

# CHAPTER 3

## DESCRIPTION OF GERMAN ARTICLES AND MALAY DETERMINERS

### 3.0 Introduction

Generally German has a reputation of being a difficult language to learn. Mark Twain (1909), albeit tongue in cheek, in his well-known essay entitled “The Awful German Language” discusses some of the intricacies of German grammar that make learning the language a formidable task. Although the essay is not meant to be taken seriously, it does have some truth to it. Take for example, the use of the German article. It changes its forms to agree with the nouns in gender, number and case. These features are not found in most of the common languages spoken in Malaysia.

This chapter gives a description of how German nouns (whether singular or plural) and the case system influence the form and use of German articles. It will also give a short description of the use of Malay determiners (*itu* and *ini*) and classifiers (*penjodoh bilangan*) which are commonly used in translations (from German into Malay) to express the definite and the indefinite respectively.

### 3.1 German Nouns

According to the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards, et al., 1992: 251), a noun is a word which:

- a. *can occur as the subject or object of a verb or the object (complement) of a preposition*
- b. *can be modified by an adjective*
- c. *can be used with determiners.*

*Nouns typically refer to people, animals, places, things, or abstractions.*

German nouns or substantives are easily recognized because they are always written with a capital letter at the beginning of the word (Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch,

1998: 961; Gschossmann, 1975: 1; Schenke and Seago, 2004: 45), regardless of their position in the sentence or whether they are proper or common nouns.

*German nouns have several unfamiliar aspects for English-speaking students: grammatical gender independent of sex, for example, the declension of nouns, the intricate pattern of plural formation and then the coordination of all these by agreement in gender, number and case.*

*(Luscher and Schäpers 1994:96)*

Each German noun has a fixed gender which is indicated by means of the definite article *der, die, das*. There are 3 genders in German:

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Article</i>
<i>Masculine</i>	<i>der</i>
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>die</i>
<i>Neuter</i>	<i>das</i>

### 3.1.1 Grammatical Gender

*Männer sind auch in der Sprache maskulin, Frauen sind auch in der Sprache feminin. Aber es gibt Ausnahmen. Sachen können nicht Mann oder Frau sein. Aber die deutsche Sprache (wie auch das Märchen) macht die Sachen lebendig, gibt den Sachen persönlichen Charakter. Wir verstehen heute nicht mehr, warum es die Erde, der Himmel, das Wasser heißt. Vor tausend Jahren haben das die Menschen vielleicht gewußt.*

*(Kars & Häussermann, 1992: 69)*

The translated version for the quotation is: “In the language men are also masculine, women are also feminine. But there are exceptions. Things cannot be a man or a woman. But the German Language (as well as the fairy tale) brings life to things, gives them personal character. Today we no longer understand, why one says ‘*die Erde*’ (the earth), ‘*der Himmel*’ (the sky), ‘*das Wasser*’ (the water). Thousands of years ago the people might have known that.”

With persons, the grammatical gender usually follows their natural gender (Gschossmann, 1975: 1), except in the case of diminutives and some other exceptions as shown by the table below. Some of these examples are taken from Luscher and Schäpers (1994: 96.)

**Table 3.1.1: Nouns that Follow Their Natural Gender**

der Mann	the man/ husband
der Vater	the father
der Sohn	the son
die Frau	the woman/ wife/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss
die Mutter	the mother
die Tochter	the daughter
der Mechaniker	the male mechanic
die Mechanikerin	the female mechanic
der Arzt	the male doctor
die Ärztin	the female doctor
der Student	the male student
die Studentin	the female student
der Verkäufer	the salesman/ male sales assistant
die Verkäuferin	the saleswoman/ female sales assistant
<b>Exceptions:</b> das Staatsoberhaupt	the head of state
das Weib	the woman
das Kind	the child
das Mädchen	the girl
das Fräulein	the Miss/ young unmarried woman
das Mitglied	the member

### 3.1.2 Rules for Determining Gender

As mentioned above, nobody knows why *die Erde* should be feminine, *der Himmel* should be masculine and *das Wasser* should be neuter. There are rules that indicate the gender of a noun by means of its ending. For examples, *Veilchen*, *Mädchen* and *Fräulein*, which have the endings of ‘-chen’ and ‘-lein’ are neuter nouns, rather than according to their natural gender. Therefore, it is recommended that German learners learn each German noun together with its definite article.

Below are some of the rules that are applicable for certain groups of nouns. Most of the examples given below are taken from Luscher and Schäpers (1994: 97), Kars and Häussermann (1992: 70), Dippmann and Watzinger-Tharp (2000: 83) and Schenke and Seago (2004: 42-45).

#### 3.1.2.1 Masculine Nouns

- a. The days of the week, the months, the seasons and most times of the day are masculine:

<i>der Montag</i>	<i>the Monday</i>	<i>der Dienstag</i>	<i>the Tuesday</i>
<i>der Januar</i>	<i>the January</i>	<i>der März</i>	<i>the March</i>
<i>der Frühling</i>	<i>the autumn</i>	<i>der Sommer</i>	<i>the summer</i>
<i>der Morgen</i>	<i>the morning</i>	<i>der Mittag</i>	<i>the noon</i>

But it is ‘*die Nacht*’ (the night), ‘*die Woche*’ (the week) and ‘*das Jahr*’ (the year).

- b. The points of compass and weather are also masculine, as shown below:

<i>der Norden</i>	<i>the north</i>	<i>der Süden</i>	<i>the south</i>
<i>der Wind</i>	<i>the wind</i>	<i>der Schnee</i>	<i>the snow</i>

- c. The brand names of motor vehicles are also masculine:

<i>der BMW</i>	<i>the BMW</i>	<i>der VW</i>	<i>the VW</i>
<i>der Mercedes</i>	<i>the Mercedes</i>	<i>der Opel</i>	<i>the Opel</i>

d. Alcoholic drinks with the exception of beer (*das Bier*) are also masculine:

<i>der Wein</i>	<i>the wine</i>	<i>der Cognac</i>	<i>the cognac</i>
<i>der Whisk(e)y</i>	<i>the whiskey</i>	<i>der Schnaps</i>	<i>the schnaps</i>

e. Most of the nouns ending in *-en* are also masculine:

<i>der Laden</i>	<i>the shop</i>	<i>der Hafen</i>	<i>the port</i>
<i>der Kuchen</i>	<i>the cake</i>	<i>der Schaden</i>	<i>the damage</i>

f. Although verbs in the infinitives used as nouns are neuter (please refer to section 2.1.2.3a), nouns derived from verbs are masculine:

