

Symposium

Common Languages in Southeast Asia

19-20 juin 2017 / June 19th-20th 2017

INALCO, salles 3.15 (06/19) et 5.08 (06/20)
 65 rue des Grands Moulins - 75013 Paris (France)

Lundi 19 juin 2017 / Monday June 19th 2017

Allocution de bienvenue / Welcome address **1400-1415**

F. BIZRI (INALCO-SeDyL)	Asian Migrant Workers' Arabic and English-based Pidgins: Singapore and the Middle East	1415-1530
T. SUTHIWAN (CLS-NUS)	Kristang: a comparative study of language contact between Portuguese and Malay and Portuguese and Thai	

Coffee

Mardi 20 juin 2017 / Tuesday June 20th 2017

SEW J.W. (CLS-NUS)	Malay mimetics in Asian onomatopoeia: Towards observational adequacy	0930-1045
J. SAMUEL (INALCO-CASE)	Surveying mutual intelligibility between Indonesian and Malaysian languages	

Coffee break

A. GRAF (Goethe Universität)	New grounds for Malay: linguistic and textual implications of Malaysia's emerging role as hub for international Higher Education	1100-1215
P.N. RIGET (UM)	<i>Bahasa Melayu Sarawak</i> as a common language in Sarawak (Malaysia)	

Lunch

D. CHAN (CLS-NUS)	Language learning in multilingual & superdiverse Singapore	1345-1500
G. FORLOT (INALCO-PLIDAM)	Exonormative language ideologies: a Singaporean case	

Coffee break

E. CHOU (INALCO)	Language and educational policies in Malaysia: ideologies and conflicting practices	1515-1630
LOOI T.C. (INALCO)	Chinese schools in the face of the entrenchment of Malay as national language in Malaysia	

Discussion **1645-1715**

Intervenants / speakers

- Fida BIZRI
Maître de conférences, singhalais et linguistique d'Asie du sud, INALCO, Paris
Associate Professor, Sinhala and South Asian linguistics, INALCO, Paris
- Daniel CHAN
Maître de conférences, français, Université Nationale de Singapour
Lecturer, French, CLS, National University of Singapore
- Elsa CHOU
Étudiante de Master, INALCO, Paris
Student in Master degree, INALCO, Paris
- Gilles FORLOT
Professeur, didactique des langues et sociolinguistique, INALCO, Paris
Professor, Language Education and Sociolinguistics, INALCO, Paris
- Arndt GRAF
Professeur, malais et études sud-est asiatique, Université Goethe, Francfort
Professor of Malay and Southeast Asian Studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt
- LOOI Tze Chien
Étudiant de Master, INALCO, Paris
Student in Master degree, INALCO, Paris
- Patricia Nora RIGET
Maître de conférences, études françaises, Université Malaya, Kuala Lumpur
Senior lecturer, French studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur
- Jérôme SAMUEL
Professeur, études indonésiennes et malaisiennes, INALCO, Paris
Professor, Indonesian and Malaysian studies, INALCO, Paris
- SEW Jyh Wee
Maître de conférences, malais, Université Nationale de Singapour
Lecturer, Malay, National University of Singapore
- Titima SUTHIWAN
Maître de conférences, thaï, Université Nationale de Singapour
Associate Professor, Thai, National University of Singapore

Modérateurs / moderators

Dr. Titima SUTHIWAN (NUS-CLS)
Prof. Dr. Arndt GRAF (Goethe Universität)
Prof. Dr. Jérôme SAMUEL (INALCO-CASE)

-Entrée libre et gratuite / Free admission
-Contact: jerome.samuel@inalco.fr

NB: Contrôles des identités et des sacs à l'entrée du bâtiment
ID and bag checks at building entrance.

Abstracts

Asian Migrant Workers' Arabic and English-based Pidgins: Singapore and the Middle East

Fida Bizri

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In the last 20 years many Arabic-based pidgins spoken between Arab employers and Asian migrant workers have been documented in the Middle East. Knowing that Singapore-Malaysia is, with the Middle East, one of the major migration hubs that Asian migrants strive to go to, exploratory research has been recently undertaken with female Asian domestic workers based in Singapore. I will present some of the socio-linguistic data collected in Singapore analyzing them from the perspective of both pidginized Englishes, and Arabic-based pidgins documented in the Middle East. The aim is to give a first sketch of the parameters at work defining language contact and pidgin formation in both regions today.

