



THEMATIC AND METAFUNCTIONAL INSIGHTS INTO SINGAPOREAN ENGLISH: A STUDY OF SYNTAX AND DIALECT FORMATION

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Abstract

The multilingual linguistic context in Singapore has been instrumental towards the evolution of Singapore Colloquial English (Singlish), a local form of the English language, which is used largely in informal communication. Due to the long-term interaction of English with other languages used in Singapore (such as Malay, Mandarin, Hokkien, and Tamil), Singlish exhibits unusual syntactic and discourse-related features that make it different to the Standard English. This research paper will examine the syntactic constructions and theme structure of Singaporean English in terms of the analytical tool of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) with the focus to the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. The study is intended to determine the unique syntactic constructions defining Singlish, analyze the ways of realization of thematic structures in the discourse level as well as the way that these characteristics of language demonstrate the mechanisms of dialect formation in a multilingual environment. The study deconstructs data obtained through semi-structured interviews with Singaporean speakers who commonly use Singlish in daily communication with others with the help of a qualitative descriptive design. Some hundred clauses with important syntactic characteristics were transcribed and analysed using a syntactic and metafunctional analysis, such as ThemeRheme structure, transitivity patterns and mood structures. The results indicate that there are a number of repetitive grammatical patterns such as ellipsis and grammatical reduction, deletion of copula, topic-prominent constructions, simplified tense marking and sentence-final discourse particles. These characteristics show that Singlish syntax is characterized by the structural simplification and functional adaptation to the multilingual sociolinguistic context in Singapore. The paper finds that Singaporean English is a systematic contact variety whose grammar patterns have a strong relationship with thematic organization and metafunctional meaning-making practices in language.

Keywords: *Singaporean English, syntax, thematic structure, metafunctions, dialect formation.*

Abstrak

Konteks linguistik multibahasa di Singapura telah berperan penting dalam perkembangan Singapore Colloquial English (Singlish), yaitu varietas lokal bahasa Inggris yang banyak digunakan dalam komunikasi informal. Akibat interaksi jangka panjang antara bahasa Inggris dengan bahasa-bahasa lain yang digunakan di Singapura, seperti Melayu, Mandarin, Hokkien, dan Tamil, Singlish menunjukkan karakteristik sintaktis dan wacana yang khas yang membedakannya dari Bahasa Inggris Standar. Penelitian ini mengkaji konstruksi sintaksis dan struktur tematik dalam Bahasa Inggris Singapura dengan menggunakan kerangka analisis Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), dengan fokus pada metafungsi ideasional, interpersonal, dan tekstual. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi konstruksi





sintaksis khas yang membentuk Singlish, menganalisis bagaimana struktur tematik direalisasikan dalam tingkat wacana, serta menjelaskan bagaimana karakteristik linguistik tersebut mencerminkan proses pembentukan dialek dalam lingkungan multibahasa. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan data yang diperoleh melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan penutur Singapura yang sering menggunakan Singlish dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Sekitar seratus klausa yang mengandung ciri sintaktis penting ditranskripsi dan dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan sintaktis dan metafunksional, termasuk analisis struktur Tema–Rema, pola transitivitas, dan struktur mood. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya beberapa pola gramatikal yang berulang, seperti elipsis dan reduksi gramatikal, penghilangan kopula, konstruksi topik-dominan, penandaan kala yang disederhanakan, serta penggunaan partikel wacana di akhir kalimat. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa sintaksis Singlish ditandai oleh penyederhanaan struktural sekaligus adaptasi fungsional terhadap konteks sosiolinguistik multibahasa di Singapura. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Bahasa Inggris Singapura merupakan varietas kontak yang sistematis, dengan pola gramatikal yang memiliki hubungan erat dengan organisasi tematik dan proses pembentukan makna metafunksional dalam bahasa.

