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**THE USE AND MAINTENANCE OF BABA MALAY LANGUAGE
AMONG THE PERANAKAN IN MELAKA**



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Awang Had Salleh
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Abstrak

Bahasa Baba telah disenaraikan sebagai salah satu bahasa yang terancam dan kini berhadapan dengan kepupusan akibat dominasi bahasa seperti Bahasa Melayu, Inggeris dan Mandarin. Penurunan jumlah penutur, khususnya dalam kalangan generasi muda, menunjukkan keperluan yang mendesak untuk pemeliharaan. Kajian ini meneliti penggunaan semasa Bahasa Baba, mengkaji sikap penutur terhadap tahap ancamannya, dan mengenal pasti langkah-langkah untuk memelihara bahasa ini dalam kalangan komuniti Peranakan. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah campuran yang menggabungkan data kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Tinjauan dan temubual diadakan dengan komuniti Peranakan merentas generasi yang berbeza. Kajian ini menggunakan rangka kerja *Fishman*, *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)*, *Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS)* dan Sembilan Faktor UNESCO untuk menilai daya tahan Bahasa dan tahap ancamannya. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa Bahasa Baba digunakan dalam konteks keluarga dan jarang diwariskan kepada generasi muda. Sikap penutur terhadap bahasa ini adalah tidak sama di mana generasi awal menyatakan kebimbangan terhadap kemerosotan bahasa ini, manakala generasi muda menunjukkan kesedaran yang terhad kepada kepentingan budayanya. Selain itu, bahasa ini juga diklasifikasikan sebagai *moribund* dengan kurang daripada 1000 penutur mencerminkan tahap pengancaman yang kritikal. Dapatan kualitatif turut mendedahkan wujud ketegangan antara rasa bangga terhadap warisan budaya dan persepsi bahawa Bahasa Baba tidak mempunyai kegunaan praktikal dalam kehidupan moden. Strategi pemeliharaan yang diketengahkan komuniti Peranakan termasuklah inisiatif kesedaran dan sokongan kerajaan untuk menghidupkan bahasa ini. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman cara pemeliharaan bahasa terancam dan menekankan kepentingan budaya dalam mengekalkan Bahasa Baba sebagai sebahagian daripada warisan linguistik yang pelbagai di Malaysia.

Kata kunci: Bahasa Baba, Bahasa terancam, Peranakan, Perwarisan antara generasi.

Abstract

Baba Malay has been listed as an endangered language and is now facing extinction due to the dominance of other languages such as Malay, English and Mandarin. The declining number of speakers, particularly among the younger generation, highlights the urgent need for preservation. This study investigates the current use of Baba Malay, examine speakers' attitudes towards its endangerment and identifies measures for its preservation within the Peranakan community. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys and interviews were conducted with members of the Peranakan community across different generations. The research utilised the Fishman Domain, the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) and the UNESCO Nine Factors and to access language vitality and the degree of endangerment. Findings reveal that Baba Malay is primarily used in familial settings and rarely passed down to younger generations. Speaker attitudes towards the language are mixed, with older generations expressing concern over its decline, while the younger generations display limited awareness of its cultural significance. The language is classified as moribund with fewer than 1000 speakers, reflecting a critical stage of endangerment. Qualitative insights reveal a tension between cultural pride and the perception that Baba Malay lacks practical utility in modern life. Preservation strategies highlighted by the Peranakan community include awareness initiatives and government support to revive the language. These findings contribute to understanding how endangered languages can be preserved and highlight the cultural significance of maintaining Baba Malay as part of Malaysia's diverse linguistic heritage.

Keywords: Baba Malay, Endangered language, Peranakan, Intergenerational transmission.

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List of Abbreviations

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
GIDS	Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
EGIDS	Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Language serves as a manifestation of culture, signifying the distinctiveness of a group's identity, and as such, it is imperative for both individuals and the community to preserve it. According to Fishman (1996), language embodies the essence of the origins, encompassing the mind, spirit, and soul. The presence of language serves as an indicator of the speaker's ethnic, group, tribal, or religious affiliation. Language is widely recognised as a significant social function. Effective communication requires the use of language to articulate one's desires and intentions. According to Joseph's (2018), language is a subjective phenomenon that is significantly influenced by social factors. This influence has been evident throughout the course of human evolution.

The number of languages in the world is constantly changing. Some languages are disappearing, while others are being developed. (Eberhard, 2022). The main cause of language disappearance is language transfer. Language shift occurs when a group of people stop speaking their native language and start using other languages. This event can happen for a variety of reasons, such as colonisation, migration, or economic opportunity.

