The term ‘South-East Asia’ has considerable currency outside linguistics and has a broadly geographical reference, namely to countries which are at the south-east corner of the Asian mainland and to the many islands which are to be found in the area off this land-mass, bordered in the west by the Indian Ocean, in the south by Australia, in the east and north-east by the Pacific and in the north by the South China Sea. In essence, this encompasses the countries Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. For the purposes of the present linguistic discussion, Hong Kong is taken as falling into the ambit of South-East Asia (Bolton 2000a), a practice which is sometimes reflected in linguistic treatments of English there (see Platt 1982), although it lies some distance north of the Philippines in the south of China. This allows one to treat the English language in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia (Nabahon 1983), the Philippines and Hong Kong together (but see McArthur 2002: 348–72 who treats Hong Kong English in a section on East Asia).

For the current chapter the title ‘South-East Asian Englishes’ has been chosen deliberately. The plural is necessary for several reasons. The areas where these Englishes exist are not geographically contiguous (contrast this with South Asian English). The English-using countries of South-East Asia have typologically different background languages and different colonial pasts, mostly British, but in the case of the Philippines, American. Given this situation, English in the South-East Asian arena is at different stages of development and hence forms of Englishes are located at different points on a life-cycle (Bolton 2002a: 19; Llamzon 1986).

In the past two decades or so a term which refers chiefly to the varieties of English in South-East Asia has arisen and gained considerable currency in linguistic literature. This is the label ‘New Englishes’ (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984: 2f.)

* In writing this chapter I have benefited from the first-hand knowledge of a number of colleagues and acquaintances. I thank in particular Christine Williams for her remarks on Singapore English and Dehua Sun for those on Hong Kong English and on forms of Chinese in general. Furthermore, I thank Kingsley Bolton, Anthea Gupta, Anne Pakir and Edgar Schneider for their assistance and detailed advice. Needless to say they are not to be associated with any shortcomings in this chapter.
which was originally coined with reference to varieties of English which had arisen in many former colonies of Britain, in Africa and in South-East Asia. This term tends to be avoided in recent literature by scholars writing about English in Asia (see the discussion in the chapter on ‘Asian and African Englishes’ above). Quite naturally scholars wish to stress the autonomy of such Englishes (Bolton 2002a: 18–22) and hence avoid terminology which sees them primarily as members of a group rather than as independent varieties.

Another reason for relinquishing the term ‘New English’ is that part of its original definition as a second-language or near-native variety does not necessarily apply any more. In the case of Singapore, and to a lesser extent in Malaysia, English has in recent years been developing quickly into a native variety. In these regions English has been sustained in the postcolonial period through a continuing presence in education, but importantly without support from significant numbers of native speakers. This situation is one in which there is a considerable influence of local languages on incipient local forms of English and transferred features may well become indicative of later native varieties, as has happened historically in the case of Irish English or Scottish English. In particular one can mention four language groups which represent key substrate influences on English in South-East Asia.

*Sino-Tibetan languages.* The Chinese are well represented in South-East Asia and form an elite in many countries of the region, notably in Singapore and Malaysia. The forms of Chinese spoken by these sections of the populations are usually either Hokkien or Cantonese, though for Singapore there has been a noticeable shift towards Mandarin (Putonghua) (Anne Pakir, personal communication).

*Dravidian languages.* In both Singapore and Malaysia there are significant sections of the population which derive from Indian immigrants. These originally came to work on the rubber plantations of Malaysia and were also involved in the construction of the railways. The languages spoken by these people are largely of southern Indian origin, but not exclusively, and include Dravidian languages such as Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam.

*Indo-Aryan languages.* Again in both Singapore and Malaysia, some northern Indian languages, belonging to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family, are present, e.g. Punjabi (from the north-west). Approximately 9 per cent of the Malaysian population and about 7 per cent of the Singaporean population is of Indian origin.

*Austronesian languages.* Languages of the western branch of this very large family are found in Malaysia and Indonesia (the two main forms of Malay which exist are spoken in these countries) and in the Philippines (the various native languages of this country, especially Tagalog, see remarks below).

The significance of languages from these groups will be seen in the presentation of linguistic features of English in the four countries/regions discussed in the present chapter. Especially in pronunciation and discourse structures as well as
in the nonstandard features of grammar, the influence of substrate languages on the New Englishes can be clearly recognised.

1 English in Malaysia

1.1 Early British involvement

Control of the Malay peninsula has been an issue of political and commercial importance for several centuries. From the sixteenth century onwards three of the European maritime powers, Britain, the Netherlands and Portugal, strove for control over this area and competed with Sumatran settlers from the large island to the south-west of the Malay peninsula (now part of Indonesia) (McArthur 2002: 334f.).

In the eighteenth century, the British became active in the area, partly in search of trade, but also to check French power in the Indian Ocean. In 1786 the Sultan of Kedah, looking for help against the Siamese, leased the island of Penang to the British East India Company. In 1819 Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles of the British East India Company founded Singapore, and in 1824 Britain acquired Malacca from the Dutch. Shortly afterwards (in 1826) the areas of Singapore, Malacca and Penang became part of the British colony of the Straits Settlements. Additional sultanates came into the ambit of British control, e.g. Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang in 1874 (McArthur 1992: 640). These regions became the Federated Malay States in 1895. There was also a group known as the Unfederated Malay States where British control was somewhat looser and which consisted of Johor and the four northern states, which were acquired by the British from Siam (now Thailand) in 1909. The British crown was represented by a high commissioner who was simultaneously governor of the Straits Settlements.

From about 1850 onwards tin-mining in the Malay Peninsula expanded considerably and Malay rulers, along with the immigrant Chinese they employed, became involved in disputes about territory. The British, fearing a disruption of trade, attempted to take control of the independent peninsular states, working indirectly through the Malay rulers. By turning internal quarrels to their own advantage the British persuaded the rulers to accept British ‘residents’ or ‘advisers’ who determined policy in the region.

