

**Local Lexical Intrusions in English Dailies: a  
Comparison of Malaysian, Singaporean & Pakistani  
Newspapers**

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## LOCAL LEXICAL INTRUSIONS IN ENGLISH DAILIES: A COMPARISON OF MALAYSIAN, SINGAPOREAN & PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines data from English newspapers in Malaysia, Singapore, and Pakistan in order to determine the extent of nativization of local varieties of English. The papers examined are 'The New Strait Times' and 'The Star' from Malaysia, 'The Straits Times', 'Sunday Times', 'Today' and 'The New Paper' from Singapore and 'The Nation' and 'The News' from Pakistan. The borrowing and assimilation of a large number of lexical items are analysed and categorized. The categorization across the countries will be discussed. Such informed knowledge truly makes English an Asian language.

### Introduction

Despite being an international language that is spoken and used by many speakers in many countries, English is not universally understood. Not everyone who speaks the language of English can understand each other as precisely as it ought to-understood. Due to the existence of various variables like region and location of a place, the ethnic landscape, social class, gender, occupation, education, religion, physical environment, age, gender and needs, the way English is used by one group of speakers may differ from the way it is used by another speech community. Each group and its sub-groups bear specific characteristics and these characteristics are reflected in the variety of English that they use. Such cultural traits reflected in the way English is used have been discussed by Anna Wierzbicka (1995) who writes about the cultural specifics of the Polish language which result in the inability to explain certain concepts with adequate English words.

How language is used by a particular society or community is a reflection of that society. Language reflects identity, culture, mood, and power and politeness are displayed through language. Differences in how English is used and spoken by the various people can be detected in accents, pronunciation, tone, vocabulary and syntax. The English language has been evolving over centuries, moving from old English to Medieval English to Modern English. In the same way, the variety of English used by speakers in Indonesia



is different from the variety used by people in Taiwan. The English language, like fashion is constantly evolving and changing. Linguistic change is tangible and can be seen from the way words from local languages are borrowed and assimilated into regional Englishes. This adds a new dimension to the variety of English used locally, has enriched and institutionalized regional Englishes

One of the major tools of communication the world over is the print media. In Malaysia, and Singapore there are four main English dailies and in Pakistan, there is no less than fourteen English language newspapers daily. The present study reveals a large number of local lexical intrusions in all the newspapers selected for research.

#### **Aim of study**

As the focus of this study is on the nativisation of English, we focus on how words from local languages are used in English language newspapers. In identifying these words we aim to highlight the extent of the process of nativisation of English that has occurred in these three countries.

#### **Corpus of data**

This study is based on the collection of data which has been extracted from the newspaper articles in local English newspapers. In Malaysia, the selected English dailies were the "New Straits Times" and the "Star". Extracts were collected from January 31, to May 12, 2004. In Singapore data from "The New Paper" was collected from February 21, to May 4, 2007; "Today" from February 8, to March 22, 2007; "The Straits Times" from March 4, 2007 to May 4, 2007 and from "The Sunday Times" dated March 18, 2007. In Pakistan, the selected Pakistani dailies were "The Nation" and "The News". "The Nation" was randomly selected from February 6, 2005 to July 31, 2005, while "The News" was randomly selected from June 1, 2005 to August 31, 2005. This study focuses only on articles written in these newspapers and not on headlines or advertisements.

#### **Methodology**

Due to the massive entries of code-switches (and code-mixes) which seem to occur almost everyday in these newspapers; random selecting from the data occurring over a period of time would help show that code-switches are a natural phenomenon and occur frequently. Code switches used by writers were identified and highlighted. Such words had to be words that were not found in British or American dictionaries. To gain a general idea of how much the English of these three countries had been nativised by lexical items from local languages, the code switches identified were then categorized.

Before moving on to the analysis definitions of certain terms is apt.

#### **Nativization**

The Collins English Dictionary (1996, 2006) defines the term, 'going native' as to adopt the lifestyle of the local population. By the term nativization, we mean a variety of English that has borrowed from local languages. For instance, the interaction of two co-existing languages like English and Urdu in Pakistan, English and Malay, English and Chinese (Mandarin and the sub-dialects), or even English and Tamil in multilingual



Malaysia and Singapore facilitate the bilingual (and multilingual) speakers in selecting words which are culturally associated with certain concepts and situations. This process of nativization, irrespective of geographical location, does in no way make the particular variety of English more superior or inferior to standard English. In fact, such specific usage results in a specific variety of English with a linguistic identity and culture of its own. -The nativisation of English both in Malaysia and Singapore is not very distinct as the two countries have common languages like Malay, English, Tamil, Mandarin and other dialects of Chinese.