However, according to the Old Dominion University Model United Nation Conference (2020) on the topic of Protecting Languages and Preserving Cultures, there are over 6500 to 7000 languages and major dialects around the world, approximately 2700 are on the verge of complete disappearance as not many speakers are left. Throughout history, languages have unsurprisingly shifted and declined into latency. Looking into the recent

pace of language loss, it is natural (Zhang et al, 2022). Taking severely endangered languages such as Ainu in Japan, with fewer than ten fluent speakers, Mapudungun in Chile, which is facing steep generational drop-off despite state-supported revitalisation efforts, and Gaelic in Scotland, whose survival depends severely on institutional support and community activism (Olko & Sallabank, 2021)

Malaysia is a developing country which made up of Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia which are Sabah and Sarawak, with current total population of 34,058,800 (Department of Statistics, 2024), comprising of 66.19% Malay, 25.49% Chinese, 7.45% Indian and 0.85% indigenous people. However, these numbers do not reflect the current Peranakan population and Baba Malay speakers since the Peranakan were included under Chinese race for the purpose of administration (Lee, 2014). Malay is the official language in Malaysia and it is spoken by the majority (Tan, 2001), English, Hokkien and Cantonese are spoken to a lesser extent. It is noteworthy to note that while Hokkien is more generally spoken in Melaka and Penang, Cantonese is more prevalent in other Malaysian states like the capital state of Kuala Lumpur. (Chen, 2003). English on the other hand, is also communicated by the younger generation. It is growing to be more prevalent in education, as a result of private schools using it as a more common form of instruction (David & Govindasamy, 2005). Additionally, Malaysia has its own regional variation of colloquial English called “Manglish” (Lee, 1998). However, Bahasa Melayu continues to be the most dominant language in Malaysia.

Among Malaysia’s diverse linguistics tapestry is Baba Malay. Baba Malay is a native language of a community of people referred as the straits-born Chinese. They are the

descendants of the early Chinese settlers in the Straits of Melaka. The Chinese in Melaka during the 17th and 18th centuries created pidginised Malay which later gained its acceptance due to large economic importance involved the Baba Chinese community. Shellabear (1913) notes that during the British settlement, the Chinese have had their commanding influence throughout the business affairs. Baba Malay was the language of the Peranakan community for centuries when it was used in everyday life, education and literature during the 15th century when the language developed. During the 20th century, the use of Baba Malay began to decline. This is supported by Lee and Lim (2020), who claimed that Baba Malay has become one of the most endangered contact languages in the world. Baba Malay is now more of a home language (Chia, 1983; Lau, 1984; Pakir, 1986).

Fishman (1991) conceptualised the language domain as encompassing diverse social contexts and settings wherein language is both utilised and acquired. The phenomenon under consideration encompasses both the formal and informal domains of language usage, which include but are not limited to education, government, media, and everyday interactions. According to Fishman's (1991) argument, the robustness of a language is contingent upon its ubiquity across all societal spheres, given that language serves a pivotal function in the dissemination of cultural, identity, and cognitive information. Upon examination of Baba Malay, it can be observed that the language has undergone a gradual transformation throughout the centuries, amalgamating the linguistic features of both Malay and Chinese. Consequently, the cultural heritage and identity of the Peranakan in Melaka are reflected through it. The language is primarily utilised in casual settings, such as familial assemblies, social gatherings, and communal exchanges.

Accordingly, the vitality of a language depends on its presence in both formal and informal domains. While Baba Malay may be less visible in formal domains such as education and government, it thrives in the informal domain of the Peranakan community in Melaka. The language serves as a medium for communication, storytelling and transmission of cultural practice among the Peranakan.

Language loss, commonly referred as language death, does not necessarily result in dysfunctionality. The case of Baba Malay language in Melaka illustrates this as the community experienced socioeconomic progress during the British colonial era, as noted by Chew (2013). Baba Malay language is currently regarded as a moribund language having maintained its social function while compromising its cultural integrity. The following table shows the linguistic repertoire in Malaysia reported by Coluzzi (2018).

Table 1.1

The Malaysian Linguistic Repertoire

Languages	Linguistic repertoire
English	Inter-ethnic communication, modernity, economic opportunities, foreigners/tourism
Standard Malay	Inter-ethnic communication, nationalism, economic opportunities, Islam
Mandarin Chinese	Communication within the Chinese community, identity for the Chinese, economic opportunities
Arabic	Islam
Tamil	Communication within the Tamil community, identity for the Tamil)
Other minority languages	Communication within the ethnic group, local identity
Other Malay and Chinese Dialects	Local communication and identity

Source: Coluzzi, (2018)

According to Coluzzi (2018), evaluating the level of prestige associated with a language is a complex task. The same research also reveals languages that are officially supported are considered the most prestigious varieties. Therefore, English has been ranked as the most widely used language, followed by Malay. Despite its status as the national language, Malay is ranked second and is utilised extensively across various domains. In addition, the predominant educational system in Malaysia incorporates the utilisation of the Malay language, with English serving as the secondary language. Despite lacking official recognition as Malaysian languages, Chinese and Indian students attended national schools where they were instructed in Chinese and Tamil, respectively. Despite the assertion that Baba Malay serves as the language of the Peranakan, its contemporary usage remains limited and the possibility of its eventual extinction looms large (Coluzzi, 2018).

The users of the Baba Malay language are also known as Peranakan and the words from Baba Malay mostly originated from Malay (Eberhard, Simons, and Fennig, 2022), where there are some arguments saying the grammar is mainly derived from Hokkien. The language is mainly spoken by its users in Melaka and Pulau Pinang Island. Parkir (1986) and Thurgood (1998) claimed that the language is a dialect of Malay. Nonetheless, many agrees that Baba Malay was formed during the contact of the Chinese through the Chinese Malay intermarriage.

