

English in Southeast Asia

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INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades English ceased to be thought of as the language of only a few countries. Its role as an international language has long been recognized of course but developments in all fields within the last twenty years have highlighted this role even more. One of the developments in linguistics during this period is the recognition of the new varieties of English, sometimes referred to as new Englishes, or as nativized (or transplanted) varieties of English.

The circumstances of transplantation have been mainly political (colonization) or economic. Such was the case in Southeast Asia. The British colonized Malaya in the early 1800s while the Americans colonized the Philippines almost a hundred years later.

The purpose of this paper is to give a brief introduction to the new varieties of English in Southeast Asia, specifically of the English used in Singapore and Malaysia, and in the Philippines. (Nothing will be said here about the English used in the other Southeast Asian countries since in these countries English has always been a foreign language.) The English of Singapore and Malaysia will be treated as one variety since, for now at least, the English spoken in these two countries is perceived by most to be the same variety. As

will be pointed out in the paper, it is possible that in the future Malaysian English will be distinguishable from Singapore English and vice-versa.

In the sketch for each variety, the following will be discussed: the historical background; the phonological, grammatical, and lexical features that characterize the variety; the functions of English in the society concerned; and the future developments.

The information used in this paper came mainly from published sources. This is especially true with the section on Singapore-Malaysian English. Other information came from informal interviews and conversations with speakers of Singapore-Malaysian English and of Philippine English.

1. THE ENGLISH OF SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA

1.1. Historical Development

The development of the variety of English spoken in Singapore and Malaysia is traceable to the beginning of the British colonial regime in the region. Prior to this period the different ethnic groups that settled in the area, mainly the Malays, the Chinese (speaking different Chinese languages), the Indians (mainly Tamils, Gujaratis and Bengalis), the Europeans, and the Eurasians communicated intra-ethnically in their own languages, and inter-ethnically, in Bahasa Pasar or Bazaar Malay, and/or in Pidgin English in situations where the interlocutors could not find a common (ethnic) language that they both mutually understood and spoke. These groups were drawn to the area because of the opening up of commercial opportunities and the development of new industries, especial-

ly tin mining and the rubber industry.

Although the terms 'Singapore English' and 'Malaysian English' have been used to refer to the English used in these countries, it has not been established that there are two separate and distinct varieties. In fact Tongue (1974) assumes that only one variety exists—the variety he refers to as ESM (English of Singapore and Malaysia). To the ordinary Singaporean or Malaysian, the two countries speak the same variety of English. If a difference at all exists it is believed mainly to be in the area of accent—that is, most Malaysians are believed to speak English with a Malay accent while most Singaporeans speak it with a Chinese accent. Other differences may eventually evolve as a result of the different roles assigned to English in either country after 1965 (when Singapore left Malaysia to become an independent country within the British Commonwealth) and 1967 (the year Malaysia started the gradual phasing out of English as a medium of instruction in the secondary and tertiary levels of education as mandated by its National Language Policy). Because they share a common history and because the ethnic composition of their populations are similar (differing only in the proportion of their Chinese and Malay populations: Malaysia is predominantly Malay while Singapore is predominantly Chinese), the features of the English used in these countries were, and still are, very similar.

In this description, we will assume that the English used in these two countries is the same variety and we will use the term Singapore-Malaysian English (SME) to refer to it.

SME developed and was propagated through education. The

first English-medium schools were the Penang Free School (established in 1816), the Singapore Free School (established in 1823, later this became the Raffles Institution), the Malacca Free School (1826), the Kuala Lumpur Victoria Institution (1894), and the Taiping King Edward VII School (1906). In these schools English was used as the medium of instruction for all lessons and the pupils were expected to use it for all communication needs, including those of the playground. English soon became the unifying language in this multi-ethnic multi-lingual society, thereby simplifying the complicated network of communicative relationships not only for the pupils at school but also for all others who had anything to do with other people who were not members of the same ethnic or linguistic group.

The necessity to learn the language was also reinforced by the employment situation. English increasingly became the language of the higher paying and more prestigious jobs, including teaching and the civil service under a colonial government. It therefore became the means to achieve upward social mobility.

It is a common phenomenon for a language that has been transported to a non-native setting to acquire features or characteristics different from those of its "parent". In the case of SME, some of its unique features are the result of the influence of the local languages, especially Chinese and Tamil. Some other features result from the strategies employed by language learners to simplify the process of learning a new language—these features may therefore be shared by other groups of learners learning the same language.

In spite of the close contact between Singapore and Malaysia be-

cause of their geographical proximity and common historical origins the use of English in these two countries has become differentiated as a result of differing national policies. Singapore stresses the unifying role of English at the national level and its developmental role at the international level. While recognizing the significant role of English as an international language, Malaysia has stressed the unification of this multi-ethnic multi-lingual country through its national language, Bahasa Malaysia. While Singapore English is fast becoming a native language (that is, more and more of the younger generations speak Singapore English as a mother tongue), Malaysian English is increasingly becoming a second language. This means that while the Singaporeans are increasingly becoming fluent in English, the Malaysians are losing their fluency (that is, the younger generations of Malaysians in general are less fluent in English than the older generations).

