RHOTICITY IN MALAYSIAN ENGLISH

KAMALASHNE A/P JAYAPALAN

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

2016

RHOTICITY IN MALAYSIAN ENGLISH

KAMALASHNE A/P JAYAPALAN

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LINGUISTICS

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

2016

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate:KAMALASHNE

Registration/Matric No: TGC100039

Name of Degree: MASTER OF LINGUISTICS

Title of Project Paper/Research Report/Dissertation/Thesis ("this Work"):

RHOTICITY IN MALAYSIAN ENGLISH

Field of Study:

I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

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

Candidate's Signature Date:

Subscribed and solemnly declared before,

Witness's Signature Date:

Name: Professor Dr. Stefanie Shamila Pillai

Designation: Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine rhoticity among Tamil speakers of Malaysian English. A variety of English is considered rhotic when an *r* in the spelling of the word is pronounced in word final environment before a pause (e.g. paper#) or before a consonant (e.g. ca*r*d). This is also known as non-prevocalic /r/. However, in Standard Spoken British English this phenomenon does not occur. Malaysian English pronunciation is modelled after British English which is non-rhotic. However, recent studies have found instances of rhoticity among Malaysian speakers. This study examines if there is evidence of rhoticity among three groups of Malaysian Tamil speakers. This study set out to address following research questions: (1) To what extent is there evidence of rhoticity in the English produced by the speakers? (2) To what extent is there a relationship between the speakers' language and educational background and the production of the non-prevocalic /r/?. A total of 15 female speakers, who were divided into a younger (13 to 19 years) and older group of speakers (50 to 70 years) participated in this study. Background information on the speakers' language use as well as educational backgrounds were examined to determine if there is a link between these characteristics and their production of the non-prevocalic /r/. The attitudes of speakers towards Malaysian English and native varieties of English, namely British and Malaysian English was also be examined for the same reason. The speakers were recorded reading a list of words containing orthographic *r* in word final environment before a pause, and before a consonant. Informal interview session with the speakers were also recorded, and words with orthographic *r* in the same position were identified for analysis. Praat Version 5.3.82 was used to measure the values of the third formant (F3) of the vowels in both rhotic and non-rhotic tokens at their mid-point based on their spectrogram and auditory examination. The combination of both perceptual and acoustic findings shows that the realisation of coda /r/ was not persistent especially among the older group. However, there was a higher incidence of rhoticity

among the younger Malaysian who spoke English as a first language, and more so among those who attended International schools.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji *rhoticity* dalam kalangan penutur bahasa Inggeris variasi Malaysia dari kumpulan etnik Tamil. Sesuatu variasi bahasa Inggeris dianggap *rhotic* apabila *r* dalam ejaan perkataan disebut di akhir perkataan (contohnya *paper#*) atau sebelum konsonan (contohnya *card*). Ini juga dikenal sebagai *non-prevocalic* /r/. Fenomena tidak berlaku dalam Bahasa Inggeris Standard variasi Britain. Sebutan bahasa Inggeris variasi Malaysia dimodelkan selepas bahasa Inggeris British yang sememangnya bukan *rhotic*. Beberapa jamian terkini telah menjumpai fenomena ini dalam kalangan penutur Malaysia. Kajian ini bertujuan mengkaji jika terdapat bukti *rhoticity* dalam kalangan tiga kumpulan responden dari kumpulan etnik Tamil di Malaysia. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab soalan kajian berikut: (1) Sejauh manakah terdapat bukti *rhoticity* dalam bahasa Inggeris yang ditutur oleh responden? (2) Sejauh manakah terdapat hubungan antara bahasa yang dituturkan oleh responden dan latar belakang pendidikan dengan pengunaan *non-prevocalic* /r/?. Seramai 15 responden wanita yang dibahagikan kepada penutur muda (13-19 tahun) dan lebih tua (50-70 tahun) telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Maklumat latar belakang pengunaan bahasa serta latar belakang pendidikan juga diperolehi untuk dibandingkan jika terdapat hubungan antara latar belakang responden dengan pengunaan *non-prevocalic /r/*. Sikap responden terhadap penggunaan bahasa Inggeris variasi Malaysia dan pelbagai variasi bahasa Inggeris juga turut dikaji dalam kajian ini. Responden direkodkan membaca senarai perkataan yang mempunyai huruf *r* di akhir perkataan dan sebelum konsonan. Sesi temu bual tidak formal dengan responded juga direkodkan dan perkataan dengan huruf *r* di posisi yang sama dikenalpasti untuk analisis. Praat versi 5.3.82 digunakan untuk mengukur nilai formant ketiga (F3) daripada vokal dan dalam token *rhotic* dan bukan *rhotic*. Nilai formant diambil dari pertengahan vocal berkenaan berdasarkan spectrogram and pemeriksaan auditori. Tiada bukti kukuh *rhoticity* dijumpai di dalam bahasa Inggeris

yang dihasilkan oleh tiga kumpulan responden. Gabungan dapatan kajian persepsi dan akustik menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan coda /r/ tidak kerap berlaku, terutamanya dalam kalangan pernutur yang lebih tua. Namun demikian, terdapat penggunaan rhoticiry yang lebih tinggi dalam kalangan penutur Malaysia yang lebih muda, terutamanya yang belajar di sekolah antarabangsa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, my heartfelt thanks to my amazing supervisor, Professor Dr.Stefanie Shamila Pillai, for her guidance throughout my master's journey and especially helping me to complete my dissertation successfully. Without her encouragement and advice I would not have come this far.

Secondly, my sincere gratitude to my family members, my mother, Mrs.Loganayagi, my father, Mr.Jayapalan, and my husband, Mr.Nimalan, for being very supportive and helping me out during my though times while I was completing my research. Their moral support and undying love kept me motivated. Not forgetting both my sisters, Ms.Rathi Priya and Ms.Maithylly, for their support and motivation. During this journey, God has blessed me with a wonderful son, Khatiirvel, who boosted my confidence and made me believe that I can to achieve great things in life.

Above all, I thank the Almighty God for giving me strength to overcome all the challenges during the completion of my coursework and dissertation. Last but not least, I would like to thank everyone who helped me in completing my master's successfully.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The spread of the English language through time has expended globally and created a variety of linguistic and cultural diversification. This diversification is reflected in the varieties of English which have developed socially and geographically among nations throughout the world (Crystal, 1997). Thus, there are different varieties of English used globally. These varieties of English can be divided into native and non-native varieties. Both native and the non-native varieties of English have their own distinct linguistic features.

Malaysian English (MaIE) is considered as a variety of 'New Englishes' together with other postcolonial varieties of English such as Indian and Singapore English, and is placed in Kachru's (1985) outer circle of Englishes. Malaysian English is considered as the second language (L2) because English is taught as the second compulsory language in Malay medium schools. This does not mean that English as L2 is learnt and used by majority of Malaysians. As for most multilingual Malaysians, English is context-driven and it is also restricted to particular domains. English is considered as their third or other language which is learnt in school (Pillai, 2015).

Malaysians use English in many domains (Fishman, 1971), with the family domain being one of them. Malaysian English used in the Family Domain is practised mostly by urban and educated Malaysians of various ethnic backgrounds. David (1996) found that some Malaysians have replaced their mother tongues, such as Malay,

Cantonese or Tamil, with English as their dominant language or as their first language (L1). This is quite common in Malaysia among educated Malaysians, and has been observed among those of Tamil origin. A small minority of Malaysian Tamils (Schiffman, 1996), usually from Tamil speaking homes, attend Tamil medium primary schools, whist the majority of them attend Malay medium primary schools. These different educational backgrounds are likely to have an influence on how dominantly they use Tamil, and also on the other languages they speak, like Malay and also English (Schiffman, 1996).

On the other hand, there are some Malaysians who do not learn or speak English at home. They learn the language from the time they enter pre-school (from 4 to 5 years old) or primary school (from 7 years old). It is rather interesting to know that English may not necessarily be the second language for this group as they may speak other languages apart from their mother tongues, and some of them may be highly proficient in English and use English much more than other languages because of their social and educational backgrounds and professions. However, unlike English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts which tend to lean towards a native model of English, post-colonial countries, like Singapore, may have shifted to their own model of English as a norm (Gut, 2007). There is an emergence of new linguistic features in New Varieties of English as the speakers look towards their own variety of English as a norm (Gut, 2007: 356) explains as this a shift to an "enodormative orientation" in her Norm Orientation Hypothesis (see 2.5).

1.2 Problem Statement

The English language used in Malaysia began to develop its own linguistic features once it was transplated here by the British (Pillai, 2015). Among these features are the lack of vowel contrast, the monophthongisation of diphthongs, the deletion of final stops, and the lack of lexical stress. However, Pillai (2015) also added that to date there are no research which indicates that there is a consistent display of rhoticity in Malaysian English. Rhoticity, here, refers to whether the orthographic *r* in a word final position (e.g. car)s, and preceding another consonant (e.g. *dark*) is pronounced (see the following section for a more thorugh explanation of rhoticity). Most studies, thus far, have looked at one ethnic group (e.g. Phoon & Maclagan, 2009 ; Pillai, Manueli and Dumanig, 2010), and some research had very few subjects like in Rajadurai's (2006), which had only three speakers who could speak MalE proficiently. Further, most of these studies were based solely on the perceptual examination of rhoticity in MalE. In contrast, this study was conducted to analyse rhoticity in Malaysian English using both perceptual and acoustic analysis and across age groups, since it is often posited that younger Malaysian speakers are more rhotic.

1.3 Rhoticity in English

A variety of English is considered rhotic when an *r* in the spelling of the word is pronounced in word final environments before a pause (e.g. *paper#*) or before a consonant, such as in the word *card*, (Ramasamy, 2005). Ramasamy (2005) notes that American English, which is rhotic, distinguishes words like *gnaw* and *nor* and cod /*kad*/ and card /*kard*/ by the realisation of the *r* in the spelling. In British English, this does not occur. The quality of the American English /r/, however, is different with the tip of the

tongue curled back further than in RP (e.g. Ramasamy, 2005). Although this realization of the *r* in words being pronounced by some varieties of English but not by others is termed as post-vocalic *r*, Trudgill and Hannah (2008) point out, that the former occurs in words like *carry* and across work boundaries in cases like *four eggs* in non-rhotic varieties.

Thus, Trudgill and Hannah (2008: 11) feel that "it is more accurate to use the term "non-prevocalic /r/" for the occurrence of /r/ before a consonant or a pause in rhotic accents". According to Roach (2009), American, Scots and West of England accents do pronounce the *r* in words like hard, ever, verse. Words which have *r* in the final position (before a pause), and before a consonant are considered rhotic, however in non-rhotic varieties, ***r*** is only pronounced before vowels, for an example in the word *marry*. However, the realisation of coda /r/ is not common in British English.

1.4 Purpose and objectives of the study

Based on previous studies on rhoticity in MalE, rhoticity appears to be a new norm that is slowly emerging in MalE. MalE is generally considered a non-rhotic variety as it is derived from British English (Rajadurai, 2006). However, Rajadurai (2006) does say that there is an increasing influence of American accent in MalE as some Malaysians produce rhotic tokens such as in words like *better*. Hence, it can be assumed that rhoticity is present in MalE sometimes. Ramasamy (2005) felt that the pronunciation of non-prevocalic /r/ is a new phenomenon in the speech produced by young Malaysia.

