

CultureTalk Malaysia Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
From Primary to Secondary School

Malay Transcript:

Chan: Tujuan pelajar ini dimasukkan kelas peralihan¹ adalah untuk memberi peluang kepada pelajar ini yang lemah dalam bahasa Melayu untuk menguasai bahasa ini, sebab dalam satu tahun di kelas peralihan ini, murid-murid hanya didedahkan dalam bahasa Melayu.

Selain bahasa Melayu, dia² juga ada diberi dua masa³ untuk bahasa Inggeris dan bahasa ibunda, tapi sebahagian besar adalah bahasa Melayu.

Dengan sistem ini, sistem pendidikan di Malaysia harap murid-murid ini berjaya menguasai bahasa Melayu, supaya bila mereka masuk tingkatan satu mereka dapat mengikuti pendidikan yang seterusnya. Itulah⁴ adalah sistem sekolah rendah.

Di sekolah menengah pula, seorang murid akan belajar dari tingkatan satu hingga tingkatan lima. Di sistem sekolah menengah ini, seorang murid perlu mengambil dua peperiksaan awam atau peperiksaan kerajaan: satu semasa di tingkatan tiga dan satu lagi di tingkatan lima.

Di tingkatan tiga seorang murid yang sudah berusia lima belas tahun, dia perlu menduduki peperiksaan PMR⁵, Penilaian Menengah Rendah. Murid ini, dia akan ambil⁶ mata pelajaran bahasa Melayu, bahasa Inggeris, matematik, sains, geografi, sejarah dan kemahiran hidup⁷. Sekali lagi, pelajar yang berasal dari latar belakang Cina atau India, dia boleh ambil mata pelajaran bahasa ibunda⁸, iaitu bahasa Cina⁹ atau bahasa India¹⁰.

Kelulusan dalam peperiksaan PMR ini tidak wajib untuk membantu seorang murid terus belajar di tingkatan empat, tapi¹¹ sistem peperiksaan ini adalah satu cara di mana sistem

¹ *Peralihan* literally means 'transition,' but in this context, the English translation is 'remedial class'

² The speaker uses the word *dia*, a third-person pronoun that is gender-neutral. Here, 'he' is used just for translation purposes and refers to the pupil or student

³ *Masa* means 'time' or 'time period' but here refers to class periods

⁴ *-lah – -lah* is a Malaysian suffix tacked on to the end of a word for verbal emphasis, but it doesn't actually mean anything

⁵ PMR: the acronym for *Penilaian Menengah Rendah*, translates to 'Lower Secondary Assessment'

⁶ *Ambil* literally translates to 'take,' but in this context it means to take (a language), to study or to learn

⁷ *Kemahiran Hidup* literally translates to 'living skills,' but it is basically a home economics class

⁸ *Bahasa ibunda* means 'mother tongue,' or 'native language'

⁹ *Bahasa Cina* refers to Mandarin, but it literally translates as 'the Chinese language'

¹⁰ Various Indian dialects are offered as languages of study at schools; there is no standard 'Indian language,' but the speaker uses the words *bahasa India* (literally translates as 'the Indian language') as a general term; the word dialect is used in the English translation for specificity

¹¹ *tapi* – abbreviation for the word *tetapi*; Malay abbreviations are commonly used in everyday or informal speech, and also in text messages or online chats, but are considered incorrect or improper when used in official contexts, such as newspaper articles, when making public speeches or at school

pendidikan menentukan aliran¹² mana yang pelajar ini akan menandakan, kerana selepas tingkatan tiga, bila seorang murid masuk tingkatan empat, dia mesti pilih aliran pelajarannya.

English Translation:

Chan: The reason why a student is placed in remedial class is to give the student who is weak in Malay a chance to master the language, because during this one year of remedial class, pupils are only exposed [to learning things] in the Malay language.

Besides [learning] Malay, he¹³ is also given two class periods for English and [for studying his] mother tongue, but a large portion [of class time] is [devoted to studying] the Malay language.

With this system, the education system in Malaysia hopes for pupils to successfully master the Malay language, so that when they begin form one they can move on to the next level of education. That is the primary school system.

In secondary school, a pupil will study from form one to form five. In the secondary school system, a pupil needs to take two public examinations or government examinations, one during form three and the other in form five.

In form three a pupil is already 15 years of age, [and] he has to sit for the PMR¹⁴ examination, Penilaian Menengah Rendah. This pupil, he will take [exams in] subjects [such as] Malay, English, mathematics, science, geography, history and home economics. Once again, a student who is from a Chinese or Indian background can learn his mother tongue, which is Mandarin¹⁵ or [his respective] Indian dialect¹⁶.

Passing this PMR examination is not compulsory in order for a student to move on and study in form four, but this examination system is a way for the education system to determine which [elective] stream¹⁷ the student will go into, because after form three, when a student enters form four, he has to choose his [elective] streams.

¹² Secondary school students in Malaysia choose to study in either the Arts stream or Science stream upon entering form four; PMR test scores determine which stream students are eligible to study in, with the Science stream typically requiring higher scores. Areas of study in the science stream include physics, chemistry and biology, whereas economics and accounting are studied in the arts stream

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About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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