Kata kunci: *Bahasa Inggris Singapura, sintaksis, struktur tematik, metafungsi, pembentukan dialek.*

INTRODUCTION

Singapore is a peculiar linguistic market that is characterized by a high level of multilingual interaction and forms of linguistic contact on the local level have been a key characteristic of local language varieties. Even though English is a dominant language in education, the government and business, Singapore has a colloquial form called Colloquial Singapore English (CSE) or Singlish, which continues to be extremely popular with informal communication among social groups (Ningsih and Rahman, 2023). Singlish is characterized as an English-based creole, in which the grammar and syntax combine the features of Malay, and different Chinese dialects (e.g., Hokkien), Tamil, and, therefore, has some unique structural features that are not present in the Standard English (Ningsih and Rahman, 2023). According to syntactic studies of Singlish, some of the salient characteristics (scattering the copula verbs, optional *day*, and discourse particles) that remind us of this multilingual imprint demonstrate the effects of this contact on its grammar structure (Ningsih and Rahman, 2023). These constructions are not merely morphosyntactic, but pragmatic and discourse implications are both available; a case in point is the rich repertoire of sentence final particles that can be used to express subtle functions in social interaction (Foo and Ng, 2024).

The development and maintenance of Singlish may be explained within a wider sociolinguistic interaction in which language variation plays an interactional role as well as a social identity role. Singaporean colloquial English and Standard English co-exists on a diglossic continuum, with code switching commonly performed by speakers in different contexts and with different aims and purposes of communication. This is a form of variation that captures underlying social developments that language preferences are negotiated, and local identity and interpersonal position (Gwee, 2016; Tan, 2023).

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a relevant theory to identify the phenomena in a comprehensive manner at the clause and discourse level. In its turn, SFL views language as a means of making meaning within social context and organized by interlinked metafunctions,



ideational, interpersonal and textual that mutually build the way information is structured and delivered (Halliday, 1994, as cited in SFL theory). Specifically, thematic organization, which divides the information in Theme and Rheme presentation, provides the information on how Singlish speakers are prioritizing and foregrounding in their discourse that may not follow the Standard English pattern. Using SFL to Singlish, the researchers will have an opportunity to identify the way in which linguistic decisions are used as an expression of both functional communicational strategies and Singapore socio cultural ecology.

This paper will explore the syntactic patterns that can be found in Singlish, and the thematic structures that are used on the daily speech of the Singaporean speakers. It also examines the realisation of the metafunctions to provide ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings, which in this case, emphasises the multifunctional aspect of language use. Also in the research, the structural features come as a result of contact with Malay, Mandarin and Tamil languages and how these structural features serve the communicative goals in the multilingual environment of Singapore which is quite complex. Combining the perspectives of syntax and functional, the research aims at giving an extensive explanation of language processes underpinning Singlish as a locally based variety of English.

METHOD

This research used qualitative descriptive design and it was based on the structure An introduction to functional grammar by M.A.K. Halliday. The data came in the form of the semi-structured interviews with the participants who are the speakers of the Malay Singaporean languages, which extensively use Colloquial Singapore English (Singlish) in their day-to-day communication. The participants were selected using purposive sampling because they had to be native or long term residents of Singapore and frequent users of the informal spoken natural English. The interviews were designed in the form of the spontaneous nature of conversational interview whereby they are to talk of the daily life, social experiences and cultural identity and hence, natural event of the Singlish features would emanate. Audio recording of all the discussions was done with the consent and further transcribed in the orthographic form and divided into clauses to be analyzed. Approximately 100 of the clauses containing saliencies of the syntactic nature (e.g. the omission of the copulation, the null subjects, the topic-prominent constructions, the discourse particle e.g. lah, lor, meh) were selected to investigate them in detail.

A syntactic and metafunctional combined approach was used to perform the data analysis. Structurally, each line was analyzed to determine the Standard patterns of English that were violated including verb phrases realization, omission of subjects, particle, and word arrangement variation. These clauses were interpreted on the basis of their functionality in which the Theme -Rheme framework has been used to determine the structuring of information and foregrounding of information in a discourse. In addition, the transitivity system (ideational metafunction), mood and modality system (interpersonal metafunction), and thematic progression system (textual metafunction) were assessed to show the simultaneous formation of the experiential meaning, interpersonal relations negotiation and textual flow of explanation in the syntactic structures. In this multi dimensional analysis, the paper intends to demonstrate the fact that the syntactic patterns of Singlish are predetermined by the contacting of multilingual processes and are the useful linguistic values of the surrounding social cultural environment in Singapore.





