

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-STANDARD MALAYSIAN
ENGLISH**

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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**RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
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ABSTRACT

The use of Standard English has always been important in Malaysia especially in education. However, people start to incorporate the non- standard English in their everyday lives including education. The problem occurs when students start using it in school as they are used to it and the non-standard English, Manglish is not acceptable in education. Education institutions have aalways promote the use of the Standard English and it has been the only variety that is acceptable in our educational context. According to Peter Tan and Daniel Tan (2008), some people have considered the non- standard English as a stepping stone towards Standard English and some still try to keep the non- standard English out of the school context. In this study, 70 students from an International School participated and they have answered questionnaires in order to examine their perceptions as well as their attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English. Results show students approved of the non-standard Malaysian English being used in their daily lives but it was not appropriate to use it with teachers in school. This paper examines on the attitudes of secondary students in Malaysia towards non-standard English in Malaysia and to observe the students' reactions towards it in the educational context.

ABSTRAK

Penggunaan Standard Bahasa Inggeris adalah penting di Malaysia terutamanya dalam bidang pendidikan. Walaubagaimanapun, kita mula menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard dalam kehidupan seharian mereka termasuk pendidikan . Masalah ini berlaku apabila pelajar mula menggunakannya di sekolah kerana mereka telah terbiasa menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard, 'Manglish' yang tidak boleh diterima dalam sistem pendidikan. Institusi pendidikan sentiasa menggalakkan penggunaan Standard Bahasa Inggeris dan ia merupakan satu-satunya bahasa yang boleh diterima dalam konteks pendidikan. Dalam kajian ini, pelajar-pelajar dari Sekolah Antarabangsa mengambil bahagian dan mereka telah menjawab soalan- soalan untuk mengkaji persepsi mereka dan juga sikap mereka terhadap Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard di Malaysia. Keputusannya adalah pelajar mengakui bahawa Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard digunakan dalam kehidupan seharian mereka, tetapi ia tidak sesuai untuk menggunakannya dengan guru-guru di sekolah. Menurut Peter Tan dan Daniel Tan (2008) , sesetengah orang telah mempertimbangkan Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard sebagai batu loncatan ke arah Standard Bahasa Inggeris dan beberapa orang masih cuba untuk menjaga Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard di luar konteks sekolah. Kajian ini mengkaji tentang sikap pelajar sekolah menengah di Malaysia terhadap Bahasa Inggeris tidak standard di Malaysia dan untuk melihat reaksi pelajar di dalam konteks pendidikan.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

English has been used in Malaysia as a subject taught in schools as well as for communication among Malaysians. The use of the Standard English in Malaysia has always been important in education. However, problems began with the natural development of non-standard Malaysian English in Malaysia, which has spread widely across the country.

According to Peter and Daniel (2008), some have considered non-standard English as a stepping-stone towards Standard English, while some still try to keep such non-standard English out of the school context. According to Peter and Daniel (2008), the situation depends on people's attitudes towards the non-standard English and how students use it in their daily lives. Therefore, this research explores the attitudes of secondary students towards non-standard English in Malaysia.

1.2 Background of the problem

The use of English is one of the legacies since from British colonialization in Malaysia. When British first came to Malaysia, known as Tanah Melayu at that time, they introduced the English language to Malaysians and made the language one of the compulsory languages that Malaysians needed to learn in school. English was disliked by many locals in Malaysia during that period and led to many controversies at the time of the British colonialization (Puteri, 2011).

According to Gill (2005), after Independence in 1957, the government of Malaysia set out on a program to establish Bahasa Melayu as the official language, to

be used in all government functions and as the medium of instruction at all levels. Gill (2005) also mentioned that it did not however attempt to control language use in the private sector, including business and industry, where globalization led to a growing demand for English. Gill (2005) said that in 2002, the government announced a reversal of policy, calling for a switch to English as a medium of instruction at all levels.

When Malaysia gained independence from the British, Bahasa Malaysia or the Malay language became the official National language, which Malaysians have been proud of until now. They did not forget English as their second language, but it was not used regularly at that time. When Tun Dr. Mahathir Muhammad was the Prime Minister of Malaysia, he encouraged Malaysians to use English as their second language and made it compulsory for Malaysians to learn English starting from the primary level until the tertiary level.

According to Ambigapathy and Revathi (2004), in January 2003 Malaysia re-adopted the English language as a medium of instruction for Science and Mathematics in a move to keep abreast with scientific and technological development that is mostly recorded in English language. Recently, the issue of making Mathematics and Science in English has continued to invite a number of controversies in Malaysia. Many have been brought to it, but many also have disagreed with it because they think that it may have a bad effect on the National language. However, most Malaysians have accepted the use of English in Malaysia as their second language and use it in their everyday life.

However, Malaysians, especially students, seem to use the non-standard English in school as well as outside the school context. Some people may think that it

is not appropriate to use non-standard English, and some may have accepted the non-standard variety in Malaysia.

English in Malaysia has been categorized into three levels which are acrolect, mesolect and basilect. Jantmary and Melor (2012) mentioned that the “acrolect” is the most standard and highest form, the “mesolect” is used in informal situations and the “basilect” is the most substandard variety. According to Puteri Azazila (2011), acrolect is near to native. Those who speak at the acrolect level are those who look upon English as their primary language. Puteri Azazila (2011) said that only a few people speak at the acrolect level in Malaysia. According to Wong (1983), she considers the acrolectal variety or Standard Malaysian English to model itself after the standard formal and written native speaker variety of English, that is, the British English. Wong (1983) also said that the acrolectal variety is the variety, which ought to be taught and learnt in the Malaysian schools.

According to Puteri Azazila (2011), mesolect is used for daily conversations or communications by most Malaysians. Basically, that is Malaysian English. Puteri Azazila (2011) said that most academics, professionals, and other English educated Malaysians speak at the mesolect level. According to Gill (2002), the mesolect is the variety that is used for intra- national communication, between Malaysians of varying ethnicity, as a medium of local communication. Malaysia is a multicultural country of different backgrounds, ethnicities, and beliefs.

Last but not least, the third level of Malaysian English is called basilect. According to Puteri Azazila (2011), the basilect level is spoken by people who are not fluent in English language, who are not grounded in the grammar and are highly dependent on the sentence structure of a local dialect, mainly Malay and Mandarin.

Puteri Azazila (2011) gave examples such as a tourist guide who wants to give a tour to the tourist or a sidewalk seller who wants to bargain with the tourist. Hence, they need to speak English language in order to get buyers or convey messages to the native speakers of English so that the native speakers will understand better in such simple communication. However, Puteri Azazila (2011) mentioned that, Manglish (non-standard Malaysian English) is prohibited in education and formal events and this is because non-standard Malaysian English is a non-standard English with features that are not parallel with the Standard English in Malaysia. Thus, Puteri Azazila (2011) said that the educated Malaysians in the urban areas are speaking in the mesolect variety while the basilect variety is spoken by people in the rural areas. Generally, the language used by Malaysians are somewhere between the basilect and mesolect variety.

Non-standard Malaysian English is also regarded as a low variety in Malaysian English which is highly dependent on sentence structure of a local dialect and not on grammar. Murugesan (2003) claimed that non-standard Malaysian English has brought these people with different aspects together and it has been an informal language in daily conversation among Malaysians. As Puteri Azazila (2011) claimed, people who speak at the basilect level will only speak in simple and short sentences in order to reduce incomprehensibility, and it may also be regarded as broken English. Puteri Azazila (2011) also claimed that people who speak at the level of mesolect are the educated people in the urban areas and people who speak at the level at the basilect level are people who are from the rural areas.

The Standard Malaysian English will be allowed to use in schools, universities and in any other formal events. Though the use of non-standard English, non-standard

Malaysian English is more preferable among Malaysians in terms of oral rather than written use. Non-standard Malaysian English is used to communicate with one another in order to minimize the distance between each other. There are many reasons that people like to use non-standard English such as non-standard Malaysian English. For example, it minimizes the distance between two parties. As was mentioned before close with another party, a person tends to use non-standard English so that it will minimize the relationship between the two parties so that the purpose of communication between the two parties can be easily achieved.

Moreover, the use of the non-standard Malaysian English is to achieve a certain purpose. For example, the sellers will try to speak non-standard variety in order to persuade customers who are native speakers of English. Therefore, the use of non-standard variety helps the sellers to sell their goods.

Lastly, people tend to use the non-standard variety due to wanting a sense of belonging in a group. This means that a person might want to be in a group which speaks the non-standard English, and in order to be in that group a person will need to speak the non-standard English so that the person would not be left out.

The media also plays an important role in influencing Malaysians' use of non-standard Malaysian English.

1.3 Problem statement

In 2013, former Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Muhammad expressed his concerns in the use of English language among youngsters. He mentioned that there were some students from institutions of higher learning who did not master the language, resulting in them not getting employment.

According to Wong Irene (1978), a standard model of English is still demanded on the formal level, particularly with regard to written language and specifically in the area of grammar. Normazla Ahmad Mahir and Mariatul Kibtiyah (2007) mentioned that as gathered by Syed Hussein Al-Attas (1990), opposition to standardization in the use of English will only promote backwardness, especially among Malay Malaysian speakers. However, a point to be considered here is ‘what are we standardizing’ and ‘to whose standard are we prescribing to’. As stated in the preface of Rebaczonok-Padulu (2001), ‘Standard English’ deals with official language of the entire English-speaking world, and which is also the language of the educated English-speaking people.

According to Normazla and Mariatul Kibtiyah (2007), what has been called ‘Manglish’ or ‘Mangled English’ or ‘Broken English’ by McArthur (11: 1998) is totally unacceptable. However, Normazla and Mariatul Kibtiyah (2007) also mentioned that non- standard Malaysian English, like other existing varieties can be standardized to accommodate the present needs of the speech community and global development. Alistair King (2012) mentioned that he frequently approached by parents who are anxious that their children should learn “correct” English and they are doubtful that the present school system can deliver as globalization becomes less of an option and more of a reality. Alistair King (2012) also said that there should not be emphasis placed on somehow stamping out (bad or wrong) Malaysian English, but rather recognizing the place and the usefulness of Basilect and Mesolect, while extending the repertoire to include Acrolect, a standard variety which is internationally accepted and still Malaysian.

The number of these students in public schools has increased substantially over time. From the 2000 US Census, almost 20 percent of US school-age persons speak another language at home. This has also happened in Malaysia, and students who do not speak English as their primary language at home and outside of school have difficulty in conversing in English in communication.

This problem has also occurred in International schools in Malaysia whereby the students came from different backgrounds and most of them are locals. They use their mother tongue almost everyday and this has affected in using non-standard Malaysian English in their schools. In a blog by Tony Pua (2005), he said that students who come from Chinese schools do not have confidence in speaking English as they were not competent in speaking English and other English speaking students look down at the Chinese students when it comes to speaking English. Tony Pua (2005) also said that the students who came from Chinese school cannot speak proper English and they tend to use non-standard Malaysian English with their English-speaking friends in the International schools. S. Chee Choy and Salah Troudi (2006) claimed that students learn English because they have to, not because of a love and interest for it. S. Chee Choy and Salah Troudi (2006) also said that it should be noted that students lose interest in studying, especially English even in primary school because of low self-esteem and poor self-confidence.

According to Benson (1991) found that "students who have had little exposure to English ... showed extremely low morale". It was also found that "integrative and personal reasons for learning English were preferred over instrumental ones". Some students may have both positive attitudes and negative attitudes towards English. In Malaysia, students are facing with difficulty in producing the Standard English in

terms of speaking and writing. So, they tend to use the non-standard Malaysian English to communicate with people. They view it as a norm for them in their daily life, and they think it is better to speak with non-standard Malaysian English rather than not speaking English at all.

