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Tracing the linguistic crossroads between Malay and Tamil

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Coretan ini cuma salah satu dari hasil karya yang terlahir dari kemurahan hati dan dorongan yang berterusan dari Pak Hein.

Abstract

Speakers of Malay and Tamil have been in intermittent contact for roughly two millennia, yet extant academic work on the resultant processes of contact, lexical borrowing, and language mixing at the interface of these two speech communities has only exposed the tip of the proverbial iceberg. This paper presents an historical overview of language contact between Malay and Tamil through time and across the Bay of Bengal. It concludes with a call for future studies on the lexicology, dialectology, and use of colloquial language of both Malay and Tamil varieties.

Keywords

Malay, Tamil, language contact, loanwords.

1. Introduction

When Europeans first entered the waters of the Indian Ocean, they encountered a vibrant, interconnected world in which Gujaratis, Persians, Tamils, Swahilis, Arabs, Malays, and a wide range of other peoples traded and settled on shores other than their own. Upon arriving in Malacca in the 1510s, the Portuguese apothecary Tomé Pires noted no less than 61 different nations inhabiting that city, representing much of the Asian continent and the Indian Ocean World. Facilitated by the annual cycle of the monsoon, the Malay-speaking settlements on both sides of the Strait of Malacca formed vital trade *entrepôt*s connecting various parts of Asia and facilitating the dispersal of people, products and ideas. Language contact must have been pervasive in the Malay speech area

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since time immemorial. However, while the lexical influence from high-status literary languages such as Sanskrit and Arabic on Malay is relatively well-known (Jones 2007), the impact of spoken vernaculars remains much less so. This is due in part to the fact that many vernacular languages of South and Southeast Asia are themselves understudied, especially in language ecologies characterized by wide-ranging diglossia. Furthermore, language contact between Southeast Asia and other regions of Asia has long been approached as a unidirectional process, reducing Southeast Asia's populations to mere recipients. There is a modicum of work on the dispersal of pre-modern loanwords from West-Malayo-Polynesian languages to other languages of the Indian Ocean (Hoogervorst 2013), but more could be done in this area. With the exception of Sri Lanka Malay, mixed languages at the interface of Malay and Tamil are almost undocumented.

An historical analysis of language contact between Malay and Tamil, as will be attempted here, provides a better understanding of the past of the Bay of Bengal as an axis of global trade and cultural exchange. This study traces the shared history of two of the largest speech communities of the Indian Ocean World, reconstructing their inter-relationship across several time periods and geographical settings. In the absence of accurate grammatical descriptions of most of the "hybrid" linguistic varieties discussed in this paper, much of my analysis will be of etymological nature. Consequently, this paper cannot be anything but sweeping and remains far from exhaustive. Most of the data and insights presented here are taken from secondary sources, rather than first-hand fieldwork. That being said, the paucity and scattered distribution of scholarship on Malay-Tamil language contact calls for a synthesis and overview of the available data as a first step to determine pathways for further research. In doing so, this study serves to demonstrate what we know, but also what we do not know. It is structured as follows: Section 2 summarizes the long history of contact between Malay and Tamil; Section 3 focuses on relationship between the two languages as reflected in the classical Malay literature; Section 4 introduces the type of Malay spoken by Tamils at present; Section 5 surveys Malay varieties in historical contact with Tamil; Section 6 traces the languages spoken by mixed Malay-Tamil communities; and Section 7 synthesizes our present state of knowledge on the Tamil variety (or varieties) used in Malaysia.

2. History of contact

The archaeological record reveals that contact between South India and Southeast Asia was regular from the first centuries BCE (Ardika and Bellwood 1991; Bellina and Glover 2004). The Old Javanese *kakawin* literature contains numerous Tamil loanwords, as does classical Malay (Hoogervorst in press a).[1] From at least the ninth century, Tamil inscriptions surface across Southeast Asia (Karashima and Subbarayalu 2009), while different Indian ethnonyms

[1] And see Ronkel (1902), Asmah (1966), and Jones (2007) on Tamil loans in modern Malay.

start to feature in the Old Javanese literature around the same time (Christie 1999). For example, early eleventh century Airlangga inscriptions make a distinction between Kling, Āryya, Singhala, and Karṇaṭaka (Krom 1913), while the mid-fourteenth century *Nāgarakərtāgama* adds Goḍā and Kāñcipurī (Pigeaud 1962: 36). South Indian influence is especially strong in North Sumatra. The Dutch orientalist Van Ronkel (1918) was the first to call attention to a number of cultural and lexical peculiarities among the Karo-speaking Sembiring clan, which he connected to the historical presence of Tamil trading guilds in the region. Recent archaeological research supports the settlement of South Indian populations in North Sumatra in medieval times (Guillot and Fadillah 2003; Perret and Surachman 2009). In later times, multi-ethnic Islamic networks between South India, Sri Lanka and the Malay World begin to overshadow earlier Hindu and Buddhist connections (ʻĀlim 1993; Tschacher 2001; Feener and Sevea 2009; Ricci 2011).

The South Indian populations in contact with Maritime Southeast Asia were diverse in terms of religion and caste. By the fourteenth century, Tamil-speaking Muslim communities started to outnumber their Hindu compatriots (McPherson 1990). The first group was then commonly known as *Kling* or *Keling*. This ethnonym is probably connected to the Kaliṅga State in present-day Odisha and would later become the generic name for "Indian", even applied to some Indianized communities in Southeast Asia (compare Damais 1964; Mahdi 2000: 848). At present, the term is regarded as pejorative across the Malay-speaking world. The collective term for South Indian Muslim traders was *Chulia* or *Chuliah*.[2] The Chulia were seen as distinct from mercantile Muslim groups from Gujarat and other western regions of India, such as the *K̲h̲ojā* and the *Bohrā* (compare Hussainmiya 1990; Noor 2012).[3] South Indian Muslim communities display a substantial and at times confounding terminological variety (Bayly 1989; ʻĀlim 1993; Tschacher 2001; Hussein 2007; Pearson 2010). One of the terms used for them by non-Muslim Tamils is *Jōn̲agaṉ* (சோனகன்), which is especially applied to Muslims of partly Arabic or Turkish descent. The colonial British censuses typically distinguish the following subgroups of South Indian Muslims:

1. Marakkar or Maricar (Tamil: *Marakkāyar*; மரக்காயர், Malay: *Marikar*)
A group claiming ancestry from Arabic merchants, as opposed to less esteemed local converts. They were mostly involved in international shipping trade, inhabited coastal regions, and adhered to the Shāfiʿī school (*maddhab*) of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The *Kāyalār*, from the coastal town Kāyalpaṭṭiṉam, are normally considered to be a subgroup of the Marakkāyar.

[2] Malay *Culia*, Tamil *Cūliyā* (சூலியா). The origins of this term are uncertain. See Khoo (2014) for a history of the Chulia community in Penang.

[3] Hindu merchants from Gujarat were known as *Baniyān*.

2. Labbai or Labbay (Tamil: *Labbai*; லப்பை, Malay: *Ləbai*)
Originally an honorary term for an Islamic functionary,[4] but later used to designate a particular Tamil-speaking community of the Ḥanafī *maddhab*. They were traditionally involved in trade, pearl-diving and betel-cultivation. The term *Labbai* is also occasionally applied to non-*Marakkāyar* Tamil-speaking Muslims as a whole.

3. Mappila or Moplah (Malayalam: *Māppiḷa*; മാപ്പിള)
Malayalam-speaking Muslims of partly Arabic ancestry who chiefly resided in the Malabār region (present-day Kerala). The majority follow the Shāfiʿī *maddhab*.

4. Muslims "from the north"
A container term for predominantly Urdu-speaking Muslims residing in different parts of South India, encompassing the ethnonyms *Navaiyat*, *Sayyid*, *Shaykẖ*, and *Paṭhān*. These groups claim be descended from non-Dravidian men in service of the Mughal and Deccan sultans. Special mention can be made of the Rowthers (Tamil: *Rāvuttar*; ராவுத்தர்), a Tamil-speaking group of the Ḥanafī *maddhab* claiming descent from Turkish (*Tulukkar*; துலுக்கர்) horsemen.

