

Language contact as reflected in Baba Malay forms of address and reference

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1. Introduction¹

The nineteenth century Baba Malay system of address and reference includes pronouns, titles, kinship terms, ethnic names, personal names, and terms reflecting ways of earning a living. Some of the terms are of Chinese origin, others are of Malay origin, a few come from English. The diversity of origins reflects the history of the Babas, their Chinese origin, their acculturation to Malay society, and the strong British influence in nineteenth century Malaya. The study shows that the Malay system of personal pronouns has been reduced in Baba Malay. However, this reduction in the overall number of Malay pronouns is accompanied by the incorporation of Hokkien pronouns and other Hokkien terms into the Baba Malay system along with some English terms. The Hokkien terms of address and reference are usually used to mark Baba ethnicity.

The Baba Malay system of address and reference shows variation in its use, some socially conditioned, some conditioned by the degree of linguistic sophistication of the user. The socially conditioned variation is largely determined by how socially equal the speakers are but also in a small part by the speakers' ethnicity. Still other variation in use reflects the degree of linguistic knowledge of individual Baba Malay speakers. Some of them knew not only Baba Malay, but also formal Malay, and could switch to it under the appropriate conditions; others were much more limited in their command of both variants. The Baba Malay system of address and reference uses communicative strategies (Ochs 1990:289) which are part of "a set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating language to context, which speaker-hearer draw on and modify in producing and making sense out of language in context". Understanding how the Baba Malay system of address and reference functioned gives us significant insights into the social structure of the Baba Malay community, that is, the norms, the preferences, and expectations that are the underlying bases for the use of these terms.

This study first looks at the descriptions of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century Malay terms of address and reference found in Marsden (1812), Crawford (1852), Swettenham (1889), and Winstedt (1927). The presentation constitutes the basis for making a comparison between the nineteenth century Malay terms of address and reference and the nineteenth century Baba Malay terms. The analysis of Baba Malay terms is based on the data found in Lim's *A manual of the Malay colloquial such as is spoken by all nationalities in the Colonies of the Straits Settlements, and designed for domestic and business purposes* and on the Baba Malay newspaper *Bintang Timor*. The major difference between the two sources is that the data found in Lim (1887) in a certain sense represents the language of the author, a single speaker, while the data found in *Bintang Timor* represents the language of many speakers. The other difference is that the language found in Lim (1887) is less formal and less influenced by written Malay than the language of *Bintang Timor*. Thus, the two sources complement each other in providing an extended sample of both the colloquial and the formal uses of the Baba Malay terms of address and reference. This study joins other studies of no longer spoken languages. Like the studies of address systems found in the ancient Greek (Dickey 1997) or in Shakespeare's English (Brown and Gilman 1989) the data base for this study is entirely text-based.

2. Terms of address and reference in nineteenth century Malay

Malay has a rich system of personal pronouns, a system which codes various differences between the speaker and the addressee. In the literature on Malay grammar, the most prominent difference coded by the pronouns is the difference in the relative status of the speaker and the addressee. In order to use Malay pronouns in a conversation both of the interlocutors have to know their respective statuses, i.e. they have to know whether they are of equal or non-equal status and, if they are unequal, just how unequal they are. If the speaker is of a lower status than the addressee, one pronoun is used; if the speaker is of a higher status than the addressee, a different address pronoun is used; and, if the speakers are of equal status, still another choice is made.

Marsden (1812), Crawford (1852) and Swettenham (1889) provide descriptions of the usages of the nineteenth century Malay pronouns. According to Marsden (1812), the pronoun system of nineteenth century Malay is as follows:

First person (singular): *aku, hamba, beta, saya, patek, kita, kami*

Second person (singular): *angkau (kau), kamu (mu)*

Third person (singular or plural): *dia*

First person (plural): *kita (orang)* [incl.], *kami (orang)* [excl.]

Second person (plural): *angkau*

Third person (plural): *dia-orang, marik itu* (or *marika itu*)

Table 1. 19th century Malay pronoun system (after Marsden 1812)

For the first person singular, the pronoun *aku* is a first person pronoun inherited from Proto-Malayo-Polynesian (PMP) **aku* (Blust, personal communication), Proto Malayic **aku* (Adelaar 1992:124). The remaining forms, most borrowed from Sanskrit, are primarily nouns that originally meant either 'servant': *hamba, beta*, or 'slave': *saya, patek*. Marsden (1812:43) explains the difference between the old pronoun *aku* and the newer terms such as *saya, hamba, beta*, and *patek* by referring to the relative status of the interlocutors. He says that *aku* is generally used by superiors talking to inferiors. He also mentions that it is sometimes used between equals, but does not elaborate. What differentiates *aku* from other terms of reference is that *aku* never originated as a form with the meaning of 'slave' or 'servant'.

