MODERNIZATION AND ITS IMPACT
TO MALAY BABY NAMES

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1. Introduction

Malay language has its own unique system of respects. Besides pronouns, Malay has an expression of respects and baby names. This system is used complimentarily and differs from one situation to another. Baby names in particular are one of the expressions of respects used among the family members. Not many languages in the world have baby names. There are advantages in using the baby names; such as we can gain extra information, namely the birth rank position in a family, gender and from which generation is the addressee. For instance if a speaker uses *Pak Long* to address a hearer, then we know that the speaker is referring to his uncle which is obviously a male and from an older generation. This explains why baby names are unique and special to the Malay.

Time has changed. It affects not only our daily life but the culture as well. We change from a traditional way of life to modern settings. The people are in the process of adopting the modern view(s) or method(s) especially tendency in matters of religious belief to subordinate tradition to harmony with modern thought. In today's world, the heat of globalization with the concept of, 'one size fits all' makes the modernization more relevant. How does this have an impact to the Malay baby names? Baby names are used strictly in the Malay community. With the modernization, eventually the use of baby names has become more relax. People are no longer observed the baby names as it implies being traditional, backward and sounds very rural. People are more acquainted with the terms 'uncle' and 'auntie', which are in fact borrowed from English. These ideas will eradicate the unique Malay culture and is considered a great loss to the society.

In realizing this, a preliminary survey was carried out to measure the impact of modernization to the baby names. **1499** respondents were selected among the first year students that enrolled in the year 2000 at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The reasons of selections are as follows:

i)   The respondents are representative. This means that we can collect the nationwide data on the baby names used in their geographical dialects

ii)   They are between 19-25 (majorities), which is considered as matured enough to answer the questionnaires.

iii)   They are considered as modern citizen breed (as more than 50 % have their parents educate in the formal systems and working).

iv)   Since this is a preliminary survey, the mass is easily reached to provide us with the overall picture of the baby names that are used by them.

This survey tries to prove that the following hypotheses are valid. The hypotheses are:

i)   Modernization has an impact to the baby names

ii)   There are gaps in using the baby names between inter generations and among siblings.

iii)   The baby names have the tendency of fading away in future.

If the hypotheses are proven true, further steps should be taken into considerations. One of the best solutions is to document all the baby names that are used in the Malay family according to the geographical dialect. Once it has been documented, the future generation can make a reference to the lists of baby names that are used by the Malay older generation.

2. The State of the Art

Before going any further, let us see the Malay system expressions of respects. As noted earlier, Malay has three ways of addressing people. They are the pronouns, expression of respects (EOR) and the baby names. These three terms have different definitions. The differences of the terms are as follows:
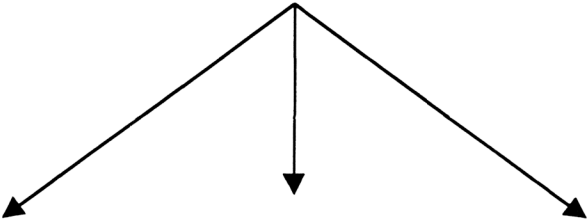
Pronouns: words that are used to replace proper names, for example *I, you, they, etc.* In Malay there are three different types of pronouns namely, the first, second, and third person. These pronouns contain no specific information such as the gender, age and reference.

Expression of respects (EOR): words that are used to replace proper names such as, *pakcik, encik, tuan, puan, kakak,* etc. In these instances, social factors such as status, age, and education will be a social determinant in using the words. These EOR are used in the society and can be divided into two - formal and informal EOR[1].

Baby names: special names that are used to replace the proper names. It is restricted among the family and the extended family members only. Sometimes in a very close-knit relationship, the baby names can be used among the villagers. The special features for the baby names include the birth rank, generation, reference and gender.