<i>der Sprung</i> ( <i>springen</i> )	<i>the jump / leap</i> ( <i>to jump / leap</i> )	<i>der Gang</i> ( <i>gehen</i> )	<i>the walk</i> ( <i>to go / walk</i> )
<i>der Verstand</i> ( <i>verstehen</i> )	<i>the reason</i> ( <i>to understand</i> )	<i>der Ausgang</i> ( <i>ausgehen</i> )	<i>the exit</i> ( <i>to go out</i> )

g. Nouns ending with *-or*, *-ling*, and *-ismus* are masculine:

<i>der Reaktor</i>	<i>the reactor</i>	<i>der Lehrling</i>	<i>the apprentice</i>
<i>der Motor</i>	<i>the engine</i>	<i>der Liebling</i>	<i>the favourite/ darling</i>
<i>der Idealismus</i>	<i>the idealism</i>	<i>der Kapitalismus</i>	<i>the capitalism</i>

h. In most cases nouns ending with *-er* are also masculine:

<i>der Koffer</i>	<i>the luggage</i>	<i>der Kugelschreiber</i>	<i>the pen</i>
<i>der Stecker</i>	<i>the plug</i>	<i>der Hamburger</i>	<i>the hamburger</i>

### 3.1.2.2 Feminine Nouns

a. Nouns derived from a verb and ending with the letter *t* are feminine:

<i>die Fahrt</i> ( <i>fahren</i> )	<i>the journey</i> ( <i>to drive / ride</i> )	<i>die Rast</i> ( <i>rasten</i> )	<i>the rest/ break</i> ( <i>to rest</i> )
<i>die Sicht</i> ( <i>sehen</i> )	<i>the view</i> ( <i>to see / look</i> )	<i>die Tat</i> ( <i>tun</i> )	<i>the deed/ act</i> ( <i>to do</i> )

b. Many plants are also feminine:

<i>die Rose</i>	<i>the rose</i>	<i>die Tulpe</i>	<i>the tulip</i>
<i>die Blume</i>	<i>the flower</i>	<i>die Eiche</i>	<i>the oak</i>
<i>die Pflanze</i>	<i>the plant</i>	<i>die Kiefer</i>	<i>the pine (tree)</i>

**Exception:** *das Veilchen (the violet)*

c. Nouns ending with *-ei*, *-heit*, *-keit*, *-schaft* and *-ung* are always feminine:

<i>die Malerei</i>	<i>the painting</i>	<i>die Bäckerei</i>	<i>the bakery</i>
<i>die Partei</i>	<i>the (political) party</i>	<i>die Polizei</i>	<i>the police</i>
<i>die Freiheit</i>	<i>the freedom</i>	<i>die Krankheit</i>	<i>the illness</i>
<i>die Gesundheit</i>	<i>the health</i>	<i>die Klugheit</i>	<i>the cleverness</i>
<i>die Tätigkeit</i>	<i>the occupation</i>	<i>die Schwierigkeit</i>	<i>the difficulty</i>
<i>die Höflichkeit</i>	<i>the politeness</i>	<i>die Geschwindigkeit</i>	<i>the speed</i>
<i>die Freundschaft</i>	<i>the friendship</i>	<i>die Mannschaft</i>	<i>the team</i>
<i>die Eigenschaft</i>	<i>the quality</i>	<i>die Gesellschaft</i>	<i>the society</i>
<i>die Einladung</i>	<i>the invitation</i>	<i>die Verantwortung</i>	<i>the responsibility</i>
<i>die Zeitung</i>	<i>the newspaper</i>	<i>die Wohnung</i>	<i>the apartment</i>

**Exception:** *das Allerlei (all sorts/kinds of things)*

d. Nouns ending with *-tät*, *-ie*, *-ik*, *-ur*, *-ion* and *-enz* are also feminine:

<i>die Aktivität</i>	<i>the activity</i>	<i>die Intensität</i>	<i>the intensity</i>
<i>die Qualität</i>	<i>the quality</i>	<i>die Realität</i>	<i>the reality</i>
<i>die Philosophie</i>	<i>the philosophy</i>	<i>die Akademie</i>	<i>the academy</i>
<i>die Chemie</i>	<i>the chemical</i>	<i>die Industrie</i>	<i>the industry</i>
<i>die Fabrik</i>	<i>the factory</i>	<i>die Grafik</i>	<i>the graphic</i>
<i>die Musik</i>	<i>the music</i>	<i>die Politik</i>	<i>the politic</i>
<i>die Kultur</i>	<i>the culture</i>	<i>die Natur</i>	<i>the nature</i>
<i>die Struktur</i>	<i>the structure</i>	<i>die Kur</i>	<i>the cure</i>
<i>die Nation</i>	<i>the nation</i>	<i>die Kommunikation</i>	<i>the communication</i>
<i>die Lektion</i>	<i>the lesson</i>	<i>die Religion</i>	<i>the religion</i>
<i>die Konkurrenz</i>	<i>the competitor</i>	<i>die Konferenz</i>	<i>the conference</i>
<i>die Konsequenz</i>	<i>the consequence</i>	<i>die Korrespondenz</i>	<i>the correspondence</i>

- e. Most nouns, about 90%, ending in unstressed *-e* are feminine (Dippmann & Watzinger-Tharp and Schenke & Seago):

<i>die Straße</i>	<i>the street</i>	<i>die Schule</i>	<i>the school</i>
<i>die Adresse</i>	<i>the address</i>	<i>die Flasche</i>	<i>the bottle</i>
<i>die Krawatte</i>	<i>the tie</i>	<i>die Liebe</i>	<i>the love</i>
<b>Exceptions:</b>	<i>der Name</i>	<i>the name</i>	
	<i>der Käse</i>	<i>the cheese</i>	
	<i>das Ende</i>	<i>the end</i>	
	<i>das Auge</i>	<i>the eye</i>	

### 3.1.2.3 Neuter Nouns

- a. Infinitives and adjectives used as nouns are neuter:

<i>das Essen</i>	<i>the meal</i>	<i>das Einkaufen</i>	<i>the shopping</i>
<i>(essen)</i>	<i>(to eat)</i>	<i>(einkaufen)</i>	<i>(to shop / buy)</i>
<i>das Leben</i>	<i>the life</i>	<i>das Fernsehen</i>	<i>the television</i>
<i>(leben)</i>	<i>(to live)</i>	<i>(fernsehen)</i>	<i>(to watch television)</i>
<i>das Gute</i>	<i>the good</i>	<i>das Grüne</i>	<i>the greenery</i>
<i>(gut)</i>	<i>(good)</i>	<i>(grün)</i>	<i>(green)</i>

- b. When nouns take on the diminutive form (with ending *-chen* or *-lein*), they all become neuter and usually take on an ‘Umlaut’ ( the ‘‘’ on top of ‘a’, ‘o’ and ‘u’) when possible. The diminutive of names is sometimes used for children, or simply as an endearment (such as *Hans – Hänschen*). The ending *-chen* is more common than *-lein*.