Thus, this study seeks to examine if there is evidence of rhoticity among two groups of young speakers aged 13 to 19 years old and a group of older speakers aged 50 to 70 years old. The main objectives of this study are to examine if there is evidence of rhoticity

among these three groups of speakers and to see if there is a link between the speakers' language use and education. Perceptual analysis and acoustic measurements will be used to show the usage of non-prevocalic /r/ in Malaysian English. These results will contribute to the analysis of the usage of rhoticity in Malaysian English. However, this research was restricted to a set to 26 from a word list (final *r* in word final position and final *r* followed by a consonant in a word) and an informal interview. Only one feature which is non-prevocalic /r/ were examined. This study is also restricted to the study of Indian females to limit the variables. However, a fixed specification for the F3 of R-coloured vowels would be difficult to analyse if data from both men and women used (Sharbawi and Deterding, 2010).

1.5 Research questions

This study sets out to answer the following research questions:

(i) To what extent is there evidence of rhoticity in the English produced by the three groups of speakers?

(ii) To what extent is there a relationship between the speaker's language and educational background, and their production of non-prevocalic /r/?

1.6 Limitations

This study is limited to 15 speakers, and thus, does not represent the entire Tamil speaking population in Malaysia or Malaysians of Tamil heritage. The focus of this study is limited to non-prevocalic /r/, and only examined its production among female speakers aged 13 to 19 and 50 to 70.

1.7 Organization of the dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters. The first provides the background to the study and presents the research objectives and questions. Chapter Two discusses the existing research on rhoticity in MalE and other neighbouring varieties of English. This is followed by Chapter Three, which discusses the method used to analyze the data. In the fourth chapter, the findings of the research are discussed. Lastly, Chapter Five concludes and summarizes the study by addressing two research questions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Malaysian English

Malaysian English (MalE), is considered as a New Variety of English (NVE) (Kachru, 1986). As Venugopal (2001: 23) explains, "Malaysian English refers to a variety of English, which is geographically distributed and socially defined within Malaysia" .MalE generally refers to all types spoken and written types of English used by Malaysians (Gaudart, 1997; Morais, 2001). The different varieties of MalE are generally placed on a continuum and described based on dimensions known respectively as the lectal range and ethnolects (Phoon, Abdullah & Maclagan 2013). The lectal range is a continuum of social dialects or sociolects. Based on Baskaran (2005), this continuum can be divided into three categories the acrolect, mesolect and basilect,and each of these lects is distinguished by phonological, morphological syntactic and lexical features (Baskaran

2005, Plattt & Weber 1980). All of these lects play a significant purpose in communication.

Wong (1981) had earlier divided MalE into two levels: Malaysian English 1 and Malaysian English 2, in which Malaysian English 1 is placed at the top and it is perceived as a Primary Language used with proficiency, similar to Baskaran's (1994) acrolect. Malaysian English 2 is placed at the bottom of this hierarchy for those who can only cope with basic communicative purposes, which is similar to the basilect (Baskaran, 1994). In Baskaran (1994), the three main lects are seen as a sub varieties of the main variety, and have their own specific features (Baskaran, 2005). Some MalE speakers are capable of switching between the mesolect and acrolect depending on the contexts that they use, this feature is not the same for the basilect speakers (Phoon et al., 2013). In addition to this, Baskaran (1987; 1994) explains that the acrolect is considered as a 'high' social dialect which is used for official or educational purposes (e.g. news readers). The mesolect is a 'middle' social dialect which is used in semi-formal and casual conversations (e.g. casual conversation between friends and family members). Lastly, the basilect is considered as a 'low' social dialect which is used informally and colloquially as a pidgin-type used mostly by village peddlers when talking to tourists and other potential customers.

Pillai and Fauziah Kamaruddin (2006) depict MalE as a continuum, which identifies the main linguistics characteristics of the three major sociolects (Ramasamy, 2005). The continuum is depicted in Table 2.1. The continuum shows that there are variations within MalE, and that these features can be distinguished on the basis of formal and informal settings.

Table 2.1 Linguistic characteristics of three major sociolects

	Acrolect (Standard MalE)	Mesolect (Colloquial)	Basilect (Broken)
S	+ Standard	-Standard	Extreme simplified structures
L	+ localized lexical items accepted in formal and informal use	+ localized lexical items, including those not used in more formal contexts.	Pidgin-like
P	Can be ± marked ethnically	Usually, but not necessarily + marked ethnic accent and intonation	Usually + marked ethnic accent and intonation
E.G	● News paper reports ● Formal letters & documents ● Television news ● Official speeches	Informal spoken & written communication between colleagues, friends, family members	Used by those with limited proficiency in English
S = Syntax L = Lexis P = Phonology			

(From Pillai and Kamaruddin, 2006)

2.2 English pronunciation

Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) are two well researched and forms of native varieties of English. These native varieties of English have developed through general acceptance of these varieties because they have been well documented and described by phoneticians, linguists and language pedagogues (Kachru, 1986). The users of non-native English found it more convenient to use RP, or as a close approximation to it, as a pedagogical model. Kachru also states that, this does not mean that RP and GA is 'correct', they are just widely acceptable. Non-native speakers often try to mirror these models of English depending on their various language historical backgrounds.

Tottie (2016) points out that the most noticeable difference between American English and British English is the pronunciation of post-vocalic /r/. American English has a higher tendency of pronouncing the post-vocalic /r/. Words like *father, mother,*

pleasure, tar, year, part, cart, and *board* are pronounced with an audible [r] or pronounced with a strong retroflex *r*-colouring of the vowel. Tottie added that when the /r/ is pronounced in this environment the tip of the tongue turned back against the roof of the mouth. In both American and British English, /r/ is said as an approximant because the /r/ is not trilled or a fricative. This happens when the air stream is less narrowed than for a fricative, and no friction is produced. However, in this context, *r* in the spelling of the word following a vowel at the end of a word or preceding a consonant is not pronounced. In standard spoken British English. For example, Yallop, (1999) points out that, in BBC English, the *r* is not pronounced in words such as *'car, card, four, fort, spur, spurt, beer, beard, stare,* and *stairs'.* Hence, British English is a non-rhotic variety of English where words like *'spa/spar, ma/mar, tuba/tuber, fought/fort'* are pronounced identically.

Davenport and Hannahs (2005) explained that a major dialect divisions in the English speaking continents are concerned about the distribution of the rhotic varieties in English. In all varieties of English have pre-vocalic /r/ as in '*racoon*' or '*carrot*', however, not all words are rhotic (e.g. *bear* or *cart*). Accents in which the *r* in the spelling of the word following a vowel at the end of a word or preceding a consonant is pronounced are known as rhotic accents. Non-rhotic accents of English inlcude Welsh English, South African English, and some West Indian Englishes. The rhotic accents include American English, Scottish and Irish English, West Indian Englishes, and in some British English varieties like in the South West of England and a few places in Lancashire (Davenport and Hannahs, 2005).

Linking /r/ occurs whenever a word final /r/ precedes a vowel across word boundaries, and the /r/ is pronounced (Davenport & Hannahs, 2005:33). For example in

phrases like ‘far away’ and ‘major attraction’ the *r* at the end of the first word tends to be pronounced to provide a smooth transition to the vowel in non-rhotic accents. In comparison, words within morphological complex words like ’soar’ with ‘soaring’, ‘beer’ with ‘beery’, or ‘ meteor’ with ‘metheoric’, the *r* is replaced. Where by, the first member of each pair of word has no /r/ sound but the rhotic occurs when vowel-initial ending is added. Nonetheless, the word final linking /r/ is limited to vowel like [ɑ:], [ɔ:], [ɜ:], as in ‘c<u>a</u>r’, ‘b<u>o</u>re’, ‘f<u>u</u>r’ respectively and [ə] an in ‘w<u>a</u>ter’, ‘be<u>e</u>r’, ect.

They also elucidated that, intrusive /r/ occurs in a non-rhotic accents of a ‘word-final’ rhotic when it is not presence in the spelling. For an example the word ‘tuna’ is produced in the same word in ‘tuna alert’. In the second occurrences an /r/ is inserted between the two vowels as in ‘tuna’ in orthograpic /r/, ‘tuna [ɹ] alert’. Instrusive /r/ is seen as an analogical extension of linking /r/, it occurs with the following vowels [ɑ:], [ɔ:], and [ə] as in ‘Shah of Iran’, ‘paw or hoof’, ‘America in spring’. Davenport and Hannah (2005:33) also added that after [ə] is produced by some speakers ‘may make a conscious effort to avoid intrusive ‘r’ after the other vowels’. This research is focused on the non-prevocalic /r/ produced by the Tamil speakers who speaks Malaysian English. Non-prevocalic /r/ occurs before a consonant or before a pause in rhotic accents (Trudgill and Hannah, 2008).

2.3 Rhoticity in Malaysian English

Malaysian English is generally assumed to be non-rhotic (e.g. Baskaran, 2004) but the realisation of postvocalic-r has been reported in this variety (e.g. Kirkpatrick, 2007; Phoon & Maclagan, 2009; Pillai, Manueli and Dumanig, 2010; Pillai, 2013; Rajadurai, 2010). Hickey (2004), for example found that *r* was pronounced by young speakers in words such as *art*, *door*, and *worker*. Ramasamy (2005), who examined the

speech of Malaysian Tamils, also found evidence of rhoticity but suggests that the pronunciation of non-prevocalic /r/ is a new phenomenon in the speech of young Malaysians. Pillai (2013) suggests that rhoticity is more evident in younger speakers not because of influence from their L1 but because this may be a growing trend among younger speakers (Pillai, 2013). In a multilingual settings such as Malaysia, labels such as English as L1, L2 or ESL are not always useful due to the diversity in how and when and to what extent English is learnt and used (Pillai, 2015). On the other hand, Rajadurai (2006) sees this phenomenon as the influence of an American accent on the pronunciation of English in Malaysia. Thus far, previous studies have indicated that age, gender and also socioeconomic background influence the pronunciation of coda /r/ in their studies.

Ramasamy (2005), who did her research on analysis of the usage of postvocalic-r in Malaysian English focusing on one ethnic group (Malaysian Indians) found that age is an important variable s in the difference of pronunciation pattern. Her speakers were 14-17 years old who spoke English as an L1, and 47-54 years old who spoke English as an L2. In her study, she found out that the younger generation was more susceptible to new influences as compared to the older generation. The younger group of female speakers were more careful while pronouncing the postvocalic-r compared to the older group. All her speakers are from upper middle class who acquired tertiary education mainly in English. Therefore, there were more careful in their pronunciation as English is used as their dominant language or L1.

However, Poon, Abdullah, Maclagen (2013) who found a lack of rhoticity among thier resondents. Their research was on the consonant realizations of Malay-, Chinese- and Indian- influenced Malaysian English. Their respondents were teachers' from the Training College, and their age ranged from 19-22 years. Both male and female

participated in this study. Their Malay and Indian speakers did not pronounce final /r/. Only two of their Chinese speakers produced the final /r/ and that too, in only five out of 70 instances.

