
A STUDY OF PENANG PERANAKAN HOKKIEN

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Abstract

This paper attempts to classify the loan words in Penang Peranakan Hokkien, a creole variety of Hokkien, according to classifications as objects and formal grammatical categories. The study is based on a word list of about 400 Malay words taken from a Penang Peranakan family and commonly found in this variety. The paper concludes with some observations of current trends in Penang Peranakan Hokkien.

Introduction

The main objective of this paper is to classify Malay words used in a creole variety of Hokkien spoken mainly in the northern states of peninsular Malaysia, namely Penang, Kedah and northern Perak. This variety of creolised Chinese dialect of Hokkien is generally referred to as the Penang Peranakan

Hokkien(henceforth PPH). This paper attempts to classify the loan words found in PPH according to classifications as objects and formal grammatical categories. The study is based on a word list of about 400 Malay words commonly found in PPH. The list is by no means exhaustive, however, this corpus which exceeds 400 word is sufficient to provide an insight into the function of borrowed Malay word in PPH. The data used in this study was collected in a Penang Peranakan family through observation and interviews with the elderly members of the Peranakan community. The main consultants are the family members of Mr Lim, who to the best our knowledge, are Peranakan Hokkien speakers of four generations. These speakers are English educated, one having worked with a commercial firm for the major part of his life. The grandfather of Mr Lim was a librarian with the Penang Library. The other consultants are aunts of Mr Lim who were educated at the Penang Convent School.

This initial word list was compared with William Gwee's *Mas Sepuluh* list of Straits Settlement born or Baba Malay words. The list of borrowed Baba Malay word was then compared with their Hokkien equivalents in Chiang Ker Chiu's *English-Hokkien Dictionary*; this is to ensure that there are Hokkien equivalents which the Penang Peranakan Hokkien do not know and thus do not use. The list was then given a check by Mr Lee Liang Hye, a Singaporean Baba of mixed Penang Peranakan Hokkien heritage to ensure its accuracy. Mr Lee himself was once the President of the Singapore Peranakan Association. The authors of this article are grateful for Mr Lee's invaluable assistance.

A word regarding the spelling convention used in the word list is in order. Whilst it may seem that the spelling is haphazard, we would like to make the following notes. The spelling convention prior to the Romanised Malay Spelling Reform of 1972 by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia was chosen. This is because the spelling of Baba Malay is essentially phonetic in nature, and the idiosyncratic features of spoken Baba Malay are often reflected in the spelling. The spelling reform does away with the phonetic spelling. However, this is not to claim that Standard Malay is spoken as it is spelt. The controversy over the so-called *sebutan baku* or standard Malay pronunciation, being a phonemic pronunciation, was introduced in the 1990s further complicates the issue. However, one thing is clear. The spelling of Baba Malay is unconventional, e.g. the high vowels /i,u/ in final closed syllables are lowered to [e, o] respectively; /puluh/> [puloh], but /berus/ remains as [berus] and not *[beros], /kahwin/>[kawen], but /betis/> [betis] and not *[betes]. An internal consistency within the pronology of Baba Malay is being maintained, and to the best of our knowledge, we have fulfilled that condition.

The data has been transcribed using the spelling prior to the reformed Malay spelling of 1972 mentioned earlier as we believe it can best represent and reflect the pronunciation of the Malay words used by the PPH

community. This divergence from standard Malay is essentially due to the fact that the Malay elements described in this paper crept into PPH before the independence of Malaya. Furthermore, some of the Malay words found in PPH have a phonological realisation which are idiosyncratic to the north-west Malay dialect or even in some cases, distorted until they hardly resemble the Malay original. Hence, it is impossible for standardised the Malay spelling to be used in this paper as it would not capture the distinctly PPH realisation of the borrowed Malay words as used in the present day. As observed by Chia (1994) Malay words are spelt differently from Baba Malay words. However, in this paper a fair amount of, but not all, borrowed Malay words have been distorted by the Penang Peranakan, hence, the spelling used in the appendix is both a mix of standard and non-standard spelling.

The grammatical categories that will be discussed in this paper include some of the seven parts of speech. The discussion of the grammatical categories of Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, Prepositions and Interjection will be used as these categories are reflected in descending order of frequency in the grammatical functions of the borrowed Malay words in PPH.

