Lexical Retention in Contact Grammaticalisation: *Already* In Southeast Asian Englishes

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Abstract

Amongst the problems of contact grammaticalisation research in past studies has been, first, the problem of searching for diachronic evidence in relatively ‘new’ language situations, something which was advocated by Bruyn (2009), amongst others as essential to contact grammaticalisation research. Because of the absence of stage-by-stage diachronic evidence for contact grammaticalisation, many cases of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation may at first appear as simply calques (polysemy-copying in Heine & Kuteva 2005). The present study reveals the presence of lexical persistence in the age-graded distribution of the perfective marker *already* in Singaporean and Malaysian English, and demonstrates that even ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation may be gradual if it is mediated by constraints from the lexifier source material. The study also questions the hypothesis of Total Systemic Transfer of the Chinese perfective aspectual system in Singapore English (Bao, 2001; 2005; 2015), and suggests an extended function for the Lexifier Filter in contact.

Keywords

the lexifier – persistence in contact-induced grammaticalisation – the extension of the Lexifier Filter – age-grading in contact grammaticalisation

1 Introduction

It has been more than 10 years since the initial theories of contact grammaticalisation of Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005) were first launched, and the field of research has not been without its fair share of debate, mainly in discussion of the mechanisms by which contact grammaticalisation takes place. In Heine and Kuteva's studies, it was first argued that in the hypothesis of replica grammaticalisation speakers in contact apparently intuitively pursue the same pathways of grammaticalisation that were followed in the Model language. This was frequently misunderstood to imply that speakers were able to trace the diachronic evolution of a grammaticalising item in their L1s, and intentionally replicate it in the contact language. Such a hypothesis was often contested as being impossible (e.g. Matthews and Yip, 2009; Gast and van der Auwera, 2012; Szeto, Matthews and Yip, 2017): how, it was claimed, was it possible for speakers to "know" the diachronic evolution of the Model language and to follow it in grammaticalising categories under contact?

The process of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation in Heine and Kuteva's (2003; 2005) model has not escaped the judgements of its critics either; according to Bruyn (2009) many cases of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation may be described as "apparent grammaticalisation" or calquing (relexifying of a substrate function using lexifier material), as they were considered to proceed too fast in creoles to have gradual stage-by-stage developments. Heine and Kuteva (2005) had described similar processes as 'polysemy copying' but found that even these could often qualify as grammaticalisation processes. Bruyn (2009) has suggested that many such cases could be identified instead as simple reanalyses without grammaticalisation.

Since then, however, alternative hypotheses have been proposed, including one that suggested that speakers may not always be following the diachronic development of a grammaticalising item in the substrate or L1 model, but instead, may retrace stages of the history of the item in the lexifier, from which the lexical material was transferred in the first place (Ziegeler, 2014; 2017, Kuteva et al (to appear)). It was shown in several case studies of Singaporean and Indian English that it may in fact be possible to predict such a process, since the grammaticalisation of a lexical item should normally follow a universal process whenever the same lexical source material is used, and regardless of the circumstances under which it takes place. If that is the case, then all that remains to be investigated is whether the path of grammaticalisation is also universal across a wide range of languages and contact situations, or is unique to the lexifier model, therefore suggesting a "replication as recapitulation" hypothesis. Even in Heine and Kuteva's (2003; 2005) 'replica' grammaticalisation

account, it is usually assumed that the Model language, which supplies the functional justification for replication in contact, is the L₁ of the speakers who are creating the new language.

A further question that arises, then, is in determining *when* contact grammaticalisation follows the grammaticalisation processes of the substrate or L₁ (replica grammaticalisation), when it follows grammaticalisation patterns of the lexifier (replication as recapitulation), and when it simply uses universal strategies of grammaticalisation, known to other contact situations (ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation, according to Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005)). One of the most under-researched areas of study for work in contact grammaticalisation has been the application of the five Principles of Grammaticalisation first outlined by Hopper (1991) and often used to explain monolingual grammaticalisation, but rarely applied to contact.¹ The aims of the present study are to attempt to apply one of the Principles, persistence or retention (Bybee and Pagliuca, 1987), to the case of *already*, an aspect marker in Singapore Colloquial English and Malaysian English, and an example of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation according to Matthews and Yip (2009), and Szeto, Matthews and Yip (2017). Evidence will be provided of the likely adherence of lexical retention from the lexifier source material, inhibiting the grammaticalisation of the adverb with respect to the substrate functions it represents, and providing some evidence that ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation may be more gradual than is assumed in earlier studies. The question is then raised how such lexical retention may emerge in the intuitions of native speakers, a more global problem associated with any situation of grammaticalisation.

Section 2 will look at the earlier studies on the use of *already* in Singapore Colloquial English and Malaysian Colloquial English (MCE), and 3 reviews the controversies surrounding the theories of contact grammaticalisation put forward by Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005), comparing them to earlier approaches of polysemy copying and relexification. Section 3 also briefly reviews the historical development of *already* in English. Section 4 discusses the sociolinguistic status of English in Singapore and Malaysia, and will present the results of a spontaneous survey of the distributional range of *already* amongst Singaporean and Malaysian speakers, in which speakers' intuitions of lexical retention or persistence are tested against three apparently marginal uses of *already* as a perfective aspect marker. Section 5 discusses the survey, and the observations

1 Hopper's (1991) principles are: Layering, Divergence, Specialisation, Persistence, and Decategorialisation. They were seen by Hopper as evidence of grammaticalisation, but not necessarily applying uniquely to grammaticalisation (1991: 21).

of generational age biases in the data. It also proposes a clearer function for the operation of the Lexifier Filter of Bao (2001; 2005) in transfer. Section 6 will summarise the study.

2 *Already* in Singapore English

The use of *already* as a perfective marker was first discussed by Bao (1995) as replicating the exact functions of Mandarin Chinese *le* in Singapore Colloquial English (Singlish).² In earlier studies, such as Ho and Platt (1993) and Kwan-Terry (1989, cited in Bao, 2005), it had been recognized as at least a marker of anteriority, and other functions such as inchoativity were also observed. But Bao's study was to demonstrate that the many different functions were representative of equivalent uses in Chinese: it expressed the entire gamut of perfective functions of marking completion, inchoativity, and inception as well; i.e., other functions representative of perfective markers crosslinguistically. The adverb is clearly identified as one of the defining characteristics of contact English in Singapore, but it is not restricted to use in Singapore English. A glance at the World Atlas of Linguistic Structure (Haspelmath, Dryer et al., 2008) reveals that *already* is also found in MCE, and it is clearly an areal feature of the southeast Asian region, its translation equivalents appearing in many different neighbouring languages. Dahl (2006) finds 21 languages in Haspelmath, Dryer et al (eds., 2005) that have grammaticalised a perfective aspect marker from a lexical source meaning 'already' or 'finish', which led him to refer to the sources as gram-types labelled 'Iamitives'. The majority of such languages are found in the Southeast Asian region, or West Africa. Interestingly enough, personal observations show that it also appears in the L2 English of mainland Chinese students:

- (1) There's no smell already (Julia, 26/2/06, personal observation)

The use of *already* in (1) corresponded precisely with a use in Singaporean English, though the student who used it had never been to Singapore, nor had she had any contact with Singaporean speakers. This was an inchoative use, expressing the fact that the smell (of fish cooking) that had been there previously had now disappeared. There is evidence in such examples that the strategies that contact speakers use to grammaticalise categories in their model languages may often also be found in the grammaticalisation of L2 speakers in any contact situation. Other uses appear in New York Yiddish and South African

2 To the authors' present knowledge, there exist no detailed accounts of *already* in MCE.

English, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) *Online* (22/07/17). So the uses that Singaporeans have for *already* are not exceptional to the dialect, and appear to be classifiable as a universal pathway for the grammaticalisation of perfectives (see also Olssen 2013).

The Singapore English functions of *already* have been frequently described in past studies. Bao's (2005) study encompasses the entire aspectual system of Singapore English, in which he lists a number of functions for *already*. In its original conception, he argued that an entire grammatical sub-system of the substrate (usually Chinese dialects) could be transferred wholesale across to the contact language using material from the lexifier (English), as follows (Bao, 2005: 258):

a. SYSTEM TRANSFER (SYSTRANS)

Substratum transfer involves an entire grammatical subsystem.

However, the transfer was also seen to be regulated by the morphosyntax of the lexifier language:

b. LEXIFIER FILTER (LEXFILTER)

Morphosyntactic exponence of the transferred system conforms to the (surface) structural requirements of the lexical-source language.

By this means, certain unproductive distributional effects in Singapore English (Singlish) could be "filtered out" of the transfer process because they were incompatible with the syntax of English, entailing that the contact language system was not an exact replica of the substrate language system (Bao, 2015: 292).

In suggesting the Lexifier Filter as a control on effective transfer, Bao was principally referring to constraints on word order being determined by the lexical-source language (Bao, 2015: 109), as other studies he cites had previously discussed (e.g. Muhlhausler, 1986; Mufwene, 1990; Lefebvre 1998). In the case of *already* in Singlish or MCE, the word order of Mandarin Chinese or Cantonese, for example, which would allow *already* to immediately follow the verb in completive functions, is overridden by the Lexifier Filter constraints of English in which *already* cannot immediately follow the verb, and so the aspect marker appears sentence-finally in Singlish completive functions, e.g. as in (1) above, and (2a):

(2a)

'I (have) washed my hand' *already*

*'I wash *already* my hand.' (Bao 2005: 239)

Bao (1995) illustrated for the first time the close functional correspondence of *already* with the Mandarin Chinese perfective marker, *le*. His later, (2005) paper listed the completive use (with no reference to time) as in (2a), but also discusses the use of the term completive to refer to the temporal sequence of clauses, in examples such as (2b).

