. These crash helmets are usually referred to as “motorcycle helmets”

Example No. 16

The country is going through a moral crisis with various social problems faced by youths like dadah abuse and criminal activities on the rise, social activist Datuk Lee Lam Thye said today. (NST p 9, 26 August 2001)

The term ‘moral crisis,’ is frequently used in Malaysia to refer to problems faced by teenagers in the country.

Example No. 17

Mohd Ali urged all kindergarten teachers in the state to fulfill their responsibilities to educate the children and to inculcate positive values in them. (NST p 13, 27 August 2001).

In Malaysia, the term ‘positive values’ is frequently used to refer to moral values.

#### Example No. 18

The Melaka Tengah Health Office has ordered the closure of all 24 stalls at a food court in Bandar Hilir following the discovery of a rat in a plate of noodle served at one of the stalls yesterday. (NST p 15, 29 August 2001)

The word “stalls” in the example above refers to eateries. These are stalls that sell Malaysian food.

#### Example No. 19

Police believe they have busted a syndicate responsible for stealing handphones in the shops here with the arrest of two youths here last night. (NST p 13, 29 August 2001)

In Malaysia, the words ‘cell phones’ or ‘mobile phones’ are seldom used when referring to these items. Instead, the word ‘handphone’ is used.

#### Example No. 24

The launch was held at the Sungai Besi toll plaza where some 5,000 car stickers were distributed to passing motorists. (NST p 8, 31 August 2001)

The CIDE defines “plaza” as “an open area or square in a town, esp. in Spanish speaking countries, or a group of buildings including shops designed as a single development within a town”

In Malaysia, the term “toll plaza” refers to toll booths located at major highways.

#### Example No. 26

GP Joran 2001 registration head Ahmad Salim Bachok said early registrants would receive specially designed T-shirts. (NST p 14, 1 September 2001)

In the example above, the word 'registrants' refers to the people who register for the event.

#### Example No. 27

Tengku Habshah when revealing the incident recently, had said that the four Standard Two pupils, including one who had admitted to having watched a pornographic movie with his parents, were caught performing oral sex in a classroom in her school. (NST p 14, 1 September 2001)

In Malaysia, the word 'primary' is seldom used when referring to primary school classes. Instead, the word 'standard' is used.

#### **4.1.2 Existing lexical stock in the mother tongue**

Lexical items in examples 30 to 96 in appendix A are existing lexical stock in the mother tongue. The use of Malay titles in the English language in Malaysia can be seen in examples 31, 32, 33, 34, and 47.

#### Example No. 31

UTP chairman Tan Sri Dr Azizan Zainal Abidin, who is to make the announcement, has also been appointed as the five year old university's pro-chancellor. (NST p 5, 19 August 2001)

#### Example No. 32

An economics graduate from Cambridge University, Raja Mohar's last position, before retiring in 1988, was as Special Economic Advisor to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, a position he also held during the tenures of Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Hussein Onn. (NST p 5, 19 August 2001)

#### Example No. 33

In recognition of his services, Raja Mohar was conferred several honours and decorations, including the Seri Setia Mahkota (1992) which carries the title Tun and Panglima Mangku Negara (1976) which carries the title Tan Sri. (NST p 5, 19 August 2001)

#### Example No. 34

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said the implementation of the Islamic Administrative policies would give priority to spiritual development which would be followed by worldly development. (NST p 2, 19 August 2001)

#### Example No. 47

The royal couple who arrived at 11 am were greeted by Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Sakaran Dandai and his wife Toh Puan Siti Rukaiyah Datuk Panglima Abdullah, Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, State Cabinet ministers and heads of departments at the Tanjung Aru airport terminal, near here. (NST p 3, 21 August 2001)

These titles, (Tan Seri, Datuk Seri, Datuk, Toh Puan) show status and rank. The usage reflects Malaysian culture which gives accord to people of rank and this is usually manifested by using these titles. It also shows politeness on the part of the user.

Lowenberg (1986: 77) in his paper quoted similar examples in newspapers in Singapore and Malaysia. The use of Malay titles in Malaysian English is a unique innovation. In fact their use is so widespread that they frequently appear in ESL textbooks used in Malaysian classrooms.

There are also certain terms used in Malaysian English since the English equivalent even if paraphrased does not express the meaning as effectively or as exhaustively (Baskaran 1987: 81)

Examples of these are in Appendix A Examples number 41, 44, 45, 60, 79, and 90.