In reality, there are many challenges in learning English in the second language classroom. These challenges somehow have driven them in using the non-standard English in the classroom. We do not notice that in the process of emphasizing the Standard English, learners are occupied or influenced by the non-standard variety in the learners' system. So, the students tend to use the non-standard variety in the classroom but they do not realise that they are using non-standard variety in order to improve their English in the classroom.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- a) to examine the attitude of Malaysian students towards non-standard English and other varieties of English in Malaysia.
- b) to explore the usage of non-standard Malaysian English in the classroom by teachers and students.

1.5 Research questions

Based on the reviewed studies, some research questions were proposed as follows:

- 1) What are the students' attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English?

- 2) To what extent do teachers and students use non-standard Malaysian English in the classroom?

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this study is to promote the use of the Standard English through the use of the non-standard English in Malaysia. It is also to improve the students' knowledge in English so that they know the rules of English language.

Furthermore, promoting the non-standard variety will increase the students' confidence in using English in communication in their daily lives. This research is to show the students' attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English and whether it can be accepted or not in the country. This research involved a small number of students. This research is important as we can see the main mistakes that students are making when they speak the non-standard Malaysian English. That is the reason why speaking non-standard Malaysian English is a stepping-stone for students towards the Standard English.

1.7 Definition of terms

1.7.1 Attitude

The meaning of attitude is the way a person views something or tends to behave towards it, often in an evaluative way. According to Wenden (1991), the term attitudes include three components, which are cognitive, affective and behavioural. Wenden (1991) mentioned that a cognitive component is made up of the beliefs and

ideas or opinions about the object of the attitude. Wenden (1991) also said that the affective one refers to the feeling and emotions that one has towards an object whether he or she 'likes' or 'dislikes', 'with' or 'against' and finally, the behavioural component refers to one's consisting actions or behavioural intentions towards the object.

1.7.2 Non-standard Malaysian English

According to Wong (1978), non- standard Malaysian English is a local dialect having less complex speech forms and showing more deviation from Standard English in terms of phonology, grammar and vocabulary. According to Wong (1978), one of the common features of non-standard Malaysian English is the use of fillers such as 'lah' (Come *lah*, Jurassic Park is a good movie). Moreover, Wong (1978) said that in terms of lexis, many items are only used in non-standard Malaysian English, such as 'Please off the fan'.

Wong (1978) also mentioned that non-standard Malaysian English is usually used in informal contexts and it has only been used in friendship as well as transaction domains.

1.8 Scope and limitations of the study

The scope of this study is to look at the attitudes of the students towards non-standard Malaysian English compared to other varieties such as Standard Malaysian

English, American English as well as British English. This study only looks at non-standard Malaysian English and how it is used among the students in school. This study was done in an International School in Selangor and most of the students in the school are Chinese.

One of the main limitations is finding a suitable time for the students to listen to the recording. Students have to follow their timetable. So, the researcher has to plan on when is the suitable time to do the research, as they have to listen to the recordings together. The recording was done for only an hour. Because of the limited time, the students could not repeat the recording. This will indirectly have some impact on the result, as they could not confirm their responds to the questions.

Another limitation of this study is the students' familiarity to other English accents in the present study. They have to listen to two native speakers recording - one American and the other British. The students tend to understand better with the American speaker because they may have been exposed to the American accent more that they hear on television. Again, this will ultimately have some bearing to the result of the present study.

1.9 Conclusion

In summary, this study examines the secondary students' attitudes towards the non-standard Malaysian English. Do they accept it or not? How do they view the non-standard Malaysian English? Do they view it as bad English or just a tool of communication with other people? This study will explore the secondary students' attitudes towards the non-standard Malaysian English.

In Chapter 2, I will discuss the most relevant literature related to the study. The method that I use in this study is presented in Chapter 3, the findings and discussions, as well as conclusion and recommendations.

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CHAPTER 2

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature on various studies and critiques on Malaysian English and non-standard Malaysian English. I will first look into the theoretical framework. I will also discuss the definition of non-standard Malaysian English, features of the variety, attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English, theoretical framework as well as the previous studies on non-standard English.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

One of the frameworks that looked into the varieties of English is by Kachru (2003), who introduced the Three Circle model. This model divides English into three varieties: the Inner Circle varieties, the Outer Circle varieties and the Expanding Circle. The model can be visually seen in Figure 2.1 (overleaf).

Kachru's Three-circle Model, the Inner Circle Kachru's model refers to the traditional bases of English, dominated by the mother-tongue varieties, where English acts as a first language. The countries involved in the Inner Circle include the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The varieties of English used here are said to be 'norm providing'. Rajadurai (2004) stated that the Outer Circle consists of the earlier phases of the spread of English in non-native settings, where the language has become part of a country's chief institutions, and plays an important 'second language' role in a multilingual setting (Rajadurai, 2004). Most of the countries included in the Outer Circle are former colonies of the UK or the USA, such as

Malaysia, Singapore, India, Ghana, Kenya, and others (Rajadurai, 2004). The English used in the outer circle is considered as 'norm-developing'. The Expanding Circle refers to the territories where English is learnt as a foreign language. The territories do not have a history of colonization by members of the Inner Circle and institutional or social role. The countries in the Expanding Circle include China, Japan, Greece and Poland (Crystal, 1997). The English used in the Expanding Circle is regarded as 'norm dependent'.

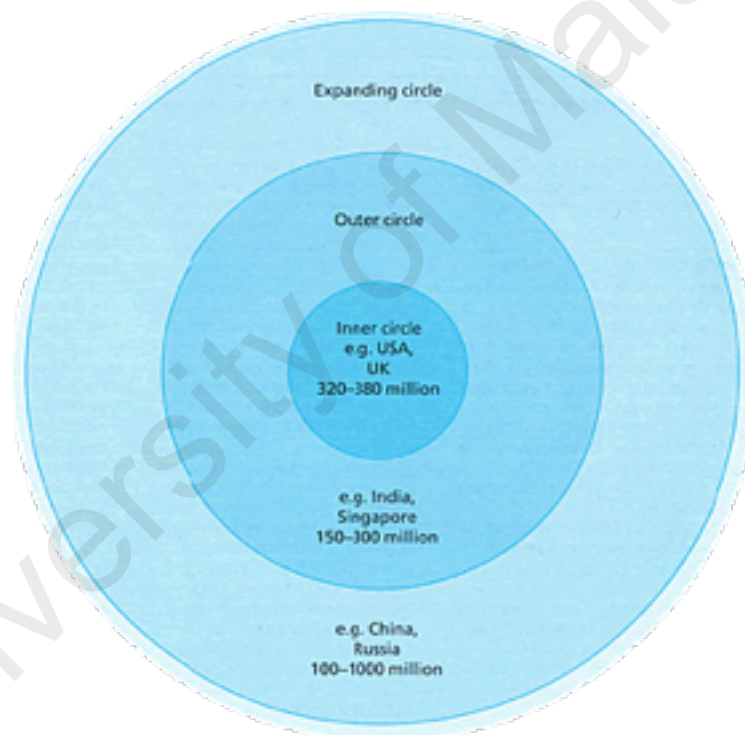


Figure 2.1 Kachru Three Circle Model

<http://thenativenetwork.blogspot.com/2012/07/three-circles-of-english.html>

This study focuses on one of the theoretical framework by Schneider. Schneider (2003) Dynamic Model provides five stages in the developmental cycle of

‘New Englishes’ that is more vigorous and complete. They are the Foundation Stage, the Exonormative Stabilization Stage, the Nativization Stage, the Endonormative Stage, and the Differentiation Stage. The model can be seen in Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2 Schneider's Dynamic Model

First and foremost, Schneider (2003) mentioned that the first stage of the model is called the Foundation stage. Schneider (2003) says that in the initial stage, English begins to be used on a regular basis in a country that was not English-speaking before, because a significant group of English speakers settles in a new country for an extended period. This is when English arrives and borrows names and places. The names that they gave to places in their natural environment tends to be adopted, linguistically adapted (sometimes reshaped by folk etymology), and retained (Schneider, 2003). There is heavy ‘toponymic’ (a name derived from a place or region) borrowing in a variety of situations, which are geographically and historically quite far apart. This can be related to Malaysian, as the British came to Malaysia to set

a place for them to stay and gradually introduced English to the locals in Malaysia. They have given names to places in Malaysia such as George Town in Penang.

The second stage of Schneider's Dynamic Model is called Exonerative Stabilization. Schneider (2003) states that after a while, colonies or settlers' communities tend to stabilize politically, normally under foreign, mostly British, dominance, whatever the precise political status may be. According to Schneider (2003), English is now regularly spoken in a new environment, with a resident community of expatriate native speakers providing for most of this stable (STL-strand) usage. English provides the linguistic standard and norms. For example, Standard British English has provided the model for Malaysia.

Schneider (2003) mentioned that the third stage is the most important, which is called the Nativisation stage. During this stage is the most vibrant one, the central phase of both cultural and linguistic transformation in which both parties involved realize that something fundamental has been changing for good: traditional realities, identities, as well as sociopolitical alignments are discerned as no longer conforming to a changed reality. Schneider (2003) again said that this stage is when the potentially painful process of gradually replacing them with something different, a new identity reflecting a changed reality, combining the old and the new, is in full swing. Schneider (2003) stated that this indicates the transition from the acceptance of a distant mother country as the source of both political power and linguistic and cultural guidance to gradual independence. For English, however, the educated elite tend to look down on this new variety. According to Schneider (2003), this stage also results in the heaviest effects on the restructuring of the English language itself, and this is perhaps most obvious on the level of vocabulary, with heavy lexical borrowing for

further cultural terms continuing but loan words overrun also the everyday vocabulary and tend to be widely used and noted. This is when Malaysian English exists and slowly overrides the Standard English. There were many aspects of Malaysian English that were different from the Standard English. Grammatical features of New Englishes emerge when idiosyncrasies of usage develop into indigenous and innovative patterns and rules.

Stage four is known as the Endonormative Stabilization stage. According to Schneider (2003), during this stage, the new variety of English becomes socially accepted. This stage typically follows and presupposes political independence for a local norm to be accepted also in formal contexts. It is necessary that a community be entitled to decide language matters as its own internal affairs. Schneider (2003) said that by this point, the newly achieved psychological independence and the acceptance of a new, indigenous identity result in the acceptance of local forms of English as a means of expression of the new identity. In the Malaysia context, the locals and the outsiders are now accepting Malaysian English. However, Malaysian English is still not acceptable in the education context.

Last but not least, according to Schneider (2003), stage five, which is called Differentiation stage. The new variety of English itself develops new varieties. This happens when the emergence of a new variety of English trails off and is almost a thing of the past, recorded and remembered in recent history but largely completed. Malaysia has not developed to this stage yet, as they have not produced any new varieties.

2.3 Definition of non-standard Malaysian English

According to Muniandy et. al (2010), Malaysia is a multi-racial society which is strongly bounded by its system of monarchy. However, Malays form the largest portion of its demography with Malay as its national language. Though, Malay is still the most commonly used lingua franca among Malaysians, English is gaining more importance and relevance in the country. In fact, Malaysians have come to realize that it is no longer necessary to speak and communicate like an English native speaker's speech to achieve their communicative function. Thus, Muniandy et. al (2010) said that there is evidence in Malaysians' everyday speech, which are often marred by grammatical and phonological errors or at times too loaded with "suffixes" (e.g. 'lah', 'lor', 'meh') and loan words from other languages during the communication.

