

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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Malay Language Report

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TESL 539

Spring 2012

Places Malay is spoken:

Malay is widely spoken in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and other countries including:

- Sabah
- Sarawak
- Brunei
- Myanmar
- Thailand
- Canada
- United Arab Emirates
- United States



(Lonely Planet)

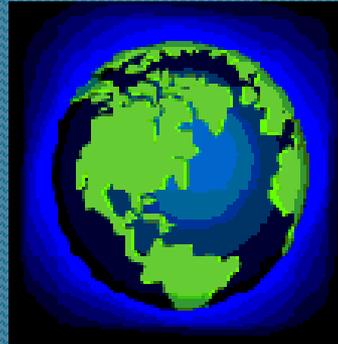
(Lewis, 2009)

Facts about Malay

- Approximately 39,144,949 people speak Malay worldwide.

- Alternate names include:

- Colloquial Malay
- Local Malay
- Malayu
- Bahasa Melayu
- Bahasa Daerah



(Wikimedia Commons)

Malay is comprised of over twenty dialects including:

- Coastal Terengganu
- Inland Terengganu
- Kelantan
- Pahang
- Southeast Island
- Orang Hulu
- Orang Kuala
- Jugra-Muar-Melaka-Johor

- *(Lewis, 2009)*

Written Language

Arabic Script - Jawi

ز	ر	ذ	د	خ	چ	ح	ج	ث	ت	ب	ا
zai	ra	dzal	dal	kha	cha	ha	jim	tha	ta	ba	alif
z	r	dz	d	kh	ch	ch	j	th	t	b	-
[z, dʒ]	[r]	[dz]	[d]	[x, k]	[h]	[ç]	[dʒ]	[s]	[t]	[b]	[∅]
ق	ف	ف	غ	غ	ع	ظ	ط	ص	ض	ش	س
qaf	pa	fa	nga	ghain	ain	dzo	tho	dhad	shad	shin	sin
q	p	f	ng	gh	ʿ	dz	th	dh	ʃ	sh	s
[k]	[p]	[f, p]	[ŋ]	[ɣ, r]	[∅]	[z]	[t]	[z, dʒ]	[s]	[ʃ, s]	[s]
ن	ي	ء	لا	ه	و	و	ن	م	ل	ك	ك
nya	ya	hamzah	lam alif	ha	va	wau	nun	mim	lam	gaf	kaf
ny	y		la	h	v	w	n	m	l	g	k
[ŋ]	[j]		[la]	[h]	[v]	[w]	[n]	[m]	[l]	[g]	[k]

(Ager, 2012)

- Jawi is one of two official scripts used in association with Malay.
- Jawi was replaced with Latin script in the 17th century under the influence of British and Dutch.
- Today, Jawi is reserved for mainly religious and cultural purposes.

(American Language Services)

Written Language continued

Romanized Script - Rumi

- Comprised of 26 letters of the basic Latin Alphabet without diacritics.
- The more common of the two alphabets.
- Indonesia follows the letter names of the Dutch alphabet.
- Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei follow the English alphabet.

Malay pronunciation

Vowels & Diphthongs

a	e	i	o	u	ai	au	ua
[a, ɑ]	[e, ɛ, ə]	[i]	[o]	[u]	[aɪ, ai]	[aʊ, au]	[ua]

Consonants

b	c	d	f	g	h	j	k	l	m	n
[b]	[tʃ]	[d]	[f]	[g]	[h]	[dʒ]	[k]	[l]	[m]	[n]
ny	ng	p	r	s	sy	t	v	w	y	z
[ɲ]	[ŋ]	[p]	[r]	[s]	[ʃ, s, sʃ]	[t]	[v]	[w]	[j]	[z]

(Ager, 2012)

Characteristics of Malay

Similar to English

- Follows a phonemic orthology, words are spelled as they sound.
- Signals morphology by including prefixes and affixes to a root word.
- Sentence structure is typically Subject, Verb, Object, but is not strictly followed.

Different from English

- Nouns are not marked for gender or number.
- Plurality is expressed through quantifiers or numerals.
- Auxiliary words can be used to denote the properties of:
 - ‘male/female’
 - ‘animate/inanimate’
 - ‘human/non-human’

Malay Pronunciation

Vowels & Diphthongs

a e i o u ai au oi

[a/ɑ/ə] [e/ɛ] [i] [o] [u] [ai] [au] [oi]

Consonants

b c d f g gh h j k kh l m n

[b] [tʃ] [d] [f] [g] [ɣ] [h] [ɟ] [k] [x] [l] [m] [n]

ng ny p q r s sy t v w x y z

[ŋ] [ɲ] [p] [q] [r] [s] [ʃ] [t] [v] [w] [z/ks] [j] [z]

[Click here for a reading of the Malay alphabet](#)

Typical Errors in Phonology

- Consonant clusters may be simplified to a single consonant in final position.
 - 'ask', 'rest' and 'child' are pronounced [as], [ɹɛs], [tʃaɪl]
- /θ/ and /ð/ are often substituted with /t/ and /d/
 - 'three' and 'brother' becomes [tɹi] and [brʌdə]
- /v/ is often replaced with /w/
 - the word 'van' pronounced as [wen]
- Voiceless stops /p, t, k/ are usually unaspirated

Common Grammatical Errors

- Errors surrounding determiners
 - Determiners are often dropped in sentences
 - (Sometimes I bring it to (the) park to play.)
 - Possessive determiners also give difficulty
 - (“I ball” instead of “my ball”)
- L1 does not inflect a verb based on the status/number of the subject (Not familiar with 3rd person)
- May omit 3rd person singular -s
 - (My father like food vs. My father likes food).

Grammatical Errors cont.

- This also causes struggles among subject-verb agreement (I lives with my parents vs. I live with my parents.)
- The copula 'be' does not exist in Malay language (I (was) born on 13 November 1990.)
- Unnecessary use of present continuous tense (I am having the flu.)
- Misuse of 'used to' as present tense (We are used to work late every night.)

Common Norms and Conventions

- Handshakes are common, but men may choose to bow to women.
- People prefer standing at arm's length apart, unless with close friends.
- Some touching occurs while speaking, mostly on the arms and hands, except between sexes where there is almost no touching.
- People are mostly indirect and as subtle as possible.
- May view overtly direct eye contact as threatening.



Common Norms and Conventions continued...



(Google Images)

- Kissing and hugging in public is to be avoided at all costs.
- Women may hold hands, but not in a romantic nature.
- Avoid pointing, as it is considered rude.

(Landers and Grossman)

Resources

Internet Sites

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Resources

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Images

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- Wikimedia Commons. (2007). [An image of the globe.]. *Globe*. Retrieved from: <http://strategywiki.org/wiki/File:Globe.svg>

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