Some of these examples include the following:

#### Example No.41

IPOH - Sunday- Police arrested 41 dadah addicts who were waiting for their 'supply' in a raid at a rubber estate in Kampung Kepayang here this morning. (NST p 3, 20 August 2001)

The term "dadah addict" is used to refer to a drug addict. The English equivalent does not fully express the negative connotation carried by this term.

#### Example No. 44

Tajol Rosli said Dr Mahathir was expected to stop at Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman to witness the display of the biggest ever Jalur Gemilang. (NST p 8 20 August 2001)

"Jalur Gemilang" refers to the National Flag. This word is used to instill pride and patriotism.

#### Example No.45

The controversy over Orang Asli sculptor Yatim Mentri Bani took a new twist today when Orang Asli Affairs Department (JHEOA) deputy director general Yahaya Awang claimed that Yatim was no longer interested in pursuing a fellowship offered by an international art studio. (NST p 7, 21 August 2001)

Orang Asli is a word that refers to the aborigines in Malaysia. It literally means "original people" and is probably used to avoid hurting the sensitivities of members of this community who were previously called "sakais", a word that carries perjorative connotations.

#### Example No. 49

Her mother S. Lilly 43, said her daughter was abducted in front of their house in Jalan Cempaka, Taman Air Bemban in Kulai by three men, one of whom was armed with a knife, about 1.30pm. (NST p 7, 21 August 2001)

The term 'jalan' for road, has become so institutionalized that most newspapers and even ESL textbooks use it when referring to roads and road names.

Example No. 53

A young resident of Kampong Seberang Kota in Kuala Kedah watches warily as water in the Sungai Kedah estuary spills over its banks. (NST p 3, 22 August 2001)

This example is similar to example number 49. When referring to a river or its name the word 'sungai' is used instead of the word 'river'.

Example No. 54

Chan told the Dewan Rakyat last month that the scheme had been abused and that contracts of 16 vendors had been terminated for offering contributors cash instead of computers. (NST p 4, 22 August 2001)

The Malaysian Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The latter is usually referred to as the 'Dewan Rakyat' which literally means 'the People's Hall'.

Example No. 58

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang today dismissed claims that Syariah Bills to be tabled at the State Assembly sitting next week were drafted by the previous Barisan Nasional Government. (NST p 6, 23 August 2001)

The term 'Barisan Nasional' refers to the coalition of political parties which rule Malaysia. Although an equivalent English term 'the National Front', exists it is seldom used by the English media.



#### Example No.60

She said a recent photograph in an English daily, which depicted a woman scuba diver wearing the tudung showed that she held to the Islamic requirement for women to cover their hair. (NST p 7, 24 August 2001)

The word tudung in this example refers to the headscarf worn by Muslim women in Malaysia.

#### Example No. 79

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had announced that a merit-based system would be introduced from next year at public universities to ensure Bumiputera students take their studies seriously. (NST p 4, 28 August 2001)

Bumiputera is a word derived from Sanskrit which literally means "son of the soil". This term refers to the Malays and the indigenous people of Sabah and Sarawak who are considered native to the land and are accorded certain rights and privileges as compared to the "non-bumiputeras"

#### Example No. 90

"I have instructed all the Exco members and wakil rakyat to monitor the development in their areas to ensure they do not contribute to the flood," he told reporters after chairing the weekly Exco meeting in Seri Negeri. (NST p 16, 30 August 2001)

The term wakil rakyat literally means "people's representative" and it is used to refer to a Member of Parliament.

These words are widely used in the media and in ESL textbooks. These words are used instead of their English equivalents because they are said to be culturally and emotionally loaded and if translated, would lose their cultural bound association. (Baskaran 1987: 8)

Certain nouns and proper nouns referring to places, institutions and concepts were used in the news items (Appendix A examples no. 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93 and 96.) These terms have become stable usage.

Some examples of these lexical items are discussed below.

#### Example No. 35

The Royal London Circus, currently performing here, has teamed up with Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sultan Ismail in Kemaman, to raise money for the school's Charity fund. (NST p 6, 19 August 2001)

In this example, the name of the school is in Bahasa Malaysia. Although its English equivalent, The Sultan Ismail National Secondary School, exists, it is not used. These terms have become stable usage when referring to schools and other institutions of learning.