### **Code switching**

Haugen defines code switching the “alternative use of two languages,” and Marasigan (1983) refers to it as the use of two languages in the same sentence or discourse. Gumperz (1982) terms code switching as being addressee specific, while Fishman (1996) argues that the choice of codes is based on domains. David (2001, 2003) and Kow (2003) demonstrate that code switchings have multiple functions while Kuang (2007) suggests that code switching in a young child’s writing occurs because the child only has that concept in that particular language. In another study Kuang and Ng (2007) examined how students writing in Malay used English words but maintained Malay syntax,.. The mass media in the globalised world, is experiencing code-switches. Daniel Hernandez (2004) in an article published in the Boston Globe said that ‘Spanglish’ (Spanish and English) is becoming more and more prominent among the US-born Hispanic communities in America, and the mass media is catering to their codes.

Code switching and lexical borrowing is a natural linguistic process in language contact situations. Malaysian, Singaporean and Pakistani varieties of English have moved beyond the stage of lexical borrowings alone. Hybridized and grammaticized mother tongue lexical items are prevalent in English language dailies and have become an integral part of the English lexicon in these countries.

### **Discussion and analysis**

For the analysis of data, the code switches instances identified and highlighted in the English newspapers are categorized as follows:-

1. People (Titles and Honoraries)
2. Events
3. Cultural activities (and physical items)
4. Places
5. Political movements and government
6. Religion
7. Arts and Films
8. Food
9. Clothes
10. Quotations
11. Conceptualising a local concept



## 1 People (Titles and Honouraries)

All human experience is, to some extent, mediated through culture and language. Objects and forces in the physical environment become labeled in language only if they have cultural significance. In other words, they take up the attention of the community. Such words or objects or activities become culturally significant.

As a former appendage of Malaysia before 1968, Singapore is not totally unlike Malaysia where titles and honoraries may resemble each other. In Malaysia titles conferred by state governments and by the king are used before the name of the person. Titles like *Datuk*, *Tan Seri*, *Puan Seri*, etc. are often seen in English dailies.

As both Pakistan and Malaysia share a common Islamic tradition certain religious terminology in both Pakistani and Malaysian English dailies emerge. For instance anyone who has performed the holy Pilgrimage or *Haj* is called a *Haji* and is allowed to use this term before his name. In Pakistan, *Mullah*, *Maulana*, *Hafiz* and *Qari* are all words which refer to persons associated with the religious fraternity..

From the data which follows it is clear that in hierarchical societies like Malaysia, Pakistan and Singapore, titles of respect for heads of organizations, tribal chiefs and religious scholars are used in the English dailies. These titles originate from the local languages and there are no such equivalents in English.

### 1 a. People, titles and honoraries in Malaysian dailies

“As *Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi* has mentioned, we want a closer relationship between the races. We want to feel like one *Bangsa Malaysia*.”(New Straits Times. (2004). April 7, 2004: 11)

Thumbs up were given to these professionally-administered schools not only by those who called themselves “*Anak Johor*” (those who were born and live in the State), but also by people from other states who moved and work here.(Sayuthi, Shahrum. February 28, 2004: 15)

“The move by Selangor Menteri Besar *Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo* to send civil servants who do not buck up to reform school will send a clear message that a certain...(Ganeshadeva, M. February 24, 2004: 11)

### 1 b. People, titles and honoraries in Singapore dailies

While Muslim law allows a bride’s father to perform the marriage solemnization in the presence of two witnesses, he risks getting jailed if caught doing so without the *kadi*’s (marriage solemniser’s ) presence, said Mr Pasuni. Arlina Arshad: The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg 27

Hundreds of people – many with children in tow – were at the Pasir Ris resort to see what “Guru” Zareena N. Ban had to offer at the Laughter Day event, organized by the NTUC club. Ho Ai Li: The Straits Times, 02/04/2007, pg H2

The tall, well-built bachelor grins mischievously as he says: “When I go on to Geylang Serai, some of the ‘mak cik’ (Malay aunties) recognize me and shake my hand. I have to



watch what I wear now." Lee Sze Yong: The Straits Times, 02/04/2007, pg Life! People 5

### 1 c. People, titles and honoraries in Pakistani dailies

Former Foreign Minister Sardar (Chief of tribe) Assif Ahmad Ali Saturday said..... (The News 24-07-05)

Other speakers on the occasion including *Maulana* (Religious scholar) *Irshad-ul-Haq* emphasized that Islam is a religion of peace. (The News 24-07-05)

They were Hafiz (One who has memorized the Quran) Muhammad Nawaz and Qari Shabir Ahmad. (The News 24-07-05)

This was informed by Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters Treaty Syed (Revered caste) Jamait Ali Shah .....carrying out inspection of the project along with Indian officials. (The News 31-07-05)

.....tribal notable Haji (One who has performed Haj) Ali Mardan, all of them were abducted at gunpoint near Sui by unknown armed men..... (July 24th, 2005)

Imam (One who leads the prayers in the mosque) doubts terrorist link to Pak-American men. (July 24th, 2005)

