**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE SCIENCES**

# A STUDY OF MIXED LANGUAGE USE AMONG TWO SOCIAL GROUPS OF EAST MALAYSIAN MULTILINGUALS IN INFORMAL SETTINGS

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby certify that this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been or is currently submitted for any other degree at the University of Newcastle or other institutions.

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# Abstract

Malaysia is a nation of considerable multi-ethnolinguistic variety. Comprising thirteen states (eleven located on the mainland, two situated in island Southeast Asia), diversity is evident between the many officially categorised ethnic groups, as well as within them (blurring official ethnic categories). Bi- or multilingualism is the norm throughout Malaysia, albeit more prevalent among minorities and in certain areas, especially those that are urban and/or are locations of ethnic diversity. Code-switching and translanguaging are common enough not to be remarkable outside of formal public discourse and mono-ethnolinguistic situations.

This study was undertaken in East Malaysia, Sarawak, and takes an ethnographic approach. In order to try and make sense of the ways in which East Malaysian speakers express themselves, participant observation was undertaken in a family and a friendship domain, respectively. Speech events were informal and naturally occurring, during which family members and, separately, a group of friends interact in a variety of languages, illustrating the rich multilingual repertoires that participants can draw on.

The findings reveal six language tendencies, namely habit, cause and effect, convenience, efficiency, accommodation and affiliation. As for the various circumstances in which language use occurs, most of them are the same for the two social groups. In addition, it could be seen that bilinguals use varied ways to connect closely with each other, and it is done by using a certain language to exclude others from the conversation or to keep the conversation flow, and it could also take place as a result of the trigger effect and external influence. Moreover, it has been shown that bilinguals associate with their interlocutors by code-switching for clarity, adaptability, and solidarity. As for the implications of affiliation, it is found that language practices serve as an important identity marker as a Malaysian, East Malaysian, and member of an ethnic, social and religious group. In this contribution, the language use patterns that have been identified and reported could subsequently be applied to Malaysians as a whole, and even to some of the previous studies conducted elsewhere.

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# Glossary

BM - Bahasa Malaysia (Malay)

CME - Colloquial Malaysian English

LT - Literal translation

MT - Meaningful translation

= - shows continuity in a speaker's turn

(        ) - indicates that a speaker's talk is unintelligible

(words) - an attempt to transcribe what the participant might have said due to the lack
            of clarity

((        )) - portrays something that cannot be written phonetically

# Chapter 1.   Language use patterns: a review of theoretical issues and previous studies

## 1.1   Introduction

This study aims to explore the language use and tendencies of East Malaysians in Kuching, Sarawak, who share a close relationship with each other; and with that, to examine how affiliation is expressed between members of a family and friends group. To start off, it is vital to cover the key terms that are employed many times throughout my study, so as to make clear the exact definition used and the meaning it carries in the context of my research. Moreover, to show how my research is significant, the earlier studies which mine is built on have also been described.

## 1.2   Review of theoretical issues

This chapter consists of two primary sections. The first section spells out a tentative definition of 'bilinguals'; it looks at some of the main theoretical issues in relation to code-switching, language choice and translanguaging; and it also points out how code-switching and translanguaging are distinct from one another. Following these would be the segment on identity – the definitions, types (national, regional, ethnic, social and religious), and its link to language.

As for the second section, it comprises studies of language use patterns that have been carried out in various aspects, internationally and in the Malaysian setting.

### 1.2.1   Bilinguals

When an individual claims that he or she is a bilingual, people would typically assume that the individual could converse in only two languages. However, in my research, the term is used in accordance to (Grosjean, 2010, p. 4), who defined bilinguals as '…those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives'. This definition is applicable to my study because as clarified by Grosjean (2010), its focus is more on language use instead of language fluency.

### 1.2.2  Code-switching

The code-switching phenomenon has long been an area of interest for many researchers. In order to obtain clearer insights into this phenomenon, an extensive amount of study have been conducted in various settings, with different focus, and by employing different approaches.

As a widely researched topic, code-switching has been defined in a number of ways by different authors (Myers-Scotton and Ury, 1977; Gumperz, 1982; Hoffmann, 1991; Muysken, 2000; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Grosjean, 2010; Wardhaugh, 2010), but my study will be using a more general description by Milroy and Muysken (1995, p. 7) who state that code-switching is 'the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation'.

As this phenomenon is normally existent in bilingual communities, one can expect that code-switching has become a major part of a bilingual's language repertoire. This is because bilinguals have at least two, or more command of languages that they usually use together in expressing themselves, and this is even more so for East Malaysians who live among a multicultural society. As a result of this, these individuals alternate between languages very frequently, and it takes place either consciously or unconsciously (Ncoko *et al.*, 2000; Baoueb, 2009; Ríos and Campos, 2013; Mabule, 2015). Concerning this, Becker (1997) casts light on the factors that cause bilinguals to code-switch, in a state of awareness or otherwise. It is indicated that when bilinguals are unconsciously triggered, it is due to:

1) Momentary inclination: in situations where speakers are afforded the privilege to use whichever language they prefer, they would go with the one that is more readily available to them, or 'closest to the tip of the tongue' (Lipski, 1980, p. 36, cited in Becker, 1997).

2) Frequency of exposure: having been exposed time and time again, this is where speakers have a tendency to say specific words in a particular language, to the extent where its usage becomes habitual.

3) Cultural untranslatability: this refers to 'certain culturally bound items [that] cannot be translated to a different language without sacrificing relevant cultural connotations' (Becker, 1997, p. 15). Becker exemplifies this with the Spanish word *'bocadillo'* and the English word 'sandwich', which have appeared in a dictionary as equivalent translations but in actuality is

distinguishable from one another, with *'bocadillo'* being a stuffed baguette and a 'sandwich' being the ordinary type, with meat or cheese placed between slices of bread.

On the other hand, code-switching could also be done consciously in instances where speakers have goals which they aim to achieve. It could be to emphasise a message, to change a conversation mode or topic, to control one's interlocutor, and for personalisation or objectivisation (Becker, 1997).

Having said that, regardless of whether bilinguals are aware of their language behaviour or not, one thing is for certain; code-switching is not arbitrary and there is generally an underlying motivation for switching from one language to another (Valdés-Fallis, 1977; Bentahila and Davies, 1983; Eldridge, 1996). In view of this, there are extralinguistic factors influencing one's code choice, and they are the interlocutors, the setting or social context in which the speakers are at that moment in time, the topic that is being discussed, and the purpose of the interaction (Grosjean, 1982). In connection with these factors are four various aspects; social distance, status, formality, and the interaction goal (Holmes, 2013).

In their study 'Social meaning in linguistic structure: code-switching in Norway', Blom and Gumperz (1972) introduced the terms situational and metaphorical switching. For the former, the language and social situation are directly linked and the changes in definition of participants' rights and obligations are evident. This can be illustrated by using one of the authors' examples; during formal lectures where students are discouraged from interrupting their teachers, a particular language is used for lesson delivery and the teachers will switch to another as they encourage the students to hold their own discussion. Situational switching can be associated with Myers-Scotton's (1993a) Markedness Model, where a speaker who makes an unmarked choice is seen as adhering to the expected rights and obligations set and norms of a community, while one who makes a marked choice is considered to be negotiating for a different position as he or she deviates from the linguistic norm. To put it another way, an individual's choice of linguistic forms is crucial in ensuring smooth and effective interactions. For metaphorical switching, the emphasis is on the types of topics or subject matter being discussed. As observed by Blom and Gumperz (1972) between the clerks and residents at the community administration

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office, there is a tendency for their dialect to be used when it involves personal matters; and for official business, the standard is used.

It is, therefore, apparent that code-switching is a conversational strategy employed by bilinguals to achieve their communicative objectives. This has also been one of the most commonly studied aspects of code-switching, resulting in some overlaps of functions in studies conducted by different researchers. According to Kow (2003, p. 61), switches could be done to:

- Appeal to the literate and the illiterate
- Convey a more exact meaning
- Ease communication
- Negotiate with greater authority
- Capture attention
- Reiterate a point
- Communicate more effectively
- Identify with a particular group
- Close the status gap
- Establish goodwill and support

She goes on to mention that the phenomenon can be caused by the trigger effect, to compensate for a lack of vocabulary, to easily express oneself, to clarify a misunderstanding, to bring about a communication effect, to make a point, to show group solidarity, and to exclude others.

In addition, code-switching can be habitual, reflect the speaker's mood, convey semantically significant information, and be done for pragmatic reasons (Malik, 1994, cited in Muthusamy and Rajantheran, 2009). Besides that, some of the functions reported by David *et al.* (2009) are to accommodate, to establish rapport, and to stress distance between speakers. Furthermore, among the 13 reasons listed by Baker (2011), code-switching is said to be used for emphasis, to express words or phrases with no easy equivalent, to reinforce a request, to quote, to interject, and to signal a change of mood, attitude or relationship. In an article by Wei and Milroy (1995), they found that bilinguals' ability to code-switch aids them in marking preferences and initiating repairs.

In the past six decades, inquiries on code-switching have burgeoned and scholars in this field continuously try to make sense of this linguistic phenomenon from various perspectives. In the matter of code-switching and language choice, one of the earliest pieces of research in the field of linguistic anthropology was carried out by George Barker in 1947, where he looked at the way languages are used by Mexican-American bilinguals in Tucson, Arizona. One of the questions Barker sets out to answer is, 'How does it happen, for example, that among bilinguals, the ancestral language will be used on one occasion and English on another, and that on certain occasions bilinguals will alternate, without apparent cause, from one language to another?' (1972, p. 1). In his study, Barker (1972) explores how interpersonal relations, family structure, and the neighbourhood influence a speaker's language behaviour. With regard to interpersonal relationships, it is shown that in the Mexican community, Spanish is used to communicate with family members and people who they are close to; whereas English is spoken in the presence of Anglos and by those in a formal relationship. For bilinguals with informal relationships, it is a commonplace for them to alternate frequently between English and Spanish; and formal Spanish is spoken by Mexicans who are in contact with Mexicans from Mexico. Where family structure is concerned, linguistic behaviour can be affected by the parents' ethnic generation and extended family pressure. For native-born parents, speaking to their children in the southern Arizona dialect is a norm; while immigrant parents have more options available to them, which includes teaching Spanish to their children, or discouraging them from speaking it. Not to mention, native-born families are more bound to tradition, which naturally puts them under greater pressure compared to immigrant families, who manage to separate themselves from their extended family. As for the neighbourhood, the southern Arizona dialect is used by the Mexican community to identify themselves with the group. Similar to how immigrant families relieve themselves from family pressure, members can relocate if they wish to detach themselves from the neighbourhood.

### 1.2.3 Language choice

In examining the various circumstances where speakers employ different languages, there is a need to delve deeper into four factors, specifically participants, content of speech, its function, and the situation (Grosjean, 2010). This is done in order to

understand how bilinguals determine which language to use when communicating with other speakers.

### 1.2.3.1 Participants

The first thing that usually comes to a speaker's mind is the language(s) that his or her interlocutor is competent in, while making sure that they themselves are equally fluent in said language (refer to 5.3.10). By doing so, they could reduce the risk of communication breakdown. The speaker's language history also needs to be taken into account, and this particularly refers to the language that has been agreed upon at the outset of the interaction between both parties. Even though this is not made explicit, the individuals share an unsaid knowledge about a common language that will mainly be used whenever they get together (Grosjean, 2010). On that ground, if a different language is used by one of the speakers, it is highly likely that the other person will notice it instantaneously; and that linguistic divergence is caused by some other factors that encompass reasons like to raise one's status or to exclude someone.

The selection of language based on this factor is demonstrated by the child in Kwan-Terry's (1992) research, where he would switch to Cantonese when speaking to his parents and grandparents, and English, when the interlocutors are his sister and maid. Moreover, a sales manager claimed that his language alternation from Tunisian Arabic to English, French or Modern Standard Arabic is reliant on the other speakers (Baoueb, 2009). In an entirely different setting that looks at teacher-student interactions in a Korean Sunday school, the speaker normally uses the same language as his or her interlocutor, and would shift to the interlocutor's more proficient language to facilitate communication (Shin, 2010).

### 1.2.3.2 Content of speech

This factor is very much about the topics being talked about. Having more than one language at their disposal, bilinguals tend to use specific languages for particular topics simply because it is more convenient or because of habit (Grosjean, 2010). This can be seen taking place in the friends' group that participated in my study, where they would switch to English when talking about topics related to the University, as it is a foreign branch campus and lessons are conducted in English.

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Hence, it was easier for them to draw on the appropriate vocabulary in the language, instead of Sarawak Malay. When gossiping amongst themselves, however, they tend to do it in Sarawak Malay because it enables them to convey their message in a playful and light-hearted manner. English is seldom used for this purpose as it gives off a more important and serious effect.

The topic's ability to affect one's choice of language has also been observed in Bentahila (1983), where French is the preferred language for Moroccan bilinguals when it involves the use of administrative, educational or medical-related terms, while Arabic is used for religious topics. In a university classroom in Sudan, it is found that scientific concepts are expressed in English, and the key reason for that is due to English's dominant role in the field of science and technology (Taha, 2008).

### 1.2.3.3 Function of the interaction

It goes without saying that in deciding which language to use, all speakers are driven by personal motives which they intend to accomplish. They usually get through successfully; but on rare occasions, there is a chance that one's choice of language could backfire and cause offence, especially when it is made to leave someone out of the conversation (Grosjean, 2010).

### 1.2.3.4 Situation

Taking Malaysia as an example, this is dependent on a few factors such as the setting itself, formality, and the monolinguals present. Where the setting is concerned, if it is in a government office for instance, people tend to use Standard Malay for official matters. What is more, in religious institutions like a Chinese-speaking church, one would be more inclined to use Mandarin, even if he or she only possesses a basic command of the language. Additionally, when some people are in public, they might start speaking in English because of its prestigious status; but when at home, the mother tongue will be used. Aside from that, English is also commonly spoken in formal situations, such as during certain events or meetings. In a separate case, if one's interlocutor is a monolingual, the other speaker will normally alternate to the monolingual's spoken language whenever he or she is present, out of respect and as a sign of solidarity.

### 1.2.4 Translanguaging

*Trawsieithu,* a term in Welsh, was formed by Cen Williams (1994, 1996, cited in García and Wei, 2014) and it is from this that the word *translanguaging* came about. Originally, it was a pedagogical practice; and while still a commonly researched area in the field of education, translanguaging is increasingly explored in bilinguals' speech.

Translanguaging can be seen as a practice where 'languages are no longer assigned separate territories or even separate functions, but they may co-exist in the same space' (García, 2009, p. 78). García also notes that it is 'an approach to bilingualism that is centred not on languages as has been often the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable. These worldwide translanguaging practices are seen here not as marked or unusual, but rather taken for what they are, namely the normal mode of communication…' (p. 44).

Otheguy *et al.* (2015, p. 297) also offered their definition, which involves 'using one's idiolect, that is, one's linguistic repertoire, without regard for socially and politically defined language labels or boundaries'. They pointed out how one's interlocutor and situation are two important factors for bilinguals to decide when to utilise all, or nearly all of their linguistic resources, and to translanguage. This indicates that speakers are required to exercise restraint over their use of language in adhering to the linguistic norms.

### 1.2.5 Code-switching and translanguaging

With the ambiguities surrounding translanguaging, it is imperative to clarify the differences between the code-switching phenomenon and translanguaging practices. For that reason, a simple table has been compiled in reference to García and Wei (2014), and Grosjean's (2010) work.

| Code-switching | Translanguaging |
|---|---|
| - the alternate use of two languages, that is, the speaker makes a complete shift to another language for a word, phrase, or sentence and then reverts back to the base language (Grosjean, 2010, pp. 51-52)<br><br>- e.g. 'Where did you get your **biasiswa** from?' | - refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language, but that make up the speakers' complete language repertoire (García and Wei, 2014, p. 22)<br><br>- e.g. 'Then they found the body, the **bomba** found the body at 6a.m.' |
| - focuses more on the use of multiple languages | - centres on the practices of bilinguals (García and Wei, 2014, p. 22) |
| - speakers can be in a monolingual, bilingual, or an intermediary mode as they see fit (Grosjean, 2010) | - posits that bilinguals have *one linguistic repertoire* from which they select features *strategically* to communicate effectively (García and Wei, 2014, p. 22) |

*Table 1-1: Differences between code-switching and translanguaging*

## 1.3   Previous studies

The following comprises earlier researches that investigate code-switching and language use patterns, with the latter focusing on speakers' daily language repertoire.

### 1.3.1 Language patterns

#### 1.3.1.1 International studies

In *Patterns of Code-Switching and Patterns of Language Contact* (1995), Bentahila and Davies investigated the language behaviour of Moroccan bilinguals, who were born between 1939 and 1951, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Due to the different contact situations experienced by these two groups, which involve the Arabic and French language; the bilinguals in the older group have the ability to use both languages with ease, and thus, can be regarded as balanced bilinguals. This is not the case for the younger group who primarily uses Arabic, with a tendency to alternate to French for its vocabulary. In looking particularly at the structural properties of switching, the authors observed that the two generations made the same types of switch in their conversation, but the number of times they were used were different. Being more competent Arabic and French speakers, the highest number of switches made by the older generation is for an entire clause; while for the younger generation, their most frequent switching pattern is made up of a complete noun phrase. Although this was the only example touched on here out of the few that were highlighted in the study, it helps to prove the authors' point, that the code-switching patterns preferred by the speakers are closely connected to what they had undergone when Arabic and French were in contact with one another.

Treffers-Daller (1998) *Variability in Code-Switching Styles: Turkish-German Code-Switching Patterns* looks at the various switching patterns between Turkish-German bilinguals who reside in Western Turkey. The purpose of this study is to test Grosjean's model of bilingual speech processing; and in doing so, the speakers' language mode (monolingual or bilingual) needs to be identified. Furthermore, Grosjean (2010) indicates that bilinguals normally have a base language which they use with their interlocutors, no matter if they are in the monolingual or bilingual mode. This particular postulate was confirmed by the author after analysing her participants' conversations in different language modes. As for the participants' code-switching patterns, it is found that the types of switches employed by the three groups differ from each other.

In another study, Wei (1998) compared two groups from the Chinese community in Tyneside, England; specifically the Cantonese Punti and the Ap Chau families. His objective was to find out the similarities and variations in the speakers'

language choice and code-switching patterns, and the influencing social factors. By using conversation analysis, it can be seen that the majority of Chinese immigrant families in Britain have transitioned from being Chinese monolinguals to English-dominant bilinguals. With respect to the differences in linguistic choice and patterns, the author attributed them to the groups' social organization and language contact history.

A study that bears a resemblance to the previous two studies is entitled *Bilingual and Trilingual Codeswitching Between Hungarian, Romanian and English in the Speech of Two Transylvanians Living in North America* by Pittman (2008). In exploring multilinguals' patterns of moving back and forth between Hungarian, Romanian, and English, one of the theoretical frameworks used by the author is Grosjean's Language Mode to determine if the speakers are in a monolingual, bilingual or trilingual mode. By considering not only the functional, but also the linguistic aspects, Pittman learnt that the speakers' linguistic, social and cultural identity have an effect on the way they converse with one another.

A brief mention should be made about the pilot study conducted by Beligan (1999), who shows that it is possible to profile speakers simply by examining their switching patterns.

Interestingly, however, Poplack's (1988) *Contrasting Patterns of Code-Switching in Two Communities* suggests that translanguaging was already existent even before the term was created, when the author points out that among the Puerto Ricans in New York, 'code-switching between English and Spanish was such an integral part of the community linguistic repertoire that it could be said to function as a mode of interaction similar to monolingual language use' (p. 217).

Shifting the attention from code-switching patterns, the studies that come next examine language use patterns. One such research was done by Myers-Scotton (1993b), which looks at urban Kenyans in Africa. When at home or with bilinguals from the same ethnic group, their mother tongues are generally used. The same applies to the workplace; but with those from other groups, Swahili is spoken. For white-collar workers, English is used; if with superiors, it could signify one's authority and level of education; but if with people who have the same first language, it may indicate a work-based relationship.

Besides that, a study by Nercissians (2001) took interest in two ethnic groups in Tehran, the Armenians and the Azerbeijani-Turkish speakers. Although the findings reveal that the groups' language behaviours are quite distinct from each other, they still share some common patterns. Farsi, the common and an official language, is valued by speakers from the two groups. Nevertheless, they also feel very strongly about the usage and retention of their native language.

As for Arua and Magocha (2002), they only took children's language use patterns into account, which consist of four different types. The most dominant pattern is Setswana + English; followed by Setswana + English + an additional language (i.e. Afrikaans, French, Ikalanga, Ndebele, Sesotho and Spanish). The third pattern is made up of only a single language, Setswana; and the last one is Setswana + English + Ikalanga + Sekgalagadi.

In addition, Remennick (2003) reported the language patterns among three generations of former Soviet immigrant families in the early 2000s. It is found that these individuals use both Russian and Hebrew; with the younger generation showing a preference for Hebrew, while the senior members are more inclined towards the use of Russian. Even so, when there is any mention of Israeli realities such as food and politics, one would normally switch to Hebrew. That said, the use of the two languages is not only determined by one's age, but also the speakers' occupation. In comparison to those who have unskilled jobs or are not employed, more Hebrew is used by skilled workers and students as a result of their immersion in the Hebrew-speaking environment.

Moving away from code-switching studies, *Moment Analysis and Translanguaging Space: Discursive Construction of Identities by Multilingual Chinese Youth in Britain (2011)* revolves around three Chinese youths living in London who exploit their multilingual skills in creating their own social spaces. The reason this study is also included here is because the aforementioned space is the result of bilinguals' translanguaging practices. 'Translanguaging space', as called by Li Wei, is 'a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging' (2011, p. 1223). With an emphasis on the creative and critical manner that sees how the speakers use the resources available to them, several themes came up which demonstrate that these individuals are mindful of the benefits of being a multilingual, have a positive outlook on the ability to mix languages, and

take pride in identifying themselves as a multilingual.

### 1.3.1.2  Studies in Malaysia

In a paper published by Muthusamy (2010), he analysed the recordings of 20 secondary school students comprising Chinese, Indians, and Malays. By using Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame model as her framework, she discovered three distinct patterns. The first one is where BM is used as a dominant language, while English is the embedded language; the second pattern is the opposite of the first, with English as the dominant, and BM as the embedded language; and thirdly, is where English or BM words are embedded in one's native language, namely Mandarin or Tamil.

Likewise, a separate study carried out in a school setting was by Then and Ting (2009) that explored teachers' code-switching functions during English and Science lessons. Two patterns emerged from their findings; in teacher-fronted content lessons, teachers often code-switched from English to BM to repeat important points and qualify messages; while in the teacher-facilitated English lesson, code-switching takes on the role of personalization.

Another relevant example is the research conducted by Ting (2012) in Sarawak, where in the findings, she delineated the language patterns of her Malay, Iban and Chinese participants in six areas – education, family, friendship, mass media, religion, and transaction. Among the three groups, it was demonstrated that the language tendencies for the Iban and Malay participants bore more similarities with each other than with their Chinese participants.

### 1.3.2  Concluding comments

This chapter began with by discussing definitions of 'bilinguals' and 'code-switching'. In spite of the fact that they seem to be quite clear and straightforward, it is necessary to try and be precise especially when they have been interpreted differently by multiple scholars over the years. The most basic definitions were chosen in order to keep the attention on the main and bigger picture of my study, which is my participants' language patterns and what it tells us about them as people who live in a multilingual society. As for the social functions of code-switching, a few that were listed under Section 1.2.2 did not come up in my findings, but as a whole,

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almost all of the reasons that have been found in similar studies are not new or unheard of. This implies that the use of a particular phenomenon and what entails it could be viewed as something universal, regardless of where the speaker comes from or the languages spoken, with some local differences.

The factors that affect one's language choice are also outlined due to their prominence in bilinguals' speech. Subsequently, a language practice called translanguaging was arrived at. Even though its occurrence was not as regular as code-switching, its presence in my study should still be acknowledged. Furthermore, a comparison is made between code-switching and translanguaging in the hope of reducing the uncertainty of how they contrast with each other. Following this is the section on identity, which is a significant part of my findings and one that has emerged upon a more thorough examination of my data.

As for earlier researches that have been outlined above, almost all of them concentrate on code-switching patterns which involve the use of two, or a maximum of three languages and shed light on the factors that contribute to the varying patterns. Besides that, only two groups of bilinguals are studied and most of the studies focus on the linguistic aspects, or are institution-based.

My study, on the other hand, stresses more on the social circumstances of language with an aim of producing patterns of language use by observing my participants' code-switching and translanguaging behaviour. In addition, my study features three ethnicities (Chinese, Iban and Malay), and the usage of two to five languages. The focal point is the instances in which East Malaysians employ their code-switching abilities, and the objective is to investigate what their language use say about their affiliations as individuals, and as members of a group and the larger society.

## 1.4   Outline of chapters

Chapter 2 provides relevant background information on Malaysia, beginning with its geography, a history, and the population which is divided into two groups, the *Bumiputeras* (*Orang asli* and Malays) and non-*Bumiputeras* (Chinese and Indians). Some of the primary spoken languages have also been described, and these include Bazaar Malay and Malaysian English. In addition to that is language policy before

and after the country's independence, which could assist in understanding how it has affected the language use in different domains such as administration, education and for the professions in Malaysia (Gill, 2005; Lee, 2007).

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the state of Sarawak and its capital city, Kuching. Similar to the previous chapter, this chapter covers the geography, demographics and the English language policy of Sarawak. Other than that, it also offers some related background, and looks at the languages of the three major ethnic groups (i.e. Iban, Chinese and Malay). With regard to Kuching, an outline of the sociolinguistic situation is provided, and with the participants' linguistic repertoires in mind, the notion of linguistic hybridity has been introduced along with examples.

Chapter 4 is the methodology chapter and it comprises the focus of my study, my research questions, the interpretive paradigm, and ethnographic approach which I have employed. Following that is my data collection instruments, namely participant observation, audio recording and focus group, and the procedures involved in collecting the needed data have been described. Also included is Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (1993a) and thematic analysis, which is the method used to analyse my data. The rest of the chapter takes into account other important issues such as validity, reliability, reflexivity and ethics.

Chapter 5 specifically address the research questions in 4.3 of this thesis: the circumstances of language use, language use tendencies, the expression of affiliation, and the implications of this. As far as I am aware, there is almost no study that explores language use patterns which arise from a linguistic practice like code-switching, and more so in East Malaysia, where studies that probe the association among members in a group are also scarce. In this chapter, my participants' language backgrounds are furnished and their circumstances of language use are listed. Based on said circumstances, the main tendencies are formed, and with the help of the extracts that have been taken from my participants' conversations, the various ways in which affiliation and identities can be expressed are pointed out.

Chapter 6 discusses the analysis results in greater detail, from a sociolinguistic perspective, and goes into more depth concerning the matter of identity.

Last of all, Chapter 7 summarises the main findings of my research questions which centres on East Malaysians' language use and their affiliations that are shown through their speech. Moreover, in an effort to allow this study to have a wider application, the final part of this chapter suggests future avenues of research for a similar study.

## 1.5   Chapter summary

Chapter 1 has reviewed the relevant theoretical issues that are related to bilinguals' language use and association. Additionally, it also includes past studies on language patterns to demonstrate my study's contribution in this area. Chapter 2 situates this study within the broader national context of Malaysia.

# Chapter 2.   The national context: Malaysia

## 2.1   Introduction

Language plays a major role in our lives and it is easy to see why it is so – we need it to communicate and to accomplish different goals. For bilinguals, they possess a mastery of different languages which are at their disposal. Thus, this can paint a complicated yet interesting picture of one's language choices and behaviour. This is because the individual does not usually speak in the same language(s) to everyone he or she knows, and one's choice in using a particular language over the other always involves various social motivations, whether the individual is aware of it or not. Owing to this, my study looks at code-switching that takes place outside institutional settings, specifically among East Malaysian bilinguals in their familiar social groups; with a focus on their language use patterns, circumstances, and the speakers' sense of affiliation. So far, language use tendencies is not an area that has been explored much in such a diverse setting like Malaysia (see 1.3.1.2), a country that is made up of different ethnic groups and includes the complex use of a wide range of languages.

Code-switching is generally defined as 'the alternate use of two languages or linguistic varieties within the same utterance or during the same conversation' (Hoffmann, 1991, p. 110). To some monolinguals and bilinguals, this ability is viewed as a weakness that shows the lack of language proficiency to express oneself; but to others, it is seen as a useful communication strategy that can be employed depending on the interlocutors and the setting (Valdés-Fallis, 1978, p. 11, cited in Baoueb, 2009; Grosjean, 2010). While it may be true that not all speakers are consciously aware of switching as it happens, it is evident from the previous researches that code-switching is a phenomenon that has fulfilled many social functions for bilinguals. Grosjean (1982) suggests some reasons why people switch languages, which include filling a linguistic need, quoting someone, emphasizing a message, showing solidarity, conveying emotions, excluding someone and indicating a change in the speaker's role, just to mention a few.

This chapter starts off with Malaysia's geographical setting, followed by a concise history, demographics that is divided into two groups (*Bumiputeras* and non-*Bumiputeras*), the main spoken languages (BM, English, Chinese, and Tamil), the language policy of the pre- and post-independence era, and it concludes with a section on the citizens' language use in various areas (administration, business, education, media).

These background information will assist in explaining how culturally and linguistically diverse Malaysia is as a whole, and the contributing factors that have made an impact on the way languages are used by its citizens.

## 2.2   Geography
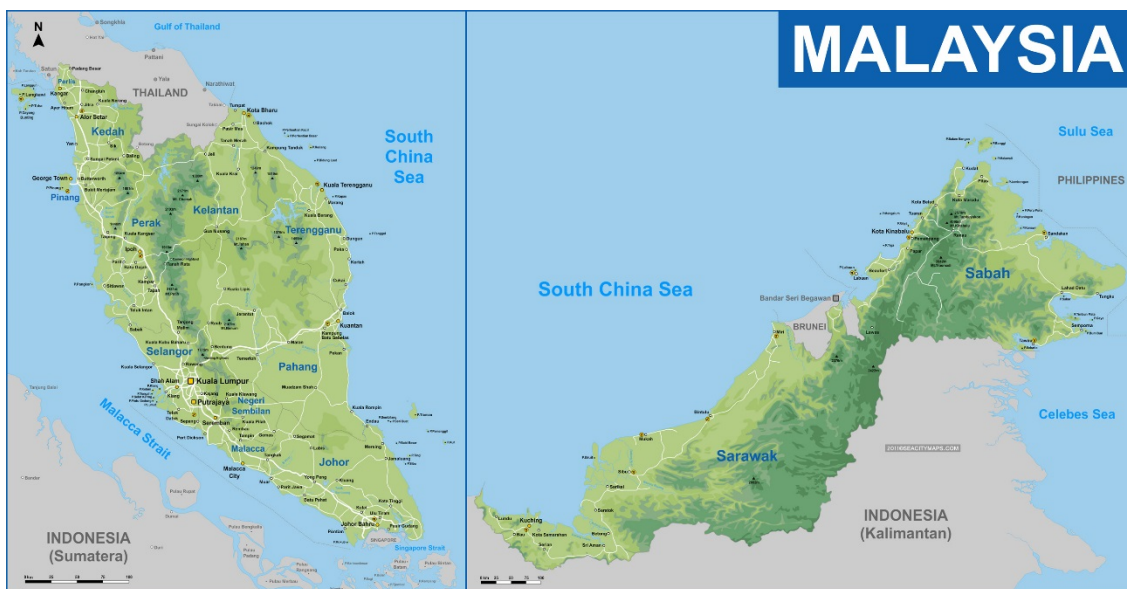


*Figure 2-1: Map of Malaysia (SEACitymaps, 2011)*

Located in Southeast Asia and with an equatorial climate, Malaysia had a population of 28.33 million in 2010 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2010). As seen in Figure 2-1, the South China Sea separates two distinct geographical segments, which are called Peninsular (or West) Malaysia and East Malaysia. Peninsular Malaysia is situated in a central position within Southeast Asia, has a total land area of around 132,090 square kilometers, and includes the eleven states and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. Meanwhile, East Malaysia has a land area of 198,160 square kilometers and occupies the north and north-west portion of the island of Borneo.

Unlike Peninsular Malaysia, it only comprises two states, namely Sabah and Sarawak (Saw, 2007).

## 2.3   Brief history

The Europeans first invaded the country in 1511 at the time the Portuguese held Malacca captive until the Dutch captured it in 1641. Malacca was then ruled by the Dutch until the British took over in the late eighteenth century. On behalf of the East India Company, Francis Light took possession of Penang in 1786, and it was ceded together with the hinterland of Province Wellesley to the company. In 1795, the Dutch surrendered Malacca to the British and despite having it returned twice, it was finally given to the British in 1825 for Bencoolen in return. Meanwhile, further south in 1819, Stamford Raffles established Singapore for the East India Company (Saw, 2007).

In an effort to increase the economic growth of the country, the British imported Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, and other Asian workers into the Malay Peninsular, which played a part in bringing about a multicultural society. Chinese laborers worked in tin mines; while Indians worked mostly on agricultural estates, rubber plantations, and supplied the manual labor needed for government projects (Shamsul, 1997, cited in Abdullah and Pederson, 2003). On top of that, the British colonialists practiced a 'divide and rule' policy which hindered the various ethnic groups from mixing together. That subsequently resulted in the separation of the three main ethnic groups, each with their own specializations in the social and economic sphere. The Malays were largely subsistence farmers or peasants in rural areas; the tin mining areas where the Chinese dwelt and worked ultimately expanded into urban and commercial centres like Kuala Lumpur; and the Indians remained as rubber tappers (Gomes, 1999). As the number of Chinese and Indians in Malaya grew, the Malay states that were initially made up of homogenous and indigenous groups were transformed into a mix that was diverse and heterogeneous. For the Malays in the Peninsular, their sovereignty was lost to the British by the beginning of the 20th century. The British needed the help of the Chinese and Indian immigrants in their economic ventures, and the Malays could not do anything to keep them from entering the country. Furthermore, they had to stand by and watch as the Chinese and Indians became wealthier. Above it all, the Malays felt that they were deprived of

their rights and were treated unfairly in their own homeland (Abdullah and Pederson, 2003).

After the Japanese Occupation came to an end on September 1945, the British Military Administration (BMA) was installed, with a duty to restore law and order. Less than a year after that, on 1 April 1946, it was replaced by the Malayan Union, which was abandoned for the Federation of Malaya on 1 February 1948. This was due to the people's resentment, especially the Malays, towards the Malayan Union as it stripped the Malay rulers of their powers (Saw, 2007). Finally on 31 August 1957, the Federation of Malaya gained its independence based on conditions that were proposed by the Reid Commission, as follows:

- Special rights are given to the Malays
- Malay is the main national language
- Islam is the official religion
- The special powers of the Sultans are maintained
- Citizenship is given to the immigrant races reducing the Malay ethnic population to 50% (provided the immigrants accepted the Malays and the Sultans' special privileges and position) (Abdullah and Pederson, 2003, pp. 46-47)

On 16 September 1963, Malaya became Malaysia with the inclusion of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore. In 1965, Singapore left Malaysia to become an independent nation state. The reason being, Singapore was in disagreement about the special privileges that were given to the Malays as the Chinese were the politically dominant group in the country. Thus, the move was necessary to prevent Malay-Chinese conflicts. From then on, the friction between the Chinese and Malays intensified and peaked prior to the election in 1969. Issues that concern the national language and the Malays' prerogatives were disputed by the non-Malays. In turn, it dawned on the Malays the vulnerability of their political position and rights. On 13 May 1969, a race riot broke out between the Chinese and Malays, when several lives were lost and properties were damaged in Kuala Lumpur. The incident served as an eye-opener for the Malay leaders to recognize the value of racial integration and the need to come up with a policy that could stabilize their country's state of affairs (Abdullah and Pederson, 2003). Following that, the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced in

1971 with a principal objective to achieve national unity, and for that to happen, it sought to:

- Minimize and eliminate poverty
- Rectify socio-economic imbalances by restructuring society (Economic Planning Unit, 2017)

Although one of the main aims of the policy is to close the gap in pursuit of racial harmony, specifically between the Chinese and Malays, it is perceived to favour the Malays in particular. As a result, different aspects of the *Bumiputeras'* lives have improved greatly, in property and land ownership, business, and educational and job opportunities. This caused much unhappiness among the Chinese community who felt they were at a disadvantage, and the consequences of this were emigration and overseas investments (Jomo, 2004).

From the history that has been briefly described above, one can see how Malaysia became the multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual society it is today, particularly with the arrival of different peoples at various points in time. Moreover, since the rule of the British empire until the present day, Malays and Chinese continue to be in tension with each another. As Malaysian citizens, it is only appropriate that everyone is entitled to the same benefits, but this is not the case in reality, seeing how *bumiputeras* are considered to be first class citizens while non-*bumiputeras* are seen as second class citizens (Leow, 2016). Additionally, the anger felt by the Chinese due to the unfair treatment is also reflected in the way they regard the role of the Malay language as the national language. When it comes to the mastery of languages, the Chinese would normally give priority to their mother tongue, Mandarin, or English; and it is highly uncommon for them to communicate with each other in BM. As far as tertiary education is concerned, a lot of Chinese parents, who can afford it, prefer to send their children overseas, instead of local institutions. Once the children have settled down and are living well abroad, some parents encourage them to be on the lookout for job openings and to remain overseas. This is because they believe that their children's talents and skills will be put to better use with the wide range of opportunities available to them overseas, and their contributions will be acknowledged and appreciated more under more meritocratic system (than that in Malaysia).

## 2.4   Demographics

Malaysia's population consists of a diverse range of ethnic groups. According to the 2010 census, *bumiputera* made up 67.4% of the population. 24.6% and 7.3% are of Chinese and Indian descent respectively, while others comprise 0.7% of the population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2010).

### 2.4.1  Bumiputeras

#### 2.4.1.1  Orang Asli

After Malaysia was formed in 1963, the term *Bumiputera* which means 'sons of the soil' was introduced to accommodate the emergence of a large variety of indigenous communities. In the present, the *Bumiputera* consists of *Malays* and *Other Bumiputeras* with the latter referring primarily to the *Orang Asli* in Peninsular Malaysia and the many indigenous tribes that can be found in Sabah and Sarawak (Saw, 2007). *Orang Asli*, a BM term that bears the meaning 'original peoples' or 'first peoples', includes the 18 sub-ethnic groups which have been classified into three main categories; Negrito, Senoi, and Proto Malay. The *Orang Asli* groups are not homogenous; the culture, languages, and the way they discern themselves vary from tribe to tribe. In addition to that, they have different lifestyles and sources of income. The Orang Kuala, Orang Seletar, and Mah Meri that make up the coastal communities in the Peninsular are mainly fishermen. Some other communities, such as Temuan, Jakun, and Semai are engaged in permanent agriculture and oversee their own cocoa, oil palm or rubber farms. Besides that, there are those that live nearby or in the rainforest as swidden (= shifting hill rice) farmers and hunters, who, in order to earn money, trade in produce like durian and *petai*, and rattan and resins. Examples of such communities are Semai, Temiar, Chewong, Jah Hut, Semelai, and Semaq Beri. For the Negrito groups in particular, very few of them continue to lead a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle and rely on seasonal produce of the forest. On top of that, quite a number have settled down in the city and work there (Masron *et al.*, 2012).

#### 2.4.1.2  Malays

As for the Malays, they make up a majority of Peninsular Malaysia's total population. Before 1957, when British ruled Malaya, the Malays enjoyed political supremacy over

the non-Malays due to the privileged position that had been accorded to them. The civil service and rural areas are dominated by the Malays, and they had primary involvement in agriculture and forestry, and in activities like fishing and hunting. This ethnic group is tied together by a similar language, religion, and culture (Abdullah and Pederson, 2003). In 1957, the Federal Constitution of Malaysia took effect, where Article 153 set out to guarantee Malay dominance and at the same time, to assure the Chinese that their economic interests would be protected. In the Article, there was a clear inclination towards the Malays' welfare with regard to public service positions, educational scholarships, and business licenses or permits. Previously, the special benefits for the Malays were already in place, but with the implementation of the constitution, they were now guaranteed in Article 153 (Majstorovic, 1997). Therefore, the Article acts as an extension of the laws the British enacted back then to counter the influx of Chinese and Indian immigrants into Malaya, in efforts to create a level playing field for the Bumiputeras.

As noted by Shamsul (1997, p. 209), 'Malayness' came to be defined in terms of the three pillars of *agama, bahasa dan raja,* i.e. Muslim religion, Malay language, and the aristocratic government of the sultans'. The national language is BM, and efforts have been made by the government, through language and education policies, to ensure that it is both the country's official language and the common language spoken by citizens. In the context of Malay and non-Malay relations, Islam is closely linked to Malay identity, so much so that to become a Muslim is frequently perceived as one becoming a Malay *(masuk Melayu)*. As a fundamental precept that signifies Malay identity, Islam plays a particularly important role in Malaysia today as problems have arisen with the other components, language and royalty. In an era of globalization, the Malay language has limited use beyond the political realm, which can make its usage impractical for certain domains of economy and technology. With regard to royalty, its importance was compromised with the clash between the Malay ruling elite and the native Malay royalty, and the scandals and corruption charges in the early 1990s (Tan, 2000).

### 2.4.2 Non-Bumiputeras

#### 2.4.2.1 Chinese

In the case of the Chinese, they started settling in the Peninsular after the British found Penang in 1786. In 1819, the numbers grew with the creation of Singapore; but towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was a steady flow of Chinese who came into the country for tin mining. The years in between 1919-1939 saw the establishment of a quota system to curb the overwhelming number of Chinese immigrants to Malaya, and since 1942, they were nearly banned altogether from entering into the country. The Chinese in Malaysia have always dominated the commercial and industrial sectors; and today, they still play a major role and an active part in said areas (Miller, 2007).

Unlike early Chinese immigrants who were somewhat divided according to regional or ethnic populations, the Chinese in Malaysia at the present time have identified with Malaysia as a single ethnic group, which is Chinese or *Huaren* in Mandarin. As for the other Chinese groups like the Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien and Teochew, they fall under sub-ethnic identities (Tan, 2000). Chinese Malaysians view ethnicity and nationality as being intertwined with one another; to phrase it in the author's words, 'the Chinese as an ethnic group in Malaysia are not just Chinese but Chinese with Malaysian identity' (p. 452), and this is where their nationality, cultural expressions, and exposure to Malaysian society make them stand out from the Chinese in other parts of the world. For this group of people, a few things have an effect on them and these include their interaction with various ethnic groups, state policies, communal politics, and their perception of the government, which is dominated by the Malays. Having said that, the Chinese Malaysians' wish is for Malaysia to remain a multicultural nation without the Malays being in control (Tan, 2000).

#### 2.4.2.2 Indians

The majority of Malaysian Indians originate from Southern India. Shortly after Penang's founding in 1786, they worked firstly as agricultural labourers and domestic servants. However, the demand for rubber in the automobile and tyre industries towards the end of the nineteenth century resulted in the arrival of a large number of Indians, who were needed on rubber plantations that were growing at a rapid pace in

the Western Peninsular. What is more, road and railway construction was viable with Indians' labour contributions. As for their children who had access to education, quite a number of them became professionals such as doctors and lawyers, and some also worked for the public service (Miller, 2007).

## 2.5  Language

With so many different languages being spoken in Malaysia, some of the main ones have been described as follows:

### 2.5.1  Malay

The national and official language of Malaysia is BM, and it is also the politically dominant language in education and administration. It is spoken as a first or additional language by 85–95% of Malaysians as a result of its long history as a regional language of wider communication, and having its use strengthened by government policies. Regarding its linguistic structure, BM possesses a straightforward sound system and relatively uncomplicated grammar. Being versatile and having an open lexical system has made the adoption of loan words from various languages possible for the Malay language. While Sanskrit (*bhumi*, is *bumi* in BM, which means earth), Arabic (*qamus*, is *kamus* in BM, which means dictionary), and English (stamp, is *setem* in BM) are the biggest contributors, loan words were also picked up through trading from Persia (*bazaar*, is *pasar* in BM, which means market) and China (*tauge*, is *taugeh* in BM, which means beansprout), and colonialization from Portuguese (*mesa*, is *meja* in BM, which means table) and Dutch (*rapport*, is *lapor* in BM, which means report). Concerning the vocabulary expansion, other than Arabic, English also continues to be a significant force as hundreds of vocabulary are incorporated into BM every year (Omar, 2004).

#### 2.5.1.1  Bazaar Malay

Communication between the Malays and traders from India and China, and between Indians and Chinese in Malaya enabled the development of Bazaar Malay (Collins, 1989), which is called *Bahasa Pasar* in the Malay language. In contrast to the colloquial or modern BM, Bazaar Malay has a reduced lexicon and syntax (Platt, 1981). The author goes on to elaborate on this:

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The pronominal system was reduced, i.e. instead of the range of first and second person pronouns appropriate to the relative statuses of the interlocutors and the widespread use of personal names and kinship terms as terms of address or self-reference, one Malay pronoun *saya* or Hokkien *goa* was used for first person singular and Hokkien *lu* for second person. Malay verbs were stripped to their stem forms, the Malay possessive system was modified to a Chinese one, e.g. *saya punya rumah* ('my house') instead of *rumah-ku* and the syntax was greatly simplified (p. 170).

Depending on the speaker's language background, Bazaar Malay also differs phonetically.

This form of BM was the majority language of Malaya until after independence and the introduction of BM as the medium of education despite having a low prestige and no official status. 'It was the language used by a Tamil Indian buying in a Chinese shop, the language used by a Sikh watchman to a Chinese merchant and it was the language that every European had to acquire in order to function in this multilingual setting' (Platt, 1981, p. 170).

### 2.5.2 English

As the language used during British colonial rule, English has long held a strong position in Malaysia and is widely used in the field of big business and commerce. Besides that, it also serves as a lingua franca between different ethnic groups, and for many Chinese and Indians, English is the preferred choice over the Malay language for various reasons (business, educational, political and/ or social). Although it is regarded as the second official language of Malaysia, it is the first language for many of its citizens (Preshous, 2001).

Since obtaining Independence in 1957, there has been an increase in the number of Malaysians who can speak proficiently in English. One of the main reasons for this is because of the access that they have to English through their education system. The popularity of English films, television and music could also be one of the causes, which have resulted in the use of American English by some of the citizens (Omar, 2004).

## 2.5.2.1 *Malaysian English*

Malaysia has its own distinctive variety of English that is also known as Manglish. This variety came about due to the multicultural and multilingual nature of the Malaysian society. It is a unique dialect of English with influences from the BM, Chinese and Indian languages, and it encompasses specific features that include lexical items, loanwords, the particle *'lah'* (that can be used to emphasise, to express irritation and many more), grammatical attributes and pronunciation. For many Malaysians, the use of Malaysian English enables them to express their cultural identity, and gives them a sense of pride (Preshous, 2001).

Malaysian English comprises three forms – acrolect, mesolect, and basilect variety. In her article, Baskaran (1994, p. 29) made a comparison between the three lects as shown in the table on the next page:

| Variables | Acrolect | Mesolect | Basilect |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Sociolinguistic* | Spoken and written formal ('standard') usage, for national and international purposes | Spoken and written formal ('nonstandard') usage, for intranational purposes | A highly informal colloquial patois ('substandard'), with limited general intelligibility, for intranational purposes only |
| *Phonological* | Permits a slight variation so long as it is internationally intelligible | Allows for greater variation, especially in stress and intonation | Stigmatised because of its great segmental and prosodic divergence: internationally unintelligible |
| *Morphosyntactic* | Permits a slight variation from the international 'standard' | Diverges considerably from international usage but remains largely intelligible to the non-Malaysian | Stigmatised because of its substantial divergence: internationally unintelligible |
| *Lexical* | Permits considerable variation for words relating to local contexts | Allows substantial substitution of words from Malaysian languages, including for international expressions | Heavily infused with items from local languages |

*Table 2-1: The three lects of the Malaysian English continuum*

As for CME's lexical (see also Ooi, 2001) and syntactic features, they are briefly listed below (refer to 6.2.4.2.1 and 6.2.4.2.2 for the detailed explanations and examples):

| Lexical features | Syntactic features |
|---|---|
| • Particles<br>   - *lah, kan*<br>   - *ah*, *ho/ hoh*, *ma*, *lo/ loh*, *meh*<br><br>• Exclamations<br>   - *aiya/ aiyah*, *aiyo*, *wah*<br><br>• Localised expressions<br>   - e.g., *'cun cun', 'samseng', 'ngam'*<br><br>• 'got' and 'one' | • Nouns<br>   - omission of plural 's' from noun forms<br><br>• Articles<br>   - absence of definite and indefinite articles<br><br>• Verb phrases<br>   - absence of the 'be' copula, and the past and present tense verb form inflections<br><br>• Invariant question tags<br>   - use of '… is it?', '… isn't it?', 'or not'<br><br>• Aspect markers<br>   - use of 'already'<br><br>• Reduplication |

*Table 2-2: Some lexical and syntactic features of Colloquial Malaysian English*

*(Khaw (2013, cited in Khaw, 2016); Lee (2015); Nor et al. (2015))*

### 2.5.3  Chinese

Malaysia is home to one of the largest population of Chinese speakers in the world. Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese and Teochew are the major languages spoken. The distribution pattern of the Chinese speakers in Malaysia is uneven and this is caused

by the Chinese who immigrated from southern China, and the occupations that vary for the different language groups. In the northern and southern parts of the Peninsular and along the coast, a greater number of Hokkien and Teochew speakers could be found, while more Cantonese and Hakka speakers settled in the central inland regions. As for Foochow, it is more dominant in East Malaysia, specifically in Sibu in Sarawak. Over the years, the Chinese dialects have become localised as BM and English loan words are adopted; and depending on one's background, there are instances where words originating from other Chinese dialects are inserted. Owing to this, the Mandarin used in Malaysia has also been localised, which results in the distinct pronunciation of words. The Chinese having a common writing system and Mandarin as a lingua franca have integrated them more linguistically (Omar, 2004).

### 2.5.4 Tamil

Most of the Indians in Malaysia reside on the Peninsular west coast, which is also the location of the first rubber plantations in M'sia. Tamil is the first language for the majority of Indians, but it is the second or third spoken language for most of the Telugu and Malayalam speakers. There are two differences that set the Tamil used in Malaysia apart from the varieties in India and elsewhere. First, is the existence of Tamil dialects, with India having a large number and with only a slight dialectal difference in Malaysia. Secondly, Tamil has been 'Malaysianised' in a way that linguistic elements are borrowed from the Malay language. This might be done out of necessity, ease of expression, lack of equivalents, or it solely comes down to one's preference. The borrowed words are primarily for common, everyday acts, descriptions and items. This is unlike the borrowing in India, where a substantial number of words are taken from English (Omar, 2004).

### 2.6  Language policy

Gill (2003, p. 11) states that, 'the factors that determine the nature of a country's language policies are dependent on the priorities that each country has set for itself'. For the purpose of understanding the priorities that influence the shaping of Malaysia's language policies, Martel's (2001) heuristic framework had been adapted by the author. Gill's (2003) version of the framework is much simpler, as it only looks at the contextual components, and it is made up of political and nationalistic

concerns, economic considerations, the society's customs and values, and knowledge economy that is based on Science and Technology ideology or policy.

### 2.6.1  Pre-independence (before 1957)

During this period, education in Malaya started out with religious schools, and it was not until the British arrived that English medium primary and secondary schools were built. Concurrently, a large number of Chinese and Indian migrants moved to Malaya as they were attracted by the growing rubber and tin industry. They then set up their own schools, with their mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Meanwhile, the British built Malay-medium primary schools to provide secular education to the Malays. Hence, the education system at that time lacked cohesion, where schools were established by their respective ethnic groups and a standard English curriculum was non-existent.

Later, although English became a mandatory subject in primary and secondary education, the same was not enforced for vernacular schools because of the shortage of competent English teachers. In 1956, the groundwork for the present education system was laid down in the Razak Report that was put together by the Education Committee (Foo and Richards, 2004). Among two of the recommendations made are:

- The establishment of standard primary schools with the national language, [BM], as the medium of instruction, and the development of schools of similar type but in which the language of instruction may be English, Tamil or Mandarin.
- All [national type secondary] schools will work to a common syllabus and for common examinations (Education Committee, 1956, p. 3).

### 2.6.2  Post-independence (1957-the 21$^{st}$ century)

In this phase, any decisions that involved the language policy took into account one's sense of nationalism more than the economic situation of the country. This is normal as feelings of nationalism are usually at their maximum when a country has freed itself from foreign rule. For Malaysia, they were resolute in developing their own national identity, and one of the ways they could achieve that is through a change in their language policy. With that, BM was chosen as the national language, mainly

because it is spoken by the Malays who form the politically dominant majority in Malaysia.

As for English, it is declared as the second most important language in Malaysia after BM. This had to be done in order to focus the attention on Malay by making it the sole official language, considering how English was playing a vital part in various aspects of people's lives. As the language of the former colonial powers and the British Empire that has traversed many countries, there is no doubt that English was a strong language. Coupled with this is its global status, and its economic and technological strength that were a hindrance to the Malay language.

In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, Malay underwent a process of modernisation in enabling it to be an effective medium of instruction in the education system, particularly in the science field. The Malay language was solidly established as the medium of instruction at the end of the 80s, and it also had a crucial role in the administrative machinery of the government's public sector. In the late 80s and early 90s, globalisation was the reason behind the changes that started to take place in the developmental phases of the world (Gill, 2003).

Changes faced by society have been described by Toffler (1980) as the First Wave, the Second Wave, and the Third Wave. According to him,

The dawn of this new civilization is the single most explosive fact of our lifetimes. It is the central event – the key to understanding the years immediately ahead. It is an event as profound as that First Wave of change unleashed ten thousand years ago by the invention of agriculture, or the earthshaking Second Wave of change touched by the industrial revolution. We are the children of the next transformation, the Third Wave (p. 25).

We are currently in a knowledge age, where economics, science and technology advancements have power over language policy changes. Considerations in these fields feed into political mind frames and affect the decisions concerning language policies (Gill, 2003).

## 2.7 Impacts of language policies on the use of language

With the language policy in Malaysia changing over the years (David and Govindasamy, 2005), it has also played a part in determining the language(s) used in some of the domains listed below.

### 2.7.1 Administration

Before Independence, English was used for government administration in the Malay states, but after 1957, it was gradually superseded by BM (refer to 2.6.2). A decade later, when the country's National Language Act was passed, it was ruled that Malay was the only language that would be used for official written business. This included meeting minutes, although it was less strict in meetings, where it was acceptable for the participants to make clarifications in English. The publication of rules, regulations, statutes and reports were done in both BM and English. In contrast to the period of British rule, BM was now given precedence, while the role of English was subdued. As for Parliament, there was also an official shift from the use of English to BM in 1967, but members who could not speak fluently in BM were allowed to use English while being aided by Malay interpreters. Nevertheless, that was no longer an issue in the 1980s as all Parliament members were well-versed in BM. The administration in Peninsular Malaysia was always conducted in BM, but English prevailed for the state of Sabah and Sarawak until 1973 and 1984 respectively (Omar, 2004).

### 2.7.2 Professions, business and industry

The significance of English in the professions and areas such as trade and international or big city commerce, such as finance and banking, communications, diplomacy, science and technology, and information technology has been recognized by Malaysians working in the public and private sectors. In light of that, the National Language Act (1967) consented to the continuous use of English for those in the professions like doctors and lawyers, in matters pertaining to foreign policies, and for higher education purposes in fields like business, engineering, law, medicine, and science and technology (Ooi, 2009).

English is commonly used by professionals to communicate with one another, and owing to the multinational corporations that have been established in Malaysia, English has also become the dominant language of business. English is essential in

the field of technology, considering how technical jargons do not usually have a BM equivalent. Not to mention, resources such as books, manuals, and journals for some of the aforementioned fields are often available in English instead of BM (Omar, 2004).

### 2.7.3  Education

Bearing in mind that Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country, the medium of instruction used in schools differs and depends on the type of school one goes to. Seeing how Malaysian students spend most of their early and important years attending school and receiving the education they need, this will, in one way or another, inevitably have an effect on their language repertoire.

In Malaysia, students are required to complete 11 years of basic education, which consists of six years in primary school and another five years in secondary school. The national language, BM, is used as the medium of instruction in national schools, while Chinese and Tamil are employed in national-type primary schools (Lee, 1999).

Malaysia's education system was established when the country achieved its independence in 1957, and the English grammar school system used during the British period was utilised as its model. Due to diversity in schools, education was seen as having a key part in bringing citizens together (Zakaria, 2000), and in developing the nation (Ahmad, 1998). Furthermore, its policies set out to remedy an issue involving the dominant ethnic group, the Malays' lag in education. For this to be carried out successfully, the government promulgated the 1961 Education Act which put a restriction on secondary schools to use either English or BM as their medium of instruction. Besides that, no tuition fees were needed to attend Malay language schools and for Malays who go to English language schools. Also, in awarding government scholarships, Malay students were given top priority, and along with that was the assurance that they had somewhat secured a spot not only in a state university (King and Lillard, 1987), but overseas as well (Brown, 2007).

Relating to the usage of English in this area, it is currently the second language of instruction after BM. With the passing of the National Language Act in 1963, it was made known that BM was the national language. Resulting from this, BM replaced English as the medium of instruction in schools. Such a change does

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not apply to Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools and their language of instruction remains the same at the primary level. Subsequently, at the secondary level, there would be one common public school system. The 1969 ethnic riots sped up the process of completing the change of the language of instruction, which was finally accomplished in 1977. As a consequence, English became a core subject and gained equal standing with Geography, History and Science (Chan and Tan, 2006).