An Overview of PPH

PPH is to all means and purpose, a Chinese dialect. This dialect in question contains numerous Malay lexical items and its syntax is underlyingly Hokkien. For the purpose of this paper, we will use a brief description of PPH as offered by Khoo (1996:112): the Baba Hokkien in Penang is closer to the Tang Min variety (a type of Min dialect) of Southeastern China than to the type of Hokkien spoken by the *sinkhek* (recently arrived immigrants), who used the standard Amoy variety (of Hokkien), PPH is even less closely related to Standard Amoy because of the Malay words it has assimilated. It is different from other variations of Hokkien spoken on the mainland of China or in Malacca and Singapore. The Malay words assimilated in PPH take the form of embedding in the various linguistic units (viz, morphemes, words, phrases and clauses). Evidence of the assimilation of Malay in all the above linguistic units is copious. e.g., the prolific use of the Malay particles *lah* and *pun*. Assimilation at the level of morphemes is, however, less evident but nevertheless present, typically in the prolific use of *nya* in PPH which in contracted form of, and semantically similar to, the original Malay term *hanya*, meaning 'only'

Historical Background

A short introduction to the origins of the community in Penang is helpful. The genesis of the Peranakan community in Penang can be traced back to the

establishment of Penang as a British colony in 1786. In the early years after it was made a British outpost, trade flourished and there was much commercial activity and regional trade with the North Malayan states of Kedah, Perak, Medan, Deli, Renong and Phuket.

Penang, as a focal point of commerce in this part of the Malay Archipelago in the past few centuries, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, attracted an influx of Chinese businessmen to the colony, particularly from Southern Thailand and Northern Sumatra. The Peranakan Chinese in Penang are descendants of Chinese males marrying or cohabiting with Malays or Siamese or Burmese women in Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore (Khoo 1998:6). It must be stressed that the Chinese Peranakan of Penang still have extensive familial ties with both Southern Thailand and Northern Sumatra.

PPH is spoken to a greater or lesser degree by many of Penang's Hokkien community but the prevalence of Malay lexicalised items in PPH is found among older members of the erstwhile Straits Chinese community. Typically, this group of speakers is above the age of 50 and many are English-educated. Although their speech is liberally peppered with lexical items of Malay origin, this does not predispose them to understanding standard Malay, that is, *Bahasa Melayu*, which has gained currency among the younger generation. In fact, many PPH speakers above the age of 50 have never had formal instruction in Malay; they are hence, unable to understand formal Malay although bazaar Malay is easily understood by all. Most of the respondents in this study were initially unaware that they have been using words of Malay origin in their everyday use of PPH.

Geographical Distribution

The state of Penang includes Penang island, which is off the northern coast of peninsular Malaysia, and the region of Seberang Prai on the peninsular mainland. Penang was founded by Francis Light in 1786. In Penang, Peranakan Hokkien has been first and foremost the mother tongue of the Hokkien Babas and Nyonyas for the past two centuries and this position is now shared by English as the present Peranakan families tend to speak both Peranakan Hokkien and English at home. Peranakan Hokkien originated in Penang, but wherever the Babas and Nyonyas of Penang migrated, they brought their Peranakan Hokkien with them. Penang Baba families who migrated to mainland Malaysia, for example to Taiping, and settled there are known to speak Peranakan Hokkien still. No dialectal mapping has ever been done on PPH or for the matter, on Penang Hokkien. Penang Peranakan families who married into Singapore Peranakan families and migrated to Singapore brought with them the Baba Hokkien they were used to speaking, and as a result the bilingual Baba Malay/

Baba Hokkien- speaking Baba or Nyonya emerged. The Peranakan Chinese can be identified through numerous facts of their culture which set them apart from other dialect speaking ethnic Chinese in Penang. The Peranakan Chinese would use PPH rather than Hokkien per se. Their cuisine has also been adapted to include ingredients that are indigenous to the Archipelago. Most text on the Peranakan Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore have discussed the issue of the different terms (i.e. Peranakan Babas, Straits born Chinese) used by both academics and the layman to describe the Peranakan. There has, however, been a consensus that the term Peranakan refers to the widest collection of acculturated Chinese in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. The term Peranakan would have occupied one end of the linear continuum based on the degree of acculturation as proposed by P'ng Poh Seng (1969) for a definition of the different terms used to describe this ethnic group. In fact, the term Peranakan, which means born of the soil, is now defunct as there is now no more mass migration of the Chinese to insular South East Asia. Hence, most if not all, of the ethnic Chinese nationals in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia were born in their respective territories. The former construct of using the term Peranakan to identify the more acculturated brethren of the newly arrived immigrant, i.e., the Sinkheks is now no longer valid.