Up to the nineteenth century the Malaysian states in Borneo were under the control of the Muslim sultanate of Brunei. Although the Europeans had conducted trade with north Borneo before this, there were no permanent settlements. An English adventurer called James Brooke was given a gift of land in 1841 along with the title ‘Raja of Sarawak’ after assisting the sultan of Brunei militarily. Known as the ‘white rajas’, the British increased the size of their territory to approximately that of present-day Sarawak by the early twentieth century. Further to the east, land was leased to foreign traders and a lease was taken up in 1877 by a British trade syndicate and managed by treaties with local leaders to
achieve complete control over the territory. This syndicate was to become the British North Borneo Company in 1881. In 1888 both British North Borneo and Sarawak became British protectorates.

1.2 Twentieth-century developments

After Japanese occupation of large sections of what is present-day Malaysia (including Singapore) during World War II, moves towards independence became marked here as elsewhere in the British empire. The situation was complicated by the different ethnic groups. In addition to Malays there were also Chinese and Indian immigrants in the area, encouraged to move there by the British to supply labour in the production of tin and rubber, for instance. By the end of the war, the population of the Malay Peninsula states was roughly 50 per cent Malay, 37 per cent Chinese and 12 per cent Indian. There were natural tensions among these groups, aggravated by different languages and religious affiliations. In an effort to solve this impasse the British imposed a scheme known as the ‘Malayan Union’ in 1946 despite considerable opposition among the Malays. Although proclaimed as a step towards self-determination it was feared by the native population as an attempt to turn the area into a full colony. The founding of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) in 1946 was intended to forestall any such system and native rulers of the region refused to cooperate in the system initiated by the British who ultimately saw no other solution than the establishment of the Federation of Malaya in 1948. Initially Brunei was not to be part of the Malayan Union but plans to create a separate Borneo Federation were not successful.

In the postwar period the most important development was certainly the secession of Singapore which became a separate colony. Various attempts at creating a successful political superstructure were undertaken: in 1948 the Federation of Malaya was formed and in 1963 the designation Federation of Malaysia came to be used as a result of North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak joining the federation. In 1965 two states chose to leave the federation: (1) Singapore (see below) and (2) Brunei, both of which became independent states.

1.3 Ethnic composition

Malaysia has a population of over 22 million of which some 47 per cent are Malay and 32 per cent are Chinese. The rest of the population is of mixed South-East Asian origin, with a sizeable minority of South Asians, for instance Tamils and Punjabs. It is majority Muslim in religion, but with significant Christian and Buddhist minorities (the latter in Penang province in the north-west). Immigration into Malaysia from China increased greatly in the late nineteenth century where many Cantonese worked in the tin mines (Platt 1982: 386f.). South Indian immigrants, chiefly Tamils, came as indentured labourers to work on the
rubber estates and in the building of the railways. The Chinese came to congregate in the towns as did the Indians with clear demarcation according to ethnicity but also according to religion. The Indians divided according to whether they were Muslims or Hindus (ibid.). Different Chinese languages came to dominate in different areas, e.g. Hokkien in Penang, with Cantonese further south in Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh.

For interethnic communication a pidgin, Bazaar Malay, arose which still has a certain function in such situations. No stabilised English pidgin established itself in Malaysia probably because the function of such a pidgin was already fulfilled by Bazaar Malay (Platt 1982: 387).

1.4 Education

During the nineteenth century a number of schools were founded (in Penang in 1816, in Singapore in 1823, in Malacca in 1826 and in Kuala Lumpur in 1894) which used English as the medium of education. Other schools used Malay, Chinese and Tamil as the language of instruction. As in other colonies the presence of English-medium schools led to the use of English in other areas. Figures for the twentieth century, such as the census of 1957, report about 6 per cent of the population (c. 400,000) claiming to use English on a daily basis (McArthur 1992: 640f.).

On independence English was awarded the status of an ‘alternate official language’ alongside Malay. But the National Language Act of 1967 established Malay – renamed Bahasa Malaysia in 1963 – as the sole official language almost without exception. A relative decline in knowledge of English set in as Bahasa Malaysia became established as the national language of education – a process that was more or less complete by the 1980s. There was concern that the decline of English would result in economic retardation for the country and it was maintained as the compulsory second language in primary and secondary schools (Asmah 1983, 1992; Benson 1990). About one-fifth of the current population of over 22 million have a working knowledge of English (McArthur 2002: 335). However, the situation has improved latterly because of the importance of English for international trade. For a recent review of attitudes to English, see Crismore, Yeok-Hwa Ngeow and Soo (1996).

1.5 The use of English

In colonial times (1826–1957), native speakers of British English and the local elite formed a variety which used to be called Anglo-Malay. The establishment of English-medium schools in the nineteenth century helped English to become the language of the non-European elite and to become a lingua franca in Malaysia. First-language speakers of English are quite definitely in the minority, about 400,000 with some five and a half million second-language users.
Malaysian and Singapore English have much in common, with the main exception that English in Malaysia is more subject to influence from Malay whereas in Singapore the influence of Chinese is far greater. Because of this closeness some of the comments made here on Malaysian English also apply to English as spoken in Singapore (Platt and Weber 1980; Platt, Weber and Ho 1983). On the development and current status of Malaysian English, see Asmah (1996), Halimah and Siew (2000), Lowenberg (1986), Wong (1981); on varieties within Malaysian English, see Morais (2001).

1.6 Linguistic levels

Pronunciation. Given the phonotactics of at least the background languages Malay and Chinese (Hokkien and Cantonese), final consonant clusters of English are simplified, e.g. *must* [mʌs̪], *best* [bɛst], *lived* [lɪvd], *relax* [rʌlæks], *recent* [ˈrɪsɛnt] (Platt 1982: 394f.). Reduction of such clusters ranges from about 12 per cent for speakers of the highest social status to about 97 per cent for those at the opposite end of the scale. Glottal stop replacement is common, especially for /k/ and /t/.

In general it has syllable-timed rhythm which leads to full vowels in all syllables, e.g. *seven* [sɛvən]. Malaysian English is also rhotic, i.e. /r/ is pronounced in such words as *art*, *door* and *worker*.

Speakers of English in Malaysia and Singapore show /t, d/ or affricated forms of these stops for the dental fricatives of English. Vowels tend to be shorter and monophthongs occur for RP diphthongs, e.g. [ɔ] for /əʊ/ and [ɛ] for /ei/.