In 2003, with an intention to rectify the decline in students' English proficiency and to stay abreast of scientific advances, Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's former Prime Minister (from 1981 to 2003), contemplated reintroducing English as a medium of education. However, that did not materialise as citizens expressed their sentiments out of concern for the weakening position of the Malay language. Ultimately, English was implemented, but only for Science and Mathematics and for students in primary one, form one and lower sixth form (Ting and Mahadhir, 2009).

### 2.7.4 The media

Television broadcasting in Malaysia was introduced in 1963. Initially, the predominant programmes were those in English, chiefly due to their availability and affordability. In spite of that, more local content were aired in the 1970s in order to appease the audience. A government-owned and operated public broadcaster, *Radio Television Malaysia* (RTM) has run two television stations, TV1 and TV2, since its first television broadcast in 1963. Originally, TV1's broadcast was wholly in BM, and TV2 was in Chinese, English, and Tamil. Nonetheless, the policy that deals with the broadcast language used by these two channels has undergone regular changes. For instance, non-Malay programmes have been aired on TV1, and the opposite is true for TV2. When the Broadcasting Act 1988 was still in effect, it was mandatory that local programmes, regardless if they were in BM, Chinese, English, or Tamil, were allotted 70 percent of airtime (Omar, 2004).

As for privately run television channels, the selection of languages for broadcasting is reliant on ratings. TV3, which began broadcasting in 1984, uses BM as its primary broadcast language particularly for news and public service programmes; and Chinese and English for the others, which include dramas and entertainment programmes (Omar, 2004). Fourteen years later, NTV7 was introduced and it offers news and a wide variety of local and foreign programmes in

English, BM, and Mandarin. Along with these two channels are their sister channels, 8TV and TV9. The former broadcast programmes in the three main languages, with the exception of the news that is only broadcasted in Chinese. Previously called Channel 9, the latter was established in 2006, with Muslims as their principal target audience.

With respect to print media, newspapers are published mainly in Chinese, English, BM, and Tamil, which is also a reflection of the diversity of the ethnic groups, cultures, and languages in Malaysia. The prominent BM newspapers are *Utusan Malaysia* and *Berita Harian*; the well-known ones in English are *New Straits Times* and *The Star*; the key Chinese newspapers are *Sin Chew Jit Poh* and *Nanyang Siang Pau*; and the Tamil language dailies are *Tamil Nesan*, *Makkal Osai*, and *Malaysia Nanban* (Omar, 2004). The leading press in East Malaysia somewhat differs, with *The Borneo Post*, that has been around for more than 30 years and at present, is the top newspaper on Borneo island; and not to mention, *The New Sarawak Tribune*. For the BM newspapers, there is *Utusan Borneo*, which is a segment that is part of the *Borneo Post online* site featuring news from Sarawak, Sabah, Peninsular, for sports, and also cater for the indigenous community with a section in the Iban language; and *Utusan Sarawak*. Besides that, the Chinese newspaper that dominates in Borneo is *See Hua Daily News*. The aforementioned are all either government-owned or controlled; in other words, Malaysia does not have a free press (Reporters Without Borders, 2016). There are also other online media that are free from the government's control and challenge their autocracy like *Malaysiakini*.

## 2.8   Chapter summary

This chapter has portrayed Malaysia at the national level by looking at the ethnic and linguistic composition of the country. This is to provide the bigger picture before narrowing down the focus to Sarawak and Kuching, where the participants are based. Chapter 3 starts off with some background on Sarawak, a Malaysian state located on Borneo Island, followed by an overview of the language situation in the capital city of Kuching.

# Chapter 3.   The areal and local context: Sarawak and Kuching

## 3.1   Introduction

The next section is on Sarawak, with some information on its geography, demographics, history, linguistic diversity that features the three major ethnic groups (Iban, Chinese and Malay), and the English language policy. The last part primarily looks at the language context and hybridity in Kuching, where examples are used for better illustration.

The contexts of Sarawak and Kuching have been included as it would contribute to the understanding of the participants' linguistic repertoire, their use of language and their connection shared with other members of the same community.

## 3.2 Geography, demographics and background



*Figure 3-1: Map of Borneo (MKB-DESKKART and SerialInternet, 2017)*

Sarawak is a state in Malaysia that is situated on Borneo Island, with the South China Sea separating it from the other 11 states of Peninsular Malaysia. Sarawak's boundary is shared with Brunei (to the east), Kalimantan (in Indonesia, to the south and west) and Sabah (to the east) (Ting, 2003) (look at Figure 3-1). With a total population of 2,471,140, Sarawak is made up of three main groups, namely the *Bumiputeras* (1,147,634), Chinese (560,150), and Malays (551,567). The Sarawak *Bumiputeras* consist of 27 sub-groups, with the major ones being Iban, Bidayuh, and Melanau. The Chinese also have many various sub-groups,

among whom Foochow are the largest, followed by Hakka, and Hokkien (Department of Statistics Malaysia Sarawak, 2014). Owing to this and the long history of contact between speakers of different languages, Sarawak has greater linguistic diversity in comparison to Peninsular (West) Malaysia (McLellan and Nojeg, 2009). This diversity is depicted in the highly complex language map below (Figure 3-2) that shows the distribution and settlement of different ethnic groups in the state of Sarawak.
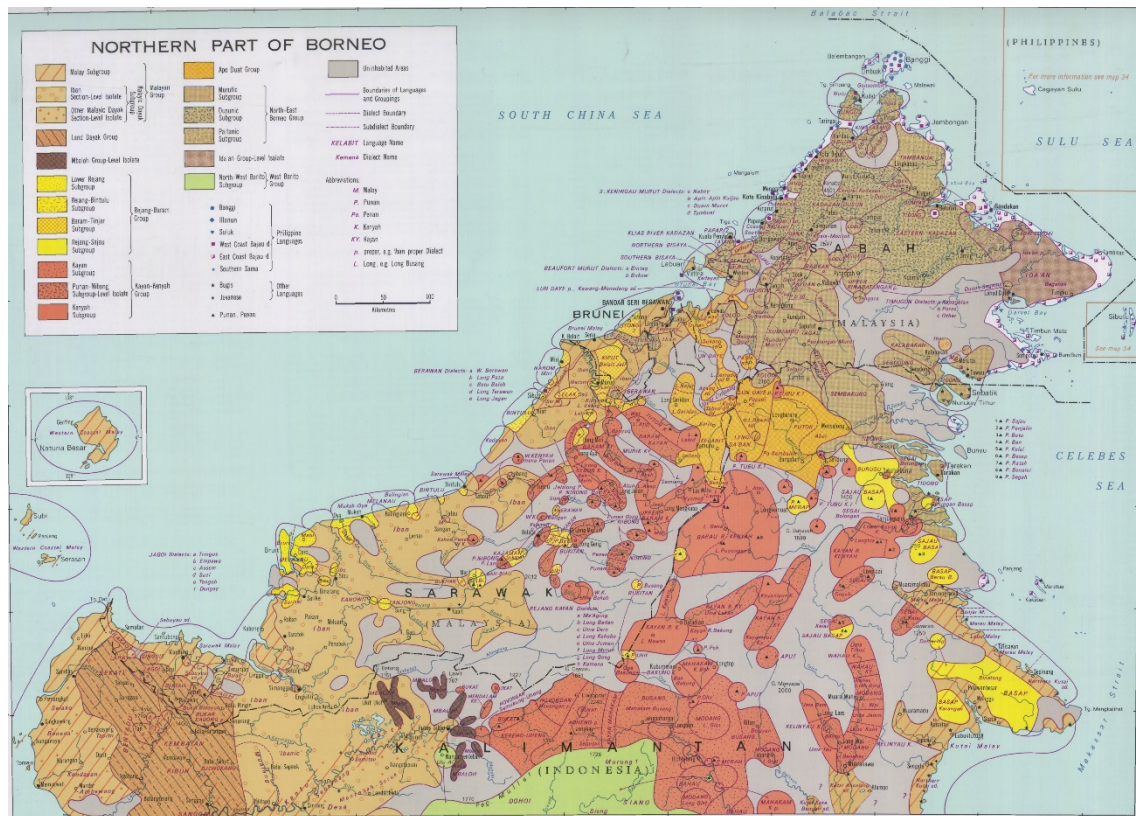


*Figure 3-2: Language map of Borneo (Comrie et al., 1996)*

In view of the state's history, James Brooke arrived in Sarawak in 1839 when the state was under the control of the Brunei Sultanate. Two years later, the Rajah of Sarawak title was presented to James after he successfully suppressed the revolt of the local Malays and the Land Dayaks (Bidayuhs) on behalf of Brunei. His base was set up in the Sarawak River basin that is located in Kuching. In 1868, James Brooke died and his nephew, Charles, inherited an expanded state from his uncle. The Sarawak territory was further developed by Charles, which made the state the largest in northwest Borneo by 1890. Meanwhile, in 1888, the British

government awarded Sarawak with a protectorate status, which gave them the privilege to remain as an independent state with complete rights to self-govern, but they had to go through the British government for any dealings outside the country. In 1917, Vyner Brooke succeeded his father and continued Charles' policies until the Japanese took over Sarawak in 1941 (Kaur, 1995). The 'White Rajahs' rule over the state lasted for more than a century under the Brooke family dynasty, until it became a British Crown Colony on July 1, 1946. In 1963, Sarawak achieved its independence by joining the Federated Malay States, Singapore and Sabah, and together they formed the Federation of Malaysia (Tan, 2006). For this to happen, it was mandatory for the state to accept BM as the national and official language, as prior to this, the language of administration was English (Ting, 2003).

Even though Sarawakians acknowledged that it was fitting for BM to be the country's national language, especially with a goal to unite the citizens, they firmly opposed to it being the official language for the reasons below:

1) As a whole, the English literacy of Sarawakians was higher than in BM.
2) The majority ethnic group wanted to continue to enjoy the benefits of English-medium education.
3) The leaders at that time felt that the loss of English's status as the official language meant putting their elite status at risk, which was partly based on their mastery of English (Leigh, 1974, cited in Ting, 2003).

Another reason for Sarawakians' resistance was due to the absence of educational facilities to develop BM literacy. Seeing how Sarawak was still unprepared for a change in their official language, the implementation of the National Language Policy was postponed and the state was given a ten-year transition period (Ting, 2003). Following the 1969 ethnic riots in Kuala Lumpur, there was a greater need to bridge ethnic differences through the use of a common language, and that led to the simultaneous introduction of BM as a school subject in primary school and Form One. In 1973, the Sarawak State legislature agreed that the medium of instruction for government schools be changed from English to BM (Bruton, 1993, p. 81, cited in Ting, 2003). The transition started in Primary One in 1976, and completed in 1989 in the Upper

Sixth Form. This move was a significant one to enhance and strengthen the Sarawakians' command of the Malay language.

Therefore, BM was implemented as Sarawak's official language in 1985, and its use in the courts only took effect in 1989. In spite of that, the use of English is still allowed with the court's approval and depending on the needs of justice. Regardless of BM's status as Sarawak's official language, English continued to be essential particularly when corresponding with government departments (Ting, 2003).

Compared to West Malaysia, Sarawak is a state that is unique by nature. Ting and Sussex (2002) provide three factors to justify this:

1) Sarawak is more ethnically diverse than West Malaysia, which makes language choice and use more complex. Unlike West Malaysia, the Malays do not make up the most populous ethnic group in Sarawak.

2) BM had been the official language in West Malaysia for four decades before its full implementation in Sarawak. Although both had been ruled by the British Empire, the change from English to BM took place in a short amount of time for West Malaysia because since the early nineteenth century, BM had been the lingua franca. In addition to that, there was a considerable number of Malay speakers in West Malaysia. In Sarawak, however, it was only until the British introduced English as the language of administration that Sarawak had a common language. With access to English-medium education during the Brooke (1841-1946) and the East India Company (1946-1963) rule, Sarawakians became literate in English. As a common language was needed, English had to be kept as the official language until the people improved their BM literacy. Until 1986, both English and BM were the official languages of Sarawak. Sarawak has a richer English-speaking environment than West Malaysia, and this was brought about by retaining the official status of English for a longer time in the state.

3) There were more opportunities for the ethnic groups in Sarawak to interact socially than those living in West Malaysia, where the divide and rule policy was practiced by the British. The Chinese, Indians, and Malays lived

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in different geographical locations (Ward and Hewstone, 1985), and were kept separate by 'maintaining a division of labour along ethnic lines. Thus the Malays provided the basic agricultural force and source of rice for the rest of the population; the Indians were recruited as indentured labour for the rubber plantations; while the Chinese quickly assumed a dominant position in the mining, manufacturing and commercial sectors which also tended to cluster around urban centres' (Nagata, 1975, p. 118). Conversely, the people of Sarawak live in harmony with one another and conflicts are usually confined to those involved and settled among themselves (Chew, 1990, cited in Ting and Sussex, 2002).

## 3.3   Linguistic diversity

The migration of groups across and along Borneo's rivers has resulted in the complex linguistic landscape of Sarawak. After the Brunei sultanate's control that continued for centuries, colonialism further contributed to the language diversity as migration from China was encouraged, and English and BM were employed in the school and administration systems (Omar, 2004).

The following table is a typological description of the languages East Malaysian speakers are acquainted with. Thereafter, Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 comprise some of the languages used by the biggest ethnic groups in Sarawak, specifically the Iban, Chinese and Malay.

| English | (Colloquial) Malaysian English (CME) | Sarawak Malay | Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|
| English is a West Germanic language that belongs to the Indo-European language family (Baldi, 2008). Standard British English is the formal variety used and taught in schools, and used in law and media. | CME includes grammatical features and word order influenced by Malay, Chinese and Tamil. As for pronunciation, the final consonant is often dropped. A generous addition of Malay and Chinese words enhances the lexicon of this indigenized variety of English (Omar, 2004, p. 61). | Sarawak Malay is based on the Malay language, with its own pronunciation and lexical features, some of which originates from Iban and Bidayuh. | The Chinese lingua franca, Mandarin, uses a romanization system called *Pinyin*. Modern Standard Chinese has four tones, which indicate differences of meaning between words or syllables that are otherwise identical in sound. A Chinese word is invariable in form, that is, it has no inflectional markers or markers to indicate parts of speech. As there is no word inflection in Chinese, the word order is fixed for the language (Egerod, 1974). |

*Table 3-1: Typological descriptions of some East Malaysian languages*

### 3.3.1 Iban

Iban is the largest ethnic group in Sarawak with a total population of 713,421 (Department of Statistics Malaysia Sarawak, 2014). They were known as Sea Dayaks, who during the Brooke era, strongly opposed the British move to expand their control of Sarawak. Subsequently, the Iban language gained Westerners' attention at an early stage. It is the second or third language for many individuals of other ethnicities (in areas where Iban reside), due to its dominance in many parts of Sarawak. As a language that is complex and flexible, Iban uses a group

of affixes to point out the nouns' functions; and it frequently follows the subject-verb-object word order. Furthermore, Iban's ritual vocabulary is extensive, and the language is well-known for being subtle and expressive. Additionally, it incorporates loan words from languages like Sanskrit, Arabic, BM and English; and the Iban language, on the other hand, has also contributed a considerable number of loan words to Sarawak Malay (Omar, 2004).

### 3.3.2 Chinese

The Chinese speech groups that are primarily found in Sarawak are:

- Hakka (predominantly rural people from the hill country of Fujian and Guangdong)
- Foochow (from the Foochow area of Fujian)
- Hokkien (from the Amoy area of Fujian)
- Teochew (from Shantou in Guangdong)
- Cantonese (from Guangdong)
- Hainanese (from Hainan Island)
- And a small number of Chao Ann and Henghua (from Fujian)

Among eight of the above, the languages that are mutually intelligible are Hokkien, Teochew, Chao Ann and Henghua (Lockard, 1971).

The earliest Chinese who came to settle in Sarawak were the Hakkas, around the year 1850 (Tien, 1983). Besides that, the most widely spoken dialect was Hakka up till 1980, and it was exceeded by Foochow. Originally based in Sibu, Foochows spread out to towns, namely Sarikei, Kanowit, Kapit, Bintulu, Miri, Kuching, and others. The dominating dialects in the towns also differ. For example, in Kuching, where the largest population of Chinese in Sarawak can be found, both Hokkien and Hakka are used by many. In Sibu and Bintulu, the chief Chinese dialect is Foochow; in Miri, Hakka and Mandarin are commonly spoken; and in Kapit, Hokkien is the most common (Omar, 2004). In situations where Chinese from different sub-groups come into contact and do not understand the others' language variety, Mandarin would normally be used.

### 3.3.3 *Malay*

In Sarawak, the regional variety spoken by the Malays is called *Bahasa Sarawak* or Sarawak Malay (Collins, 2016; see also Collins (1990) for an annotated bibliography of Malay dialects used in Borneo). In comparison with the BM spoken in West Malaysia, Sarawak Malay varies in terms of pronunciation, rhythm of speech, and vocabulary (Omar, 2004). For instance, in Standard Malay, "I" and "you" are said as *"saya"* and *"awak/ anda",* while in Sarawak Malay, it is *"kamek"* and *"kitak"*. This can confuse Malay speakers living in West Malaysia as they would mistake *"kamek"* and *"kitak"* for *"kami"* and *"kita"* which both signify "we" in Standard Malay (Ting and Mahadhir, 2009). Although it is primarily spoken along the Sarawak River in Kuching, the state capital, Sarawak Malay is widely used throughout the state. The reason for this goes back to the 19th century during the Brooke rule, where the Sarawak River Malays played an important part in governing the state (Omar, 2004).

Apart from the Malay community, for some families with parents from different indigenous groups, Sarawak Malay serves as their children's first language (Ting and Campbell, 2007, cited in Ting and Mahadhir, 2009). In the workplace, it is common for speakers to use Sarawak Malay when engaging in informal interactions, but if someone among them does not know the language, the other speakers might accommodate by switching to Standard Malay. As Sarawak Malay is always used informally, speakers of this variety would normally choose said language to form a close personal relationship with their interlocutors (Ting and Mahadhir, 2009).

## 3.4 Language policy

On November 18th, 2015, Sarawak's Chief Minister, Adenan Satem, announced that English would be made the second official language of the state, together with BM (Malaysiakini, 2015). This was done in an effort to improve citizens' command of English, which was a crucial step that needs to be taken in helping them to become competent English users. This would enable Sarawakians to keep up with our highly competitive and demanding world today.

This decision, undoubtedly garnered support from a great number of Sarawakians who anticipated the policy's implementation (Ji, 2015). At the same time, this had also resulted in strong opposition from some Malay individuals and groups from Peninsular Malaysia who were concerned that the status of BM as the sole official language of Malaysia might be jeopardised, and that the use of English could cause disunity among the various ethnic groups (FMT, 2015). In spite of that, Adenan Satem pressed on and insisted that it is a policy which is also in line with the Malaysia Agreement 1963, and has to be enforced (Chia and Ten, 2015; Umpang, 2015).

Sarawakians' reactions towards this issue was not unexpected as English is already spoken by many in their everyday lives; not to mention for an increasing number of people, the language is indispensable in their field of study or work. On top of it all, Sarawak is a multilingual society and takes pride in its relative racial harmony, which is why citizens were accepting of the English policy, as they believe that being good at multiple languages would enable them to build and maintain close bonds with other ethnicities. In other words, this means not limiting themselves to BM and their native language, but exposure to the universal language is also imperative; bearing in mind the ethnic diversity in Sarawak, including the expatriates living and working there.

### 3.5   Kuching ('Cat' in English)

Kuching, also well-known as the Cat City, is the capital of Sarawak, which makes it the city with the highest population in the state. Kuching is home to different ethnic groups such as the Malays, Chinese, Iban, Bidayuh, Bumiputera, Melanau, Indian and others. On August 1st, 2015, Kuching was declared as the first 'City of Unity' in the world (Lim, 2015; Malay Mail Online, 2015). Citizens respect and get along well with one another regardless of ethnicity and religion. It is very common to see people from different ethnic groups mingling together in coffeeshops; and Bumiputera children in Chinese schools. Moreover, mixed marriages are a norm and there are many festivals which bring the ethnicities together. Although Chinese New Year is a festival for the Chinese, *Deepavali* for the Hindus, *Gawai* for the Dayaks, and *Hari Raya Puasa* for Muslims, they are celebrated by all.

During the festivities, there is an 'open house' tradition, where family and friends are welcome to visit, and provide good opportunities for everyone to enjoy fellowship whilst also enjoying a lush array of food.

## 3.6  Overview of language situation

A majority of the citizens, especially those living in urban areas, are proficient bilinguals; and generally, their first language is normally used when communicating with people from the same ethnic background. For instance, status in the society aside, one can expect two Malay individuals to communicate with each other in a particular BM variety, be it Standard or Sarawak Malay. In a different case, however, it is very likely that the speakers will draw on their linguistic resources and put them to good use without sticking to a single language. An example of this is, if a Malay crosses paths with a Chinese person, BM and English will most probably be used; and sometimes, in a bid for solidarity, the Malay speaker may even use some basic Chinese words or phrases. As we live in a highly multilingual environment, it is no surprise that we pick up simple expressions in other languages easily and naturally. Therefore, at times, while in conversation with our interlocutor, more than the ability to string a proper sentence together in that person's language, is the unsaid yet genuine intention to connect with the interlocutor; and this can be expressed through code-switching, even if it is only saying hello in their native language. To quote Ting (2001, p. 56), 'it is the thought of accommodation which counts'.

As can be seen from the two examples provided, when speakers from a Malay and non-Malay group come together, they are bound to communicate in BM, but when it involves only non-*Bumiputera* speakers, their preferred language is English. According to Omar (1985), their avoidance of the Malay language could be for the reasons below:

1) It is simply because BM is not a language the individuals have grown up with, and so they do not have a habit of using it.
2) It may be a reflection of how they feel about the national language. With an aim to 'connote national inclusiveness while still heralding the language of the Malays' (Albury and Aye, 2016, p. 79), the

government changed the language's name from *Bahasa Melayu* to *Bahasa Malaysia*. Nevertheless, that did not do much to encourage the non-*Bumiputeras* to use BM as their mindset was already fixed – that in doing so, they would be assuming a Malay identity.

Throughout the 11 years of compulsory education, BM and English are mandatory for all students, while Chinese is an additional or an optional subject in national schools. In the classroom, most students tend to speak to their teachers by using the medium of instruction; but when communicating with other students outside the classroom, a different language will probably be used. When first getting to know one another, it is typical for an individual to start a conversation in his or her mother tongue, or in another language that could be comprehended and spoken by the other person. In doing so, bonds are established and the speakers are able to identify with each other as members of the same group. A good example would be my friend and me when we met in college. Her dominant language is Mandarin and she seldom speaks in English; while for me, it is the other way round. Other than the fact that communicating in Mandarin 'feels' right, it is because we know that it will be less of a struggle for me to express myself in Mandarin than my friend in English, which instantaneously leads to how Mandarin has become our common language. Typically, if one uses a language that is not normally used, he or she will be viewed as trying to assume a different role in the social relationship. For example, when a Chinese speaks in English instead of Mandarin, more often than not, he or she will be teased by their peers as being a show-off and trying to emulate a native speaker. Thus, in order to avoid this from happening, the young Chinese generation especially, tend to be resistant towards English whenever they are with their peers. For these speakers, adapting to their group norms is very important, which also makes it very challenging for educators in a class setting, particularly one that requires students to use English. On the contrary, in situations where English is an individual's first language, speaking one language or the other is expected and acceptable as that is part of his or her language repertoire.

It is important to note that although BM is the official language of our country, it is not the primary language spoken by all Malaysians in their daily

lives. Besides those who speak BM as their first language, bilinguals from other ethnic groups usually use BM out of necessity or to fulfill other social reasons. There is an automatic assumption by foreigners that Malaysians speak and communicate with each other in BM, and so, some would be taken aback if they come across a Malaysian who speaks good English, but only knows basic BM or none at all.

The focus is now shifted to one's family, who usually determines the language varieties available to, and language proficiency of an individual (King *et al.*, 2008). A lot of parents are in favour of exposing their children to different languages at a young age in hopes that they will be able to achieve mastery of multiple languages. This is mainly done through education, and there has been an increasing trend of Bumiputera parents sending their children to Chinese schools (Ten, 2016). Likewise, more Chinese parents are choosing international over public schools despite the hefty fees, which to them, is a worthwhile investment for their children's future (Malaysian Digest, 2015). As a result of this, there is a high possibility these children are competent in Mandarin and English, instead of just their mother tongue; and their first language may differ from their parents'. Nevertheless, for some parents, such a decision is made as an attempt to ensure that their children have an equally good command of the said languages, as there will always be an opportunity to use them in various aspects of their lives. For this reason, some parents are adamant to speak in their mother tongue with their children at home, while being assured that their children are getting sufficient practice for the other languages in school. This is common in a Chinese family with parents who are intent on preserving Chinese culture and traditions, and therefore, learning Mandarin is a must. It can also be observed that the number of Chinese parents who feel the compelling need for their children to master the English language has increased, as they are even more aware about the importance of being well-versed in the international language that could broaden their children's prospects in the future. Consequently, children gain native-like fluency and this causes some of them to be at risk of losing their mother tongue and hinders them from becoming fully skilled in other languages. This also rings true for the younger generation who show a higher tendency to

watch English programs and movies, listen to English songs, and read English books and newspapers.

With regard to translanguaging practices among the speakers, it could possibly be present in some interactions, although the frequency of code-switching may be greater on many occasions. This is also reflected in the available literature on both subjects, where code-switching researches that have been carried out in Malaysia are quite extensive, whereas there are almost no studies on translanguaging, not even in classroom settings, which make up the majority of the researches done in other contexts (Creese and Blackledge, 2010; García (with Makar, Starcevic, Terry), 2011; Sayer, 2013; Nambisan, 2014; Vaish and Subhan, 2015; Alam *et al.*, 2016).

## 3.7   Linguistic hybridity

Another notion that needs to be touched on here is linguistic hybridity, which concerns the blending of bilinguals' languages and cultures (Anchimbe, 2007, cited in Wong *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, as (Wong *et al.*, 2012) points out, those whose first language is English could be thought of as linguistic hybrids because 1) they do not have the same linguistic repertoire as their parents; 2) they identify with more than one culture; 3) their languages are employed depending on the situation they are in. This is applicable to some of the participants in my study, and their cases are briefly delineated as follows:

a) B's first language is English, but she also speaks in Hokkien and Hakka when with her family and relatives. She is adaptable to her interlocutors, such as how she made an effort to learn Sarawak Malay because it is the common and dominant language used by her good friends. Even though she is a Chinese, she has friends of different ethnicities and celebrates their festivals with them.

b) J was brought up in an English-speaking environment, and to ensure that he was exposed to Mandarin, his mother insisted that he attend a Chinese-medium school. Having received his education in Chinese for six

years in primary school, and in the early years of secondary school has helped J built a solid foundation in Mandarin. Even so, J has always preferred the English language, and this includes his reading materials and the movies he watches. He also speaks mostly in English at home, but occasionally switches to Mandarin or Foochow when he is conversing with his parents. At work, his language use is more diverse – BM is spoken with some of his colleagues and patients and, along with that, other Chinese varieties like Hokkien, as well as English.

c) X grew up with English, but her language choice is determined by her interlocutors; it could be the language that both parties are used to using or what her interlocutors are more comfortable with. Not having had the opportunity to master Mandarin at a younger age, she plans to pick it up in the future as she recognises the value of the language. As a Foochow, she only has a basic command of the language, but her love of Foochow food acts as a marker of her Foochow identity.


## 3.8   Chapter summary

This chapter has briefly covered Sarawak's geography, demographics, history, languages and language policy, and the way languages are used in different aspects of bilinguals' lives in Kuching; all of which are important in understanding my participants' language behaviours. Having provided the relevant background information, Chapter 4 focuses on details relating to the design of my research and the procedures involved.

## Chapter 4.  Methodology

### 4.1  Introduction

This chapter starts off with the research focus and questions; followed by the research paradigm, namely interpretivism; the ethnographic approach; data collection methods such as participant observation, audio recording, focus group, and the use of questionnaires; data collection, and analysis procedures; the Markedness Model; validity and reliability; reflexivity; ethics, particularly informed consent and privacy; and the methodological issues that were encountered.

All of the above have been included as they are items that concern my research design, they can assist in explaining the process by which data is collected and analysed, and they also cover important issues that need to be dealt with when doing a research.

### 4.2  Focus of the study

My study concentrates on social aspects of interaction that takes place among close-knit groups that can be found in any society, specifically among family and friends. In other words, emphasis is on the way languages are used, when discussing different topics with various interlocutors, and in particular situations. By conducting this study, insights can be gained about the ways participants' present themselves as they interact with one another in informal settings. Code-switching in particular, and translanguaging are looked at, as Malaysian bilinguals utilise these sophisticated skills to communicate with other speakers (David, 2003; Kow, 2003). With extensive research undertaken on institutional code-switching in Malaysia (Don, 2003; Jan, 2003; Ariffin and Husin, 2011; Azlan and Narasuman, 2013), and in other countries (Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain, 2005; Üstünel and Seedhouse, 2005; Hobbs *et al.*, 2010), the significance of my research lies in studying the language use patterns of different ethnic groups in Sarawak on more intimate, non-institutional and informal levels. On that note, researchers who have explored speakers' code-switching patterns have been conducted in various contexts (Poplack, 1988; Bentahila and Davies, 1995; Treffers-Daller, 1998; Wei, 1998). In each of these studies, the

tendency has been to consider only two languages whereby two groups of bilinguals were studied; and it mostly focused on form. My study, however, centres on three main ethnicities (Chinese, Iban, and Malay), involves the usage of up to five languages, and it aims to better understand Sarawakians' language use patterns that emerge as a result of the code-switching phenomenon and translanguaging practice. Although the size of the sample is quite small, it would be safe to presume that the reported patterns are generalisable to Malaysians as a whole, and even to most of the previous researches carried out elsewhere. This is acknowledging the fact that even though some circumstances of language use differ from one social group to another, it is highly likely that the patterns they fall under are quite similar to each other.

## 4.3   Research questions

Bearing in mind the focus of the research, specific research questions have been set, and they are as follows:

1.  What are the circumstances in which language use occurs?

2.  What language use tendencies can be revealed from informal talk among East Malaysians in non-institutional settings?

3.  How is affiliation expressed through one's use of language(s)?

4.  What can this tell us about East Malaysians' sense of 'affiliation'?

With these research questions, I aim to obtain a more detailed picture of my participants' connections as individuals who make up and live together in a multi-ethnic community, by looking at the way they interact with one another in their everyday lives.

## 4.4   Research paradigm

All research is informed by particular perspectives held by the researchers within their disciplines, and these are called paradigms. They constitute ways of seeing the world, interpreting what is seen, and deciding what are important to document

(LeCompte and Schensul, 1999). Here, the focus is directed towards interpretivism, or the interpretive paradigm.

### 4.4.1  The interpretive paradigm

Under this paradigm, shared constructs and meanings are seen as 'situated', which means that they are located in or affected by the individual and his or her circumstances (including: social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, age and gender). A distinction can be seen between positivists and interpretivists, where the former tend to work on the basis of fixed categories, while the latter tend to orient towards local meanings. In addition, meaning tends to be constructed through interaction, best understood when researchers participate in their participants' lives in order to observe interaction processes as they occur (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999).

Interpretivism is well-suited for my research as the findings are derived from my participants' interaction as it happens in real-time. Nothing is predetermined in advance (i.e. lack of researcher control), and new revelations and a greater clarity about speakers' language patterns can be acquired by studying the data that have been gathered. In my case, entering the field with my own views and knowledge of the phenomenon was inevitable as I grew up in the bilingual community under study (refer to Reflexivity in 4.11); but that said, I try to keep an open mind whenever working with my participants. By doing so, there was a possibility of discovering something new and significant as they used communication strategies to convey their meanings and messages to others. Furthermore, besides participant observation, I used multiple data collection methods like audio recording, focus group, and questionnaires, which could assist in painting a clearer picture of the phenomenon at hand.

### 4.5  Methodological approach

For the purpose of my research, I will be using an ethnographic approach, which is defined by Brewer (2000, p. 10) as:

… the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher

participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning imposed on them externally.

Ethnography, a descriptive account of what traditionally was a non-Western community or culture, originated from anthropology in the nineteenth century and was a handmaiden to colonialism. Ethnographic fieldwork subsequently became an essential cornerstone of anthropology. Furthermore, some research strands within the Western sociology, such as the community study movement, made use of ethnography, among the other approaches that were utilized. From the 1920s to the 1950s, an approach that somewhat resembled anthropological research in studying human social life was developed by sociologists at the University of Chicago. Their interest was particularly on how the developing urban ecologies shaped the range of the different life patterns that were discovered in the city. Following this was the spread of the forms of sociological work across all kinds of sub-fields of the discipline and into other disciplines, and also their migration to Europe and other parts of the world, with the United States as the starting point; and all of these took place from the 1960s onwards. Additionally, more anthropologists began to conduct their studies in both rural areas and urban locales within the Western societies. In another relevant development, cultural studies rose as an area of inquiry that was different from but overlapped with anthropology and sociology, in the latter half of the twentieth century. The later decades saw the further spread of ethnography, for instance into psychology and human geography (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

This approach was chosen because of its nature that fits my study of Malaysian bilinguals who come from different backgrounds, and their complex use of language. Being born and raised in a multi-ethnic country like Malaysia, there is much one can learn about citizens' language behaviour by looking at their social environment. In addition, participant observation is a vital component of ethnography as it allows one to assume a position where one can observe and ask questions of a comparative and analytical nature, while at the same time drawing on the insider's knowledge and experiences (Murchison, 2010), as a member of the society being researched. This makes it an approach that is appropriate for my data collection. The emphasis is placed on the emic perspective, which refers to 'the insider's view of reality' (Fetterman, 2008, p. 249), and it is of principal importance in efforts to understand how people see the world around them (Fetterman, 2008). Here, an insider is someone who belongs to the group and is familiar with the way languages

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are used in their community. Moreover, when it comes to writing up ethnography, it is done in the form of an interpretive and explanatory story regarding a group of people and their sociality, culture and behaviours; and this is based on data that have been systematically gathered and analysed (Madden, 2010).

On the whole, ethnography was a suitable approach as it enabled me to be part of and understand the way my participants interact with one another in their daily lives by studying them in close proximity. That way, I had the opportunity to watch them communicate in their specific social roles and 'natural' environments, which could reveal much more in comparison to carrying out interviews.

## 4.6 Data collection instruments

In order to investigate the questions, appropriate tools should be employed to ensure that the needed data is collected for analysis, and subsequently for the discussion of my findings.

### 4.6.1 Participant observation

My research looks at two groups, made up of nine participants in total. One of the groups is my own family, while the other group consists of good friends who have known each other for more than five years.

Different researchers have explained participant observation in various ways, but perhaps two quotes which illustrate this quite well are by Fetterman (1998, pp. 34-35) who states, 'participation observation combines participation in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data'. As for Bernard (2006, p. 344), he puts it a little differently by saying that it 'involves immersing yourself in a culture and learning to remove yourself every day from that immersion so you can intellectualize what you've seen and heard, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly'.

Bernard (2006) lists five reasons for using participant observation:

1. It gives researchers access to different types of data.
2. It decreases the chances of participants behaving differently when they know that they are being observed.

3. It helps researchers to come up with relevant questions to be asked in interviews and surveys.
4. It helps researchers to understand what is happening in a culture and to speak confidently about the data.
5. Some research questions cannot be adequately addressed by other data collection methods.
6. It's humanistic and puts people before numbers.

Therefore, it should be clear why non-participant observation is not considered for my study as the researcher using this method tends to take on a more distant role, which defeats the whole purpose of closely observing my participants' language behaviours.

### 4.6.2 Audio recording

For the study of a phenomenon like code-switching, capturing naturally occurring talk is of paramount importance to the researcher. In doing so, a good voice recorder is essential, and this instrument has been chosen mainly because the recordings will serve as valuable evidence as findings, and can be replayed at any time and as many times as needed by the researcher. Nevertheless, there exists a potential disadvantage of intrusiveness if the participants are fully aware of the recorder's presence nearby. It can be an unnerving experience for them, so it might help to give the participants a head start to proceed with their activity as usual. As they become more involved and engrossed in the conversation, only then will the researcher start the recording. In spite of all that, this did not affect the research as the participants were comfortable in their surroundings and the company they were with. There is no fixed duration of time for my participants' recordings, but they would normally last for around an hour or so.

### 4.6.3 Focus group

A focus group is akin to a group interview that usually involves a minimum of four participants, and is run by the researcher, who acts as the moderator or facilitator. Typically used to explore a specific topic in depth, the researcher using this method is especially interested in the interaction between the participants as a group (Bryman, 2012).

In a focus group, the participants are given the opportunity to probe each other's views, and in the process of doing so, a wide variety of opinions in connection with the issues being discussed could be elicited. Also, views can be challenged and arguments may ensue, but this will be beneficial to the researcher who may wind up with more realistic accounts of the participants' thoughts. What is more, considering how the researcher takes a less active role in focus group discussions, this creates an opening for the participants to bring significant issues forward. Besides that, setting up a focus group allows the researcher to study how members of a group make sense of and construct meanings together (Bryman, 2012).

A focus group with my eight participants was conducted only towards the end of the data collection process. By interviewing them after the observations, recordings, and preliminary analysis, I was able to pick up on significant instances and to formulate my interview questions carefully. During the session, my participants told me more about their background, their language use in particular situations and with people from different social circles, and their language preference for certain activities. Following that, I highlighted some of their conversational patterns, and they enlightened me about them. That said, I continued to maintain close contact with my participants via email and WhatsApp throughout the analysis process as I carried out an in-depth analysis of the data. This enabled me to clarify particular details or new things that cropped up regarding their code-switching behaviours. It is imperative to mention that an updated version of the transcript was provided to my participants each time, for them to refer to and to make comments on.

### 4.6.4 Questionnaire

The focus of my questionnaire is on my respondents' language background, use, and attitudes. My target audience is anyone above 18 years of age, and he or she has to be a Malaysian.

The purpose of a questionnaire is to "elicit factual and attitudinal information from the respondent concerning their social characteristics, present and past behaviour as reported by the respondent, standards of behaviour as seen by the respondent, and attitudes, beliefs and reasons for action in relation to the matter under investigation" **(Bulmer, 2004, p. XIV)**.

Seeing how the questions can cover a wider area than questions asked during an interview, the main advantage of using this method is the breadth of information that it provides, which could also serve as background data. Moreover, quantity-wise, it gives me a lot of data; and is a basis for comparison with qualitative data, where for my study, it gives evidence of widespread multilingualism as normal. Additionally, respondents may be more forthcoming about what is being shared with the researcher (Bryman, 2008), due to the fact that they are given time to answer the questions, as opposed to being probed in an interview. A paper-based survey was the preferred choice over online survey because not all of my respondents are computer savvy, and the return rate is normally higher if the respondents had a copy of the questionnaire to complete.

There are, however, drawbacks that a researcher is usually cautious about. One concern about the use of questionnaires is the risk of missing data. Although it is my intention for my respondents to complete the questionnaire there and then, it might not be convenient for some and they will request for a copy to be taken away with them. In the event this happens, the researcher needs to send follow-up emails to respondents whose questionnaires have not been returned after an expected time. In addition, open-ended questions were included as they gave the respondents full liberty to state their opinions without being restricted by a set of given options. Having said that, with the use of open-ended questions, the researcher has to accept the answers provided by the respondents without being able to discuss the matter in detail with them. For this reason, questionnaires can often be used together with other methods. By employing questionnaires alone, the researcher can only get a rough idea of a particular subject or phenomenon, but when combined with interviews, for example, the amount of data gathered could provide extremely useful insights. From the respondents' perspective, yet another disadvantage of questionnaires is the mere thought of filling one out, and that is enough to put them off. Thus, the questionnaire should be written with the research objectives and respondents in mind, which means that it has to be clear, straight to the point and not too lengthy (Bryman, 2008).

## 4.7 Data collection procedures

The data was collected in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, which started off with participant observation and audio recording, and focus group was held at a later time.

### 4.7.1 Participant observation and audio recording

This was the stage where I observed and recorded my family and the group of friends. Observations were conducted in the morning and afternoon, and the location was at home and in a café. As a participant observer in any social setting, it is common practice for the researcher to take field notes, which are 'detailed, non-judgmental, concrete descriptions of what has been observed' (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 98). As the researcher stays close to the setting and watch the participants under study, he or she will jot down names, figures, impressions, short quotes and so on. At the end of the day, these notes will prove to be very useful in assisting the researcher to recall what took place during the respective events (Madden, 2010). For my study, things noted were in relation to what would be useful to answer my research questions. The simplest examples would be how quickly and naturally my participants move between or across languages depending on who their interlocutor was at that point in time, and how language choices are made to achieve their communication goals, which is also a reflection of how they affiliate with their group members. My participants had already been informed about the use of a recorder during the preliminary stage of my research. Hence, at a mutually convenient time for my participants, the recordings took place at locations that are familiar and comfortable for them to interact like they do on other days.

Also, I was aware about my role as an observer, which might influence the way my participants acted. In order for my participants to get used to my presence, where possible, I observed them more than once; but in all cases, I became a part of the social group where being accepted as a member was easier as I took on more intimate roles, such as a daughter, sister or a friend. For that reason, it is evident that my own talk was used as data alongside with my participants.

With regard to recordings, due to the fact that my research was conducted in informal settings, background noise affected the quality of some of my recordings. Another difficulty that I experienced was the volume of participants' voices that were

not always consistent; one moment they were talking clearly and the next, their voices were soft and muffled, which was sometimes also caused by overlapping talk.

### 4.7.2 Focus group

After the family and friends had been observed and recorded, focus groups were conducted with the participants in person, at home and in a café. Usually, I was the one who started off the discussion, and it was either mainly based on the transcripts, where highlighted parts of the conversation formed the central points of discussion or simply enquiries that came up from my observation about my participants' language patterns and behaviour, during which my participants had the opportunity to come together as a group to talk about the way they used languages and other related matters. By using this method, the participants were in control of expressing their views without much intervention, and on my part, invaluable information could be gathered from the participants' interaction with one another. So far, only one face-to-face focus group session has been done with each group, which lasted for more than an hour.

### 4.7.3 Questionnaire

Finally, was the use of questionnaires, which consisted of closed and open-ended questions for three main sections that included the respondents' language background, use and attitudes towards the ability to alternate between languages. The distribution of questionnaires was an ongoing process from the beginning until the end of my fieldwork. They were given out in the form of hard copies to my family, friends, and ex-students; and some of them, in turn, also helped to distribute it to their acquaintances, all of whom were Malaysians from different walks of life. Upon receiving the questionnaire, the respondents were allowed to take it home and completed it in their free time. The completed questionnaires originally covered respondents from East and West Malaysia, but I chose to limit my focus to East Malaysians because of my interest in that context, and rejected the latter.

From my experience, it was not so much about having insufficient respondents to fill out the questionnaires, but it was about getting them to answer all the questions correctly and accordingly. Two problems encountered with this research instrument were, some questions were not answered in an appropriate manner, and some

answers were omitted. As it was not feasible to be with my participants while they completed the questionnaire, there was always a chance that it was not filled in properly, which consequently made it invalid.

## 4.8 Theoretical model

In order to understand my participants' association with one another, a suitable model that looks at their choice of language was chosen. Through the choices made, it could help to paint a bigger picture of their social relation and how tightly knit they are as members of the same community.

### 4.8.1 Markednesss Model

Under this model, 'speakers use their linguistic choices as tools to index for others their perceptions of self, and of rights and obligations (RO) holding between self and others' (Myers-Scotton, 1993a, p. 478). The speakers are goal-oriented actors, who make choices based on the outcomes they would like to achieve, while at the same time acknowledging the normative framework (Myers-Scotton, 1993a). This model was selected mainly because its focus is in line with my research questions which are connected to speakers' linguistic choices. By investigating the choices made in given circumstances, it could throw light on something deeper, such as my participants' bond and affiliation with each other in a narrow and wider context, namely, as a member of a social group, a Sarawakian, and a Malaysian.

An unmarked choice is when a speaker uses an expected form of a language, which indicates that he or she is adhering to the RO set and norms of a particular community. For this reason, speakers normally make unmarked choices in an effort to maintain the RO balance. On the other hand, when a marked choice is made, it is the speaker's way of saying that he or she is taking on a different position from what is expected, and so the marked choice is to index the speaker's negotiation for another position (Myers-Scotton, 1993a). In a multilingual setting like Malaysia, the speakers are not always conscious when making a marked or an unmarked choice at the time of speaking as they speak spontaneously to fulfill a goal. A marked choice, however, might appear obvious to some interlocutors; and in that situation, they might also be aware of the speakers' intention that is signalled by their unexpected choice of language.

Two main criticisms for this model are, firstly, it would be difficult for the researcher to know if a particular language is a marked or an unmarked choice unless one is exposed to the way languages are used in the community. This is made possible if the researcher is using the ethnographic approach, which allows one to assume the role of a participant observer. Through immersion in the social group, researchers will be able to familiarize themselves with the community's norms. Secondly, assumptions about the bilinguals' knowledge and understanding of the language situation need to be made by the researcher, which would then affect how the researcher justifies a phenomenon like code-switching (Nilep, 2006).

In Myers-Scotton's (1993a) article, she argues that code-switching utterances are shaped by social and structural factors, where "grammatical processes designate permissible forms of code-switching; then social processes regulate selection among the range of permissible forms" (p. 476). However, my study only took the social factors into consideration because of the nature of my research, which looks at the participants' social interactions instead of the structure of their speech. Therefore, in my case, the Markedness Model is purely employed to determine if one's switch is marked or unmarked in his or her social group.

## 4.9   Data analysis procedures

This section is primarily about thematic analysis and the step-by-step process of how the data was analysed, which begins with the transcription, all the way up until the presentation of findings. This was done as it is essential to be clear regarding the manner in which the entire analysis was carried out.

### 4.9.1   *Thematic analysis*

Thematic analysis was adopted to analyse my data as it enabled me to identify, analyse, and report the language use patterns of East Malaysians in Borneo. Among some of the advantages of this method of analysis are it can provide a thick description of data, it can highlight the similarities and differences between various ethnic groups (Braun and Clarke, 2006), and it also allows categories to emerge from the data (Saldaña, 2009).

My study takes an inductive approach, which means that it is data-driven and the themes are dependent on what the data reveals (this links to 'interpretivism' in 4.4.1, and 'ethnography' in 4.5). Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase analysis guide is used as a basis for my data analysis process, which consists of five steps and are described as follows.

The first step involved getting familiar with the data that had been gathered, and to do so, the audio-recordings of conversations were transcribed. The data was then read through once, and re-read carefully multiple times, as I highlighted any striking switches. Based on the following extract, they could be (1) the alternation from one language to another, as demonstrated by H who used Mandarin in line 1, and switched to English for "box" in line 4; (2) when a marked choice is made, like how Y used Mandarin in line 7 to respond to H, instead of English, which he is accustomed to using. That is to say, the switches looked at are not parts of speech in particular, neither is the focus on specific intersentential or intrasentential switches.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: *Ni zhe dao jiu hao, hai yao zhe yang pao.*[1] |
| | (Good that you know, still want to run like this.)[2] |
| 2 | Y: But this year, do you know how heavy is that box that I had to carry |
| 3 |    down from my apartment. |
| 4 | H: Max *de* **box** *ha*? |
| | (Max's) |
| 5 | Y: Hmph! |
| 6 | H: *Ni dai ci xiang hui lai ni? Ni zao shang dai ci xiang hui lai?* |
| | (How many boxes did you bring back? How many boxes did you bring |
| |  back this morning?) |
| 7 | Y: **San xiang**. |
| | (Three boxes.) |
| 8 | H: *Ci* k–kilo? |
| | (How many) |
| 9 | Y: Uh… *qi shi, liu shi ba ah*. |
| |     (70, 68.) |
| 10 | H: *Shi meh?* |
| | (Really?) |
| 11 | Y: Yeap. |
| 12 | H: Where is the boxes now? I didn't see. |
| 13 | Y: Outside, outside. |

After that, I considered each switch based in its context, and by utilising what I already know of language use in my community, I stated my rationale for my participants' language choice in the comment boxes in the margins. The line numbers for the highlighted words and phrases were then written next to the names of the respective speakers in my note book as they were items that required clarification and confirmation from my participants. Their 'voice' is vital in providing invaluable insights on bilinguals' language behaviour, and could also increase the validity of my findings.

     Following this, the list of circumstances was produced with the help of my participants. When the transcript was sent to my participants, they were told to think

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[1] *Italics* - Mandarin
[2] (Parentheses) - MT

carefully about their reasons for moving between languages, and that they could accept or reject the reasons which I provided. Upon the return of the transcript, I meticulously perused each of the reasons, and in instances where explanations were given by my participants, they were summarised into a concise phrase. It is very important to pay full attention to the participants' explanations in order not to misinterpret them, and to make sure nothing was missed, as their justifications are not always expressed in a straightforward manner, and at times may consist of two or more conditions.

The third step was where the different circumstances of language use, which act as the primary 'codes', were organised into possible themes. In coming up with the appropriate themes, I compiled all the circumstances in a list. With the list, I was able to look at each circumstance individually and decide on the theme it falls under.

Next, the themes that were identified were reviewed and refined. I started by placing the circumstances under their relevant themes, and checked to make sure that the circumstances fitted well with the main theme. As for themes that were redundant, they were either merged with a similar theme or omitted completely. At first, I inferred seven themes – habit, cause and effect, convenience, functional, linguistic repertoire, efficiency, accommodation and affiliation. However, after some scrutiny, 'functional' was taken out because all the conditions were in fact, included in this category. Thereafter, 'linguistic repertoire' was also discarded as translanguaging could be placed under the 'habit' category, considering how it is the normal mode of communication for bilingual speakers.

The last step involves writing up the report. This is where the complicated story of my data was narrated to the readers so that they know and understand some of the language practices of East Malaysians, and see the importance in conducting this study.

The principal reason why thematic analysis is better suited for my research in relation to approaches such as conversation analysis and grounded research is chiefly due to its flexibility that enables me to adapt it to my ethnographic study and its objectives. Conversation analysis is keen to uncover the structures underlying talk in interaction and how order is achieved through interaction. It is a more rigorous approach that centres on the fine details of talk as it transpires. That said,

conversation analysts would take account of details like pauses and emphases which play very important roles in interaction; and look at features such as turn-taking, adjacency pairs, preference organization, and repair. In addition, this form of analysis can be restrictive for two reasons:

1. It is illegitimate to claim to thoroughly understand a culture, which leads to the attribution of motives and meanings.
2. It is contextual in the sense that understanding is located in the sequences of talk. Therefore, unless the added components of the context, like the speakers' culture and their shared knowledge, are specifically part of the organization of talk, the analyst is refrained from considering them (Bryman, 2012).

Based on the aforementioned, it is clear that conversation analysis is less applicable for my study, as my focus is on *what* my participants' say, rather than *how* they speak. As for grounded theory, it is useful when 'there is little extant knowledge of the issue' (McGhee *et al.*, 2007, p. 339); not to mention, there exists a controversy concerning the literature review, as to whether it should be done before or after data has been collected (McGhee *et al.*, 2007). My study, however, comprises a phenomenon that has been widely researched and a practice that is receiving increased attention. In view of that, I have read up on the subject areas in order to be well-informed about the topics that have been covered, which would help to identify the gap, and allow me to contribute to my field of study.

By using thematic analysis for an ethnographic study, it is vital to have tacit knowledge about the area being studied (Boyatzis, 1998). In this case, there needs to be a good or thorough understanding about Sarawakians and their language backgrounds in order for one to fully comprehend the complexity and uniqueness of the speakers' language behaviour. Boyatzis (1998) also touched on the issue of reliability, when he mentioned that it is important for researchers to be consistent when it comes to recognizing significant parts of their data and coding. What is more, that consistency should apply to other researchers as well, in the event they carry out the same research. This is where the challenge comes in, especially when it concerns people and understanding why they do what they do. Thus, unless one is exposed well to the community under study, there is a high chance that he or she will

perceive the phenomenon at hand differently, if compared to the observations of the original researcher.

Above all, it is crucial for researchers who are doing ethnographic analysis to 'tell it like it is' with a focus on the insider's point of view, which can be done by being with and talking to the participants; while always bearing in mind to analyse well, tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity that arise in interpretations, and resist the temptation to rush to firm conclusions (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

## 4.10 Validity and reliability

In all qualitative research, the issues of validity and reliability need to be addressed in showing the credibility of one's findings. Under this section, internal and external validity and reliability are defined; and where it is possible, what have been done to maximize these in my study will also be explained.

### 4.10.1 Validity

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of findings; with internal validity referring to the extent to which observations and measurements are true representations of a certain reality, and external validity that deals with the degree to which such representations could be compared across groups (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982).

As an effort to maximise the internal validity of my study, I use triangulation, which is a strategy used to cross-validate or cross-check qualitative data. In ethnographic research, triangulation is especially important as there is an expectation for multiple data sources or collection procedures to come together to support a conclusion (Suter, 2012). For my study, this is where the different data sources, namely transcripts, field notes, interviews, and questionnaires are employed. Guided by my research questions, I set out to look for language patterns in transcripts of conversations. To try and establish its significance, I probed my participants during the focus group to elicit more information on their habits and motivation for their language use. Similarly, for their affiliation with one another, the transcripts once again served as the primary source of data as they feature the interactions between my participants, and along with that, I referred to the field notes that have been taken while observing my participants and the questionnaires, particularly the section on

respondents' language use. Not to mention, interviews were essential as they gave me a good opportunity to make enquiries and verify my findings. On top of the sources of data, one imperative technique that I used for triangulation is respondent validation. To quote Bloor (1978, pp. 548-549, cited in Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), it aims to 'establish a correspondence between the sociologist's and the member's view of the member's social world by exploring the extent to which members recognize, give assent to, the judgements of the sociologist'. With my participants, respondent validation was done twice; during the focus groups, where questions were put forth in seeking their clarification and confirmation; and after the analysis had been done, where I shared my findings and my participants either affirmed or rejected them. By doing so, a more thorough validation could be carried out, hence increasing and strengthening the credibility of the findings. The advantage of respondent validation is that the participants who are directly involved in the study may have additional knowledge of the context and access to their own experience of events, which are not accessible to the researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In combination with respondent validation is the use of stimulated recall, which can 'prompt participants to recall thoughts they had while performing a task or participating in an event' (Gass and Mackey, 2000, p. 17). For this to be done, my participants' transcript was sent to them as it can be an effective aid to help them remember the context of their speech, and to relive the situation as it happened then.

External validity, on the other hand, is about generalisation and can pose a problem in ethnographic research, mostly because of the context of the study. Thus, the setting has to be stated explicitly in order to make generalisations. While its focus is narrow, it can have broad relevance; for example, a research of a bilingual community would reveal similar patterns of language use that were found in other bilingual communities.


### 4.10.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to whether studies can be replicated, and by that, it means obtaining similar results as those of a previous study. While external reliability looks at whether independent researchers will come upon the same phenomena or produce like constructs in the same or similar settings; internal reliability is concerned with the degree to which other researchers will match a set of constructs that have been

generated previously, with data in the same way as the original researcher (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982).

Generally, unlike experimental research, the test for reliability is a great challenge in ethnographic research, and this is mainly due to the nature of the research process and data, and the way in which the findings are presented. The former constraint involves studying the complex behaviours of participants in everyday situations that take place in natural settings; so it is therefore not surprising that no ethnographic study can be replicated in the exact same manner, even if the same research methods are used. Nonetheless, an attempt can be made to achieve external reliability by being systematic in the collection and analysis of data, and making sure that the methods used are specified and described thoroughly (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). As for the presentation of findings, it should be written in an informative way and creates an accessible and credible picture of a culture or society (Madden, 2010). Also, it is necessary to mention that the internal reliability of my research may be increased with the use of a voice recorder, as the data can be preserved and other researchers who are allowed access could use it to verify certain important details (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982).

## 4.11 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the 'concern with how the selves and identities of the researcher and the researched affect the research process' (Hertz, 1997 cited in Brewer, 2000, p. 126). In ethnographic studies, the researcher is seen as a research instrument (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), which means that he or she is a vital part of the whole process and product, and this makes it impossible to fully detach oneself from a particular study (Horsburgh, 2002). Thus, in understanding how the interpretation of data may be influenced by the researcher, her profile and position in this study are explained as follows.

### 4.11.1 The researcher and position in the study

I am a 34-year-old female and I obtained my Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) in Canada in 2006. I mainly speak English, Chinese and BM, and I am interested in the language behaviour of East Malaysians from Sarawak, Malaysia; more specifically, their language use tendencies, the

circumstances of language use, the different ways of expressing one's affiliation, and the implications of the speakers' affiliation.

In 2009, I pursued my MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL in the UK, and my research focus was on the code-switching habits of Malaysians, where I explored the prevalence of this phenomenon among citizens, and their rationale and social motivations for doing so. This stimulated my desire to learn more about the speakers' language practices and the ways they identify with each other.

As for my position in the study, there were no major complications and I was able to blend well with my participants. Although I entered the field as a research student from an overseas university, I assured my participants that I was also a participant like them, in that I mingled and interacted as part of the group. On top of that was the fact that they were already familiar with me as someone from their social group, and as a fellow East Malaysian. Having grown up in the local community is especially beneficial as that gives me an insider status, which consequently helps me to relate my knowledge to the study's findings. That said, carrying out this study in my hometown and with participants who I am well-acquainted with was more reason for me to remember that my perspective as someone who had been raised in the community itself, was but one perspective (Madden, 2010).