This still leaves the question of the remaining three terms, Babas, Strait Chinese, and Strait born Chinese, loosely used to describe the Peranakan Chinese. Ho (1987) believes that P'ng's (1969) ordering of his definition in a linear continuum according to degree of acculturation, with Malay culture at the other (Ho 1987: 82) is arbitrary and destroys the complexities of current usage of the terms. Ho (1987) labours to prove that the terms Strait Chinese and Strait born Chinese have virtually no distinction in common usage and in fact, many regard the former to be a contraction of the latter.

This fluidity in the use of the terms amongst this community in question to describe themselves further adds to the fact that it might not perhaps be an easy task for one to give a watertight definition of the terms used to describe the Peranakans. As explained by Ho (1987), and we agree with this interpretation, it is common for a Peranakan Chinese to call himself a Strait Chinese when he speaks with his political hat on and as a Baba when he tries to differentiate himself from the Sinkhek. From observation it seems that the Peranakan will label himself a Peranakan when dealing with the Malays and hence claim some common ground which the Sinkhek cannot.

We will not attempt to unravel the exact definition of the different terms used to describe the Peranakans in this paper. We shall use the terms Peranakan or Baba interchangeably in this paper, and we shall not attempt to demarcate the different definitions that are available. As linguists, we are conscious that language and identity is not a fixed construct even for monolingual speakers. In the case of the Peranakans we are dealing with multilingual chameleons.

Discussions on the question of the use of the different terms described above can be found in P'ng (1969), Clammer (1980) and Ho (1987).

Malay words used as Nouns

There is a significant number of Malay words which function as nouns in PPH. These words are usually used to identify concrete objects such as the flora and fauna which are peculiar to life in the Malay world. Amongst the most well represented categories of words borrowed from Malay, besides those related to life in the Archipelago, are nouns related to the household such as those related to jewelry and housekeeping.

There is a large representation of Malay words that relate to jewelry worn by the Nyonyas. To a certain extent this is only to be expected as the Nyonyas were brought up in a more Malay manner than were the Babas. The Nyonyas wore Malay costume and spoke almost exclusively Malay and were expected to emulate their mothers who were of indigeneous stock. On the other hand, the Babas were exposed to a more cosmopolitan lifestyle whereby Chinese and English influences were adopted as the Babas had to deal with the community at large which included the Sinkheks and the British colonial authorities. Furthermore, the Babas were expected to emulate their fathers who were Chinamen. Hence, it is only to be expected that there is bound to be a proliferation of Malay words in areas of activity which were predominated by the womenfolk.

The following terms related to jewelry are found in PPH. These terms range from words used to describe individual items of jewelry like *anting* for earrings, *chincin* for ring and *gelang kaki* for anklets to certain types of precious stones and metals like *berlian* for diamond and *suasa* for low grade gold. Malay terms are also used to describe certain sections of jewelry such as *gigi* for holder of gems, or for teeth-like ornaments found in certain brooches and hairpins. Certain styles or setting of jewelry also use typically Malay terms such as *bintang* for a star brooch, and *kerabu* for a stud-like design on rings. In total, we found 17 Malay terms used to describe articles of jewelry or certain styles of personal ornaments. For a detailed list of Malay terms used in jewelry, please refer appendix to A.

Malay terms used to describe many type of fauna, were also found. The generic term *manatang* (Malay, *binatang*) is used for animals, while many other animals ranging from mammals to insects are referred to in Malay, such such as *mosang* for bobcat, *babi* for pigs. Amongst some of the common words used to describe the members of the insect kingdon include *belalang* for crickets, *chacing* for worm, *kutu* for lice, *pachat* for leech and *kongkiak* for large red ants peculiar to the tropics. Reptiles are represented by *buaya* for crocodile and *katak puru* for frogs. Birds on the other hand are

represented by two candidates: the generic term *burong* for birds and peculiarly, *burong kuku* for pigeons. Surprisingly, many types of fauna that have Malay terms in PPH also have Hokkien equivalents although the Hokkien terms are not used by the Peranakans. For example, the PPH term of *mosang* has the equivalent Hokkien term *hor lay* which the Babas and Nyonyas comprehend but do not use. This suggests that the Peranakans are not forced to use Malay terms, Hokkien terms although available and known, are not adopted. In total, 18 Malay words were found to be used in describing animals.