In his description of Malay pronouns, Marsden (1812:44) explains what it meant in nineteenth century Malay to designate oneself as a slave or a servant. He emphasizes that the person calling himself a 'slave' or 'servant' does not "necessarily regard himself as the slave, or even as the inferior of the him to whom he addresses himself, but only that it is his intention, by an affection of humility, to show his politeness." According to Marsden (1812:44-45), there is a 'humility' continuum that various first person pronouns code. Marsden (1812) mentions that *patek* implies more 'humility' than *saya*, while *saya* implies more 'humility' than *hamba* and *beta*. Understanding what degree of 'humility' was appropriate to use in nineteenth century Malay society would require an analysis of the actual language use by different interlocutors in various contexts, and is beyond the scope of the present work. Nonetheless, on the basis of Marsden's description of the usages of address terms it is clear that these displays of humility are directly related to the relative status of the interlocutors. Marsden (1812:45) also reports that the two pronouns for the first person plural, the inclusive *kita* and the exclusive *kami*, may be "used for the singular by royal personages".

For the second person singular, Marsden (1812) gives three forms: *angkau* (sometimes shortened to *kau*), *kamu* (sometimes shortened to *mu*), and *tuan*. He says that *angkau* “appears to be indifferently used both in the singular and the plural, by superiors and inferiors” (Marsden 1812:46). However, he observes that “when abbreviated to *kau* it is generally employed in a tone of overweening authority, approaching to contempt [...]”. He gives the following example of *kau* being used contemptuously:

- (1) tiada kau kanal
not 2s know
'Art thou not aware?'

In contrast to *angkau*, which occurs in various contexts, *kamu* and its shortened form *mu* are only used by the superior talking to the inferior. Marsden (1812:47) illustrates with the following example the use of *kamu* being used by a superior referring to an inferior:

- (2) tiada kami mau ber-dami-an dengan kamu
not 1p want make peace with 2s
'we do not choose to make peace with you'

Besides the two pronouns: *angkau* and *kamu*, Marsden (1812:47) also discusses the term *tuan*, and says that “[it] is employed as a pronoun personal in addresses from inferior, and politely, amongst equals”; for example:

- (3) apa tuan mau makan?
what tuan want eat
'What do you choose to eat?'

As for the third person forms, according to Marsden (1812:49) there is basically one pronoun *dia*, which “has no positive character of superiority or inferiority.” The pronoun *dia* is used to mark a singular as well as plural referent. However, as with some first person forms, if needed, plurality may be overtly marked by adding *orang*. Marsden (1812:49) mentions yet another third person plural pronoun, namely *marik itu* or *marika itu*, where *marik* or *marika* stands for ‘person’. He says that “in sense it is nearly synonymous with *dia orang*, but much less common in conversation.” Here we see *mereka*, the formal third person plural of modern Malay.

Like Marsden, Crawford (1852:24-26) uses the terms 'superior' versus 'inferior' to explain the nuances of Malay terms of reference and address. He shares Marsden's observation that the relative rank is a primary factor determining the use of Malay terms, adding that Malay politeness requires the interlocutors of equal status to refer to themselves as 'servants' or 'slaves'.

Another grammarian of the nineteenth century, Swettenham (1889:xviii), agrees with Marsden's and Crawford's descriptions of Malay pronouns. He devotes a few additional lines to the pronoun *patek* and says that "*patek* is the commonest form of expressing the pronoun of the first person when used by an inferior to a *Raja*, or between *Rajas* when the younger wishes to show respect to the elder or superior in office."

In response to these subtle coding differences, Malay speakers frequently avoid the use of pronouns altogether. Winstedt ([1927] 1957:107), for example, observes that "the Malay looks upon the personal pronoun proper as a rude form of address." Winstedt continues, saying that "rather than employ it, [the Malay] will omit the subject altogether, or if he knows the rank and status of the person addressed he will employ some kind of honorific, describing himself by some noun of self-depreciation."

The Malay uses a wide range of non-pronominal terms of address and reference. Included among them are kinship terms. Winstedt ([1927] 1957:111) observes that Malay kinship terms are often used as terms of address, noting that "the relationship may not be actual but merely a polite fiction." He lists the following kinship terms regularly used as address and reference terms:

<i>dato', to'</i>	'grandfather'
<i>nenek</i>	'grandmother'
<i>ayah</i>	'father' (polite)
<i>bapa</i>	'father' (vulgar)
<i>ėmak</i>	'mother'
<i>anak</i>	'child'
<i>abang</i>	'elder brother'
<i>kakak</i>	'elder sister', or rarely 'brother'
<i>adek</i>	'younger brother or sister'
<i>chuchu</i>	'grandchild of either sex'

The descriptions of the nineteenth century Malay address and reference terms make several Malay sociolinguistic norms

obvious. First, it is important for the speakers to acknowledge their relative status in the society. Second, it is usually politer to address or refer to a person by his title (including if appropriate a kinship term) than with a personal pronoun. Third, it is polite to deprecate oneself. In addition, two of the grammarians, Marsden (1812:45,48) and Crawford (1852:24), observe that the Chinese pronouns *gua* and *lu* are also used in informal Malay. However, both of them note that these pronouns never occur in "any good Malay writings". Their observation that the Chinese pronouns *gua* and *lu* occur in the spoken variety of nineteenth century Malay is supported by Lim's (1887:i) general observation that "those Malays who live in towns and all those who constantly have intercourse with the public speak the Babas' Malay when communicating with the people in town." Lim (1887:i) stresses the fact that "the highest class of Malay when holding conversations with the Babas always speak as the latter do."