<i>das Büchlein</i>	<i>the little book</i>	<i>das Bildchen</i>	<i>the small picture</i>
<i>das Tischlein</i>	<i>the small table</i>	<i>das Häuschen</i>	<i>the cottage</i>
<i>das Kätzlein</i>	<i>the kitten</i>	<i>das Städtchen</i>	<i>the small town</i>

- c. In most cases, nouns ending with *-um* and *-ment* are neuter:

<i>das Datum</i>	<i>the date</i>	<i>das Zentrum</i>	<i>the centre</i>
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<i>das Studium</i>	<i>the studies</i>	<i>das Gymnasium</i>	<i>the grammar school</i>
<i>das Appartement</i>	<i>the apartment</i>	<i>das Argument</i>	<i>the argument</i>
<i>das Experiment</i>	<i>the experiment</i>	<i>das Dokument</i>	<i>the document/ papers</i>

### 3.1.2.4 Special Cases

a. As shown below, some masculine nouns denote both the male and female persons:

<i>der Boss</i>	<i>the boss</i>
<i>der Gast</i>	<i>the guest/ customer</i>
<i>der Mensch</i>	<i>the person</i>

(Luscher & Schäpers, 1994:99)

b. German speakers love to form long words. A word that is made up of more than one noun is called a compound noun in grammar terms. In this case the last noun defines the gender (Schenke and Seago, 2004:45).

*In zusammengesetzten Nomen entscheidet das Wort rechts:*

(In a compound noun the word on the right will determine the gender.)

<i>das Land</i>	+	<i>die Karte</i>	=	<i>die Landkarte</i>
the country		the card		the map

(Kars & Häussermann, 1992:69)

Other examples of compound nouns:

<i>das Geschäft</i>	+	<i>der <b>Mann</b></i>	=	<i>der <b>Geschäftsmann</b></i>
the shop/business		the man		the businessman

<i>der Dollar</i>	+	<i>der <b>Kurs</b></i>	=	<i>der <b>Dollarkurs</b></i>
the dollar		the exchange rate		the dollar exchange rate

<i>der Sommer</i>	+	<i>die Nacht</i>	+	<i>der <b>Traum</b></i>	=	<i>der <b>Sommernachtstraum</b></i>
the summer		the night		the dream		the summer night's dream



Besides noun-based compound nouns, there are also preposition-based, adjective-based and verb-based compound nouns in German as shown by the examples below:

<i>bei</i>	+	<i>das Boot</i>	=	<i>das Beiboot</i>
<i>near / at</i>		<i>the boat</i>		<i>the dinghy</i>
<i>hinter</i>	+	<i>der Hof</i>	=	<i>der Hinterhof</i>
<i>behind / after</i>		<i>the yard</i>		<i>the backyard</i>
<i>schwarz</i>	+	<i>das Brot</i>	=	<i>das Schwarzbrot</i>
<i>black</i>		<i>the bread</i>		<i>the black bread</i>
<i>rot</i>	+	<i>der Wein</i>	=	<i>der Rotwein</i>
<i>red</i>		<i>the wine</i>		<i>the red wine</i>
<i>braten</i>	+	<i>der Fisch</i>	=	<i>der Bratfisch</i>
<i>to fry / roast</i>		<i>the fish</i>		<i>the fried fish</i>
<i>schauen</i>	+	<i>das Fenster</i>	=	<i>das Schaufenster</i>
<i>to look / see</i>		<i>the window</i>		<i>the display window</i>

### 3.1.3 The Plurals

The plural of the definite article is the same for all genders: *die*.

<i>der Vater</i>	<i>the father</i>	<i>die Väter</i>	<i>the fathers</i>
<i>die Mutter</i>	<i>the mother</i>	<i>die Mütter</i>	<i>the mothers</i>
<i>das Kind</i>	<i>the child</i>	<i>die Kinder</i>	<i>the children</i>

Almost all German nouns have singular and plural forms.

### 3.1.3.1 Nouns Appearing Only in the Singular or Plural Form

Examples of nouns appearing only in the singular or plural below are taken from Luscher and Schäpers (1994: 99-100).

**Table 3.1.3.1a: Nouns Appearing Only in the Singular Form**

1	The names of material or substances:  das Eis                    the ice cream der Kaffee                the coffee die Salami                the salami
2	Collective nouns:  die Bevölkerung        the population das Gepäck              the luggage die Polizei                the police
3	Abstract nouns and nouns formed from infinitives:  der Durst                 the thirst der Bedarf                the need <i>(bedürfen)</i> <i>(to need / require)</i>  die Erholung              the recovery <i>(sich erholen)</i> <i>(to recover oneself / to have a rest)</i>  das Wetter                 the weather  das Tennisspielen        the tennis game <i>(spielen)</i> <i>(to play)</i>  das Skifahren             the skiing <i>(fahren)</i> <i>(to ride / drive)</i>

**Table 3.1.3.1b: Nouns Appearing Only in the Plural Form**

1	Certain geographical names: die Alpen                      the Alps die Niederlande              The Netherlands die USA                          The USA
2	Groups of people: die Eltern                      the parents die Leute                        the people die Geschwister              the siblings
3	Miscellaneous: die Ferien                      the (school) holiday die Spaghetti / Spagetti      the spaghetti die Papiere                      the documents die Lebensmittel              the groceries

**3.1.3.2 Formation of the Plural**

Dippmann & Watzinger-Tharp (2000: 86) say “Plural in English is mostly formed by adding an –s or –es to the singular of a noun. There are a few irregular noun plurals, such as child – children, foot – feet, man – men, etc.”

But in German, the plural formation is more complicated. Although the plural forms (endings) are the same (- / no change in spelling, -, -s, -e, -e, -en, -er, or -er), there are different ways of categorizing these plural formations. Deyer and Schmitt (1994: 14) give 8 possible plural formations, whereas in most other grammar books only five possibilities are given. Schmitz (1991: 305) puts forth that the distribution of the morphemes is subject to an extremely complicated system of rules with large numbers of exceptions. The six rules of the plural formation and the examples given below are extracted from Vorderwülbecke (1999:18).

