

# Voice and transitivity in Malay varieties

The voice system of Malay and Indonesian varieties shows complications, with typologically unusual systems found within a single variety and a great range of variation found across different varieties. Among the variables that we find are:

- the number and nature of voice contrasts;
- the status of the agent in a non-active clause;
- the role of the person (first, second, or third) of an agent on eligibility for different voices;
- the coding of oblique agents, and any polysemy between this morphological expression and other uses of the same morphology;
- the morphology employed in the different voice choices (and any markedness relationship between them);
- the zero-encoding of a particular voice type or types;
- the relationship between the morphology used to code non-active clauses and its use in active clauses;
- the non-voice/non-transitivity uses of voice morphology in different varieties.

In this paper I examine some typologically interesting variation in voice in a small number of eastern Malay varieties, comparing the results to trends found more widely in the Malay-speaking world, and propose that an account can be made of the variation with a set of formal constraints on the encoding of pragmatic information that have different levels of importance in different varieties.

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