Pillai (2015) also found a lack of rhoticity among a group of fluent English speakers. The speakers were Malaysian Malay, Chinese, and Indian aged 20-30 and 30-45 years. All speakers were English language teachers and lecturers who were fluent in English. Based on the perceptual analysis that she carried out, only three speakers in the older group produced rhotic tokens. In the younger group, only four speakers out of the 15 speakers produced rhoticised tokens. Only one of the L1 speakers pronounced the coda /r/, e.g. in the phrase *stronger of.* This finding confirms the assumption that L1 speakers, especially the younger ones, are purveyors of the emergence of rhoticity in MalE. However, none of the speakers were considered rhotic as they produced inconsistent non-prevocalic-r tokens. She also added that, the production of the /r/ could be attributed to the fact that they were reading a text than speaking spontaneously.

2.4 Rhoticity in neighbouring varieties of English

Sharbawi and Deterding (2010) who investigated the occurrence of rhoticity in Brunei English and Singapore English found that the Bruneians produced non-prevocalic /r/, and this finding was supported both auditorily and acoustically. They found that only one Singaporean speaker was judged to have a rhotic English accent. They concluded that rhoticity in Brunei English is partly because Brunei Malay is also rhotic, unlike the Malay spoken in Singapore and most of Malaysia. This combined with the influence from American media in Brunei has resulted in widespread rhoticity in Brunei English.

Tan and Gupta (1992:140) found that post-vocalic /r/ in Singapore English was a "prestige feature" for some speakers. About 21 respondents from various social backgrounds were recorded. All respondents were given a reading passage and a word list, and an informal interview session was carried out, to observe the usage of post-vocalic /r/. The three contextual styles were selected to observe the correlation between post-vocalic /r/ and stylistic variation. Tan and Gupta (1992) found out that the younger respondents aged 10 to 23 years old tended to display higher post-vocalic /r/ usage. Most of their young respondents were exposed to pop culture and entertainment programmes which are mostly 'American Imports'. However, the female respondents displayed higher usage of post-vocalic /r/. Out of seven /r/ users only one is male respondent. They also found out that peer groups were also a strong influence in the usage of post-vocalic /r/ by the younger respondents.

" (r) was shown to be indeed a sociolinguistic variable, with post-vocalic /r/ being a prestige feature for some speakers. This may well happen since young Singaporeans have rather positive feelings towards American English. As respondent 10 remarked … our English is mostly… influenced from America…we tend to understand American English much better than British… American English is much better, it's straightforward…"

Hence, this explains is getting ahead Singapore English is going towards the rhotic variety of English as most of the younger generations are very much influenced with the American media and they are following the rhotic accents of words produced by the Americans.

On the other hand, coda /r/ can be also influenced by the educational level and the socioeconomic background of the speakers (Tan, 2011). Tan who investigated the social correlates of /ɹ/ in Singapore English found that there is a direct correlation between the education and socioeconomic status of the speaker with the production of postvocalic-r and intrusive-r in Singapore English. A total of 24 native speakers were recorded in her study. All of her respondents were female speakers aged 18-25. All of them were Chinese-Singaporeans and English-Mandarin bilinguals. They were studying in a post-secondary education institution in Singapore. All respondents were asked to read a set of 50 sentences. The sentences were designed with different phonological environments for the occurrence of post-vocalic /r/, instrusive –r, and lingking –r. This is explained as it is a distinct phenomenon in Singapore English and speakers who produced this tokens are in complementary distribution.

She suggests that "intrusive-r itself a social class marker." Singaporeans are more exposed to American media and the fact that the use of postvocalic-r is restricted to university students with higher economic backgrounds suggests the influence of American English. She concluded that *" The production of /ɹ / in this non-rhotic variety of English is also not due to hypercorrection, as if so, instrusive – r speakers should also produce postvocalic –r, but that is not the case. All these perhaps imply that SgE may be moving towards becoming rhotic variety of English."*

2.5 Differences in the pronunciation in non-native varieties of English

There was a training grounds this research been carried out to identify the differences in the usage in the pronunciation produced by speakers who speaks the non-variety of English. The emergence of English into different varieties led to the diversity of linguistics variations and these variation of pronunciation seems to take the lead

(Ramasamy, 2005). Kachru (1984), found that, the English of ESL countries are 'norm developing' and this group of speakers will show regular variations firstly compared to the native speakers and the non-native speakers. Gorlarch (1998), characterized English used in ESL countries by four elements; firstly, a wide divergence of individual competencies, with only a minority speaking English at all. Secondly, the restriction of English to certain domains (law, media, administration). Thirdly, a restricted input, historically often dominated by administrationese, literary English from Shakespere to Dickens and biblical language. Lastly, a much greater deviance from a Standard pronunciation expected in international communication than in written forms.

Most studies, are carried out to show and understand the phonological variation in nativized varieties of English. Wells (1982) explains the classification for the differences in pronunciation between the native and non-native varieties. There are several differences that occurs in pronunction:

i. Phonectic realization
ii. Phonotactic distribution
iii. Phonemic ststems
iv. Lexical distribution

Ramasamy (2005), explained the phonotactic distribution which is ways in which sounds can co-occur in words. One of the major phonotactic division of English accents which is made between rhotic (or 'r-ful') and non-rhotic (or 'r-less') accents. The differences of the pronunciation or non-pronunciation of an /r/ sound can be identified when there is an orthographic /r/ not followed by a vowel. Examples of words like *car*, *card* and *for*. Speakers who speaks the non-rhotic accents will try to imitate an American

accent are likely to add /r/ at the end of a word like data, where the /r/ is not pronounced by the Americans. She also said that this form of occurrence is identified as overgeneralization. Phonetic realization refers to the details of pronunciation of a sound which appears in the same lexical set in two varieties, for example, for the word /kit/ vowel and medial consonant in /ether/ (Bauer, 2002). The /kit/ vowel is used to distinguish the Australians from the New Zealanders.

The influence of L1 speaker is well explained by Gut (2007) in her Norm Orientation Hypothesis. This hypothesis is focused on the "relationship and mutual dependency between the development of linguistics stuctures and the norm orientation of the speakers" (Gut, 2007:356). She explained that the nativization of Englishes occurs when a dialect mixing among the settlers will not show the difference in the indigenous pupolation. This occurs when, a dialect mixing among the settlers will not show the difference in the indigenous population. Mostly, happened in countries like New Zealand, Austrialia, Canada and the USA. If the native speakers leaves the country or stay even in small numbers, the phonological features will enter the new English variety.

The hypothesis also explained that the media and the teaching has a major influence on the phonological development of the varieties of English spoken in the most of the post-colonial countries. Her findings was supported by Sharma (2005) on the English spoken by the Indian Immigrants in the US. The second language learning system were different from the non-varieties of English in both structure and attitude in perceiving the language. The learners aim was to adapt the local accent of English in both structures. This leads to style shifting and dialect stabilization. Hence, this explains that a new learner of a language has high tendencies to follow the structure of a language that they are learning.

2.6 Other Englishes and acoustic analysis

An acoustic analysis was done by Hasselwood and Plug (2011) on what actually effects the removal of F3 from a rhotic signal which is perceived in rhoticity. Two experiments were carried out to see the reliability of the results. As for the first experiment, they extracted rhotic tokens from a word list recordings of a 79 years old male speaker of English from Accrington, Lancashire. Lancashire is a rhotic area in nort-west England. Words like *fort*, *stars* and *hurt* were extracted from the recording. For all three words, 40% judged as rhotic for the word *fort* and 80% were rhotic for the word *stars* and 73% of rhoticity was found for the word *hurt*. This shows that, 'if a low-frequency F3 is a crucial acoustic correlate of rhoticity, attenuation of F3 should result in a decrease in the degree of perceived rhoticity' (Hasselwood and Plug, 201:868).

As for the second experiment, forty-four phonetics students participated in the study. They were asked to listen to the recorded tokens and to judge which were rhotic tokens. They found out that both the words fir and back have lower F3 which contributes to their assumption that the tokens are rhotic if there is a lowering in F3 measurements. All their data was acoustically tested using spectrograms.

2.7 Sociolinguistics variations

Sociolinguistics is a field of study in which explains the relation between the language and social structure used by a language user (Spolsky, 2004). Adding to what Spolsky has explained sociolinguistics shows the linguistic changes and the variations which relates to the linguistics variables and social parameters. Linguistic features which differs both socially and stylistically are termed as stylistic markers (Chamber & Trudgill, 1980). Stylistic variations and social variations are often interrelated. Ramasamy (2005)

explained that linguists describes stylistic variation in terms of 'dichotomies', which is formal versus informal and written versus spoken. However, Biber (1998) states that the stylistic variation in language is not a continuum but more of a dichotomy and a continua as a whole. This concludes that, linguistic variations in a variety influences the stylistic and social variables of a language.

Ramasamy (2005) also added that this pertinent feature which can be found in Malaysian context. Being in a multiethnic groups and able to speak variety of languages shows that Malaysians are able to use the variables of the English language in different contexts. This phenomenon could be related to Hymes Rules of Speaking (Hymes, 1972) which explains that speakers of a language who are able to adapt accordingly to different situations. For instance, if a group of speakers are from the same group and they are engaged in a casual conversation, they probably would speak differently compared to while they read a formal context.

2.8 Socio-Phonetics variation

The term socio-phonetics and socio-phonology have been used to explain the recent findings in linguistic variations on the part of phoneticians and phonologists (Foulkes & Docherty, 1995:5). This is particularly in the area of accent studies in which research is carried out in differences of segmental or suprasegmental pronunciation. Foulkes and Dorcherty 1995:5 also added that the term of socio-phonetics is derived from the necessity to identify the link between social variables and that influence the pronunciation patterns of certain groups of people.

There have been many studies carried out in the field of pronunciation particularly with the non-native speakers of English. Poedjosoedarmo and Deterding

(2000) conducted a study on the ethnicity identification through pronunciation. The data collected consist of conversational speech among Singaporean Chinese and Malay undergraduates. The speakers were asked to listen to the recordings of conversations and they have to identify the ethnicity of the speakers. The results of the research shows that Singaporeans can be identified of their ethnicity through their speech. Ramasamy (2015) added that the studies on pronunciation variability should be taken into the sociolinguistics context and also the pragmatic aspect of the non-native speech community. She added that this study is known as a socio-phonetics and is a rather new field.

2.9 The Phenomenon of r-deletion or r-lessness

Labov (1972), carried out research on r-lessness in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Pre-consonantal and final /r/ was being analyzed in the research. He listened to a set of recordings recorded by researchers in a particular speech community. The findings of the research shows that Philadelphia used to have r-lessness but then went through a process of rhoticization, and now this is the norm. Labov, concluded that the realization of r-lessness occurs as the age group of speakers got older and the sound change thus occurred in real time.

2.10 Summary of Chapter 2

In this chapter, different varieties of English were discussed. The influence of rhoticity in Malaysian English (MalE) and the other neighbouring varieties of English were also discussed. The following chapter will present the method used in analyzing this research.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter discusses the methods used to carry out this study. This chapter explains the research design, selection of speakers, the background of the speakers, the instrument and materials and method of data analysis in this study.

