

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

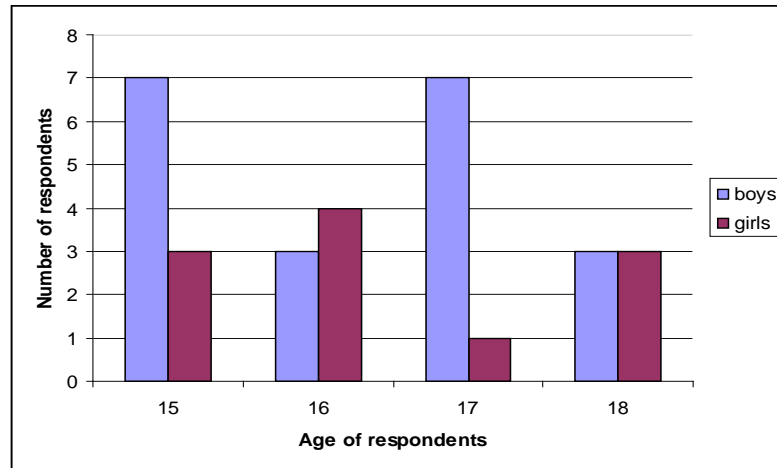
The first research question in this study is to ascertain what types of structures are used to form questions by DSE. The second research question is to identify what patterns emerge in the use of the different structures by the speakers. This chapter presents the results of the structured questionnaire administered to 28 members of the target group in relation to these two research questions. However, the first part of this chapter will first present the results of the personal questionnaire which enabled the selection of the TG members who fulfill the stipulated criteria (see 3.2)

4.1 PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents were familiar to the researcher and as such, purposeful sampling was done. All respondents were South Indians. The respondents who were selected were students from form 3 - Upper 6 thus they fulfilled the age requirement with an average age of 16.32 years. The age range of the selected respondents is shown in the figure 4.1.

A total of 20 boys and 11 girls were initially selected for this study. However, in this study, the gender of the respondents is not a criterion. It was based on random selection resulting in the varied numbers of male and female respondents. The respondents were chosen solely on the basis that they are a DSE.

Figure 4.1
Gender and the Age of Respondents



The chosen respondents are students of SMK Tengku Ampuan Rahimah, Klang which is a national school situated in Klang district, Selangor. All English teachers here are non-native speakers of English. The respondents also live in the surrounding residential areas of this school which can be considered a sub-urban area.

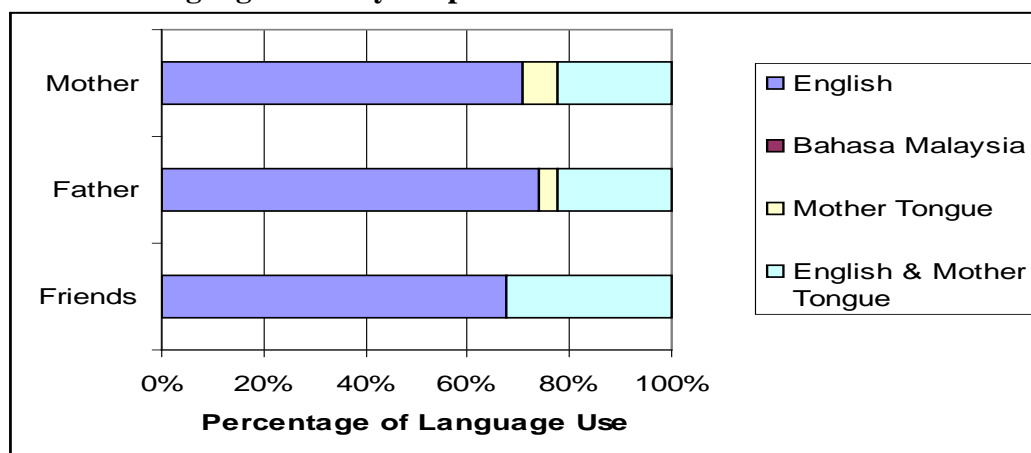
A total of 20 out of the 31 respondents studied at the primary school which is situated within one kilometer radius from their present school, SMK Tengku Ampuan Rahimah, Klang (SMKTAR). Nine others studied at the neighbouring schools in the vicinity not more than 2 km from SMKTAR. One respondent had her primary education in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan. Another respondent studied at the Methodist English School, Banting which is a government run school with non-native English speakers as their teachers. Thus, it can be concluded that all the respondents studied at National Schools as this is a required criteria.

As for the results obtained in the public examinations, all ten of the Form 3 respondents obtained a grade A for English Language for the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) in 2004, while all the Form 4 students also obtained an A in PMR exam which they sat for the previous year. All the Form 5 respondents secured an A for English Language for the Sijil

Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) which is the O Level equivalent. All six of the upper six respondents obtained a band 5 for the MUET- Malaysian University English Test (MUET) identifying them as “good users” whereby the highest band is a band 6. Thus, it can be assumed based on the exam results that all the respondents are competent users of the English language.

The language used at home to communicate with the parents and their language with friends is shown in Figure 4.2. This will show the respondents dominant language.

Figure 4.2
Languages used by Respondents with Parents and Friends

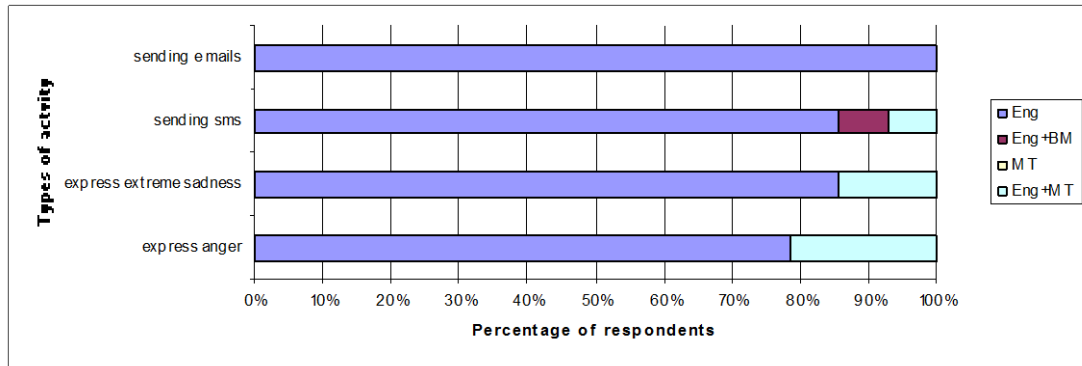


It is obvious from the results shown in figure 4.2 that the dominant language at home and among friends for this group is English. Although there are three respondents who communicate solely using their MT with one parent, (respondents who spoke to their mothers in their MT used Tamil while the respondent who used MT with his father used Malayalam) none of them used the MT to both parents. However, as to ensure that all results were of DSE, the three respondents were removed from the study.

To confirm that the remaining 28 respondents are DSE, four more questions were posed regarding their language use (see Appendix 1, Section 3). In general, when one is extremely angry or sad and is not in control of ones emotions, the dominant language takes precedence. Furthermore, teens today send a lot of e-mails and use short text messaging

services (SMS) and this may portray their dominant language. The results relating to those questions are shown in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3
Language Use of Respondents in Everyday Activity



None of the respondents solely used their MT to express these feelings. The respondents who identified that they used English and their MT and English and BM were asked to explain their response. For those who used a mixture of their MT and English, the use of the MT was confined to a word or a phrase. It did not dominate as the main language. Two respondents used English and Malay to send SMS text messages. It was for communication with their Malay friends and again confined to a word or a phrase. Thus, it can be concluded that all the 28 selected respondents were DSE and members of the target group. The structured questionnaire was then administered to them.

4.2 RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

As explained in chapter 3, the structured questionnaire was conducted individually with the assistance of another TG member to perform the required role play appropriate to the given situation (see 3.4.1). With eight situations (indicated as A–H) and 28 respondents, there were a total of 224 responses for each question type (refer to appendix 2).

4.2.1 WH INTERROGATIVES

The study was to establish if the respondents inversed the *wh* forms with the subject in questions and whether particles were used in forming *wh* interrogatives.

The following were considered as non-standard use of *wh* interrogatives :

1. Ellipsis of the auxiliary
e.g. *Where she going?*
2. The *wh* form is not in the frontal position
e.g.. *She is going where?*
3. Non-standard use of tenses
e.g. *Where did she went?*

The respondents were given 8 situations in which they were to use the target interrogative form (indicated as A – H : see appendix 2) for which the standard response would be:

- A1 What's the time? / What is the time?
- B1 Which topics came out? / Which topics were asked?
- C1. What's her name? / What is her name?
- D1 Which school is he from?
- E1. What did you buy for recess?
- F1 What did Pn ---- teach today?
- G1 What's your plan after school today? / What are your plans after school today?
- H1 Where did you buy the book?

4.2.1.1 OMISSION OF THE AUXILIARY VERB

The standard response will have the *wh* form in the initial position with the subject and auxiliary inverted. However, responses with the auxiliary omitted and the verb used in the past tense were found. One such example is respondent 13's response to situation E1 (refer to Appendix 2) (**R13 E1**):

WH	S	V	NP	
What	you	ate	for	recess?

instead of

WH	AUX	S	V	NP	
What	did	you	eat	for	recess?

The auxiliary in the example given above is omitted. The auxiliary *did* should be followed by a verb in the present tense. However, as the auxiliary is not used, the speaker has used the past tense instead. Other examples are:

R13 F1 *What you all did for Bio?*
(What did all of you do during Bio?)

R13 H1 *Where you got it from?*
(Where did you get it?)

Further examples of utterances where there was ellipsis of the auxiliary were with the use of the progressive form of the verb. (The standard forms are given in the parenthesis)

Wh +ing verb form

R15 G1 *What you doing this afternoon?*

(What are you doing this afternoon?)

