CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview:

Learning a second language is not an easy task. When learners learn a second/foreign language, errors will be made, errors cannot be avoided, and second language structures may be complex and not easy for learners. The Arabic language is one language which learners find difficult to learn. Errors made by foreign learners are many; one can say learners of the Arabic language experience enormous difficulties in learning the language. These difficulties cannot be attributed to a single source, but to several. An example of the language problems encountered by learners of Arabic is the use of (الْ) the definite article ('al) which is a problem for most non-native speakers of Arabic. Prepositions with verbs cause the more serious problems. Learners have trouble understanding why sentences, such as: أشتري من الدكان 'ashtray min 'ad-dukkaani (I buy from the shop) is not constructed as (أشتري في الدكان) 'ashtary fy 'ad-dukaani...in the shop.

Foreign learners of Arabic are confronted with many difficulties. Sometimes they confuse parts of speech; learners use nouns when they actually want to use verbs, or verbs where they want to use nouns unable to distinguish between verbs and nouns. Besides using the incorrect parts of speech, learners of Arabic, including Malays, have problems with the boundaries of the Arabic sentence not knowing the limits of the sentences and most importantly the types of Arabic sentences. Learners produce sentences such as: الطلاب كتب الدرس 'aT-Tulaabu kataba 'd-darsa, "The students wrote

the lesson", which is not acceptable as a nominal sentence because the verb 'katab' (wrote) is not marked for a plural number. The error in this sentence maybe traced to the confusion with the type of the sentence. In the verbal sentence it is correct to say

كتب الطلاب الدرس kataba 'aT-Tulaabu 'd-darsa "The students wrote the lesson", so in

the verbal sentence, the verb is not inflected for number. Another difficulty encountered by foreign learners in learning Arabic is the passive voice. For instance, Malay learners try to avoid using the passive voice. Although this type of structure is used in BM, the subject appears in the sentence unlike the passive sentence in Arabic. Othman (1976:109) states, "As in English...a sentence in the Active Voice can be turned into the Passive Voice, and vice versa". In relation to the above is the following example: Ali diundang oleh Ahmed (Ismail, 1990:22) "Ali has been invited by Ahmed", so Ali is the object, diundang is the passive verb, and Ahmed is the subject. Whereas in the Arabic language, the subject الفاعل will disappear, while the

so-called naa'ib 'alfaa'il نائب فاعل the agent replaces the verb. However, Malays as

foreign learners of Arabic language, are expected to have persistent problems with the inflection of the Arabic verb for tense form usage and subject-verb- agreement (SVA). The Malay learners have problems in choosing the correct tense, a learner

may say انا أكتب الدرس أمس "I write the lesson yesterday", instead of انا كتبت الدرس أمس

'anaa 'aktubu 'd-darsa (I wrote the lesson yesterday) so, the present tense maybe used instead of the past and vice versa.

Also learners have problems in tense form structure, or tense form sequences:

بعد ان كتبت الدرس انا أذهب الى المكتبة ba'da 'an katabtu 'd-darsa "After I /wrote the lesson, I

go to the library." The learner in this sentence confronts difficulty in forming the

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correct structure, which is بعد أن كتبت الدرس ذهبت إلى المكتبة "After I wrote the lesson I

went to library." Sometimes a noun is used instead of a verb: بعد أدن المؤذن أنا صلاة

"After calling for prayers, I prayer" Instead of (صليت) Sallaytu "I prayer."

Thus, there are many errors in tense form usage, and understanding tenses in the Arabic language is considered a problematic area for Malay learners.

Malay learners have problems with subject - verb- agreement (number - person - gender), in the verbal sentence, as well as in the nominal sentence with the predicate as a verb. The concord, or the subject - verb agreement, is one feature of a sentence in Arabic, that is to say, the inflection of the Arabic verb depends on its agreement with person (P), number (N), and gender (G). Malay learners find difficulty in constructing correct sentences and phrases with subject- verb agreement. The Malay learners usually say, كتب فاطمة الدرس kataba faaTimah 'd-darsa "Fatimah wrote the lesson",

normally omitting the feminine sign 'ت' (ta), which makes the concord for the

feminine subject فاطمة.

However, changes have occurred in the area of second language acquisition (SLA), especially with the problems and difficulties that learners face in learning a second language. In order to solve these problems, the learner's difficulties have to be identified, so that an improved method of teaching can be undertaken, along with an organized syllabus and well-prepared textbooks can be produced suited to the difficulties of the learners.

For these reasons, the identification and investigation of learning difficulties in second and foreign language teaching has become an important issue of study in many language centers concerned with second language learning and language studies. Therefore, such studies have become important because people who study a second language commit frequent errors as they try to learn the target language. Hopefully, with the help of teachers, researchers, and linguists, students will improve, and develop their knowledge of the newly applied language. In addition, an improved system can be formulated and an improved framework can be developed to clarify their sources of errors, as well as to explore methods of learning. The findings of such studies can improve the views regarding the language learning process and, at the same time, teachers can update their language teaching methods and materials, as well as syllabuses, to suit the language requirements.

The field of second language learning acquisition has been explored by a number of researchers, educators, and applied linguists in order to facilitate both learning and teaching. However, they are still trying to formulate a set of principles, or rules, regarding second language acquisition process to pave the way, at least, for proper teaching.