Many Indian merchants who ventured to Southeast Asia married local women. The affluent and influential mixed community that thus emerged became known in Malay as the *Jawi Pəranakan* 'local-born Jawi'.[5] These children of merchants were well-connected with the Muslim elites in Southeast Asia and beyond (Fujimoto 1989). In the Straits Settlements, their multilingual background, including in English, qualified them for lucrative employment under the colonial government. They were also involved in the printing press. In 1876, a Singapore-based Malay printing office under the name *Jawi Pəranakan* published – at the same time – Southeast Asia's first Tamil and first Malay newspaper (Birch 1969; Tschacher 2009).[6] In Aceh, mixed people of Tamil ancestry – mentioned by Snouck Hurgronje (1893: 20) as *basterd-Klinganeezen* – appear to have largely assimilated into the Acehnese mainstream, being only recognizable on a phenotypical level. A still existing hybrid group are the so-called *Chitty* (Tamil: *Ciṭṭi*; சிட்டி), the offspring of *Kəling* fathers and Malay mothers in Malacca. Their name goes back to *Chetty* (Tamil: *Ceṭṭi;* செட்டி, Malay: *Ceti*), a term loosely applied to a number of South Indian mercantile castes and money-lenders in the Malay World. The Chitty people have kept their Hindu

[4] In Sri Lanka Malay, *lebbe* still refers to an Islamic scholar (Saldin 1993: 1015). In Indonesia, *ləbai* typically refers to a mosque official.

[5] In Penang, the term *Jawi Pəkan* 'urban Jawi' is more common. The word *Jawi* presumably goes back to Arabic *Jāwī*, an umbrella term for Malays and other Southeast Asian Muslims.

[6] The Tamil newspaper was named *Taṅgai Siṉēhaṉ* (தங்கை சினேகன்), the Malay newspaper *Jawi Peranakan*. Contrary to popular belief, the latter was not the world's first Malay newspaper. Already in 1869, the *Alamat Langkapuri* was issued in Colombo, Sri Lanka, by a member of the Malay diaspora (Ricci 2013).

religion to this day, yet can be considered Malay in terms of language and culture (Raghavan 1977).[7] In post-independence Malaysia, however, Chitties have thus far been unsuccessful in claiming *bumiputra*-ship, whereas most Muslim Jawi Peranakan conveniently registered themselves as Malays.[8]

Cultural contact between South and Southeast Asia persisted into modern times. While the British Government had a long tradition of employing Indian personnel in the Straits Settlements, the late nineteenth century saw a substantial increase of labour migration from South India to the Malayan rubber plantations and tea estates. This led to an influx of Indian Tamils, Sri Lankan Tamils, Malayalis, Telugus, and other South Asian communities, then known as 'coolies' (Tamil: *kūli*; கூலி). This system of indentured labour depended on local recruiters and became known as the "kangani system" (compare Guilmoto 1993), from the Tamil word *kaṇgāṇi* (கண்காணி) 'supervisor of coolies in plantations'. Around the same time, the Dutch relied on agricultural labourers from South India and other regions to work on the infamous estates of Deli in northern Sumatra (Mani 1993a). The cultural cross-fertilization between South and Southeast Asian populations in Malaysia, Singapore, southern Thailand and parts of Sumatra led, among other things, to the emergence of a mixed Indian-Malay cuisine known as *mamak* food, from the Tamil word *māmā* (மாமா) 'uncle'. Popular dishes include *roti canai* 'layered flatbread', *murtabak* or *martabak* 'stuffed pancake', *nasi kandar* 'steamed rice with various curries', *mamak rojak* 'fruit and vegetable salad' and *teh tarik* 'pulled tea'.

3. Literary connections

In the light of the trans-regional Islamic networks across the Bay of Bengal, it is not surprising to see South Indian influence reflected in the classical Malay literature. The *Hikayat Səri Rama* – the Malay version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* – for example, displays some uncommon Tamil words. One example is *c-ng-g-l-n-r* 'a type of water-lily with miraculous powers', which reflects Tamil *ceṅgaḻunīr* (செங்கழநீர்) 'purple Indian water-lily; red Indian water-lily' (compare Von de Wall 1877-97, appendix: 24; Van Ronkel 1902: 107). Other examples are *parwadam* 'mountain' from Tamil *parvadam* (பர்வதம்) (Juynboll 1899: 66) and *tərisulam* 'trident' from *tirisūlam* (திரிகுலம்) (Van Ronkel 1919: 383). The names of some of the characters, too, suggests that the *hikayat* contains Tamil influence (Table 1).

[7] The fact that the Chitties have never converted to Islam would either imply that not all Malays were Muslims by the time this hybrid group emerged, or that interreligious marriages were historically seen as less problematic in the Malay World than they are at present (Raghavan 1977: 444-445).

[8] Being registered as *Bumiputra* 'Son of the Soil' comes with various types of ethnicity-based state benefits (Kessler 1992). In nationalist circles, however, there was no small degree of resentment to the practice among hybrid Indian Muslims (*darah kəturunan Kəling*) to claim Malay status (Hussain 2005: 124).

Malay	Tamil	Sanskrit
Baradan	Baradaṉ (*பரதன்*)	Bharata
Kikukan	Kukaṉ (*குகன்*)	Guha
Nikumbili	Nikumbalai (*நிகும்பலை*)	Nikumbhilā
Surapandaki	Sūrppaṇakai (*குர்ப்பணகை*)	Śūrpaṇakhā
Səri Jati[9]	Tirijaṭai (*திரிசடை*)	Trijaṭā
Bibusanam	Vibiṣaṇaṉ (*விபிஷணன்*)	Vibhīṣaṇa

Table 1. Tamil names in the *Hikayat Səri Rama* (Juynboll 1899; Muniandy 1995).

Malay	Tamil
Anji-w-n-t-r	Añjuvaṉattār (*அஞ்சுவனத்தார்*)
Bijayanagaram	Vijayanagaram (*விசயநகரம்*)
Cit-m-b-ram	Cidambaram (*சிதம்பரம்*)[10]
Kh-l-y-k-t[11]	Kōḻikkōṭu (*கோழிக்கோடு*)[12]
K-n-di	Kaṇḍi (*கண்டி*)[13]
K-s-n-r-y-n	Kiruṣṇarāyaṉ (*கிருஷ்ணராயன்*)[14]
K-s-t-r-y-n	Kṣattiriyaṉ (*க்ஷத்திரியன்*)
M-l-wari	Malabāri (*மலபாரி*)
N-l-s-ng-kun[15]	Narasiṅgaṉ (*நரசிங்கன்*)

Table 2. Tamil names in the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*.

The *Hikayat Hang Tuah* contains more clues to Tamil influence on the classical Malay literature. During his diplomatic journey to the Tamil Land (*Bənua Kəling*), the story's protagonist surprised his hosts with his fluency in Tamil,

[9] This form is evidently rationalized as consisting of the Malay honorific *Səri*, which is Sanskrit *Śrī*.

[10] This is the name of a famous Shaiva shrine in the Arcot district. The word was left unidentified by Van Ronkel (1904: 315) and is commonly transliterated as the meaningless compound *sitam bərama* in later editions of Hikayat Hang Tuah.

[11] Van Ronkel (1904: 314) regards this form as a misspelling of P-l-y-k-t (Pulicat).

[12] Presumably the city of Calicut.

[13] This presumably denotes the city of Kandy (Sri Lanka), although Van Ronkel (1904: 314) connects it to the Kannaḍa community in South India.

[14] Reflecting Sanskrit *Kṛṣṇarāja*, a common title for South Indian kings.

[15] At present, this name is typically transliterated as Nala Sang Guna, which makes little etymological sense.

which he proclaimed to have learned from a Ləbai from that country. As first pointed out by Van Ronkel (1904), here too we find a number of Tamil-derived onomastics and caste names. Table 2 above lists the Jawi transliterations and their tentative precursors.

A third Malay literary work that casts some light on Malay notions of India is the *Hikayat Pərintah Nəgəri Bənggala*. This text, written in 1811 by the Chulia author Ahmad Rijaluddin, contains a number of uncommon Tamil loanwords, such as *bangku* 'dagger' from *vāṅku* (வாங்கு) and *banam* 'rocket' from *vāṇam* (வாணம்) (Skinner 1982: 168, 173). In addition, we come across a number of Malay names for South Indian toponyms (Table 3), although it is uncertain what role, if any, these places play in the popular Malay imagination of those days.