3. Baba Malay terms of address and reference

The Baba Malay system is a Hokkien influenced variant of the Malay system of address and reference. However, despite the many similarities, there are a number of obvious differences in the Baba Malay use of terms, the most prominent among them the incorporation of Hokkien terms into the system and a reduction in the overall number of pronouns.

First person (singular):	<i>gua, saya</i>
Second person (singular):	<i>lu, angkau</i>
Third person (singular or plural):	<i>dia</i>
First person (plural):	<i>kita</i>
Second person (plural):	<i>lu-orang</i>
Third person (plural):	<i>dia-orang</i>

Table 2: Baba Malay pronoun system (data from Lim 1887)

There are some important differences between the pronoun systems found in Malay and in Baba Malay. First, in Baba Malay there is only one Malay pronoun *angkau* referring to the second person singular. In Malay, it is the least marked pronoun, "indifferently used by superiors and inferiors" (Marsden 1812:46). Second, the distinction between the inclusive *kita* and the exclusive *kami* is not preserved in Baba Malay, where only *kita* occurs. Third, the plurality of the second person is formed analogically to the plurality of the third person, namely by adding *orang* 'people' to the second person pronoun.

Interestingly, the Malay word *orang* is added to the Hokkien pronoun *lu* 'you'.

The list of pronouns presented in Table 2 tells only part of the story however. In Baba Malay, as in Malay, pronouns constitute a somewhat restricted subset of the address and reference terms. One norm governing the choice of a particular term is the social status of the interlocutors. This status can be described in terms of what Brown and Gilman (1970) called, the T/V distinction. The T pronoun (from Latin *tu* 'singular you') is used to address either lower ranked speakers or equal and familiar speakers. The V pronoun (from Latin *vos* 'plural you') is used to address either higher ranked speakers or equal, but socially distant speakers. The other norm governing the choice of address terms in Baba Malay is the ethnicity of the speakers. The influence of the ethnicity of the speakers on the choice of a particular term, partially distinguishes the Baba Malay system from the Malay system.

3.1 Nonreciprocity in Baba Malay

Lim's conversations typically involve asymmetrical relations, for example, on the one hand, his conversations feature the lady of the house, the master of the house, or the doctor, and, on the other, the domestic help, or the tradesman (the cook, the gardener, the tailor and the shop keeper). What jumps out at the reader is the differences in how speakers of different ranks address each other. Baba Malay pronouns are used only by the speaker of higher rank; they are never used by the speaker of lower rank. In Lim's conversations, speech directed to lower status speakers is marked in one of two ways: either with the second person pronoun *lu* or *angkau*, or with a title reflecting some sort of occupation. Among the titles are: *aya* 'female domestic help', *boy* 'male domestic help', *koki* 'cook', *tukang kěbbun* 'gardener', *tukang jaet* 'tailor' and *tauke* 'shop keeper'.

In the analysis of address and reference terms occurring in Lim's data, the major question which is pursued is what controls the choice between the Hokkien pronoun *lu* and the Malay pronoun *angkau*? A second question involves determining to what degree the titles, occupation terms, kinship terms and the like have been incorporated into the address system. Thus, care has been taken throughout to see which forms are used as address terms and which forms are used as terms of reference.

The address and reference terms found in Lim's data are presented in Table 3. The first column gives the textual

frequencies for the two second person pronouns *lu* and *angkau*. The second column gives the textual frequencies of other terms. Here each occurrence of a particular term is coded as either an address term (AT) or a term of reference (RT). The numbers in the third column are the numbers Lim (1887) uses for his dialogues.

PRONOUNS		NOUNS					dialogue #
<i>lu</i>	<i>angkau</i>	<i>aya</i>	<i>boy</i>	<i>koki</i>	<i>tukang</i>	<i>tauke</i>	
		RT/AT	RT/AT	RT/AT	RT/AT	RT/AT	
3							#10
3			0/1				#14
3			0/1				#15
2			0/1				#17
Ø	Ø	1/0	0/2				#18
3			0/2	0/1			#19
4			0/1	0/1			#20
Ø	7				0/3		#21
5				0/1			#23
5				0/1			#24
2				0/2			#25
15				0/1	0/2		#27
1		1/4					#28
Ø	3						#29
5						0/4	#32

Table 3. Terms to address (AT) and refer (RT) to a person of a lower status

In the 15 conversations analyzed, lower ranked persons are referred to 51 times with the pronoun *lu*, and 10 times with the pronoun *angkau*. Examples are given below.