- (2b) 'After you have washed the car, I'll pay you' (Authors' gloss – DZ/SL)
(Bao, 2005: 239n)

These examples are suggesting that completive means simply that the event or action must have taken place at the time of utterance, or prior to reference time. The use in clause-sequencing, then, may be considered an extension of its use in independent main clauses, as it suggests the completion of a discourse unit as well. Such functions have often been referred to in the literature as *anterior*s (see, e.g., Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca, 1994), a stage of grammaticalisation preceding perfectives.

The inchoative use illustrated in (1) refers to the commencement of a new state, or a change of state – formerly there was a smell, now there is no smell. Another example of the former type of inchoative, taken from the authors' personal observation, was provided by a 4-year old child, describing the film *Schindler's List*:

- (3) First it's colour, after that it's black and white already [...]. But at the end part it's all coloured already.

However, Bao's (2005) classifications of inchoatives also refer to the start of a new habit, a state of regular occurrences (4).

- (4) Last time John was a housing agent. Now he drive taxi for a living already.³ (Bao 2005: 240)

The remaining function described by Bao (2005), the inceptive use, can also be found, often occurring ambiguously with the other two functions:

- (5) Miss Lin eat cake already. (Bao 2005: xxx)

The inceptive interpretation would entail that the subject was just about to start, or had just started eating the cake. De-contextualised, the example could

3 *Last time* in Singlish often means 'before'.

also mean that she had eaten the cake (completive) or had started the habit of eating cake (inchoative), which she did not do before (Siemund, 2013: 117) also notes the absence of past tense marking co-occurring with *already*.

Bao's (1995; 2005) observations were preceded by those of Platt, Weber and Ho (1984), for example, who attributed the adverb to both Singaporean and Malaysian English, suggesting it marked completive aspect, as in (6a) but they did not ignore the fact that it could also be used to mean *any more*, as in (6b).

(6a) My father pass away already.

(6b) I don't drink coffee already.

(Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984: 71)

However, they did not mention this as indicative of similar functions of the perfective aspect in Chinese, or in any other language with a perfective grammatical marker, the main objectives of their study being to reveal the universal features of the New English dialects. Fong (2017) claims for an Optimality Theory explanation of *already* in Singlish, in which the possible uses of *already* in Singlish are matched with the possible uses in standard English, and the compatibilities noted: important is that the diphasic nature of the perfect aspect in standard English is readily accounted for in the diphasic nature of *already* in Singlish which always marks a change from one state to another (2017: 91). Such grammatical constraints are significant in the process of interlingual identification (Weinreich 1953; Matras and Sakel, 2007) of polysemies by which speakers creating new replica languages of contact select forms from the lexifier to grammaticalise functions in their model languages. However, *already* in standard English is not an aspect marker and often only functions to reinforce perfect aspect which is already expressed in the verbal morphology. In searching for the basis of interlingual identification in the case of *already*, it is necessary to examine the diachrony of the adverb source as well. This will be discussed further in the sections to follow.

Other studies on the use of *already* in Singapore English have noted that it may appear with negation in Singlish, though not in standard (Singapore) English, e.g. (6b above), and (7).

(7) You want some more or not or don't want **already**?

(Bao and Hong, 2006: 198)

These uses would not appear in standard dialects elsewhere, since they illustrate an inchoative use which is not one of the functions of Standard English

already.⁴ In Bao and Hong's (2006) study of the adverbs *already* and *also* in Singlish, they conclude that the Singlish use of *already*, which is claimed to reflect the functions of the aspect markers *le* (Mandarin), or *liao* (Hokkien), is distinguished from the standard usage by such factors as the syntactic position (it is mainly found in final position) and its co-occurrence with negation, as in (6b – 7).

This is also shown in a recent study by Siemund and Li (2017) in which *already* (together with *also*) are seen to appear in the data from the *Singapore National Archives Oral History Interviews* (OHI). The archives data-base is taken from speakers of all professional and ethnic backgrounds, and has been collected since 1979. The earliest birthdate of the speakers in the archive collection is 1900, and Siemund and Li note that although the data is not fully representative of a diachronic corpus, the use of *already* and *also* may be traced from the time the collection was started, and as such it represents the nearest available account of the diachronic history of Singapore English. Interestingly, the data reveal some examples of *already* appearing twice in the same clause:

(8a) They were *already* actually piling their arms *already*.

(Siemund and Li, 2017: 20 [OHI: CORD-TMK: Reel 2])

(8b) After all this news going on, after the screening, the people were *already* living in fear *already*.

(Siemund and Li, 2017: 20 [OHI: CORD-L: Reel 2]).

Siemund and Li note that the appearance of *already* in two positions in the clause appears to challenge Bao's (2005) hypothesis that the surface structural requirements of the lexifier will control the morphosyntax of the transferred system. However, in these two examples (8a and b), the two uses of *already* seem to conform to the lexifier morphosyntax though with one redundant use in each case – they do not appear to represent cases of present-day Singlish *already* at all. The double use of *already* could be interpreted as an attempt to adhere to the morphosyntactic conventions of the substrate languages, as noted by Siemund and Li (2017: 20): in Mandarin Chinese the use of the perfective marker *le* may be found both post-verbally and clause-finally (though usually with different functions, according to Li and Thompson (1991, and Olssen, 2013). In (8), however, the antecedent *already* follows the auxiliary as in standard English, and is not post-verbal as in Mandarin. In today's uses of Singlish *already* we rarely find both post-verbal and clause-final *already* co-occurring in

4 Note that in this case the lexifier functions do not inhibit the use of *already* in the transfer of the perfective grammatical system from the Chinese model languages.

this way – the most frequent occurrences being clause-final, and in (8), the uses appear to indicate only the redundancy of one *already*. Interestingly also, Siemund and Li's (2017) study reflects the fact that it is amongst Chinese speakers of Singapore English that the use of *already* is the most prevalent, and this reveals a clear need to replicate a substratum function, as is discussed below.

It should be noted at this stage that the typology shown in the range of functions of *already* above is relevant to the present study only as far as the completive use is concerned, which, as will be shown, is the only use affected by the semantics of the lexifier. It is also interesting to note that it appears to be the only function affected by the syntactic constraints of Bao's (2005) 'lexifier filter', as seen in (3a).⁵

3 Contact Grammaticalisation Studies

Contact situations have rarely been the subject of diachronic studies, and in studying the diachrony of contact, it is difficult to make a great deal of headway, for one or more reasons: the replica language has rarely been the medium of a great deal of historical literature in many cases, and further, it has not been in existence (in some cases) for as long as a non-contact language.⁶ The study of grammaticalisation in contact is thus often considered somewhat tenuous. It is also noted that the length of time of grammaticalisation in a contact language is usually commensurate with the relatively small population of speakers through which the contact language diffuses, creating the illusion of accelerated development (Ansaldo, 2009: 111). Grammaticalisation in contact, therefore, formerly regarded as taking place rapidly (Heine and Reh, 1984), or abruptly in time (e.g., Bruyn, 2009) could be seen as evolving no faster than any other form of grammaticalisation, given the small speech communities through which a grammaticalisation process diffuses spatially.

On the other hand, a faster rate of grammaticalisation brought about by a smaller replicating population of speakers should enable a clearer viewpoint

5 As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, the completive function often carries with it an additional sense of agentivity or intention on the part of the actor-subject. However, this is not believed to be a factor of persistence in the semantics of *already* as the typology above demonstrates inchoative functions as in examples (1) and (4), contexts which could possibly admit a reading of 'earlier than expected' though not necessarily agentivity.

6 In using the term 'non-contact' language, it is necessary to maintain some reservation, as, as Mufwene (2008: 166) and Ansaldo (2009: 97) note, a non-contact situation is marked by comparison to a contact situation, which is historically and genetically the norm in the diachronic evolution of languages.

on the origins of many forms which are being replicated. In Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005) we see the foundations of a theory of contact grammaticalisation, intended for any situation of contact, creole or otherwise, and divided into two strategies:

- (i) Ordinary contacted-induced grammaticalisation:
 - a. Speakers notice that in language **M** there is a grammatical category **Mx**.
 - b. They create an equivalent category **Rx** in language **R**, using material available in **R**.
 - c. To this end, they draw on universal strategies of grammaticalisation, using construction **Ry** in order to develop **Rx**.
 - d. They grammaticalise **Ry** to **Rx**.

The identification of language **M**(odel) and language **R**(eplica) in Heine and Kuteva's studies is not stipulated, simply because contact can be related to many different situations. In some cases, the classifications are geographically determined, e.g. Basque has served both as a replica language (**R**) and a Model language (**M**) with regard to Spanish (Heine and Kuteva, 2005: 4). Ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation rests on the assumption that the material used to grammaticalise the Model function is selected on the basis of universal principles: whatever lexical concepts are frequently used cross-linguistically to grammaticalise the **M**-function will be used in the contact situation, selecting the lexical material available in the language being replicated. One of the questions arising from such an account (as noted earlier) is that it is often not known whether the grammaticalisation strategy is reflective of the specific grammaticalisation patterns in the **M**-language or whether it just reflects a cross-linguistically universal pattern that would have been followed, whether the language was in contact with another language or not.

In order to resolve such questions, Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005) proposed a different strategy, less frequently found across languages, in which the stages of development seen in the **R**-language can be replicated in the process of transfer. They suggest a process of Replica Grammaticalisation:

- (ii) Replica grammaticalisation:
 - a. Speakers notice that in language **M** there is a grammatical category **Mx**.
 - b. They create an equivalent category **Rx** in language **R**, using material available in **R**.

- c. To this end, they replicate a grammaticalisation process they assume to have taken place in language **M**, using an analogical formula of the kind $[My > Mx] = [Ry > Rx]$.
- d. They grammaticalise **Ry** to **Rx**.