It seems that Milroy and Milroy's Belfast could be applicable to the context in Malaysia with the existence of Standard and non-standard varieties in Malaysia. According to Peter and Daniel (2008), it can be assumed that the presence of different varieties of English to be true almost all places where English is spoken. Malaysian English is one of the varieties in the world that has been accepted by Malaysians, but what about other people outside Malaysia? According to Pillai (2008), early descriptions tended to categories Malaysian English (MalE) into two or three sub-varieties. Platt and Weber (1980), for example, divided MalE into two categories based on whether speakers had been to English medium schools or to Malay medium schools. The former sub-variety was considered similar to SgE and indeed many early studies tended to treat MalE and Singapore English (SgE) as one entity.

According to Pillai, Zuraidah, Knowles and Tang (2010, p.159), Malaysian English is sometimes referred to as the colloquial variety rather than derogatively

called 'Manglish'. They also mentioned that the standard variety of Malaysian English is similar to the Received Pronunciation (RP) and the colloquial variety of Malaysian English is just more morphosyntactic, phonological and lexical variation different than the Standard variety of Malaysian English. It shows that the non-standard Malaysian English is not bad, but just different in terms of the features of the variety itself than the Standard English. The previous researchers do not called the non-standard Malaysian English as 'Manglish' but as the colloquial variety because they thought that by calling it as 'Manglish', the word itself might give the wrong impression to other people in each corner of the world. But what about the use of the phrase colloquial variety? Does it give the right impression of the Malaysian English that has been popular for many decades? They said that both are just the same, because both carry the same non-standard Malaysian English and both are used by the locals. The word colloquial itself shows that the basilectal level has been used by the locals and not the foreigners.

Venugopal (2000, p.205) claimed that "Colloquial Malaysian English is marked as a localized variety". Venugopal describes the colloquial variety, which is the non-standard variety has been used by the locals in Malaysia. According to Venugopal (2000, p.205), the term 'ethnolect' refers to the accented speech variety employed by immigrants to highlight their distinctiveness in speaking the majority language of a country. Venugopal also described the non-standard Malaysian English as ethnolect in her study. She said that the non-standard Malaysian English is just the same as the term ethnolect which she thinks that the non-standard Malaysian English by immigrants who come to the majority language of a country.

According to Muniandy et. al(2010), the non-standard Malaysian English is like a dialect with three levels, which are the acrolect, mesolect and the basilect. Baskaran (1994) also said that the non-standard English is a sociolect categorized into three levels. These are acrolect, mesolect and basilect. First, the acrolect is defined as the high social dialect which is used by the educated people who love to speak English. This is both in the form of oral as well as written. The second level of the sociolect is called mesolect. Mesolect is defined as the middle social dialect and is a sub-variety that is used in an informal situation among fellow Malaysians. Lastly, the basilect is defined as low social dialect and is used informally and colloquially by the village peddlers when talking to the tourists. So, Baskaran (1994) described the non-standard Malaysian dialects with different levels.

Many blame the decline in English language proficiency on the education system. However, Pillai (2008) claimed that the declining of English is used amidst the dominance of Malay in public education and the public sector set against the multilingual canvas of Malaysia has contributed to the contracting numbers of English speakers, concentrating them mainly in urban areas and among higher socio-economic groups. Further, Pillai (2008) mentioned that the use of a more standard form of English competes alongside a more user-friendly colloquial variety and unlike Singapore where there is more delineation between the colloquial and standard variety, the use of CMaIE permeates many contexts of use in Malaysia (Pillai 2008a).

According to Pillai (2008), in her article, she mentioned that the use of Colloquial Malaysian English (CMaIE) is generally seen as an indication of bad English or poor proficiency in English. Yet it is also used by fluent speakers who seamlessly switch from CMaIE to a more standard variety for a number of reasons,

including the signaling of intimacy and shared identity, and accommodating other Malaysian speakers (Pillai 2006). Thus, whilst there is a need to enhance the level of English proficiency among Malaysians, Colloquial Malaysian English cannot be dismissed as a deficient variety as it is inextricably linked to one's identity as a Malaysian. Moreover, it is clearly a variety with a system of its own, having adopted and adapted linguistic features from Malay, Chinese and Tamil, among others.

2.4 Features of non-standard Malaysian English

There are some features of non-standard Malaysian English. The features are phonological features, lexical features and syntactical features. These features are found in non-standard Malaysian English that people use every day in their daily life. For example, how they pronounce certain words and sometimes they code-mix English with their first language during the conversation. So, I will discuss the features that occur in non-standard Malaysian English.

2.4.1 Phonological Features

Baskaran (2005) said that in Malaysian English long vowels being shortened and short vowels being lengthened. For example:

/i:/ and /i/ (BrE) [i]MalE

beat bit

heed hid

seat sit

/əʊ/(BrE) realized as [o] (MalE)

boat [bot]

slow [slo]

Baskaran (2005) also mentioned that common consonants to be omitted are the alveolar stops /t,d/, /s,z/ realized as [tens]. For instance, the avoidance of dental fricatives in three [tri:] and devoicing of voiced fricatives in gave [geif], easy [i:si].

In terms of suprasegmentals features, Baskaran (2005) said that the stress-patterns in official (standard) Malaysian English are similar to those in RP but there is still a certain degree of variation in both word and sentence-stress patterns especially in unofficial and broken (patois) Malaysian English. In stress-position, Malaysian English speakers do not seem to make a distinction between words which have different morphemic functions and in stress-quantity, Malaysian English speakers feel free to both reduce as well as increase the number of stresses in the word.

According to Baskaran (2005), one of the features of phonological features is the reduction from two to one phoneme. For example, the word 'self' in non-standard Malaysian English will be pronounced as 'sef'. There is a reduction of a phoneme 'l' in the word 'self'. Other than that, Baskaran (2005) also mentioned that voicing of voiceless fricatives is also one of the features of non-standard Malaysian English. He mentioned that the alveolar and palate-aveolar voiceless fricative (s) is quite often voiced. For example, the word 'nice' in non-standard Malaysian English will be pronounced as 'nize'. The fricative (s) is voiced to (z).

Besides that, another feature of non-standard Malaysian English is secondary phoneme substitution. Baskaran (2005) stated that it is often such contoids are not in the original phonological framework of the ethnic language of the non-standard Malaysian English speakers whether it is Malay, Chinese or Tamil. For example, the

Malay Malaysian English speaker will pronounce 'very' to 'bery', the Chinese Malaysian English speakers pronounce 'ran' to 'lan' and the Tamil Malaysian English speakers pronounce 'van' to 'wan'. Baskaran (2005) said that the Malaysian English speakers find such sounds relatively new in their First Language itself. In the attempt of speaking Malaysian English, he or she approximates the sound nearest to his own (original) system.

According to Puteri Azazila (2011), Malaysian English is non rhotic /r/ whereby 'r' is not pronounced in words such as art, door, first and worker. Next, there is a tendency towards full vowels in all syllables. For instance, the word 'seven' is pronounced as 'seh-ven' instead of 'sevn'.

2.4.2 Lexical features of non-standard Malaysian English

There are also lexical features that are influenced by the first language such as Malay and Mandarin. As Pillai et. al (2010) mentioned, temporal information is obtained from context or from the use of temporal markers like 'today', 'everyday', 'yesterday'.

Malay: 'Saya datang sini setiap hari' : I come here every day

Mandarin: 'Wo mei tian dou lai zhe li' : I everyday also come here.

There are other features that have been mentioned in other research regarding Malaysian English. According to Puteri Azazila (2011), there are a few features of Malaysian English that has been used by Malaysians. First, since Bahasa Malaysia is the national language of Malaysia, there are many Malay words that are brought into the Malaysian English by Malaysians. For example, 'selamat datang' which means 'welcome' and 'puasa' which means 'to fast'.

Other than that, Normazla & Mariatul (2007) stated that among the features of Malay Malaysian English are as the following:

- a. particle 'lah' usage
- b. particle 'kan' usage
- c. direct translations of English to BM
- d. nativized intonation, speech rhythm and pronunciation

In ensuring the acceptance of this language variety (Malay Malaysian English), it is necessary for its speakers to employ codifying agents. Such is the case of American English, as when Noah Webster and Dr. Franklin codified its usage and spread its usage within the education system, the status of American English become solidified (Baugh; 371:2002). In addition, the standardization of the variety needs to also fall in place to gain acceptance within its socio-linguistic context and with the British English RP that acts as model of Standard English. In relation to Malay ME and ME, however, this has yet to be seen.

2.4.3 Syntactical features of non-standard Malaysian English

Pillai et. al(2010) also gave an example of use of negation. Malaysian English and Singapore English both use invariant tags such as isn't it and can or not. For instance, 'I want to go home, can or not?' 'Can I go home?'. The main effect of the 'isn't it' tag is to seek agreement from the interlocutor and therefore, the tag does not need agree with the verb in the main clause for type, tense and number (e.g. 'They are driving, isn't it?'; The concert started late, isn't it?). The can or not tag has a different effect, as it connotes permission and possibility (Wee 2008: 599).

Pillai (2008) also mentioned about agreement. The feature of agreement is similar to non-standard Malaysian English, zero marking for 3rd person singular resulting in the use of the invariant present tense form can also be found in non-standard Singapore English. For example, 'He eat here yesterday'. There is also the existence of the word *got* in the Colloquial Malaysian English such as 'Where got enough time' for 'There isn't enough time.' Besides that, there is generally no inversion or auxiliaries in *wh*-questions and in main clause yes or no questions, such as 'What you want?' for 'What do you want?'

Pillai et. al(2010) claimed that speakers that are more proficient are less likely to use non-StE verb forms. The features described should not be considered as deviations from StE but rather as features which are commonly used in informal contexts. Pillai et. al(2010) gave many features and examples of features in non-standard English Malaysian English in her article, and one of the features is the dropping of subject pronoun for referential pronouns and for dummy pronouns occurs in both non-standard Malaysian English and non-standard Singapore English. The following are examples from non-standard Singapore English:

'Always late!' 'You are always late!'

'Must buy for him, otherwise he not happy'. 'We must buy a present for him, otherwise he won't be happy.' (Wee 2008: 598)

Another common feature of the non-standard Malaysian English that Pillai mentioned is in both non-standard Malaysian English and non-standard Singapore English is the use of -s to Standard English (StE) irregular plurals (e.g. deers and phenomenons), while there is a tendency to use the plural form for uncountable nouns

like, equipments, informations, luggages and staffs (Low and Brown 2005, Wee 2008). For instance, '(A) new girl, is it? May I apply for (a) car license?

The next features that Pillai et. al(2010) mentioned is the leveling of tense and aspect is prevalent in both colloquial varieties. This includes using the simple past form for StE present perfect with a preference for lexical marking of time and aspect with words like 'already'.

'She ate lunch already' (Alsagoff 2001: 84)

The use of present perfect for StE simple past can also be found in both non-standard Malaysian English and CollSgE, especially among less proficient speakers:

'We seen Tarzan last night'. (Tay 1993: 33)

Less proficient non-standard Malaysian English speakers tend not to mark the past tense form of regular verbs, and this can also be found in non-standard Singapore English:

'She shop here yesterday'. (Alsagoff 2001: 80)

'He eat here yesterday'. (Wee 2008: 594)

Puteri Azazila (2011) also claimed that in grammar, the reflexive pronouns are used to emphatic pronouns often without the verb to be such as in 'Himself sick' instead of 'He is sick'. Hence, even the non-standard Malaysian English also has certain features which differentiate from other varieties.

