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MALAY DIALECT VARIANTS IN LANGKAWI: A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: Dialectical studies scrutinised the closeness, kinship or genealogy of dialects derived from a language. Previous scholars divide Malay dialects in Peninsular Malaysia into four main clusters. The first cluster are the Johor-Melaka-Selangor and Central Perak. The second cluster is a group that spreads from the Patani region covering the Patani-Kelantan-Terengganu dialect. The third is the Negeri Sembilan cluster, and the fourth is the Kedah dialect. Generally, the Kedah dialect is divided into seven groups, covering Kedah (including Langkawi), Perlis, Penang and northern Perak Taiping. This study aims to investigate the Malay dialect variants in Langkawi Island via the Historical Linguistics approach and qualitative comparison research design.

Methodology: This study utilised the qualitative research method. A total of 23 native speakers of Langkawi Malay dialect participated in this study. These informants were selected using NORM (an acronym for non-mobile, older, rural and males). Data collection mainly used several techniques such

as interviews, recordings, and observations. The data were analysed based on the scope of comparative linguistics.

Findings: The findings show that there are five characteristics of separated innovation between the Kuah and Air Hangat variants in one group and the Kedawang variant in other groups. Furthermore, there are nine innovations that separate the Langkawi Malay dialect from the Proto Malayik language. This study indicates that the Kedawang variant is an earlier variant apart from the Kuah and Air Hangat variants.

Contributions: In addition to further strengthen the research on the various dialects spoken in Malaysia, this study attempts to highlight the complete description of the Kedah dialect varieties. This study also contributes to the science of Malay language variants and Malay Dialectology studies.

Keywords: Historical linguistics, reconstruction, innovation, Langkawi Island, Malay dialect.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the goals in dialectical studies is to create a dialect cluster, which is to determine the closeness, kinship or genealogy of dialects derived from a language. In Malaysia, this is started by Hussein (1973) in his discussion of Malay dialects in Peninsular Malaysia through qualitative data which are based on the similarities of specific phonological and lexical alignment, in which he divides Malay dialects in Peninsular Malaysia into four main clusters. The first cluster are the Johor-Melaka-Selangor and Central Perak clusters that are said to be spread from the southern region of Peninsular Malaysia. The second cluster is a group that spreads from the Patani region covering the Patani-Kelantan-Terengganu dialect. The third is the Kedah Coastal cluster, and the fourth is the Negeri Sembilan dialect. Similar work is done by Haji Omar (1985) which reveals that the Kedah dialect is classified as a variation found in the southwest group or region of the Kedah dialect that includes the states of Perlis, Penang and part of Perak. Earlier on, Hussein (1973) states that the Kedah dialect speech area expands the whole north-western coast of the Peninsula Malaysia, including Penang Island. Based on phonological comparison, Haji Omar (2008) has streamlined the Malay dialects clustering in Peninsular Malaysia by dividing the Kedah dialect into seven groups, covering Perlis, Kedah

(including Langkawi), Penang and northern Perak Taiping, and indicates Kedah dialect as Northern Malay dialect. Collins (1996), on the other hand, classifies the Kedah dialects in broader and larger aspects which include the coasts and islands of three countries, namely Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand (Collins, 1997). Summaries of past studies show that there is disagreement about the section or division of the geographical dialect areas of Kedah.

Basically, the existence of disagreement about the sect or division of the geographical dialect areas of Kedah has impacted the elaboration of its dialect. Previous studies have shown that the Kedah dialect is not uniform due to sub-dialect existence factors based on district, sub-district, village and idiolect factors of a person. In other words, this study looks directly at the lexical characteristics of the Langkawi dialect and its variants in Kedah, and the distinctive features of lexical representations in this area.

The grouping made by Haji Omar (2008), Collins (1996) and Hussein (1973) is based on inter-dialect comparisons to detect dialectal differences. Any dialect that shows the similarity of linguistic features will be categorised in the same group. On the other hand, if there are differences, then the dialects are placed in different groups. This means that the degree of difference or similarity usually depends on the location of the dialects. In this regard, we argue that the grouping of variants is in dire need of the discipline of historical comparative linguistics which aims to reconstruct the core of these variants. The results of the reconstruction will reveal the veil of innovation and retention (Atan, Aman, & Shahidi, 2021; Mohamed, Aman, & Shahidi, 2020; Ringe & Eska, 2013; Campbell, 2001; Fox, 1995). It will at the same time allow for a very robust grouping of variants.

This paper, therefore, will fully highlight some of the dialects found in the state of Kedah, namely Langkawi Island. The state of Kedah Darul Aman is on the north of Peninsular Malaysia bordering Thailand, covering an area of about 9,425 square kilometres. The state of Kedah has 12 districts comprising of Alor Setar, Sungai Petani, Kubang Pasu/ Jitra, Kulim, Langkawi, Pokok Sena, Pendang, Bandar Baharu, Yan, Padang Terap, Baling and Sik. However, the district of Langkawi is more prominent and well known as a famous tourist centre in the country and the world in general. Langkawi Island is located on the border between Malaysia and Thailand, which is at the north of the Malacca Straits. This land is an archipelago of 106 islands and covers 47,848 hectares or 466.51 square kilometres. However, only three islands are inhabited by people, namely Langkawi Island (321.80 sq. km) Dayang Bunting Island (50.91 sq. km) and Tuba Island (17.63 sq. km). Langkawi is divided into six mukim, namely Kuah, Padang Mat Sirat, Ayer Hangat, Bohor, Ulu Melaka and Kedawang.