The differences are thus in the evolutionary processes: in replica grammaticalisation, the entire grammaticalisation ‘route’ is followed by the replicating item in the contact code. The evidence of this type of strategy was in the fact that the ‘routes’ of grammaticalisation in contact were unique to a particular language (or rarely found) and not representative of a universal means of grammaticalisation, as was the case in ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation. Although the original studies of Heine and Kuteva provided clear evidence for this process, for example in the case of the Irish *after*-perfect, a number of studies that followed questioned the possibility that speakers could assume a historical process to have taken place and were able to copy it (e.g. Matthews and Yip 2009, Gast and van der Auwera, 2012). Often the historical processes were representative of universal grammaticalisation paths anyway, and Pietsch (2009) emphasized that such criticisms were misleading, as they implied that the speakers of the contact language were intentionally re-creating past stages of grammaticalisation, when in fact, it was quite often the case that earlier and later stages of grammaticalisation were found to co-exist synchronically. Matras and Sakel (2007), citing Keesing (1991), had also discussed the problems with such interpretations, suggesting that interlingual identification could involve identifying less abstract, lexical source meanings in the polysemy of certain grammatical function words in the lexifier, which would enable the recreation of specific grammaticalisation pathways across contact. This would entail a certain degree of semantic transparency in the lexifier function words; a situation of contact “layering” would be necessary (Ziegeler 2017). The same allusion to the semantic transparency of lexifier function words has been observed by Lefebvre (2011: 24), working on Haitian Creole, who refers to the need for functional categories in the lexifier to have some semantic content in order to be “relabelled” in the contact language; for example, determiners, pronouns, tense, mood and aspect markers can be relabelled while case markers cannot.⁷ This suggests that more advanced grammaticalised categories which have become either too abstract or phonologically eroded for the identification of their lexical sources are less likely to be replicated.

7 Lefebvre’s definition of relabelling is the use of lexifier phonological forms to represent the grammatical functions of the substrate language in contact.

Along the same lines, Bruyn (2009) discusses the differences between ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation and polysemy copying, or calquing, the latter held initially by Heine and Kuteva (2005) to be distinct from grammaticalisation in that it did not reflect progressive stages of development or universal patterns of grammaticalisation. Bruyn provides the case of the tense marker *ben* in Sranan, which is obviously derived from the English past participle *been* and hence it is claimed that it does not serve as an example of grammaticalisation since the original source form is not used alongside its grammaticalised counterpart; rather, it is an example of restructuring or reanalysis. However, this does not deny the possible situation of a secondary grammaticalisation (Brinton and Traugott (2005), where items that are already grammaticalised may be pressed into service for further grammatical functions, and there is no reason why such a process may not occur in contact. The only cases of polysemy copying that may not be considered grammaticalisations are those in which there is a reversal of direction (Bruyn 2009) provides the example of Sranan verbs derived from prepositions) or when there are no clear, universal parallels in other languages. In the present case of *already*, there is plenty of evidence of universal parallels in other languages, as mentioned above.

One of the problems with current research into contact theory is the fact that many of the disagreements are created by the tendency to compare apples with oranges: Bruyn (2009: 326) makes it clear that the kinds of contact situations demonstrated in Heine and Kuteva's (2005) study as those of long-term contact and bilingualism on a broad scale are not the same as those of rapidly-developing creoles. The application of creole theory to situations of post-colonial contact, as in the present study, must also consider the differences of contact situation: Singapore English, for example, has remained in constant contact with its lexifier (and some former substrate languages) throughout its entire history, as pointed out by Bao (2010: 792). It would not be surprising, then, to find the influence of the lexifier to be stronger in such cases. Theories of relexification and transfer, then, are considered to be of less significance to the Singaporean situation than to the situations of typical creoles, and the fact that Singapore English (and to a certain extent, Malaysian English) did not develop in the same way as a typical creole should be taken into consideration when comparing the present situation with other studies on contact grammaticalisation.

3.1 *Replication by Recapitulation*

Ziegeler (2014; 2017), using the example of the comparison between the diachronic grammaticalisation and the frequency of the modal verb *will* in

contact varieties of English, have demonstrated that the replication of historical stages of grammaticalisation in contact could easily be shown to have taken place in the lexifier itself. Such cases were labelled replication by recapitulation in Ziegeler (2014). For example, in the ICE-corpora, the use of *will* to mark habituais in Singapore and Indian English (11.67% and 12.22% respectively) is considerably higher than in British English (3.13%). In the Trinidad and Tobago corpus of the ICE-corpora, Deuber (2010) found that habitual *will* had a frequency of 14.56% in spoken usage, as against 4.72% in spoken usage in the ICE Great Britain corpus, the higher frequencies across more than one variety of ‘new’ English suggesting that substrate features could not have played a very significant role. Such frequencies were matched with the relatively high frequency of habituais marked with the predecessor of *will* in Old English texts, where 59.8% of all such uses were either habitual (described as generic) or having meanings ambiguous between habitual and volitional or habitual and future. Examples from the ICE-corpora included from Indian English (9).

- (9) Everyday I **will** have rice then curry then uh [...] when I go to sleep
I **will** have a glass of milk [...].
(ICE-IND: S1A-072#214:1:A)

Such examples were compared with uses found in the Old English part of the Helsinki Corpus; e.g. (10):

- (10) [...] *elpendes hyd wile drincan water*
elephant's hide will absorb water
‘[...] elephant's hide will absorb water’
(Helsinki Corpus: *Orosius* 230.26.)

The latter example, having an inanimate subject, was classified as ‘generic’ rather than habitual, these two categories being regarded in Ziegeler (2017) as distinguished only by the nature of the subject.

In Ziegeler (2017) other case studies showed that the grammaticalisation of the indefinite article in Singlish followed the early stages of its development in Old English, as a numeral ‘one’, used mainly for specific or referential nouns, a crosslinguistically universal pattern of development also illustrated by Bruyn (2009) as showing abrupt grammaticalisation in Sranan. In both the Singapore case and in Sranan, the numeral form does not appear to grammaticalise to appear with non-specific nouns. In the case of Singlish, non-specific nouns remain as bare forms, as also found in Old English by Hopper (1987), before the

numeral form had spread to non-specific contexts by Middle English. In Singapore English regular contact with the grammaticalised indefinite article available in the co-existing, standard sub-variety would obviate the need to grammaticalise *one* further; the functions of non-specific *one* would eventually be taken up by the available indefinite article, already less effortful in terms of pronunciation.

Another case of replication by recapitulation shown in Ziegeler (2017) was the appearance of the progressive aspect with stative verbs (familiar to many new varieties of English). Stative progressives were also observed in Old and Middle English; e.g. (Mustanoja 1960: 595):

- (11) [...] *we holden on the Crysten feyth and are bylevyng*
 [...] *we hold onto the Christian faith and are believing*
- in Jhesu Cryste*
in Jesus Christ
 '[...] we hold onto the Christian faith and believe in Jesus Christ.'
 (Mustanoja 1960: 595 [Caxton, c. 1489, *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*])

In each case shown, the grammaticalisation path is not represented or replicated in its entirety, but earlier stages of development in the lexifier are simply replicated in the developing new, contact language, indicating that the grammaticalisation paths adopted by newly developing language varieties share similarities with the patterns of the lexifier in its early diachronic stages.

3.2 *Bilingual Studies of the Grammaticalisation of Already*

Amongst the critiques of the work of Heine and Kuteva (2003; 2005), Matthews and Yip (2009) and Szeto, Matthews and Yip (2017) took up the challenge to demonstrate the case of *already* in Singlish and Hong Kong child learner English as an ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation, and Matthews and Yip (2009) studied *give* in Hong Kong child learner English as a case of replica grammaticalisation. They proposed in their study that the same strategies of grammaticalisation in contact could be applied to the stages of grammaticalisation in the bilingual child, supporting their claims with comprehensive empirical data of bilingual acquisition of Hong Kong English. Their studies carefully reveal the contrasts available: in the case of *give* the child progresses from lexical functions of transfer, to those of permission, and finally to passive functions, as stages of acquisition. They note, however, that in ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation, a category in the model language is replicated (using equivalent material from the replica language) but that it does not follow the same pathway of grammaticalisation as in the replica language

(2009: 376). This means, essentially, that the category in the model, substrate language cannot be equated to a similar category in the lexifier. In the case of *already*, since there is no function for the adverb to serve as an aspect marker in the pre-contact lexifier (colonial English), contact-induced grammaticalisation creates a new function in exploiting *already* in the replica language to serve immediately as a marker of perfective aspect, e.g. (Matthews and Yip, 2009: 378).

- (12) I find already the glasses. (HKBCLC/CHILDES: Timmy, 2;07; 10)
(Matthews and Yip, 2009: 378)

In (13) *already* marks completive functions of perfectivity. Inchoative uses are also found, e.g.,

- (13) [child coming in wearing pink dress] I today wear pink. I today wear pink. [later, re-appearing in red dress] I all red already. (HKBCLC/CHILDES: Alicia 1;10; 16)
(Matthews and Yip, 2009: 380)

The authors also point out that the uses are consistent with Cantonese uses, in which an inchoative use can be found with a stative verb, and thus Cantonese is the model language. Interesting is the fact that there is no progressive development shown in the acquisition of these functions by the children (all of the functions could have been acquired at the same time). But on the other hand, there is a 'mixing' of codes in the use of *already* alongside the adverb *now* in one of the children's uses:

- (14) I open already now [holding up an opened present] (HKBCLC/CHILDES: Timmy 2;07; 04)
(Matthews and Yip, 2009: 378)

Matthews and Yip (2009: 378) note that the introduction of *now* reflects the child's understanding of another adverb in English which has the closest approximation of the meaning of *already* in this example. This seems to suggest a reinforcement of the aspectual meanings of *already*, already analysed by the child. Later research undertaken by Szeto et al (2017) on Cantonese/English bilingual children's acquisition revealed that there were multiple elements in the Cantonese model language which led to the grammaticalisation in contact of *already*, and that the grammaticalisation of *already* in this way might represent only a transient stage in the children's language development. Moreover, the grammaticalisation of *already*, they found, was not affected by certain meanings

associated with its use in standard English, those of ‘contrary to expectation’. However, Chen (ms.) showed that there may be distributional constraints on the use of *already* in present-day Singapore English, possibly linked to the lexical source meanings of the adverb in the course of its historical development; these constraints inhibit the use of *already* with accidental events. There is evidence in the *OED Online* of such a developmental path; if such constraints are found, then the process of grammaticalisation of *already* as an aspect marker may be more gradual than at first appears. It is thus necessary to first review the historical source of *already* as it is used in standard English.