**Table 3.1.3.2: Formation of the Plural**

1	There are normally no changes for neuter nouns ending with <i>-chen</i> and <i>-lein</i>	Examples: das Büchlein      die Büchlein das Mädchen      die Mädchen
2	Most of the foreign words that are neuter nouns will have a <i>-s</i> ending when forming the plural	Examples: das Taxi              die Taxis das Hotel             die Hotels
3	Masculine and neuter nouns with ending of <i>-en</i> , <i>-el</i> and <i>-er</i> will have no other plural ending.	Examples: der Briefkasten      die Briefkästen der Zettel             die Zettel der Kilometer        die Kilometer das Essen             die Essen das Fenster            die Fenster
4	Feminine nouns with ending of <i>-e</i> always have the plural ending of <i>-n</i> .	Examples: die Straße             die Straßen die Frage              die Fragen die Brücke             die Brücken
5	Feminine nouns with endings of <i>-in</i> , <i>-ei</i> , <i>-heit</i> , <i>-keit</i> , <i>-schaft</i> and <i>-ung</i> will have the plural ending of <i>-en</i> .	Examples: die Wohnung         die Wohnungen die Krankheit        die Krankheiten die Bäckerei          die Bäckereien
6	There are two other types of plural endings ( <i>-e</i> and <i>-er</i> ) that have no fixed rules.	Examples: das Telefon            die Telefone die Stadt               die Städte der Platz               die Plätze das Bild                die Bilder das Land               die Länder der Mann               die Männer

In most cases a, o, u changes to ä, ö, ü in the plural.

Besides the rules discussed above, here are three other types of exceptions taken from Reimann (1999: 95).

<i>die Lehrerin</i>	<i>die Lehrerinnen</i>
<i>die Schülerin</i>	<i>die Schülerinnen</i>
<i>das Gymnasium</i>	<i>die Gymnasien</i>
<i>das Museum</i>	<i>die Museen</i>
<i>das Thema</i>	<i>die Themen</i>
<i>die Firma</i>	<i>die Firmen</i>

### 3.1.4 Declension of Nouns / Case

Declension is a list of the case forms of a noun phrase in a particular language, and which case a noun or the article (or the adjective) has is determined by the function in the clause. The form of the noun or noun phrase changes (by inflection) to show the different functions or cases (Richards, et al., 1992: 97 & 46, Reimann, 1999: 95). In German, there are four cases (Nominative, Accusative, Dative and Genitive) indicated by the article and sometimes also by an ending (Luscher and Schäpers, 1994: 107).

Dippmann and Watzinger-Tharp (2000: 90) say that:

- a. The noun and article in the nominative and accusative cases are identical in form, except for the masculine accusative singular.
- b. The dative plural adds *-n* to all nouns unless the plural ends in *-n* or *-s*.
- c. The genitive masculine and neuter (singular) may add *-es* or *-s*.
  1. *-es* is usually added to monosyllabics such as *des Buches*, *des Tisches*.
  2. The *-es* ending is mandatory for all nouns with the endings of *-s*, *-ss*, *-ß*, *-z* and *-x*, such as *des Glases*, *Grußes*, *Gesetzes*, *Reflexes*.
  3. *-s* is added in all other instances.
- d. In the singular, feminine nouns never take an ending.

An overview of the declension of German nouns or how the four cases affect the definite article is shown by Table 3.1.4 below.

**Table 3.1.4: Declension of German Nouns**

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
<b>Singular</b>			
Nominative	der Mann	die Frau	das Kind
Accusative	den Mann	die Frau	das Kind
Dative	dem Mann	der Frau	dem Kind
Genitive	des Mannes	der Frau	des Kindes
<b>Plural</b>			
Nominative	die Männer	die Frauen	die Kinder
Accusative	die Männer	die Frauen	die Kinder
Dative	den Männern	den Frauen	den Kindern
Genitive	der Männer	der Frauen	der Kinder

(Adapted from Reimann, 1999:95)

Every German noun can have different cases. This function can be governed by the verb (Ich *suche* den Lehrer.), by a preposition (Er steht *vor* dem Zimmer.) or by another noun (Das ist *das Handy* meiner Schwester.). A more comprehensive explanation is provided by the example below:

*Nominative*    **Der** Lehrer liest ein Buch. (The teacher reads/ is reading a book.)

*Accusative*    Ich suche **den** Lehrer. (I look/ am looking for the teacher.)

*Dative*        Ich gebe **dem** Lehrer das Buch. (I give the teacher the book/ the book to the teacher.)

*Genitive*     Ich kenne die Tochter **des** Lehrers. (I know the teacher's daughter.)

The German definite article for 'Lehrer' is not the same for each case because it indicates the different function of the noun (Lehrer) in the above sentences, whereas the English *the* remains constant.

#### 3.1.4.1 Nominative Case

In nominative case, the noun is the subject of the sentence – a person or thing doing the action. As can be seen from the example given above, 'Der Lehrer' is the subject of the sentence.

The verbs **sein** (*to be*) and **werden** (*to become*) will also require the use of the nominative case (Schenke and Seago, 2004:63):

Er ist *der* neue Deutschlehrer. (He is the new German teacher.)

Durch seinen Fleiß wird er *der* erfolgreichste Mann im Dorf. (Through his diligence, he becomes the most successful man in the village.)

#### 3.1.4.2 Accusative Case

In accusative case, 'den Lehrer' is the direct object or the receiver of the action (*suche / look*) in the example given above. Other uses of the accusative case are the expression of definite time and the duration of time, and also with certain prepositions (Gschossmann, 1975: 18):

**Time:** Er bleibt *die ganze Woche* in Bonn. (He is staying the whole week in Bonn.)

**Preposition:** Arbeiten Sie *für die Firma*? (Do you work for the company?)

As the accusative case is governed by the verb and some prepositions, it is possible to have more than one accusative form in a sentence (Schenke and Seago, 2004:67):

Ich sehe *den Jungen ohne seinen Mantel*.  
(I see the boy without his coat.)

Wir möchten *den Tisch* und *den Schrank für deinen Vater* kaufen.  
(We would like to buy the table and the wardrobe for your father.)

### 3.1.4.3 Dative Case

German dative case is mainly used for the indirect object, namely, the person or thing to whom or to which something is done. Referring to the example given before this in section 3.1.4, ‘dem Lehrer’ was the indirect object in the sentence. Normally, when there are two objects in a sentence, the dative object is typically the one that is animate, a person or other living being (Dippmann and Watzinger-Tharp, 2000: 92).

Like the nominative case, the use of the dative case is also governed by certain verbs and prepositions. Therefore it is also quite common for more than one dative form to appear in a sentence. Examples are taken from (Schenke and Seago, 2004:72):

Ich helfe *dem Jungen mit seinem Mantel*.  
(I help the boy with his coat.)

Sie folgen *dem Mann* und dann *der Frau mit ihren Freunden*.  
(They follow the man and then the woman with her friends.)