This paper highlights the efforts of the comparison between the Proto Malayik Language (BMP) with the Langkawi Malay dialect (DML) to include aspects of phoneme changes and phonotactics to detect aspects of the dynamism and resilience of the language. The discussion in this paper focuses on the comparison of phonemes and phonotactic changes of BMP with the DML variants based on the following objectives;

i) to make a comparison of vowel, diphthong and consonant phonemes of BMP with variants of DML, and
ii) to explain phonological innovations or BMP phonetic disagreements with DML.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no specific study that traces the diachronic aspects of the Kedah dialect hence creating a lacuna in the existing literature. Amongst previous significant studies are done by Haji Omar (1977, 1985, 1991, 2008), Collins (1986, 1996), Shahidi (2009), Mohamed Sultan, Ahmad, Jalaluddin, and Radzi (2011), and Mohamed Sultan and Suhaimi (2012, 2013).

Haji Omar (1977, 1991) makes a significant contrastive study between the dialects of Malay comprising of Kedah, Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Johor, Kelantan, Sarawak and Penang Malay dialects. She indicates the phonological and lexical difference between each of the Malay dialects. In addition, Haji Omar also shows that every dialect of Malay has a distinctive vowel system and is different from each other. Haji Omar (1985, 2008) has divided the Kedah dialect into the Coastal Kedah Persisiran sub-dialect, the North Kedah sub-dialect, the Perlis-Langkawi subdialect, the Tanjung subdialect and the Balik Pulau subdialect. While explaining the system of vowels, diphthongs and consonants, Haji Omar (1985, 2008) also made comparisons across Malay sub-dialects, such as the Kedah sub-dialect and the Patani dialect.

Collins (1986) briefly discusses nasalised vowels in the Langkawi Malay dialect. According to him, an addition of prefix / meN- / to a word always requires a sound adjustment. For example, / m□N- / + / b… / à [m□mb…], / m□N- / + / d… / à [m□nd…], / m□N- / + / g… / à [m□ŋg…] and so on. This indicates that the phonetic form of the adjective / m□N- / is influenced by the sound that follows it. Vowel nasalisation is said to occur in certain phonetic environments such as nasalisation in single consonant environments that occurs after the nasal sound and before the glottal stop [□]. He also points out the phenomena of double consonants and vowels nasal in Patani which are dissimilar to the Kedah Malay dialect. For example, /l□mbu/ ‘cow’ becomes [l□mu] in the Kedah Malay dialect. In his study, Collins has shown that nasal vowels are phonemic representations in the Kedah Malay dialect. These / i̤ □̤ a̤ o

/ vowels are not related to the evaporation process that occurs after the phonological rules apply (Collins, 1983, 1984, 1989).

Collins (1996) also compares the phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical aspects between the Kedah dialect and "Bahasa Orang Laut". He highlights the high vowel break-ups, frontiness, NH clustering and ancient Malay forms of consequence. He also discusses the aspects of affixation, namely prefix and suffix. Collins also finds the availability of the prefix /beke/ in the Kedah dialect. In addition, he also explains the syntactic aspects of the causative form and the role of markers. Collins (1996) proves that there are similarities and differences in terms of lexicality between the Kedah dialect and the Bahasa Orang Laut.

Shahidi (2009) discusses the phonological processes found in the North Kedah sub-dialect, as well as the distribution of vowel and consonant phonemes. This study is conducted in Naka, Kuala Nerang and Pedu, namely in the Padang Terap district, Kedah. His study highlights the peculiar phonological features across the North Kedah and the Coastal Kedah sub-dialects. The results obtained show that the North Kedah sub-dialect has its own characteristics, for example, consonant reduplication as a substitute for the nasal-obstructive assimilation process, the segment fusion process and the aspiration element. His findings clearly show that the North Kedah and the Coastal Kedah sub-dialects have their own distinct differences.

A study by Mohamed Sultan and Suhaimi (2012) discusses the Kedah dialect interrogative words. Data are obtained through field studies in the state of Kedah. The researcher found that interrogative words in the Kedah dialect are unique and varied. The native speakers of this dialect have several other lexicals in pronouncing the interrogative word. This study found that interrogative words also have an indefinite position; that is, either at the initial or at the end of the sentence.

There is only one study of the Langkawi Malay dialect which is conducted by Collins (1986). Collins' (1986) study, however, is limited only to the aspect of nasalised vowels. Other studies such as Haji Omar (1977, 1985, 2008) highlight the dialect features of Kedah in general without scrutinising the Langkawi data.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This comparative study between DML and BMP follows the field study approach. According to Wan Teh (1980), field and external studies generally refer to any research conducted beyond the limits of physical, location or space constraint such as on the outside of rooms, offices campuses, and states. Field studies are crucial for researchers to obtain solid information and

data, and adhering to the objectives of the study (Aman et al., 2020). In this field study, the focused aspect is on the selection of research questions, the locality and the limitations of the study, informants, data collection, description and analysis of data.

