The 'New Englishes'

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The factors most catalytic to the internationalization of English are varied. But before considering the various factors, it would be useful to realize the various statuses that English has, in the many countries that use it.

It is 'first language' status in Great Britain, America, Australia and New Zealand, where it is used in its native-speker context. It is used in its non-native linguistic ecology (quite often a multilingual one) in countries that were either

(a) Former colonies of Britain and America and are now members of the new Commonwealth of Nations or are independent nations viz. India, Africa, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong (English holds 'second language' status here).

(b) countries that were not under former colonial rule but which have adopted English as a foreign language in restricted domains for various reasons. Such are countries like Germany, Belgium, Poland, Russia, China, Japan and Egypt.

It is estimated that about 330 million people throughout the world today speak English as a mother-tongue, whilst the same number of speakers use English as a second language. A total of nearly one billion English speakers is reached if we include another 350 million using English as a foreign language reasonably competently

The more relevant contexts of internationalization are the areas where English has gained acceptability in non-native environments. In most of these countries the factors contributing to the use of English as a second language of communication can be traced to historical and sociological reasons as well as to more recent functional reasons.

The initial factors that can be traced are historical in nature. English being the language of the colonial rulers of each of these countries, it penetrated deep on the local linguistically heterogenous populace. There was always a local lingua franca for example, Kiswahili

in East Africa, Hindi in India, Tagalog in the Philippines, Malay in Malaysia. However, intergroup communication especially between the colonial administration and local aristocracy warranted the need for a socially and politically neutral language — which was soon found in English. Soon a general preference for the English language slowly evolved whilst such a preference was further fanned by the prevalent education system. Furthermore, jobs were easier to come by if one had an adequate command of English.

In most of these colonies, formal education was initiated by the Colonial Administration which imported teachers form Britain. Furthermore, Christian missionary groups like the de La Salle brothers, Jesuit brothers and the Methodist missionary movement also came into these colonies with education as well as Christianity as their forte. Thus English was disseminated via the education facilities provided for the local populace. In most cases this went up to secondary education with good schools established in the major towns of the countries. Public exams were held in liaison with the Cambridge Examination Syndicate (in English). Any further education (tertiary) was obtained out of the country especially in Britain (it was only after Independence that local Universities
countries). Vernacular education too was provided but only to a certain level (most up to primary) due to the shortage of trained local staff. Thus advancement in education was only via English schools.

Besides administration and education, British and European merchants "were making their entry into these countries. The various East India Companies were one example of entry into places like Malaya, India and Africa for trade in spices, gold, timber and ivory, besides other commodities. Hence trade was a subsequent disseminating factor of the language into non-native soil — although not as direct a factor as education.

Soon, however, the awakenings of nationalism brought about the seeds of lingustic emancipation as well. With the quest and consequent attainment of independence, English was now looked upon as a 'vestige of the colonial past' Hence it gradually was assigned a secondary though not altogether obsolete role. In certain of these countries, however (such as Kenya and Uganda in East Africa and in Fiji), English was the main language with which nationalism was achieved. Thus the status of English was now ascribed in terms of 'link language' (Kenya, Nigeria), 'associate official
'additional language' (Ghana), 'bridge languge' (Singapore), 'co-ordinate language' (Philippines) and 'strong second language (Malaysia). It is in these contexts that English is said to be 'institutionalised' where the vestiges of colonization are realized most dominantly in the

inheritance of this language. As Fishman (1983) very aptly puts it,

> "Regardless of what may have happened to the British Empire, the sun never sets on the English Language and it is difficult to envisage the domains into which English has little or no entree"

Thus English started as a language which was of functional use in these contexts stretching its use from administration and religion into education and from education, with the passage of time, it has now become institutionalized in these same contexts. In such contexts, its deep-seated position has come about due to:

(a) the passage of time in use (in most of these countries - nearly two centuries)
(b) the extension of its functions from just instrumental terms to integrative terms (not of identity with just the English literary and cultural values - as it was so initially - but even more obvious - of integrative values within the local socio-cultural context)
(c) the inevitable process of indigenization both in lingustic as well as literary manifestations
(d) consequent national and international acceptance.

Hence in India, Africa and Malaysia, English is institutionalised in the sense of being used and disseminated within the framework of language and corpus planning. Governmental recognition, planning and sponsorship in a decided and deliberated manner is accorded to the language.

A significant consequence of such institutionalization, along with the passage of time, is the filtering of local features into the language. Language acculturation and contextualization have resulted in the evolution of such local varieties with indigenized features - in linguistic as well as sociolinguistic terms. Lingustically speaking, a marked non-native variety can be traced - in phonological, syntactical and lexical terms (A.E. Odumuh, 1974; E. Ubahakwe, 1981, B. Kachru, 1983; Loga Baskaran 1987). Odumuh says that

> "While the phonological distinctions are obvious and cannot be disputed, it is more reasonable to take the view that such variety sigmfiers (in Standard Nigerian English) extend also to other areas of analysis such as lexicon, syntax and semantics". (1984)

Thus the English which was initially the code of the colonial administration was absorbed in its native form, reaching, for a start,

the more educated levels of the local speech community In Malaysia for instance, the variety now known more commonly as Malaysian English has, among various factors, the local languages as one of the ingredients that colour this variety (these local languages being basically Malay, Chinese and Tamil). Such indigenized varieties are most often the informal communicative (speech) variety (as compared to a more codified and standardized 'model' variety). In some aspects, however, this tendency is slowly being changed - some of the informal features also appear in rhetorical official form.

In considering the basic linguistic features, a general overview indicates that there are some similar features cutting across many of these varieties. Whether such similarities allow the notion of linguistic variational universals to be addressed sufficiently enough remains yet to be seen. In other words, indepth research in this perspective still needs to be done, although one cannot deny the presence of occasional superficial attempts at establishing similarities among these "New Englishes".

However, in this paper, I will present some of the main linguistic features of Malaysian English (M.E.) from which some elements may perhaps be seen to be similar to some of the other "New Englishes".