As a result of the linguists' efforts, the most remarkable shift in the area of second language acquisition has been a pedagogical focus from preventing errors to learning from errors. In supporting the above George (1972:189) explains, "It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the sixties the word error was associated with correction, at the end with learning." It is known that behaviorists have encouraged learners to focus on learning from pattern drills to prevent errors. As a result, errors were considered a failure in learning a second language in the 1950's and early 1960's because errors were deemed undesirable. However, by the appearance of Corder's

1967 article "The Significance of Learner's Errors" the trend has changed to expect and accept errors as a natural process, and necessary part, of second language acquisition. Corder (1967:11) elaborates "The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language." Corder (1967) here makes an analogy between first language acquisition and second language learning. Errors are the feature of this comparison. Thus, as Corder (1967) noted, errors are signals that indicate that actual learning is taking place and errors can indicate the learners' progress in the target language.

1.2 Background of the Problem

In BM, the verbs are not inflected for marking tense form and the same form of verb can be used to indicate the present, the past, and the future; Othman (1976:72) elaborates this, "...the same form of verb is used for both present and past tenses. Malay tenses are understood from the context. The same form of verb can be used for the present tense, the future tense, and the past tense..." whereas the situation in Arabic is totally different. The form of the verb in Arabic is formed to indicate the time, for example 'alfi'l 'almaaDy الفعل الماضي the past tense, and 'alfi'l 'almuDaari'

الفعل المضارع the imperfect tense, which show the present tense as well as the future tense. The Arabian grammarians as stated by Wright (1981:51), "Have given an undue importance to the idea of time, in connection with the verbal forms, by their division of it into the past (الماضي), the present (الحال or الحاضر), and the future (المستقبل)."

The tense form or the Arabic verb form, is inflected for person, number, and gender, whereas the situation in BM is different. With regards to gender Othman (1976:42) says, "When we use words denoting persons, or animals we generally use them in the

common gender." However, the sections below show in detail how Arabic verbs indicate tense, person number, and gender.

1.2.1 Tense (TNS)

The Arabic verbs are marked for tense, form, showing the time of the action in certain forms.

The verb in Arabic has three categories, namely:

1.   The Perfect Verb: 'alfi'l 'almaaDy الفعل الماضى

2.   The Imperfect Verb: 'alfi'l 'almuDaari' الفعل المضارع

3.   The Imperative: fi'l 'al'amr فعل الامر

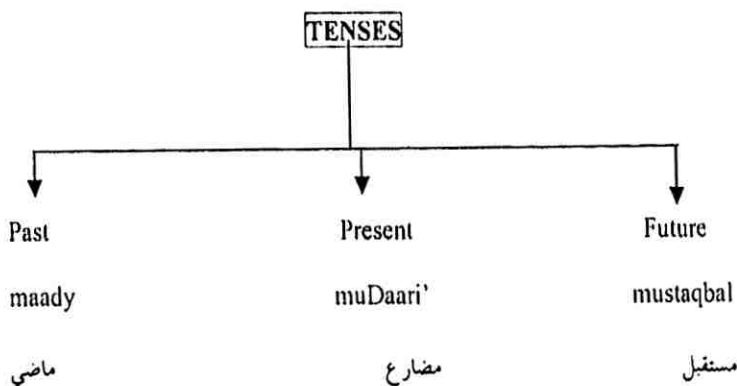There are three time periods that can be indicated by these verbs, see the figure below:

Past	Present	Future
maady	muDaari'	mustaqbal
ماضي	مضارع	مستقبل

Figure 1.1: *Arabic Tenses*

The present time, and future time is covered by الفعل المضارع (muDaari'), while the past time is covered by الفعل الماضي (maaDy). Wright (1981:51) says, "...the first of which

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'Arabic verb' they assign to the perfect and the other two to the imperfect."

1.2.2 Forms and Tense:

The Arabic language depends, to a large extent, on the inflectional form of the verb to show the tense, the following forms show this fact:

كتب kataba "He wrote" (past tense) maaDy ماضى

يكتب yaktubu "He writes" (present tense) muDaari' مضارع

سيكتب sayaktubu "He will write" (future tense)mustaqal مستقبل

The forms above show the past tense, the present tense, and the future tense.

As mentioned earlier, the Arabic verbs are inflected for tense, and these tenses are inflected for person, number, and gender as well. The section below discusses the inflection of tenses for agreement. It is important to notice that in the Malay Language, the verb forms are not inflected for tense and agreement, and this is why Malay learners find difficulty in learning the Arabic Language and commit many errors in the use of tenses and agreements.

1.2.3 Sentence Analysis

Analysis of sentences will show how Arabic verbs are formed, showing time, and the inflections for person, number, and gender.

I   The students wrote the lesson.   kataba 'aT-Tulabu 'd-darsa

كتب الطلاب الدرس

2.   You write the lesson.   'antumaa taktubaani 'd-darsa

أنتما تكتبان الدرس

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3. We will write the lesson. naHnu sanaktubu 'd-darsa نحن سنكتب الدرس

In the first sentence, the verb kataba كتب is in the past tense form and at the same time

shows the third person. The verb is singular in number and masculine in gender.

The second sentence verb taktubaani تكتبان shows the present tense, while the person

is inflected for second person because of the suffix 'an (أن). The number is inflected

for dual, and the gender could be both masculine and feminine.

In the third sentence, the verb form naktubu نكتب is present, but because of the prefix

'syn' س, the verb form shows the future tense, indicating the first person, while the

number is plural and the gender could be either masculine or feminine. The table

below shows this analysis.