#### Example No. 36

The Malaysian Trade Union Congress today urged Tabung Haji to reconsider its decision to increase *haj* fares. (NST p 9 19 August 2001)

In this example, the Malay term Tabung Haji has been used instead of its English equivalent, The Pilgrim's Fund.

#### Example No. 37

Two building blocks housing the lecture hall and other facilities of the Mara Activity Centre in Jalan Telipot here were destroyed in a fire this morning. (NST p 9, 19 August 2001)

It has become standard practice in the Malaysian media to refer to road names as Jalan Telipot or Jalan Bagan Jermal (Example 40 Appendix A); instead of Telipot Road or Bagan Jermal Road.

The following examples illustrate certain proper nouns referring to places, institutions and concepts that were used in the news items.

#### Example No.48

They later visited the Menara Tun Mustapha in Likas Bay (NST p 3, 1 August 2001)

Menara Tun Mustapha refers to the Tun Mustapha Tower.

#### Example No. 51

The award, totaling RM 1,000 each, was presented to Form five students who obtained all A's in their recent Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia examinations. (NST p 14, 21 August 2001).

Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia refers to the Malaysian Certificate of Education, which is awarded to students who pass their secondary school examinations.

#### Example No 63

Meanwhile Sisters in Islam is marking Hari Wanita with a campaign to reduce delays in divorce cases. (NST p 3, 25 August 2002)

Hari Wanita, in the example above refers to Women's Day.

Another group of lexical items are items related to religion and festivals. These items are used because there is no English equivalent, which can be used to refer to them. Examples of these can be found in Appendix A, examples number 57, 65, 82, and 84,

#### Example No 57

Menteri Besar Datuk Sei Abdul Hadi Awang today dismissed claims that Syariah Bills to be tabled at the State assembly sitting next week were drafted by the previous Barisan Nasional Government. (NST p 6, 23 August 2001)

#### Example No. 65

Prayers were led by Ustaz Pirdaus Ismail, while the Imam Besar of the National Mosque, A. Jalil Daeng Perangreng, delivered the sermon. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

#### Example No. 82

More than 1,000 Malaysians will hold their Onam celebrations in conjunction with national day on Aug 31. (NST p 15, 28 August 2001)

#### Example No. 84

The 48<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Samajam will also be held the same day at 2.30pm (NST p 15, 28 August 2001)

In examples no. 82 and 84, the Malayalee language terms “Onam” and “Samajam” have been used because there are no English language equivalents for these terms.

### 4.1.3 Hybrid Lexical items

Hybrid lexical items are combinations of English lexical items plus local lexical items. These can be found in Appendix A, examples no.97 to 124. Some of these examples are discussed below.

#### Example No.97

The school submitted the proposal for the tie-up to the circus organizer, Novel Showcase Company Sdn Bhd, last week. (NST p6, 19 August 2001)

In the example above the name of the company, which is in English has been combined with the Malay abbreviation Sdn. Bhd., which means private limited. This is a common practice not only in the English language media in Malaysia but it is also evident in ESL textbooks in Malaysian schools.

Another example of this variation can be seen in the example below.

#### Example No. 100

According to a spokesman for Malaysia Airports Berhad in Miri, six of the departures were two each to Limbang and Marudi and one each to Lawas and ba Kelalan. (NST p 13, 2001)

Hybrid lexical items are also commonly used when reference is made to political parties and other organizations. The following examples illustrate this.

Example No. 101

Puteri Umno will propose to the Employees provident fund that it would give an automatic maintenance allowance to children of divorced parents who are EPF contributors, its protem chief Azalina Othman Said said. (NST p 14, 22 August 2001)

In this example, Puteri UMNO refers to the Women's Youth Wing of the political party called the United Malay Nationalist Organization.

Example No. 102

A villager in the area said the last time such a phenomenon took place, homes in the village as well as padi fields were flooded. (NST p 3, 22 August 2001)

The word 'padi' does not exist in the CIDE. Instead the word paddy fields is used and it is defined as 'a field planted with rice growing in water'.

Example No. 103

Kindergarten classes should be set up in all government-run schools, the State Wanita Gerakan proposed today. (NST p 6, 24 August 2001)

In the example above, State Wanita Gerakan refers to the State Women's Wing of the political party known as Gerakan.