Stress patterns can vary, e.g. *educated* and *criticism*. However, these could be part of a legacy of regional pronunciations from Britain which established themselves in the early days of colonialism and have been maintained since.

Grammar. There are a variety of syntactic characteristics which may reflect grammatical features of background languages, probably in combination with incomplete acquisition of English. The use of noncountable nouns as if they were countable may be just such an instance: *Pick up your chalks; A consideration for others is important*. Variation in the use of prepositions with verbs is found, e.g. *cope up with*, rather than *cope with*, though such cases could well be extensions from phrasal verbs like *to put up with*. Another nonstandard feature is the use of reflexive pronouns as emphatic pronouns: *Myself sick* ‘I am sick’; *Himself funny* ‘He is funny’ (McArthur 1992: 640).

Some features may be specific, e.g. colloquial Malaysian English (Wong 1983: 132) shows a use of *got* for *there*, e.g. *Got two men at the gate*. Newbrook (1997: 240) remarks on the use of *got* as a perfect marker for verbs, e.g. *I got go there before* ‘I went there before.’

Vocabulary. There are many Malay words in the English of Malaysia, e.g. *bumiputera* (from Sanskrit ‘son of the soil’) ‘a Malay or other indigenous person’, *dadah* ‘illegal drugs’, *rakyat* ‘the people, citizens’, *majlis* (from Arabic) ‘parliament’, *makan* ‘food’, *kampung* ‘village’. Apart from such loanwords one also finds...
specific uses of English words in a Malaysian context, e.g. *chop* ‘rubber stamp, seal’, *crocodile* ‘womaniser’, *sensitive issues* ‘issues that must not be raised in public’ (McArthur 1992: 640).

Loans in English. From the earlier period (seventeenth century onwards) come such general English words of Malay origin as *amok*, *durian*, *kampong*, *mango*, *orang-utan*, *sago* and *sarong* ‘type of dress’. The word *amok* ‘rushing in a frenzy’ is often written *amuck* by contamination with *muck* ‘dirt’ and occurs in the phrase to ‘run amok/amuck’.

Pragmatics. A prominent feature of Malaysian English discourse is the use of the particle *lah*, which can be employed for various purposes, especially informal or intimacy or indeed to persuade or reject (Tongue 1979 [1974]: 114f.; Wong 1983: 142), e.g. *Sorry, can’t come lah*. The use of another discourse particle *a(h)* is common at the end of sentences and may vary in tone for pragmatic effect (Brown 1992: 1–3), e.g. *You just buy it ah? What you see there, ah?* (Wong 1983: 141). There is considerable mixing of Malay and English, as in: *She wanted to beli some barang-barang* ‘She wanted to buy some things’, see also Lowenberg (1991: 370f.).

1.7 Indigenous language

Malay is spoken in the state of Malaysia and, in a slightly different form, in Indonesia by approximately 20 million native speakers and by 60 million speakers in all. It is found throughout the following countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, parts of Thailand. Malay is an Austronesian language belonging to the Western Austronesian branch.

The oldest known Malay text dates from AD 638 and belongs to the cultural heritage of the Hindu–Buddhist maritime empire of Srivijaya and was written in a Pallava script from India. Malay was used as an administrative language in this empire, but probably in other regions as well. The first pidgin, Bazaar Malay, developed in this period, too. In later centuries, the region was influenced by Islamic religion and culture which produced many texts, both religious and literary. The language of this period used a form of Arabic script and is termed ‘Classical Malay’. In modern times, and as a consequence of colonialism and several wars, the region was divided into Malaysia and Indonesia. Both countries continue to use literary Malay. The two varieties have thus developed few grammatical, but many lexical differences, especially in technical terms. Over many centuries Malay has been a means of intercultural communication in a multilingual situation and this fact was a determining factor in its selection as a national language in both Malaysia and Indonesia.

Malay is agglutinative in type and has a basic SVO word order. Slightly different versions of the Roman alphabet are used for Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia. The influence of Dutch on Bahasa Indonesia is minimal but that of English on both forms is considerable (Hsia 1989).
2 English in Singapore

2.1 History

In January 1819 Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781–1826) of the British East India Company landed at Singapore in search of a trading site. The place was sparsely populated with only a few Chinese and some Malays and he was given permission by a local leader to purchase the land. Contravening instructions of the East India Company not to aggravate the Dutch, Raffles proceeded with the purchase despite the protests of the Dutch.

Some five years later, in 1824 a treaty between the Dutch and the British left Malaya and Singapore in the British sphere. Later the same year the entire island of Singapore was purchased by the British. The territories of Singapore, Penang and Malacca (Melaka) were combined as the Straits Settlements in 1826. After the East India Company lost its monopoly of trade with China in 1833 its interest diminished. In 1851 the Straits Settlements came under the direct control of the governor-general of India and in 1867 they became a crown colony.

The origin of the present-day state of Singapore lies in its secession from Malaysia and its establishment as a separate country in 1965. Since then the political development of Singapore and Malaysia has been separate (Riaz 1976).

2.2 Ethnic composition

There are three main ethnic groups comprising a total of some 4.4 million speakers (2002): Malay 14 per cent, Chinese 77 per cent, Indian 7 per cent. The Republic of Singapore has four official languages – English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil – of which the national language is, for historical reasons, Malay.

2.3 The development of English in Singapore

During the colonial period the position of English was established in Singapore through the British presence and the establishment of English-language schools. Since independence in 1965, the use of English has continued to increase, for instance as the language of law and administration. English has been the main medium of education in Singapore since 1987 and is the language of instruction at the three universities: National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and Singapore Management University as well as at the five polytechnics in the country (Anne Pakir, personal communication). Given this situation in education for many Singaporeans, English is the main language (Pakir 1991, 2001), with many families speaking English at home. In addition one should stress its importance as a means of interethnic communication, a contributory factor in the steady rise in the number of native speakers of Singapore English (Foley 2001).
Nearly all Singaporeans speak more than one language, usually English and Mandarin Chinese, Malay or Tamil. The contact between English and these background languages has led to a specific variety of English arising, popularly called Singlish (Platt 1975). Although not accepted officially, it does serve as an identity marker for Singaporeans and official efforts to diminish its use have not necessarily been successful. The vernacular forms of English in the city cover a spectrum from second-language English, heavily influenced by background languages, to higher prestige varieties (Newbrook 1987, Tay 1983) which are near to standard English, at least in vocabulary (Ooi 2000, 2001a, b) and grammar, if not in phonology (Tay 1982).