1.2. The Features of Singapore-Malaysian English

In both Singapore and Malaysia, proficiency in English is determined by attendance at English-medium schools, and, since these schools charge fees, by a persons' socio-economic ranking. This means that the speakers of the most prestigious sub-variety of Singapore or Malaysian English are those who attended English-medium schools and/or belong to the upper socio-economic classes.

Singapore and Malaysia used Standard British English (SBE) as the norm for learning the language at school. However, this norm is being replaced by a local norm, the acrolectal sub-variety, which manifests most of the characteristics and features of Standard British English but has enough unique features to make it distinctly

Singaporean or Malaysian.

The English of Singapore and Malaysia may be characterized as a continuum of 3 sub-varieties: the *acrolect*, the *mesolect* and the *basilect*. The *acrolect* is spoken by the educated class and is considered the standard sub-variety, making it the appropriate sub-variety to use in formal and official communication situations. The *mesolect* is the sub-variety used by Singaporeans and Malaysians who have some education or were educated in non-English medium schools. It is also used by the educated class in semi-formal situations or in communicating with other Singaporeans or Malaysians who do not speak the *acrolectal* sub-variety. The *basilect* is the lowest sub-variety in the continuum. It is used by people who have little or no formal education. However, *acrolectal* and *mesolectal* speakers also use this sub-variety in very informal situations or when communicating with *basilectal* speakers.

The existence of the 3 sub-varieties should be kept in mind in the consideration of the features that will be discussed below. A feature may have low frequency in the speech of *acrolectal* speakers (it may even be absent), while it may have a higher frequency in the speech of *mesolectal* speakers and highest frequency in the speech of *basilectal* speakers. (The features given below are only some examples of the characteristics of SME and therefore not meant to be complete or exhaustive.)

1.2.1. PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciation features are probably the most distinctive features in terms of identifying the Singapore and Malaysian variety of English.

1. Final consonants

SME simplifies consonant clusters so that a 3-consonant cluster is simplified into 2 consonants or even one consonant. Thus words like *friends*, *worked*, *hundreds* and *guests* become *frien*, *work*, *hunres* and *gues* respectively. The consonants /f/, /p/, /b/, /m/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ get replaced with a glottal stop when they occur in word-final position. Thus, for example, the final consonants in the following words may become /q/: *pork*, *mad*, *big*, *crab*, and *chop*. The most consistent of this glottal stop substitution occurs in words ending in /t/ and /k/.

2. Initial dental fricatives

The initial dental fricatives in such words as *thing* and *they* become stops, thus *ting* and *dey* respectively.

3. Voiceless stops

The voiceless stops /t/ and /k/ are either weakly aspirated or unaspirated in all positions.

4. Other consonant substitutions

Among the speakers of the basilect, the Malays do not distinguish between /p/ and /f/ and /b/ and /v/, the Chinese between /l/ and /r/, and the Indians between /w/ and /v/.

5. Voicing of consonants in word-final positions

Stops, affricates and fricatives are not voiced when they occur in word-final positions. Thus *believe* is pronounced as *belief*, *teethe* as *teeth* (or *teet*), *ones* as *once* and *rouge* as *rooch*.

6. Diphthongs

The diphthongs /ou/ and /ei/ are absent in the vowel system of most speakers of SME. These sounds are produced as pure vowels

with length added. Thus *boat* may sound like *bought* + vowel length and *take* may sound like *tek* + vowel length.

7. Schwa

In the native varieties of English unstressed vowels are pronounced as a schwa. In SME these unstressed vowels retain their full vowel quality. Thus the vowel in the first syllable of the word *familiar* is pronounced in the same way as the vowel in the first (stressed) syllable of the word *family*. Some scholars explain this tendency as the result of spelling pronunciation.

8. Stress Placement

In SME, the placement of the primary stress may be different from that in the native varieties. For example, in the native varieties, the primary stress moves to another syllable in certain derived words like *specific* (from *spécify*), *remédial* (from *rémédy*), *ecónomic* (from *ecónomy*), and *advántageous* (from *advántage*). In SME, the primary stress remains in the same syllable as the root word, thus *spécific*, *rémédial*, *ecónomic* and *advántageous*.

The reason for the primary stress placement of some words is more difficult to explain, for example, *dévelop*, *cónsider*, *province*, *advértise*, and *vístt*.

9. Rhythm and Intonation

SME is characterized by syllable-timing rather than stress-timing. This means that every syllable, stressed or unstressed, receives the same length. The rhythm is therefore even and regular and produces a staccato effect.

1.2.2. VOCABULARY

As in the features of pronunciation, the biggest differences between SBE and SME in the area of vocabulary are found in the speech of

the basilectal and mesolectal speakers. Among the speakers of the acrolect, the difference is mainly in the use of certain words that have acquired different meanings or are used differently in the Singapore context. (Remember however, that speakers of the acrolect also switch lects depending on the context of communication.)