Language learning in multilingual & superdiverse Singapore

Daniel Chan (CLS–FASS–NUS) & **Gilles Forlot** (INALCO–PLIDAM)
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In 1965, the Republic of Singapore was founded on the principles of ethnic, religious and linguistic plurality, with English as a common language both for inter-community communication and international development. Long before the spread of globalization and superdiversity (Vertovec 2007; Arnaut et al. 2016), the country had always been multilingual and multicultural. Half a century after its independence, the country is renowned not only for its sensitive multilingual balance as well as for its debates on the legitimate use of different language and linguistic forms. In the meantime, the teaching and learning of foreign languages has gained significant momentum in Singapore's education system, although restricted to an elite group of high-performing secondary school students. Our research focuses on the evolving roles of language education in Singapore in the 21st century, as traditionally language learning/teaching has been grounded on both identity and instrumental functions – i.e. maintaining the cultural and linguistic heritage of the various communities and being able to use those languages in the context of globalization. Large-scale questionnaires and interviews were administered in 2016 to students at the National University of Singapore. They aimed at providing some material for an analysis of students' representations of language diversity and the various ideologies surrounding local and international language learning in Singapore's multicultural and globalized society.

Language and educational policies in Malaysia: ideologies and conflicting practices

Elsa Chou

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This communication deals with Malaysian sociolinguistics. It examines language and educational policies implemented in Malaysia today regarding different languages which coexist in its educational system: Malay, English, Malaysian languages, and international or foreign languages. In fact, Malaysia established a bilingual educational system whose the objective is to acquire the majority language (Malay, the national language) while maintaining the minority language (Malaysian languages, the mother tongues). Malaysia also introduced international or foreign languages in secondary schools in order to value internationally itself. This study shows (demonstrates?) a conflict between ideologies and practices.

Exonormative language ideologies: a Singaporean case

Gilles Forlot (INALCO–PLIDAM) & **Daniel Chan** (CLS–FASS–NUS)
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The promotion and engineering of language choice and correctness have been paramount in Singapore's national narrative. Indeed, issues regarding the maintenance or the emergence – let alone the naming – of the different local varieties – mostly those of 'Singlish' and 'dialect(s)' – still spark heated debates and wavering attitudes in Singapore, revealing the ideological underpinnings of the country's language policies.

In this paper, we examine these debates and attempt to provide a sociolinguistic interpretation of the stakes of language use and correctness in a context where postcolonial multilingualism, language contact, and the gradual appropriation and legitimization of local forms are challenging exonormative pressure to rely only on 'Standard' Mandarin and 'Standard' British English – and its local offspring, Standard Singaporean English.

The corpus this paper drawn on is made up of 620 questionnaires collected in 2016, a series of interviews with students, academics and educators carried out in 2017 and a collection of 'circulating discourse' (Heller 2002) items on language appropriateness, correctness and legitimacy in the local media championing or challenging official language policies.

New grounds for Malay: linguistic and textual implications of Malaysia's emerging role as hub for international Higher Education

Arndt Graf

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Initially as a reaction to the financial constraints of the Asia Crisis 1998-9, the Malaysian government has since developed a strategy of becoming an international hub of Higher Education, with the target of eventually attracting 200,000 paying international students by 2020. The Malaysian niche in the market of internationally mobile students is mostly middle-class students from not so developed and/or Muslim-majority countries for whom Muslim-majority and tropical Malaysia with its competitive tuition fees and living costs seems to be more attractive than traditional Western destinations in colder climates or other Asian and Pacific countries, including Singapore and Australia. As a consequence, hundreds of thousands of international students have since studied in Malaysia, among them tens of thousands of African students. In 2015 alone, more than 25,000 African students were registered in public and private Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

This paper departs from the observation that most of these students acquire some Malay language skills during their stay in Malaysia, not only as part of their mandatory study programmes, but also through various social encounters. This has been leading to a great range of unprecedented linguistic, textual, and cultural phenomena. This paper discusses notably the changing international role of Malay and the emergence of Malaysia's image both as an international role model of a modern and developed Muslim-majority country as well as a site of vice, prostitution and danger, as in the Ugandan music drama „Malaysia“ (2016) performed by the drama group „The Ebonies“ in Luganda language. In Malaysia itself, aside of many negative stereotypes, also more positive notions of Africans are occurring in contemporary Malay-language imaginary, including in the popular Youtube video „Malaysia yang ku cinta“ (2017) sung by Kaiho (i.e. Kaiho Rikambura) from Namibia, as well as in the Malay travelogue on Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Sudan by Dr. Hayya Bilal (i.e. Jamilah Jaafar), *Afrika: Aku mai lagi* (2016).