Finding and Discussion

The description of the obtained clauses shows that the syntactic features of the Singaporean English (Singlish), are not arbitrary errors but the deviations of the Standard English. The trends in the data indicate that the grammar of Singlish has structural simplification of the patterns, discourse-based organization and utilization of pragmatic particles that facilitate the effectiveness in communication in a multilingual setting. These syntactic patterns are explicable using contact linguistics as well as the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) wherein linguistic structures have ideational, inter-personal and textual functions to serve concomitant functions. About twenty expressive clauses of the interview were extracted to demonstrate the most significant syntactic characteristics. These lines illustrate how the Singlish syntax is an indication of the simplification of grammar, and pragmatic functionality on a daily communication.

1. Ellipsis and Grammatical Reduction

Ellipsis has become one of the most common syntactically characteristics noticed in the data as some of the grammatical elements, including auxiliary verbs, subjects or copular verbs, are missed. These omissions notwithstanding, the meaning of the clause can be considered to be interpretable, because of the contextual clues.

Table 1. List of Ellipsis and Grammatical Reduction

No	Singlish Clause	Standard English Equivalent	Omitted Element
1	You going or not?	Are you going or not?	Auxiliary verb
2	Later then see.	We will decide later.	Subject + auxiliary
3	Can.	It is possible / Yes, I can.	Subject + verb
4	Cannot.	It is not possible.	Subject + copula
5	No need.	There is no need.	Subject + auxiliary

These clauses show syntactically the reduction of the clause that involves a minimum of lexical material to convey a proposition. Shortened clause patterns are commonly made by omission of the auxiliary verb be and the modal verbs. Structurally these clauses are similar to predicate-based constructions where the predicate is given the key semantic meaning of the clause and other grammatical components are left out. Here is an illustration; the sentence, You going or not, does not have an auxiliary verb are but the main process in the clause is the same verb going.

In the ideational metafunction, the process element (going or see) can be recognized despite the fact that the entire grammatical structure can be simplified. It suggests that the grammar of Singlish is more efficient with semantics and inferences over application of Standard English grammatical codes of morphemes.

Moreover, these patterns also represent substratos influence of Chinese languages where subjects and auxiliary verbs can be stored in cases where the referent can be pragmatically retrieved by discourse factors. Consequently, the ellipsis in Singlish can be viewed as the systematic characteristic of the multilingual contact instead of its accidental departure of grammar.

2. Copula Deletion





The other notable syntactic characteristic of the data is the absence of the copula verb “be”. In Standard English, the copula is used in order to connect the subject to a complement. In Singlish the copula can also be omitted without making a difference to the understanding.

Table 2. List of Copula Deletion

No	Singlish Clause	Standard English Equivalent
1	This food very nice.	This food is very nice.
2	My brother always late.	My brother is always late.
3	That one very expensive.	That one is very expensive

In these constructions, the copula verb is omitted, resulting in a subject–complement structure without an explicit linking verb. Syntactically, the clause structure can be represented as:

[Theme (Subject) + Attribute (Complement)]

Example:

This food very nice.

Theme: *This food*

Rheme: *very nice*

Regarding the transitivity system developed by Halliday, the clause remains a relational process, though the verbal component has not been brought out openly. This food is a participant which acts as the Carrier and this adjective phrase very nice acts as the Attribute. The process of copula deletion is common among languages in contacts and other languages that are spoken in creoles, where a grammatical simplification takes place because of the multilanguage use. This simplification, as can be seen in the case of Singlish, is both a structural economy and also this is due to the influence of such languages as Mandarin and Malay, which do not make use of copular verbs to show the relational meanings.

3. Topic-Prominent Sentence Structure

A particularly distinctive feature of Singlish syntax is the use of topic-prominent constructions, where the topic is introduced before the main clause.