- (4) Sari sari pëttang chakop jam, lu mēsti bawah saya satu changker te,
 day day afternoon grab hour 2s must bring 1s satu cup tea
 'Every afternoon when it is time you must bring me a cup of tea,'

(Lim 1887:58)

- (5) Baeh la, bikin la apa kue lu suka,
 good LA make LA what cake 2s like

'Very well, make whatever cakes you like,' (Lim 1887:59)

- (6) Saya mau tau apa kaen lu ada.
 1s want know what cloth 2s have

'I want to know what cloth you have.' (Lim 1887:71)

In example (4), domestic help is referred to; in example (5), a cook is referred to; and, in example (6), a tailor is referred to. In

each case, the Hokkien pronoun *lu* is used. However in examples (7-8), a lower ranked addressee is referred to with the Malay pronoun *angkau*, not *lu*.

- (7) Ini kuda suda jahat, kaloh angkau tidak pegang ras baeh baeh,
this horse SUDAH wicked if 2s not hold reins good good
'This horse is vicious, if you don't hold the reins properly,'
(Lim 1887:77)

- (8) Laen kali bila pëttang angkau msti siram aër smua pokok.
other time when evening 2s must to water water all plant
'For the future you must water all the plants in the evening.'
(Lim 1887:52)

In example (7), a cart driver is referred to; in example (8), a gardener is referred to.

The use of *lu* in examples (4-6) parallels the use of *angkau* in examples (7-8). Both involve the same relative status, that is, examples (4-6) like examples (7-8), involve a higher status speaker referring to a lower ranked speaker. What is most likely, although it is not obvious from this data alone, is that the difference between (7-8) and (4-6) involves the ethnicity of the addressees. This possibility follows from the pronouns themselves: *lu* is a Hokkien pronoun, and *angkau* is a Malay pronoun. Thus, it is quite likely that the pronoun *lu* is used, when the addressee is a Baba; and, the pronoun *angkau* is used when the addressee is a Malay. Some minor supporting evidence for this analysis is found in the fact that there is no pronoun mixing in any of the analyzed conversations. The Baba speaker of a lower status is always referred to with the pronoun *lu*, and the Malay speaker of a lower status is always referred to with the pronoun *angkau*. The preponderance of *lu* in the data simply follows from the fact that generally Lim's conversations involve the Babas.

A higher status person may refer to a lower ranked person with nonpronominal terms.

- (9) Aya mau saya bole kasi sikit.
female domestic help want 1s can give a little
'If you want some, aya, I can let you have.' (Lim 1887:45)

- (10) aya tah siserkan
female domestic help not comb-KAN
'you have not combed it.' (Lim 1887:74)

In examples (9-10), the term *aya* is the subject, and thus syntactically *aya* is an integral part of the sentence. In contrast, in examples (11-12) it is clear that *aya* occurs outside the sentence construction, because it is used vocatively.

- (11) aya, chuchi sama sabun wa-ngi
 aya wash with soap fragrant
 'aya, wash with fragrant soap' (Lim 1887:74)

- (12) Kasi mandi, aya,
 give bathe aya
 'Bathe him, aya.' (Lim 1887:73)

In Lim's data, aside from *aya*, other occupational terms are never used as terms of reference but only as terms of address; for example:

- (13) Koki, lu tau masah lummah?
 cook 2s know masak lemak
 'Cook, do you know to prepare masah lummah?' (Lim 1887:63)

- (14) Tukang jaet, bila lu ada snang saya mau lu
 craftsman sew when 2s be comfortable 1s want 2s
 'Tailor, when you have time I want you to

kasi tunjoh sama saya lu punya chonto kaen.
 give show with 1s 2s have sample cloth
 'show me your samples of cloth.' (Lim 1887:71)

- (15) Boy, lu suda kasi pēcha ini changker te?
 male domestic help 2s SUDAH give break this cup tea
 'Boy, did you break this tea cup?' (Lim 1887:47)

It is difficult to determine why only *aya* is used as a term of reference. It is possible that the lack of other occupational terms used as reference terms represents a gap in the data base due to the nature of Lim's conversations, or perhaps simply because Lim's conversations ultimately represent the language of a single speaker.

While the higher ranked speakers may address or refer to the lower ranked speakers with personal pronouns, the lower ranked speakers can only use titles to either address or refer to the higher ranked speakers.

PRONOUNS:	NOUNS:		dialogue #
<i>lu angkau</i>	<i>tuan</i>	<i>ma'am</i>	
	RT/AT	RT/AT	
Ø Ø	3/1		#10
	0/1		#14
	0/1		#17
		2/2	#18
	1/0	0/1	#19
	3/1		#20
	0/1	1/0	#21
	0/2		#23
	0/3		#24
	0/3		#25
	0/2		#27
		0/1	#28
	0/5		#29
	5/7		#32

Table 4. Terms used to address (AT) and refer (RT) to a speaker of higher status

Table 4 shows that the master of the house can only be addressed or referred with the Malay term *tuan*, while the lady of the house can only be addressed or referred to with the English term *ma'am*; for example:

- (16) Ma'am mana suda pëggi jalan?
 ma'am where SUDAH go walk
 'Where have you been, ma'am?' (Lim 1887:45)

- (17) Tuan bole kasi lapan rengget?
 Sir can give eight dollars
 'Will you give me eight dollars, sir?' (Lim 1887:49)

The two terms, *tuan* and *ma'am*, are the only terms the domestic help and the tradesmen may use to refer to the lady or the master of the house.

