

Abstract Title: Malay "macam" (like) is 'macam so KL' (Kuala Lumpur). Evidence of transnational metrolingualism in cosmopolitan Malay discourse?

This paper explores the appearances of Malay *macam*, which are found in certain Malay and Malay/English discourse environments in the urban area of Kuala Lumpur. Examples are in (1).

(1) (Malay/English mixed code (italics = Malay))

a. But er *macam* every year um.. I *dah* budget lah,
'But er like every year um.. I already budget.'

b. I think *dia ada satu row er semua ni center, macam row sini row sini semua center berderet.*
'I think it has one row er all in centers, like this row, this row, all lined up in the center.'

c. *Dia nak... Dia nak... ap- kami like macam* I say.. *cakap ini PU Bahasa Cina* right?
'She wants, she wants wha- we like like I say, speak to PU in Chinese right?'

It is shown that a number of extended discourse usages beyond *macam's* traditional Malay ones, are very similar to those for English *like*, e.g., as a quotative, hesitation device, focusing device, etc (see D'Arcy 2008, Dailey-O'Cain 2000 and references therein). Significantly, English *like*, in the sample of conversational data examined here, is also frequently occurring in Malay discourse.

It is suggested that such usages are evidence of participation in a transnational global 'mega-trend' language change (Gagliamonte & Hudson 1999), where particular linguistic units, often from the hyper-international language, English, display a transnational trajectory of reach (Meyerhoff & Niedzielski 2003). Discourse usages of English *like*, originally a US English feature, is proliferative amongst English-speaking populations across the globe. Its appearance has also been noticed in bilingual populations in various locales, e.g., Müller 2005 for German/English, Nestor *et al* 2012 for Polish speakers of Irish English. Some have argued that in such populations, *like* and/or its calque, is associated with cosmopolitanism, or in the terminology of Otsuji & Pennycook 2010; also Pennycook & Otsuji 2015), "metrolingual" interactional contexts, where "creative linguistic practices" cross "borders of culture, history and politics". In Kuala Lumpur, English is a lingua franca, and enjoys high social status (Asmah 2012), and discourse *macam/like* and their frequencies of occurrence of *macam*, may well indicate some level of participation in modernity and cosmopolitan contexts. In addition, an important outcome of this investigation concerns how perhaps we can approach linguistic units that appear in

high contact Malays such as that used in Kuala Lumpur, i.e., not as discrete language systems but as linguistic practices of speakers who typically use multilingual resources to achieve sociolinguistic aims.

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