Accurate statistical data regarding the number of individuals who speak Baba Malay is currently unavailable. The state of affairs in Melaka appears to be comparably discouraging to that of Singapore. According to Salleh's (2006) report, the Peranakan population in Malaysia was limited to 2,000 individuals. Meanwhile, in a more recent

research by Azmi et al. (2018) the population of Peranakan living in Melaka is only at 600 people and getting lesser. The language of Baba Malay in Malaysia is believed to have a limited number of speakers, with an estimated count of less than 1,000 individuals. This is attributed to the language's moribund state. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that only a small number of 14 speakers under the age of 50 are known to exist, which is considered to be a rare occurrence. It is also assumed that the distribution of Peranakan individuals who are under and over 50 years of age is equal.

Given the severe decline in active usage, documenting and studying Baba Malay becomes increasingly critical, not only for preserving linguistic heritage, but also for safeguarding the cultural identity of the Peranakan community in Melaka. Understanding the current state of Baba Malay's maintenance efforts is therefore imperative, as it sheds light on broader sociolinguistic phenomena related to language endangerment and cultural survival.

1.2 Problem Statement

Research on language maintenance and language shift has been conducted globally (Brenzinger, 2006; Heinrich, 2004; Walsh, 2005). These studies explore a range of sociolinguistics scenarios from “a no longer spoken language to an endangered language that is nevertheless spoken by a large number of younger generations” (Zuckermann, 2020). Looking into the perspective of language profile in Malaysia, Article 152 constituted that Malay language is the official language and its functions and roles are undisputed as the national language. As a result of positioning the National Language Act, other minority languages such as Baba Malay are increasingly confined to limitation and only used in certain domains.

Baba Malay is undergoing a language shift with the other prestige languages in Malaysia, such as English, Malay, and Mandarin (Coluzzi, 2018; Subramaniam & Mohamad, 2010). The language has been evaluated to be ‘critically endangered’ on the Language Endangerment Index (LEI) developed by the Catalogue of Endangered Languages (ELCat) and documented on the Endangered Languages Project Website (2021). Lee (2014) further characterises the language as moribund as those speaking the language are almost exclusively from the grandparents’ generation. Baba Malay, according to the Endangered Languages Project (2021), has only 2,000 speakers in Malaysia and faces a very low likelihood of being passed down to the next generation.

Research conducted by Coluzzi, Riget and Wang (2013; 2017) and Coluzzi (2017), applying the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS), developed by Lewis and Simons (2010) derived from Fishman’s GIDS (1991) to assess the vitality of minority languages in Malaysia. Based on their findings, Baba Malay is categorised under Level 6b (Threatened), 7 (Shifting) and even 8a (Moribund), depending on the community and region. This variability underscored both the fragmented vitality of the language and its decline in usage and transmission, particularly among younger generations.

Intergenerational transmission has become significantly lower with most active users now being elderly speakers. This situation aligns Baba Malay with global trends of endangerment, where loss of transmission in the home is a decisive factor (Sallabank & Austin, 2022). Without intervention, Baba Malay risks becoming a stage in which no new first-language speakers emerge (Bromham et al., 2022)

There are a number of factors contributing to the decline of Baba Malay. One of the factors is language shift. As more and more Peranakans in Melaka adopt Malay or English as their primary language, the use of Baba Malay is declining. The government's policy which has promoted the use of Malay and English over other languages significantly impacted the decline of the language. Socioeconomic mobility and formal schooling, while having advantage in broader contexts are strong correlated with language endangerment as seen globally (Bromham et al., 2022). Many Peranakans has found that the language is no longer required in day-to-day communication as it has no value in the modern world. While the younger Peranakan perceive Baba Malay as lacking contemporary usage thus, further accelerating its decline in usage.

This research would enable the community of Baba Malay speakers or also known as the Peranakan to be alarmed and aware that their language is on the verge of being forgotten by the next few generations. It is crucial for the community to ensure the language is not decaying. The loss of Baba Malay would not only diminish Peranakan cultural heritage but also represent wider loss to linguists concerned with linguistic diversity as an aspect of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003). This study therefore addresses the language vitality of Baba Malay should be extended beyond the concern of the minority (community) itself. Language vitality should be gauged for any large groups of language users.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to seek whether the Baba Malay language is being utilised and passed down to the younger generations. In achieving these aims, three objectives have been outlined to guide the phase of the study:

RO1: To identify the domains (home, friends and formal) of the Baba Malay language usage in Melaka.

RO2: To examine the speaker's attitude towards the endangerment of Baba Malay language in Melaka.

RO3: To determine the measures taken to preserve the Baba Malay language in Melaka.

1.4 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions in order to meet the objectives:

RQ1: What are the domains where the language is being utilised?

RQ2: What are the attitude of the Baba Malay users in Melaka which affect the endangerment of the language?

RQ3: What are the measures should be taken to preserve the Baba Malay language in the future?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Simons and Fenning (2018) reported that Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multilingual nation that has historically spoken 140 distinct languages. Primarily, these spoken languages are made up of 54.6% Malays, 24.6% Chinese, 12.8% Bumiputras, 7.3% Indians (notably Tamil) and 0.7% other unlisted minority ethnicities (Saw, 2015). Despite

this great linguistic variety, Standard Malay (Bahasa Malaysia) is the only official language of Malaysia. Meanwhile, English as the past colonial language has been considered a second language because it has a very dominant presence, and it has been used widely in many high domains such as media and education. Omar (1979) stated that English has the tendency to be the primary language of interethnic communication, especially those with education.