2.4 The Regional Language Centre

This is an educational institution of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education (SEAMEO) with headquarters in Singapore. The member states are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. There are also associate members, namely Australia, New Zealand, Canada, France and Germany. This institution was founded in 1968 (originally entitled the Regional English Language Centre) with the specific aim of promoting the teaching of English as a second and foreign language in the member countries of SEAMEO. In 1977 it was broadened to include the teaching of all languages with the retention of its acronym. Publications include a twice-yearly journal, the RELC Journal, dedicated to language teaching and research in South-East Asia and Guidelines, a magazine for teachers. There is also a RELC Newsletter. See McArthur (1992: 860) for more information.

2.5 Knowledge of English

Platt (1982) in his survey quotes data collected in the 1970s. At that time, a quarter of a century before the time of writing for the present chapter, over 87 per cent of informants in the 15–20 age bracket in a survey in Singapore claimed to have an understanding of English. More revealing perhaps is the spread of English use across generations. For the group aged 18–35 (which is
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now well into middle-age) about 20 per cent used English with their parents, over 66 per cent used English with their spouses, over 75 per cent with their siblings and some 80 per cent used English with their children. This situation goes a long way towards explaining that now, a generation later, there are native speakers of Singaporean English.

Singapore–Malaysian English – the compound term was already used by Platt (1982: 388ff.) some twenty years ago – arose as a result of the school system and not on the basis of a pidgin as in West Africa, the Caribbean and in Papua New Guinea (ibid.). There are various reasons for the rise of English in this region:

1. English-medium schools did not offer instruction in local languages.¹
2. English was strongly advocated on a social level.
3. The senior staff of schools usually came from Britain.²
4. English was favoured in schools for interethnic communication between Chinese, Indians and Malay.

In Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong, education in local languages was generally the norm for the majority of the school population in colonial times. English was usually taught only in a minority of elite schools. This situation is worth mentioning because it is related to the fact that the era of the spread of English in such situations was typically the postcolonial period when English was retained in newly created mass-education systems, with the notable exception of Malaysia (Kingsley Bolton, personal communication).

2.6 Linguistic levels

PRONUNCIATION. Colloquial pronunciation is sometimes termed ‘singsong’ because of its intonational qualities (Ling and Grabe 1999). There is no contrastive stress so that words like con'vert (verb) and 'convert (noun) are homophones (see Peng and Ann 2001 for an account of stress which is not based on transfer from background languages). Singaporean English is nonrhotic, as are both Hokkien and Mandarin Chinese (but not Malay, see above). Final consonants are realised as glottal stops and final consonant clusters reduced to one consonant, such as just [dʒæs] and told [tol] (McArthur 1992: 938) or [slɛp] / [slɛʔ] for slept (the background languages of Singaporeans do not have final clusters, Platt 1982: 398). Diphthongs are often reduced to monophthongs, e.g. take [teʔ], stay [stɛʔ], so [so], dare [de].

English in Singapore is generally syllable-timed (see comments on English in Malaysia above). It places more or less equal stress on all syllables, usually with the final syllable of a tone unit somewhat lengthened (Deterding 1994).


¹ But at one stage the teaching of English was through the medium of Malay (Anthea Gupta, personal communication).
² Anthea Gupta points out that teaching staff were often defined as European but in fact came from a variety of places.
1. *got* 'obtain’ is used possessively, e.g. *I got two brother* or in an existential or locative sense *Here got many people* ‘there are many people here’, Platt (1982: 397).

2. Lack of verb marking. Platt (1982: 398) attributes the lack of verb marking to the equivalent lack in the background languages, at least in Hokkien and Malay, and quotes sentences like *My mum, she come from China many years ago* and *I start here last year* to support this.

3. Absence of *be*. Platt (1982: 399) notes the absence of *be* as a copula or auxiliary. In a group of fifty-nine speakers (forty with English-medium education and the rest with Chinese- or Malay-medium education) the implicational ordering of this deletion was (1) pre-adjective (*this coffee house very dirty*), (2) pre-predicate nominal (*my car a Toyota*), (3) pre-verb + -ing (*my sister also not working*) and (4) pre-locative (*my auntie in America*). See also Platt (1991: 378f.).

4. Aspect and tense. Given that the background languages Malay and Chinese have aspectual systems but no obligatory tense, Platt explains the occurrence of anterior or completive aspect, by means of *already*, and nonpunctual or habitual actions or states by means of *use to* without simultaneously marking tense as resulting from transfer from these languages (Platt 1982: 399).

5. Omission of article. This is found in sentences like *I don(t) have ticket*; *You have pen or not?* (McArthur 1992: 938); *He went to office yesterday; My paren' have (a) flat in Geylang*; *You see (the) green shop house over t'ere?* (Platt 1991: 378). Platt also notes a frequent use of demonstratives as in: *Some, they buy these perfume*.

6. Use of *would* to refer to future events. Platt (1982: 400) maintains that ‘the tense–aspect system of English has been restructured so that *would* marks any unrealised state or action’: *I hope the government would take action to put a stop to this practice; I trust that his son would retain his zest for the game*. In strongly vernacular forms this situation may be realised by unmarked verbs, e.g. *I hope you come again; I see you tomorrow*.

7. Direct and indirect objects are highlighted by being preposed: *Is very interesting I find geography* (Platt 1982: 401).

8. The use of resumptive pronoun (what Platt called pronoun copying) is found in sentences such as the following: *Some customers, they disapprove if you speak to them in English*.

9. The invariant tags *is it?* and *isn’t it?* are common: *You check out now, is it? You want Mary, is it?* (Platt 1982: 401). On interrogative sentences, see Kwan–Terry (1986), on negative patterns, see Schneider (1999).