Malay	Tamil	English
Harkat	Ārkāṭu (ஆற்காடு)	Arcot
Macəli	Maccilippaṭṭaṇam (மச்சிலிப்பட்டணம்)	Masulipatam
Mahu	Māhē (மாஹே)	Mahé
Naga Patan	Nāgappaṭṭiṉam (நாகப்பட்டினம்)	Negapatam
Nagor	Nāgūr (நாகூர்)	Nagore
Tanjauru	Tañjāvūr (தஞ்சாவூர்)	Tanjore
Tipu[16]	Srīraṅgappaṭṭaṇam (ஸ்ரீரங்கப்பட்டணம்)	Seringapatam

Table 3. Malay names for Tamil toponyms in the *Hikayat Pərintah Nəgəri Bənggala* (Skinner 1982: 26).

Muslims of mixed Malay-Tamil ancestry were often bilingual if not multilingual. By the late nineteenth century, they typically published both Tamil and Malay newspapers in Sri Lanka (Hussainmiya 2008) as well as the Malay World. In the Straits Settlements, Jawi Pəranakan children would have learnt Malay from their mothers and Tamil from private tutors (Fujimoto 1989: 98 fn. 18). This is confirmed in the writings of the famous early nineteenth-century Munshi Abdullah, a Malacca-born author of mixed origins who grew up in a district known as Kampung Pali (Tamil: *paḷḷi*; பள்ளி) – '*Kampung* of the Mosque' – a historical part of Malacca known for its mixed population. In his mid-nineteenth century autobiography named *Hikayat Abdullah*, he wrote that "it had been the custom from the time of our forefathers in Malacca for all the children of good and well-to-do families to learn it [Tamil]. It was useful for

[16] Presumably a reference to Ṭippu Sultān, the late eighteenth-century ruler of Mysore.

doing computations and accounts, and for purposes of conversation because at that time Malacca was crowded with Indian merchants. Many were the men who had become rich by trading in Malacca, so much so that the names of Tamil traders had become famous. All of them made their children learn Tamil" (translation from Hill 1955: 48).

The tradition of multilingualism among the literate elite led to a degree of convergence between Islamic Malay and Tamil literature. As previous scholars have pointed out (ʻĀlim 1993: 95-99; Tschacher 2009: 53-54; Ricci 2011: 174), these shared origins become evident upon comparing the ways in which sounds absent in the Arabic alphabet are represented in Arabized Malay (*Jawi*) and Arabized Tamil (*Arwi*). This is done in a remarkably similar way, with minor differences on a diacritical level: the voiceless bilabial stop /p/ is written as *fā'* <ڤ> with three upper dots in Jawi and with one lower dot in Arwi, the velar nasal /ŋ/ as *'ayn* <ڠ> with three upper dots in Jawi and with three lower dots in Arwi, and the palatal nasal /ɲ/ as *nūn* <ڽ> with three upper dots in Jawi and two lower dots in Arwi. It should be noted here that the Arabicized writing practice dates back to the early fourteenth century in the Malay World, whereas it presumably developed around the late sixteenth century in the Tamil-speaking areas of South India (Tschacher 2001: 27; Ricci 2011: 98), cautioning researchers not to assume an *a priori* eastward directionality of cultural transmission.

Regrettably, it is not known how many multilingual or otherwise hybrid manuscripts are housed in public and private libraries worldwide. In the late nineteenth-century, there is some circumstantial evidence that the Acehnese kept their administrations records in *Klingaleesch*, to wit, Tamil (Scherer 1891: 298). One of these manuscripts is mentioned by Voorhoeve (1952: 212) in his inventory on Indonesian manuscripts at the Leiden University Library. That same library also houses the *ʿIẓām al-fawā'id fi niẓām al-ʿaqā'id*, a 1730s manuscript written partly in Tamil and partly in Malay (Van Ronkel 1922; Tschacher 2009: 54). ʻĀlim (1993: 105-106) calls attention to "a book on Muslim Medicine edited in 1807 AD […] written in four languages: Javanese (*Javi*) [sic!], Persian, Arwi and Arabic" kept in the "Indonesian Manuscript Library at Jakarta", which is likely to be the same manuscript (B.A. Hussainmiya, personal communication on 12 December 2014). This multilingual Islamic tradition may have persisted into recent times. An undated but modern-looking manuscript discovered in 2008 by Mahyudin Syukri and Siti Aisyah in Balai Jering (Kampar, Riau Province, Indonesia) contains a quadrilingual word-list – Arabic, Malay, Urdu and Tamil – written by a local Muslim scholar (Aisyah 2014). It is hoped that similar works will surface in private collections in Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

4. The Malay used by Tamils

The Malay varieties spoken by communities of Chinese ancestry are relatively well-documented, for example, Lim (1981), Pakir (1986), and Gwee (2006) on "Baba Malay" of the Straits Settlements, Teo (2003) on the variety of

Kelantan, Rafferty (1982) on Malang, Oetomo (1987) on Pasuruan, and Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo (1982) on Central Java. The same cannot be said of varieties spoken by Indian communities. Mohamed (2006) describes the lexico-phonology of the dialect belonging to the Chitty community, whereas Hassan (1969) and Kader (1971) provide some notes on colloquial Malay as spoken by Tamils. While the majority of local-born Indians speak Tamil at home and some have switched to English, a small part of this group have adopted the Malay language.[17] A systematic study on Malay as spoken by people of South Indian ancestry, however, remains to be conducted to this day.

Research on errors (*kəsalahan*) in Malay offers an otherwise infrequent glimpse into the Malay speech habits of Tamils. I can only give an incomplete set of isolated examples from the sources available to me. On a phonological level, the following tendencies, some of which inconsistent, are observed among Tamil pupils in Malaysian schools (Gan 1982, quoted in Onn 1989: 78-79):

(1) Omission of /h/

boleh	>	*bole* 'can'
hisap	>	*isap* 'to suck'
hujan	>	*ujan* 'rain'
puluh	>	*pulu* 'ten'
sudah	>	*suda* 'already'
tahun	>	*taun* 'year'

(2) Substitution of /ə/ by /a/, /e/ or /i/[18]

əmpat	>	*ampat* 'four'
ənam	>	*anam* 'six'
pəcah	>	*pica* 'broken'
səlalu	>	*silalu* 'always'
səndiri	>	*sindri* 'self'
təmpat	>	*tempat* 'place'
tərus	>	*terus* 'direct'

(3) Gemination of word-medial stops

apa	>	*appa* 'what'
sədikit	>	*siddikit* 'a little'

[17] In 2005, 10.6% of Singapore's Indian population spoke Malay at home (Aman et al. 2009). The Malaysian statistics are unknown to me.

[18] All three variations are attested, for example, in the Tamil renditions of Malay toponyms: Kəlantan (Kiḷāntāṉ; *கிளந்தான்*), Məlaka (Malākkā; *மலாக்கா*), Nəgəri Səmbilan (Negiri Sembilāṉ; *நெகிரி செம்பிலான்*), Pərlis (Perlis; *பெர்லிஸ்*), Tərəngganu (Tiraṅgāṉu; *திராங்கானு*).

(4) Devoicing of /g/

gətah	>	*keta* 'rubber'
goreng	>	*koring* 'to fry'
tiga	>	*tika* 'three'

(5) Fricativization of /w/

wang	>	*van* [*vang*?] 'money'
wayang	>	*vayang* 'movie'

(6) Monophthonization of /ai/

kədai	>	*kede* 'shop'

Gan (1982) gives no examples on the pronunciation of the diphthong /au/. Mohamed (2006: 88-89) mentions in passing that *kalau* 'if' is pronounced as *kalu* by Tamil speakers.[19] She also lists two examples which make it clear that the glottal stop /ʔ/ at the end of a syllable – written in Malay as <k> – is omitted by Tamil mother tongue speakers: *anak* > *ana* 'child' and *kakak* > *kaka* 'older sister'. In addition, it has been pointed out that Tamil-speakers pronounce *orang* 'person' as *worang* and *barang* 'goods' as *bareng* (Hassan 1969: 218). Both examples can be explained through the phonology of colloquial Tamil. The automatic onset of /w/ before close and close-mid back vowels is common across spoken Tamil varieties (Schiffman 1999: 16). In certain dialects, the word-final ending –/aN/ is pronounced as –/ẽ/ (Schiffman 1999: 18), which would explain the transcription of *bareng* for standard Malay *barang*. No further examples are given by Hassan (1969) or other scholars to determine the distribution and regularity of this phonological tendency.