The uniqueness of the SME vocabulary may be attributed to the following:

1. Words and expressions from the local languages

Some examples of this type of vocabulary are *amah* (nurse or domestic servant, presumably from Portuguese), *jaga* (guard, from Malay), *chop* (stamp or seal, also used as a verb, from either Malay or Hindi), *kampung* (village or settlement, from Malay), *makan* (food or meal, from Malay), *tamby* (office attendant, office boy, errand boy, from Tamil for 'younger brother'), *dhobi* (laundry, from Hindi), *padang* (open area, from Malay for 'field' or 'plain'), *agak-agak* (to estimate, from Malay), *gotong-royong* (mutual assistance or solidarity, from Malay), and *toukay* (proprietor, shop-keeper, from Chinese).

2. Words and expressions which have acquired different or new meanings (in addition to the old meanings) or are used differently

These groups of words can become a source of confusion if their meanings and uses in SME are not understood. Some of these words are (with their meaning and/or use in SME indicated):

bungalow	a two-storey house
spoil	be out of order (My telephone is spoilt.)
friend	be someone's friend (I don't want to friend him.)
follow	go with or accompany someone (I followed him to the zoo yesterday.)

send	take someone someplace (I'll send you home. In SBE and in American English (AE) to send someone home means to ask someone else (usually inferior in rank or status) to take someone home.)
show (n.)	film, movie (Tonight I'm going for a show.)
sleep	go to bed (I slept late last night. In SBE and AE this sentence would be I went to bed late last night.)
alphabet	letter (of the alphabet) (My name is written with four alphabets.)
last time	previously, formerly, in the past (Last time Singapore was a part of Malaysia. In SBE and AE this expression means the occasion before the present one.)
take	eat (Do you take pork?)
borrow/lend	used interchangeably
come/go	used interchangeably
bring/take/fetch/send	used interchangeably
live/stay/put up	used interchangeably
say/speak/talk	used interchangeably
borrow	use (May I borrow your phone?)
close/open	used to mean switch on/off, turn on/off (Open/Close the light. Sometimes simply On/off the light.)
schooling	go to school, at school (My younger brother is still schooling.)
scold/scolding	argue/argument /Such terrible scolding between

the salesgirl and the woman went on and on.)

3. Other expressions

These are expressions that a visitor to Singapore and Malaysia will not fail to notice immediately.

la/lah

This particle, presumably derived from Hokkien, has a range of uses, depending on how it is pronounced. It is used as a "marker of rapport, solidarity, familiarity and informality, (Platt and Weber 1980:77), as "an intensifying particle,—a signal of intimacy,...for persuading, deriding, wheedling, rejecting and a host of other purposes" (Tongue 1974:114).

E.g. This one better la.

Raining la.

allama/alamak

From Malay, this is an exclamation that indicates annoyance, anger, shock, or dismay.

E.g. Alamak, I forgot my umbrella.

Alamak, what for you do that?

1.2.3. GRAMMAR

In the formal and international uses of English, the grammar of the educated, especially English-medium educated Singaporeans and Malaysians may not be distinguishable from the grammar of SBE speakers. It is in the colloquial and local uses where SME shows its grammatical uniqueness. Wong (1982, 1983) describes some of these unique features as the result of simplification processes, strategies which learners resort to in order to eliminate some of the complexities of the language being learned. Some of these simplification

processes are given below (most of the examples given are taken from Wong 1982):

1. Simplification of the question tag

SME reduces the complicated question tag rule in English into a simple one: add *is it?* or *isn't it?* to a declarative sentence. Thus,

He came yesterday, didn't he? → He came yesterday, *is/isn't it?*

(Or in conjunction with the verb system simplification:

He come yesterday, *is/isn't it?*)

He won't come tomorrow, will he? → He won't come tomorrow, *is/is't it?*

2. Simplification of the noun system

The countable/non-countable distinction of nouns in native speaker English tends to be ignored in SME. Thus sentences like the following are quite common:

Women like to wear lots of jewelleries.

The mails come early in this part of town.

Let me give you an advice.

There are a lot of equipments in the shop there.

3. Simplification of the verb system

SE and ME tend to use adverbial expressions to indicate time instead of inflecting the verb to indicate tense:

He leave my house last night. (He left...)

This evening we go shopping. (We will go)

When we get there, he left already (got there...had already left)

He say we must all be ready by five. (He said we should...)

SE and ME do not tend to show subject-verb agreement as the

following sentences illustrate:

He say it all the time.

Teacher don't let us do it.

My father work in a big office.

The breadman come everyday.

The less common and more difficult tense forms such as the past perfect tense and the conditional are not generally used in SME.

He called a cab by the time we arrived.

He mentioned this to me before.

Suppose you do it, and get into trouble, don't blame me.

When I saw him, he already bought the present.