The hierarchical nature of these relationships is also reflected in the choice of the first person pronoun. There are two first person pronouns in Baba Malay: *gua* (from Hokkien) and *saya* (from Malay). In a conversation among the Babas of equal status the Hokkien pronoun *gua* is used in response to either being addressed or referred to by the pronoun *lu* (see section 3.2). However, in a conversation among the Babas of unequal status, the Malay pronoun *saya* is used by the speaker of the lower status.

- (18) Koki, mana lu suka; lu suka pake kayu api ato arang?
 cook which 2s like 2s like use wood fire or charcoal
'Cook, which do you prefer; do you prefer using firewood or charcoal?'

Pake arang ada mahal sikit, tuan,
 use charcoal be expensive little sir
'To use charcoal is a little dearer, sir,

saya piker saya lëbbe baeh pake kayu api.
 1s think 1s more good use wood fire
I think I had better use firewood.' (Lim 1887:50)

In (18), the cook is referred to with the Hokkien pronoun *lu*. However, in his answer to the master's question, the cook refers to himself with the Malay pronoun *saya*.

The unequal status of the two interlocutors is also illustrated in example (19), which shows the lady of the house referring to herself with the Malay pronoun *saya* and to her tailor with the Hokkien pronoun *lu*.

- (19) Tukang jaet, bila lu ada snang saya mau lu
 craftsman sew when 2s be comfortable 1s want 2s
'Tailor, when you have time I want you to

kasi tunjoh sama saya lu punya chonto kaen.
 give show with 1s 2s have sample cloth
show me your samples of cloth.' (Lim 1887:71)

The asymmetrical relations also characterize the relationship between a doctor and a patient. Because of his profession, the doctor has a higher status than the patient. As a result, he is addressed either as *doctor*, or is as *tuan*.

- (20) Doctor, saya mau tuan pëggi tengngoh orang saket dëkkat saja
 doctor 1s want sir go see person ill near just
'Doctor, I want you to go and see a patient near here.' (Lim 1887:108)

- (21) Saya punya badan manyah panas, tah bole tahan, tuan.
 1s have body much hot not can stand TUAN
'My body is very hot, I can't bear it, doctor.' (Lim 1887:109)

The address terms used between the doctor and the patient are asymmetrical, as a result the patient is never addressed as *tuan*

by the doctor. Instead, he is addressed with the pronoun *lu*, for example:

- (22) O, lu, jangan minom aër sědjoh lagi,
 o 2s don't drink water cold again
 'Oh, don't drink any more cold water,' (Lim 1887:109)

At one point, the doctor calls his patient *orang pute* 'white person'.

- (23) Satu kali makan satu sendoh běssar, orang pute, satu hari tiga kali.
 one time eat one spoon big person white one day three times
 'A table spoonful to be taken thrice a day.' (Lim 1887:110)

It is not clear from the text itself or from the term *orang pute*, which was at times used to address both Europeans and Babas, whether the addressee in this example was a European or a Baba. The possibility that the addressee is a Baba is based on Vaughan's ([1879] 1974:3) observation that "*Babas* on being asked if they were Chinamen bristle up and say in an offended tone 'I am not a Chinaman, I am a British subject, an *Orang putih*' literally, a white man."

The title *tuan* may co-occur with some professional titles. For example, the editor of *Bintang Timor* is addressed as *tuan editor*.

- (24) Tuan Editor, tolong-lah atas perkara ini.
 Tuan Editor help -LAH on top of matters this
 'Tuan Editor please help spreading the word.' (SPA:31)

The term *tuan editor* is also often used as a term of reference; for example:

- (25) Tuan Editor punya fikiran tentu berstuju dengan fikiran sahya ...
 tuan Editor have thought certain agree with thought 1s
 'Tuan Editor will certainly agree with me ...' (SDAP:30)

Like titles, Baba Malay kinship terms also function as terms of reference.

- (26) Mak ada kah pukol sahya bergitu kuat.
 mother be Q beat 1s so strong
 'Mother, you are hitting me so hard.' (TLMT:3)

Some Baba Malay kinship terms are of Malay origin, others are of Hokkien origin. For example, according to Lim (1887:134),

Baba Malay has two terms for 'elder sister': the Malay term *kakah* and the Hokkien term *tachi*. Lim (1887) says that within the Baba community, the Hokkien term is used, while in conversations with the Malays, the Malay term is used. As in Malay, the kinship terms may be used to address someone who is not related to the speaker. For example in the story *Smoa pun baik jikalau penghabisannya* 'All's well that ends well', a female neighbor is referred to as *tachi* 'elder sister'.