Table 1.1: *Analysis of Arabic Sentences*

Sen.	TNS	Person	Number	Gender
1.	Past	3rd	S	M
2.	Present	2nd	D	M F
3.	Future	1st	P	M /F

Sentences 1,2 and 3 have given numbers in the table under (Sen). The sentences show

all the tenses (past, present, and future) and all the persons (first, second, and third

person). One could say that the tenses are inflected for gender and person.

1.2.4 Agreement (Agr)

As seen in the tense forms and sentence analysis above, the Arabic verb forms are used, that is to say they show tense usage. At the same time the verbs are inflected for the person, number and gender. However, the discussion of the tense usage couldn't be handled separately from the agreement usage.

Here are some explanations for the inflection of the agreement in Arabic verbs.

1.2.5 Person (P)

Arabic verbs are inflected for person. For instance, in Arabic it is stated 'aktubu اكتب "I write", and naktubu نكتب "We write", this is for the first person. For the second person it is stated نكتب, نكتبين, نكتبين, نكتبان "You write", singular, dual, and plural respectively. The following forms of the verbs, are used with the third person in the Arabic language (يكتب) "He writes" (تكتب) "She write" (يكتبون) "They write" يكتبن "They write" for feminine), and يكتبان "They write, for dual". The table below shows the inflection of the Arabic verb for person.

Table1.2 *Inflection of The Verb for Person*

First Person & G	Second Person &G	Third Person &G
M/F اكتب I write	M نكتب you write	M يكتب he writes
M/F نكتب we write	F نكتبين you write	F تكتب she writes
	M/F نكتبان you (2) write	M they يكتبون write
	M نكتبون you write	F يكتبن they write
	F نكتبن you write	M يكتبان they (2) write
		F يكتبان they (2) write

1.2.6 Number (N)

Unlike other languages, Arabic verbs arc inflected for number. Verbs have plural and singular forms. Arabic has a special inflection for number two, it is 'dual'. The suffixes show the inflection for singular (S), dual (D), and plural (P). For instance, consider the following examples: كتبتم ،كتبتما ،كتبت katabta, katabtumaa, and katabtum (You write) singular, dual, and plural, we notice that the verb is inflected for number, be it singular, dual, and plural respectively. Also, notice the suffixes ت، ما، م demonstrate these numbers, (taa`), is for the singular, (tumaa) is showing the dual, and finally, the suffix (tum)is for the plural. The table below elaborates this inflection for number.

Table1.3

Inflection of The Verb for Number

كتبت katabta	You wrote.	S
كتبتما katabtumaa	You (2) wrote.	D
كتبتم katabtum	You (plural) wrote.	P

1.2.7 Gender (G)

Gender must agree with gender in Arabic verbs as part of the whole agreement. There are two genders in Arabic, masculine (M) and feminine (F). Prefixes and suffixes play the role of inflection for gender in the Arabic verb. Usually the masculine verb is without the sign, 'kataba' كتب "He wrote", is maaDy ماضى,

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while 'katabat' كتبت "She wrote", is with the feminine sing 'taa'' ت. As for the imperfect verb, مضارع the prefix marks the gender, first 'taa'' in تكتب makes the verb feminine; however, for the Imperative Verb فعل الامر, the suffix marks the gender, as in "Write" اكتبى which indicates command for the feminine. The following table shows gender in the Arabic verb.

Table 1.4

Inflection of The Verb for Gender

M	F
كتب "He wrote"	تكتب "She wrote"
يكتب "He writes"	تكتب "She writes"
اكتب "Write"	اكتبى "Write"(command)

Moreover, tense form usage in is a problematic area for foreign learners. In this case it is truthful to say that tense usage is difficult for Malay learners.

This study deals with the Arabic verb inflection, in both the nominal sentence and verbal sentence from compositions written by pre-university learners from the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). The study aims to investigate the errors committed by the Malay learners because Malay learners have difficulty in constructing sentences using correct tenses, inflected verbs for person, number, and gender.

The errors investigated are important in light of a number of factors.

First, the Arabic verb and its inflection are very important in learning the Arabic language. Verbs are not only important in the Arabic language, but for almost any language in which the verb is complex, and learning a language is to a very large degree learning how to operate the verbal forms of that language as Palmer (1974) mentioned.

Second, the most obvious forms of inflection in all languages (like Arabic, Latin, Malay and Chinese) are in the verb patterns, or verb phrases.

Third, the verb and its inflections, according to Palmer (1974) is so central to the structure of the sentence that no syntactic analysis can be made without careful consideration of it.

Fourth, the verbal forms differ in crucial ways according to sentence production indicating the type of information being conveyed, hence this is the most important and is certainly difficult for learners.

As seen briefly in the background to the problem, the inflection of the Arabic verb indicates and carries different types of information. These changes and additional information are explained in the sections that follow.

1.3 Statement of the Problem:

This study deals mainly with the syntactic problems which face Malay learners of Arabic as a foreign language. In particular, the study focus' on the difficulties encountered in verb inflection, which is crucial for learning foreign languages as "learning a language is to very large degree learning how to operate the verbal forms of that language" Palmer (1974:1).

