Adjectives in a Seventeenth Century Malay Language Grammar

Karim Harun[1]*, James T. Collins[2] and Maslida Yusof[1]

[1]*School of Malay Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*
[2]*Institute of Ethnic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*

ABSTRACT

Malay grammars produced in the 17th century were a product of Dutch influence. These grammars were written a century after the arrival of the Portuguese and seven years after the arrival of the Dutch. The development of Malay grammatical studies occurred in stages beginning in 1603 with an analysis of conjugations by Houtman, followed by a brief explanation about the formation of words in Malay by Wiltens and Danckaerts in 1623 and finally in 1655, a systematic Malay grammar authored by Roman. Roman's grammar is a complete Malay grammar that discusses aspects of Malay word classes. However, in this grammar, adjectives were not categorised as an independent word class, instead, it is placed under the noun word class. This paper will explain the discussion of adjectives in Roman's grammar. Among the aspects that will be elaborated is the position of adjectives in the noun *namen* word class. In addition, discussions about the formation of adjectives and the degree of comparison of adjectives will be presented as well. Roman's treatment of adjectives will also be compared with the treatment of adjectives in today's Malay grammar. This paper concludes that adjectives discussed by Roman were parallel with the climate of opinion in Europe.

Keywords: Adjective, degree of comparison, grammar, noun, preposition, substantive, verb, word class

INTRODUCTION

The Malay grammars that were produced in the 17th century were the results of the efforts of the Dutch. They were written a century after the arrival of the Portuguese and seven years after the Dutch arrived in the Malay world (Karim, 2009). The

development of the praxis of writing Malay grammars occurred gradually in stages beginning in 1603 with an analysis of the Malay "conjugational" system by Houtman followed by Wiltens and Danckaerts (1623) who described the formation of words in Malay and finally in 1655, a systematic Malay grammar was written by Roman.

From these three early grammars, only Roman's grammar system gained the attention of scholars. Among the scholars who discussed this grammar were Gonda (1936), Harimurti (1991) and Collins (1991). Gonda (1936) discussed the cases found in Roman grammar while Harimurti (1991) clarified the content of this grammar book by restating the grammatical aspects discussed by Roman in a simplified manner. Collins (1991) on the other hand, studied the source of data that was used by Roman. This article will also discuss Roman's grammar.

However, it focuses on the treatment of adjectives that are found in this grammar.

WORD CLASS IN ROMAN'S GRAMMAR

In the second part of his grammar, Roman discussed Malay grammar based on word class. Roman (1655) began his discussion by stating that "Previously, we discussed letters that form words among the Malays. Now, let us also discuss words that form sentences."[1] He divided words that form sentences in Malay into seven word classes. He explained: *"Die konnen gevoeghlyck onder deze seven begrepen werden, namelyck, datze zyn Namen / Voornamen / Woorden / Bywoorden / Voorzettingen / Koppelingen / ende Inwurpen."* The word classes listed by Roman can be compared with the current Malay and Indonesian language word classes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Comparison of Roman's Word Classes with the current Malay word classes

Roman (1655)	Bahasa Melayu (Nik Safiah et al., 1996)	Bahasa Indonesia (Moeliono, 1988)	Post intervention M(SD)
Namen	'Noun'	Kata nama	Nomina, pronomina, numeralia
(Namen)		Kata adjektif	Adjektiva
Voornamen	'pronoun'	(Kata nama)	(Nomina)
Woorden	'verb'	Kata kerja	Verba
Bywoorden	'adverb'	-	Adverbia
Voorzettingen	'preposition'	-	-
Koppelingen	'konjungation'	Kata tugas	Kata tugas
Inwurpen	'interjection'	-	-

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[1] "That can be the following seven concepts, namely noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection."

From Table 1, we can see that the number of word classes listed by Roman is larger compared with what can be found in the current Malay and Indonesian grammar books. In the current Malay grammar, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections, classified by Roman as word classes on their own, are all now placed under function word class. While the *bywoorden* 'adverb' word in Roman's grammar can still be found in Indonesian grammar, it is not found in the Malay grammar of Malaysia. Moreover, in Roman's grammar, adjectives are not discussed as a word class of its own; instead, it is a part of *namen* 'noun'.