3.1 Research overview

This study was designed to analyse if there is evidence of rhoticity among the Tamil speakers who speak English as their first (L1) and second language (L2). It also examines if their education background and their attitude influences the production of rhoticity in Malaysian English. Table 3.1 shows the overall design of this study.

Table 3.1 Research design

Research Questions	Source of Data	Methods of Data Collection	Methods of Data Analysis
1. To what extent is there evidence ofrhoticity in the English produced by the three groups of speakers 2. To what extent is there a relationship between the speakers' language and educational background and the production of the non- prevocalic /r/?	1. 15 female speakers - Aged 13-19 - Aged 50-70 2. All could speak and understand English. 3. Tamil L1 and L2 4. Fairly homogenous -Educational background -Professional(Students, Teachers, Businesswoman,and Housewife)	1. Read a word list (26 words) three times. 2. Interview -Education background -Language proficiency - English test results	1.Praat Version 5.3.82 (Boersma&Weenink, (2014) 2. Statistics -Average,Mean &Standard Deviation

3.2 Speakers

A total of 20 female speakers from one ethnic group, in this case, Malaysian Tamils, aged from 13 to 19 and 50- to 70 years were recorded. The rationale for choosing one ethnic group was to examine if this feature occurs among Malaysian Tamil speakers. However, it may be the case that young Tamils in Malaysia who speak English as their first language display different patterns because of a possible influence from American media as suggested in Ramasamy (2005). Thus, by focusing on ethnic group but with different first languages and educational backgrounds, this study could focus on whether these had any influence on the way in which the respondents spoke Malaysian English. In short, this study will look at Malaysian Tamil speakers who speak English as their L1, and those for whom Tamil is their L1 and English their L2. Female speakers were selected, because as studies have indicated that women have a tendency to use what is

deemed to be more ‘correct’ or ‘prestigious’ linguistic forms (Trudgill, 1983). Further, female are generally the agents of linguistic change (Holmes, 1997).

The 13-19 years old group comprised 10 Malaysian speakers of Tamil origin, the speakers in this age group were divided into two groups; the first group of students speak English as their first language. On the other hand, the second group of students speak Tamil as their first language. All speakers live in the Klang Valley. This age group was selected since younger speakers seem more inclined to display rhoticity in their English (e.g. Pillai, Manueli & Dumanig, 2010; Sharbawi and Deterding, 2010). Three speakers from the first group were studying at an International school, where the medium of instruction is English, and the other two speakers were studying at government schools where Malay is the medium of instruction at the time of the recording. All of them in this group said they spoke English as their L1. They communicate in English with their parents, siblings, most of their friends and relatives. Some of them said that they speak in Malay with their friends at school. All of them in this group of speakers were from a higher socioeconomic background as their parents are all professionals, for example managers, director of companies, lawyers, university lecturers, and executives. Their monthly household income is more than RM10 000, and both their parents are working.

The fluency of the speakers can be also determined by their exam results. During the informal interview sessions, speakers were asked about their government exam results at year six of primary school (UPSR), Form three of secondary school (PMR), and the fifth form of secondary school (SPM) and their English language results, As for the first group of speakers all of them obtained an ‘A’, in their English exams.

On the other hand, the second group of speakers speak Tamil as their L1. This group of respondents studied at Tamil medium schools during their primary school, and all of them were pursuing their secondary education in government schools in the Klang Valley at the time of the recording. All the speakers from the second group are from a middle-class socioeconomic background. Their parents' household income is less than RM10 000, and for most of them only their fathers' are working but their mothers' are housewives. Among the type of employment their parents had were taxi drivers and school teachers. During the informal interview sessions, they said that they spoke mostly in Tamil with their parents, siblings, relatives and friends. They also communicate in English and Malay at school with their peers. The speakers also said that they used Tamil with their friends while they were studying at the Tamil-medium primary school. However, these second group of speakers did not obtained high score in their English examinations throughout their UPSR, PMR exams compared to the first group of speakers. Most of them scored a 'B' and some of them scored 'C' which is lower than 70%. This shows that their proficiency level is very much related to their exam scores. Table 3.2 shows the details of the speakers in Groups 1 and 2.

Table 3.2 Speakers from the 13-19 year old age group

	SPEAKER	L1	AGE	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
Group 1	YGE1	English	17	Kajang Utama
	YGE2		16	Kajang Utama
	YGE3		17	Puchong
	YGE4		16	Kelana Jaya
	YGE5		18	Kelana Jaya
Group 2	YGT1	Tamil	17	Bangi
	YGT2		13	Subang Jaya
	YGT3		14	Bandar Sunway
	YGT4		14	Bandar Sunway
	YGT5		15	Bandar Sunway

Note: YGT = Younger generation, Tamil as L1 speakers

YGE = Younger generation, English as L1 speakers

OG= Older generation

The second age group consisted of five speakers who were 50 to 70 years old. Some speakers were still working, and some of them had retired at the time of recording. Although all speakers spoke Tamil as their L1 at home, they were all educated in English medium schools in the 1950's. Most of them had completed their Form 5 studies (O level equivalent), and some of them graduated with Diplomas or Degrees. All speakers in this group spoke Tamil with their family members, relatives and friends. They used English and Malay as a medium of communication with their colleagues. There were also asked about their English examination grades during their high school. OG1 said that that she got an 'A' in her English exams and the OG3, OG4 and OG5 said that they always obtained a 'B' in their English examinations. Only OG2 said that she got a credit in her

SPM examination. These shows that speakers who uses English as a medium of communication with their friends and at home have higher tendency to score better in their English examination.

Table 3.3: Speakers from the 50-70 year old age group

SPEAKER	AGE	L1	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
OG1	68	Tamil	Housewife	Kajang
OG2	51		Secondary School Teacher	Kajang
OG3	61		Housewife	Puchong
OG4	53		Entrepreneur	Petaling Jaya
OG5	54		Pre-School Teacher	Kajang

Note: OG = Older Generation

3.3 Data

The speech data were elicited in two ways: (a) a list of word that were read out by the speakers, (b) an informal interview. This will show the two different speech styles as speakers tend to be more careful while reading out a text, but during an informal interview they can be expected to be more relaxed and calm. The word list comprised 26 words, 21 words with final *r* in word final position and the other five words with final *r* before a consonant in a word. Speakers were told to read the words aloud as naturally as they could. Table 3.4 shows the list of words that was used during the recording.

Table 3.4 Word List

r+C#	
r + Stop#	Burp Curb Tart Card Bark
r + Fricative#	Curve Birth Nurse
r + Affricate#	Church Large
r + Approximant#	Curl
r + Nasal#	Term Corn
r+ s# (plural/ third person verb forms)	Bars Cars Stars Stirs Stores
r #	
	Bar Car Jar Far Pour Stir Star Store

All words were chosen with the possible combination of *r* that comes before a consonant in a word final position and *r* in word final position. Five words with a final *r* position in a word were also pluralized to see if speakers pronounced the *r* in this environment (e.g. car /kɑː/ and cars /kɑːz/). There are 20 syllable-final consonants in English b, p, d, t, g, k, v, f, ð, n, ŋ, θ, z, s, ʒ, ʃ, m, l, ʧ, ʤ. However, only a few combination of consonants used in this study as not all consonants can be used with a *r* in a word.

Interview sessions were also carried out to observe the speakers' language use in their everyday lives. All speakers were asked similar questions. Firstly, they had to talk about their language education background, and their favourite television programmes. Besides that, they were also asked about their proficiency in Tamil.

3.4 Procedure

Speakers were interviewed and recorded in a quiet room at their respective houses. The recordings were carried out using a Marantz PMD661 Solid State Sound Recorder with an Audio-Technica ATM 73 headworn microphone, d at 44,100 Hz, 16 bit sampling rate. Two recordings sessions were conducted. For the first session, the speakers were provided with a list of words to read. The list of words were not given upfront so that the reading was not rehearsed. All speakers were asked to read the words in the list three times. This was done to examine if coda *r* is produced in all three instance by a speaker which would suggest consistent use. As explained earlier the values for F1, F2 and F3 is also measured in this study. Sharbawi (2006) also discussed in her research that pre-vocalic /r/ can affect the F2 and F2 can be an important indicator of R-colouring. Speakers were asked to include the word in a carrier sentence (e.g. Please say ***church*** to me). They had to use the same sentence for all the words. If a word with a final *r* before a consonant was followed by a word beginning with a vowel the tendencies of pronouncing the coda *r* will more salient.

The second session was the interview with the speakers. They were asked about seven questions (see Appendix). The recordings were recorded in a quiet room. The questions were about their first language proficiency, the languages that they speak at home, with their friends, relatives and colleagues. The speaker's educational background

and their highest score throughout their English exams in school were asked to know their proficiency level in English. Besides that, they were also asked about their favourite television programmes. Since the study is focused on Tamil speakers, the speakers were asked if they are able to read and write Tamil fluently, and if they had taken Tamil subject while studying at secondary school. Hence, this would give a brief understanding of their proficiency level in both Tamil and English and how much do they use it in their daily life. The recordings of the informal interview were also transcribed. Words which had word-final *r* in the spelling, and those in word-final *r* followed by a consonant were extracted and analysed in Praat to see if the speakers pronounced *r* in an informal context.

3.5 Analysis of data

The recorded data were then transferred onto a computer to be analysed. A perceptual analysis of the data was carried out to determine if the speakers were realising *r* in the target environments. For the recordings of the word list, a total of 26 words were analysed for each speaker. The 26 words were transferred on an excel sheet and all the F1, F2, and F3 measurements were written in the excel sheet. As mentioned earlier all speakers needs to read each word three times and all the three measurements were transferred in the same excel sheet. Both the researcher and a linguist listen to the recordings three times and confirms if the *r* is realized for each word. All recordings were transcribed orthographically and examined and annotated using Praat version 5.3.82 (Boersma & Weenink, 2013).

Praat version 5.3.82 (Boersma and Weenick, 2014) was used to acoustically analyse these data. The first (F1), second (F2) and third formant (F3) of the vowels (a,e,i.o.u) for the word list and only four vowel (a,e,o,u) for the interview data measured

using Praat. Based on the assumption that a dipping of F3 of the vowel preceding /r/ can be expected if the speaker is being rhotic the F3 will be shown was measured (see Chapter 2). As Ladefoged (2001; 53) points out, for /r/, "a very low frequency of the third formant" of "below 2000 Hz" for the vowel preceding the r can be expected. There are, however, issues with associating the lowering of F3 with rhoticity (Sharbawi & Deterding, 2010). Nevertheless, this measurement will still be used to supplement the perceptual analysis as there is currently no alternative acoustic measure.

Figure 3.1 shows the word ***nerd*** that is extracted from the informal interview with a speaker who produced a rhoticised toke. The lowering of the F3 indicates shows that the speaker produced rhoticised token.