It is important to mention that the 'power' in this research lies with my participants. This is evident from the beginning of the data collection process, where the meeting time and venue were fixed by them, and they continued to play a central role in the data analysis phase by sharing insights on their language behaviour. Furthermore, my participants were permitted to remove themselves from the study without the need to provide reasons.

## 4.12 Ethics

In all research, the ethical issues must always be taken into consideration; and they are particularly critical where live participants or subjects are involved. The researchers play an important role, as it is their duty to ensure that the participants are protected from harm while carrying out their research. For my study, two issues that have been discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) will be considered; and they are informed consent and privacy.

### 4.12.1 Informed consent

Under this principle, it is imperative for the researcher to provide all the needed information to his or her participants in order for them to decide whether or not to participate in a study (Bryman, 2012). As I work with my participants, I will be an overt participant observer, but even so, researchers tend to disclose only certain information to their participants. This may be due to the participants' lack of interest in the study, and it is also to minimise the effect on people's behaviour that will invalidate any conclusions obtained later on (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

Having said that, the participants' consent should be acquired before proceeding with the study. Here, a participant information sheet was given to each of my participants, and it contains the essential information they need to know before a decision is made. Attached together is the consent form (see Appendix 1: Consent form), which the participants were required to sign after acknowledging that their participation was voluntary, they understood the contents of the information sheet, they had the opportunity to ask questions, and they could withdraw from the research at any time.

Apart from making sure that my participants are well informed of the nature of my research and the implications of their participation at the start, it enables me to keep a signed copy of the consent form as a safeguard against any concerns that may be raised by the parties involved (Bryman, 2012).

### 4.12.2 Privacy

With regard to ethnographic studies, there is a frequent concern that things that were said or done in private are made public, and it is sometimes feared that this may bring on undesirable long-term consequences (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

This then, leads us to the issues of confidentiality and anonymity. At the beginning of my study, I explained to my participants that their conversations would be recorded and no one else would have access to the data other than my supervisors and myself. Not to mention, the data would be stored on a password-protected computer for five years, after which, it would be discarded. As for the transcripts, only the participants' initials would be used to keep their identities anonymous.

## 4.13 Methodological issues

The main issue that I encountered from using ethnography was about keeping a 'safe' distance with my participants when in the field. It was about finding a balance between working closely with, but not too closely that it made the participants uncomfortable in their own natural setting. Having originated from the same hometown as my participants who were already familiar with me gave me an insider's advantage to blend in and be a part of the social group, while still maintaining my position as a researcher who was interested in my participants' language behaviours. Although my participants represent three of the most populous ethnic groups in Sarawak, specifically Chinese, Iban and Malay, I hoped it would provide insights into East Malaysians use of multiple languages in the same stretch of discourse.

Akin to the types of ethnographic participation employed by Madden (2010) for his fieldwork, namely immersion and step-in-step-out ethnography; mine too, used a combination of both as I studied my family and the group of friends at home and outside the comforts of home, at a time when everyone was gathered together. It is important to note that step-in-step-out ethnography is defined as 'short-term and/ or not co-resident, particularly as ethnographers engage in more multi-sited fieldwork, or engage subjects that are closer to their own natal society' (Madden, 2010, p. 80). Being aware of the fact that my participants were used to communicating with me without the additional role of a researcher, I observed their ongoing interactions in the background in as unobtrusive a manner as possible. Even though my participants were still mindful of my presence, they were able to ease into the conversation quite quickly, and accepted me as a member of their group by including me in their conversation.

## 4.14 Chapter summary

Chapter 4 is centred on the focus of my research and the methodological approaches that are used in this thesis. It is based on these that my analysis in the subsequent chapter is conducted, from a sociolinguistic perspective.

**Chapter 5.    East Malaysians' language use: a sociolinguistic perspective**

**5.1    Introduction**

One way to gain greater insights into the relationships among individuals in a particular community is by looking at the way languages are used amongst them. In a multicultural society, especially, language plays a major role in various aspects of their lives; and it also reflects the ways in which they identify themselves with members of their ethnic groups, and as a Malaysian. Some of the languages spoken are unique and only comprehensible to the citizens; such as Malaysian English (as mentioned in 2.5.2.1), which is more commonly known as Manglish, and Sarawak Malay (refer to 3.3.3) that may be challenging to most West Malaysians because of the different word formation and pronunciation.

While numerous research have been carried out on the functions of code-switching (refer to Section 1.2.2*)*, very little have been done on language use patterns and the expression of affiliation through the use of this communicative strategy; not to mention one that involves the simultaneous alternate use of two to five languages. Having said that, the few studies in Malaysia that have made mention of switching patterns are mostly in the educational setting (Ariffin and Rafik-Galea, 2009; Muthusamy, 2010).

This chapter reports on an analysis of East Malaysians' language use, with reference to the use of different languages in the same conversation, as discussed in 1.2. It explores how the speakers move across languages to achieve their communicative purposes, which in turn, could shed light on their language behaviours and sense of 'Malaysianness'.

The findings feature the circumstances in which language use occurs for the participants, the patterns derived from the use of language, the ways affiliation are expressed, and what those further imply. All these could be better understood with the assistance of two groups of bilingual speakers – a family and three good friends, and this chapter starts off with a brief summary of their linguistic backgrounds.

It is imperative to note that the data in this (and the Discussion) chapter have been arranged in the most logical order possible in hopes that the data can be presented in a coherent manner. In my study where one of the key focus is the speakers' language use patterns, valid themes can only surface after the circumstances of language use have been obtained. Without knowing when my participants tend to code-switch or translanguage, there would be no basis to build said patterns on. The speakers' affiliation is another important component of my research, and their ways of associating with each other emerge and become clearer from the patterns that have been formed. Following all these, I was then able to look at the deeper implications of my participant's language choice and use; hence the engaging discussion of identity at the end of the chapter. Based on this, the point that is made is that it would not have been possible to investigate the subsequent research question (see 4.3) if the former has not been examined.

## 5.2   Language backgrounds: introduction

Before looking at the data, it is essential to provide some background information of the participants. Their names have been anonymised, and their main personal details are in the table below. The purpose of the information is to paint a very general picture of the participants' linguistic background (i.e. birthplace, ethnicity, languages spoken, and language choice factors), which would indirectly explain their language choice and use.

### 5.2.1   Family

The first group that will be analysed is my own family of six. They were included because of the multiple languages in our repertoires, and due to how we regularly alternate between those languages, especially when our parents are interacting with us. The factors that distinguish us are our upbringing and languages used, particularly where my brothers and myself are concerned. In a general sense, the language of the home and school for children of an average Chinese family is usually Mandarin; and for some, a specific Chinese language is used when with one's family. Conversely for us, we were raised in an English-dominant environment by our parents, and coupled with the use of English at school, we were able to attain mastery of the language. On that note, being an intimate member of the group allows

me to obtain answers on my family's language behaviour; which would also give us a chance to reflect on and make sense of the way we use languages in our daily lives.

The extracts that were taken from the conversation among family members that took place at home during our reunion lunch. It was the afternoon of 19th November, 2014; and my brother and sister-in-law were back in town for a short vacation. Mealtimes, especially dinner, are something my family always looks forward to because these are the only times when we could give each other our undivided attention after a long, hectic day. However, the chance to do so does not come by often as we live in different cities, and we normally reunite during festive occasions like Chinese New Year and Christmas.

The bond shared by our family enables us to be very forthcoming with each other; and when we get together, we take our time to catch up on each other's lives, and talk about anything that comes to mind. Whenever we engage in conversation, it is the norm for us to use different languages, namely Chinese, English, and Foochow. These languages are part of our repertoires, albeit with varied proficiency levels, and it is only expected of polyglots like us to employ our available linguistic resources when communicating with others. An exception would be where we come in contact with a monolingual, where only the monolingual's language is spoken.

| Speaker | Sex | Birthplace | Ethnicity | Languages | Language choice factors |
|---------|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| **W** | Male | Sarikei [see Figure 3-1] | Chinese | Foochow (L1), English, BM, Mandarin | - Interlocutor (relationship, ethnicity, languages, education level) |
| **H** | Female | Sibu [see Figure 3-1] | Chinese | Foochow (L1), English, Hokkien, Mandarin | - Interlocutor (ethnicity, languages, education level) |
| **Y** | Male | Kuching [see Figure 3-1] | Chinese | English (L1), Foochow, BM, Mandarin | Interlocutor and setting |
| **C** | Female | Kuala Lumpur | Chinese | English (L1), BM, Mandarin | - Interlocutor (ethnicity and region) |
| **X** | Female | Kuching | Chinese | English (L1), Foochow, BM, Mandarin | - Interlocutor (relationship, ethnicity, languages) |
| **J** | Male | Kuching | Chinese | English (L1), BM, Mandarin | - Interlocutor (ethnicity, ease of communication) |

*Table 5-1: Summary of family's language backgrounds*

### 5.2.2 Friends

The next group features three good friends who have known each other for more than five years, and they spend quite a lot of time together outside of University. Their close relationship that entails sharing personal details of their lives with one another and being very comfortable in each other's company keeps them bound together even after they have completed their tertiary education and started their careers. Their basic details are as shown in Table 5-2, and it can be seen that they are made up of a more ethnically diverse group. It is also for this precise reason that this group was chosen for this study. Even though these speakers are of entirely different ethnicities (Chinese, Iban and Malay) (see Section 3.3), it is fascinating how their main 'agreed upon' language of communication is Sarawak Malay. This implies that at least one of the three friends is making a real effort to adapt to the group by becoming familiar with the language used by the majority. Based on the conversation, it is found that B tries to adapt the most, which she also reaffirmed in the interview as she stated that she was not very proficient in Sarawak Malay prior to meeting N and T. This is because she did not use the language much back then, but could converse in it fairly fluently in the present as she uses it all the time when she is with N and T.

Unlike the family group, the interview with the speakers' reveals that their choice of language is affected not only by the interlocutor's ethnicity, but also by what the interlocutor is more comfortable with, and the closeness of their relationship.

Their conversation was recorded during their meetup for afternoon drinks at one of their favourite cafés. It encompassed multiple topics, and they could be seen alternating between English and Sarawak Malay.

| Speaker | Sex | Birthplace | Ethnicity | Languages | Language choice - factors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **N** | Male | Limbang, eastern enclave of Sarawak between Brunei and Sabah [see Figure 3-1] | Iban | Standard Malay (L1), Sarawak Malay, English | - Interlocutor (ethnicity)<br>- Setting |
| **B** | Female | Kuching Capital city [see Figure 3-1] | Chinese | English (L1), Standard Malay, Sarawak Malay | - Interlocutor (ease of communication) |
| **T** | Female | Miri Northeast corner of Sarawak [see Figure 3-1] | Malay | English (L1), Standard Malay, Sarawak Malay | - Interlocutor (intimacy) |

*Table 5-2: Summary of friends' language backgrounds*

In relation to my participants' language use, there is an inconsistency between one's ethnicity and first language (for example, speakers B, C, J, X and Y are of Malaysian Chinese descent but are native speakers of English). For this reason, information from the survey data have been included in the following table to show that such complexity is common among many East Malaysian bilinguals.

As seen in Table 5-3, out of the 99 respondents who took part in the survey, Chinese make up the majority with 38 people speaking in Mandarin, and 15 using various Chinese varieties (Foochow, Hokkien, Hakka, and Teochew). Meanwhile, the remaining 19 are speakers of English, and one respondent uses Iban as his or her

first language. Besides that, there are eight Malay respondents in total, with five of them speaking in Sarawak and Standard Malay, and the other three using English. The third biggest ethnic group that participated in this survey are Iban. Out of the six, three say they use the Iban language, while two speak in Standard Malay, and one, in Bidayuh.

| | | | | | | | L1 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | English | Foochow | Hakka | Hokkien | Iban | Mandarin | Sarawak Malay | Standard Malay | Teochew | Other | Bidayuh | Melanau | Total |
| **Ethnicity** | Bidayuh | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| | Bidayuh Chinese | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Chinese | 19 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 73 |
| | Iban | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| | Iban Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Indian | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | Lun Bawang | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Malay | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| | Malay Melanau | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Melanau | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Total | | 27 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 38 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 99 |

*Table 5-3: Respondents' ethnicity and first language*

Referring to Table 5-3, the focus is now directed to Mandarin, as it is the first language spoken by the highest number of respondents (38 people), to provide a brief illustration of how one's language use could differ for different people. This could possibly signify speakers' identification or association with their social groups (see Gee's (1990) definition of 'Discourse' under 6.2.4.7).

As shown in the table below, the two groups of interlocutors comprise of the respondents' family and their school peers. In comparison to the latter, a wider range of languages is spoken within the family group. Bearing in mind that Mandarin is the primary language for all these respondents, it is found that most of them use that language to interact with their family members. Following that is the use of Mandarin + Foochow by five respondents; Mandarin + English, Mandarin + Hakka, and Foochow by three respondents each; while two reported that they converse in Mandarin + Hokkien. The rest of the language sets are each spoken by a single respondent, where up to three languages are used (Mandarin + Hokkien + Teochew, Mandarin + English + Foochow, and Mandarin + English + Hakka); two languages (Mandarin + Teochew); and a sole language (Hokkien).

A different situation is observed with the peers, where in spite of Mandarin being the respondents' first language, 15 of them communicate with their peers in English; with Mandarin, and Mandarin + English ranking second with ten respondents

each. Lastly, there are also reports by two separate respondents on the use of other languages, Mandarin + English + Foochow, and Mandarin + BM + English.

| | Mandarin | Mandarin English | Mandarin Foochow | Foochow | Mandarin Hokkien Teochew | Mandarin English Foochow | Mandarin English Hakka | Mandarin Teochew | Mandarin Hakka | Hokkien | Mandarin Hokkien |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Family** | 17 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

| | English | Mandarin | Mandarin English | Mandarin English Foochow | Mandarin BM English | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student peers** | 15 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | |

*Table 5-4: Respondents' language use with their family and school peers*

## 5.3 Circumstances of language use: introduction

20 language use circumstances have been discovered from the family and friendship group. With most of the circumstances found in both groups, a mix of extracts has been used to exemplify the respective circumstances. On the contrary, circumstances that only feature a single group means that it has not come up in the other group's data. It is important to note that this is by no means an exhaustive list, but it gives an indication of the wide-ranging language use situations that may arise from a bilingual community.

Before looking at the extracts in this chapter, it is necessary to explain how they have been set out. Using Extract 5-1 as an example, it is divided into two columns; on the left are the line numbers, and next to it, are the letters that identify the different speakers. As each extract consists of two or more languages, those that are not English have been italicised, and these also include discourse markers. Moreover, particular words or phrases with a central focus have been highlighted in bold, while the plain texts provide important and useful contexts. Additionally, meaningful translations are furnished for non-English utterances, and the notation symbols are taken from Antaki (2017) (refer to Glossary).

### 5.3.1 The norm

With multiple languages at their disposal, bilinguals tend to have a habit of saying certain words or phrases in a particular language. Very often, the bilinguals automatically go with what they are already used to, provided their interlocutors would have no difficulty in understanding them.

The first extract features a conversation between our mother, my older brother and myself; and this was selected because it gives an example of how speakers might switch when it involves something they are accustomed to. For Chinese families, this is sometimes evident from the way the younger generation address the elders politely, by using specific designated terms; and for our family, this is done in either Foochow or Mandarin.

*Extract 5-1*

| 1 | Y: Are you going to cook your *biling* now? |
|----|---|
| 2 | H: Now *a*? You want to cook now? |
| 3 | Y: Or later. |
| 4 | X: *Bu yong* la *ni you*= |
|    | (No need la do you=) |
| 5 | H: Tonight? |
| 6 | X: =*shi jian meh*? |
|    | (=have time?) |
| 7 | Y: Tonight? But= |
| 8 | H: *Wo jiu wo jiu shi mei you shi jian oh*. |
|    | (That's why I don't have time oh.) |
| 9 | Y: =but I thought that tonight we are going to= |
| 10 | H: Ya *la*. But… |
| 11 | Y: =Ah G **nerng ngu**'s house to eat. |
|    | (uncle's) |

In this extract, Y was asking H if she wished to cook a vegetable dish called *'midin'*. As they were contemplating this, X asked H disapprovingly in Mandarin if she had time (lines 4 and 6), and H reaffirmed the fact that she was busy by using the same language in line 8. The focus is on the switch in line 11 when Y switched to Foochow to address Uncle G. Personally, Y only has a basic command of Foochow, but for the senior generation of his extended family, Foochow is their mother tongue. Conversations with the seniors are normally held in Mandarin for ease of communication; but Foochow is used when addressing seniors as a sign of respect and solidarity, and it creates a sense of intimacy among all of them.

Unlike how it is more general and straightforward to address relatives in English (for e.g., aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather); Foochow and Mandarin provide a more specific way to differentiate relatives from the father and mother's side, and their positions in the family hierarchy. The ways to address respective relatives are listed in the following table:

| Family member | Father's side | | Mother's side | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Foochow | Mandarin | Foochow | Mandarin |
| Grandfather | Goong goong | Gong gong | Ngiung | Wai gong |
| Grandmother | Ma ma | Po po | Ngiema | Wai po |
| Uncle | Ba pak (older); ka ka (younger) | Bo bo (older); shu shu (younger) | Nerng ngu | Da jiu (older); xiao jiu (younger) |
| Aunt | Gu gu | Da gu (older); xiao gu (younger) | Yi yi | Da yi (older); xiao yi (younger) |

*Table 5-5: Ways of addressing relatives in Foochow and Mandarin*

Considering how Y's first language is English, H used English whenever she responded to Y; and switched to Mandarin in response to X's question as that is the main language usually spoken by the both of them. Therefore from their language use, it could signify that H, Y, and X affiliate with each other.

In Extract 5-2, B reminisced about the time when T did not remember to call her via Skype. The switch that is looked at specifically here is in line 3, where B started off by using a Sarawak Malay phrase (*'Tapi ya lah ya'*), which indicates that she was speaking in a playful manner. This phrase does not have an exact translation in English, but its rough equivalent is 'But yeah'. When employed in this context, it is almost never used in English because it might bring about a different effect from what the speaker intended, which is a lighthearted effect. The rationale for choosing this part of the conversation is because it features a commonplace phrase that one might use or come across in a friendly setting.

Through their language use, it is possible that B and T associate with each other as members of the same group. Initially, they were speaking in English, but after B made the switch to Sarawak Malay (line 3), T also followed suit (line 4) and they continued using Malay after that.

*Extract 5-2*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: I forgot my Skype password, T. |
| 2 | T: It's okay… |
| 3 | B: **Tapi ya lah ya**. *Dah la orang lupak maok* Skype *aku*= <br> (But yeah. Someone forgot to Skype me=) |
| 4 | T: *Neh da…* <br> (Nooo…) |
| 5 | B: =*masa holiday.* "Skype, T? Ah… sorry T". Eh, "sorry T".= <br> (=during the holidays. "Skype, T? Ah… sorry T". Eh, "sorry T".=) |
| 6 | T: "Sorry T". |
| 7 | B: ="Sorry B. *Sikpat* B". <br> (I can't, B.) |
| 8 | T: Eh *ngan blakang tok,* Facetime. <br> (I always Facetime with the person behind me.) |

### 5.3.2  For ease of expression

When speakers switch for this purpose, they would use words or phrases that are more readily accessible in one language rather than the other. This does not necessarily mean that they are lacking in the other languages, but by using those that they could conveniently access at that moment in time, they are able to ensure that conversations run smoothly, with minimal pauses and hesitations.

Some of the switches that have been done for easy expression have also been found under 'the norm' (see 5.3.1), and a direct relation could be seen between these two circumstances; because a speaker is used to using a word or phrase in a particular situation, it may become the easy choice for him or her when that situation arises, as evident in Extract 5-5.

In Extract 5-3, the father and mother (W and H), were discussing their youngest son's (J) insect bite with their older son (Y). This extract spotlights W's turn in line 20, where he began his sentence in Foochow, when he was previously using English (line 13). His use of Foochow was due to the fact that it is a language he is very fluent in, so he was able to transition effortlessly. Meanwhile, the switch back to English, was done for Y so that he clearly knew what was said by W. In order to

understand W's language choice (line 20), his turns in lines 10 and 13 need to be considered. In the former, Foochow was spoken as that was the language W last used, but Y's reaction in line 11 informs W that Y did not fully grasp his question. In line 13, W then switched to English, but the "uh" filler indicates a brief thinking time as to what to say next. Taking into account how English is W's second language, he is not as well-spoken in the language as he is in Foochow. This subsequently explains W's language use in line 20.

*Extract 5-3*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: No, I say, if, *oh oh ni you dai dai* ointment *hui lai gei* J *ho.* |
| | (you brought)　　　　　(back for) |
| 2 | Y: Yeap. |
| 3 | H: I think it's, actually it's not that bad, you know or not. He went to work |
| 4 | one day, come back worse, you know. I think= |
| 5 | Y: Told you. |
| 6 | H: =because the air is very dirty there, I think. |
| 7 | Y: I tell you, it's definitely from the mountain. |
| 8 | H: No *la,* because, because, why, because mountain *a,* he wear knee pad |
| 9 | all that, why how come the knee there area also have *le?* |
| 10 | W: *Ee uh terng ah,* Y, *ho?* |
| | (There are insects) |
| 11 | Y: Ha? |
| 12 | H: I think it's from his bed. |
| 13 | W: Jungle have uh, different type of insect. |
| 14 | H: Because he wear two o–, two, double layer. And then the weather is so |
| 15 | cold, how can from the mountain. |
| 16 | Y: Mmm… |
| 17 | X: Seems like a bed bug. It seems like a really, because… |
| 18 | H: Because the first few days, he didn't feel anything at all. Only in the |
| 19 | airport start with a sm–small dot only, you know or not. |
| 20 | W: ***Jia li terng oh, suo jung*** insect, *hoh!* Insect, insect bite. |
| | (This is an insect, a type of) |

In Extract 5-4, Y was encouraging W to run the marathon that would be held in the following year with H, although it was obvious W was reluctant to do so from the way he constantly diverted the topic to the number of people that participated in the marathon that year. This extract was included to point out the two switched items in W's turn which could have occurred because it was the easier route for him at that moment in time. The first one was in line 3 when W originally spoke in Mandarin but said "next year" and "in the paper" (line 4) in English instead of maintaining the use of Mandarin throughout. It is important to mention that both of these English switches are deictic, one of 'time' and one of 'place'.

*Extract 5-4*

| 1 | Y: *Ba ba!* Next year, ne–, what's that, next year Mommy wants to run as |
|---|---|
|   | (Dad!) |
| 2 |   well. Are you going to run? |
| 3 | W: *Wo kan* ah. *Na* **next year** *cai jiang. Wo zhi dao na tian (jiang) liu wan* |
|   | (I'll see. We'll talk about that next year. I know that day they (said) |
| 4 | *ren*, neh… **in the paper**. |
|   | (there were 60,000 people) |
| 5 | Y: Yeap. |
| 6 | W: 60,000. |
| 7 | Y: Mo–, what's that, Mommy plans to run next year, so you you feel free |
| 8 |   to join her too. |
| 9 | W: Okay. *Liu wan liu wan liu wan jiu shi–* |
|   |       (60,000 60,000 60,000 that is–) |

In Extract 5-5, N digressed from the current topic to something trivial, by saying that he was in need of another drink. His switch to English in line 1 for the verb "order" was not only because it was the usual and expected choice, but also because N felt more comfortable using the word in that language, rather than in Sarawak Malay. Thus, it can be said that this switch was inevitable for N as the vocabulary in English is an umarked choice for him.

*Extract 5-5*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | N: *Cam maok* **order** *air gik.* |
| | (Feel like ordering another drink.) |
| 2 | B: *Alu* thirsty *nya.* |
| | (He suddenly feels thirsty.) |
| 3 | N: This one *macam polah* thirsty *jak,* ice cream. |
| | (like makes me thirsty) |
| 4 | B: *Aok.* |
| | (Yes.) |

### 5.3.3  A trigger

This code-switching circumstance is one of the few that has been found in both the family and friends' group, where for the latter, it could be seen occurring in each speaker's data although its frequency is not significant.

The analysis of the transcripts has revealed that triggers can be invoked by others and oneself, which could subsequently lead to intrasentential and intersentential switches. The intrasentential switches could consist of a duplication of words or phrases in the same language as the interlocutor's, while an intersentential switch could last for one entire part of the conversation.

The sixth extract starts off with W asking his son, Y, about his wife's plan to resume work. The frequent use of "uh" in W's utterance (lines 1 to 2) shows that he was treading carefully on the topic as he tried to convey his question in a gentle manner. As Y responded to his father, he was also eating a papaya that his mother (H) served after lunch. This explains his switch to Foochow in line 6 when he told his mother to keep the rest in the fridge. When H did not fully grasp Y's message in line 7, he then reverted to his dominant language to state what he was referring to. Even so, H has already been triggered by the original switch (line 6), and answered Y in Foochow in lines 10 and 12. As can be seen, H's alternation to Foochow is an intersentential one, which is in line with Y's switch in line 6. Knowing that her son (Y) would understand what she was saying, H did not feel the need to employ any English in her reply.

*Extract 5-6*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | W: So… this one uh… tsk. How you plan your, this one uh, I mean uh, |
| 2 | this uh, this uh, C *ah, ne* this one *ho*, going back to work. |
| 3 | Y: Going back to work ah. Don't know yet. |
| 4 | W: Hm? |
| 5 | Y: Actually, we really don't know yet because we never had time to talk. |
| 6 | Mommy, *nah, ci gi eh tang eng diu woh.* |
| | (you can keep this.) |
| 7 | H: Hm? |
| 8 | Y: This one? Papaya? |
| 9 | W: X *ee nerng siak mui.* |
| | (Have X and J eaten?) |
| 10 | H: ***Nei nei eng diu, lang nga=*** |
| | (No no need to keep, later=) |
| 11 | Y: *Nei.* |
| | (No need.) |
| 12 | H: ***=do siak.*** |
| | (=eat it.) |

In Extract 5-7, the group of friends were talking about their friend's birthday celebration, and discussed his favourite food in deciding on the party venue. The conversation was mostly carried out in Sarawak Malay with the occasional use of English words; but in lines 7 and 8, N made a longer switch to English, which is the highlight of this extract. For N, saying the verb "comment" in English (line 7) is the norm, and because of that, he finished his sentences in English thereafter. Typically, the interlocutor's use of a particular language could result in triggering, which sees the subsequent speaker switching over to the language of the previous speaker, and it is common for this to continue into the following utterance. From my observation, this, however, seems to be a case of self-trigger, where the speaker himself is the cause of the language alternation. Here, the self-trigger only has an effect on N himself, and this is substantiated by the fact that T and B continued in Sarawak Malay (lines 9 to 10) from their previous turns, as N went on in English (lines 8 and 11).

*Extract 5-7*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: *Nya suka* Western *ka, macam ingat nya cam suka* Western. |
| | (Does he like Western, I seem to remember that he likes Western.) |
| 2 | T: *Nya suka* Western *nak?* |
| | (He likes Western right?) |
| 3 | N: *Definitely bukan pedas.* |
| | (not spicy.) |
| 4 | T: *Aok…* |
| | (Yea...) |
| 5 | B: *Bukan pedas.* |
| | (Not spicy.) |
| 6 | T: *Berpeluh,* (       )? |
| | (He will sweat) |
| 7 | N: *Aok.* That day *masa dekat* Topspot *nya sik da* **comment anything** |
| | (Yea.)              (when we were at Topspot he didn't) |
| 8 | **that he really likes** *oh.* He didn't say= |
| 9 | T: *Aok=* |
| | (Yea=) |
| 10 | B: *Macam sik da.* |
| | (Seems like he didn't.) |
| 11 | N: =any of the dishes. |

### 5.3.4 For getting attention

There is an overlap for this circumstance, specifically by speaker N in Extract 5-9 when he alternated completely to English from Sarawak Malay. The former language was chosen because it produced a more formal effect (refer to 5.3.14), which is unusual when the friends communicate with one another. Nevertheless, with an objective to draw B and T's full attention, N deemed the English switch was necessary.

The extract below focuses on the interaction between the father and son (W and Y), where lines 1 to 4 are included to show how both speakers were consistent with the use of their first language from the beginning of their conversation, in Foochow and English respectively. The speech patterns that have emerged here are,

Foochow was spoken by the father (W) for imperatives (i.e. clean it first, go to sleep), while his son's (Y) answer in English was mainly to assert himself. This continued in lines 6 and 7, but seeing how Y did not intend to nap immediately, W saw it as his chance to discuss an important matter with his son. As the subject W was going to raise was of great importance, he switched to English in his next turn (lines 8 and 10). By using Y's first language, W was able to effectively get his attention, and for Y, this signifies that it was about something serious.

*Extract 5-8*

| 1 | W: *Ah seng nu lah, kei kong.* |
|---|---|
| | (clean it first, then we'll talk.) |
| 2 | Y: I will do it, I will do it, I will do it. |
| 3 | W: *Seng nu lah.* |
| | (Clean it first.) |
| 4 | Y: No, I will do it, I will do it, I will do it. |
| 5 | H: *Shen me* you do it loh, *wo men zuo lah*, *ni qu shui jiao liao*. |
| | (What)                    (we'll do it, you go to sleep.) |
| 6 | W: *Ah nu kuo kong ah*, Y. |
| | (you go to sleep) |
| 7 | Y: No, I want to eat papaya first before I sleep. |
| 8 | W: **Okay, no, since** *ah* **we are eating, I want to talk=** |
| 9 | H: *Nah*, *gei wo.* |
| | (give it to me.) |
| 10 | W: **=a few word to you.** |
| 11 | Y: Okay, talk, talk. |

Extract 5-9 again features the friends talking among themselves about a male stranger in the same café they were at. As they identified the man, N commented on his good looks (line 6), and after his friends responded, N code-switched to English in line 9. His motive was to take his friends' attention away from the subject, and to make himself the centre of attention. In order to do so, he chose to use English as he knew that would change the tone of what he was saying. It is, however, not to come off as sounding serious, but solely to capture their attention, while keeping the chat a

lighthearted one. His friends' reactions in lines 10 and 11 show that N managed to accomplish his intended goals.

*Extract 5-9*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: Which one? |
| 2 | T: Is it that one? |
| 3 | N: Ah… *baju putih.* |
| | (white shirt.) |
| 4 | T: Oh *counter ya.* |
| | (at the counter.) |
| 5 | B: No no, he's still sitting down. |
| 6 | N: *Nak ya macam* cute *jak.* |
| | (That one looks cute.) |
| 7 | T: *Kantoi.* Finally. |
| | (Busted.) |
| 8 | B: *Aduh…* (  ) |
| | (Oh dear…) |
| 9 | N: **I got something to tell you guys.** |
| 10 | T, N & B: *Yer…..* |
| 11 | T: *Apa,* N? *Padah lah.* We don't know anything. |
| | (What is it, N? Tell us.) |

### 5.3.5  Translanguaging

Translanguaging is a language practice where languages are not seen and used as separate codes, but as being part of the same language (refer to 1.2.4, and for the differences between code-switching and translanguaging in 1.2.5).

As some bilinguals translanguage in their everyday lives, it is not surprising that the example under Extract 5-10 has also appeared under a separate circumstance, namely 'the norm' (5.3.1).

In Extract 5-10, Y and C were sharing with the family about a suicide case that took place just the day before. Here, English was used considering how both Y and C are native speakers of the language. In line 9, however, C used BM to say 'fire brigade' *(bomba)*. Unlike previous examples, this differs from a classic case of code-

switching. In actuality, C was using a BM word, but because she is accustomed to using the noun in this manner, it has become part of her English speech itself. Therefore for C, instead of having a clear line drawn between English and BM, said BM word has already been embedded in her English repertoire (see 1.2.5 for differences between the code-switching phenomenon and translanguaging practice). That said, it is important to point out that the English variety that is specifically referred to here is Malaysian English. In formal occasions where Standard English is spoken, C will use 'fire brigade', which is the appropriate choice, but not the norm in Malaysian English. This also indirectly casts light on the role of the speaker at the time of interaction. For instance, when C uses *'bomba'*, she identifies as a Malaysian; on the other hand, the use of 'fire brigade' might indicate that she is taking on a different position in her social group.

*Extract 5-10*

| 1 | H: You mean, *oh*, she jumped *a*? |
|----|----|
| 2 | Y: Mm. |
| 3 | C: Don't know whether she jumped or what *la*. |
| 4 | Y: On the way to Mr. Kam's office. |
| 5 | H: Drown *a*, drown *a*. |
| 6 | Y: Drown, drown. |
| 7 | C: Drown *la*. |
| 8 | Y: That's what they said. |
| 9 | C: Then they found the body, the **bomba**[3] found the body at 6a.m. |
|    | (fire brigade) |
| 10 | actually, I don't know. |
| 11 | Y: So today, please go and check it out, in the newspaper. |

In Extract 5-11, T and B were talking about their friend's food preferences, and the focus is towards the end of line 6 where B used English for the verb "stop" almost immediately after making a switch to Sarawak Malay. According to B, "I barely use the word in Bahasa Sarawak as I always thought that the word 'stop' in English is also 'stop' in Sarawak (Malay)".

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[3] This is a common Malay noun that Malaysians tend to use when speaking in Malaysian English.

Language convergence is once again evident here as B answered T in the same language (line 2); and T interjected in Sarawak Malay in line 5, after B switched to Sarawak Malay in line 4.

*Extract 5-11*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | T: =(   ) he didn't really eat much also, *kan?* <br>                                 (right?) |
| 2 | B: He didn't eat much… |
| 3 | T: *Ah…* he didn't eat much. |
| 4 | B: *Nya macam*= <br>    (Seems like he=) |
| 5 | T: Crab *pun sik da ya nak?* <br>   (He didn't even eat much of the crab right?) |
| 6 | B: =*makan– aok…* he he ate for a while then *macam* **stop** *jak cam ya.* <br>   (=eat– yea…)                           (like he just stopped <br>                                           eating.) |

### 5.3.6 Conveying a precise meaning

When a speaker switches with an objective to convey a precise meaning, it usually denotes that the use of one language is more fitting than the other in that setting. By doing so, he or she would be able to communicate without distorting the originally intended meaning, and consequently, the message would be easily understood by the other party. This has been reaffirmed by the fact that the English switch in the extract below has been found in a different situation where speaker B also made the alternation for her interlocutors' clarity.

In Extract 5-12, T and B were criticising KK, a female American celebrity, and when B touched on the issue regarding the lady's buttocks, she voiced her doubt about them being natural. Therefore, to ensure that she expressed herself clearly, she used "real" in place of *'benar'* as the adjective in Sarawak Malay carries an entirely different meaning, which is 'true' (refer to 6.2.1.6 for further discussion). This example shows that even if a vocabulary has an equivalent in a spoken language, it is not necessarily suitable to be employed in certain contexts. When that happens,

bilinguals like B will draw on their tacit knowledge of language use in their community for a more fitting alternative.

*Extract 5-12*

| 1 | T: Maybe you should support KK. |
|---|---|
| 2 | B: *Yerobih… nya padah buritnya nang* **real** *nak, aku rasa sik eh.* |
|   | (Woah… she said that her ass is real right, I don't think so.) |
| 3 | T: Mm. |

### 5.3.7  External influences

Under this type of influence, speakers are exposed to the usage of certain words or phrases in a particular language, and have an inclination to use it in the same manner. This may cause some utterances to become one's expected choice, like how H is likely to say *'xin Zhu'* instead of 'trust in the Lord' (line 2 in Extract 5-13), or it may result in one's automatic use of lexical items, which is illustrated by B in Extract 5-14.

The next excerpt looks at an exchange by H whose interlocutor at that time was her husband. The words in bold are the Mandarin switches, and as can be seen in Extract 5-13, their position in the sentences are consistent in that they always occur at the end of an utterance. The remaining phrases are in Foochow, the matrix language[4] for the conversation between these two speakers. The topic was religion-related, and it was evident that H has a tendency to alternate to Mandarin every time Christian terms, expressions or verses are employed. For H, a devoted Methodist who has been attending a Chinese church for many years, her reason for the switch was due to her exposure to the language used to conduct church services and activities. Owing to that, switching to Mandarin in this circumstance is very common for H, but less so for English or Foochow.

---

[4] Dominant language

*Extract 5-13*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: *Hia tauke jiu jiu sui si jiek siu, ge ee kuo* office *gei kong. Kong kau liu* |
| 2 | *uh, hia tauke kau mui* **xin Zhu.** *Nu nerng ai kong kio si leng ngau* **dou** |
| 3 | **shi fu yin de dui xiang.** *Jia jiang ho nu jia nerng uh* **ba Shang di fang** |
| 4 | **zai yien li, fang zai xin zhong.** *Kuo tuong tuh lio cho* **Shang di de** |
| 5 | **guang he yan.** |
| | (That boss immediately accepted Jesus, and invited the man to his office to tell him more. After that, the boss came to believe in Christ. Wherever we go we have to spread the gospel to non-believers. This means that God is always in your heart. We have to be the salt of the earth and light of the world wherever we go.) |

In Extract 5-14, B and T had a sudden food craving, and the switch that is pointed out here is the noun in line 5, *"buntut"*, in referring to chicken bottoms. Clearly for B who is proficient in English, she could have kept to 'butt', but being in the company of N and T who always call it *'buntut'*, B naturally said it in the same way. As her language choice is very much dependent on what her interlocutors are comfortable with, it is highly probable that she would use 'butt' when among a group whose dominant language is English. Therefore, in a situation like this, B would be seen as making an unmarked choice; but if 'butt' is used with her good friends, N and T, it can be said that B's choice is a marked one. This indicates that B usually affiliates well with her interlocutors; and in this case, with her good friends, because even in instances when English is used, B will subconsciously insert or use Sarawak Malay in a bid for solidarity with them. After B's use of *"buntut"* in line 5, T also used the word in Sarawak Malay in line 6, and not shown in this extract but a bit further into the conversation, N did the same as well. Additionally, it should be mentioned that as an object of the speech, *"buntut"* has been used by both B and T in the last part of the sentence (lines 5 and 6). The same also applies to the other food items such as "prawn and crab" in line 1, and "crab" in line 2.

*Extract 5-14*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: *Rasa mauk makan* prawn and crab… |
| | (I feel like eating) |
| 2 | T: Mm. *Aih rasa mok makan* crab *eh.* |
| | (I feel like eating crab.) |
| 3 | B: I want to eat fried chicken wings… |
| 4 | T: *Nok* salted *pun ya.* Salted egg *ya.* |
| | (The salted one. The one with salted eggs.) |
| 5 | B: Fried chicken wings, and then fried **buntut** *eh.* |
| | (butt) |
| 6 | T: *Ee lamak sik makan buntut oh…* |
| | (been a long time since I've eaten chicken butt…) |
| 7 | N: *Aok…* last semester *sik ada langsung.* Right? |
| | (Yea... none at all last semester.) |

### 5.3.8 Lack of vocabulary

In this situation, bilinguals find themselves in a position where they are unable to retrieve a particular word from their repertoire, and they compensate what they lack by replacing it with an equivalent from an alternate language.

Extract 5-15 presents an interaction between the mother, H, and her son, Y. As can be seen, Mandarin was the base language used by both speakers, with English used thrice for the nouns "oranges" and "orange juice". Nonetheless, for this circumstance, only the switches made by Y are considered. As he has not received any formal Chinese education, he could only strike up simple conversations in Mandarin, and English is used whenever he cannot find the relevant Chinese words. This was the case in lines 4 and 6 for "oranges" and "orange juice". These words are not commonly accessible to him in Mandarin because his parents often say them in English for clarity, as apparent from his mother's (H) use of "oranges" in line 1. Hence, for Y who picks up most of his Mandarin from his family, the vocabularies that are available in his Mandarin repertoire are those that he is constantly exposed to whilst at home.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: Oranges, *papa sha–shang ci mai de, yi li dou mei you chi dao a. Mei* |
| 2 | *ge ren kerh kerh kerh zai na bian, yi li dou mei you chi dao. Ni men xia* |
| 3 | *wu…* |
| | (The oranges that papa bought previously, we haven't eaten any of them. Everyone's coughing, so we didn't eat any. This afternoon, all of you…) |
| 4 | Y: *Wei shen me* **oranges** *bu ke yi chi?* |
| | (Why cannot eat oranges?) |
| 5 | H: *Aiyo, hen suan le. Papa mai suan de yi zhong. Mei ge ren ke sou.* |
| | (too sour. Papa bought the sour type. Everyone's coughing.) |
| 6 | Y: *Wo ke sou de shi hou wo he* **orange juice** *a.* |
| | (When I am coughing, I drink orange juice.) |

Extract 5-16 was taken from the friends' conversation when they were discussing pregnancy, and were sharing their birth stories. Here, T was relating her story about being spanked by the doctor after delivery as she did not cry. As T did not know the right word in Sarawak Malay, she shifted to English to communicate what she wanted to say. Although the Malay verb *'pukul'* (which means 'hit') could be used to substitute "spank", the meaning that it conveys is not exactly the same, and this slight difference lies in its effect; the former being more forceful, and the latter being less so but it is also more relevant in T's context as she was struck on her buttocks.

*Extract 5-16*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | T: *Aku dolok keluar nak, aku kenak* **spank** *doktor berapa kali.* Because I |
| | (When I came out last time right, I got spanked a few times by the doctor.) |
| 2 | wasn't crying when I came out. |

In Extract 5-17, the friends were looking back on the happenings of 2014, and as N wondered if the event he mentioned actually took place the year before, T assured him that his initial thought was right. Subsequently, T created a link to their University's academic calendar when she stated specifically that it was at the start of their semester (line 3). B then followed up by pinpointing the exact semester, and in

doing so, she switched to English at the end of line 6. The reason for B's shift is mainly attributed to their University's medium of instruction that is purely in English. The rationale for including this extract was to demonstrate that other than the various parts of speech (i.e. nouns, verbs, and adjectives), time markers are one of the items that have also emerged from the friends' data for this particular circumstance.

*Extract 5-17*

| 1 | N: Darl *jadi* Bear Grylls, or was that, was that 2013? |
|---|---|
|   |     (became) |
| 2 | B: 2000– |
| 3 | T: 2014 *ya. Eh! Oh,* 2014 *awal* sem. |
|   |   (It was in 2014.)        (during the beginning of the semester.) |
| 4 | B: 14, ah... |
| 5 | T: *Aok…* |
|   |   (Yes…) |
| 6 | B: *Ya lah ya.* **The last semester.** |
|   |   (That's it.) |

### 5.3.9   *For emphasis*

There are occasions when bilinguals will code-switch to underscore a point in their speech. In Extract 5-18, Y was talking to his mother about his desire to participate in an ultramarathon and H was expressing her disapproval about his plan. The attention is directed to *"bu yao"* in line 13, as this switch to Mandarin has come up several times in this conversation for the same reason, which is to serve as a reinforcement. However, besides that, other Chinese switches in this extract (lines 6, 10, and 14) are also made to add extra emphasis to what has been said. In analysing this extract, a similar pattern has cropped up as to how the shift to Mandarin by H was done to accentuate her own speech. In each instance, it can be observed that the switch always comes after a point is made, and this strategic positioning could assist in further strengthening H's messages (i.e. in line 6, it was to emphasise the risk of a heatstroke; in line 10, to stress the extreme temperature on hot days; and in line 14, to underline Y's compromise of his well-being by running the 100 kilometres marathon).

In comparison to English, Mandarin can be considered a rich and meaningful language. This encompasses Chinese utterances that cannot be translated literally to English, as it would simply not carry the same meaning. In separate cases, fewer words could also be used to convey multiple meanings. One's choice of words when talking in English, however, needs to be direct and 'accurate', and speakers might need to elaborate themselves in order to get their message across clearly. The first sentence in line 7 of Extract 5-18 has been used to exemplify this, with the focus on the last two words, *"yao ming"*:

**Sentence:** *(Wo men) (zhe bian) (bu shi) (xia yu) (jiu shi) (ri dao) (yao ming).*
**LT[5]**    :    We    here    not    rain    is    hot    want life.
**MT[6]**    : If it isn't raining here, then it is terribly hot.

In this context, *"yao ming"* was employed to describe the extreme or unbearable heat in relation to the hot weather, but it would not mean anything if directly expressed in English ('want life'); therefore, Mandarin could be regarded as the more expressive language.

---

[5] Literal translation
[6] Meaningful translation

*Extract 5-18*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Y: Mommy *ah,* there's only one place in Malaysia that has a 100 |
| 2 |    kilometres. |
| 3 | H: *Ah.* |
| 4 | Y: That's in Sabah, but I don't think I'll run that one. Maybe I'll run it in |
| 5 |    Boston. *Cheh-wah.* |
| 6 | H: No *lah!* You will burn *lah!* I tell you, heatstroke *ah. Na li ke yi zhe yang.* |
| |                                                 (How can you do this.) |
| 7 |    *Wo men zhe bian bu shi xia yu jiu shi ri dao yao ming.* If last time still |
| |    (Here, if it isn't raining, then it's terribly hot.) |
| 8 |    can, nowaday the weather is totally different already. |
| 9 | Y: Yeah. |
| 10 | H: *Shen jing de ri.* |
| |    (Crazy hot.) |
| 11 | Y: Okay, but don't worry. Let me try and run the 42 first, once I get over |
| 12 |    the 42 then I'll run the ultra. |
| 13 | H: You go to Western country can *la,* how come in Malaysia. ***Bu yao*** risk |
| |                                                       (Don't) |
| 14 |    your life like that *la.* Tsk tsk. *Zhen de.* Nothing to stress, stress over |
| |                                    (Really.) |
| 15 |    that *a.* |

Extract 5-19 starts off with the mother of the family group talking about the vegetables bought by W as she was in the midst of discussing whether or not to cook it immediately since it was fresh. The focus here, however, is on W as his method of emphasis differs from H's in Extract 5-18 and N's in Extract 5-20. While H and Y were still contemplating the matter, W voiced his suggestion in Foochow (lines 3 and 5) that was directed at his son (Y), which was to cook the vegetables after H had taken her lunch. In spite of that, the conversation in the background continued, and in an effort to get his point through, W switched to Mandarin in his next turn (line 7) to repeat the second half of his sentence in line 5.

*Extract 5-19*

| 1 | H: It's fresh. |
|---|---|
| 2 | Y: Yea, but– |
| 3 | W: *Ti na=*<br>(Later=) |
| 4 | X: Hm? |
| 5 | W: *=ting suo a jue ting* Mommy *li siak suo a la.*<br>(=cook it later, wait until Mommy finishes her lunch.) |
| 6 | H: Because Uncle G six o'clock= |
| 7 | W: ***Deng ta chi yi xia.***<br>(Wait for her to finish her lunch.) |
| 8 | H: =if you want we can cook some… supper? For supper. |

From Extract 5-20, it could be deduced that B, N and T enjoy eating chicken butts as they tried to recall the last time they had it. The primary language spoken by the friends is Sarawak Malay, with short switches made to English between intervals. The switch of interest is at the end of the sentence in line 8, where the function of "at all" was to emphasise N's conviction about his prior statement, which hinted at his uncertainty of whether he did, indeed, eat any chicken butts. Without doubt, had N decided to carry on in Sarawak Malay, he would not have been able to stress his point as well as he did in this extract with his English switch.

*Extract 5-20*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | T: *Ee lamak sik makan buntut oh*…<br> (been a long time since I've eaten chicken butt…) |
| 2 | N: *Aok…* last semester *sik ada langsung.* Right?<br> (Yea... none at all last semester.) |
| 3 | B: Mm. |
| 4 | T: (*Sik da langsung, kita.*)<br> (None at all, us.) |
| 5 | N: *Cam sik da cam–*<br> (Doesn't seem like–) |
| 6 | T: *Tapi kita sik da pergi Teh Tarik nak,* last sem.<br> (But we didn't go to *Teh Tarik* right, last sem.) |
| 7 | B: *Aku ada ngan* A *la*, but–<br> (I did go with) |
| 8 | N: Oh… I think I *sik da makan buntut ayam.* **At all.**<br> (didn't eat chicken butt.) |

### 5.3.10 For clarity

When speakers shift languages for this purpose, their main aim is to ensure that they communicate in a way that is free from ambiguity, and this is done in favour of the interlocutors.

In Extract 5-21, Y was talking to H about running the marathon together, and for the most part, English was used. After a few alternations to Mandarin in lines 9 and 11, H finally switched back to English when she showed her concern by telling Y that he was overstraining his body by going for the 42 kilometres run. By using Y's dominant language, H was making sure that she got her message clearly across to him, and that he knew that she disapproved of his plan.

*Extract 5-21*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Y: We can go for the Kuching one, together. |
| 2 | H: Kuching one first *la,* together with you *ha,* you will be coming back *ah.* |
| 3 | Y: Yeap. Kuchi– |
| 4 | H: How many kilometres? |
| 5 | Y: Um… it's up to you. They have the 42, they have the 21... I'm run– |
| 6 | H: Who's the– who is the organizer? |
| 7 | Y: I'm not sure *o.* That one you have to ask G, Mommy. Because I |
| 8 | didn't come back for this year's one. So I'm planning to run the 42. |
| 9 | H: Kuching *ye shi you* 42 *a?* |
| |        (also has) |
| 10 | Y: Yeap. They run to *Petra Jaya* and come back. |
| 11 | H: *Bu yao la. Bu yao la,* Y, *ni* **overstress yourself** *ah,* Y. |
| | (Don't. Don't) |
| 12 | Y: Whaaattt. |

Extract 5-22 features the use of a common term in our everyday lives; and here, W asked his son, Y, how his father-in-law was faring. The question posed in Mandarin is a simple one, and the noun switch in line 1 was attributed to the fact that W knew Y would have no difficulty understanding it in English, but it would have been different if W had continued in Mandarin and said *'yue fu'* instead of "father-in-law". Whenever any mention is made of Y's father and mother-in-law, our parents never say it in Mandarin because Y is more familiar with the English words. This is due to the fact that he has not come across the Chinese vocabulary enough to recognise its meaning, and he is also not fluent in Mandarin. If the words used were unintelligible to the interlocutor, it would have caused an interruption to the ongoing interaction and it would not have gone on as smoothly as it did in the extract below.

*Extract 5-22*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | W: *Ni de* **father-in-law** *hao ma*? |
| | (How's your father-in-law doing?) |
| 2 | Y: Okay. |
| 3 | W: Okay *ah*? |

### 5.3.11 For adaptability

During these instances, speakers adjust their language use to those they are conversing with in order to fit well with them.

In Extract 5-23, B and N were talking about their trip to the beach. The whole exchange was in English until line 7 when B used Sarawak Malay to say 'Let's go'. This was not because she had any difficulty in retrieving the said vocabulary in English, but because her friends always use *"jom"* to express 'let's go'. Therefore, B's use of language is shaped by her friends', which also marks her close acquaintance with them.

*Extract 5-23*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: When should we have our beach day *ah*? |
| 2 | N: The… first week. |
| 3 | B: Oh… first week. |
| 4 | N: First week of Uni= |
| 5 | B: Oh… |
| 6 | N: =first weekend. |
| 7 | B: Best! ***Jom!*** |
| | (Let's go!) |

### 5.3.12 Maintaining conversation flow

When a bilingual makes an effort to keep the flow of a conversation, he or she may code-switch to the interlocutor's language, even if his or her language competency is lacking. Perhaps this is precisely the reason why this circumstance overlaps with 'for adaptability', as the speakers go out of their way to accommodate their interlocutors who are usually more proficient in the language used. This is demonstrated in both of the following extracts, where Y alternated to Mandarin for his mother, and X used Foochow for her father.

Extract 5-24 is an extension of Extract 5-15, where lines 1 and 2 were included to provide the context that showed H and Y's use of English before they switched to Mandarin from line 3 onwards. Also, lines 9 to 14 were added to aid in illustrating this particular circumstance. Considering Y's strong command of English,

it is a given that carrying out the conversation below in the language would have been effortless for him, but he decided to go with his mother's (H) choice, and kept going in Mandarin for the whole part of this conversation with only four embedded switches to English ("oranges", "orange juice", "what's that", and "pluck"), as he did not have the words in Mandarin. Switching to H's more dominant language was Y's attempt to associate with his mother; and if looked at from another perspective, it could be said that he was accommodating his language choice to his mother's preferred language, which is Mandarin.

*Extract 5-24*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: Go ahead, go ahead. |
| 2 | Y: Celebrate, Jesus, celebrate! |
| 3 | H: Oranges, *papa sha–shang ci mai de, yi li dou mei you chi dao a. Mei* |
| 4 | *ge ren kerh kerh kerh zai na bian, yi li dou mei you chi dao. Ni men xia* |
| 5 | *wu…* |
| | (The oranges that papa bought previously, we haven't eaten any of it. Everyone's coughing, so we didn't eat any. This afternoon, all of you…) |
| 6 | Y: *Wei shen me* oranges *bu ke yi chi?* |
| | (Why cannot eat oranges?) |
| 7 | H: *Aiyo, hen suan le. Papa mai suan de yi zhong. Mei ge ren ke sou.* |
| | (too sour. Papa bought the sour type. Everyone's coughing.) |
| 8 | Y: *Wo ke sou de shi hou wo he* orange juice *a.* |
| | (When I am coughing, I drink orange juice.) |
| 9 | H: *Hai you o, hai you hai you tang gen na ge o, yao ma?* |
| | (There is, there is there is still soup and others, do you want it?) |
| 10 | Y: *Hai you shen me ah?* |
| | (What is left?) |
| 11 | H: *Guan diao la feng shan. Zuo shen me yao feng shan o. Hen tao yan* |
| 12 | *feng shan zai* table *ni zhi dao ma. Mei you, hai you* s–, *yi dian* soup. |
| | (Switch off the fan. Why do we need to turn on the fan? I really don't like the fan blowing (when we're eating) at the table. No, there is some more soup.) |
| 13 | Y: *He la, ni qu chi xian. Fang er wo,* what's that, *ni ye shi yao deng wo.* |
| 14 | *Wo na ge,* pluck *ci ge a.* |
| | (Drink it, you go and eat first. After all, you will also need to wait for me. I am plucking this.) |

Extract 5-25 has also been taken from the family data, but where Extract 5-24 was centred on the older son, Y, the central focus of this one is on X, the daughter. In this excerpt, they were talking about the suicide incident that involved C and Y's neighbour in Kuala Lumpur. As all the children (C, J, X and Y) were participating in the conversation, only English was spoken for the most part of this extract simply

because it is their first language (refer to Table 6-1) and their unmarked choice when they are together. In this case, even the parents' (W and H) accommodated their children by using English (lines 1 and 12) in order to ensure that the interaction goes on smoothly. That aside, the point of interest here is W and X's turns in lines 23 and 24. While the rest of the family were still engaged in talk, the father (W) switched to Foochow and addressed his daughter (X) to confirm if the ringing sound he heard was coming from their home phone. In response to W's question, X switched to her father's mother tongue and this was done to show that where previously (lines 14 and 16) she was concentrating on H, C, J, and Y, her attention had now fully shifted to W. Not to mention, the underlying significance of this switch is in how the daughter relates to her father as a Foochow speaker, which is not possible had she continued in English or alternated to Mandarin.

*Extract 5-25*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | W: This is something uh, family argument *ah.* |
| 2 | Y: Probably. |
| 3 | W: *Ha*? |
| 4 | Y: Probably. Husband and wife. Yeap. Unresolved issues. Before this, |
| 5 |    she has already threatened the husband that she wanted to commit |
| 6 |    suicide. |
| 7 | W: Oh… |
| 8 | H: Mmm… |
| 9 | Y: Then after that it escalated saying that she even hugged the children, |
| 10 |    and wanted to jump into the river with her children. |
| 11 | C: Eh but yesterday I didn't see the children, you know. |
| 12 | H: You mean, you mean who drove her out? |
| 13 | C: Don't know. |
| 14 | X: Dramatic. |
| 15 | J: Is it? |
| 16 | X: I don't know. |
| 17 | C: I really don't know, very drama one. |
| 18 | Y: We, what's that, we do not know the whole story, the only thing we |
| 19 |    know, the woman, jumped into the river, found… |
| 20 | C: Some people say, some people say husband killed her *la,* don't know |
| 21 |    whether true or not, we really don't know. |
| 22 | Y: Yeah, that, that was what your father said. |
| 23 | W: *Si ni dian wa chi wuan?* |
| |    (Is that the phone ringing?) |
| 24 | X: ***No miang a?*** |
| |    (What?) |

### 5.3.13 Spontaneity

Here, 'spontaneity' refers to cases where code-switching is done without deliberate thought or effort, and it appears that it is largely dependent on the participants' language practice which is affected by the people they are talking to at that time.

Extract 5-26 features the mother, eldest son, and daughter (H, Y, and X) from the family group, where they were discussing if H should cook the vegetable *(milian)* then. As can be seen, Y and H's speech were in English, but X intercepted in the form of a question (lines 4 and 6) in Mandarin as she reminded H that she did not have time to spare for cooking. For X, a switch to Mandarin is done spontaneously if her interlocutor is H because that language is already embedded in their repertoire. This is also demonstrated by H's reply to X in Mandarin in line 8. From this extract, it is apparent that the interlocutors' dominant language takes precedence, and this applies to H who speaks to her son (Y) only in English, and X who uses Mandarin with their mother (H).

*Extract 5-26*

| 1 | Y: Are you going to cook your *milian* now? |
|---|---|
| 2 | H: Now *a*? You want to cook now? |
| 3 | Y: Or later. |
| 4 | X: **Bu yong la ni you=** |
|   | (No need, do you=) |
| 5 | H: Tonight? |
| 6 | X: **=shi jian** meh? |
|   | (=have time?) |
| 7 | Y: Tonight? But= |
| 8 | H: *Wo jiu wo jiu shi mei you shi jian oh.* |
|   | (That's why I don't have time.) |

In the friendship group, a switch for this reason is evident as well although it is done for a slightly different reason as in Extract 5-26. B's switch to English in line 4 was spontaneous as a result of a topic trigger, which in this context was on American celebrities. This is not surprising as programmes or shows that feature these stars are in English, so it was natural for B to express her view in that language.