For a clearer picture, let's refer to table1 below:

The Malays System of Expression of Respects

Pronouns	Exp. Of respects	Baby Names
+ human	+ human	+ human
+ non-human	- non-human	- non-human
- gender	+ gender	+ gender
- reference	+ reference	+ reference
- birth rank	- birth rank	+ birth rank
- status	+ status	- status

Table 1

It clearly shows that each type of the expressions has its own features. The aim is to make bold definitions of these three types of expressions in the system. For instance, the pronouns can be used both for referring to human and non-human but not for the EOR and the baby names. Similarly, we can tell the birth–rank of an individual based on their baby names but we are not able to do so for the pronouns and the EOR. And finally, we can tell the status of the addressee by the EOR used by the addresser but not in the pronouns and the baby names. The status will tell us about the education background, the formal or informal situation that took place in the conversation.

Most researchers concentrate on the Malay pronouns and the expression of respects when discussing about the Malay system expression of respects. Collins (1982), Nik Safiah (1992), Amat Johari Moain (1989), Sumalee (1994), Nor Hashimah (1992, 1995), discussed the pronouns and the expression of respects with different approaches. Collins, Nik Safiah, Amat Johari and Sumalee analyses are based on

sociolinguistic approach. Meanwhile Nor Hashimah analyses are based on the semantic and pragmatic approach.

Collins (1982) explains how the EOR works within the framework of discourse. He recorded the conversation and come to conclusion that the age factor is very important in determining the use of the EOR. Nik Safiah in her book, *'Beberapa Persoalan Sosiolinguistik'* (1992), tells about how the EOR is divided sociolinguistically. She introduces the politeness and impoliteness terms in the EOR. Meanwhile Amat Johari and Sumalee describe the usage of EOR comparatively. Amat Johari compares Malay EOR with the Bruneian's EOR. On the other hand, Sumalee contrasts the Malay with the Thais. Both research show that each society has its own system but comparatively there are many common factors that make the systems look similar.

Nor Hashimah (1992, 1995) explicates the use of Malay pronouns according to the semantic and pragmatic approach. She explains about the vagueness in Malay pronouns especially regarding the referent assignments and offer an explanation to overcome the problems. She looks into the role and function of the pronouns[2]. Nor Hashimah and Maslida (2000) tries to redefine the Malay pronouns based on the data gathered from the field. The redefinition will modify the explanation given in the Malay grammar books. She described her redefinition as *'user friendly'*[3].

All research carried out have not covered on the Malay baby names. The only relevant research on baby names is the Perak Malay baby names. C.C.Brown (1921) listed a few baby names, which can be found in Perak Malay such as, *Kulop, Yong, Yop, Ngah, Alang, Pandak* and so on. Unfortunately, his research is superficial. No further discussion was given in his book on Malay baby names. As part of our effort to preserve the baby names from fading away from the Malay culture, it is our duty to document this baby names, so that it becomes one of our future assets and references.

Looking back from all the research above, apparently, a baby name, which is part of the unique trait to Malay culture, has not been taken seriously by the Malay speakers themselves. In the heat wave of globalization and modernization, the proof

of fading away becomes more obvious. Even though with baby names we can tell from which generation, gender and birth rank of the addressee, the Malay speakers seems to be ignorant. Once again the reasons given that, the names sound too old fashioned, traditional, backwards and non-educated.

The overall picture of this research is to produce a list of baby names that are used in every dialect in Malaysia. The documented list will become a reference to anybody who is interested to know about the Malay system of respects in future. Furthermore, one small research done on the baby names by C.C.Brown is not sufficient. Alternatively, with this research, a comprehensive baby names are produced.

3. Malay Baby Names

From the questionnaires distributed to the 1499 respondents, we process the baby names used in the family accordingly. The data were processed manually. The baby name with the highest score for each birth rank in a family will represent the baby name. For example, we can have *along, abang, yop, chor* for the eldest child. If the score for *along* is the highest, then we choose *'along'* to represent the baby name for the first child. *Ngah, nyah, chor, kakak*, are names that can be used to refer to the second child. If the score of *'ngah'* is the highest, then the name *'ngah'*, will be given to the second child and so on. There are cases whereby certain baby names can occur equally the same, and then we have to decide which name will fill in the slot of that particular child. For instance, we have *anjang* and *alang* with the same percentage to fill in the sixth birth rank position in the family. What we did is to go one-step further that is to the next child. If we have only *anjang* for the 7th child, then we will choose *alang* for the 6th child. Or if the percentage of *anjang* is higher for the 7th child, then we will reserve *anjang* for number 7. For every problem that arises, we will look at the overall picture of the percentages stated. And as a results, the findings of our research is as follows[4]:

JOHOR	MELAKA	N.SEMBILAN[5]
Long	Long	Long
Ngah	Ngah	Ngah
Uda	Alang	Alang
Cik	Teh	Teh
Teh	Tam	Tam
Tam	Uda	Andak
Anjang	Cik	Anjang
Andak	Usu	Cik
Alang	-	Induk
Mak + name	-	Usu
Usu[6]	-	-

Selangor	W. Persekutuan	Perak
Long	Long	Long
Ngah	Ngah	Ngah
Alang	Alang	Alang
Uda	Teh	Anjang
Teh	Andak	Cik
Cik	Cik	Teh
Name	Tam	Tam
Name	Uda	Cik + name
Usu	Mak +name	Usu
-	Usu	We

Penang	Kedah	Perlis
Long/Chaq	Long	Long
Ngah	Ngah	Ngah
Alang	Alang	Alang
Teh	Anjang	Yang
Yang	Andak	Cik
Uda	Cik	Andak
Andak	Tam	Tam
Cik	Teh	Teh
Usu	Usu	Usu
-	We	-

Pahang	Terengganu	Kelantan
Long	Long	Long
Ngah	Ngah	Ngah
Uda	Uda	Mak+ name
Teh	Cik	Cik
Cik	Teh	Teh
Tam	Mak +name	Uda
Andak	Mak+name	Mak + name
Anjang	Mak +name	Mak + name
Usu	Usu	Mak + name
-	-	Usu.

Sabah[7]	Sarawak	
Makcik	Wa	
Ngah	Ngah	
Tanggah	Uda	
Makcik	Makcik	
Makcik	Ibu	
Makcik	Ibu	
Makcik	Chacha	
Makcik	Usu.	

The list produced in this research is more like proposals to the baby names according to the geographical dialect. It is entirely up to the family to decide what is the best for the family. No one can claim that their list is the best because clearly the list will differ from one family to another. We are only offering the list for the future generation reference.

4. The Impact of the Modernization

According to the results gathered by this research, the gaps between the modern breed societies, i.e., the young generations and the older generation in using the baby names are clearly spotted. The younger generation does not follow the baby names in their own family. One of the reasons is that perhaps they are not guided or stressed or emphasized by their parents to use the birth rank names among siblings. This proofs that the impact of modernization whereby the traditional thoughts have been discarded and replaced by the modern views. But this is not the case for the usage involving inter generations. The young ones will still observe and address the names to their uncles and aunts.

The figures below will provide evidence to the patterns of the baby names especially used among siblings and inter generation. This will apparently strengthen the claim that modernization does really have an impact on the baby names. From the data gathered, it clearly shows that the declining of using the baby names among siblings really exists. Let us go through in turn. Among the females, the family members are still using the name *along*. In fact we can still have a baby name *angah* to refer to the second child. But the usage has declined swiftly. We can see the transition from the baby names to the modern names when it comes to the third child. The personal names are being used among the members of the family apart from *kakak*. The baby names such as *uda* and *alang* have dropped to less than 10% by the Malay speakers. *Uda* and *alang* are two popular names to refer to the third child in the older generation, but unfortunately these names have been deserted. These data below will justify the statement we have just made.

Siblings (female)

First child:

Along	44%
Kakak (sister)	44.2%
Name	4.7%
Yong	3.7%
Others[8]	3.4%

Second child:

Angah	32.5%
Kakak (sister)	47.4%
Adik	3%
Name	8.8%
Others	8.3%

Third child:

Name	19.2%
Kakak	39%
Uda	6.9%
Alang	7.9%
Others	27%

The data above also confirms that the use of the baby names has become more impractical. For more evidence on how modernization has great impact on the baby names, let's look at the data below:

SIBLINGS (male):

First child:

Along	37.3%
Abang (brother)	54.1%
Name	4.4%
Yop	1.4%
Others	2.8%

Second child:

Angah	28%
Abang (brother)	45.9%
Name	13.9%
Adik	2.87%
Others	9.4%

Third child:

Name	23.1%
Abang	39.8%
Uda	7.7%
Alang	6.7%
Others	22.7%

Once again from the data given above, we can see that EOR like *abang* and even names are used more frequent in a modern family as compared to the baby names. The first son is supposed to be called along, stated 37.3% of the total percentages. The family opts for *abang*. The same thing happens for the second child. *Abang* with 45.9% scores overtake the traditional baby name, *angah*. *Abang* is still considered one of the polite usages to address the elder siblings. The fact that *abang* is a general term which can be used in a society to refer to anybody who is older than the speaker. But if along is used, pragmatically we can tell that the

person is the eldest in the family, male and from the same generation.