R9 G1 *What you going to do later?*

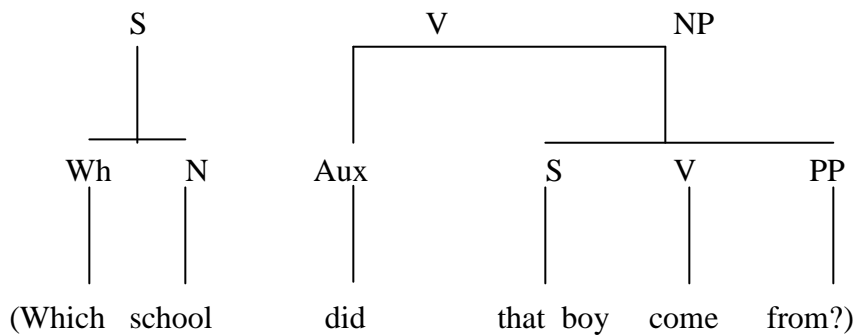
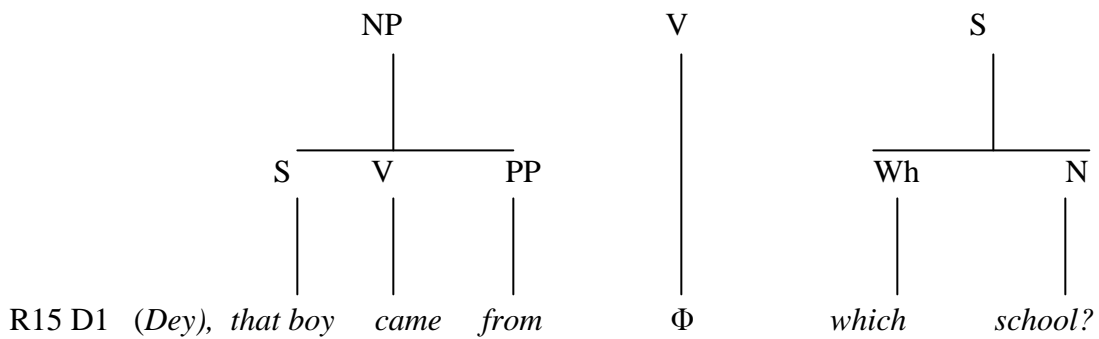
(What are you going to do later?)

R3 G1 *What you doing after school today?*

(What are you doing after school today?)

4.2.1.2 WH NOT IN THE FRONTAL POSITION

Some responses were considered non-standard *wh* questions as these structures did not have the *wh* form in the frontal position. All variations of such were found in situation D1. The situation is where the respondent enquires about a new classmate's previous school from a friend.



- R19 D1 *That boy is from which school, eh?*
- R1 D1 *That boy is from which school, huh?*
 (Which school is that boy from?)
- R13 D1 *He came from which school?*
 (Which school did he come from?)
- R28 D1 *He from which school, ah?*
 (Which school is he from?)

These responses use the *wh* questions but the *wh* forms do not have the standard frontal position. Three of these responses used particles and they were the particles *eh*, *huh* and *ah* (they will be discussed later in 4.2.1.4). All responses end with a rising intonation indicating to the hearer that the speaker is asking a question. Thus, the combination/interplay of the use of sentence with an internal *wh* form, the use of the sentence with a final particle, and the use of the rising intonation indicates that these are questions. However, as the recording was not done, the use of the rising intonation was not based on an instrumental analysis and it was just perceived to be so.

4.2.1.3 NON - STANDARD USE OF TENSES

Other utterances that were considered non-standard were those with non-standard use of tenses. They were

- R21 E1 *What did you bought for recess?*
 (What did you buy for recess?)
- R21 F1 *What did Pn Lis taught today?*
 (What did Pn Lis teach today?)
- R212 H1 *Where did you bought the book?*
 (Where did you buy the book?)

This particular non-standard form was produced by the same respondent in different situations. Of the eight *wh* questions given, only these three questions required the use of the auxiliary *did*. Thus, it is possible that this particular respondent is unaware that with the use of the auxiliary 'did' the verb has to be in the present tense.

There was a response which was classified as a non-standard *wh* question although the utterance did not use a form. The utterance is as follows:-

R25 A1 *Haren, time?*

(Haren, what is the time?)

There is ellipsis of the *wh* form and the copula resulting in the utterance being only the subject and the hearer's name. Yet it is clear that the speaker clearly intends to enquire about the time and as such this structure is a non-standard *wh* question with ellipsis of the copula and the *wh* form. This abbreviated form is expected in informal or casual speech and also common with native speakers.

There were ten utterances that used the indirect form of questions (embedded questions). They were as follows with the embedded questions in parenthesis.

R5 B1 *Can I know (what the topics they asked just now?)*

R6 B1 *Can you please tell me (what are the topics that are coming out?)*

R11 B1 *Do you know (what are the topics coming out?)*

R14 B1 *Can you tell me roughly (what are the topics asked?)*

R13 C1 *Do you know (what's the girl's name?)* (twice)

R14 C1 *Don't you know (what's her name?)*

R3 D1 *Dey, you know (which school he is from?)*

R6 D1 *Any idea (which school he is from?)*

R6 F1 *Can you please tell me (what Pn. Lis taught today?)*

The situation was explained twice but at both times the response was the same. Thus the matter was not pursued any further as this may influence the response to the situations.

4.2.1.4 THE USE OF PARTICLES IN *WH* QUESTIONS

As mentioned in 4.2.1.2, there were *wh* questions that were tagged by non-lexical particles such as *ah*, *huh* and *eh*.

The examples of standard responses where the particle *eh* was used were as follows:

- R8 A1 *What's the time, eh?*
- R9 B1 *What topic's coming out, eh?*
- R10 C1 *What's her name, eh?*
- R12 D1 *Which school is that boy from, eh?*
- R10 G1 *What's your plans eh, after school today?*

The example G1 has the particle *eh* in the middle position. The question ‘*What's your plans?*’ can actually stand as a complete question by itself. The phrase ‘*after school today*’ is to clarify the time the speaker is referring to. Thus, the particle is actually at the end position of the main question.

Some of the standard responses using other particles were

- R3 A1 *What's the time ah?*
- R1 D1 *Which school is he from, huh?*
- R1 D1 *That boy is from which school, huh?*
- R5 E1 *What you bought for recess, ah?*
- R12 G1 *What is your plans after school today, ah?*

Unlike the particle *eh*, the terms *dey* and *Mike* refer to a person and is not a particle which helps in the formation of a question. The term *dey* is often used to signify camaraderie especially among Indians. These terms *dey* and *Mike* were used as follows:

R22 A1 **Dey**, *What's the time, eh?*

R15 H1 *Where did you buy the book, **dey**?*

R19 C1 ***Mike***, *what's the girl's name?*

4.2.1.5 DISCUSSION OF THE FORMATION OF *WH* QUESTIONS

The results obtained from the 28 respondents are shown in Table 4.1. A total of 136 responses used standard structures while 78 responses used non-standard structures.

Table 4.1
The Use of Particles in *wh* Questions

	<i>eh</i>	Others	No particle	total
Standard use of <i>wh</i>	43	5	90	138
Non-standard use of auxiliary <i>wh</i>				
<i>Ellipsis of the copula</i>	28	8	27	63
<i>Tenses</i>	6	-	3	9
<i>Non inversion of aux and subject</i>	1	2	11	14
Total	32	10	33	86
Grand total	75	25	124	224

With reference to Table 4.1, 61.61% (138/224) of the responses were standard *wh* questions with 31.16% (43/138) of these standard structures being tagged with the particle *eh*. In total, 34.78% (48/138) of these standard responses used particles while 65.22% (90/138) of the standard structures did not use any. Therefore, it can be said that in verbal

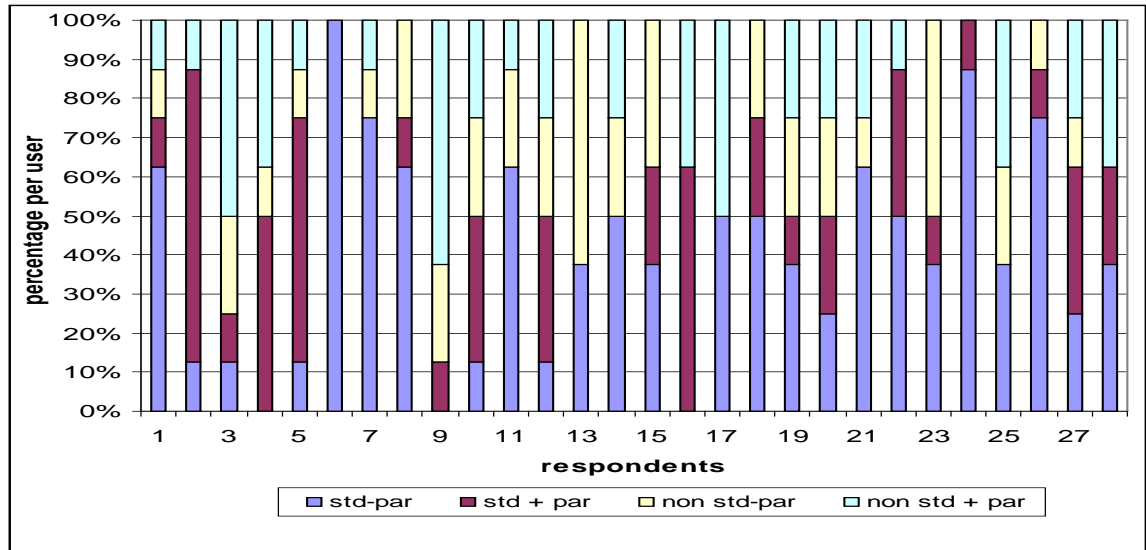
interactions in standard *wh* interrogatives, the TG's seldom uses particles at the end of the question form. However, if particles are used, the most frequently used one was *eh*.