3.3 *On the History of Already*

The *OED Online* (accessed 12/08/2017) reveals that the adverb *already* began life as an adjectival predicate or complement, usually of the copula (as in *X is all ready*), and thus having the meaning of ‘fully prepared or ready’. The earliest uses are dated to 1200, but no further examples are provided after the beginning of the 15th century (in the *OED*). One of the earliest examples comes from Chaucer:

- (15) *OED Online*: c1395) CHAUCER *Wife of Bath's Tale* (Harl. 7334) (1885) l. 1025
 Al Redy [c1405 *Hengwrt* and redy] was his answer
 all ready was his Answer
 ‘His answer was all ready’

However, this function cannot be obsolete, as *all ready* still exists in today’s English as a predicate or complement. The *OED* also noted that some of the later examples appear with an inherent sense of preparedness or readiness; the following could well be slightly ambiguous in meaning:

- (16) *OED Online*: 1555 *Hawes' Pastime of Pleasure* (new ed.) xxix. sig. R.ii^v
 And founde the basket, at the grounde already
 and found the basket at the ground already’
 ‘And found the basket, on the ground already/all ready’

The development of adverbial functions carried with it a slight desemanticisation of the meanings of readiness or preparedness that had accompanied its functions as a predicate or complement: the next sense provided in the *OED* is one in which the adverb means “before the time in question or the expected or likely time”. Thus, the adverbialisation process (and univerbation) of *already* was already in progress by the 14th century.

How this occurred is another matter. As noted above, adverbs are only in some cases considered to be instances of grammaticalisation; there is no

lexemic source for the adverbialisation of *already* – it merely undergoes a univerbation process and a category shift. A brief search of a *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse Online* (21–22/08/17) revealed a preponderance of examples co-occurring with other words meaning ‘ready’, or ‘in a state of preparedness’, e.g. *dight* or *boun* as in (17) indicating most likely a need for lexical reinforcement of the original meanings:

(17)

... þe lord was to þe soper set: / þe mete al redy boun
the lord was to the supper sat the food all ready prepared

Vp he toke his holy hond & 3af þe bCenesoun
up he took his holy hand and gave the blessing
‘... the lord had sat down at the supper: the food was all ready prepared.
He raised his holy hand: and gave the blessing.
Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse Online: 1350–1420. *Cursor Mundi*, Ed. Morris.

Boun is a past participle meaning ‘prepared’; another use with a past participle occurs in (18):

(18)

That it be ferm with led and pich. Anon was
that it be firm with lead and pitch soon was

mad a cofre sich, Al redy broght unto his hond
made a coffer such all ready brought to his hand
‘That it be firm with lead and tar. Soon such a coffer was made, already
brought/brought all ready to his hand’
Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse Online: 1325–1408, John Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*.

It is in such contexts that there is a likely ambiguity between the two functions of predicate adjective and adverb. This may have resulted from a reassignment of scope formerly extending leftwards over the antecedent NP (describing the coffer, in (19)), to extend rightwards instead over the verb participle which follows *al redy* (describing the manner in which it was brought). Univerbation or coalescence appears to have accompanied this reanalysis. But the adverbialisation of *already* in this way did not mean the disappearance of its function as a predicate adjective either, as is quite clear from Early Modern English examples, taken from the EME I file of the Helsinki Corpus:

(19)

We found all redy, The lordes, Turkis, and
 We found all ready The lords Turks and
 Sarrasyns, Mamolukes, as well of Jherusalem, as of Rama.
 Saracens Mamluks as well of Jerusalem as of Rama
 'We found all ready, the lords, Turks, and Saracens and Mamluks, of
 Jerusalem, as well as of Rama.

Helsinki Corpus: 1500–1570, *Torkington, Richard.*
Ye Oldest Diarie of Englysshe Travell
 Ed. W. J. Loftie.

Thus, it was evident that in the 16th century the complement form was still in use, and in fact, still is today, as its usage in (20) would not be unusual in today's English. An example was found in the ICE-GB corpus:

(20) Pete and I were all ready to raid those camera shops.
 (ICE-Great Britain:W2B-004 #113:1)

In fact, what appears to have taken place, in grammaticalisation terms, would be likened to a 'split' (Heine and Reh, 1984) or divergence (Hopper, 1991), wherein the lexical source of a grammaticalising item continues on its usual function alongside the grammaticalising form. In the present case, the principle of a 'split' or divergence is not restricted to grammaticalisation alone, and it is clear that it may be found in other processes of category change as well.

The development of meanings of 'earlier than expected' emerging in the history of *already*, implied in the meanings of preparedness and expectation (readiness), are now part of the present-day polysemy of the adverb, along with the basic senses of completion. Inchoative and incipient functions are more likely to have developed in the lexifier using adverbs such as *now*, as shown in (15), but have never been part of the range of functions of *already* in the lexifier, as shown above. Thus the use of *already* in Singapore and Malaysian English does not replicate, stage-by-stage, any functions appearing in the history of the lexifier; it is not a replication-by-recapitulation process, nor is it a case of replica grammaticalisation as shown by Heine & Kuteva (2005) for the *after*-perfect in Irish English. Since the adverb's functions are modelled on all the perfective functions of Chinese or Malay, simultaneously, the process can only be described as an ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation, the adverb supplying the lexical source for the grammaticalisation of perfective functions, post-contact. However, as noted above, the abruptness of such processes has been questioned in previous studies (e.g. Bruyn 2009) as untypical of grammaticalisation.

In the replication of the perfective senses of the model languages such as Malay and the Chinese dialects, it would appear that the adverb may have been selected by some speakers of Singapore English to grammaticalise all the model functions. However, Chen's (2008) study revealed some rejections of its use with accidental events, which are not exempt from perfective marking in Chinese and Malay (see section 5). Thus, it would appear that although for some speakers, there is a complete replication of all the perfective functions in the model, for others, the additional nuances of expectation and readiness (and 'earlier than expected') may be inhibiting the distributional grammaticalisation of the adverb relative to the model language grammaticalisation of perfectivity. Thus, the lexifier would be acting as a constraint on grammaticalisation, and we are not talking about a blind re-coding of a model category. We now turn to a recent empirical study of the grammatical distribution of *already* as a perfective marker in Singapore English and Malaysian English, in order to investigate to what extent speakers' intuitions on its present-day distribution may in fact reflect the historical meanings associated with earlier developments of the adverb.

4 A Note on the Dialects under Review

Singaporean and Malaysian English are often compared with one another, as they are in close geographical proximity, have some common sociocultural history including being a part of British Malaya (1771–1957),⁸ and are seen to share similar features. However, as observed by Pennycook (1994), the divergent ideologies adopted by the two countries in terms of education, language and political priorities to manage their multilingual and multiethnic populations while at the same time remain relevant to modernisation efforts have contributed significantly to differential rates of the spread and indigenisation of English. Importantly, while English is found throughout Singapore and increasingly as a first or home language of Singaporeans (32.6% of Chinese, 17% of Malays and 41.6% of Indians in 2010, according to Bao (2015:72)), in Malaysia, it remains a mostly urban phenomenon and is typically just one language, often not as a first language, in the repertoires of largely multilingual (at least bilingual) speakers. The divergence is potentially relevant to the issue at hand because we are looking at two locations with similar contact histories but which have since been subject to differing sets of pressure.

8 Singapore became part of British Malaya in 1819. The settlement that was to become the city of Kuala Lumpur was founded in 1857.

Schneider's (2003) 5-stage developmental hierarchy of 'New' Englishes provides a helpful snapshot of the global states of English in the two locations in terms of the evolution of standard as well as colloquial varieties. Singapore English is classified at Stage 4, while Malaysian English remains at Stage 3. The difference between the two stages is that while Stage 3 reflects nativisation, Stage 4 exhibits endonormative stabilization. Reasons for the disparate categorisations are primarily to do with contrasting language policy positions that have either promoted or slowed the entrenchment of English in the general population. In Singapore, the development of an endonormative standard, which Gupta (1994) has described as "varying little from any other international standard", has been encouraged by officially establishing English as the working language of government. There has also been a total conversion to English as the medium of education at all levels of schooling, with the official language of one's ethnicity a compulsory subject taught in Singapore schools, whether or not it has been acquired in the home beforehand. In contrast, the official working language of government and the public sector is Malay, and the trend of Malaysian language policy through successive governments is a commitment mostly to education in Malay, the national language and that aligned to the dominant ethnic group. Partial support for the other ethnically-aligned languages, Mandarin and Tamil, is given in the form of availability of primary schools taught in these languages which parents of any ethnicity can select. English has not been supported extensively or consistently in the public education system since the 1970s but is available privately, and it is not unusual for Malaysians to have spent some but not all of their schooling in English-medium institutions. Regardless, English enjoys a status that has emerged through its perceived value as capital for employment, further education and links to modernity. Unlike the situation in Singapore, Standard British English remains the reference standard variety.