As stated in the background of the study, Arabic teachers found that Malay learners of

Arabic are usually confronted by specific difficulties when exposed to written Arabic. As such, this study will focus on the difficulties encountered in writing for Malay learners of Arabic. However, interviews with the samples in this study have been used to gather data for the study and to explore oral skills. The scope of Malay learners' problems in Arabic verbs is very wide, a single is difficult to give a comprehensive clarifications of all the difficulties that learners face. As such, this study is confined to the most problematic syntactic aspects in the Arabic verb. As observed by the researcher and other Arabic teachers: tense, gender, person and number are areas of difficulty for Malay learners of Arabic.

This study aims at investigating the syntactical errors related to tense, number, person, and gender in the verbal sentence as well as the nominal sentence. The study will show statistically, in terms of tables, graphics, and percentages the occurrence of these errors, and the gravity of these errors. The study also investigates the possible sources of the errors.

The investigation of these problems is carried out through error analysis of the students' written work, as well as student interviews are investigated.

1.4 Study Method Employed:

It is the researcher's intention to investigate the problems of Malaysian students learning Arabic, via the error analysis (EA) approach.

This study examines learners' difficulties with particular focus on the inflection of the Arabic verb for tense, person, number, and gender. The study investigates both the verbal sentence, as well as the nominal sentence, with a predicate verb.

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The most important reasons for choosing the error analysis approach are state:

1. The researcher believes that the EA approach is a workable method to help the students master the language and to help teachers teach the language more effectively.

2. By analyzing the students written work, the teacher can begin to understand the students' position, and understand what difficulties they are going through in order to fulfill the learners' needs.

3. Why this study focuses of the Arabic verb and its inflections? Because the verb is the central aspect in any language.

4. It is the researcher's stand to take a non-contrastive approach to analyse the errors of Malay learners of Arabic because Malay students make an abundant errors when expressing themselves in Arabic.

The study examines learners' difficulties with particular focus on the inflections of the Arabic verb. The study of Arabic verb inflection errors is important, as the Arabic language is important as a cultural and religious language to Malay learners, Chee (1977:13) puts it in plain words:

"...Arabic terms and linguistic structures continue to be pervasive for the simple reason that Islam is the religion of the Malays and Islamic culture remains a fundamental influence on Malay life. Thus, the Malay vocabulary contains within it terms and linguistics forms traceable to Islamic religion, philosophy, jurisprudence, astronomy, and politics."

The findings of this study will hopefully, contribute to the field of learning second language processes in general, and teaching and learning of the Arabic language in Malaysia in particular, by facilitating the learning and paving the way for Malay learners to master the Arabic language. What is meant by second language here is any language learned after the acquisition of the mother tongue, the teaching of the Arabic language to Malay learners in Malaysia, where Arabic is not an official

language, is an example of foreign language teaching, Nickel (1998:3) says, "It must be made clear that there are striking differences between FL- and SL- teaching due to factors, like motivations, exposure to the new language outside the classroom, intensity of teaching and learning..."

1.5 Significance of the Study:

The learning difficulties encountered by the Malay learners of Arabic, especially in the verbal system, are the focus of interest of the researcher in this study. Teachers complain about their students' weaknesses in the use of the Arabic language. The focal point of this study is the verb and information carried by it, that is to say inflection. As mentioned by Palmer (1974:1): "Learning a language is to a very large degree learning how to operate the verbal forms of that language."

This study has been undertaken to examine the inflections of the Arabic verbs. This, on the recommendations made, may make a humble contribution to make teaching and learning of Arabic to Malay students at the university and pre-university level at other similar institutions more effective.

The study provides a description of the Arabic verb and its inflections for tense form usage, person, number, and gender. In addition, it identifies the learning difficulties experienced by the Malay learners of Arabic offering an insight into the difficulties in tense and agreement made by the learners.

The outcome of this study, hopefully, will be useful to language teachers of Arabic with reference to:

1. Diagnosing students' problem areas.

2. Teaching the verb with its inflections, as well as its conjugations.

3. Selecting appropriate materials and constructing well prepared teaching.

The findings also can be employed for planning appropriate Arabic Language syllabuses, and can be useful to course designers for organizing remedial programmes for teaching the Arabic verb.

1.6 Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the syntactical errors in both verbal sentences and nominal sentences (with predicate verbs) from free compositions written by Malay students at the IIUM Matriculation Center.

2. To examine the inflection of the Arabic verb for tense, person, number and gender, from free compositions written by Malay learners.

3. To explain the causes of errors in the area investigated, with more concentration on the mother tongue (Malay) in particular to find out whether the mother tongue influences inter language.

4. To suggest how errors in tense and agreement areas can be remedied.

5. To make pedagogical suggestions for teachers in teaching the Arabic verb with its inflection for tense, person, number and gender.

6. To suggest steps in designing programmes for teaching verb inflections in the Arabic Language.

1.7 Research Questions:

Before the research questions are discussed, a summary of the variables involved in this study is explained in this section.

The dependent variable in this study is the students' difficulties in Arabic language; the independent variables are the students' errors in Arabic verb usage,

especially tense usage, as well as the causes of errors.

This study, according to the objectives stated above, aims at answering the following questions:

1. What types of tense errors do Malay students make when learning the Arabic language?

2. What types of syntactic errors are made regarding the use of:

   1. Person.

   2. Number.

   3. Gender.

3. What types of errors are made in conjunction of tense and agreement?

   (What errors emerge from these two inflections)

4. What are the causes of the errors made by Malay students?

5. How can these errors be remedied?

1.8 Limitation of the Study

During the researcher's years of teaching Arabic to Malay students at the pre-university level, the researcher has encountered assorted errors made by Malays in learning Arabic. As observed by the researcher, as well as other teachers, errors recur and are persist. Therefore, in order to improve students learning, as well as the researcher's teaching and other teachers, the researcher undertook this study.