*Extract 5-27*

| 1 | T: Maybe you should support KK. |
|---|---|
| 2 | B: *Yerobih… nya padah buritnya nang* real *nak, aku rasa sik eh*. |
|   | (Woah… she said that her butt is real right, I don't think so.) |
| 3 | T: Mm. |
| 4 | B: **I think she did implants.** NM did implants *nak.* Her butt is so big. |
|   | (right.) |

Extract 5-28 is used to exemplify 'external influences', where B chose to use Sarawak Malay for 'butt' *(buntut)* as she was following her friends' word choice. Seeing how this vocabulary is already embedded in her communication repertoire with N and T, a switch that encompasses this word is also one that happens spontaneously.

*Extract 5-28*

| 1 | B: *Rasa mauk makan* prawn and crab… |
|---|---|
|   | (I feel like eating) |
| 2 | T: Mm. *Aih rasa mok makan crab eh.* |
|   | (I feel like eating crab.) |
| 3 | B: I want to eat fried chicken wings… |
| 4 | T: *Nok* salted *pun ya.* Salted egg *ya.* |
|   | (The salted one. The one with salted eggs.) |
| 5 | B: Fried chicken wings, and then fried ***buntut*** *eh.* |
|   | (butt) |
| 6 | T: *Ee lamak sik makan buntut oh…* |
|   | (been a long time since I've eaten chicken butt…) |
| 7 | N: *Aok…* last semester *sik ada langsung.* Right? |
|   | (Yea... none at all last semester.) |
| 8 | B: Mm. |

### 5.3.14 For a conversational effect

This reason for code-switching is only present among the group of friends, where English and Sarawak Malay are used to produce varying effects such as to make something sound more convincing, dramatic or pitiful. This knowledge is implicit to the group members, who have mingled with each other for years and in the process, obtained understanding about their choice of language that could reinforce or soften their message.

In Extract 5-29, N received a text about their friend's car trouble and was telling B and T about it. Here, the emphasis of the switch is in lines 11 and 12, which appears to be the only intersentential switch throughout the whole extract. This is because by asking the question solely in English, B is able to convey the serious effect better. Believing that she has accomplished her objective, she instantly reverted to Sarawak Malay (line 12) to continue her conversation with N and T.

*Extract 5-29*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | N: *Keretanya* stuck *dekat rumah orang*. Oh, *keretanya* stuck.<br>　(Her car's)　　(at somebody's house.)　(her car's) |
| 2 | T: *Tetak gik ya, kurang asam*.<br>　(Still dare to laugh.) |
| 3 | B: *Rumah siapa*?<br>　(Whose house?) |
| 4 | N: *Rumah nya. Neh… front–frontyard nya ya*.<br>　(Her house.)　　　(in her frontyard.) |
| 5 | B: *Tapi*=<br>　(But=) |
| 6 | T: *(Masih pat masuk.)*<br>　(Still could go in.) |
| 7 | B: =*kenak nya kenak* clamped? *Mun nya dah*–<br>　(=why was her car)　　　(Since she already–) |
| 8 | N: *Sik sik, bukan kenak* clamped.<br>　(No no, it's not) |
| 9 | B: Oh… |
| 10 | N: *Nya engkah batu*, so that, because *keretanya ada lumpur sia bah*.<br>　(She placed a rock)　　　　　(there's mud where her car is.) |
| 11 | B: Yerobih. **I thought she knew that she wasn't supposed to park**<br>　(Woah.) |
| 12 | **there?** *Kan hari ya nya padah sik, sik pat* park *sia* cause *berlumpur.*<br>　　(Thought that day she said cannot, cannot park there because<br>　　 it was muddy.) |

In Extract 5-30, B asked T if she would eat her pet tortoise or turtle if she had one. When T replied B in line 11, she meant it as a joke, and automatically alternated to Sarawak Malay. This is because for B and her friends, Sarawak Malay is linked to lightheartedness, and at times, it is to prevent the people around them from understanding what they are saying. By using Sarawak Malay to deliver a playful effect, B immediately caught on to T's joke as the both of them burst out laughing.

From the way B and T move back and forth between languages, it can be seen how their language use are in sync with each other. They started off mainly in Sarawak Malay, and when B switched to English to ask the question in line 8, T also responded in English (line 9). In line 11, T shifted back again to Sarawak Malay, and B immediately followed suit.

*Extract 5-30*

| 1 | B: T, if you *membela* tortoise *nak*= |
| |         (rear)        (right=) |
| 2 | T: Ah *membela.* |
| |      (rear.) |
| 3 | B: =*ka* turtle, *nak*= |
| |   (=or)     (right=) |
| 4 | T: Huh? |
| 5 | B: =turtle, *nak.* |
| |       (right.) |
| 6 | T: Ah. |
| 7 | B: I mean *bila dah empat puluh tahun dah nak, nya dah besar dah nak,* |
| |      (when you are already 40 years old, it is already big, right) |
| 8 |   will you cook it and eat it? |
| 9 | T: No. |
| 10 | B: Why? |
| 11 | T: **Ambik telurnya.** |
| |   (I'll take the eggs.) |
| 12 | B: *Telurnya diambik* you. |
| |   (You would take the eggs.) |

In Extract 5-31, the friends were talking about a mutual acquaintance from university. The point of interest is in lines 8 and 9, when B used Sarawak Malay to express how their acquaintance, W, misses C, his friend; owing to the fact that it may have sounded more dramatic when said in that language compared to English. Nevertheless, it is found that B also uses English for a dramatic effect, albeit less frequent than Sarawak Malay. This shows that Sarawak Malay is generally her preferred choice when she wishes to deliver said effect.

*Extract 5-31*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | T: Do you see him? |
| 2 | B: *Agik ada.* |
| |    (He is still around.) |
| 3 | T: *Nya dah* graduate *ka?* |
| |    (Has he graduated?) |
| 4 | N: *Ya ka?* |
| |    (Really?) |
| 5 | B: *Agik ada,* sometimes we see him. *Nya kan nya* he made me talk to him |
| |    (He's still around,)            (Didn't he) |
| 6 |   about C.= |
| 7 | T: Mm… |
| 8 | B: =He wants to go and meet C and then ***nya rindu dengan*** C *semua* |
| |                                      (he misses C and all that.) |
| 9 |   ***ya.*** |

### 5.3.15 For economy

Set in the context of language use, being economical is where a speaker imparts the desired meaning by being as brief as possible.

The focus of Extract 5-32 is specifically on the verb at the end of the sentence in line 9. N speaks both English and Sarawak Malay very fluently, and because of that, he can use either language in ways that suit his needs. This is one instance, where using Malay enables him to say what he wants in a briefer manner than in English (*"ada"* versus 'was set up').

*Extract 5-32*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: Check-in, and the= |
| 2 | T: Check-in S *selalu*=<br>　　　　　　　　(always=) |
| 3 | B: =bank and everything. |
| 4 | T: =*tolong aku.*<br>　　(=helped me.) |
| 5 | B: Oh… *nektok senang sikit o.* I *sik tauk* key in the number *dapat ya dah.*<br>　　　　(now it's easier.)　　　　(didn't know we could just key in the<br>　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　number.) |
| 6 | T: Mm. |
| 7 | B: *Ku ingat perlu* detail *semua.* Cos last time my sister she check-in, she<br>　　(I thought we needed all the details.) |
| 8 | 　needed the bar code *pun ya.* |
| 9 | N: Oh… yea. Last time, I think it was before the kiosk ***ada.***<br>　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(was set up.) |

Extract 5-33 looks at the friends' conversation where B was sharing her experience when she was born. She was giving an account of the way the doctor and nurses delivered her due to the size of her head, which left her with a scar for a fortnight. Although it could be seen that her alternations to English are constant in her utterances, her switch to the Sarawak Malay verb *"ada"* in line 6 was done for economy as she was able to get her point across to N and T with the use of a single word, instead of having to say, 'there was a…' if English was used.

*Extract 5-33*

| 1 | B: *Nok, cam* scissor *ya,* and then *tarit palak keluar,* and then, here |
| | (It's, like the scissors) (pulled my head out) |
| 2 | *macam ada penyet.* |
| | (seems to have a dent.) |
| 3 | N: *Sik da lah.* |
| | (No, there isn't.) |
| 4 | B: And then= |
| 5 | T: *Sik da pun.* |
| | (There's none.) |
| 6 | B: =they said uh for two weeks **ada** scar *sitok.* |
| | (there was a scar here.) |

### 5.3.16 To exclude others

Code-switching is a useful strategy that could be utilised by bilinguals who wish to exclude someone from the discourse that is taking place between their group members.

Extract 5-34 starts off with B, N and T talking about the time they last spotted a friend of theirs attending class. In fact, the whole extract is concerning that except for T's turn in line 10, which is also the switch that fulfils this particular language use circumstance. When T alternated to Sarawak Malay (line 10) from her last turn in English (line 4), she momentarily digressed and referred to someone who was in the same café with them at that time. Therefore, her intention of switching was to prevent others from understanding what she was talking about. This entails using a language that she could speak quickly in, so that only her interlocutors could pick it up. They are normally people who are close to T, and they would have no trouble keeping up with her, as they are familiar with her speaking style and what she is saying. Quite often, however, more than wanting to leave others out of their conversation, the speakers from the friends group are keener to mark their strong in-group boundaries.

| 1 | B: Or is that a different semester, T? |
|---|---|
| 2 | T: It was not last sem, it was the sem= |
| 3 | B: Oh… |
| 4 | T: =before last sem, before E came. |
| 5 | B: Then last sem *nang sik ada nya lah.*<br>(he was not there at all.) |
| 6 | N: So he stopped. |
| 7 | B: *Dahsyat.*<br>(Drastic.) |
| 8 | N: *Nang=*<br>(I)= |
| 9 | B: *Macam* stop *ya.*<br>(Seems he has quit.) |
| 10 | T: *Eh **nok ya nok**–*<br>(that one that–) |
| 11 | N: *=nang sik ada nanga nya=*<br>(=I did not see him=) |
| 12 | B: *Aok.*<br>(Yes.) |
| 13 | N: *=dekat* Uni *bah.*<br>(=in) |

### 5.3.17 Quotation

In this subsection, four excerpts from the family and friends' conversation have been taken to illustrate bilinguals' tendency to quote their interlocutors in the original language that was used when they interacted with one another. By doing so, the bilinguals hope to bring about the same effect as in the original situation, be it funny, serious or so on.

The speaker in Extract 5-35 is the father who was talking to his daughter (X) about his Iban friend who he usually purchases produce from. When W said this, he had just got off the phone with his friend and was telling X that he is a very nice

person. The highlight of this extract is in the first line, when W said that his friend passed on early Christmas wishes to him. The switch from Mandarin to BM happened as W quoted his friend's holiday greetings, and the use of BM made it more 'authentic' than if the Mandarin version of 'Merry Christmas' was used *(Sheng dan jie kuai le)*.

*Extract 5-35*

| 1 | W: *Hai wen wo dao jia le mei you. Hai shuo,* ***Meri Krismas.*** He's a |
|---|---|
| 2 | Christian. |
| | (Still asked me if I have already arrived home. And also wished me, Merry Christmas.) |

In Extract 5-36, H's interlocutor was her husband, W, and Foochow was the matrix language for this part of the conversation, as is always the case whenever they are together. In this example, H was relating her exchange with a staff at a furniture shop that she visited earlier, which resulted in the switch to Mandarin at the end of line 1.

*Extract 5-36*

| 1 | H: *Kau hie ne ee nerng jiu zha wei,* ***ni shi D de tai tai ha?*** |
|---|---|
| | (When I arrived there, they asked me, are you D's wife?) |

In Extract 5-37, B was telling her friends the amusing story about what her mother did after she purchased cherries from the supermarket. The switch that is underlined here is in bold, where B quoted her mother who made the statement in English. According to B, although her parents normally converse with each other in Hakka or Hokkien, English is used when communicating with their children (B and her two sisters).

*Extract 5-37*

| 1 | B: And then the cherry *macam sikit jak,* and then *mahal* so *nya belah,* **10** |
|---|---|
| | (was very little)  (expensive, so she divided it) |
| 2 | **for you, 10 for** *adik,* **10 for Daddy.** *Macam ya.* |
| | (little sister)  (Like that.) |

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The main topic of the next extract is regarding T's cousin (F) who wishes to return to his hometown, and the focus is in lines 1 and 2, where T shifted from English to Sarawak Malay as she repeated her question to her cousin. Considering the fact that F is family and an East Malaysian, there is no doubt that both his and T's common language is Sarawak Malay.

*Extract 5-38*

| 1 | T: =*dia maok balit* Tuesday… because I said ***kitak maok maok balit*** |
|---|---|
| 2 | ***Tuesday kitak Tuesday bila maok balit?*** You? Tuesday ka? Tuesday |
| 3 | lah. So I think he really wants= |
|   | (=he wants to go back on Tuesday… because I said do you want to go back on Tuesday, when on Tuesday? You? Tuesday, is it? Tuesday, it is.) |
| 4 | V: Mm… |
| 5 | Z: =to go back on Tuesday. |

### 5.3.18 As a filler

In this situation, bilinguals change languages to fill the pauses in their speech. The stress in Extract 5-39 is on the last two vocabulary items in line 2, where B ended her English sentence in Sarawak Malay. The switch came about because at the time of speaking, B could not think of how best to end her sentence in English, but when she remembered that she was talking to N and T, she shifted back to Malay as it was the language they communicated in on a regular basis. On this note, it could be seen why the switch here also comes under two other circumstances, specifically 'spontaneity' and 'for adaptability'.

In this context, the use of *"pun ya"* only serves to make the last sentence (lines 1 and 2) whole, and it does not carry any meaning as it was referring to the "bar code" that was mentioned by B (for a clearer portrayal of this context, see Extract 5-32).

*Extract 5-39*

| 1 | B: *Ku ingat perlu detail semua.* Cos last time my sister she check-in, she |
|---|---|
|   | (I thought we needed all the details.) |
| 2 | needed the bar code ***pun ya.*** |

### 5.3.19 Showing solidarity

This is where a bilingual's language choice is the result of his or her desire to associate with the other speakers.

In the family's interaction, the marked choices that have been made are by the older son and daughter, Y and X respectively. One of the times this took place was in Extract 5-40, where X was talking to her brother (Y) in English, with H, their mother, remaining in the picture as she interrupts her children's conversation to speak to the both of them (lines 8 and 9), to Y (line 13), and alternates to Mandarin when she requested her daughter to clean the table (line 17). Even while speaking to her brother, X was aware of their mother who was working nearby. This led X to alternate to Mandarin at the beginning of her utterance in line 19, a language that neither her nor Y is likely to use when communicating with one another. In addition to that, her switch also indicated that she agreed with H concerning the muscle strain that H touched on in line 1 and reinforced again in line 20. Even though the Mandarin switch on X's part was a slight diversion from the norm for both herself and Y, X knew that it would not affect her brother or their ongoing discourse in any way as the Mandarin words that had been employed were easily understandable to him.

*Extract 5-40*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: *Hai jiu jiu yi ci,* maybe your tendon *ye* strain and then y–you will have |
| | (Once in a blue moon) (also) |
| 2 | side effect. |
| 3 | Y: Mommy, 75, 73 years old still runs… |
| 4 | X: *Oppa,* you still want many… huh sorry? |
| 5 | Y: What is that? |
| 6 | X: What did you say? |
| 7 | Y: No, 73, still runs it without any complications. |
| 8 | H: *Ae siang no, wo ci ge ben lai shi gei* Y *chi de, ni kan, fang na bian kan* |
| 9 | *dao ma yi cai zhe dao.* |
| | (Goodness, actually I wanted Y to eat this, you see, after seeing the |
| | ants then I remembered.) |
| 10 | Y: *Shen me lai de.* |
| | (What is that?) |
| 11 | X: You you still want many Father's Day, *oppa,* so, so… |
| | (older brother) |
| 12 | Y: No, what does that– |
| 13 | H: Y, I think you eat at the same time, please. |
| 14 | Y: Yeah. Okay. |
| 15 | H: *Nah.* |
| 16 | Y: Need a fork. Yeah, thank you. No= |
| 17 | H: *Ci ge mak yi xia,* girl. *Pang bian mak yi xia.* |
| | (Clean this) (Clean the side.) |
| 18 | Y: =no, no, what does that have to do with Father's Day? |
| 19 | X: **Mei you la,** don't strain yourself *a,* is what. |
| | (Nothing) |
| 20 | H: Don't strain yourself *oh,* really too far *ba.* |

### 5.3.20 For reiteration

This circumstance involves speakers restating a point, with an intention to drive one's message home.

In Extract 5-41, W wanted to chat with Y, his son, but as they had just finished their lunch, W requested that the table be cleaned first. W actually gestured to his wife and expected her to complete the task, but since Y was standing idly by, he offered to help his mother, H. While Y used his first language to convey his insistence, W and H continued in Foochow and Mandarin respectively from their previous turns. However, in line 5, soon after H started off in Mandarin, she switched to English to say "you do it" instead of *'ni zuo'*. This was because Y first said it in English, and as a consequence, it triggered H to say it in the same language. More importantly, by repeating the phrase in English, she intends for Y to listen and have his afternoon nap.

*Extract 5-41*

| 1 | W: *Ah seng nu lah, kei kong.* |
|---|---|
|   | (clean it first, then we'll talk.) |
| 2 | Y: I will do it, I will do it, I will do it. |
| 3 | W: *Seng nu lah.* |
|   | (Clean it first.) |
| 4 | Y: No, I will do it, I will do it, I will do it. |
| 5 | H: *Shen me* **you do it** *loh, wo men zuo lah, ni qu shui jiao liao.* |
|   | (What)                    (we'll do it, you go to sleep.) |

### 5.4   Tendencies in language use: introduction

This section comprises the language use patterns that have emerged after categorising the 20 circumstances under Section 5.3, and they are 'habit', 'convenience', 'cause and effect', 'efficiency', 'accommodation', and 'affiliation'. In order to exemplify each pattern better, extracts from my participants' data are used to demonstrate how a particular language circumstance fits in with its respective pattern.

### 5.4.1 Habit

Extract 5-42 was taken from the family's conversation to illustrate H's language behaviour whenever 'pitiful' is used. Here, the three family members were talking about a suicide case that involved a lady they knew. It was no surprise that almost the whole exchange took place in English, seeing how C and Y are able to express themselves best in that language as it is their mother tongue. On the other hand, it is clear that H, who has a stronger command in Foochow and Mandarin, was going with her son (Y) and daughter-in-law's (C) dominant language until the switch for the adjective in line 27. In this case, H knows the word in English, but she rarely says 'pitiful' simply because she is already used to saying it in Mandarin or Hokkien, depending on who she is talking to at the time. With her children, as in the extract, she would usually use Mandarin as it is the other language spoken to them, besides English. However, if her interlocutor was her sister, she would most likely say the adjective in Hokkien *(kolien)* because that is their dominant and common language.

*Extract 5-42*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | H: Mmmm. You mean that because husband and wife always fight *ha*? |
| 2 | C: Don't know them *lah*, they all psycho one. |
| 3 | H: Oh, all psycho one *la*. |
| 4 | C: Really *a*. |
| 5 | H: And then= |
| 6 | Y: It seems that– |
| 7 | H: =the children quite small, isn't it? |
| 8 | Y: Yeah, very young. |
| 9 | C: Small. |
| 10 | H: How how, how big? |
| 11 | C: I think the oldest is (only) eight *ah*. |
| 12 | H: Hm? |
| 13 | Y: No he's seven years old, the oldest. |
| 14 | H: *Aiyo*= |
| 15 | C: That is also very small. |
| 16 | H: =so small, so young *a*. |
| 17 | Y: Mm. |
| 18 | C: Mm. |
| 19 | H: Two, is it? |
| 20 | C: Mm. |
| 21 | Y: Two of them. |
| 22 | H: And then, the younger one? |
| 23 | Y: Hm? |
| 24 | C: I don't know o. |
| 25 | H: The youngest one? |
| 26 | C: Two, three, I mean two, three years difference. |
| 27 | H: *Aiyo*, so **ke lian** *a*. |
| |        (pitiful) |

One of the words that has been translanguaged by speakers of Sarawak Malay is 'time', as seen in the following extract between the friends. It is used to refer to a specific time when a particular event has already happened, or one that has yet to

take place. When used in this context, "time" is considered as coming from a single repertoire, which is Malay itself.

*Extract 5-43*

| 1 | T: *Kan kamek sik pandei pergi naik belon sorang-sorang dolok nak*, N. |
|---|---|
| | (Last time I did not know how to travel alone, right, N.) |
| 2 | N: Ah. |
| 3 | T: So *lepas ya nak, mek tanyak laki tok "Kitak pergi* Bintulu *ka?" "Aok."* |
| | (After that, I asked this guy "Are you going to Bintulu?" "Yes.") |
| 4 | Then *mek duduk sebelahnya, mek ikot kitak.* And then *cam suk jak.* |
| |     (I sat next to him, and followed him.)          (he looked |
| |                                                 happy.) |
| 5 | N: *Yer…* |
| 6 | B: *Nya cam suk?* |
| | (He looked happy?) |
| 7 | N: Oh you *balit sorang jak* **time** *ya?* |
| |     (went back alone that time?) |

### 5.4.2 Convenience

Referring to Extract 5-44, X and H were interacting mostly in Mandarin, like they normally do between themselves. They were talking about a marathon that took place, and X was telling H about her good friend, L's, feedback. In the entire extract, only two switches to English were made, and they are the focal point of the analysis here.

Despite not receiving any Chinese education throughout her school years, X still managed to obtain the basics required to converse in Mandarin as she had the opportunity to use it with her Chinese-speaking friends while in college. Since then, she has also been speaking it at home, especially with her mother who feels more comfortable communicating in Mandarin as she often claims that she is less fluent in English. Thus, this type of interaction pattern where Mandarin is the prevalent language, is commonplace between H and X. Nonetheless, with only the fundamentals in Mandarin, X is often incapable of having a conversation solely in the language, which explains the switches to English. Here, English was used for

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"organiser" and "volunteering" because she did not know how to say them in Mandarin. In this case, having the option to alternate to English is a convenient measure that is available to bilingual speakers like X.

*Extract 5-44*

| 1 | X: *Gang cai* L *ye shi gen wo jiang, ma lai ma, ta jiang ma ah zhen de.* |
| | (Just now, L also told me, she said she was unhappy (about the run.)) |
| 2 | H: Hm? |
| 3 | X: *Tai duo ren, ta jiang.* |
| | (Too many people, she said.) |
| 4 | H: Tsk tsk tsk. *Ae siang no.* |
| | (Goodness.) |
| 5 | X: *Ta jiang* **organiser** *ah, yi ge ren dou mei you kan dao. Zhi kan dao* |
| | (She said)       (there's no one to be seen. Only saw) |
| 6 | *xiao hai zi hoh,* **volunteering** *hoh.* |
| | (children) |
| 7 | H: *Zhe yang na li ke yi. Zhe yang dou shi zhuan dao.* |
| | (How can this be? In this case (the organizer) earned a lot of money.) |

### 5.4.3  Cause and effect

In Extract 5-45, the speakers were triggered (see 6.2.1.3) on three occasions; H in lines 3 and 13, and Y in line 6.

As usual, Y started off in his native language, English, and H replied in her dominant language with a single switch for "box", which Y mentioned in line 1. H did the same in line 13 when she echoed Y's use of "outside" in English instead of going on in Mandarin, which she could have easily done. In line 6, it was Y's turn to be triggered when he shifted to Mandarin to answer H; and on his part especially, it can also be viewed as wanting to identify with his mother as he has a strong inclination towards the use of English. Furthermore, it should be noted that the trigger resulted in two different types of switches; for H, her English intrasentential switches did not affect the language used in her next turn (i.e. she maintained the use of Mandarin, like in line 5), and conversely for Y, his intersentential switch to Mandarin in line 6

caused him to continue using the language in his subsequent turn (line 8), when he was originally using English (line 1).

*Extract 5-45*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Y: But this year, do you know how heavy is that box that I had to carry |
| 2 |    down from my apartment. |
| 3 | H: J *de* **box** *ha?* |
| |   (J's) |
| 4 | Y: Hmph! |
| 5 | H: *Ni dai ci xiang hui lai ni? Ni zao shang dai ci xiang hui lai?* |
| |   (How many boxes did you bring back? How many boxes did you bring |
| |    back this morning?) |
| 6 | Y: ***San xiang.*** |
| |   (Three boxes.) |
| 7 | H: *Ci k–kilo?* |
| |   (How many) |
| 8 | Y: Uh… *qi shi, liu shi ba ah.* |
| |     (70, 68.) |
| 9 | H: *Shi meh?* |
| |    (Really?) |
| 10 | Y: Yeap. |
| 11 | H: Where is the boxes now? I didn't see. |
| 12 | Y: Outside, outside. |
| 13 | H: *Hai zai* **outside** *a*? |
| |   (Still) |

In Extract 5-46, B was asking X if the smoke from their cigarettes was bothering her. When X kindly dismissed it, B switched to Sarawak Malay to show her sympathy for having to tolerate them (line 3). As B generally uses English for 'official' matters, the local BM was employed to bring about a more pitiful effect.

| 1 | B: Is the smoke bothering you, Ms. X? |
|---|---|
| 2 | X: No, it's alright, I'll put–put up with it today. |
| 3 | B: Oh **kesian**… |
| | (poor thing...) |

### 5.4.4 Efficiency

In the following English dominant extract, the two friends (B and N) were telling me (X) about their parents' awareness regarding their smoking habits. The central focus of this extract is on the last turn by B in line 15, where she switched in agreement to N's statement in line 13 about how she too, continues to smoke despite her parents discovering the truth. B's motive of alternating from English to Sarawak Malay here, however, is not to exclude me from what was said (look at 5.3.16 and 5.5.1), but it is because the use of Sarawak Malay allows her to say what she needed in a shorter manner; instead of saying 'same goes for me' if she continued in English, she could also convey the same meaning with *"sama"*. This extract is another clear example where the speakers' choice of language is dependent on their interlocutor. Having used English from the first time the three of us met in a foreign branch campus of an Australian university, that would be the only language that we communicate in when we are together.

*Extract 5-47*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: Uh… no. My parents know= |
| 2 | X: Oh. |
| 3 | B: =they found out. |
| 4 | X: Ah, right. |
| 5 | B: Found out. |
| 6 | X: And and, what did they say? |
| 7 | B: Uh… stop smoking, but… |
| 8 | X: Yeap. Right. And N? |
| 9 | N: Uh… my parents know about it. |
| 10 | X: And and they are cool about it. |
| 11 | N: Mmm… not really, but then. |
| 12 | X: Okay. Okay. |
| 13 | N: I just continue to smoke. |
| 14 | X: Right, right. |
| 15 | B: ***Sama lah***.<br>    (Same goes for me.) |

### 5.4.5  Accommodation

This is demonstrated in Extract 5-48 between H, the mother, and X, the daughter. As they usually speak Mandarin to one another, H carried on in that language from her previous turns when she requested X to pass her the sieve on the table. The consistent use of Mandarin is apparent until the mention of the "yellow sieve" in line 3 that caused H to switch automatically to English. This alternation did not occur because H did not have the equivalent in Mandarin, but because she knows well that her children are accustomed to the term in English. Therefore, by choosing English over Mandarin, H was facilitating her interaction with X, which also seemed to be a less straightforward way of saying, "I will go with the language that you are most competent in if that would make communication easier for you". In doing so, the parents are prioritising and accommodating their children's language use. Moreover, the fact that X switched altogether to Mandarin for her mother when she was actually talking to her brother (Y) simultaneously in English suggests her close association with H.

*Extract 5-48*

| 1 | H: *Lai, lai. Na, wo yao na.* |
|---|---|
|   | (Come, come. Take, I want to take that.) |
| 2 | X: *Ni yao shen me a?* |
|   | (What do you want?) |
| 3 | H: *Wo yao na yi ge* **yellow sieve**. |
|   | (I want that yellow sieve.) |
| 4 | X: Oh. |

### 5.4.6  Affiliation

Under this tendency, an overlapping of circumstances has been found, and they are 'a trigger' and 'external influences', which also belong to a separate theme, 'cause and effect'. The former situation could be seen in Extract 5-49, where H's Mandarin trigger led to J's switch to the same language with a motive to keep the flow of the conversation. As for 'external influences', it is illustrated in Extract 5-50 by B, whose choice of words is affected by her close friends', N and T.

In Extract 5-49, this time featuring H and her youngest son, J, the main focal point is on J's turn in line 5. The conversation started off with J reminding H about the time as he was having an evening shift that day, and H then told him to take his bath. Although J is proficient in Mandarin, English has always been his preferred language. As for H, she regularly interacts with her son in Mandarin as she knows that he is a fluent speaker of the language. The highlight of this extract is when J switched to Mandarin (line 5) after H's repeated requests. When asked, J said that it was more appropriate to reply his mother in Mandarin since she was using the language. By switching over completely to H's language to express his affiliation with her, J also hoped that his mother would understand him better. She probably did, in line 8, when she immediately mentioned the penknife that J was initially searching for to open the boxes with.

*Extract 5-49*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | J: Now it's 4:10 *ah*. |
| 2 | H: *Ni yao qu chong liang oh*, J! |
| | (You need to shower) |
| 3 | J: Yeah. |
| 4 | H: *Ke yi qu chong liao lo.* |
| | (You can go and shower now.) |
| 5 | J: **Wo yao kai he zi xian.** |
| | (I want to open the boxes first.) |
| 6 | H: Huh? |
| 7 | J: *Wo yao kai he zi, wo yao na na ge dong xi chu lai yi xia.* |
| | (I want to open the boxes, I want to take out the things.) |
| 8 | H: *Mei you* penknife *ha*? *Lou shang de* staircase *na bian mei you a*? |
| | (There is no penknife, is it? There is none upstairs, at the staircase?) |
| 9 | Shelf *na bian*. |
| | (Somewhere on the shelf.) |

Extract 5-50 considers the three good friends talking about seafood, with N correcting himself in line 1 as he recalled his earlier words, which were inaccurate. English was used until the first switch took place in line 8, where N reiterated himself in Sarawak Malay to T after her reconfirmation in line 4. Having said that, the primary emphasis here is in line 9, when B switched to Sarawak Malay for the verb 'grilled'. To quote B concerning her spontaneous use of *"panggang"*,

"I'm used to saying the word *panggang* compared to 'grilled' because T and N always use the word *panggang* instead of 'grilled' so I'm more influenced by the words they use".

By adhering to the word choice of the majority rather than sticking to what she was originally more familiar with was an implication of B's desire to maintain, or even to deepen her connection with her peers. Although it is not something that is stated explicitly among the friends, it is clear that B wishes to be accepted as a member of the group through her linguistic accommodation, which is also one of the ways a bilingual could associate himself or herself with other bilinguals.

*Extract 5-50*

| 1 | N: Oh not, not butter prawn, fried squid. |
|---|---|
| 2 | T: Hah? |
| 3 | N: Fried squid. |
| 4 | T: Fried squid? |
| 5 | B: Oh… |
| 6 | N: Yeah. |
| 7 | B: Squid= |
| 8 | N: *Sotong goreng.* <br>     (Fried squid.) |
| 9 | B: =fried *ka,* ***panggang?*** <br>         (or, grilled?) |
| 10 | N: Fried, deep fried *la.* |
| 11 | B: Oh. |
| 12 | T: Deep fry… |

## 5.5   Ways to express affiliation: introduction

It is found that bilinguals associate themselves with individuals from the same community in different ways. Seven circumstances of language use stood out, and affiliation takes place when one wishes 'to exclude others', 'to maintain the conversation flow', 'to adapt', 'as a result of the trigger effect', 'for solidarity', and 'external influence'.

### 5.5.1   For exclusion

This reason for language switches only emerged from the friendship group. In Extract 5-51, N was eyeing and trying to direct his friends' attention to a man in the café. In line 1, having moved on from the previous topic, he continued in Sarawak Malay. After successfully getting T's attention, N alternated to English to refer to the man more generally, but upon seeing how his friends were unsure as to who he was referring to, he reverted to Malay to specify the man's shirt colour (line 6). With that, T and B instantly knew who N was talking about. For N, and the same applies to T, in situations where they are talking about people secretly and do not want the other

party to know or hear, Sarawak Malay would most likely be used. In this sense, Sarawak Malay could be regarded as being exclusive to N and T, which is used to symbolise their identity as members of the friendship group.

*Extract 5-51*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | N: Summer term. Oh… *nanga ya, nanga ya, nanga ya.* |
| | (look at him, look at him, look at him.) |
| 2 | T: *Nanga apa, nanga apa, nanga apa.* Oh *ya ka.* Huh? |
| | (Look at what, look at what, look at what. Oh really.) |
| 3 | N: Not that one, right? |
| 4 | B: Which one? |
| 5 | T: Is it that one? |
| 6 | N: Ah… **baju putih**. |
| | (white shirt.) |
| 7 | T: Oh *counter ya.* |
| | (at the counter.) |
| 8 | B: No no, he's still sitting down. |

### 5.5.2  For maintenance of conversation flow

Extract 5-52 begins with H admonishing her son (Y) for his plan to participate in the 42 kilometres marathon. In making her stand clear, H went back and forth between English and Mandarin (lines 1 and 2), while Y kept to the use of English. The significant bit in this extract starts from line 6 when H replied in Mandarin to her daughter's (X) questions in line 5. Subsequently, that elicited a response from Y, who also switched to Mandarin (line 7). As evident from the extract, Y continued in Mandarin in his following two turns (lines 9 and 12), which was in line with H's utterances in the same language.

Here, a longer extract is used to show the change in Y's state, where in line 3, he seemed rational as he corrected his mother (H). However, as H continued to stress her disapproval (lines 4 and 6), Y made a full alternation to Mandarin in consecutive turns, which not only might have enabled him to associate more closely with his mother, but also to appeal to her by implying that he was aware of the side effects.

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| 1 | H: I think 21 will be quite, just nice *ei… ni de* body *zhen yang qu pao wu* |
| | (how can your body endure a run |
| 2 | *liu ge xiao shi oh…* |
| | that lasts for 5-6 hours…) |
| 3 | Y: No, the cut-off point is seven hours. |
| 4 | H: No *lah,* cannot *lah.* Really too tired, too too that one, too… |
| 5 | X: *Ni hui shu na ge meh? Qi shi wu sui de ren meh?* |
| | (Are you not better than someone who is 75 years old?) |
| 6 | H: *Aiya, ni na li dong. Hui qu zhe bian tong na bian tong. Chei…* |
| | (how do you know. You'll start aching here and there when you |
| | go home.) |
| 7 | Y: *Yi ding hui tong de…* |
| | (I'll definitely ache…) |
| 8 | H: Yea *la. He ku le.* |
| | (Why do you want to suffer like this?) |
| 9 | Y: *Bu yao jin o…* (   ) |
| | (It's alright…) |
| 10 | X: *He ku.* |
| | (Why do you want to suffer like this?) |
| 11 | H: *Bu yao zhe yang ba.* |
| | (Don't do this.) |
| 12 | Y: *Jiu jiu yi ci er yi o...* |
| | (Once in a blue moon.) |

### 5.5.3  For clarity

Extract 5-53 shows how the mother (H) accommodates her son (Y) as she switched from Mandarin to English for "ointment". By doing so, the mother was connecting with her son by being sensitive to his language needs, considering the fact that he is proficient in the English language. As demonstrated in the brief extract below, such language choice normally brings about a good outcome as the interlocutor would have no trouble in understanding what is said.

*Extract 5-53*

| 1 | H: No, I say, if, *oh oh ni you dai dai* **ointment** *hui lai gei* J *ho.* |
|---|---|
|   | (you brought)　　　　　(back for) |
| 2 | Y: Yeap. |

### 5.5.4 Trigger effect

Language alternation as a result of being triggered by one's interlocutor does not only appear under the 'Cause' theme (see 5.4.3), but it could also be a direct way to associate with other speakers. In Extract 5-54, the wife (H) was recounting the conversation she had with an employee at a furniture shop concerning something W said. As always, Foochow is used to converse with each other, and in this extract, switches have been made to Mandarin. Here, the husband's (W) switch in line 3 had been triggered by his wife who said 'wife' in Mandarin as *"tai tai"* (line 2), a term he would otherwise have no difficulty expressing in his first language, Foochow.

*Extract 5-54*

| 1 | H: *Ni kau mui pu gen, ee hie jiak nerng gu kong, nu nu ni ni ni mama, nu* |
|---|---|
| 2 | *pu kong ni tai tai. Wo tai tai. Herh! Ma si ya li ni jia cho wa.* |
|   | (After that you still told her, your mother, then you said your wife. My wife. You are the one who made it up.) |
| 3 | W: *Wei tuh mo hu wang kong a. Si nu jia kong* **tai tai** *oh. Wei dian wa* |
| 4 | *tuong uh hu wang kong.* |
|   | (I didn't say that. You're the one who said wife. When did I say that on the phone?) |

### 5.5.5 External influences

For this circumstance, an example consisting of one line was used (Extract 5-55); and in this context, B was stating her beverage preferences. She could have uttered the second sentence in English easily as, 'Not tasty/ delicious', but she chose to say it in Sarawak Malay, which happens to be the language normally used by her friends for this expression. Hence, through her language choice, she was making a conscious effort to affiliate with her friends.

*Extract 5-55*

| 1 | B: I want this one. ***Sik nyaman.*** |
|---|---|
|   | (Not tasty.) |


### 5.5.6  For adaptability

The following extract is an extension of Extract 5-37, with the focus again on B's recount of what her mother said in lines 7 and 8. The switch that is the primary highlight here, however, is the noun *"adik"* in line 8. Taking into account the slim probability that B's mother used BM to refer to her younger daughter shows that on B's part, the single alternation was made purely because she was together with her friends. During that time, B felt that the change in language was fitting as she wanted to show her connection with the group whose common language is Sarawak Malay. Having said that, she also seldom hears her friends using English when mentioning their siblings, so instead of 'younger brother or sister', they would say *'adik'*, which was what B did in this excerpt. On the whole, B's efforts of adjusting her language behaviour to her friends' could be seen from the way Sarawak Malay is incorporated in her speech, which is normal practice when she is with N and T.

*Extract 5-56*

| 1 | B: That day my Mommy *beli* cherry *nak,* and then *macam…* |
|---|---|
|   |       (bought cherries, right, and then like…) |
| 2 | T: No I mean, *tangan* B. |
|   |       (B's hand.) |
| 3 | B: Oh. |
| 4 | N: Oh. |
| 5 | B: T *pun.* |
|   |    (It belongs to T.) |
| 6 | T: Oh… |
| 7 | B: And then the cherry *macam sikit jak,* and then *mahal* so *nya belah,* 10 |
|   |       (was very little)          (expensive, so she |
|   |                                          divided it) |
| 8 | for you, 10 for ***adik,*** 10 for Daddy. *Macam ya.* |
|   |       (little sister)          (Like that.) |

### 5.5.7 For solidarity

Throughout the whole study, this reason for switching only came up twice. It is alike to the extract in 0, in the sense that it features the same words for the main switch (*"Mei you"* which means 'No'), and the same interlocutors. Lines 1 and 2 have been included to show how the mother (H) is also a participant of this conversation. The point of interest in this extract is in line 6, where X who only speaks to her older brother (Y) in English wanted to affiliate with him by using the language, but at the same time, she also wished to acknowledge their mother's (H) presence. Therefore, this explains X's switch to H's more dominant language, Mandarin, at the beginning of line 6 which was so that H knew she was still part of their conversation. From this short extract, there is a clear pattern of language use between these three speakers; the mother (H) and daughter's (X) primary language is Mandarin, while with X's older brother (Y), it is English. Although the Mandarin switch (line 6) has been singled out due to its markedness, if viewed from another perspective, X was also showing solidarity with Y when she chose to alternate back to English to answer his question in line 5. If X did complete the rest of her sentence in Mandarin (*"Mei you, **tai duo ren"***), then it could be said that the switch was made solely for their mother as English is the unmarked choice for X and Y.

*Extract 5-57*

| 1 | X: Even L *su ni ah*… |
|---|---|
|   | (can't beat you…) |
| 2 | H: *Bu neng, mei you, mei you, mei you ke neng.* |
|   | (Cannot, no, no, impossible.) |
| 3 | X: But L said on the way, on her way back, right, she also started walking. |
| 4 | Walked all the way. |
| 5 | Y: Why? |
| 6 | X: ***Mei you***, too many people. |
|   | (No) |

## 5.6  The 'affiliation' among East Malaysians: introduction

For this section, multiple excerpts have been extracted from the transcripts to demonstrate the various ways these bilinguals portray their identities through their

speech. This is done not only through the languages used, but also by utilising certain lexical items, sentence structures, and expressions, which is what makes these individuals unique.

### 5.6.1 Family

In Extract 5-58, both Y and W were in a conversation about Y's neighbour who committed suicide and the ambiguities surrounding her case. Being in agreement with what Y said, W ended his sentence in line 4 with the words, "correct correct", which is a basilectal form of Malaysian English (refer to Basilect (sociolinguistic) in Table 2-1) that means 'that's right' in Standard English.

*Extract 5-58*

| 1 | Y: We do not know, we do not know how the body was found= |
| 2 | W: Yea… how= |
| 3 | Y: =we do not know how she jumped= |
| 4 | W: =how she jumped down *ho,* **correct correct.** |
| 5 | Y: =nobody knew, yeah. |

The following extract is on the same topic as Extract 5-58, but the speakers here are the mother (H) and her daughter-in-law (C). The focus of this extract is C and H's turns in lines 2 and 3, which took place after H asked about C's neighbour's relationship. C then said she did not have a clue as to what was going on between them as they did not seem normal. The Malaysian English features underlined here are the *lah* particle and the use of "one" (line 2), where in this case, the both of them performed the same function, which was to emphasise what was said. In the last line, H reiterated C's second half of her response in almost the same way to show that she understood what C meant.

*Extract 5-59*

| 1 | H: Mmmm. You mean that because husband and wife always fight *ha?* |
| 2 | C: Don't know them *lah,* they all psycho one. |
| 3 | H: Oh, all psycho one *la.* |

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Extract 5-60 looks at the exchange between Y and H about a marathon, and one could easily make out H's interest to participate in the run that was held on the Penang Bridge. When Y tried to dissuade H from running the Penang marathon (line 3) and advised her to join the Kuala Lumpur one instead (line 5), H replied in line 8, insisting that "she wants the Penang Bridge". Unlike the meaning that this sentence conveys literally (i.e. H's desire for the bridge), it actually referred to her wish to be part of said marathon. In line 9, after Y replied in the same manner in a question form, he gave in immediately and told H to try it once, which he said as "one time". H then made a comment with regard to the starting time, which she felt could be earlier than seven in the morning. The proper way to phrase line 11 would be, "It can start earlier, why does it have to start at 7?" Although the syntactic structures for the utterances in lines 8, 9 and 11 appear as somewhat odd (look at 6.2.4.2.2 for some syntactic features of Colloquial Malaysian English), it is one of the things that distinguish these speakers as Malaysians.

*Extract 5-60*

| 1 | Y: Or= |
| 2 | H: *Nah.* |
| 3 | Y: =or, Mommy, you don't go for the Penang one. |
| 4 | H: Mm. |
| 5 | Y: You go for the um, you go for the KL marathon. |
| 6 | H: *Aiya*= |
| 7 | Y: Mm. |
| 8 | H: **=I want Penang Bridge** *le,* Y. |
| 9 | Y: **Oh, you want Penang Bridge? Then just go one time!** *Aiyah,* |
| 10 | Mommy. |
| 11 | H: **Time can start early *leh,* why start 7.** |

Extract 5-61 is a longer extract that involves the parents, the older son and daughter. From lines 1 to 6, the father and son were communicating mainly in Malaysian English, when H pointed out the uneaten food on the table in Mandarin (line 7). Upon hearing that, the next two replies from her children were also in Mandarin (lines 8 and 11). Meanwhile, in line 12, the father, who was still continuing his conversation on the

side with Y, switched to Mandarin too. Thereafter, in the remaining turns (lines 13 to 16), H and Y continued on consistently in Mandarin.

The Chinese identity of the speakers stood out in this extract as one person's use of Mandarin influenced the others in their choice of language. It had an effect on the son who normally speaks in English most of the time, and more interestingly, it also caused W to alternate while on a separate topic. With English being a dominant home language for the children, especially for the eldest son (Y), occasions like this become more salient in signifying their acknowledgement of and connection to their Chinese heritage.

*Extract 5-61*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | W: *Tai duo le.* You mean, you haven't decide yet *a?*<br><br>(Too much.) |
| 2 | Y: Not yet. |
| 3 | W: If not like that *la,* easy *la.* Just a small thing. *Hoh?* |
| 4 | Y: Mm. |
| 5 | W: Everybody enter that stage of life *ah.* |
| 6 | Y: Mm. |
| 7 | H: *Ci ge hai mei you chi a.*<br><br>(This has not been eaten.) |
| 8 | Y: *Lai, wo chi lah.*<br><br>(Come, I'll eat it.) |
| 9 | X: Mm. |
| 10 | H: *Ha?* |
| 11 | X: *Gei ge ge chi.*<br><br>(Let older brother eat it.) |
| 12 | W: Mommy *you shi hou you kong, ye ke yi (chu qu…)*<br><br>(Sometimes when Mommy's free, she can also (go to your place…) |
| 13 | H: *Gei* papa, papa *yi dian lah=*<br><br>(Give)          (some) |
| 14 | Y: *Nah, ba ba.*<br><br>　　　(Dad.) |
| 15 | H: *=ni xian cai chi mu gua you chi na ge na li hui ngam oh?*<br><br>(=now that you're eating papaya, and also going to eat that, how does<br>　it match?) |
| 16 | Y: *Shi shen me lai de?*<br><br>(What is that?) |

Extract 5-62 also centres on the speakers' Chinese identity, but not in a general sense as in the previous one, but of a specific Chinese group, namely Foochow. Again, while W and Y were in a conversation that was solely in English (lines 1 to 4), H, who was sorting the vegetables in the kitchen made a remark in Foochow about the overripe cucumber (line 5). W then broke away from his ongoing talk with Y and switched to Foochow to answer H (line 6), which was followed by another reply in the

same language (line 7). In line 8, as W shifted his attention back to his son, Y, he chose to speak in Mandarin instead of proceeding in Foochow. From here, it can be seen that there is a clear separation of language use when W speaks to his son (Y), and his wife (H).

For the husband and wife (W and H) who grew up in a Foochow household, in the town of Sarikei and Sibu respectively, it is expected that Foochow would become their first language as it plays a major role in their daily communication with the people around them. It is apparent that these two bilinguals strongly identify as Foochows as their matrix language is always Foochow whenever they interact with one another.

*Extract 5-62*

| 1 | W: You have to be very careful. In making decision, you know or not. |
| 2 | Y: Yeah. |
| 3 | W: Once you make the wrong decision *ah,* it will be very tough. That |
| 4 |     mean you destroy your foundation, whatever you have built. |
| 5 | H: ((talks to W)) *Jia qie gua ci mang lau la.* |
| |                 (This cucumber is so old.) |
| 6 | W: *Me lau a, ee lak kiang, lak kiang li qie gua a.* |
| |    (It's not old, it's from the Ibans.) |
| 7 | H: *Cie nok siak.* |
| |    (How to eat it?) |
| 8 | W: *Ni* mother-in-law *you shi hou ye hui xia qu ha?* |
| |    (Your)             (sometimes also goes down (to your place?)) |

### 5.6.2  Friends

In Extract 5-63, the friends were planning for their day out to the beach and spoke of a seafood restaurant in the area. Even though the primary language used is English, the participants' Malaysianness is evident when the shrimp paste *(cencaluk)* was mentioned by N in line 3, and it was echoed by T in lines 4 and 9. The BM term is used for this particular food because there is no equivalent in English to best describe it, so a switch to BM in this situation is very normal for fellow Malaysians. Furthermore, the shift to Sarawak Malay, such as for the pronoun *"ya"* (which means

'that') in line 1, B's expression and reaction in lines 8 and 22, and even the phrase by T in line 23, all hint at their East Malaysian identity.

*Extract 5-63*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | N: Butter prawn *ya.* The the sauce, right=<br>    (That butter prawn.) |
| 2 | T: Oyster pancake. |
| 3 | N: =they don't use uh, chilli or anything. They use *cencaluk*=<br>    ((*cencaluk*: a type of shrimp paste)) |
| 4 | T: Oh, *cencaluk*= |
| 5 | N: =with lime. |
| 6 | T: =oh, my God… |
| 7 | N: That's the sauce instead of chilli. |
| 8 | B: *Yobihh.*<br>    (Woah.) |
| 9 | T: *Cencaluk,* oh my God. Uhhh… |
| 10 | N: Oh not, not butter prawn, fried squid. |
| 11 | T: *Hah?* |
| 12 | N: Fried squid. |
| 13 | T: Fried squid? |
| 14 | B: Oh… |
| 15 | N: Yeah. |
| 16 | B: Squid= |
| 17 | N: *Sotong goreng.*<br>    (Fried squid.) |
| 18 | B: =fried *ka, panggang?*<br>          (or, grilled?) |
| 19 | N: Fried, deep fried *la.* |
| 20 | B: Oh. |
| 21 | T: Deep fry… |
| 22 | B: *Nya-mannnnn…*<br>    (Yummyyyy…) |
| 23 | T: My God... *kamek maok makan* crab *jak.*<br>          (I only want to eat crab.) |

Extract 5-64 was included to illustrate how the friends usually communicate with one another, with Sarawak Malay as their dominant language. In the example below, they were making small talk and it could be seen that B, who had little knowledge of Sarawak Malay in the beginning was using the language in all her turns. By doing so, not only is she associating with N and T as members of the same social group, but also as a proud East Malaysian.

*Extract 5-64*

| 1 | N: Oh yea, I haven't asked my sister about the vodka. |
|---|---|
| 2 | B: Oh, *nya dah habis ka?* <br> (has she finished it already?) |
| 3 | N: I don't know, I forgot to ask= |
| 4 | T: Vodka. |
| 5 | N: *=belum tanya gik.* <br> (=haven't asked yet.) |
| 6 | B: *Nang teruk* vodka *ya,* T= <br> (The vodka was really bad, T=) |
| 7 | T: *Makseh.* <br> (Thank you.) |
| 8 | B: *=sik nyaman.* <br> (=not good.) |
| 9 | T: *Macam marah jak.* <br> (She seems angry.) |
| 10 | B: *Mintak.* <br> (Can I have some?) |
| 11 | T: *Sik nyaman inda, manis* only. <br> (It is not tasty at all, only sweet.) |
| 12 | B: *Ku maok.* <br> (I would like some.) |

## 5.7   Chapter summary

This chapter has reported East Malaysians' language use from a social aspect that primarily involves the code-switching phenomenon, which is widely used in these

bilinguals' interactions with one another. Besides that, it has also explored the direct and indirect ways in which bilinguals could affiliate with their interlocutors. Chapter 6 delves deeper into the findings and discusses the various types of identities that have been expressed by my participants.

# Chapter 6.  East Malaysians' discourse: circumstances, tendencies and affiliation

## 6.1  Introduction

Studies of language tendencies that involve a variety of languages are not unexplored. In spite of this, their emphasis is primarily on the code-switching phenomenon and the way languages are used in bilinguals' everyday lives (as discussed in 1.3.1). This sets my study apart as the six main language patterns found in mine are the outcome of the strategies (mainly code-switching) employed by the speakers during the process of discourse. The patterns (i.e. habit, convenience, cause and effect, accommodation, efficiency and affiliation) have not been haphazardly produced, but they are the final product of a long analytical procedure, one that includes the identification and categorisation of bilinguals' circumstances for their language use. Based on the analysis of my study's results, it can be said that the tendencies are some of the most frequent, if not the most general motivations as to why bilinguals speak the way they do.

In view of that, the circumstances that invoke my participants to code-switch and translanguage have also been listed. There are 20 circumstances altogether, and they too, have appeared in the work of other researchers (see 1.2.2). Some are described alongside mine in this chapter for the purpose of comparing and contrasting. Extra-linguistic factors such as participants, content of speech, function of interaction and situation play an important part in determining the language that will be used (see 1.2.3). Seeing how the circumstances found in my study have already been discovered by other researchers, it reaffirms the notion that regardless how bilinguals' language backgrounds differ, some of the things picked up from one community could be applicable to a group of bilinguals that is located in a different area. This is because as people who know multiple languages, they are bound to utilise similar communication strategies when talking to their interlocutors (see 1.2.2 for code-switching and 1.2.4 for translanguaging).

By examining the situations and main themes for speakers' language use, it enabled me to probe deeper into something that is not obvious at the outset, which

is, 'What role was assumed by the speaker when he or she used a particular language to convey a message across to his or her interlocutor?' Therefore, in the final section of this chapter, attention is centred on identity, and East Malaysians' speech styles in representing who they are as members of the community that they live in, individually or collectively. Some instances of colloquial Malaysian English, a distinct variety which is affectionately known as Manglish (see 2.5.2.1) by Malaysians; and Sarawak Malay, which is spoken by the people of Sarawak (see 3.3.3), are featured here to further show how they are one of a kind.

## 6.2 Discussion

Under this section, the four research questions in my study are examined further after the results were obtained in the previous chapter.

### 6.2.1 Circumstances for language use: introduction

Various circumstances have come up from the analysis, a lot of which are not uncommon in studies that explore bilinguals' reasons for alternating between languages. Based on the goal a bilingual individual wishes to achieve, different communication strategies are employed, sometimes more regularly under particular circumstances, and vice versa. Not to mention, a speaker tends to use certain language more than the rest that are available in his or her repertoire, and this is largely dependent on their interlocutor(s) during the interaction.

#### 6.2.1.1 The norm

Based on my data, this circumstance could be caused by:

1) the bilinguals themselves
   - It could be a word or phrase that they frequently use in a particular language because it is effortless to express, and it is able to deliver the intended effect and meaning directly


2) the interlocutors
   - In this case, what is habitual could depend on the group a bilingual is part of at the time of interaction. Having familiarised oneself with the group's

linguistic repertoire, the bilingual would choose to use expressions that are usually employed when among a particular circle. This means that what is expected for Group A does not necessarily apply to Group B as different languages might be spoken.

This circumstance is evident for all the members in the family, except J. In Extract 5-1, Y addressed his uncle in Foochow even when his knowledge of the language is very limited. Relating it to the two points above, Y has been greeting his uncle by the Foochow term, *nerng ngu*, since he was young. For his uncle who is not proficient in English, being addressed in his first language by his nephew would make him feel respected and it also helps to maintain the bond that they share. Compared to if 'uncle' was used, that might cause the relationship to feel distant as it is a general term that could be used by any young person to address someone noticeably older.

Along with the family group, this circumstance is also evident among the three friends. Contrary to Y, B switched from English to Sarawak Malay for the phrase in Extract 5-2 as a result of her friends' influence. In a situation like this when she is being sportive and does not want to offend her friends, she tends to use *"tapi ya lah ya"* instead of the English expression, 'but yeah', which might come off as sounding less friendly. Therefore, this Sarawak Malay phrase is the default choice for B considering her friendship with T (and N) is an easygoing one.

Don (2003) offered an example in her study that focused on Kelantanese Malay undergraduates and their code-switching behaviour. In one of the extracts, Speaker A introduced C to B, who are both from Kelantan; and as soon as B knew that his new friend is from the same state, he alternated to Kelantanese Malay to get to know her better. When A who is a non-Kelantanese expressed her irritation, B admitted that his switch to the Kelantan dialect is habitual especially when he comes into contact with people who also use the same mother tongue.

Don's study varies from mine as hers involve speakers from different states, hence it concerns the habitual use of a language variety rather than sentence components or short sentences as found in my study. Nonetheless, it shows that switching does take place for something that bilinguals do on a repeated and regular basis.

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Besides that, Don's (2003) research also looks at a hypothesis that is made up of two variables that could affect a speaker's language choice, namely the interlocutors and setting. Her overall postulation was that Kelantanese would employ their own language if their interlocutors are fellow Kelantanese, and they would alternate to Standard Malay when they spoke to their peers who are non-Kelantanese. Thus, it is evident that the Kelantanese Malay speakers would make an effort to adapt themselves to their interlocutors or the situation they are in. This, too, is true for my participants who code-switch to converge, which also explains their strong affiliation with the other members and their social environment.

### 6.2.1.2 For ease of expression

Grosjean (1982) states that many a time, bilinguals have access to vocabulary in both languages (A and B), but when talking in language A, the particular word could be more readily available in language B, and vice versa. Therefore, it is natural for a bilingual to say a word in both languages in a single conversation.

This circumstance appeared in most of the family members' data. The fact that the circumstance did not show in J and C's interaction could be overlooked because both of them spoke the least in the whole conversation. From Extract 5-3, it can be observed that bilinguals are able to express themselves with ease if the language used is one that they have achieved complete fluency in. For W, the Foochow language has played an integral role in his daily communication since a very young age, and even until today, it is still used in different aspects of his life. Tracing back to W's first turn (line 10) in this extract, it is clear that Foochow was already used to communicate his message, and he would have finished off in the language if it had not been for his son who is more fluent in English. As for Extract 5-4, the alternation from Mandarin to English for "next year" is an example of how bilinguals spontaneously go with words that require less effort to produce.