Figure 3.1: Screenshot of Spectrogram for the word 'Nerd'

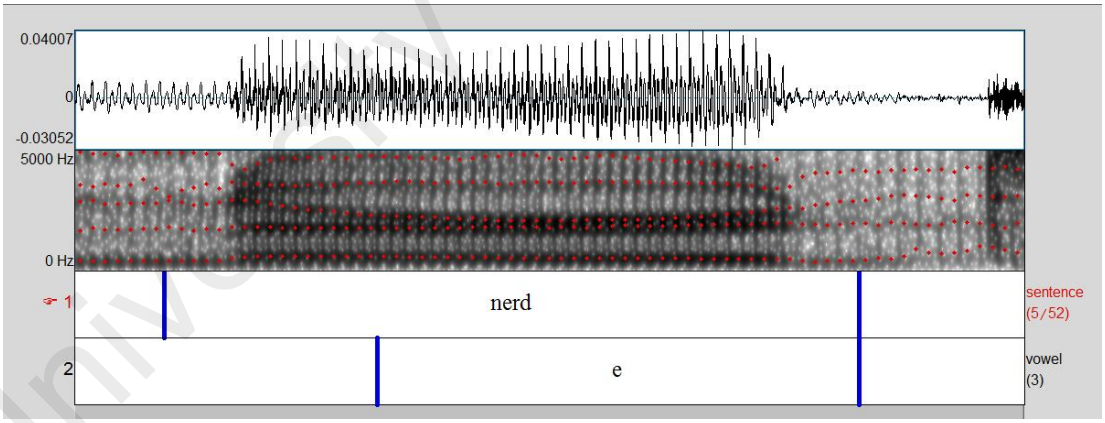
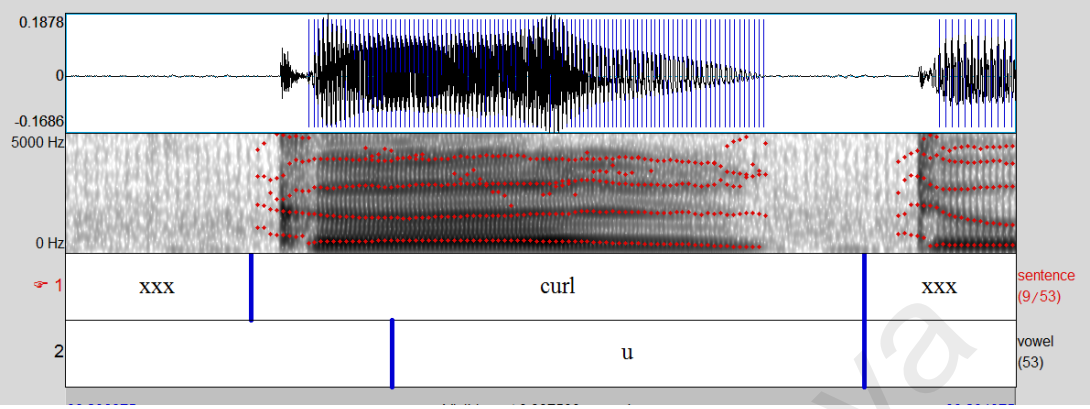


Figure 3.2 shows the utterance of the word curl by one of the speaker who speaks Tamil as her L1. There is no evidence of non-prevocalic /r/ in this recording. After the vowel /u/ the F3 did not drop and this indicates there is no element of rhoticity found in this recording.

Figure 3.2: Screenshot of Spectrogram for the word 'Curl'



Pre-vocalic /r/ can affect the F2 in a word and the F2 can be important indicator of R-colouring. The findings will also be compared to the patterns of rhoticity found in neighbouring varieties of English (e.g. Sharbawi, 2010; Sharbawi & Deterding, 2010; Tan, 2012; Tan & Gupta, 1992) which share a colonial past. This comparison is important to see if there are also similar trends in the emergence of rhoticity in the neighboring varieties.

3.6 Summary of Chapter 3

In this chapter, an overview of speakers profile and the method of data collection was discussed. The methods that used to analyse the data for the word list and also the informal interview session were mentioned earlier in this chapter. In chapter 4, the measurement of the non-prevocalic /r/ and the overall results of the study will be presented and discussed.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the analysis of the recordings of the word list and informal interviews. The findings are discussed to determine the usage of non-prevocalic /r/ by the speakers in this study. The findings include the discussion of perceptual and acoustic analysis of coda *r* produced by the speakers in the three groups.

4.1 Perceptual analysis

4.1.1 Rhoticity in the word list

As mentioned in Chapter 3, a total of 78 (26 x 3) words per speaker were recorded resulting in 1170 tokens in the word list context. The perceptual analysis of the sounds was done by the author and another researcher. Both listened to the recordings at least twice to perceptually determine if there was an occurrence of *r* in the target words. An agreement of 95% was achieved between the two listeners about whether the *r* in the target words was pronounced by the speakers. Upon further listening, an agreement was reached about the items that were in dispute. Once the perceptual analysis was completed, all rhoticised tokens were extracted to determine the frequency of occurrence of rhotic words produced by the speakers. Overall, only 330 words out of 1170 (28.2%) words were rhotic produced by seven speakers of the 15 speakers. The total number of rhoticised tokens were divided with the total number of words (*r* in word final position and in *r*C# position) used in this study to calculate the percentage of the rhoticised tokens. Table 4.1 shows the results of the perceptual analysis of the recordings of the word list.

Table 4.1: Rhotic tokens by speakers

Speakers	Rhotacised Tokens	Frequency and Percentage of rhotic tokens per speaker
YGE1	bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs	77 (98%)
YGE2	bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs bark card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir jar car bar pour star bars cars stars stores stirs	78 (100%)
YGE3	card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir bars cars stars stores stirs card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir bars cars stars stores stirs card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb far store stir bars cars stars stores stirs	60 (79%)
YGE4	card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb store stir bars cars stars stores stirs card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl store stir bars cars stars stores stirs card church term corn nurse tart birth burp curve large curl curb store stir bars cars stars stores stirs	58 (77%)

Speakers	Rhotacised Tokens	Frequency and Percentage of rhotic tokens per speaker
YGE5	bar**k** chu**r**ch te**r**m nu**r**se ta**r**t cu**r**ve fa**r** ja**r** ca**r** ba**r** pou**r** ba**r**s ca**r**s sta**r**s sto**r**es sti**r**s ba**r**k chu**r**ch te**r**m nu**r**se ta**r**t cu**r**ve fa**r** ja**r** ca**r** ba**r** pou**r** ba**r**s ca**r**s sta**r**s sto**r**es sti**r**s ba**r**k chu**r**ch te**r**m nu**r**se ta**r**t cu**r**ve fa**r** ja**r** ca**r** ba**r** pou**r** ba**r**s ca**r**s sta**r**s sto**r**es sti**r**s	48 (59%)
YGT1	None	0
YGT2	None	0
YGT3	None	0
YGT4	None	0
YGT5	None	0
OG1	None	0
OG2	None	0
OG3	cu**r**l	1 (4%)
OG4	None	0
OG5	fa**r** sto**r**e ja**r** ba**r** pou**r** ca**r** ba**r** ja**r** fa**r** ca**r**	10 (38%)
TOTAL		327 (42%)

Based on this analysis, evidence of rhoticity can be seen in the first group which speaks English as their L1 compared to the second and the third group. As explained in Chapter 3, the first group of speakers (YGE1) speaks English as their L1 and for three of them, Tamil is their L2 but there were also two speakers, YGE1 and YEG2, who did not know how to speak Tamil. These two speakers produced the *r* in all the tokens. The other

three speakers in the first group produced only about 60% of rhotacised tokens. YEG3 who is also from an international school produced about 70% of rhoticised tokens in all three recordings (see Table 4.1), compared to YEG4 and YEG5 who produced about 77% and 59% of rhoticised tokens respectively. Both YEG4 and YEG5 are from government schools and speak English as their L1, but they can also read and write in Tamil. A chi-square test was performed to examine the relationship between Malaysian Tamil speakers with English as an L1 from international and government schools. The results indicate that there is a significant difference between the speakers between the type of school attended by these L1 speakers and rhoticity, X^2 (1, N = 390) = 36.81, p <.05. Younger Malaysian Tamil speakers from International schools were more likely to produce rhotic tokens than those from government schools.

The second group of speakers consisted of five speakers who speak Tamil as their L1. All of them were able to communicate in English but their proficiency level is low compared to the first group of speakers. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this group of speakers studied in Tamil medium primary schools, and all were studying at a Malay medium government secondary school at the time of the recording. The perceptual analysis of the recordings of the word list showed that none of the speakers produced non-prevocalic /r/ from the three sets of recordings. Since there were no rhotic tokens for the Young Malaysian Tamil with Tamil as L1, no statistical test was carried out to compare them with the Young Malaysian Tamil with English as an L1 group. However, the fact that none of the speakers in the latter group produced any rhotacised tokens suggests that speakers with English as their L1 were more likely to produce rhotic tokens than those for whom Tamil is an L1.

The third group of speakers consisted of five older Malaysian Tamil speakers aged 50 to 70 years old. Tamil is their L1 and English is L2 for most of them. Speakers from this group could read and write in English (see 3.2). As can be seen in table 4.1, in this group only OG3 and OG5 produced some rhoticised tokens (e.g. *curl*, *far*, *store*, *jar*, *car*, *bar* and *pour*). OG3 is a housewife but she is very active in social work and frequently attend meetings with her friends. During the informal interview she mentioned that she uses English, and sometimes Malay, Tamil and Malayalam to communicate with her friends. She uses mostly English with her husband and children at home. On the other hand, OG5 is a pre-school teacher, and she teaches English. She uses English and Malay as a medium of communication at school. She speaks in Tamil and English with her husband and children at home. OG3 and OG5 use English as a medium of communication in everyday contexts such as with their families, children and colleagues which perhaps had influence on their production of rhoticised tokens as they were the only two older speakers who produced rhotacised tokens while reading out the words given to them. However, like the other older speakers they did not produce any rhoticised tokens while reading out the words from the word list as well as in the interview which suggests that they are not naturally rhotic.

As mentioned earlier, the first group produced the most rhoticised tokens compared to the second and third group. A chi-square test shows that there is a significant difference between the two groups, X^2 (1, N =1170) = 187.98, p <.05. Younger Malaysian Tamils speakers were more likely to produce rhotic tokens than older Malaysian Tamils.

The 78 words in total which is repeated three times by each speaker were divided into words with *r* in final word position and words with final *r* before a consonant. There were 18 words with a final *r* before a consonant and eights words with an *r* in final word position. Most of the speakers pronounced the *r* in the rC# context compared *r* in word final positions as words with a final *r* before a consonant had the highest percentage of rhoticity (83%). All the five speakers pronounced *r* in *church, term, nurse, tart, curve, large, bars, cars, stars, stores* and *stirs* compared to the other words. There was a significant difference between the rC# tokens that were rhotacised (M=13.46, SD=1.94) and rhotacised r# token (M=11, SD=2.39); $t(24)$= 2.59, p<0.05.