Example No. 104

Badrul Hisham, who teaches at Sekolah Rendah Mambau, is also State Parti Keadilan Youth committee member. (NST p 7, 24 August 2001)

State Parti Keadilan Youth is a coinage, which refers to the State Youth Wing of the political party called Keadilan.

Following are some other examples of hybrid lexical innovations.

Example No. 105

Accompanying them was Jalan Che Ros and Kampung Dodol Rukun Tetangga sector secretary Hamzah Amir. (NST p 15, 24 August 2001)

Rukun Tetangga refers to neighborhood organizations that carry out activities, which among others, try to reduce petty crimes in their respective neighborhoods.

Example No. 106

He said initial investigation showed that the man could have been involved in a spate of armed robberies, motorcycle thefts, tampering of motorcycle chassis numbers and peddling dadah and VCDs. (NST p 15, 24 August 2001)

The hybrid innovation peddling dadah refers to peddling drugs.

Example No. 107

“Right now, Muslim women get a raw deal in the Syariah Court because of two reasons...a very conservative interpretation of Islam and inherent gender discrimination in all women-related matters. (NST p 3, 25 August 2001)

Syariah Courts refers to courts, which dispense Islamic justice.

Example No. 108

The project, organized by the Budi Penyayang Foundation and the Seberang Perai Utara and Tengah district education departments, is aimed at helping poor and needy children in the Kepala Batas parliamentary constituency. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

In the example above, the English word ‘foundation’ has been used together with the Malay words ‘Budi Penyayang’ to form a proper noun referring to a charitable organization.

Example No. 109

The Perak Tengah district was in the limelight today as some 250 patriotic Perak residents, among others, did their part in passing on the *jalur gemilang* to the next contingent in the ongoing nationwide Merdeka Walk. (NST p 7, 25 August 2001)

Example No 110

A total of 1,000 participants, including foreigners, have signed up for the Sept 2 Merdeka Run. (NST p 8, 26 August 2001)



#### Example No. 111

The annual event, to be held in conjunction with this year's Merdeka Day celebrations, is organized by the Penang Malay Chamber of Commerce, Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad, *New Straits Times*, Milo and Hotel 1926. (NST p 8, 26 August 2001)

In all three examples above, the word "Merdeka" refers to Malaysia's independence day. The word 'Merdeka' is used instead of Independence because it is an emotionally more loaded word.

#### Example No.112

The country is going through a moral crisis with various social problems faced by youths like dadah abuse and criminal activities are on the rise social activist Datuk Lee Lam Thye said today. (NST p 9, 26 August 2001)

In the example above, the term 'dadah abuse' has been used instead of 'drug abuse' because the word 'dadah' carries very strong negative connotations.

#### Example No 117

Also present was State Rakan Muda Brigade Committee chairman and Datuk Keramat State Assemblyman Lim Boo Chang. (NST p 14, 27 August 2001)

Rakan Muda, which literally means 'young friends' refers to organizations formed by the government for youths to prevent them from indulging in unhealthy activities.

These coinages are commonly used in Malaysian English and they even appear in ESL textbooks. The term Independence Day, the English equivalent for

Merdeka Day does not completely express the emotional connotations of nationalism carried by the term Merdeka Day.

Sendirian Berhad or its abbreviation Sdn Bhd is another term, which has been institutionalized in Malaysian English. Its English equivalent, Private Limited, is never used in Malaysian English when reference is made to any company.

## 4.2 Acronyms

A total of 23 (10.5%) of acronym induced lexical items are identified in this study. Examples of these lexical items appear in Appendix A (Examples no. 125 to 148). Some of these examples are discussed below.

### Example No. 126

UTP – Universiti Teknologi Petronas which is the Malay equivalent of Petronas University of Technology. (It should be mentioned that the word ‘Petronas’ itself is an acronym of ‘Petrolia Nasional’ whose English equivalent would be the National Petroleum Company)

### Example No. 129

On Wednesday, Yatim 55 told the NST that he had been trying to get JHEOA’s assistance to secure an international passport but told by the department that there was nothing it could do. (NST p 7, 21 August 2001)

‘JHEOA refers to the ‘Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli’ whose English equivalent would be ‘The Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Example No. 130

Zainuddin said it was Suhakam's right to make the report public but people would still question its sincerity. (NST p 3, 22 August 2002)

In the example above the acronym 'Suhakam' is coined from the words 'Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia' whose English translation is The Malaysian Human Rights Commission.