Both locations also have colloquial varieties that are locally known as "Singlish" and "Manglish" (MCE), respectively. They possess features that vary considerably from the standard. Reflecting the English-dominant environment in Singapore, Singlish more recently has been considered to co-exist in a diglossic structure with the standard variety. It has a questionable status in Singapore, although it is sometimes accorded covert prestige amongst the locals in the search for a new cultural identity (see, e.g. Alsagoff, 2010). MCE similarly can be said to exist in diglossia, however, not just with Standard English, but in a complexity that includes other languages. (Here, we describe the conditions applicable to Greater Kuala Lumpur, which includes the capital city and surrounding areas (site of the data collection for the present study), as English does not appear consistently across the nation. English has been noticed, as a primary language of social interaction, and in various areas of education,

the professions, and in some areas of governance (Asmah, 2012) *but* it is often found within multilingual strategies such as tranlanguaging and code-switching. In fact, mixing is so prevalent that Asmah calls this way of speaking English-X, with X referencing the other language(s) speakers bring in. Ethnicity is a major factor that determines these other language(s). Intra/intergroup communications involving Malays will typically include Malay, for the Chinese, a Chinese dialect (usually Cantonese in Kuala Lumpur), Mandarin, and/or Malay, and for Indians, Tamil or other Indian languages and/or Malay. English that is more reflective of the standard variety, i.e., fewer contact effects, is observed in domains such as the professions and various private educational sectors. The presence of English contrasts with the almost exclusive use of Malay in government and public sector communications. (Asmah, 2012). While it needs substantiation, one way we can interpret the growing difference between Singapore and Malaysia is that the former has moved away from conditions in which contact effects from intensive mixing of various languages is prevalent whereas in the latter, this is still very much the situation, with the difference being that today, Mandarin in Singapore and Malay in Malaysia are increasingly important respective adstrates.

As mentioned, both Singlish and MCE are contact varieties marked extensively by contact features, many of which are shared (Pillai, 2012) because of shared sociohistorical conditions, including common language substrates. Amongst those previously discussed specifically in the Singaporean context include the omission of pronouns (pro-drop), and the frequent use of discourse particles (usually borrowed from the languages of the historical contact ecology, as discussed comprehensively by Lim, 2007). There is also a high frequency of topicalisation (see, e.g. Bao 2001), variable use of past tense (e.g. Ho and Platt, 1993), and variable use of plural marking and indefinite articles (e.g. Author1, 2003), the use of *one* as a relative clause marker (Alsagoff and Ho, 1998; Bao, 2009), and as a marker of emphasis (Bao, 2009), and a universal tag question (*isn't/is it*), also observed in Platt, Weber and Ho (1984), and still currently in use. The features are symptomatic of the transfer of grammatical functions from the local languages, southern Chinese dialects featuring most prominently. In fact, for Singlish, it is such prolific grammatical transfer that it has motivated some researchers to admit that Singlish is “an Asian variety of English with a Sinitic-type grammar” (Ansaldò, 2009: 52), and for others to suggest that the transfer is of entire grammatical systems from Chinese (Bao 2005, 2015). MCE features are by comparison very under-studied but those above-mentioned for Singlish are described as present in the Malaysian context (Azirah, 2002, 2007, Azirah & Tan, 2012, Baskaran, 2008, Platt & Weber, 1980, etc). We suggest therefore that the earlier stages of contact were also largely Sinitic-influenced. This has support from the sociohistories of many urban areas

important during British Malaya period, which were characterised by majority Chinese populations. In Kuala Lumpur for instance, the proportion of Chinese residents reached 72% in 1901 (Butcher, 1979:17), and although this figure has slowly decreased through subsequent decades (to just over 50% in the 1970 (UNESCO Report 1972: 6)), Chinese-dominant Kuala Lumpur held until the last census taken in 2010 (with Malays at 45.9% and Chinese at 43.2%).⁹ In addition, the uptake of English education by locals were mostly by non-Malays. To our knowledge, no substantial studies have been done on the linguistic ecologies of particular cities but it seems likely that similar to Singapore, which served as the centre of British Malaya, the various Chinese languages were significant substrates in the periods when the attested features of MCE, including localised *already*, emerged.

It is not surprising then that the substrate histories of Singapore and Malaysian cities (here represented by Kuala Lumpur) are similar. Substrate languages of Singapore once amounted to up to 10 southern Chinese dialects, according to Ho and Platt (1993), of which Hokkien (Fujian Southern Min) and Cantonese may be considered to hold the majority; others included Teochew (Chaozhou), Hakka (Kejia) and Hainanese, with Baba Malay spoken by the Peranakans, descendants of Chinese-Malay mixed families associated mainly with the town of Malacca in Malaysia (see, e.g. Bao, 2015: 49). Today, Malay is the national language of Singapore and is spoken by around 15% of the Singaporean population. The Chinese making up the majority of the population, at around 75% and southern Indians and others (about 6%) do not typically use or learn Malay at all. These figures were current at the time of Ho and Platt (1993) and have changed little since then, according to Leimgruber (2009). English has the status of a neutral, lingua franca in Singapore, is a working language for all ethnicities, and is one of four official languages, the others being Malay, Tamil, and Mandarin Chinese. Mandarin has never actually been associated with the substrate, though nowadays it forms a highly active adstrate language, and bilingualism in Mandarin and English (as well as frequent code-switching) is the norm for most Chinese, for whom the former southern dialects are now mainly used for communication with the older generation.

The composition of the substrate languages of Malaysia is historically similar to that of Singapore, although impact of any one language on another will vary depending on a number of factors such as geographical area, the availability of English education, and speaker ethnicity. Various sub-varieties of Hokkien, some of which serve as lingua francas for Chinese populations in northern Malaysian cities, were and are also still present. In central Malaysian

9 Strictly speaking, the figure of 45.9% includes non-Malays who are categorised as indigenous to Southeast Asia.

cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Cantonese is the established lingua franca amongst the Chinese and it is likely to be an important substrate at least in early periods. The influence of Malay historically in Kuala Lumpur is not likely to have been significant, in contrast to today, where urban Malay-English bilingual speakers are now highly visible, and clearly Malay features are emerging. A further complication is that spoken varieties of Malay in urban areas themselves have long been in contact with the Chinese dialects, and English. Furthermore, while Malay is the national language, its penetration into the non-Malay population as a commonly-shared linguistic resource is limited and it is still very much identified with the Malay population. In addition, the repertoires and language preferences of Greater Kuala Lumpur residents are incredibly varied, which makes generalisations applicable only to a point. Just as in Singapore, English has the status of an ethnically-neutral lingua franca but is seldom used without mixing (Lee 2015).

In a way, the sub-variety of MCE may thus be considered as representing an ‘older’ form of a common dialect, with features likely to have been present in Singapore English at an earlier stage of its history, where its less frequent use in the community and in fewer domains, and its continued intensive contact in a multilingual setting may mean a slower rate of internal evolution and change. The important similarities and contrasting points of the evolution of English Singapore and Malaysian contexts are summarised in Table 1.

Importantly, these differences position English in the Malaysian context as reflective of English in Singapore in an earlier period, i.e., more open to influence and at the same time, more constrained by other languages in its ecology, and make it *particularly* apt to study a feature such as *already* which was and is present in both dialects.

4.1 *Age-Grading in Variation Studies*

Age-grading as a means of measuring language change in apparent time has not been a major factor in studies on grammaticalisation in non-contact situations, let alone in contact settings, though it has long been a diagnostic in sociolinguistic studies, first exploited by Labov (1966), according to Bailey (2012). Bailey (2012: 312) describes apparent time studies as an “excellent surrogate” for real-time investigation of diachronic data, though, like many others, he advises that it must be used with caution if the objective is to determine the path of language change. For example, although Labov had undertaken apparent time studies on the understanding that the individual’s vernacular stabilizes in adult life, Bailey (2012) comments on studies in which it can be seen to change according to factors relating to the individual’s social environment (e.g. Sankoff and Laberge, 1978). He also refers to research in which an idiolect is shown to be still not stable in adolescence (citing Cukor-Avila, 2000), making

TABLE 1 Summary of key characteristics of English in Singapore and Malaysia.

Characteristic	Singapore	Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur in particular)
Current stage (using Schneider's dynamic model)	Stage 4 – endonormative stabilisation	Stage 3 – nativisation
Support in education	Complete	Inconsistent, unstable, contested
Official language status	Working language of government	Partial. Used unofficially as a secondary language
Standard English	Endonormative	Exonormative (British English)
Use for social interaction	Extensive for all groups and domains	Extensive for some urban sub-communities, mostly non-Malays, lingua franca for educated across ethnicities
Diglossia	Standard and colloquial varieties	Standard, colloquial varieties, other languages (Malay, Mandarin, Cantonese)
Significant substrate languages	Hokkien, Cantonese, other Chinese dialects, Baba Malay, Malay, Mandarin (more recent)	Cantonese, Hokkien, other Chinese dialects, colloquial Malay (possibly more recent)
Significant adstrates	Mandarin	Cantonese, Malay, Mandarin (growing)
No. of first language speakers	32.6% of Chinese, 17% of Malays and 41.6% of Indians spoke English as their home language in 2010	5% (2005) but is most likely higher in urban areas

comparisons with such age-groups somewhat risky. Furthermore, he notes that although resurveying the same participants decades later may be necessary to prove the viability of apparent-time studies, real-time research of this kind is quite difficult to undertake in terms of achieving adequate precision in repetitions of the same methodology.

Wagner (2012: 377) also mentions the difficulties of assuming too much from the results of apparent-time studies, and cites Wagner and Sankoff (2011) who found that some speakers tend to revert from innovative uses to more conservative uses as they grow older – in their study, it was the use of the periphrastic future tense form versus the more conservative inflected future form in Montreal French. This indicates that it may be often social pressures that influence the selection of alternative forms in language change – innovative forms are associated with younger speakers. However, it is not necessarily an indication of the reversal of the direction of change across a community, as a conservative use will disappear with the life-span of its (older) speakers, leaving a period of longer duration for more innovative uses to remain in the speech community.