### 3.1.4.4 Genitive Case

This case is used to show the relationship between two nouns, to indicate a possessive relationship or a relationship of belonging together. Referring to the earlier given example, ‘*die Tochter des Lehrers*’ (the daughter of the teacher), the relationship between the two nouns was indicated by the declension of the noun, ‘*des Lehrers*’. In English, this relationship is expressed by *of* or ‘*s*’, as seen in the following examples (Dippmann and Watzinger-Tharp, 2000: 94):

Das ist der Vorname *des Vaters*.  
(That is the first name of the father. / That is the father’s first name.)

Das ist die Verantwortung *der Mutter*.



(That is the responsibility of the mother. / That is the mother's responsibility.)

As with the nominative case and dative case discussed earlier, there are certain prepositions which take the genitive case.

Examples:

*Trotz des schlechten Wetters* macht er einen Spaziergang.

(In spite of the bad weather, he goes for a walk.)

*Während der Mittagspause* geht sie meistens ins Restaurant.

(During {the} lunch break she goes mostly to the restaurant.)

### 3.1.4.5 n-Declension Noun Group

There is a group of nouns known as the *n-Declension* noun group. All the nouns in this group are masculine nouns and an *umlaut* never occurs in the plural (Dreyer and Schmitt, 1994:16). These nouns are usually referred to as weak nouns and – *(e)n* is added to the noun in all cases except in the nominative singular. Table 3.1.4.5a below shows the declension of the noun according to the different cases and Table 3.1.4.5b gives other examples belonging to this group. The examples given below are mostly taken from Vorderwülbecke (1999: 20), Reimann (1999: 96 & 97), Dippmann & Watzinger-Tharp (2000: 86 & 97), Luscher and Schäpers (1994: 107-113), Dreyer and Schmitt (1994: 17) and Kars & Häussermann (1992: 74-75).

**Table 3.1.4.5a: n-Declension Noun**

Case	Definite Article	Indefinite Article
Nominative	der Junge	ein Junge
Accusative	den Jungen	einen Jungen
Dative	dem Jungen	einem Jungen
Genitive	des Jungen	eines Jungen

**Table 3.1.4.5.b: n-Declension Noun: Examples**

Rule	Example	
Nouns ending with <i>-e</i> in the singular and <i>-(e)n</i> in the plural	der Affe	des Affen
	der Jude	des Juden
	der Herr	des Herrn
	der Kollege	des Kollegen
	der Löwe	des Löwen
	der Kunde	des Kunden
	der Neffe	des Neffen
All masculine nouns ending with <i>-and, -ant, -ist, -ent</i>	der Doktorand	des Doktoranden
	der Elefant	des Elefanten
	der Musikant	des Musikanten
	der Polizist	des Polizisten
	der Journalist	des Journalisten
	der Student	des Studenten
	der Präsident	des Präsidenten
Masculine nouns – mostly occupation terms derived from Greek	der Biologe	des Biologen
	der Diplomat	des Diplomaten
	der Monarch	des Monarchen
	der Katholik	des Katholiken
	der Fotograf	des Fotografen
	der Architekt	des Architekten

### 3.2 German Articles

The Federal-Chambers Advanced English Dictionary: English – Bahasa Malaysia Edition (2000: 59) defines article as “*one or two types of determiner, the definite article (in English the determiner ‘the’)* and the indefinite article (in English the determiner ‘a’ or ‘an’)”. But the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (Woodford and Jackson, 2003: 60) gives a better definition. It defines article as “*any of the English*

words 'a', 'an' and 'the' or words in other languages that do the same job as these".

The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992: 21) defined article as "a word which is used with a noun, and which shows whether the noun refers to something definite or something indefinite".

For example, there are two articles in English: the definite article 'the', and the indefinite article 'a' or 'an'. In contrast, article is defined by the Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch: Deutsch als Fremdsprache (1998: 71) as a kind of word that indicates the gender of a noun, whereby "der" is the definite and "ein" is the indefinite article for a masculine noun.

German has two types of articles, definite and indefinite articles. An article always precedes the noun and it indicates whether the noun is a masculine, feminine or neuter noun (Kars and Häussermann, 1992:76, Luscher & Schäpers, 1994: 116).

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>der Baum</i>	<i>(the tree)</i>	<i>ein Baum</i>	<i>(a tree)</i>
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>die Tasse</i>	<i>(the cup)</i>	<i>eine Tasse</i>	<i>(a cup)</i>
<i>Neuter</i>	<i>das Auto</i>	<i>(the car)</i>	<i>ein Auto</i>	<i>(a car)</i>

It is possible to have other words, such as adjectives and participants, coming between the article and the noun.

<i>der blühende Baum</i>	<i>the blossoming tree</i>
<i>eine neue rote Tasse</i>	<i>a new red cup</i>
<i>kein altes Auto</i>	<i>not an old car</i>

### **3.2.1 The Definite Articles**

The use of definite article depends on the case (which is a grammatical category that shows the function of the noun or noun phrase in a sentence), gender of the noun (which is a grammatical distinction where the nouns are marked according to distinction between masculine, feminine or neuter) or whether the noun is in plural or singular. As mentioned before, there are four cases in German and they are the

Nominative, Accusative, Dative and Genitive Case. All the nouns in German are divided into Masculine, Feminine or Neuter nouns.

### 3.2.1.1 Declension of the Definite Articles

The English definite article 'the' is constant, but its German counterpart changes its form to agree to its noun in gender, number and case.

#### i. Singular (Sg.)

Masculine: der

N	der	<b>Der</b> Kugelschreiber ist teuer. <i>The pen is expensive.</i>
A	den	Dort findest du <b>den</b> Schlüssel. <i>There you will find the key.</i>
D	dem	Sie bringt <b>dem</b> Lehrer Blumen. <i>She is bringing/ brings the teacher flowers.</i>
G	des	Der Rekord <b>des</b> Teilnehmers war eine große Leistung. <i>The contestant's record was a great achievement.</i>

Feminine: die

N	die	<b>Die</b> Studentin studiert in Leipzig. <i>The (female) student is studying/ studies in Leipzig.</i>
A	die	Ich kaufe <b>die</b> schöne Tasche. <i>I am buying/ buy the beautiful bag.</i>
D	der	Sabine schenkt <b>der</b> Lehrerin eine Rose. <i>She is giving/ gives the (female) teacher a rose.</i>
G	der	Er möchte gern den Namen <b>der</b> Kirche wissen. <i>He would like to know the church's name.</i>

Neuter: das

N	das	<b>Das</b> Zimmer ist dunkel. <i>The room is dark.</i>
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- A     das     Er kauft **das** Radio.  
*He is buying/ buys the radio.*
- D     dem     Wir schreiben **dem** Kind einen Brief.  
*We are writing/ write the child a letter.*
- G     des     Den Namen **des** Restaurants weiß ich nicht mehr.  
*I have forgotten the name of the restaurant.*