Example No. 133

The flag was unfurled on STAR's main field in an hour amid cheers and applause from those who attended the event. (NST p 7, 25 August 2001)

STAR is a school named in honour of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Example No. 136

TNB = Tenaga Nasional Berhad – which is the malay name for the National Energy Corporation

Example No. 140

HUKM – refers to Hospital Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia whose English equivalent National University of Malaysia Hospital, is never used by the mainstream media.

Example No. 142

UPSR – 'Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah', is the test that all primary school pupils sit for before continuing their education in secondary school.

Example No. 146

JAKIM - This acronym refers to the National Islamic Affairs Department.

Example No. 147

MPPJ – refers to ‘Majlis Perbandaran Petaling Jaya’ which is the Petaling Jaya Town Council.

Example No. 148

MPS – This acronym refers to “Majlis Perbandaran Seremban”. The words ‘Majlis Perbandaran’ refer to Town Council.

Out of the acronyms, 22 are Malay lexical items while two are in English. All these acronym- induced lexical items have established themselves. With the emergence of organizations and bodies to cater to Malaysia’s developing needs, a number of local acronyms have been coined to fit into the Malaysian identity.

#### **4.3 Semantic shift**

Semantic Shift, (Examples 149 – 169) has 20 lexical items which form 10.5% of the total number of items. These lexical items had their semantic range extended. Some of the meanings are different from the dictionary meanings because of Malaysian values, systems and way of life. Some of these examples are discussed below.

Example No. 149

“We believe the two old buildings caught fire because of a short circuit as all the students are on leave. (NST p 9, 19 August 2001)

The CIDE defines “leave” as “time permitted away from work for holiday or illness”.

In the example above, the meaning of the word “leave” has been extended to include semester break.

Example No. 150

Ipoh police chief Assistant Commissioner Ahmad Tejudeen Abdul Majeed said the team rounded up the addicts between 4.30 am and 12.30pm following a tip-off. (NST p 3, 20 August 2001)

The CIDE defines “round up” as “a gathering together of people, cattle, things etc.”

In the example above however, the term “rounded up” has been used as a substitute for the word arrested.

Example No. 151

Police arrested 41 dadah addicts who were waiting for their “supply” at a rubber estate in Kampung Kepayang here this morning. (NST p 3, 20 August 2001)

The CIDE defines estate as “a large area of land which is owned by a family or organization”

In Malaysia however, the meaning of the word “estate” is extended to refer to an oil palm or rubber plantation.

Example No. 157

State CID chief Assistant Commissioner Sulaiman Mahmud said today the victim was playing with two relatives in the compound of the man's house at 6 pm when she was lured in. (NST p 13, 28 August 2001)

The CIDE defines 'compound' as an enclosed area which contains a group of buildings. In Malaysian English however, this word is also used to refer to the yard of a house.

Example No. 158

The tragic event unfolded when the lorry driven by Mogan Sundram, which was carrying factory goods, rammed the lorry in front, which was filled with plastic goods and was driven by Pek Tee Kok, 64. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

The CIDE defines "unfold" as "to develop or become clear to other people".

In the example above however, the word unfolded has been used as a substitute for the word "occurred".

Example No. 160

Roslan has head injuries and was warded at the Tangkak hospital. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

In this example, the word warded, has been used as a synonym for the word 'hospitalised'

#### Example No. 162

Such mechanism would ensure that the Rural Development Ministry was pro-active in its approach, and at the same time take off some of the burden from the Finance Ministry. (NST p 16, 30 August 2001)

The term “take off” is defined by the CIDE as “to leave suddenly, esp. to leave the ground and fly”.

In the example above however, the meaning of the term “take off” has been extended to include “remove or reduce”.

#### Example No. 163

The 20,000 capacity MPPJ stadium will now host the men’s matches while the women’s tournament which kicks off on Sept 4, will be shifted to the Kuala Lumpur FA Stadium in Bandar Tun Razak. (NST p 1, 31 August 2001)

The CIDE defines “shift as “to move from one position or direction to another, esp. slightly”.

In Malaysian English, the word shifted is often used to mean transferred.

4.4 Transfer

There are three lexical items in this category (Appendix A, Examples 167, 168 and 169).