The characteristics of non-standard *wh* questions were due to ellipsis of the auxiliary (73.26%), non-frontal position of the *wh* forms (16.28%) and the non-standard use of the tenses (10.47%). Compared to the standard forms of *wh* questions, the use of particles was more prevalent in the non-standard structures with almost half (48.83%) of the non-standard question forms tagged with particles. In these non-standard structures that have particles, 76.19% (32/42) were tagged with the particle *eh* signifying a preference for this particular particle, similar to its use in the standard form of *wh* questions.

Some of the other particles that were used were *ah* and *huh*. Terms such as *as Dey* and *Mike* were not considered as particles as they did not contribute to forming the questions but were instead terms of addressing a person. Thus, they were not used in determining if a response was standard or non-standard.

The standard forms occurred more frequently (61.61%) in *wh* questions and if these forms were used, most frequently a particle was not used. If particles were used, it would be the particle *eh*. Figure 4.4 shows the respondents individual response for *wh* questions.

Figure 4.4
Individual Responses To WH Questions



Non-std + par = non-standard forms with particles
 Non-std – par = non-standard forms without particles
 std+par = standard forms with particles
 std –par = are standard forms without particles

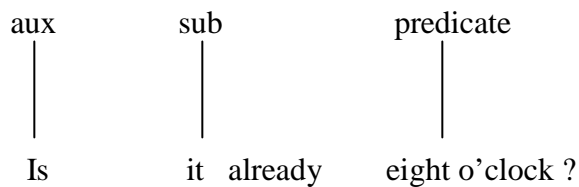
4.2.2 YES/NO INTERROGATIVES BEGINNING WITH IS/ARE.

The purpose of these questions is to enquire and not to seek confirmation or to express disbelief. As *yes/no* questions in the negative form may have other connotations (refer to 2.4.1) only positive questions were asked. The enquirer (respondent) has no idea whether the reply will be an affirmative or a negative and in this case he/she is not seeking confirmation. The reply to the question can be either a *yes* or a *no*. The respondents were given 8 situations for which the questions would begin with an *is* or an *are* in the standard form. They are:

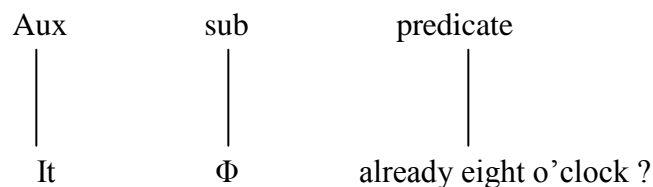
- A2. Is it 8 o'clock already?
- B2. Is/Was the test difficult?
- C2. Is that Rachael's mom?
- D2. Is he from ACS?
- E2. Is the canteen open today?

- F2. Is he a good teacher?
 G2. Is there tuition today?
 H2. Is the book expensive?

In the standard form, the auxiliary must be in the initial position followed by the subject. Therefore, a structure is considered non-standard if there is no inversion of the subject and auxiliary and as such the auxiliary will be positioned after the subject. An example is in situation A2 where respondents were to ask their friend if it was already 8 o'clock.



A *yes/no* question is also considered non-standard when there is ellipsis of the auxiliary where the subject is in the frontal position.

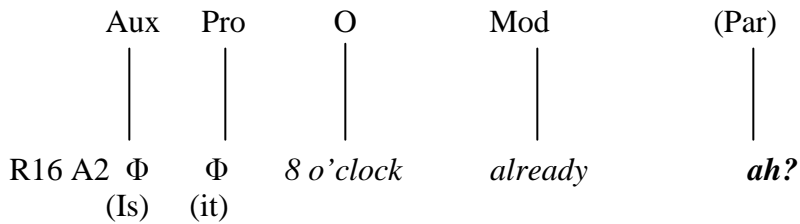


Some of the possibilities of how the responses were categorised were

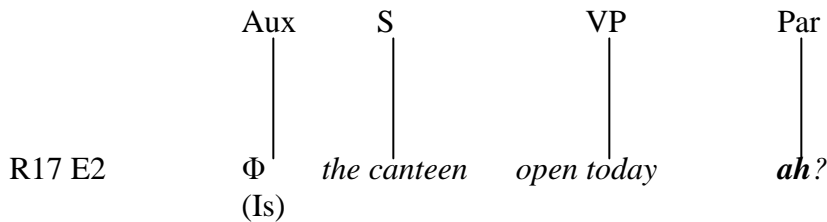
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Is it already 8 o'clock?</i> | (inversed with no particle) |
| <i>Is it already 8 o'clock, ah?</i> | (inversed with the particle <i>ah</i>) |
| <i>It is already 8 o'clock?</i> | (not inversed without any particle) |
| <i>It is already 8 o'clock, ah?</i> | (not inversed with particle <i>ah</i>) |
| <i>That boy is from ACS?</i> | (ellipsis of the copula with no particle) |
| <i>That boy from ACS, ah?</i> | (ellipsis of the copula with particle) |
| <i>8 o'clock already?</i> | (pro-drop and ellipsis of the copula without particle) |
| <i>8 o'clock already, ah?</i> | (pro-drop and ellipsis of the copula with particle) |

4.2.2.1 ELLIPSIS OF THE COPULA AND PRO-DROP

The results revealed that (refer to table 4.2), pro-drop with ellipsis in the non-standard form (33/97 = 34.02%) was common but sometimes only the auxiliary (20/97 = 20.61%) was dropped. The following is an example where the pronoun 'it' and the auxiliary *is* were dropped and the particle *ah* is used at the end of the question.



The following is an example where the subject was not omitted but the auxiliary *is* is dropped. The subject is probably retained as it is not a pronoun.



Further examples of *yes/no* with the non-standard structures with the ellipsis of the auxiliary *is/are* with the particles (in bold) are shown below. The standard forms are given in parenthesis.

- R3 G2 *Today got tuition **ah?***
- R18 G2 *You got tuition **or not?***
 (Is there tuition today?)
- R9 H2 *Expensive, **ah?***
- R12 H2 *The book expensive **ah?***
 (Is the book expensive?)
- R10 B2 *The exam difficult, **or not?***
 (Was the exam difficult?)

The two examples below have the particle at the sentence internal position

R11 G2 *Got tuition **ah** today after school?*

(Is there tuition after school today?)

R4 H2 *Expensive **ah** the book?*

(Is the book expensive?)

The phrases ‘*got tuition, ah*’ and ‘*expensive, ah*’ are structures with both pro-drop and ellipsis. The phrases ‘*today after school*’ and ‘*the book*’ are further information regarding the earlier questions. Thus, although they seem to be sentence internal particles, they are actually at the end of the main phrase whereby the main information is already conveyed. In the first examples above, the speaker can stop after saying ‘*got tuition, ah*’. However, the phrase ‘*today after school*’ is additional information so that the hearer knows that the tuition he is referring to is the one he has after school on that day. However, if the hearer is aware that the speaker is referring to that particular tuition, the second phrase is not necessary and as such is additional information.

4.2.2.2 **NON INVERSION OF THE SUBJECT AND AUXILLIARY**

Non inversion of the subject and the auxiliary occurs when the declarative form is retained and the position of the auxiliary and the subject is maintained. Some of the examples were

R23 B2 *The test was difficult, **ah**?*

R20 C2 *That’s Rachel’s mom, **ah**?*

R25 D2 *He is from ACS, **ah**?*

R17 E2 *The canteen’s open, **ah**?*

R17 F2 *He is good, **ah**?*

R27 G2 *You got tuition today, **ah**?*

R20 H2 *The book is expensive, **ah**?*

4.2.2.3 RESPONSES THAT WERE NOT *YES/NO* QUESTIONS

The total of 209 responses to *yes/no* questions were used for the purpose of analysis. 15 responses were omitted because the respondents used tags rather than particles, used the *wh* questions or they used *yes/no* questions beginning with *do*.

Examples of respondents using tags instead of particles are,

R21 A2 *It's already 8 o'clock, **right**?*

R23 D2 He is from ACS, ***right**?*

Examples of the respondents using *wh* questions are

R25 B2 *How was the exam just now?*

R19 F2 *How is the new Chemistry teacher?*

R21 G2 *How good is our new Physics teacher?*

The respondents also used *yes/no* questions beginning with *do* and not *is/are* such as

R13 C2 *Do you think that lady is her mom?*

R18 C2 *Do you think that's Amanda's mother?*

Such responses were omitted from the research resulting in 209 responses. The use of these tags may also be due to the fact that some of the respondents were unclear of their task. The response to the tasks in this section requires the respondents to produce *yes/no* questions and if they failed to do so or form other questions they have not fulfilled the task. Thus it was decided that it would be best to remove these responses from the analysis. The respondents were not 'forced' into giving the required response. This was because the respondents need to respond in a natural manner.

4.2.2.4 THE USE OF PARTICLES IN YES/NO QUESTIONS BEGINNING WITH *IS/ARE*

There were only three types of particles that tagged the *yes/no* questions and they were the tag *ah*, *or not* and *or what*. Examples of the particle *ah* used with standard forms of such questions were as

R8 A2 *Is it eight o'clock, ah?*

R24 B2 *Was the test hard, ah?*

R24 C2 *Is that Rachel's mom, ah?*

R16 F2 *Is he good, ah?*

R24 H2 *Is the book expensive, ah?*

Some of the non-standard structures tagged with the particle *ah* and *or what* were as follows:

R23 A2 *Eight o'clock already, ah?*

(Pro-drop and ellipsis of the copula tagged with the particle *ah*)

R15 B2 *Difficult or not?*

(Pro-drop and ellipsis of the copula tagged with the particle *or not*)

R14 B2 *The test hard, ah?*

R3 C2 *Dey, that one her mother, ah?*

(Ellipsis of the copula tagged with the particle *ah*)

R10 F2 *He good or not?*

(Ellipsis of the copula tagged with the particle *or not*)

R25 D2 *He is from ACS, ah?*

R20 E2 *The canteen is open today, ah?*

(Subject and auxiliary were not inversed and tagged with particle *ah*.)