10. Co-ordination without *and*: *He go in the room, talk to my sister*. There are also many uses of *so*, e.g. in the sense of ‘if’, ‘then’, ‘that’: *I don’t think so my English is that good* (Platt 1982: 401).

Further studies on the syntax of Singaporean English are to be found in Bao and Wee (1998, 1999), Ho and Wong (2001).
Vocabulary. The vocabulary is influenced by regional borrowing, rearranging and reallocating the meanings of existing English words and by the use of reduplication (McArthur 1992: 938); on lexical innovations, see Tan (2001).


2. Words of English with adapted meanings: send in the sense of ‘take’ (I will send you home); open meaning ‘put on’ (Open the light); take suggesting ‘eat, drink, like’ (Do you take hot food? ‘Do you like spicy food?’); off and on as verbs (to off/on the light); off as a noun, for ‘time off’ (We had our offs changed to Thursdays).

3. Reduplicating of a word so as to intensify or emphasise a point: I like hot-hot curries; Do you speak English? – Broken-broken (on reduplication, see Lim and Wei 2001).

Pragmatics. As might be expected, given the fact that New Englishes have not arisen through native-speaker transmission, some of the distinctions in register and style are not necessarily felt to apply, for instance a sentence like her deceased hubby ‘her deceased husband’ shows a mixture of formal and informal registers which might be regarded as inappropriate by native speakers of English elsewhere. The use of pragmatic particles, interjections and tags frequently reflects influence from background languages (McArthur 1992: 938).

Chinese particles, such as lah and a(h) (Kwan-Terry 1978; Platt and Ho 1989; Richards and Tay 1977), are a common means of conveying emphasis and emotion (as in Malaysian English), in effect replacing the intonational features of mainstream English: for example, lah as a token of informal intimacy, Can you come tonight? – Can lah/Cannot lah; a(h) in ‘yes–no’ questions, You wait me, aa? Will you wait for me?; I come tonight, aa? Should I come tonight?; You think I scared of you, aa? (compare Malaysian English above).

3 English in Hong Kong

Early in the seventeenth century (1637) the first contacts took place between British traders and Chinese officials and merchants (Bolton 2002b: 31–5). This trade came to be confined to Canton in the south of China in the following century and later. For this reason the commerce was labelled ‘the Canton trade’ and
it continued to flourish, particularly in the period 1760–1840 (Bolton 2003). One linguistic outcome of this trade was a new variety of Asian English or Chinese English that was first referred to as ‘Canton jargon’ or ‘Canton English’. References to the regular use of English by Chinese merchants and their interpreters date back to the 1730s. In the mid nineteenth century (1859) the label ‘pigeon-English’ (later ‘pidgin English’) comes to be used by travel writers describing the speech of those involved in the trade of opium, tea and silk in Canton/Guangzhou. For more details of this early phase, see Bolton (2000c; 2003).

3.1 History

Prior to the arrival of the British in the middle of the nineteenth century, Hong Kong Island was inhabited by only a small population engaged in fishing. The conditions for settlement appeared unfavourable with the absence of arable land and sources of fresh water. In addition it was known to be frequented by pirates. But the natural harbour came to be used by British merchants after they began in 1821 to use it in the opium trade (Pennycook 1998: 101–7). The significance of the harbour for shipping was quickly appreciated, given that it is sheltered but open to the east and west. In 1848 Hong Kong Island came under British rule as a result of the Treaty of Nanking which was concluded after the First Opium War (1839–42). After the Second Opium War (1856–60) China had to relinquish Kowloon Peninsula south of what is now Boundary Street and Stonecutters Island by the Convention of Peking (1860). At the end of the nineteenth century (1898) the New Territories on the mainland were leased to Britain for ninety-nine years. With this increase in territorial size, Hong Kong’s population leaped to 120,000 in 1861 and to more than 300,000 by the end of the century. It further increased from 840,00 in 1931 to an estimated 4.5 million in 1972 (Platt 1982: 406) and is now (2003) estimated at close to 7 million (Bolton 2002a: 1). During World War II Hong Kong was occupied by the Japanese. The Sino-British Declaration (1974) specified that Hong Kong was to be handed back to China in 1997, the date at which the lease of 1898 expired.

The term ‘Hong Kong’ is taken in Europe to refer to a large city, once in British hands, and since 1997 part of the People’s Republic of China. To be precise, the city most Europeans refer to consists of two parts, namely ‘Hong Kong side’ (on Hong Kong island) and ‘Kowloon side’ (on the Kowloon peninsula), both part of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the official designation since 1997.

3.2 The development of English in Hong Kong

Before the handover in 1997 English was the co-official language in Hong Kong along with Chinese. The numbers of English-knowing bilingual Chinese have risen remarkably since the 1960s, although only a minority use ‘pure’ English as the usual language of home (as opposed to code-mixing and code-switching).
English is very influential in international communication, in the media and generally in tertiary education, and also has an important role as a link language between Cantonese and other non-English groups.

Platt (1982: 405–10) provides an overview of English in the region, some fifteen to twenty years before the handover to China. For a more recent treatment, see Bolton (2002c) and Hyland (1997); for the period before the return of Hong Kong to China, see Luke and Richards (1982). On the question of the relative status of English vis-à-vis Cantonese in post-1997 Hong Kong, see Li (1999).

3.3 Indigenous languages

Chinese and English are co-official languages in Hong Kong. Census figures (2001) indicate that English is spoken by roughly 43 per cent of the population. Of this section only about 3 per cent consider English their regular language. The remaining 35 per cent view English as a further language (Hong Kong Government census of 1996; Bacon-Shone and Bolton 1998). The population for 1996 was calculated at 6.2 million but has now (2003) risen to approximately 7 million.

Around 90 per cent of the Chinese population is either native to Hong Kong or from the Guangdong Province of mainland China which forms the hinterland. Other cities and regions of China are represented here, e.g. Shanghai, Fujian, Zhejiang and Jiangsu as well as Taiwan. Hong Kong was also the destination of many thousands of ‘boat people’ from Vietnam from the mid 1970s. Most of these were repatriated in the years before 1997, both voluntarily and forcibly. Of those remaining at the time of the handover, a few hundred left for Vietnam, the remainder gaining resident permits (Kingsley Bolton, personal communication).