Adjective in Van Namen 'Noun'

The first word class discussed by Roman was namen. He defined *namen as zyn die deelen eener redne waer mede men eenige zaeck zonder beteekenisse van tydt nomen kan.*"[2] From this definition, *namen* 'noun' is explained as part of the word class with which one can talk about something without any reference to time. This definition demonstrates Roman's usage of semantic criteria to explain namen in Malay. The current grammar systems, for example the one written by Nik Safiah et al. (1996), applied two criteria, namely syntactic

criteria and semantic criteria to classify words in Malay.[3]

Roman divided *namen* 'nouns' into two subcategories, namely *zelf-standige* 'substantives' and *byvoeghlycke* 'adjectives'. According to Roman, the Malay language differs from Dutch because in Malay, *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' is categorised under *namen* 'nouns'.

For *zelf-standige*, Roman explains that *"Deze zyn ofte **zelf-standige** / de welcke beteekenen een dingh dat zyn eygen wezen heeft ofte by zich zelven bestaet"*.[4] In other words, *zelf-standige* 'substantive' means words that are able to wholly function without support. Roman equates the term *zelf-standige* with the term *substantiva* in Latin. Even though Roman had given the definition of *zelf-standige*, he did not however, elaborate in detail on either the meaning of *zelf-standige* or *substantiva*.

Bussmann (1996, p. 473) stated that *substantiva* has two meanings. The first is *substantiva* which is synonymous with a noun. The second, in a wider context, *substantiva* refers to nominal which in some grammar books include nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals as *substantiva*. Nevertheless, there are also grammar books that explain that *substantive* encompasses nouns and adjectives only.

Based on the definition given by Bussmann (1996), it is evident that *substantiva* is more suited to be paired with *namen* and not *zelf-standige*. However, as explained by Roman, the Malay language

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[2]   "The name is part of the word class where one can state something without any meaning related to time.

[3]   As Nik Safiah et al. (1996) defined kata nama: "Noun is a group of words that can become the principle unit in the construction of a nominal phrase and usually such a word refers to a person, place, thing or concept.

[4]   "These are substantive which means a thing that has its own essence or exist within itself"

differs from Dutch because in Malay, *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' is included under *namen*; therefore, Roman tried to differentiate between *namen* 'noun' and *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective'. Thus, he named them *zelf-standige* 'substantive'. An example given by Roman for *zelf-standige* is:

(1) *Daoud*   'David'

(2) *Orang*   People'

(3) *Pohon*   'tree'

From the examples above, it is clear that the concept of *zelf-standige* meant by Roman is noun. He did not include adjective, pronoun and numeral within *zelf-standige*. The concept of *zelf-standige* used by Roman resembles the Latin grammatical concept in which *nomen substantivum* means independent noun. In contemporary Malay grammatical terminology, noun refers to persons, places, things or concepts. According to Nik Safiah et al. (1996, p. 97), pronouns are considered within the category of noun, but apparently Roman did not agree.

Roman placed *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' within the noun class. According to Roman "...**byvoeghlycke** / de welcke beteekenen iets dat geen eygen wezen heeft, maer aen een zelf-standige naem gevoeght werdt..."[5]

Roman equates the term *byvoeghlycke* with the term adjectiva in Latin. According to him, in Malay, *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' is often added to *zelf-standige* 'substantive.' Examples of *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' given by Roman are:

(4) *benar*   'true'

(5) *hitam*   'black'

(6) *ketsjil* 'small'

In current Malay grammar, examples (4), (5) and (6) are also classified as adjectives. However, in today's Malay grammar, adjective is not placed within the noun word class as found in Roman's grammar book, but adjective is in a word class of its own.