PHONOLOGICAL VARIATION

Among the phonological features, the notable points of variation where segmental variation is concerned are:

Segmental Features

(a) *Contoid Cluster Reduction*

Tendency to reduce contoid clusters from 3 to 2 or 2 to 1 especially in clusters involving stops, fricatives and the lateral element (most common in final, quite common in medial positions).

e.g. (3 to 2) *medial position*

R.P	M.E.
syndrome/sɪndrəum	sɪnrəum/
symptom/sɪmptəm	sɪmtəm/

final position

glimpse/glɪmps	glɪms/
patient/peɪʃnt	peɪʃn/

e.g. (2 to 1) *medial position*

R.P.	M.E.
alway/ɔ:lweis	ɔ:weis/
also/ɔ:lsəu	ɔ:səu/

final position

result/rizʌlt	rizʌl or rizʌt/
inject/indʒekt	indʒek/

(b) *Dental Fricative Substitution*

There is a common tendency to substitute the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ by the corresponding alveoar stops /t/ and /d/ respectively This is a common feature in all three positions (initial, medial and final) although in final position. the fricative /ð/ is not really substituted by /d/ but by /θ/ instead.

e.g. *initial position*

	R.P.	M.E.
/θ ⟶ t /	thick /θik	tik/
	thought /θɔ:t	tɔ : t/

medial position

anthem/əenθəm	aentəm/
method/ meθəd	meθəd/

final position

fourth/fɔ:θ	fɔ:t/
breath/breθ	bret/

/ð ⟶ d/ *initial position*

the/ ðə	də/
that/ ðæt	dəæ/

medial position

father/fa. ðə	fa:də/
either/ei ðə	eidəi/

final position

(substituted by ɵ)

with / wi ð	wiɵ/
bathe / bei ð	beiɵ/

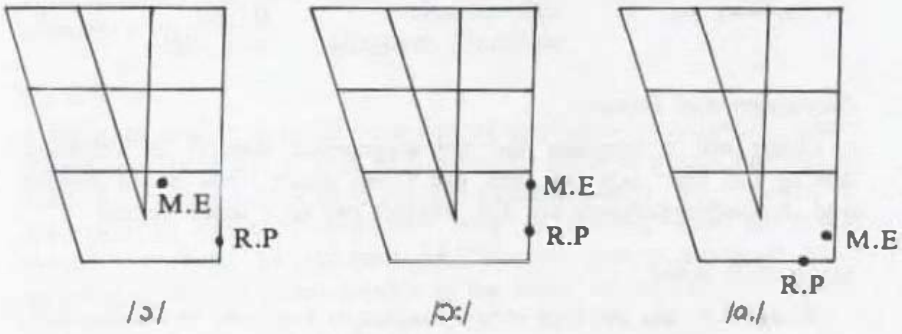
(c) *Unstressed Schwa Substitution*

A recurrent feature among M.E. speakers is the full phonetic realization of the orthographic representation of the vowels normally realized in R.P by the unstressed schwa.

	R.P	*M.E.*
e.g.	around/əraund	ʌraun(d)/
	assess/ə ses	aesɛs/

(d) *Vocoid Quality*

Vocoids in M.E. particularly of the back vowels like /ɔ/, /ɔ:/ and /a. / tend to be of a more close quality



(e) *Vocoid Length*

There is a generel tendency to shorten long vowels in M.E. This feature can be attributed to the absence of long vowels in Bahasa Malaysia. It recurs mostly in long vowels in medial positon.

	R.P	*M.E.*
e.g.	/a.⟶ʌ/ half / ha:f	hʌf/
	/ɔ:⟶ɔ/ water / wɔ:tə	wɔtə/

(f) *Reduced Diphthongs*

M.E. does not have the full range of diphthongs. The R.P diphtongs /ei/, /əu/, /uə/, and /ɛə/ do not have the full quality of a two-vowel entity in M.E. Thus we have the following instances of monophthongization in M.E.

e.g. /ei—→eː/	mail-train	/ meil trein	mel tren /
	railway	/ reil wei	rel we/
/əu	slow coach	/ sləu kəut	sloː koːtʃ /
	don't know	/ dəunt nəu	don(t) no/
/uə—→ɔ/	pure	/pjuə	piɔ /
	cure	/ kjuə	kjɔ/
/ɛə—→ɛ /	there	/ðɛə	ðɛ/
	hair care	/ hɛəkɛə	hɛkɛ/

(g) *Identical Diphthong Sequence*

The diphthong /iə/ when occurring recurrently in a single word is reduced to the long vowel /iː/

e.g.	*R.P*	*M.E.*
/iə, iə,—→iː iə/	scrious/siəriə s	siːriəs/
	material / mətiəriəl	məti ːriəl/

Suprasegmental Features

Going on to consider the suprasegmental features of variation, among the most obvious ones are those under stress whilst rhythm and intonation-patterns are also variant but to a lesser degree.

(a) *Stress-Position*

Where R.P has ascribed stress-position in disyllabic and polysyllabic words that have only single stress, M.E. differs where such stress-position is concerned. Thus if a certain words has only primary stress on syllabel (say the first), it is not unusual to hear the M.E. speaker habing the stress on some other syllable instead.

	R.P.	*M.E.*
e.g. exercise /	ˈcksəsaiz	eksəˈsaiz /
ieutenant	/leftenənt	ˈlɛftenən(t) /
intellectual	/ ˌintəˈlektʃuəl	ˈintəlektʃ

(b) *Stress Quantity*

Where R.P may have more than one stress in a polysyllabic word, M.E. does not necessarily have the same number of stresses in that word.

		R.P	*M.E.*
e.g.	manufacture	ˌmæenjuˈfæ ekʧə	mæ enjuˈfaekʧə/
	generalization	ˌʤenrəlaiˈzeiʃn/	ˈʤ enr ə ˈlaizei ʃ n/

(c) *Stress Quality*

The M.E. speaker's placements of such stress-quality varies, where primary and secondary stress are concerned.