## ii. Plural

Masculine, Feminine, Neuter: die

- N     die     **Die** Blumen sind sehr schön.  
*The flowers are beautiful.*
- A     die     Er holt **die** Gläser.  
*He is fetching/ fetches the glasses.*
- D     den     Sie geben **den** Kindern Bonbons.  
*They are giving/ give the children sweets.*
- G     der     Das ist die Meinung **der** Mitglieder.  
*That is the members' opinion.*

Below is an overview of the definite article in relation to case, gender and number:

**Table 3.2.1.1: Declension of the Definite Articles**

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nominative	der	die	das	die
Accusative	den	die	das	die
Dative	dem	der	dem	den
Genitive	des	der	des	der

### 3.2.1.2 The Use of Definite Article

As mentioned before, the use of the English definite article ‘the’ is constant, but the use of the German definite article is more complex (Dreyer & Schmitt, 1994: 21). The following guidelines indicate the use of German definite articles and also where German practice differs from English. The situations and examples are taken from the following sources: Luscher & Schäpers (1994:117-119), Reimann (1999: 104) and Dreyer & Schmitt (1994: 21).

**Table 3.2.1.2: The Use of Definite Articles**

Situation	Example
i. When noun in question is known or has already been mentioned.	<p><i>Das</i> Stadion in Berlin ist groß. (The stadium in Berlin is large.)</p> <p><i>Das</i> neue Auto von Daniel ist wirklich super! (The new car of Daniel is really great!)</p> <p><i>Der</i> Lehrer schreibt <i>das</i> Wort an <i>die</i> Tafel. (The teacher writes the word on the board.)</p>
ii. The definite article can often have the force of the English demonstratives <i>this</i> and <i>that</i> .	<p><i>Den</i> Film möchte ich mir ansehen. (I want to watch <i>that</i> film.)</p> <p><i>Die</i> Frau möchte ich gerne kennenlernen. (I'd like to meet <i>that</i> woman.)</p>
iii. The definite article always occurs with the superlatives and ordinal numbers.	<p><i>Der</i> Mount Everest ist <i>der höchste</i> Berg der Erde. (Mount Everest is the highest mountain of the earth.)</p> <p>In <i>der zweiten</i> Urlaubswoche erholt man sich am besten. (One gets the best rest in the second week of the holiday.)</p>
iv. With prepositions a) The following contractions of prepositions + definite article are usual unless the article is emphasized or stressed	<p>Er war gestern <i>im</i> Kino. (He was at the cinema yesterday.)</p>

<p>(ST):</p> <p>Prepositions (an, bei, in, von, zu) + dem (D Sg. Mas. &amp; Neu.): am, beim, im, vom, zum</p> <p>Preposition (zu) + der (D Sg. Fem.): zur</p> <p>Prepositions (an, in) + das (A Sg. Neu.): ans, ins</p> <p>With proper names the contracted form appears because of identification</p> <p>b) Contraction always appears in certain set phrases and with nouns formed from infinitives.</p> <p>c) Contraction is not possible when a noun acts as an antecedent to a relative clause.</p>	<p>ST: Warst du schon <i>in dem neuen</i> Kino? (Have you been in the new cinema yet?)</p> <p>Kommt doch <i>am nächsten</i> Wochenende! (Do come next weekend!)</p> <p>ST: <i>An dem</i> Wochenende bin ich zu Hause. (I'll be at home that weekend.)</p> <p>Wir waren ein paar Tage <i>am</i> Rhein. (We went to the Rhein for a few days.)</p> <p>Jeder kann <i>zur</i> Reinhaltung der Luft <i>beitragen</i>. (beitragen zu) (Everyone can contribute towards keeping the air clean.)</p> <p><i>Im Hinblick</i> auf die hohen Kosten wurde das Projekt abgelehnt. (In view of the high costs, the project was turned down.)</p> <p>Du sollst <i>beim Essen</i> nicht immer reden. (You mustn't always talk when you're eating.)</p> <p>Er hat keinen Spaß am Lernen. (He doesn't enjoy learning.)</p> <p>Ich war <i>in dem</i> Restaurant, <i>das</i> du mir gezeigt hast. (I was in the restaurant you showed me.)</p>
<p>v. When the nouns are abstract nouns or used in a general sense and the definite article is dropped in English.</p>	<p><i>Die</i> Arbeitslosigkeit steigt. (Unemployment is rising.)</p> <p><i>Das</i> Leben wird immer interessanter. (Life gets more and more interesting.)</p>
<p>vi. With the genitive, unless the noun is a proper name or is acting as a proper name.</p>	<p>Das Haus <i>des Lehrers</i>. (The teacher's house.)</p> <p><i>Vaters</i> Auto. (Father's car.)</p>
<p>vii. When the proper name is preceded by an adjective.</p>	<p><i>Die alte</i> Frau Schmidt hat morgen Geburtstag. (It's old Mrs Schmidt's birthday)</p>

	tomorrow.)
viii. With parts of the body where English uses a possessive.	Er wäscht sich gerade <i>die</i> Hände. (He is just washing his hands.)
ix. Often in colloquial German or in a familiar context.	Ich habe heute <i>den</i> Terry gesehen. (I saw Terry today.)
x. Before the names of countries (those with articles).	Ich fahre in <i>die Schweiz</i> . (I am going to Switzerland.) Waren Sie schon in <i>den USA</i> ? (Have you been to the USA?)
xi. With street names, names of buildings, lakes, etc.	Er arbeitet jetzt in <i>der Ludwigstraße</i> . (He works in Ludwig Street now.)  <i>Der Münchner Bahnhof</i> ist groß. (Munich Station is big.)
xii. With certain stock phrases	Er fährt <i>ins Ausland</i> . (He is going abroad.)  Ich fahre lieber mit <i>der Bahn</i> . (I prefer to go by train.)
xiii. Time expressions such as days of the week, months, seasons, meal times, etc.	Das sagte sie mir <i>am Montag, beim Mittagessen</i> . (She told me that on Monday – during lunch.)  Er kam <i>im Januar</i> , also <i>im Winter</i> . (He came in January, hence in winter.)
xiv. With nouns indicating institutions such as church, school, etc.	Ich gehe ganz gern in <i>die Schule</i> . (I like going to school.)  Er war in <i>der Kirche</i> . (He was in the church.)
xv. The German definite article replaces the English indefinite article when used distributively.	Das kostet zwei Euro <i>das</i> Meter. (That costs two Euros a metre.)