On a grammatical level, Kob (1989: 495) provides the following examples of interference from colloquial Tamil on the word order of spoken Malay (here and elsewhere: the spelling, translations and glosses are mine):

(7)

Itu	*saya*	*punya*	*suka=lah*
DEM	1SG	POS	like=PART
Inda	*enuḍaiya*	*viruppam*	(Tamil)
DEM	1SG.GEN	desire	

'That's the one I like.'
(standard Malay: *Saya suka itulah*.)

(8)

Api	*kəreta*	*jalan*	*sudah*
fire	cart	go	already

[19] This is also the case in Sri Lanka Malay (Paauw 2004).

Pugai=vaṇḍi *pōy=viṭṭadu* (Tamil)
Fire=cart go=leave.PST
'The train has departed.'

(standard Malay: *Kəreta api sudah jalan*.)

However, the latter example may also reflect a Hokkien structure (Kob 1989: 495):

(9) *Hóe* *chhia* *kiâⁿ* *liáu*
火 車 行 了
fire cart go already

Rather than dismissing these phonological and syntactic patterns as erroneous, Hassan (1969) introduces the term 'Tamil Bazaar Malay' (*Bahasa Məlayu Pasar Tamil*) and lists a number of characteristics. While the noun phrase-initial position of the demonstratives – as seen in example (7) – is quite common cross-linguistically and could reflect interference from Tamil, Hokkien or other languages, the clause-final position of the verb in Tamil Bazaar Malay specifically points to Indian influence.[20] Hassan (1969: 212) provides the following examples:

(10) *Ahmad* *pokok* *panjat*
Ahmad tree climb
'Ahmad climbs a tree.'

(standard Malay: *Ahmad məmanjat pokok*.)

(11) *Itu* *budak* *bola* *sepak*
DEM kid ball kick
'That kid kicks a ball.'

(standard Malay: *Budak itu mənyepak bola*.)

In addition to clause-final verbs, Tamil and many other Indian languages also display postpositions instead of prepositions. This impacts on the Malay they use, as Mohamed (2006: 13) demonstrates in an isolated example:

(12) *Saya* *rumah* *misjid* *bəlakang* *juga* *ada*
1SG house mosque behind also is
'I also have a house behind the mosque.'

(standard Malay: *Saya juga ada rumah di bəlakang masjid*.)

[20] The basic SOV word order is common in Indian languages of various families, including Dravidian and Indo-Aryan.

Other characteristics of Tamil Bazaar Malay include a set of distinct personal pronouns and the use of the particle *punya* as a possessive marker. These features are shared with several other Malay contact varieties and will be addressed in more detail in the next section. Hassan (1969: 214) provides the following examples in Tamil Bazaar Malay:

(13) *Saya punya rumah bəsar punya anjing ada*
1SG POS house big POS dog is
'There is a big dog in my house.'
(standard Malay: *Di rumah saya ada səekor anjing bəsar*.)

(14) *Saya punya rumah puteh (ada)*
1SG POS house white (is)
'My house is white.'
(standard Malay: *Rumah saya bərwarna putih*.)

In a MA thesis on Malay spoken by Tamils, Kader (1971: 446, quoted in Mohamed 2006: 31) provides some additional examples displaying the abovementioned features:

(15) *Ittu jam worang tarak banyak*
DEM hour people NEG many
'Not many people were around at that hour.'

(16) *Ittu ujan tara brənti, sampe sattu ari po wora*
DEM rain NEG stop so.that one day PART people
tara kitta diyam sajja
NEG 1PL still PART
'It was raining non-stop, so that nobody showed up for the entire day [and] we had nothing to do.'

The above examples reflect difficulties in terms of transcription. For example, the negative marker *tarak* occurs alongside *tara* and *worang* 'people' is found alongside *wora*. The forms <wora> and <po> presumably represent /worã/ (*orang*) and /põ/ (the particle *pun*). A more systematic phonological analysis of Malay spoken by Tamils, which also addresses the conditions of intervocalic consonant gemination, may help us make sense of these inconsistencies.

5. Bazaar Malay and other contact varieties

As mentioned in the previous section, some of the characteristics of colloquial Malay spoken by Tamils are attested more widely, especially in what is known as "Bazaar Malay" – the container term for Malay contact varieties not spoken as a mother tongue. The Malaysian Tamils presumably learnt this basilectal variety for out-group communication. Studies on West Malaysian Bazaar Malay are not well-distributed beyond a local level and often remain unpublished (Hassan 1969: 210 fn. 3). On the Singaporean variety, Daw (2005) offers the most complete description. Across West Malaysia, Bazaar Malay is spoken by Tamils and Chinese as a contact language. Its personal pronouns (see Table 4), resemble those of other "pidgin-derived Malay varieties".[21]

	singular	plural
1	*gua*	*kita (orang)*
2	*lu*	*lu orang*
3	*dia*	*dia orang*

Table 4. Bazaar Malay pronominal paradigm (Hassan 1969: 216).

The Bazaar Malay personal pronouns reflect Chinese influence. The 1SG goes back to Hokkien *góa* (我), whereas the 2SG reflects dialectical Hokkien *lú* (汝) in the same meaning. The use of *orang* as a plural marker corresponds to *lâng* (人 or 儂) in some Hokkien dialects, including in the original meaning of 'person; people'. This usage is also found in Chitty Malay (Mohamed 2006), Baba Malay (Gwee 2006), Sri Lanka Malay (Nordhoff 2009), Cocos Malay (Adelaar 1996) and several Eastern Indonesian Malay varieties (Paauw 2008). Sri Lanka Malay, along with other Malay varieties, also displays other loanwords from Hokkien, including *lo:teng* 'storey, floor' and *ku:we* 'breakfast' (Paauw 2004: 45).[22] Other tentative Chinese loans attested as far as Sri Lanka include *bangsat* 'bedbug' and *bopeng* 'pock-marked' (compare Saldin 1993).[23] This implies that the Chinese played some role in the making of a vehicular Malay trade variety. On a grammatical level, this is corroborated by the use of *punya* as a possessive marker, which is attested in roughly the same pidgin-derived Malay varieties as the above-mentioned Chinese-derived personal pronouns. Pakir (1986: 141-162) demonstrates that the use of *mia* in Baba Malay – which goes back to *punya* – largely mirrors the Hokkien syntax:

[21] In a paper on the language history of Malay, Adelaar and Prentice (1996) distinguish "literary Malay varieties", "pidgin-derived varieties", and "Malayic vernaculars". This distinction roughly corresponds to 'written Malay' (*Bahasa Məlayu Tulisan*), 'regional Malay' (*Bahasa Məlayu Daerah*) and 'spoken Malay' (*Bahasa Məlayu Lisan*), and 'Bazaar Malay' (*Bahasa Məlayu Pasar*) proposed by Hassan (1969).

[22] Reflecting *lâu-téng* (樓頂) 'upper storey, upstairs' and *kóe* (粿) 'cakes'.

[23] Presumably from Hokkien *bák-sat* (木虱) and *mô-pang* (麻斑).

(17) *Dia* *mia* *mənantu* (Pakir 1986: 141)
I *ê* *sin-pū* (Hokkien)
伊 的 新婦
3SG POS daughter-in-law
'His daughter-in-law'

(18) *Kasi* *gua* *wangi* *mia*
Hō *góa* *pang* *ê* (Hokkien)
予 我 方 的
give 1SG fragrant POS
'Give me the fragrant one.'

(19) *Ini* *bukan* *səbarang* *mia* (Pakir 1986: 161)
Chit-lé *m̄-sī* *chin-chhái* *ê* (Hokkien)
這禮 毋是 清采 的
DEM NEG careless POS
'This is not careless(ly done).'