		R.P	*M.E.*
e.g.	interrupt	/ˌintəˈrʌpt	ˈint əˌrʌp(t) /
	misunderstand	/ˌmisˌʌndəˈstaend	ˈmisʌndəˈstaen(d)/

In some cases, (as in "misunderstand"), secondary stress is given rqual prominence so that the M.E. version has equal stresses (like the doube-stressed disylabic words in R.P. e.g. "prewar" / ˈpriːˈwɔː /, nineteen / ˈnainˈtiːn/).

(d) *Rhythm*

Rhythm is M.E. is more often one of a syllable-timed nature -where all syllables (stressed as well as unstlessed) recur at equal intervals of time. R.P has a stress-timed rhythm instead, which ME speakers do use, only in formal declamatory style or reading style. In casual speech (unofficial or informal M.E.) even among educated M.E. speakers, a syllable-timed thythm is the order of the day.

(e) *Intonation and Pitch*

The various types of nucleus (failing↘, rising/, fall-rise↘, rise-fall∧) that are operant in R.P are used to signify the difference in a speech situation. In M.E., however, there are not so many patterns of intonation and they do not perform so many functions either. Thus if any syllable is to be stressed within the word or any word is to be stressed within the sentence, loudness is the differentiating
greater breath effort and muscular energy is effected by the M.E. speaker). Change in pitch direction both within the word as well as within the sentence is not common in M.E. speech as it is considered affected and undesirable. Thus in a sentence like this: "I am thirty

years old" (and not "forty"), the difference between the R.P and M.E. speaker's intonations would be:

R.P.

M.E. I am thirty years old

For signifying various sentence-types or for showing the speaker's attitude or emotions, M.E. does not have as wide a range of intonation as R.P In M.E., question, attitude - and emotion-markers are seen in the particles such as "lah, man nad uh?", which can be considered as substitutes for intonation especially in indicating emotions and attitudes.

As for range of pitch in the M.E. speaker, it certainly is not as wide as that in the R.P speaker For example, in declamatory style in R.P., a man's pitch range is sais to be about two octaves (sixteen notes on the musical stave) with the highest note at F (above middle C). For women, it is a little less wide with a range between D (one octave above middle C) and G (below middle C) in declamatory style, and between B (six notes above middle C) and G (below middle C) for normal speech. (Daniel Jones, 1972).

In M.E. the pitch range does not extend over this wide a scale. Perhaps at the most from middle C to an octave below for the men and upper C (one octave above middle C) to middle C for women depending on whether it is declamatory or discourse style. Pitch range for the M.E. speaker widesn only in estremely exictable instances in the discourse.

Phonotactic Features

Coming on the phonotactic features that are operant in M.E., it would suffice, to say that factors like gradation, liaison, syllabicity and elision, syllabicity and elision are almost absent in M.E.

(a) *Gradation*

Where in R.P., unaccented words show reductions of length of sounds and obscurations of vowels

e.g. do / du: ——————→ də/
at /æt ——————→ ət/,

in M.E. such gradation is not at all common except maybe in very official and declamatory style. The definite and indefinite articles "the" and "a" as well as the preposition "of" and the conjuction

"and" are sometimes reduced in connected informal speech although the frequency of such gradation is considerably low.

(b) *Liaison*

While liaison is prominent features of R.P connected speech, it is seldom observed in M.E. - except in the very official speech of the educated M.E. speaker Linking 'r' is more frequently used by the M.E. speaker than intrusive "r" this may be because there is an "r" in the ortography - the M.E. speaker finds it acceptable to vocalise it in connected speech as in:

here and there	/hiər	ənd	ðeə/
far and near	/fa:r	ənd	niə/

But the M.E. speaker finds it really odd to use intrusive "r" in his speech, this resulting in the very staccato, jerky effect in his speech. Some examples of intrusive "r"

law and order	/lɔ:r ən(d) ɔ:də/
Malaysia and India	/mə leiʒiərənd indjə/

(c) Syllabicity

A notable feature in R.P is the syllabic function fulfilled by contoids like the lateral /l/ and the nasal /m/ - where they behave as consonants in being marginal in the syllable yet taking on the function of a syllable without the vowel.

e.g. button / bʌtn̩ /
little / lit l̩ /
bottle / b at ˌl̩ /

In M.E. this features is almost absent. Thus we have button /bʌtən/, little / litəl / and bottle / bɔtəl / - with the CVC pattern (the schwa taking prominence for syllabicity). This tendency to insert the vowel to perform the syllabic function can be attributed ro a consistent CVC system within the syllable in Bahasa Malaysia.

(d) *Elision*

This is another frequent feature in R.P. (within the word and in connected speech). Within the word, elision occurs by the loss or obscuration of phonemes in weakly accented or totally unaccented syllables. In connected speech, an instance of elision is when the

initial schwa is lost, and /l/ and /ə/ take on a syllabic role. The M.E. variants of such instances of elision are shown below:

		R.P	*M.E.*
e.g.	buffalo	/ bʌfləʊ	bʌfələu /
	murderer	/ mə:drə	mə:dərə/

Syntactic Variation

As for the syntax of Malaysian English, contrary to being regarded as a manifestation of learning errors or an unsuccessful approximation of the target language, such second language characteristics warrant a descriptive rather than a presciptive approach. It is true that many the differences between Malaysian English and Standard British English can be explained as the result of influence from the substrate languages, especially Bahasa Malaysia, but this fact in itself does not show that M.E. is inferior to B.E. On the contrary, this influence indicates that there is, and has been, an adaption process whereby the exonormative model has been made accessible to the Malaysian learner. This has taken place at various linguistic and sociolinguistic levels, thus resulting in an endonormative mode. This seems apparent in other non-native varieties as wel viz. Indian English, African English and Filipino English.

Three characteristic elements in the Noun Phrase of Malaysian English discussed in the second chapter of a thesis on "Aspects of Malaysian English Syntax" (Loga Baskaran, 1987) show that there isn't just random simplification process that is entailed but a specific system. For example in the section on article ellipsis, we note that such ellipsis does not just occur before any nouns as such, by abstract nouns in particular, and from there, not just abstract nouns generally, but only those that are modified. In other words, the modifier before the abstract noun stands to replace the determiner status of the ellipted article, as seen in examples such as:

e.g. "Did you get *mileage-claim* for that trip?
Finance companies effected *drastic increase* in interest rates this year
Main reason for their performance was *frequent absence* from classes.