The 472 words which form the list of words in this study are from 12 meaning domains and they are from the aspects of the body parts, agricultural tools, verbs, food, household items, time/weather, nouns/pronouns, measuring terms, animals, clothing, relationships, and collective nouns (Ab. Hamid & Ramli, 2020, 2021; Ab. Hamid, 2020). These are basic words used in DML. They have been utilised at all locations of the study which include Mukim Kuah (VKH), Mukim Air Hangat (VAH) and Mukim Kedawang (VKDWG). The chosen locations are places that have the Malay dialect in Langkawi.

This study utilised the qualitative research method. 23 native speakers of Langkawi Malay dialect participated in this study. They were selected using NORM criteria (an acronym for non-mobile, older, rural and males). Non-mobile refers to speakers who permanently reside in a location, typically in the suburban or rural areas (Trudgill & Chambers, 1990). 'Older' is a reference to their age. Che Kob (1985) is of the opinion that the older the informants are, the better they are, being between 70 – 75 years old, in depicting the originality of their spoken dialect. Subbiah (1966) states that it is more suitable to have informants who are above the age of 55, as they tend to preserve the olden forms and are less affected by or exposed to external influence. Therefore, in this study, the male informants are older people ranging between 55-75 years in age and with good articulatory abilities. 'Rural' refers to the location of a field study that has rural or village-like characteristics. Generally, the informants of this study have limited formal education, finite reading habits, and engage in restricted formal interaction with outsiders. They work as fishermen, farmers or serve as village heads.

The choice of informants is an important criterion which relates to the preciseness of the collected data. Trudgill and Chambers (1990) citing Orton in a study in England says that men usually converse in local accents, in a more constant and original manner compared to women. Wolfram (1969) also stipulates that male informant perform better than their female counterparts, being more consistent and unblemished, while the speech of the females resembles more to the standard form.

As a rule of thumb, a researcher should be able to select appropriate techniques to be used in data collection. The techniques used in this study to gather data include interviews, recordings, and observations. The questions for the informants are related to the wordlist prepared by the researcher. The recording technique used by the researcher allows information

to be kept longer for reference. All recordings related to the data for this study were transcribed phonetically, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

The data were analysed based on the scope of Historical Comparative Linguistics approach. Historical Comparative Linguistics is a branch of science which studies language diachronically (Crystal, 1980). This entails the data of a language being compared to observe changes and development from the perspective of the language historicity. This study involves language comparison in a specific timeframe. This branch of language science is developed to obtain the archaic form of language which lack written materials. To this aim, language historians would scrutinise language or variant data of a language which are still in existence currently. The language or variant data are gathered and put through a reconstruction process to regain their archaic form of the language (Collins, 1989). Besides reconstruction abilities, the Historical Comparative Linguistics is able to classify and place a language or its variant in language clusters.

Language comparison in the Historical Comparative Linguistics emphasises similarities in form and meaning, which is known as the cognate forms from languages in the same family (Bynon, 1990; Crowley, 1992; Campbell, 2001). The similarities in form-meaning which occur due to other factors, such as through coincidences, borrowing, and being iconic needs to be filtered prior to comparison work. A crucial task by a Historical Comparative Linguistics analyst is the reconstruction of ancient languages. This is achieved based on the existence of similarities in a particular language. In this study, the Proto Malayik language construction obtained from Adelaar (1985) is used as the basis of comparison in attempting to observe its immutability or change of DML from BMP. Therefore, the focus to address the second research objective is on phonological comparison. The construction of the Proto Malayik language forms the foundation and guide to compare the DML variant. The BMP is used as it is an older language in the Malay dialects. Adelaar's (1985) BMP construction is selected for its suitability in the Malay dialect perspective. It is also an extension to the efforts of constructing even older language levels, such as the Proto Austronesian, Proto Polynesian Malay and Proto Malay-Javanic languages. In other words, the BMP is the source of other variants of the Malay dialects. By utilising the comparative approach, the comparison of DML can be made from BMP.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section will present the findings of the study. The discussion specifically focuses on the comparison of BMP vowel, diphthong and consonant phonemes with DML variants, as well as

explanations on phonological innovations or BMP phonetic differences with DML.

4.1 Comparison of BMP Vowel Phonemes with DML

Vowel comparisons were performed to obtain innovation and retention of BMP with DML. Adelaar (1985) indicates that BMP have 4 proto vowels. DML variants, on the other hand, contain 6 vowels, namely /i, u, e, o, □, a /.

Table 1: Inventory of BMP vowels

Tongue height	**Tongue section**		
	Front	**Middle**	**Back**
High	*i		*u
High-mid			
Low-mid		*□	
Low		*a	

Note: Adaptation from Adelaar (1985)

The difference in the volume of BMP vowels with this DML variants shows the existence of innovation. These changes are further discussed below.

BMP has a high front vowel *i which occurs at the word-initial position, penultimate and final syllables. The BMP vowel *i is lowered directly to the DML at all word positions. However, at the initial and the final-word position, a sporadic innovation has occurred in some DML data; BMP *i > [e] as in the Kuah Variant (VKH) and the Air Hangat Variant (VAH), and becomes [□] in Variant Kedawang (VKDWG). Innovation also regularly applies to the position of the penultimate word in some DML data; BMP *i> [e].