Example No. 167

The Public Relations Officer of the Kelantan Fire and Rescue Department Abdul Aziz Harun, said the fire was put out within 30 minutes. (NST p 9, 19 August 2001)

Example No. 168

“The 55 year old suspect is believed to have called the girl and offered her the money if she followed him to the bedroom,” he said. (NST p 13, 28 August 2001)

The process of the innovation of transfer of meaning seems like a direct transfer from the Malay language. The following table illustrates this.

Bahasa Malaysia	Transfer Innovation	Standard English
dipadamkan	Put out	Extinguish
ikut	followed	Accompanied
Barang barang	bagages	Baggage

Table 4.2 Transfer



#### 4.5 Semantic Under differentiation

This study recorded 17 items in this category (Appendix A, examples 170 to 187). Malaysian users of English seem to neutralize or under differentiate distinctions between certain lexical items. For example, the word good (Appendix A, example 170), which the CIDE defines as, 'very satisfactory because of being pleasant, enjoyable, of high quality, effective or suitable', has been used as a substitute for the word beneficial.

##### Example No 170

"We support causes which we believe are good for the community," Lee said. (NST p 6, 19 August 2001)

In the example above, the word beneficial would be a more appropriate choice.

##### Example No. 171

Thinking that his son was just telling tales Che Ani Md Daud 50, scolded the boy and told the boy to stop making up stories. (NST p 14, 23 August 2001)

The CIDE defines 'telling tales' as 'allowing a secret to become known'. However, in the example above, the meaning of this term is extended to include 'telling lies.'

##### Example No. 172

Two motorcycles, including one reported stolen and another fitted with fake number plates, were also seized. (NST p 15, 24 August 2001)

In Appendix A, example 172, the lexical item fake, which the CIDE defines as 'an object which is made to look real or valuable in order to deceive people' has been substituted for the word false.

#### Example No. 174

He said Rosdi was about to switch off the engine when he realized that his neighbour was burning rubbish nearby, and decided to move the lorry. (NST p 6, 27 August 2001)

The Cambridge International Dictionary of English, (1997: p 1478) states that, “You usually start a car, but turn off the engine”.

In Appendix A, example number 174, the lexical item ‘switch off’ has been substituted for turn off.

#### Example No. 175

The bodies of two brothers, who went missing after their boat capsized in a storm on Sunday, were recovered today after a 40-hour search-and-rescue effort. (NST p 5, 29 August 2001)

In the example above, no distinction is made between the word “in” and “during”, where the latter would be a more appropriate choice in this expression.

#### Example No. 176

His mother Misiyah Solimun said her son had invited relatives and friends to attend his birthday celebration on August 31. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

This example illustrates semantic under-differentiation between the terms “birthday celebration” and “birthday party”.

### Examples 177 and 178

“We want all stalls to be clean and if we are satisfied with the cleanliness, the operators will be allowed to resume their businesses,” he said. (NST p 15, 29 August 2001)

In the examples above, the words ‘clean’ and ‘cleanliness’ are used to mean ‘hygiene’ and hygienic’.

### Example No. 179

A young man’s wish to celebrate his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday on Merdeka Day never materialized when he was killed in a fire that destroyed his house at Kampung Kapa , near here, early this morning. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

This example illustrates semantic under-differentiation between the words “destroyed” and “gutted”. The CIDE defines these words as follows:

Destroy: - to cause, esp. in a violent way, to exist no longer; to cause damage.

Gut: - to destroy a building completely, esp. by fire.

In the example above no distinction is made between these two words.

4.6 Lexico- Semantic duplication and redundancy

Lexico-semantic duplication refers to the duplication of lexical items belonging to the same semantic field or the use of a superfluous modifier for emphasis (Bamiro 1994: 51)

Examples 188 to 205 in Appendix A are lexical items, which show lexico-semantic duplication and redundancy. Some of these examples are discussed below:

Example 188

The Fire and Rescue Department would conduct a thorough probe on the fire. (NST p 9, 19 August 2001)

probe – The CIDE defines ‘probe’ as ‘a thorough and careful examination of something’. Therefore, the word ‘thorough’ in this sentence is redundant.

Example 189

The four year-old girl who was found dead in a reservoir on Saturday, a day after she was kidnapped, was strangled to death. (NST p 7 21 August 2001)

...strangled to death... - The Cambridge International Dictionary of English ( CIDE ) defines the word ‘strangle’ as ‘to kill (someone) by pressing their throat so that they cannot breathe’. The words ‘to death’ as used in this sentence are redundant.

