CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

French was first introduced in certain English schools such as the Holy Infant Jesus Convent in Malaysia at the turn of the century during the colonial period. These schools were set up by the Catholic Mission which was under the charge of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Malaya and Singapore. French was a compulsory subject in some of these schools but was offered as an elective in others such as the St. John's Institution in Kuala Lumpur. French lessons were carried out by the Catholic sisters of French or Irish origins. The textbooks used were predominantly published in Great Britain. Students sat for the Junior Local Examination and the School Certificate Examination. With independence, the missionary schools were nationalized and French was not offered in the school programme but some schools continued to offer French lessons after the official school hours. Students could sit for the French paper in the Lower Certificate Examination or Malaysian Certificate Examination. (Choi, 1995)

The present set-up of the French language course in schools started in the late seventies when a few government residential schools such as Sekolah Datuk Abdul Razak (Seremban), Sekolah Alam Shah (Kuala Lumpur) SekolahMenengah Sains Muzaffar Syah (Malacca) and Sekolah Menengah Sains Selangor (Kuala Lumpur) began to have French in their curriculum officially or unofficially. By the late eighties, French
has more or less been accepted officially in these schools. Presently there are twenty-five residential schools offering French and they are:

1. Sekolah Menengah Sains Tun Syed Sheh Shahabudin
2. Sekolah Menengah Sains Raja Tun Azlan Shah
3. Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman
4. Kolej Melayu Kuala Kangsar
5. Sekolah Alam Shah
6. Sekolah Seri Puteri
7. Sekolah Menengah Sains Selangor
8. Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan Kajang
9. Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan Labu
10. Kolej Tunku Kurshiah
11. Sekolah Datuk Abdul Razak
12. Sekolah Menengah Sains Muzaffar Syah
13. Sekolah Tun Fatimah
14. Sekolah Menengah Sains Dungun
15. Sekolah Menengah Sains Sultan Mahmud
16. Sekolah Sains Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah
17. Sekolah Menengah Sains Tengku Mohammad Faris Petra
18. Sekolah Menengah Sains Pasir Putih
19. Sekolah Menengah Sains Kota Tinggi
20. Sekolah Menengah Sains Machang
21. Sekolah Menengah Sains Sabah
22. Sekolah Menengah Sains Miri
23. Sekolah Menengah Sains Labuan
24. Sekolah Menengah Sains Kuching
25. Sekolah Menengah Sains Kuala Selangor

The pioneer teachers of French in these residential schools were sponsored by the French government to study French in France at certificate or diploma level. In the early nineties the Malaysian Ministry of Education undertook to send trained teachers to study the French language at degree level in France. In the early years the textbooks used were limited to those written for British schools. Now teachers have a wide range of textbooks published in France for foreign students to choose from.

The teaching of French has also a special place in Malaysian institutions of higher learning such as UITM (formerly Institut Teknologi Mara), Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Multimedia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, etc. Since 1998, Universiti Malaya offers a Bachelor degree in French. Universiti Putra Malaysia will start its Bachelor programme in French very soon.

French is also taught in private institutions such as International School Kuala Lumpur, Garden International School, Fairview School, Sayfol School, Kolej Tuanku Jaafar, Taylor’s College, Stamford College and the Alliance Française whose role is to promote the French language as well as cultural relations between Malaysia and France,
1.2 Statement of problem

Malay, a member of the Austronesian family of languages is structurally and morphologically different from French, a Latin language falling within the Indo-European family. The Malay language shows large-scale borrowing from other languages. Besides Sanskrit, it also borrows from Arabic, and English. However these influences are more lexical than grammatical. Learning French, a language genetically different from Malay could present a lot of difficulties to Malay students, more so when it is a language not much spoken in Malaysia and is only learnt later in life when the students have already a set or more of earlier language habits. As Corder (1981:6) claims:

...the differences between the learning of the two languages are obvious: that the learning of the mother tongue is inevitable, whereas there is no such inevitability about the learning of a second language; that the learning of the mother tongue is part of the whole maturational process of the child while learning a second language normally begins only after the maturational process is largely complete; that the infant starts with no overt language behaviour, while in the case of the second language learner such behaviour, of course, exists; that the motivation for learning a first language is quite different from that for learning a second language.