2.5 Factors of the use of non-standard English

In Peter & Daniel (2008) research, they confirm that Singlish (Singapore English) is a variety valued by the pupils because they use it regularly and they enjoy using it. They do not, in general, see it as 'bad' English. It has the ability, like other

non-standard varieties, to reduce social distance or establish group affinity: it helps them feel ‘closer to friends’ and makes the speaker sound ‘friendlier’. Peter and Daniel (2008) found out that Singlish scores the lowest in their research in terms of fashionableness in the survey: it suggests that speakers do not use it because it is fashionable or ‘cool’ and trendy, but rather use it to interact effectively in the community. The pupils were opting for solidarity, as indicated by Milroy and Milroy (1985).

Singlish also appears to function an identity marker (local and perhaps even national, though the application of these terms to the Singaporean context may be subject to debate) and therefore carries covert prestige as indicated by Peter and Daniel (2008). Singlish could be said to have a similar kind of attraction.) Pupils indicate that Singlish ‘is part of [their] unique culture’ and ‘it makes [them] sound different from other people’. As suggested by May, ‘In theory then, language may well be just one of many markers of identity. In practice, it is often much more than that’ (2005: 332). The survey indicates that Singlish stands out among the other markers of Singaporean identity proffered.

2.6 Language attitude

According to Takumoto and Shibata (2011), language attitude may influence people’s learning behavior, including motivation, language practices and successful attainment of the language. Attitude is important in their study because they think that attitude is the key to a person’s behavior especially in how a person’s motivate himself or herself in learning a language. They said the more positive attitude that a person has the more the person will motivate themselves even they are not good in the

language itself. But as long as the positive attitude is there, the motivation will be built up in a person's life. This is the same for language practices.

In order to analyze the language attitude, Takumoto and Shibata (2011) has used the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and percentages were used to compare accent perceptions among the three groups, which are the Japanese, Koreans as well as Malaysians. They have found out that Malaysians can accept the non-standard Malaysian English, which they have used for decades.

According to Baker (1992), there are several functions of language attitude summarized as follows:

1. attitude to language variation, dialect and speech style.
2. attitude to learning a new language.
3. attitude to a specific minority language.
4. attitude to language groups, communities and minorities.
5. attitude to language lessons.
6. attitude of parents to language lessons.
7. attitude to the uses of a specific language.
8. attitude to language preference.

Baker (1992) added that it is indispensable as it contributes to our knowledge of the status and value of languages and language varieties. This can help policy makers predict the degree of success of any new government policy related to language can achieve.

2.7 Attitude towards English

In many countries, people have positive attitudes toward English. This is true even at times when attitudes toward major English-speaking countries such as America or Britain are negative due to their foreign policies, which are often described as biased and unfair. It seems that citizens of many countries recognize the instrumental value of English. They are aware of the many doors knowledge of English opens.

Idris (2009) mentioned that high prestige English enjoys around the world is confirmed by a number of studies on attitudes toward English among non-native speakers and learners. For example, attitudes toward English in Singapore schools (Kwan-Terry, 1993), attitudes toward English among students and the government in China (Yong & Campbell, 1995) and many more.

2.8 Attitude towards non-standard English

According to Peter and Daniel (2008), a child with some home background in non-standard English copes better in English in school than a child with no background in any kind of English at all. For both researchers, a child is better in using the non-standard form of English rather than with no knowledge of English language at all. For them, at least a child can learn to speak even though it is ungrammatical. However, both researchers regarded the non-standard English as the low variety. That is why they have used Diglossia model in their study. Diglossia model defined the non-standard English functions as the low variety and the Standard English as the high variety.

In Peter and Daniel (2008) study, they mentioned that non-standard coexist with the standard. The standard variety can in fact be 'wrong' in certain contexts. They have mentioned that it might be considered how it is often important to signal formality and informality. Peter and Daniel (2008) also claimed that people need to know whether there is a need to distant themselves from each other or there is a need to minimize the distance.

Previous research has been done on the Standardization of English in Malaysia and the procedure in making the Malaysian English as a Standard English in Malaysia. In a letter to New Straits Times dated 5th August 1993, a Malaysian parent expressed her concern over a trainee teacher who taught her students to pronounce 'leopard' as 'lio-pat' and 'thirsty' as 'twisty'.

Khaw's (1999) research aims are to examine the attitudes of English teachers towards these varieties, and explore the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards and the international intelligibility of ME. The findings of this study indicate that teachers generally hold negative attitudes towards the mesolect, and positive attitudes towards the acrolect. They believe that the mesolect is less standard, formal, and grammatical than the acrolect. It is also found that the mesolect is less intelligible than the acrolect to most teachers. Although teachers have positive attitudes towards the acrolect of ME, they do not think that it is on a par with other varieties such as British, Australian, and American English.

Normazla & Mariatul (2007) stated that a language becomes 'standard' if the spoken and written language is clearly understood by its users. Foley (1998) also mentioned that language becomes incomprehensible and later leads to major problems if the acquisition of new varieties of English occurs in isolation from their cultural

context. Therefore, it is important to use the Malaysian English in its own sociolinguistic settings.

Syed Hussein Al-Attas (1990) claimed that opposition to standardization in the use of English will only promote backwardness, especially among Malay Malaysian speakers. However, a point to be considered here is ‘what are we standardizing’ and ‘to whose standard are we prescribing to’. As stated in the preface of Rebaczonok-Padulu (2001), ‘Standard English’ deals with official language of the entire English-speaking world which is also the language of the educated English-speaking people. Indeed, such a universally binding term like the ‘entire English-speaking world’ carries connotations of colonial superiority that is unlikely for the present emergence of New English varieties such as the Malaysian (ME) and Singapore English (SE).

Normazla & Mariatul (2007) mentioned that it is also important to note that the status of English in that particular country varies, whether it is the second language (as in Malaysia) or the official language in Singapore. As the Malays, Chinese, and Indians have their own mother tongue language, the need for acquiring English varies from the second language for the Malays and the third language for the Chinese and Indians, as Bahasa Malaysia is the official language. Hence, Malaysian English arises to be the lingua-franca (used in an informal setting) to this multiracial society. For example, a Malay speaker would speak Malaysian English with certain words, phrases, particles understood by the Chinese and Indians. For instance, instead of speaking a proper English for ‘It should be done like that!’ the Malaysian English version would be ‘Like that one’.

Malaysian English functions as a wider range of interlocutors; namely that the Malays, Chinese and Indian. With these dominant influences. This language variety

consequently acts as an intercultural communication tool of English that is more comprehensible within the domains of Malaysia. This was emphasized by Gill (1994), as Malaysian English consists of lectal manifestations that enable international and intra-national communication to take place.

Other than that, Gaudhart (1997) stated that people need to remind themselves that Malaysian students will not be interacting with linguists but with business people and politicians and those with whom they interact will not be just from English-speaking countries. Malaysians will be judged by how proficient they are in the language they are using.

Gaudhart (1997) added people must ensure that teachers are able to handle not just the varieties of Malaysian English but also be able to handle an internationally acceptable variety of English as well. Any teacher who has no command or knowledge of Standard English is short-changing his or her students. She also stated that when we talk about Malaysian English, we should recognize that there are many varieties on the continuum. People also need to recognize that they need to learn a standard international variety and not use Malaysian English only because we cannot cope with learning the standard.

Khaw (1999) mentioned that in general, British English is viewed as the best variety in terms of standardness, clarity and originality. Most teachers who come from Korea, Japan, and Vietnam where American English is the pedagogical model for ELT (English Language Teaching) favor American English. Some Australian teachers favor Australian English as its use is linked to their national identity. Most teachers hold negative attitudes towards Malaysian English and Indian English, as they are not familiar with those varieties and experience difficulties understanding them due to

distinctive pronunciation and intonation. It may be concluded that familiarity with a variety and intelligibility of a variety may be important factors affecting one's attitudes towards that variety.

2.9 Previous studies in non-standard English

There is a previous study done in 1966 by Alister Hughes on the 'Non-Standard English in Grenada'. This study concerns the use of the recognized language, identifying words and phrases and the awareness of the knowledge of the language. This study was concerned with the considerable number of words and phrases which have been adopted from foreign languages, preserved from Old English and expanded by innovation.

Another study related to non-standard English is by Khaw Li Lian (1999), entitled 'Teachers attitudes towards non-standard English in Malaysia'. This study is designed to assess the international intelligibility of two of the sub-varieties of Malaysian English (ME), namely the acrolect (the standard form of ME) and the mesolect (the colloquial form of ME). It also aimed to examine the attitudes of English teachers towards these varieties and explore the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards and the international intelligibility of ME.

Other than that, there is an article entitled 'Attitudes of Japanese nationals towards standard and non-standard varieties of Scottish English speech' by Robert Mackenzie (2004). This study investigates the perceptions of 32 Japanese nationals resident in either Scotland or Japan of two varieties of English speech (Scottish Standard English speech and the non-standard Glasgow vernacular speech), according to gender and familiarity with the variety. The results obtained suggest that although

there appears to be a general tolerance amongst the informants for both the standard and non-standard varieties of Scottish English speech selected, attitudes were significantly more favorable towards the Scottish Standard English form. However, gender and familiarity with the speech variety were not found to be significant variables in determining the language attitudes of the informants.

Rajudurai (2004) discussed on the uses of English in the classroom. She said that consistent with the rest of the classroom data in the corpus, it shows the teacher using Standard Malaysian English for her main points, and a more colloquial English for explanation, elaboration and rapport-building. Although code-switching and code-mixing are common in intranational interaction in Malaysia, it is not encouraged in many English language classrooms. Therefore, to maintain the use of English on its own, the teacher uses a different kind of code-switching, slipping from Standard Malaysian English down the continuum to a more colloquial form. She gave an example of the use of Malaysian English in the classroom:

Example 1

Referring to a poem in the book,

Teacher: Poets want to share their feelings and experience with us. And they try to make them as vivid as possible. [She then illustrates the idea of vividness by eliciting an example of beauty from the class]

Teacher: Give me a beautiful er – lady.

Student: Cindy Crawford!

Teacher: Cindy Crawford?

[Class laughs]

Teacher: Beautiful lady – Cindy Crawford, OK lah.

Student: OK, who do you want?

Teacher: Ah?

Student: Who do you want?

Teacher: Who do I want doesn't matter. [Class laughs]

Nozirah & Azirah (2009), did a study on 'Electronic English in Malaysia: features and language in use'. The study discusses the impact of technology on English in Malaysia by examining data samples from blogs, chats or instant messages (IM), e-mails and text messages. They highlighted the distinctive features of Malaysian English users from different ethnic groups in this medium. Since Malaysians are generally bilingual and multilingual, they considered how and when different languages are used and comment on the innovation and creativity involved. It is hypothesized that technology impacts on this variety of English, which has itself arisen from the globalization of English, further shaping it, and thus giving rise to new blends and new styles of communication.

Conclusion

The aspects that were mentioned were attitudes towards Standard English and non-standard English, factors of the use of non-standard English, features of non-standard Malaysian English, as well as previous studies that are related to non-standard English. In the next chapter, I will discuss the methodology that has been

used in this study and how this study was conducted through survey and tape recording.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the method adopted for the study and its justification. The research design will be presented first. I will discuss on the research design that I have chosen, the sampling of the study and the instrumentation used for this study will also be described. This chapter also consists of the method of data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

This research has employed a mixed method design, which involves both quantitative and qualitative research. Creswell (2008) defines mixed method as a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study in order to understand a research problem nor completely (p.535).