Hence, English is also spoken among a small number of Malaysians as their first language including the Peranakans. Amidst the argument which is repeated in the majority of educational and publicity materials, that Baba Malay is the language of Baba Nyonyas. Colluzi et al. (2018) have theorised that Baba Malay is not widely and frequently used by current Peranakans and the process of segregation may be in progress through the observation of Malaysia's overall level of linguistic vitality. The observation has shown that Peranakans probably tends to shift towards more outstanding languages, such as English or Mandarin which have to be examined the reasons behind these attitudes toward the language.

The study will create awareness to the community in which they need to realise that despite the language being at the verge of extinction. They should feel alarmed as the language is a symbol of their identity. Baba Malay is the key part of the Peranakan heritage apart from its' unique culture.

This study indirectly allows the Peranakan to rekindle with the past. Knowing that the language is being used mainly by the older generation, having the younger generation to

learn the language will enable the later generation to learn from their grandparents. Thus, promoting language. The result of this study can be used by the government in the effort to preserve the language, adding Baba Malay as one of the cultural preservations in Baba Nyonya Museum in Bandar Hilir, Melaka.

This study also will serve as the avenue for the community to ensure the language is being passed down to another generation. Language awareness will particularly benefit the children of the later generation as they will want to learn the root of their heritage language. As mentioned by Datin Seri Endon (2004) in “The World of the Peranakan: Baba and Nyonya Heritage of Southeast Asia”, despite many efforts made to ensure the culture of Baba Nyonya keep thriving, the language will somehow keep deteriorating if the community itself did not take the responsibility. There is plenty of literature on the Baba Nyonya community, but the writing mostly focuses on Baba Nyonyas’ material culture. There are a few linguistic studies available, but sociolinguistic studies seem to be limited. Nevertheless, some analysis of sociolinguistic nature can be found in most studies by Tan (1988; 1993) and Ansaldo et al. (2015). In addition, a study by Lee (2014) is the most recent Baba Nyonya grammar available that contains an intriguing chapter on the vitality of Baba Malay, however, it does not appear to be based on sociolinguistic data.

Looking at this lack of studies in this area, this study will be conducted in order to record Baba Nyonyas’ linguistic repertoire, the use of Baba Malay in different domains and the community attitudes with regard to the language focusing to measure the definite vitality of the heritage language. Thus, this research will greatly contribute to policy makers and the Peranakan community.

1.6 Scope of Study

The focus of this research is to assess the present level of vitality of Baba Malay language, which is a Malay dialect utilised by the Peranakans residing in Melaka. It is unfeasible to obtain an accurate count of the Baba Nyonya population, as this ethnic group or community has yet to be officially registered on the website of the Department of Statistics Malaysia. The e-statistics data retrieved from the website exclusively presented the three primary ethnic groups in Malaysia, namely Malay, Chinese, and Indian, alongside a distinct category designated as "others."

This study will look into the daily practise of the Baba Malay language in the Peranakan community in Melaka by completing a questionnaire on daily language usage and their attitudes towards the language in which by collecting responses from younger and older respondents. The results will be compared in apparent time as well as using the parameters to assess the language vitality and the domain of the language use. Besides, this study also briefly mentioned the language shift and bilingualism that occurs in the society as it is one of the reasons that cause language to extinct, but it will not be covered in detail. Thus, after some discussion on Baba Nyonya's linguistic lists and results obtained from the analysis of the status of the language vitality, some general reflections and recommendations will be presented in order to maintain the Baba Malay language.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Peranakan

According to Teo (1996), the term "Peranakan" originates from the Malay language with circumfix of "per- -an," an abstract nominal morpheme, to the root word "anak," which denotes 'child' through a morphological process. Originally, it denoted the anatomical structure known as the uterus. Subsequently, the metaphorical range of the term was broadened to encompass individuals who were born in the locality but do not belong to the indigenous race (Teo, 1996).

Meanwhile, Warren (2022) defines the Peranakan as a community of mixed ethnic background of Chinese and Malay ancestry. The Peranakan possess a distinct cultural identity that is characterised by a fusion of Chinese and Malay cultural elements. This cultural amalgamation is also reflected in their language, which is recognised for its unique features. Peranakans are also known as Straits Chinese, Baba Nyonya and Nyonya Peranakan who speaks a creole language called Baba Malay. (Teo, 2016; Chew, 2013).

1.7.2 Baba Malay

Baba Malay is the language of communication used within the community of the Baba Nyonya in Melaka that is influenced by Malay and Hokkien (Lee, 2014). Nonetheless, some people in the community call it Baba Patois while some others suggest Baba Language or Peranakan. It is a dying language, and its contemporary use is mainly limited to members of the older generation. Baba Malay is a living reminder of the Peranakans' unique culture and heritage. It is characterised by its' use of Malay vocabulary, and Chinese grammar (Warren, 2022). This research will continue to use the standard term of Baba Malay to describe the language.

1.7.3 Endangered Language

According to UNESCO's definition in 2022, an endangered language is a language that is in danger of becoming extinct. In 2022, the Linguistic Society of America provided a definition for endangered language, characterising it as a language that is at risk of becoming extinct. From an alternative viewpoint, a language that has less than 10,000 speakers are classified as an endangered language (Krauss, 1992). There exist a multitude of languages that are currently undergoing a process of decline, either due to their lack of usage or their displacement by more prevalent languages.