The only other exception to this rule is the concrete noun when it is used as an institutionalised noun in predicate position, as seen in the following examples:

e.g. She is *trend-setter* of the class.
He was *most popular prefect* last year
He is *drug addict*

Such article ellipsis before modified abstract nouns could be considered a carryover from Bahasa Malaysia - the main substrate language in consideration, where there is no article system operant (whilst numeral quantification of concrete nouns is by cardinal determiners with classifiers). Hence the absence of articles begore abstract nouns in Malaysian English, on lines of analogy from Bahasa Malaysia, as seen in examples such as:

B.M. apakah *keadaan* tentang perkara itu?
[What (int.) situation regarding topic that?]

B.M. *Penghasilan* motokar sekarang diberi keutamaan.
[Production motor-cars now given priortiy]

In the section on pronominal concord, where there is a singular/plural distinction for living (non-human) nouns, there is no number distinction for non-living nouns. The same is true of B.M., where is only one pronoun 'ia' for living (non-human) as well as non-living nouns, both plural and singular. The following M.E. examples would be representative:

e.g. M.E.. *Those books* are very informative.
It can be obtained at Dillon's.
The houses on Travers Road are UDA houses.
It caters for the Division 'B' employees of the Malayan Railways.
Rahman bought *three ball-pens* from the Co-op, but forgot and left *it* on the cash desk.

The partial influence from B.M. can be postulated from examples like the following, (in B.M.):

e.g. B.M.· *Surat-surat* itu baru sampai - mungkin *ia* dari ayah saya.
(Letters those just arrived - must be *it* from father my)

S.B.E.: Those letters have just arrived - they must be from my father

B.M.: *Baju* siapa semua itu? *Ia* sangat cantik.
(Clothes whose all those? *It* very pretty)

S.B.E. Whose clothes are those? They are very pretty.

B.M.. Ada *dua ekor kucing* di dalam longkang itu - *ia* semua berwarna putih.
(Are two (classifier)) kittens in drain that - *it* all coloured white).

S.B.E. There are two kittens in that drain - they are all coloured white.

As for individuation in M.E., where there is pluralisation of mass/ collective nouns, the process of simplification is obtained purely due to either the reduction of "unit nouns" (also known as classifiers in B.M.) within M.E. itself, whilst in B.E. such nouns are quantifiable via these unit nouns, giving such examples as in the sentences below·

e.g. M.E. How many *staffs* are on medical leave?
B.E. How many *members of staff* are on medical leave?
M.E. She bought three *lingeries* at Mark's today
B.E. She bought *three pieces of lingerie* at Mark's today
M.E. There are not many *stationeries* in the room.
B.E. There is not much *stationery* in the room.

or by random pluralising of such mass nouns, as in.

M.E. She cleared all her *parephernalias* out of the way
B.E. She cleared all her *paraphernalia* out of the way
M.E. There were no suitable *accomodations* for them.
B.E. There was no suitable *accomodation* for them.

Some element of analogy within English itself can be postulated where such examples like *jewellery (jewelleries* - M.E.) and *stationery* (stationeris - M.E.) are pluralised on lines similar to *pottery (potteries* - B.E. and *grocery* - B.E.) Coupled with that, another analogous situation is seen in the composite members of these mass nouns as well - viz. *furnitures* - from tables, chairs, beds; *fruits* - from apples, pears, bananas; *offsprings* - from sons, daughters (although the synonymous "children" is not pluralised).

As for the Verb Phrase itself, the three variational features in M.E. are Temporal Distance (remoteness distinctions of tense), the reduced Modal Verb system and Stative Verbs in the Progressive.

Tense in M.E. is shown to be determined by temporal distance from the deictic centre. The concepts of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority seem to lend to this conceptual framework where:-

(i) events past are considered anterior to the deictic centre - with three degrees of remotenesess viz.
(a) immediate past - I *ate (was eating)* rice this morning.

(b) recent past - I *have eaten (have been eating)* rice yesterday
(c) remote past - I *had eaten (had been eating)* rice last month.

(ii) events present are considered simultaneous to the deictic centre - thus with no degree of remoteness involved viz.
I *eat* (am eating)

(iii) event future are considered posterior to the deictic centre - with two degrees of remoteness viz.
(a) immediate future - I *will eat* (will be eating) rice tonight.
(b) remote/distant future - I *would eat* (would be eating) rice tomorrow

Such a system seems to be independent of any influence from Bahasa Malaysia where although there is differentiation of temporal orientation in terms of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority (in its aspectual verbs), there is no deictic tense marking involved. Further, there is no tense marking in its lexical verbs either, as seen in the following examples:

e.g. M.E.. I *ate* rice this morning.
B.M.. Saya *makan* nasi pagi tadi.
M.E.: I *have eaten* rice yesterday
B.M: Saya *sudah makan* nasi semalam.
M.E.. I *had eaten* rice last month.
B.M.. Saya *sudah makan* nasi bulan lalu.
M.E.. I *eat* rice now
B.M.. Saya *makan* nasi sekarang.
M.E.. I *will eat* rice tonight.
B.M.. Saya *akan makan* nasi malam ini.
M.E. I *would eat* rice tomorrow
B.M.. Saya *akan makan* nasi esok.

Hence in B.M., where the aspectual verbs like *sudah*, *sedang* and *akan* show anteriortiy, simultaneity and posteriority respectively, from the deictic centre (in both main and subordinate clauses), the lexical verbs are not marked for tense (e.g. *makan* - eat - used for all cases), the whilst temporal adverbs like *semalam* (yesterday), *sekarang* (now) or *esok* (tomorrow) show the temporal orientation of the clause.