According to Roman, the Malays also often add *byvoeghlycke* 'adjectives' to *zelf-standige* 'substantives'. He states that *"Hier van staet aen te mercken dat in een reeden by de Maleyers, altydt dezelf-standige naem voor de byvoeghlycke werdt gestelt, recht anders als 't Nederlandtsch gebruyckelyck is."*[6] Examples of addition of *voeghlycke* 'adjective' to *zelf-standige* 'substantive' are given below:

(7) *orang hitam*   'black person'

(8) *pohon ketsjil* 'small tree'

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[5]   "Adjective by which it's meant something that has no essence of its own but is added to substantive noun."

[6]   "Here it is observed that for this reason, in the Malay language the substantive noun is always placed in front of (proceeding) the adjective, exactly the opposite of the Dutch usage."

The words orang in (7) and *pohon* in (8) are *zelf-standige*, whereas the word hitam (7) and ketsjil (8) are *byvoeghlycke*. Therefore, the words *hitam* (black) and *ketsjil* (small) are *byvoeghlycke* that are added to the *zelf-standige orang* (person) and *pohon* (tree).

According to Roman, adding the *byvoeghleycke* 'adjective' to *zelf-standige* 'substantive' differs from the Dutch language. From the examples given by Roman, the difference that occurs is in the position within the combination, namely in Malay, *zelf-standige* is placed before *byvoeghlycke* whereas in Dutch, *byvoeghlycke* is placed in front of *zelf-standige*. The examples given by Roman in Dutch are:

(9)   *swart man*   'black person'

(10) *een kleyne boom*   'small tree'

In (9) *swart* 'black' and (10) *kleyne* 'small' are *byvoeghlycke*, while (9) *man* 'person' and (10) *boom* 'tree' are *zelf-standige*. Therefore, the order of combining *zelf-standige* and *byvoeghlycke* in Dutch differs from Malay in terms of position within the noun phrase.

However, according to Roman, in Malay the combination of *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' and *zelf-standige* 'substantive' also occur, similar to constructions in Dutch. He gave the examples of the words *segala* and *barang* which according to him are *byvoeghlycke*. According to Roman, although these words *segala* and *barang* are *byvoeghlycke*, they are placed in the

initial position of the combination. In other words, the combination has the form of *byvoeghlycke-zelf-standige* 'adjective-substantive', not *zelf-standige-byvoeghlycke* 'substantive-adjective'. The examples given are as below:

(11) *segala orang*   'all persons'

(12) *barang pohon*   'any tree'

In examples (11) and (12) the words *segala (all)* and *barang (item)* are *byvoeghlycke* while the words *orang* (persons) and *pohon* (tree) are *zelf-standige*. These two examples are very similar to the form that occurs in Dutch such as (8) *swart man* and (9) *een kleyne boom*. In current Malay grammar, the term that matches *byvoeghlycke* is adjective but the words *segala* and *barang* are not classified as adjectives but as numerals.

Roman also discussed the combination of the word *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' with *zelf-standige* 'substantive' that are interchangeable. Previously, Roman had discussed the combination of *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' with *zelf-standige* 'substantive,' which is a combination that begins with the *zelf-standige* 'substantive,' followed by *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective;' and *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' followed by *zelf-standige* 'substantive.' This combination is probably discussed with the intent of demonstrating that in Malay there are also combinations of *byvoeghlyke* and *zelf-standige* that are interchangeable. Roman gave a *byvoeghlyke* example such as *baick* which can be combined with the *zelf-standige* word *hati*,

that becomes *hati baick*, or according to him it is also commonly said as *baick hati*. In this example given by Roman, the combination of *both baick* and *hati* can yield forms that are interchangeable.

In today's Malay grammars, the process of combining *zelf-standige* 'substantive' with *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' as discussed by Roman is a nominalisation process. This combination creates noun phrases in Malay. Thus, we can see that Roman not only discusses the aspects of the word but he also discusses the syntactic aspects of the Malay language.