4. Simplification of the modal auxiliary system

The modal auxiliary system of native-speaker English is very complicated and it is understandable for second or foreign language learners to find the system difficult to learn. This problem has led to the simplification of the system by learners—in the case of SME, the speakers tend to use expressions like *I think, surely, maybe, perhaps, it is obvious, it is likely*, and *I am sure* to express probability/possibility, certainty, ability, necessity, etc. in place of the modal auxiliaries like *can, must, may*, etc.

5. Simplification of question structures

In native-speaker English the rule that requires the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary in WH questions is obligatorily applied. This rule is ignored in SME.

What you are doing?

Who you buy that for?

When you are leaving?

Why you go now?

Where you going?

Which you buy for him?

How you carry that?

Why he must act like that?

6. Omission of certain words

In SME the coupla (be) is often omitted as in the following sentences:

That man my father.

He very tall.

She selfish.

He terribly afraid then.

You so silly lah.

In native-speaker English the “dummy” auxiliary *do/does/did* is needed in WH questions. In SME the “dummy” auxiliary is dropped since it does not have a semantic function anyway.

How you get here?

What you buy?

Why you say that?

When you think you are free?

7. Refusal to invert word order after negative adverbs

In native-speaker English, the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary verb is required in sentences that begin with the negative adverbs like *neither*, *rarely*, *seldom*, *never* and *not only*. This inversion rule is ignored in SE and ME.

Seldom he met with an accident.

Never I have met such stupidity before.

Rarely he was late for work.

1.3. The Functions of English in Singapore

Being a multi-ethnic country, Singapore is also multi-lingual, its citizens speaking a variety of languages: Hookien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka, Hainanese, Foochow, Mandarin, Malay, Tamil and English. The ethnic languages are used at home and in many intra-ethnic communication situations although an increasing number of Singaporeans now use English as the main home language especially in parent-child communication. The census data of 1980 show that among the Chinese population of Singapore the use of English has been increasing by 6.7% per generation; among the Malays, by 1.7%; and among the Indians, 13% (Anderson 1985). If this trend continues, within a decade most Singaporeans will be speaking the local variety of English as a native language.

Tay 1982 lists 6 main uses of English in Singapore: as an official, language, as a language of education, as a working language, as a lingua franca, as a language for the expression of national identity, and as an international language.

Singapore has three other official languages aside from English: Mandarin, Malay and Tamil. This means that public documents, newspapers, radio and TV programs, and official statements from government bodies are in these four languages.

Singapore requires that all children study English in school, even in non-English medium schools. In these schools, English is learned as a second language. The importance of English as a study language is evident from the growing enrollment in English-medium schools: in 1947 only 31.6% of all schoolchildren were enrolled in

English-medium schools; in 1975, the enrollment was recorded at 69.4% (reported in Tay 1982).

A remark made by Singapore's representative to the United Nations, T.T.B. Koh, quoted in Tongue 1974 (p. iv), has often been used to illustrate the use of English as an expression of national identity:

When one is abroad, in a bus or train or aeroplane and when one overhears someone speaking, one can immediately say this is someone from Malaysia or Singapore. And I hope that when I'm speaking abroad my countrymen will have no problem recognizing that I am a Singaporean.

Tay 1982 (p. 55) makes the following statement to emphasize the same sentiment: "...the average Singaporean...considers it important to aim at a standard indistinguishable from standard British English *in the area of syntax but not in the area of phonology (pronunciation, rhythm, stress and intonation) and vocabulary.*" (*Underlining supplied.*)

1.4. The Functions of English in Malaysia

English in Malaysia ceased to be the official language in 1967 although it has remained an important second language up to the present. In 1982, the conversion of all English-medium primary and secondary schools into Malay-medium was completed. However, English continues to be taught in these schools as a second language and passing the English exam is required for promotion to the next level of education. In tertiary education also, English is a compulsory second language.

Although proficiency in English is no longer required in many jobs, especially those that do not involve transactions with foreign

countries, most executive positions, and the legal profession, still require high proficiency in English. English is also still the main language used in the fashionable shopping places, especially those that are frequented by the urban elites and the foreigners.

The use of English in Malaysia has clearly been decreasing, with Bahasa Malay increasingly replacing it. The country, however, does not negate the value of English, and has taken steps through its educational policies to ensure that its people continue to acquire the proficiency they need for jobs, studies, international relations, etc.

1.5. Prospects

SME is one of the recognized nativized (as opposed to native) varieties of English. It has achieved status not only among its speakers but also in the international linguistic community. Its highest sub-variety, the variety used by the educated members of the population, has replaced SBE as the norm toward which teaching and learning endeavors are directed.

It is to be expected that English in Singapore will continue to spread. And with the younger generation becoming more educated and more fluent in English, there might even be a merging of the lects, or at least a redefining of the lines of use of these lects. At present the distinction between the acrolect, the mesolect and the basilect is drawn mainly along the educational and socio-economic lines; in the future it may be drawn only along the lines of formality versus informality.

The case of Malaysia will be different. English will eventually become a true second language as the generations of near-native

(SME) speakers do not get replaced.