In other words, the learning of the mother tongue is a necessary part of a child’s mental and social development within his cultural environment. He receives linguistic immersion everyday. His acquisition of the language is unplanned and ongoing. He learns by imitation, association and by trial and error. There is no time schedule to meet. The child is highly motivated, otherwise he will not get his daily needs answered.
On the other hand, learning a second or a foreign language may not involve the same favourable environmental and psychological factors. The learner of a foreign language has to follow a school syllabus, which is examination oriented and set within a certain time frame. He might or might not be motivated. If he were, his motivation would not be on the same level as that for his first language. Very often too the learner would abandon and forget whatever he has learned or acquired once he is out of the formal school environment.

A second language learner also possesses a set of habits. Some of these habits may facilitate while others may hinder the new learning task. Rutherford (1987:7) said that the learner has to adapt to a new system of speech and a new channel of thinking, which will differ from the one he already knows in ways that are perhaps striking and often even quite spectacular.

According to Fries:

.....the basic problems arise not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new languages themselves but primarily out of the special "set" created by the first language habits. The learner of the foreign language has to develop a new set of language habits against a background of different native habits.  
(Fries in Lado; i;1957)

Faced with these constraints, a person will not learn a foreign language in the same way as he learns his first language. If he learns it through formal instruction it is inevitable that he learns its grammar. As Widdowson (1985 : 154) puts it:

... For language learning is essentially grammar learning and it is a mistake to suppose otherwise.
But Widdowson also points out that this does not mean restricting attention to its formal properties but rather to use it as a device to mediate between words and contexts in order that meaning is achieved. Learning grammar is a necessity in order to understand the structure of a foreign language and to express oneself correctly. A knowledge of basic expressions as found in many tourist phrase books is insufficient. Language is not just a mere exchange of greetings. Language is the ability to vary one's speech pattern in different situations. Any grammatical concept or form is taught not with the purpose of asking the learner to regurgitate its formal properties but to apply it correctly after he has understood its logical basis. A knowledge of the grammar of that foreign language helps in the comprehension of and the expression in the language. In other words, it facilitates speaking, reading and writing and also being understood. Grammar is not an end in itself but a means to an end.

An important component of grammar is the verbal system of a language. The French verbal system, which is characterized by a number of features, non-existent in the Malay verbal system, could present a lot of learning problems to a Malay learner. The French verbal phrase, which includes the tense, aspect, mood and voice, is one of the most difficult areas of the French language, since both the concepts and the terminologies involved are confusing. (Judge & Healey, 1983:90)

Malay, on the other hand does not have verbal inflections to show time. The idea of time is expressed through the use of aspectual
auxiliaries and adverbial phrases of time or from the context itself. As illustrations, let us look at the following sentences:

i) *Saya telah menulis karangan itu.*

ii) *Saya menulis karangan itu semalam.*

iii) *Saya akan menulis surat itu.*

To denote the past, sentence i) uses the aspect word *telah* while in ii) the adverb *semalam* is used. In iii) the aspect verb *akan* indicates the future. The form of the verb *tulis* is invariable i.e. *menulis* in all the cases.

*We can see that the* accidence of the Malay verb is simple as compared to the French system. But this does not mean that Malay verbs are simple. The complexities of the Malay verbs are found in the affixes but these affixes do not express time and aspect the way French tenses do. Faced with these differences, very often, Malay students of French cannot use the French tenses correctly. One area of great difficulty is the use of the past tenses. Besides having to learn the various inflections of the French verbs, students have to deal with the concept of tense, which covers both time and aspect.

*Aspect* refers to the stage reached by the action or to its duration. Time is a universal concept. It involves the past, the present and the future but it is a non-linguistic concept. Tense is the correspondence between specific linguistic forms and time as a universal concept. In French, time and tense are combined in the various tense forms in ways which are not always easy to analyze, given that time and aspect are fused. (Judge & Healey:90)
To illustrate, let us compare the following sentences:

i)  *Hier, je travaillais dans le jardin, quand soudain j'ai entendu un cri perçant.*

ii) *Hier, j'ai travaillé dans le jardin toute la journée.*

Both the sentences above refer to the same time “yesterday” but they describe the action from different angles. The first sentence sees the action as ongoing, while the second sees it as completed. To further illustrate let us look at the following examples:

i)  *Je jouais au tennis tous les matins pendant les vacances.*

ii) *J'ai joué au tennis tous les matins pendant les vacances.*

These sentences match each other word for word except for the verb which uses different tenses but both tenses refer to the past. The first sentence uses the *imparfait* while the second the *passé composé*. The use of either the *imparfait* or the *passé composé* depends on what we want to express. The *imparfait* is used here if we want to project ourselves in the past *pendant les vacances* while giving prominence to the repetition of the action *tous les matins*. In the second example, with the use of the *passé composé* the action is viewed from the present. We see the total duration of the repetition of the action in the past *pendant les vacances*.