The group of Yatrees (Pilgrims who come to visit holy sites) arrived here on June 21st on ten day visit to participate in 166th death anniversary of Maharajja (Great king) Ranjeet Singh. (The News 01-07-05)

### 2. Events, Ceremonies and Rituals

Speakers give names to important entities and events in their physical and social worlds, and once named these lexical items become entrenched. Words associated with ceremonies and rituals relating to birth, marriage and death are generally borrowed from the local languages. Words like *nikah* (both in Malaysia and Pakistan), and *shadi rasm-i-hina* (Pakistan) refer to various ceremonies related to weddings. Similarly words like *qul*, *chehlum* and *barsi* (Pakistan) are related to rituals associated with death. Then there are certain words in all three countries which have been accepted in English due to continued usage e.g. bazaar. In the Singaporean context, words like *yusheng*, *gong xi fa cai*, and *chingay* from Chinese were noted. Examples follow:-

#### 2 a. Events, Ceremonies and Rituals in Malaysian dailies

. "He is especially touched when the boys cium tangan (kiss his hand as a sign of respect)...a basic *salam* will do..." (Aljunid, Sharifah Sakinah, May 8, 2004: L7.)

The nature of such gatherings is a combination of edutainment, networking, gotong royong – whatever you care to call it. (Bajunid, Ibrahim Ahmad, April 18, 2004: 8)

#### 2 b. Events, Ceremonies and Rituals in Singapore dailies

Reading how Blackie has made alive the endangered "kampong spirit", I can feel a ray of hope for our future. Dr Tan Chek Wee: The New Paper, 25/02/2007, pg 4

Okay, lah, also, gong xi fa cai! Peter H L Lim: The New Paper, 21/07/2007, pg 18

If, like me, you're used to the milder version at neighbourhood pasar malams, you may want to avoid ordering it here. Lee Pei Qi: The New Paper, 21/07/2007, pg 26 & 27

Road closure for the Chingay Parade preview today will affect 22 SBS Transit bus services. The New Paper, 23/02/2007, pg 18



### 2 c. Events, Ceremonies and Rituals in Pakistani dailies

The *nikah* ((the signing of the marriage contract) ceremony but *valima* (the reception hosted by the boy's family) or reception that was deliberately passed off The nation,30-7-05)

We are at Data Saab( Muslim saint 's tomb) no one will say anything to you here. (The News 6-6-2005)

### 3 Cultural activities

In the Oxford dictionary of sociology (1998), culture is "a general term for the symbolic and learned aspects of human society...[encompassing] to a learned complex of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and customs" (p. 137). Cultures are context specific and they are maintained through the sociocultural practises of society (also see Fairclough, 1995). Below are some of the examples of cultural activities which are not found in non-Malaysian and non-Pakistani environments (in this case, newspapers).

#### 3 a. Cultural activities in Malaysian dailies

Video cameras to keeps tabs on ceramah. (talk) (Krishnamoorthy, M. February 26, 2004: 1/4)

"After accepting the job, I treated him to a big makan (treat) to thank him" (Ang, Yen Ling, May 4, 2004: 15).

Last Saturday was Workers Day. In the name of workers – an lest we forget, we are all workers – let's reward them properly before their contribution is forgotten. Selamat Hari Pekerja! (happy worker's day). (Talib, Ahmad A. May 3, 2004: 10)

#### 3 b. Cultural activities in Singapore dailies

Then, as I grew older, I started to wonder why there were more gong xi fa cai (Mandarin for wishing you prosperity) wishes than xin nian kuai le (happy new year) greetings during Chinese New Year. Peter H L Lim: The New Paper, 21/07/2007, pg 18

Those with their eye on the goodies will tell you that they are hoping for an early hong bao from the Government in the Budget to be delivered one week from now.

(Tor Ching Li: Today, 08/02/2007, pg 1)

#### 3 c. Cultural activities in Pakistani dailies

The 377th annual 3 day urs (annual celebration) of Hazrat Baba Shah Jamal will start at Saints Mazar (Tomb) in Ichra, Lahore on Thursday. (The Nation 12-05-05)

Thana culture. (police station) (The Nation 06-06-05)

### 4. Places

Names of places mostly use native expressions and these are retained as such in the English language newspapers. Places, like events and cultural values are contextual 'items', and over time, the local languages are assimilated into the matrix language.



#### 4 a. Places in Malaysian dailies

I support the *SJK* (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan). (Aznam, Suhaini. (2004). Gruelling day on the campaign trail. March 20. 20.)

A couple of years ago, I called Hospital *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* (National University of Malaysia Hospital) for an appointment to have a child...(Teh, B. C., May 8, 2004. StarTwo 27).

The many so-called *rumah tumpangan* (brothel) here ply the flesh trade openly.(Tan Hwee Mui, Margaret. April 9, 2004: 11).

