UNIVERSITY MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate : Murugan Raj A/L Tanaraj (I.C: 680701-05-5883)
Registration /Matric No : TGB 100014
Name of Degree : MESL
Title of Project Paper : The Use Of Different Varieties Of Malaysian English Among Female Teenage Malaysians
Field Of Study : Sociolinguistic

I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:
(1) I am the sole author / writer of this work;
(2) This work is original;
(3) Any use of any work in which copyright exists was done by way of fair dealing and for permitted purposes and any excerpt or extract from or reference to or reproduction of any copyright work has been disclosed expressly and sufficiently and the title of the work and its authorship have been acknowledged in this work;
(4) I do not have any actual knowledge nor do I ought reasonably to know that the making of this work constitutes an infringement of any copyright work;
(5) I hereby assign all and every rights in the copyright to this work to the University of Malaya (UM), who henceforth shall be owner of the copyright in this work and that any reproduction or use in any form or by and means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of UM having been first had and obtained;
(6) I am fully aware that if in the course of making this work, I have infringed any copyright whether intentionally or otherwise. I may be subject to legal action or any other action as may be determined by UM.

Candidate’s signature
Date :

Subscribed and solemnly declared before;

Witness’s signature
Date:
Name :
Designation
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank the ALMIGHTY for giving me a chance to finish this research project through the angles that he sent in the form of family, lecturers and friends.

The task of completing my masters was not an easy one. Right from the very beginning, many internal and external factors gave me a hard time. Although there were many setbacks, there were always helping hands that pulled me through it. With the support of my family, friends, course mates, lectures from UM and my colleagues. At this juncture, I would to thank those who helped me through the task. I would like thank a few individuals who have helped me by giving me a lot of guidance, encouragement and motivation

Special thanks to Prof Dr. Stefanie Shamila Pillai for her help and ideas for bringing this research together. Her guidance and patience is really appreciated. Special thanks are also due to my wonderful friends, Wanitha Govindan, Elesabth Mary and Harjandar Kaur for their help and support through many group discussions and numerous telephone calls. I would also like to thank my respondents for giving me invaluable help in completing my work.

I would also like to thank my wife, Madam Arun Moly and daughter, Preiya Tharshini for putting up with me during the research period which proved to be a heavy task for me. Last but not least, I would like to thank the staff and teachers of Sekolah Kebangsaan Labu for relieving my classes and co-curricular activities during my entire course.

“THANK YOU”
ABSTRACT

This study was to determine the varieties of English used with different people in different domains among female teenage Malaysians. It was also carried out to find out to what extent these respondents are able to switch from the acrolectal to the mesolectal variety of English and at the same time how is language use is related to one’s language identity. The investigation was done by using various instruments such as interviews, reflective journals and questionnaires and written test to obtain much needed information to help facilitate this paper. The main findings were that these respondents use the mesolectal variety when they are communicating with their peers who are less proficient in English and family members and at the same time they use the acrolectal variety when they are in formal domains such as during examinations and English lessons in schools. These respondents were also able to switch from one variety to another according to their needs. It also revealed that the respondents were able to take up different roles at different domains. It was concluded that teenagers are able to use the varieties of English mentioned earlier, according to the domains and the people they are with and at the same time switch from one variety to another accordingly. It can also be concluded that the respondents take up different identities to avoid ‘othering’ and they resort to ‘styling’ to blend into the group that they are in and this means that language plays a pertinent role in forming identities.
ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti jenis Bahasa Inggeris yang digunakan oleh gadis remaja di Malaysia dengan orang lain dalam domain yang berlainan. Ia juga dijalankan untuk mencari setakat mana Bahasa Inggeirs jenis akrolektal dan mesolektal digunakan dan bagaimana penggunaan jenis-jenis Bahasa Inggeris ini berkaitan dengan identity seseorang. Kajian ini telah menggunakan pelbagai instrumen untuk mendapat maklumbalas dari para responden. Antaranya ialah sesi temuduga, borang soal-selidik, ujian bertulis dan journal refleksi. Penemuan yang utama kajian ini ialah para responden menggunakan jenis mesolectal bila berkomunikasi dengan ahli keluarga dan rakan sebaya yang kurang arif dalam Bahasa Inggeris dan menggunakan jenis akrolektal dalam situasi yang formal seperti semasa peperiksaan dan di dalam kelas Bahasa Inggeris di sekolah. Pada masa yang sama para responden dapat beralih dari satu jenis Bahasa Inggeris ke jenis yang lain mengikut keperluan mereka. Mereka juga menggunakan jenis Bahasa Inggeris yang sesuai supaya mereka dapat diterima dalam kumpulan yang mereka berinteraksi. Sebagai rumusan, boleh dikatakan bahawa responden memeluk identiti yang berbeza untuk mengelakkan 'othering' dan mereka menggunakan 'styling' untuk diterima ke dalam kumpulan yang mereka berada dalam dan ini menunjukkan bahasa memainkan peranan yang penting dalam membentuk identiti.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Title page i
- Original Literary Work Declaration ii
- Acknowledgment iii
- Abstract v
- Abstrak iv
- Table of Contents vi
- List of Tables viii
- References viii
- Appendix viii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Background

1.0- Introduction 1
1.1- English in Malaysia 1
1.2- Malaysian English 3
1.3- Language use in Malaysia 5
1.4- The present study 6
1.5- Objectives of the study 7
1.6- Research question 7
1.7- Significance of the study 8
1.8- Conclusion 8

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1- Introduction 9
2.2- Sociolects in Malaysia 9
2.3- Language used by teenagers 10
2.4- Multilingualism 10
2.5- Language use in specific domains 11
2.6- Identity 12
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0- Introduction
3.1- Respondents
3.2- Ethical issues and letter of consent
3.3- Instruments
  3.3.1- Questionnaire
  3.3.2- Interviews
  3.3.3- Writing test
  3.3.4- Reflective journal
3.4- Data analysis
3.5- Conclusion

Chapter 4: Findings

4.0- Introduction
4.1- Background of respondents
  4.1.1- R1IF17
  4.1.2- R2MF17
  4.1.3- R3IF16
  4.1.4- R4CF16
  4.1.5- R5IF16
4.2- Results of written test
Chapter 5 : Conclusion

5.0- Introduction 49

5.1- The variety of English used in schools and at home. 49

5.2- The switching of English varieties 50

5.3- The relationship between the usage of English and identity. 51

5.4- Limitations 53

5.5- Conclusion 53
List of Tables

1. Table 2.1 : The characteristics of sociolects of Malaysia 9
2. Table 3.1 : Terms used 21
3. Table 3.2 : Criteria for the selection of respondents respondents 22
4. Table 3.3 : Basic information of the respondents 23
5. Table 3.4 : Parents’ occupations 24
4. Table 3.5 : Respondents’ English grades 25
5. Table 3.6 : Instruments and rationale 26
6. Table 3.7 : Terms used in Reflective Journal 30
7. Table 3.8 : Sample of reflective journal 31
8. Table 4.1 : Language usage 37
9. Table 4.2 : Marks obtained from written tests. 38
10. Table 4.3 : Variety of English used in different domains 46

References 54

List of Appendices

APP 1 : Questionnaire 1 : Personal Details 57
APP2 : Questionnaire 2 : Open Ended 59