Fishman (1991) defines an endangered language as one that is not being acquired by children. According to Crystal (2000), the language in question is one that is not utilised in educational, governmental, or media contexts. Upon examining the case of Baba Malay, it is evident that this language is exclusively spoken by native speakers, with usage primarily limited to the older generation. As a result, Baba Malay is classified as an endangered language.

1.7.4 Language Domain

Language domain is a distinct realm of human activity characterised by the consistent use of a specific classification or combination of conversational types. The language domain refers to the context in which a language is utilised. In his theoretical model, Fishman (1972) identifies five fundamental domains, namely family, friendship, religion, education, and work.

The definition of language domain varies among researchers. The definition of language domain, as proposed by Bates et al. (1998), refers to a collection of interconnected

linguistic skills that are acquired simultaneously. The argument posits that the domain of language is not a static construct, but rather a fluid and evolving system that undergoes transformation as children acquire greater knowledge of language.

In Owens' (2005) definition, language is a comprehensive classification of linguistic aptitudes that encompasses both the capacity to comprehend and the ability to express.

1.7.5 Vitality

Language vitality refers to the degree in which a language is actively spoken, transmitted across generations and sustained. It comprises factors such as number of speakers, domains of usage, community attitudes and institutional support. UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment framework considers it as the key indicator of language's long-term survival (UNESCO,2003).

Bromham et al. (2022) emphasised that intergenerational transmission remains the most reliable predictor of a language's future viability, noting that without active transmission to children, language risk losing all native speaker within a few generations.

1.7.6 Moribund

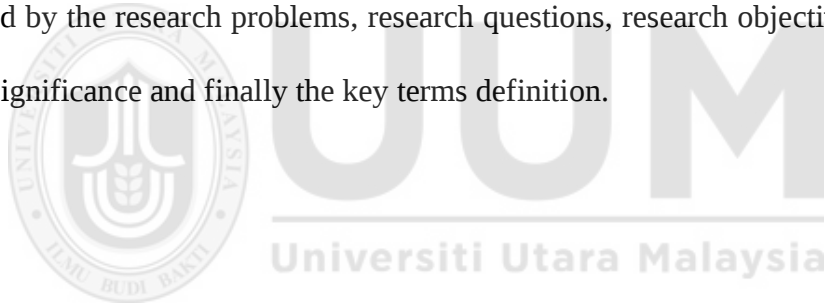
A moribund language is a language that is no longer being learned as a native language by the children of the community. Whilst the adult speakers still utilising it, the absence of intergenerational transmission signals the language is on the verge of extinction. Krauss (1992) emphasised that moribund languages are “not being learned ny children as mother tongue” and therefore unlikely to survive. UNESCO (2003) also highlighted that a language becomes severely endangered or moribund when it is no longer used in the home or passed on to the next generation.

1.7.7 Intergenerational Transmission

Intergenerational transmission is the process through which a language is passed from one generation to the next within families. It is considered the most critical factor in assessing the vitality of a language (UNESCO,2003). When the parents no longer speak the language to children, the continuity of the language is disrupted, hence can lead to language shift or eventually lead to extinction (Fishman, 1991).

1.8 Summary

In general, this chapter offers the thorough introduction of background of the study, followed by the research problems, research questions, research objectives, the scope of study, significance and finally the key terms definition.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Key Sociolinguistic Concepts

A discussion of Baba Malay cannot be separated from broader concepts in sociolinguistics that explain how languages are maintained, shifted or lost in multilingual societies. Establishing these concepts provides the necessary theoretical foundation for understanding the processes that have shaped and continue to shape, the vitality of Baba Malay in Melaka.

Language vitality refers to the degree to which a language is actively spoken, transmitted across generations and sustained in diverse domain of social interaction (UNESCO, 2003; Grenoble & Whaley, 2021). A vital language demonstrates stability in intergenerational transmission and functional use in both formal and informal settings, whereas a weakening language shows restriction to narrower domain.

Closely related to this is language endangerment, which arises when a language loses speakers and functional spaces to the extent that the survival of this language is placed at risk (Sallabank & Austin, 2022). Endangerment is seldom abrupt, but it is a reflection of a gradual sociolinguistic pressures such as assimilation policies, socioeconomic change and competition from dominant languages.

Language maintenance on the other hand describes deliberate efforts by a community or institutions to preserve and strengthen the use of a minority language, either by cultural initiatives, education or policy support (Fishman, 1991). In contrast, language shift refers

to the process which a speech community gradually abandons its heritage language in favour of a more dominant language where it often occurs across two or three generations (Bot & Stoessel, 2002).

Another important concept is the domain of language use, introduced by Fishman (1972). Domains are typical contexts such as home, school, workplace or religious institutions where a language is utilised. Minority languages are often confined to domestic or symbolic domains while dominant languages expand into prestigious and institutionalised functions such as education, governance and media.

Finally, language attitudes constitute a crucial determinant of vitality. Community members' perceptions of prestige, utility and identity value of their language directly influence whether the language is maintained or abandoned (Garret, 2010). Positive attitudes often encourage the preservation whereas negative perceptions may accelerate its decline.