Table 4.2: Frequency and percentage (%) of words with rhoticised tokens in the word list

Words	Total rhoticised tokens	Frequency		
		YGE	YGT	OG
bark	15	9 (60%)	0	0
card	15	12 (80%)	0	0
church	15	15 (100%)	0	0
term	15	15 (100%)	0	0
corn	15	12 (80%)	0	0
nurse	15	15 (100%)	0	0
tart	15	15 (100%)	0	0
birth	15	12 (80%)	0	0

Words	Total rhoticised tokens	Frequency		
		YGE	YGT	OG
bu**r**p	15	12 (80%)	0	0
cu**r**ve	15	15 (100%)	0	0
la**r**ge	15	15 (100%)	0	0
cu**r**l	15	12 (80%)	0	1 (6%)
cu**r**b	15	12 (80%)	0	0
fa**r**	15	12 (80%)	0	2 (13%)
sto**r**e	15	12 (80%)	0	1 (6%)
sti**r**	15	12 (80%)	0	0
ja**r**	15	9 (60%)	0	2 (13%)
ca**r**	15	9 (60%)	0	2 (13%)
ba**r**	15	9 (60%)	0	2 (13%)
pou**r**	15	9 (60%)	0	1 (6%)
sta**r**	15	6 (40%)	0	0
ba**r**s	15	15 (100%)	0	0
ca**r**s	15	15 (100%)	0	0
sta**r**s	15	15 (100%)	0	0
sto**r**es	15	15 (100%)	0	0
sti**r**s	15	15 (100%)	0	0
Total	390	324 (83%)	0	11 (2.8%)

4.1.2 Rhoticity in informal interviews

As explained in the previous chapter, the recordings of the informal interviews, the words that were produced with the final *r* before a consonant and words with final *r* in a word were extracted and analysed using Praat Version 5.3.82 (Boersma and Weenick, 2014). Table 4.3 shows the rhoticised token from the interview data. Similar to the word lists, YGE produced more tokens with coda /r/ in words like *year, her, other, learn, later, words, nerd, star, short, never, mark, before, after, four, for, form, super, singers, remember.* A few words like *year, later, star, four and form* were repeated. Only two words with a final *r* in a final word position and with a final *r* followed by a consonant, *years* and *consider were* produced by YTG1 and YTG5 from Group 2. In other words, the Younger English as an L1 group seem to be more rhotic than the other groups of speakers. This is probably because the first group of speakers elaborated more when they were answering the question during the interview session rather than just giving direct answers. YEG1 and YEG2 produced the most rhotic tokens which in 70% of the total words produced with word final *r* and in rC# contexts. YEG3 produced only about 50% of rhotic tokens. Speakers wanted to sound 'correct' when they read a text than in a more spontaneous speech, and this may have resulted in producing more rhotic tokens in the word list contexts. Table 4.3 shows the rhotic tokens produced by the speakers in the informal interviews.

Table 4.3: Total number and percentage (%) of words with rhoticised tokens in the interview

Speakers	Rhotacised tokens	Total number and percentage of rhoticised tokens
YGE1	yea***r***, he***r***, othe***r***, lea***r***n, late***r***, wo***r***ds	5 (70%)
YGE2	ne***r***d, sta***r***, sho***r***t, neve***r***, ma***r***k, befo***r***e, afte***r***	5 (70%)
YGE3	sta***r***, fou***r***, fo***r***, fo***r***m	2 (50%)
YGE4	fo***r***	0
YGE5	sta***r***	0
YGT1	yea***r***s	0
YGT2	None	-
YGT3	None	-
YGT4	None	-
YGT5	conside***r***	0
OG1	supe***r***, singe***r***s, fo***r***m	0
OG2	fo***r***m	0
OG3	None	-
OG4	fo***r***m	0
OG5	None	-

Note: YGE: Younger generation, English as L1

YGT: Younger generation, Tamil as L1

OG: Older generation

In terms of language use and rhoticity, it appears that those who speak English as L1 displayed more evidence of rhoticity compared to the other groups in this study. In addition, those who went to international as opposed to government schools were even more likely to produce rhoticised tokens. This is consistent with the findings from the word list context. The younger speakers in the first group scores higher marks in their English examinations compared to the second group of speakers. OG3 and OG5 from the third group of speakers aged 50 to 70 years old produced rhotic tokens. OG3 were very fluent and uses a wide range of words compared to the rest.

As explained in Chapter 2, Malaysian English is considered as a non-rhotic variety and Malay is learned as L1 and English is taught as L2 in Malay medium schools (Pillai, 2015). Hence, most of the speakers who participated in this study are from the Malay medium school and only YEG1, YEG2, and YEG3 are studying at the international school. Teachers who teach in Malay medium schools are supposed to use British English as a pronunciation model based on the English language curriculum requirements (Baskaran, 2005). Students are likely to be influenced by the pronunciation pattern used by the teachers in schools. Except for the speakers of the first group who mostly said that they watch American Television programmes like Star World, HBO and Discovery Channel during the interview session and so they have the tendency to follow the American accent. Similarly discussed by Tan and Gupta (1992) that their respondents who are influenced by American Television programmes produced /r/ tokens when they speak.

4.2 Acoustic analysis of rhoticity for the word list

The tokens that were rhoticised were analysed against those that were not. As explained in Chapter 3, the third formant (F3) of the vowels preceding in both rhotic and

non-rhotic tokens were measured at mid-point. Table 4.4 shows the average F3 values and the standard deviation for all the tokens produced in this study. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the F3 values of the vowels in rhotic and non-rhotic tokens. There was a significant difference in the F3 values of the vowels preceding a pronounced coda /r/ and those preceding coda /r/ that was not produced. The t-value is -13.35966. the p-value is <.00001. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 4.4: Number and average F3 values of vowels in rhotic and non-rhotic tokens in the word list context

Words	Rhotic		Non-Rhotic		Total number of words
	Number of words	Average F3 (Hz) and SD	Number of words	Average F3 (Hz) and SD	
ba**r**k	9	2387	36	3097(313)	45
ca**r**d	12	2341(220)	33	2978(580)	45
chu**r**ch	15	2426(168)	30	3076(546)	45
te**r**m	15	2097(244)	30	2677(354)	45
co**r**n	12	2316(163)	33	2967(282)	45
nu**r**se	15	2336(314)	30	3002(158)	45
ta**r**t	15	2185(227)	30	3045(189)	45
bi**r**th	12	2384(271)	33	2923(140)	45
bu**r**p	12	2419(244)	33	2935(295)	45
cu**r**ve	15	2265(190)	30	2946(314)	45
la**r**ge	15	2276(212)	30	2980(203)	45

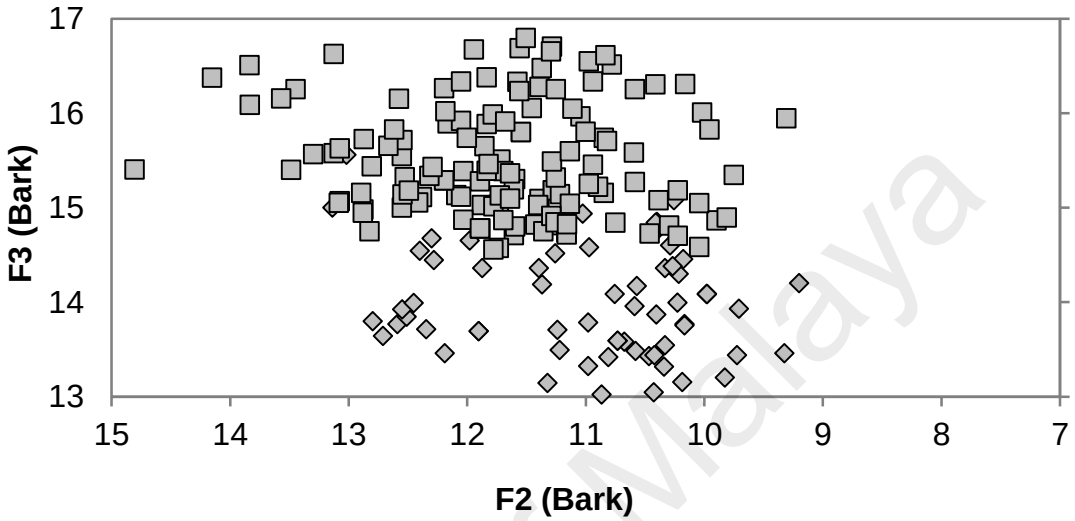
cu**r**l	13	2283(159)	32	3021(246)	45
cu**r**b	12	2290(178)	33	2980(196)	45
fa**r**	14	2381(253)	31	2921(180)	45
store	13	2331(233)	32	3083(317)	45
sti**r**	12	2366(246)	33	3115(286)	45
ja**r**	11	2284(171)	34	3028(294)	45
ca**r**	11	2265(317)	34	3014(194)	45
ba**r**	11	2366(241)	34	2954(247)	45
pou**r**	10	2321(281)	35	2381(152)	45
sta**r**	6	2326(128)	39	3027(209)	45
ba**r**s	15	2381(265)	30	3284(324)	45
ca**r**s	15	2389(297)	30	3018(209)	45
sta**r**s	15	2409(306)	30	3027(207)	45
sto**r**es	15	2328(377)	30	2967(282)	45
sti**r**s	15	2400(233)	30	2923(140)	45
TOTAL	390	2329(62)	780	2976(88)	1170

Note: Standard deviations are in parenthesis

Figures 4.1 to 4.3 show the scatter plots of the /a/, /ɔ/ and /ɛ/ vowels in rhotic and non-rhotic tokens extracted from the word list. For /a/ there were a total of 540 words extracted from *bark*, card *tart, large, far, jar, star, bar, car, cars stars* and *bars*. There were a total of 180 words for / ɔ/ taken from *store, stores, pour*, and *corn.* The F3 for the vowel /ɜ/ was taken from *church, term, nurse, burp curve, curl, curb, stir, stirs* and

birth. The rhotic tokens can generally be distinguished from the non-rhotic ones due to their lower F3 values for all three vowels.