Malay students who learn Arabic language at this level (advance level) in all universities are almost equal in the level this fact is based on:

1. Educational background: they share the same opportunity in secondary education, and the same exposure to the Arabic language.

2. Curriculum: they also share the same textbooks in Arabic language and other

subjects taught in Arabic.

So, as has been mentioned in vetting discussion for this thesis, Malay learners of Arabic and Islamic study in Nilam puri (UM matriculation center), IIUM matriculation center, or National University of Malaysia (UKM) have had the same opportunity of exposure to the language.

This study is limited by its nature. The researcher hopes for a certain validity by recognizing the limitations of this study. The limitations of this study are based on the following factors:

1. It is limited to the twenty learners who take Islamic Revealed Knowledge (IRK), at the Matriculation Centre of the IIUM. This is a limitation of using a corpus (linguistic statement). One never knows when a corpus is quite enough for investigation.

   1. It deals with the written task only, that is, the nine free written compositions of the Malay learners of the Arabic language at the IIUM.

   2. The study is also limited to the investigated area, namely the Arabic verb inflection for tense, person, number and gender, which are considered important areas in teaching and language learning, particularly for Malay learners.

The study provides information about subjects, such as gender, age, etc. These variables are not included in the analysis in spite of their importance in language learning.

Finally, the limitations of this study are evident in the samples of learners' language collected.

1.9 Background to the Study:

This section provides some information about Malaysia, its language, religion and society in general. The section is divided into various headings as shown below:

1.9.1 Malaysia: People and Language:

Malaysia is a multi-racial, multi cultural, multi lingual, and multi-religious country in Southeast Asia. Malays, together with the *Orang Asli,* make up the indigenous peoples of Malaysia today, and are classified as "sons of the soil", or *Bumiputra.*

As stated in the *Information Malaysia 2000 Yearbook* "Nature's bounty no doubt accounts for the fact that Malaysia was one of the earliest homes of man." The multi-racial composition of Malaysia the Peninsular is made up of three main ethnic groups: Malay. Chinese, and Indian. This has been the result of British colonial economic policies in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The colonial government encouraged the immigration of the Chinese to work in the tin mines and encouraged Indians to work in the rubber plantations.

Malaysia consists of two parts (*see the map*). West Malaysia, also called Peninsula Malaysia, and East Malaysia. Peninsula Malaysia comprises the states of Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang (Penang). Perak, Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan (Negri Sembilan), Melaka (Malacca), Johor, and the Federal Territory "Wilayah Persekutuan" Kuala Lumpur. East Malaysia consists of the island states of Sabah and Sarawak. The two parts of Malaysia are separated by the South China Sea

The region of Southeast Asia has ten independent countries, Brunei. Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and

Vietnam.

West Malaysia is bordered by Thailand to the north and to the east by the South China Sea. The southern part is bordered by Singapore, and to the west by the Straits of Malacca. While, East Malaysia is bordered to the north by the South China Sulu Sea, to the east by the Celebes Sea, and to the south and west by Kalimantan (Indonesia). Located along the coast, within Sarawak, is the small independent nation of Brunei.
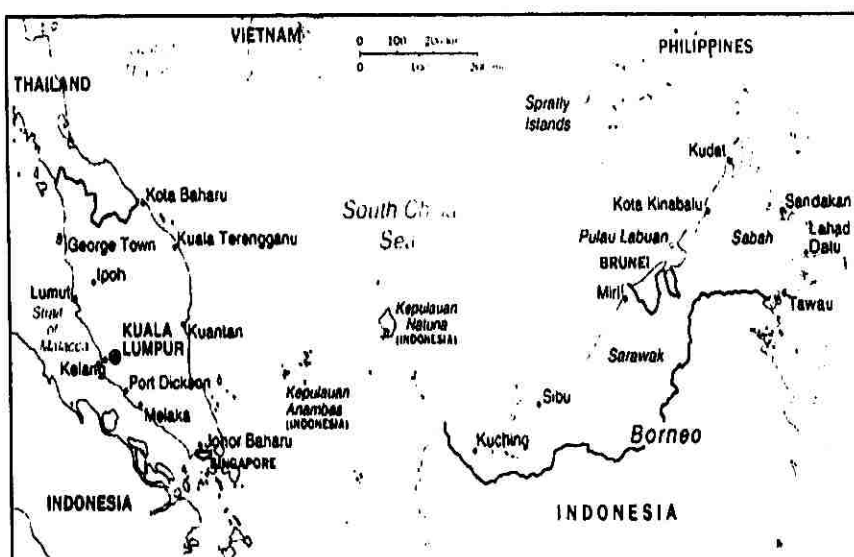
Malaysia has a tropical rainy climate. Its area: 128. 328 sq mi (339, 750 sq km). Nearly four-fifths of Malaysia is covered by tropical rain forest (see yearbook 2000:7). According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (Preliminary Count Report) the total population and housing census of Malaysia 2000 is 22,202,614. 11,212,525 males and 10,990,089 females. However, west Malaysia has more than 80% of the total population, concentrated mainly on the west coast, about 60% are Malay, or of indigenous descent, over 30% are Chinese, and some 10% are Indian or Pakistani.