- (27) Kenapa tachi begitu takut dengan si Bachik,
 why elder sister so afraid with si Bachik
 'Why are you, Tachi, afraid of si Bachik?' (SPB 8:23)

In Baba Malay, the use of some terms has variation that reflects, not relative social status, but the degree of linguistic knowledge of individual Baba Malay speakers. Some of the Babas knew not only Baba Malay, but also formal Malay, and could switch to it under the appropriate conditions. In the following example the speaker uses the Malay enclitic *-ku* for the first person possessive pronoun, which otherwise does not occur in Baba Malay.

- (28) Mengapakah anak-ku jadi demikian itu.
 why -Q child-1s become thus that
 'Why did you, my child, become like that?' (Kab:6)

However, even in the somewhat formal *Bintang Timor*, it is more common to find *anak saya* 'my child' instead *anak-ku* 'my child'.

Some Babas also knew the terms required when one was to address a Malay rajah. Those of the Babas who were able to talk to a Malay rajah, referred to him in the same way the Malays did, namely with the term *tuanku* 'my lord'. Additionally, a Baba would refer to himself in the same way that the Malay subject would, namely with the special first person pronoun *patik*.

- (29) jikalau Tuanku sudi ajak patik makan bersama sama
 if Tuan-1s pleased invite 1s eat BER-with with
 'If my Lord is pleased to invite me to eat with your

Tuanku, patik terlebih suka makan makanan Malayu.
 Tuan-1s 1s TER-more like eat food Malay
Majesty, I would prefer to eat Malay food. (DDR:57)

Example (29) shows the competence of some Baba Malay speakers in applying the formal Malay system of reference when talking to a rajah.

3.2 Reciprocity in Baba Malay

A Baba of an equal status is referred to with the Hokkien pronoun *lu* 'you'. And, in order to code familiarity, the speaker refers to himself with the Hokkien pronoun *gua* 'I'.

- (30) *Lu* ada mēnniaga bēssar sama dia?

2s be MENG-trade big with 3s

'Have you been doing a large business with him?' (Lim 1887:90)

- (31) *gua* suda mēnniaga sama dia ada lima anam taon suda

1s SUDAH MENG-trade with 3s be five six years SUDAH

'I have had business transactions with him for the last five or six years.' (Lim 1887:90)

In *Bintang Timor*, in which articles were written in a more formal variety of Baba Malay, there was usually no need to mark familiarity, but even there one can occasionally find conversations in which familiarity is expressed. For example, in a conversation that appeared in *Bintang Timor* on March 11, 1895, two friends are talking about how to get a letter published in the newspaper, and use *lu* and *gua*. At one point they start to quarrel and one of them says:

- (32) Gua kata lu satu besar bodoh.

1s say 2s one big stupid

'I say you are very stupid' (SPB: 20)

When a policeman joins in, he addresses them both with the pronoun *lu* marked for plurality with *smoa*.

- (33) Pegi, pegi, *lu-smoa* — apa gadoh gadoh di sini?

go go 2s-all why fight fight at here

'Go away, both of you — why are you fighting here?' (SPB:25)

Examples (32-33) illustrate again that the pronoun *lu* is used in two kinds of situations. It is used reciprocally to refer to a person of equal status and a friend, and it is used nonreciprocally to address a person perceived as having a lower status.

The reciprocal use of formal terms also signals that a social distance exists between two speakers.

- (34) hamba dengar tuan handak jual rumah dan tanah, iyakah betul?
 1s hear tuan want sell house and ground 3s-Q good
'I hear (that) you want to sell your house and land, true?' (PH:11)

In (34), the speaker refers to himself with *hamba* and his interlocutor with *tuan*. Both terms mark the speaker as an inferior speaking to a superior. However, in his answer, the interlocutor uses the same terms, marking in turn himself as an inferior speaking to a superior. Compare (34) and (35).

- (35) hamba handak jual juga; adakah tuan handak membli?
 1s want sell still be -Q tuan want MENG-buy
'I want to sell it; do you want to buy it?' (PH:15-6)

When the two Baba Malay speakers refer to each other as *tuan*, and refer to themselves with the pronoun *hamba*, they mark the mutual relationship not only as socially equal, but also as very formal.

3.3 Personal names

In Baba Malay, personal names are used as address terms. Names used by the Babas are usually of Chinese origin. As an illustration see sentence (37), which was uttered by a Malay speaker.

- (36) Keong Soon, angkau betul tada patut skali;
 Keong Soon 2s good not be proper very
'Keong Soon, you shouldn't have done it,' (SPB:5)

In (36), a Baba is addressed with his personal name Keong Soon and referred to with the Malay pronoun *angkau*.

A Baba would also use his or her personal name to introduce himself or herself; for example:

- (37) Look Yan Kit, tukang gigi
 Look Yan Kit, craftsman tooth
'Look Yan Kit, a dentist' (Ad.3)

In (37), the Baba introduces himself with his Chinese name and a professional title, *tukang gigi* 'dentist'.

Personal names are also used to refer to a third person. However, when personal names are used to refer to a third person, they are preceded by what Wilkinson (1959:1101) calls 'a titular prefix'. The titular prefix that Wilkinson specifically

mentions is the Malay *si*. When occurring in front of personal names, the polite prefix *si* is best translated as 'Mr.' or 'Mrs.'