The particle *or what* was used by the same respondent twice, once in a standard structure and once in a non-standard structure. They were

R13 D2 *Is he from ACS or any other school, or what?*

In this question, the respondent had no idea which school the new boy in school is from. The respondent was enquiring about the boy's former school from a friend.

R13 F2 *Better than Pn. Chong, or what?*

In this situation, the speaker was absent from school the previous day and does not know anything about the new teacher. Thus, he is enquiring about the teacher's ability to teach from a friend in comparison to his previous teacher. The copula and the pronoun of *is* and *he* was dropped thus in this example there is a pro-drop and a copula ellipsis and the tag *or what* is used.

4.2.2.5 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF YES/NO QUESTIONS BEGINNING WITH *IS/ARE*

There were 209 responses that were analysed in this aspect of the study. The results show that 112 (53.59%) of the responses used the standard forms while 97 (46.41%) of them were of the non-standard form. Table 4.2 shows the results obtained from the respondents for the *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are*.

Table 4.2
The Use of Particles in Verbal *yes/no* Questions Beginning with the Auxiliary *is/are*

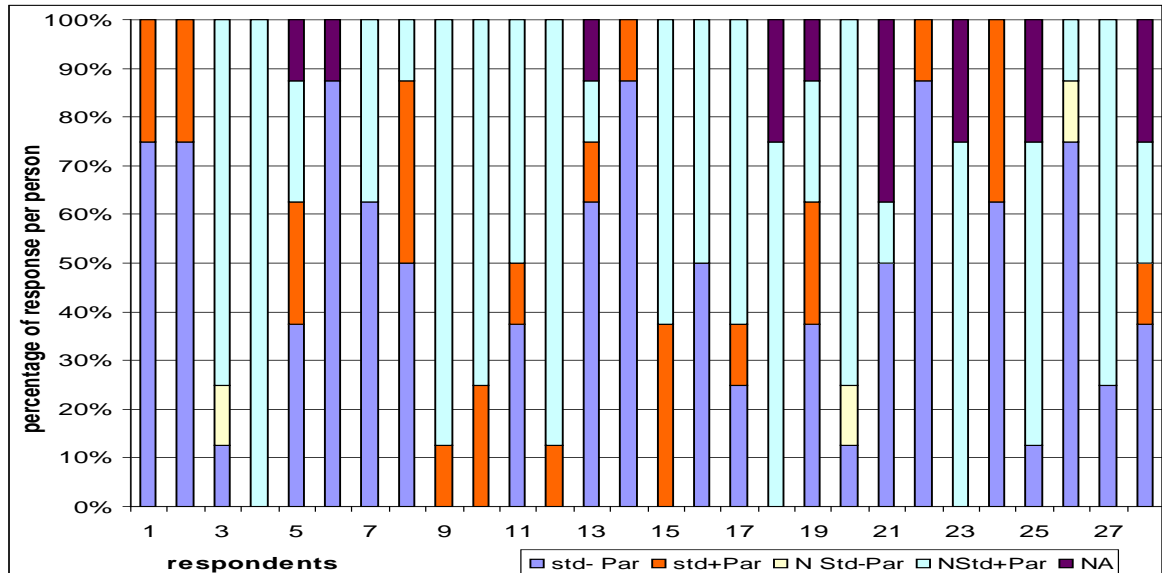
	<i>ah</i>	Others	No particle	total
Standard use of <i>is/are</i>	26	1	85	112
Non-standard use of auxiliary <i>is/are</i>				
<i>Ellipsis of the copula</i>	19	-	1	20
<i>Pro-drop and ellipsis</i>	26	6	1	33
<i>Non inversion of aux and subject</i>	36	7	1	44
Total	81	13	3	97
Grand Total	107	14	88	209

The difference between the use of standard structures and non-standard structures was only 7.18%. For both the standard and the non-standard structures that had used particles, it was found that particle *ah* dominated (88.43% = 107/121). However, it is interesting to note that of the standard structures, 75.89% (85/112) of the responses used no particles. On the other hand, when the non-standard structures were used, 96.91% (94/97) of the responses used particles and 86.17% (81/94) of these responses used the particle *ah*. This suggests that the formation of non-standard *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are* is associated with the use of particles. The non-standard structures consisted of the non inversion of the copula and the subject (45.36%), ellipsis of the copula (34.02%) or the pro-drop with ellipsis of the copula (20.62%). These structures are in the declarative form and as such the role of the particle enables the hearer to distinguish the utterance as a question.

On the whole, for the *yes/no* question form, there appeared to be no preference for either the standard or non-standard form. If particles tag these *yes/no* questions, the most frequently used was the particle *ah*. The non-standard forms were mainly characterized to the ellipsis of the copula. Even when pro-drop occurred in 20.62% of the non-standard structures, it occurred together with the ellipsis of the copula. Thus, ellipsis of the auxiliary alone occurred in 34.02% of the non-standard structures and it occurred together with pro-drop in 20.62% of these structures. Thus, on the whole, the ellipsis of the copula occurred in 54.64% of the non-standard structures. However, it is important to note that the non-standard question forms very much resemble a declarative.

The use of particles was found to be more predominant in the non-standard forms. Thus the role of the particles in these forms seems to be to mark these utterances as questions. Figure 4.5 shows the percentage of the type of response of each respondent in *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are*. Only 10 of the 28 respondents used the standard forms more than 50% of the time. This is an indication of the preference for the non-standard forms. Furthermore, only three respondents (7.14%) use the non-standard forms without particles and this happens only once in their eight responses. Thus it is quite evident that the non-standard form of the *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are* uses particles.

Figure 4.5
Individual Responses in Yes/No Questions Beginning With *Is/Are*



Non-std + par = non-standard forms with particles
 Non-std – par = non-standard forms without particles
 Std + par = standard forms with particles
 std – par = standard forms without particles
 NA = utterances that were not accepted

Respondent 6 is the only respondent who did not use any particles and all the questions were in the standard form. The one response that was not accepted from this respondent was because the respondent used an indirect question form. Based on an interview with this respondent, it was found that she used English dominantly at home with her parents. This respondent’s parents were very particular that she used standard English in her daily interactions.

4.2.3 YES/NO QUESTIONS BEGINNING WITH HAS/HAVE

The purpose of a question beginning with *has/have* is to inquire. It is quite similar to questions beginning with *do/does/did*. However grammatically when there are the words ‘yet’ or ‘already’ in the question posed, the questions formed should begin with *has/have*. Similarly, the present perfect tense should be used when enquiring about something in the

recent indefinite past (Leech & Svartvik, 1986: 66) (refer to 2.4.1). Thus based on the structured questionnaire (Appendix 2) the eight expected responses using SE were:

- A1. Have you finished your homework yet?
- B1. Have you sat for the exam yet?
- C1. Have you told her yet?
- D1. Have you talked to him yet?
- E1. Have you (already) had your breakfast today?
- F1. Have you seen Pn. ____?
- G1. Have you finished your BM tuition homework yet?
- H1. Have you already bought the book Pn. ____ asked to buy?

4.2.3.1 OMISSION OF THE AUXILIARY AND PRO-DROP

Similar to the *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are*, omission of the auxiliary *has/have* were common in non-standard forms for these questions. There were 85 responses and 18 of them were not tagged with a particle. Some of the examples were as follows:

- R19 B3 *You sat for the exam already?*
- R3 D3 *Dey, you talked to him already?*
- R7 D3 *You talked to him already?*
- R13 E3 *You had your breakfast today?*
- R12 G3 *You finished your BM tuition homework already?*
- R3 H3 *You bought the book Pn. Suraya asked to buy?*

There were eleven responses where the auxiliary and the pronoun were omitted and five of them were not tagged with a particle. They were:

- R20 A3 *Finished your homework already?*
- R9 B3 *Finished the exam already?*

R7 E3 *Had your breakfast already?*

R19 E3 *Had your breakfast?*

The examples shown above used the regular form of verbs such as ‘talked’, ‘finished’ and ‘bought’ where if the respondent is changing from the past tense to the perfect tense, the verb form is retained. However if irregular verbs are used as in E3 and F3, the verb form needs to be changed from ‘have’ to ‘had’, ‘eat’ to ‘eaten’ or ‘take’ to ‘taken’ and from ‘see’ to ‘seen’ (see Appendix 2). This probably explains why the use of the past tense was more prevalent in question E3 (refer to Appendix 2).

4.2.3.2 NON-STANDARD USE OF TENSES

There were 19 responses that were categorised as non-standard of which 13 were in situation F3. The expected response would be:

Have you seen Pn Suraya?

However the responses that were given were:

R3 F3 *You **saw** PN Suraya?*

R11 F3 *You **saw** Pn Suraya, ah?*

R4 F3 *You saw Pn Suraya or not?*

R3 F3 ***Saw** Pn Suraya?*

R23 F3 ***Saw** Pn. Suraya, ah?*

R9 F3 ***Saw** Pn Suraya or not*

This is probably because ‘saw’ is an irregular verb. If the intention of the speakers were to use *do*, *does* or *did*, the verb used would have been ‘see’.

Other examples that were considered non-standard due to the tenses used would be

R28 B3 *You sit for the exam already?*

R12 D3 *You talk to him already?*

R1 G3 *Have you did your homework?*

In the last two examples the respondent (same respondent) attempts to begin the question with *have* but is unaware that the irregular verbs of ‘spoken’ and ‘done’ need to be used. However, when the regular verbs are used, this respondent was able to use the standard forms.