However, the use of the possessive marker *punya* is by no means limited to Chinese and Chinese-influenced varieties. In a paper on Sri Lanka Malay, Jayasuriya (2002: 49) provides an example in which Sri Lanka Malay, colloquial Sinhala and Sri Lanka Tamil are syntactically identical (the spelling is mine):

(20) *Sri: Laŋka:* *=pe* *te:* *da:won*
Sri: Laŋka: *=ve* *te:* *ko:lə* (Sinhala)
Sri: Laŋka: *=ɖa* *te:le* *tu:l* (Tamil)
Sri.Lanka =POS tea leaves
'Sri Lankan tea leaves'

Of the substandard Malay varieties in contact with Tamil, Sri Lanka Malay has received the most academic attention. This variety has an estimated 46000 speakers (Jayasuriya 2002) and its survival is threatened by Sinhala, Sri Lanka's national language. This Malay variety is spoken by the descendants of soldiers, convicts, slaves and exiles who came to the country from the mid-seventeenth-century onwards, both under Dutch and British rule. These "Malays" came from various places, but the mainstream dialect bears a strong resemblance to East Indonesian Malay, while also displaying some Jakartan influence (Adelaar 1991; Paauw 2004). In-depth analyses of Sri Lanka Malay and its origins are of recent date (Nordhoff 2009, 2014; Slomanson 2011). It has often been argued that Sri Lanka's Malay population was in close contact with other Muslim communities. Muslims in Sri Lanka constitute a rather diverse demographic

segment, including Malays, groups from Northwest India,[24] and the so-called "Moors". The term Moor historically referred to Muslims in general and is not regarded as particularly derogatory in a Sri Lankan context. It specifically denotes Tamil-speaking Muslims, who generally do not consider themselves Tamils. Sri Lankan Malays, too, see them as distinct communities; they call the former *Keling* and the latter *Mulbar* (Saldin 1993).

Aside from a rather brief description (Hussein 2007: 40-48), systematic and well-distributed linguistic research on the Tamil variety of the Moors – known as Shonam or Sonam and traditionally written in Arwi script – is lacking to this day.[25] There appear to be at least two distinct dialects, one spoken by the inland 'Sri Lankan Moors' or *Sōnahar* and one by the coastal 'Indian Moors' or *Sammankārar* (Nuhman 2007: 25; Hussein 2007: 473).[26] Most scholars of Sri Lanka Malay believe that the language received significant grammatical influence from Shonam. A counterview has been proposed by Ansaldo (2008), who takes issue with what he calls the "Tamil bias" and contends that the rather atypical grammatical features of Sri Lanka Malay may equally well reflect Sinhala influence. While descriptions of Sri Lanka Malay occasionally contain elicited Shonam data (Jayasuriya 2002; Slomanson 2011), this variety deserves a systematic description in its own right if we are to advance the discussion of Sri Lanka Malay origins (Ansaldo 2014: 383-384).

A number of typological features of Sri Lanka Malay can be attributed to Tamil (or Sinhala) influence. These include consonant gemination, the presence of long vowels, SOV word order, postpositions, adjectives preceding nouns, and suffixed conditions (Adelaar 1991; Jayasuriya 2002; Paauw 2004). As we have seen in the previous section, several of these features also occur in Bazaar Malay used by Tamil speakers. Other characteristics of Sri Lanka Malay, such as the position of the demonstratives and the use of a possessive marker, are quite common cross-linguistically – in particular in contact languages – and are therefore poor markers of contact-induced borrowing (compare Ansaldo 2008). Likewise, the omission of /h/ in Sri Lanka Malay (see Saldin 1993: 1001), which could point towards Tamil influence, presumably already took place in the Malay World, where it is quite common across dialects.

As mentioned previously, Sri Lanka Malay bears the greatest typological resemblance to the pidgin-derived varieties of East Indonesia. Paauw (2008) highlights a set of features shared by the varieties of Manado, North Maluku, Ambon, Banda, Kupang, Larantuka and Papua, which he argues go back to an historical "Eastern Indonesian Trade Malay". In summary, these include: the monophthongization of /au/ to /o/ and /ai/ to /e/, the loss of /h/, the loss of the glottal stop at the end of a syllable, the lowering of /i/ to /e/ and /u/ to /o/ in closed final syllables, the use of *punya* or a derived form

[24] These include the so-called *Memon* from the Sindh region and the aforementioned *K̲hojā* and *Bohrā*, who migrated to Sri Lanka in colonial times (Hussainmiya 1990).

[25] Shonam corresponds to standard Tamil *Cōn̲am* (சோனம்), a term denoting Muslims or (other) foreigners.

[26] Corresponding to standard Tamil *Cōn̲akar* (சோனகர்) and *Cammān̲kārar* (சம்மான்காரர்) 'sampan-men', the latter having been borrowed into Sinhala as *Hambankārayā*.

as a possessive marker, the shortening of the demonstratives *ini* 'this' and *itu* 'that' for discourse strategies, plural pronouns formed with *orang*, and *tara* as a negative particle. Interestingly, several of these features are also found in Bazaar Malay, Chitty Malay, Baba Malay, Sri Lanka Malay, Cocos Malay, and colloquial Indonesian (compare Adelaar 2005). Regardless of whether we prefer the term "pidgin-derived Malay varieties", "contact varieties", "trade Malay" or "vehicular Malay", it is important to keep in mind that varieties displaying this largely shared set of features are geographically attested throughout the Malay speech area – often in a diglossic continuum with standard Malay.

In addition to these shared grammatical features, Malay contact varieties – including colloquial Indonesian – exhibit a set of lexical discrepancies from the acrolectal, inherited varieties of Sumatra and West Malaysia, which stood at the cradle of standardized Malay. In other words, the vocabulary shared by pidgin-derived Malay varieties across a broad geographical range indicates a common origin. Some examples are given in Table 5.

Baba Malay (Gwee 2006)	Sri Lanka Malay (Paauw 2004)	Colloquial Indonesian	Inherited Sumatran /West Malaysian Malay	Gloss
bikin		bikin	buat	'to do, to make'
bilang	bi:lang	bilang	cakap	'to say'
buntot		buntut	ekor, punggung	'tail, rear part'
capek ('lame, limping')[27]	ca:pe	capek	lətih, pənat	'tired'
dia orang	derang	dia orang	məreka	3SG
dukun	du:kun	dukun	bidan, bomoh	'medical healer, midwife'
gampang	gampang	gampang	mudah, sənang	'easy'
gini	gi:ni	gini	bəgini	'like this'
gitu	gi:tu	gitu	bəgitu	'like that'
gua	go:	gua	saya	1SG
kasi	ka:si	kasih~kasi	bəri, bagi	'to give'
kəmaren ('two days ago')	kuma:reng	kəmaren	səmalam	'yesterday'
kuping	ku:ping	kuping	təlinga	'ear'
lu	lu:	lu	kau, awak	2SG
lu orang	lorang	lu orang	kalian	2PL
pantat	pantat	pantat	punggung	'buttocks'

[27] Borrowed from Tamil *cappai* (சப்பை) 'weak, lean'.

Baba Malay (Gwee 2006)	Sri Lanka Malay (Paauw 2004)	Colloquial Indonesian	Inherited Sumatran / West Malaysian Malay	Gloss
pi	pi:	(compare several Malay dialects: pi ~ pigi)	pərgi	'to go'
piara	piya:ra	piara	pəlihara	'to take care of'
tarok	ta:ro	taruh	lətak	'to put'
təman ('female slave or nanny')[28]	tuman	təmən	kawan	'friend'

Table 5. Some lexical similarities in Malay contact varieties.

Sri Lankan Malay has also adopted some Tamil words at the cost of their Malay equivalents (Table 6).

Sri Lanka Malay	Tamil	Standard Malay	Meaning
kusni	kusiṉi (*குசினி*)	dapur	'kitchen'
mami	māmi (*மாமி*)	bibi	'aunt'
nondi	noṇḍi (*நொண்டி*)	pincang	'lame'
wauwal	vavvāl (*வவ் வால்*)	kəlawar	'bat'

Table 6. Tamil loans in Sri Lanka Malay (Hussein 2007: 419).

More Tamil loans in Sri Lanka Malay are given in Scott Paauw's MA thesis on the lexical origins of Sri Lanka Malay (2004). Some of the words listed in this study appear to display phonological innovations specific to Shonam (compare Hussein 2007), providing some further support to the hypothesis that the latter had influenced the former to a considerable extent. This again underlines the need for an accurate description of this variety if the discussion of Sri Lanka Malay origins is to be taken any further. A modest number of examples are given in Table 7.

Sri Lanka Malay	Shonam	Literary Tamil	Meaning
bla:ngga	bulāṅga	viḷāṅgāy (*விளாங் காய்*)	'wood-apple'
mawen	mavan	magaṉ (*மகன்*)	'boy, son'
mawol	mavaḷ	magaḷ (*மகள்*)	'girl, daughter'

Table 7. Shonam loans in Sri Lanka Malay.

[28] Borrowed from Tamil *tamaṉ* (*தமன்*) 'male relative or friend'.

Other Tamil loans in Sri Lanka Malay appear to go back to another type of colloquial Tamil, whose precise dialectical origins remain obscure. Some examples taken from Paauw (2004) are listed in Table 8; the envisioned dialectical Tamil etyma are mine.