Table 2: Comparison of the front high vowel spread of BMP *i> [i] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final (closed syllable)**
BMP	*i-	*-i-	*-i
VKH	*i- >[i-] or [e-]	*-i- >[-i-] or [-e-]	[-i]
VAH	*i- >[i-] or [e-]	*-i- >[-i-] or [-e-]	[-i]
VKDWG	*i- >[□-]	*-i- >[-i-] or [-e-]	[-i]

Table 2 shows a comparison of high front vowel distribution of BMP *i > [i]; BMP *ikan ‘fish’

> VKH, VAH and VKDWG [ikan]; BMP *iku□ 'tail' > VKH and VAH [ekoq] and VKDWG [□ko□]; BMP *kulit 'skin' > VKH and VAH [kulet] and VKDWG [kulit]; and BMP *kaki 'leg' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [kaki].

BMP has a low medial vowel *a which occurs at the word-initial, penultimate and final syllables. It is lowered directly to the DML at all word positions.

Table 3: Comparison of middle low vowel distribution of BMP *a> [a] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*a-	*-a-	*-a
VKH	[a-]	[-a-]	[-a]
VAH	[a-]	[-a-]	[-a]
VKDWG	[a-]	[-a-]	[-a]

Table 3 presents a comparison of the distribution of mid-low vowels BMP *a > [a]; BMP *aka□ 'root' > VKH, VAH, and VKDWG [aka□]; BMP *kanan 'right' > VKH, VAH, and VKDWG [kanan]; BMP *dahan 'branches' > VKH, VAH, and VKDWG [dahan]; and BMP *apa 'what' > VKH, VAH, and VKDWG [apa].

BMP has a medial vowel *□. At the word-initial position, BMP *□ is lowered directly to VKH and it regularly changes in VAH and VKDWG (BMP *□- > □-). BMP *-□- > [-a-] in the word-medial position and closed penultimate syllables (lowered directly to all DML variants).

Table 4: Comparison of middle vowel distribution of BMP *□ > [□] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*□-	*-□-	*-□
VKH	[□-]	[-□-]	*-□ >[-a]
VAH	*□- >□-	[-□-]	*-□ >[-a]
VKDWG	*□- >□-	[-□-]	*-□ >[-a]

Table 4 provides a comparison of the distribution of the medial vowels BMP *□ > [□]; BMP *□mpat 'four' > VKH [□mpat], VAH and VKDWG [pat]; BMP *b□sa□ 'big' > VKH and

VAH [b□sa□], VKDWG [b□sa□]; BMP *d□k□t 'near' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [d□kat]; and BMP * tad□□m 'sharp' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [tad□am].

BMP has a high back vowel *u. The vowel BMP *u is present in all word positions, and it is lowered directly to the DML. Based on the data, there is a sporadic change in VKH and VAH in the position of the penultimate syllable of a closed word when BMP *u- > [o-]. In addition, innovation regularly applies to word final positions when BMP *-u > [-aw] on all DML variants.

Table 5: Comparison of high back vowel spread of BMP *u> [u] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial/Penultimate**	**Word-final**
BMP	*u-	*-u-	*-u
VKH	[u-]	***-u- >[-o-]**	***-u >[-aw]**
VAH	[u-]	***-u- >[-o-]**	***-u >[-aw]**
VKDWG	[u-]	***-u- >[-u-]**	***-u >[-aw]**

Table 5 presents the comparison of the distribution of high vowels; BMP *u > [u]; BMP *ul□□ 'snake' > VKH and VAH [ula□]; VKDWG [ula□]; BMP *muntah 'puke' > VKH and VAH [muntah]; VKDWG [mutah]; BMP *duduk 'sit' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [dudu□]; BMP *habu 'ash' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [abu]; and BMP *bahu 'shoulder' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [baw].

4.2 Comparison of BMP Diphthong Phonemes with DML

Adelaar (1985) clarifies that there are only two BMP diphthongs, namely *aw, and *aj. Analysis on the Langkawi Malay dialect shows that BMP *aw and *aj are lowered directly to the DML.

Table 6: Comparison of BMP diphthong distribution *aw and *aj> [aw], [aj] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	Word-medial/Penultimate	Word-final
BMP	-	-	*aw and *aj
VKH	-	-	*-aw and *-aj >[-aw] and [-aj]
VAH	-	-	*-aw and *-aj >[-aw] and [-aj]
VKDWG	-	-	*-aw and *-aj >[-aw] and [-aj]

Table 6 displays a comparison of diphthong dispersion of BMP *-aw and *-aj > [-aw]; BMP *hid□aw 'green' > VKH [hid□aw]; VAH, VKDWG [id□aw]; BMP *k□□□baw 'buffalo' > VKH [k□□baw]; VAH [k□baw]; VKDWG [k□□□baw]; and BMP * su□aj 'river' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [su□aj].

4.3 Comparison of BMP Consonant Phonemes with DML

Adelaar (1985) indicates that the BMP has 19 consonants. See Table 7 below.