As for the modals in Malaysian English, the simplified system can be summarised as follows:

CAN - permission, ability
COULD - past tense of the above meanings
MAY - possibility
WILL - immediate futurity (± volition)
WOULD - distant/remote futurity (± volition)

SHOULD - obligation, necessity
MUST - Saya *akan makan* nasi esok.

Such a system may be considered similar to the narrow-ranged modal system in B.M. as well:

HENDAK, MAHU, INGIN	- volition
ENGGAN	- weak/negative volition
HARUS, WAJIB, MESTI	- compulsion
PERLU	- obligation, necessity
BOLEH, DAPAT	- ability, permission
MUNGKIN	- possibility, probability;

or it can be viewed as a purely straight forward reduction of the system for simplification, so that there is no ambivalence of meaning.

The third characristic feature in the Verb Phrase is the occurrence of some of the Stative Verbs in the Progressive, where in B.E. such verbs do not occur in the progressive. These are the relation verbs and verbs of inert perception and cognition, such as:

e.g. M.E. That bottle *is containing* sulphuric acid.
B.E. That botle *contains* sulphuric acid.
M.E. I *am smelling* curry in this room.
B.E. I *smell* curry in this room.
M.E. She *is owning* two luxury apartments.
B.E. She *owns* tow luxury apartments.

Apart form the fact that in B.E. itself there is a possible source of overgeneralization (into M.E.) viz. the Verbs of Bodily Sensation that can occur in the Progressive (as in "My back *is aching* or "My foot *is hurting*"), in B.M. too, there is the influencing factor where relational verbs like *contain* and *own* can occur optionally with the equivalent v-ing form (although this is not a common phenomenon).

Coupled with these, the fact that within B.E., there are also some stative verbs occurring in the Progressive (but with change in meaning), allows the emergence of stative verbs in the Progressive in M.E.

Variation in Clause Structure is seen in the form of interrogative clausal features, declarative clausal features and coupla ellipsis.

Among the main features characteristic to interrogative clauses is that of no inversion in the WH - interrogative, as the auxiliary does not become operator in all cases, except with the non-auxiliary "be" in M.E. (in both direct and indirect interrogative) hence giving examples like:

e.g. M.E. What *we* have *here?*

B.E. What *have we* here?
M.E. Where *they are going?*
B.E. Where *are they going?*
M.E. How *they will come* home?
B.E. How *will they come* home?
M.E. I wonder where *is she?*
B.E. I wonder where *she is?*

The fact that the non-auxiliary "be" is the only verb that takes operator status when occurring in the interrogative (both direct and indirect) may be a hypercorrective device, when compared to the situation in B.M. where there is no copula as such at all.

e.g. B.M. Mereka tinggikah?

The WH-element in the M.E. interrogative can also occur in sentence-final position as seen in:

e.g. M.E. He is *where?*
They are going *where?*
She is doing *what?*

Again, this could be a transfer from B.M where we can have:

B.M. Mereka pergi *ke mana?*
(They go where)
Dia menangis *kenapa?*
(She cry why?)

Another interesting feature of M.E. interrogative clauses is the *yes or not* and *or not* tags used to mark *Yes-No* interrogatives. Thus the two variant tags are used as seen below:

e.g. B.E. Can she sing?
M.E. She can sing *or not?*
She can sing, *yes or not?*
B.E. Are you hugry?
M.E. You are hungry *or not?*
You are hungry, *yes or not?*

A possible source of influence for this tag system could be the B.M. interrogative construction in:

e.g. B.M Dia makan *atau tidak?*
M.E. He (eat) ate *or not?*

B.E. Did he eat?
B.M. Dia makan, *ya 'tak?*
B.E. He ate, *yes or not?*
B.E. He ate, *didn't he?*

Another interrogative tag that is often used in M.E. is the *can or not?* tag with the functions of:

(i) *Seeking permission.*
M.E. I want to come, *can or not?*
B.E. Can I come?
(ii) *Confirming ability*
M.E. They must submit the forms tomorrow, *can or not?*
B.E. Can they submit the forms tomorrow?
(iii) *Assessing volition.*
M.E. You carry this for me, *can or not?*
B.E. Will you carry this for me?

The *isn't it/is it?* tag is the next interesting feature in M.E. interrogatives where this is the only interrogative tag used for tag interrogatives (with isn't *it?* serving the function of B.E. reversed polarity tags, and *is it* that of B.E. constant polarity tags, as in the examples below:)

e.g. M.E. They are coming, *isn't it?*
B.E. They are coming, *Aren't they?*
M.E. He can play the piano, *is it?*
B.E. He can play the piano, *can he?*

The alternative interrogatives in M.E. also have the same feature of the absence of operator (auxiliary verb) inversion:

e.g. M.E. *They were* fat or thin?
B.E. *Were they* fat or thin?
M.E. *He likes* red or white wine?
B.E. *Does he like* red or white wine?

The next interesting feature is where the declarative clause is concerned. The feature of word-order is again of interest here, where specifically for the initially-negated declarative and the adverbially-fronted declarative there is no operator inversion.

e.g. M.E. Never *he was* so delighted.
B.E. Never *was he* so delighted.
M.E. Scarcely ever *he has* come here.
B.E. Scarcely ever *has he* come here.

Other mesolectal features in the syntax of Malaysian English that are interesting but still to be researched on in greater depth are:

(i) *Pronoun-copying*
My brother, *he* is an engineer.

(ii) *Pronoun-ellipsis.*
She wrote the letter but forgot to post.

(iii) *Adverbial positioning:*
They must admit immediately tothe offence.

(iv) *Ellipsis of expletives "it/there".*
No point pursuing the matter further

(v) *Substitution of "There & be" with existential/locative "got".*
Got no food in the fridge.

(vi) *Grammatical Particles.*
Such particles are typically Malaysian and replace the various functions represented by intonational variation and grammatical structures in B.E., as in examples such as:

e.g. WHAT·I told, *what*, the other day.
(Don't you remember/Aren't you convinced that I told you?)
MAN *He isn't the Captain, man,* he's just a Prefect.
(Don't talk nonsense, he's not the captain - just a prefect!)
ONE: She is real lazy, *one.*
(She sure is a typical lazy thing!)
LAH. Please, *lah,* come home early
(For heaven's sake, come home early).