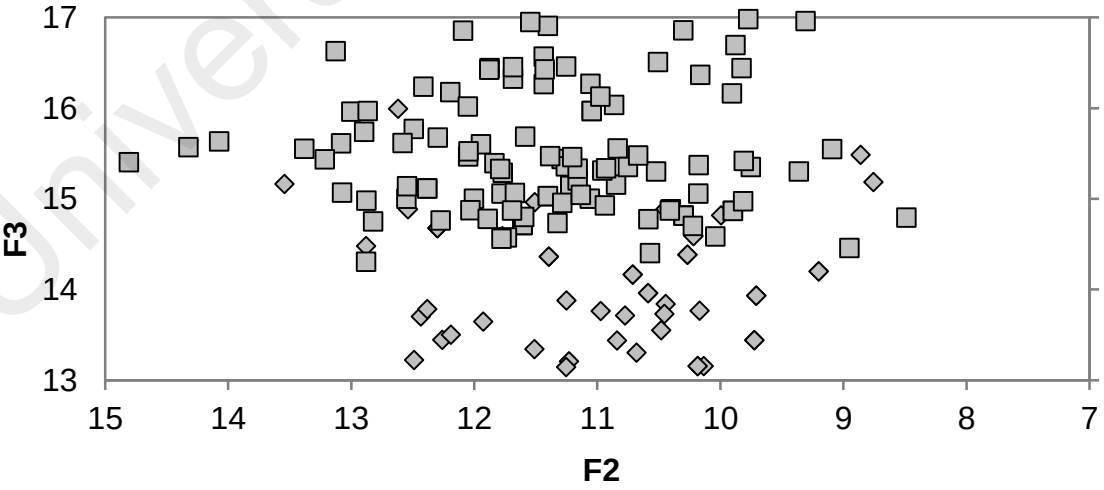
Figure 4.1: Scatter plot of all word list tokens for /a/



Note: Diamond shape = Rhotic tokens

Square shape = Non-rhotic tokens

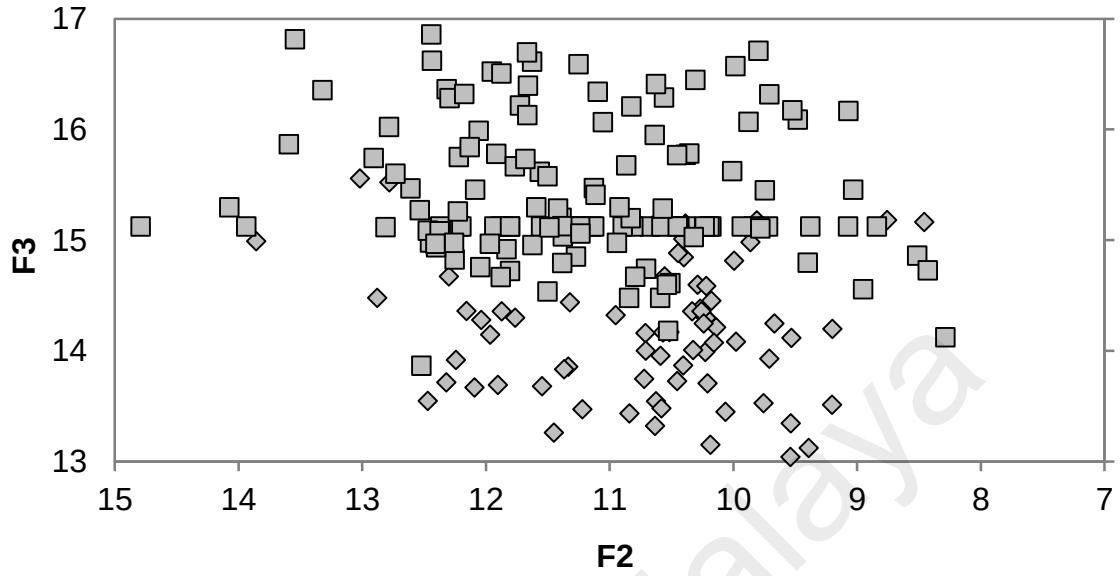
Figure 4.2: Scatter plot of all word list tokens for /ɔ/



Note: Diamond shape = Rhotic tokens

Square shape = Non-rhotic tokens

Figure 4.3: Scatter plot of all word list tokens for /ɛ/



Note: Diamond shape = Rhotic tokens

Square shape = Non-rhotic tokens

Table 4.5 shows the average value of rhotic tokens of the speakers who produced non-prevocalic /r/ in all three instances. It can be seen clearly that the F3 values for these tokens are all less than 2800Hz. Tokens with less F3 are considered as rhoticised tokens as explained by Ladefoged (2003).

Table 4.5: F3 (Hz) values for rhotic tokens by speakers

	YEG1	YEG2	YEG3	YEG4	YEG5	OG3	OG5
Bark	2004	2334	-	-	2643	-	-
Card	2265	2155	2536	1685	-	-	-
Church	2115	2514	2555	2588	2433	-	-
Term	2148	2373	2618	2815	2396	-	-
Corn	2102	2125	2227	2470		-	-
Nurse	2235	2382	2800	2680	2417	-	-
Tart	2230	2158	2503	2529	2122	-	-
Birth	2153	2374	2496	2129		-	-
Burp	2693	2114	2356	2360		-	-
Curve	2244	2200	2485	2664	2764	-	-
Large	2224	2218	2599	2450		-	-
Curl	2091	2746	2828	2716		2679	-
Curb	2248	2186	2425	2383		-	-
Far	2069	2214	2640	-	2440	-	-
Store	2040	2514	2258	2782		-	2743
Stir	2128	2297	2413	2295		-	-
Jar	2032	2261	-	-	2472	-	2152
Car	2012	2203	-	-	1924	-	2737
Bar	1931	2300	-	-	2440	-	2726
Pour	2016	2276	-	-	2397	-	2773
Star	2216	2244	-	-		-	-
Bars	2206	2037	2149	2780	2118	-	-
Cars	2075	2090	2132	3007	2106	-	-
Stars	2177	2096	2245	2411	2258	-	-
Stores	2643	2000	2064	2787	2144	-	-
Stirs	2299	2666	2401	2299	2532	-	-

On the contrary Table 4.6 shows the average value of F3 of all three instances produced by the second and third group of speakers. The F3 value is above 2700Hz for all the words produced by the speakers. This indicates that the the *r* in the tokens were not produced by speakers of the second and third group, hence suggesting that they are non-rhotic.

Table 4.6: F3 (Hz) values for non-rhotic tokens in the word list

	YGT1	YGT2	YGT3	YGT4	YGT5	OG1	OG2	OG3	OG4	OG5
Bark	2996	2810	2760	3620	3087	2854	3181	2817	3078	2843
Card	2736	3103	2845	2861	3026	2868	3070	2811	2702	3203
Church	3296	3133	3148	3135	2782	3177	3794	2735	3139	3881
Term	2813	2988	3428	3379	3006	2820	2889	3112	2924	2788
Corn	2981	2701	2987	3104	2779	2933	3689	3904	3009	2771
Nurse	3246	3137	2763	3136	3521	3313	3042	3162	3417	4203
Tart	2712	2754	2827	3485	3167	2913	2800	3063	3224	2769
Birth	2994	3089	3104	3278	3011	2868	3061	2899	3093	2796
Burp	2786	2790	3239	3658	2826	2769	2858	2852	3012	2860
Curve	3237	2986	3387	3454	3018	2892	3199	3157	2935	2673
Large	3246	2780	3356	3415	3263	3168	3521	3218	3126	4026
Curl	2951	2965	3242	3396	3038	2854	3165	2879	3087	2820
Curb	2808	2929	2926	3306	3303	2779	2901	2907	2844	2753
Far	2841	2823	2942	3439	2842	2945	2847	2879	2803	2671
Store	2793	2860	2837	3364	3071	2888	2876	2815	2927	2753
Stir	2807	3211	2971	3285	3253	2706	3153	2888	3073	2748
Jar	2927	2767	2732	3037	3131	2827	3000	2727	3034	2676
Car	2831	2715	2852	3267	3014	2993	3010	2944	2849	2739
Bar	2807	2753	2725	3432	3002	3051	2950	2779	2988	2529

	YGT1	YGT2	YGT3	YGT4	YGT5	OG1	OG2	OG3	OG4	OG5
Pour	2776	3095	2997	3223	2844	2718	2743	2127	3185	2501
Star	2780	2918	2717	3213	2753	2923	2772	2779	2844	3054
Bars	2874	2894	2893	3340	3193	3026	3100	3035	2850	4033
Cars	3273	3510	2892	3970	3218	3147	3608	2716	3069	2867
Stars	3204	3105	3058	2714	3071	2933	2913	2782	2904	3165
Stores	2982	3228	2796	3561	3164	2849	3251	3741	3285	4273
Stirs	3060	3103	3013	3066	3470	3046	3056	3133	2927	4192

4.3 Acoustic analysis for the interview data

About 25 words with final /r/ in a word final position and final /r/ before a consonant in a word were extracted from the interview data. All the words in these environment were bold and presented in the appendix. Only the first group speakers (YGE1 and YGE2) produced rhotic tokens compared to the second and third group of speakers. Table 4.7 shows the F3 value for the rhotic and non-rhotic tokens produced by the speakers.

Table 4.7: F3 (Hz) value for /r/ tokens in the interview

Speaker	Tokens	F3 (Hz) value
YGE1	yea*r*	2341
	he*r*	2763
	othe*r*	2856
	lea*r*n	2674
	later	2897
	words	2678
YGE2	ne*r*d	2013
	sta*r*	2348
	sho*r*t	2673
	neve*r*	2489
	ma*r*k	2563
	befo*r*e	2615
	afte*r*	2875
YGE3	sta*r*	2821
	fou*r*	2467
	fo*r*	2863
	fo*r*m	2361
YGE4	fo*r*	2953
YGE5	sta*r*	2892
YGT1	years	3084
YGT5	conside*r*	3279
OG1	supe*r*	3069
	singe*r*s	3365
	fo*r*m	3048
OG2	fo*r*m	3217
OG4	fo*r*m	3183

Note: YGE = Young group speakers who speak English as their L1

YGT = Young group speakers who speak Tamil as their L1

OG = Older group of speakers who speak Tamil as their L1

4.4 Discussion

All the rhoticised words were produced by the first group who are aged 16-19 and speak English as their L1. Among the three groups of speakers this group produced the most rhotacised tokens. Thus, this could be assumed that the L1 speakers, particularly the younger generation are purveyors of the emergence of rhoticity in MalE (Pillai, 2015). This is similar to the study done in Brunei and Singapore English (Sharbawi & Deterding 2010) as their respondents were also aged 19-30. The younger group of speakers may be influenced by media and tend to produce rhoticised tokens because of this. Tan and Gutpa (1992) also mentioned that the younger generations are influenced by the American media and the pronunciation of Singapore English will also change overtime. Further, Tan (2012) found that students with higher socioeconomic background have higher exposure to English-language media, which is highly Americanized in Singapore adopted American features in their postvocalic-r in words like *later* and *matter*, and this could be the case with the English as an L1 speakers in this study.

Only two speakers OG3 and OG5 from the third group had rhoticised tokens albeit inconsistently. The second group of speakers which speak Tamil as their L1 were not rhotic as they do not have much exposure to the English-language media as their mainstream media would be in Tamil. Therefore, they are not likely to be as fluent as the first group of speakers. This is consistent with Phoon, Abdullah & Maclagan (2013) whose Tamil speakers were not rhotic as well.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there is also no overwhelming evidence of rhoticity among the younger L1 and the L2 speakers. This is based on the previous study carried out by Pillai (2015) which was discussed in Chapter 2. None of the speakers can be considered rhotic except for YEG1 and YEG2 could be considered rhotic based on

their consistent production of non-prevocalic /r/. YEG1 and YEG2 is considered rhotic as they produced the most rhotic tokens while reading the word list in all three instances and during the interview session. The other three speakers form the first group produced significant rhotic tokens while reading out the word list compared to during the interview session. The second and third group of speakers did not produce any rhotic token while reading out the word list and informal interview session.

Tan and Gupta (1992) found a higher precentange of post-vocalic /r/ being produced when their speakers were reading a passage and a word list compared to when they were being interviewed. Compared to the five younger speakers who produced a total of ten rhotacised tokens, there is no overwhelming evidence that the younger group of speakers were necessarily more rhotic than the older ones. Hence, the overall inconsistent use of rhoticity among the speakers and the lack of realisations among the L1 speakers. However, there is no indication at present that rhoticity is developing as a prestige feature in MalE (Pillai, 2015).

