

Notes on Malayic Suku Laut dialectology

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Abstract

Southeast Asia is home to many distinct groups of Sea Nomads, also called Orang (Suku) Laut. Those located between Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula are all Malayic-speaking. Information about the speech of these Suku Laut groups is paltry and scattered; while starting points are provided in publications such as Kähler (1960), Sopher (1977:178–180), Kadir et al. (1986), Collins (1988), and Safian (1999), a comprehensive accounting and description of Malayic Suku Laut (MSL) lects has not been provided to date. This study brings together disparate sources on these lects, including a bit of original research, in an attempt to begin to paint a unified picture of MSL lects and point the way for further focused investigation. While much is still unknown, this paper demonstrates relationships between individual MSL lects and neighboring canonical Malay lects, as well as intriguing connections with scattered and distant Sumatran Malay lects.

References

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