Like most of the members in the family group, this circumstance is prevalent among the three friends. Unlike the former, however, their switching pattern is more consistent, where it can be seen that these individuals find it more convenient to use English to express themselves. In a Sarawak Malay conversation, N's use of "order" in a restaurant setting (Extract 5-5) demonstrates that on some occasions, it is easier to say something in a particular language simply because it has become customary.

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In David *et al.* (2009) study of code-switching functions in the family domain in Malaysia, it was noted that precise names are used when referring to food items in the Malaysian context, and this is due to the diverse ethnic communities that exist together in Malaysia. Hence, the food names are used as they are since they have been integrated into the speakers' language repertoire. In other words, using the specific names makes it easier for individuals to identify the exact food they are referring to. It is something that all Malaysians are already accustomed to, which makes it standard practice for someone to order *char kuey teow*, not stir-fried flat rice noodles; *roti canai*, not 'flying bread' (because of how it is made); and *laksa*, not rice noodles or vermicelli with curry broth.

The following table provides some of the cuisine names of the different ethnic groups that can be found in Malaysia.

| Ethnicity | Cuisine |
|-----------|---------|
| Chinese | *Char kuey teow, bak kut teh, lok lok* |
| Indian | *Roti canai, mee rebus, thosai* |
| Malay | *Laksa, rendang, asam pedas* |

*Table 6-1: Cuisine names according to ethnic groups*

### 6.2.1.3 A trigger

The shift in Extract 5-6 is an intersentential switch, where H was speaking in Mandarin before she fully alternated to Foochow to answer her son's request that was also in Foochow. On the other hand, Extract 5-7 is an instance where the source of the trigger was the speaker himself, and this only came up once from N's data.

Another case of a trigger was found in Bentahila's (1983) research about code-switching motivations, where a speaker switched to French [from Arabic] for the noun 'weekend' as the equivalent is not available in Arabic. Therefore, the moment French was used, it caused the bilingual to finish the rest of the sentence in that language.

Faltis (1989, p. 120) stated that a common reason switching takes place is because of triggers caused 'by the presence of a lexical element embedded later in the sentence which is untranslatable in the language of the first portion of the sentence'. Quite often, the words are proper nouns, and this is illustrated by Jacobson's (1978, p. 22, cited in Faltis, 1989) example, where the speaker initially spoke in Spanish but shifted to English soon after, as there was going to be a mention of a bar name (Sonny's) that could only be said in English. Additionally, other items that could trigger a bilingual to switch are particular idioms and sayings in a certain language (Faltis, 1989).

### 6.2.1.4 For getting attention

From the few switches that have cropped up for this reason in my study, the speakers normally use English as it helps to set a serious tone, which suggests that the listeners' undivided attention is needed. In Extract 5-8 and Extract 5-9, it could be seen that after the switch was made in lines 8 and 9 respectively, the interlocutors' responses indicated that they were ready to listen to what the speakers were going to tell them.

Bentahila (1983) gives a slightly different example for this circumstance which involved the speaker switching to Arabic to signal that he or she was beginning a new topic. Thus, through language alternation, the interlocutor might be able to gather that the speaker wished to move away from what was currently discussed.

### 6.2.1.5 Translanguaging

In spite of the fact that translanguaging only occurred once for the family in the entire conversation, it is still worth including as it shows that a practice other than code-switching is existent in this group (Extract 5-10).

Having said that, the spoken data demonstrates that this language practice is more prominent in the friendship group (Extract 5-11). This could be due to the fact that the three individuals hail from contrasting backgrounds, and as they use both English and Sarawak Malay to accommodate and identify with one another, they begin to pick up and develop a similar repertoire, which also involves implicitly knowing whether a particular choice is marked or unmarked.

The translanguaging examples comprise English nouns, verbs, and adjectives. These words have been used so frequently, that over time, they become embedded in the speakers' language repertoire and are treated as Malay words when used in a Sarawak Malay sentence.

Although this language practice has been evident in my study for the two groups of participants, most of the research that have been conducted in this area have looked at translanguaging in institutional settings, be it in relation to identity (Creese and Blackledge, 2015); or teaching and learning (Hornberger and Link, 2012; Mazak and Herbas-Donoso, 2015), just to name a few. Furthermore, it is found that bilinguals do not only translanguage in their spoken repertoire, but also in their writing (Canagarajah, 2011; Velasco and García, 2014).

Seeing how Creese and Blackledge's (2015) study involves identity (which is also an important implication that arose in mine; see 6.2.4), two of their arguments are included here, and they are:

1. Languages can no longer be held to be separate entities with fixed boundaries, but rather linguistic resources are deployed as people draw on communicative repertoires.
2. Identities are incorporated and performed as sets of emblematic, multisemiotic features, including linguistic resources, and that identity positions may or may not be negotiable in particular social settings (pp. 29-30).

The first idea has been demonstrated by my study through the use of translanguaging. As for the second argument, my participants' expression of identity is a representation of themselves as an individual in the larger society that they live in, and as a member of a group that they belong to. In doing so, my participants constantly negotiate their identities as they interact with their interlocutors (Soriente, 2008), and because they are tightly-knit groups, it is normally done with an aim to converge.

### 6.2.1.6 Conveying a precise meaning

B, who is from the friendship group, illustrates this circumstance best in Extract 5-12, where the English word "real" was used to describe a celebrity's buttocks, instead of

*'benar'*, its equivalent in Sarawak Malay. Even though they are alike in meaning, they cannot be used in the same sentence in this case. This is because the idea B wished to express through "real" is 'not fake', and *'benar'* is not appropriate because it is commonly used as 'true', in a situation that concerns something factual. B also verified this in the interview:

> *"Because I feel like if I say benar, it will be like, "Is her butt true" or "Is her butt correct", it's not… suitable in that context".*

For Hughes *et al.* (2006), French words are used to exemplify the subtle difference in the meaning each one conveys. Both *adieu* and *au revoir* can be used to say 'goodbye', but the former is used if the speaker does not know when he or she would be meeting the other party next, while the latter is employed if the speakers will be seeing each other again within a short time. This means that speakers would decide which one to use based on the situation they are in. Hence, it is apparent that French is more versatile than English, where 'goodbye' is used all the time.

In comparing Hughes' study to mine, it was imperative for speaker B to make the switch as the difference between the lexical items was significant enough to alter the meaning of the statement, so by using the proper word, her message would be well transmitted and a communication breakdown could be prevented.

### 6.2.1.7 External influences

The three friends made switches as a result of external influences; unlike the family group, where only one out of the six members switched for this reason.

It is well-known that a bilingual's language choice can be the result of factors like the participants, situation, topic, and purpose of the interaction (as discussed in 1.2.3). The participants' factor is true for B who was found to switch mostly to Sarawak Malay because of her friends' (N and T) influence (go to Extract 5-14). Words that she could have easily accessed in her first language, English, are now spoken in the group's dominant language resulting from her close interaction with her friends over the years. Referring to Extract 5-13, H showed that one's religious institution could also have an effect on one's code-switching habits. In comparison with B's code-switched items (single words and short expressions), however, H made longer Mandarin alternations as they consist of words from the gospel.

Moreover, it is important to mention the pattern that arose from the other members of the friendship group, N and T, as it has not been reported in the literature review. For N, his switches to English were due to mass media and social media, while for T, it was because of the people in her other social groups. This is corroborated by Bell (2001, p. 147) who states that 'referees are third persons not usually present at an interaction but possessing such salience for a speaker that they influence style even in their absence'.

It was found that the Moroccans in Bentahila (1983) tend to code-switch according to the topics under discussion. For example, when the subject matter is administration, education or medical-related, the speakers would often shift from Arabic to French.

In relation to the contributing factors of one's language choice, the most prominent factor that has surfaced repeatedly from the speakers in my study is the one involving the participants themselves. It is undeniable that familiarity between speakers does affect languages used, as Rubin's (1968, cited in Grosjean, 1982) description of Guarani-Spanish bilinguals who talk to strangers or people they know in Spanish, but Guarani is used when they are among friends.

### 6.2.1.8 Lack of vocabulary

Among the family and friends groups, only four participants switched the most when they could not find the required vocabulary while engaging in conversation. These individuals (X and Y; B and T) are similar in a way that all of their first language is English and the language that they tend to fall back on in times of need is also English. This is a communication strategy that is available to bilinguals as they always have at least one competent language as an alternative, and without a doubt, for X, Y, B, and T, English is the language that sustains them when their command of Mandarin and Sarawak Malay is inadequate.

Myers-Scotton (1979, cited in Baker, 2011) provided an example to illustrate this situation, where a regular alternation from Kikuyu to English was made by a Kikuyu university student in Nairobi, Kenya, whenever Geometry was being discussed with his younger brother: *"Atiriri* angle *niati* has *ina* degree eighty; *nayo* this one *ina mirongo itatu".* In this case, English was employed to make up for the

lack of words in Kikuyu because it was the original language used for the subject in school.

To some extent, my participants resemble the Kikuyu student in a sense that the vocabulary that are ready for immediate use in a certain language are normally those that the bilinguals constantly use and are exposed to. Extract 5-15 is an instance of this where "oranges" is the unmarked choice for Y, and its use is consistent when he switched from Mandarin to English again in his second turn for "orange juice". As for Extract 5-44, the lexical items "organiser" and "volunteering" are not words that X would use frequently as they only apply to certain events, so this would inevitably lead to the switch to English. Besides that, from the friends' conversation, it could also be because of what the word is associated with or the topic at hand. Thus, they are prone to switch from Sarawak Malay to English if it is related to University or when they are talking about particular issues. The former is shown in Extract 5-17 when B used English for the phrase "the last semester", and this switch is in fact also prevalent in her friends' (N and T) speech. As all teaching and learning are carried out in English in their university, it is only natural for this group of bilinguals to revert to English in this situation.

### 6.2.1.9  For emphasis

Out of the nine participants, three speakers from the family the father (W), mother (H), and older son (Y)), and two speakers from the friendship group (B and N) switched for this reason. Other than Y, who only shifted once to Standard Malay, W and H made the most significant switches with the majority of them in Mandarin, followed by B and N who chose English for this purpose.

Having examined the participants' talk, it is found that they code-switch to emphasise a point, a sentiment, and imperatives. For the highlighted switch in line 13 *(bu yao)* in Extract 5-18, H placed emphasis on the imperative ('Don't risk your life like that'), which at the same time serves as an admonishment. It should be noted that throughout the whole conversation, H used *"bu yao"* for the same reason six times, which is very likely because H sees Mandarin as being more expressive than English, hence making Mandarin the better choice to appeal to her son. In Extract 5-19, W stressed what he was saying by repeating himself; he initially spoke in Foochow and switched to Mandarin. As for Extract 5-20, N's switch from Sarawak

Malay to English was done to emphasise his point and his sureness that he did not consume any chicken butts.

As for the participants in Bentahila (1983), they place emphasis by repeating themselves in one language, then switching to another; and this is also done when they wish to stress their thoughts or feelings, like when one speaker disagreed with what was said, and when one felt astonished and indignant as a result of his interlocutor's statement. This repetition technique was also employed in Kwan-Terry's (1992) research where a child spoke in Cantonese, and reiterated the adjective 'clever' in English. Conveying the same item in two different languages was the young participant's way of making his point. In this context, he was emphasising his thought of how intelligent the man is.

### 6.2.1.10    For clarity

This circumstance only emerged from W and H's data, and it is significant because this is one of the more indirect ways where bilingual parents could be seen accommodating their children, in efforts to connect closely with them. That is also obvious from the findings, which show that the total number of switches to English outweigh the ones made in Mandarin, simply because they are easily understood by the children who have grown up with English their whole lives. Even during most of the instances when Mandarin was spoken, it was kept simple to match the interlocutors' proficiency level, and this was demonstrated through the examples taken from the family's transcript.

Nonetheless, it is important to point out that the bulk of English switches made by the father and mother from the family group involve exchanges with their older son (Y), as apparent in Extract 5-21 and Extract 5-22. The reason for this is because Y left home much earlier than his siblings to pursue his education and career, and all along, English has been indispensable in his daily life. This means that compared to his siblings who have been living with their parents, they have had more opportunities to speak Mandarin and Foochow. In light of this, it is understandable why more alternations to English take place when Y is being addressed.

Code-switching for clarity is also one of the reasons listed by Baker (2011), but clarification is somewhat different from what transpired in Extract 5-21 and

Extract 5-22, that is, by repetition. It was mentioned by Baker how in classrooms, certain teachers use a language to explain a concept, and thereafter, use a different language to get the meaning across the second time. This is done with the belief that it could act as a reinforcement and to build a more complete understanding for students.

## 6.2.1.11    For adaptability

Between the two speakers from the friendship group (B and T) who switched to Sarawak Malay because of their friends, B's case is a more salient one, owing to its frequency and her language background (refer to 5.2.2). From her switches, it can be seen that B's way of adapting is either by using words or phrases in the same manner as her friends (as in Extract 5-23) or by employing Sarawak Malay words in an English utterance. B's intention to adapt to her good friends through the use of Sarawak Malay shows the strong links that she has established and wishes to maintain with them.

Don (2003) also offers an instance that supports this circumstance, which consists of three friends - speaker A and B who are from the same state and share the same mother tongue, but not speaker C. Therefore, it is not surprising that A and B use Kelantanese Malay when in each other's company, which is reflective of their identity as the people of Kelantan. Nevertheless, a change in their code is apparent when C enters the conversation, and this involves A and B switching to the informal variety of Standard Malay. It is clear that by accommodating C, they hope to make him or her feel comfortable and included. The effort could be seen especially on B's part, who tries to insert Malay words into his or her speech although it is not a language (s)he is fluent in.

From here, it seems a group's majority can choose to adapt, depending on the circumstances. In Don's study, speaker A and B knew that communication with C would not be able to take place if they continued in a language that was unintelligible to C. As for B who is in the friendship group participating in my study, she was aware that the mastery of Sarawak Malay was key to becoming a part of this tight-knit group.

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Interestingly, Y, the older son from the family group switched the most to maintain the flow of interaction, with Mandarin used each time and with the same interlocutor, his mother, H (see Extract 5-24). The central role that English plays in Y's repertoire is evident, as apart from the time when he used Foochow in the family's discourse, he always starts a conversation in English. Thus, his willingness to switch to Mandarin multiple times on separate occasions suggests that this goes beyond wanting to associate with his mother; specifically, it was also his way of reaffirming his identity as a Malaysian Chinese. It is worth noting that following Y is his younger sister (X), who alternated to Foochow while talking to their father in Extract 5-25, which is considered a prominent switch as she only possesses basic Foochow, and she does not use it as often as she does Mandarin. Her reply, albeit a simple question in Foochow, shows that she recognises it as part of who she is and that she takes pride in her Foochow heritage.

In the example given by Bono and Melo-Pfeifer (2010), the speaker was originally talking in Spanish, but was unable to retrieve the noun 'German' in the same language. Therefore, in order to keep the conversation going, (s)he switched over to English to compensate for what she lacks in Spanish.

Besides that, Arnfast and Jørgensen (2003) investigated first-year Danish learners who utilised code-switching as a strategy for communication, learning, and social negotiation. In one of the examples, an American English-speaking exchange student wanted to respond to the interviewer's question in Danish, but was struggling to do so. However, not wanting to disrupt the flow of communication, the student alternated to English in his next turn at the beginning of his sentence, before returning to Danish.

Both of these examples differ from the siblings' as the switches made by the speakers were mainly driven by their motive to have uninterrupted conversations, whereas the Chinese and Foochow switches made by the son and daughter were not a form of strategy that was employed because they could not find the words in English, but it was a revelation of something deeper, which is their expression of affiliation with their parents.

*6.2.1.13      Spontaneity*

Spontaneity can encompass shifting to a language that is normally used between the speakers, or alternating for particular words or phrases. The former can be seen in Extract 5-26 when the daughter (X) switched from her previous turn in English to Mandarin as the person she was addressing changed from her older brother (Y) to her mother (H). This is a natural reaction for X as Mandarin is the primary language of communication for both her and her mother. As for the latter, B demonstrates it in Extract 5-28 when she mentioned *"buntut"* (butt) in Sarawak Malay simply because that is how it is usually said among the group of friends she was with.

In their study, Tan and Waldhoff (1996) reported the language use of the second generation Turks living in Germany. Many proficient Turkish speakers of German would alternate to Turkish for counting purposes; but if it is a political debate, German would be spoken. This language is also used by the rest to think and write in; but when caressing their loved ones or pets, Turkish is chosen. Language is also employed according to the occasion, like how at banquets or musical events, one would switch to Turkish; or when one is very happy, angry or worn out. The said switches normally take place automatically and do not involve awareness on the part of the speakers.

For my participants, however, it is quite a tricky task to clearly state the situations in which certain language is employed, as these bilinguals seem to put their linguistic resources to good use in most circumstances. Having said that, topic needs to be taken into account as the friends did mention that English is their unmarked choice when their discussion is centred around university, and this also applies to the mother (H) from the family group in an instance where technology is the subject matter. In spite of that, a striking pattern of behaviour that has constantly cropped up from the data indicates that the main determining factor of the speakers' language choice and switch still comes down to their interlocutors.

*6.2.1.14      For a conversational effect*

It is imperative to note that even with the participants' varying claims with regard to the effects, it can be observed that the general pattern is, English is used to convey a

more serious message (refer to Extract 5-29) while Sarawak Malay is for something lighthearted (see Extract 5-30).

In addition to that, irregularities have been found, and they are: 1) a speaker can use both languages to deliver the same effect (for example, B used English and Sarawak Malay to come off as more dramatic), and 2) two separate speakers can use different languages to deliver the same effect (for example, B switched to English to sound more convincing, while T alternated to Sarawak Malay for the same purpose). This implies that as bilinguals who have a good command of both languages, they have the privilege to make on the spot decisions about which language would be best to bring about said effect most effectively.

An example in Kow's (2003) study also touched on this language use circumstance, where a Chinese bilingual chose to say 'very ugly' in Mandarin and Cantonese rather than English. One of his reasons for doing so was because the use of the two former languages allowed him to deliver the message in a gentler manner.

### 6.2.1.15    For economy

The participants who have switched reasonably for this are B and N from the friendship group, where for them, the most efficient language to use in this situation is Sarawak Malay.

From the analysis, the word *"ada"* which literally means 'got' was employed by both B and N. Its usage is quite flexible depending on the context, and that can be seen from Extract 5-32 and Extract 5-33. N's switch at the end of his turn (line 9 of Extract 5-32) was in relation to the set up of check-in kiosks at the airport, and here, *"ada"* was used as an intransitive verb in a passive sentence ("… before the kiosk **was set up**"). On the other hand, B's use of *"ada"* (line 10 of Extract 5-33) was in the form of an active voice and acted as a transitive verb ("… **there was** a scar here"). Another finding that needs to be pointed out is how numbers are commonly said in English, not only by N as in Extract 5-17 but also by his good friends (B and T) throughout their conversation, whether or not they were speaking in English or Sarawak Malay at the time.

In looking at Poplack's (1988) work on the French and English contact in Ottawa-Hull, Canada, it was revealed that generally, French speakers from Ottawa

are a lot more familiar with the code-switching phenomenon, with respect to knowing that it exists, confessing that they practice it, demonstrating neutral feelings about it, and also pinpointing their reasons for alternating between multiple languages. Most of the time for these bilinguals, English enables them to say something in a shorter, more concise, and more expressive or appropriate way.

### 6.2.1.16    To exclude others

The few switches that were made by the friends, N and T, to keep others out of their group's conversation were all in Sarawak Malay (see Extract 5-34). The fact that no English was used signifies that Sarawak Malay is their 'we-code', which connects them as peers of the same group.

Skiba (1997) also provided an instance for this circumstance, where the setting is in an elevator, and there are two speakers using a language that is not English. This naturally excludes the other people around them who do not know the language; and for the two bilinguals, it would be reassuring to know that they could say what they want freely without being understood by the rest.

In contrast to what was found from the friendship group, the more typical cases of speakers switching to exclude involve a relationship of power. David *et al.* (2009) looked at an employer-employee relationship, where the husband and wife pair would speak to their maid in BM, but when they wanted to say something between themselves, they would switch to English to keep her out of the conversation. Ordinarily, this may be viewed as rude, but from an employer's perspective, this is a way in which authority could be exercised and shown.

According to Di Pietro (1979, cited in Grosjean, 1982), Italian American parents who have children who are monolingual English speakers make use of Italian when talking about matters that they want to withhold from their children. Unlike the friends who switch for this reason in order to associate with one another, these parents are setting clear boundaries about what should or should not be shared with their children.

*6.2.1.17      Quotation*

This reason has come up in some code-switching studies (Gumperz, 1977; Bentahila, 1983; Barnes, 1994; Shin, 2010) by using a different language to quote someone separates it from the ongoing dialogue, and it also directs the listener's attention to what has originally been said (Bentahila, 1983).

This too, has occurred in my participants' data, where the language used to report the quotation is the common language shared by the speakers in the original conversation (look at Extract 5-35 to Extract 5-38). By doing so, the original effect could be maintained and the authenticity could be felt by the other speakers who the speech is relayed to (Barnes, 1994).

*6.2.1.18      As a filler*

In the entire study, this circumstance of language use only appeared once in B's speech, a participant from the friendship group. This can be considered as a communication strategy (as illustrated in Extract 5-39), and in using Sarawak Malay for the filler, it in turn 'completed' B's sentence.

In Discourse Strategies by Gumperz (1982), he gave a few examples where bilinguals switch to fill in the gaps. The commonly used example shows the speaker using Spanish for the filler before switching back to English. Gumperz also discussed conversational code-switching, to which he wrote:

While linguists, concerned with grammatical description as such, see the code alternation as highly salient, participants immersed in the interaction itself are often quite unaware which code is used at any one time. Their main concern is with the communicative effect of what they are saying. Selection among linguistic alternants is automatic, not readily subject to conscious recall. The social norms or rules which govern language usage here, at first glance at least, seem to function much like grammatical rules. They form part of the underlying knowledge which speakers use to convey meaning (p. 61).

This quote by Gumperz describes the way my participants' employ codes as their language choice is often made instantly and without conscious thought, where communicating a message normally precedes accuracy of speech. To put it simply,

having experienced social interactions in their community, speakers will automatically know what is fitting, bearing in mind the topic, interlocutor, setting or purpose (refer back to 1.2.3), and language decisions are made as they go along.

Bentahila (1983) also reported this circumstance, but unlike the two previous instances, words or phrases were utilised by the speaker as a strategy to buy himself some time to ponder on the best way to voice his thoughts. In this example, the speaker shifts to Arabic for the fillers, and reverts to French when he has found the right words to express himself with.

### 6.2.1.19    *Showing solidarity*

This was explicitly expressed by the daughter (X) from the family group whose marked choice was one of the few that has emerged in this research. From Extract 5-40, it is evident that a bilingual can be in solidarity with someone who is not directly involved in the conversation, which then results in a switch to the third party's more dominant language. Referring to said extract, not only was the alternation made to acknowledge their mother's (H) presence, but it was also to show that X was in agreement with H.

An example that resembles mine is by David *et al.* (2009) that featured a mother who was making dinner plans with her son. By alternating from English to Mandarin to suit his mother's language choice, the son is seen as forging solidarity with her.

Grosjean (1982) used a similar example of two bilinguals (Martine and Nicole), who were conversing in French during the absence of their colleague (Ann), who is American. However, Martine and Nicole spontaneously shifted to English when Ann approached them, and this was done so that Ann would not feel left out of the conversation. For the daughter in the family group, and Martine and Nicole, switching is also their way of being polite and respectful towards their interlocutor.

In a completely different setting, Scott (2000) revealed how 'girl' is used by Black women not only as an identity marker, but also as a sign of solidarity with other Black women who they see to share the same identity. This switch is further distinguished by the stress in rhythm and marked intonation patterns.

### 6.2.1.20       For reiteration

There was only a single case for this circumstance, which has been found in the mother's (H) speech as seen in Extract 5-41. It seems that by code-switching to repeat oneself or something is a fitting technique to urge someone to execute a task. In said extract, it could be seen that Y, H's son, was insistent about helping to clean up, and this was demonstrated through his repetition of "I will do it" six times (lines 2 and 4). Following that, H joined the conversation in Mandarin but switched to English to repeat after Y ("you do it"), which was done to emphasise what he needs to do next. Moreover, with the use of the particle *loh* (see 6.2.4.2.1.5) after that phrase, H was reiterating her demand in a stern and reprimanding manner with an aim to get Y to nap immediately.

Another study that was carried out in a home setting is the one by Chanseawrassamee and Shin (2009) that looked at the interaction between two Thai brothers living in the United States. Reiteration occurred in the data when the older brother (Winner) failed to speak louder as his younger brother (Willy) requested him to, and this subsequently caused Willy to alternate from Thai to English to repeat his request. The authors analysed Willy's switch as his unhappiness towards his older brother for not fulfilling his request, or it could be because Willy prefers using English.

Lau and Ting's (2013) study is one that is of a transactional nature, with the participants being the Chinese vendors and the customers. At times, the vendor used Foochow to state the price, which is followed by a shift to Hokkien to repeat what was said, and this was done to ensure that no mistakes were made with the customer's request.

In comparing my participant's (H) finding with these two studies, she did not reiterate herself twice in different languages, but only once as she echoed what her interlocutor said in his primary language. This is very likely because at that time, H perceived this to be an effective way to get her son, Y, to do what he has been told to. Also, her reason for reiterating differed from the participants in the previous two studies, which is for emphasis.

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### 6.2.2  Language use patterns: introduction

Instead of looking at code-switching or one's daily language use patterns in particular like the past studies that were conducted (see 1.3), my study focuses on bilinguals' language use tendencies that emerge from the code-switching (CS) phenomenon and translanguaging practice. That way, a broader picture of bilinguals' linguistic habits in the community could be provided, as said tendencies could be applied to any individuals who use two or more languages in their discourse.

### 6.2.2.1  Habit

One of the most common reasons that could explain bilinguals' language behaviour is due to habit (see 6.2.1.1). It could be a particular word, or phrase that one regularly uses with their interlocutor in a certain situation, or when a specific topic is being discussed (Mesthrie *et al.*, 2009). Suffice to say, when a language is chosen over the other, it happens spontaneously and does not necessarily mean that the speaker lacks the needed vocabulary (Gumperz, 1977).

From my data, one of the circumstances that falls under this category is 'the norm', where the bilingual whose first language is English made a switch to Foochow for a familial greeting when his uncle was mentioned (Extract 5-1), and a brief expression in Sarawak Malay was used when the bilingual did not want to come off as being serious (Extract 5-2). The second circumstance looks at bilingual's spontaneity in employing a particular language or lexicon (Extract 5-26 to Extract 5-28).

In Li and Tse's (2002) analysis of Chinese university students from Hong Kong, one of the themes that emerged shows that switching from Cantonese to English is already a habitual practice. According to some of the participants, English was used in order that group membership and rapport could be maintained with their interlocutors. Furthermore, some others stated that particular words are the easy choice as they are commonly employed; and it promotes convenience, such as when it involves a proper noun in English.

As for David's (2003) study that focused on code-switching functions in Malaysian courtrooms, its emphasis was not on specific lexical items, but to show how speakers could employ a mixed discourse and keep their language use separate

for different interlocutors when they need to be addressed at the same time. The speakers in this context are the judges, lawyers, and witnesses – where the former two would typically speak to one another in English, and BM would be used with the witnesses.

Besides Li and Tse, and David's examples, a language practice, known as translanguaging is also included under this rubric as it is '… the discursive norm in bilingual families and communities' (García and Wei, 2014, p. 23). This means that it is common for bilinguals to translanguage in their everyday communication with one another, and from my participants' data, it has been observed that a familiar translanguaged word among the friends is 'time'. Even though it has an equivalent in Sarawak Malay *(masa)*, the bilinguals have a tendency to use the English word even when they are speaking in Sarawak Malay. It is a similar case for *"bomba"* and "stop" as shown in Extract 5-10 and Extract 5-11.

### 6.2.2.2 Convenience

One of the palpable benefits of being a bilingual is the ability to make up for what one lacks. In other words, they do not need to fret about not being able to express themselves in one language as they always have the other(s) as a backup.

Based on my participants' data, two circumstances belong to this theme – first of all, for ease of expression consists of instances where bilinguals opt to use their dominant language in getting their message across (Extract 5-3), where one's language choice is effortless (Extract 5-4), or because it is what one is accustomed to (Extract 5-5). Secondly, when bilinguals do not have the appropriate word(s), they have the advantage of compensating for that in another language (Extract 5-15 to Extract 5-17).

Among the reasons listed by Grosjean (2010), two of them are fitting for this theme. The first one is when a switch is the result of a bilingual finding *'le mot juste'*, which means 'the right word' in French. Simply put, it is when the speaker feels that it is better to express certain words in a particular language. The example used was of Grosjean himself and his wife, who usually alternated for the word 'playground', as a substitute for the French *'parc'*, while in the United States. This was because 'playground' carries a connotation of the open environment where children could play

in. On the contrary, *'parc'*, at that time, was associated with stringent rules and fairly poor facilities, specifically the swings.

Secondly, is when a bilingual switches because a linguistic need has to be filled. Hence, sometimes bilinguals use certain words solely because they are the only ones available, or most freely available to them; provided that the speaker possesses command of another language that comprises the needed expressions, and that the situation is favourable for language alternation. Here, a mention was made of a French-English bilingual who stated that when she communicates with French speakers, she uses many English words because it provides ease to talk about her life in the States. In French, concepts such as 'day care centre' and 'window shopping' are less direct compared to English.

### 6.2.2.3 Cause and effect

Sometimes, the interlocutors or other related factors determine how an individual uses language, and in a separate situation, the speaker chooses to use a language that could best deliver their message. From my findings, 'a trigger' and 'external influence' could be considered as 'cause', and 'for a conversation effect' as 'effect'. The previous two reasons could imply that the speakers affiliate with each other (Extract 5-6 and Extract 5-14); but for the latter, it is more about setting the tone, be it to sound more convincing, serious, sensitive, dramatic, playful, polite, and so on (Extract 5-29 to Extract 5-31).

One common instance of a trigger is when a speaker talks in one language and switches to another to continue in the last language used by his or her interlocutor (Extract 5-49). Extract 5-45, however, shows that triggers could also include particular words that are said in the same language as one's interlocutor.

It is argued by Clyne (1967, 1972a, 1977a, cited in Clyne, 1980) that both sociolinguistic factors and trigger words can be sources of the code-switching phenomenon. He went on to provide a few trigger word examples, some of which are loanwords, homophones, and proper nouns, and mentioned that some speakers show consistency in switching when a specific trigger word is in use (Clyne, 1980).

In connection with the various effects brought about by the use of a certain language, one of the purposes for moving from one language to another in Bentahila

(1983) was to create a dramatic effect. The given illustration shows something said in French, followed by the use of Arabic, in response to someone's sickness. So as to magnify the content's differences in a relatively dramatic manner, language use was meant to correspond with what was said; and this was where French was adopted to represent the modern solution, while Arabic was used for the traditional solution. In the same vein, Barnes (1994) in his article *Bilingual code-switching: function and form* indicates an English switch that was made to achieve the same effect.

### 6.2.2.4 Efficiency

In my data, the only speakers who have switched to maximise efficiency are the friends. Although alternations to both English and Sarawak Malay are evident, it is obvious that the latter is more efficient as most of the switches were in Sarawak Malay. For B and N especially, Sarawak Malay is regarded as the language that enables them to communicate something in as few words as possible, and this is shown in Extract 5-32 and Extract 5-33.

This is corroborated by Bautista (1999, cited in Bautista, 2004, p. 230) who termed it as 'communicative efficiency' that entails 'switching to the other code [that] provides the fastest, easiest, most convenient way of saying something with the least waste of time, effort, and resources'. In Bautista (2004), the author found that this was done by switching to either English or Tagalog for function and content words, idioms and linguistic play.

### 6.2.2.5 Accommodation

At first glance, 'accommodation' may appear very similar to 'affiliation' (see Section 6.2.2.6), but in reality, they are quite different, and this distinction is made by using the definition from Merriam-Webster (2017), which states that to accommodate means 'to adapt oneself'.

In many of the past studies (as delineated below), it was found that bilinguals used communication devices such as code-switching with an aim to accommodate their interlocutor(s). On this occasion, the speakers are considerate and mindful of the other party's linguistic needs, and this is reflected in the way language is chosen and used. More than acknowledging their interlocutors' shortcomings, the speakers

are exploiting their strengths to make the interaction process more smooth sailing for them. In this instance, the speaker uses his or her interlocutor's predominant language in order to be easily understood; like in the family group, where the parents (W and H) used English most of the time when they wished to convey messages clearly to their children who grew up in an English environment since they were young (refer to Extract 5-21, Extract 5-22 and Extract 5-52).

In a separate yet similar case, the study conducted by David *et al.* (2009) focused on a conversation between a mother, her son and daughter-in-law from an Indian family; where the mother who is an eloquent Tamil speaker inserted English vocabulary into her speech, while her daughter-in-law switched from English to Tamil when talking to her mother-in-law, as a way of showing respect towards the elders.

The example from David's and my study resemble each other in more ways than one, taking into account that the speakers come from Malaysia (refer to 2.4 and 2.5 for the demographics of Malaysia and the languages spoken), they represent the family groups, and it features the intimate relations between the older and the younger generations of a family. Even though said groups switched for a different purpose, for clarity and for rapport, it is undeniable that bilinguals who set out to accommodate have an underlying wish to affiliate with their interlocutors.

There are several other studies where accommodation by children participants has cropped up. In Kwan-Terry's (1992) research, the child accommodated his mother by going with the language she decides to use in various situations. This includes the times when his mother makes an unmarked choice by using English to begin a conversation, and quite frequently, the son would also reply in English. Similarly, Shin and Milroy (2000) found that Korean-English bilingual children as young as six and seven years old already have the ability to code-switch strategically with an objective to negotiate and accommodate the preferences of both parties. Cromdal and Aronsson's (2000) study also featured children who conformed their language use to their interlocutors', but this is not only for the preferred, but the dispreferred language as well.

Besides that, Zentella (1990) carried out an ethnographic study that showed that, as the children grow older, the changing networks that they engage in also become more stable gradually; said networks put emphasis on Spanish, English, or

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code-switching. Regardless of the situation, setting, or subject, accommodation is demonstrated in how the speakers' language choice is chiefly dependent on their interlocutors' identity and proficiency level in Spanish and English. Moving on to another context, Gupta and Yeok (1995) investigated the way languages are used by a Singaporean Chinese family that is made up of three generations. The findings revealed that a second generation speaker tends to start off in Cantonese for a first generation member, and thereafter he or she would switch to English so that the third generation member would understand the exchange that just took place. It is therefore clear that the second generation is trying to bridge the gap between the other two generations to ensure that no one would be left out of any conversations. That said, perhaps what is more interesting is how members of the first generation make an effort to accommodate the younger speakers from the third generation in hopes of bonding with them, even at the expense of their ancestral language.

Where accommodation is concerned, it is relevant to touch on the theoretical framework that has been developed by Giles (1973, cited in Dragojevic *et al.*, 2014), which is called Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). Three of the key concepts this theory looks at are convergence, divergence, and maintenance. According to Giles and Coupland (1991, p. 63), convergence is:

> ...a strategy whereby individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviours in terms of a wide range of linguistic/prosodic/non-vocal features including speech rate, pausal phenomena and utterance length, phonological variants, smiling, gaze and so on.

Divergence, on the other hand, is '...the way in which speakers accentuate speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and others' (Giles and Coupland, 1991, p. 65). As for maintenance, it involves '…sustaining one's "default" way of communicating without adjusting for others' (Dragojevic *et al.,* 2014, p. 4). Nevertheless, that aside, what is more pertinent is the cognitive (organisational) motive suggested by CAT, where it is proposed that the adjustment of one's communicative behaviour may be driven by the wish to help ease the interlocutor's understanding and to make communication more efficient (Thakerar et al., 1982, cited in Dragojevic *et al.,* 2014). This is particularly obvious from the family participants in my study where the parents are the only ones switching for these reasons, and the majority of switches were in English, knowing that their children

possess a good command of the language (Extract 5-21, Extract 5-22 and Extract 5-53).

*6.2.2.6 Affiliation*

As defined in Merriam-Webster (2017), 'affiliation' means 'to associate as a member', and 'solidarity' is 'a feeling of unity between people who have the same interests, goals…' Yet again, it is imperative to clarify these two terms beforehand, as with 'accommodation' (go to 6.2.2.5), to ensure that they are not seen as overlapping one another.

Affiliation is evident from my participants' interactions, where speakers make use of languages to communicate their intentions, and with a motive to reduce social distance. This involves efforts made by the participants to accommodate or adapt themselves to the people they are in conversation with. Either way, it could be a conscious or an unconscious act. Furthermore, it could help one to better understand the members' relationships within a particular community, and additionally, the ways in which they associate with one another.

Showing solidarity (Extract 5-40 and Extract 5-57) and excluding others (Extract 5-51) are two of the more common ways my participants identify with each other, but it is found that they could also do so by other means. The first instance is in situations where the speaker switches to the interlocutor's language in response to him or her, as a result of a trigger (Extract 5-54). Another occasion of affiliation is when one tries earnestly to adapt and when one's language choice is affected by the other speakers in the group. This can be seen among the friends, for B particularly, who learnt Sarawak Malay and said certain words in the language (mainly lexical items and short expressions) simply because N and T constantly use them in that manner (Extract 5-14 and Extract 5-55). Lastly, bilinguals can also associate with their interlocutors by using the same language to maintain the communication flow, such as apparent from the siblings in their interaction with their parents (Extract 5-25, Extract 5-49 and Extract 5-52).

Based on what have been observed from my participants' conversations, it can be inferred that they share a collective identity (see 6.2.4) and a strong sense of group affiliation that encompass the usage of marked and unmarked choices.

In Fina (2007), she explored how Italian and Italian American members in an all-male card playing club employed code-switching strategy to affiliate with one another. One of the ways it is done is through their club's newsletter, where Italian words that are inserted most often by the President usually for cuisine and games. That way, the Italianness of said fields and the club's traditional character are emphasised. This also applies to when the President addresses the members verbally during dinner. The other way identity is stressed by the participants is through the social practices in the game domain, and this is evident from the way old and new players switch between languages during their interaction. Furthermore, in this club, a player is considered to be good at cards only if he could use Italian for the words of the game, even if they are just the basic ones, which explains the stern association established by the members between playing cards and speaking the native language.

With regard to collective identity, Fina's (2007) argument is that it is 'an emergent construct shaped within practices that define a community' (p. 389). Bearing in mind the fact that her participants comprise immigrant groups, it is no wonder their expression of identity is linked to the community's practices instead of the language itself (i.e. Italian). However, in the context of my study, the latter is the case for my family as the English (including Malaysian English), Mandarin, Foochow, and Hokkien languages are perceived as symbols of our Malaysian Chinese identity. Therefore, there is an underlying importance for the group members to use the languages that reflect who they are, in spite of their level of proficiency in said languages.

From the examples above, it is clear that one of the primary factors that determines a bilingual's language choice is the other participants in the conversation. A simple but dated illustration provided by Holmes (2013) looked at a Polish family that lived in Lancashire. Polish was used among the family members at home, but an English switch was made by all of them when the local priest who was a speaker of English, called. In addition, one's language use could also be for something that runs deeper, such as to indicate group membership and shared ethnicity (Myers-Scotton, 2000; Fina, 2007). In expressing these, words and short phrases from a second language would suffice for bilinguals who do not have a very good command of the particular language. For example, Gaelic tags and phrases are used by Scottish Highlanders to identify with the local Gaelic speech community even though they do

not speak Gaelic proficiently (Holmes, 2013). In another case involving Italian immigrants, when a joke is being told in English with a switch to Italian for the punch line, one of the reasons for that is to emphasise the sense of belonging to the group (Di Pietro, 1977, cited in Grosjean, 1982).

### 6.2.3  Expression of affiliation

With the numerous occurrence of speakers' affiliation throughout my data, it has been found that the most common way the family and friend participants identify with one another is by means of the trigger effect. The family code-switched more than the friends, whereby the former's language use were more diverse than the latter, whose alternations were predominantly in English.

Besides this, external factors, namely other speakers, could cause bilinguals to switch. This was seen in the friendship group, with B using mostly Sarawak Malay because she wanted to affiliate with her good friends, while T uses a mix of English and Sarawak Malay as the source of her switch consist of her family, friends, and acquaintances. The mother (H), too, reported that some of her Mandarin switches were the result of an external influence, although unlike B and T, it was because of the Chinese Methodist church that she goes to.

The act of switching with an intention to maintain the conversation flow also came up, but only in the two older siblings' (X and Y) speech. At that time, the people they were associating themselves with were their parents (W and H), and this was reflected in their switches that were only made to Mandarin and Foochow, which are the languages that the parents are more competent in compared to English.

Directing the attention back to the friends, B shows that speaking the majority language of the group is an effective approach to forming a close relationship with the members. Originally, she was not fluent in Sarawak Malay and this is understandable taking into account the fact that she is of Chinese descent and subjects were taught in either English or Standard Malay throughout her schooling years. Therefore, with the minimal exposure she had to Sarawak Malay and without a need to use the language before she met N and T shows that among all of the participants in my study, B made the most effort to affiliate as she willingly learnt a 'new' language to blend well with her friends.

Another way to express one's affiliation has appeared only in the friendship group, which is through exclusion. It could be inferred that the reason this did not happen with the family was due to their setting at the time of interaction; they were at home where no outsiders were present, while it was the exact opposite for the friends, who were in a public space with strangers around them. From the friends, it is revealed that leaving someone out of a conversation is not necessarily achieved by using a language that is unknown to that person, but it could also mean employing the group's dominant language, which in this case is Sarawak Malay, that makes a strong statement about them as a group.

The use of certain language to show solidarity with others, in which they belong to the same group, has also arisen from the family's conversation and for the two instances, the same alternations to Mandarin were made *(Mei you)* by the daughter (X) for the benefit of her mother (H). Likewise, in both situations, the language choice was marked and it was done to include her mother, who does not share the same mother tongue as her daughter.

With the focus still on the family but with a shift to the parents (W and H), they are the only speakers who showed their affiliation by switching for clarity, with their children as their interlocutors. This explains why most of their alternations were to English as they are confident that their English-speaking children would have no trouble comprehending what was said.

### 6.2.4  Implications of 'affiliation': introduction

Based on the discussion in the preceding sections, the one thing that is certain is, bilingual speakers possess a useful advantage in communication as they are able to exploit their linguistic abilities and resources according to the situation that they are in. From the surface, we can tell that there is always a justification for the way bilinguals go about their language use and for the language strategies which they deem imperative to adopt in ensuring that the interaction is a smooth and successful one. That being said, there is more to that, other underlying factors that govern how speakers behave around different interlocutors and which languages they decide to employ from their repertoire.

From my findings, it has been observed that speakers' choice of language and even their use of particular lexical items are driven by who they are, or by the person

they wish to be as they communicate in real time. Therefore, the next segment begins with a general introduction of identity, and looks at the identity that is assumed by each individual, be it a national, regional, ethnic, or social identity. The implications listed here do not apply to all the nine speakers in my study, and this shows the varied identities one can take on by affiliating and disaffiliating with the other participants. Some of the important speech features have also been highlighted to demonstrate how each identity stand out from the rest. Along with that, the explanations are accompanied with examples that serve to provide a clearer idea of language usage.

### 6.2.4.1 Identity

Identity is 'a dynamic and shifting nexus of multiple subject positions, or identity options, such as mother, accountant, heterosexual, or Latina' (Pavlenko, 2004, p. 35). Moreover, Luk and Lin (2007, p. 50) described it as 'highly fluid, sometimes incoherent, fragmented, multiple, and conflicting'. That said, several authors (Joseph, 2004; Castells, 2009) have underlined how we carry more than one identity in us. To quote West (1992, p. 20), 'there's no such thing as having one identity or of there being one essential identity that fundamentally defines who we actually are'. According to Candlin (1998, cited in Lee, 2003, p. 138), there are four perspectives on identity:

a) There is no one self waiting to be discovered but a multitude of selves found in the different linguistic practices articulated now, in the past, historically, and cross-culturally.

b) Identity is a product of cultural models of the self arising from ideologies and socialisation practices reflected in wider patterns of communication.

c) The self is not individually possessed but negotiated and co-constructed among actors through discourse.

d) A continuing discursively mediated struggle exists between persons as authors of their own identities and as animators of identities that are authored for them.

Identification could be done by relation (for example, teacher-student or parent-child ties), or by category, as members of a group who share certain characteristics such as ethnicity, language, and religion (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). The friends' case

leans more towards the former, as they lay greater stress on intimacy concerning the use of their main in-group language, which is Sarawak Malay. As explained by T, B and N respectively:

*"I think it's like, if, if I'm talking to someone, and then… I know that they know how to speak Sarawak, I think I tend to talk to them in English. I think I talk in Sarawak more to someone that I'm close to. Even though they know how to speak Sarawak, but then I tend, I think I tend to talk to them in English. If they can speak in English".* (T)

*"[I use Bahasa Sarawak] only when I'm close, actually. 'Cause when they can speak in Sarawak and I don't really know them, I automatically cannot speak in Sarawak. I don't know why. I automatically cannot understand".* (B)

*"I realised that there's like one girl, who's in my group this semester, and she's a local Malay, so by assumption she can speak Bahasa Sarawak, but then I choose to speak English with her because I'm not close with her".* (N)

On the other hand, the family primarily identify by category, and this has been explicitly mentioned by the father and the youngest son. Sharing about the language spoken by his parents at home, the father (W) said:

*"The parents, of course, when they speak to us, when they spoke to us, to the family member, you see, hundred percent, they will talk in Foochow. Because that time, people also have a belief that we are Foochow, and that we must know how to speak Foochow. You know or not? In order to protect our own mother tongue. Yeah, that is, you know, identification, you know, to our own people".*

As for the son (J), when asked how Mandarin is significant for him, his respond was:

*"Mandarin is part of our Chinese culture. A Chinese who does not know how to speak Mandarin, I must say that is a shame. It's very basic of a Chinese, of a Chinese person. If you do not know how to speak Chinese, it's not excusable".*

J also remarked how Chinese from English-educated backgrounds are no exception.

In a multilingual context like Malaysia, identity is a more complicated matter, where individuals could have a bicultural identity, as termed by Arnett (2002). This is

where 'part of their identity is rooted in their local culture while another part stems from an awareness of their relation to the global culture' (p. 777).

### 6.2.4.2 National identity (Malaysian)

As noted by Poole (2003, p. 272), this identity is 'the mobilisation of linguistic and other cultural resources to create a representation of the nation to which those who shared a language and a culture belonged'. One of the things that makes my participants distinctively Malaysian is their own version of English, which is also known as Malaysian Englishes.

Malaysian English comprises two main types, Standard and Colloquial. Here, emphasis is placed on the latter as it is the variety that is frequently spoken in relaxed settings, but more importantly, it showcases Malaysians' linguistic richness and uniqueness (see Appendix 2: Conversation transcript for more instances of Colloquial Malaysian English). Its usage would come off as strange and even incorrect for a non-native who is unfamiliar with the language, but for Malaysians themselves, it would feel very natural and appropriate to speak in that way. Y, from the family group concurred with this in the interview, and by relating it to a situation where one breaks the traffic law and is issued a ticket, he said,

"Because of the way how our environment, how our surrounding is, our daily interaction with people. I mean, nobody goes around here and say, "You know what, I got fined". And then people will be like, "I know you are fine, but what's up", you know. But, if you go around saying, "I got *saman*". Then everybody knows".

Regarding the different language features used by my participants to represent their identity, the main reference points for the lexical features are the study conducted by Lee (2015) and Nor *et al.* (2015); meanwhile the syntactic aspects are mostly taken from Khaw (2013, cited in Khaw, 2016).

It is necessary to note that the language features and functions in this section are not exhaustive, but its objective is to paint a picture of the diverse ways Malaysians could express their Malaysianness through their language. The introduction of each language feature starts with the literature that states its specific function, which is followed by examples taken from my participants' data to provide a clear illustration for each function.

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6.2.4.2.1 Lexical features

First of all, some of the particles found in the data are covered, which are made up of BM words like *lah* and *kan*, and Chinese loanwords, such as *ah*, *ho/ hoh*, *ma*, *lo/ loh*, and *meh*. A few Malaysian exclamations are also included (i.e. *aiya/ aiyah*, *aiyo*, and *wah*), together with some localised expressions and the use of 'got' and 'one' in Colloquial Malaysian English.

*6.2.4.2.1.1 Lah*

As a significant feature of Colloquial Malaysian English, *'lah'* is used considerably by Malaysians, and for various reasons. The ones that have been found in my study are to emphasise (Kow, 2003); to appeal (Lee, 2015); to indicate the obvious, to express approval and disapproval, and to show annoyance (Nor *et al.*, 2015).

(1) To emphasise

> H: Not sure, how she commit suicide? Hang *ah?*
> Y: Nope.
> C: No ***lah…*** jump into the river.

(2) To appeal

> H: No *lah, bu yao **lah,*** I don't want to stress myself.
> (No, I don't want, I don't want to stress myself.)

(3) To indicate the obvious

> H: No *lah!* You will burn ***lah!*** I tell you, heatstroke *ah.*
> (In response to her son's wish to run the 100 kilometres ultramarathon.)

(4) To express approval and disapproval

**(a)**     N: I think maybe… *kitak polah* cele–celebration *sebabnya cun cun* on the
        12th *lah.*
        (I think maybe… we will celebrate because it is exactly on the 12th.)
       T: Oh, A. Oh…
       N: Yea, because I think A needs it the most ***lah.***

**(b)**     H: I think 21 will be quite, just nice *ei… ni de* body *zhen yang qu pao wu*
        *liu ge xiao shi oh…*
       (I think 21 will be quite, just nice… how can your body endure a run
       that lasts for 5-6 hours…)
       Y: No, the cut-off point is 7 hours.
       H: No *lah,* cannot ***lah.*** Really too tired, too too that one, too…

(5) To show annoyance

       H: *Ci ge hai mei you chi a.*
         (This has not been eaten.)
       Y: *Lai, wo chi **lah.***
         (Come, I'll eat it.)

In his study, Goddard (1994) explored the functions of *'lah'* in the BM language, but they also apply to Malaysian English, and some of them are listed as follows:

(1) To tell the interlocutor something

      N: Oh, that day, nak, I *tanga* on YouTube ***lah,*** I don't know how I got
       there…
       (Oh, that day, right, I watched on Youtube, I don't know how I got
       there…)

(2) To agree or insult in a friendly manner

**(a)**    H: *Ya **lah**, na li bu ke yi chi hoh.*

(Yes, there is no reason why we cannot eat it.)

**(b)**    T: Who said you're gonna be the bridesmaid? No ***lah!***

(3) To invite

T: Then you guys can *lepak* at my house ***lah*** after that.

(Then you guys can hang out at my house after that.)

(4) To be joined with perfunctory exclamations

H: Cannot ***lah**, haiyo.*

(Cannot, goodness.)

*6.2.4.2.1.2 Ah*

The *a/ ah* particle is commonly used by Malaysian Chinese speakers, as is especially evident in the family participants' conversation. Out of the five functions of *'ah'* in Nor, Zamri and Awab's (2015) study, four have been found in my research as below:

(1) To keep speakers in contact

According to Low and Brown (2005, cited in Nor *et al.*, 2015), the use of *ah* for this purpose means that there is continuity in the conversation.

**Situation (a):** *H telling her children (X and Y) about a rumour she heard.*

H: *Eh you de ren you jiang ci ge bu ke yi chi xian zai, zhen yang jiang hua ho.*
    *Ta jiang you du **ah**.*
    (Some people said nowadays, this cannot be eaten, don't know what they
    mean. They said it is poisonous.)

**Situation (b):** *Y sharing his marathon experience with H and X, his mother and younger sister*

Y: Do you know that day ***ah***, when I ran my marathon, right.


**Situation (c):** *W advising his son, Y, about making wise choices.*

W: Once you make the wrong decision ***ah***, it will be very tough. That mean you destroy your foundation, whatever you have built.


(2) To reassure

**(a)**    H: *Wei wei, wei cai guk mui siu lo lei ah.*
            (I–I, I have not stored my vegetables yet.)
         W: *Wei din na puong siu lo oh, mo lei ye ah.*
            (Later I'll help you to store them, don't worry.)

**(b)**    W: If not like that *la*, easy *la*. Just a small thing. *Hoh?*
          Y: Mm.
          W: Everybody enter that stage of life ***ah***.
          Y: Mm.


(3) To persuade

**(a)**    C: Come and eat ***ah*** Mom.

**(b)**    H: Okay, next year you buy ticket for me ***ah***.


(4) To show annoyance

                W: *Zhao bu dao a*, J?
                   (Can you find it, J?)
                 J: What?
                W: What. *Guk mui ho **ah**.*
                   (Not yet found it.)


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*Ah* has also come up from the friends' speech, but many times, it is used at the beginning of a statement to express one's agreement. An excerpt was taken from their conversation to illustrate this:

> B: He didn't eat much…
>
> T: ***Ah***… he didn't eat much.

### 6.2.4.2.1.3 Ho/ hoh

Where it is spelt as *hor* in Nor, Zamri and Awab's (2015) study, the ones in mine are *ho* or *hoh*, and some also fulfils the same function as given by Low and Brown (2005, cited in Nor *et al.*, 2015), which is to draw an agreement from the interlocutor.

**(a)**   C: …that's good *lah*. ***Ho baobei?***
                            (precious)
   Y: Which one?
   C: The mattress is very good.
   Y: Very good. Yes mommy, your mattress is really good.

**(b)**   W: Oh. Unless you are a Master holder, ***hoh***=
    Y: Mm.

In two of these instances, it is clear that the speakers' (C and W) use of *ho* and *hoh* were effective in eliciting Y's agreement.

### 6.2.4.2.1.4 Ma

For this particle, Nor *et al.* (2015) provided two functions, which are to assert or justify one's belief, and to say the obvious. Additionally, Lee (2015) also discovered that it could be used to enquire or for emphasis. All of the four functions have been found in the family's talk, but from my observation, the parents (W and H) in particular, employ *ma* or *mah* often in question forms.

(1) To assert

H: *Guan diao la feng shan. Zuo shen me yao feng shan o. Hen tao yan feng*
  *shan zai* table *ni zhi dao **ma**. Mei you, hai you* s–, *yi dian* soup.
  (Switch off the fan. Why do we need to turn on the fan? I really don't like the
  fan blowing (when we're eating) at the table. No, there is some more soup.)


(2) To say the obvious

H: *Bu yong lah, mei you xian zai xin xian **ma**, zhu yi dian lai chi eh*=
  (No need, since it is fresh now, let's cook some=)


(3) To enquire

W: *Ni de father-in-law hao **ma***?
  (How's your father-in-law doing?)


(4) For emphasis

H: *Jiu shuo xian zai xin xian de ni men yao (xian qu chi) le*.
  (Since it is still fresh now, all of you should (eat some first.))
X: *Shi lo, ge ge, pa pa jiu shi jiang xin xian **ma***.
  (Yeah, big brother, Dad said it is fresh.)


*6.2.4.2.1.5 Lo/ loh*

Lee (2015) reports that it is typical for one to make a statement with the Chinese
particle *lor* (which in my study is *lo* or *loh*). This was demonstrated by speaker H
when she spoke to her children:

H: I think can cut coconut and bring some to Uncle Ah G ***lo***, let Uncle Ah G
  drink ***lo***.


Besides, Lee (2015) mentioned that it could convey varying tones, specifically
agreement, anger, nonchalance and sarcasm. In the family group, this particle is
mostly used to concur with one's interlocutor, as in the example between the mother
and her daughter:

H: *Zhe yang na li ke yi. Zhe yang dou shi zhuan dao.*

   (How can this be? In this case (the organiser) earned a lot of money.)

X: *Shi **loh**.* Then–

   (Yeah.)

There was also an instance where the speaker spoke in a nonchalant manner. The following Foochow utterance was said in relation to the old curtains:

H: *Ee nerng uh dik to **lo**, mo dik gerk woh ge ee kong noh*.

   (Let them know that they could keep it if they want it, and if they do not want

    it, they can throw it away.)


Although *lo* or *loh* was not used in an angry or a sarcastic way, it was spoken in a reprimanding tone by the mother as she responded to her son:

Y: No, I will do it, I will do it, I will do it.

H: *Shen me* you do it **loh**, *wo men zuo lah, ni qu shui jiao liao*.

   (What)                 (we will do it, you go to sleep.)


### 6.2.4.2.1.6 *Meh*

In Nor *et al.* (2015), it is stated that *meh* is normally added to a question as a suffix, and from their study, speakers use it to show that they are surprised and/ or that they are feeling indignant.

   In my study, however, this particle is primarily used to confirm, like the next example between the mother and son. A longer extract was included to provide a clearer explanation of the situation. Here, Y was helping H to prepare the vegetables for cooking, and in lines 1 and 2, he was asking his mother if the method of preparation was the same at restaurants. When he asked this, he already had an answer in mind, but he wanted to verify his thought regardless, and the *meh* particle helps him to accomplish this. It can be seen that when H gave Y a vague answer in line 3, he replied with a leading question (line 4) that voiced his belief. Thereafter in line 5, with the possibility being presented to H, it elicited a more definite answer from her towards the end of her last turn.