#### Example 191

Expert forensic pathologist Dr Shahidan Md Noor, who conducted the post-mortem this morning, said S. Maniarasi had been suffocated to death before her body was dumped into the reservoir. (NST p 7, 21 August 2001)

This example is similar to example 189 as the word 'suffocate' is defined by the CIDE to mean 'to cause (someone) to die because of a lack of oxygen'

#### Example No. 193

In addition, Sved Razak said consultants from local universities would be engaged to conduct studies on public response towards the plans planned under the masterplan. (NST p 15, 23 August 2001)

In the example above the word 'planned' is redundant as 'plans' are obviously 'planned'.

#### Example 194

The project, organized by the Budi Penyayang Foundation (Penyayang) and the Seberang Perai Utara and Tengah education departments, is aimed at helping poor and needy children in the Kepala Batas parliamentary constituency. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

The CIDE defines the 'poor' as 'needy people'. The use of the word 'needy' here is thus, redundant, and is probably used for emphasis.

#### Example 195

As such, teachers must be creative and innovative in their teachings. (NST p 2, 25 August 2001)

The CIDE defines 'creative' as producing or using original or unusual ideas' whilst the word 'innovative' is defined as 'different and new ideas'. As such, one of these words as used in this example is redundant.

#### Example 197

Abdul Rahman's wife, Toh Puan Majimor Shariff, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Khoo and his wife, Puan Sri Chui Kah Peng are also expected to join about 50 other State dignitaries in a 2km run for VIPs. (NST P 8, 26 August 2001)

The word 'dignitaries', according to the CIDE, refers to 'people who have an important position in society'. The use of the abbreviation VIPs (Very Important People) in this expression is therefore redundant.

#### Example No.198

Meanwhile, the car following behind the third lorry slammed into it and was, in turn rammed by the second car. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

In the example above, the word behind is redundant since 'to follow' means to 'to come, go or take place after somebody or something else'

#### Example No. 199

Abdul Razak warned the public to be cautious of anyone selling handphones at cheap prices as the items might have been stolen. (NST p 13, 29 August 2001)

The CIDE defines the word 'cheap' as 'costing little money or less than is usual or expected' while the word 'price' is defined as the 'amount of money for which something is sold.' The word 'cheaply' should have been used instead of the expression 'at cheap prices.'

#### Example No. 201

"We have to create better and better environment for these children," she said. (NST p 8, 31 August 2001)

In the example above, the expression 'better and better' is redundant. The expression 'a better environment' should have been used.

#### Example No. 202

Saturday's event will see 5,000 children and adults gather together to pledge their commitment to the well being of the children of this nation. (NST p 8, 31 August 2001)

In the example above, the word 'together' is redundant as the CIDE defines 'gather' as 'to come together as a group'.

Example No. 203

The historic event culminated with the Sultan striking a gong thrice and signing the declaration plaque at exactly noon. (NST p 15, 31 August 2001)

In the example above, the word ‘exactly’ is superfluous since the word ‘noon’ refers to exactly 12 o’clock in the afternoon.

Example No. 204

The Kulim municipality, covering 750 sq km, has a population of 191,160 people according to the 2000 census. (NST p 15, 31 August 2001)

In the example above, the word ‘people’ is redundant as the term population refers to the number of people.

In all the above examples, duplication seems to have been used to provide emphasis.

In Malaysian spoken English, it is quite common to hear expressions like, ‘He is very, very tall’, ‘You can see a lot of fat, fat people jogging in the park’, used for emphasis.

The lexical items in example 196, Appendix A. ‘went back’ to their home, and in example 198, ‘following behind’, are commonly used in Malaysian English.



#### 4.7 Ellipsis

The term ellipsis refers to the deletion of the head- word in the nominal group structure. (Bamiro 1994: 52)

Example: He bought a video (cassette player)

In the example above, the head word “cassette player”, in the nominal group “a video cassette player”, is deleted. For the purpose of this study, this process is also extended to the omission of articles, modifiers and plural markers.

There were 25 lexical items identified in this category (Examples 206 to 231, Appendix A).

These 25 lexical items include examples of the omission of articles, modifiers, verbs and the plural ‘s’.