Table 7: BMP consonant inventory

Manner of Articulations		Place of Articulations				
		Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosives	Voiceless	*p	*t		*k	
	Voiced	*b	*d		*□	
Affricates	Voiceless			*t□		
	Voiced			*d□		
Fricatives	Voiceless		*s			*h
	Voiced				*□	
Nasal	Voiceless					
	Voiced	*m	*n	*□	*□	
Lateral	Voiceless					
	Voiced		*l			
Semivowels	Voiceless					
	Voiced	*w		*j		

Note: Adaptation from Adelaar (1985)

The plosive consonant BMP *p is lowered regularly at all word positions in the DML variants.

Table 8: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *p > [p] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*p-	*-p-	*-p
VKH	[p-]	[-p-]	[-p]
VAH	[p-]	[-p-]	[-p]
VKDWG	[p-]	[-p-]	[-p]

Table 8 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *p > [p]; BMP *p□□ut 'stomach' > VKH and VAH [p□□ut]; VKDWG [p□□ot]; BMP *□mpat 'four' > VKH [□mpat]; VAH and VKDWG [pat]; BMP *asep 'smoke' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [asap].

The DML variants retains the plosive consonant BMP *t at all word positions in order. However, there is a sporadic change in the final syllable of the BMP *-t > [-t], [-□] or -□ in the DML.

Table 9: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *t > [t] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*t-	*-t-	*-t
VKH	[t-]	[-t-]	*-t >[-t] or [-□] -□
VAH	[t-]	[-t-]	*-t >[-t] or [-□] -□
VKDWG	[t-]	[-t-]	*-t >[-t] or [-□] -□

Table 9 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *t > [t] > [t]; BMP *tula□ 'bone' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [tula□]; BMP *kilat 'lightning' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [kilat]; BMP *kabut 'fog' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [kabu□]; and BMP * *□a□ut 'scratching' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [□a□u].

All DML variants maintain the plosive consonant BMP *k at the initial and medial positions in an orderly manner. Analysis of the data also shows that innovation occurs regularly at the final position of words in all variants if BMP *-k> [-□].

Table 10: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *k > [k] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*k-	*-k-	*-k
VKH	[k-]	[-k-]	*-k >[-□]
VAH	[k-]	[-k-]	*-k >[-□]
VKDWG	[k-]	[-k-]	*-k >[-□]

Table 10 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *k > [k]; BMP *kiba 'left' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [ki□i]; BMP *tik□m 'stab' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [tikam]; BMP *pindik 'short' > VKH and VAH [pend□□]; VKDWG [panda□]; and BMP *masak 'cook' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [masa□].

The DML variants show a direct derivative of the plosive consonant BMP *b at the initial position of the word in all DML variants. In the medial position of the word, certain words of BMP *b experiences sporadic innovation in all variants of DML to be [w].

Table 11: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *b > [b] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*b-	*-b-	-
VKH	[b-]	*-b- >[-b-] or [-w-]	-
VAH	[b-]	*-b- >[-b-] or [-w-]	-
VKDWG	[b-]	*-b- >[-b-] or [-w-]	-

Table 11 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *b > [b]; BMP *bulu□ 'feather' > VKH, VAH, VKDWG [bulu]; BMP *babah 'under' > VKH, VKDWG and VAH [bawah]; BMP *timba□ 'shooting' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [temba□]; and BMP *d□bu 'dust' > VKH and VAH d□bu; VKDWG [abu□].

BMP *d is lowered directly in all DML variants at the initial and medial positions of the word.

Table 12: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *d > [d] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*d-	*-d-	-
VKH	*d- >[d-] or [l-]	[-d-]	-
VAH	*d- >[d-] or [l-]	[-d-]	-
VKDWG	*d- >[d-] or [l-]	[-d-]	-

Table 12 displays a comparison of the distribution of the BMP consonants *d > [d] in the DML variants. Phonological innovation of BMP *dilah 'tongue' > [lidah] in VKH, VAH and VKDWG indicates that DML is undergoing a process of metathesis. For example, BMP *de□ej 'listen' > VKH and VAH [d□□aq], VKDWG [d□□a□]; BMP *dilah 'tongue' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [lidah]; BMP *hidup 'alive' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [hidup]; and BMP *duduk 'sit' > VKH, VAH, VKDWG [dudu□].

BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial and medial positions of the word.

Table 13: Comparison of BMP plosive consonant distribution *□ > [□] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*□-	*-□-	-
VKH	[□-]	[-□-]	-
VAH	[□-]	[-□-]	-
VKDWG	[□-]	[-□-]	-

Table 13 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *□ > [□]; BMP *□a□ut 'scratching' > VKH, VAH, VKDWG [□a□u]; BMP *□i□i 'teeth' > VKH, VAH, VKDWG [*□i□i]; and BMP *□i□it 'bite' > VKH and VAH [*□i□it]; VKDWG [toko□].

BMP *t□ is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial and medial positions of the word.

Table 14: Comparison of BMP affricate consonant distribution *t□ > [t□] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*t□-	*-t□-	-
VKH	[t□-]	[-t□-]	-
VAH	[t□-]	[-t□-]	-
VKDWG	[t□-]	[-t□-]	-

Table 14 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *t□ > [t□]; BMP *hul□t t□at□i□ 'ground worm' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [t□at□in tanah]; BMP *t□uji 'steal' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [t□u□i]; and BMP *k□t□il 'small' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [k□t□i□].

BMP *d□ is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial and medial positions of the word.