As mentioned in Yearbook 2000 Islam was brought primarily by Indian and Arab traders, "there is evidence of the presence of the new religion in the region as early as the thirteenth century. After 1400, Islam became a major influence with the conversion of the Malay-Hindu rulers of Melaka."   Islam is the national religion of the country, and all of the Malays are Muslim adhering faithfully to Imam Shafie' School of Fiqh, or Madhab. Asmah says: "The constitution of Malaysia defined Malays as people who speak the Malay language as their mother tongue, lead the Malay way of life and profess the Islamic faith" (Asmah, 1983:19). Thus, Islam is primarily identified with the Malays, although there are a considerable number of non-Malays (i.e. particularly Muslims of Indian decent, and also Chinese, Kadazan and others). However, the majority of Chinese in Malaysia, are Buddhists, and Indians are predominantly Hindus. Moreover, all religions: Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhists among others, are free to practice in peace and harmony, as stated in Yearbook 2000 "all of the world's major religions have substantial representation in Malaysia". In spite of this, according to the constitution, Islam is the religion of the Malaysian Federation" Yearbook (200:18)

1.9.2 Bahasa Melayu (BM)

The Malay Language is the official national language of Malaysia. English, Chinese, and Tamil are also widely spoken. The national language, Bahasa Melayu, is established as such under Article 152 of the constitution (Yearbook 2000:32)

The Malay Language belongs to the Austronesian sometimes also called Polynesian family of languages (Farid, 1980:1). According to Nik Safiah Karim (1995:1), the Austronesian Language family can be divided into four branches, the languages of the Malay Archipelago, or Nusantara branch has the biggest number, which includes

BM and other Indonesian languages, such as Javanese, Archinese, Sundanese, Minangkahau, Batak, and the languages of the Philippine Islands (Tagalong, Bisaya). All these languages belong to the Austronesian family, as the figure (2.1) illustrates below:
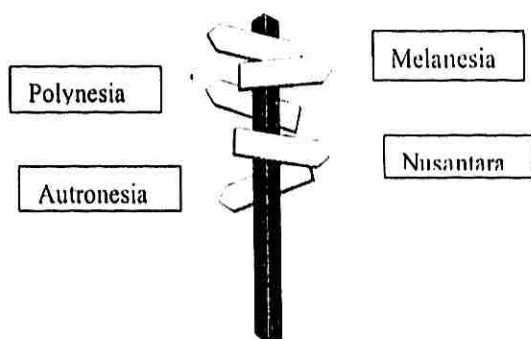

Figure 1.2

Branches of Austronesian language

The Austronesian, family of languages is estimated to be spoken by more than 25 million people in the Malay Peninsula, Madagascar, Taiwan, Indonesia, New Guinea, the Melanesian, Micronesian, and Polynesian Islands, the Philippine Islands and New Zealand.

The Austronesian languages provide an abundance of vowels and a comparative smallness of consonants. The languages also tend to have disyllabic roots, from derivatives by means of affixes, and use reduplication to indicate the plural and other grammatical concepts. In addition, the writing varies, some forms being based on the Arabic alphabet and others on Roman or Indian scripts.

The Malay Language (Bahasa Melayu-BM) is the national language of Malaysia since the formation of Malaysia in 1963. It is also the national language of Indonesia, Brunei, and one of the official languages in Singapore. BM also is widely spoken in southern Thailand.

The language policy of Malaysia, as stated in the Federal Constitution 1955, is that: "the national language in Malaysia shall be the Malay Language", but also it safeguards other languages. It provides that no person shall be prohibited or prevented by law from using (except for official purposes) from teaching or learning any other language. It is thus the national language (BM) that shall be used for all official forms of government communications, administration, and it is the medium of instruction at all levels of education in Malaysia. BM has also been used for centuries as a lingua franca among the ethnically, linguistically diverse people of the Malay Archipelago. The language plays a unifying role for this multi-cultural society.

1.9.3 BM, and the Arabic Language:

BM, like other Polynesian Languages, has very little inflection, but is rich in derivational affixes and, as Farid (1980:2) says, "It has been said that the strength of the language is in its adaptability, a feature that has given the Malay Language unlimited capabilities in borrowing and assimilating foreign lexical items" however, BM, unlike Arabic language, the is not an inflected language as elaborated above.

Throughout history, the Malay language has taken three forms of alphabetical writing, according to Asmah (1983) those scripts are: the old Malay script, the Arabic script and the Romaine script, which is known as Rumi, and Arabic script known as Jawi script.

Now, the Malay language uses both the Roman alphabet and the Arabic scripts for its writing system. Muslim missionaries introduced the Arabic writing system (Jawi), whereas the (Rımi) alphabet came into use during the British administration. The influence of Arabic on the Malay language has been deeply rooted, Farid (1980:

1) explains, '.... in the Fourteenth Century, when Islam and Arabic culture penetrated this part of the world, that the Malay language gained, prominence and flourished not only as the medium of religious, political, and business communication, but also of literary works.' (Farid, 1980:1).