Much of the earlier research using apparent-time methods was centred around variationist work examining phonological features across English dialects. Less research has been undertaken with a view to combining grammaticalisation research with apparent-time studies, an obvious starting point from which to investigate rapid grammaticalisation changes over time. One recent grammaticalisation study to consider the apparent-time factor has been Tagliamonte, Durham and Smith (2014), whose study of *be going to* in British and Canadian English showed a more conservative use of the periphrastic future with speakers aged 66 or over than with younger speakers. They cite Brinton and Traugott (2005) who emphasise the importance of frequency as evidence for the grammaticalisation of a form diachronically: more frequent token counts usually entail a higher level of grammaticalisation. Frequency patterns can be readily measured across diachronic corpus texts, but it is less often the case that statistical frequency across generations of speakers can be seen to provide insight into the rate of grammaticalisation of a feature. Hopper and Traugott (2003: 239) also allude to the importance of increased diachronic frequency levels related to generational differences (which may thus reveal increasing levels of grammaticalisation). In Tagliamonte et al's (2014) study, age and generational differences were cross-factorised into the total results together with effects of linguistic environment and geographical differences. In doing so, it can be seen that the increased frequency of the item was due to an increase in the range of linguistic environments in which it was used as it became grammaticalised amongst younger speakers.

Other studies which have referred to generational differences in grammaticalisation have included Schwenter (1994), who found, in his study of the hodiernal perfect in Alicante Spanish, that speakers aged 40 and above had a more restricted use of it than speakers aged 18–25 to refer to events in the past (without current relevance) which happened on the day of speaking. The use of the preterite rather than the present perfect amongst the older speakers

was 27% as against only 6% amongst the younger speakers, illustrating that the generalization of the present perfect to a wider distributional range of environments was taking place faster in the younger generation of speakers. Romaine and Lange (1991) also refer to age-grading effects in their review of the grammaticalisation of the quotative marker *like* in English, using a range of studies for their evidence.

4.2 Empirical Investigations

The following surveys take into consideration the factor of age-grading in the grammaticalisation of *already* in Singapore and Malaysian English, using intuitive judgements to test for distributional preferences as evidence of the presence of lexical persistence in the use of *already*. The presence of lexical persistence is hypothesized to reflect levels of distributional grammaticalisation across apparent time.

4.2.1 The Singapore Survey

A brief questionnaire (which had already been tested as a pilot study using 19 informants) was posted online as a Google application,¹⁰ with the following sample sentences for evaluation:

- i. *Aiyah! I hurt my hand already!*
- ii. *Aiyoh! I lost my wallet already!*
- iii. *Wah lao! My computer crash already!*¹¹

All three sentences referred to accidental events, the first one having formerly been used in Chen's exercise. The participants in the Singapore study were completely anonymous, the only information requested of them being whether they were brought up from childhood in Singapore or Malaysia, and their age. The single question to be answered was whether the sample sentences were "good" Singlish or not, and the response categories were: *Good*, *Possible but not Good*, and *Bad*. The intermediate category of evaluation, *Possible but*

10 The link to the Singapore survey may be found on: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Hjf rNxRPWhaWxTgC3XBRpr4ePydDrcPYS8d6LLi5_To/edit?ts=599eefe7.

11 The sentences were accompanied by appropriate discourse markers (*aiyah*, *aiyoh* and *wah lao*) in order to emphasize the accidental nature of the event described, as suggested by one participant in the pilot survey. The absence of past tense marking (particularly for regular pasts, as in sentence 3) is frequent in Singlish when the verb co-occurs with *already* as a completive marker, as noted above.

not good was taken to allow for judgements that might include rejection but with the additional speculation that the example sentence could occur. The objective in simplifying the survey format in this way was to avoid the appearance of an academic survey, which would most likely elicit an over-careful or less spontaneous response, or maybe none at all (in cases in which the participant did not wish to be seen condoning non-standard usage). Another reason was the time factor, since many speakers could be turned away from a survey that was too wordy, and the speed of a rapid, simple ('fun') survey was thus likely to be more appealing. The survey hyperlink was first sent out to various Singaporean contacts via smartphone applications such as *What's App* and *Facebook*; the contacts then forwarded it on to increasingly wider social networks until a total of 45 responses was eventually received (one had to be rejected), after which the incoming responses started to slow down and the site was then closed. The first respondents were asked not to discuss the answers amongst themselves, but as the networks rapidly broadened, this became a factor that was naturally difficult to control. However, there did not appear to be any immediate evidence of priming in the answers, which were collected in the order in which they came in. The majority of the data was obtained over a period of less than one week.

The speed and brevity of the survey precluded the advantages of assembling large amounts of sociolinguistic biodata such as details about the participants' education or professional status. However, questions requesting such information might have provided unnecessary distractions from the main objectives of the task and made the respondents more reflective of the social status of Singlish, since (as noted earlier) Singlish has an ambiguous identity in Singapore. The minimal background information regarding place of up-bringing and age were considered less likely to create such problems. 21 of the respondents were aged under 50 and 23 were aged 50+. The 50-year cut-off point was seen as providing a diachronic perspective on the data, and along with this, enabling predictions to be made according to apparent-time gradings (cf., e.g. Labov, 1966; Bailey, 2004; Wagner, 2012). Singapore's political independence was established in 1965, after which English-medium education became the norm everywhere, and thus age-grading was considered a significant factor. The following tables illustrate the results obtained.

Given that the category *Possible, but not good*, rules out accepting the usage, even though it might have been considered a possible usage, the data above thus reveal the following relative frequencies in terms of rejection:

Under 50s group (21): 0 *Bad*, 19 *Possible but not good* responses, across 126 possible rejections. $19/126 = 15.07\%$ rejections in the entire group.

TABLE 2 Evaluations of 3 sentences using already as an aspect marker in Singlish: participants aged under 50:

N = 21

	Good	%	Possible but not good	%	Bad
Q1	17	26.9	4	6.3	0
Q2	11	17.4	10	15.8	0
Q3	16	25.3	5	7.9	0
Total = 63	44	69.8	19	30.1	0

TABLE 3 Evaluations of 3 sentences using already as an aspect marker in Singlish: participants aged 50+

N = 23

	Good	%	Possible but not good	%	Bad	%
Q1	8	11.5	12	17.3	3	4.3
Q2	8	11.5	11	15.9	4	5.7
Q3	11	15.9	9	13	3	4.3
Total = 69	27	39.1	32	46.3	10	14.4

TABLE 4 Summary of Singlish results (%): both groups.

	Good Singlish	Either possible but not good or bad Singlish
Under 50 group	69.8	30.1
50+ group	39.1	60.7

For the 50+ group (23): 10 *Bad*, 32 *Possible but not good* responses = 42 rejections in total, across 138 possible rejections. 42/138 = 30.4% of the entire group = 101.7% more than the Under 50 group.

Bearing in mind that the rejections in the Under 50s group were derived solely from the slightly weaker evaluation, *Possible but not good*, the proportions are seen in Figures 1 and 2 to be almost the converse of each other.

Under 50 Group (Singlish)

■ Acceptances ■ Rejections

FIGURE 1

Results summary for the respondents in the Singapore group aged under 50.

50+ Group (Singlish)

■ Acceptances ■ Rejections

FIGURE 2

Results summary for the respondents in the Singapore group 50+.

4.4 *The Malaysian English Survey*

The same survey was distributed as a Google online survey, as with the Singapore group, via a social network of internet applications,¹² to speakers of Malaysian English in Kuala Lumpur. One of the sentences (iii) was changed slightly to allow for a more typical, local use of the discourse particle: instead of *Wah lao! My computer crash already!* it was presented as: *Aiyeh! My computer crash already!*. For the Malaysian English survey, the final numbers of

¹² <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BxYeR4LFOijFz93ezyjzkkEBwdxas2oWEicUuxws200/edit?ts=59c6d9bb>.

TABLE 5 Evaluations of 3 sentences using *already* as an aspect marker in MCE: participants aged under 50:

N = 78

	Good	%	Possible but not good	%	Bad	%
Q1	23	9.8	36	15.4	19	8.1
Q2	25	10.7	34	14.5	19	8.1
Q3	15	6.4	36	15.4	27	11.5
Total = 234	63	26.9	106	45.3	65	27.8

TABLE 6 Evaluations of 3 sentences using *already* as an aspect marker in MCE: participants aged 50+:

N = 23

	Good	%	Possible but not good	%	Bad	%
Q1	6	8.7	4	5.8	13	18.8
Q2	6	8.7	9	13.0	8	11.2
Q3	3	4.3	7	10.1	13	18.8
Total = 69	18	21.7	20	28.9	34	48.8

TABLE 7 Summary of MCE results (%): both groups.

	Good MCE	Either possible but not good or bad MCE
Under 50 group	26.9	73.1
50+ group	21.7	77.7

respondents totalled 101, as there was a greater number of Under 50 respondents. However, the 50+ group had the same number of respondents as the Singaporean group, as shown in Tables 5–7:

Clearly, the rejection rate was much higher across both age groups in the MCE data than in the Singaporean data. The relative frequencies may be calculated as follows:

For the Under 50s group (78): 65 Bad, 106 Possible but not good = 171 rejections in total, across 468 possible rejections. $171/468 = 36.5\%$ of the entire group.

Under 50 Group (MCE)

■ Acceptances ■ Rejections

FIGURE 3

Results summary for the respondents in the Malaysian group aged under 50.

50+ Group (MCE)

■ Acceptances ■ Rejections

FIGURE 4

Results summary for the respondents in the Malaysian group aged 50+.

For the 50+ group (23), 34 Bad, 20 Possible but not good, across 138 possible rejections. $54/138 = 39.1\%$ of the entire group = 2.6% more than the Under 50s. The age grading for the Malaysian respondents was thus not shown to be as significant as in the Singaporean group, and the rejection rate was almost the same for both older and younger respondents.

5 Discussion

It is argued, as mentioned earlier, that the differences between the Singaporean groups and the Malaysian groups is simply due to the fact that the Singa-

poreans tend to have a more frequent usage of English in the community than do the Malaysians, and thus allowing for faster rates of evolution and change. The more conservative profile of the older Singaporean speakers in the survey is therefore believed to be comparable to the more conservative choices of the Malaysian groups in general, and the higher rates of rejection in the distribution of the aspectual marker reflect a less frequent usage of the dialect in the local domain which would otherwise allow for certain semantic features to be 'bleached out' over time. If the surveys do provide an approximate measure of actual usage, the older age-groups in both surveys testify to the correlations between distributional generalization of the aspect marker and the length of time the feature has been in use in the community.