Table 3. List of Topic-Prominent Clauses

No	Singlish Clause	Standard English Equivalent
1	This food ah, very nice.	This food is very nice.
2	My brother right, always come home late.	My brother always comes home late.
3	That movie ah, very funny.	That movie is very funny.

These constructions demonstrate a **topic–comment structure**, which differs from the subject–predicate structure typical of Standard English. The syntactic pattern can be represented as:

[Topic + discourse marker + comment]

Example:

This food ah, very nice.

Topic: *This food*

Marker: *ah*

Comment: *very nice*

As far as the textual metafunction is concerned, the topic serves as the Theme, which is the point of focus of the clause which comes before any other information presented in the Rheme.





The discourse marker *ah* is a pragmatic mark, which denotes the shift between comment and topic.

There is also the topic-prominent construction of Chinese discourse, especially of Mandarin and Hokkien, where speakers often pre-establish the subject of discussion and then go on to give descriptive material. This syntactic element found in Singlish is hence an indication of the high impact of Chinese discourse mechanisms on the Singaporean multilingual linguistic context.

4. Sentence-Final Particles and Interpersonal Meaning

One more syntactic-pragmatic characteristic of the data, which is also quite noticeable, is the use of sentence-final particles one may speak about *lah*, *lor*, *meh*, and *ah*. These are particles that characterize Singlish, which also play a significant part in conveying interpersonal meanings in informal speech. These particles are at a discourse level unlike lexical elements that add to the propositional meaning of a clause but instead they alter the attitude, emotional attitude or amount of confidence of the speaker to the message he or she is saying.

Syntactically, the particles are found in clause-final position unlike normal adverbs or modal auxiliaries found in the English language. Whereas Standard English makes use of intonation, modal verbs or lexical expressions to give interpersonal meanings, Singlish often makes use of discourse particles as grammaticalized signs of speaker position.

Table 4. List of Discourse Particle Constructions

No	Singlish Clause	Communicative Function
1	Relax lah.	Friendly reassurance
2	Then like that lor	Acceptance or resignation
3	Really meh?	Doubt or disbelief
4	You coming later ah?	Softened question

Data 4.1: “Relax lah.”

The word “*relax lah*” is made up of the verb *relax* which is imperative and the last sentence particle *lah*. Syntactically, the clause has an imperative form of mood and the subject, *you*, is implicit but not explicit. Even in Standard English the imperative *Relax.* might possibly appear abrupt or authoritative. Nonetheless, the insertion of the particle *lah* mollify the tone of the command and gives it the feeling of friendliness, or a feeling of reassurance.

As an interpersonal metafunction, the particle *lah* represents a sign of solidarity and informal relations between the speaker and the listener. It eliminates the possibility of the message becoming face threatening because the message is marked by an indicator that the speaker is intending to support the other person, not dictate what to do. *Lah* is also a pragmatic tool in most Singlish exchanges that turn an indication of command into a more socially acceptable statement, especially when peers are talking.

Data 4.2: “Then like that lor.”

The sentence is “*then like that lor*”, which shows the application of the particle *lor* that frequently signifies the acceptance, resignation, or inevitability. The clause is very elliptical in nature. The word *like that* is a referential general speech and it alludes to something that has already been talked about in the conversation. The first connector is *then*, which is used to provide a connection to previous conversation. The *lor* used on the particle does not imply





that this is not a fact that the speaker likes but it might be a fact that they are not keen on it. It is thus a faint attitude of outworn recognition.

Regarding interpersonal metafunction, *lor* assists the speaker to bargain on the social interaction as he expresses a somewhat emotional response without demanding confrontation and difference. The speaker does not directly suggest to the situation, but he merits with conversational harmony. The syntactic form of the clause is as a context-dependent elliptical form in which the discourse on preceding clause is critical in interpreting the semantic meaning.

Data 4.3: “Really meh?”

The fact that the particle *meh* is used in the clause, “*really meh?*” also shows that the particle means doubtfulness, surprise, or disbelief. This clause is interrogative in form but it does not contain the normal English question structure of subject tense, auxiliary, which is inverted. Rather, intonation is used as well as the particle *meh* to express the interrogative meaning.