1.9.4 Influence of the Arabic Language on BM:

Although, Arabic and the Malay Language are linguistically different as Skinner observed, quoted in (Ismail 1959:3) "Arabic is a 'synthetic' language with inflection for person, number, gender, case, and aspect. Malay is essentially an 'analytic' language", according to Ismail (1959) the typical Arabic word is based upon a skeleton, or 'radical' of three consonants, closer definition being obtained by the insertion of vowels, and the typical Malay word remains unchanged in form. Whereas, the phonemic structure of Arabic is equally at home with root words (Morphemes) of one, two and three syllables. The Malay language has more than two syllables. Whereas (spoken) Arabic is tolerant of final consonant clusters, Malay emphatically rejects them; preferring to add an extra syllable, or sometimes to eliminate one or more of the consonants. Ismail also summaries three (1959. p.vi) influences of Arabic on the Malay language:

1. Vocabulary borrowing

2. The mode of adopting Arabic phrases and expressions into Malay usage

3. The syntactical constipations of Arabic patterns.

However, the obvious influences of Arabic on Malay are word borrowings and the alphabet system. The borrowing of certain Arabic words according to Ismail (1959:2) had apparently been indispensable, for example, the word 'nikah' literally, marriage: with its Islamic concept can hardly be substituted by a Malay word having

the same religious concept.

To sum up the influences of Arabic on Malay language, it is as Basher (1958:1) says, "A host of words have entered directly into Malay from the sacred Arabic of the prophet"

The Malay Language, has adopted the Arabic system of writing .The number of Arabic letters is 29, whereas Malay's use letters is 34. The table on the next page shows the alphabetical letters of the Arabic language BM has adopted.

Table 1.5
The Arabic Alphabetical Letters

Arabic Consonant	Name of the letter
ا , أ	'alif
ب , باء	baa'
ت , تاء	taa'
ث , ثاء	thaa'
ج , جيم	jym
ح , حاء	Haa'
ح , خاء	khaa'
د , دال	daal
د , ذال	dhaal
ر , راء	raa'
ز , زاى	zayn/za
س , سين	syn
ش , شين	shyn
ص , صاد	Saad
ض , ضاد	Daad
ط , طاء	Taa'
ظ , ظاء	Zaa'
ع , عين	'ayn
غ , غين	ghayn
ف , فاء	faa'
ق , قاف	qaaf
ك , كاف	kaaf
ل , لام	laam
م , ميم	mym
ن , نون	nuwn
ه , هاء	haa'
و , واو	waaw
ي , ياء	yaa'
ء	hamza

The Malay language has added five letters, into the original Arabic system. The additional letters are shown in the table below:

Table 1.6

Five Malay letters

Letter's	Name	As in
چ	Cha	چوران
ڠ	Nga	بوعا
ݢ	Ga	گررر
ڤ	Pa	تانا
ث	Nya	نامرك

1.9.5 Significance of the Arabic Language in Malay Education

In her study Sue (1965: 22) stated " The earliest form of education for the Malays had its origin in the religious, or Koran schools, in which pupils were taught to read the Koran in Arabic after studying the Arabic alphabet."

This shows the importance of the Arabic language to Malays learners, and how far back it dates. Moreover, Madrasah is a Malay and Arabic word, which means a school in which the pupils learn how to read Qura'n and Arabic writing. On the other hand the Malays continued to write their language using the Arabic script until 1904 as Sue (1965: 24) says, " In 1904, a move was made to replace Arabic scripts by Romanised in Malay schools."

However, Arabic remained as a strong second language in Malay education till the forties, because English was not taught as a second language in the Malay school before 1945. Sue (1965: 26) stated, " Thus the teaching of English in Malay

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schools was introduced in 1945 from the third year onwards."

1.9.6   Teaching of the Arabic Language in Malaysia

The history, of the teaching and the learning of the Arabic language in Malaysia is very deep, dating back about six centuries. During this period, many words were assimilated into the Malay vocabulary. This happened because of missionary contacts, which occurred when the Arabs brought Islam and followed later by contacts with Islamic countries, such as Hadramut (Yemen) and Saudi Arabia (Mecca). For the first time, the Malay society received new concepts from these countries. The use of Arabic is as old as the coming of Islam to the Malay Archipelago-ever since, the influence of Arabic has expanded the Malay language. The use of Arabic is more pervasive in the Malay language, especially in its verb, noun and stylistic phrasing. The contact between Arab merchants who traded with Malay merchants, and who were at the same time missionaries, had been further extended until recently because many Malays travel abroad to study in the Middle East. After graduating from universities in the Middle East, some of these intellectuals became Arabic language teachers, or religious teachers (Ustaz). The Malays learnt Arabic to absorb the Islamic teachings from their original textual sources. Since then Arabic has been taught in Pondok (small school), Madrasah, higher institutions, and universities. The Malay education system has close links to the Arabic language, and its teaching.

1.9.7 The International Islamic University, Malaysia and the Teaching of Arabic

IIUM has spared no effort to ensure that it provides the best tertiary education possible in all branches of knowledge. Its establishment in 1983 was the fulfillment of one of the major aspirations of the contemporary global Muslim community-"to regain the Ummah's leadership in the quest for knowledge" (IIUM Undergraduate Prospectus 2001-2002). IIUM was set up as a coeducational institution by the government of Malaysia, after the first international conference on Islamic Education in Mecca, 1977. The idea of the university is to provide an Islamic environment for candidates from Islamic countries to study in a comprehensive professional institution of higher learning in all fields of knowledge, based on Islamic values and Islamic philosophy of knowledge.

