

# Points of the Compass in Brunei Malay.

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Some seven years ago I made a note of the Malay words used for the points of the compass by Brunei Malays. In Sarawak the ordinary dictionary words are used, but in Brunei they have a slightly different system. A curious feature of it is that in nearly every instance the points of the compass are moved round one place, either "upwards" or "downwards:" thus *utara*, "North" in ordinary Malay, is "North East" in Brunei Malay, while *selatan*, "South," becomes "South East" in Brunei Malay. The following table shows the two systems:—

<i>Dictionary and Sarawak Malay</i>				<i>Brunei Malay</i>
North	Utara	..	..	.. Iraga
North East	Timor laut	..	..	.. Utara
East	Timor	..	..	.. Timor
South East	Tenggara	..	..	.. Selatan
South	Selatan	..	..	.. Barat daya
South West	Barat daya	..	..	.. Barat tapat
West	Barat	..	..	.. Barat laut
North West	Barat laut	..	..	.. Angin laut

It will be seen that the two systems agree on one word only, viz. *timor* for "East." The four words for South, South West, West and North West are all moved round one place in one direction, while *utara* for North is moved one place in the opposite direction. I can offer no suggestion as to the reason for this rather curious difference in the two systems, and I only call attention to it in the hope that someone else may be able to throw some light on it.

For "North" the Bruneis introduce a new word *Iraga* (sometimes *Uraga*), for which I have been unable to find any parallel or possible derivation in other Malayan dialects.

The Brunei use of *barat tapat* for South-West is interesting in view of the fact that *tapat* means literally "due," "exact;" thus *barat* is "West," and *barat tapat* "due West" in ordinary Malay.

On the coast of Northern Sarawak both systems are known. In that part of Borneo there must be many instances of Sarawak and Brunei Malays working together in the same ships and one would imagine that some confusion must arise over the similarity of the two systems, which however differ from one another in such important details.

Messrs. C. D. Adams and F. H. Kortright, of the Sarawak Civil Service have been kind enough to verify the accuracy of my notes from Brunei Malays in their districts (Baram and Miri). I have also received independent confirmation from Mr. W. H. Lee-Warner who made a note of the Brunei system when he was Assistant Resident in that District.