

The variable realisation of coda /r/, henceforth referred to as /r/, has been accounted for by the traditional phonological distinction of English varieties into rhotic and non-rhotic types (Wells 1982:218–220), and has been a hallmark area of study in sociolinguistic research (e.g. Labov 1966; Nagy and Irwin 2010; Blaxter et al. 2019). Over the last three decades, the status of Singapore English (SgE) as a non-rhotic variety has been addressed in notable studies on SgE (Tan and Gupta 1992; Poedjosoedarmo 2000; Tan 2012) with a view to establishing whether this previously British-influenced variety is now being influenced by American English (AmE). However, rhoticity or lack of it in SgE is still in question. While rhoticity among ordinary Singaporeans is limited, there is consensus that certain Singaporean media personalities display instances of rhoticity.

This dissertation will investigate the usage patterns of /r/ in the speech of educated Singaporean media personalities. The present study investigates a group that explicitly identifies as standing between global culture and Singaporean culture. Pertinent to this theme, are recent studies reporting how media personalities use a variety of linguistic styles (e.g. a globalised standard and a localised variety) to engage both international and local audiences (Lee 2014; Sutrisno and Ariesta 2019).