

Seventeenth Century Malay *via* Thomas Bowrey's
Bilingual Dictionary Published in 1701.

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After 19 years navigating and trading in around the Bay of Benggals and the islands of Southeast Asia, an Englishman, Thomas Bowrey, seemed to have achieved a proficiency of Malay of the later part of the seventeen century. On his long return journey to England in 1688, he wrote a bilingual dictionary which was later published by the Sam London in 1701. In the preface he wrote that, "...whereas in all the islands ..., the Malay Language is received and generally used in all trading ports of those islands, only as Trading Language, ...most of those islands having a peculiar language of their own." He explained that the work was intended, "...chiefly for the promotion of trade in the many countries where Malayo Language is spoken." It contains wordlists entered in English-Malayo and Malayo-English. As its supplements, he added the following: (a) short grammar rules and directions, (b) several miscellaneous items, (c) dialogues and (d) letters in English and Malay. This paper shall present two areas: (a) some aspects of the nature of the Malay verb morphology especially those surrounding the passive prefixes and the transitive prefix *me-* and *ber-* and compare them with the functions of their modern counterparts as found in the *Tatabahasa Dewan* (1994) and (b) some observations on the nature of the basic syntactic patterns of Malay and compare them with their respective modern counterparts. On the morphology part, it is observed that some functions of the prefix *ber-* is very closely similar to the active prefix *meng-*. This is contrary to the modern position of the grammar of the *Tatabahasa Dewan* (1994). As for the passive marking, there seems to be a richer version in the modern Malay than the passive prefixes in the late seventeenth Century Malay. As for the basic patterns in syntax, it will report on some observations on sentence complementation, relativization and the patternings of the interrogative structures. A traditional morphological theory will be used for the presentation of the morphology while the X' theory of the Principles and Parameters of Culicover (1997) shall be used for the syntactic presentation.

Reference:

Bowrey Thomas. (1701). A Dictionary: English and Malayo, Malayo and English. London: Sam London.