4.2.3.2 RESPONSES THAT WERE OMITTED

38 responses were omitted from this study. 29 of these responses began the questions with the word *did* and as this question form is not analysed in this study, they were omitted. The examples are:

R1 C3 *Did you tell or not you broke her pencil?*

R1 E3 *Did you have breakfast today, ah?*

R25 F3 *Did you see Pn Suraya just now?’*

R2 G3 *Did you finish your BM tuition homework already ah?*

R5 H3 *Did you buy the book?*

The remaining nine responses used the structure of the simple past tense with the ellipsis of the auxiliary *did*. The non-standard forms using *did* were all due to ellipsis of the auxiliary.

R8 A3 *You finish the homework or not?*

R28 B3 *You sit for the exam already?*

4.2.3.4 USE OF PARTICLES

There were three particles used and they are *ah*, *or not* and *or what*. The most common particle was *ah*, followed by the particle *or not*. Only one response used the lexical particle *or what* and it was used in the standard form of the question as shown below:

R13 D3 *Have you talked to him or what?*

The particle *or not* could be the influence of spoken Bahasa Malaysia where this strategy is commonly used to enable the hearer to recognize the structure as a question.

Sudah beritahu dia **ke tidak?**

Already told her **or not ?**

Another example is

R23 D3 *You talk to him already or not?*

(Have you already talked to him?)

The auxiliary is dropped and the particles *or not* is used. The particle *or not* indicates to the hearer that he has the option to agree or disagree. These are mainly terminal particles but they can appear in the middle of a sentence/utterance.

R15 C3 *You told her or not you broke her pencil?*

R18 A3 *You already finished ah, the homework?*

'*You told her or not*' and '*You already finished ah*' can be questions on their own. The additions of '*you broke her pencil*' and '*the homework*' are only to give further explanation on the subject that is being discussed.

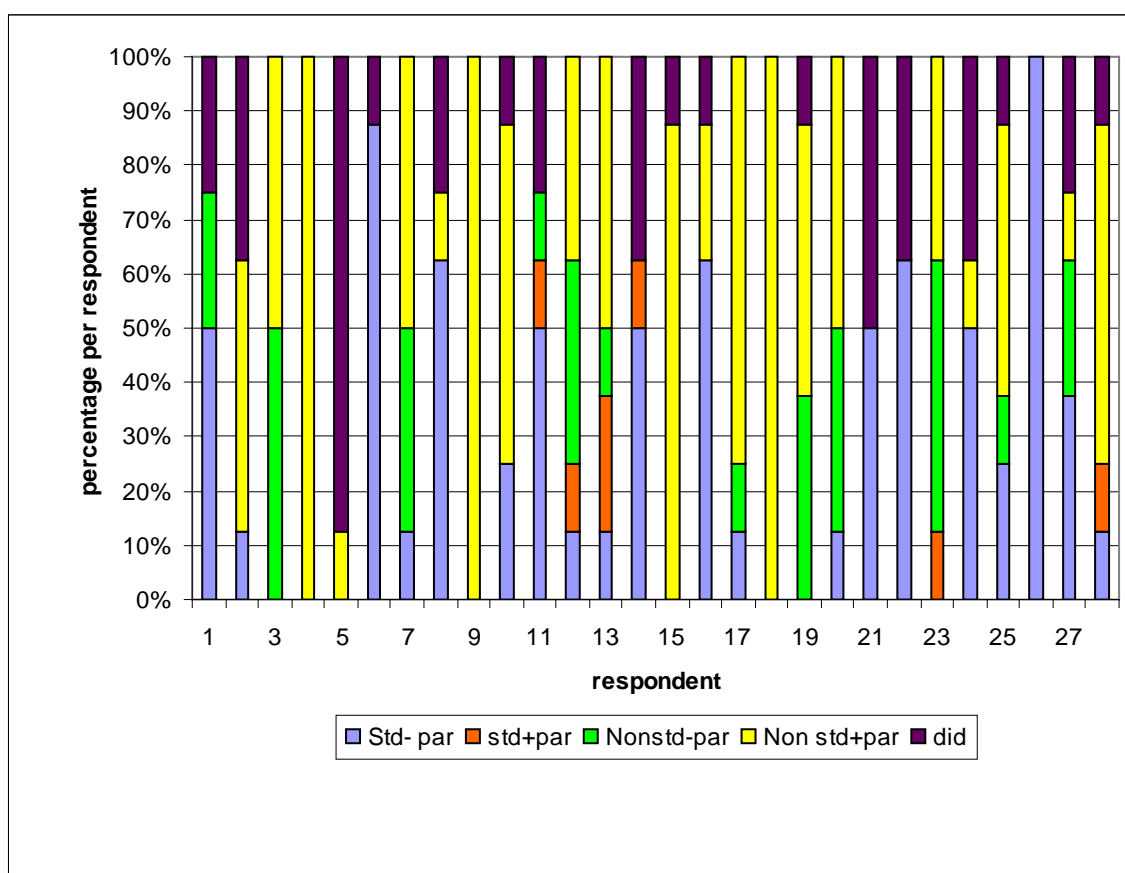
It is interesting to note that unlike questions beginning with the auxiliary *is/are*, in these questions, there is no case of non inversion of the subject and the auxiliary; the non-standard forms are all omission of the auxiliary *have/has*, due to pro-drop and wrong use of tenses.

4.2.3.5 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

A total of 38 (16.96%) of the responses in this study began with *did* (with and without the ellipsis of this auxiliary) as opposed to the auxiliary *have*. Thus, those responses were omitted because the purpose of this section of the research was to determine

the structures of *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have*. While explaining the situations to the respondents, the researcher used the words *already* and *yet* but these respondents still responded using the auxiliary *did* in the frontal position. The respondents were not prompted further for this may have influenced their actual responses. Perhaps for some of these respondents there was no difference in meaning between the uses of *did* and *have*. This is already happening in some Englishes such as the American English (Biber et al, 1999) (see 2.4.1). Figure 4.6 shows the use of standard and non-standard forms with and without particles and the use of the auxiliary *did* as used by each respondent.

Figure 4.6
Individual Responses in *yes/no* Questions Beginning with *has/have* and the Auxiliary *did*



- non std + par = non-standard forms with particles
- non std – par = non-standard forms without particles
- std+par = standard forms with particles
- std –par = standard forms without particles
- did = responses that used structures that begin with *did*

Out of the 28 respondents, 17 (60.71%) used the auxiliary *did* instead of *has/have* structure at the least once. Furthermore, it was found that out of the 38 responses that were omitted, 29 (76.32%) used the standard forms of a *yes/no* question beginning with *did* while the remaining nine (23.68%) formed questions with the ellipsis of this auxiliary *did*. Thus, it is possible that the respondents are beginning to show a preference for *yes/no* questions with *did* and only ten of the respondents used the standard form for these questions in at least 50% of their responses. This shows that in the informal spoken context, DSE have a tendency not to use the standard form in *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have*. Table 4.3 shows the summary of the DSE's response when constructing *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have*.

Table 4.3
The Use of Particles in Verbal *yes/no* Questions Beginning with the Auxiliary *has/have*

	'ah'	others	No particle	total
Standard use of has and have	4	3	64	71
Non-standard use of auxiliary				
Ellipsis of the auxilliary	51	16	18	85
Pro-drop and ellipsis	4	2	5	11
Tenses	12	2	5	19
Total	67	20	28	115
Overall Total	71	23	92	186

In these questions, it was found that of all the accepted responses, 38.17% used the SE while 61.83% used the non-standard form. This gives further proof that the DSE generally used the non-standard form in *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have*. These non-standard forms are due to the omission of the auxiliary (73.91%), pro-drop with ellipsis (9.57%) and the wrong use of tenses (16.52%). The DSE generally omitted the auxiliary *has* or *have* in *yes/no* questions beginning with this auxiliary. There were no cases of the non inversion of the subject and the auxiliary.

Again there seems to be a clear link between the standard structures with no particles (64/71 = 90.14%) and the non-standard structures with particles (87/115 = 75.65%). The other particles that were used were *or not* and *is it*. There seems to be a tendency to use particles with non-standard structures while standard responses tend to be not tagged with particles. The particle that was most frequently used was the non-lexical particle of *ah* which was used in 58.26% of the non-standard forms. Thus, it can be concluded that particles are dominant in non-standard structures for *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have* and the preferred particle as with other *yes/no* question forms, was *ah*. Particles are however uncommon in the standard structures. This is probably because the structure of the non-standard *yes/no* questions without the auxiliary could be mistaken for a statement and so the particle at the end of the utterance enables the hearer to identify the structure as a question. On the other hand, when the standard structure is used, this strategy is not necessary.

4.2.3.6 COMPARISON OF THE RESPONSES IN YES/NO QUESTIONS BEGINNING WITH IS/ARE AND HAS/HAVE

Below is the comparison between the results obtained for the *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are* and *has/have*. Firstly, in *yes/no* questions starting with *is/are*, the

non-standard structures are mainly where the auxiliary was not inversed whereas in questions beginning *has/have*, the non-standard structures were when the auxiliary was omitted.

In *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are*, it was found that the standard form is more often used over the non-standard form 53.58% (112/209). However this is inconclusive as the difference between the standard and non-standard is only 7.18%. However the non-standard forms were more often used in *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have* with a percentage of 61.83% in comparison to the standard forms which amounts to 38.17%. The results shown in table 4.5 also indicate that the use of the non-standard structures is more prevalent in this form of questions. Thus in *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have*, there is a preference for the non-standard structure. Table 4.4 shows the comparison of non-standard *yes/no* questions beginning with *is/are* and *has/have*.