Table 15: Comparison of BMP affricate consonant distribution *d > [d] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*d□-	*-d□-	-
VKH	[d□-]	[-d□-]	-
VAH	[d□-]	[-d□-]	-
VKDWG	[d□-]	[-d□-]	-

Table 15 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *d□ > [d□]; BMP *d□ahit 'sewing' > VKH and VAH [d□ai□]; VKDWG [d□ait]; BMP *tad□□m 'sharp' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [tad□am]; and BMP *hid□aw 'green' > VKH [hid□aw]; VKDWG and VAH [id□aw].

BMP *s is lowered regularly in all variants at all word positions. However, regular innovations have taken place in the VKDWG at the final position of the BMP *-s> [-□] in all DML variants.

Table 16: Comparison of BMP fricative consonant distribution *s > [s] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*s-	*-s-	*-s
VKH	[s-]	[-s-]	[-□]
VAH	[s-]	[-s-]	[-□]
VKDWG	[s-]	[-s-]	[-□]

Table 16 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *s > [s]; BMP *sajap 'wings' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [sajap]; BMP *sakit 'pain' > VKH and VAH [saket]; VKDWG [sakit]; BMP *b□sa□ 'big' > VKH and VAH b□sa□; VKDWG [b□sa□]; and BMP *atas 'top' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [ata□].

BMP *h is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial, medial and final positions of the word.

Table 17: Comparison of BMP fricative consonant distribution *h > [h] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*h-	*-h-	*-h
VKH	[h-]	[-h-]	[-h]
VAH	[h-]	[-h-]	[-h]
VKDWG	[h-]	[-h-]	[-h]

Table 17 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *h > [h]; BMP *hati 'lever' > VKH, VKDWG and VAH hati; BMP *dahan 'branches' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG dahan; BMP *dilah 'tongue' > VKH, VKDWG and VAH lidah; and BMP *muntah 'puke' > VKH, VKDWG and VAH muntah.

The BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial and medial position of the word but undergoes regular innovation to [-□] in VKH and VAH and [-□] in VKDWG at the final position of the word.

Table 18: Comparison of BMP fricative consonant distribution *□ > [□] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*□-	*-□-	*-□
VKH	[□-]	[-□-]	[-□]
VAH	[□-]	[-□-]	[-□]
VKDWG	[□-]	[-□-]	[-□]

Table 18 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *□ > [□]; BMP *□ambut 'hair' > VKH and VAH □ambot; VKDWG [□ambut]; BMP *p□□ut 'stomach' > VKH and VAH [p□□ut]; VKDWG [p□□ot]; and BMP *tidu□ 'sleep' > VKH and VAH [tido]; VKDWG [tido□].

BMP *m is lowered regularly in all DML variants at all word positions.

Table 19: Comparison of the nasal consonant distribution of BMP *m > [m] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*m-	*-m-	*-m
VKH	[m-]	[-m-]	[-m]
VAH	[m-]	[-m-]	[-m]
VKDWG	[m-]	[-m-]	[-m]

Table 19 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *m > [m]; BMP *makan 'eat' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [makan]; BMP *□ambut 'hair' > VKH and VAH [□ambot]; and VKDWG [□ambut]; BMP *d□a□um 'needle' > VKH and VAH, VKDWG [d□a□om].

BMP *n is lowered regularly in all variants at all word positions. However, in the medial position the word innovation sporadically becomes -□- in VKDWG.

Table 20: Comparison of BMP nasal consonant distribution *n> [n] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*n-	*-n-	*-n
VKH	[n-]	[-n-]	[-n]
VAH	[n-]	[-n-]	[-n]
VKDWG	[n-]	-□-	[-n]

Table 20 displays a comparison of the consonant distribution of BMP *n > [n]; BMP *naik ‘rise’ > VKH and VAH [nai□]; VKDWG [□a□aih]; BMP *kanan ‘right’ > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [kanan]; and BMP *muntah ‘puke’ > VKH and VAH [muntah]; VKDWG [mutah]; BMP *makan ‘eat’ > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [makan]; and BMP *d□alan ‘walk’ > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [d□alan].

BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the initial position of the word. However, this consonant does not occur in the word-medial in VAH and VKDWG.

Table 21: Comparison of BMP nasal consonant distribution *□ > [□] with DML

BMP/DML	**Position**		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*□-	*-□-	-
VKH	[□-]	[-□-]	-
VAH	[□-]	-	-
VKDWG	[□-]	-	-

Table 21 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *□ > [□]; BMP *□amuk ‘mosquito’ > VKH and VAH [□amo□]; VKDWG [□amu□]; BMP *□awa ‘breathe’ > VKH [□awa]; VAH and VKDWG [napa□]; and BMP *ku□ah ‘chew’ > VKH [ku□ah]; VAH and VKDWG [p□pa□].

BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the medial and final positions of words. However, there are sporadically innovation in all variants to be [-n] at the final position of the word.

Table 22: Comparison of BMP nasal consonant distribution * > [] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	-	*-□-	*-□
VKH	-	[-□-]	[-n]
VAH	-	[-□-]	[-n]
VKDWG	-	[-□-]	[-n]

Table 22 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *□ > [□]; BMP *b□□kak 'swelling' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [b□□ka□]; BMP *su□aj 'river' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [su□aj]; and BMP *k□□i□ 'dry' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [k□□in].