*Extract 6-1*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Y: *Hao*. Mommy *ah, zai na ge* restaurant *ta men ye shi zhe yang zhi hao* |
| 2 | *xiang wo zhe yang zhi* pluck **meh**? |
| | (Okay. Mommy, do they also pluck it like me at the restaurant?) |
| 3 | H: *Ying gai ba*. |
| | (Should be.) |
| 4 | Y: *Hai shi ta men yong dao rang hou qu qie ta*? |
| | (Or do they use a knife to cut it?) |
| 5 | H: *Ye bu yi ding o. Ni hai xiang de dao ho, yi ding shi dao qie xia qu ho.* |
| | (Maybe. You can think of that, they must be using a knife to cut it.) |
| 6 | Y: Mm. |

Akin to the function of *meh* in the previous extract, N also used the particle to confirm what B said about a person they knew. Wong's (1994, cited in Nor *et al.*, 2015) suggestion that *meh* is only available to Chinese speakers can be refuted with this excerpt from the friendship group, especially where said particle was used by N, who is an Iban and does not have any Chinese languages in his linguistic repertoire. This is mainly attributed to the harmonious relationship and peaceful co-existence between the ethnic groups in East Malaysia.

*Extract 6-2*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | B: *Nok pakei* specs. *Mun aku ambik gambar cam ngantap alu*. |
| | (The one wearing specs. If I took a photo it would be obvious.) |
| 2 | N: Long time ago. |
| 3 | B: *Rambut–* |
| | (Hair–) |
| 4 | N: *Ada* **meh**? |
| | (He is?) |

*6.2.4.2.1.7 Neh*

It is very common for Malaysians to use *neh* (which means 'there') when they are pointing at someone or something. Furthermore, it can be employed in questions with a reference to something abstract (Lee, 2015). The latter was found in the family's data when W, the father, asked his son how his wife was planning to resign:

W: How to resign ***neh***?

Other than that, N from the friends' group also used *neh*, but it was to refer to a material object (i.e. the front yard of their friend's house), as in the following example.

N: *Rumah nya*. ***Neh***… front–front yard *nya ya*.
    (Her house.)       (in her front yard.)

*6.2.4.2.1.8 Kan*

As a BM word, *kan* is usually employed as a word's suffix, but here the focus is on the interrogative manner in which the word is used (Lee, 2015). This appeared only in the friends' data as they speak Sarawak Malay among themselves. The example below shows how *kan* is regularly used, with the word placed at the end of a question.

T: =(   ) he didn't really eat much also, ***kan***?
                              (right?)

Unlike the first example, the next one shows T starting off her speech with an interrogative *kan*.

T: ***Kan***? *Berapa tahun dah celebrate sama*…
    (Right? How many years have we been celebrating together…)

6.2.4.2.1.9 Got

According to Kow (2003), 'got' could be used for three purposes:

(1) To replace the simple past tense

> Y: I've never **got** to talk to the women, because the women were in a different division, you know.
> (I've never **talked** to the women, because the women were in a different division, you know.)

(2) To replace the 'to have' verb

> N: I **got** something to tell you guys.
> (I **have** something to tell you guys.)

(3) To affirm

> N: *Yo… benarkah?*
> (really?)
>
> T: **Got!**

6.2.4.2.1.10   One

As for 'one', it is usually used at the end of a sentence, and it is akin to *de* (的) in Mandarin (Lee, 2015), and the BM *'punya'* (Nor *et al.*, 2015).  Two of its most common usage are:

(1) To act as a restrictive relative pronoun (Nor *et al.*, 2015)

> X: The 67 **one**.
> (The pacer who is 67 years old.)

(2) To stress a point (Lee, 2015)

> C: I really don't know, very drama **one**.
> (Emphasis is on 'drama' in describing how dramatic the speaker's neighbour is.)

6.2.4.2.1.11  Exclamations

Some of the Malaysian exclamations found in Nor *et al.* (2015) have also been used by the family participants in my study. Both *aiya/ aiyah* and *aiyo* come from Mandarin, while *wah* is from BM.

*6.2.4.2.1.11.1        Aiya/ aiyah*

*Aiya/ aiyah* normally comes at the outset of a sentence and can be used to express different feelings. For instance:

(1) The mother who was shocked by something she saw.

H: ***Aiya***, *xia dao wo zhen de*.

      (scared me, really.)

(2) H expressed her frustration with *aiya* after her son, Y, suggested that she join the Kuala Lumpur marathon, when she really wanted to run the one that was held on Penang Bridge. His subsequent use of *aiyah* was to signify his resignation to his mother's wish.

Y: You go for the *um*, you go for the KL marathon.
H: ***Aiya***=
Y: Mm.
H: =I want Penang bridge *le*, Y.
Y: Oh, you want Penang bridge? Then just go one time! ***Aiyah***, Mommy.

*6.2.4.2.1.11.2        Aiyo*

From my findings, only the mother (H) in the family used this exclamation, and mostly to show her sympathy.

(a)      ***Aiyo***, that lady commit suicide *ah*?

(b)      ***Aiyo***, so *ke lian a*.

        (pitiful)

Also, it can be used to show her displeasure:

(a)     ***Aiyo***, so late *ah*?

(b)     ***Aiyo***, too hot, too too hot like that, very terrible *le ho*.

*6.2.4.2.1.11.3        Wah*

Compared to first two exclamations, *wah* was used the least by the family members. The following exemplification shows W expressing his amazement at the capacity of the Penang Bridge as he was talking to his family about the marathon.

W: ***Wah** na ge qiao ye ye ye shi nai ah ho*?

        (that bridge is very strong.)

6.2.4.2.1.12  Lexical shifts

Nair-Venugopal (2000) identified five ways used by Malaysians to signal their identity, but only 'lexical shifts' are included here as it has emerged from my data.

        Lexical shifts entail the switches made to localised expressions, which serves to index one's identity as a Malaysian. In the example used by the author, the Hokkien word *'chin chai'* (which means 'non-fastidious') was employed in an English exchange.

        Three examples were taken from my participants' data, and they are described below. In situations where there is a need for these words, Malaysian bilinguals have a tendency to use words that do not fall in the standard language category, but those that are deeply embedded in their repertoire, which when spoken, characterises them as a Malaysian.

        Originally a term in Hokkien, *'cun cun'* means 'accurate'. In Example 1, it was the most appropriate Malaysian expression to depict how their friend strolled by at the exact moment when they were in their car. In this context, it was used to show the close shave between this group of friends and their friend, that is, if they had got out of their car then, they would have bumped into him. In BM, one may also come across the word *'cun'*, which is a slang for 'attractive'.

(1) *Nya… nya padah* walking alone ***cun cun*** *nya limpas kita, nasib kita tapuk*
   *lam kereta.*
   (He… he said he was walking alone when **exactly at that moment** he
   passed us, luckily we hid in the car.)

Another word derived from the Hokkien language is *'samseng'*, which is a well-known
expression used to refer to gangsters. More often than not, this word carries a
negative connotation, where in this case, it is in connection with a suicide incident.

(2) You know, one of the ***samseng,*** yeah, doing all those motor oil and ev–.
   (You know, one of the **thugs**, yeah, doing all those motor oil and ev–.)

In the third example, the focus is on *'ngam'*, a word that originates from Cantonese
that means 'match or fit perfectly'. In this situation, the mother was using it in her
Mandarin utterance and was asking her son if a papaya and a meat pie would be a
good combination.

(3) *Ni xian zai chi mu gua liao zai chi ci ge, zhen de a.* ***Ngam*** *meh*?
   (Now you're eating papaya and then you're going to eat this, seriously. **Do**
    **they go well with each other**?)

6.2.4.2.2 Syntactic features
Some syntactic features that are evident in my participants' data have been listed
below, and they comprise nouns, articles, verb phrases, aspect markers (Khaw,
2013, cited in Khaw, 2016), invariant question tags and reduplication (Lee, 2015).

6.2.4.2.2.1 Nouns
A feature that came up in my study is where speakers omitted the 's' for plural nouns:

(a)     Cannot keep *ho* these coconut *ah*.

(b)     I was the heaviest among my sibling.

6.2.4.2.2.2 Articles

This is where definite and indefinite articles are not present:

(a)     Actually that lady is working or housewife?

(b)     Let me try once. Once in life–lifetime.

(c)     I think I need to go to toilet.


6.2.4.2.2.3 Verb phrases

The more common features involves speakers leaving out the copula 'be', and the past and present tense forms of verbs:

(a)     Don't know them *lah*, they all psycho one.

(b)     *Aiyo*, that lady commit suicide *ah*?

(c)     *Ah*… government, unless *ah*, she go for further study *ah*.


6.2.4.2.2.4 Invariant question tags

The tags concerned are '… is it?' and '… isn't it?', and also 'or not' (Lee, 2015). Similar to the functions mentioned by Pillai (2012, cited in Lee, 2015) and Wee (2008, cited in Lee, 2015), the former two tags are used to seek the interlocutor's agreement, while 'or not' could be employed to mark the possibility of something. For instance:

(a)     Oh, like that, is it?

(b)     Because they were supposed to make the U-turn, isn't it? (Because they were supposed to make the U-turn, weren't they?)

(c)     You cannot go back to government hospital to work, isn't it? (You cannot go back to the government's hospital to work, can you?)

(d)     Will they employ her or not?

6.2.4.2.2.5 Aspect markers

Two aspect markers are considered here, namely 'already' to indicate that an action has been completed, and 'used to', which shows a speaker's habit. However, only the use of 'already' has been found in my participants' discourse, and the examples are as follows:

(a)     But shareholder now already agree *a*.

(b)     Then *a*, tes, yesterday evening we went back home just half an hour
        before that, they already put up the tent to put the wake everything.


6.2.4.2.2.6 Reduplication

According to Lee (2015), Malaysians' usual practice of reduplicating words in the Chinese, BM and Tamil language has caused them to do the same in English. When it is done in Colloquial Malaysian English, it is generally to stress and to represent the pluralisation of things. This only occurred once among all my participants, and it was spoken specifically by the father (W) as seen in Extract 5-58 under Section 5.6.1. In that context, W's use of "correct correct" was to emphasise his agreement on what his son (Y) said. In Malaysia, it is not odd to hear someone saying 'correct correct' as *'betul betul'* in BM and *'dui dui'* in Mandarin, hence its utterance in English as well.


Having covered some of the lexical and syntactic features that make Malaysians' speech unique, it is important to note that based on my participants' interactions, they have reaffirmed Rajadurai's (2004, p. 54) statement, 'Indeed, colloquial Malaysian English is often the preferred choice, as a sign of solidarity and camaraderie, even for speakers who are highly proficient in standard English'. The following studies look at another two language varieties that mark speakers' national identity when spoken.

The first study is by Borlongan (2009), she investigated the usage, identity, and attitudes of university students towards Philippine English. The survey results showed that the majority of respondents had positive feelings about their local variety of English; and other than Tagalog, Philippine English also symbolises their identity as Filipinos. For these bilinguals, 'Philippine English is not seen as deficient or erroneous English but simply an English variety that is distinctly Filipino and

structurally different, in particular in terms of phonology, lexicon and semantics, grammar, and pragmatics' (p. 101).

For Singaporeans, they also have their vernacular variety of English which is called Singlish. It is unique in a way that it embodies words from Malay and different Chinese languages, adopts some grammatical structures from said languages and English, and has its own intonation pattern (Bokhorst-Heng, 2005). While recognising the importance of Standard English on an international level, the citizens have also shown their support in using Singlish which functions as 'a national bond and source of Singaporean identity' (p. 195). Therefore, there is no doubt that there is an inextricable link between the employment of Singlish and being a Singaporean. To cite Alsagoff (2010, pp. 343-344), 'at the level of the individual, Singlish represents rapport, familiarity and intimacy; on the larger collective level, Singlish denotes group membership and the framing and positioning of community identity'.

### 6.2.4.3 Regional identity (East Malaysian)

Regional identity is perceived as 'collective narratives on who and what 'we' and 'our region' are and how these differ from others' (Paasi, 2002, p. 146).

The speakers' identification as East Malaysians was mainly exhibited by the friendship group who chose to speak in Sarawak Malay amongst themselves instead of Standard Malay. Even though they also have access to Standard Malay, the language does not give them the same feeling of intimacy and togetherness that the local variety does. Thus, by prioritising Sarawak over Standard Malay, it distinguishes these individuals from West Malaysians in general, as the language is not spoken and intelligible to Malay speakers living outside of Sarawak. In addition, it shows that the friends take pride in being East Malaysians, and their language use boasts of the multi-ethnic and harmonious society they are a part of.

Extract 5-64 (lines 2, and 6 to 12) from 5.6.2 has been selected to show how the word formation between Standard and Sarawak Malay differs from one another, and along with that, their literal and meaningful translations in English are also provided.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sarawak Malay** | Oh, *nya dah habis ka?* |
| **Standard Malay** | Oh, *dia sudah habiskan?* |
| **LT** | Oh, she already finished? |
| **MT** | Oh, has she finished it? |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Nang teruk* vodka *ya*, T, *sik nyaman*. |
| **Standard Malay** | *Memang teruk* vodka *itu*, T, *tidak sedap*. |
| **LT** | Really bad vodka that, T, not tasty. |
| **MT** | That vodka was really bad, T, not good. |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Makseh.* |
| **Standard Malay** | *Terima kasih.* |
| **LT** | Thank you. |
| **MT** | Thank you. |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Macam marah jak.* |
| **Standard Malay** | *Macam marah saja.* |
| **LT** | Like angry only. |
| **MT** | She seems angry. |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Mintak.* |
| **Standard Malay** | *Minta.* |
| **LT** | Request. |
| **MT** | Can I have some? |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Sik nyaman inda, manis* only. |
| **Standard Malay** | *Tidak sedap, manis* only. |
| **LT** | Not tasty, sweet only. |
| **MT** | It is not tasty at all, only sweet. |
| **Sarawak Malay** | *Ku maok.* |
| **Standard Malay** | *Saya mahu.* |
| **LT** | I want. |
| **MT** | I would like. |

As reported by Sebba and Tate (2002) in their work that looks at British Caribbeans, 'English' for these speakers is 'most likely to mean a local dialectal variety of English, which identifies its speaker as local, by upbringing and usually by birth, to a particular place in urban England' (p. 80). In relation to a quote by Gilroy (1987), the authors also went on to explain that people who use Cockney identify strongly with London.

This local language variety is linked to locality, informality, and solidarity, and disassociates the users from authority and power.

*6.2.4.4 Ethnic identity (Malaysian Chinese)*

Baker and Jones (1998, p. 112) state that this form of identity 'has continuity over time and lives across generations'. Moreover, it 'may be historically deep, collectively felt with a sense of rootedness and togetherness'.

With regard to language and ethnic identity, Gudykunst and Schmidt (1987, p. 157) point out that they are 'related reciprocally, i.e. language usage influences the formation of ethnic identity, but ethnic identity also influences language attitudes and language usage'. Unlike these two authors, Fishman (1977, cited in Puah and Ting, 2016) holds the view that the relation between language and ethnicity is made up of three aspects – paternity, patrimony and phenomenology. To put it simply, for paternity-based ethnicity, language does not only represent one's ethnic identity, but it is something that is inherited, like ethnicity. On the other hand, the patrimonial dimension is where speakers are perceived as deliberately marking their ethnic identity when they use their ethnic language in social interactions. As for the phenomenological aspect, it is said that not all speakers use language to express who they are, and for some, symbols are used to achieve this purpose. Next, my two groups of participants would be examined to see which of these three dimensions they fulfill.

For the family, all of the members identify themselves as being Chinese. For them, belonging to the Chinese group does not only encompass speaking in Mandarin, but also in other languages like Foochow and Hokkien. For the parents, their expression of affiliation is more direct as they always converse in Foochow, and at times, they would initiate conversations with their children in Mandarin and Foochow.

It is not the same for their eldest son (Y) whose primary language is English, which makes it the dominant code choice in his day-to-day communication with others. In spite of that, in the family's recording, he has been found to alternate to

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Mandarin and Foochow while interacting with his parents. In one of the comments made to clarify his reason for his Mandarin switch, he stated,

*"I think that is part and parcel of practicing Mandarin. Yeah, because I want to improve my Mandarin as well, and I would seize whatever opportunity that I can get in order to improve myself in that language. Because it is not my first language, I have to use that language, at least in conversational, terms. So, I will take any, every opportunity, you know, if I can speak to someone in Mandarin, like for example my family, yeah, my friends, to better myself in that language".*

This indirectly shows that Y is aware of his family roots, and even if Foochow or Mandarin does not play an important role in his work and social life, that is secondary to the fact that he is a Foochow and Chinese, and it is essential for him to have some knowledge of the language. As for the daughter and youngest son, using Mandarin, and the occasional Foochow with their parents is expected.

On the whole, this family is leaning towards the patrimonial dimension, where rather than seeing the Chinese language as one that is passed down by birth, they believe that speaking Chinese marks their identity as a Chinese.

Similarly, in the Arab communities, the Arabic language is viewed as an integral part of their identity (Fishman, 1972). This, too, is evident in Malaysia for the Malay community, which is reinforced by the definition in Article 160 of the Malaysian Federal Constitution that states, 'Malay' means a person who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom…' (*Federal Constitution*, 2010).

For the friends, it can be said that the link between ethnic language use and ethnic identity is almost not apparent because they are a more diverse group, one that involves speakers of three ethnicities (Chinese, Iban and Malay). Consequently, they had to agree on the use of common languages, and it has to be a language that is already existent in the speakers' repertoire, or one that is reasonably easy to pick up. This automatically eliminates the Iban and Chinese languages, and leaves English and BM as the most viable options for the friends. Being East Malaysians, they settled on the use of Sarawak Malay instead of the standardised variety because it is more suitable for their casual conversations. On a side note, however, one of the participants (N) mentioned how he does not know how to speak Iban

although he is an Iban. Interesting as it is, this cannot be taken to mean that he does not identify as an Iban, and like cases are depicted below.

Puah and Ting (2016) discovered that the Foochow speakers who participated in their research feel that it is not mandatory for one to know and use the language to be a Foochow. For this reason, these bilinguals communicate in Foochow mostly when they are with their family, and speaks Mandarin in the company of other Chinese. Additionally, in Ting and Rose's (2014) study of indigenous groups in Sarawak, she found that four out of the twelve groups (Penan, Iban, Saban, and Kelabit) showed a high level of ethnic language usage. After the analysis, she concluded that the degree to which a language is used does not signify how strongly the individuals identify as members of their ethnic group. Nevertheless, these speakers are not only closely associated with their in-group members, but also mix well with those from the other ethnic groups, and this is expressed through their behaviours. Hence, it is obvious that other than language, bilinguals also indicate who they are through other ways, which comprise festivals, traditional clothings, and even who they choose to marry (Naji and David, 2003).

### 6.2.4.5  Social identity (family and friendship group)

As for social identity, Tajfel (1978, p. 63) sees it as 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership'. For Thoits and Virshup (1997, p. 106, cited in Ashmore *et al.*, 2004), social identity is composed of 'socially constructed and socially meaningful categories that are accepted by individuals as descriptive of themselves or their group'. When individuals associate themselves with their groups, they will acquire knowledge on the topics, attitudes, and even the vocabulary used among the members. By understanding the norms and what is appropriate when with respective groups, individuals are able to align themselves with the other members and communicate more successfully (Eastman, 1985).

From the findings, it is clear that the participants affiliate with their social group at the time of interaction. By associating oneself with the other, the speaker readjusts his or her language behaviour to the interlocutor's. Sometimes, the speaker does this

without much difficulty as they already possess a reasonable command of the language, like in the family group, when the father switches to English for his son; and when his son shifts to Mandarin for his mother. In some other situations, a bit more work is required of the speaker, such as seen among the friends. One of the girls, who knew very little Sarawak Malay before she met her friends, took it upon herself to learn and master the language in order to communicate better and more comfortably with them. The study by Gupta and Yeok (1995) that has been briefly described under Section 6.2.2.5 resembles the way my participants adapt to their interlocutors.

Besides language behaviour, affiliation is also demonstrated through one's use of language. An example is the female speaker in the friendship group who utilises certain words and phrases in Sarawak Malay when with friends who know the language, and this would very likely not be the case when she is mingling with a different group in her network. Therefore, as an alternative to *'palak',* she might say it as 'head' in English, or *'tou'* in Mandarin.

As for the choice of language, unmarked choices are usually the norm for my participants, but when the occasional marked switch does take place, it too, is done with an aim to converge with the other people in the conversation. An example of the latter is when the son and daughter alternated to Mandarin as a sign of respect and solidarity with their mother.

In her research, Yoon (1996) revealed that for her participants who are competent first generation Korean-English bilinguals, a vital factor that determine their language choice is group membership. Korean is normally spoken with outgroup members due to the fluid nature of their relationship. Furthermore, the Korean language has formal or polite speech forms that individuals comply with in maintaining a good relationship with the other speakers, so the need to be constantly mindful of one's position and to be respectful towards one's interlocutor makes Korean the preferred choice for communication with outgroup members. On the contrary, having an established connection with ingroup members where intimacy or solidarity carry more weight than hierarchical social structures resulted in the speakers using English.

In *Identities at play: language preference and group membership in bilingual talk in interaction*, Cashman (2005) puts forth an argument about how the usage of English and Spanish by one of her female participants detaches her from the Spanish speakers, and at the same time, classifies her as a member of both groups. This, however, is not true for my participants who share an intimate relationship, in comparison to those in Cashman's study who we can safely assume, do not know each other well, as they are only helping out in a senior citizens' day program. There is a high probability that my participants' strong affiliation with one another is attributed to their tight bond, so much so that even in instances where a speaker deviates from the norm, it is done out of good intentions for the interlocutor.

### 6.2.4.6 Religious identity (Christian)

Studies that have been conducted in this domain primarily looked at the religion and language link within religious settings (Kouega, 2008; Chew, 2014). The one that has emerged from my findings, however, is made up of a simple connection between language and religion, which is evident when my participant identified herself as a member of the Chinese Methodist Church through the use of Mandarin. Joseph (2004, p. 173) also touched on this direct link when he made mention of how 'religion bound Christian Europe to Latin, the Islamic world to Arabic, and Jews to Hebrew'.

Bilinguals could also identify with their religious institution through their use of language, and in my study, only one participant appeared to do so. The speaker referred to here is the mother from the family group, and in the transcript, this particular identity showed when she was talking to her husband. Suffice it to say, whenever Christian-related statements, terms or verses are used, they are normally said in Mandarin. The rationale for her language choice is that going to a Chinese church where only Mandarin is used for sermons and services has made it a habit for her to employ Mandarin in these situations. In support of this are Jaspal and Coyle's (2010, p. 19) words, 'the LL [liturgical language] in which the religious identity is communicated to the individual is also the prescribed code'. Even when she attends meetings or programmes in other churches, they would be conducted in Mandarin. Thus, this explains the close link between Mandarin and the speaker's identity as a devoted Methodist who serves in a Chinese church.

In light of this, Jaspal and Coyle (2010) made mention of their Muslim participants who acknowledged that the Arabic language joins all of them together; and the same goes for some Hindu participants, who hinted that knowing Sanskrit is important in giving one a sense of unity in their community.

One's association with religion has also emerged from the Indian Tamil group who participated in Ting and Mahadhir's (2009) research, where in one family, Tamil was the language spoken at home, and one of the reasons was because of their religion as a Hindu. The father from another family justified his preference for English, and part of it was because of the fact that he is a Christian, and a church-goer.

### 6.2.4.7 The relationship between language and identity

Based on my findings and discussion, it is clear that my participants' sense of affiliation is prominent through their speech as can be seen not only from the different circumstances of talk, but it has also come up in most of the main patterns of language use. This, in turn, is reflective of who the speaker is at the time of speaking. This language-identity nexus has been corroborated by other researchers, and some of them are listed as follows.

- Language is 'a totem through which the members of a community proclaim its identity' (Le Page, 1975, p. 538, cited in Nair-Venugopal, 2000).
- In clarifying what he meant by the term 'Discourse', Gee (1990, p. 143) wrote, it is 'a socially accepted association among ways of using language,… that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful 'role'. In other words, 'each Discourse is tied to a particular social identity within a particular social group and to certain social settings and institutions. Each is a form of life, a way of being in the world, a way of being a 'person like us', in terms of action, interaction, values, thought and language, whether this is people in our family, classroom, school, local drinking group, church, nation, ethnic group, sewing circle, business, job site, profession, gender, club, peer group, gang…' (pp. 174-175).

- '… language displays social identity and relationships' (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 199).
- According to Weedon (1997, p. 21), 'language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed'.

## 6.3  Chapter summary

This chapter has further examined the circumstances that are favourable for code-switching and translanguaging, the tendencies of language use, the various ways in which affiliation could be expressed, and the identities that have been assumed by my participants while communicating with their interlocutors. The following and final chapter combines what have been found and presented in the findings and discussion, and concludes the thesis.

# Chapter 7.   Conclusion

## 7.1   Introduction

This thesis takes a sociolinguistic perspective (i.e. social aspects) on East
Malaysians' language use patterns and their expression of affiliation with one
another. The research participants are divided into two groups, a family and a
friendship group. The family is a homogenous group as they are all Malaysian
Chinese, while the friends make up a more diverse group, which consists of an Iban,
a Malay and a Chinese. There are only nine participants in total, but even so,
generalisation of the language use patterns is possible as it is mainly derived from
speakers' code-switching practice, and this is a phenomenon that is prevalent among
all bilinguals. Besides shedding light on speakers' tendencies, this thesis also aims to
explore the ways the participants affiliate with their interlocutors through the use of
language, which are two things that have not been researched in East Malaysia.

This chapter starts off with a summary of the key findings for each of my
research question, which is followed by my study's contributions, its limitations, and
last but not least, my recommendations for future research.

## 7.2   Summary of key findings

The first research question is, 'What are the circumstances under which language
use occurs?'

From my participants' data, 20 different circumstances of language alternation
has cropped up. First, the norm involves speakers using a particular word or phrase
out of habit. In other words, they are lexical items that have been so frequently used
in a certain language that their usage usually takes place spontaneously. Secondly,
for ease of expression is where speakers' language choice is determined by what is
more available to them at the time of interaction. This means that they have the
ability to say something in multiple languages but simply used the one that came to
mind first. Thirdly, a trigger normally results in a switch to the interlocutor's language;
this could be used for the speaker's next utterance or to echo specific word(s)
spoken by the interlocutor. Fourth, when speakers wish to get their interlocutor's
attention for an important matter or for something they would like to underscore, they
exhibit an inclination to use English. For these speakers, it could be because English

comes off as being more 'official', or because it is the interlocutor's dominant language. Next, is a linguistic practice called translanguaging that is also evident in my participants' speech, more so among the friends than the family. This is where there is no segregation between languages because they are used as a single language. Sixth, in situations where the speakers' objective is to convey a precise meaning, one of the languages in their repertoire would be preferable to communicate their intended message accurately. Seventh, external influence is where speakers' language use is affected by the exposure to the way languages are employed by their interlocutors, bilinguals that are not immediate participants of the ongoing conversation or even mass media. Eighth, when speakers do not have access to certain vocabulary, they always have another language to express themselves in, which is a useful skill to prevent their interaction from being disrupted. Ninth, speakers also code-switch in circumstances where they want to stress a point. Tenth, when speakers intend to clarify, that is, to make something easier to understand, they will switch to their interlocutor's primary language or one that they have a stronger command in. This way, ambiguities in the speakers' speech could be avoided and the interlocutor would be able to obtain the message clearly. The eleventh instance is where a speaker possesses a motive to adapt to his or her friends in an effort to blend in with the group. One of the ways to achieve this is by adjusting one's language use to the group's majority, which would subsequently enable the speakers to converse comfortably with one another. On another occasion, speakers maintain the flow of a conversation by shifting to the language last used by their interlocutor. The thirteenth circumstance is spontaneity, which in a way is linked to a speaker's language habits. This means that speakers' use and choice of language in this case is normally unmarked. Fourteenth, is where languages are employed to deliver various conversation effects, such as if a speaker switches from Sarawak Malay to English, he or she would most probably want to sound serious and vice versa if Sarawak Malay was used. Although this is the overall pattern, it could be seen that speakers use a language that they deem most suitable for a certain effect. The fifteenth situation is where a particular language is employed for economic purposes. This is done by keeping an utterance as concise as possible, which at the same time could maximise its efficiency. The next instance is when speakers wish to exclude outsiders from their conversation by talking in their common language. As for the seventeenth circumstance, it is with regard to quoting what someone else has said in an earlier conversation. It has been found that bilinguals are inclined to repeat

what another person said in the same language, which could be helpful in bringing about a similar or the same effect. The last two cases are when a speaker requires a filler, and when one shows solidarity with the interlocutor, which also indicates that they are members of the same group. Almost all of the circumstances that were briefly delineated here have come up in some of the earlier code-switching studies (Grosjean, 1982; Kow, 2003), with the exception of external influence. This reveals that even when bilinguals originate from different parts of the world, there would be similarities in their use of particular practices as they are bound to encounter these various circumstances in their daily lives. This, too, is corroborated by my participants; even though the group of friends code-switched in slightly more circumstances than the family members, the majority of those circumstances are the same for both groups.

As for the second research question, it is: 'What language tendencies can be revealed from informal talk among East Malaysians in non-institutional settings?'

Six main themes have emerged from my study's findings and they are:

1) Habit – the circumstances that are considered to be habitual are the norm, spontaneity, and translanguaging. A good example of the norm is from the way a speaker addresses someone, and this could be seen in the family where Y referred to his uncle in Foochow as *nerng ngu*. Besides that, spontaneity is also viewed as a habit as it includes automatic alternations that are made with the other speakers in mind. For B from the friends' group especially, not only does she employ Sarawak Malay words and phrases when among her friends, but she also switches for someone who is not directly part of the conversation. As for translanguaging, it is practiced by some bilinguals' in their everyday interaction and this has occurred more frequently among the friends, which is very likely because of their use of Sarawak Malay and English that are intertwined with each other.

2) Convenience – 'for ease of expression' and 'lack of vocabulary' fall under this theme. In this context, convenience represents something that is comfortable and/ or easy for the speakers. This is why on some occasions, bilinguals will choose to use their dominant language, like the father (W) who switched from

English to his mother tongue, Foochow, because Foochow allows him to say what he needs more fluently. In addition to that, it could be convenient because it is something the speaker is used to, such as when N from the friendship group used English for the verb "order" instead of *'pesan'* in Sarawak Malay. For another speaker, it could be simply because it requires little or no effort on his or her part, so whichever that comes to mind first will be put to use. This happened in the father's data, and for his switched English items, he was actually fully capable of saying them in Mandarin if he hadn't gone with what was easiest for him.

3) Cause and effect – a circumstance for cause is when a speaker is triggered by an interlocutor or influenced by external factors, while for effect involves speakers using a language to convey their message with the desired effect (i.e. more serious, playful, dramatic, etc.). The result of a trigger could be an intrasentential or intersentential switch, where a speaker would repeat certain lexical items used by the interlocutor, or make a switch altogether. As for external influence, all my participants in the friendship group code-switched because of this, and it was due to different factors. For B, it was primarily because of her good friends, N and T; for N, it was attributed to some of the things he had heard from movies and television shows, and read on social media; and for T, it was mostly caused by third parties (i.e. family, friends, and acquaintances). The mother (H) from the family who was the only one to switch in this situation showed that one's code-switching habit could also be caused by a religious institution one is attending. In a separate instance where my participants' (the group of friends) goal is to create a conversation effect, it has been observed that although there is a general pattern among the three friends (i.e. English is used for serious matters, and conversely, for Sarawak Malay), it could be discerned that the speakers would use a language which they regard as most fitting to communicate a particular effect.

4) Efficiency – for the group of friends, it has been found that one of the reasons they code-switch is 'for economy', and this is where the speakers express themselves by taking the shortest route possible. B and N who exhibit a tendency to use Sarawak Malay in this circumstance shows that said language

is more efficient in enabling them to get their message across (i.e. by using fewer words), compared to if English was used.

5) Accommodation – this theme only features one circumstance that has been obtained from the family's data, which is 'for clarity'. When bilinguals find themselves in this situation, they would prioritise the language needs of their interlocutors and this usually leads to a choice that is made in favour of the interlocutors. By doing so, it could ease the interlocutors' comprehension and minimise any possible disruption to the talk. This is the case for the parents (W and H) of the family group, whose bulk of switches are in English in order to accommodate their children who speak English as their first language.

6) Affiliation – this is where speakers associate themselves with their interlocutors through their language use, and this theme has come up from all the speakers' data. This provides important insights into the social relationship shared by the speakers and the role they take on as they communicate with one another. The few circumstances that have been included in this theme will be listed in the following section.

The third research question is, 'How is affiliation expressed through one's use of language?'

Where affiliation is concerned, it is not only evident in my participants' speech, but also a recurring theme in their entire discourse. It is found that there are multiple instances when the family and friends group identify with each other.

Firstly, it is when the speakers wish to exclude others from their group's conversation, and this could be seen among the friends who code-switched solely to Sarawak Malay, which is their main in-group language. Secondly, it is in situations where a speaker chooses to alternate to the language of the interlocutor because he or she wants to maintain the conversation flow. An example of this is when the children (Y and X) shifted to Foochow and Mandarin as they responded to their parents (W and H), rather than continuing in English. The third circumstance in which affiliation takes place is when speakers want to free their interlocutors from confusion

by using the language they are most competent in, like the father and mother, whose language choice was chiefly in English when talking to their children. Fourthly, the speakers could affiliate as an effect of being triggered, where they would switch to the interlocutor's language although they would have no difficulty saying something in the language they were initially using. As for the fifth circumstance, it involves the speakers saying particular words or phrases in the same manner as their interlocutors or other bilinguals they know, resulting from the constant exposure to said lexicons in their respective groups. The next instance is when a speaker adapts by using the group's majority language and even makes an effort to master it, like participant B who learned and conversed with her friends (N and T) in Sarawak Malay in order to connect better and closely with them. Last but not least is one of the most common ways a speaker associates with another, and that is when a switch is made to show solidarity. This was apparent in the daughter's (X) speech, where she switched to Mandarin twice while talking to her older brother in English, which was done to include their mother (H) who was not a direct participant at the time.

The last research question is, 'What can this tell us about East Malaysians' sense of 'affiliation'?

Having analysed my participants' data, it is found that in the course of communicating and affiliating with each other, these speakers too, assume certain identities that are outlined as below:

1) National identity – being Malaysians, one of the things that makes them stand out is their spoken English variety, specifically, the Colloquial Malaysian English. Owing to its unique lexical and syntactical features, it is a language that is intelligible only to Malaysian citizens. For many, it symbolises their identity in the Malaysian community (Widdowson, 1994), and this informal variety also represents intimacy, rapport and solidarity between the speakers (Rajadurai, 2004). For the purpose of showing how Colloquial Malaysian English stands out, some of the lexical and syntactical features and functions that have been covered by Lee (2015), Nor *et al.* (2015), and Khaw (2013, cited in Khaw, 2016) were adopted in my study. The lexical features comprise particles such as *lah, ah, ho/ hoh, ma, lo/ loh, meh, neh*; the BM suffix *'kan'*;

the use of 'got' and 'one'; exclamations like *aiya/ aiyah, aiyo* and *wah*; and localised expressions. As for the syntax, some of the distinguishing characteristics that have been highlighted involve the employment of nouns, articles, verb phrases, invariant question tags, aspect markers, reduplication and repetition.

2) Regional identity – this identity is exhibited by the good friends who choose to converse in Sarawak Malay, a local BM variety that can only be understood by those living in East Malaysia. This is because Sarawak and Standard Malay differ in their word formations, and the fact that B, N and T use the former for their interactions shows that Sarawak Malay ties them together as a group and that they are proud to be East Malaysians.

3) Ethnic identity – the identity referred to here is as Malaysian Chinese, and this has surfaced from the family's conversation. Even though the importance of speaking Chinese languages is not explicitly stated by all the family members, it is shown in their exchange with one another. For example, the parents (W and H) communicate in Foochow between themselves, and with their English-speaking children, it is not uncommon for W and H to speak to them in Foochow or Mandarin. As for Y, the eldest son, his basic command in the Chinese languages does not hinder him from using them at home, and Mandarin is also spoken quite often by his siblings (X and J). Therefore, based on their language use, it could be deduced that the different identities these bilinguals take on is determined by their language choice (i.e. when Mandarin is used, they are identifying as a Chinese, and as a Foochow when Foochow is spoken).

4) Social identity – in expressing said identity, the members of a group could be seen going back and forth between languages to match with the interlocutor's speech. This is clear in both the family and friends group where very often, the way they go about their languages indicate their convergence with another individual or with the group. This could be in the form of an unmarked choice like when the parents alternated to English for their children's benefit, or a marked choice by the son switched to Mandarin to maintain the conversation flow with his mother. The same association was shown among the friends

through their use of Sarawak Malay, more so for B who made an initiative to improve her command of the language upon knowing that Sarawak Malay is the main language spoken by her good friends.

5) Religious identity – the mother (H) of the family group demonstrated that one could show strong links with their religious institution, and in this context, it is a Methodist church. This has appeared a few times when she was in conversation with her husband, and touching on the topic of moral principles naturally caused her to relate it to religion. Whenever that happens, H would use Christian teachings to reinforce the points she is making, and for that, Mandarin is normally used as it is the language employed in church for preaching or for any other events or activities.

## 7.3   Key contributions of the study

Through the use of participant observation, focus groups, and stimulated recall, my study investigates East Malaysians' language use patterns as they engage in informal talk and provides insight into the bilinguals' affiliation with one another. Two different groups are looked at (i.e. family and friends) in order for comparisons to be made, particularly the circumstances in which they have a tendency to code-switch and the degree of affiliation between the members.

The results obtained from this study can contribute primarily to the available literature on language use patterns in general. With code-switching being a phenomenon that continues to be widely studied by researchers today, one would be able to find studies on code-switching patterns (Poplack, 1988; Bentahila and Davies, 1995; Treffers-Daller, 1998; Wei, 1998; Pittman, 2008) or patterns of bilinguals' daily linguistic repertoire (Myers-Scotton, 1993b; Nercissians, 2001; Arua and Magocha, 2002; Remennick, 2003; Ting, 2012).

My study, however, centres on the patterns that arise from the use of code-switching and translanguaging in informal and non-institutional contexts which could be useful in understanding instances when bilinguals are prone to employ said linguistic practices. It has been revealed that my participants are inclined to switch (and translanguage) out of habit, due to some sort of trigger, to convey an effect, for

convenience, accommodation, affiliation and efficiency. Furthermore, all of my participants are from East Malaysia, where almost no study has been conducted on language patterns, and very little has considered the ways in which bilinguals associate with the other members in their social group. With regard to the latter, the data has shown that my participants strongly affiliate with each other, and while it is obvious that all of them identify as Malaysians through their use of Colloquial Malaysian English, and as members who belong to the family and friends group; the family's use of Foochow and Mandarin also marks their identity as Malaysian Chinese, and likewise for the friends, whose use of Sarawak Malay sets them apart as East Malaysians. Taking into account how these bilinguals' identities are expressed through their language, it attests the statement made by Tabouret-Keller (1997, p. 315), 'the language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of this language are inseparable'.

## 7.4   Limitations of the study

The limitations mainly revolve around my participants and their observations as explained below:

1) Relating to participants' recruitment, I first contacted potential participants and asked a few basic questions about their language use to make sure they were eligible to participate in my study. Here, eligibility was primarily determined by the speakers' repertoire that comprises the languages spoken in Malaysia. Having confirmed that, I then proceeded to tell them briefly about my research and also made sure they knew that it involved observations, recordings and interviews. Following that, I asked their opinion and feeling about the prospect of being a part of this study.

   If a positive response was given, the next step was to arrange a face-to-face meeting with my participants to explain my study in more detail with the use of the participant information sheet, and it would also give them an opportunity to enquire and clarify any doubts they have. As participation was on a voluntary basis, my participants were given time to think about the study before making a decision. Upon agreeing to participate in my research, I told my participants to keep me informed about the time and venue of their meeting.

Initially, I planned to include approximately 15 participants, which in my mind might make up a few groups of speakers, hence diversifying the social groups being researched. Nevertheless, it was not without any problems when I was in the field. For instance, two people agreed to participate, but there was always the issue of everyone's busy schedule. Therefore, it was difficult to find a mutually convenient time for us to meet and discuss my study. As for the handful that was initially hopeful but did not work out, it was mainly because some group members were living in a different city, thus rendering face-to-face interactions impossible.

Aside from targeting participants of different ethnicity, I was also on the lookout for individuals that form various social relationships like family and friends, as I wanted my study to include a range of participants. Despite the fact that I did not manage to recruit all the participants I originally intended to, I still succeeded in rounding up sufficient and the needed participants.

However, because my study is heavily reliant on my participants and I am bound by ethics, there is always a possibility that someone might pull out midway owing to personal reasons. At the outset, I had three groups of participants, but as I went deeper into the analysis phase, I found it more difficult to contact one of the members of the Iban group as she became busier with life abroad. Having no knowledge of Iban myself, I needed more support from the group members; hence, with my participant's silent withdrawal, I had to forgo this particular group completely. Even though it did not affect my study in a major way, it still led to a setback in my progress, which consequently caused a delay in data analysis and the analysis write-up.

2) As my research looks at people in naturally occurring situations such as during mealtimes and catch up sessions, the time and venue of observation were dependent on my participants. For this reason, it is crucial to allocate a good amount of time for fieldwork as it is uncertain when or how often an opportunity to observe participants would crop up. There were time and geographical issues; for example, among the group of friends, one of them is not from the same city and travels quite often. Also, taking into account their

academic calendar and schoolwork, they did not have time to meet as frequently, which meant time was quite tight for me to observe them. For my family, a chance to study them did not come by often as my older brother and sister-in-law are based in West Malaysia, and we only normally meet together during the festive season.

## 7.5   Recommendations for future research

Under this section, some suggestions are put forth on how to improve and expand a similar research in the future.

1) The recruitment of more participants would allow for greater generalisability, and this does not only encompass the quantity, but also the ethnic diversity of the speakers. That way, a better comparison can be made between the different social groups and it is even possible to obtain certain patterns by categorising the speakers according to their respective ethnicity. This will inevitably require more time and effort on the researcher's part as potential participants may not wish to be involved in this study because of the process which could be quite a long one, beginning with the observation until the analysis, where participants need to be consulted from time to time for clarifications of their speech. Moreover, with a bigger group of participants, the findings may also be different. For instance, placed in the context of my study, the circumstance of language use may be more varied; hence this may lead to other tendencies that have not been found in mine.

2) As the current study only looks at informal talk in non-institutional settings, this could be extended for future research to include interactions in a formal environment. By doing so, more could be revealed about speakers' language choices (marked or unmarked) in that context, and besides that, it could cast light on a different circumstance such as when speakers code-switch to exert their power over their interlocutors.

3) Somewhat similar to the previous recommendation, it would also be interesting to examine participants who are casual acquaintances; mainly to

find out how they would associate with one another and if their affiliation is nearly or as strong as the family and friends in my study. Consequently, a sense of belonging between participants from a tightly-knit group could be contrasted with a group that consists of speakers who are familiar with each other but are not particularly close.

4) Last of all, it would also be useful to widen the scope being studied so that it covers both East and West Malaysia. This is because although they make up the same country, the speakers' language behaviour and language variety are not the same; a good example used in this study is Sarawak Malay which is not spoken, and is not generally and easily comprehensible to West Malaysian bilinguals. Therefore, by studying speakers in both parts of Malaysia, their language use and its implications could be observed. This could then contribute to the sociolinguistic knowledge of how citizens from the West are alike or different from those residing in the East, and the cause behind that is also worth probing into.

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# Appendices

**Appendix 1: Consent form**

**Project title:** Language use patterns and affiliations among East Malaysians in informal settings

**Principal Investigator with the contact number and organization:**

Victoria Xinyi Wong

School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University

Tel: 012-8906138

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I hereby acknowledge that:

1.  My signature is my acknowledgement that I have agreed to take part in the above research.

2.  I have received a copy of this information sheet that explains the use of my data in this research. I understand its contents and I have had the opportunity to ask questions.

3.  I understand that participation is voluntary and withdrawal from this research is possible at any time by informing the Principal Investigator and all my data will be discarded.

_____          _____

Name and Signature (Participant)                               Date

**Participants:** Members of the family group (the parents, two sons, a daughter, and
a daughter-in-law)

**Date:** 19 November, 2014

**Duration:** Approximately 80 minutes

**Location:** The participants' house in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

1       W: But shareholder now already agree *a*.

2       Y: Mm.

3       W: 27 cent.

4       Y: Khazanah is pumping in six billion of our money.

5       W: Yea, *liu shi yi ha*?

          (six billion)

6       Y: Don't know. *Ne*, what's that, six billion is how much.

7       W: *Liu shi yi, liu shi yi*.

          (Six billion, six billion.)

8       J: Yes, that's right. *Liu shi yi.*

                  (Six billion.)

9       W: Six thousand, six thousand. Ha, retrenched.

10      Y: Yeah, highly retrenched.

11      W: Hm?

12      H: If you need more, more soup in the warmer still have some more soup.

13      C: Okay.

14      Y: Alright Mommy. Mommy, have you eaten?

15      C: Come and eat *ah* Mom.

16      H: *Wo, bu yao jin, wo ci ge xi xian, wo chi yi dian liao.*

          (I'm alright, I'll wash this first, I've already eaten a little.)

17      W: S *shui zai na li leh*? In the cot *ah*?

          (Where is S sleeping?)

18   Y: *Ah*.

19   H: *Nu hia puong do ni kiang siak lah a papa ah*.

      (Eat some of the rice, papa.)

20   Y: On the bed.

21   C: On the bed *ah*. I put two pillows at the side there.

22   H: *Ngi do li pui puong ah*.

      (Eat the fish with your rice.)

23   Y: Hm?

24   C: Two pillows at the side.

25   W: *Tong yu ah*.

       (It's raining.)

26   Y: *Ha?*

27   W: Oh, oh.

28   Y: Hm.

29   C: Two pillows at the side.

30   Y: Alright alright. How about his leg?

31   C: Put clothes on bottom side.

32   H: *Yao ting ting yi xia kan* S *hui xing ma oh*.

      (Listen to see if S wakes up.)

33   Y: Mm.

34   C: Yea, I'm going to go up already after this.

35   H: No, you just stand outside the door you can hear already. You don't

36      need to open the door you can hear.

37   C: Mm-hm.

38   Y: Yeap.

39   C: But I want to go to sleep *ah*. I hope so *ah*. Keep worrying he'll wake up

40      or not.

41   W: *Ni de father-in-law hao ma*?

      (How's your father-in-law doing?)

42   Y: Okay.

43   W: Okay *ah*?

44   Y: Something happened to my father-in-law's neighbour yesterday you

45      know, mommy.

46   H: Hm?

47    C: Oh yea yea. Tell her the drama.

48    Y: Mm. No no, no, C, C can tell.

49    C: No *la*, you tell *la* you tell (        ). You were=

50    Y: The neighbour…

51    C: =talking about, yea.

52    H: I think he will sleep for, two two, at least two hours eh.

53    Y: In Jesus' name, hallelujah.

54    C: I also pray *ah*.

55    Y: Mommy *ah*.

56    H: Hm?

57    Y: Do you know, that my father-in-law's uh neighbour committed suicide.

58    H: *Ha?*

59    J: Are you serious!

60    Y: Oh… massive.

61    H: Your father-in-law what?

62    Y: My father-in-law's neighbour…

63    H: *Ah*.

64    Y: …committed suicide.

65    H: Commit suicide *ah*?

66    Y: Mm.

67    C: Mm.

68    H: You mean the one which is very bad one *ah*?

69    C: Mm.

70    Y: That's right yo.

71    H: You mean the lady or the man?

72    C: The lady *ah*.

73    Y: The lady.

74    H: *Waiya*.

75    C: We don't know the real story also actually.

76    Y: Mm.

77    H: And then, just trying to commit suicide or what?

78    Y: (*A*, you see.)

79    C: No, dead.

80    Y: Mm, dead alrea–

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81    H: Dead *a*?

82    C: Funeral=

83    Y: Yeah, funeral.

84    C: =ah not funeral, the wake, the wake.

85    H: The wake, is it?

86    Y: Funeral. That means funeral.

87    W: ((in response to the phone ringing)) *Jia, to wai tiang*=

                                      (Come, let me answer it=)

88    C: Mm.

89    W: =*si wei dian wa*.

          (=it's my phone.)

90    H: Oh, like that, is it?

91    Y: Yeah.

92    H: *Aiyo*, that lady commit suicide *ah*?

93    Y: Mm.

      ((Dad answers the phone in the background))

94    H: I didn't see the lady before anyway.

95    C: We also never see.

96    Y: Don't worry, I've also never seen her before.

97    C: The night before my mother said that, the night before, she still heard

98       the woman screaming up and down, fighting.

99    H: *Aiyo*, like that *a*…

100   C: Ten something at night.

101   H: Mm.

102   C: Then *a*, tes, yesterday evening we went back home=

103   H: *Wo bu yao bu yao, wo bu neng chi liao*. ((talks to X))

          (I don't want don't want, I cannot eat anymore.)

104   C: =just half an hour before that, they already put up the tent to put the

105      wake everything.

106   H: Is it…?

107   C: Then, the neighbours told my Mom=

108   X: Put the what?

109   C: =that, the the=

110   J: Tent, tent.

111     C: =the tent=

112     Y: The tent.

113     C: =the tent for a wake, you know, service.

114     Y: Yeah.

115     H: Mmm.

116     Y: For the wake service of people to come…

117     X: Oh wake, right right right.

118     H: Mmmm. You mean that because husband and wife always fight *ha*?

119     C: Don't know them *lah*, they all psycho one.

120     H: Oh, all psycho one *la*.

121     C: Really *a*.

122     H: And then=

123     Y: It seems that–

124     H: =the children quite small, isn't it?

125     Y: Yeah, very young.

126     C: Small.

127     H: How how, how big?

128     C: I think the oldest is (only) eight *ah*.

129     H: Hm?

130     Y: No he's seven years old, the oldest.

131     H: *Aiyo*=

132     C: That is also very small.

133     H: =so small, so young *a*.

134     Y: Mm.

135     C: Mm.

136     H: Two, is it?

137     C: Mm.

138     Y: Two of them.

139     H: And then, the younger one?

140     Y: Hm?

141     C: I don't know *o*.

142     H: The youngest one?

143     C: Two, three, I mean two, three years difference.

144     H: *Aiyo*, so *ke lian a*.

(pitiful)

145    Y: The uh, the woman, ap ap–, apparently has depression, and she has

146       already been on certain medications.

147    C: Is it?

148    Y: That's what your father says.

149    C: Sure or not?

150    Y: Yeah.

151    H: Not sure, how she commit suicide? Hang *ah*?

152    Y: Nope.

153    C: No *lah*… jump into the river.

154    Y: She jumped.

155    J: *Ai cham*.

     (Oh my.)

156    H: You mean not at home, is it?

157    C: So, only after=

158    Y: Near Mr. K's office.

159    C: =many hours…

160    H: You mean, oh, she jumped *a*?

161    Y: Mm.

162    C: Don't know whether she jumped or what *la*.

163    Y: On the way to Mr. K's office.

164    H: Drown *a*, drown *a*.

165    Y: Drown, drown.

166    C: Drown *la*.

167    Y: That's what they said.

168    C: Then they found the body, the *bomba* found the body at 6a.m. actually,

169       I don't know.

170    Y: So today, please go and check it out, in the newspaper.

171    J: Yeah, man.

172    H: Mm-mm, mmm.

173    Y: So they hauled the body out from the um, from the river at 10p.m.… no,

174       at 3a.m. yesterday.

175    H: You mean that means yes–, last night, last night the tent still there *la*,

176       not yet funeral *la*.

177    Y: I think they just set up the tent before we came.

178    H: Mmm…

179    C: When we came, they were just s–setting it up.

180    W: Oh…

181    H: You mean it happened yesterday *la?*

182    C: Mm.

183    Y: Uh no, the night before.

184    H: The body not, the body must be in the, in the hospital.

185    C: Yesterday 3a.m. *lo*, correct *lo*. Body in the hospital the whole day *la*.

186    H: Body didn't brin–, didn't bring back the body, eh?

187    Y: Brought.

188    H: Brought back the body (also) *a?*

189    Y: Yea.

190    C: (Brought back already.)

191    W: You mean she commit suicide where, at home *ah?*

192    Y: No, on the way to Mr. K's office.

193    W: Hm?

194    C: River, river.

195    Y: Jumped into the river.

196    W: Oh oh oh.

197    X: Who is Mr. K?

198    W: The lawyer *la*.

200    Y: Mm, the lawyer friend.

201    X: Oh… the lawyer.

202    C: Lawyer, lawyer.

203    W: Mmm.

204    Y: His son is now in QE.

205    H: Actually that lady is working or housewife?

206    Y: Housewife.

207    C: Housewife.

208    H: But never seen her before *ho?*

209    C: I think I saw her once only. I cannot remember.

210    H: Like that is it?

211    C: Yeah.

212   W: This is something uh, family argument *ah*.

213   Y: Probably.

214   W: *Ha?*

215   Y: Probably. Husband and wife. Yeap. Unresolved issues. Before this, she

216      has already threatened the husband that she wanted to commit suicide.

217   W: Oh…

218   H: Mmm…

219   Y: Then after that it escalated saying that she even hugged the children,

220      and wanted to jump into the river with her children.

221   C: Eh but yesterday I didn't see the children, you know.

222   H: You mean, you mean who drove her out?

223   C: Don't know.

224   X: Dramatic.

225   J: Is it?

226   X: I don't know.

227   C: I really don't know, very drama one.

228   Y: We, what's that, we do not know the whole story, the only thing we

229      know, the woman, jumped into the river, found…

230   C: Some people say, some people say husband killed her *la*, don't know

231      whether true or not, we really don't know.

232   Y: Yeah, that, that was what your father said.

233   W: *Si ni dian wa chi wuan*?

        (Is that the phone ringing?)

234   X: *No miang a*?

        (What?)

235   Y: So that's why=

236   J: Who is that *a*?

237   Y: =WH and I said, "Please=

238   C: Better don't say anything *oh.*

239   Y: =do not say anything.=

240   C: Yeah.

241   Y: =Even if it is just a postulation."

242   H: He is *samseng kia*, isn't it?

              (thug)

243    Y: Yeah. He's a thug.

244    W: (    ) *ah*, Y?

245    Y: Yeap. Yeap.

246    W: *Ha?*

247    J: He's a Chinese, isn't it?

248    Y: Yeap.

249    C: Chinese guy.

250    W: Oh. How old already? Tha–, that man.

251    C: Thirty plus only *la*.

252    W: *Ha?*

253    Y: Probably early forties, maybe.

254    C: *Ah*=

255    W: Oh…

256    C: =late thirties, early forties only.

257    W: Oh…

258    C: Cannot be so old *la*, he's always picking the daughter.

259    W: Oh, she's not working also *a*?

260    Y: No.

261    C: Mm.

262    W: Oh, the husband *neh*?

263    Y: Husband, yeah.

264    W: Working.

265    Y: He's working, but uh, they said that he was a thug.

266    W: Mm…

267    Y: You know, one of the *samseng*, yeah=

                          (thug)

268    C: He does the motor oil one.

269    W: Oh…

270    Y: =doing all those motor oil and ev–.

271    W: Mm… so no case *ah* this sort of thing *hoh*?

272    Y: No, the funny thing is the=

273    W: (Go) commit suicide.

274    Y: =how, what's that, is how, is how, is is how the, is how fast the body

275        was being released.

276     W: Oh… of course *la*.

277     Y: Yea, apparently she, what's that, her body was found that morning=

278     W: Oh...

279     Y: =and uh it was released that eve–, I mean, usually you don't release a

280        suicidal case just like that.

281     W: Mmm…

282     Y: Because you do not really know=

283     W: Yea, the=

284     Y: =if it is actually a true suicide=

285     W: =yea yea.

286     Y: =it's a g–genuine ge– suicide…

287     C: Yea *ho*, they released the body quite early *ho*.

288     Y: Yea yea yea.

289     W: Mm.

290     Y: The police should actually classify it, you know, probably under

291        homicide or something, then after that they will go and investigate to

292        see if there was any=

293     W: Oh, accidental death, death *la ho*.

294     Y: Yea, is it really an accidental death=

295     W: Yea yea.

296     Y: =or really is it something that has been provoked to her=

297     W: Mm mm.

298     Y: =or something has been induced to her.

299     W: Yea, something behind *la*.

300     Y: Yea, you never know, you know, what actually happened.

301     W: Yea, now, we are nowaday is some– non– it's all all like that now.

302     Y: Yea.

303     W: Yea, nowaday it happened the killer is the one who, you know, *ho*.
        ((Sister-in-law takes the dishes into the kitchen and talks to Mom))

304     Y: Yea, and it's so easy just to dump the body into the river. Because you

305        just, because they found the body in the river.

306     W: Oh… big river, small river?

307     Y: Big.

308     W: Oh…

309    Y: The Klang river.

310    W: Oh… Klang river *la*.

311    Y: I do not know there was actually a river on the way to Mr. Kam's.

312    W: Oh…

313    X: So so, they saw the body floating or what? I mean, obviously the river is

314        big and they should…

315    Y: We do not know.

316    W: You mean the, how how to say, they travel in the car and then that one

317        *a*.

318    Y: We do not know.

319    W: Oh… yea, nobody knows *la*.

320    Y: We do not know, we do not know how the body was found=

321    W: Yea… how=

       ((Mom talks to sister-in-law about the new mattress in their bedroom))

322    Y: =we do not know how she jumped=

323    W: =how she jumped down *ho*, correct correct.

324    Y: =nobody knew, yeah.

325    W: Oh.

326    J: Unless there's CCTV.

327    W: That one *la*…

328    X: Hm?

329    J: Unless there's CCTV.

330    W: *Mei you la, jiu shi, mei you ren zhi dao de shi hou qu zi sha la*.
       (No, that's, she committed suicide without anyone knowing.)