Chinese schools in the face of the entrenchment of Malay as national language in Malaysia

LOOI Tze Chien

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This study aims to investigate the attitude of the Malaysian government towards the Chinese education and Chinese schools in Malaysia by scrutinizing its implementation of various educational and language policies and related laws. The discussion is completed by a review of a series of historical events taking place from the time of independence to the present, providing a useful perspective to consider the government's policies and its consequences; and eventually to interpret the government's attitude towards the existence of Chinese schools within its system of education. This study demonstrates a different and opposing opinion towards the imposing of one common language in a multicultural society.

***Bahasa Melayu Sarawak*
as a common language in Sarawak (Malaysia)**

Patricia Nora Riget
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Sarawak, located on the island of Borneo, is home to at least 12 ethnic groups and over 50 language varieties. Sarawak Malay or *bahasa Melayu Sarawak*, which is distinct from “Peninsular Standard” Malay, serves as Sarawak’s lingua franca alongside Iban and English. Mandarin serves this function among Sarawak’s Chinese community whose heritage languages include Hokkien, Hakka and Foochow. Taking into account this linguistic diversity, this presentation will try to provide insights into the role and place of a regional language, namely, *bahasa Melayu Sarawak* as a common language in Sarawak. The data presented are based on a questionnaire used for a survey on the use of *bahasa Melayu Sarawak* by Sarawakians and their attitude towards this variety of Malay.

**Surveying mutual intelligibility
between Indonesian and Malaysian languages**

Jérôme Samuel
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Indonesian and Malaysian languages, two closely related Malay dialects, as well as standards and national languages of different countries, are commonly said easily mutually intelligible. Still, to my knowledge affirmative statements – although expressed by (socio)linguists – are much more common than researches and scientific measurement of this mutual intelligibility among – more specifically – Indonesian and Malaysian speakers.

Whatever the reality of it and of its extent, on one side national language policies consider (and treat) these languages as different, underlining or reinforcing real differences; on the other side, integration between Malay speaking countries (through, for instance, widening circulation of people and goods, notably audiovisual products) should tend to make speakers from Malay-speaking countries more likely to better understand neighbour’s dialect.

This communication will present first results of a new research on intelligibility of Indonesian language among students in Singapore (Singaporean Malays) and Malaysia (all communities), as an initiating step before further researches.

Malay mimetics in Asian onomatopoeia: Towards observational adequacy

Jyh Wee Sew

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With the recent studies on mimetics and sound symbolism in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, we reestablish that sound-based lexicon plays a vital part in language interaction. The recent political jab in the media world (e.g. *Bloomberg Politics*) that the winning 777 votes of the new Chief Executive of Hong Kong, seems mimetic to impotency, is a case in point. Positive attitudes towards number 8, and 9 among the Chinese, and Thai speakers, respectively reflect the significance of a mimetic mindset among some Asian speech communities. This discussion explores mimetics in Malay by studying selected utterances and phrases in the digital and printed materials. Comparing the use and non-use of mimetics to describe certain meanings in spontaneous expressions and discursive references, we observe that verb-based mimetics uniquely tracks iterative frequency in Malay communication. A series of bipartite comparisons, with and without mimetic as the strategy, i.e. *pusing-pusing* (turn and turn) vs. *pusing* (turn), or *ada* (have) vs. *ngada-ada* (fidgety) in contrastive contexts, further indicates that informed decisions to encode specific references with mimetics are made on the Malay speakers' part. Hence, this discussion suggests that differentiating a specific description from the commonplace by correlating it with mimetics provides adequate ground to identify mimetics (and sound symbolism) as an iconic part of speech. Indeed, as an iconic category mimetics is important for encoding the specifics, thus beneficial to a productive interaction in socio-cultural settings including business, classroom, politics, and studio.

Kristang: a comparative study of language contact between Portuguese and Malay and Portuguese and Thai

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In 1511 when Portugal conquered Malacca, a trade negotiation was also established between Portugal and Ayutthaya. By 1592, there were about 300 Portuguese settlers in the Thai capital. The interactions and intermarriages between the Portuguese and the Thais have resulted in some Portuguese loanwords in Thai, mostly in the area of religion. While in Thai, the term 'kristang', a loanword from Portuguese 'cristão' (Christian) refers to Catholic Thais, in the Malay speaking world, it refers to Malaccan Portuguese Creole, and the people who speak it. Currently, the Kristang language is facing steep decline, although efforts to revive it have begun in recent years in both Malacca and Singapore.

This preliminary research looks into the different natures of language contact that have led to different results in the Malay and the Thai speaking worlds. It is hoped that the research will shed light on the Portuguese language and culture influence on Thai which is still understudied as well as the spread, decline, and revival attempts of Kristang language and culture in the Malay speaking world that is also currently understudied. Portuguese loanwords in Malay, as well as Kristang loanwords in Indonesian will also be discussed as results of language contact besides the creolization above mentioned.