DEGREE OF COMPARISON OF THE ADJECTIVE

Roman states that the Malay language also demonstrates degrees of comparison. In Malay, degrees of comparison occur in *byvoeghlycke namen* 'adjective'. According to Roman, the degree of comparison in Malay occurs when someone compares one thing with another. He explains:

"De byvoeghlycke Namen zyn in hare beteeckenisse mede opklimminge

als by trappen onderworpen: Dit geshiedt somtydts wanneermen iets by vergelyckinge met wat anders zeght meer te wezen als dat; zoo komt van groot, grooter."[7]

He divides the degree of comparison in the Malay language based on the usage of particular words. The first comparison degree in Malay uses the word *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' itself, namely *besar* 'big'. The second degree of comparison uses the word *lebeh* 'more'; and the third degree uses the comparative word *sekali* 'most' or *lebeh deri samoa* 'more than all'. Roman gives examples of all three degrees of comparison as shown in Table 2 below:

From the examples given in Table 2, the comparative word *lebeh, sakali* and *besar lebeh deri samoa* are used in Malay to show the degree of comparison. In other words, the degree of comparison in Malay consists of not only words but also phrases.

The division of adjective comparison into three levels by Roman was influenced by the categorisation of comparison found

Table 2
Degrees of Comparison of Adjectives in Roman's Grammar

Degree of Comparison	Byvoeghlycke	Kata Perbandingan (Comparative Word)	Post intervention M(SD)
First	Besar	-	Besar
Second	Besar	Lebeh	Lebeh besar
Third	Besar	Sekali/Lebeh deri Samoa	Besar lebeh deri samoa/ besar sekali

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[7]   "The adjectives in their meaning are subject to ascending in stages when one views something in comparison to something else as being more, such as big, bigger.

in Latin. In Latin, there are three levels of comparison which are positive degree, comparative degree and superlative degree. These levels of comparison in Latin are indicated by changes in word form of the word, through affixation and subsequent changes in the root word. Changes in the word through affixation are shown in Table 3:

In today's Malay grammar, there are three degrees of comparison: the normal degree, comparative degree and superlative

Table 3
Degree of Comparison in Latin

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Lóngus 'long'	Lóngior 'longer'	Longíssimus 'longest'

degree. By the measure of current Malay grammar, the examples given by Roman, for example, the byvoeghlycke **besar** ('big') are *besar* the normal degree, *lebeh* the comparative degree and *sakali* and *lebeh deri samoa* the superlative degree. However, from the examples given, it can be seen that Roman used the comparative word *lebeh* to convey the meaning of the second degree of comparison. This can be seen in the examples given by Roman in Dutch. The examples are listed in Table 4.

Forming Nouns from Adjective (Nominalisation)

According to Roman, in Malay, a noun (*zelf-standige*) can be formed from an adjective (*byvoeghlycke*). This formation is made by adding the suffix an to the adjective. Roman states that *"Zelf-standige namen die van byvoeghlycke spruyten, werden in 't eyndt meest wel vermeerdert met an"*, for example:

(13) *kouassa – kouasssa'an*

(14) *benar – benaran*

From the example above, the word *kouassa* (13) and *benar* (14) are *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective'. However, the *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' changes into *zelf-standige* 'noun' when it receives the addition *an*.

Table 4
Degrees of Comparison in Malay and Dutch

	Normal Degree	Comparative Degree	Superlative Degree)
Malay	Besar	lebeh besar	besar lebeh deri Samoa
Dutch	Groot	Grooter	zeer groot allergrootst
English	Big	Bigger	very big biggest

In addition, the *zelf-standige* 'noun' that is formed from *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' that has been added with the suffix an can also receive the addition of ka to the front of the word. The examples given by Roman are:

(15) *besar*   - *kabesaran*   'greatness'

(16) *bakti*   - *kabaktien*   'service'

(17) *lappar* - *kalapparan*   'hunger'

(18) *malou*   - *kamalou'an*[8] 'shame', shyness'

(19) *sondel* - *kasondel'an*   'prostitution'