BMP *l is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the initial and medial position of the word. Whereas, in the final position the word innovation regularly becomes [-oj] in all variants.

Table 23: Comparison of the lateral consonant distribution of BMP *l > [l] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	*l-	*-l-	*-l
VKH	[l-]	[-l-]	[-oj]
VAH	[l-]	[-l-]	[-oj]
VKDWG	[l-]	[-l-]	[-oj]

Table 23 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *l > [l]; BMP *laki 'husband' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [laki]; BMP *lihe□ 'neck' > VKH and VAH leheq; VAH [lehia□]; BMP *d□alan 'walk' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [d□alan]; and BMP *tumpul 'blunt' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [tumpoj].

BMP *w is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the medial and final positions of the word.

Table 24: Comparison of the distribution of the semi-vowel consonants of BMP *w > [w] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	-	*-w-	*-w
VKH	-	[-w-]	[-w]
VAH	-	[-w-]	[-w]
VKDWG	-	[-w-]	[-w]

Table 24 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *□awa > [w]; BMP *□awa 'breathe' > VKH [□awa]; VAH and VKDWG [napa□]; BMP *awan 'cloud' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [awan]; and BMP *hid□aw 'green' > VKH hid□aw; VAH and VKDWG [id□aw].

BMP *j is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the medial and final positions of the word.

Table 25: Comparison of the distribution of the semi-vowel consonants of BMP *j > [j] with DML

BMP/DML	Position		
	Word-Initial	**Word-medial**	**Word-final**
BMP	-	*-j-	*-j
VKH	-	[-j-]	[-j]
VAH	-	[-j-]	[-j]
VKDWG	-	[-j-]	[-j]

Table 25 displays a comparison of consonant distribution of BMP *kaju□ > [j]; BMP *kaju□ 'wood' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [kaju]; BMP *sajap 'wings' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [sajap]; and BMP * su□aj 'river' > VKH, VAH and VKDWG [su□aj].

4.4 Phonological Innovation Analysis or BMP Phonetic Discrepancies with DML

Comparative linguists such as Collins (1981, 1986, 1989), Aman (2008), and Ringe and Eska (2013) assert that the element of innovation is an important element in describing the development and change of a language or dialect. The retention factor describes the stature of a language or dialect. Thus, when there is innovation in a language or dialect, this indicates

that there is a development in the society that speaks the language or dialect.

In this section, a description of phonological innovations or phonetic discrepancies that occur in all DMLs is performed. Table 26 below describes 18 features of phonological innovations or phonetic discrepancies that can be detected through the analysis of the findings comparing BMP with DML previously.

Table 26: Phonological innovation or phonetic conflict of BMP with DML

No	BMP	Position	Phonological innovation or phonetic conflict of BMP with DML	Types of Innovation
1	*i-	Word-Initial	BMP *i- > [e-] in VKH and VAH; [□-] in VKDWG.	Sporadic
2.	*-i-	Word-medial	BMP *-i- > [-e-] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
3.	*-□-	Word-Initial	BMP *□- > □- in variants of VAH and VKDWG; VKH remain as [□-].	Sporadic
4.	*-□	Word-Final	BMP *□ - > [-a] in all DML.	Systematic
5.	*-u-	Penultimate Closed Syllable	BMP *-u- > [-o-] in VKH and VAH; data VKDWG remain as [-u-].	Sporadic
6.	*-u	Word-Final	BMP *-u > [aw-] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
7.	*-t	Word-Final	BMP*-t and -□ in variants of VKH and VAH and > [-□] in VKDWG.	Sporadic
8.	*-k	Word-Final	BMP*-k > [-□] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
9.	*-s	Awal and Word-medial	BMP *-s> [s-] and [-s-] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
10.	*-s	Word-Final	BMP *-s> [-□] in DML	Systematic
11.	*-□	Word-Final	BMP *-□ > [-□] in VKH and VAH; [-□] in VKDWG.	Sporadic
12.	*-n-	Word-medial	BMP *-n- > -□- in VKDWG; other data remain as [-n-] in VKH and VAH.	Sporadic
13.	*-n	Word-Final	BMP *-n > [-n] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
14.	*-□	Word-Final	BMP *-□ > [-n] in all variants of DML.	Systematic
15.	*-l	Word-Final	BMP *-l > [-oj] in all variants of DML.	Systematic

Based on Table 26 data item numbers 1 and 2, the vowel phoneme BMP *i that is present at the initial position of the word and the penultimate syllable of the word, is descended directly in all DML at all these positions. Nevertheless, a few changes have taken place and are difficult

to explain in some DMLs particularly on the data on the initial position of the word and the penultimate word. At this position, some data show that innovation has sporadically occurred in some DML data when BMP *i> [e] in VKH and VAH and becomes [□] in VKDWG. Similarly, in the penultimate position of the word, several data show that innovation has sporadically occurred in some DML data when BMP *i > [e] in all DML variants.

Data item numbers 3 and 4 i.e. the BMP vowel *□ are present at the initial position of the word and are revealed directly in VKH, but it changes regularly to □- in VAH and VKDWG (BMP *□- > □-). In the final position of the word, BMP *-- > [-a-] is lowered directly in all DMLs.