A comparative analysis of French past tenses and the Malay expressions of the past is expected to help the teacher to anticipate problems that students might encounter while learning the French verbs and also the difficulties that they might find in trying to apply what they have learned. However, some linguists have pointed out that the problems and difficulties as predicted by contrastive analysis do not
always hold true. The contrasts and differences between a target language and a source language may or may not be a source of difficulty and neither would the similarities between them be a factor which would facilitate the acquisition of the target language. An error analysis of the students work would help to identify the sources of errors. This study focuses on the kind of errors that Malay students tend to make when trying to use the French past tenses.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to identify and analyze the errors made by Malay students when they use the French past tenses. This study also aims:

- to find out the nature of these errors
- to show how the past is expressed through the use of aspectual words and adverbial phrases of time and other devices in Malay
- to show how the past is expressed through the use of tenses in French
- to show how the French past tenses (imparfait and passé composé) express time and aspect
- to propose pedagogical measures to deal with difficulties in the use of the passé composé and the imparfait.

Error analysis involves the observation of errors made by a foreign language learner. This is a diagnostic tool which will inform the teacher about the effectiveness of his teaching procedures and materials. It will also reveal the mechanisms that come into play as the learner tries to learn the language. Contrastive analysis is presumed to allow the
prediction of errors brought about either by partial analogy or by a
difference between the native language and the foreign language.

1.4 **Significance of study**

The teaching of French as a foreign language is gaining popularity in Malaysia. At present, French is one of the three or four third languages offered in twenty-five residential schools. The number of schools having French in their curriculum will increase when more teachers who are at present undergoing undergraduate studies in France return to Malaysia.

In the institutions of higher learning, French is also offered as an elective subject. In Universiti Putra Malaysia, French started in 1982 as an two-hour elective course offered by the Foreign Language Unit in the Faculty of Education. Since the creation of the Faculty of Modern Language Studies in 1995, learning one of the many foreign languages offered is a prerequisite to obtain a Bachelor degree offered by the faculty. There are four levels. Each level is equivalent to a semester of 42 contact hours. French is one of the more popular languages chosen by the students. Universiti Putra Malaysia plans to offer a Bachelor degree in French.

Many Malay students have problems and difficulties in understanding the French verbal system, which unlike the Malay verbal system, is more complicated with its moods and tenses and their inflections. As such, the study is undertaken with the hope that it will prove useful to teachers of French in Malaysia in their tasks of:
a) diagnosing their students' learning problems in French.
b) setting up a remedial programme.
c) designing effective teaching and testing materials

This study may also benefit those who intend to write instructional materials and textbooks for Malay learners of French.

1.5 Methodology

In this study, two complementary approaches are used, that is Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis. Carl James calls it the CA/EA analysis. First a CA is conducted by describing the Malay expressions of time and the French past tenses. This is followed by an EA on the use of the two past tenses in French by Malay learners.

1.5.1 The subjects

The subjects of the EA study involved a group of students in an undergraduate French proficiency class in Universiti Putra Malaysia. These students have had about 180 hours. The majority of these students are from the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication for whom a proficiency of up to 4 levels, that is, 4 semesters of a foreign language offered in the Faculty, is a requirement for graduation.

A questionnaire was distributed at the end of the semester to find out more about them. All the students think they speak Malay very well while only 16.5% think they also speak English very well. 41.5% and 39% consider that they speak English well and fairly well respectively. When learning French, about half of them make comparisons with English, while the other half with Malay. Many of them make
comparisons with both languages i.e. English and Malay, when learning the French tenses. About 57% of the 35 respondents compare French tenses very often with English tenses. About 6% claimed that they do not make any comparison with any other language and the rest (37%) very often make comparisons with Malay.