As for Noornadia, Ansara's assistance would enable her to continue her studies at *Kolej Matrikulasi* Kulim (Kulim Matriculation College) in Kedah.(New Straits Times. May 8, 2004: 12).

"Furthermore, the ministry is taking over *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (Language and Cultural Centre) because it is very important to teach the young to speak proper Malay," she added. (Ritikos, Jane. April 22, 2004: 12)

#### 4 b. Places in Singapore dailies

Mr Ng said his bakery daily produces about 1,000 loaves of brown bread, supplying *Kopitiam* and Banquet foodcourts. (Teh Jen Lee: The New Paper, 25/02/2007, pg 14)

There are many reasons *Bagus* ("good" in Malay), which opened three years ago lives up to its name. (Teo Pau Lin; The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg L31)

#### 4 c. Places in Pakistani dailies

...afternoon at *kamran's baradari* ( A verandah with twelve arches) (The News 14-08-05)

*Anarkali Bazaars*. (A shopping centre named after a royal maid servant )

A police post exhibition hall Suma'a hall industrial school for women, library *,langar khana* (a place for dining which gives free food)and *musafir khanas*.(inn offering free lodging) (The News 6-6-2005)

*Bab-e- Pakistan*(The Pakistan Gate) project is being completed on 110 Acres of land. (The News 14-08-05)

A low of profile politician, invited me to his sprawling *Lal Havel*. (The News,1-7=05)

The *Lari Adda* (Bus stop) police said..... (The News 01-07-05)

#### 5. Political movements and government

All political movements are indigenous in origin. Also their success and popularity depend on their appeal that cater to the masses so they carry names in the local language Urdu. Since a vast majority of the public is not familiar with English, Urdu is used to reach out to the maximum number of people in the country. In the Malaysian and Singaporean data base under study, no such examples were found.

#### 5 a. Political movements and government in Pakistani dailies

English is the official language in Pakistan. Most of the written communication is done in English. There are however, some posts that carry Urdu names and one such post is that of Nazim which means administrator. This post occurs as the administrator at the lower level (*tehsil*) or at the higher level (district). A compound word - *Nazimship* was also



recorded (The News, 1-07 -06). Also the Malaysian and Singaporean data did not reveal any instances of code switches for this category.

*Khaksar Tehrik* (Movement) Pakistan has announced its support to Ms. Fakhrunisa for that office of Lahore High court Bar association. (The Nation 25-02-05)

MMA, ARD and Pakistan *Tehrik Insaaf* (movement for justice) agreed yielding unanimous candidate for the *Nazim* slot against the ruling party in UC-32, Dars Baray Mian, Mughalpura. (July 7, 2005)

President Musharraf will also distribute medals among two hundred *Karkun-e- Tehreek* Pakistan. (Workers of the Pakistan Movement) (The News 14-08-05) The sources said both the parties in their party meetings discussed in detail the ruling party's strategy to win the seats right fro union councils to the district and *Tehsil Nazims*. ( Local government administrators)

Ministers would also be eligible for simultaneous *nazimship*. (coinage of a new term) (The News 01-07-05)

Dcos, Tmos replace *nazims*. (The News 01-07-05)

Secretariat will come under the Mohtasib. ( Accoutability chief) The News, 6-07-05.

Candidates for union council *nazim* and *naib nazim* (deputy administrator) will file their papers. (1-07-05)

The election commission has fixed September 29th for the elections of district, *tehsils*, *talukas* and / or towns. (The Nation 17-06-05)

## 6. Religion

Malaysia and Pakistan share a common state religion- Islam hence, it was not surprising to find that a vast majority of words under this category were found. Names of religious places, religious events and activities are retained in the native form in the English dailies. Examples are words like *masjid*, (place of worship for Muslims) *naat khawani* (recitation of poems in praise of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, *assalamualaikum* (peace be upon him) or Quran *khawani* (recitation of the Holy Quran) . Such instances of code switches in Singaporean newspapers were not found.

### 6 a. Religion in Malaysian dailies

But then, we could not sit together because there would be a non-*halal* section and a *halal* section. (New Straits Times. (2004). Captions. February 1. 2.)

The mutaah comprised claims of up to 15 year for alimony (*nafkah*) amounting to RM360,000, clothing and accessories (RM270,000) and maintenance of their four children aged between 13 and 22. The remainder, to be given in movable and fixed assets, was acquired by the couple during their marriage (*harta sepencarian*). Properties given to Nooraini as matrimonial gifts (*pemberian hibbah*) – including a BMW car, a Honda Civic car and a house in Subang Jaya, Selangor – will remain at her disposal. (Othman, M. Husairy. May 12, 2004: 6).