In the examples below, articles have been omitted.

##### Example 206

He said this at the closing of a special defence course for Home Ministry’s Puspanita (Senior Government Servant’s Wives Association) members at Pulapa today. (NST p 13, 20 August 2001)

In this example, the definite article “the” has been omitted

“ civil defence course for (the) Home Ministry’s Puspanita”

#### Example 207

“Once the study is completed, the PSD would hand it over to a special committee before it is presented to (the) Cabinet. (NST p 6, 26 August 2001)

#### Example 211

A total of 1,000 participants, including 20 foreigners, have signed up for (the) Sept 2 Merdeka Run. (NST p 8, 26 August 2001)

#### Example 213

“IN many instances, youths are easily influenced by negative elements mainly because they do not have (a) sound relationship with their parents and brothers and sisters.” (NST p 15, 27 August 2001)

#### Example 217

The 14-day closure is also to enable health officers to carry out (a) thorough inspection at the food court to avoid a recurrence. (NST p 15, 29 August 2001)

#### Example 221

He added the winning team would get (a) cash prize and a certificate. (NST p 9, 30 August 2001)

#### Example 228

Saturday's event will see 5,000 children and adults gather together to pledge their commitment to the well-being of (the) children of this nation. (NST p 8, 31 August 2001)

In this category, another group of lexical items involved the omission of verbs. The following examples illustrate this.

#### Example 208

"One thing the public can be assured of is that whatever changes (are) recommended would only be for the overall improvement of the scheme," he said. (NST p 6, 26 August 2001)

#### Example 216

In Muar, two men died and four others (were) seriously injured in a five-vehicle pile-up at km 171 of the Tangkak-Malacca highway last night. (NST p 14, 29 August 2001)

#### Example 222

Why (are) many people willing to pay for high priced tickets to watch Manchester United...it is due to strong image...strategic marketing which is extraordinary when compared to the 60s," he said. (NST p 9, 30 August 2001)

#### 4.8 The Changing Role of English

The role of English has changed over the years in Malaysia. At one time English was the language of administration and education. Being good in English gave social and economic rewards to the people. People spoke English with the standards of correctness of the educated native speaker. Those who lived in the towns continued their secondary education in the English schools. The English medium schools of Malaya used English as a medium of instruction for all subjects. English literature was also taught. All public examinations were set from England. There were efforts made to speak the correct standard form and teachers provided the standard English model.

After independence, the role of English has changed. The importance of English is acknowledged and it is maintained as a second language. It is taught as a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools, by teachers trained locally. All other subjects however, are taught in Malay, which has become the medium of instruction under the new education policy.

This transition from Malay to English has naturally affected the mastery of English among the post-independence generation. The function of English changed from one of administrative to one of an auxiliary language. When a language (in this case, English, has gone on a long journey, experiencing varying emphasis at different points in its Malaysian life, as is so far removed from its country of origin, then the nationals will naturally use the language as they please to serve their own needs and purposes in whatever style they choose. (Gill 1994: 66)

Hence, the use of localized lexical items is tolerated and accepted.

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Wong describes this feeling well.

*‘Through political independence and growing political maturity, Malaysians have come to realize that no longer is it necessary or desirable to aim at a foreign standard of English for themselves.’*

*(Wong 1981: 94)*

Thus, some of these localized lexical items are commonly used in the media.

**4.9    Tabulation of data**

This study identified a total of 229 lexical items, examples of which can be found in Appendix A. Table 4.9 gives a breakdown of these lexical items according to categories.

Category	Occurrence (Number)	Occurrence (%)
Coinages	123	53.7
Acronyms	24	10.5
Semantic Extension	18	7.9
Transfer	3	1.3
Semantic Underdifferentiation	18	7.9
Lexico-semantic duplication	17	7.4
Ellipsis	26	11.0
Analogy	0	0
Total	229	100 %

*Table 4.3*

The table above shows that the highest percentage of lexical items are found in the Coinages category (53.7%). This is followed by the category Ellipsis, which made up 11% of the total. Acronyms made up 10.5% of the total number of lexical items. Both the Semantic Extension and Semantic underdifferentiation categories made up 7.9% each of the total number of lexical items. The category Lexico-semantic duplication made up 7.4% of the total number of lexical items. The number of lexical items in the Transfer category was negligible, making up only 1.3% of the total number of lexical items.