Each proficiency level has a three-hour class session per week per semester or level. The subjects of the test had already done about 110 hours of French and had already learned, among other things, the following tenses:

the present (présent)
the immediate future (futur proche)
the present perfect (passé composé)
the past imperfect (imparfait)

The researcher taught all these students when they were in Level 3 and 4. The past tenses were taught towards the end of level 3 and at the beginning of Level 4 and were used in dialogues or passages in the textbook to introduce other grammatical items. These students were selected for the following reasons:

a. homogeneity of age
b. linguistic homogeneity
c. level of proficiency that is more or less equivalent.

There were 35 students, 33 of whom were female and 2 male. The majority was aged between 20 and 24. Of the 35 respondents, 17 were majoring in English, 15 in Malay, 1 in Arabic, 1 in Computer Science and 1 in Science.
1.5.2 The instrument

Before this test was carried out these students had already been tested, among other items, on their use of the passé composé and the imparfait in their mid-semester fourth level examination. Through the analysis of the use of these items in the examination paper and through previous teaching experience, we observed that Malay students have a lot of problems in applying the concept of tenses and also in using the correct form of the right tenses. It was hoped that by the time this test was carried out, the students would be more familiar with the past tenses through further exposure to them in successive lessons.

For the purpose of this study the instrument used consists of a test, which was piloted on three native French speakers whose answers are used as models for the correction of the students' answers. The test was administered to the students before the end of level 4. This test is in the form of four passages where all the verbs to be used were given in the infinitive form. There were altogether 109 items consisting of verbs from different groups and the subjects were required to use the correct past tense i.e. either the imparfait or the passé composé of these verbs, according to the context. As the test is on the use of the correct past tense, the form of the verbs was in the infinitive to lessen the burden of finding the appropriate vocabulary. The students would then have more time in deciding the correct tense and form to be used. Passages were used to create a story line, which would require the use of a certain past tense. Sometimes both tenses could be employed. The passages were
taken from different sources and adapted to suit the objective of the research. The test was answered within a 90-minute period and was supervised by the lecturer.

This test hopes to find out whether the subjects could use the correct French past tenses i.e. the passé composé and the imparfait in a given context. French tenses are a fusion of the concepts of time and aspect. The choice of these tenses is not always easy. As such a tense system does not exist in Malay, the correct choice of tense could present a problem to Malay students in French. Besides deciding on which tense to use, learners of French have also to learn the various inflections of the tenses.

The answers that the subjects give would reveal the strategies they use to learn the tenses and their application. As the subjects have a certain level of English background and a tense system does exist in English though having inflective forms that are simpler than that of Latin languages, we could expect some interference from English. The aim of this test is also to see whether the subjects have understood the rules of conjugation. If they have not grasped the fundamentals of conjugating verbs, we can gain insights into how they try to solve their problems.

1.5.3 The Evaluation of the Test

The scripts were corrected by the researcher using the answers provided by three French native speakers. The errors are classified under the following categories:
i. choice of tense

ii. choice of auxiliary

iii. formation of the past participle

iv. agreement of the past participle with the subject

v. agreement of the *imparfait* with the subject

vi. agreement of the past participle with the object

vii. syntactic deviation of the negation

viii. elision

The researcher attempted to interpret the choice of tense following a certain guideline, which is given in Chapter 4. This interpretation is necessary as the forms given by the students were at times incorrectly formed and very ambiguous. To discuss the errors of category 2 to category 8, only answers considered as the correct choice of tense were taken into account. The errors were tabulated according to their frequency and explanation given regarding the sources of error:

a. negative transfer, as well as

b. intralingual and developmental errors as posited by Richards, i.e.:

i. overgeneralization

ii. ignorance of rule restrictions

iii. incomplete application of rules

iv. false concepts hypothesized

The students' individual scores were tabulated generally as well as according to their Bachelor programmes.
Negative transfer is the result of L1 interference. Some errors can be attributed to the use of structures, forms and categories of previously learned languages. In this study, the previously learned languages are Malay (the mother tongue of the students) and English (the second language).

Overgeneralization refers to an instant when a learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of their experience of other structures in the target language. It normally involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures. (Richards, 1985:48) Redundancy reduction is an example of overgeneralization. Some teaching techniques can also create over-generalized structures.