Such examples might appear as testimony to the hypothesis that language change takes place in L1 acquisition, as many (generative) studies have long maintained. However, this hypothesis rules out intra-generational variation, and the variable frequencies of use of *already* seen in the above age-graded data would need to be explained. There would also be no evidence for the instability of the individual vernacular at various stages of his or her life, as discussed above. The extension of use of a form across generations is merely evidence that younger speakers tend to innovate from an older usage, expanding its distribution to an ever-widening range of functions. As a result, the longer a form is used in a community, the more likely it is to undergo semantic erosion. The data presented are a clear indication that such innovation is or has already taken place in the case of the distribution of *already*, which is obviously more restricted in its usage with older speakers of Singlish: the perfective aspect marker is dispreferred in contexts in which the event marked by it referred to something accidental or unexpected. This is clearly conveyed in one comment, elicited from a participant aged 40–50, as part of the Singaporean pilot study: *Already is not used for accidents. It's to indicate that something has been done, completed, finished. E.g. Aiya, I send already lah. Note we tend to pronounce it as awready.*¹³ There were many comments following the surveys, but some of them did not specify the reason for rejection or acceptance of the sentences, or reveal that they were aware of the precise semantic constraints on the distribution of *already*. As a preliminary observation, though, the results of the present study do testify to the presence of retention or persistence (Hopper, 1991) in the grammaticalisation of a lexical source item across contact: the context of an accidental event is inconsistent with the lexical meaning of the source item as a predicate adjective meaning 'in a state of preparedness', and indicates that not all of the full range of perfective uses

13 The Singlish discourse particle *aiya* is used to express dismay, *lah* is another discourse particle, used for emphasis.

(completion, inchoativity, and incipience) may yet have been included in its distributional range as one would expect. In previous contact studies of grammaticalisation, there has been little evidence of persistence recorded, to our present knowledge.¹⁴ Such evidence strongly reinforces the hypothesis of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation as an explanation for the presence of *already* as an aspectual marker in Singapore English, as hypothesized by Matthews and Yip (2009) and Szeto et al (2017).

Although it could be argued that the respondents had perceived other features in the sample sentences which were motivating their responses, many of the responses exploited the “Comments” space on the survey to express their discontent with the use of *already*, for example (in the Singaporean survey):

- (21) a. *Why the already?*
 b. *“Lah” is often used in place of already.*
 c. *To make the statements more singlish, instead of using already, can use “liao”. It has the same meaning.*

And in the Malaysian survey:

- d. *Already strange because external to the person.*
 e. *Don’t need already.*
 f. *Like the already before the verb.*
 g. *Shorter better. Without already ok.*
 h. *We usually use it for sentences like “I have done that already, or “We eat already”.*
 i. *Those who speak Hokkien would end their sentences with “liao” instead of already.*
 j. *Good but not gramamtical [sic.]*

Interestingly, the suggestions for the use of borrowed aspectual markers such as *lah* or *liao* in (21c and 21i) may indicate that the lexical persistence in *already* is not present in the use of *lah* or *liao*, being grammaticalised from lexical source verbs meaning ‘finish’. In fact, the translation equivalents of the sample sentences in the substrate languages do permit the co-occurrence of the aspect marker to mark accidental events (see (23) and (24) below), whereas this environment does not admit the distribution of *already* in Singlish and MCE for many speakers. However, the question is how speakers of Singlish and MCE may have access to the earlier meanings of the lexical source for the aspectual

14 One exception is Bao and Wee’s (1999) study on *give* in Singapore English, cited in Matthews and Yip (2009) as showing persistence of lexifier meaning in contact. However, Bao (2015) finds little evidence for the use of the *give*-passive in present-day Singapore English.

marker, in order to understand its distributional limits in present-day usage. Studies described above (section 3.1), using Singapore and Indian English (Ziegeler, 2017), have shown a close similarity between early stages in the pathways of grammaticalisation of the lexifier language and high frequency linguistic environments in the grammaticalisation of an item in the present-day contact situation, as discussed above. Such findings have been hypothesized to indicate a partial recapitulation of the lexifier stages of grammaticalisation. However, *already* has never been used in standard English to grammaticalise perfective aspect, and so the evidence observed in the data above is not readily explained by replication as recapitulation of the historical functions of the lexifier.

In the case of *already*, the substrate languages provide the functional model, but the item selected for the substrate model language functions appears to be affected (to a certain extent) by the continued adherence of lexical nuances associated with its historically earlier source form, a quantifier + predicate adjective, *all + ready* (as seen in 3.3). Thus, two paths of development are observed in the history of *already*:

- (i) a reanalysis + univerbation from quantifier + predicate adjective → adverb (standard English); and
- (ii) grammaticalisation from adverb → aspect marker (Singlish and MCE)

Only the second stage (ii) is an instance of grammaticalisation, and in the present case, an ordinary, contact-induced grammaticalisation. This does not replicate any grammaticalisation in the lexifier, since English has no use for *already* as a perfective aspect marker, nor is it an example of replica grammaticalisation of the stages of development represented in the model languages, since the persistence shown is from the lexifier. This may be seen below in the translations of the survey examples in the model languages.

5.1 *Substrate Constraints on Distribution*

That the lexical nuances persisting in the case of *already* cannot be associated with the substrate model languages is shown in present-day Cantonese and Mandarin, the most important substrate and adstrate languages for Singlish and MCE, which do not have the same restrictions, for example:¹⁵

15 Although there were a number of southern Chinese dialects/languages contributing to the Singaporean substrate, it is usually agreed that they share principal grammatical features (e.g. Bao, 2015: 51). Abbreviations in (20–22) are the following: POSS: possessive

(Kuala Lumpur) Cantonese:

- (22) a. *Ngo soeng-hoi ngo ge sau zo.*
 1SG hurt-COMPL 1SG POSS hand PERF
 'I hurt my hand'
- b. *Ngo m-gin-zo ngo ge ngan-baau.*
 1SG NEG-lost-PERF 1SG POSS wallet
 'I lost my wallet'
- c. *Ngo ge din-nou m-hang zo.*
 1SG POSS computer NEG-move PERF
 'My computer crashed'

Szeto et al (2017) note that the functional need replicated in the grammaticalisation of *already* in Hong Kong bilingual children's learner English is found in a combination of two markers, verb-final *zo*₂ and sentence-final *laa*₃ (and not simply *zo*₂ alone), which together supply the meanings of completion (in *zo*₂) and change-of-state (in *laa*₃) (2017: 496).¹⁶ However, regardless of how many functional elements provide the actual correspondence, Szeto et al (2017) still find that the nuances of expectation or preparedness are not obligatorily associated with the meaning of the Cantonese model functions, unlike in the standard English use of *already*.

Mandarin similarly allows perfective markers to co-occur with predicates referring to accidental events:¹⁷

marker, NEG: negative marker, PERF: perfective, COMPL: complementiser, 1SG: first person singular. Glosses are the authors' own.

- 16 *Zo* may occur sentence-finally in Kuala Lumpur Cantonese, possibly due to the influence of contact languages such as Hokkien. *Hoi* (a habitual marker in Hong Kong English) is used in (20a) with a completive or perfective function similar to *liao* and *zo*, possibly under the contact influence of Hakka, in which it has this function.
- 17 However, it is unlikely that in their earlier diachronic functions such forms would have appeared in contexts referring to accidental events (according to Alain Peyraube, p.c.). The lexical sources for marking perfectivity in Chinese were originally derived from a paradigm of verbs with meanings of 'finish' or 'achieve', of which only one was eventually selected, *liao/le* (了), a process of "lexical unification" according to Peyraube (2009) – or specialization in Hopper (1991). The Cantonese marker *zo* is believed to have come from the perfective aspect marker in Medieval Chinese (and some present-day dialects) 着 (*zhe/zhao/zhuo*) (Alain Peyraube and Liu Danqing (p.c.)).

Mandarin:

- (23) a. *Aiyo, wo de shou souchang le.*
 Aiyoh 1SG POSS hand hurt PERF
 'I hurt my hand'
- b. *Aiyo, wo de gianbao bujian le/liao.*
 Aiyoh 1SG POSS wallet lost PERF
 'I lost my wallet'
- c. *Huai- diao le/liao wo de dian nao.*
 break COMPL PERF 1SG POSS computer
 'My computer crashed'

Malay seems to prefer the perfective before the verb. The perfective adverb is *sudah* (sometimes shortened to *dah*) in more informal contexts and *telah* in more formal contexts.¹⁸

- (24) a. *Tangan aku (su)dah sakit.*
 hand 1SG PERF hurt
 'I hurt my hand'
- b. *Dompot saya (su)dah hilang.*
 wallet 1SG PERF lose
 'I lost my wallet'
- c. *Komputer saya (su)dah rosak.*
 computer 1SG PERF break
 'My computer crashed'

(*Su*)*dah* can also occur at the end of the utterance by itself or together with its pre-verbal use (the latter strategy is for emphasis), as in Colloquial Malay:

- (25) *Kau OK tak*
 2SG OK NEG
 ('Are you OK or not?')
- Darah dah stop dah. Tangan rasa kebas sikit.*
 blood PERF 1SG PERF hand feel numb little
 'The blood has stopped already. Hand feels a little numb'

Zaini, Adib. 2011. *Zombijaya*. Petaling Jaya: Buku Fixi, p. 5.

18 The Malay native speaker consulted said the *already* in the English sentences should be omitted or replaced with *lah*. She also said that *sudah* was optional.