Sri Lanka Malay	dialectical Tamil	literary Tamil	meaning
e:pong	*e:ppõ	ēppam (ஏப்பம்)	'burp, hiccup'
konyong	*koɲɲõ	koñjam (கொஞ்சம்)	'some, little, few'
ku:re	*ku:re	kūrai (கூரை)	'roof'
o:ɖe	*o:ɖe	ōḍai (ஓடை)	'canal'
po:n	*poɳ	peṇ (பெண்)	'bride'
rete	*reṯṯe	iraṭṭai (இரட்டை)	'twins'

Table 8. Colloquial Tamil loans in Sri Lanka Malay (Paauw 2004).

For the sake of completeness, it should be added that Sri Lanka Malay also exhibits some lexical influence from Sinhala, although the role of the latter as a lexifier is more modest than that of Tamil. Some examples from Paauw (2004) are given in Table 9; the tentative Sinhala precursors are mine.

Sri Lanka Malay	Sinhala	Meaning
ko:ci	kōcci	'train'
maheteya	mahattayā	'Sir'
nari:ya	nariyā	'fox'
po:re	pōra	'manure'
pus	pus	'mould on food'
rastiyadu (ja:ɖi)	rastiyādu	'to roam without a purpose'
(ru:ma) o:la	ōla	'cadjan hut'
siwura	siwura	'robe'
tape	tāppe	'bund, retaining wall'
te:ro	tera	'Buddhist monk'

Table 9. Sinhala loans in Sri Lanka Malay (Paauw 2004).

6. Lexical traces of mixed languages

This section highlights a number of poorly described and quickly disappearing Malay varieties influenced by Tamil, whose documentation is typically restricted to small glossaries. The available information is therefore largely lexical. The aforementioned variety used by the Chitty, also known as Malaccan Creole Malay, has around 200 remaining speakers in Malacca, while an even smaller group have migrated to Singapore in the early twentieth century (Dhoraisingam 2006). Some brief notes on their language are given in Moorthy (1997). The most complete analysis of this Malay variety is a lexico-phonological description by Mohamed (2006). Phonologically as well as syntactically, Chitty Malay appears to be quite similar to Baba Malay. In all likelihood, both varieties developed out of a stabilized form of Bazaar Malay.

In terms of phonology, we find several more characteristics of pidgin-derived Malay varieties, including the monophthongization of /au/ to /o/ and /ai/ to /e/ and the deletion of /h/. The glottal stop, however, is retained in Chitty Malay. As in Baba Malay, a word-final glottal stop – written as <k> – is added to a limited number of words (Mohamed 2006: 93):

(21) Addition of word-final glottal stop in Chitty Malay:

bawa	>	*bawak*	'to bring'
cari	>	*carik*	'to search'
garu	>	*garok*	'to scrape'
nasi	>	*nasik*	'boiled rice'

Chitty Malay also exhibits the assimilation of consonant cluster /mb/ to /m/ in intervocalic position. This phonological innovation is also attested, for instance, in Baba Malay, Kelantan Malay and subdialects in Kedah and Sarawak (Mohamed 2006: 92), but not among (other) pidgin-derived Malay varieties.

In terms of lexicon, Chitty Malay is predominantly Malay. Some Tamil vocabulary occurs in the domains of family members, religious terms, cultural items, traditional clothes, food, and wedding-related terms (Mohamed 2006: 124-127). A small selection of these loanwords is presented in Table 10.

Chitty Malay (Malacca)	Tamil	Meaning
aneng	aṇṇaṉ (அண்ணன்)	'elder brother'
arjanai	arccaṉai (அர்ச்சனை)	'a religious ritual'
besti	vēṣṭi (வேஷ்டி)	'white man's cloth'
kolem	kōlam (சோலம்)	'ornamental figures drawn on floor with rice flour'
pandaram	paṇḍāram (பண்டாரம்)	'assistant temple priest'

Chitty Malay (Malacca)	Tamil	Meaning
parpu	paruppu (*பருப்பு*)	'pigeon peas'
patrige	pattirigai (*பத்திரிகை*)	'invitation card for a wedding'
sudem	sūḍaṉ (*சூடன்*)	'camphor'
talpa	talaippā (*தலைப்பா*)	'turban'

Table 10. Some Tamil loans in Malaccan Chitty Malay.

Upon comparing the short glossary of Singaporean Chitty Malay given in Dhoraisingam (2006: 94), we see some minor discrepancies in pronunciation (Table 11), possibly due to infrequent usage or dialectical differences.

Chitty Malay (Singapore)	Tamil	Meaning
aneng	aṇṇaṉ (*அண்ணன்*)	'elder brother'
arshaneh	arccaṉai (*அர்ச்சனை*)	'a religious ritual'
kaboleh	kuvaḷai (*குவளை*)	'drinking vessel'
pandarom	paṇḍāram (*பண்டாரம்*)	'assistant temple priest'
prasadom	pirāsādam (*பிராசாதம்*)	'food offered in temple'
təlpah	talaippā (*தலைப்பா*)	'turban'

Table 11. Tamil loans in Singaporean Chitty Malay.

A comparable mixed variety must have existed in Penang. This commercial *entrepôt*, historically belonging to the Kedah Sultanate, was frequented by South Indian communities from pre-colonial times. Since its acquisition in 1786 by the East India Company, the British encouraged foreign settlement, including from India and China. In a description of this dialect as it was used in the early twentieth century, Hamilton (1922: 57) contends that Penang Malay "is really the Malay of Kedah altered slightly to suit the needs of a cosmopolitan town population with a large element of Southern Indians from the Madras Presidency". The author lists various lexical items, many of which borrowed from Tamil and Hindustani, that make this dialect stand out among other Peninsular Malay varieties. When I checked these words with Penang Malay speakers in 2014, many of them were only recognized by people older than 40, who associated them with the speech of their parents and grandparents. Penang Malay has recently converged with a more mainstream type of colloquial Malay found, with minor regional differences, across West Malaysia. Table 12 lists the Penang Malay words given in Hamilton (1922) that go back to Tamil.

Old Penang Malay	Tamil	Meaning
candi	caṇḍi (சண்டி)	'stubborn of a horse'
macan	maccāṉ (மச்சான்)	'the husband of an elder sister'
maini	maṉṉi (மன்னி)	'the wife of an elder brother'
mambu	vēmbu (வேம்பு)	'the neem tree'
mami	māmi (மாமி)	'aunt'
mandom	mandam (மந்தம்)	'worthless, a broken down horse'
pərli	puraḷi (புரளி)	'to tease, to deceive'
pili	pīli (பீலி)	'a water tap'
ponen	peṇṇaṉ (பெண்ணன்)	'impotent'
poni	pōṇi (போணி)	'a small, tin vessel'
ponu	peṇ (பெண்)	'a bride'
sule	sūlai (சூலை)	'a rheumatic swelling in the joints'
tairu	tayir (தயிர்)	'curds'

Table 12. Tamil loans in (old) Penang Malay.

In addition, some words in Penang Malay can be attributed to colloquial Malayalam, a language closely related to Tamil. These include *pətəras* 'pride, arrogance' from *patrās* (പത്രാസ്) and *pokəri* 'a profligate, a blackguard' from *pōkkiri* (പോക്കിരി), as well as the generic Peninsular Malaysian term *tandas* 'toilet' from *taṇḍās* (തണ്ടാസ്).[29] I have looked at pre-modern Malayalam borrowings into Maritime Southeast Asia in another paper (Hoogervorst in press a), but this topic remains underexplored.

Studies on Malay language contact rarely take into account colloquial speech or dialects, neither of the donor nor the recipient language. We may mention in passing the neighbouring dialect of Kedah, which exhibits the loanwords *kambi* 'plain metal earring' (Tamil: *kambi*; கம்பி 'kind or earring') and *kawar* 'thief; trespasser' (Tamil: *kavar*; கவர் 'to steal') (Asmah 1966). A systematic study will almost certainly reveal more examples. On a related note, I would argue that lexicographic practices obscure the actual influence of Tamil on generic Malaysian Malay, as numerous loanwords known to and used by its speech community are omitted in most dictionaries. Table 13 lists some examples.

[29] I am indebted to Abdur Rahoof Ottathingal and Mahmood Kooria for bringing this to my attention.