4.5 Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter, the results obtained for the 15 speakers from the recordings were presented and discussed. The following chapter concludes and summarizes the study by addressing two research questions analysed in this study. All recordings of the interview sessions are shown in the Appendix.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a summary of the findings of this study in relation to the two research questions presented in chapter one. The implications and the limitation of the study are also presented as recommendations for future research in the area of rhoticity in Malaysian English.

5.1 Summary

This study was carried out to examine the emerging pattern of rhoticity among Tamil speakers of Malaysian English. Thus far, Malaysian English could not be considered rhotic based on their inconsistence production of non-prevocalic /r/ (Pillai, 2015). Pillai (2015), also mentioned that the production of /r/ could be attributed to the fact that they were reading a text rather than speaking continuously. As for this research, only YEG1 and YEG2 produced rhoticised tokens during the informal interview. Even some speakers produced words with final /r/ and words with final /r/ before a consonant but they did not pronounce the non-precocalic /r/. The summary of the two research questions are presented in the following sub-sections.

5.1.1 Research Question 1: To what extent is there evidence of rhoticity in the English produced by the speakers?

In relation to the first research question, there is no strong evidence of rhoticity found in the English produced by the second and third groups of speakers. The combination of both perceptual and acoustic findings shows that the realisation of coda /r/ was not persistent. This was clearly shown in 4.1. Nonetheless, only YEG1 and YEG2

show the strong evidence of rhoticity compared to the other three speakers in the first group. They produced non-prevocalic /r/ in all the 26 words and their F3 value is also lower than the other speakers. The first group of speakers produced the most number of /r/ tokens compared to group 2 and group 3 in both the recordings. Only a few rhoticised were words produced by OG3 and OG5 from the third group. Therefore, it appears that those who use English less in their daily routine the production of non-prevocalic /r/ is also less compared to those who speak English as their L1.

5.1.2 Research Question 2: To what extent is there a relationship between the speakers' language and educational background and the production of the non-prevocalic /r/?

The first group of speakers who speaks English as L1 display rhoticity, and this can be seen in the speakers who are studying at English medium International schools compared to the speakers who are studying at the Malay medium local government schools. The international syllabus and their English language environment might have influenced their pronunciation and language proficiency. The second and the third group of speakers are all studied at the local government school, and they are likely to be exposed to educators and family members who are non-rhotic and thus, they tend to follow the language style that they hear in their daily life. As for the first group of speakers their parents are from more educated and all of them are professionals. It can be assumed that when the parents have a good command of English, this will tend to be passed it down to their children (Ramasamy, 2005). Speakers from the first group have good command of English as their parents speak in English with them at home. Thus, it can be concluded that if parents could speak English fluently they will influence the proficiency level of their children as well.

5.2 Implication from the current study

As for this research Malaysian English shows more non-rhotic tendencies. Compared to neighbouring countries, Brunei and Singapore show more instances of rhoticity due to the exposure of English media, and as for Brunei to their variety of Malay is rhotic at their state. Rhoticity in Malaysia is a new emerging pattern that is slowly emerging among the younger generation. However, the influence of non-prevocalic /r/ can be also due to the socioeconomic background of speakers as well as their education and family background. From the sociolinguistics perspective, it can be assumed that language used in a social context are very much related to the way a person reads, listens and speaks. Hence, this study suggests that MalE still a non-rhotic variety of English and the results obtained showed in this study allows us to understand the changes which is taking place in the pronunciation pattern of Malaysian English.

5.3 Limitation of study

The study is limited to speakers of one gender, females, as they are prone to show the linguistics changes (see Chapter 2). Only Tamil speakers were recorded in this study to see if there are any evidence of rhoticity in this group of speakers. Only 26 words were listed for the recordings and words were kept simple for the benefit of the respondents. Perceptual analysis was done by author and another researcher to ensure the reliability of the data.

5.4 Recommendation for future study

Future studies can be undertaken in a formal settings and a wider range of words from different contexts in Malaysian English. The influence of speakers who speak different variety of L1 and L2 English can also be investigated.

5.5 Concluding comments

In conclusion, the perceptual and acoustic analysis carried out in this study to see if there is evidence of rhoticity among Tamil speakers of Malaysian English. A list of 26 words and an informal interview session was done to see if this group of speakers are being rhotic. The data were analysed using Praat (Version 5.3.82). All non-prevocalic /r/ tokens were extracted and shown in a table. The results were then compared to the other research done in neighbouring countries like namely Brunei and Singapore. Background information on the speakers' language use as well as educational backgrounds will be obtained to examine if there is a link between these and their production of the non-prevocalic /r/. The attitudes of speakers towards MalE and native varieties of English, namely British and Malaysian English will also be sought for the same reason. The results of this research showed that there is no strong evidence of rhoticity in MalE at the present moment.

REFERENCES

Baskaran, Loga (2004). Malaysian English: Phonology. In Edgar W.Schneider, Kate Burridge,

Baskaran, Loga (2005). 'A Malaysian English Primer: Aspects of Malaysian English Features.' Kuala Lumpur:University of Malaya Press.

Bernd Kortmann, Rajend Mesthirie and Clive Upton (Eds.), *A handbook of varities of English Volume 1: Phonology* (pp. 1034-1046). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Biber, D. (1998). *Variation Across Speech and Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boersma, Paul & Weenick, David (2012). Praat: Doing phonetics by computer [Computer program].Version 5.3.25, retrieved from http://www.praat.org/

Chambers, J.K & Trudgill, P. (1980). *Dialectology Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.

Davenport,Mike & Hannahs, S.J. (2005). Introducing Phonetics & Phonology. Oxford University Press. Second Edition.

Demirezen, Mehmet (2012). Which /r/ are you using as an English Teacher? Rhotic or non-rhotic? Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences 46 (2012) 2659 – 2663.

Foulkes, D & Docherty,G. (1999). Urban Voices: Accent Studies In The British Isles New York: Oxford University Press.

Gaudart, H. (1997). 'Malaysian English, Can or Not?' In H. M. Said & N. K. Siew, eds, *English is an Asian Language: The Malaysian Context.* Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Bahasa Moden & Macquarie Library Pty Ltd, pp. 47–56.

Gut, Ulrike (2007). First language influence and final consonant cluster in the new Englishes in Singapore and Nigeria. *World Englishes 26*(3), 346-359.

Hayward, Katrina (2000). Experiential phonetics: Harlow. Longman.

Heselwood, Barry & Plug, Leendert (2011). The role of F2 and F3 in the perceprtion of Rhoticity: Evidence from listening experiments. University of Leeds, UK.

Hickey, Raymond. 2004. "South-East Asian Englishes". In Raymond Hickey,ed. *Legacies of Colonial English: Studies in Transported Dialects*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,536–58.

Hymes, D. (1974). Foundation in Sociolinguistic: An ethnographic approach Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Kachru, Y. (1986). Discourse Analysis, Non-native Englishes and second Language Acquisition research. *Word Englishes*: Vol 4 (1) pp. 223-332.

Keane, E. (2004). Tamil. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association 34/1*: 111-116 Kirkpatrick,Andy (2007). *World Englishes: Implications for international communication and English language teaching.* Cambridge University Press.

Labov, W. (1972). The Social Stratification of (r) in New York City Department Stores Coupland, N.& Jaworski, A. (1997) (eds) *Sociolinguistics: A reader and coursebook* New York: St Martins Press.

Martin J. Ball, Nicole Müller and Siân Munro (2001).The acquisition of the Rhotic Consonants by Welsh-English bilingual children. International Journal of Bilingualism 2001; 5; 71

Morais, E. 2001. 'Lectal Varieties of Malaysian English.'In V. O. B. Yeow, ed., *Evolving Identities: The English Language in Singapore and Malaysia.* Singapore Time Academic Press, pp. 33–52.

Phoon, Hooi San & Margaret Maclagan(2009). The phonology of Malaysian English: A preliminary study. In Lawrence Jun Zhang, Rani Rubdy & Lubna Alsagoff (Eds.), *Englishes and Literatures-in-English in a Globalised World: Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on English in Southeast Asi*a (pp. 59-17). Singapore: National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University.

Phoon, Hooi San, Anna Christina Abdullah & Margaret Maclagan (2013). The Consonant Realizations of Malay-, Chinese- and Indian-Influenced Malaysian English, Australian Journal of Linguistics, 33:1, 3-30.

Pillai, Stefanie, (2013). Is Malaysian English becoming Rhotic. Feautres Paper. 2013 MELTA International Conference.

Pillai, Stefanie, Zuraidah Mohd Don, Knowles, Gerald & Tang, Jennifer (2010). Malaysian English: An instrumental analysis of vowel contrasts. *World Englishes 29(2)*, 159-172.

Pillai, Stefanie, Manueli, Maria Kristina & Dumanig, Francisco Perlas (2010). Monophthong vowels in Malaysian and Philippine English: An exploratory study. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics 41*, 80-93.

Pillai, Stefanie (2008). Speaking English the Malaysian way –or not? English Today 96, Vol. 24, No. 4.

Platt, J. & Weber, H. (1980). *English in Singapore and Malaysia: Status, Features, Functions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Poedjosoedarmo, G. (2002). To what extent can the ethnic group of young Singaporeans be identified from their speech? Brown, A; Deterding, D & Low, E.L. (eds 2000) The English in Singapore: Research on

Pronunciation. Singapore: Singapore Association for Applied Linguistics pp,2-7.

Rajadurai, Joanne (2006). Pronunciation issues in non-native contexts: A Malaysian case study Malaysian Jounal of ELT Research 2, 42-59.

Ramasamy, Sheila Adelina (2005). "Analysis of the usage of post vocalic /r/ in Malaysian English". Unpublished M.A. thesis, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia.

Roach, Peter (2009). English Phonetics and Phonology. A Practical Course. Cambridge University Press. Fourth Edition.

Sharbawi, Sabrina & Deterding, David (2010). Rhoticity in Brunei English. *English World Wide,* 31(2), 121-137.

Sharbawi, Salbrina (2010). The sounds of Brunei English: 15 years on *South East Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 10, 39-56.*

Schiffman, H. E. (1999). *A Reference Grammar of Spoken Tamil.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spolsky, Bernard (2004). Oxford Introduction to Language Study. *Sociolinguistics.* Oxford.

Tan, Chor Hiang & Anthea Fraser Gupta (1992). Post Vocalic /r/ in Singapore English. York Papers in Linguistics 16, 139-152.

Tan, Loo Kee (2005). "A Survey of Attitudes towards different accents of English among Malaysians". Unpublished M.A. thesis, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia.

Tan, Ying-Ying (2012). To r or not to r: A Sociophonetic Analysis of / ɹ / in Singapore English. Division of Linguistics and Multilingual studies. Nanyang Technological University Singapore.

Tottie, G. (2002). '*An Introduction to American English'*. Blackwell Publishers.

Trudgill, Peter and Jean Hannah. (2008). *International English: A Guide to the Varieties of Standard English*. 5th ed. London: Hodder Education.

Venugopal, D.N. (2001). The sociolinguistics of choice in Malaysian Business Settings Halimah Md. Said and Ng, K.S. (eds.*) English as an Asian Language: The Malaysian Context.* Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Bahasa Moden Malaysia & The Macquarie Library Pty Ltd, 78-89.

Yallop, C. (1999). English around the world. In: Ronozicz, E & Yallop, C (eds.) New York: Cassell.