The scenario suggests the possibility of an eventual split between Singapore English (SE) and Malaysian English (ME). The phonology, grammar and vocabulary might remain very similar (at least for SE and the highest level of ME) because of geographic proximity and contact, but the overall fluency and proficiency of the Singaporeans and the Malaysians will continue to diverge. SE will remain a nativized variety but ME will become a second language variety.

2. ENGLISH IN THE PHILIPPINES

2.1. Historical Background

The Philippines is an island country speaking several languages. Estimates put the number of languages between 85 and 300—the uncertain figure suggests problems in drawing the boundary between languages and dialects. The major languages are (listed according to number of native speakers in the 1975 census): Cebuano, Tagalog, Ilokano, Hiligaynon or (Ilonggo), Bikol, Samar-Leyte (or Waray), Kapampangan (or Pampango), Pangasinan and Maranao. A language was considered major if there were at least 500,000 people speaking it as a native language. Although this criterion was later raised to 1 million speakers the rank order of the languages has not changed very much except that now Tagalog has more speakers (native and second language speakers) than Cebuano because of the Bilingual Education Policy and the dominance of the Tagalog-speaking areas, especially Metropolitan Manila, in government, commerce and trade, media, culture, education and entertainment.

The problem of multiple languages and multiple cultures was responsible for the decision to use English, the language of the colonizers, to carry out the task of mass education for the natives when the Americans took over the governance of the country. Instead of choosing the way of Spain, which was to develop a local Spanish-speaking elite, or learning the various languages that the natives spoke (or at least the various regional *lingua franca*), the new colonizers chose an easier (at least for them) option and that was to teach the natives English.

English was officially established in the Philippine school system on January 21, 1901 by Act No. 74 of the Philippine Commission. Five months later, on August 21, 1901, the first American teachers arrived on board the USS Thomas—these teachers were later known as the Thomasites. The Thomasites, numbering 765 teachers, were sent all over the country to teach English and to train Filipino teachers of English.

The Filipinos took to learning the language of the colonizers with a vengeance. In 1918 only 28% of the literate population were reported as able to read English. Twenty years later, 26.6% of the whole population were listed as speakers of English. In the 1980 census, 52% of the population of 48 million (that is almost 25 million) claimed to speak English, giving justification for the claim that the Philippines is the third largest English-speaking country in the world after the USA and the UK.

English was the sole medium of instruction in the Philippine education system from 1901 to 1974, when the Bilingual Education Policy was implemented. During this period, Tagalog (taught

under the subject title the “National Language”) was taught as a subject starting from primary school and Spanish as a required subject in college. Arabic was taught in the Muslim areas and the vernaculars were used as a transition and subsidiary language up to Grade 3. The 1974 Bilingual Education Policy introduced another language as medium of instruction and differentiated the domains of these languages. English and Pilipino (the term that replaced the term National Language) were designated languages of instruction in separate subjects: English for teaching science and math and Pilipino for teaching all other subjects.

Before we end this section, we would like to clarify the use of certain terms. *Pilipino* as a term was introduced in 1959 to remove regional resentments against Tagalog. The 1973 Constitution however, changed the term to *Filipino* even if the Bilingual Education Policy which was issued a year later continued to use the term *Pilipino*. Now *Filipino* is slowly replacing *Pilipino* since the 1987 Constitution and the New Bilingual Education Policy use this term (a minor complication is that many Philippine languages do not have the /f/ sound so that in spoken form many people still use Pilipino although in written form they use Filipino).

2.2. The Features of Philippine English

English has been used in the Philippines for 90 years and it is not surprising that it should acquire features that would mark it as different from the native varieties and even from the other nativized varieties. Like the other new varieties, Philippine English (PE) shows the influence of the speakers’ native language and the results of language learning strategies and processes.

As in the case of Singapore English and Malaysian English (and any nativized variety for that matter), the most prestigious variety of PE is near-native (American English) and would have few of the features described below.

2.2.1. PRONUNCIATION

1. Vowels

The vowel system of Philippine languages is not as complicated as the English vowel system. Some languages have a 3-vowel system only: /a/, /u/ and /i/. Others have a 5-vowel system, including /e/ and /o/. Others have a 6-vowel system, including the *pepet* vowel, usually represented as /ə/.

This being the case, it is not uncommon for Filipino speakers of English not to be able to produce the English vowels /æ/, /ɪ/, /ɔ/, /ʊ/, /ow/, /ei/, /uw/, and /ɛ/. For example, many PE speakers would not be able to make the distinction between the vowels in *boat* and *bought*, *put* and *boot*, *ban* and *bun*, and *pen* and *pin*. However there are indications that the younger learners are acquiring these sounds more successfully than their parents or the generations before them did.

2. Consonants

The fricatives /f/, /v/, /θ/, and /ð/ are not distinguished from the stops /p/, /b/, /t/, and /d/ respectively. Thus, /paɪb/ for *five*, /bain/ for *vine*, /trɪj/ for *three*, and /deɪ/ for *they*.

