



English or Singlish? The Syntactic Influences of Chinese and Malay on the Learning of English in Singapore

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Abstract

This paper examines the syntactic influences of the Singapore students' mother tongues on the students' learning of English in the classroom. Singlish arises due to the influences of the students' mother tongues on the lexical, syntactic and discourse aspects of English used by the students. As Chinese and Malays form the majority of the population in Singapore, this study focuses on the influences of Chinese and Malay on the learning of English in the classroom. The primary source of data consists of written assignments done by a group of adult learners studying in a polytechnic in Singapore. The overt influences of Chinese and Malay on the students' learning of English indicate that language teachers in Singapore need to take into consideration the transfer and interference of the students' mother tongues in the students' writing and speaking.

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