An analysis of the Peranakan household reveals it as a rich source of Malay in PPH. Many articles in the household or nouns related to household chores are referred to in Malay. The different objects in the living room of the house such as the furniture have Malay names such as *baleh* for bench and *bangku* for stool. The kitchen is another area where there is a proliferation of Malay terms. Bottles are referred to as *botol*, bottle corks as *butut* the stone for grinding spices as *geling rumpah*, a big steel mug as *kole*, plates as *piring*, and the pestle as *tumbuk*. The bedroom and bathroom are host to a large number of Malay words. The Peranakans have cultivated the Malay tendency of referring to bolsters as *puluk*, the mattress as *tilam*, and the cotton within it as *kapok*. In addition, there is a high incidence of the use of Malay to describe the articles of dress and fashion of the Peranakans. For example, the Nyonyas have taken up the use of *baju* for a lady's short blouse, *kasut manek* for beaded shoes or slippers, and *sanggoi* for the very typical Nyonya hairstyle of braiding one's hair into a bun. On the other hand, the Babas have *sepatu* for shoes. Both Peranakan men and women use the *sarong* while the loin cloth is referred to as *chawat*. They have also borrowed many Malay preferences for certain toiletries such as using *bedak sejuk* for rice powder, and *bedak* for powder. To the Peranakans, the Malay word *jamban* is used for the water closet, or toilet, *sabun* is used for soap, *timba* for pail, and *tuala* for towel. The fence around the house is referred to as the *pagar*, and if the house is located in the town, then the frontal half door is called the *pintu pagar*, while the drain around and in the house is the *longkang*.

Other nouns listed under the classification of object are an eclectic collection drawn from different and diverse areas of human activity which range from marketing to card games to midwifery. Although the Malay words used are drawn from diverse activities it is perceptible that they revolve mostly around daily activities linked to the household. In total, there are 76 Malay words under the category of things. Surprisingly, some of the nouns have undergone a shift in meaning from their Malay original. A good example is the use of the word *bangsan* for market which is derived from the Malay *bangsar*. The Malays would use the term *pasar* for market and not *bangsar* which is used for barn. *Akai* (Malay, *akal*, itself a borrowing from Arabic into Malay),

on the other hand, underwent a slight distortion of meaning as it usually has the connotation that one has a somewhat sly disposition because one is smart. Hence one who is full of cunning is *akai banyak* while one who lacks commonsense is *bo akai* (literally without brains).

Among some of the interesting observations for the borrowed Malay words used as nouns we found that most Malay words which function as nouns are concrete nouns and are not abstract nouns. It must be stressed that the borrowed Malay terms in PPH seem to exist with the competing Hokkien equivalent. The Babas and Nyonyas are aware of these corresponding Hokkien terms but are not predisposed to using them. For example, the Malay word *sarong* is preferred to *mua*, and *batok* (to cough) is preferred to the Hokkien equivalent *sau*. The Peranakan Hokkien have clearly expressed their preference for PPH over Hokkien by their willingness to create distinctly PPH terms. This creative formulation of PPH can be seen in the following two examples of exploiting onomatopoeia in *burung kuku* (i.e. the bird that makes the cuckoo sounds) and *pululu* refers to the cloth that looks like *bulu-bulu* or hair/ fur in Malay. The *burung kuku* is called *burung merpati* in Malay. A plausible explanation would be that the Peranakan speaker is perhaps not familiar with the Malay equivalent. Therefore the onomatopoeic word is created in its stead. Similarly, for describing a velvet cloth, the onomatopoeic word *pululu* is used and not the Malay equivalent of *kain baldu*.

