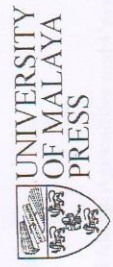


THE MAHMERI
LANGUAGE
AN INTRODUCTION

Edited by: **Asmah Haji Omar**



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Naming Plant Growth and Earth Surfaces

Ainun Rozana Mohd Zaid

Introduction

The Mah Meri community lives in an area where palm and coconut trees grow in abundance compared to other type of trees. And for some of the community members, certain parts of the palm and coconut trees have become a supplementary source of income. Today, some home-makers can be seen sitting in front of their houses separating ribs of the coconut leaves to make brooms for sale.

The Mah Meri settlement is situated nearby a Malay community village. The Malays in the nearby village have in some way influenced the daily lives of the Mah Meri people through their culture and common practices. More important, the Malay language is perceived by the Mah Meri as a more dominant language and it is the language which is most commonly used by both community members to communicate even among themselves. The Mah Meri people also recognise that the use of Malay enables them to have better interaction with people outside their own community.

Cultural borrowing, according to Bloomfield's (1935) characterisation is evident in the naming of trees, crops and plants by Mah Meri people. This is said to happen mainly due to the geographical location of the Malay village which is closely situated to the Mah Meri settlement.

The main focus of this chapter is to provide a description of naming plant growth and earth surfaces in the Mah Meri language. In doing this, it provides a brief scenario of the Mah Meri livelihood and an understanding of how the natural surrounding affects their view of the world. The examples presented in this chapter