Table 4.4
A Comparison of Verbal Responses to *yes/no* Questions Beginning with the Auxiliary *is/are* and the Auxiliary *has/have*

NonStd. Forms	Auxiliary	no particles	particles	total
Ellipsis of the auxiliary	Is/are	1.1%	19.59%	20.62%
	Has/have	15.65%	58.26%	73.91%
Pro-drop and ellipsis of the auxiliary	Is/are	1.1%	32.99%	34.02%
	Has/have	4.35%	5.21%	9.57%
Non inversion of the subject and the auxiliary	Is/are	1.1%	44.32%	45.36%
	Has/have	-	-	0
tenses	Is/are	-	-	0
	Has/have	4.35%	12.17%	16.52%

In both non-standard *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have* and *is/are*, particles play a significant role. Another similarity between both of these questions is that the non-standard structures seem to support the use of particles mainly the particle *ah*. In the non-standard form, with questions starting with *is/are*, 83.35% (81/97) of the responses used the particle *ah* while in questions beginning with *has/have*, 75.65% (87/115) responses used this particle. This indicates that in *yes/no* questions in the non-standard form, the particle *ah* is often used probably to enable the hearer to identify the structure as a question. Furthermore, most of the non-standard forms in *yes/no* questions beginning with *has/have* are due to the ellipsis of the auxiliary (73.91%) but for the questions beginning with *is/are*, ellipsis of the copula (5.30%), pro-drop together with ellipsis of the auxiliary (34.02%) and a non inversion of the subject (45.36%) are the three common characteristics of the non-standard forms of *yes/no* questions.

4.2.4 TAG QUESTIONS

The purpose of a tag question is to confirm a doubt or a belief. For example if one says, “*You are happy, aren’t you?*”, the initial assumption is that the hearer is happy and the purpose of this question is to seek confirmation. The first part of the question states the respondent’s belief while the tag is the negative of this. Thus, a positive statement warrants a negative tag. To analyse the results, all the 224 responses were placed into 5 categories. The first category is when the responses are the standard response. Next is when the utterance ended with the word *right*. The third category is when the utterance ended with words or phrases or particles other than the word *right*. The next category is when the respondents use complete sentences apart from the initial question in order to confirm a question. Finally, the last category is when respondents used only one sentence without a

particle or phrase. The element of seeking clarification in utterances in this last category is unclear.

4.2.4.1 NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

For the negative tag questions, the expected standard responses for the eight given situations (refer to Appendix 2) would be as follows:

A4 You have finished your homework, haven't you?

B4 The test was easy, wasn't it?

C4 Their names are Susan and Rachel, aren't they?

D4 He looks nerdy, doesn't he?

E4 You brought nasi lemak, didn't you?

F4 He scolded you, didn't he?

G4 You have tuition after school today, don't you?

H4 You have finished all the questions, haven't you?

There was only one response using the standard for negative tags which was

R6 E4 *That's nasi lemak, isn't it?*

4.2.4.1.1 NON-STANDARD RESPONSES WITH NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

A total of 79.38% (154/194) of the responses with a standard structure used the word *right* in place of the tag. Examples include:

R28 A4 *You finished your homework, right?*

R22 C4 *They are Susan and Rachel, right?*

R28 E4 *You bought nasi lemak, right?*

There were four responses which were tagged with the question form of *Am I right?*. These were statements followed by a direct question seeking confirmation by the hearer of the speaker's statement.

R13 E4 *You brought nasi lemak. Am I right?*

R13 G4 *You have tuition after school today. Am I right?*

R6 G4 *You have tuition today. Am I right?*

R13 H4 *You finished all the questions. Am I right?*

Thus, there is a clear link between the negative tag questions and the use of the word *right* and *Am I right?* as a tag.

20.10% (39/194) of the responses used other particles or phrases. These particles or phrases may take the place of a tag. Below are some of the examples.

Y/N QUESTION FORM + FINAL TAG (NON LEXICAL)

R24 B4 *Was the test easy, ah?*

R6 E4 *Is that food you bought nasi lemak, ah?*

It is interesting to note that in situation B4 where the respondent had to ask for confirmation if the test was easy, only eight of the 28 respondents used the word *right*. The majority of the respondents used other ways such as *yes/no* question forms due to the pragmatic effect where students seldom admit that a test is easy even if it is so. Thus, to ask "The test was easy, wasn't it?" would seem too arrogant thus the phrase was not used.

Y/N QUESTION FORM + FINAL TAG (LEXICAL)

R26 A4 *Have you finished your homework or not?*

DECLARATIVE +SENTENCE FINAL TAG (NON LEXICAL)

R23 D4 *He looks nerdy, eh?*

DECLARATIVE +SENTENCE FINAL TAG (LEXICAL)

R18 F4 *He scolded you, right or not?*

R13 F4 *He scolded you, true or not?*

R28 F4 *He scolded you, is it*

R19 E4 *You bought nasi lemak, isn't it?*

DECLARATIVE FORM WITH SENTENCE INTERNAL TAG (NON LEXICAL)

R15 B4 *Very easy ah the paper?*

R4 E4 *Nasi lemak ah today?*

R3 F4 *You kena scolding ah just now?*

Although the tag is not at the final position, the initial phrase and the particle would suffice to indicate the speaker's intentions of seeking confirmation. For example:

Nasi lemak ah (today)?

The initial phrase of ' *Nasi lemak*' and the particle *ah* is enough for the hearer to know that the speaker is seeking confirmation. The word 'today' is added on as additional information for the hearer so that he knows that the speaker is speaking about this meal during recess on that day and not on any other day.

4.2.4.1.2 RESPONSES THAT WERE NOT ACCEPTED AS NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

A total of twelve responses used declaratives to indicate that they were seeking confirmation. The meaning is derived from the preceding statement and the following statement or question is where the respondent is seeking confirmation. The examples are below.

R13 C4 *I think they are Susan and Rachel. You same also?*

R6 D4 *He looks nerdy. Don't you think so?*

R26 D4 *I think he looks nerdy. How about you?*

R13 D4 *Do you think what I am thinking? He looks quite nerdy.*

These statements and questions are quite similar to the question *Am I right?*. However, in these cases the speaker has given his opinion and the hearer is being asked to respond by giving his opinion rather than confirming the matter and as such these questions were not categorized as tag questions.

The last category also involves the responses that were excluded in the analysis. They were not accepted because they were statements and questions without any particles or tags and thus did not seek confirmation of a doubt or belief. The examples of such questions are shown below.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

R13 E4 *Did you bring nasi lemak today?*

R26 F4 *Did she scold you?*

R11 A4 *Did you finish your homework?*

R21 B4 *Did you find the paper easy?*

R26 A4 *Did you bring nasi lemak today?*

R18 A4 *Doesn't the boy look nerdy?*

R14 A4 *Have you finished your homework from yesterday?*

R26 H4 *Have you done the work?*

R14 H4 *Have you finished all the questions?*

R14 C4 *Is that Susan and Rachel?*

R24 C4 *Are they Susan and Rachel?*

R24 A4 *Was it easy?*

WH QUESTIONS

R27 D4 *Dey, what happened?*

YES/NO QUESTION WITH THE SUBJECT AND AUXILIARY NOT INVERSED

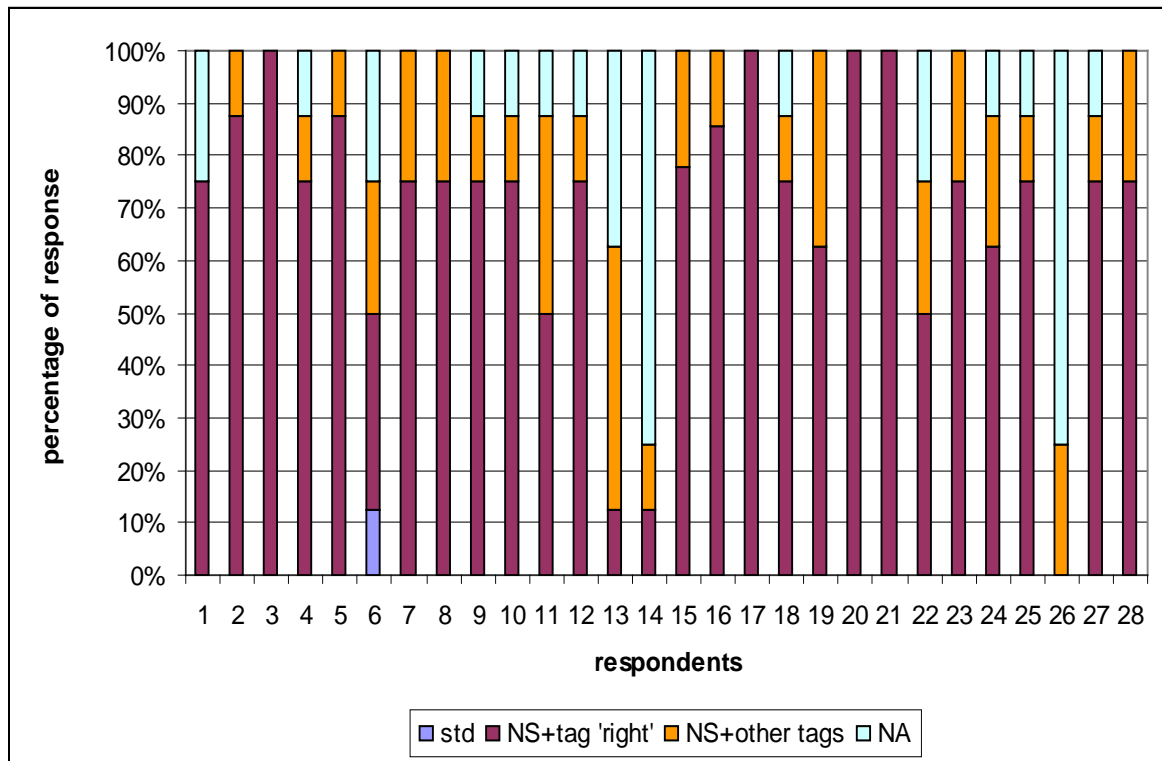
R25 A4 *You're sure you've done your homework?*

R1 F4 *He scolded you?*

Thus, there were 194 responses that were considered as negative tag questions.