"I am not young anymore, and this is a way for me to earn my *pahala* (spiritual merit for doing good deeds)," she says. Just as Muslims have to attend courses to perform the *umrah* and the haj, Asmah too had attended short courses organised by the State Religious Department, the Health Ministry as well as the *surau* to qualify for the job. (Yusoff, Yulina. May 12, 2004)



#### 6 b. Religion in Pakistani dailies

*Chehlum* ( Religious prayer /Condolence Ceremony held forty days after death) of *Chaudhary Faqir* Muhammad will be held on Sunday. (The News 24-07-05)

*Qul*( Religious prayers held on the third day after death) of Razzatullah Khan at Jamia Masjid Ashrafia Sant Nagar Today. (July 24th, 2005)

*Madrassa*( Religious seminary /school) reforms Board meets today. (July 7, 2005)

Quran *Khawani*( Reading of the Quran) for mother of Dr. Nadeem Cheema will be held at..... (July 24th, 2005)

...honor of this *Ummah* ( The Muslim nation) is being sold..... ( July 7th, 2005)

#### 7. Arts and film

Arts define the properties of culture and is presented in the local language, in order to 'contextualise' the value. Both Malaysia and Pakistan's data base displayed such code switching but it was not found in the Singaporean data base.

##### 7 a. Arts and film in Malaysian dailies

He said the performing arts had also been neglected and the new ministry could revive dying traditional arts such as *wayang kulit* and *mak yong*. (Ritikos, Jane. April 22, 2004: 12)

Jeganathan Ramachandram's art exhibition '*Vaastu* – Windows to Time'...The concept is very much like *feng shui*, but *vaastu* also incorporates the time factor in its application...A musician in his own right, he was also trained as a *veenai* (a traditional Indian stringed instrument) player in South India. (Samat, Hafidah, May 8, 2004: L14).

One child especially was in her element dancing to a *bhangra* tune, and mesmerising the audience with her slick Bollywood moves. (Taib, Shuib. April 29, 2004: CL1).

Pengkalan Kotan candidate Lee Hack Teik of Barisan National kicked off his campaign with a song entitled *Say Kai Tay Ee Theng* (meaning "The World's Bravest" in Hokkien). (Star. March 15, 2004: 4).

##### 7 b. Arts and film in Pakistani dailies

Names of movies, plays and theatrical performances are mostly in the local language.

Hmm! While on the one hand we have couples heading for splitsville, we have one dusky *dhamaka* (Explosion) from *Sheikhpura* (name of place) *Meera* desperately trying to create some big bangs across the great divide. (July 12, 2005)

Names of Urdu movies:

Double *Sawari*. (The Nation 05-09-05)

"*Paoon Ka Zeher*". (The Nation 05-09-05)

"*Kareeb Kareeb*" (The Nation 05-09-05)

*Samri jadugar* (The Nation 05-09-05)

*Oh ho ho! Ainak Wala Jin* ( The bespectacled genie) (The Nation 05-09-05)

He revealed that he plans to stage play "*Kareeb Kareeb*". ( name of play) (The Nation 05-09-05)



## 8. Food

Like art, food also indicates cultural identity. Names of local dishes, foods, fruits and vegetables are referred to by using words from local languages.. The reliance on local names occurred because there are no English equivalents:

### 8 a. Food in Malaysian dailies

According to her niece, Delphine Raneé Dawson, who is in her mid 30s, "My aunt's anchovy and petai sambal is unbeatable!"...Her catering business includes doing the weekly cooking for a couple and providing snake packs of fried *meehoon* and *nasi lemak* for the altar boys...Her spicy brinjal *chutney*, fiery chicken sambal, crispy fish cutlets, rich cauliflower *kurma* and aromatic *briyani* make her clients come back for more... However, her *dhalca*, mutton varuvel and chicken *briyani* have remained all-time favourites...(Chen, Grace, May 8, 2004: StarTwo 4).

As I recall, it used to be a small, friendly, calm, slow, cheap, serene place with a beach and sea view all the trappings of a port city and a pretty good *nasi kandar* and *char kuay teow*...(Moses, Rajan, May 8, 2004: 11).

Smoking be banned in all restaurants, *teh tarik* stalls and toilets. (J., Peter, May 8, 2004. StarTwo 27).

The owner, a short man who still wears a Pagoda- brand white singlet, knows his order – *kopi kau* (strong coffee with condensed milk). Although the tables are always filled up because of a popular *Hokkien mee*, or prawn mee stall there, the 65- year-old teacher is left undisturbed to read his two English newspapers. At *ceramah*, he tells his listeners he has eaten *kari pooi* (curry rice in Hokkein) – a euphemism for having spent time in prison or a lock-up. (Wong, Chun Wai. March 20, 2004: 8).

### 8 b. Food in Singapore dailies

The thought of *ginseng* in *chawanmushi* made me a little nervous. An added bonus? The ginkgo nut at the bottom of the cup. The *tang gui* flower crab is another dish on offer.(Lee Pei Qi: The New Paper, 21/07/2007, pg 26 & 27)

Halfway through our *ramen* dinner, I popped the question: "Where did the two of you meet?" (Mindy Tan: The New Paper, 23/02/2007, pg 25 & 26)

Especially the dinning bit, what with the array of pineapple tarts, *kueh lapis* and abalone meals.