In sum, these concepts provide a conceptual lens through which the case of Baba Malay can be examined. They underscore that language vitality is not solely a matter of speaker numbers, but the interplay of intergenerational transmission, domain of use and community attitudes under the influence of dominant societal forces.

2.2 The Vitality of Baba Malay Language

Building on the key sociolinguistic concepts outlined, the vitality of Baba Malay can be assessed in terms of its intergenerational transmission, functional domains and the

attitudes of its speaker. These dimensions reflect the internal dynamics of the Peranakan in Melaka as well as the external pressures exerted by more dominant languages in Melaka.

Baba Malay, also known as Peranakan Malay, is still alive and well among Southeast Asian Peranakan Chinese communities because of its distinctive cultural and linguistic significance. Originating between the 15th and 17th century, Chinese immigrants and indigenous Malay women intermarried, giving rise to this creole language. The language, which has a unique lexicon, syntax, and pronunciation, is a blend of Malay and Hokkien Chinese dialects.

Research highlights that Baba Malay serves as a crucial tool for intergenerational communication within Peranakan communities, helping the preservation of traditions, practices, and values (Wong, 2018). The language acts as a linguistic link between generations, preserving the rich cultural history of these communities. Nonetheless, as with many minority languages, there is often a divergence between symbolic recognition and active use. Comparative studies on other endangered languages have shown that a language can retain strong cultural value while simultaneously undergoing functional decline (Sallabank & Austin, 2022; Grenoble & Whaley, 2021).

However, Baba Malay faces challenges due to the influence of dominant languages such as English, Mandarin, and the standard Malay. This has led to a decline in fluency, particularly among the younger generation (Ibrahim, 2020). The diminishing number of native speakers raises concerns about the sustainability of the language (Ch'ng, 2020).

Efforts are being made to revive Baba Malay, including publishing glossaries and dictionaries, and conducting language classes and cultural events (Synergy, 2021). However, such initiatives have been limited in scope and scholars have warned that without institutional support and systematic educational integration, revitalisation efforts are unlikely to halt long-term decline (Lee, 2019; Coluzzi, Riget & Kitade, 2018).

Nowadays, Baba Malay has become a home language that faces the danger of extinction (Chia, 1983; Parkir, 1986) and most of Peranakan in Melaka speak using non-Baba Malay languages, which include English, Hokkien, and Malay, which happen to be more dominant. Apart from the reason of being 'patois', the Peranakan have their own identity and culture, which are described as being "syncretic" (Hardwick, 2018) and "hybrid" (Lim, 2010). Lee (2019) mentioned that Baba Malay was recognised as facing endangerment since the early 80's signalling that Baba Malay languages have changed towards endangerment since the colonisation of the British in Melaka. Chia (1983) mentioned that there has been no discourse with regard to the language or the culture being highlighted. This reflects a broader global patterns where minority languages situated within multilingual ecologies especially those overshadowed by prestige or policy-promoted languages becomes increasingly confined largely to home and casual use until their intergenerational collapses (Fisman, 1991; Sallabank & Austin, 2022).

Thus, the three major factors that lead to the endangerment of the Baba Malay languages are; (1) the extensive use of English language among the Peranakan community, (2) the additional requirement under language education policy, and (3) the fact of inherently declining numbers in the Peranakan community.

Looking into the extensive use of English language usage among the Peranakan, the emergence of Baba Malay as a unique creole language can be attributed to the amalgamation of Chinese, Malay, and Indonesian components with Portuguese, Dutch, and British influences. Baba Malay has emerged as the dominant language of communication among the Peranakan community, serving as a symbol of their distinct cultural and social identity. The influences of British culture and its languages on Peranakan have been discussed at some length by Lim (2010). The establishment of English medium schools came with the settlement of the British in Malacca in 1946. Tan (1979) has reported that this situation has led a few rich Peranakans to send their descendants to English schools for education, instead of sending their sons to China like the former generation.

Apart from that, the enduring impact of British cultural influences on the Peranakan community is noteworthy, particularly in light of the dominance of the English language. The adoption of British customs, including but not limited to etiquette, fashion, and education, served as a means of attaining higher social status. As a result, it can be observed that Peranakan households began to assimilate English customs and conventions, ultimately resulting in a gradual decline of their unique Baba Malay cultural heritage. Cheah (2015) noted that the impact of British culture in Melaka resulted in a noteworthy transformation in the cultural customs and principles of the Peranakan community. This, in turn, played a role in the gradual erosion of the Baba Malay language.

In addition, the Peranakan learnt English to determine themselves to be apart from the other Chinese migrants, and Song (1967) mentioned that the Peranakan recognised

themselves as the King's Chinese. They line themselves up with the British rather than the Chinese (Tan, 1979), thus, this makes the Peranakans as the middlemen between the immigrants and English colonial officials. Due to this circumstance, they gained social influence and socioeconomic advantages (Ansald, Lim & Mufwene, 2007), but ironically, Lim (2015) mentioned that these circumstances also become the reason for the present situation of language endangerment.

The substantial influence of the English language and British cultural norms in Melaka has had a notable effect on the utilisation and conservation of Baba Malay. The preservation and relevance of Baba Malay within the Peranakan community requires proactive measures despite its strong historical ties and unique cultural heritage.