### 3.2.2 The Indefinite Articles

Like the definite article, the indefinite article in German is also governed by the gender and case of the noun. There are two forms: 'ein' for the masculine and neuter nouns and 'eine' for the feminine nouns. It is not governed by the number because 'ein / eine' exists only in the singular.

#### 3.2.2.1 The Declension of the Indefinite Articles

Similarly, the German indefinite article also undergoes changes to agree with the noun in gender and case, while the English 'a' and 'an' remain invariable. Most of the examples cited below are taken from Luscher & Schäpers (1994: 119-120).

Masculine: ein

N	ein	<b>Ein</b> Urlaub zu Hause kann auch schön sein. <i>A holiday at home can also be nice too.</i>
A	einen	Ich kaufe <b>einen</b> Kugelschreiber. <i>I'll buy a pen.</i>
D	einem	Sie kommt mit <b>einem</b> neuen Freund. <i>She is coming with a new boyfriend.</i>
G	eines	Er arbeitet im Büro <b>eines</b> Architekten. <i>He is working in an architect's office.</i>

Feminine: eine

N	eine	<b>Eine</b> berufstätige Frau arbeitet mehr als ein Mann. <i>A woman with a job works more than a man.</i>
A	eine	Er braucht <b>eine</b> neue Krawatte. <i>He needs a new tie.</i>
D	einer	Wir kommen in <b>einer</b> Stunde. <i>We'll come in an hour's time.</i>
G	einer	Sie arbeitet in der Verwaltung <b>einer</b> kleinen Fabrik.

*She is working in the administration department of a small factory.*

Neuter: ein

- N ein **Ein** Originalgemälde kostet viel Geld.  
*An original painting costs a lot of money.*
- A ein Er kauft **ein** Radio.  
*He'll buy a radio.*
- D einem Er arbeitet in **einem** Restaurant.  
*He is working in a restaurant.*
- G eines Er arbeitet in der Küche **eines** großen Hotels.  
*He is working in the kitchen of a large hotel.*

Below is an overview of the indefinite article in relation to case and gender:

**Table 3.2.2.1 Declension of the Indefinite Articles**

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	ein	eine	ein
Accusative	einen	eine	ein
Dative	einem	einer	einem
Genitive	eines	einer	eines

When it comes to negating, the German indefinite article also has a negative form *kein-*, meaning *no*, *not a* or *not any* (Luscher & Schäpers, 1994: 120-121). It can also be used in the plural.

### i. Singular

Masculine: kein

- N kein **Kein** Mensch war da.

*Not a soul was there.*

A keinen Er möchte aber **keinen** Wein.  
*But he doesn't want any wine.*

D keinem Er ist mit **keinem** Vorschlag zufrieden.  
*He isn't satisfied with any suggestion.*

G<sup>1</sup> (keines)

Feminine: keine

N keine **Keine** Frau war schöner.  
*No (other) woman was more beautiful.*

A keine Ich habe **keine** Schwester.  
*I don't have a sister.*

D keiner Er hat an **keiner** Versammlung teilgenommen.  
*He took part in no meeting.*

G<sup>1</sup> (keiner)

Neuter: kein

N kein Im Hotel war **kein** Zimmer frei.  
*In hotel was no empty room.*

A kein Es gibt hier **kein** Bier.  
*There is no beer here.*

D keinem Das findest du in **keinem** Wörterbuch.  
*You won't find that in any dictionary.*

G<sup>1</sup> (keines)

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<sup>1</sup> The genitive forms *keines, keiner* are uncommon ; they are only used with certain verbs, e.g. *bedürfen*: Das bedarf *keines* Vertrages, *keines* Wortes, *keiner* Erwähnung. – That needs no contract, no word, no mentioning.

## ii. Plural

Masculine, Feminine and Neuter

N	keine	<b>Keine</b> Computerkenntnisse erforderlich. <i>No knowledge of computer required.</i>
A	keine	Meine Eltern können <b>keine</b> Fremdsprachen. <i>My parents can't speak any foreign language.</i>
D	keinen	Das Auto gehört keinen Kindern, sondern Erwachsenen. <i>The car belongs to no children, but adult./ The car doesn't belong to children, but to adult.</i>
G <sup>1</sup>	(keiner)	

### 3.2.2.2 The Use of the Indefinite Article and Zero Article

The indefinite article is used to indicate a person or thing that is unknown, or to refer to a type of person or thing. It is also used in texts, as well as in spoken German, to introduce people or things for the first time, whereby the definite article is used thereafter.

Sie nimmt **eine** Tasse aus dem Schrank. (*She takes a cup from the cupboard.*)

Ein Bauer hatte **einen** Esel. **Der** Esel war alt und schwach. (*A farmer has a donkey. The donkey was old and weak.*)

As mentioned before in section 3.2.2, there is no plural form for the indefinite article. In this case, it is similar to English.

Er hat noch **eine** Frage. (*He still has a question.*)

Habt ihr noch **Fragen**? (*Do you still have questions?*)

**Frauen** reden viel. (*Women talk a lot.*)

### 3.2.3 The Omission of the Article or Zero Article

Cases in which articles are omitted in German:

- i. When the article is used in a partitive sense (as in English implying *some* or *any*) or to denote an indefinite quantity, as in “*Haben wir noch **Bier**?*” (Have we any beer left?). But, an article must be used if the first noun in such a sentence structure will define the second noun: “*Er hat **eine** Flasche Bier getrunken.*” (He drank a bottle of beer.)
- ii. It is omitted after *sein*, *werden*, *bleiben*, and after *als*, before the nouns denoting a profession or nationality, as in “*Ich bin **Studentin**.*” (I am a (female) student.), “*Ihre Ausbildung als **Pilotin** war teuer.*” (Her training as a pilot was expensive.) But an article will be needed if there is a defining adjective; “*Er ist **ein** guter Vater.*” (He is a good father.)
- iii. Nouns in the accusative that form a unit with the verb do not take an article. Examples; “*Ich habe **Hunger**.*” (I am hungry.), “*Der Zug hat **Verspätung**.*” (The train is late.), “*Er fährt gerne **Rad**.*” (He likes cycling.) . But, “*Er hat immer den größten Hunger.*” (He is always the hungriest.)
- iv. In many of the prepositional phrases, the article is also omitted. For example, “*Wir verbringen unseren Urlaub **mit Wandern und Fotografieren**.*” (We spend our holiday going on rambles and taking photographs.), “*Er ist **bis nächste Woche** verreist.*” (He will be away until next week.)
- v. With most of the names of continents, countries or towns, the article will be omitted. For example, “*Mein Nachbar kommt aus **Deutschland**.*” (My neighbour is from Germany.), “*Er fliegt morgen nach **Frankfurt**.*” (He is flying to Frankfurt tomorrow.). But, if the countries have an article, omission of article will not take place; “*In den Ferien fahren wir in **die Schweiz**.*” (In the holidays we are going to Switzerland.)