In other words, mixed method is a good approach to research because it seeks strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data. This is also a good design to seek on the type of research that is not enough to address the research problem and to answer the research questions. (Creswell, 2008: 535)

The qualitative research design is used in this research when observation and tape recording were done in the classroom. The quantitative research has been used in this research when I did a set of questionnaires and was given to students in order to gauge their attitude towards non-standard Malaysian English.

3.3 Background of the respondents

The research was conducted in an International school that consists of various backgrounds of students. This school is a new school that was recently built in 2014. All 70 students in Year 8 participated in this research. They are of 14 to 15 years old. They were chosen because they can comprehend better on the questions given in the questionnaires. The students were also chosen for this study because they are not taking any major examination this year.

There are 50 Chinese students, 15 students are Indians and only a minority of them are Malays. Even though they are of mixed ethnicity, all of them were from Chinese primary schools in either Kuala Lumpur or Petaling Jaya. They choose International School because their parents want them to be in the environment where English is the medium of language. These students were chosen in this research because they use the non-standard Malaysian English in school as they came from schools that do not use English as their medium of language and their primary languages are their own mother tongue such as Mandarin, Tamil and Bahasa Malaysia. English is their second language that they rarely use in their daily lives. It is important to note that even though it is an International school, English is mainly used only in classrooms and with teachers. Based on my observation, the spoken language used in their daily communication outside of the classroom is their own mother tongue.

3.4 Instruments

A set of questionnaires from Peter and Daniel (2008) was used in the study. This is because the respondents used in their study were quite similar to the present research. They look at attitudes towards the non-standard Singaporean English amongst Singapore students. So, I tried to adapt Peter and Daniel research with the non-standard Malaysian English context.

The questionnaires were given to all 70 students of Year 8 in an International school. The questionnaires are of three parts. The first part relates to the non-standard Malaysian English; the second part looks at their attitudes towards the non-standard Malaysian English and when do they use the non-standard Malaysian English (friends, family, teachers), depends on the situations given; and the third part is when the students need to answer the questions based on the recordings that they heard. It is a five-point scale questionnaire with number 1 is the lowest score and number 5 with the highest score.

Part 3 is further divided into the three sections. The first section of Part 3 consists of a survey where respondents were asked to rate the different varieties and to rate the speakers in terms of intelligence, affinity, and friendliness. In part 2 and part 3, respondents were asked to regard the speakers as teachers for the subjects of English and Mathematics. In each instance they have to rate the speakers for effectiveness, appropriateness, intelligence, approachability, and fashionableness.

Other than the questionnaires given to the students, tape recording as well as observations was also carried out in the classroom. There were two tape recordings and they were employed on two focus groups. Each recording was 15 minutes long and each group has three students who were a mixed of female and male students.

They were given a text to discuss for about 15 minutes. All of the texts were different for each group and they needed to discuss what they understand about the text as well as what the text is all about. The observation was done to look at extend of the usage of the non-standard Malaysian English between the teacher and the students.

3.5 Data collection

A combination of direct and indirect methods (as referred to Peter and Daniel, 2008) were used to obtain Malaysian secondary students' views about appropriate language behavior in the classroom. The data collection for this research has been done step by step. Tape recordings were carried out with two focus groups. Each group consisted of three students and each group was given a different text from the other to discuss.

The school was holding an event that was called literature week and the students need to read as well as discuss on literature. So, the teacher asked the students to read and discuss the poems that they like, There were two poems that the students have to choose- the 'Lone Dog and the 'Farmer'. Both of the poems are being used in the English syllabus. Each group discussed the poem for 15 minutes. Each student takes turn in giving his or her opinions on the poem. While the students talk, the teacher tape-recorded their discussion based on the poem that they have chosen.

Both tape recordings were taken at the same time with tape recorders. They were put in each group. Other than the recording, an observation was done in the classroom. This was due to the reason that I was trying to observe how the teacher

and students interact with one another. The main purpose is to identify the variety that both teacher and students use in order to communicate in the classroom.

Besides that, the third section of Part 3 is a survey based on a match-guised technique. There were three speakers who are Malay, British and American. The speakers were given a paragraph to read but with different varieties based on their nationalities. The passages were adapted from Tan & Tan (2008). This is because of the passages can be applied in the Malaysian English as Singlish has almost the same lexical aspect and the pronunciations of both varieties are almost the same. Some words changed as the words are not used in the non-standard Malaysian English. Passage 1 and Passage 2 below are the paragraphs that they needed to read out for the recordings:

Passage 1: *Today whole day rain, cannot go out mah. Have to stay at home, very kesian leh. Hope won't be that long, very boring. What time your appoingment tomorrow? I tink you got to go very early izzit? Maybe we go drink kopi after that? By the way, I finally got my results arredy. Quite teruk la.*

Passage 2: *It's been raining the whole day, so I can't go out. I hope it won't hold up. I have to stay at home, it's really boring. What time is your appointment tomorrow? I think you've got to be there quite early, right? How 'bout coffee after that? Oh, by the way, I've finally received my results. They're pretty bad.*

Speaker 1 was a Malay speaker who knows how to speak the Standard Malaysian English and the colloquial Malaysian English. The speaker had to speak in

two different varieties. The researcher was lucky to get a speaker who can speak different varieties without being noticed that the two varieties were spoken by the same speaker. At first, speaker 1 needed to read passage 1 with the colloquial accent and then the speaker reads passage 2 in Standard Malaysian English.

As seen in passage 1 non-standard Malaysian English vocabulary (*kesian* ‘tiresome’, *kopi* ‘local style coffee’, *teruk* ‘bad’) and pragmatic particles (*mah*, *leh*, *la*, signalling different speaker attitudes) were employed. The students frequently omit subjects and the verb-to-be is absent from the first clause. Passage 2 conveys the same content in Standard English and maintains an informal style with the regular use of weak forms (e.g. *It’s* rather than *It is*).

Then, a British speaker (recording C) read passage 2 using the Standard English. The researcher recorded when the speaker reads the passage. Last but not least, an American speaker (recording D) read passage 2 using the Standard American English. Again, I recorded the speaker’s voice and labeled it as recording D. The four recordings seem to be like there were four speakers. However, the students did not realise that there were only three speakers with one speaker spoke with two different varieties. Each recording was labeled recording A (non-standard Malaysian English), recording B (Standard Malaysian English), recording C (Standard RP) and recording D (American English).

Table 3.1. Voice Recordings

Recording	Actual Speaker	Description
A	Malay Speaker	Non- Standard Malaysian English
B	Malay Speaker	Standard Malaysian English
C	British Speaker	Standard English (British accent)
D	American Speaker	Standard English (American accent)

Each student was been given four sets of questionnaires and all of the questionnaires have the same questions. There were four set of questionnaire because there were four recordings and the students needed to rate the different recordings that they heard.

The students hear recording A and after the recording A has finished the students rate the recording based on the questions given in the questionnaires. They had to rate from number 1 to 5 (number 1 with lowest score and number 5 with the highest score). After the students finished scoring recording A, I played recording B and the students scored the recording based on the questions given in the questionnaires. This has been repeated for recording C and recording D. After all recordings have finished, I collected all of the recordings and labeled recording A, B, C and D to make the analysis easier.

3.6 Data Analysis

The tape recordings were transcribed in order to analyse the tape recording. The questionnaires were analysed through Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). They were represented through Charts (figure 3.2 and 3.3).

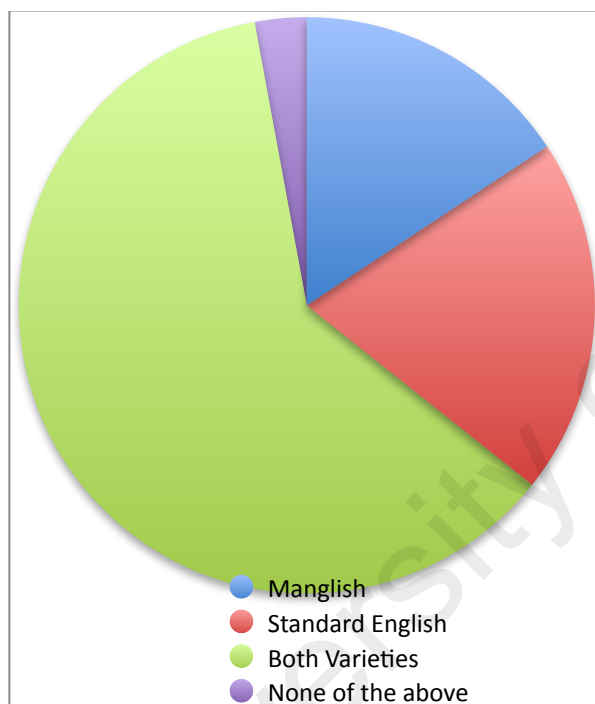


Figure 3.2 Languages and varieties spoken

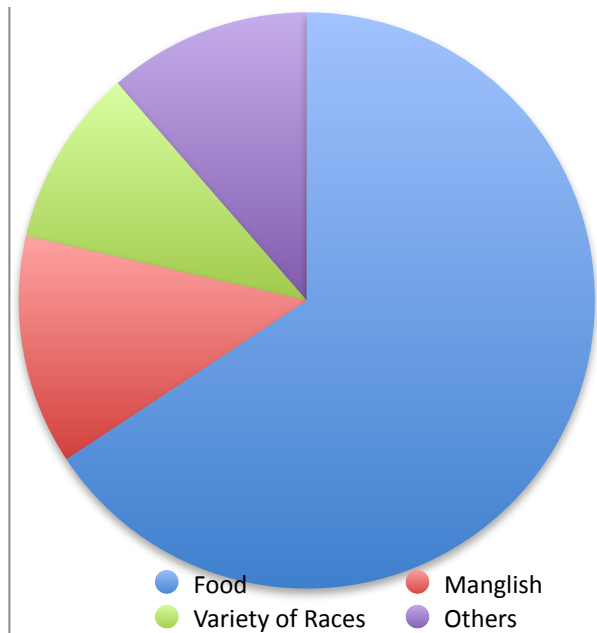


Chart 3. Items and traits associated with Malaysia

Figure 3.3 Items and traits associated with Malaysia

These questionnaires in figure 3.2 and figure 3.3 were closed-ended questions. The questionnaires are being presented in percentage and number of respondent that have responded to the questions.

The questionnaires that were related to responses to the non-standard Malaysian English and Standard English were presented in a table. These questionnaires were presented in table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Responses to Manglish and Standard English

Statement or question	Weighted average
Do you think Manglish means “bad” English?	
Should Malaysians speak Manglish?	
Do you enjoy speaking Manglish?	

Do you think it is important for you to speak Standard English?

The students had to score on their opinions about Manglish (non-standard Malaysian English) and the analysis is presented in table 3.4. The data had to be analysed through weighted average because the score were from number 1 to 5 (number 1 being the lowest score and number 5 being the highest score). I had to look at the average of the scores that they students have responded. There was another set of close -ended questions:

Another data from the questionnaires that were related to this study was situations when the non-standard Malaysian English is used. The data was presented in table 3.5. The data was presented in table 5 just to see the number of respondents each situation.

Table 3.5 Situations when Manglish is used

Situations	No. of respondents	%
With friends and classmates outside school.		
With friends and classmates in school, outside lesson time.		
With family members and relatives.		
With friends and classmates during Maths lesson.		
With Maths teachers in school, outside lesson time.		
With friends and classmates during English lesson.		
With teachers during Maths lesson.		
With English teachers in school, outside lesson time.		
With teachers during English lesson.		