LEXICAL VARIATION

Having covered the phonological and syntactic features of indigenization in Malaysian English, it would be incomplete if the lexical indigenization features are not given due mention. In doing so, the semantic relationships of the following kinds would be considered:

(a) *Substrate Language Referents* (use of substrate lexicon in M.E.).
(b) *Standard English lexicalisation* (English lexemes with M.E. usage)
Within each of these categories there are sub-categories which are representative enough although they are not necessarily exhaustive. There are still aspects like idiomaticity, acronyms/abbreviations and slang which could be included but are not, purely due to constraints of time and purpose here.

A. Substrate Language Referents

The various characteristics that warrant the use of local terms can be considered from the following points:

(i) Institutionalised concepts
(ii) Emotional and cultural loading
(iii) Semantic restriction
(iv) Cultural/culinary terms
(v) Hyponymous collocations
(vi) Campus/student coinages

(i) *Institutinalised Concepts*

Some of the local words that have been borrowed into M.E. really have no equivalent in standard English. The non-native concept is somewhat an institutionalised one (in the local context) so that the English equivalent, even in paraphrase does not express the meaning as effectively or exhaustively. Some examples are terms like *bumiputera, gotong-royong, khalwat* and *rukun-tetangga.*

(ii) Emotional and Cultural Loading

Some of the borrowings are culturally and emotionally loaded. Thus although translatable into English, such words would lose their culture-bound association. Further, the indigenous (local) setting and specific sociolinguistic nuances might be dispersed if the English equivalent is used.

Some examples of such words are *kampung* (village), *dusun* (orchard), *bomoh* (medicine-man), *penghulu* (village-chief) and *pantang* (taboo).

(iii) *Semantic restriction*

These are local words with possible English translation but used in a semantically restricted field. For example: *dadah* (drugs) does not mean drugs in general but drugs used illicitly. Thus if we were to translate *dadah* to mean "drugs" – then we'd have drug-store (pharmacy) as *dadah*-store (this place being the first to be seized by the Malaysian authorities!). Other lexemes with such semantic restriction are those like *haj* (pilgrimage, specially of Muslims to Mecca), *toddy* (fermented coconut-water – different from fresh coconut water sold as an iced refreshment), and *silat* (the Malay art of self-defence). Thus we read of *silat*-groups and *toddy*-shops. The word *padi* (now appearing as 'paddy' in Hornby's OALDCE) also has such semantic restriction – meaning 'rice grown in the fields i.e. unhusked rice' (Hence differences between *padi*-field, and *padi*-harvest as compared to *rice*-mill, *rice*-bowl and *rice*-meal).

(iv) *Cultural and culinary terms*

These are native (local) culinary and domestic referents specifically akin to a characteristic of local origin and ecology. Some such lexemes are *durian, satay, angpow, sambal,* and *kuali. Such words, similar to the Indian sari* and Japanese *kimono* are now slowly being transported to at least the South East Asian region – viz. the word *durian* and *sambal* in Sri Lanka. Such a phenomenon of lexical entry – East to West – is not altogether remote if one considers how words lie *tortilla* (Mexican) and *croissant* (French) and *sarong* (Malay) have all come to appear in the current English dictionaries.

(v) *Hyponymous collocations*

The presence of local words collocated with the English superordinate term is yet another type of lexical indigenization. These are hyponymous terms where the English equivalent is the superordinate and the local word is the subordinate referent. Some examples are such words as *meranti* wood, *orang asli* people, *batik* cloth, *syariah* court, *nobat* drums, *bersanding* ceremony, and *path da bhog* ceremony.

(vi) *Campus/student coinages*

These are few words that have recently come into currency – being transported from Bahasa Malaysia due to the change in medium of instruction in education and the subsequent strong influence of this language. Thus students in schools and at campuses use these local referents. Some examples:

lecheh – "troublesome, inconvenient"
(as in "*Lecheh*-lah! I am not coming back all the way just for this seminar!").

teruk – "serius, in bad shape"
(refers to an extreme situation – e.g. one who's obtained low grades in his exams would say that his predicament is "teruk!").

doongu – "silly, dumb, stupid, foolish"
(used in a sometimes pejorative yet friendly manner among friends – "you *doongu* you! Why didn't you tell me about it earlier?"

Having summarised the basic characteristics that are inherent in the local borrowings of Malaysian English, it would be interesting to note the extent to which such items can take the morphological processes of English lexemes. The three notable processes are compounding, affixation and conversion. Compounding is a very productive process. Thus we have such coinages as police-*pondok* (police beat-base), *dadah*-ring (vice/drug-ring), *toddy*-can (similar to 'beer-can'), *satay*-house (similar to 'pizza-house/hut') and *kwali*-cooking (similar to 'microwave-cooking'). Affixation is also another productive process,

although not as productive as compounding viz. the presence of words like *datukship* (similar to 'lordship'), *anti-dadah* (anti-drug) and *ulufied* (similar to 'countrified' – connotes lack of social decorum or civility). Conversion seems to be another possible morphological process as well. Thus we have "makan" as a verb (meaning 'eat'), as in "Let's *makan* now", as well as a noun (meaning 'meal' or 'food', as in "Let's have our *makan* now" The word *kachang* (nuts) normally referring to peanuts is often denominalised. Thus we can have "I don't eat *kachang* as it makes me put on weight" (as a noun) as well asa "The examination was *kachang*" (as an adjective) (somewhat idiomatic, meaning 'easy').

A few of these local terms also take in some inflectional processes that are operant in Standard British English viz. pluralization – *bomohs, penghulus, dhobis*; tense inflections – "I jaga*ed* his books while he went to the office" (looked after – kept an eye on), and gerundialising – "Jaga*ing* this place is no joke." Another few examples are "angkat*ing*" (carry favour) and "kaypo*ing* (being nosey).