- vi. When using certain expression of time, the article will be omitted. For example, “*Ende Juni war ihre Schwester in Thailand.*” (Her sister was in Thailand at the end of June.), “*Anfang des Monats werde ich bezahlt.*” (I get paid at the beginning of the month.)
- vii. Articles are omitted in slogans and headlines, for example, “*Einkaufen ohne Auto.*” (Shopping without a car.)

Most of the examples cited above are taken from Luscher & Schäpers (1994: 122-124).

### 3.3 Malay Nouns

Unlike German nouns, which are easily recognized because they are written with a capital letter at the beginning of the word (as mentioned earlier), only Malay proper nouns have this feature. Besides this difference, there are also a few other differences. Malay nouns have no fixed grammatical gender, neither do they have complex inflection that are governed by case or number like German nouns. Teh (2006: 56) says the sex of a human being is expressed in Malay by adding *perempuan* (woman) or *lelaki* (man), and *betina* (female) or *jantan* (male) for an animal or other living things. These words that denote the sex are used only when the sex has to be determined.

**Table 3.3a: Malay Nouns**

Male	Female
<i>Budak lelaki</i> (boys)	<i>Budak perempuan</i> (girls)
<i>Kuda jantan</i> (stallion)	<i>Kuda betina</i> (mare)

(Adapted from Teh, 2006: 56)

The way Malay nouns form their plural is also very different from German nouns. In Malay, it is the context that determines the number (singular or plural). If the plural is to be indicated, a numeral, a qualifier, or a numeral with a qualifier is attached to the noun (Othman, 2000: 201). When the exact quantity is not stated, the noun is reduplicated. However, not all the words that are reduplicated in form are plurals. Examples are such words like, *kanak-kanak* (child), *anai-anai* (termite) and *kura-kura* (tortoise). The different ways of showing whether a Malay noun is singular or plural is shown through the examples given in the next page. These examples are taken from Teh (2006: 56-57) and Othman (2000: 2, 201-205).

**Table 3.3b: Indication of Plurality in Malay Nouns**

<b>Plurality in Malay Nouns</b>	<b>Examples</b>
By reduplication	<i>pelajar-pelajar</i> (students), <i>meja-meja</i> (tables)
By using quantifiers	<i>ramai</i> (many), <i>banyak</i> (many), <i>sekalian</i> (all)
By using numerals and quantifiers	<i>lima ekor ikan</i> (five fish), <i>lima orang pelajar</i> (five students)
By using numerals	<i>dua ringgit</i> (two ringgit), <i>sepuluh cawan</i> (ten cups)
By using the context	<i>Sekalian orang yang datang sudah bawa anaknya.</i> (All the people who came brought <b>their children.</b> )
By using reduplication of words in the predicate	<i>Durian di dusunnya itu sedap-sedap belaka.</i> (The durians in his orchard are very delicious.)

**Table 3.3c: Indication of Singularity in Malay Nouns**

<b>The Singular</b>	<b>Examples</b>
By using <b>satu, suatu</b> or <b>se</b> before simple nouns	<i>satu minit</i> (one minute), <i>pada suatu masa</i> (once), <i>seorang</i> (one person)
By using the context	<i>Gunung itu tinggi.</i> (That mountain is high.)

### **3.4 The Use of Malay Determiners “ini” and “itu”**

The *Kamus Linguistik Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (1997: 18) defines articles as words that belong to the group of determiners. A determiner is a word, when used together with a noun, explains or constrains/limits the meaning of the noun. Malay and Russian are given as examples of languages that do not have articles.

Although there are no articles in Malay, Schmitz (1991: 303) gave the following example to show that the Malay demonstrative article ‘*itu*’ (which falls under the determiner group) often functions like a definite article:

Di belakang gunung ada (sebuah) kampung. Kampung itu berpenduduk 500 orang. (Malay)

Behind the mountains there is a village. The village has 500 inhabitants. (English)

Hinter den Bergen liegt ein Dorf. Das Dorf hat 500 Einwohner. (German)

Unlike English and German where there is a proper definite article, in the above example, “*itu*” is used to refer anaphorically to something which has already been mentioned before (or the term “given information” as Schmitz used). Other examples of the use of ‘*itu*’ as a definite article have been explained earlier.



### 3.5 The Use of Malay “Penjodoh Bilangan” (Classifiers)

As for the indefinite article, sometimes the classifiers (e.g. *seekor*, *seorang*, *sekuntum*, *sebuah*) in Malay do function like an indefinite article for the native speakers of Malay. According to the book “*Malay for Everyone*” (2000: 3), it is sufficient to say “*Saya pelajar*” to mean “I am a student”. But there are Malay native speakers who insist on saying “*Saya seorang pelajar*” as the correct way of saying “I am a student”. Other examples are:

Ibu saya membeli (seekor) ayam di pasar.

Meine Mutter kauft auf dem Markt ein Hühnchen.

My mother buys a chicken at the market.

Dia beri saya sekuntum ros.

Er gibt mir eine Rose.

He gives me a rose.

Dia beli sebatang pen.

Er kauft einen Kugelschreiber.

He buys a pen.

Therefore, in a way, these classifiers do function like the indefinite article in English or German.

### 3.6 Conclusion

As German is a Germanic language and Malay is an Austronesian language, it is of no surprise that there exist so many differences between the two. One of the main differences is the existence of articles in the German language, whereas articles do not exist in the Malay language.

In German, an article is used before a noun to indicate whether the noun refers to a specific or non-specific person, animal, thing, place, event or idea. The articles have to agree with a noun in gender, case and number. However, Malay uses the demonstrative determiners (*ini*, *itu*) to indicate a definite object and the classifiers (*penjodoh bilangan*)

to indicate an indefinite object. Therefore, among the foreseeable difficulties that Malay learners of German might encounter are those that involve:

a. the choice of articles:

1. definite article
2. indefinite article
3. absence of the article (zero article)
4. *negativer Artikel*

b. declension of the article in agreement with the noun cluster in terms of gender and case

c. use of contraction (preposition + definite article)

Before carrying out an error analysis, it is assumed that the degree of learning difficulty of a language might have a big influence in the frequency of errors. Teh (2006:59) says that in error analysis, errors are systematically collected, analyzed and categorized to provide necessary empirical data. As error analysis is an integral part of contrastive analysis, teachers could use it to verify predictions concerning the language learner's difficulties and to come up with better methods of teaching and remedial materials for the learners.