Cantonese is claimed as a usual language by the vast majority of the community, accounting for some 89 per cent of the population (Li 1999: 69; the figure was apparently also 89 per cent in 1991 for Cantonese as a first language at home, Hyland 1997: 192). Unlike many other parts of China, native speakers of Mandarin/Putonghua are only a small minority (approximately 1 per cent). The official policy of the Hong Kong government since the mid 1990s has been one of promoting a policy of ‘trilingualism’ (i.e spoken Cantonese, Putonghua (Mandarin) and English), and ‘biliteracy’ (written Chinese and English).

English has maintained its position as a public language, for example in the commercial, legal and administrative spheres and in the media (Li 1999: 74), despite the fact that Cantonese is the primary language for most people in Hong Kong. Given this situation, code-switching and code-mixing (mainly with English and Cantonese) are quite common.

In the print media Hong Kong is served by two daily newspapers in English, the leading South China Morning Post (Bolton 2002a: 11), and the Hong Kong Standard (Li 1999: 74). This type of public English is well represented in the Hong Kong component of the International Corpus of English; see Bolt (1994),

3.4 Linguistic levels

**Pronunciation.** At the level of phonology, Hong Kong English speakers often share a number of local features. These include short-vowel equivalents to RP long vowels and diphthongs, e.g. *takes* [teks], *joking* [dʒɔkiŋ] (Platt 1982: 409). Consonant substitution deriving from background languages is common. The patterns of intonation are most obviously accounted for by the substratum influence of Cantonese, e.g. in the even stress used across words. Other salient features of English in the region are final cluster reduction and the use of a flap /r/ for /l/, e.g. *English* [ɛŋɡəɾɪʃ] and *college* [kɔɾɛdʒ]. Initially /r/ can be replaced by [w] *railway* [weɪɻɛ] or after /t/ *train* [twɛn]. /v/ is realised as [w] in pre-stress position, e.g. *vine* [waɪn], *event* [iˈwɛnt], but as [f] after a stressed vowel, e.g. *leave* [lɪf], *even* [ˈɛvən] (Hung 2002: 131f.). Glottal stops can be found for [t] and [k]: *snake* [snɛ(ʔ)] (Platt 1982: 409). There is also a tendency towards final devoicing, e.g. *wise* [waɪs] (Hung 2002: 136). Indeed for many speakers sibilants are always voiceless, e.g. *zeal* [sɪl] (Hung 2002: 130). Phonotactic restrictions appear also to be operative, e.g. the prohibition on a stop following on a diphthong in a syllable rhyme, e.g. *line* [laɪn], *loud* [laʊd] (Hung 2002: 138). On the social function of these features, see Bolton and Kwok (1990), see also Peng and Setter (2000).

**Grammar.** On the grammatical level Platt (1982: 409f.) notes a lack of plural marking and third-person-singular marking, e.g. *He give all de picture(s) to you.* There is also a variable lack of the copula, e.g. *De Vietnam people (are) smuggle(d) ou(t)*; *English (is) main language of instruction.* Platt also comments on the nonmarking of the past tense, e.g. *Mandarin, I learn(ed) privately,* and further on the nonoccurrence of *it* as subject and the nonoccurrence of the object with transitive verbs, e.g. *Yes, finish; I don’t like.* A variable use of the definite article has been noted as well as that of resumptive pronouns, e.g. *Our Chinese people, we like fishing very much de shrim(ps); De farmer(s) dey do de gardening ou(t)si(de) dere* (Platt 1982: 410).

In his examination of syntactic features of Hong Kong English, Gisborne (2002) notes a number of phenomena which may well be the result of transfer from the background language Cantonese. Zero relatives in subject clauses, e.g. *Hong Kong is a small island (which → O) has a large population. There was a fire (which → O) broke out* (Gisborne 2002: 144). Another feature is the omission of a finite verb form in relative clauses, e.g. *This is the student who (was → O) admitted last year* (Gisborne 2002: 146). The use of resumptive pronouns (in both subject and object function) after relative pronouns can be seen in examples like *Spoken languages are produced by those vocal organs that some of them cannot be seen; When we see a new chair at home that we never see it before, we can still form the concept of chair* (Gisborne 2002: 150f.). One could also mention the lack of a distinction...
between active and passive which can lead to considerable ambiguity, e.g. *I am boring* (i.e. *bored*) *in lectures* (Gisborne 2002: 154). This phenomenon extends to the passivisation of unaccusative verbs as in *The bus was appeared around the corner; I’ve been tried* (i.e. *trying*) *hard to do that*. There is also an evident nonstandard marking of verbs as in *I think it’s very difficult to described* (i.e. *describe*).

With the compilation of the Hong Kong section of the *International Corpus of English* (Bolton and Nelson 2002) a data corpus is now available which has already been the subject of analysis and which is presented in Bolton, Hung and Nelson (2004).

**Vocabulary.** Words and phrases from Chinese are characteristic of English in Hong Kong such as *taipan* ‘a foreign head of a native business’ or *pak choi* ‘Chinese cabbage’. A second lexicological feature are the loan-translations from Chinese such as *dragon boat* ‘a long canoe-like boat raced at festivals’ or *snakehead* ‘a smuggler of illegal immigrants’. There are also borrowings from other languages, for example Portuguese or Hindu. Abbreviations like *Exco* ‘Executive Council’, *Legco* ‘Legislative Council’, *IIIs* (pronounced ‘eye-eyes’) ‘illegal immigrants’ are common. General words like *short week* denoting a week where one does not have to work on Sunday, *triad* ‘secret criminal society’, are found in local usage.


Certain lexicalisations have arisen due to the geopolitical position of Hong Kong, e.g. ‘local’ refers to the city itself and ‘mainland’ to the People’s Republic of China when referring, for instance, to the administration, government, the police, etc. (Benson 2002: 166f.)

