

## Language

Given the many different languages in the *mélanges* that constitutes the Eurasian heritage, how do Eurasians decide which language to use?

Eurasians are a blend of two or more races. Hence, where there is a stable community of Eurasians, they will develop their own language using the grammar and vocabulary drawn from the various languages that they come into frequent contact with. These ‘mixed’ languages are known as ‘creoles’.

One common creole is the Kristang language, which is a mixture of Portuguese and the local dialect in Malacca. Kristang originated in 1511 when the Portuguese traders who arrived in Malacca needed to find a common language to immerse in the culture and facilitate trade. Eurasians who trace their roots back to Malacca are familiar with the Kristang language, which evolved from the Portuguese language in the Malay Peninsula. In recent times, only the older generations are able to speak Kristang. English has become the universal language for majority of Eurasians.

Here are some words and phrases to learn to help keep alive our unique Kristang language.

	<b>Kristang</b>	<b>English Pronouncement</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1	Na kaza	Na ka-zer	At home
2	Filu	Fee-lu	Son
3	Fila	Fee-ler	Daughter
4	Kifoi ta churah	Key-foi ter chu-rah	Why are you crying?
5	Pai	Pie	Father
6	Mai	My	Mother

7	Nos tudu	Nose to-do	Everyone of us
8	Akeli nungka retu	Ah-kay-lee nung-ker ray-to	That is not right
9	Nang ribeh	Na-ng rye-ber	Don't get angry
10	Bai na drentu	By ner drain-to	Go in
11	Netu	Nay-to	Grandson
12	Neta	Ne-ter	Granddaughter

With thanks to Valerie Scully and Catherine Zuzarte, authors of the *Eurasian Heritage Dictionary*. Copies of the dictionary are available at the EA, price \$28.00.