To further substantiate the discussion, herewith I disclosed the data gathered for uncles and aunties. From here we can make a comparison on how baby names are used inter generation.

Uncles

First:

Pak/ayah long	70.7%
Wa	7.8%
Ayah + nama	7.9%
Others	13.6%

Second

Ayah/pak ngah	60%
Pakcik	11.5%
Pak lang	3.9%
Pak the	3.5%
Others	21.1%

Third:

Pak lang	23.1%
Pak uda	12.6%
Pakcik	12.4%
Name	1.2%
Others	50.7%

Aunties

First:

Mak long	55.4%
Mak tua/we	4.2%
Makcik	7.8%
Mak Ngah	4.6%
Others	27.7%

Second:

Mak ngah	52.4%
Makcik	14.9%
Mak long	3.3%
Mak teh	2.9%
Others	26.1%

Third:

Mak lang	20.4%
Makcik	21.2%
Mak uda	12.2%
Mak teh	6.8%
Others	38.9%

In the earlier discussions that involved the siblings, we can observe the declining of the baby names used among them. In this case, we are going to discuss how the baby names are used inter generation. In Malay society, sense of respects is very essential. In this case, how we address people become one of the main concerns in the society. It is more vital when it comes to the family matter. This explains why the baby names are being observed strictly among inter generation. For the eldest uncle, 70.7% respondents will use the baby names *Pak/Ayah Long*. Meanwhile 60 % will call their second uncle as *Pak Ngah*. And the baby names are still relevant for the third uncle. There are instances where personal names are used

but the percentage is relatively low. The possibility of the uncle and the addresser are about the same age can be considered. What is important is that, the baby names are maintained in inter generation relationship. The baby names are also being observed when addressing the aunts. Even though there are differences in the percentages, the most important thing is that the baby names are still being used actively among inter generation.

5. Conclusion

From the table given above, it clearly shows that, the use of the baby names is fading away. The names among the siblings are restricted to the eldest and the second child only. The use of *'abang'* means 'brother' and *'kakak'* means 'sister'are much more popular. The birth rank names for number 3 and below has changed mostly as the personal names or *'adik'* (little sister or brother). But the situation is different when we look at the birth rank names used to address their uncle and aunts. The baby names are still there and being used up to the youngest uncle and aunt. Once again the claim that modernization has an impact to our baby names is a true fact. The list of baby names produced will hopefully serve as a contribution for future reference.

Notes

[1] I will not discuss in details about the EOR. Nik Safiah (1985) wrote in detail about the EOR.

[2] Her works are on Sarawak and Kelantan Malay pronouns.

[3] The paper was written with Maslida Yusoff.

[4] Our research produce lists of baby names for both from the mother's family and father's family. In this paper, I will give a list from the mother's family only. For full report please refer to Nor Hashimah et.al, Projek A/4/2000 – *"Sistem Panggilan Dalam Keluarga Melayu: Satu Dokumentasi"*.

[5] N.Sembilan means Negeri Sembilan.

[6] The baby names can go on until the tenth child. Otherwise Mak/Pak (mother/father) + name can be used. The list will depend on how many siblings each family has.

[7] We fail to get a good list of the baby names for Sabah and Sarawak because the Malay Sabah and Sarawak respondent are relatively very few. We have to interview students from Sabah in order to gain more information.

[8] "Others" means any other baby names that are used to address his speaker. The percentage of others becomes larger when it reaches to the third child (siblings and older generation). This is because; we can have a few options what to call the hearer. We can have 7-8 options of baby names. The names are chosen according to the family itself.

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