Malay words used as Verbs, Adjective and Adverbs

There are many Malay words which function as verbs and adjectives. We found 69 action words in Malay. As expected, these words are restricted to the informal sphere of life. In housekeeping and the household we can find numerous examples of Malay verbs and adjectives. The action of rinsing is referred to as *bilai*. While to throw things away is referred to as *buang*, surprisingly *buang* is also used as the term for exile, a semantic extension of the word in PPH. If one's shirt is old and crumpled then it is *chomot*, and if kept longer it would probably be *luput* (rot), but if it is new then it is *baru*. If one's place is in a mess then it is *semak* and when something smells bad it is *busuk bau bangkai* (smells of a carcass). When food is good, it is described as *sedap* (tasty), and the person who partakes it would be *lalu* (have a good appetite) and if one sells the food it will be *laku* (saleable) and there will be nothing left to be *lelong* (auctioned off). In some religious activities, Malay words are used. For example, one is expected to *asap* (light incense) on certain days of the lunar month and also the Peranakans tend to *pantang* (superstitious) at certain times or on certain occasions.

There are numerous words used in child rearing such as *bunting* for pregnant and *gugur* for abortion, *bukumbak* for twins and *comek* to describe a cute child, but if the child is naughty he or she will be pinched or *cubit* as a

form of punishment. However, if the child utters obscenities he or she will be subjected to a more severe form of punishment where chilli will be rubbed onto their mouths or will probably be severely beaten or *bantai*. If the child is cute then he or she will be cuddled lovingly or *gumoi* and will be loved dearly or *sayang* and will probably be pampered or *manja*. Children are also advised not to talk too much as they will be branded *cakap banyak* or talkative. Those who are over active are bound to disturb or *kacau* and *bising* (make noise) and are likely to be beaten or *hentam*. Parents who observe their children embarking on games that are dangerous, like climbing trees, will probably feel *gayat* or frightened. When the child coughs, he *batok* and when he falls he may suffer from laceration or *galek* or *terkeliat* (sprain himself/herself). Parent also tend to advise their daughters not to sit *kangkang* (astride) as it is unladylike and children must not be *lalai* (forgetful) or *lengan-lengan* (dawdle) in whatever they are doing. They must also be nursed well when they have a fever or when *terkejut* (shocked/frightened), otherwise, they are likely to suffer from *tarik* (convulsions). When one is bitten by mosquitoes, then one feels *gatai* (itchy).

The Peranakan have also exploited the use of imagery in their borrowed Malay words. An example of this connotative use of language is illustrated in the following paragraphs.

The metaphorical use of the imagery of itch has been exploited by the Peranakan to connote promiscuity. Anyone who is cuous promis or amorous is described as *gatai* (itchy). If this affair is made known to the elderly then it shows that the younger generation do not *hormat* (respect) their elders. The perpetrators will then be branded *kurang ajar* or badly brought up. This is because if they flaunt their affections it would be unseemly and other people who see this would feel *geli* (disgusted). The spouse of the *lumak* (flirtatious) person would be *hangat* (angry) and will probably *harap* (bear a grudge) against him, and *lama-lama* (eventually) might lose his or her calm and *naik jaki* (get very angry) if (s) he can no longer *tahan* (tolerate) such behaviour. Then probably others would say *padan* (serves the flirt right) as one would not *kesian* (pity) or *tolong* (help) him or her because s/he is *salah* (in the wrong). This type of *tak tentu* (immature/unbecoming) behaviour will not be sanctioned, similarly if one is *mabok* (drunk).

The other verbs and adjectives found include verbs like *makan* (to eat) and when one has eaten enough then one would be *jelak* (nauseated), but if one still has not had enough then one can *tambah* (add) more. One could go *jalan-jalan* (for a stroll), or *harap* (hope) that someone would (*h*)*antak* (send) one somewhere and one could *lumpang* (hitch a ride) them into town. However, one could also *sendak* (lean) on a comfortable seat to *sembang* (to chit-chat). One could also *campur* (mingle) with others and *kawan* (befriend) them. One would be wise to chose a *lembut* (refined/petite) woman to *kawen*

(marry) if one *suka* (likes) and *sayang* (loves) them. Vegetables and maidens can also wither or *layu*, biscuits will turn soft or *lembek*. When things are lost, they are described as having gone into hiding or *sembunyi* and would probably cause the searcher to be in a great state of *geram* (consternation). Other characteristics include forms of behaviour such as being ostentatious or *tunjok*, but, of course, one cannot do this if one is *kedukot* (stingy), or if one is *ulu* (unsophisticated). There are also people who are *tiga suku* (unpredictable/crazy) who can *naik angin* (lose their temper) at anytime and these people might *mok/hentam* (physically abuse) you *suka-suka* (deliberately at will) and there are also others who are *satu macham* (eccentric). There are some adjective that describe the complexion of people, for example *hitam manis* (attractively dark), *muka sayang* (loveable face), and *muka benci* (unlikeable face), *senyum manis* (sweet smile) and *mata sepek* (squint eyed).