(Mindy Tan: The New Paper, 23/02/2007, pg 25 & 26)

If these bakeries were ever to close down, Singaporeans would feel the loss most keenly when they want to eat *kaya* toast. (Teh Jen Lee: The New Paper, 25/02/2007, pg 14)

Go for the a la carte buffet if you have the luxury of time and a good appetite (Goh Mei Yi: The New Paper, 26/02/2007, pg 31)

Inspired by a Thai-style glass noodle dish, I decided to prepare a claypot meal using bean thread noodles (*tang hoon*), tiger prawns and thinly-sliced abalone. (Amy Van: Today, 08/02/2007, pg 50)

The crowd is young and casual, and seems to be as comfortable ordering wood-fired *pizzas* as they are *briyani*, the city's famous meat-and-rice dish. (Today, 08/02/2007, pg 51)



Try carrying a mountain bike, a box of *bak kua* and Kylie Minogue's perfume onto the MRT.

(Neil Humphreys: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 12)

Last night, I had a strange dream, in which I was wearing my favourite white wrap shirt tucking into an enormous bowl of *laksa*. (Pearlyn Tham: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 20)

After all, the laidback recreation area is more commonly known for affordable family-friendly chow than posh nosh like *foie gras*. (Neo Chai Chin: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 22)

I was a tad disappointed with the slipper lobster pasta (\$18), comprising chunks of slipper lobster meat, served with chopped parsley in light cream and *pomodoro* (tomato) sauce. (Eveline Gan: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 22)

I opted for the baked chocolate *lava gateau* (\$6) served with vanilla ice cream and strawberries.

(Eveline Gan: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 22)

The eatery will, for instance, serve an eclectic range of food including *foie gras* fried rice, sweet-potato pancakes with *gula melaka* (palm sugar) and *cempedak* preserves. (Ashraf Safdar: Today, 21/03/2007, pg 39)

Organic *miso*, Korean *chilli* paste, maple syrup, eggs, lots of fruit, salad greens, real butter, my store of Chinese herbal tonics such as sweet and bitter apricot kernels, Chinese dates and chicken soup herbs. And my home-made *kimchi* collection. (Eveline Gan: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 22)

My Beijing sister-in-law's *jiaozi* (steamed dumplings), served with aged Chinese vinegar with tender ginger juliennes and a saucerful of *jiucaai hua* (pickled flowering chives). (Eveline Gan: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 22)

At first sight, this *halal yong tau* foo restaurant in a shophouse unit in Changi Road doesn't look promising. You can even have it with *la mian* (pulled noodles, add \$1), bee hoon or rice (add 50 cents). For example, the best-selling *ikan parang* balls (\$4 for a few balls in soup) are big and bouncy, and you can tell they're handmade because their surfaces are pock-marked. (Teo Pau Lin; The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg .L31)

There was also the monkey guffaw, involving much scratching of heads and armpits, and even a local "*teh-tarik*" laugh. (The Straits Times, 02/04/2007, pg 1)

Here I marry two traditions by spicing up a Mediterranean broth with a sambal which I either make from scratch or put together with the help of a bottled paste. I end up with a full-boiled stew, spiked by *chillies* and *belachan*. 2 slices *batang* fish, cut into at least 6 pieces. 1 tbs tamarine puree (available bottled from Tekka market). Mix in turmeric and *galangal* powders. (Sylvia Tan: The Straits Times, 04/04/2007, pg mindyourbody 15)

Just as special is the unique Saison Sayang, a beer crafted in the European style but with a touch of Asian spices like coriander, Chinese *ba jiao* and lightly spiced with a liquorish anise undertone.

(Today, 22/03/2007, pg 46)

Serve the rice with slices of lime, coriander leaves, *chilli padi* and cashew nuts. To prepare this dish, you'll need to get a bottle of preserved olive vegetables (*kana chai*) packed in brine. (Amy Van: Today, 22/03/2007, pg 52)

No doubt about it, *doujiang* (Chinese salted bean sauce). A really good packet of fried hor fun topped with lots of tasty gravy, slices of shark meat, liver, pork fillets and prawns, all



wrapped up in smoky, dried palm leaf (*wuba ye*). So breakfast is now one plain *roti prata* for 60 cents. (Radha Basu: The Straits Times, 03/04/2007, pg 2)

### 8 c. Food in Pakistani dailies

They found a packet of *Chaars* (Marijuana) in it and arrested me. (July 12, 2005)

....are called *simla mirch*.(capsicum). (The News 14-08-05)

while wave after wave of falsa (purple coloured sour berries) lychee, mangoes and plums are visible.” (The News 30-06-05)

“the per acre produces of the *sindhr*( a variety of mangoes)i mangoes is around stones.” (The News 06-07-05)

“ Mrs Samira Shahzad’s cooking classes ; *Sheesh Kabab* (meat dish) (The News 06-07-05)

*koftas*. (meat balls) (The News 28-08-05)

“... a few itinerant vendors selling peanuts and *chana jor garam*( roasted grams)...” (The News 28-08-05)

### 9. Clothes

In the era of globalisation, clothes provide the wearer with an identity. The data indicates that clothings which are native in origin are referred to by using words from the local languages.