- (38) Bachik, si Tia Oon itu sudah lebih makan dan minum,
 Bachik Mr. Tia Oon that already more eat and drink
'Bachik, that Mr. Tia Oon the more he ate and drank

lebih pula chakapnya!
 more also speak-NYA
the more he talked!' (SPB 2:68)

- (39) dia dapat khabar si Watt Neo itu sudah lari,
 3ps get news si Watt Neo that SUDAH run
'he learned that Mrs. Watt Neo had already run away,' (SK 2:4)

Further, as examples (38-39) illustrate, *si* may occur in front of names referring to men (example 38) and in front of names referring to women (example 39).

It is not clear, however, exactly what *si* marks. Wilkinson's characterization of *si* as a titular prefix is not followed by Lewis (1968). Lewis (1968:123) characterizes *si* occurring in front of a personal name as denoting 'friendly familiarity'. She gives the following example:

- (40) Biar kita ajak aku si-Kasim.
 let we invite 1s Si Kasim
'Let's ask 'our' Kasim to come along.' (Lewis 1968:123)

It is possible, however, that both Wilkinson and Lewis are right, and *si* occurring in front of personal names functions as a titular prefix that marks what Lewis calls 'friendly familiarity'. The proof that there is an element of familiarity associated with *si*, is that narrative stories *si* never occurs in front of personal names of newly introduced characters.

In my data, *si* also occurs in front of common names, in the same position that *tuan* may occur. As an illustration, compare examples (41-42).

- (41) Demi di dengar ulih si penjaja, suka chitalah dia,
 at (when) DI hear by Mr. seller like joy -LAH 3s
'When the hawker heard it, he became very happy,' (PH:12)

- (42) maka tuan penjaja pun menjawablah dengan adab sopannya.
 and tuan seller EMP MENG-answer-LAH with courtesy show respect
'and the hawker answered him respectfully.' (PH:10)

The parallelism in the distribution of *si* and *tuan* exemplified in (41-42) at least suggests that *si* functions as a titular prefix.

3.4 Ethnicity and terms of address

In referring to a third person, personal names are often preceded by the term *Baba*. The origin of the term *Baba* is not known. In the literature, the most often quoted explanation is the one given by Vaughan ([1879] 1974:2), who says that “the term *Baba* is used by the natives of Bengal to designate the children of Europeans and it is probable that the word was applied by the Indian convicts at Pinang to Chinese children and so came into general use.” The term *Baba* used in front of a personal name denotes the referent as a member of the *Baba* community.

- (43) *Baba Tia Oon dan Baba Keong Soon ada kenal sama si Bachik baik*
Baba Tia Oon & Baba Keong Soon be recognize with Mr. Bachik well
‘Babas Tia Oon and Keong Soon knew Mr. Bachik very well,’ (SPB:18)

In (43), the term *Baba* also denotes the referent as a male. Thus, this term corresponds very much to English *Mr.*, German *Herr*, or Polish *Pan* functioning like a general term rather than a particular title. However, the term *Baba* may also be used without a personal name following it to refer to a man. Sentence (44), for example, was uttered by a Malay, who used the term *Baba*.

- (44) “Hai!” kata dia “Baba ingat baik baik bila masok hutan
 hei said 3s baba remember good good when enter jungle
 “Hei!” he said “Baba, you should remember about it when you enter
 jika handak tembak rusa atau ayam hutan.”
 if wish shoot deer or fowl jungle
 the jungle, if you want to shoot a deer or a jungle fowl.” (Badi:5)

The advice given in (44) follows the discussion of *badi*, i.e. “ghostly influences haunting a deer scene of slaughter, esp. the slaying of a deer or a jungle fowl” (Wilkinson 1959:62).

The term that is used to address a female *Baba* is the Javanese term *nyonya*.

- (45) nyonya, angkau slalu pergi di rumah sebelah berjam jam,
 nyonya 2s always go in house next BER-hour hour
 ‘nyonya, you always go to the neighbors house for hours,’ (SPB 9:64)

The term *nyonya* corresponds to English *Mrs.*, German *Frau*, or Polish *Pani*.

When reduplicated, the term *Baba baba* is used to refer to all the members of the Baba community.

- (46) Ada-kah Baba baba fikir mahu panggil
 be-Q Baba baba think want call
'Do you, Babas, think that we should call

satu perhimpunan segala baba baba,
 one meeting all baba baba
a meeting of all the Babas,

supaya bulih preksa apa itu yang tiada betol?
 in order that can examine what that YANG not be true
so that we can examine everything that is wrong?' (PP:140)

Example (46) comes from a letter published in *Bintang Timor* on November 19th, 1894. In this letter, the author, calling himself 'a straits-born Chinese', discusses the Babas' conditions of living and suggests that they should be improved. In (46) he is suggesting that the Babas should meet and discuss how to improve their lives.