Malaysian Malay	Tamil	Meaning
dipawali (~ deepavali)	dīpāvaḷi (தீபாவளி)	'name of a festival'
kawadi (~ kavadi)	kāvaḍi (காவடி)	'a decorated pole carried on shoulders with offerings'
taipusam (~ thaipusam)	taippūsam (தைப் பூசம்)	'name of a festival'
tose	tōsai (தோசை)	'kind of rice-cake'
toti	tōṭṭi (தோட்டி)	'a menial servant'
umapodi	ōmappoḍi (ஓமப்பொடி)	'kind of confectionary'

Table 13. Tamil loans in Malaysian Malay.

In addition, several Malaysian slang words have escaped the attention of linguists. This is a largely unexplored field requiring knowledge of both Malay and Tamil slang. Elsewhere I call attention to the Malay slang word *rendek* 'to be together with someone', which goes back to colloquial Tamil *reṇḍu* (ரெண்டு) 'two' (Hoogervorst in press b).[30] Other examples that I have collected during several brief periods of fieldwork in and around Kuala Lumpur are listed in Table 14.

Malaysian slang	Tamil slang	Meaning
aney	aṇṇē (அண்ணே)	'employee of mamak restaurant'[31]
ayoyo	aiyyayō (ஐய்யயோ)	INTJ
maca	maccā (மச்சா)	'buddy'
manjen	mañjaṉ (மஞ் சன்)	'Chinese man (derogatory)'
nandrek	naṉṟi (நன்றி)	'Thank you!'
pondan	peṇḍaṉ (பெண்டன்)	'effeminate man'
porah ~ podah	pōḍā (போடா)	'Get lost!'
pundek	puṇḍai (புண்டை)	'cunt'
tanggaci	taṅgaicci (தங்கைச்சி)	'girl'
yilek	illai (இல்லை)	'absent'[32]

Table 14. Malaysian slang words borrowed from Tamil slang.

[30] The word final <u> is pronounced as a high central rounded vowel /ʉ/ in spoken Tamil. The colloquial pronunciation of this form, hence, is /reɳɖʉ/. Interestingly, the same word is attested in the gold traders' slang of Malang (Table 16).

[31] Original meaning: 'elder brother'.

[32] Original meaning: 'no'.

Kojak form	Tamil	Meaning
aambille	āṇbiḷḷai (ஆண்பிள்ளை)	'husband'
kaliyaanam	kalyāṇam (கல்யாணம்)	'marriage'
koobdu	kūppiḍu (கூப்பிடு)	'to invite'
maliyu	malivu (மலிவு)	'cheap'
nombu	nōṉbu (நோன்பு)	'to fast'
patche	paccai (பச்சை)	'virgin'[33]
pille ~ polle	piḷḷai (பிள்ளை)	'children'
pombile	peṇbiḷḷai (பெண்பிள்ளை)	'wife'
salli	salli (சல்லி)	'money'
satte	saṭṭai (சட்டை)	'shirt'
soro	sōṟu (சோறு)	'rice'
thahpan	tahappaṉ (தகப்பன்)	'father'
vange	vāṅgu (வாங்கு)	'to buy'

Table 15. Tamil loans used by the Kojak community in Semarang.

Indonesia exhibits a slightly different situation. With the exception of North Sumatra (Mani 1993a), Tamil communities were generally too small to remain independent and eventually assimilated into the mainstream. In Indonesia, the most common Malay term to denote Indian Muslims was *Koja* ~ *Kojah* ~ *Khoja*, from the aforementioned *K̲ẖojā* and ultimately from Persian *K̲ẖwāja* (خواجه) 'a man of distinction'. The word is first documented in the late fourteenth century in the Tanjung Tanah manuscript, which was written by a certain *Kuja* Ali (Mahdi 2015). Javanese exhibits the related word *Koja* 'merchant (usually Muslim Indian)'. Historically, several harbours on Java's north coast had a *Pakojan*; a quarter where the *Koja* resided. While the term *K̲ẖojā* normally implies a northwest Indian origin, the eponymous community in the north Javanese city of Semarang traces their ancestors to Tamil-speaking *Marakkāyar*, with a small minority of *Māppiḷa* and Gujarati *K̲ẖojā* (Mani 1993b: 126). At one point, they may have spoken a mixed language akin to Chitty Malay. Mani (1993b: 126-127) briefly addresses the "secret" language of this mercantile community, which at the time of his research was only used by speakers older than 40. Some examples are given in Table 15 above (spelling of the Kojak forms as in original).

Another Tamil-influenced in-group language has been documented in Malang. In the 1950s and 1960s, the gold trade in this East Javanese city was dominated by Indians. Even when local people took over in the 1970s, their cryptolect still consisted of Tamil words (Pujileksono and Kartono 2007: 23-24; Hoogervorst 2014: 114-115). Some examples are given in Table 16.

[33] Original meaning: 'green'.

Malang slang	Tamil	Meaning
ilek	illai (இல்லை)	'not'
ina	eṉṉa (என்ன)	'what'
pati	pattu (பத்து)	'ten'
pesi	pēsu (பேசு)	'to chat, to lie'
pocik	poci (பொசி)	'inferior gold'
renḍik	reṇḍu (ரெண்டு)	'two'
sarik	sāru (சாரு)	'beautiful'
tanggəm	taṅgam (தங்கம்)	'gold'
weleh	vilai (விலை)	'price'
werəm	vayiram (வயிரம்)	'diamond'

Table 16. Tamil loans in Malang slang.

The opposite phenomenon has also been documented. In colonial times, the cryptolects of the Tamil-speaking Paṟaiyar community in Jaffna (Lewis 1890) and the merchants of the Coromandel Coast (Pandit 1894) have been identified as partly inspired by Malay or a closely related language (Kern 1894; Hoogervorst 2013: 17-18, 27-28). Unsurprisingly, multilingual traders would have communicated in a language they picked up far away to keep their transactions back home a secret.

7. Malayicized Tamil?

As the previous three sections have explored Malay varieties influenced by Tamil, this section discusses localized Tamil varieties of Maritime Southeast Asia. As has been discussed in Section 2, the historical practice among Indian merchants to marry into local, Malay-speaking families gave rise to a wealthy, influential generation of bilinguals. The linguistic competence of such hybrid communities, however, would typically decrease as they assimilated into the mainstream. In all likelihood, a stabilized, "Malayicized" variety of Tamil could only develop in recent times, with substantial numbers of women to ensure intergenerational transmission. Whether we can indeed speak of such a variety remains open for discussion. It may be pointed out that Tamil has been used as a medium of education and local literary works in Malaysia and Singapore since the independence of both nations (see Willford 2006: 45-52). While the phrase "Malaysian Tamil" occasionally surfaces in the literature (compare Renganathan 2009), it is rarely qualified. In general, scholarship on any aspect of Malaysian Tamil remains limited and poorly distributed (see, for example, Fernandez 2008; Karunakaran and Krishnan 2013). A monograph-length description of colloquial Malaysian or Singaporean Tamil is still needed.

The available information is at times contradictory. For example, Venugopal (1996: 5) contends that Malaysian Tamil is relatively Anglicized. He points towards the English educated background of most Malaysian Tamils and gives some examples of lexical influence from English in Malaysian Tamil literature (Venugopal 1996: 285-286). Conversely, Ramasamy and Moses (2004: 58-59) hold that Indian Tamil contains a comparatively larger proportion of English, implying that Malaysian Tamil has remained closer to its roots. The authors further state that there is little dialectical difference in Malaysia, as opposed to India (and Sri Lanka). In addition, they call attention to a number of common Malay loanwords in Malaysian Tamil, as listed in Table 17. The fact that many Tamil-speakers learned Bazaar Malay would have accounted for this situation.[34]

Malaysian Tamil	Malay	Standard Tamil	Meaning
a:tta:ppu	atap	kūrai (கூரை)	'(thatched) roof'
campo:ru	campur	cēr (சேர்)	'to mix'
kla:mbare	kəlambu	kosuvalai (கொசுவலை)	'mosquito net'
pasa:ru	pasar	candai (சந்தை)	'market'
saron	sarung	kaili (கைலி)	'sarong'
vakulu	bakul	kūḍai (கூடை)	'basket'

Table 17. Malay loans in Malaysian Tamil (Ramasamy and Moses 2004: 59).