Data item numbers 5 and 6 in Table 26 show that the BMP *u vowel is present at the penultimate closed syllable and final syllable positions and is lowered directly in all DML variants at all these positions. These compared data show that sporadic changes have occurred in VKH and VAH at the position of the penultimate syllable of the closed word when BMP *u- > [-o-], while VKDWG remains as [-u-]. Accordingly, regular innovation also occurs at the final position of the word when the BMP *-u> [-aw] is all DML variants.

DML preserves the plosive consonant BMP *t at all positions in order. However, some of the data found in Table 26 (data item number 7) show that sporadic changes have occurred in all variants on the final syllable when the BMP *-t > [-t], [-□] or -□ in DML. Item number 8 shows that at the final position of the word BMP *k it is found that innovation occurs regularly in all variants when BMP *-k > [-□].

Data item number 9 shows that there is a regular occurrence of innovation involving the position of BMP *s at the initial and medial of the word, in all DML variants. Similarly, at the final position of the word (data item number 10) orderly innovation occurs when BMP *-s exists as [-□] in all DML variants. Meanwhile, BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all variants at the initial and medial word positions but innovated sporadically to [-□] in VKH and VAH and [-□] in VKDWG at the final word position as found in data item 11.

Table 26 shows the data on items numbers 12 and 13, BMP *n is lowered in order in all variants at all word positions. In the medial position of the word there is a sporadic innovation that is -□- in VKDWG. Furthermore, data 14 shows that BMP *□ is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the medial and final position of the word. But at the final position of the word in certain data it innovates regularly in all variants to be [-n]. Data item number 15 shows that BMP *l is lowered regularly in all DML variants at the initial and medial position. Whereas, at the final position of the word present innovation regularly becomes [-oj] in all DML variants.

This study showed that VKDWG experienced a relatively distant separation from the

VKH and VAH variants. This separation can also be attributed to the environmental factors of this variants which is heavily visited by foreign tourists. The assimilation of the VKDWG speaker variants that are constantly visited by these tourists has indirectly caused the authenticity of these variants from their ancient form to be far apart. This shared innovation shows that all three variants are of the same branch of the Langkawi Malay dialect.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Reconstruction and classification analysis of DML variants yielded a finding that the legendary island exhibits at least three major variants, namely VKH, VAH and VKDWG. Among these three DML variants, the VKDWG variant is much more different from the VKH and VAH variants and it appears that the VKDWG variant was earlier separated from the Langkawi parent dialect. There are five features of innovation that separate between VKH and VAH in one group from another group namely VKDWG. The five characteristics of such separator innovation are, i) BMP *i- > [e-] in VKH and VAH; [□-] in VKDWG, ii) BMP *-u- > [-o-] in VKH and VAH; VKDWG data maintained [-u-], iii) BMP*-t and -□ in VKH and VAH variants, and > [-□] in VKDWG, iv) BMP *-□ > [-□] in VKH and VAH; [-□] in VKDWG, and v) BMP *-n- > -□- in VKDWG; other data maintains the [-n-] in VKH and VAH.

In addition, there are nine innovations that separate DML from BMP, that is i) BMP *-i- > [-e-] in all DML variants, ii) BMP *-□ > [-a] in all DML variants, iii) BMP *-u > [aw-] in all variants of DML, iv) BMP*-k > [-□] in all variants of DML, v) BMP *-s> [s-] and [-s-] in all DML variants, vi) BMP *-s > [-□] in DML, vii) BMP *-n > [-n] in all DML variants, viii) BMP *-□ > [-n] in all DML variants, and ix) BMP *-l > [-oj] in all DML variants.

The findings presented through this paper prove to be a valuable contribution to enrich and further expand studies in dialectology, especially in comparative linguistics. The study of DML is important because it can be used as a basis in discussing the knowledge of phonology applied in this comparative knowledge, especially at the tertiary level. The application of phonological knowledge in this study can thoroughly identify the sound features present in each word between areas. In addition, this study is significant in terms of observing at features that are shared or differ between regions either from phonetic or phonological aspects.

Accordingly, when a comparison of BMP with this DML is produced, it automatically allows us to know the features of innovation and retention that exist in this DML. Generally, each variant found in the Langkawi dialect is assumed to be descended from an ancient language. Comparing each current variant with its ancient form will ultimately result in an evolution of this DML from its historical perspective. This intended change is in terms of

retention and innovation characteristics inherent in the BMP and its variants. The results will provide an initial overview of the DML position in the lineage and genealogy of ancient languages and eventually be able to develop the theory of 'The Malay of Sundaland' which sees the Malay world as the realm of land-Malay community.

The changes that took place in the DML as a result of the comparison with the BMP displayed through this retention and innovation feature turned out to produce a new finding in this treasure trove of comparative knowledge. Vocabulary collected in this field is not only to create a description and analysis of the DML, but can be used by all parties in particular can make a significant contribution in terms of creation of the BM as vocabulary DML is classified in the Malay dialect. This study is also important because it can enrich the literature on various dialects in Malaysia in general, and in the state of Kedah in particular. Although the study of this language is to prove the existence of the remnants of various dialect treasures, this study can further expand the knowledge of the society about the linguistic aspects that exist in this language.

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