Ignorance of rule restrictions is closely related to generalization of deviant structures. The learner fails to observe the restrictions of existing structures on applying rules to contexts where they do not apply (Richards, 1985:49). Analogy and rote learning of rules provide instances of errors in this type.

A learner may also fail to apply the operational rules of the target language to produce acceptable utterances. Redundancy may be a factor. Another factor could be the motivation to achieve communication rather than production of grammatically correct structures.

Sometimes certain concepts are falsely hypothesized due to faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language. The learner’s exposure to quite a number of the TL rules and to poorly graded teaching items could lead him to make his own assumptions of the rules without adequately understanding them.
1.5.4 The Structural Model

In contrastive analysis, selected linguistic features of two or more languages are compared with the aim of finding out the similarities and differences between them. According to Rudolf Filipović:

One of the basic principles of CA methodology says that both systems have to be described equally well especially if the two languages confronted are genetically and typologically different. (1981:107)

From the perspective of genealogy and typology, both French and Malay are different. French is a Romance language, which falls within the Indo-European group of languages. Malay is an Austronesian language. Typologically, French is an inflecting language whereby grammatical relationships are expressed through the use of inflectional endings. Malay, on the other hand, is an agglutinative language. (Asmah 1991:55)

In this research, the French past tenses and the corresponding Malay expressions of the past is compared using the structural model. Lado gives a general guideline of the procedures for comparing language structure:

We begin with an analysis of the foreign language and compare it structure by structure with the native language. For each structure we need to know if there is a structure in the native language 1) signaled the same way, that is, by the same formal device, 2) having the same meaning, and 3) similarly distributed in the system of that language. (1957:66)

Each structure compared should be in pairs i.e. each L2 structure needs to be analyzed to see if that structure has a form, meaning and distribution which is the same in L1 structure.
S.N. Sridhar in his article "Contrastive analysis, Error analysis and Interlanguage" says that the main principle in CA methodology is that the structure of both languages needs to be described using the same theoretical model:

The prerequisite for any contrastive study is the availability of accurate and explicit description of the language under comparison. It is also essential that the descriptions be theoretically compatible.  
(in Pisiak, 1981: 214)

1.5.5 Rationale for Structural Model

In the seventies and the eighties, researchers preferred a transformational grammar model as the notion of "deep structure" and "surface structure" reveals that many structural differences between source language and target language are merely superficial. Similar deep structure features in both languages may be expressed differently in the surface structure. (Nickel: 1971:5) But it has been pointed out that it is precisely these "superficial" similarities and differences of source language and target language surface structures that generate errors. Interference causes transfer of features of the source language surface structure to the target language. This generates errors wherever the source language and the target language surface structures are different. Common deep structure features of both languages are largely irrelevant in this process. (Schmitz: 1991: 4)

In this study where the task is to compare and contrast the French expression of the past through the two past tenses (passé composé and imparfait) to the Malay expressions of the past, the structural approach is chosen as the model.
1.5.6 Error Analysis as a complement to Contrastive Analysis

Stockwell stated that the comparison of sources of interference, that is, contrastive analysis could be approached in two ways:

... by collecting lists of errors students have made, and then trying to describe the conflicts between the systems that give rise to such errors, or by setting up a systematic comparison which scans the differences in structure in search of sources of interference, and predicting that such-and-such errors will occur from such-and such conflicts. (1968:18-19)

The first approach is EA and the second is CA. Stockwell adopted the second approach but it was somewhat tempered by the first.

James thought that EA and CA studies should not be presented as two propositions of an alternative choice. They should in fact complement each other:

... each approach has its vital role to play in accounting for L2 learning problems. They should be viewed as complementing each other rather than as competitors for some procedural pride of place. (1980:187)

In this study an EA is carried out to collect the errors, which are evaluated and tabulated according to the categories mentioned above. The errors produced are then discussed in terms of negative transfer as well as intralingual and developmental errors. The scores of the subjects are also tabulated and illustrated in graphs to bring out the distributional patterns of the scores.
1.6 Scope and limitation of study

The purpose of this study is to look into and analyze, through error analysis, the occurrence of linguistic errors among Malay students of French. As the domain is vast and a study has already been done on morphological errors committed by Malay learners, this study focuses on the use of the French past tenses of the indicative mood by Malay learners. The analysis of errors was carried out only when there was availability of students who could fulfill the requirements, that is, they must have already completed three proficiency levels in Universiti Putra Malaysia and this means that the test was conducted at the beginning of the fourth level.