331    Y: Mm.

332    W: *Mei, mei you ren zhi dao ta zi sha la*.=
       (No, no one knew she committed suicide.=)

       ((Sister-in-law turns to big bro for his affirmation of the good quality of the
       mattress))

333    C: …that's good *lah*. *Ho baobei*?
                               (precious)

334    W: =*Mei ban fa*.
       (=Nothing can be done.)

335    Y: Which one?

336    C: The mattress is very good.

337    Y: Very good. Yes mommy, your mattress is really good.

338    H: I say good thing I bought this one *o*.

339    Y: Mm.

340    H: Initially, we want to buy the Dreamland, *ni zhi dao ma*.

                                              (you know.)

341    Y: No.

342    H: No stock.

343    W: (    )

344    Y: Huh, *hen hao hen hao*.

              (very good very good.)

345    W: Hm?

346    H: No stock and then papa say want to buy Goodnite=

347    Y: Mm!

348    H: =and then end up I went there they introduced this one, I said I better

349       get this one.

350    X: They have Goodnite–

351    H: Good thing *ho* if not even cannot go up *ho*. King-size how to go up?

352       This one they fold it you know or not, packing in the, (don't let it) fold it,

353       they just open up and then it springs up like that, open up like that.

354       They fold it.

355    Y: Right, right.

356    W: *Ta jiang ci ge shi* memory latex.

           (She said this is)

357    C: Okay. I go up first *ah*.

358    W: Mm.

359    Y: Go.

360    C: Thanks. Talk to you all later, okay?

361    Y: Okay.

362    C: Thanks Mom!

363    W: Mm mm. *Bu yong, bu yong*.

                  (Don't mention it, don't mention it.)

364    H: Kay, welcome!

365    Y: Mommy, shall I cut um umm coconuts.

366    H: Can… of course. A lot to eat that's all *ho*. *Milian ((midin))* also have to

367        cook actually.

368    W: (    ) *Milian hen pian yi ah. Wo–*
                    (very cheap. I–)

369    Y: Are you going to cook your *milian* now?

370    H: Now *a*? You want to cook now?

371    Y: Or later.

372    X: *Bu yong la ni you*=
            (No need, do you=)

373    H: Tonight?

374    X: =*shi jian meh*?
            (=have time?)

375    Y: Tonight? But=

376    H: *Wo jiu wo jiu shi mei you shi jian oh*.
            (That's why I don't have time.)

377    Y: =but I thought that tonight we are going to=

378    H: Ya *la*. But…

379    Y: =Ah G *nerng ngu*'s house to eat.
                    (uncle's)

380    H: But=

381    X: *Bu yong zhu la, ming tian la*…
            (Don't need to cook, tomorrow...)

382    H: =you want to eat now, is it.

383    Y: Tomorrow?

384    W: *(Ti na) ngai wo*.
            (Later it will go bad.)

385    Y: Tomorrow?

386    H: It's fresh.

387    Y: Yea, but–

388    W: *Ti na*=
            (Later=)

389    X: Hm?

390    W: =*ting suo a jue ting* Mommy *li siak suo a la*.
            (=cook it later, wait until Mommy finishes her lunch.)

391    H: Because Uncle Ah G six o'clock=

392    W: *Deng ta chi yi xia*.

       (Wait for her to finish her lunch.)

393    H: =if you want we can cook some… supper? For supper.

394    Y: Supper?

395    H: No *la*. Because J come back have to eat.

396    Y: Oh.

397    W: *(Ta xu yao.)*

       (He needs to.)

398    X: Aren't aren't we going to take away something from Uncle Ah Wong's

399        house, no?

400    H: No… I don't know. You want or not, if not we cook milian and then

401        bring, *ei?*

402    Y: (*Bu xu yao la*), Mommy…=

       (Not necessary)

403    W: *Nei o.*

       (No need.)

404    X: *Bu yao, shi meh*?

       (Don't want, really?)

405    Y: =I don't know.

406    H: Bring also not enough for everybody *la ho*.

407    X: *Zi ji chi la woi, zi ji xiang shou, wo hen* deprived *de le ha*…

       (Eat it ourselves, enjoy it on our own, I am very deprived…)

408    H: *Bu yong lah, mei you xian zai xin xian ma, zhu yi dian lai chi* eh=

       (No need, since it is fresh now, let's cook some=)

       ((Dad talks to his friend on the phone))

409    Y: Whoa, papa's using a coloured phone.

410    X: Really?

411    H: =…*xian zhu yi dian lai chi* eh?

       (=…cook some first?)

412    X: Before *la*, before=

413    Y: Can=

414    X: =before wo men, *a, ge ge, ge ge* pluck *lo*.

                     (we)      (big brother)

415  Y: =I'll help you, I'll help you, I'll help you. I'll help you, I'll help you. I can do
416      it pretty fast.

417  H: *Jiu shuo xian zai xin xian de ni men yao (xian qu chi) le*.
         (Since it is still fresh now, all of you should (eat some first.))

418  X: *Shi lo, ge ge*, pa pa *jiu shi jiang xin xian ma*.
         (Yeah, big brother, Dad said it is fresh.)

419  H: *Xin xian hai jiang*.
         (It is fresh.)

420  Y: That's right.

421  W: Iban. Iban friend.

422  Y: What time is J going to work?

423  H: Five.

424  Y: Five.

425  X: 4, 4:45.

426  H: 4, 4:45 *la*.

427  X: Maybe.

428  W: Iban friend *a*.

429  Y: 4:45.

430  X: Right, right, right.

431  H: I think can cut coconut and bring some to Uncle Ah G *lo*, let Uncle Ah G
432      drink *lo*.

433  X: That one you can give them.

434  H: Yea, it's really a lot.

435  X: That one, you can give.

436  H: Cannot keep *ho* these coconut *ah*. Five days later if you do not eat *ah*,
437      burst one by one.

438  Y: That's right.

439  X: We we can open a small coconut stall.

440  Y: Okay, Mommy, uh, which uh, what's that, which uh midin should I–

441  W: Oh J *ki na mo uh cho gerng a*?
         (Is J working tonight?)

442  X: Oh.

443  H: *Deng yi xia ha, ci ge fang xia qu xian*. No, I say, if, oh oh *ni*
444      *you dai dai* ointment *hui lai gei* J *ho*.

(Wait a moment, let me put this down first. No, I say, if, oh oh you
brought the ointment back for J.)

445　Y: Yeap.

446　H: I think it's, actually it's not that bad, you know or not. He went to work

447　　one day, come back worse, you know. I think=

448　Y: Told you.

449　H: =because the air is very dirty there, I think.

450　Y: I tell you, it's definitely from the mountain.

451　H: No *la*, because, because, why, because mountain *a*, he wear knee pad

452　　all that, why how come the knee there area also have *le*?

453　W: *Ee uh terng ah*, Y, *ho*?

　　　(There are insects, right, Y?)

454　Y: *Ha?*

455　H: I think it's from his bed.

456　W: Jungle have uh, different type of insect.

457　H: Because he wear two o–, two, double layer. And then the weather is so

458　　cold, how can from the mountain.

459　Y: Mmm…

460　X: Seems like a bed bug. It seems like a really, because…

461　H: Because the first few days, he didn't feel anything at all. Only in the

462　　airport start with a sm–small dot only, you know or not.

463　W: *Jia li terng oh, suo jung* insect, *hoh*! Insect, insect bite.

　　　(This is an insect, a type of insect, right!)

464　H: To me, I think it's a bed bug *a*. *Na yi ge chuang a*.

　　　　　　　　　　　　(That bed.)

465　W: *Ja ni cin tuk li*.

　　　(Really poisonous.)

466　Y: Okay, it doesn't matter, Mommy. Whatever it is, it has already occurred.

467　　So, let's uh, cut the midin! Which one, Mommy? Shall I just open up this

468　　one?

469　W: *A lei* eh, *chan chan ni a*.

　　　(You can, they're all mixed.)

470　H: *Wo kan yi xia, wo kan yi xia zhen yang*.

　　　(Let me see, let me see how.)

471     W: (*Wei mae*) *chin ho ci pei a.*

         ((I bought) very good ones this time.)

472     X: Right.

         ((Mom talks to big bro in the background))

473     W: "*Saya bini pun ambik. Itu macam dua ringgit.*" *Ni kan*, Kuching *yi* kilo

474        *shi kuai.* Ten dollar, twelve dollars.

         ("My wife also harvested some. That much costs RM2." You see, one

         kilogram in Kuching costs RM10.)

475     X: Hm.

476     W: 700 gram, 2 dollar.

477     X: Right.

478     W: *Hen duo jin tian o*, because of rain.

         (A lot today)

479     X: Right. *Wo men te di chu qu chi a*.

           (We like to order this when we eat out.)

480     W: Mm…

481     X: *Te di yao huan qian chi a.*

         (We would pay for this.)

482     Y: You're the best, papa.

483     W: *Ha?*

484     Y: You're the best!

485     W: *A, na ge, no, wo jiu shi bu gan mai duo yin wei hui, a=*

         (that)      (I didn't dare to buy too much because it will=)

486     H: *Tai pian yi liao lo zhen de. Jie ching peng nye ae kiang lo* hm.

         (It is really too cheap. How can it be this cheap.)

487     W: =*huai huai diao ma. Ru guo ta you xia lai*, if, *ha?*

         (=go bad. If he comes down)

488     H: *Ae hiu ching peng nye jie no mae*–

         (If it is so cheap, why did you buy–)

489     W: *Ne, wei chi jia hwang ngiang guk uh o. Ee ee, wo wo wen, ta hai wen*

490        *wo yi jin dao jia le mei you. Ta fei chang guan xin wo*. Heh.

         (My Iban employee still has some more. He he, I–I ask, he even asked

         me if I have already reached home. He is really concerned about me.)

491     H: Eh *you de ren you jiang ci ge bu ke yi chi xian zai, zhen yang jiang hua*

492   *ho. Ta jiang you du ah.*

   (Some people said nowadays, this cannot be eaten, don't know what
   they mean. They said it is poisonous.)

493 X: *Ai si* erh *jiang dao lai shen me dou bu neng chi.*

     (at the end of the day, we can't eat anything.)

494 H: *Luan jiang la, wo cai bu xiang xin.*

   (Simply say, I don't believe.)

495 X: *Jiu shi lo, wo ye shi bu xiang xin.*

   (Yeah, I also don't believe.)

496 Y: It's a jungle produce.

497 H: Ya *lah, na li bu ke yi chi hoh.*

     (why can't we eat it.)

498 Y: Mm.

  ((Dad calls his Iban friend to ask him about the availability of midin in his
  garden, while Mom and big bro continue their conversation))

499 W: Ei, you *bila turn* Kuching *lagik ah*? Oh, *minggu ini tidak lah*. Oh, oh, *lu*
500   *lelah turun ho. Rilek dolok ah*? *Kawan ada turun? Tidak.* Oh… *rilek*
501   *Dolok ho. Betul betul la.* Eh *lu punya kebun midian pun ada ah*? *Ne,*
502   *tadi saya cakap itu midin ah. Auk, itu kebun ah.* Oh, *ada banyak ah*?
503   Oh *musim hujan banyak ho. Ah, lu mesti kasi potong dolok, potong dia*
504   *naik, potong dia keluar ho.* Oh… *i–itu ya. I–Itu barang bagus ah, lu pikir*
505   *ah? Memang mahal. Mahal dari babi ho. Dari daging ho. Betul betul.*
506   *Itu, I–I–lu punya itu tidak tidak ada ubat* eh. *Tidak ubat ho. Tidak ho. Itu*
507   *dia punya apa, dia liar punya ho. Ya la, ya ya. Hari ini saya tengok itu*
508   Lachau *pun banyak ah. Ya, satu ikat dua ringgit. Memang ho. Lu bini*
509   *biasa jual berapa satu ikat? Oh, sama dua ringgit ah*. Okay. Okay *lah*
510   Min, thank you *ah*, Min! Okay, thank you. Bye-bye, bye-bye, bye-bye,
511   bye-bye.

  (When will you be coming down to Kuching again? Oh, not this week.
  Oh, oh, it's very tiring to drive down. Rest first? Is your friend coming
  down? No. Oh… rest first. That's right. Eh do you also plant midin in
  your farm? The midin which I was talking about just now. Yes, your
  farm. Oh, are there a lot? Oh a lot during the rainy season. Ah, you
  have to cut them first, so that they can grow. Oh… that yes. Is it good,

what do you think? It's expensive. More expensive than pork. It's meat.

That's right. That, yours do not have pesticides eh. No pesticides.

None, right? They are from the jungle, right? Yes, yes yes. I saw a lot in

Lachau today. Yes, one bundle is RM2. That's right. How much does

your wife usually sell one bundle for? Oh, also RM2.)

512　((hangs up and turns to me)) *Wo gang chai* calendar *gei ta yi ben*, *ta*

513　*you wen wo na. Hen hao ci ge ren.*

　　(Just now, I gave him one calendar, he requested for one. He is a very

　　 nice person.)

514　X: Hm.

515　W: *Hai wen wo dao jia le mei you. Hai shuo, "Meri Krismas".* He's a

516　　Christian.

　　(Still asked me if I've already arrived home. And also wished me,

　　"Merry Christmas".)

517　X: *Zhe yang zao*?

　　(So early?)

518　W: He's a Christian.

519　X: Right.

520　H: ((Referring to her red spinach)) *Wo de lao liao, bu neng bu cai liao.*

521　　*Quan bu lao liao, bu neng chi liao. Wei wei, wei cai guk mui siu lo lei*

522　　*ah.*

　　(Mine's already old, so I have to pluck them. All of them are already too

　　old, can't be eaten anymore. I–I, I have not stored my vegetables yet.)

523　W: *Wei din na puong siu lo* oh, *mo lei ye ah*.

　　(Later I'll help you to store them, don't worry.)

524　Y: (　　) I can do it. ( )

525　H: *Mei you kong zhu, bu shen me.*

　　(Too busy to cook.)

526　Y: *Wo bang mang ni zhu mo*. Mommy *ah*.

　　(I help you to cook.)

527　H: *Shi jian jiu shi guo de zhe yang kuai a*...

　　(Time passes by really quickly…)

528　Y: Mommy *ah*. Er what are, what what is our programme for tomorrow,

529　　Mommy.

530   H: *Mei you* programme *ah*.
          (No)

531   Y: *Mei you* programme *a*? *Mei you* programme *a*, Mommy. Tomorrow can
532      you just let me devote one whole day to my thesis *ah*?
          (No programme? No programme, Mommy.)

533   H: Mm.

534   Y: I have, I have only ten more days left. If I don't finish my thesis in this 10
535      days…

536   H: *Lou shang zuo la*.
          (Do it upstairs.)

537   Y: Yeah.

538   H: *Zai lou shang mei you ren da rao ni la*.
          (There are no distractions upstairs.)

539   Y: Yeah, so=

540   H: *Shi jian dao zi ji xia lai chi wan can a*.
           (When it's time, come down and have your dinner.)

541   Y: =yeah, so you just take care of S for me… just one day only, I (focus)
542       for one day.

543   H: Oh.

544   Y: Finish it for one day, from morning till night=

545   H: Good.

546   Y: =then okay, then, I can celebrate.

547   H: Go ahead, go ahead.

548   Y: ((sings)) Celebrate, Jesus, celebrate!

549   H: Oranges, papa *sha–shang ci mai de, yi li dou mei you chi dao a. Mei ge*
550       *ren* kerh kerh kerh *zai na bian, yi li dou mei you chi dao. Ni men xia*
551       *wu*…
          (The oranges that papa bought previously, we haven't eaten any of it.
           Everyone's coughing, so we didn't eat any. This afternoon, all of you…)

552   Y: *Wei shen me* oranges *bu ke yi chi*?
          (Why cannot eat oranges?)

553   H: *Aiyo, hen suan le*. Papa *mai suan de yi zhong. Mei ge ren ke sou*.
             (too sour. Papa bought the sour type. Everyone's coughing.)

554   Y: *Wo ke sou de shi hou wo he* orange juice *a*.

(When I am coughing, I drink orange juice.)

555     H: *Hai you* o, *hai you hai you tang gen na ge* o, *yao ma*?

          (There is, there is there is still soup and others, do you want it?)

556     Y: *Hai you shen me ah*?

          (What is left?)

557     H: *Guan diao la feng shan. Zuo shen me yao feng shan o. Hen tao yan*

558       *feng shan zai* table *ni zhi dao ma. Mei you, hai you* s–, *yi dian* soup.

          (Switch off the fan. Why do we need to turn on the fan? I really don't

           like the fan blowing (when we're eating) at the table. No, there is some

           more soup.)

559     Y: *He la, ni qu chi xian. Fang er wo*, what's that, *ni ye shi yao deng wo. Wo*

560       *na ge*, pluck *ci ge a*.

          (Drink it, you go and eat first. After all, you will also need to wait for me. I

           am plucking this.)

       ((Mom goes to the dining table to take her lunch))

561     H: *Aiya, xia dao*=

             (scared=)

562     X: Hm? *Zuo me o*?

             (Why?)

563     H: =*wo zhen de*.

          (=me, really.)

564     X: *Na li lai zhe yang*.

          (Where did this come from?)

565     H: *Wo yi wei fan bu gou, hai you sheng a*?

          (I thought there is not enough rice, but there are still leftovers?)

566     Y: *Wa, liang ba bu gou*, what's that, *bu duo oh,* Mommy.

           (2 bundles are not enough)    (not much)

567     H: Mm.

568     X: Mm.

569     H: *Ni bu yao xi shui xian*, pluck *le fang na bian xian*, J, Y.

          (Don't wash it first, leave it there first after you've plucked it)

570     Y: *Hao*. Mommy *ah, zai na ge* restaurant *ta men ye shi zhe yang zhi hao*

571       *xiang wo zhe yang zhi* pluck *meh*?

          (Okay. Mommy, do they also pluck it like me at the restaurant?)

572    H: *Ying gai ba*.

       (Should be.)

573    Y: *Hai shi ta men yong dao rang hou qu qie ta*?

       (Or do they use a knife to cut it?)

574    H: *Ye bu yi ding o. Ni hai xiang de dao ho, yi ding shi dao qie xia qu ho*.

       (Maybe. You can think of that, they must be using a knife to cut it.)

575    Y: Mm.

576    H: *Na li you zhe yang xian kong qu man man* pluck.

       (Don't think they have time to pluck it slowly.)

577    Y: *Shi lo*.

       (Indeed.)

578    H: *Ne, you* soup. *Yu*.

       (There's soup. Fish.)

579    X: *Wo mei ci na ge, zhu* like, bean *a*, with egg, fry, *wo ye shi yong dao lai*

580      *qie de o. Na li you yi ge yi ge*.

       (Every time I, cook like, bean, with egg, fry, I also use a knife to cut it. I

        don't pluck it one by one.)

581    H: Bean *shi na lai qie*.

       (The beans should be cut.)

582    X: Oh, *shi ha*?

         (is it?)

583    H: *Ren jia, mei you zhen yang le*?

       (People, if not, how?)

584    X: No no, *na ge, tou tou* and *wei wei. Tou tou* and *wei w–*.

         (that, the top and bottom part. Top and bottom.)

585    H: *Na ge ye na lai qie*.

       (That, you also need to cut.)

586    X: No, because *ke yi* like, *yi qi ma*. Faster. *Quan bu* line up, *jia yi qi* and

587      then like, *qie*.

       (No, because I could do it together. Faster. Line all of them up, put them

       together, and then, cut.)

588    Y: Mommy *a*.

589    H: Mm?

590    Y: *Dongsaeng*.

(Younger sister.)

591    X: Yeah?

592    Y: Do you know that day *ah,* when I ran my marathon, right.

593    X: Yeap. *Oppa*, you come here and pluck, *oppa*.

            (Older brother)                    (older brother.)

594    Y: Alright.

595    H: *Na lai*.

        (Bring it here.)

596    X: Come here and pluck.

597    Y: That day when I ran my marathon, you know *a*, if you follow the

598        marathon, right, you have something what you call pacers.

599    X: Yes.

600    Y: So, these pacers *a*, you know what is pacer, Mommy?

601    H: Mm?

602    Y: Pacer *a*, that means *a*, you follow them. Okay? You follow their runs.

603    H: Mm-hm.

604    Y: You follow their tempo. So they will say that they will run, finish the run

605        in 5 hours, 4 hours. So I was following this uncle that was supposed to

606        finish, in 5.5 hours.

607    H: Mm.

608    Y: Do you know what did he tell me, Mommy?

609    H: Mm.

610    Y: He told me, that this 5.5 hours, is slow for him. So I said, "Uncle! What

611        is your usual time?" And I'm huffing and puffing, and he was, "Oh, my

612        usual time is 5 hours." Do you know how old is he, Mommy?

613    H: Sixty-se–, 76.

614    Y: Close, but he is only, he was only 53 years old.

615    H: 53?

616    Y: 53. Okay? 53, and he is running 5.5 hours=

617    H: Tsk tsk tsk.

618    Y:  =effortlessly. And I was panting.

619    X: *Oppa…*

        (Older brother…)

620    Y: Okay?

621    X: Because they train, you didn't train.

622    Y: No no no no no no.

623    X: That's also a huge factor.

624    Y: A lot of people say by the time you hit 50, bones are going to start

625        creaking, you are going to get osteoporosis=

626    H: You can eat some more.

627    X: Okay.

628    Y: =you are going to get osteoarthritis=

629    H: Some more soya sauce.

630    X: Oh.

631    Y: =you are going to get gout, you can't do this, you can't do that.

632    H: *Ci ge gei ni*, stomach part. ((talks to X))
          (Give you this)

633    Y: Okay? So=

634    X: Oh, no it's okay, okay thanks.

635    Y: =at kilometre 21=

636    H: Mm.

637    Y: =he left me. Because I was too slow.

638    H: Mm.

639    Y: So the uncle was=

640    H: Mm.

641    Y: =in front of me.

642    H: Mm.

643    Y: At kilometre 25, I gave up.

644    H: Mm.

645    Y: So I started walking for 5 kilometres.

646    H: ((gestures to big bro)) Sit down, sit down, sit down.

647    Y: No no no no no no no no.

648    H: Sit down, sit down.

649    Y: It's very hard for me to stand up after I sit. My knees, what's that, my

650        knees hurt.

651    H: *Aiyo*.

652    Y: Yeah, so it's better for me to stand up. So, at kilometre 25 I gave up, at

653        kilometre 30, an unknown uncle, came up to me, huffing and puffing.

654      He says, "Young man! Let's go, let's go." I said, "Uncle, my legs are

655      tired. Then he says, "You're a young man. You know *ah*, uncle, is

656      already 73 years old, you know." Eh no no, wait *ah*. Twelve (    ).

657   X: 67, isn't it?

658   Y: Uh, 67. Uncle is already 60–

      ((Dad comes in the dining room))

659   W: Y, *nu* (   )

       (you)

660   Y: Huh? No no no, no.

661   X: Just now Mommy said 76. Mommy got the number overturned.

662   Y: Sixty-s–, "uncle is already 67 years old, you know." I said, "Really,

663     uncle? How many marathons have you done?" He asked me, "Young

664     man, how many marathons=

665   W: *Waiya mo nau jiu kan do kuong wo hii ma ni hit to*. Hm.

      (No wonder it is so heaty because the door is closed.)

666   Y: =have you done?" I say, "2." And then I say, then he was laughing.

667   H: *Kuo kui*.

     (Go and open it.)

668   W: Hm-mm.

669   Y: Then he says, "Young man like you, you should be running a 100

670     kilometres, ultramarathons. And I say, "Uncle, I'm trying to finish this

671     42. How many marathons have you done, uncle?" He says he's done

672     12. He started running when he was 55 years old. And, he was rushing

673     for the 5.5 hours. So he was chasing the other uncle. Okay, fine. That,

674     really gave me some (fire power).

675   H: *Wei nerng ki nang dei duai suo tao ba cheong siak la*.

     (Today we'll eat the biggest pomfret.)

676   Y: So, I started running. Obviously not as fast as him. Up until I think,

677     kilometre 10, was when I met another uncle, and this guy was like a

678     woman's man. Every, because I told you, at kilometre 10, eh no, at

679     kilometre=

680   H: *Dei duai suo tao ba cheong ki nang to chu wang chu*.

     (Today, we'll cook the biggest pomfret like this.)

681   W: *Ha?*

682    H: *Dei duai suo tao ba cheong ki nang chu wang chu uh. (Loong chung*

683      *siak uh.)*

       (Today, we'll cook the biggest pomfret like this. (We'll finish

       everything.))

684    Y: =5 onwards, we met up with the 10 kilometres. Because they were

685      supposed to make the U-turn, isn't it?

686    X: Yeah.

687    Y: So all the chicks were actually saying=

688    H: *Duai suo tao ba cheong.*

      (The big pomfret.)

689    Y: ="Uncle Sunny, uncle Sunny!" And then I was like, "Wow, you are really

690      famous, uncle."

691    W: *To wang ha to li liu hie ni ah*?

      (Have you taken out the prawns just now?)

692    H: *Mui ah.*

      (Not yet.)

693    X: The 67 one.

694    W: Oh, *na, na tiok hie die a*.

      (still inside.)

695    Y: Nope.

696    X: The 53.

697    Y: This, no, no, this is the other pacer.

698    H: (   ) *nai kui seng, ting suo arh lah*.

      ((   ) don't open it yet, wait a while longer.)

699    Y: This was the other pacer. This, this, uh no, this is the third uncle that I

700      saw. Okay, this this, what's that, this third ol–ol– uh veteran that I saw,

701      he was pacing for the 6 hours.

702    X: Oh, so you mean these are all pacers that you're talking…

703    Y: These are all pacers.

704    X: Right, right.

705    Y: So you got 4, 4.5, 5, 5.5, and 6. So I lost the 5.5.

706    X: And all the pacers are uncles.

707    Y: No no no no=

708    X: Oh okay.

709   Y: =not necessarily.

710   X: Right, right.

711   Y: Yea, there are some young ones too. There were some young ones as
712       well.

713   X: Mm.

714   Y: But, so this old uncle, okay Mommy. He became, what's that, no he was
715       very famous among the ladies, you know. A lot of ladies knew him.

716   H: Mm.

717   Y: And apparently, um, he was going to finish the marathon in 6 hours.

718   H: Mm.

719   Y: So I say, "Okay, let's give it a, let's what's that, let's let's give it a shot,
720       let's try to finish in 6 hours. So I was following him. And of course,
721       unfortunately he did not finish in 6 hours, he finished in 6 hours and 3
722       minutes. One minute ahead of me because he, I was also left behind.
723       This uncle, was running bare feet for 42 kilometres. So I went back
724       home, and I went back to the, to the uh, what's that, the webpage to
725       see, because I never had a chance to talk to him much, to see how old
726       was this uncle.

727   X: The third one.

728   Y: The third one.

729   X: Right.

730   Y: The one that finished in 6 hours and 3 minutes.

731   X: Right.

732   Y: Do you know how old was this uncle, Mommy?

733   H: Mm.

734   Y: Guess, guess. He is around C's size.

735   X: 79.

736   Y: Close.

737   H: *Mei you lah. Bu ke neng zhe yang lao lah.*
         (No. Impossible for him to be that old.)

738   Y: Close. Close.

739   X: Okay, fine. 81.

740   Y: 7–73.

741   X: Oh, 73. I–I wanted to say 75!

742   Y: 73 years old, and he, and he finished one minute ahead of me, Mommy.

743   H: Mm.

744   Y: Do you know, that this guy, has been awarded a lifetime athlete, uh that

745      one, a lifetime athlete award? Because, not because he has won a 1000

746      medals, or a 1000 marathons, no. About 14 years ago, at the age of…

747      60. At the age of 60, okay. He ran a marathon in less than 5 hours.

748   X: How many kilometres is that?

749   Y: A full marathon is always 42.

750   X: Right, right, right.

751   Y: Yeap.

752   X: No, but you have to admit that training plays a crucial role though.

753   Y: Absolutely. Of course=

754   X: Yea.

755   Y: =you have to consistently train.

756   X: Exactly.

757   Y: I, what's that, no, but, but what really amazes is this. Because I work in

758      a hospital. Trust me, *dongsaeng*. Yesterday I had a 52 year old guy who
                            (younger sister.)

759      came in with a third heart attack.

760   X: Of course… they are really healthy.

761   Y: I have known, 34 years old who was going for surgery to cut off=

762   X: Yeap.

763   Y: =his right or his left leg because of diabetes.

764   X: Wait, don't don't have to say too far. Don't have to talk about like, all

765      these people. Your own cousin, tonight we're going to go to their place.

766      How old is she?

767   Y: Yeah, look at my own cousin!

768   X: So yeah, exactly. Don't have to talk about all these people.

769   H: No!

770   Y: Do you think she can run a=

771   H: Less than 20 years.

772   Y: =marathon? Mommy, at 73 years old, oh, by the way, you know this

773      uncle that I met at kilometre 30, the one that say, "Young man, let's go!"

774      You know what did he tell me? He says, "Actually, I am very

775      disappointed in myself. I say, "Why?" He said, "I have a friend, 66 years

776      old, and he's running an ultramarathon.=

777 X: Oh my.

778 Y: =I am disappointed that I never got to run it." So I say, "Why, why are

779      you disappointed?" He says, "My knees hurt, but, every time whenever

780      I run, I forget about that pain and I keep on running. I cannot stop

781      (anymore)."

782 J: Where's my, oh.

783 Y: You know what I mean, Mommy?

784 H: J, J. *Lai, wo wo gei ni yi dian*.

           (Come, I–I give you some.)

785 Y: How many 67's do you see running.

786 H: ((Referring to the fish)) Stomach part. Mm. Eh, *you* bone *ah*.

                                    (there's)

787 Y: You know.

788 H: Mm.

789 Y: I mean, this is amazing.

790 H: Mm-mm.

791 Y: And it's not only the men. I've never got to talk to the women, because

792      the women were in a different division, you know.

793 H: Mm.

794 Y: But, the women, whoa! They were like, they were like a bullet train.

795      Mommy, at 67 years old, I still want to be running. At 73, I do not want

796      to be on the wheelchair, Mommy.

797 H: You are more and more skinny now *a*, Y.

798 Y: Skinny? (  )

799 X: When you said that Mommy, when you said that Mommy did a sharp

800      head turn. When you said you still want to run at 67.

801 Y: No, what I mean is that I want to be healthy, I want to be active. You

802      know. I do not want to, I do not want to be at 73 and having a belly,

803      okay?

804 X: A lot of ways, Oppa, a lot of ways. You can go hiking…=

805 Y: Yea yea yea yea yea yea yea yea yea.

806 X: =you know. But but…

807    H: Next year I join your 10 kilometre, eh?

808    Y: Hallelujah!

809    X: Nice!

810    Y: Eh, UA, what's that, UA also say she wanted to, because of me,

811        because she want, because of me she also wanted to run 10 kilometres,

812        you know?

813    H: Can?

814    Y: Yes! It is achievable, Mommy.

815    H: For me, I think no problem eh.

816    Y: No problem.

817    X: Have to train *hoh*.

818    Y: No problem.

819    X: Not no problem eh *oh.*

820    Y: No problem.

821    H: 10 kilometres *oh*.

822    X: Have to train *oh*. You don't=

823    Y: No, Mommy, I tell you.

824    X: =think 10 kilometres is very short.

825    Y: Okay, Mommy, actually, 10 kilometres, 21 kilometres, is mainly for

826        speed. So you must train for speed. 42 kilometres, is a totally different

827        ball game altogether.

828    H: Mm.

829    X: Yeap.

830    Y: You have to train for endurance.

831    X: Yeap.

832    H. Mm.

833    Y: Because, a very famous marathoner once said, "To run a full marathon,

834        it is 20% strength, 80% brain".

835    X: Yeap, that's true.

836    H: Okay, next year you buy ticket for me *ah*.

837    Y: Hallelujah. Serious. Penang marathon. I'm going to register you.

| 838 | | Hallelujah. Okay, good. |
|---|---|---|
| 839 | H: | 10 kilometre, can *la*. |
| 840 | Y: | 10 kilometre. |
| 841 | H: | How how far is 10 kilometre *ah*? |
| 842 | Y: | 10 kilometres. |
| 843 | H: | Here to, here to Chin Seng church? |
| 844 | Y: | Mmm… I don't know. I'm not re–, what's that, I'm not really sure. |
| 845 | H: | 10 kilometre not that, that far eh. |
| 846 | Y: | Okay, tonight, okay, tonight uh… |
| 847 | H: | Oh oh, I know I know I know how how far is it. Here to General Hospital |
| 848 | | is 5.5, double only. |
| 849 | Y: | *Ah.* |
| 850 | X: | Double only= |
| 851 | Y: | Yeah. |
| 852 | X: | =I lov– I love that= |
| 853 | H: | Yeah. |
| 854 | X: | =I love that. |
| 855 | Y: | That's right, that's right. |
| 856 | X: | I love that. |
| 857 | H: | To and fro, to and fro. |
| 858 | Y: | So you run to the General Hospital, and you run back home. |
| 859 | H: | Yeah. To and fro, to and fro. |
| 860 | Y: | Right. You know, that, what what's that, that was exactly one thing that I |
| 861 | | told C. |
| 862 | H: | Not too far. |
| 863 | Y: | I say that if next time I come back here and work– |
| 864 | H: | *Neh*, using Laksamana way. |
| 865 | Y: | That's right. |
| 866 | H: | I checked already. |
| 867 | Y: | Well done. |
| 868 | H: | 5.5. |
| 869 | Y: | Okay. |
| 870 | X: | Have to train *oh*, Mom. Don't talk big now *oh*. Don't talk big now and |
| 871 | | then later I receive a phone call from overseas and then somebody in |

872     the hospital.

873    Y: Mommy, do you know, Captain F was supposed to run with us.

874    H: Then?

875    Y: Unfortunately, he hurt his knee, so he never ran.

876    H: Is it?

877    Y: But he was gracious enough to bring us all the way up to Penang, you

878     know.

879    H: How he hurt his knee?

880    Y: Ah… he was training.

881    H: Training, and then hurt his knee.

882    Y: Hurt his knee.

883    H: Is it?

884    Y: Mm.

885    H: How much have to paid for that one.

886    Y: Half-marathon.

887    H: *Ah.*

888    Y: Eh no no, uh what's that t–t–

889    H: No, 10 kilometre.

890    Y: 10 kilometres I feel it's quite expensive.

891    H: Is it?

892    Y: Mm… how much *ah*? I forgot. That one you have to ask L. Ask L.

893    X: Okay, ask L.

894    Y: Yeah.

895    X: L knows.

896    Y: Mommy, but before, but but bef–

897    X: You can go with L if you want.

898    Y: Mommy, but before you go for the Penang marathon, I advise you, to go

899     for the Kuching one as well. Next year I'm coming back to Kuching I'm

900     going to run the marathon here. The marathon–

901    X: If you want, if you want I just need to tell L. L will take you.

902    Y: No no no no no no. I will sponsor my mother.

903    X: No no, I mean, as in like, L can help, like to=

904    H: No, I can go to KL *oh*.

905    X: =register, or whatever.

906     Y: Can…

907     H: From KL I can move down *oh*.

908     Y: Can…

909     X: L goes training every week, *ho*.

910     Y: Where?

911     X: Running on the road.

912     Y: Really *a*?

913     X: They join a running club, yea yea yea.

914     Y: Oh, there is actually a running club?

915     X: There is a running club.

916     H: I think in my, my life should go for one time eh.

917     Y: Oh…

918     X: And you can see runners…

919     Y: Oh! Mommy, you have to.

920     H: Yea *lo*.

921     Y: You have to. I'm telling you, it's totally different. You know, when, what's

922        that, when I ran the Penang, Penang bridge, I'm telling you, you get the

923        chance to pray for Penang, you get a chance to pray for Malaysia. You

924        never get a chance. How many people, will have a chance to walk on

925        the Penang bridge.

926     H: Mm. True. 10 kilometre you mean also, also 10 kilometre 5.5, 5

927        kilometre of the Penang bridge *ha?*

928     Y: Yes.

929     H: And then turn back again.

930     Y: Then you turn, uh turn back, yeap.

931     H: Not, not hot eh?

932     Y: Oh, very hot.

933     H: Very hot *ah*?

934     Y: Mm.

935     X: Very hot *oh.*

936     Y: They start at 7 o'clock.

937     H: *Aiyo*, so late *ah*?

938     Y: Mm. Very late.

939     X: L said, L said she was baked *ho*.

940    Y: Yeap, very hot.

941    X: You know, baked, right?

942    Y: Because too many people.

943    H: *Aiyo*, too hot, too too hot like that, very terrible *le ho*.

944    Y: Or=

945    H: *Nah*.

946    Y: =or, Mommy, you don't go for the Penang one.

947    H: Mm.

948    Y: You go for the um, you go for the KL marathon.

949    H: *Aiya*=

950    Y: Mm.

951    H: =I want Penang bridge *le*, Y.

952    Y: Oh, you want Penang bridge? Then just go one time! *Aiyah*, Mommy.

953    H: Time can start early *leh*, why start 7.

954    Y: Mommy, I tell you, if you start training now, by next year, if you are
955       consistent in your training, by next year, you can run 21. Trust me on
956       this.

957    H: No *lah, bu yao lah*, I don't want to stress myself.
                 (I don't want)

958    X: Don't want, don't want.

959    Y: No… 21, you are supposed to finish in 3.5 hours. You can do it,
960       Mommy.

961    H: Mmph! *Lao ren jia bu ke yi zhe yang*.
                 (The elderly cannot (strain themselves) like this.)

962    Y: Mommy, you're–

963    X: You think you think Mommy has time to train or not? I think it's
964       impossible.

965    Y: No no no no. I tell you, I tell you…

966    H: Eh *ming nian wo hui bi jiao hao yi dian*.
              (next year will be a little better for me.)

967    Y: Mommy, mommy.

968    X: *Zuo me leh*?
          (Why?)

969    H: *Ming nian wo bu yong zuo zhe yang duo gong* eh. *Wo zuo*=

264

(Next year, I won't have as many responsibilities. I'll be=)

970　　X: *Shen me yi si*?

　　　　(What do you mean?)

971　　H: =*cai zhen er yi* eh…

　　　　(=only the treasurer…)

972　　X: *Cai zhen ha*?

　　　　 (Treasurer?)

973　　Y: Mommy *ah*, Mommy.

974　　H: *Ah*.

975　　Y: Uh, can I tell you something?

976　　H: Mm.

977　　Y: Preparing for a marathon doesn't mean that you have to run like L.

978　　H: Mm.

979　　Y: I have totally changed my technique of training. It has a lot to do with

980　　　 your nutrition, it has a lot to do with your core training, it has to do a lot

981　　　 of your long run short runs.

982　　H: Mm.

983　　Y: It's, what's that, it's not just about running=

984　　H: Mm.

985　　Y: =you know.

986　　H: Mm.

987　　Y: Okay, picture this. You are supposed to finish your 10 kilometres in 1.5

988　　　 hours before you get a medal.

989　　H: Mm.

990　　Y: 1.5 hours. 21 kilometres, which is double the time, uh no, dou–double

991　　　 the distance, you're supposed to finish it within 3.5 hours.

992　　H: Extra half hour only *oh*. Extra half hour only *oh*.

993　　Y: Yeah, but that's an extra 1 kilometre, but=

994　　H: Yea.

995　　Y: =you can for sure finish it.

996　　H: Cannot *lah, haiyo*.

997　　Y: Why?

998　　H: 3.5 hour *zou bu wan ah, ae siang no. Bu ke yi ah*, from the start 10

999　　　 kilometre first *oh*.

(Can't finish in 3.5 hours, goodness me. Cannot, I need to start with
10 kilometres first.)

1000    Y: Okay. But I tell you, Mommy, once you start running–

1001    H: *Hen ri, wo wo bu, pa ri er yi, bu shi shen me.*

(Very hot, I–I'm not, only worried about the heat, not anything else.)

1002    X: *Yi ding hui ri de.* Penang *duo me ri ah. Ni wen* L, L *jiang hun* erh*, na ge*

1003      *a*, baked *a*.

(It's definitely going to be hot. Penang is too hot. You can ask L, L said
she felt giddy.)

1004    Y: But I don't agree with that. No, but don't worry, I think next year will be

1005      better because a lot of people has complained.

1006    H: No, actually they should start 6, why start at 7?

1007    Y: Because, there were just too many people. Too many. If they start too

1008      close together, then there will be a lot of people.

1009    H: You start at 2, is it?

1010    Y: I started at 1:30.

1011    H: And then the other group?

1012    Y: The other, the other groups, uh what's that, okay. Last year, the full

1013      marathon started together. Male, females, half-male, half-females, all

1014      started together. So this year, they divided into 3 groups. They divided

1015      into males, females, um… and uh, veterans. Veterans they still put the

1016      male and female together but there are not m–, there were not many

1017      vet–=

1018    H: What is veterans?

1019    Y: =veterans. Veterans are 45 years old and above.

1020    H: Mmm…

1021    Y: Yeap.

1022    H: Mmm…

1023    Y: That is–

1024    X: Oh, so Mommy is going in that group?

1025    Y: Yeap. But it's a very encouraging group, I'm telling you. That's why=

1026    X: Mm.

1027    Y: =that's why I purposely (try to)–

1028    H: You know last time, our Chin Seng church, 45 and above, I get the

1029    champion?

1030   X: For what?

1031   H: Running?

1032   X: Running. Where did you run?

1033   H: From our church=

1034   X: I think you told me before, yea yea.

1035   H: =from our church, and then come out from, to Jalan Song, and then go

1036     up, go up to BDC, and then go back to our church again.

1037   Y: How many kilometres was that, Mommy?

1038   X: Right, right, right.

1039   H: Hm?

1040   Y: How ma–

1041   H: You think how many kilometres=

1042   X: How many?

1043   H: =I think that at least is…

1044   X: 5.

1045   Y: 8

1046   H: No *lah,* more than that *ah*.

1047   Y: 8.

1048   H: Yeah, more than that.

1049   Y: 8 *ah*.

1050   H: I, I think around 7 or 8 *oh,* like that.

1051   Y: Right right.

1052   X: Then not a problem.

1053   H: 7 *lah*, don't say 8 *lah*.

1054   Y: Eh–

1055   X: Then 10 is not a problem.

1056   Y: Then, what's that, then it should not be a problem for you, Mommy.

1057   H: (     ) *gen ni men jiang mei you* problem *a*.
          (told all of you there's no problem.)

1058   Y: Well done.

1059   X: But you have to that one *oh.*

1060   Y: Well done.

1061   H: 10 kilometre 1.5 hour *na li you* problem…

1062   Y: Yeah. My record *ah*, but actually=

1063   X: Very confident.

1064   Y: =when I was training my record was 59 minutes. That one, uh…

1065   H: I think I can finish in 1 hour eh.

1066   Y: Hallelujah.

1067   X: Not bad.

1068   Y: Hallelujah. A lot of people who just started out run 5 kilometres in 1

1069     hour. But if you can run 10 kilometres in, I feel–

1070   X: You said you have to run one hour, L still needs 1.5 hours *hoh*.

1071   Y: Mommy *ah*, if you can run, 10 kilometres in 1 hour, chances are you'll

1072     win a medal. I mean, you what's that, you win at least the top 20.

1073   H: *Aiyo*…

1074   X: *Waiya*=

1075   Y: I'm not joking.

1076   H: *Mei you la, mei you. Bu ke neng, bu ke neng.*

       (No, no. Impossible, impossible.)

1077   X: =not bad *a*, Mommy. We're all proud of you.

1078   H: *Bu ke neng*=

       (Impossible=)

1079   Y: Yeah.

1080   H: =*bu ke neng*.

       (=impossible.)

1081   Y: I'm not joking=

1082   X: Putting the pressure on you already.

1083   Y: =I'm not joking. Yes. Seriously.

1084   H: *Bu ke neng, bu ke neng*.

       (Impossible, impossible.)

1085   Y: 10 kilometres in an hour *ah* is really fast.

1086   H: *Bu ke neng lah, zhe yang*.

       (In that case, it is impossible.)

1087   X: Even L *su ni ah*…

          (can't beat you)

1088   H: *Bu neng, mei you, mei you, mei you ke neng*.

(Cannot, no, no, impossible.)

1089   X: But L said on the way, on her way back, right, she also started walking.

1090       Walked all the way.

1091   Y: Why?

1092   X: *Mei you*, too many people.

         (No)

1093   Y: Too many people.

1094   X: Yeah, too many people *oh,* the bridge.

1095   H: *Zhe yang ren jia* delay time *zhen me yang ban ban le*.

        (What to do if people delay time like this?)

1096   X: Yea, I don't know what did L told me already.

1097   Y: That's why I say, that they I think they are going to change, because I

1098      think, all what they they have to do, no they don't have to change the

1099      venue, they just have to limit the participants. 62,000 is way too many.

1100   H: Last year *le*?

1101   Y: 45.

1102   H: Hmph!

1103   Y: 62 is just too many! There's humans everywhere!

1104   X: Correct.

1105   Y: You know, at the e–, what's that, do you know in the midpoint of 42

1106      kilometres, there were at least 60, 70 people who could not go on. They

1107      gave up halfway.

1108   X: Of course…

1109   Y: So they were lying on all the s– what's that, on the highway, on the

1110      street.

1101   X: Thanks.

1102   Y: There were bodies everywhere. It looks like a bomb just…

1103   X: No no no, zombie apocalypse.

1104   Y: Huh?

1105   X: Zombie apocalypse.

1106   Y: Yeah. It's quite a scene, you know.

1107   X: Mm that one you didn't photo.

1108   H: You mean, next year=

1109   Y: *Dongsaeng*.

(Younger sister.)

1110    H: =S is going *ah*?

1111    Y: Sorry?

1112    H: C is going to push S *ha*? You *ha*?

1113    Y: Maybe, uh, oh next year, okay next year, S is definitely going for one

1114       run. This run, the, what's that, the Great Eastern Run. Do you

1115       remember?

1116    X: Oh, the Matrade…

1117    Y: The Matrade.

1118    X: Yea yea, we saw families=

1119    Y: Yeah.

1120    X: =but they are really taking their time, like, like…

1121    Y: No, that one is truly a family run.

1122    X: Yeap.

1123    Y: Yeah. So it's like 3 kilometres, you put him in a tr– uh stroller, and then

1124       you just push him…

1125    X: No, no need to put him in a stroller, he can walk already, right?

1126    Y: Yea yea yea.

1127    X: That one also babies also walk together with parents.

1128    Y: But honestly, I was thinking to put him on the 12 kilometres and I push

1129       him.

1130    X: But what's the point? You should, you shouldn't be so ambitious. It's

1131       more for like, it's for him, not for you.

1132    Y: Yea, I know.

1133    X: I know, right? I mean, if you put him in a stroller, then it doesn't really

1134       count, you see.

1135    Y: Yeah.

1136    X: After all he can walk and he has these adorable shoes that he could

1137       like, wear. You know, so you could like.

1138    Y: Or, I could run the 12 kilometres, finish it, come back, and start the 3

1139       kilometres with him. Won't that be awesome, huh?

1140    X: *Oppa, oppa.*

1141    Y: So Mommy, we set that you join the 10 kilometres next year, yeah?

1142    H: *Ni jiang leh*?

(What do you think?)

1143   Y: Well done, well done. *Ah*… I will applaud that.

1144   H: What month?

1145   Y: Uh… next month, no, next year one is already out. It's going to be on

1146       November 22nd.

1147   H: *Zhe yang chi ah*?

       (So late?)

1148   Y: But, that's yes, exactly; that's another thing that we don't agree on.

1149       Because the later you put it, chances are it's going to be raining.

1150   H: *A*.

1151   Y: Yeah. But rain or shine, the marathon goes on.

1152   H: Let me try once. Once in life–lifetime.

1153   Y: Hallelujah. Mommy, but you don't have to try it once, you can try it

1154       again, because uh, there is the Kuching marathon that's coming up.

1155   H: Oh.

1156   Y: We can go for the Kuching one, together.

1157   H: Kuching one first *la*, together with you *ha*, you will be coming back *ah*.

1158   Y: Yeap. Kuchi–

1159   H: How many kilometre?

1160   Y: Um… it's up to you. They have the 42, they have the 21... I'm run–

1161   H: Who's the– who is the organizer?

1162   Y: I'm not sure *o*. That one you have to ask L, Mommy. Because I didn't

1163       come back for this year's one. So I'm planning to run the 42.

1164   H: Kuching ye shi you 42 *a*?

         (also has)

1165   Y: Yeap. They run to Petra Jaya and come back.

1166   H: *Bu yao la. Bu yao la*, Y, ni overstress yourself *ah*, Y.

       (Don't. Don't)

1167   Y: Whaaattt.

1168   H: *Bu ke yi a. Tai chang liao o* 42 *zhen de. Na li ke yi zhe yang* stress *leh*.

       (Cannot. 42 is too long, really. How can you stress yourself like that?)

1169   Y: It's not stress.

1170   X: But I think as long as you train as well, I think it's fine.

1171   H: I think 21 will be quite, just nice ei… *ni de* body *zhen yang qu pao wu liu*

1172    *ge xiao shi oh…*

(I think 21 will be quite, just nice… how can your body endure a run that

lasts for 5-6 hours…)

1173    Y: No, the cut-off point is 7 hours.

1174    H: No *lah*, cannot *lah*. Really too tired, too too that one, too…

1175    X: *Ni hui shu na ge meh? Qi shi wu sui de ren meh?*

(Are you not better than someone who is 75 years old?)

1176    H: *Aiya, ni na li dong. Hui qu zhe bian tong na bian tong. Chei…*

(how do you know. You'll start aching here and there when you go

home.)

1177    Y: *Yi ding hui tong de…*

(I'll definitely ache…)

1178    H: Ya *la. He ku le.*

(Why do you want to suffer like this?)

1179    Y: *Bu yao jin o…* (    )

(It's alright…)

1180    X: *He ku.*

(Why do you want to suffer like this?)

1181    H: *Bu yao zhe yang ba.*

(Don't do this.)

1182    Y: *Jiu jiu yi ci er yi o...*

(Once in a blue moon…)

1183    H: *Hai jiu jiu yi ci,* maybe your tendon *ye* strain and then y–you will have

(Once in a blue moon)                (also)

1184     side effect.

1185    Y: Mommy, 75, 73 years old still runs…

1186    X: *Oppa,* you still want many… huh sorry?

1187    Y: What is that?

1188    X: What did you say?

1189    Y: No, 73, still runs it without any complications.

1190    H: *Ae siang no, wo ci ge ben lai shi gei* Y *chi de, ni kan, fang na bian kan*

1191     *dao ma yi cai zhe dao.*

(Goodness, actually I wanted Y to eat this, you see, after seeing the

ants then I remembered.)

1192   Y: *Shen me lai de.*

       (What is that?)

1193   X: You you still want many Father's Day, *oppa,* so, so…

                                   (older brother)

1194   Y: No, what does that–

1195   H: Y, I think you eat at the same time, please.

1196   Y: Yeah. Okay.

1197   H: *Nah.*

1198   Y: Need a fork. Yeah, thank you. No=

1199   H: *Ci ge mak yi xia,* girl. *Pang bian mak yi xia.*

       (Clean this)       (Clean the side.)

1200   Y: =no, no, what does that have to do with Father's Day?

1201   X: *Mei you la,* don't strain yourself *a,* is what.

       (Nothing)

1202   H: Don't strain yourself *oh,* really too far *ba.*

1203   Y: Mommy *a?*

1204   H: Hm?

1205   Y: You can ask C as my witness. Last year when I ran the Penang

1206     marathon, I was paralysed for a week.

1207   H: *Ha?*

1208   Y: I was limping for a week.

1209   H: *Ni zhe dao jiu hao, hai yao zhe yang pao.*

       (Good that you know, still want to run like this.)

1210   Y: But this year, do you know how heavy is that box that I had to carry

1211     down from my apartment.

1212   H: J *de* box *ha?*

       (J's)

1213   Y: Hmph!

1214   H: *Ni dai ci xiang hui lai ni? Ni zao shang dai ci xiang hui lai?*

       (How many boxes did you bring back? How many boxes did you bring

        back this morning?)

1215   Y: *San xiang.*

       (3 boxes.)

1216   H: *Ci* k–kilo?

(How many kilogramme?)

1217 Y: Uh… *qi shi, liu shi ba ah.*

(70, 68.)

1218 H: *Shi meh?*

(Really?)

1219 Y: Yeap.

1220 H: Where is the boxes now? I didn't see.

1221 Y: Outside, outside.

1222 H: *Hai zai* outside *a?*

(Still)

1223 Y: Yeap. I brought back your dates.

1224 H: *Ni na dao liu shi duo* kilo *chu lai ah?*

(You brought home 60 plus kilogramme?)

1225 Y: Yea, because, because S' S', you know, the big luggage bag.

1226 H: *A!*

1227 Y: That one is all S' stuff inside there, you know.

1228 H: *Aiyo… yi ge* baby *jiu zhe yang duo ah.*

(one)       (already so many things.)

1229 Y: Mmm.

1230 H: *Suo yi ni dao di* entitled *ci* kilo?

(So actually how many kilogrammes were you entitled to?)

1231 Y: 70.

1232 H: *Ae siang no… na dao liu shi* kilo *hui lai ah.*

(Goodness… and you brought home 60 kilogramme.)

1233 Y: Mm-hm. So, Mommy, you're still afraid that I cannot run a 42? Hmph!

1234    Mommy *a.*

1235 H: Yea?

1236 Y: Before I die *ah*=

1237 H: *Ah.*

1238 Y: =I hope to run a ultramarathon, you know.

1239 H: Tsk. *Chei…*

1240 Y: You know what's an ultramarathon, right?

1241 X: 100 kilometres.

1242 Y: Yeah. You know my friend, P, you know how many hours he took to

1243   finish that? 17.

1244 X: My…

1245 Y: It's like, *dongsaeng*=

     (younger sister=)

1246 H: *Ci ge* cover *qi shi bu da hao,* girl.

    (This cover is actually not that good, girl.)

1247 Y: =I'll see you tomorrow.

1248 H: *Ci ge hao xiang bu hui* tight, *shi ma?*

    (Looks like this is not tight, right?)

1249 X: Seriously. Sorry?

1250 H: *Hao xiang hen* tight, *shi ma?*

    (Looks like it's very tight, right?)

1251 X: Okay *ah.*

1252 Y: It's like=

1253 H: *Lai, lai. Na*=

    (Come, come. Take=)

1254 Y: =(it's like as if–)

1255 H: =*wo yao na.*

    (=I want to take that.)

1256 X: *Ni yao shen me a?*

    (What do you want?)

1257 H: *Wo yao na yi ge* yellow sieve.

    (I want that yellow sieve.)

1258 X: Oh.

1259 Y: If I start running now=

1260 H: Oh, *ci ge bu* tight. *Ci ge bu hui* tight.

     (this is not tight. This is not tight.)

1261 Y: =and I see you tomorrow morning.

1262 H: The light blue one *bu hui* tight.

        (is not)

1263 X: That's absu– that's crazy.

1264 H: I have papaya *ho,* ready papaya in the fridge also. Cut *de.*

1265 Y: Mm. Mommy *a,* what do you think?

1266 H: *Bu yao la.*

(Don't)

1267   Y: The day before I die, I run an ultramarathon.

1268   H: *Bu yao la…*

     (Don't)

1269   Y: Mommy, my friend, P, who goes to the same church, DUMC. He ran

1270      Iron Man. Do you know what is Iron Man, Mommy?

1271   H: Don't know.

1272   Y: Iron Man, is when you put on your swimming trunk, you swim out to sea

1273      for 3.8 kilometres. Sea! In the sea, in the ocean, you know. 3.8

1274      kilometres. Come back to the to the land, get on your bicycle, and start

1275      cycling a 160 kilometres.

1276   H: I tell you, a 100 kilometre in Western country can *la.* In this sort of

1277      weather how to.

1278   Y: Of course, Mommy.

1279   H: It's burning.

1280   Y: Mommy *ah,* there's only one place in Malaysia that has a 100

1281      kilometres.

1282   H: *Ah.*

1283   Y: That's in Sabah, but I don't think I'll run that one. Maybe I'll run it in

1284      Boston. *Cheh-wah.*

1285   H: No *lah!* You will burn *lah!* I tell you, heatstroke *ah. Na li ke yi zhe yang.*

                             (How can you do this?)

1286     *Wo men zhe bian bu shi xia yu jiu shi ri dao yao ming.* If last time still

      (Here, if it isn't raining, then it's terribly hot.)

1287     can, nowaday the weather is totally different already.

1288   Y: Yeah.

1289   H: *Shen jing de ri.*

     (Crazy hot.)

1290   Y: Okay, but don't worry. Let me try and run the 42 first, once I get over the

1291      42 then I'll run the ultra.

1292   H: You go to Western country can *la,* how come in Malaysia. *Bu yao* risk

                               (Don't)

1293     your life like that *la.* Tsk tsk. *Zhen de.* Nothing to stress, stress over that

               (Really.)

1294 *a.*

Y: ((chuckles))

1295 X: *Gang cai* L *ye shi gen wo jiang, ma lai ma, ta jiang ma ah zhen de.*

(Just now, L also told me, she said she was unhappy (about the run.))

1296 H: Hm?

1297 X: *Tai duo ren, ta jiang.*

(Too many people, she said.)

1298 H: Tsk tsk tsk. *Ae siang no.*

(Goodness.)

1299 X: *Ta jiang* organiser *ah, yi ge ren dou mei you kan dao. Zhi kan dao xiao*

1300 *hai zi hoh,* volunteering *hoh.*

(She said she did not even see any of the organisers. She only saw

children volunteers.)