The alveolar stops /t/ and /d/, the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ and the palatal sibilants /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ tend to be produced as dentals. Thus the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ become /ts/ and /dy/ or /ds/ respectively; the voiceless palatal sibilant /ʃ/ becomes /sy/ or simply /s/ in final

position while the voiced palatal sibilant /ʒ/ becomes /sy/ in non-final position and /ds/ in final position. For example: *church* is pronounced /tsarts/, *judge* is pronounced /dyads/, *sugar* is /syugar/, *measure* is /mɛsyur/ and *gauge* is /geyds/.

Some PE speakers break up consonant clusters by inserting a vowel between the consonants. Thus, *school* becomes (iskul/, *street* becomes /istrit/, *stand* becomes /istand/, and *scholar* becomes /iskolar/. Notice however that this tendency applies only when the cluster appears in initial position and when the initial sound is /s/.

3. Sound changes and loss of syllables

A frequent tendency in PE is the loss of certain syllables because of a sound change. An example is the loss of a syllable in *humiliation* when the vowel /I/ of the third syllable becomes the glide /y/ in PE, thus /hyumilyeyʃon/ or /yumilyeysyon/ (4 syllables) instead of /hyumilIeyʃon/ (5 syllables). Other examples of words where the same rule applies are *appropriate* (PE /apropreyt/), *evacuate* (PE /ivakweyt/ or /ibakweyt/), *sexual* (PE /sekswal/, *actual* (PE /aktwal/) and *usual* (PE /yuswal/).

4. Word stress

The primary stress in some words shifts to syllables which normally receive only secondary stress. It is not clear what the pattern is but some examples are (mostly from Gonzalez 1985):

cónversation (for conversátion)

délegation (for delegátion)

líberation (for liberátion)

órganization (for organizátion)

únification (for unificátion)

candidacy (for cándidacy)
 secretáry (for sécretary)
 determiné (for detérmine)
 militáry (for mflitary)
 awárdees (for awardeés)
 parliamentáry (for párliamentary)
 beneficiáry (for benefíciary)
 ceremóny (for céremony)
 circúmstances (for círcumstances)

5. Rhythm and intonation

Each syllable in PE receives equal time, resulting in speech that may be characterized as slow and producing a staccato effect. Generally, questions in PE, including WH-questions, are produced with a rising intonation.

2.2.2. VOCABULARY

Like the other new varieties of English, PE has a very open vocabulary system: it borrows words from the local languages, it may give new meanings to existing words or give new functions to existing words. The lists given below give only a few examples.

1. Words and expressions from the local languages/local cultures

balikbayan a Filipino returning home after living or working
abroad for some time

barangay the smallest political unit, consisting of families
living in a community

barkada gang, gangmate, a small circle of friends one
usually does things with for social purposes

barong-barong a small makeshift hut where poor people live

barong-Tagalog	an embroidered shirt for men
bienvenida	(from Spanish) a welcome party
despedida	(from Spanish) a farewell party
common tao	an ordinary citizen
merienda	(from Spanish) a snack

2. English-derived words or existing words used differently or given new meanings

bed spacer	a person who literally rents space big enough to hold a bed. A room in a rooming house (usually for students) may be rented out to several bed spacers.
blue seal	imported cigarettes; also a blonde foreigner
bold	usually said of pornographic movies and of movie stars who play pornographic roles
carnap	(analogous to <i>kidnap</i>) to steal a car
chancing	to touch a woman in such a way that it appears like an accident
comfort room	a toilet
dirty kitchen	a second kitchen, usually outside the house and one where wood or other such material is used for fuel, where cooking is actually done
green jokes	off-color jokes
happy hour	the first few hours after opening in a drinking place when food and drinks are offered at a discount to attract early customers
hospitality girl	an entertainer in a pub or night club; a prostitute
negotiable	available; unmarried. Usually said of women
brownout	the shutting down of electric power in certain

sections of a city, etc. A complete shutdown is a blackout.

salvage a term that resulted from the war between the military and the communists or the insurgents to mean to kill a person suspected of being a communist or an informer

blow out a treat in celebration of something, e.g. He gave a big blow out on his birthday.

internal refugees people who have been forced to abandon their homes because of the war between the military and the insurgents and who live in temporary shelters in cities or towns for security reasons

3. Literal translations from Tagalog

These are expressions that resulted from a literal translation of equivalent sentences in Tagalog or the other native languages:

Open/Close the light/TV/radio. (Switch on/off, Turn on/off)

I am ashamed to you. (I am embarrassed.)

Go here. (Come here.)

I'll go ahead. (Goodbye/I'm leaving now.)

I'll pass by for you. (I'll pick you up.)

It's very traffic. (Traffic is very heavy; there is a traffic jam.)

4. Use of *no* and *already*

Conversations in PE, especially informal conversations among Filipinos, will show frequent use of the expression *no*, said with either a high pitch and rising intonation or a middle pitch and level intonation. *No* is used at the end of a word, a phrase or a sentence to seek affirmation of what was said by the speaker to the listener.