The word *really* is an evaluative adverb meaning surprise, whereas the particle *meh* supports the pragmatic disbelief by the speaker towards the facts mentioned before by another speaker. *Meh* is an indicator of epistemic position within the interpersonal metafunction. It means that the speaker doubts the correctness or maybe the possibility of a statement under consideration. Such particles enable the speakers of Singlish to express subtle emotional reactions in a brief tone in a discourse. The clause thus goes to show the dependence of Singlish not on the syntactic inversion but on pragmatic particles to indicate interrogative meaning.

Data 4.4: “You coming later ah?”

The yes/no question structure with the particle *ah* is depicted in the clause “*you coming later ah*”. Syntactically, the component includes the grammatical element of a subject *you*, form of the progressive verb *coming*, and the adverb of time *later*. The auxiliary verb *are*, that would be used in Standard English (*Are you coming later?*), is excluded. This exclusion is characteristically Singlish in the deletion of auxiliaries.

The particle *ah* as a question softener produces a question that is less direct and high-level, and more conversational. In communication between people, these particles have the effect of lowering the formality or even stress that could be generated due to direct questioning. Interpersonally, an *ah* moment would mean that the speaker wants to be assured in a friendly and informal way. It provokes a reaction of the listener and is in the style of the casual conversation.

5. Simplified Tense Marking

The other structural peculiarity that is present in the data is the decrease in the tense morphology among Singlish clauses. Alternatively to the expression of the temporal reference by the grammatical inflection of the tense of the verbs, speakers often use the temporal adverbs or contextual signs to indicate the time when something takes place. This trend is characteristic of an analytic tense marking tendency whereby the reference of time is lexically and not morphologically represented.

Table 5. List of Simplified Tense Marking

No	Singlish Clause	Standard English Equivalent
1	Yesterday in school right, something funny happen.	Yesterday something funny happened at school.





2	Just now I see him already.	I just saw him.
3	Last time we go there very often.	We used to go there very often.

The three clauses reveal that the Singlish speakers mostly apply the use of the temporal expressions like yesterday, just now and last time in order to determine time frame of an event. They are used in the form of opening of the clause or in the clause structure and they serve a circumstantial purpose of time. Since the reference time is already clearly indicated by these adverbs, the verb does not always have the past tense form it would have in Standard English: the verb itself remains almost in the uninflected form.

Data 5.1

The sentence “*yesterday in school right, something funny happen.*” is an example of a narrative framework where the speaker sets the time and the space then continues to narrate what happens. “*Yesterday in school*” is an expression that serves as a marked Theme, which predicts the time and place of the action. The discourse marker *right* also shows that the speaker is raising background information before giving out the main event.

The verb *happen* is not used in the past form but in the present form, so it is mentioned as happened but the time word used, *yesterday*, shows clearly that something has been done in the past. This time aspect in Systemic Functional Linguistics serves as a situation of time under the ideational metafunction. The untyped meaning of the clause is thus easy to get even in the absence of morphological tense marking.

Data 5.2

Another technique of describing past events in Singlish comes out through the clause, “*just now I see him already.*” The term *just now* implies that the activity has taken place recently in the past. Also, the particle *already* serves as a perfective aspect marker, which means that the action has already had its completion.

In this construction the verb *see* does not change into *saw* but it is placed at the base. Nevertheless, the combination of *just now* and *already* gives adequate information to the listener to understand the occurrence as a thing that has been done in the recent past. Syntactically, this phenomenon is a symptom of the way Singlish tends to show aspectual communicational intent in the form of lexical classes, as opposed to lexical agreement. Particular significance lies in the use of *already*, which is similar to aspects markers in various languages of Asia, such as Mandarin, where particles can be used to describe the fact that an action is done.

Data 5.3

The sentence “*last time we go there very often*” gives an incident of the way Singlish conveys habitual past. The time element is the *last time*, which demonstrates that the action took place many times before. Even though the word *go* is of the base form, the temporal phrase gives a clear understanding that the activity is of the past time.