4 **English in the Philippines**

In the mid sixteenth century the Spanish were successful over the Portuguese in their claim of the Philippines (1542) and gave the islands their present name in honour of the then heir to the Spanish throne, Philip II. After Philip became king of Portugal in 1580 the tension between Spain and Portugal subsided in this area. The Philippines were converted early on to the Catholic faith, a development which is still seen today in the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic population (over
80 per cent). There is, however, a significant Muslim minority in the south, particularly in western Mindanao.

At the end of the nineteenth century a brief war ensued between the Spanish and the Americans, essentially about the continuing Spanish presence in the Caribbean, above all in Cuba. This had an immediate effect on the only Spanish possession in Asia, i.e. the Philippines. The most significant event was the destruction of the Spanish fleet in Manila in 1898. With the Treaty of Paris Spain surrendered the Philippines to the United States for the sum of 20 million dollars. With that America established a military presence and installed a government in the Philippines. This situation was resented by the native population and guerilla warfare ensued for a few years with a heavy loss of life. With the cessation of hostilities, the Americans installed a civilian government. In the course of the early twentieth century the American attitude changed to one which envisaged eventual independence for the Philippines. A significant step in this direction was the Jones Act of 1916 which allowed for an elected senate. Some twenty years later, in 1935, a commonwealth was established during the presidential term of Franklin Roosevelt and which had complete independence within twelve years as its explicit goal. During World War II the Japanese occupied the Philippines with a government in exile in the United States and a Quisling-style acquiescent government in the Philippines. Shortly afterwards, in 1946, the Republic of the Philippines was proclaimed.

4.1 The development of English

From the sixteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century the Philippines were a continuous colony of Spain. From this time onwards English spread rapidly and the significance of Spanish decreased (but see Whinnom 1956). In the area of education a group called the Thomasites were active. These were teachers from the United States who arrived at the beginning of the twentieth century and who were responsible for the introduction of English-language education in the Philippines.

The motivation for the Filipinos to learn English was increased by advancement in civil service and the possibility of transfer to the United States, if only temporarily. Of all public spheres, education was the last to switch from English to indigenous languages. One obvious reason for the retention of English in this area was the fact that the various Austronesian languages of the Philippines (see below) are more or less mutually unintelligible and English fulfilled the role, here as elsewhere in countries in which New Englishes have arisen, of a link language, a lingua franca for a native population.

4.2 Ethnic composition

There are around 110 indigenous Austronesian languages in the Philippines (see information on the numerically more significant of these below). These languages
stem from the Malay branch of this large family and have a continuing influence on forms of Philippine English. The speakers of Malay languages are migrants into the Philippine archipelago who arrived there around 200 BC, displacing the original pygmy population. The most important indigenous group are the Tagalogs on the main northern island of Luzon and who are the most significant population in the area of Manila. There is a small but socially relevant group of mestizos, those of mixed Filipino and white or Chinese descent.

The official language of the Philippines is Filipino – a language based on Tagalog – with roughly 35 million speakers. Despite the fact that Filipinos favour the use of Spanish personal names, the Spanish language is of only very minor importance in present-day Philippine society.

### 4.3 Forms of English

Both Philippine English and Filipino (the native language derived from Tagalog) are official languages in the present-day Philippines. The degree of competence in English varies considerably but approximately half of the present population of over 80 million use English, a fact which makes the Philippines an English-speaking country.

Competition is to be found between Philippine English and Filipino in many domains of public discourse. The native language is passing through a phase which is termed ‘intellectualisation’, by which is meant the process of expanding its registers into the formal domain and so establishing itself as a language for academic and official purposes. This process is aided by a bilingual education programme which was introduced in 1974. The print media are dominated by English (Gonzalez 1982; 1991) but television, radio and films are heavily influenced by Filipino.

As opposed to a country like Singapore which has a vigorous policy of furthering English in all public domains, the situation in the Philippines is less clear (Gonzalez 1985). For the construction of national identity the emerging Filipino would seem to play the major role and hence English does not have anything like the same function for present-day Philippine society. This is not to say that no recognisable form of English has arisen in the Philippines (see Llamzon 2000 for a discussion of Standard Philippine English, especially pp. 139ff.). But it would seem to form more of a continuum and not to show the incipient focusing which is typical of varieties which are employed by speakers in acts of national, or at least communal, identity (Schneider 2003). The answer to the question of the future of Philippine English as a focused variety with a distinctive profile may well be found in the educational system. If Filipino is advanced to compete successfully with English in all domains of discourse then the role of English may become purely functional, i.e. as a lingua franca, used as a link language and in international communication. At present the situation seems to be quite stable and English does not appear to be dominating social life in the Philippines (Sibayan and Gonzalez 1996: 160, 165).
The question of Philippine English as an independent variety with its own specific linguistic profile is treated in Gonzalez (1983) and (1997) and in the contributions in Bautista (1997b); see also Llamzon (1986). There is also a current project at De La Salle University, Manila, under the directorship of Maria Lourdes Bautista (Defining Standard Philippine English: its Status and Grammatical Features). On bilingualism, see Pascasio (1977); on vocabulary, see Cruz and Bautista (1995).

4.4 Linguistic levels

Pronunciation

1. Philippine English is rhotic but an alveolar flap is found rather than the retroflex /r/ of American English (Wells 1982: 648f.).
2. This variety of English, like so many New Englishes, is syllable-timed (Wells 1982: 647). Here as elsewhere the prosodic contours of the variety are derived from those of background languages.
3. There are many accentual patterns for words of more than two syllables which are unexpected: eligible, establish, cerimony.
4. Vowels (i) Phonemic length. In general the distinction between long and short vowels is not observed which means that the members of word pairs such as sheep/ship, full/fool, boat/bought are not necessarily distinguished.
   (ii) The trap vowel. As the low front vowel of this word is not present in the background languages of the Philippines, a more central low vowel [a] is used instead.
5. Consonants. (i) Sibilants. The distinction between /s, z/ and /ʃ, ʒ/ is not usually made, i.e. voiceless sibilants are to be found in words like azure, pleasure, seize and in plurals demanding /z/ in standard English, e.g. bees, cities.
   (ii) Ambidental fricatives. /θ, δ/ are often rendered as /t, d/, e.g. this [dɪs], thin [tɪn].