We waited for him for one hour, no?

He is the youngest in the family, no?

The president should have been more firm, no?

Already occurs very frequently in PE, not only in spoken but also in written discourse and may be a direct translation of the Tagalog (also found in many Philippine languages) enclitic *na*, which indicates the completion of an action or the attainment of a state or condition. This means that *na* and *already* are not completely semantically identical, since *already* implies that the action or state was completed or attained sooner than expected.

The children went home already. (This does not necessarily imply that the children went home earlier than expected. In AE: The children have gone home/The children went home.)
Come home already. It's already late. (Come home. It's late.)

5. Use of unusual terms or collocations

Wherein

Speakers of PE use this word in embedded sentences where native speakers would use *who*, *that*, *where*, *when* or *which* or some other conjunction.

I had a patient wherein the patient could not open the door of the car. (I had a patient who could not even open the door of the car.)

He went to the province wherein the people were kind to him. (He went to/visited the province and the people were kind to him.)

I want an apartment wherein there are two bathrooms. (I want an apartment with/which has two bathrooms.)

Also

In PE *also* is used in both affirmative and negative utterances. This may be because in Tagalog *din* 'also' is used in both types of utterances.

He did not go to school also.

His mother was not angry with him also.

I do not like arrogant people also.

the one

In PE the expression *the one* or *be the one* is used very frequently, whether or not the speaker intends to emphasize the noun preceding it.

I will be the one to do it. (I'll do it.)

He will be the one to go. (He'll go. He's going.)

This house is the one I will buy. (I will buy this house/

This is the house I will buy.)

use of prepositions

Prepositions present a lot of problems for second language learners and speakers of PE are not an exception:

cope up with (cope with)

He can't cope up with the work.

deal on (deal with)

His department deals on crime.

result to (result in)

His gambling resulted to his bankruptcy.

lose interest with (lose interest in)

He seems to have lost interest with his studies.

attribute on (attribute to)

His success is attributed on his good luck.

mention about (mention)

He mentioned about his decision to resign,
despite of (despite)

The teachers were fired despite of their plea.

2.2.3. GRAMMAR

1. Sub-categorization of nouns

As in Singapore English and Malaysian English the noun system in PE is simplified so that non-count nouns are treated as count nouns and therefore undergo the pluralization rule, e.g.; evidences, luggages, machineries, equipments, jewelries, furnitures, advices, informations. One also finds non-count nouns like *pants*, *trousers*, *clothes*, *eyeglasses*, or *slacks* being given their singular form *pant*, *trouser*, *clothe*, *eyeglass* or *slack*. (A not uncommon sign in clothing stores is: P99.90 *per pant*!)

On the other hand, there are many instances where PE speakers do not pluralize count nouns when they should as shown in the following sentences (from Gonzalez and Alberca 1987):

The PTA will also hold dialogue (dialogues) with the farmers and the private sector.

In addition, the project requires another P7,000,000 to be funded through fresh equity contribution (contributions).

But the court ruled that economic benefit (benefits) to the employer can be used to justify a wage differential...

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject-verb agreement rule in English is frequently ignored in PE, especially in unedited utterances. The following examples are from Gonzalez and Alberca 1978 and were taken from written

samples (therefore edited):

...their current concern were (was) worlds apart.

...the same number of voters were (was) accommodated.

...the system's combined assets was (were) held by ten savings
banks

...The octopi stranded by the receding sea seeks (seek) shelter
among the crevices.

3. Noun-Antecedent Agreement

The noun-antecedent agreement rule in English is also frequently ignored or not consistently applied in PE:

Cecilia was broken-hearted when his (her) boyfriend left him
(her).

Marcelo's grandson graduated at the top of their (his) class.

The company lost the case against their employees.

4. Use of tenses

PE speakers tend to use the past perfect tense where native English speakers would use the simple past tense as in (from Gonzalez and Alberca 1978):

...we had reacted too quickly.

I remember a friend back in the province, who had made it
almost a habit to toast the coming of evening.

It was reliably gathered two years ago that the Philippine
government had bought a big edifice in Madrid...

Tense sequence is a complicated grammatical rule that very often does not contribute to the semantic clarity of utterances. The PE speaker therefore drops this rule after having established the temporal context of his utterance.

He told me his name is Peter.

When I saw him at the market the other day he is talking to the fish vendor.

She told me last week that she is leaving for Australia next month.

5. Non-inversion of subject and verb in embedded WH-clauses

In native speaker English the subject and the verb in the embedded WH-clause undergo the inversion rule. In PE this rule is not consistently applied:

I asked him what is his name.

I do not know where did he go.

She does not know who are these people.

2.3. The Functions of English in the Philippines

Although there is a large group of people among the educated upper middle and upper classes who learned English as their first language or who are more proficient in English than in their first language, for the country as a whole, English is still very much a second language and is expected to remain so for at least the first quarter of the twenty-first century unless the geo-political situation of the country changes drastically.