Under Standard English, such a meaning would normally be described using the constructions: *we used to go there very often* or *we used to go there very often*. However, in Singlish, the singlish temporal marker is given the primary task of marking past reference. In the ideational metafunction, the temporal expression, in its turn, is a circumstance of time, which will result in the information of an experience concerning the time when the process took place. Since





this circumstantial element exists already, the provision does not necessitate further marking of the tense of the verb.

In all the three instances, a number of patterns are recurring. To start with, temporal expressions often occupy first position within the clause and serve as marked Themes where they are used to create the temporal environment before proceeding to the main process is presented. This thematic structure will aid in navigating the spectator of the discourse by her/his progression of narrative. Second, the verbs are commonly not inflected, meaning that Singlish is less concerned with the morphological tense inflexion than the Standard English. The language however does not use any verbal signs to show the passage of time but makes use of the contextuality and lexical signs. Third, the data show the combination of Singlish in terms of incorporating temporal adverbs and aspectual markers to represent time relationships. Such words like yesterday, just now, and last time are used as direct temporal markers, whereas the words like already might point to the fact that something has been done.

Language contact can also be used to explain the simplified tense system witnessed in Singlish. A considerable amount of verbs inflection in the tense is used in many languages used in Singapore, such as Mandarin and Malay. Rather, these languages simply depend on temporal adverbs and aspectual markers, and circumstantial information to point to time. Consequently, Singlish represents a blend of a grammatic system whereby English words are mixed with various discourse patterns that are affected by other languages equally operating in the same area. This results in a tendency of using analytic grammars, with the meaning transmitted using discrete lexical items instead of verb morphology variants.

The syntactic traits of the data could be interpreted as a direct extension of the multilingual linguistic ecology of Singapore where English is in coexistence with other questionable languages like Malay, Mandarin, Hokkien, Cantonese and Tamil. In this kind of environment, languages do not work independently rather; they interact amongst themselves and each affects the other through constant interrelationship within the day to day communication. Since the adoption of the English language in Singapore, especially after gain of independence and by the national system of education, it had progressively taken the structural and practical attributes of the rest of the languages that were used by people of Singapore. What has been produced is the Singlish, which is an English-based form of contact speech, with grammar that combines various forms. The syntactic patterns that are observed in the data- topic-prominent constructions, less tense morphology, omission of copular verbs and the extensive use of discourse particles - illustrate how interaction of languages influences the structure of grammar.

Topics Prominent syntax in Singlish is one of the key aspects that were formed as a result of language contact. Topics prominent languages like Mandarin and most of the Chinese dialects in Singapore have sentences whereby the topic that defines the context of the discussion comes first before main information is given. On the same note, the speakers of Singlish often place time, location or situation on the foreground prior to coming up with the main clause. This framework moves the emphasis away out of the grammatical subject onto the discourse topic. An example is the use of phrases such as *"yesterday in school"*, *"this one very expensive"* where the topic is first mentioned with a comment on the same coming afterwards. These constructions indicate that Singlish speakers arrange information in a manner that is more discourse coherent and context oriented as a view of discourse of the topic dominant languages in the multilingual speech community.





Further outcome of the contact between languages is the decrease in morphology of tenses. The tense contrasts are normally represented in the inflection of the verbs by use of Standard English, a form of English, e.g. walk versus walked. In Singlish though, it is typical to have a verb in its underlying form irrespective of whether the action has been done in the past, at the present or in the future. Rather than indicating the time reference of an event through the occurrence of morphological changes of the verbs used, speakers often rely on the temporal reference of an event by the help of a temporal expression, like yesterday, just now, or last time. The given pattern is consistent with the grammatical features of the languages like Mandarin and Malay, which is more dependent on the markers of time or aspect than verb inflection. Accordingly, Singlish is shown to show a transition over to analytic grammar forms whereby the semantic expression is represented not by morphology when modifying the verbs but by individually combining lexical items.