Figure 4.7 shows the individual response of each of the respondents.

Figure 4.7
Individual Responses in Negative Tag Questions



std = standard response
 NS+ tag *right* = non-standard structures using the tag *right*
 NS + others = non-standard structures using other tags
 NA = utterances that were not accepted

22 of the respondents tagged the negative tag questions with the word *right* more than 50% of the time. This again shows that the tag *right* is most prevalent as a tag in negative tag questions.

4.2.4.2 POSITIVE TAG QUESTIONS

The purpose of this tag question is to confirm a negative statement where there is an element of doubt or a belief. For example if one says, “*You are not happy, are you?*”, the initial assumption is that he is not happy and the purpose of this question is to seek confirmation. The first part of the question states the respondent’s belief while the tag is the opposite of this. Thus, a negative statement is followed by a positive tag (refer to 2.4.4.2).

For positive tag questions, if the respondents use SE structures, the responses for the given eight situations would be:

A5 *You haven’t done your homework, have you?*

B5 *The test wasn’t easy for you, was it?*

C5 *That is not Rena, is it?*

D5 *He doesn’t mingle well, does he?*

E5 *You haven’t had your breakfast yet, have you?*

F5 *Pn Suraya is not in school today, is she?*

G5 *You don’t have tuition today, do you?*

H5 *You haven’t completed your workbook, have you?*

Of this only two standard responses were made and they were for question B5 and E5 (refer to appendix 2).

4.2.4.2.1 NON-STANDARD POSITIVE TAGS

A total of 70.26% (137/195) of the responses used the word *right* at the end of the statement. Among the responses were:

STANDARD FORM + RIGHT

- R28 C5 *That's not Rema, right?*
- R5 C5 *I don't think that is Rema, right?*
- R27 D5 *He doesn't mix well, right?*
- R28 F5 *Pn. Suraya is not in school today, right?*
- R25 A5 *You haven't finished right, your homework?*

Although the tag *right* is in the internal position, it is used to confirm the initial statement of '*You haven't finished*'. The phrase '*your homework*' is a further explanation to the initial statement.

NON-STANDARD + RIGHT

- R9 D5 *Not so sociable, right?*
- R19 H5 *Not yet finish your work, right?*

There is a pro-drop and ellipsis of the auxiliary.

- R27 E5 *You not yet have your breakfast, right?*
- R15 A5 *You not yet do your homework, right?*

There is ellipsis of the auxiliary and the *do* is in the wrong tense.

- R5 G5 *You got no class after school today, right?*

The word 'got' substitutes the present participle of 'have'

It is clear here that the word *right* plays the role of a tag to confirm a doubt. A total of 28.72% (56/195) of the responses used other lexical and non-lexical particles in place of the tag. The following responses illustrate such use.

STANDARD DECLARATIVE + NON LEXICAL TAG

- R28 B5 *The test was not easy **ah**?*
- R28 D5 *He doesn't mix well **eh**?*
- R1 D5 *He doesn't mix well **huh**?*

STANDARD INTERROGATIVE + NON LEXICAL TAG

R24 B5 Was the test hard ah?

STANDARD + NON LEXICAL TAG

R23 E5 Why ? Did not have breakfast **ah**?

R4 E5 Not yet eat **ah**?

Pro-drop and ellipsis of the auxiliary occur in these examples.

STANDARD DECLARATIVE + LEXICAL TAG

R13 H5 You haven't finished your work, **correct or not**?

R24 G5 You didn't have your breakfast **or not**?

R13 A5 You haven't finished your homework **or what**?

R13 F5 Pn Suraya is not in school today **or what**?

R22 C5 That is not Rema, **isn't it**?

In the example above, the respondents uses a negative tag in a negative statement.

R19 C5 The girl you were talking about is not Rema, **is it**?

The respondent used the general tag of 'is it'.

R22 D5 I don' think he is the mixing type, **isn't it**?

The respondent used the general tag of **isn't it**.

NON-STANDARD + LEXICAL PARTICLE

R7 A5 You haven't finished your work. **Am I right**?

R23 G5 After school today got no tuition, **right or not**?

Although **Am I right** is a question, the speaker is still seeking confirmation (refer to 4.2.4.1).

4.2.4.2.2 RESPONSES THAT WERE NOT ACCEPTED AS NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

A total of twelve of the responses did not use any lexical or non-lexical particle. These responses were not considered as tag questions because the speaker is asking for the hearer's opinion rather than confirming a matter. Some of the examples are as follows:

DECLARATIVES

R16 A5 *I'm sure you finished everything, lah.*

lah is not a particle to tag a question. It is not used to identify the utterance as a question.

The respondent uses the phrase 'I 'm sure' to state his opinion.

R27 A5 *I'm sure you've not finished.*

R6 D5 *I'm sure you haven't taken your breakfast.*

R6 G5 *I'm quite sure you don't have tuition tomorrow.*

R26 C5 *The girl doesn't look like Rema.*

R8 C5 *Don't tell me that's Rema.*

R7 D5 *She cannot mix with people*

R6 C5 *That's not Rema. She is nothing like what you described.*

R8 B5 *The test was not easy.*

R13 C5 *I don't think she is. She looks different.*

R15 E5 *You not yet have your breakfast.*

DECLARATIVE + INTERROGATIVE

R6 D5 *I think he doesn't mix well. Don't you think so?*

R6 F5 *I think Pn Suraya is not in school today. Did you see her?*

R13 B5 *The test was not easy. Do you think like me?*

R26 D5 *I don't think he mixes well. What about you?*

R26 B5 *The test was difficult for me. How about you?*

In the last group there were 17 responses that were not accepted as tag questions as there was ambiguity in the intention of the speaker in seeking confirmation. Furthermore, there is no tag used in these utterances. Below are some of the examples.

YES/NO QUESTIONS WITHOUT A TAG

R26 E5 *Have you taken your breakfast? You look kind of hungry.*

The speaker gives an opinion and states why he thinks so.

R26 F5 *Did Pn. Norli come to school?*

R26 G5 *Do you have tuition today?*

R26 H5 *Have you done your homework, yet?*

R7 B5 *Was the test killing?*

R22 A5 *Have you finished your homework?*

R14 B5 *Was the test very difficult?*

The speaker gives his opinion and asks the hearer for his. Here, there is no element of seeking confirmation.

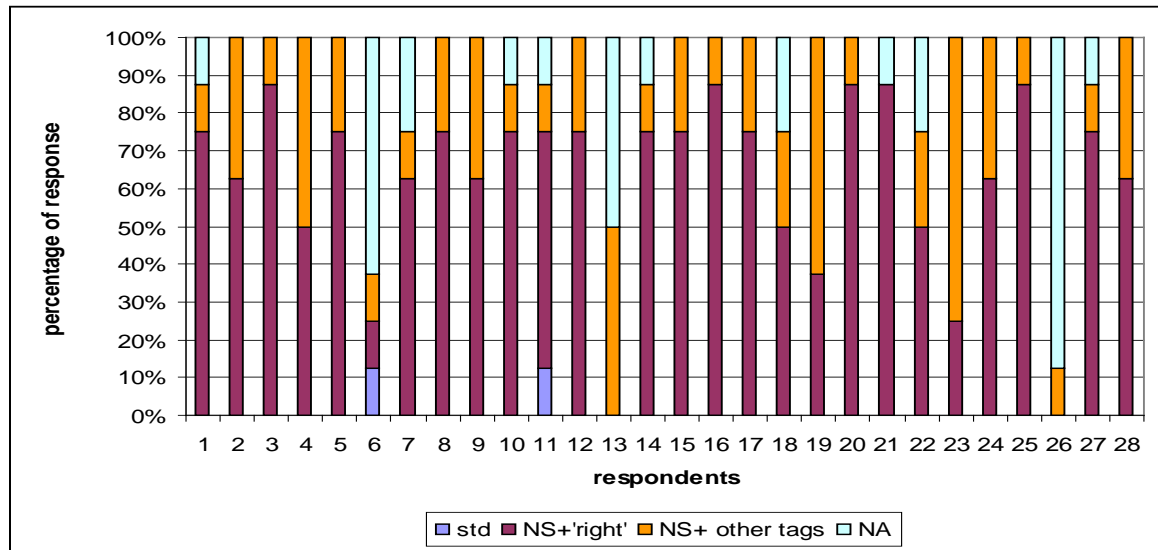
R22 B5 *Oh my God. Was it difficult?*

R22 G5 *You are free tomorrow, right?*

Although the speaker uses the tag *right*, the statement is positive.

Figure 4.8 shows the individual response of the TG members when using positive tag questions.

Figure 4.8
Individual Responses in Positive Tag Questions



std = standard response
 NS+ tag *right* = non-standard structures using the tag *right*
 NS + others = non-standard structures using other tags
 NA = utterances that were not accepted

Only two respondents did not use the tag *right* in all their responses. They were respondent 13 and 26 who actually had a lot of responses that could not be used because they were unclear of the task. A total of twenty respondents used the tag *right* at least 50% of the time, which indicates that this tag is very prevalent in positive tag questions.

4.2.4.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

It is evident that the use of the tag *right* dominates in the positive (70.26%) and negative (79.38%) tag questions in this variety. Furthermore, the individual responses as shown in figure 4.6 and 4.7 suggest the dominance of this tag in the tag questions. Thus, it can be concluded that in this variety, the DSE uses the word *right* in the place of a tag for both positive and negative tag questions but it is more evident in negative tag questions. This could be the influence of Malay where for example:

They are Susan and Rachel, aren't they? Can be translated to
Mereka Susan dan Rachel, betul tak?

(They are Susan and Rachel, right or not.)

The simplification of the tag *right or no* probably results in the tag *right*.