Secondly, the major factor of Baba Malay language endangerment is due to the additional prerequisite under bilingual language policy that forced the Peranakan to study Mandarin in schools as an addition to English language. (Lee, 2010). The policies pertaining to language education are formulated with the aim of endorsing particular languages within the educational establishments. The policies in question tend to give preference to languages that are commonly spoken, such as Malay and English. As a result, students may be expected to exhibit a certain level of proficiency in these languages. The implementation of language policies, while intended to improve linguistic abilities and promote a sense of national identity, may have the unintended consequence of marginalizing minority languages such as Baba Malay. Indisputably, the policy has affected them as the youngsters are not exposed to their mother tongue and the Baba Malay is mostly spoken by people who are over 50 years old (Lee, 2014). The children of some

Peranakans were also encouraged by their parents to speak Mandarin in the household instead of Baba Malay. Instead of the influence of English, the dominant use of Mandarin and its influences at home have been notably recognised by Peranakan community members to Baba Malay's decline (Hong, 2017).

Consequently, the educational institutions' marginalisation of Baba Malay has resulted in a sharp reduction in intergenerational transmission (UNESCO, 2024). The prioritisation of languages mandated by policy, particularly English and Malay has meant that younger generations are no longer acquiring Baba Malay. As a result, proficiency in the language has declined dramatically, weakening its vitality and threatening its long-term survival. Today, Baba Malay is largely confined to the home domain, with very limited functional use beyond family interactions.

Finally, the reality that the Peranakan community nowadays is not growing in a conservative manner has resulted in the Baba Malay Language to become critically endangered (Lee, 2018). Despite the fact that Chinese-Malay intermarriages still take place, this kind of endogamies do not add to Peranakan ethnicity since '*Peranakan-ness*' is a unique blend of numerous cultures that encompasses more than just the marriage. Ironically, the Peranakan ethnicity and culture are the result of intermarriages. Hence, Peranakans were certainly marrying among themselves (Pakir, 1984) in order to keep the so-called *pure* bloodline. However, these intra-community marriage customs are vanishing (Tan, 1979). Instead, a trend documented in the 1970s shows that the increasing number of Peranakans in Malacca have married their partners from other Chinese communities, for instance the Cantonese, Hakkas, Hokkiens, Teochews and (Tan, 1979).

For example, Lee (2014) wrote that Wee (2013) mentioned that parents nowadays lean towards a more dominant home language, which is Mandarin or English, for socio-economic reasons, and the option to pass the Baba Malay to youngsters is becoming less practical. Thus, the Baba Malay became slowly extinct due to the attitudes of speakers. Henceforth, the inherently declining numbers within the Peranakan community in Melaka pose a serious threat to the preservation and transmission of the Baba Malay language, as there are fewer speakers and fewer opportunities for language acquisition.

Taken together, these factors illustrate how dominant languages have progressively marginalised Baba Malay across multiple domains, English, once adopted as the prestige language of education and socioeconomic continues to erode Baba Malay use in formal and literacy contexts (Tan, 1979; Lim, 2010). Mandarin, reinforced by family preferences has replaced Baba Malay as the primary language in many Peranakan households (Lee, 2014; Hong, 2017). Meanwhile, Malay as the national language dominated the inter-ethnic communication, leaving little functional space for Baba Malay in the public domain (Coluzzi, Riget & Kitade, 2018). These overlapping pressures have confined Baba Malay largely to the home, accelerating its decline and weakening intergenerational transmission.

The transmission of the Baba Malay from one generation to the next has been greatly impacted by the declining numbers of the Peranakan. Language transmission typically occurs within families and through community interaction. However, as the community size decreases, there are fewer opportunities for the children to acquire Baba Malay as their mother tongue, thus leading to a decline in fluency and proficiency.

Research indicates that the decline in the Peranakan population has resulted in a critical endangerment of Baba Malay, with the language being utilised by the older generation and not being passed down to the next generation. This situation is worsened by the community's small size, which limits the social contexts where the language can be naturally transmitted (Lee, 2014.).

The survival and vibrancy of the Baba Malay language face severe obstacles due to the Peranakan community in Melaka's naturally diminishing population. The transmission of the language and the maintenance of cultural identity are becoming more endangered as the number of the group decreases. However, ongoing community projects and language revitalisation efforts provide hope for the future of Baba Malay, preserving its persistence and significance within the Peranakan community and the wider linguistic environment of Melaka.

To ensure the vitality of Baba Malay, continuous efforts are necessary. It is important to continue promoting language education, providing resources for language learning, and fostering cultural pride among the Peranakan communities. Additionally, collaboration between academic researchers, community organisations, and language activists can further contribute to the preservation and documentation of Baba Malay, ensuring its continued existence as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Peranakan (Lee, 2020).

Efforts have been made to preserve and promote the Baba Malay language among the Peranakan community and beyond. These initiatives include language revitalisation programmes, documentation projects, and cultural events. The aim of these endeavors is to safeguard the Baba Malay language and its associated cultural heritage. The present

efforts are directed towards inculcating a sense of pride and cultural identity among the younger generations, with the primary objective of ensuring the sustained existence of Baba Malay in Melaka.