The term *Baba* also appears in advertisements found in *Bintang Timor*; for example:

- (47) Membri tahu kapada Mem-mem, Tuan-tuan dan Baba-baba di Singapura,
 MENG-give news to madam tuan-tuan and baba-baba in Singapore
'We would like to inform you, Ladies and Gentlemen of Singapore,'
 (Ad.1:2)

In (47), the term *Baba baba* co-occurs with two other terms, *Mem-mem* and *Tuan-tuan*. The distinction is made between the Babas, addressed as *Baba-baba*, and the non-Babas, most possibly Europeans, addressed as *Mem-mem* and *Tuan-tuan*. But often the Babas as well as the non-Babas are addressed as *Mem-mem* and *Tuan-tuan*.

- (48) Membri tahu kapada Mem-mem dan Tuan-tuan di Singapura ini,
 MENG-give news to madam and tuan-tuan in Singapore this
'would like to inform you, Ladies and Gentlemen of Singapore'
 (Ad.2:2)

Examples (47-48) show that there is some variation in the way the Baba community is referred to. Some authors prefer to separate out the Babas and refer to them explicitly; others prefer to refer to all the members of the Singaporean society as *Mem-*

mem and *Tuan-tuan*, incorporating the Babas into the more general terms.

In example (49), the ethnicity of the groups referred to is again coded. The European women are referred to as *Mem mem* and *Missi missi*, while the Baba women are addressed as *Umbok umbok*.

- (49) dan tunjok-kan smoa ini kata-kan di Town Hall kepada
and show -KAN all this say -KAN at Town Hall to
'and would show all this at the Town Hall to you,

Mem mem dan Missi missi dan Umbok umbok
Mam Mam and miss miss and umbok umbok
Ma'am, Miss and umbok' (SPS:21)

The term *umbok* is translated by Wilkinson (1959:299) as "mother, elder sister; dear lady." Wilkinson (1959:299) also says that "*umbok* is not so much a definition of relationship as an appellation of respect and affection for ladies somewhat older than the speaker."

4. Conclusions

The Baba Malay system of address and reference reflects the Chinese origin of the Babas, their assimilation to Malay culture, and the English influence on them. The Chinese origin of the Babas is reflected primarily in the Hokkien kinship terms as well as in the two Hokkien pronouns: *gua* 'I' and *lu* 'you'. The Malay assimilation is reflected in the Malay titles, the professional terms, and the pronouns *saya* 'I' and *engkau* 'you'. The English influence is reflected in titles borrowed from English.

The analysis has shown which of the Baba Malay terms were used nonreciprocally, and which were used reciprocally. The Hokkien pronoun *lu* was used nonreciprocally to refer to individuals of lower rank. It was also used reciprocally to refer to individuals of equal rank and familiars. The Malay term *Tuan* was used nonreciprocally to either address or refer to individuals of higher rank or reciprocally to address socially distant equals. The development of the T/V distinction in Baba Malay supports what some linguists refer to as "universality of the rules of address" according to which "the forms of address used by the superior of an unequal dyad are also the forms reciprocally used between intimate equals, whereas the forms used by the inferior of an unequal dyad are also the forms reciprocally used between distant equals" (Kroger and Wood 1992:148).

The Chinese ethnicity of the Babas is not only reflected in the Hokkien pronouns, but also by how these pronouns fit in the system. The Hokkien pronouns are used at home and among those one knows very well. Likewise, the Hokkien kinship terms are used primarily among the Babas themselves. In contrast, the Malay and English terms are used outside the home. This differentiation between the Hokkien terms used at home and the Malay and English terms used outside the home parallels the constraint that Gordon (1964) claims is true for assimilation in other spheres of life. Gordon (1964:79) observes that the last place one finds assimilation is in the private spheres (religious beliefs and practices, ethical values, and family). In the case of the Baba Malay language, the Hokkien inherited terms were preserved at home. What is more, the Hokkien terms became the mark of the Chinese ethnicity of the Babas. As a result, they were often used also by the Malays addressing the Babas.

Note

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Appendix

LIST OF TEXTS FROM *BINTANG TIMOR*

News reports:

- (1) *Kabajikan* (Kab)
- (2) *Perbuatan peranakkan Baba baba* (PP)
- (3) *Dua orang Hokkien* (DOH)

Narrative stories:

- (1) *Di cheritakan dengan rengkasnya waktu kawinnya Tuan putri anak-anda Beginda Sultan Johore* (DDR), by Kalam Langit
- (2) *Pengli Hati* (PH), by Mastari
- (3) *Smoa pun baik jikalau penghabisannya baik* (SPB)
- (4) *Terlampau lekas mahu tolong* (TLMT) by Tit-Bits

Letters:

- (1) *Surat dari Ahli Pembacha* (SDAP)
- (2) *Surat Peranakkan Singapura* (SPS)

Advertisements:

- (1) Advertisement from September 21, 1894 (Ad.1)
- (2) Advertisement from December 2, 1894 (Ad.2)
- (3) Advertisement from April 16, 1895 (Ad.3)

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