During the process of adding the prefix *ka* to the *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' it is not stated whether the *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' had already received the addition of *an* first, and only after that received the addition of *ka* or whether both the *ka* and *an* were added simultaneously. From examples (15) - (19) that are given by Roman, it is found that Roman did not give an example of adding only the *an* to examples (15) -(19), such as in the instance of *besar→besaran*; instead, he only gave the example of *besar→ kabesaran*. Moreover, for examples (13) *kouassa* and (14) *benar*, Roman only stated the addition of *an* but did not include it as an example of adding *ka* at the beginning of the word. It can be hypothesised that examples (13) and (14) can receive the addition of an at the end of the word and the additional

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[8] In the seventeenth century, 'kemaluan' means shy or ashamed; there was no reference to genital.

ka at beginning of the word in an ordered sequence as suggested in the figure below:

(a) *byvoeghlycke* (adjective)
       + *an*   →   *zelf-standige* 'noun

(b) *ka* + *zelf-standige* → *zelf-standige*

For example,

(a) *kouassa* +   *an* →   *kouassa'an*

(b) *ka* + *kouasa'an* →   *kakoussa'an*

Based on Roman's discussion, a *zelf-standige* 'noun' can be formed from a *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective' by adding *an*. This *zelf-standige* 'noun' (*byvoeghlycke + an*) accept *ka*. This process demonstrates that the addition of ka can be performed on a derived word (spruyt woorden). However, not all *byvoeghlycke* 'adjectives' accept the addition of *an* and *ka* in stages. Examples (15) -(19) for instance cannot be added to with *an* and *ka* in stages. Instead, the process of adding *ka* and *an* is done simultaneously. In other words, *ka* and *an* are a form of circumfix.

This process of adding *an* and *ka* is the same as the process of adding the prefix *ke-* and the suffix *–an* in the today's Malay language. Although a noun can be formed from an adjective that has receives the *–an* suffix and also the *ke-* prefix, not all adjectives can be affixed nor the suffix *an* and prefix *–ke*. In the affixation process of the current Malay language, only examples (13) and (14) given by Roman can accept

the suffix *–an*. Examples (15) - (19) on the other hand are not able to accept the suffix *–an*. However, these examples can accept the circumfix *ke-…-an*.

Forming Adjectives from Verbs

In Malay, *byvoeglycke* namen 'adjectival noun' can also produce through *woorden spruyten* 'derivative verbs'. In other words, in today's Malay grammar, the adjective is formed through affixation to the verb. Roman states "*Byvoeghlycke namen die van woorden spruyten, ende geven eenige gemeynschap te kennen, met het gene dat het woordt beteeckent, hebben in 't gemeen voor haer ka, en achter haer an.*"[9] To produce *byvoeghlycke namen* 'adjectival noun', the additions of *ka* and *an* are combined with *woorden* 'verb'. The addition *ka* is placed at the beginning of the *woorden* 'verb', while *an* is placed at the end of the *woorden* 'verb'. Roman gives the following examples:

> (20) *liat* → *kaliatan* 'seen'

> (21) *takot* → *katakotan* 'afraid'

Based on Roman's examples, (20) *liat* 'seen' and (21) *takot* 'afraid' are *woorden* 'verbs'. Both these words have received the addition *ke* at the front part of the word and *an* at the end of it yielding *kaliatan* 'appearing seeming' and *katakotan* 'ketakutan' 'afraid'. Both words are adjectives because according to Roman, a verb that accepts the addition *ka* and *an* will change into an adjective. In other words, the addition *ke* and *an* change the word class of both words from *woorden* 'verbs' into *byvoeghlycke namen* 'adjectives'.