1301 H: *Zhe yang na li ke yi. Zhe yang dou shi zhuan dao.*

(How can this be? In this case (the organizer) earned a lot of money.)

1302 X: *Shi loh.* Then–

(Yeah.)

1303 H: *Yi ge ren duo shao a,* Y?

(How much is it per person)

1304 Y: I registered early, so it was only 70 *ah.*

1305 H: Register late how much?

1306 Y: 70 *ringgits.*

1307 H: No, late late late registration.

1308 Y: I'm not sure *ah.* I think…

1309 H: 70. How many people?

1310 X: Correct. Exactly.

1311 H: One for 70, how many–

1312 X: 62,000 *hoh.*

1313 H: 62,000 time together, how much Penang government earn?

1314 X: That's why, I'm ( )

1315 H: No money, just go for organize this sort of marathon enough *oh,* like

1316 that.

1317 Y: Mommy, can I tell you something?

1318 H: *Ah.*

1319   Y: I feel it's not the government's fault. I really feel it's not the Penang

1320       government fault.

1321   H: *Ah.*

1322   Y: Because *ah,* the Penang government, definitely has employed

1323       somebody to do it. That particular somebody, has done a terrible job.

1324   X: Yeah, definitely.

1325   H: That means different, different people *la* from last year *la.* Different

1326       tender *la.* Tender also *la.*

1327   Y: That's right.

1328   H: So this one should be blacklisted.

1329   Y: Absolutely.

1330   H: Complain=

        ((Dad comes back into the kitchen))

1331   W: Y, *nu ko long a tok wah?*

              (are you plucking everything?)

1332   H: =complain to Penang government.

1333   Y: Yeap. Huh? No, just uh, just this two.

1334   H: Blacklist the, this this organiser.

        ((I clarify with Mom about what she said in the background))

1335   W: *Hai yao mah? Wo* (      )

           (Do you still want some more? I)

1336   Y: *Ba ba, ba ba, ba ba.* Do you know I just finished (    ), *ba ba ba ba,* do

           (Dad, Dad, Dad.)                                        (Dad Dad)

1337       you know I just finished running…

1338   W: ((reads big bro's t-shirt)) Oh, 42 point finisher.

1339   Y: Yeah.

1340   W: ((reads big bro's t-shirt)) Penang bridge. Oh…

1341   Y: You know I just finished 42 few days ago, *ba ba.*

                                                    (Dad.)

1342   W: *Wo zhi dao.* 60,000 *ha?*

           (I know.)

1343   Y: 60,000, that's right.

1344   W: Yea, you, *wo kan dao bao zhi o.*

           (I read the newspaper.)

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1345    Y: *Ba ba!* Next year, ne–, what's that, next year Mommy wants to run as
         (Dad!)

1346      well. Are you going to run?

1347    W: *Wo kan ah. Na* next year *cai jiang. Wo zhi dao na tian (jiang) liu wan*

1348      *ren, neh…* in the paper.
       (I'll see. We'll talk about that next year. I know that day they (said) there
        were 60,000 people… in the paper.)

1349    Y: Yeap.

1350    W: 60,000.

1351    Y: Mo–, what's that, Mommy plans to run next year, so you you feel free to

1352      join her too.

1353    W: Okay. *Liu wan liu wan liu wan jiu shi–*
          (60,000 60,000 60,000 that is–)

1354    H: Join *la,* 10 kilometre *ah,* papa.

1355    W: *Jiu shi* Penang–
       (That is)

1356    H: We go and run for 10 kilometre *de la.*

1357    Y: (Yeah.)

1358    W: Penang bridge *ah, pao lai*=
               (run across=)

1359    X: Remember to Skype with me when you are running.

1360    W: =*pao guo lai, ui. Pao guo lai.*
       (=run across. Run across.)

1361    Y: Yeah.

1362    W: *You dao hui qu bu shi.*
       (And run back, right?)

1363    Y: That's right.

1364    W: *Ah.*

1365    H: *Ah, mei you ni qu zhao, pao* 21 *de, wo qu pao* 10 10 *de.*
        (otherwise you could look for someone to run the 21, and I'll run the
        10 10.)

1366    W: *Yi zhi pao lai pao qu, shi bu shi?*
       (Keep running across and back, right?)

1367    X: Remember to Skype with me *oh.*

1368   Y: Huh?

1369   X: When you're running.

1370   W: *Wah na ge qiao ye ye ye shi nai ah ho?*

        (that bridge is very strong.)

1371   Y: *Nai.*

    (Strong.)

1372   H: Can Skype *meh?*

1373   W: *Wah.*

1374   X: *Ke yi.* (    )

    (Can.)

1375   W: *Jia no miang, (siak)…*

    (What is this, (eat)…)

1376   Y: No, cannot. *Dongsaeng,* that day *ah,* the phone connection is very bad.

        (Younger sister)

1377   X: Oh, yeah.

1378   Y: I found it difficult to call out to uh, *da sao* even.

                (sister-in-law)

1379   X: Oh…

1380   H: Then then, *da sao* wait at the finish point or not *le.*

        (sister-in-law)

1381   Y: No… S.

1382   H: Cannot *ha?*

1383   Y: How?

1384   H: Oh…

1385   Y: S, S, S– Mommy *ah,* you know they they blocked the road for

1386      kilometres long, okay.

1387   H: Oh… then like that no point to bring also *oh* like that.

1388   Y: Hm?

1389   H: No point to bring your your your son *oh.* Oh… *gen ben bu neng chu ah*

                      (cannot even go out.)

1390      *ho.*

1391   Y: Mm-mm.

1392   W: *Xiao hai zi bu neng gou qu* eh. *Xiao hai zi ru guo xiao bian zhen yang*

1393      *le?*

(Children cannot go. What happens if they need to go to the toilet?)

1394    Y: No, they provide uh, toilets over there.

1395    W: Oh…

1396    Y: But very dirty.

1397    W: Oh.

1398    Y: But do you know, I met a friend.

1399    H: How's the air-cond in the master room *ah,* Y?

1400    Y: Very cold.

1401    H: We have two two *ah,* that one *oh,* remote control *hoh.*

1402    Y: Right. But that remote control is working, Mommy. No worries.

1403    H: Yea, I have another one also working *hoh.*

1404    Y: Okay.

1405    H: I don't know how to try last time didn't work. And then, yesterday I found

1406      another one.

1407    Y: Mommy *a,* but I made a friend in uh, in the, in the marathon.

1408    H: Mm.

1409    Y: This guy, ran the Penang bridge marathon um… 4 years ago.

1410    H: Mm.

1411    Y: So when he ran it, he gave up at kilometre 15.

1412    H: Mm.

1413    Y: He says, he couldn't, he couldn't run anymore.

1414    H: Oh…

1415    Y: So he gave up.

1416    H: Oh.

1417    Y: He sat by the side of the road=

1418    H: *Ah.*

1419    Y: =and he saw the 21 kilometres pass him, and he wanted to join the 21=

1420    H: *Ah.*

1421    Y: =but because he was 42, they didn't allow him to.

1422    H: Oh.

1423    Y: So he just sat on the road for approximately 45 minutes.

1424    H: *Ah.*

1425    Y: After 45 minutes, he realized he was the only joker that was sitting by

1426      the side of the road, and he was in the middle of the bridge.

1427     H: Oh…

1428     Y: So, he gathered his um, his courage, and he says, "Whatever, let me do

1429         the run." So he started running again. 3 kilometres, before they

1430         finished, because *ah,* the cut-off point is 7 hours.

1431     H: Mm.

1432     Y: You must finish within 7 hours, or else a bus is going to come and pick

1433         you up.

1434     H: Mm.

1435     Y: So, after 7 hours, there was a bus that come by=

1436     H: Mm.

1437     Y: =and say, "Hey brother, get up on the bus, your time's up."

1438     H: Mm.

1439     Y: And then he asked the bus driver, "Bus driver, how many hou–, what's

1440         that, uh how far am I from the finish line?"

1441     H: Mm.

1442     Y: And the bus driver said, "Thr–three more kilometres."

1443     H: Mm.

1444     Y: So he says, "3 more kilometres I'm going to finish the race=

1445     H: Mm.

1446     Y: =so that I can get the medal, and I can proudly say, I finished this first

1447         marathon in my life."

1448     H: Mm.

1449     Y: 7.5 hours, that's the time that he finished the marathon, but

1450         unfortunately, there was no medal given to him.

1451     H: *Ah.*

1452     Y: So he came in the last person in the marathon without a medal.

1453     H: Oh… *zhuo me le.* You mean, your time time…
                 (why is that?)

1454     Y: Because you have to finish within 7 hours.

1455     H: Oh…

1456     Y: If you finish later than that=

1457     H: Oh…

1458     Y: =you can't get a medal.

1459     H: Oh…

1460  Y: So I met the person who finished last.

1461  H: Mm… and then, how how is his run this year?

1462  Y: I don't know. Uh… what's that what's that, he just added me on

1463      Facebook, so I'm going to message him and say, "What's up, brother?"

1464  H: Mm… you can sell starfruit also. I think tonight better bring some

1465      starfruit for Uncle Ah G.

1466  Y: Yeap.

1467  H: At least we have to give something also.

1468  Y: Yes.

1469  X: That one you can give.

1470  Y: Yes, Mommy.

1471  H: Yeah, we have to give something. Cannot like that.

1472  Y: Yes, you're right.

1473  H: Yea… because we have to buy something. Papaya take out and eat,

1474      eh?

1475  Y: Alright.

1476  H: *Deng xia* C *xia lai ke yi chi ho?*

         (Later C can eat when she comes down?)

1477  Y: Mm-hm.

1478  H: *Waiyo,* tomato.

1479  Y: ((calls out to me in the living room)) *Dongsaeng!*

                                          (Younger sister!)

1480  X: Yeap.

1481  Y: How many days was L uh in Penang?

1482  X: I think… she went on uh… she went on the 15$^{th}$, came back on the 17$^{th}$.

1483      Eh, came back on… I think came back on 17$^{th}$, I think.

1484  Y: Right. Where did she stay?

1485  X: Um… Tune Hotel.

1486  Y: Who did she go with?

1487  X: Her friends. Her friends, a few of them.=

1488  Y: I didn't know–

1489  X: =Also ladies.

1490  Y: I didn't know that she was actually into running.

1491  X: Oh… she is. So I think now she is going to fly wherever. I mean if it's,

1492      like you know, in West Malaysia.

1493  Y: Right.

1494  X: You know.

1495  Y: Then, tell her, one day, we should just meet up.

1496  X: Yeah, why not?

1497  Y: You know, after a run. You know, I go to a lot of runs. Well, not really a

1498     lot, but.

1499  X: Mm, can. Sure. I'll let her know.

1500  H: I think give Uncle Ah G also one bunch of banana.

1501  Y: Sure.

1502  H: Ei, papa *hai you oh.* Oh, *bu yong bu yong, na bian* one comb.

                (still has some more. Oh, there's no need, there's one comb

                over there.)

  ((Conversation between Dad, my little brother and I))

1503  W: Authentic or not, the, yeah, the first factor, *ah.* Nothing to do with the

1504     (   ). *Ah.* Just say that we want, we, blindly *la,* we say the artifact, you

1505     know. (We have the photo) taken for an artifact, then we would like to

1506     send over to you. *Ah,* for your, *ni, na tian wo men you na ge* form *o, shi*

                            (your, that day we have the form, what is)

1507     *ta shi zhuo me?* Some sort like quotation of the, quotation of the

          (*i*t for?)

1508     amount, *ha? Ah.* ((turns to me)) X, *ni kan na ge xiang pian,* X. Eh, the

                        (you look at that photo)

1509     two photograph on top there, on the book. *Ah ni kan yi xia. Ah, ah ah*

                              (you look at it.)

1510     *ah. Ni kan,* X, *ci–ci ge, ni, ci ge* copper *lah, bu yong jiang* in–inside

         (You look at it, X, this, you, this is copper, needless to say inside)

1511     twelve phoenix ph–ph–phoenix bird. *Ci ge ah*=

                     (This=)

1512  X: Mm.

1513  W: =*shen me dong xi?*

     (=what is it?)

1514  X: It looks like dragons.

1515  W: ((chuckles)) Look like snake, look like dragon.

1516    X: Yea yea, it looks like, a bit like snake, but then, um=

1517    W: It's dragon *a.*

1518    X: =because of the head.

1519    W: Because of the, because of the, because of the, gear *ah.*

1520    X: Yeap.

1521    W: Head gear *ah.*

1522    X: No, there's something sharp pointing, you see.

1523    W: That's called head gear *la.*

1524    X: Yea, and snakes, they don't have pointy stuff.

1525    W: No, what do you think this one. Is it 100% is antique or not. Very old.

1526    X: Difficult to say.

1527    W: I'm… yah, *hai* you are no common sense. Present, at the present

1528        moment who is going to make this sort of thing *o*… so frightening, you

1529        look at. Huh? *Ah…*

1530    X: Yeap. But un– but unless you authenticate…

1531    W: Okay. Who use this one? We just say *la,* we assume *la,* I think *ah* my

1532        friend say maybe the king or the emperor *lah.*

1533    X: Hmph!

1534    W: You know, they this one *ah* they put the wine inside then they drink,

1535        they hold it.

1536    X: Mmm…

1537    W: Th–these Ch– these Chinamen they have a very great belief. They say

1538        that with the dragon he is, he can make him powerful, you know or not.

1539    X: Mmm…

1540    W: All this sort of funny thing *la.* This one is very glazed, and, and this one

1541        is (        ) a bit. Very old already this one.

1542    X: Hm!

1543    W: The height is around 6… 6 inches.

1544    X: Right.

1545    W: *Ah* this one. That's why I asked him to search. I want to send to this

1546        one, Sotherby.

1547    X: So? So can he um, find it?

1548    W: No, cannot.

1549    X: But difficult *oh,* difficult to look for it. I mean, unless you type in the um,

1550    you type in the keywords, is it, J?

1551    J: Hm?

1552    W: Yesterday I, yesterday I, checked=

1553    J: Yeah.

1554    X: Right.

1555    W: =with this one uh, with the Sibu private museum *ah,* manager Mr. M, he

1556    say, "Yeah, your, your photograph already forwarded to that

1557    archaeologist 2 months ago, but still pending for reply."

1558    X: Mm.

1559    W: No reply *lah.*

1560    X: Right.

1561    W: Yea, so leave it *lah.*

1562    X: Yeah, do it then.

1563    W: Sure she will give a reply.

1564    X: Exactly.

1565    W: You know why, because she said, according to him, they are very busy

1566    people.

1567    X: Mm.

1568    W: When they study one thing, when they, you know, research something,

1569    they must finish that particular thing first.

1570    X: Mm.

1571    W: They cannot split their mind.

1572    X: Right.

1573    W: Maybe if they go out to do a s–, carry out a research a, a, maybe take

1574    weeks or month, you know or not?

1575    X: Mm.

1576    W: That's why. *Ah… zhao bu dao la na ge dong xi.*

                        (you can't find that anymore.)

1577    X: *Ni zhe yang zhao hen nan de…*

     (How are you going to look for it, it's not easy…)

1578    W: *Mei you, wo shuo zhao bu dao. Na ge yi ding shi hen lao, qi shi hen lao*

1579    *de,* very old.

     (No, I said it can't be found. That is definitely very old, actually it is very

     old, very old.)

1580  X: Right.

1581  W: Very old actually *o.*

1582  X: But but where, but where did you get it? Is it your=

1583  W: No.

1584  X: Ib–, your friends gave it to you?

1585  W: Iban, Iban.

1586  X: Iban friends.

1587  W: Very old. He say *a,* at least 200 years. Hanging down from the fore
1588     parents.

1589  X: And and where did they get it from?

1590  W: How do they know? The father passed away, the grandfather passed
1591     away, how do they know? Now they don't have money, bring out and
1592     sell *lah.* Just say 50, 80 dollar *lah.* If they don't sell, a day, when the
1593     house catch fire, no more. *Ah*, like that *lah.*

1594  X: Mm.

1595  W: Many antiques *a,* will burn, you know or not, according to them. They
1596     are reluctant to sell, and then, keep it keep it. One day, burn, finish.

1597  X: Mm.

1598  W: Happy *lah.*

1599  X: Hmph!

1600  W: Not even a cent back.

1601  X: Right.

1602  W: *Zhao bu dao a,* J?
          (Can you find it, J?)

1603  J: What?

1604  W: What. *Guk mui ho ah.* ((Dad walks into the kitchen))
             (Not yet found it.)
       ((Conversation between Dad and big bro))

1605  W: *Ah seng nu lah, kei kong.*
          (clean it first, then we'll talk.)

1606  Y: I will do it, I will do it, I will do it.

1607  W: *Seng nu lah.*
          (Clean it first.)

1608  Y: No, I will do it, I will do it, I will do it.

1609    H: *Shen me* you do it *loh, wo men zuo lah, ni qu shui jiao liao.*
        (What)                    (we'll do it, you go to sleep.)

1610    W: *Ah nu kuo kong ah,* Y.
            (go to sleep)

1611    Y: No, I want to eat papaya first before I sleep.

1612    W: Okay, no, since *ah* we are eating, I want to talk=

1613    H: *Nah, gei wo.*
            (give it to me.)

1614    W: =a few word to you.

1615    Y: Okay, talk, talk.

1616    W: So… this one uh… tsk. How you plan your, this one uh, I mean uh, this

1617        uh, this uh, C *ah, ne* this one *ho,* going back to work.

1618    Y: Going back to work *ah.* Don't know yet.

1619    W: Hm?

1620    Y: Actually, we really don't know yet because we never had time to talk.

1621        Mommy, *nah, ci gi eh tang eng diu woh.*
                (here, you can keep this.)

1622    H: Hm?

1623    Y: This one? Papaya?

1624    W: X *ee nerng siak mui.*
            (Have X and J eaten?)

1625    H: *Nei nei eng diu, lang nga=*
            (No no need to keep, later=)

1626    Y: *Nei.*
            (No need.)

1627    H: =*do siak.*
            (=eat it.)

1628    W: *Tai duo le.* You mean, you haven't decide yet *a?*
            (Too much.)

1629    Y: Not yet.

1630    W: If not like that *la,* easy *la.* Just a small thing. *Hoh?*

1631    Y: Mm.

1632    W: Everybody enter that stage of life *ah.*

1633    Y: Mm.

1634    H: *Ci ge hai mei you chi a.*

         (This has not been eaten.)

1635    Y: *Lai, wo chi lah.*

         (Come, I'll eat it.)

1636    X: Mm.

1637    H: *Ha?*

1638    X: *Gei ge ge chi.*

         (Let older brother eat it.)

1639    W: Mommy *you shi hou you kong, ye ke yi (chu qu…)*

         (Sometimes when Mommy's free, she can also (go out…)

1640    H: *Gei* papa, papa *yi dian lah=*

         (Give papa, papa some)=

1641    Y: *Nah, ba ba.*

           (Dad.)

1642    H: *=ni xian cai chi mu gua you chi na ge na li hui ngam oh?*

         (=now that you're eating papaya, and also going to eat that, how does it

          match?)

1643    Y: *Shi shen me lai de?*

         (What is that?)

1644    W: *Me you ah.*

          (I don't know.)

1645    H: J *na hui lai de.*

          (brought it home.)

1646    Y: Meat pie.

1647    H: Meat pie *oh.*

1648    Y: Meat pie.

1649    H: No, beef, beef.

1650    Y: *A,* okay *na. Ba ba, ni na lai chi lah.*

              (Dad, you have it.)

1651    H: *Ni xian zai chi mu gua=*

         (Now you're eating papaya=)

1652    Y: *Ba ba,* no, *ba ba,* you try first.

         (Dad)       (Dad)

1653    H: *=liao zai chi ci ge, zhen de a.*

(=and then you're going to eat this, seriously.)

1654  Y: *Wei shen me?*

    (Why not?)

1655  H: *Ngam meh?*

    (Do they go well with each other?)

1656  Y: Okay *ah.*

1657  H: *Zhe bian hai you* bread, *gen wo chi.* HL *yi yi de* bread.

    (There's still bread here, eat it. Aunt HL's bread.)

1658  W: *Mei you.*

    (No.)

1659  Y: Huh? Yeah.

1660  W: Mommy sometime can go out, *bang mang bang mang, yi xia zi, jiu ci ci*

                     (help out, and just in a blink of an eye, a)

1661    *ge yue jiu guo qu liao.*

    (few months would fly by.)

1662  Y: Mm.

1663  W: You have to be very careful. In making decision, you know or not.

1664  Y: Yeah.

1665  W: Once you make the wrong decision *ah,* it will be very tough. That mean

1666    you destroy your foundation, whatever you have built.

1667  H: ((talks to Dad)) *Jia qie gua ci mang lau la.*

           (This cucumber is so old.)

1668  W: *Me lau a, ee lak kiang, lak kiang li qie gua a.*

    (It's not old, it's from the Ibans.)

1669  H: *Cie nok siak.*

    (How to eat it?)

1670  W: *Ni* mother-in-law *you shi hou ye hui xia qu ha?*

    (Your)         (sometimes also goes down (to your place?))

1671  Y: Mm.

1672  W: Hm?

1673  Y: Pa, we don't want so much of my mother-in-law, because–

1674  W: Of course *lah.* Housemaid also cannot be trusted *ho?* ((Big bro looks

1675    thoughtful)) Hm? Hm? Babysitting.

1676  Y: Mm.

1677    W: Babysitter. Cannot.

1678    Y: The worst thing that will happen is that, after Chinese New Year, C will

1679       resign.

1680    W: How to resign, Y?

1681    Y: Resign *la, letak jawatan.*

                          (resign.)

1682    W: Huh?

1683    Y: Resign.

1684    W: How to resign *neh?*

1685    Y: I QUIT!

1686    W: *Ah.* No, quit means quit. How to resign that I ask you. How? *Ah.*

1687    Y: She will quit=

1688    W: *Ah.*

1689    Y: =then uh, she will take up a locum.

1690    W: Locum, is it, is it is it uh… I mean, uh… is there any uh… vacancy or

1691       not, like that?

1692    Y: Many.

1693    W: How is the pay for locum that side?

1694    Y: In the hospital, it's 80 *ringgits* per hour.

1695    W: Outside *leh?*

1696    Y: Hm?

1697    W: Outside.

1698    H: *Jia ru* C=

             (If)

1699    Y: Outside *ah.*

1700    H: =*zhe yang* resign *hai ke yi* go back to hospital for locum *meh?*

          (=resign like this she can still)

1701    Y: Yeah.

1702    H: *Ta men hui* employ *ah?*

          (They will)

1703    Y: Mm!

1704    W: Cannot eh.

1705    H: *Hui ah?*

          (They will?)

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1706    Y: Mm, mm! Because, because she is still, uh=

1707    W: You you you you mean–

1708    Y: =she still have her practicing license.

1709    W: I know practicing license. If she resign, she still can go back to hospital

1710      *a?*

1711    Y: Which hospital?

1712    W: No, I don't know, that's why I ask you.

1713    Y: Mm.

1714    W: Any hospital.

1715    Y: Are you talking about government or public?

1716    W: Government.

1717    Y: Government, cannot.

1718    W: *Ah…* government, unless *ah,* she go for further study *ah.*

1719    H: You cannot go back to government hospital to work, isn't it?

1720    Y: Cannot.

1721    H: *Ah…* you have to go to private *oh.*

1722    Y: Yeap.

1723    H: Ya *la…* what I mean *la.*

1724    W: Oh. Unless you are a Master holder, *hoh*=

1725    Y: Mm.

1726    W: =then you can, *ha,* apply for=

1727    Y: Yeah.

1728    W: =huh. Mm.

1729    Y: Yeap.

1730    W: That one, different.

1731    Y: No, even Masters, it depends, if you are a private candidate or you are

1732      a sponsored candidate.

1733    W: But they are still short of Master, *ho?*

1734    Y: Major.

1735    W: You mean, work in the private clinic, is it?

1736    Y: Mm-hm.

1737    W: How is the pay for private clinic?

1738    Y: Private clinics varies between uh, 30 to 40 *ringgits* per hour.

1739    W: One hour *ah?*

1740   Y: Yeah. I think we can cut a new one for C. Me and papa will finish this

1741      papaya.

1742   H: Mm.

1743   W: You mean, one–

1744   Y: Papa, do you still want some more?

1745   W: *Bu yao, gou le.* One hour only 30 to 40 *ah?*

         (No, I've had enough.)

1746   Y: 30 to 40 *ringgits,* yeah.

1747   W: Very small pay, *hoh.*

1748   Y: If your clinic is not busy, they will pay you 30.

1749   W: Hm?

1750   Y: If your clinic is not busy, they will pay you 30.

1751   W: One hour *ah.*

1752   Y: Mm.

1753   W: Busy, 40 dollar.

1754   Y: 40. But, really, the responsibility is not that great. Very small

1755      responsibility. You only see cough and flu, simple fevers=

1756   W: I know, okay.

1757   Y: =anything you don't want, just send to the hospital.

1758   W: Okay, I know. But the… how to say. That one, uh… you mean, there

1759      are vacancy for, huh, there are vacancies *lah.*

1760   Y: Clinic.

1761   W: Huh?

1762   Y: Clinic.

1763   W: No, for private clinic. Yes *lah.*

1764   Y: Absolutely.

1765   W: Huh?

1766   Y: Absolutely.

1767   W: Why, you mean this… some doctor also cannot that one, is it?

1768   Y: Hm?

1769   W: They have the clinic *lah.*

1770   Y: Yeah.

1771   W: And then, they let it run by some people.

1772   Y: Absolutely.

1773    W: But what about for Sarawak here?

1774    Y: You'll find it a lot like that. I don't know, I–

1775    H: C can go back to Sime Darby like yours or not?

1776    Y: Can. 80 *ringgits* per hour.

1777    H: Will they employ her or not?

1778    Y: Absolutely.

1779    W: Will they see that you have experience or anything, this and that?

1780    Y: Usually 5 years experience is more than enough.

1781    W: Mm. 5 years…

1782    Y: But I tell you, our medical fraternity, as long as you know people, that's

1783        more than enough. But Sime Darby is a hospital. They pay more

1784        because your responsibility is more.

1785    H: In another 2 hours we'll be going out to eat.

1786    W: So what about Sarawak here, Y? What about in Sarawak?

1787    Y: I don't know.

1788    W: Ah. Sarawak=

1789    Y: I've never worked in Sarawak before.

1790    W: =I know. Sarawak is there any such thing I mean uh… just like locum or

1791        not? I don't think, is it?

1792    Y: I don't know.

1793    W: *Wo jue de mei you ah, Sha lao yue.* Not come to that uh stage yet,
           (I don't think so, Sarawak.)

1794        because *ah ho.*

1795    Y: I don't know.

1796    W: Normally here, private clinic *ah,* they man– they you know, they

1797        manage by themself.

1798    Y: Mm-hm.

1799    W: *Ho?*

1800    Y: Mm-hm. I don't know, papa. I really don't know. I–I, what's that, I cannot

1801        comment because I've really never worked here.

1802    W: No, *wo zhi dao.* That is why, no, *ni yao ni yao qu shui jiao xian ha?*
             (I know.)                (you want you want to sleep first, is it?)

1803    Y: Sorry?

1804    W: I think you go to sleep first. We talk, that one, talk to you again *hoh.*

1805  Y: Okay, I go and take a nap first=

1806  W: *Ah.*

1807  Y: =then after that we can talk on=

1808  W: *Ah.*

1809  Y: =the way to the uh=

1810  W: *Ah.*

1811  Y: =dinner place=

1812  W: *Ah.*

1813  Y: =tonight.

((Conversation between Dad and Mom))

1814  H: *Wei chia pung* uh *lang siong si hia* curtain *ah. Mi nang lah tuong uh dai*

1815  *dai guo ka na hia, ee nerng ai dik mo. Seh tak li, chang li hia, wong*

1816  *chuong tak li, wei ne suo mei seh li. Chang li hia* (curtain) *jing sing gok.*

1817  *Na li kong nang nga jia tui muong hia, hia lang hung ae kak gu liu lah.*

1818  *Puai uh liu lah uh li lah. Ee nerng uh dik to lo, mo dik gerk woh ge ee*

1819  *kong noh. Chang li suo hung wong chuong sing li. Si meh lei mae nok,*

1820  *nang nga lo. Chien wang meh lai muong meh liu chu wang nok. Guo*

1821  *leh nok woh. Wei lou ling wei ge X kong ah,* hmph. *Nei kong uh liu.* CD

1822  *ge* story book comic *meh hiu gerk, tiok gerk niu wai. Suo siong oh! Suo*

1823  *siong suo siong, lang siong. Tang jiang wei hia nok gu mo no lei liu.*

1824  *Wei mo ah, hie kieng kom puong na li kong siu lo lah, eh ae die lah nok*

1825  *oh. Kolong nga* 5-tier cabinet *ae chuti ah. Pung kieng nok eh sei*

1826  *kong… ae chuti. Hie gerng ger ee ha nok ngang wong si woh wei ge ni*

1827  *kong, hia* driver *ah. Wei ge nu kong, ki nang wei ge nu, hie gerng ge nu*

1828  *kong ah, wei ah pei ah, ni lah gei ger wei kong pien wa ah, wei mo*

1829  *kuing nu liu. Cie nok kong leh? Cho nerng meh lei cho gau chu wang*

1830  *woh, wei ka nu kong oh. Siong nah, wong chuong meh tiok oh nang*

1831  *nga chu wang nerng. Eh hiu kong pien wa hwan choi a, ku li kuo hwan*

1832  *choi. Ban dao nerng. Suo gerng chin ngiang ee nerng eh pek, nang nga*

1833  *nerng kuo sie leng ngau a, tiok muong ee nerng ni uh sing Ya Su mui*

1834  *ho. Tiok uh cho Shang Di de guang yu* yan *ah. Wo men shi shi shang*

1835  *de guang yu yan. Nang nga nerng hwan cai chu wang nerng ha, jiu li*

1836  *ban dao nerng. Lang ngung nerng tan tiok kong, cho le wai nerng sang*

1837  *chu wang, ku lio cho no cho le wai oh. Wei kong, wo wo bu dong shen*

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1838   *pan de ri zhi zhen yang qu hui da ci ge ti mu. Jing ngie eh cho chu luan*

1839   *wo nu hia nerng. Wei si teh lei mo eng ah, nu ge wei kong no miang,*

1840   *wei jue kong no miang. Wei kom puong tuh mo kuo toh siong oh. Siong*

1841   *na kau mui siong na guo tui hui woh. Kau hie ne ee nerng jiu zha wei,*

1842   *"Ni shi* D *de tai tai ha?" Wo jiang, "Ma ma." Dian wa ee nerng pa li wei*

1843   *tio kong, "D you da dian hua jing qu." Chu mang tien jing ah. Cho miang*

1844   *nang nga nerng cho nerng tiok cho jue siu wai oh. Ni uh no miang eh*

1845   *tek choi nerng oh, kong jing miang oh. Cho kau mui fang er gan ga.*

1846   *Cho kau mui hie jiak A fang er guk kieng ngek kong nang nga nerng*

1847   *guo hung woh. Cho miang chu wang pien pien, pien no miang. Ni lo* E

1848   *jiu lo* E *la. Uh no miang ka siak. Kom puong tuh mo ka siak ah.*

(I have two boxes of curtains in the car porch. When you go home tomorrow, bring them with you and see if they want it. They are clean, the green one is clean, my mother washed it last time. The green curtain is still very new. It's just that the ones used for our main door are quite old. Some of them are already torn. Let them know that they could keep it if they want it, and if they do not want it, they can throw it away. The green one is completely new. We really cannot buy things. We really cannot simply buy things anymore. Too many things. Upstairs, I told X. I have nothing to say. I don't know how many CDs, story books, and comics we have to throw. One box! One box one box, two boxes. Now, those things are also of no use. I'm just clearing that room so that I could push the things in. Push out all the 5-tier cabinets. The things in the room… push them out. That day, the driver was really unhappy when I asked him to take the things away for me. I tell you, what I told you that day, next time if you tell me to lie, I won't follow you anymore. Why so? We cannot behave like this, let me tell you. After thinking about it, it is not right for us to do this. We already know that lying is sinful yet we still sin. Misleading. If one day they find out, wherever we go, we should ask them if they have accepted Jesus. We have to be the salt of the earth and light of the world. People like us mislead other people. Next time people will definitely say, if Christians behave like this, what is the point of going to church? I say, I don't know how to answer that question when Judgment Day comes. Why are you

so messy? I have been too busy, so I'll follow whatever you tell me to say. I didn't give it any extra thought. I really regret it after thinking it over. When I arrived there, they asked me, "Are you D's wife?" I said, "Mother." When she called me I told her, "D has already called in." So naïve. Why do we have to make life so difficult? If you mentioned your real name, how would you offend anyone? Things became awkward for us instead. In the end, A must have felt that we were too much. Why do we have to lie like this? If you are looking for E, then look for E. What's wrong? There's nothing wrong with that.)

1849   W: *Guo hung. No miang guo hung, ni ge ee gang wei kong moh. Wei*
1850     *kiang–*

    (Too much. What too much, tell her to say that to me. I'm afraid–)

1851   H: *Wei muong nu, cho miang cho nerng hu wang oh. Nerng=*

    (Let me ask you, why do we behave like that. People=)

1852   W: *Cho miang (hu wang cho).*

    (Why do that).

1853   H: *=tiok eh hiu hui gai oh, tiok eh hiu siong na lo.*

    (=need to know how to repent and reflect.)

1854   W: *Hui gai, dan nu seng kong la, nu seng kong la. Nu ki lau nu ji ee kong*
1855     *hie chong le, hie chong meh lei leh.*

    (Repent, so tell me first, you tell me first. At first, why did you say that, that cannot–)

1856   H: *No miang meh lei?*

    (Cannot what?)

1857   W: *Nu ki lau* ((stutters)) *hie chong neh, nu ki lau wei kong kong nu–*
    ((stutters))

    (At first you, at first you, when I said, you–)

1858   H: *Wei tuong tuong uh kuo siong? Wei ge nu kong, gerng gerng nu me*
1859     *you, nu muong niang ngo la, wei suo gerng cho no miang a, gerng*
1860     *gerng a.*

    (I've never thought about that. Didn't you know that every day, ask the kids about what I am doing every day.)

1861   W: *Ee, hie chong, ki lek… nu no miang hie chong a…*

    (She is funny… what are you…)

1862    H: *Wei kom puong tuh mo siong oh, mo eng kau kom puong siong tuh mo*

1863      *siong woh. Nu nerng ge wei kong no miang ngong ngong jiu kong no*

1864      *miang a. Wei la hie puang=*

     (I was so busy that I didn't think about it. Whatever you tell me to say,

     I'll just blindly follow. That time if I=)

1865    W: (    )

1866    H: *=dian wa ge nu kong nu ma si ya li kong, "Nu guing wei kong tuh meh*

1867      *dang liu."*

     (=told you on the phone you would also have told me, "Just follow what

     I say and you won't go wrong".)

1868    W: *Jan ni ah, nu nerng gu kiang kong ti na ee cie nok* (    ).

     (That's right, but you're still worried that later she would (    ).

1869    H: *Wei ge ni kong, cie pei ki, you ci gi* incident *eh dang mo you gin a.*

1870      *Nerng dang tiok eh hiu kei kuo a. Na gei meh kei kuo, wei ge nu kong,*

1871      *jia kuo gen Siong Ne kong wa lo. Siong Ne suo gerng na muong nu,*

1872      *jing ngie jiu suo sie nerng chu wang a. Nu chu wang cho no ki lu tu oh.*

1873      *Wei siong na nio toi hui wo. Jing jing nang nga nerng suo gerng nerng*

1874      *eh hiu kong, nei kong eh hiu ah. Cho, nang nga muong jia la cho gau*

1875      *jing ngie sang chu wang a. Jan ni o, jing ngiang na nerng kan na, ae sie*

1876      *lo, ci jiak ku li Jin Sheng tang li de nerng, kong na jia jia cie nok kau lai*

1877      *uh. Wei siong wei–*

     (I tell you, from now onwards, it is alright to make mistakes from this

     incident. If we're wrong, we should know how to repent. Otherwise, we

     have God to answer to. If one day God asked you, why did you live

     your entire life in this manner? How can you call yourself a Christian? I

     really regret it after giving it some thought. If one day people find out,

     let's say they do not know. We have to ask ourselves the reason we are

     doing this. Really, if people realize that we are from Chin Seng Church,

     how do we explain ourselves? I think I–)

1878    W: *Ee gu eh pek nu,* D *si si nu=*

     (How would she know you, D is is your=)

1879    H: *Cai nu ni ni si ni a.*

     (It doesn't matter if you are or not.)

1880    W: *=kiang, si nu lo ung a. Si nu kiang hie chong a.*

(=son or husband. Even if he's your son…)

1881 H: *Nu jia cho jia luan a. Lang nga pu* D, *hie ci–, wei gu meh pek ah, ge*
1882 *nerng kong taeng deng ngiang ah, A tuh lio hie neh liu a. A gu meh pek*
1883 *nu nerng kong no miang ah? A jiang ho gu suo jiak* customer *li ka piak*
1884 *ah. Wei tieng ngieng kong, wei kiang diu ee nerng jiu kong, ee kong*
1885 D, D *ama. Wei kong ama. A cin na toh a mui tuh ngou liu la. Ee kong,*
1886 *ee kong, lou ma, no miang ama, ee kong. Wei gu meh pek ee nerng*
1887 *kong no miang.*

(You are confusing yourself. After that you're D's, how could I not know,
when you were talking about the shoplot, A was there. A would know
what the both of you were talking about. Coincidentally, A was just next
to us with her customer. I heard that when I entered the building, they
said, she said D, D's mother. I said mother. A was already talking at the
back. She said, she said, wife, not mother, she said. I knew what they
were saying.)

1888 W: *Ee gu eh pek kong=*
(As if she knew=)

1889 H: *Wei meh pek. Jung kong suo guok mo su yu–*
(I don't know. Bottom line is, there is no need–)

1890 W: *=ee gu eh pek kong, nu nu mo nu tiang nu. Ee, ee gu eh pek kong mo*
1891 *chu wang* D *a, ee* D *ee ee hie chong neh, ee mo.* (          )
(=as if she knew, you you no, listen. As if she knew there was no such
D.)

1892 H: *Ni kau mui pu gen, ee hie jiak nerng gu kong, nu nu ni ni ni mama, nu*
1893 *pu kong ni tai tai. Wo tai tai.* Herh! *Ma si ya li ni jia cho wa.*
(After that you still told her, your mother, then you said your wife. My
wife. Herh! You are the one who made it up.)

1894 W: *Wei tuh mo hu wang kong a. Si nu jia kong tai tai oh. Wei dian wa*
1895 *tuong uh hu wang kong.*
(I didn't say that. You're the one who said wife. When did I say that on
the phone?)

1896 H: *Wei, tuh li suo duo tuh li mak ama ama ho. Wei tieng ngieng, tieng*
1897 *ngieng ee kong ho. Nu nerng kong wa doi wa deng ngiang ho.* "Oh…
1898 *tai tai ha?" Ee chiu. Nu muong* X, *nu kiang tuh na cho* witness *hoh. Mo*

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1899 *hu wang kong, nu nerng jia kong li wa mo sin ning. Guk mo kei kuo.*

1900 *Nei, nei liu. Uh nok jian zheng nu ge wei kong na moh. Wei siong nah*

1901 *guk no jian zheng. Nerng jian zheng si jing jing jin li Zhu a. Nu nerng*

1902 *chu wang kom puong ho suo guo, ban dao nerng a. Meh lei o, wei kong*

1903 *cho nerng meh lei chu wang. Nu nerng si kong pien wa kong sik kuan li*

1904 *nerng liu oh. Wei nerng si mo=*

(I, I stuck with 'mother' all the way. I heard, heard her say. When the both of you were talking. "Oh… your wife?" She laughed. You ask X, your children witnessed the whole thing. Didn't say that, still do not admit your own words. Still do not repent. There's no need anymore. Tell me, how can our lives still be a testimony? After thinking about it, there's no testimony to share. When people testify, they have really experienced God. People like you are misleading others. No, we really cannot behave like this. Lying has become a habit for you people. We don't=)

1905 W: *Wei mo kong sik, wei mo kong sik kuan ho, si nu nerng jia=*

(I don't have a habit of lying, you people are the one who=)

1906 H: =*puong ne tuh meh kong pien wa, mo mo ka nu nerng chu wang qian*

1907 *zhe bi zi zou o.*

(=I actually do not lie, I don't let people control me.)

1908 W: =*kong jia ya li kong kong pien wa ho. Nerng uh muong nu, gu kiang*

1909 A *bu jing ngi. Mo, kan, wei ka na uh hie chong ee mo.*

(=tell lies. I asked you, and you were concerned if A would be fine with that. Otherwise, see if I would have lied to her.)

1910 H: *Wei muong nu cho miang tiok kong* D *ama, wei muong nu.*

(I'm asking you why did you have to say D's mother, I ask you.)

1911 W: *Hia si ni jia–*

(You yourself–)

1912 H: *Nu muong wei, nu ge wei kong* D *ama, cho miang tiok kong* D *ama, wei*

1913 *muong nu.*

(You asked me, you told me to say I'm D's mother, why do you have to say D's mother, I ask you.)

1914 W: *Wei meh you uh kong ama, sien no go tau ah. Wei meh pek ah.*

(I didn't know I said mother. I don't know.)

1915    H: *Na, si ni ah. Jia kong wa mo sin ning.*

       (You see. You do not admit what you said.)

1916    W: *Jan ni, ni mo sin ning=*

       (That's right, not that I don't admit=)

1917    H: *Na jia kuo tio kong=*

       (If you're going, you have to say=)

1918    W: *=wei meh pek ama.*

       (=I don't recall saying 'mother'.)

1919    H: *=wei jiu li* D *ama o.*

       (=I'm D's mother.)

1920    W: Mm.

1921    H: *Kong wa mo sin ning, dei si jiu li kong wa mo sin ning o, ge ni kong o.*

       (To not admit what you said, the worst is to not admit what you said, let me tell you.)

1922    W: *Wei meh pek ama no miang, wei meh pek. Wei na uh ning ngai (    ).*

       (I don't recall saying 'mother', I don't know. I can only (      ).

1923    H: *Si nu ni ge wei kong wei tiok, tiok* announce, *tiok gen ee kong wei si ee*

1924       *li ama.*

       (Aren't you the one who told me that I have to, announce, tell her that I am his mother.)

1925    W: *Jan ni, jan ni. Wei la kong (eh hiu).*

       (That's right, that's right. (I'll know) if I said it.)

1926    H: *Hie la pu, guk meh pek.*

       (Then you still said you don't know.)

1927    W: *Nu* D=

       (You're D's=)

1928    H: *Ci mao dong o ni kong wa.*

       (Your words are so contradicting.)

1929    W: *=ama nu, wei tuh meh gi uh liu ho. Nu kong nu am– nu ama, nu jiu li*

1930       *kong nu ama du ho liu, nu bu kong hie chong.*

       (=Mom, I have already forgotten. If you said you're his mother, just stick to that, but you still said that (you're his wife).

1931    H: *Wei jiu li kong suo duo tuh li* D *ama o. Si nu jia lau chuk kong tai tai o.*

       (All the way, I said that I am D's mother. You are the one who

accidentally blurted out I am your wife.)

1932  W: *O…*

1933  H: *Meh pek ah, wei jung gong suo guo cho jing siu le de yek ah, wei ge ni*

1934     *kong. Ni kiang eh sei kong gan ga tuh mo puong ne ah. Wei lo* A *jiu lo*

1935     A, *wei lo* E *jiu* E *ah, wei kau hie ne wei kong, wei kong* E. *Lo* E. A *tuh*

1936     *pa tieng wa puong wei dian wa, wei suok a tuh kau liu. Wei kong wei,*

1937     *wei kong wei wei kiang,* D *yi gin pa tieng wa die uh liu ho, yi gin yi gin*

1938     *lie luo lie luo hie jiak* E *uh liu.* E *gei diu uh liu. Jiu si liu. Wei na kong, na*

1939     *kong wei lao gong ni gua ho. Ni kiang tuh mo hia ah. Nu pa tieng wa*

1940     *die li, nu* E *hie hie hie no miang ka siak. Ni lo* A *ee mo hia huo, wei guk*

1941     *ge* A *kong, "Mei you huo, mei you ban fa loh. Suo yi wo yao, na ge* E *yi*

1942     *jing jie shao wo xin de liao." Hia guk dang. De nerng gei diu de nerng to*

1943     *wo ba. Wei si kong mo, ya mo eng kuo pek wong kan oh. Wei siong sin*

1944     *ya mo yi diang peng ngie ah,* Beetex *ah. Si wei hu wang kang ah. Wei*

1945     *ci gi* Nature, Napure *wei siong si pek wong ya uh dei li ah. Ee mo ning*

1946     *ngai, ee lou huo yi gin pang uh liu. Mo ning ngai, kau mui pa tieng wa*

1947     *kuo taukeniong, wei ga ee kong jie nau ka serng suo lak, ngeng ngeng*

1948     *ku lio heng kau lek toi jien. Kau lek toi, kau lek toi lah. Tapi wei hia lang*

1949     *lak gu ya lang lak jie nau ki sik ya mo kong guo ho, jiu li chui kak hie die*

1950     *ngai uh. Wei ya geuk uh liu. Chou mo mok. Mui suo gi cheng nao lok,*

1951     *liu liu cho lah meh chueng nok oh. Nang guai ah, ( ) si woh. Wei, dang*

1952     *chu wang jia min chong eng lok, dei you ing diok ka na* ceiling *eh lau*

1953     *chui me a. Na lou chui la lang woh, hia sing tiang noh, nei kong oh. Wei*

1954     *hia cha kak ah, na lio geuk chia pung li a, hie ki si wei jia suo ki ming*

1955     *chong ge ee nerng ha kuo. Wei kang hia cha kak cha a, bie nang nga*

1956     *pung kieng cha kak li cha ho chin ne. Wei gu to ei, gu chik ta ta li to uh*

1957     *la siong meh ngam. Ka toi ni kiang. Kiang eh ka lao lok oh. Jiu li liu liu*

1958     *chik uh. Hia kak kak, nang nga pung kieng hie ki ming chong ya li hia*

1959     *kak kak. Pien pien ci gi kak toi ni kiang. Na mo wei kak kak ai to wuang*

1960     *uh. Gu ya cha ho jiu li ho, wei ge ni kong oh. Deng cha a. Ni kiang jiu*

1961     *kerng la tu mo oh. Merng guo merng na tuh eh hiu liu oh, jiang wei cha*

1962     *(    ) bak bak bak bak li, jia cha ni kan, sek ngang sek pu erng oh. Wei*

1963     *chik ta ta li gerk hie nuh, dang ee hiew yin wei ee nerng ha wei ge na*

1964     *mo jia liang pien gerk hie ne lah. Wei suo sing suo yi tuh li hua, wuang*

1965        *( ), pien pien to la siong meh hak.*

(I don't know, in conclusion, I've done a very shameful thing, let me tell you. Actually, it wasn't awkward at all. If I'm looking for A then I'm looking for A, if E then E, when I arrived there I asked for E. Looked for E. I arrived a while after A called me. I said I, I said my son, D, already called in, already already contacted contacted E. E has made her recommendations. That's all. Won't it be better if I just said he's my husband. It's not a big deal. What's wrong with you calling and looking for E? When A told you that there's no stock, I still told A, "If there's no stock, then there's nothing we can do. So I'd like, Janet has already recommended me a different one." Nothing wrong with that. Whoever recommended it to us gets the business. I was saying I don't have time to go and check elsewhere. I believe it is not necessarily cheaper at Beetex. That's what I think. I think other furniture shops are also selling Napure beds. She cannot, the boss fell sick. In the end, we called the lady boss and I requested for another free pillow, but I still had to pay RM90 for it. RM90, so be it. But we actually never got to use the two pillows which we bought last time, and they cannot be used anymore as they were soaked with water. I've thrown them away. So smelly. The pillow covers were also in a terrible condition. No wonder, ( ). So now that we have a new bed in the room, most importantly, we have to see if water leaks from the ceiling. If the leak wets the bed, my heart will ache. The wooden bed frame in the car porch, which I asked the guys to take away, belonged to my sister. That wooden bed frame is so much better than the one in our room. I took and cleaned it, only to realize that it didn't fit after I brought it upstairs. Just a little shorter. I'm afraid it will fall in. I cleaned all of them. They are the same as our room's bed frame. It just so happened that these are a little shorter. Otherwise, I intend to change our bed frame. In the past, the wood is of good quality, let me tell you. It's hardwood. There is no sign of rotting. One look at it and you'll know that the wood nowadays are fairer in colour, and if you look at this wood, the colour is brownish red. I cleaned and left them there, and after that because the guys picked them up, I told them to just leave the two pieces there. All along I've

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wanted to change it, but it just didn't fit.)

1966  J: My *ah,* where's the penknife *ah,* Mommy?

1967  H: Penknife? I think *hen duo zhi o. Lou shang* I think the the staircase

1968    there shelf there *you eh. Wo you fang liang ba zai na bian bo. Bu zhi*

1969    *dao na xia lai mei you.*

    (Penknife? I think there are a lot. Upstairs, I think they are on the shelf

    at the top of the stairs. I put two penknives there. I don't know if I have

    taken them down.)

1970  J: Now it's 4:10 *ah.*

1971  H: *Ni yao qu chong liang oh,* J!

    (You need to shower)

1972  J: Yeah.

1973  H: *Ke yi qu chong liao lo.*

    (You can go and shower now.)

1974  J: *Wo yao kai he zi xian.*

    (I want to open the boxes first.)

1975  H: Huh?

1976  J: *Wo yao kai he zi, wo yao na na ge dong xi chu lai yi xia.*

    (I want to open the boxes, I want to take out the things.)

1977  H: *Mei you* penknife *ha? Lou shang de* staircase *na bian mei you a?* Shelf

1978    *na bian.* ((continues conversation with Dad)) *Wei tieng ngieng suo gi*

1979    *Jian zheng. Uh suo jiak tauke, wai lah mo dang ya li cho ka li li. Wei*

1980    *meh you lah, meh you jia si mu shu kong li jian zheng a. Ya li cho seng*

1981    *ngi cho kui sek nyian, nerng li li kuo kuo cho seng ngi. Uh suo gerng*

1982    *suo jiak nerng li jiu li muong ee, "Nu sing Ya Su mui?" Jiu tuong hu yin*

1983    *puong ee tiang. Hia tauke jiu jiu sui si jiek siu, ge ee kuo* office *gei*

1984    *kong. Kong kau liu uh, hia tauke kau mui xin Zhu. Nu nerng ai kong kio*

1985    *si leng ngau dou shi fu yin de dui xiang. Jia jiang ho nu jia nerng uh ba*

1986    *Shang di fang zai yien li, fang zai xin zhong. Kuo tuong tuh lio cho*

1987    *Shang di de guang he yan. Ni du li kuo ban dao nerng. Nerng nah eh*

1988    *pek wah, wei la si wei la cho* customer *lah, gu cho gu cho no ki lu tu.*

1989    *Wei nei cho ki lu tu bi nu nerng kua ho ah. Gu li wei ge ni kong, nerng*

1990    *la muong nu, ha? Mo eng jiu li mo eng. Tuh nei kong siong peng hwak*

1991    *ku lio kuo siong nah, cie nok meh tek choi ee la ha. Siong nah cie nok*

1992 *meh tek choi ee. Wei si meh lei kong mo eng ah ho. Mo eng jiu li mo*
1993 *eng ho. Nu ge wei zuok jiu zuok, mo pien. Si mo eng. Nerng lieng,*
1994 *nerng eh hiu kong no miang ho sai du mo eng na a. Wei wei jing jing ho*
1995 *jin li guo ah. Mo eng deng ngiang jia jue rung meh kuo pung kang woh.*
1996 *Nu nerng kan mo nok oh. Siu lo mui suok yong nok nu jia ka na a. Hie*
1997 *nu nerng na hu wang nok eh la eh la eh la guk uh kiu. Wei chik liu ah,*
1998 *lou ling chik dei geng suo cheng mo ning ngai chik ah, cho kui gerng*
1999 *woh. Ngong nerng cho ngong dai, wei kong a. Gerng gerng cho chu*
2000 *wang mo eng. Nik mang cho. (Sie nok kak) suo chuo. Cai nu terng ge*
2001 *wei wei tuh li kong mo eng. Ge wei kuo siak dao, wei kong wei mo eng.*
2002 *Si mo eng, ni kong no miang. Wei mui kuo* KL *teng ngiang wei liu liu siu*
2003 *lo ho. Hie peng, hie peng pung kieng ya le siu lo, lou ka suo kieng pung*
2004 *kieng ya le siu lo. Uh li nok, moh tik li nok, jik kuang ge ee gerk uh. Jue*
2005 *no miang,* file *no miang mo tik jik kuang gerk uh. Cho cho miang hie mo*
2006 *eng no? Ngong nerng cho ngong dai a, no miang mo eng. Jiu li cho dei*
2007 *ngong li dei yek ah. Kuo siu, siu lah dang hua si kang kuo kuo siu lo.*
2008 *Jung ngian nerng ya mo ha ni si, (    ) eh dai li kuo meh, guk mai gerk.*
2009 *Guk mui gerk kau liu woh, wei chu wuang uh li gu mo ning ngai kuo*
2010 *(    )* detail *oh. Guk mui gerk kau liu woh, guk uh oh. Chia pung suo*
2011 *siong suo siong uh li ku li ta pui a no miang hia,* plastic *pui pui no miang*
2012 *hia lang ngung suo ki to serng nerng. (Dang mui lah) sei yung tiok nok*
2013 *ah jiu li meh lei me. Sei yung tiok jiang me. Kui jiu kui ni kiang, mo yu*
2014 *yin. Mo sei yung tiok meh lei me. Toh long hie eng hie ne. Deng nyun*
2015 *nok nerng meh kui sek ka eng hie ne. Cho miang sei yung? Tang peng*
2016 *ngie suo ka san toi jien. Si jia nerng li, suo jiak* driver. *Ee kong ee kong*
2017 *jing ngie eh tang wei nerng eh tang puong ee ha guo. Wei kong wei*
2018 *kong* E *kong san nek toi jien ni ge wei ha uh. Ee kong nu gen tauke*
2019 *kong, ni gen* E *kong, tiok gen tauke kong. Hia hia ming chong kak to li*
2020 *leh, hia gou gou a, tuh li sang sing li. Wei pa tieng wa* E, *wei kong nu*
2021 *gou gou tuh li sang sing li a, ee kong nu muong* driver *la chia teh guk*
2022 *uh mo. Kak ho li to siong uh.* Driver *bi bo la.*

(There is no penknife, is it? There is none upstairs, at the staircase?
Somewhere on the shelf. ((continues conversation with Dad)) I heard
one testimony. There is one boss, if I am not mistaken, he is also

selling furniture. I can't remember, can't remember if pastor shared this testimony. He had also been going back and forth, doing business for many years. One day, a person came along and asked him, "Have you accepted Jesus?" Then he shared the gospel with him. That boss immediately accepted Jesus, and invited the man to his office to tell him more. After that, the boss came to believe in Christ. Wherever we go we have to spread the gospel to non-believers. This means that God is always in your heart. We have to be the salt of the earth and light of the world wherever we go. You are always misleading people. If people knew, if I were the customer, what is the point of being a Christian. I would be better off as a non-Christian. That's why I told you, if anyone asked you, ha? If you're not free, then you're not free. You don't have to think how to avoid offending him or her. Think of how not to offend him or her. I can't say that I'm busy. If I'm busy then I'm busy. If you call me heartless then so be it, nothing can be done. Really busy. Now I know what people mean when they say that they do not even have time to go to the toilet. I have really experienced it. During hectic times, I'd naturally not be able to go to the toilet. It might not seem like a lot of work to you people. Just see how many things there are to clear. It's not as simple as just pushing the things around, like what you people did. I cleaned everything, but I cannot clean the top of the shelf. I've been clearing for a few days now. We are silly to have kept so many things and now we have to do this silly job of throwing them away. Making myself busy every day. Working day and night. (Keeping everything) at home. If anyone asks me out, I'll say that I'm busy. Asked me out for lunch, I said that I'm busy. Really busy, what can you say. Before I go to KL, I have to clear everything. I have to clear that, that room, and the room downstairs. Just throw away the things that we do not want anymore. That includes the books and the files. Why are we so busy? We are silly to have kept so many things and now we have to do this silly job of throwing them away, making ourselves busy. Wasting our time on unproductive things. We keep, and spend time to clear. Your daughter and children won't appreciate it; can you take it away with you? Still do not want to throw. I haven't thrown everything

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away, and I still can't (    ) for some of them. I haven't thrown everything away, just throw. Some of the boxes in the car porch are filled with glasses and plastic cups, which we could give to others. If there is no use for something, we should not buy it. Only if we need it, then we can buy it. It's alright if it is a little more expensive. If we are not going to use it, then don't buy. It would be a waste if we just leave it there. Like the clocks, we bought so many and left them there. What's the point? Just because we can get one for RM3. Four of them came, including one driver. He said, he said, how can she ask us to take this away. I said, I said that E said you could help me to take it away for RM30. He said you have to talk to the boss, not E, but the boss. When they delivered the bed frame, the hooks were all rusty. I called E, I said all the hooks are rusty, and she said to ask the driver if they have new ones in their truck. Bring up the better ones. The driver scolded me.)

2023    J: My *ah,* the towel I use a new one, is it?

2024    H: Huh?

2025    J: Towel.

2026    H: *Ah* towel, get new one, red one. *Ni de* towel *xi liao oh.*

(Your towel has been washed).