In table 3.5, students have to choose the situations that they think are appropriate to use non-standard Malaysian English. The data was analysed using SPSS and it was presented in numbers and percentage of the respondents who answered the questions. Last but not least, the questionnaires that the students needed to answer based on the recordings that they heard is being analysed in this Table 3.6.

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Table 3.6 Responses to the recordings

Questions	Average weighted scores			
	Recording A (Non-standar d Englis h)	Recording B (Stand ard Malays ian Englis h)	Recording C (Britis h)	Recording D (Ameri can)
<i>Part 1</i>				
Do you think you sound like the speaker?				
Would you like to sound like the speaker?				
Do you think the speaker is intelligent?				
Do you think the speaker is friendly?				
Do you feel close to the speaker?				
Do you think the speaker is cool?				
<i>Overall average for part 1</i>				
<i>Part 2</i>				
Do you feel it is appropriate for an English teacher to speak like this person?				
Do you think the English teacher is intelligent?				
Do you think the English teacher is a good teacher?				
Do you think that the English teacher is cool or trendy?				
<i>Overall average for part 2</i>				
<i>Part 3</i>				
Do you feel it is appropriate for a Maths teacher to speak like this person?				
Do you think the Maths teacher is intelligent?				
Do you think the Maths teacher is a good teacher?				
Do you think that the Maths teacher is cool or trendy?				

Overall average for part 3

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In table 3.6, these questionnaires are using likert scale whereby the respondents needed to score the questions based on the recordings that they heard. I used SPSS in order to analyse the questionnaires and the researcher analysed through weighted average. As you can see the students needed to score from number 1 to number 5 (with number 1 being the lowest score and the highest being the highest score). The only way to analyse the data is through the average of the score because the highest score is 5 and not more than that. Hence, if the score is below 3 which shows disagreement to the questions and score of above 3 shows agreement.

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, there are 70 students participated in the study. I have used the mixed method approach in data collection and analysis, which are quantitative and qualitative research. The instruments that I have used were questionnaires and tape recordings. The data collection of this study was presented in tables. The findings and discussions are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Findings and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses on the findings and discussion for this study. The findings were presented in tables which then be presented in percentage and weighted average. These are the findings of the questionnaires.

4.2 Findings on questionnaires (Attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English)

This research discusses relevant parts of the responses but not necessarily in the order given in the questionnaire. This research focuses first on the direct questions on the pupils' views of non- standard Malaysian English and Standard English and other languages. This research has used respondents from an International School (HELP International School). The respondents are from the age of 14 to 15 years old and they are in Year 8. There were three classes of Year 8 in the school and there are 70 students in Year 8. Most of them came from the government schools in Malaysia and they were sent to International School in 2014. Their races are mostly Chinese, Malays and Indians and their primary language is Mandarin, Bahasa Malaysia as well as Tamil. English is their second language and they only used it in the school and mostly with their teachers.

One of the findings for questionnaires that were answered by the respondents was on languages or varieties being spoken. The purpose of this questionnaire was to see the varieties that the respondents speak. Chart 4.1 shows 16% spoke non-standard Malaysian English, 20% spoke Standard English, 61% spoke both varieties and 3%

declared that they didn't speak any varieties mentioned. The vast majority of the students said that they spoke non-standard Malaysian English and Standard English. Further information of the finding is shown in Figure 4.1.

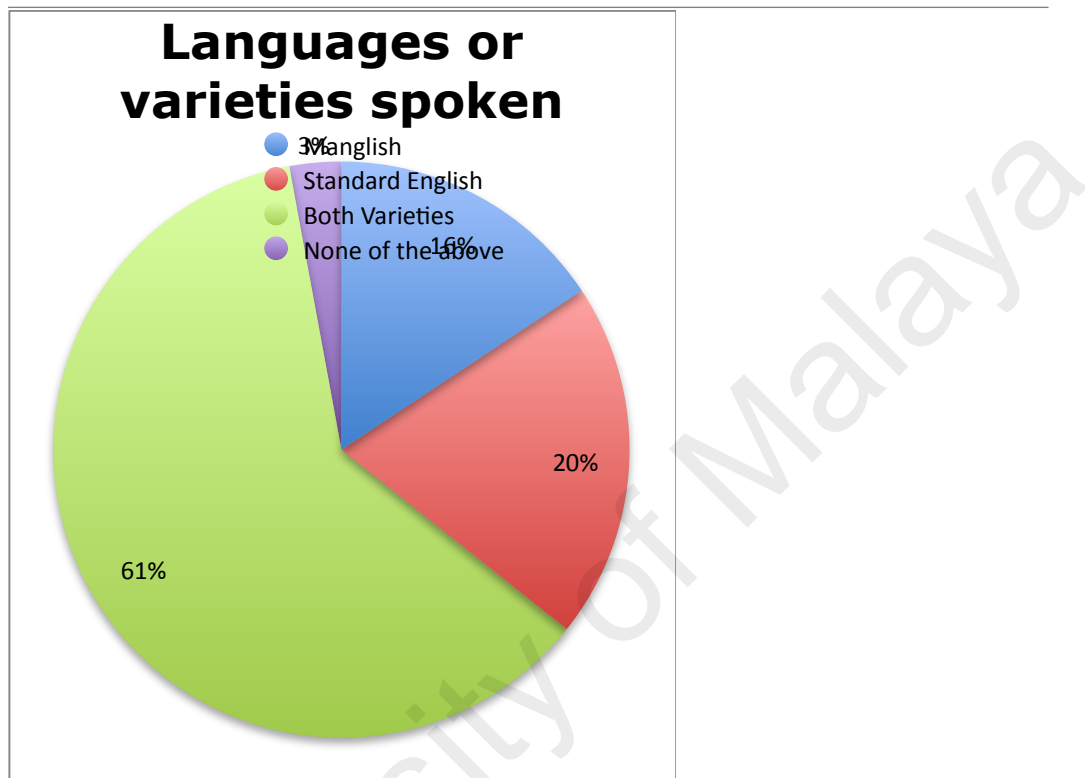


Figure 4.1. Languages or varieties spoken

As you can see in Figure 4.1 that the students claimed that they spoke both Non-Standard Malaysian English and Standard English, which points to their ability to code-switch between the two varieties. There were 61.4 percent said that they can speak both languages and varieties. Interestingly, there was 2.9 percent said that they neither speak non-standard Malaysian English or Standard English. It is not clear whether this indicates careless completion of the survey (which was administered only in English) or that the students felt incompetent in their fluency in either. Other

than that, there were 14 students (20 percent) said that they do not speak non-standard Malaysian English) and they claimed that they speak Standard English, although short conversations with them revealed the non-standard Malaysian English features. This is because it might be due to negative attitudes towards that variety (non-standard Malaysian English).

The result in figure 4.1 also shows that they are familiar with both varieties as most of the students answered that they speak both varieties in daily conversations. Some of them even answered that they speak only Standard English or only non-standard Malaysian English. This also shows that they are familiar with the varieties in Malaysia.

Another finding for the questionnaires that have been answered by the respondents was on items or traits associated with Malaysia. The purpose of this questionnaire was to find out which traits that the respondents have chosen that can be associated with Malaysia. Chart 4.2 shows that 66% chose food, 13% chose Manglish, 10% chose variety of races and 11% chose others. The majority of the students chose food that can be associated with Malaysia. Further information on the finding is shown in Figure 4.2.

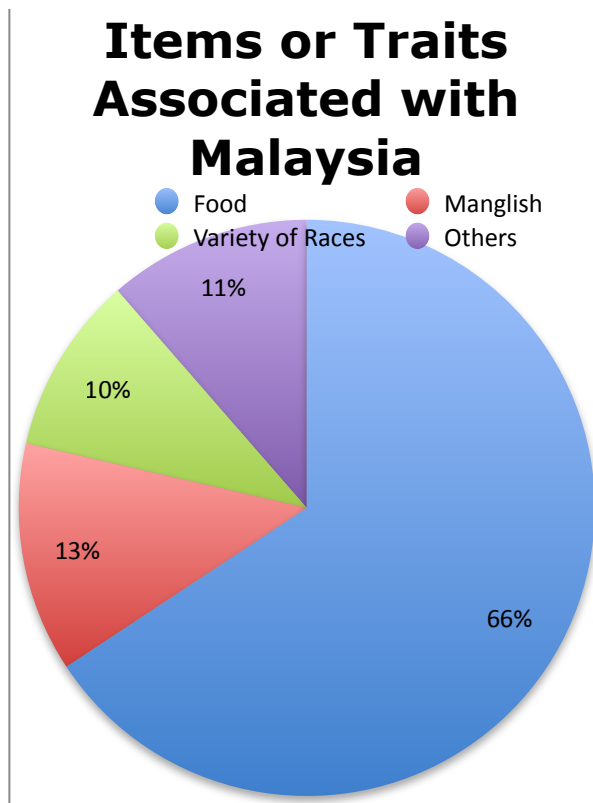


Figure 4.2. Item or trait associated with Malaysia

Figure 4.2 shows the frequencies of items or traits that can be associated with Malaysia. Before the recording starts, the students answered some of the close-ended questions regarding items or traits that can be associated with Malaysia. Figure 4.2 shows the result of the students' answers. There were four kinds of items that I thought can be associated with Malaysia which are food, Manglish, variety of races and other than what have been mentioned in the questions. Malaysia is famous with various delicious food that captured the hearts of tourists as well as the locals. That is the reason why the researcher put food is one of the items that can be associated with Malaysia. Malaysia is also popular with the variety of races, which are Malay, Chinese, Indian and many more. Malaysia is one of the countries in the world that has many races that lived together under a community. There were 46 students (65.7 percent) who answered food that can be associated with Malaysia. There were 9

students (12.9 percent) who answered non-standard Malaysian English that can be associated with Malaysia. This is due to the reason that they might think that non-standard Malaysian English is not the primary item that can be associated with Malaysia. Fascinatingly, there were 8 students (11.4 percent) stated others that can be associated with Malaysia. It was not clear what is the item that they think can be associated with Malaysia. There must be other traits that the students think can be associated with Malaysia.

Other than that, responses to the non-standard Malaysian English and the Standard English were one of the findings for this study. The main purpose of this questionnaire was to explore the respondents' responses towards non-standard Malaysian English and the Standard English. Table 4.3 presents the average score of the responses towards non-standard Malaysian English and Standard English. The weighted average score of the responds towards non-standard Malaysian English means 'bad' English was 2.43, the weighted average score of whether they should speak non-standard Malaysian English was 2.54, the weighted average score of the response of whether they enjoyed speaking non-standard Malaysian English was 3.33 and the weighted average score of the response whether it was important for them to speak Standard English was 4.54. Detailed explanations on the findings is shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Responses to Manglish and Standard English

Statement or question	Weighted average
Do you think Manglish means “bad” English?	2.43
Should Malaysians speak Manglish?	2.54
Do you enjoy speaking Manglish?	3.33
Do you think it is important for you to speak Standard English?	4.54

Table 4.3 summarised the responds of questions related to non-standard Malaysian English and Standard English. In all, students were asked to choose ‘definitely not’, ‘not really’, ‘maybe’, ‘yes’, or ‘definitely’. Each is scored as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. A weighted average of below 3 indicates overall disagreement or a negative response and one above 3 indicates overall agreement or a positive response. There was an overall disagreement that the students scored on the question of non-standard Malaysian English as bad English and the weighted average for the question is 2.43. This showed that the students did not think non-standard Malaysian English as bad English and they approved of the variety in Malaysia. This also shows that they do use non-standard Malaysian English in communicating with people and they understand what non-standard Malaysian English is. Moreover, the students thought that it was very important for them to speak Standard English and this shows when the overall score for the question of the importance of speaking Standard English is 4.54. If the score is more than 3, it showed overall agreement of the total score of 5. The students do think that it is important to speak Standard English since it was the only accepted variety in education and the non-standard Malaysian English has not been accepted in education.