English has been losing ground to Filipino during the last two decades but it is certainly not going the way of Spanish, the language of the early colonizers. Unlike Spanish, English is a working language: it is not simply a language that is required for study in schools. It is an indispensable study language especially in math and science, and it is the language used at the higher levels of business and industry. Although radio and TV have switched over to

Filipino and the local vernaculars, English has remained the predominant language of the more influential print media. It is also still the main language of government administration, especially at the national level. The courts of law use English predominantly although Filipino and the vernaculars are also used to facilitate communication with those who cannot understand and express themselves in English.

The Filipino has at least two languages in his/her linguistic repertoire. For families living in Manila, the vernacular (local languages other than Tagalog) is used for communicating with friends and relatives from the home province and it may even be the language of the home if the children were born and therefore spoke the language before the family moved to Manila. Tagalog or Filipino is used for informal socializing and for doing low level transactions such as shopping at the wet market or taking a bus or a taxi. English is used as the main study language in schools, especially at the tertiary level and in the better schools, many of which are run by private religious groups. Business meetings are conducted in English although a lot of code-switching (English and Tagalog) or Filipino may take place depending on the formality of the occasion and the role relationships between the participants in the interaction, that is, the less formal the occasion and the more equal the role relationship the more code-switching takes place.

Gonzalez 1985 (p. 148) summarizes the code selection process that the Filipino uses in the following paragraph:

The Filipino's repertoire is a rich one; his Philippine English is restricted simply because he has other codes and varieties of

such codes at his beck and call for other functions. When he wishes to be intimate, he uses the local vernacular; when he wishes to be familiar, he uses the local vernacular, Pilipino, or a code-switching variety of English (with the English portion predominantly in the formal style). Only when he wishes to be formal does he use English and, if he is versatile enough in Pilipino, the standard literary variety of Pilipino (which he is quickly acquiring as a result of the present policy on bilingual education).

2.4. Prospects

It is inarguable that the domains of English are contracting and will continue to contract while the domains of Filipino are expanding and will continue to expand. More and more Filipinos are becoming bilingual in English and Filipino—the 1980 census reported that 62.6% of the population six years old and above considered themselves bilingual in these two languages. This figure is quite impressive (although probably a little exaggerated since the degree of proficiency in these languages is not indicated) considering that at the time the census was taken the Bilingual Education Policy was only on its sixth year of implementation. The exaggerated claim notwithstanding, what is clear is that the Filipinos as a whole will become less and less proficient in English and more and more proficient in Filipino.

The trend described above will apply to the general population only. The academic and the socio-economic elite, however, will continue to learn and maintain English at their present level of proficiency and also continue to use it for social as well as business

purposes. This group will create opportunities where their children can learn English well. The parents will speak English to their children (as they do now) and send their children to schools that teach English well.

The road ahead for the Philippines points to a situation where English will still figure prominently but only at the higher rungs of society. The rest of the population will need English for very specific purposes, like understanding scientific and technical literature, and the teaching of English in the country will be directed mainly to these purposes.

English is expected to become another variable in the social stratification of the population. High proficiency in English will be an indicator of membership in the high social class. The elite will be speaking good English and perhaps also good Filipino, in addition to the vernaculars. The linguistic repertoire of the lower classes will be different only in that their knowledge of English will be quite limited, if English exists at all in their repertoire.

English is becoming a foreign language in the Philippines. In exchange for the diminishing role of English, however, the people are achieving a greater sense of nationhood that is being made possible by their acceptance of Filipino as a linguistic symbol of national unity.

3. CONCLUSION

The emergence of the new varieties of English has caused changes in the way people think about language. For instance, the concept of *native speaker* is being redefined to account not only for those

people who acquire a language as first language (from childhood) but also for those people whose first language has been supplanted by a later language in terms of level of proficiency and dominance.

In some quarters there is a fear that the spread of English might create all sorts of pidgins and creoles and that there would come a time when so-called speakers of English would not be able to understand each other. These people insist that the traditional native-speaker standard is needed to ensure mutual intelligibility. However, what we have seen in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines assures us that the fear is exaggerated. The people speaking the new varieties set up their own norms and these norms tend to be similar to rather than different from norms of other new varieties and even of the native speaker varieties. A person speaking good Singapore English or good Philippine English is a good speaker of English by whatever standard.

Aside from bringing into clear focus the need to re-orientate thinking from just native speaker norms to international norms, the emergence of the new varieties has also provided scholars the opportunity to study closely the dynamics of language learning and language change.

Because of the dynamic political, economic and social forces at work in Southeast Asia, the future scenario for English in the region is also expected to change. The role of English in Malaysia and the Philippines will become more limited as each country's respective effort to unite its people under one language as a symbol of national identity succeeds. Singapore, on the other hand, regards English as the bond that unites its various ethnic and linguistic

groups. The domains of English in Singapore will continue to expand, even to the extent of replacing the vernaculars as the language of the home.

In sum, even if its role in the national life of the Philippines and Malaysia will change, English will continue to be an important language in Southeast Asia.

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Received April 30, 1991