In current Malay grammar, the form of the addition of *ka* and *an* is known as the circumfix affixation of *ke-…-an*. This circumfix can be combined with nouns, verbs and also adjectives. The *ke-…-an* circumfix yields a meaning of "hal keadaan yang terkandung dalam kata dasar (the condition and qualities are contained in the root word)" (Nik Safiah et al., 1996: 128). In addition, the *ke-…-an* circumfix can also mean a passive verb. (Nik Safiah et al., 1996, p. 202).[10]

Change from *Zelf-standige* to *Byvoeghlycke*

According to Roman, in Malay, the combination of two *zelf-standige* can also produce changes to the *byvoeghlycke*. In other words, the second word that follows *zelf-standige namen* 'noun' change from *zelf-standige* into *byvoeghlycke*. Roman states that "*Twee zelf-standige namen neffens malkanderen gevoeght zynde, werdt de achterste somwylen als een byvoeghlycke gebruyckt.*"[11] The examples given are:

> (22) *ikan garam* 'salted fish'
>   fish salt

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[9]   "Adjectival noun, that is derived from verbs, and express commonality with the base that the word means in general have in the front ka and in the back an."

[10]   The number of verb and adjective that can accept ke-...-an is limited.
[11]   "Two nouns having been combined, the latter part functions as an adjective"

(23) *babi oetang* 'wild pig'
        pig forest

Examples (22) and (23) show the *zelf-standige* that is placed after a *zelf-standige* functions as an adjective. In example (22) *ikan garam (fish salt)*, the word *ikan(fish)* is *zelf-standige* and the following word *garam (salt)* is also *zelf-standige*. This is the same for example (23) *babi oetang* 'wild pig', the word *babi* 'pig' is *zelf-standige*, and the word *oetang* 'forest' is also *zelf-standige*.[12]

   Both examples (22) and (23) are given a gloss in Dutch, which is *gezoute visch* for *ikan garam* 'salted fish' and *wildt berckey* for *babi oetang* 'wild pig'. In Dutch, the word *gezoute* is a past participle that functions as adjective and *wildt* is *byvoeghlycke* 'adjective'. In Malay, even though *garam* 'salt' and *oetang* 'forest' are nouns, nonetheless from the semantic point of view examples such as *garam* and *oetang* convey an adjectival meaning. *Ikan garam* means fish that has been cured with salt to make it salty. In today's usage, salted fish is no longer referred to as *ikan garam* but *ikan masin* 'fish tasting salty'. In this current term of use for *salted fish* 'ikan masin', we can clearly see what Roman meant by stating that the adjective follows the noun. Meanwhile, *babi oetang* 'wild pig' means a pig that is not a domestic animal or a wild

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[12] Wiltens and Danckaerts(1623) also discussed the combination between noun and noun that functions as adjective. The ikan garam example is also the same as the example cited by Wiltens and Danckaerts (1623). In Wiltens and Danckaerts, the adjective can also be traced from the given meaning in Latin.

pig that lives in the forest. The word *oetang* or 'forest' refers to the quality of the pig that is wild.

CONCLUSION

This paper is not questioning the grammar analysis made by Roman (1689). His grammar was analysed in a systematic way based on classical and grammatical framework well-known to the educated elite of the late Renaissance (Collins, 1991). In this grammar, Roman intended to describe the most common and grammaticality correct usage of Malay. For example, the Malay adverb was also discussed. Thus, in this paper we only describe the efforts of the writing of Malay grammar by Roman in 17th century. In other words, we are not trying to criticise his analysis on Malay grammar.

   In the Malay grammar of the seventeenth century, the adjective is discussed within the word class of noun. This discussion is systematic and comprehensive. As a matter of fact, when compared with analyses found in the Modern Malay grammars, Roman's grammar is still relevant. The discussion of the adjective as part of the nominal word class is parallel with the developments in the writing of grammar in seventeenth century. This discussion of adjectives within the nominal word class in not unusual if we examine the seventeenth century perspective. In that century, the discussion of adjectives is placed under the noun. In a Dutch grammar book published in the sixteenth century, *Twee Spraack* (1584), and also in grammar books published in the seventeenth century, *De nederduytsche*

grammatical ofte spraeckonst by Van Heuele (1625) and *Aanmerkingen op de Neererduitsche taale* by Leupenius (1653) also did not discuss the adjective as being in a word class of its own. Indeed, the discussion of the adjective under the noun is the effect of the seventeenth century *'climate of opinion'* that demonstrates the influence of European grammar on Malay grammar.

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NOTES