The test did not include the pluperfect (plus-que-parfait), the past historic (passé simple) and the past anterior (passé antérieur) as these tenses were not covered in the first three proficiency levels. It was on the use of the perfect tense or compound past (passé composé) and the imperfect or progressive past (imparfait) and bore upon the written form, not spoken French.

1.7 Definition of relevant concepts

In this dissertation, the concepts used are as follows:

a) CA - Contrastive Analysis is a procedure whereby the descriptions of the learner's first language and second language are obtained and an interlingual comparison carried out.
b) EA - Error Analysis refers to the techniques used to measure the students' progress in learning the French past tenses through the study and classification of the errors that they make.

c) L1 / first language / Source language / mother tongue / native language - These terms are used to refer to Malay.

d) L2 / second language / target language / foreign language - These terms refer to French, a language that the subjects are learning formally as a third or even a fourth language.

e) SLA - Second language acquisition is not to be contrasted with foreign language acquisition. Here both the terms shall be used to refer to the learning of French.

f) Acquisition - Some linguists contrast the word "acquisition" with the word "learning". They refer "acquisition" to the process of picking up a language through exposure while "learning" a language means the study of a language in a formal and conscious manner. In this dissertation this term is used interchangeably with the term "learning".

1.8 The French language

French is one of the many Romance languages which developed from the spoken or 'vulgar' form of Latin used throughout the Roman Empire. In medieval times the French dialects of the north and centre were known collectively as the Langue d'oïl and the dialects of the south the Langue d'oc.
Modern standard French developed from Francien, the dialect of the Ile de France which comprises Paris and the surrounding area. Factors which favoured Francien for the status of national language were the establishment of a royal court in Paris, the development of an education and of a legal system centred in that same city and the existence of the abbey, the spiritual center of the kingdom, at Saint Denis close by. Since the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Francien came to be accepted as the standard to aim towards in writing and in cultivated speech in northern and central France. In the south however, it made a slow but steady advance. (Harris, 1988:14)

By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it came to be wholly prevalent within the boundaries of France. But it was used as an international language of culture and diplomacy in Europe long before it was generally accepted within France. French had, in effect, replaced Latin in the former role by the seventeenth century while it was the native language of only a quarter of the population of France. It rose as a major international language to the point that the Berlin Academy was able to ask, as a matter of fact, in 1782, Qu'est-ce qui a rendu la langue française universelle? (What has made the French language universal?) (Harris, 1988:14) “Anybody who belonged to Europe’s most fashionable, elegant and educated circles made it a point to speak French. Frederick the Second of Prussia, Catherine of Russia, the courts of Germany and Italy were all entirely French-speaking.” (Landau in France Information, No. 122, 1984: 3)
Beyond the shores of Europe, the French language also gained inroads as its explorers ventured out and settled down in all the four corners of the earth, beginning in Canada in the sixteenth century and then in other parts of North America, in Africa and in the Far East. This enhanced role persisted until the First World War and even beyond with colonization. (Harris, 1988:14)

French is a world language spoken in almost every continent. Within Europe, it is spoken by the fifty-nine million people living in France and Monaco. It is also the native language to many inhabitants in Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Val d’Aosta in northern Italy. (Harris, 1988:14)

In North America, French speakers are found in Canada. Three-quarters of these francophones live in Quebec where they form about eighty percent of the total population. In the United States, there are significant numbers of francophones in New England. These are descendants of a group of French colonists of Acadia (the easternmost provinces of Canada) driven out in the mid-eighteenth century with an admixture also directly from Quebec. Some of these Acadians or Cajuns settled further south, that is, in Louisiana, which was a French possession until 1803. (Harris, 1988:15)

French and French-based Creole are also spoken in the French overseas departments and territories of St. Pierre and Miquelon, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, Reunion, Mayotte, New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallis. In Haiti, French and French-based Creole are also spoken. Vanuatu in the South Pacific is also francophone.
French is not only the official language of Mainland France and its overseas departments and territories; it is also the only official language in twelve African countries i.e. Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. (Landau in *France Information*, No. 122, 1984)

In Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Canada, it shares the status of official language with another. It is also the case in the African nations of Burundi, Cameroon, Comores, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritania, Rwanda, Seychelles and Zaire. (Landau in *France Information*, No. 122, 1984)

It also holds a privileged position, being a scholastic language in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritius, Syria, Brazil, Colombia, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. It has a local official status in Pondicherry in India, Jersey of the Channel Islands, Val d’Aosta in Italy, and Louisiana in North America. (Landau in *France Information*, No. 122, 1984)

(See map of the French-speaking world on page 28.)