Another effect of the multilingual contact is the lack of copular forms and the widespread use of the discourse particles in Singlish. However, in most Singlish constructions, the copula be (e.g. is or are) can be dropped, which means that a sentence (e.g. He very tall) can be expressed as He is very tall. This trend is similar to the grammar of the Mandarin and certain other Asian languages whereby copular verbs are optional or different in usage as expressed in English. Secondly, Singlish is widely seen utilizing sentence-final sentence particles (i.e. lah, lor, meh, ah) with participatory meanings like emphasis, doubt, agreement, or friendliness. These particles are usually a result of the Chinese dialects and may be discussed as pragmatic markers facilitating speakers to convey emotional tones, social position, or intention of the conversation. Consequently, though the syntax of the clauses may seem simplified syntactically, the discourse particles supplement the pragmatic, interpersonal aspect of the speech.

Combining these characteristics, it can be mentioned that Singlish cannot be regarded as a simplistic or incorrect variety of English. Rather it is a systematic and functional form of lingo which has grown after many years of multilingual contact in Singapore. The grammars of Singlish provide evidence of how speakers of different types customize grammar according to the communicative requirements of a heterogeneous society, and frequently in languages where syntactic economy and pragmatic transparency are given importance. Moreover, Singlish also serves as a significant indicator of the Singaporean ethnicity especially when dealing casually. Most Singaporeans can alternate between Singlish and Standard English according to the type of conversation, and this eloquently referred to as code-switching or style-shifting. This capability demonstrates the dynamism of linguistic competency of the Singaporean speakers who negotiate various social contexts through the appropriation of the numerous varieties of English which are best suited to that communicative context.

Conclusion

In this research, it has been shown that the syntactic patterns that occur in the Singaporean English (Singlish) are not accidental or unsystematic breaks of the Standard English. Through the analysis of naturally occurring conversational clauses, the findings reveal several distinctive structural features, including ellipsis and grammatical reduction, copula deletion, topic-prominent constructions, the use of sentence-final discourse particles, and simplified tense marking. These constructions when viewed in the context of the Systemic Functional Linguistics indicate a co-occurrence of ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. Ellipsis and tense simplification are examples of how the experiential meaning can be carried out effectively by using context and lexical clues, and discourse particles, including *lah*, *lor*,





meh and ah, play critical roles as an interpersonal resource to demonstrate stance, attitude, and social alignment. Furthermore, topic-prominent structures underline the theme based structure of information in Singlish discourse showing the way in which speakers mark out the contextual features prior to the introduction of novel information.

Also, the research establishes that the syntactic properties of Singlish are strongly influenced by the multilingual sociolinguistic setting of Singapore. Language borrowing effects of other languages like Malay, Mandarin, Hokkien and Tamil serve structural effects where grammar is designed to focus on pragmatic understanding, discourse coherence and communicative effectiveness. Instead of reflecting linguistic inadequacy, these aspects depict how Singlish has grown to be a stable and functional language contact variety, as indicative of the sociocultural reality in Singapore. Meanwhile, Singlish is a useful signifier of local identity, especially in colloquial speech, and speakers still possess the option of moving to Standard English in more serious situations. This is the dynamic linguistic flexibility that proves the high standard of communicative competence among Singaporean speakers and outlines the importance of Singlish as not only a linguistic system but also a sociocultural resource of Singaporean multilingual society.

RECOMMENDATION

Resting on the results of this research, some recommendations can be given as to future research and linguistic studies about the Singaporean English. To begin with, future research must broaden the scope of the data by encompassing bigger spoken data sets of various social groups, such as varied age group, occupations, and ethnicities in Singapore, so as to get a more detailed picture of the Singlish application. Second, scholars will be urged to use mixed-method methodologies that will include the method of qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative corpus-based approaches to recognize frequency patterns of syntactic constructions and discourse particles in a more systematic way. Third, additional studies can also dwell further into the other aspects of Systemic Functional Linguistics, including thematic development of larger portions of discourse or multimodality in digital media where Singlish is often seen. Lastly, future comparative studies of Singlish and other forms of contact a variety of English in Southeast Asia would help offer more information on the ways in which dialects are formed, language contact, and functional adaptation among multilingual communities.

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