Table 4.5 shows the number of responses for the positive and negative tag questions.

Table 4.5
A Comparison of Responses to Positive and Negative Tag Questions

	Standard	Uses <i>right</i>	Uses others	Not accepted	Total
Negative tag question	1	154	39	30	224
Positive tag question	2	137	57	28	224

In negative tag questions, of all the responses, only 20.10% (39/194) of the responses used other tags such as *eh, ah, right or not, Am I right?* or the generalized tag of *isn't it*. In positive tag questions, more of other tags such as *ah, eh, isn't* (28.72%) were used. Thus, the assumption that there is a generalized tag of *is it and isn't it* is not true in this study. Furthermore, the tag *isn't it* was found in only 5 responses in the negative tag question and 8 times in the positive tag questions. Thus, the tag *right* was more prevalent in positive and negative tag questions. It occurred in 74.62% (291/390) of the total acceptable negative and positive tag questions. All respondents except respondent no. 26 used this tag in positive or negative tag question.

4.2.5 QUESTIONS IN THE INDIRECT SPEECH

When forming questions in the indirect speech the position of the auxiliary and the object needs to be inversed (refer to 2.4.5). However, the responses indicate that this was not a common phenomenon among the DSEs.

For questions in the indirect speech, the 8 standard responses would be

- A6 *He asked me why Tan's working is so different.*
- B6 *He asked me how the test was.*
- C6 *He asked me who the girl was.*
- D6 *He asked me who Chan's brother is.*
- E6 *He asked me if I knew when today's recess is.*
- F6 *He asked me where the English Society meeting today is.*
- G6 *He asked me if I knew why Tan was late for tuition yesterday.*
- H6 *He asked me where the shop is.*

Only twelve (5.36%) of the 224 responses used the standard structure. In most of the responses (94.64%), the subject and the verb were not inversed thus, retaining the declarative form as shown in the following examples:

- R26 A6 *He asked me why **is Tan's working** so different.*
- R28 A6 *He asked me how **was the test**.*
- R27 C6 *He asked me who **is that girl**.*
- R26 D6 *He asked me who **is Chan's brother**.*
- R23 E6 *He asked me if I knew when **is the recess***
- R22 F6 *He asked me where **is the English Society meeting today**.*
- R17 G6 *He asked me if I know why **was Tan** late for tuition yesterday.*
- R20 H6 *He asked me where **is the shop**.*

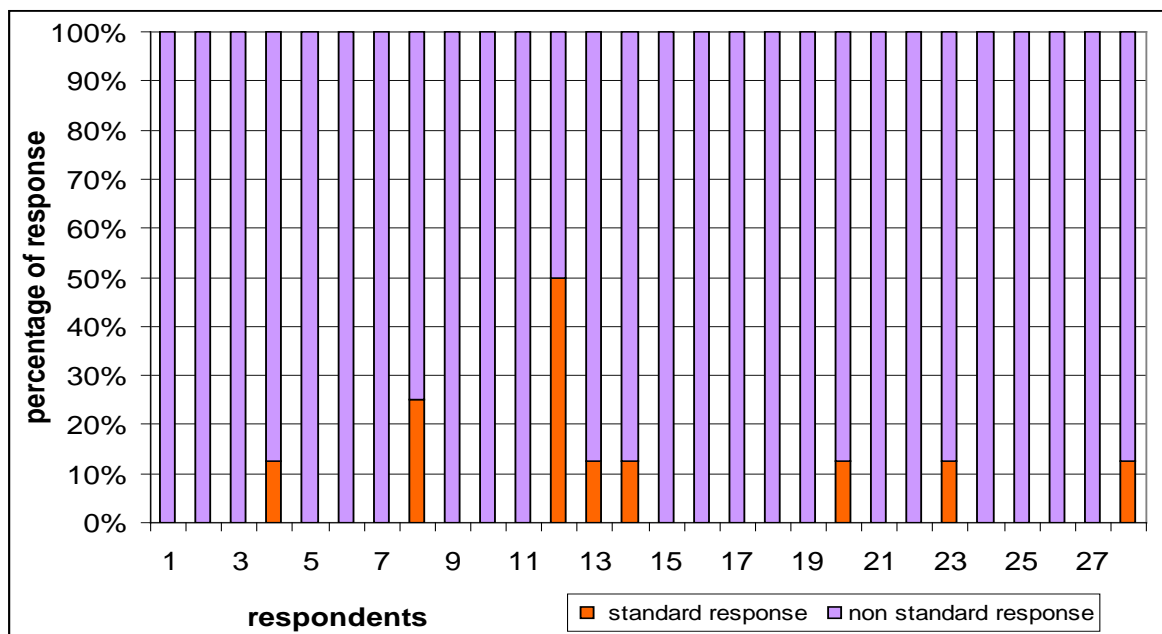
This proves that almost all the DSE did not use the standard structure when using questions in indirect speech. Table 4.6 summarizes the DSE's responses.

Table 4.6
Results of the Verbal Response of Indirect Speech in Questions

standard	12
Non-standard	212
Total	224

The findings show that only twelve of the responses used the standard form (5.36%). Thus 94.64% of the responses were non-standard where the respondents did not inverse the auxiliary and the object. Figure 4.9 shows the individual response of the respondents. Only eight respondents used the standard forms and only one respondent used the standard form 50% of the time. This strongly indicates that the DSE's may not have the standard form of indirect questions in their linguistic system.

Figure 4.9
Individual Responses in Indirect Questions



Thus, it can be said that the DSE do not use the standard structures when forming questions in the indirect speech. The initial question structure in the direct form is retained probably due to the process of simplification. Furthermore the meaning of the question is not altered thus the interlocutors understand the message conveyed.

This is in contrast to direct *wh* questions where the TG predominantly used the standard form while in the indirect form, the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary *did* not take place resulting in the use of non-standard forms. This result is dissimilar to what was suggested in Baskaran (2005). It was said that in ME the direct *wh* question is not inversed resulting in non-standard form while the in the indirect form, this structure is retained resulting in the standard form (refer to Chapter 2.5.5 and Table 2.5). Baskaran states that in ME the direct and indirect interrogative forms have the same word order. While this is true, the results of this study found that there is a high incidence of SE (70.91%) in *wh* questions. However, there was frequently no inversion of the subject and the auxiliary in the indirect form. The following example illustrates this phenomenon.

SE and ME (Direct *wh*)

Wh	aux	object
Where	is	the shop

SE Indirect *wh*

S	V	O	wh	S	aux
He	asked	me	where	the	shop
					is.

ME Indirect *wh*

S	V	O	Wh	aux	S
He	asked	me	where	is	the
					shop.

Thus, the question in the direct form is used without inversion in the indirect form. It is also interesting to note that particles were not used in indirect questions. This could be because in the *wh* questions in the direct form as well particles were seldom used (39.10%).

4.3 SUMMARY OF QUESTION FORMS

The first aim of this research was to identify what types of structures are used to form questions by the DSE. This was done using the structured questionnaire. In this chapter the various structures in direct question forms as in *wh* questions, *yes/no* questions and tag questions and in indirect questions have been discussed.

The second research question assumed to identify the patterns that emerge in the use of the different structures by the speakers. As the various question forms were studied, the results obtained are discussed for each of these forms.

In the informal speaking context, the standard *wh* structures were more prevalent. Particles were seldom used with SE structures in these questions. Non-standard structures in *wh* questions are mainly due to ellipsis of the auxiliary. The use of particles in the non-standard forms of *wh* questions is inconclusive but if particles were used, the particle *eh* seems to be the most frequently used.

In the direct *yes/no* question beginning with *is/are* in the informal speaking context, neither the standard nor the non-standard structures dominated. The non-standard forms were due to non inversion, ellipsis of the auxiliary and the ‘pro-drop’. Particles were more often used with the non-standard forms and the preferred particle is *ah*. This is possibly due to the fact that the non-standard forms are similar to declaratives and the particle at the end of the utterance enables the hearer to identify these structures as questions. However, this is not necessary for utterances in the standard forms which already have the inversion of

the auxiliary and subject in *yes/no* questions to signal that they are interrogatives and perhaps because of this, particles were seldom used with these standard forms.

However, in the direct *yes/no* questions beginning with *have/has* in the informal speaking context, the non-standard was more frequently used. The non-standard structures are formed mainly due to ellipsis of the auxiliary and usually used with the particle *ah*. This is probably because without the auxiliary (due to the ellipsis of the auxiliary) the structure of this question form is quite similar to a command. The role of the particle appears to be two fold: to enable the hearer to identify the question form and to sound less direct or abrasive (refer to 2.5.4). That is probably why standard forms are frequently used without particles.

In the informal speaking context, the DSE almost never used the standard tag in both positive and negative tag questions. The most common tag was the word *right*. . This is contradictory to the assumption that in ME *isn't it* and *is it* are a generalised tag. Probably as the DSE was of the younger generation, the tag *right* is in the repertoire of the younger generation who use this variety. The results of the individual assessment of the respondents tag (refer to table 2.6 and 2.7) also show that the generalised tag for this group of respondents is *right*.

The DSE did not inverse the subject in indirect question forms resulting in a high occurrence of the non-standard form. This does not fully support Baskaran's (2005) findings that the direct *wh* is not inversed resulting in a non-standard structure. According to Baskaran, the structure is retained in form without the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary when forming the direct question. While the direct and the indirect forms are similar, the non-standard structure occurred more frequently in the indirect question form compared to the direct question form. Thus, it is the direct question forms that are not inversed when forming the indirect questions.

The next chapter will discuss the results of the test. The test was conducted based on the assumption that the respondents would use a higher or more acrolectal variety of English compared to their spoken forms obtained through the structured questionnaires. Comparing the test results to the results of the structured questionnaire addresses the third research question that is the extent to which the DSE are able to use the non-standard forms that they use when forming questions.