

Editorial: Invitation To Submit An Expression Of Interest

Special Issue On Norms Of English In Malaysia

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Readers researching issues of the norms of English in Malaysia are invited to submit an expression of interest for a special issue of GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies.

Deadline for abstracts is 31 July 2010 and all abstracts should be sent to:
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cc to adi@ukm.my and sussex@uq.edu.au

Theme

Asian Englishes are expanding their domain and outreach, and show complex interactions with major varieties of English (especially in the U.K. and U.S.A.), with English as an International Language, and with the national languages of each country.

In Malaysia, English is in many respects functioning as a co-national language with Bahasa Malaysia (Malay) in many respects. This national variety of English is actually a highly diverse and variable code, from something very close to British English in formal written usage to varieties which show heavy influence from Bahasa Malaysia.

To what extent is Malaysian English driven by norms, what are they, and how are they shaping the direction of Malaysian English? How does this relate to language policy, educational policy, and differing patterns of the use of English in Malaysia? Where do these norms reside, how are they applied, and what are the attitudes of users of English in Malaysia to the different varieties of English which they encounter?

Domains and Questions

A number of areas are relevant to the issue of norms of English in Malaysia. Readers may wish to propose among others:

- What kinds/genres are involved?
- Written and spoken English;
- Norms in education, the media, public usage;
- Attitudes of the consumers of Malaysian English;

- Different sources of norms: British, American, Malaysian, Singapore, Australian, other?
- Areas of language: phonology and phonetics, morphology, syntax, lexis, rhetoric and style;
- What are the national and international models, how are they used? Are writers aware of them? How do they apply them?
- Status: which norms have prestige or other socio/cultural value? How do language users perceive the various norms, and how do they implement /apply them?
- Educators' perspective: which norm? To correct or not?
- Language policy: What policy instruments are in place (including in education), how do they work?
- Synchronic or diachronic? The evolution of norms, and attitudes to them, over 10-20 years in primary and secondary sources?
- How do the norms interact with Bahasa Malaysia?
- Diglossia, active and passive;
- Code-switching and borrowing, especially in relation to norms and prescriptive ideas and perception;
- Pragmatic switching (relation to rhetoric, and mainly in spoken interpersonal language); and
- Relation to International English.

We very much look forward to receive your abstracts and later, your full papers.

Saadiyah Darus

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