1.9 The Malay language

The Malay language is a member of the Austronesian or alternatively the Malayo-Polynesian family which extends from Madagascar to Easter Island and from Taiwan and Hawaii to New Zealand. This family is divided into two main groups: the Eastern and Western group. The Eastern group consists of the languages spoken in New Guinea, the islands of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. The languages spoken in Madagascar, Malaysia, the Indonesian islands, the
Philippines, Taiwan, parts of Vietnam and Cambodia, the Western end of new Guinea and parts of Micronesia fall within the Western group. Some of these languages are Malay, Achinese, Batak, Minangkabau, Javanese, Iban, Sudanese and Tagalog.

Malay is the mother tongue of the Deutro-Malays i.e. modern Malays whose ancestors migrated from the Mon-Khmer civilisation in Central Asia around 2,000 B.C and established kingdoms all over insular Southeast Asia. (Abdullah Hassan, 1974:1). Today it is the native language to about two hundred and forty million people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. It is the national language of these countries.

Since 1967, Malay has been the only official language in Malaysia. Prior to that English was also an official language. The status of Malay as the sole national and official language is enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution under Article 152, which also safeguards the use of other languages except for official purposes. It is the medium of instruction in public educational institutions at secondary and tertiary levels although Chinese and Tamil schools continue to operate at primary level.

The Malay language is officially called Bahasa Indonesia in the Indonesian islands since 1949 and alternatively Bahasa Malaysia or Bahasa Melayu in Malaysia. There are many dialects and varieties of Malay spoken. A pidginized form of Malay or Bazaar Malay, which predates the time of contact with European languages in the seventeenth century used to be spoken throughout the Malay Archipelago. Baba
Malay, a form of Creole Malay is used by some Chinese communities in
Malaysia, especially in Melaka.

According to Asmah Hj. Omar (in Choi, 1986), there are five main
regional dialects in Peninsular Malaysia namely,
a) the North-western dialect of Kedah, Perlis, Penang and North Perak
b) the North-eastern dialect of Kelantan which is also spoken within the
   frontiers of Trengganu and Pahang
c) the Eastern dialect spoken in Kelantan, Trengganu and Pahang
d) the Negri Sembilan dialect. This dialect is also spoken in Melaka
e) the southern dialect which is spoken in the states of Johore, Melaka,
   Pahang, Selangor and Perak

The Southern dialect or the Johore-Riau dialect has become the
standard Malay language in Malaysia. It is used in administration,
schools, colleges and radio and television broadcasts in Malaysia.

Written records of Malay found on various inscriptions in Sumatra
date back to the seventh century A.D. The arrival of Islam in the
Malay/Indonesian Archipelago encouraged the development of the
literary tradition. Malay is written both in Roman and Arabic scripts,
though the former is more widespread. Modern written Malay is different
from the classical form.

(See map of the Malay-speaking world on page 29.)
1.9 The language situation in Malaysia

Malaysia is a multiracial, multiethnic, multi-religious society with an estimated population of twenty-two million people in 2000. Malaysians of different racial and ethnic origins have different mother tongues. Malay is the native language for about 60% of the population.

Malaysians are generally bilingual. Some speak three languages or more. The contributing factors are the social environment and the national educational policy. Besides the various languages of the different racial and ethnic groups, they are also given the opportunity to learn the major languages of the world like French, German, Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin that are offered in many language centres, universities and fully residential schools.
THE FRENCH-SPEAKING WORLD

[Map showing countries where French is spoken, with different symbols indicating official or administrative language, mother tongue, and high percentage of speakers.]

Country or region where French is the official language and/or mother tongue

Country with a region where French is an official language

Country or region where French is the official or administrative language

Country with a small percentage of French speakers

Country with a high percentage or number of French speakers