#### 9 a. Clothes in Malaysian dailies

Male students wear black *songkok*, white baju *Melayu teluk belanga*, black *samping* and white shoes. Female students wear white-and-blue *baju kurung*, white tudung and white shoes. Male teachers are required to be dressed with tie and *songkok*, while women wear *baju kurung* with *tudung*. Nowhere in sight is “Arabic” attire such as *jubah* (robes), *ketayap* (skull caps) and *serban* (turbans), which are trademarks of religious schools in other parts of the country. (Sayuthi, Shahrum. February 28, 2004: 15).

Probably the most eye-catching were the Wanita Umno members who were using the “blue wave” to maximum effect – they wore the blue BN flag as their *selendang* with their white and red *baju kurung*. (New Straits Times. February 24, 2004: 2).

Clad in a fuschia *songket baju kurung*, guest of honour Datin Paduka Seri Endon Mahmood was clearly pleased to see the stylish creations. (Manan, Dazman. May 7, 2004: 3).

#### 9 b. Clothes in Singapore dailies

For a day out at the zoo or in the urban jungle, dress up your little ones in the Safari designs, which are heavy on flower and camouflage prints and crochet details and come drenched in shades of green, *khaki* and pink. (Pearlyn Tham: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 21)

The new rules follow a high-profile court case in which the father of a 12-year-old Muslim girl was last month refused permission by London’s High Court to challenge a school’s ban on her wearing the full-face veil, or *niqab*, during lessons. (Today, 21/03/2007, pg 20)



Outwardly, it appears conservative, with many women in long cloaks and wearing the *hijab* (head scarf), yet it boasts a chic quarter, Al-Jedeida, home to a number of boutique hotels with stylish restaurants. (Tan Chung Lee: The Straits Times, 03/04/2007, pg Life! Travel 2)

Law studies: Former Hong Kong actress-turned-lawyer Yung Ching Ching, the wife of director Lau Kar Leung, has been donning a *tudung* and *mini-kurong* while studying Islamic law in Singapore, reported Malaysia's Guang Ming Daily. (The Straits Times, 03/04/2007, pg Life! Buzz 12)

### 9 c. Clothes in Pakistani dailies

She exhibited her bridal collection of *ghararas* and *saris* made in muslin. (The News 24-07-05)

The kind of work seen on the costume included tapestry, embroidered work like *jaamdani* and *zardozi* work on muslin and pure silk. (The News 24-07-05)

She has stuck to set limits with the exception of a *khaadi* shoot in which she felt she revealed too much. (The News 24-07-05)

That and another shoot in which my choli was way too small. (The News 24-07-05)

We need to prove that *kurtas*, sequins and *khussaa* are as much our culture as India's. (The News 24-07-05)

President Musharraf was clad in white *Shalwar Qameez* with a traditional *Khusa*. (The News 16-08-05)

She designed her bridal collection of *Ghararas* and *Saris*. She also showed her interest in *Khussas* and *Kurtas* clothes.

## 10. Quotations

Quotations are frequently used by journalists so as to emphasise and provide a realistic account. This is done in the language used by the speaker. .

### 10 a. Quotations in Malaysian dailies

"*Apakah sangat teruk kerja sini? Cari duit saja. Bau busuk dah biasa* (what is so bad about working here? It is just to earn money. We get used to the stench)," exclaimed one of the women, who gave her name as Mas and she said she was 48 (Chin, Mui Yoon. April 19, 2004: 2-3)

It was scorchingly hot, but one in the crowd was heard saying: "*Panas lit lit pun tak pa. Semangat tu ada.*" "It doesn't matter how hot it is, the spirit is here." And in thick Penang patois he added: "*Jangan buat leceh.*" It means, don't spoil it. (Nadzri, Syed. March 9, 2004: 4)

"*Guane, nok sokong lagi?*" (How? Do you still want to support them?). Another popular slogan is "*Pas molek doh weh, Umno dok rok chetong,*" *Molek* which means elok, and *dok rok chetong* translates as *lekeh* or "not in the same class", say locals. Where the above slogan is seen, Umno's retort can be found a few telephone poles away: "*Serik doh wehhh.*" (Enough already.) "*Umno bina, PAS musnah*" (Umno builds, PAS destroys) – a catchphrase popular in Setiu and Besut, is answered by "*Umno bina tol, PAS musnah tol*" as you cross the Sultan Mahmud bridge into the state capital. At makeshift huts along the road to Merang it is simply "*Selamat tinggal PAS*" (Goodbye PAS) to which PAS retorts:



“Selamat tinggal Umno, dan jangan kembali lagi” (Goodbye Umno and don’t come back). An Umno banner posted in the vicinity of government offices and quarters in Besut carries the list of political blunders allegedly committed by PAS leaders: “2001 – Panggil wartawan tupai dan monyet (Called journalists squirrels and monkeys), 2002 – Panggil polis syaitan bisu (Called the police silent devils), 2003 – Panggil kakitangan kerajaan berkaki empat (Called civil servants four-legged, implying they were animals). The banner ends with the word “Guane?” At the state capital, the messages are more conservative with a giant billboard showing Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang and the ruling government’s main slogan below: “Terengganu kite, hok kite” (Our Terengganu, Our right) – a direct reference to the issue of oil royalty allegedly owed to the state by the Federal Government. (Suthakar, K. and Baharom, Farris. March 8, 2004: 19).

#### 10 b. Quotations in Singapore dailies

The Japanese have a proverb: *Ishi no ue nimo san nen* – which means. After sitting on a cold stone for three years, the stone becomes warm. (Letter from John A Tessensohn in Osaka, Japan: Today, 08/02/2007, pg 26)

In reference to their upcoming concert being named Jump: *Li Kai Di Qiu Biao Mian* (Mandarin for “Jump: Leaving the Face of the Earth”), the band’s guitarist Stone said at a press conference on Friday: “In the physical sense, we hope our fans that come to the concert will join us in jumping to the beat if the music and hence ‘leave’ the earth.” (Winson Teo: Today, 17-18/03/2007, pg 30)

He said: “*Tilam* (mattress in Malay) is a very common item. How you interpret it depends on your mindset. But to many....it means having a home, a personal space, a possession.” Wendy Teo: The New Paper, 05/04/2007, pg 26

Student Lim Aik, 21, says: “I’d fell ‘*paiseh*’ (Hokkien for embarrassed) if there was a line of people waiting for seats.” (Shaan Seth: The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg L10)

#### 10 c. Quotations in Pakistani dailies

Nazar na lagay. (God save you from the evil eye) (July 12, 2005)

History is repeating itself. Previously Mohsin Khan left cricket and joined the Indian Film Industry. Ultimately he was like a “dhobi ka kutam na ghar ka na ghat ka”

Har Qadam Zindagi ! (life at every step)

#### 11. Conceptualising local concepts

Some concepts cannot be explained with an English word because there are no English equivalents for such concepts. Although the above categories have attempted to highlight concepts that were related to religion and culture, the following section illustrates instances of code switches in Singaporean newspapers. These instances appeared to be using local concepts like the Hokkien ‘*kiasu*’ which means afraid to lose as well as romanising the concepts.

Although in *hucyu* it’s cool, it’s not so hot in English. Mandarin speakers might say *mai hui lai*, which literally translates to “buy back”. (The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg 42)



But inversely, when there's more than plenty and one is still grabby, well, there's being *kiasu* to the nth degree (meaning to the highest order). (Sylvia Toh Paik Choo: The New Paper, 25/02/2007, pg 27)

Oily rice in today's *kiasi* (fear of death) mindset is a no-no because it can make you feel sick. K.F. Seetoh: The New Paper, 25/02/2007, pg 30)

The therapeutic aim of a TCM treatment is to invigorate the kidneys and liver, especially through nourishing the kidney *yin* to restore the inner balance. (Gerard Yeo: The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg L12)

It saves you trouble at the airport counter and gives you more time to trawl through the duty-free shops or sip a *mai-tai* in the lounge. (Jason Hahn: The Sunday Times, 18/03/2007, pg L15)

Journalist who have interviewed her attest to her "*nu ren wei*" or sense of femininity.

When I look at the photo, I was dishevelled and my face like *kena bus langah* (like a bus had hit me). (Judith Tan: The Straits Times, 04/04/2007, pg mindyourbody 4)

## Conclusion

The corpus of data from English newspapers in Malaysia, Singapore and Pakistan have been categorised (11) Although Malaysia and Singapore share many historical facts there are a number of categories where no examples from the Singapore data emerged..There could be a number of reasons for this including strict censoring to ensure what the government deems "pure English" is used. Malaysia and Pakistan share more similarities in terms of their hybridization of words found in their respective English newspapers. Singapore appears to have many food items borrowed from various local languages. and the romanising of concepts which are more Chinese than English.

This richness of lexical intrusions and assimilation into regional varieties of English makes them truly our English and so we can strongly assert that the colonization process has come full circle with the one time colonies of the British Raj now colonizing and Asianising the Raj's language. English is a global language and more importantly from the perspective of learners of English it has become our language as so many of our lexical items have assimilated and been accepted not only in the regional varieties but globally. Everyone know knows what a *kampung* is and what going *amuk* means!

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