Besides the findings mentioned above, there was another finding that has been related to this study, which was the situation when non-standard Malaysian English is used. The purpose of this questionnaire was to find out the situations that the respondents have chosen to speak the non- standard Malaysian English. In Table 4.4, 97.1% of the respondents choose to speak with friends and classmates outside school and 8.6% of the respondents choose to speak with teachers during English lesson. The vast majorities choose to speak with friends and family members. Further explanation has been put in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4. Situations when Manglish is used

Situations	No. of respondents	%
With friends and classmates outside school.	68	97.1
With friends and classmates in school, outside lesson time.	48	68.6
With family members and relatives.	51	72.9
With friends and classmates during Maths lesson.	16	22.9
With Maths teachers in school, outside lesson time.	11	15.7
With friends and classmates during English lesson.	8	11.4
With teachers during Maths lesson.	7	10.0
With English teachers in school, outside lesson time.	14	20.0
With teachers during English lesson.	6	8.6

Table 4.4 refers to the situations when non-standard Malaysian English is used in Malaysia. It shows that there are 68 students (97.1 percent) who speak non-standard Malaysian English with friends and classmates outside school. This situation shows the highest percentage out of all the situations that were mentioned in the

questionnaires. Again, this shows that the students approved of the variety being used in Malaysia and they are comfortable using it with friends and classmates instead of teachers in school. Moreover, this indicated that they approved that it can only be spoken outside of school but not in school even though there were 48 students also chose speaking the variety with friends and classmates in school but outside lesson time. This also shows that the non-standard Malaysian English brings solidarity among the students as they approved of using it in school as well as outside school.

Interestingly, the second highest percentage of the overall result for the situations that they chose to speak non-standard Malaysian English is using the variety with family members and relatives. This showed that they thought that it was not a problem using non-standard Malaysian English with family members and relatives as they are not teachers. Again, this indicated that non-standard Malaysian English is one of the factors of solidarity among family members and relatives.

Surprisingly, there were quite a number of students who chose to speak non-standard Malaysian English with English teachers but outside of lesson time. 16 students chose to speak non-standard Malaysian English with Mathematic teachers in school and the students thought it was not a bad thing by speaking non-standard Malaysian English with teachers regardless what subjects the teachers teach. This displayed that it was not wrong for them to speak non-standard Malaysian English with English teachers even though it is not a variety that is approved in using it in school. The need to speak English with the English teachers was known by the students even though non-standard Malaysian English was not the Standard English that the teachers have taught them during lesson but it is a stepping-stone for them of learning the Standard English. However, only a few of students (8.6 percent) favored

of speaking Manglish (non-standard Malaysian English) with English teachers during lesson time. This demonstrates that a few students do think that speaking non-standard Malaysian English can also help them communicate with their English teachers.

Based on table 4, it can be summarized that students do not think it is appropriate to use non-standard Malaysian English during lesson time either during English or Mathematics lesson. Only a few students think that it is suitable to use non-standard Malaysian English during lesson time. This showed that even a few students approved of using non-standard Malaysian English during lesson time, the students still approved the variety and they might use it just to communicate with teachers who spoke English during lesson time.

Last but not least, one of the major findings of this study was response to recordings of the speakers. The purpose of this questionnaire was to see what the respondents thought of the speakers' language or variety and scored the variety that the speakers used. Recordings C and D was the most favoured by the respondents when they scored the varieties towards agreement (score average of more 3) rather than disagreement (score average less than 3). More explanation is shown in Table 4.5 on responses on the recordings of the speakers.

Table 4.5. Responses to the recordings

Questions	Average weighted scores			
	Recording A (Non-standar d Englis h)	Recording B (Stand ard Malays ian Englis h)	Recording C (Britis h)	Recording D (Ameri can)
<i>Part 1</i>				
Do you think you sound like the speaker?	2.13	2.71	2.33	2.79
Would you like to sound like the speaker?	1.83	3.19	3.09	3.34
Do you think the speaker is intelligent?	2.27	3.41	3.49	3.46
Do you think the speaker is friendly?	2.99	3.49	3.00	3.56
Do you feel close to the speaker?	2.69	2.90	2.56	3.14
Do you think the speaker is cool?	2.27	2.93	2.90	3.04
<i>Overall average for part 1</i>	2.36	3.11	2.90	3.22
<i>Part 2</i>				
Do you feel it is appropriate for an English teacher to speak like this person?	1.73	3.84	3.84	3.89
Do you think the English teacher is intelligent?	2.27	3.63	3.61	3.54
Do you think the English teacher is a good teacher?	2.44	3.36	3.51	3.53
Do you think that the English teacher is cool or trendy?	2.46	3.04	2.93	3.29
<i>Overall average for part 2</i>	2.22	3.47	3.47	3.56
<i>Part 3</i>				
Do you feel it is appropriate for a Maths teacher to speak like this person?	2.40	3.34	3.46	3.54
Do you think the Maths teacher is intelligent?	2.69	3.37	3.39	3.33
Do you think the Maths teacher is a good teacher?	2.63	3.29	3.31	3.39

Do you think that the Maths teacher is cool or trendy?	2.44	2.91	2.86	3.07
<i>Overall average for part 3</i>	2.54	3.23	3.26	3.33

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Table 4.5 shows the responses to the four recordings (non-standard Malaysian English, Standard English, British, American). The four recordings were played one by one and then the students scored the questions based on the recording that they heard. Overall, students were asked to choose 'definitely not', 'not really', 'maybe', 'yes', or 'definitely'. Each is scored as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. A weighted average of below 3 indicates overall disagreement or a negative response and one above 3 indicates overall agreement or a positive response.

Overall result for recording A (non-standard Malaysian English) fall towards disagreement of the questions being asked in the questionnaires. The scores for recording A is more towards 1 and 2. This indicates that the students approved of the variety but they do not approved in using it in school. It also shows that they do not approved of using it regularly even the features of using the variety has been noticed when they were observed in the classroom.

The result for recording B (Standard English) shows that the students agreed on the variety in school and outside of school. It is the variety that the education system has approved and the students know that that is the only variety that can be accepted in education. Surprisingly, the score for the question whether they sounded like the speaker or not falls towards disagreement as the average score is 2.71 that are below 3. This showed that some of them do think that they do not sound like the speaker who speaks the Standard Malaysian English. It is not clear whether they actually understand that the speaker speaks the Standard Malaysian English or not. This is because the scores for the non-standard Malaysian English and the Standard English are almost similar.

Overall result for recording C (British accent) falls towards agreement. The students do not think that speaker is cool or trendy neither they feel close to the speaker. They did think that the speaker is intelligent. This is because the speaker is a British man and the students thought that the speaker is intelligent by the way he speaks. For recording D (American accent), the overall scores are likely to fall to agreement. The students do think that the speaker is cool and trendy as well as intelligent. They also thought that the speaker could be an English teacher as well as a Maths teacher. That goes the same for the speaker from recording C. Therefore, the average score for recording C and D are most likely to fall to agreement instead of disagreement.

4.3 Findings on the tape recordings

Other than the questionnaires, an observation and tape recordings have been done in this research. There were two tape recordings and the recordings were with Year 8 students. Each recording consists of 15 minutes long. The first recording were students a mixed of Chinese and Malay students. Their level of competency is the intermediate level. They came from the government schools before they come to the International School.

4.3.1 Phonological features

There were some phonological features of the non-standard Malaysian English that can be found in the recordings. Further explanations on the phonological features are explained below.

The students in the first group have shortened the long vowels when they were discussing with each other. For example, one of the boys pronounced the word 'been' becomes 'bin'. The shortened the long vowel to short vowel can be seen in Example 4.1.

Example 4.1

A: I think the hammer is something in the past.

B: How many life and death situation this guy *bin* through?

According to Baskaran (2005), there is a tendency of shortening the long vowels to short vowels and it occurs in the long vowels medial positions.

The students' pitch and intonation when discussing in a group is different than the Received Pronunciation (RP) pitch and intonation. The pitch direction does not change within the stressed word. They did not stress in any word in the discussion as pitch direction in Malaysian English is not common.

The students in the second group use more non-standard Malaysian English phonological features. They also tend to shorten the long vowel such as one of the girls pronounced the word 'would' to 'wud' and 'season' to 'seson' as in Example 4.2 and Example 4.3.

Example 4.2

B: Imagine if we *wud* walk like that with cute feet. That would be hilarious..

C: Even it's like the way the words are structured, old

Example 4.3

B: Who really watch pretty liars?

C: I watch like *seson* 1 and *seson* 2.

As you can see in the excerpts, the students tend to shorten the long vowels in the words mentioned above. Baskaran (2005) said that this feature can be attributed to the absence of long vowels in Bahasa Malaysia. The students' pitch and intonation in this group is just the same as the first group. They did not stress in any word in their discussion.

4.3.2 Syntactical features

There were some syntactical features of non-standard Malaysian English that were found in the recordings. The first recording, the students tend to omit the verb to be and pronouns such as 'am'. This can be seen in Example 4.4.

Example 4.4

T: Anything else? That one la..

B: Still finding..

For example, one of the boys said, 'Still finding'. He omitted the pronoun 'I' and the verb to be 'am'. Another finding for the recording was they tend to omit the singular 's' to singular verb.

B: He say..After that he say what happen old boy my loyal horse warrior...the hammer blow that stuff you know

As you can see in the excerpt, one of the boys has mentioned that 'he say...'. This indicated that the students have used some syntactical features of non-standard

Malaysian English. According to Baskaran (2005), the syntactical features has been made to show the possibility of influence from Bahasa Malaysia. Bahasa Malaysia does not have any regular verb and singular verb features. Thus, the students tend to speak without the verb to be and singular verb.

The second recording consists of three girls and they are Chinese and Indian. This group used a lot of the non-standard Malaysian English. They liked to use past tense with the word “already”. This can be shown in Example 4.5.

Example 4.5

A: I watching season 1 episode like eleventh times. I donch want...I donch want...

B: It changes everything isn't it?

As you can see in Example 4.5, ‘I watched that already’. They also like to omit the verb to be such as ‘am’, is, are. For example, ‘I watching season 1’.

4.3.3 Lexical features

There were also some lexical features of the non-standard Malaysian English that can be found in the recordings. The features will be explained in details below.

In the first recording, they used some features of non-standard Malaysian English such as ‘la’. When one of the boys responded ‘ Ok la, that’s true’ as in Example 4.6.

Example 4.6

B: The earth probably he was buried underground..The earth..

C: Oh yeah..

A: Ah ok..that’s true la..

As you can see in the excerpt, they tried hard enough not use the non-standard Malaysian English because it was during English lesson. There were many pauses, as they do not know how to analyse the poem and limited vocabulary in English. The teacher also interrupted in their discussion and the teacher tried to use the non-standard Malaysian English such as ‘That one la’. This is due to the reason that the teacher wanted the students feel comfortable to speak with the teacher.

According to Baskaran (2005), the most common particle ‘la’ is to mark the speech act whereby one is involving dimensions of informality, familiarity, solidarity between participants.

In the second recording, they also liked to use the particle ‘la’ such as ‘It is a bit la’. One of the students also use a Malay word. This can be seen in Example 4.7.

Example 4.7

B: I don’t really like Aria.

B: She’s like in his kumpulan.