In his treatise on Malaysian literature in Tamil, Venugopal (1996: 299) lists a number of words he considers to be characteristic of Tamil used in Malaysia. These include some Malay loanwords, such as *itik* 'duck', *janji* 'promise', *kəpala* 'head', *lalang* 'tall grass', *lampu* 'light', *ringgit* 'dollar', *rokok* 'cigarette', *samsu* 'illicit liquor', *sələsai* 'solved', *sənang* 'easy', *səpatu* 'shoe' and *tukang* 'carpenter'. The Tamil spelling and pronunciation of these words are not given, which makes the examples of limited use for linguistic purposes. The author also calls attention to a number of neologisms specific to Malaysian Tamil, such as *āyākkoṭṭagai* (ஆயாக்கொட்டகை) 'child centre', *kākkā kaḍai* (காக்கா கடை) 'Indian Muslim shop' and *piraṭṭukkaḷam* (பிரட்டுக்களம்) 'the place where workers give their names for attendance'. More examples of Malaysian Tamil vocabulary are given in a pioneering lexical study of the Tamil dialects in lower Perak (Subbiah 1966). Some instances of Malay loanwords in Lower Perak Tamil are listed in Table 18.

[34] Venugopal (1996: 301) provides examples of code-mixing and code-switching between Tamil and colloquial Malay in Malaysian Tamil literature, but does not present any first-hand data.

Lower Perak Tamil	Malay	Meaning
attāppu (அத்தாப்பு)	atap	'roofing-thatch'
beṇḍāṉ (பெண்டான்) ~ veṇḍāṉ (வெண்டான்)	bəndang	'irrigated paddy fields'
īttai (ஈத்தை)	itik	'a duck'
kampam (கம்பம்)	kampung	'a Malay settlement'
kīlā (கீலா)	gila	'mad'
kirās (கிராஸ்)	kəras	'tight, stiff'
kōsam (கோசம்)	kosong	'empty'
kurisu (குரிசு)	kurus	'lean'
lombam (லொம்பம்)	lombong	'a tin mine'
pārāṅ (பாராங்)	barang	'goods, things'
piñjam (பிஞ்சம்)	pinjam	'a loan'
sālā (சாலா)	salah	'fault'
sīlāppu (சீலாப்பு)	silap	'a fault'
tāṅgā (தாங்கா)	tangga	'house steps'
toṅkāṉ (தொங்கான்)	tongkang	'a large boat'
vakkuḷ (வக்குள்)	bakul	'a basket'

Table 18. Malay loans in Lower Perak Tamil (Subbiah 1996).

Balasubramaniam (1994) offers another isolated contribution to the study of Malaysian Tamil. In his exploration of the language used by tea pluckers and factory workers in the tea estates of the Cameron Highlands, he calls attention to a number of loanwords and hybrid constructions (Table 19).

Cameron Highlands Tamil	Meaning	Malay element	Meaning
boṅkusu kāmarā	'section where packing is done'	bungkus	'packet'
campalac-cūra	'wage slip, salary slip'	surat	'letter'
jāmāṅkoṭṭāy	'latrine'	jamban	'toilet'
kāmarā	'room type structure; section of factory'	kaməra	'chamber, cabin'
kappalā	'attendant in the estate dispensary'	kəpala	'head'

Cameron Highlands Tamil	Meaning	Malay element	Meaning
lampuk-kāsu	'light money (money deducted from the workers' pay)'	lampu	'lamp, light'
tiṭṭi	'a day off'	cuti	'leave of absence'
tōmpukoṭṭāy	'shed for heating water in large drums for bathing'	tong	'drum'

Table 19. Loanwords and hybrid constructions in Cameron Highlands Tamil (Balasubramaniam 1994).

Unsurprisingly in the light of the strong connections of Southeast Asian Tamils to their ancestral land, some of these Malay loanwords gained currency back in India. Contemporary examples include *kittā* (*கித்தா*) 'rubber' (Malay: *gətah*) and *sēvā* (*சேவா*) 'to rent' (Malay: *sewa*).[35] Elsewhere, I have called attention to other examples of Malay loanwords in Tamil (Hoogervorst 2013). The lexical items highlighted in the latter study were presumably transmitted before interethnic commerce in the Indian Ocean World had become a European-dominated enterprise. A selection is given in Table 20.

Tamil	Malay	Meaning
jōṅgu (*சோங்கு*)	jung	'sea-going ship'
kaiyāppuḍai (*கையாப்புடை*)	kayu putih	'cajuput tree'
kajaṅgu (*கசங்கு*)	kajang	'mat protection against the rain'
kākkattuvāṉ (*காக்கத்துவான்*)	kakaktua	'cockatoo'
kambīr (*கம்பீர்*)	gambir	'a plant used for betel chewing'
kiṟisu (*கிறிசு*)	kəris	'a kind of dagger'
sagu (*சகு*)	sagu	'sago'
sāmbal (*சம்பால்*)	sambal	'chili-based spicy sauce'
sambāṉ (*சம்பான்*)	sampan	'a type of boat'
sappaṅgi (*சப்பங்கி*)	səpang	'a type of fragrant wood'
taṅgāṉ (*தங்கான்*)	təngahan	'half'

Table 20. Malay loans in Tamil (Hoogervorst 2013).

[35] The form *sēvā* (*சேவா*) is only in use among the Nāṭṭukkōṭṭai Chetties, a mercantile caste who often migrated to Southeast Asia (Subbiah 1966: 151).

8. Conclusions

In his treatise on Malaysian Tamil literature, Venugopal (1996: 285) contends that "[p]urity of language is not found in the writings of these novelists". Diglossia and the existence of high-status literary languages have made expressions of the above type almost commonplace in both South and Southeast Asia. Yet notions of language purity obstruct, rather than stimulate, in-depth linguistic research. Academic attention to the colloquial and dialectical registers of Malay and Tamil remains remarkably sparse, although the situation is gradually improving for Malay. The traditional focus on "high language" has left the vernacular dimensions of language contact across the Bay of Bengal largely underexplored, leading to an imbalanced understanding of the cultural history of this part of the world. Indeed, while artists, scholars and scribes feature prominently in South and Southeast Asian historiographies, merchants, middlemen and labourers remain poorly documented. That the latter groups were vital to the introduction of products and ideas across geographical and ethno-linguistic boundaries becomes clear – among many other things – from the lexical and grammatical influence of Tamil and Hokkien dialects on Malay contact varieties, including Sri Lanka Malay. The role of Indian communities in these networks deserves closer academic attention in the future.

If we are to understand the wide range of activities underpinning cultural and linguistic contact in the Bay of Bengal and elsewhere, we need to focus on non-standardized languages. I have mentioned in passing the influence of Malayalam on the Peninsular Malay varieties. This topic merits a more thorough analysis than has been possible here. The same holds true for specific Tamil dialects or sociolects, especially those belonging to mercantile groups (both Hindu and Muslim). Fieldwork-based grammatical descriptions of Shonam, Malaysian Tamil and Malay spoken by Tamils, too, are lacking to this day. Local scholarship in this area is often of great interest, but poor distribution leaves much of it neglected in wider academic circles. Meanwhile, there is no reason to believe that similar mixed languages did not exist before colonial times. Varieties spoken by the hybrid communities highlighted in this paper must have been common historically. The present overview has only been able to scratch the surface of the linguistic processes and phenomena emerging at the crossroads of Malay and Tamil.

Two major problems remain in advancing this area of study. Foremost, much of the scattered scholarship on language contact at the interface of Malay and Tamil is done in a linguistically haphazard way. For phonologically complex languages such as Tamil, either an IPA representation or consistent transliteration with diacritics are prerequisites for up-to-standard data presentation. If the phonology of the languages under research is disregarded, painstakingly collected data will lose much of their value to serious linguistic research. The second problem has to do with post-colonial paradigms in academia. With some notable exceptions, humanities scholars based in South and Southeast Asia tend to treat Indonesian, Malaysian, Indian and Sri Lankan (language) history as teleological narratives, without considering events taking

place outside the present-day borders of the countries under research. Yet at the same time, a series of pivotal, transnational events left a deep impact on all regions involved. One prominent example is the emergence of the Malay printing press in Colombo and later in Singapore, which was spearheaded in both cities by culturally hybrid groups. More comparative work in the fields of historical linguistics, literature, manuscript studies, religion, and other disciplines is required to explore broader perspectives of language contact and etymology in some of the world's most diverse and exciting language ecologies.

Abbreviations used

1	: first person
2	: second person
3	: third person
DEM	: demonstrative
GEN	: genitive
NEG	: negation
INTJ	: interjection
PART	: particle
PL	: plural
POS	: possessive
PST	: past
SG	: singular
SOV	: subject-object-verb

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