Once again, then, the rejection of *already* with accidental events seems to be unrelated to the use of its functional model in the substrate (and adstrate) languages. Olssen (2013), moreover, finds that Singapore Malay does not allow *sudah* with an example similar to (24b), the shorter form *dah* being possible, and also shows that sentence-final *le* may occur in Mandarin translations of the same example. The acceptability of *dah*, according to Olssen (2013), is an indication that it is no longer a iamitive but is now a perfective aspect marker (the shorter form being also a clear indication of phonological erosion familiar to later stages of grammaticalisation). Thus, although Bao's (2005; 2015) claims are for a complete transfer of the perfective aspectual system of Chinese, it would appear that the model language functions have proceeded further in their grammaticalisation than those of the replica languages.

The question remaining, though, is how speakers may access the constraints on the adverb's distribution in this way if the constraints are not reflected in the substrate model languages. In earlier studies (as mentioned above, e.g. Matras and Sakel (2007: 833–4) it was noted that speakers in contact may have access to polysemies in the form of an item grammaticalising in contact, which justify their selection of that form to replicate the model function required. Such constraints may also be explained by the continuing presence of the lexical source construction in the replica language itself:

(26) The stupid shipment is three weeks ago now they send. You think by the time the fellow will still be on the ball you know what I mean you know this type usually when the starting uh whoa everybody **all ready** to go off fired up you know. Three weeks down the road *alamak* these guys all forgotten **already** man. So then *wa bo chap* ... you know uuh don't care don't care you know. Then you know when you don't care huh. The law of uh what's that Thermodynamics ...¹⁹

(ICE-Singapore: S1A-096#X349:2:E)

This was one of two examples found in the spoken section of the ICE-SIN(GAPORE) Corpus (no examples were found in the written section, and only one was found in the ICE-GB (21)). It is also interesting that both the source form, *all ready*, and the perfective marker, *already*, are used in the same

19 *Alamak* is a borrowed discourse marker from Malay, expressing dismay. *Wa bo chap* is a phrase in Hokkien meaning 'I couldn't care less.' *Liao* in (24b) is also used in Hokkien for 'already', 'finish'. *Lo* (in (28)) is a discourse marker from Cantonese with a meaning of obviousness.

utterance by the same speaker.²⁰ A number of examples could also be found in Malaysian English online forums:

(27) hmmm..he say hq no stock. scold him also no use lo. [...] accessories **all ready** liao but car not yet ready
<https://forum.lowyat.net/topic/4222823/+1400>

In (27), moreover, there is a non-redundant co-occurrence of *all + ready* with the Hokkien aspect marker model, *liao* replacing *already* (the speaker may have wished to avoid using *already* alongside its source construction). Thus, the continued use of the predicate adjective source of *already* as shown in both examples illustrates that the ‘split’ in the history of the adverb in monolingual situations is transferred across contact, in which both the lexical source of the adverb, and the adverb itself, are replicated in the contact variety (a double split).

This does not mean that *already* emerged out of *all + ready* in the brief history of Singlish and MCE; naturally, both items must have present in the dialect at the time of contact (in the 19th century). However, the continued co-occurrence of the source concept from which the adverbial function evolved, appearing alongside the grammaticalised function of an aspect marker, has obviously had an influence on the distribution of the grammatical marker for some speakers. In the contact situation, then, the presence of such splits enables the speaker to identify meanings which are not otherwise accessible diachronically and may place constraints on distribution at later stages. In many

FIGURE 5 Transfer of *all ready/already* as a split (divergence) across contact, and subsequent grammaticalisation as an aspect marker in Singlish and MCE.

20 The likelihood of the use of *already* in (27) being a standard use is not ruled out, but there is also the possibility that it would be placed pre-verbally and not in clause-final position, if that were the case.

TABLE 8 Replication of functional attributes of *already* in the Singaporean and Malaysian contact situation.

<u>Singlish/MCE</u> <i>already</i>	<u>English</u> <i>already</i>	<u>Chinese languages (+</u> <u>Malay): <i>le/liao/zo/(su)dah</i></u>
(i) adverb – ‘in a state of preparedness’; ‘completion prior to expectation’	adverb – ‘in a state of preparedness’; ‘completion prior to expectation’	perfective aspect: -completion -inchoativity -incipience -anterior
(ii) perfective aspect: -completion -inchoativity -incipience -anterior		

cases of grammaticalisation in contact, the selection of the lexical source to be replicated in this way is therefore no mystery and does not entail that contact speakers understand the diachrony of their language – the diachrony may still be present at the time of contact (this tendency is also noted in Matthews and Yip (2009). Thus, this is a case of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation which has been mediated by the lexifier. The functional features which are replicated are shown in the table below, following the model of Lefebvre (2011: 22–23):

Matthews and Yip’s (2009) study does not indicate any likelihood of the grammaticalisation of *already* being represented in gradual stages; all the functions of the model language are replicated at roughly the same time in their study. However, as the present study as shown, the presence of persistence in older generation Singaporean speakers along with the evidence from all speakers of MCE suggests that an earlier stage may be hypothesized in which the completive function of the aspectual range may be more restricted in its distributional grammaticalisation. Thus, based on the data obtained, the following (hypothetical) stages may be proposed for the (post-contact) grammaticalisation of *already*:

Stage 0: adverb

Stage 1: (i) adverb;
 (ii) perfective marker, restricted in its completive function to non-accidental events

- Stage 2: (i) adverb;
 (ii) perfective marker, unrestricted in all model language functions.

Such observations may then challenge the hypothesis of Total Systemic Transfer in Singapore English (Bao, 2005; 2015), and its claims that *already* is not a case of grammaticalisation, but of substratum transfer (Bao, 2015: 297–8). What is transferred is the substratum function; the lexical expression of that function, using material from the lexifier, is affected to some extent by the semantic constraints on the historical source of that material. In Bao's (2005, 2015) theory of transfer of an entire aspectual system from the substrate, the lexifier function is viewed in terms of its regulatory constraints on the morphosyntax of the replicating language, and in this regard, Bao deals mainly with the issue of the transfer of constituent order.

However, the question which arises now is, if the Lexifier Filter regulates the System Transfer, what regulates the Lexifier Filter? In the present study, the abstract definition of a Lexifier Filter may be advanced to a further stage, as indicated by the data above: it is not only the morphosyntax which places constraints on the distribution of transferred items, but also the semantics, suggesting that the Lexifier Filter is a much more powerful influence on the transfer of features in contact than originally perceived. The presence of lexical retention in the transfer process can be readily observed in a case of ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation, as shown above. However, the extent to which the aspect marker has grammaticalised in the replica languages is not the same as in the model languages, and it still retains, for some speakers, traces of its original lexical source meaning from the pre-contact replica language or lexifier. We are reminded that the same constraints exhibited in the distribution of *already* are not found in the present-day aspectual model functions in Mandarin Chinese or Cantonese, and Mandarin *le* and Cantonese *zo* may be used with any completed event, accidental or otherwise. Olssen (2013) also finds no similar constraints on the use of the aspect marker *dah* in Malay. It seems evident that the distributional constraints (also a puzzle for Soh (2009)) can only be attributed to the continued presence of the lexical source of the aspect marker in the replica language itself.

6 Conclusions

The present study has provided a rapid, spontaneous survey of attitudes and intuitions towards the use of *already* as an aspect marker in Singlish, and

reveals clear distributional limitations relating to the development of the adverb from a predicate adjective. As such it stands as an empirical testimony to the principle of persistence (Hopper, 1991) and an indication that the gradual generalization of linguistic environments typical of grammaticalisation may also appear in contact situations. Hopper and Traugott (2003: 96) mention the fact that constraints on a grammaticalising item may often only be understood in the light of diachronically earlier meanings, and describe this as one of the most damaging pieces of evidence against sudden emptying of meaning or bleaching. In the present study, it is understood as evidence for the contact-induced grammaticalisation of *already*, together with the age-grading and generational differences reflected in both surveys – indicating that ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation may be attributed a degree of gradualness after all.

Distributional constraints in grammaticalisation can be measured by individual intuitions, though this is not a fail-proof indication of the usage of the feature, and should not be understood as definitive of its grammaticalisation level with any particular group: many speakers will willingly accept an item in isolation even though they may never use the item in the relevant contexts themselves. On the contrary, there may be differences between those who mark an item as unacceptable and yet may occasionally use it themselves. For this reason, the survey should not be taken as a watertight representation of actual usage within the community of speakers, and a more detailed, longitudinal survey involving closer observation of the speakers concerned would be necessary to reinforce the claims made on the basis of the present data. Nevertheless, the trends are interesting, in view of the greater number of intuitive rejections of the examples of *already* occurring in expressions describing accidental events from the older age-groups and from a less grammaticalised contact dialect, MCE. Such data should be taken as an indication of a more conservative use, reflecting the stronger adherence of lexical source meanings in the grammaticalisation of the aspect marker in MCE than in Singlish, and in the older age-groups, for both dialects. The differences between the older and the younger Singaporean groups also reveal the likelihood that a more rapid level of grammaticalisation of *already* may be found with younger speakers. The prospect of different *rates* of grammaticalisation in contact has not been the topic of a great deal of discussion in the literature so far, and is worthy of further research.

At the same time, for the promotion of other theories of contact, it provides a welcome conciliation. Theories of contact involving reference to a Lexifier ‘Filter’, such as Bao (2005; 2015) has described, may be discussed alongside contact grammaticalisation theories and within the framework of Matthews and

Yip (2009) and Szeto et al.'s (2017) case of *already* as ordinary contact-induced grammaticalisation. In the present case of *already* in Singlish, there is ample evidence in the observations of persistence that grammaticalisation was involved in replicating the perfective aspectual system of the substrate model languages. The role of the Lexifier Filter alluded to in Bao's studies may thus be expanded to refer to not only the morphosyntax of the lexifier, but the lexicon also, since grammaticalisation entails no clear separation across such categories. It remains, then, for future studies to exploit the phenomenon of lexical retention in contact grammaticalisation in greater depth and in broader scope.

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