In Example 4.7, one of the students said ‘She is like in his ‘kumpulan’. The word ‘kumpulan’ means group. They were talking about a television series and the girl in the television series wanted to be in a boy’s group. According to Baskaran (2005), some of the borrowings are culturally and emotionally loaded. This shows that there is the influence of Bahasa Malaysia when they speak English with each other. It is the culture of Malaysians to mix two languages or more when speaking with each other.

Thus, this shows that students do use the non-standard Malaysian English during conversation between them.

4.4 Discussions

4.5 Introduction

This study discusses on the factors of using non-standard Malaysian English and what are the aspects that may influence people using non-standard Malaysian English. Secondly, the students' attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English as well as the use of non- standard Malaysian English will be touched in this chapter.

4.5.1 The factors of using non-standard Malaysian English

The results of the survey gave us a picture of the position and function of non-standard Malaysian English. The students confirmed that non-standard Malaysian English is a variety valued by other students because they use it regularly and they enjoy using it. According to Peter and Daniel (2008), the students do not, in general, see it as 'bad' English. It has the ability, like other non-standard varieties, to reduce social distance or establish group affinity. It helps them feel 'closer to friends' and makes the speaker sound 'friendlier'.

The non-standard Malaysian English scores the lowest for variety of races, as they do not think that it is one of the major factors that can be associated with Malaysia. Non-standard Malaysian English also appears as a function of identity marker, which is the same with the non-standard Singapore English. Peter and Daniel (2008) also mentioned in their research, the non-standard Singapore English also appears to function as an identity marker. However, in the survey of this study, the non-standard Malaysian English was not one of the major traits that the students

chose that can be associated with Malaysia even though we can see that students like to use non-standard English among them in the tape recordings.

Identity of races can be one of the factors of using non-standard English in Malaysia. In this study, some students chose variety of races is one of the traits that can be associated with Malaysia instead of food and the non-standard Malaysian English (Manglish). This shows that the use of non-standard Malaysian English is influenced by races in Malaysia. Even in this research, 10 percent of the students answered variety of races that can be associated with Malaysia and this shows that they approved that races can be associated with Malaysia. For example, Baskaran (2003) says that Malay Malaysian speaker tend to pronounce the word 'fan' as 'pan' and Chinese Malaysian English speaker tend to pronounce the word 'fried rice' to 'flier lice', This shows that identity of races can be one of the factors of using non-standard Malaysian English.

The students in this study do realize that races can be one of the factors of using non-standard Malaysian English. Malaysian English has more of dialectal influence on the use of English language. Even the Chinese students in the International School speak Mandarin as their primary language. When they speak English, there were some features of Malaysian English in their communication with their friends such as 'Like that one' with the Chinese dialects. Thus, the dialects may also influence the use of Malaysian English. According to Lee et. al (2010), this can be seen clearly through the usage of dialects in Kelantanese English, Kedahan English and Perakian English. Lee et. al (2010) also says the dialectal deviations nativise the use of English to the point that makes it more comprehensible to fellow Malay interlocutors of the state. As indicated by Lee et. al (2010), English is clearly a

language that divides; it is an important marker of identity in the multilingual, multiethnic Malaysian society. Hence, identity of races and dialects may influence the use of non-standard Malaysian English.

4.5.2 Attitudes towards non- standard Malaysian English

In this research, the students' perceptions towards non- standard Malaysian English is that they approved of the variety that has been spread around Malaysia. This can be shown when some of them chose non-standard Malaysian English as one of the important traits to be associated with Malaysia. Moreover, the students do not see non-standard Malaysian English as bad language. They see it as one of the varieties of English in Malaysia. This also proved that they do use the non-standard variety even though they refuse to agree that they are using it everyday to communicate with friends and family or even teachers. Only a minority who speaks the non-standard variety with their teachers. However, they do approve of using it as a tool of communication with their teachers including their English teachers. According to Crismore et. al (2007), Malaysian speakers of English accept the functionality of Malaysian English but are, nevertheless, determined to learn Standard English because they regard Malaysian English as 'wrong' English. Though, the students in this research have never regarded non-standard Malaysian English as bad or wrong English. It is just that they regard it as one of the variety that has been used by Malaysian but it cannot be used in the education context.

Nonetheless, the students also thought that non-standard Malaysian English should not be used by teacher regardless the subjects that the teachers teach. This shows when they scored towards more to agreement when the British and American

speakers speak in the recording. They thought English and Mathematics teachers should speak in Standard English when teaching in the classroom. However, the students do not agree that teachers should speak in the non-standard Malaysian English. As you can see that they scored the non-standard Malaysian English towards disagreement when the questions asked about English and Mathematics teachers. According to Crismore et. al (2007), teachers' language attitudes are important because of their effects on their students' attitudes toward language variation and on literacy.

4.5.3 The use of non-standard Malaysian English between teachers and students

Based on the tape recordings in this research, the teacher has used the Standard English and non- standard Malaysian English. In group 1, the teacher tried to use non-standard Malaysian English with the students in order for the students to feel comfortable talking to each other. The teacher tried to make a sense of solidarity between them so that they have the chance to talk in English. Most of the students are from Chinese School, so they have limited of vocabulary in English. There were many pauses in their discussion. Though, the teacher also speaks the Standard English so that they understand more. Teachers need to know when to use the Standard English and non-standard English in order to help the students' understanding in the discussion. Gaudhart (1997) mentioned that teachers are able to handle not just the varieties of Malaysian English but also be able to handle an internationally acceptable variety of English too. Any teacher who has no command or knowledge of Standard English is short-changing his or her students.

In other recordings, the students are comfortable using the non-standard Malaysian English in their discussion. Sometimes, they code-switch English with Bahasa Malaysia so that their friends understand more what message they want to deliver. Sometimes, code-switch or code-mix English with the first language of the speakers will help more in understanding of the message. For example, one of the students said 'She is like in his kumpulan'. She may not know what is the word for 'kumpulan' in English and the listener understands what she says because they speak the same first language as the speaker. Mixing the first language with English makes people comfortable in communicating with each other. According to Habibah (1997), the speaker or the user of the language himself, that is, what he feels most comfortable with, what he feels he can communicate most effectively with and what he wants. Habibah (1997) also mentioned that employer's attitudes towards Malay-accented English amongst employees found, for example, that generally employers viewed candidates with Malay-accented English unfavourably. Habibah (1997) also mentioned that it seems pointless to deny it its natural development in our society and whether it matters or not what English one speaks depends to a very large extent on the situation. So, the use of non-standard Malaysian English may be the most effective way in communicating with other people.

The students also considered non-standard Malaysian English are the Low variety and Standard English is the High variety. This is confirmed when the students make differences in relation to the audience (other students, Mathematics teachers, English teachers) setting (during or outside the class period) and location (in school or out of school). They know that non-standard Malaysian English is a Low Variety that they can speak with their friends outside of school or lesson time rather than using it

with their teachers. Again, this shows that they are comfortable using non-standard Malaysian English and to show solidarity among their friends. They will try to speak the Standard English with teachers because for them it is the High Variety. As indicated by Peter and Daniel (2008), in the school context, the importance of Standard English is well established. Standard English has been promoted as a useful commodity in the global arena through the Speak Good English Movement (Rubdy 2001), and there is no argument that pupils who go through the school system should have a good command of Standard English with their teachers. However, the responses clearly indicate in this study that there are occasions when some non-standard Malaysian English is appropriate, as well as occasions when it is not. The survey in fact confirms that the situation in Malaysia shares similarities to other contexts where English is spoken. As Peter and Daniel (2008) mentioned that in their study on Singlish is to persist in officially maintaining schools as Singlish-free zones flies in the face of what actually happens.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed about the findings and some discussions that are related to this study. The discussions were about Malaysian English versus Standard English, factors of using non-standard English, perceptions and attitudes towards non-standard Malaysian English as well as the use of non-standard Malaysian English between teachers and students. In the next chapter, I will conclude and recommend for future research.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes everything that has been discussed in the previous chapters. The discussions that have been discussed in the early chapters will be repeated and the recommendation that I think suits for the next research will be explained.

5.2 Summary of the study

In conclusion, this study examines the attitudes of 70 secondary students in an International School in Malaysia towards non-standard Malaysian English. It shows that the students understand the meaning of non-standard Malaysian English (non-standard Malaysian English) and they approved of it as being spoken by the locals. Some of the students viewed non-standard Malaysian English as negative and it should not be used in everyday conversation even though there were some features that were found in their discussion. Nevertheless, there were some of the students viewed the non-standard variety in Malaysia as positive because they think that as long as they speak English with everyone regardless of the errors that they make.

It seems to me that it would be helpful for the English curriculum, to acknowledge the situation clearly that the standard exists together with the non-standard. Even though the standard is held in high regard, the non-standard is also considered useful for promoting local identity and solidarity within the community especially in countries that do not use English as their primary language.

The purpose for this study is that we should promote the non-standard English in order to learn the Standard English. This is the way that people especially students may improve their English and will be fluent in terms of writing as well as speaking. We cannot avoid the non-standard variety, as it has been a norm for countries that do not use English as their primary language. As Peter & Daniel (2008) stated that rather than considering the non-standard as something to be feared, it might be incorporated into the curriculum as a variety that could be discussed and contrasted to the standard, somewhat like the British National Curriculum. This would certainly make for a higher level of maturity in linguistic matters in a new generation of pupils.

The use of the non-standard Malaysian English may also enhance communication between students in schools as they are not using English as primary language and they were not brought up with using English in their everyday life. So, the use of the non-standard variety will boost up their confidence in speaking the language with other people. Peter & Daniel (2008) mentioned the non-standard could also be seen as a resource that could be harnessed. Peter and Daniel (2008) also said what has not been disputed is that a child with some home background in non-standard English copes better in English in school than a child with no background in any kind of English at all. Some students in this study have no background of English but when they were transferred to an International School, they had to speak English. However, they speak the non-standard Malaysian English with teachers and friends. It is better for them to speak the non-standard Malaysian English rather than nothing. Hence, that was why some students viewed the non-standard English as positive.

Teachers should think of learning varieties of English because not all students have knowledge in using the Standard English. As indicated by Gaudhart (1997), it

should be pointed out that most Malaysian teachers actually have no idea of what American English is, what RP is and where Malaysian English begins and ends. Gaudhart (1997) also said that we must ensure that teachers are equipped with varieties of Malaysian English so that they are able to handle students who use the non-standard variety. This is because of this factor will give an impact to the students that they are teaching.

In summary, the attitudes of secondary Malaysian students approved of the non-standard Malaysian English and they enjoy using it as they have chose to speak the non-standard Malaysian English with their friends and family members. This is to show the solidarity between their friends and family members.

5.3 Recommendation

This study was carried out in an International school in Malaysia and consists of 70 secondary students in Year 8. Researchers may look into a wider range of the study. For example, researchers might want to carry out the research in the rural area in Malaysia with mote students. The views and attitudes of students in the rural area might be different than the views and attitudes if students in the urban area. The students in the rural area might enjoy more and use more the non-standard Malaysian English.

Other than that, researchers might want to explore the study with more students from different types of government schools. The syllabus and the exposure in the government schools are different than International Schools especially in terms of the exposure of the English language. Government schools in Malaysia are exposed

more towards Bahasa Malaysia as it is the medium of the syllabus in the government schools. So, the results might be a bit different than this study.

In summary, these are the recommendations and summary of this study. I hope researchers can carry out more study on the use of non-standard Malaysian English among students in Malaysia either in schools or tertiary level. This might help not just the students but it may help the teachers in Malaysia to understand as well as able to help their students during lesson.

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