Thus in M.E. there are signs of gradual assimilation of local lexemes into standard English not merely due to non-linguistic criteria but even on the basis of linguistic criteria. It may well be that in the decades to come, such lexemes will gain more currency not only in local contexts but internationally as well, so that dialectal as ewll as international features can be said to be recognisably Malaysian or of Malaysian origin. The use of local lexemes is to maintain the localised characters of the context. It is not far-fetched to envisage further, such assimilation into Standard English – if one realises how *kayak, kebab, karate, monsoon, catamaran* and *harmattan* – all of which are from definitely unEnglish contexts, have now been absorbed and included in most of the Standard English dictionaries.

B. *Standard English Lexicalisation*

The Malaysian English speaker also has a tendency to use some of the standard English lexemes in a manner particularly characteristic of not only Malaysian English, but also of Ghanaian English (Sey 1973), Nigerian English (Bamgbose, 1971) and Indian English (Kachru, 1965), the basic characteristics of lexical variation (of Standard English) in M.E. are:

(i) Polysemic variation
(ii) Semantic restriction
(iii) Informalisation
(iv) Formalisation
(v) Directional reversal
(vi) College colloqualism

(i) *Polysemic variation*

These are standard English lexemes that have the original English meaning as well as an extended semantic range of meanings not originally in Standard British English. Examples are:

"cut" — (besides the original meaning of 'slicing')
— overtake
(as in "I tried to *cut* him but he was driving too fast" or "The anchor-man managed to cut Singapore's anchor just twenty metres before breasting the tape").
— beat (to beat an opponent by points or marks)
(as in "Rahman *cut* me by only two marks to become the first boy in class").
— reduce (to lower an amount of money for e.g.)
(as in "The shopkeeper *cut* twenty-cents for that breakage when he gave back the change.")

"open" – as for blinds, curtains (draw)
– as for light, electrical appliances (switch on)
– as for shoes, socks (remove)
as for tap (turn on)
– as for clothes (take off, undress)
– as for zip, buttons, hooks (unfasten, undo)

These are only a few of the many instances of semantic extention that is common in M.E. These could be considered as attempts at lowering the learning load of the M.E. speaker as well as achieving the communicative effect faster – by simplifying and using one lexeme to mean and refer to many things.

(ii) *Semantic Restriction*

Some of the lexemes in M.E. are used in a narrower sense, confined to specific referents only. Some noteworthy examples are the lexemes "windy", "heaty" and "cooling" as applied to foods and drinks. Another example of restricted reference is the lexeme "tuck-shop" – referring specifically to the canteen or refectory of schools (primary and secondary). Likewise, is the word "coffee-shop" and "five-foot way" An often-used term especially among younger Malaysians is 'one kind' – meaning 'wierd or peculiar' 'odd' or 'way out' – as in the sentence "She is *one* kind really – won't even smile at you although she knows you."

(iii) *Informalisation*

Many of the lexemes used by the M.E. speaker tend to do be informal (colloquial) substitutions of standard English words. As has been started earlier, M.E. in its most representative state is of widest

currency among the mesolectal speakers. Thus it is not surprising to find a profusion of lexemes indicating a more informal style and register – words like "kids" (for 'children') or "hubby' " (for 'husband') appearing in headlines style in the standard English local dailies – as in "Eight *kids* burnt to death as fire guts Kampung Jawa" and "Amok woman stabs *hubbay*" Other such examples are:

partner - for 'spouse' (You and your partner are cordially invited for cocktails)
flick – for 'steal'
line – for 'profession'
fellow – for 'person' (both male and female)
sleep – for 'go to bed'
spoilt – for'out of order'
follow – for 'accompany'
spendd – for 'give a treat'

(iv) *Formalisation*

On the other hand, there are occasions as well, when the M.E. speaker has a tendency to sue more formal words in an informal context. What Sey (1973) terms "preciosity" (of Ghanaian English) and Goffin (1934) terms "latinity" (of Indian English). It is not rare, therefore to read letters of a personal nature asking a friend to *"furnish* him with the details regarding the cosmos tours" (instead of "providing or sending him "). Likewise a friend may ask me "Did you *witness* the accident last night along Jalan Bangsar?" (instead of "see") or someone may be busy this weekend as he is *"shifting house* (instead of "moving house").

(v) *Directional Reversal*

There are certain lexemes, verbs mostly, that M.E. speakers tend to use in reverse direction. This is a frequent phenomenon with converse pairs like "go/come", "bring/send", "fetch/take" and "borrow/lend" This could be attributed to the absence of two separate lexemes in the local language for such a meaning. In Bahasa Malaysia, the concepts of 'borrow' and 'lend', for example, are subsusmed under one lexeme "pinjam", although the difference between the meaning of 'borrow' and 'lend' is shown by the suffix 'kan' (performing the benefactive function). Thus we have sentences like "She *borrowed* me her camera" or "He always likes to *lend* my books". The bidirectional verbs "go", "come", "bring", "take", "fetch" and "send" are very often used in the opposite manner in M.E. Thus we often hear sentences like:

"We'll *go* over to your house to-night." (come)

"Can you *send* me home first?" (take)
"I *take* my daughter here everyday " (bring)

Thus where Standard British English lexicon would have the verbs 'go', 'send' and 'take', meaning action away from the place, whilst 'come' and 'bring' would indicate action towards the place. and 'fetch' shows action away from them towards the place, M.E. usage seems to indicate the reverse in directional terms.

(vi) *College colloquialism*

The student population being a major area of M.E. usage, it is inevitable that certain Standard English lexemes have been localised for informal use especially among students in school (secondary), at colleges (tertiary), and universities. Such words relate to studies, examinations and youth – such as

'mugger' (or 'bookworm') – an extremely studious person.
'frus' (frustrated)
'fantab' (a blend of *'fantastic'* and *'fabulous'*)
'worst type' (a somewhat friendly, intimate term for criticising a close colleague).