Various words are used to described actions that are typically performed by old folks because many Nyonyas are, at this point in time, elderly. These borrowed Malay words describe actions and conditions mostly associated with the elderly. A good example can be observed in the following discussion. Nyonyas tend to *latah* or to curse uncontrollably and when they are frightened they will be *ketak-ketak* (panic). Old folks also tend to scold uncontrollably or *carut*. These actions can something be ascribed to the fact that they are senile or *nyanyok*. Sometimes the old folk are considered nosey as they like to look through or *pereksa* other people's things. When one is asked awkward questions by nosey parkers, one is likely to feel *ganggu* or *kaku* (awkward). All these idiosyncrasies of old can sometimes be ascribed to the fact that they lead a *sunyi* (quiet) life.

There are also many word that particularly describe criticisms. When one is *gasak* (scolded) by others then one is on the receiving end and if one is scolded even though one is blameless then one is *buta*. It would also mean that one would already have been victimised or *naiya*. Others might also *chuchok* (instigate) one's friend to turn against one and would be likely to *galoh* (quarrel) with them, or if not, one is bound to give them a *juling* (an unfriendly stare) when one meets them on the street or *langsung* (absolutely) ignore them. One might then console oneself that the world is made of *macham-macham* (all sorts of) people and the best policy is not to *champur* (mingle) with them or get *sangkot* (entangled) with them. Hence one should be *puas* (satisfied) that one has a family that *sayang* (loves) one.

Among some of the more common Malay adverbs used include the use of the particles *nya* (only), *pun* and prepositions and conjunction like *pula* (also), *tapi* (but), *sampai* (until), *mana* (where) and *pasai* (because) which also doubles up as a noun meaning problem. We found that Malay nouns were most frequently used in PPH, in total Malay nouns occurred 211 times. Adjectives occurred 91 times while verbs 76 times.

Interjections

The use of Malay interjections in PPH is both prevalent and frequent. Of those interjections, the commonly used ones include *adoi* to express pain, *alah* to express disappointment, *alamak* for shock, *amboi* and *ch eh* for disgust and anger. *Lah* is multi-faceted and it is used both as to soften and heighten a speech act, and also as a way of entreating the listener to the speaker's position, and finally *ooi* as a way of calling for the listener's attention. It can be observed and it has to be stressed that PPH borrowings of Malay interjections have been both copiously and frequently used in the everyday language of the Peranakans. This can be immediately observed in any verbal intercourse amongst the Peranakan in Penang.

Conclusion

We conclude this paper with some observations of current trends in PPH. It is safe to speculate that the future survival of PPH in its present form is indeed suspect. This is due to pressure from society at large on the Peranakans and also inherent weakness within the Peranakan society itself. The inherent weakness within the society stems from the very fact that the Peranakans no longer tend to distinguish themselves from the mainstream Chinese community. This lack of identity within the Peranakan community is being exacerbated by continuing pressure of resinization and westernization. This pressure of resinization has its fount in the Peranakans feeling of being not quite Chinese nor Malay. Whether this process of resinization is realised by the community or not is open to debate. But this tendency to some form of resinization is unmistakable and it ranges from a resurgence in interest in learning Mandarin by young Peranakans usually their families and to the adoption of more mainstream Chinese culture. The pressures of westernization on the other hand is also very prominent among the Peranakans and this tendency can be best seen in their speech which invariably is English.

Both the above pressure have conspired to erode the presence of the Malay elements in PPH which is its most copious distinction from mainstream Hokkien. These Malay words are being sidelined by Hokkien and English equivalents, depending on the speakers' tendency for resinization or westernization. This situation of language attrition will definitely marginalise the Penang Peranakan as a distinct community.

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