The university operates under the direction of a Board of Governors with representatives from the eight sponsoring governments and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (IIUM Undergraduate Prospectus 2001-2002).

IIUM maintains close links with other national and international institutions and universities, such as the league of Islamic universities, the International Association of Universities, and the Association of Commonwealth Universities. (IIUM Undergraduate Prospectus 1998-1999)

IIUM offers a wide range of academic programmes geared towards "both skill-building and scholastic attainments designed in accordance with IIUM's philosophy." The university offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the humanities and the natural and technical sciences. There are currently more than 80 degree programmes administered by nine faculties (IIUM Undergraduate Prospectus 2001-2002). These programmes are described in the following Kulliyyahs (faculties):

1. Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyyah of Law

2. Kulliyyah of Architecture & Environmental Design

3. Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences

4. Kulliyyah of Education

5. Kulliyyah of Engineering

6. Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge & Human Sciences

7. Kulliyyah of Medicine

8. Kulliyyah of Science

9. Kulliyyah of Pharmacy

IIUM has grown firmly under nine Kulliyyahs (Faculties), (IIUM prospectus 2001-2002). Besides these nine Kulliyyahs the IIUM has service units and special centers, the Center for Languages and Pre-University Academic Development (CELPAD) is the body which is responsible for teaching of the Arabic, English, and Malay languages in the University.

The IIUM permanent campus, with its beautiful architecture, is already completed in Gombak, a suburb of Kuala Lumpur. The university has already moved to this new campus, while the Petaling Jaya campus (the old campus) has become the Matriculation Center and the Kuliyyah of Medicine is located in Kuantan next to the Kuantan Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital in the state of Pahang. So, all in all IIUM occupies three (3) campuses:

1.Main Campus in the residential area of Gombak.

2. Kuntan Campus (Bandar Indera Mahkota, Pahang).

3.Matriculation Center in Petaling Jaya.

As mentioned before, the philosophy of the university was inspired by the recommendations of the first world conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca in 1977. The spirit and meaning of this philosophy is based on the Holy Qur'an, in particular the first five Qur'anic verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), namely Surat al ~Alaq. Verses 1-5.

$$ اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِى خَلَقَ ۞ خَلَقَ الْإِنسَـٰنَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۞ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۞ الَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۞ عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۞ $$

Which is translated (Ali 200:779)

1 Proclaim! (Or Read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created **2** Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: **3** Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Beautiful, **4** He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, -**5** Taught man that which he knew not.

1.9.8 Language Requirement

The Arabic language is an important subject in the curriculum of IIUM because, unlike other universities in Malaysia, IIUM considers both Arabic and English as its media of instruction, although the latter is more widely used. Therefore, Arabic has a strong base in IIUM, as the university offers a B.A. in Arabic, an M.A. in teaching Arabic as a second language, and a PhD in Arabic as well. The University thus has intensive programmes in Arabic.

The Center of Languages and Pre-university Academic Development (CELPAD) houses the English Language Division (ELD), Bahasa Malaysia Division, Tilawah Unit (recitation of the Qur'an) and Qura'nic Language Division (QLD)-

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which is responsible for education in Arabic. The center is responsible for ensuring that all IIUM students have a strong command of the languages required for their academic work so that they will be able to perform well in Arabic and English. BM is offered mainly to international students.

One of the major steps at ensuring that students are streamed according to their proficiency level in Arabic is the introduction of the Arabic Placement Test (APT) at the beginning of their first semester. QLD offers Arabic Language courses to all students of the university regardless of kulliyyah or department, except those who obtain exemption.

The QLD offers Arabic courses to all students of the Matriculation Centre depending on the result of the Arabic Placement Test (APT), and the student's grade in the Arabic High School. The general objective of these Arabic courses is twofold:

1. To enable the students with Arabic as their major language of instruction at the university (i.e. the students of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Arabic programmes) to acquire skills in understanding Arabic lectures, taking notes directly from lectures in Arabic, writing answer Arabic scripts and using the original textual sources, in Arabic, for research.

2. To help the students with English as their major language of instruction at the university to acquire a knowledge of the Arabic Language which would enable them to at least understand the Qur' an and the Sunnah the Prophet, Muhammad peace and blessings be upon him —from the original text. Regardless of their programme the students will be streamed into the following main levels according to their scores in the APT, which is a test of 100 marks. The following table shows the placement of students at each level, from zero to 20 is level one, and ending with 81 to 90, the student will be placed in level six.

Table 1.7

The Arabic Language Placement Test

LEVEL	TEST SCORE	SCORE
Arabic Language I	(LQM 1016)	00— 20
Arabic Language II	(LQM 1026)	21 — 40
Arabic Language III	(LQM 1036)	41 — 50
Arabic Language IV	(LQM 2045)	51 — 70
Arabic Language V	(LQM 2055)	71 — 80
Arabic Language VI	(LQM 2065)	81 — 90

Every student admitted to the Matriculation Centre of the university is required to sit for the APT, irrespective of country of origin, or programme. If they do not obtain an exemption, students must take Arabic courses as a compulsory part of their overall programme of study at the Matriculation Centre. Depending upon the results of the APT, students may be required to take courses ranging from LQM 1016 (Level One) to LQM 2065 (Level Six). However, as mentioned in the undergraduate prospectus 98-99, students who intend to undertake programmes, where Arabic is the medium of instruction, must achieve exemption at the highest level in the Arabic Language Placement Test.