Grammar. The grammar of Philippine English involves various nonstandard features in the verbal area and some differences in the use of articles.

1. Verbal area
   (i) Tense (1) Lack of marking on the third-person-singular verb, e.g. He go to school; She drink milk (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984: 67); (2) lack of marking for past tense of verbs, e.g. And then I go to the Public School; Some of them crying because teacher ask them to read stories in Filipino. (3) Other nonstandard uses of tenses are use of the present perfect for the simple past, e.g. We have done it yesterday ‘We did it yesterday’, McArthur (1992: 766; 2002: 346f.) or vice versa But it was only in 1510 that a more authentic epidemic has been (was) described (Bautista 2000: 155).
(ii) **Subject–verb agreement** The use of singular verb forms with plural sub-
ject has been frequently registered in data compilations (see Bautista 2000: 148–54), e.g. Ocean, solar and wind power sources has a potential . . .; Liquidity problems of rural banks on a massive scale is being experienced . . . Bautista attributes this feature to the optional marking of verbs for plu-
rality in Philippine languages.

(iii) **Aspect** The present progressive is commonly used for habitual behaviour,
rather than the simple present, *We are doing this work all the time* ‘*We do
this work all the time*’; *He is going to school regularly* ‘*He goes to school
regularly*’.

(iv) **Transitivity differences** Philippine English shows greater leeway in the
neglect of objects with verbs which are normally transitive: *Did you

2. **Article usage** Variation in the use of the definite article is found as seen in
sentences like . . . the result of (a) long, slow, but thoroughly dynamic process;
(A) Majority of the public school teachers do not want to serve . . .; In Japan and
(the) U.S . . . (Bautista 2000: 150f.). On the use of articles in New Englishes
in general, see Platt, Weber and Ho (1984: 52–9).

3. **Prepositions** A general uncertainty in the use of prepositions is also common,
e.g. In this occasion, On many instances, . . . with no effect to the human body.
The prepositions of verbal complements may also be missing: . . . if the
company disposes (of) its properties . . . (Bautista 2000: 1452f.). Note that all
Bautista’s examples stem from written educated Philippine English.

**Vocabulary.** The specific vocabulary of Philippine English consists of loan-
words, either from Spanish or from any of the various indigenous languages.
The following represents a selection; for a discussion and more examples, see
McArthur (1992: 766; 2002: 347). For further information on the lexicon, see
Bautista (1997a).

1. Loans from Spanish: *asalto* ‘surprise party’, *agrupation* (from agrupación
‘group’), *bienvenida* ‘welcome party’, *despedida* ‘farewell party’, *Don/Doña
‘title for a prominent man/woman’, *estafa* ‘fraud, scandal’, *merienda* ‘mid-
afternoon tea’, *querida* ‘mistress’.

2. Loans from Tagalog: *boondock* (from bundok) ‘mountain’ (hence the Ameri-
can English usage ‘the boondocks’), *carabao* (from kalabaw) ‘water buffalo’,
*kundiman* ‘love song’, *tao* ‘(the common) man’.

3. Loan translations from local usages: *open the light/radio* ‘turn on the
light/radio’ (also found in other forms of South-East Asian English), *since
before yet* ‘for a long time’, *joke only* ‘I’m teasing you’, *you don’t only know
‘you just don’t realise’, (with reduplication) *he is playing and playing* ‘he keeps
on playing’.

4. Local neologisms: *carnap* ‘to steal a car’, modelled on *kidnap, cope up* ‘to
keep up and cope with sth.’, *hold-upper* ‘someone who engages in armed
hold-ups’ and *jeepney* (blending of *Jeep* and *jitney*, ‘small bus’), ‘Jeep adapted for passengers’.

**Style in Philippine English.** A feature of New Englishes is a mixture of styles and a use of spelling pronunciations. This derives from the acquisitional source of English. As the language is not transmitted by large numbers of native speakers (descendants of settlers) it must be acquired via written sources. There are a number of consequences of this. One is that English vocabulary and phraseology tends to be somewhat archaic or ornate, here in Philippine English and even more so in South Asian English. Another consequence is that there is a tendency towards spelling pronunciation, as the native-speaker pronunciation of words which deviate from general principles of orthographic-phonetic correspondence is not available to those in the ‘New Englishes’ context. Examples of this from Philippine English are *leopard* [liˈopərd], *subtle* [ˈsʌbtl], *Worcestershire sauce* [ˈwɜːsəstərˌʃɛər ˈsɔːs]. Furthermore, if speakers are not exposed during acquisition to a variety of registers, then style tends not to be differentiated. In Philippine English the formal style in general use has been called the ‘classroom variety’ or ‘compositional style’ (Gonzalez 1991: 334).

**Code-switching.** In the Philippines a specific register of English has developed which relies heavily on code-switching between Filipino and English. This is a vernacular form which is used on a colloquial level (somewhat like Singlish in Singapore), particularly in greater Manila (McArthur 1992: 766; 2002: 347). It is found in the cinema, on television and radio and used in informal registers in the print media.

### 4.5 Indigenous languages

*Tagalog* (stressed on the second syllable) is an Austronesian language and belongs to the Western Austronesian branch, as Malay does, and has about 15 million speakers mainly on the northern island of Luzon and is the main indigenous language in the area of metropolitan Manila. After independence in 1946 it was standardised and provided the basis for Filipino, the co-official language of the Philippines along with English. Tagalog is agglutinative in type and has a basic VSO word order for sentences without particular focus.

*Cebuano* is an Austronesian language spoken in southern parts of the Philippines by about 12 million people. It uses the Roman alphabet, but is not often employed as a literary language. It belongs to the Bisayan languages as do Hiligaynon, Tausug, Waray and others. Sea trade led to the spread of varieties throughout the Philippine archipelago.

*Ilocano* (*Ilokano*), a further Austronesian language, spoken by about 5 million in northern parts of the Philippines.

*Bicol* (*Bicol, Vicol*) is spoken by about 3 million in southern Luzon and is closely related to Tagalog and Bisayan languages.
References