* * * *

On the sociolinguistic level, within each of these 'New Englishes', there is also the differentiation between the standardized norm (the model acceptable for official purposes viz. teaching in schools, official functions etc.) and the more communicative style used in the speech of most users. The terms used to distinguish these two levels are the acrolect and the mesolect respectively In Malaysia, the acrolect tends to be still more of the Standard British English although some local influence (especially at the lexical and phonological levels) is tolerated. The mesolect is very much the Malaysian variety – the informal style used among Malaysian. It is this mesolect into and out of which the very same speakers weave – using an almost International English at one instance (perhaps when speaking to a superior or to a Non-Malaysian) and then switching (almost immediately) into the mclosectal Malaysian English when speaking to his friend. There is a third 'lect' so to speak – the basilect – which most often singifics the uneducated style of speech communication which can be considered the 'patois' form of the New Englishes – be they Malaysian, Indian or African English. In Malaysia, this is often termed 'broken English' or 'half-past six English' ('half-past six' beign a local idiomatic adjective referring to something below expectation or standard). 'Kitchen English', 'Babu English', 'Cheechee English' are some of the terms of the basilectal

Indian English, whilst in the Philippines it is known as 'Bamboo English' or 'Yaya English'.

The emergence of such New Englishes makes it imperative for us to consider the general attitudes of acceptance towards them. Generally speaking, the attitudes towards such indigenized varieties can be considered positively The attitude of native speakers towards non-native varieties was originally not one of acceptance. These varieties were considered deficient models (both oral and written). Later, however, there was some recognition and acceptance by literary scholars – initiated by the acceptance of Commonwealth literature in the works of such non-native writers like Raja Rao, Cyprian Ekwensi, Mphalele and Achebe. Gradually, linguists like Firth, Halliday, Strevens and Smith acknowledged and accepted such varieties. Greenbaum (1985) says,

> "Indian and Nigerian English are beginning to gain recognition as independent national varieties, because of the changing attitudes of their speakers to their own varieties and to other varieties – attitudes that now express greater acceptance of local variation from British norms"

Coming on to the non-native speakers themselves, the attitude of full acceptance is portrayed in some of the following writers and linguists. Exekial Mphalele (1962) for example says,

> "The white man has detribalized me. He had better go the whole hog. He must know that I am the personification of the African paradox – detribalized, Westernized but still African".

Chinua Achebe (1965) reiterates this kind of view when he says that,

> "The English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it'll have to be a new English still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings".

Sey (1973) says that,

> "Educated Ghanaian English is acceptable but the type that strives too obviously to approximate to R.P is frowned upon as distasteful and pedantic",

whilst Bamgbose (1971) says that,

> "the aim is not to produce speakers of British R.P (even if this were feasible). Many Nigerians will consider as affected or even

> snobbish any Nigerian who speaks like a native speaker of English".

On the Indian front, Raja Rao (1937/1977) says that,

> "We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore, has to be a dialect which will *someday* prove to be as distinctive and colourful as the Irish or American. Time alone will justify it"

– furthering it to say that,

2ill"I will have to write *my* English – yet English, after all, (and how soon we forget this) is an Indo-Aryan tongue . . so why not Sanskritic or Indian English?"

R.K. Narayanan (1965) says that,

> The English language is now undergoing a process of Indianization in the same manner as it adopted US citizenship over a century ago – English is a very adaptable language, and it's so transparent, it can take on the tint of any country".

William Walsh (1971) says of R.K. Narayanan's writings that,

> "It has neither the American purr of the combustion engine nor the thick marmalade quality of British English, and it communicates with complete ease a different – an Indian sensibility".

Coming nearer home we can consider English in the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. Andrew Gonzales (1981) says that,

> English has become acculturated in the Philippines and Philippino English is the result of such acculturation. It is an on-going process and it is by no means completed . . No matter how hard the English teacher tries, a local variety will continue to develop".

Ted Llamzon (1969) also admits that,

> "Standard Filipino English is the type of English in which educated Filipinos speak and which is acceptable in educated Filipino circles".

Mary Tay (1981) says of Singapore English that,

> "the average educated Singaporean including the language teacher, rejects and exonormative variety at least in spoken English because he wants to sound like a Singaporean"

Last but never the least, Irene Wong (1981) declares that,

> this recognition of this new variety of English has come from Malaysians themselves who no longer feel the need to be apologetic about their unique colloquial use of English but are beginning to view it even with pride, as a symbol of identity as English-speaking Malaysian They have come to regard this new variety as belonging uniquely to them"

The indigenization of English also has literary manifestations besides linguistic manifestations, as can be seen in the many creative and stylistic works of writers like V.S. Naipal, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayanan (India); Chinua Achebe (Nigeria); Ngngi (Kenya); Edwin Thumboo and Arthus Yap (Singapore); Llyod Fernando, Edward Dorall, Patrick Yeoh and Lee Foo For (Malaysia). Thus it's not only functionality and communication that English seems to serve in non-native contexts, but an even more intrinsic culture-expressing literary value that it has.

These new Englishes have been further given open acceptance and recognition by way of international journals and linguistic literature in this vein. Two such journals are 'English World-Wide' and 'World Language English (now entitled 'World English') whilst some of the recent literature is by way of Smith's, Kachru's, Trudgill's, Platt and Weber's and Todd's writing, to name a few The existence of such non-native varieties has also propagated the need for international seminars and conference with this theme, the most noteworthy ones being the conference on 'English as an International Auxiliary (International) Language' in Hawaii in (1978), 'English in Non-native Contexts' in Urbana, Illinois (in 1978) and another on the 'Varieties of English in South-East Asia' in Singapore (in 1981). The vast range of topics presented in the papers of these proceedings point even more towards the institutionalization of such indigenized Englishes as a valid and justified process.

It is apparent and undeniable, therefore, that the New Englishes are well past the evolution stage – although it is also undeniable that language is always never in a 'freeze frame' so to speak. The New Englishes, however, have passed their formative years, and coupled with the fact that they are wholesomely accepted by their speakers – the need for complete recognition is past denying here, and as the

saying goes, "The best may be the enemy of the good" let not standard British English put off any of these New Englishes, all that is asked for is tolerance towards them as Charles Taylor (1984) says,

> "While with languages in general, we should teach the language, and not about the language: with varieties, the reverse is true: teach about varieties – but never attempt to teach them"

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