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A GENERAL CLASSIFICATION OF VOWELS IN MALAY LANGUAGE

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Abstract: There are 26 letters in the Malay alphabet, of which 5 are vowels and 6 were introduced by Malay linguists as consonants. These introduced letters were created to make sounds that were absent from the Latin script and unique to the Malay language. This article examines vowel classification in the Malay language.

Key words: phoneme, taling, pepet, articulation process, diphthong, double vowel.

In the field of phonetics, language sounds are called phonemes. Phonemes are divided into two types: vowels and consonants. D. Jones[1] divided the sounds in common language into three groups, namely vowels, consonants and semi-consonants or semi-vowels. That distinction was based on the presence or absence of obstructions or interference (articulation process) in the means of articulation. Later, Mohamad Yunus Maris[2] discovered that there are eight vowels in Malay language. Spoken Malay language has four front vowels, [i], [e], [ɛ], and [a], three back vowels [u], [o], and [ɔ], and one middle vowel, [ə]. The formation of these letters depends on the movements of the air, tongue, lips and teeth.

- The wide front vowel "a" is pronounced in Malay as it is pronounced in Uzbek. For example: apa, asrama, ayah.
- • “ i ” is a narrow front vowel, pronounced like [i] in other languages. But it is pronounced softer than [ы] in Russian. For example: ikan, ambil, memberi.
- • "u" is considered a narrow back vowel and is pronounced like all languages. For example: ular, bukan, buku.
- • The vowel “ o ” is pronounced like [o] as in other languages. But it is different from Uzbek [o‘]. For example: orang.
- • The vowel “ ɔ ” is known in spoken speech, but in writing it is written as a regular [o] vowel. In pronunciation, it is pronounced as [o‘]. For example: oleh.
- • The letter “ e ” has three different pronunciations in Malay language. The first form is [e] like in all languages. This is called taling in Malay language. For example: elok, bed, enak. Other forms are pronounced like [ы] in Russian. The forms [ə] and [ɛ] are mainly used in the dialect. For example: residents of Kelantan province pronounce "e" in the word "male" as [ɛ]. [malɛ]. Also, to make this pronunciation even more precise, the letter [e] is pronounced pepet in Russian when it is pronounced like [ы] in Russian. In this case, the vowel [e] in the first syllable is pronounced as a pepet. If the end of the syllable is closed, it is not pronounced like pepet. If the pepet occurs on the first syllable, the stress falls on the second syllable*(Table 1).*

(Table 1)

letter	in front	from the	from behind

[1] Slideshare.net
[2] Siti Hajar Hj. Abdul Aziz, 2008. Bahasa Melayu 1 Siri Pendidikan Guru, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford Fajar Sdn. Bhd. 45

	of	middle	
a	api	tali	kita
e (I) e pepet (II) e taling	emak ela	kena petak	sosiolisme tauge
i	itu	tidur	padi
o	oleh	kota	pidato
u	ular	kuda	satu

Malay language has 6 double vowels and 3 diphthongs[3]. Double vowels **include ua, ai, iu, ia, au, ui**. In addition, we can find double vowels in the form of **aa, oo, ao** and **ae** in words borrowed from the Arabic language. Diphthongs include **ai, au** and **oi**.

Homonymy was made between the above-mentioned diphthong and double vowels. The presence of another vowel is important in distinguishing them, that is, if the word has another vowel sound other than **au** or **ai**, it is considered a diphthong. If absent, it is a double vowel *(Table 2)*. Another important point is that only these two sounds - **au** and **ai** - form homonyms. In all other cases, it is a double vowel. *(Table 2)*

diftong	qo‘sh unli
damai	baik
danau	jauh
lambai	ghaib
harimau	kaum

Through this small study, we analyzed the classification of Malay language vowels, diphthongs, double vowels and the differences between them, and thus came to the following conclusions:

a. Language sounds include diphthongs;

b. Some words borrowed from Arabic also have diphthongs;

c. The sounds au and ai can form homonyms;

d. The pronunciation of the E sound depends on the dialect.

The above article was limited to medieval books and studies, as well as their conclusions

[3] Diphthong (greek, double vowel or double consonant) is a complex vowel consisting of two phonetic elements forming one syllable.

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