2.3 Intergenerational Language Transmission (ILT)

Intergenerational Language Transmission is generally recognised as the single principal determinant of language vitality (Fishman, 1991; UNESCO, 2003). It refers to the ability of a community to ensure that its children learns and continue to use the language, typically within the home domain. Grenoble & Whaley (2021) asserted that when this chain of transmission is broken, even a language with symbolic prestige or cultural value is unlikely to survive more than a few generations.

Intergenerational language transmission is a key mechanism for language transmission in which children learn the language from their parents or grandparents (Borland, 2006). With the purpose of evaluating language vitality, research that has looked at the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority languages in Malaysia, for instances, Baba Malay by Coluzzi, Riget, and Kitade (2018), Kensiui by Bishop (2001) and Semai by Alias (2015), has suggested the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) by Fishman (1991), UNESCO Nine Factors (2003) and Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) by Simon and Lewis (2010). These models, while distinct, share a central concern with the ways in which intergenerational transfer either sustains or weakens, making them relevant to Baba Malay study.

The recognition of the home's crucial role in facilitating the ongoing transmission of language across generations is widely acknowledged by scholars and advocates in the field of language research on a global scale. There is a general consensus among scholars that in order to comprehend the mechanisms by which minority languages are able to persist, it is imperative to examine the influence of the home environment in language transmission to younger generations. Studies of endangered languages such as Irish (Óhlfeanáin, 2013), Māori (King, 2001) and Ainu (Sato, 2021) repeatedly show that revitalisation efforts cannot succeed without active reinforcement within families. Similarly, a research on Kensiu language underscores the needs of intergenerational transmission, particularly as many younger members of the community are not turning to the dominant national language in hopes for better opportunities and fitting in the wider society (Hamzah et al., 2024).

Consequently, it becomes necessary to get into the underlying processes that contribute to this phenomenon. In his seminal work, Fishman (1989) recognised the pivotal role of the home environment in the preservation and sustenance of language. According to Fishman, the home, family, and neighbourhood collectively form an intrinsic mechanism that facilitates the intergenerational transfer of language skills. The replenishment of speakers within succeeding generations is facilitated by the practises observed within the domestic sphere (p.88). Strubell (2001) posits that the utilisation of a singular language within the familial context plays a significant role in the preservation and continuity of language at the family level. The preservation or decline of a minority language is contingent upon the language selection within the familial context.

Looking into the perspective of Baba Malay in regard to Intergenerational Language Transmission (ILT), changes of language practice within families have heavily influenced the Baba Malay transmission. The increased use of majority languages such as English and Malay in daily interactions has led to a decline in the use of Baba Malay as the primary language within households. In recent study by Sa'adiyah Ma'alip (2019) it was noted that the shift towards majority languages has affected the proficiency and usage of Baba Malay among younger generations. The findings indicate that this shift has resulted in reduced proficiency and usage of Baba Malay among younger generations within Peranakan families.

Elaborating further on the language shift, the influence of languages spoken by the majority of the population, such as English and Malay, has led to a movement away from Baba Malay as the predominant language in Melaka. Baba Malay suffers from a decline in both proficiency and use as a result of younger generations' propensity to place a higher priority on the majority languages. A language shifts toward majority languages, pushed by societal causes and educational policies, has resulted in a dwindling number of Baba Malay speakers among younger generations in the Peranakan community (Rahilah Omar, Nasrun Alias and Teo Kok Seong, 2016; Noriah Mohamed and Meriam Abd Karim, 2005).

Apart from that, the lack of language exposure is another contributing factor to the ILT decline. The reduced exposure to Baba Malay within the community and educational settings has hindered ILT. External factors such as globalisation, urbanisation and shifting

nature of the dynamics of society have resulted in limited opportunities for the children of later generations to acquire and use Baba Malay as their mother tongue.

Thus, in the discussion of ILT, this study will use the three established measures namely, GIDS, UNESCO Nine Factors and EGIDS to assess the vitality of the Baba Malay language by observing the role of the shift language in the Baba Malay community, whether the Baba Malay language will be transmitted from one generation to next, the existing domain and the language function through the trend, and the language attitudes by determining the identity and perspectives of promoting and preserving the language.

2.3.1 Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)

The preservation and revitalisation of languages have been the subject of extensive scholarly inquiry, particularly in relation to minority languages. Numerous approaches have been proposed to address the issue of language vitality, as evidenced by the vast body of literature dedicated to this topic. According to Trudgil (1995), language shift is a fundamental phenomenon characterised by the gradual abandonment of a community's original native languages in favour of adopting a different language for communication purposes. The process of language shifts within immigrant communities, as noted by Bot & Stoessel (2002), is a gradual progression that spans multiple generations. It has been noted that a complete shift in language usually occurs over the course of three generations.

One of the many focuses in linguistics today is the phenomenon of language shift, where the theory is explained by the basic premise of GIDS by Fishman (1991), as shown in Figure 2.1. It is designed to assess how well a language is being transmitted and in which social domain it is still used. As seen in the figure, Fishman (1991) has established an

eight-scale metric for language change where Stage 1 is the highest and Stage 8 is the lowest. The proposed scale proposes that Stage 1 has identified the language as an official national language, while Stage 8 has identified the language as a vanishing language only the elderly speak. Meanwhile, the other six scales in between (2-7) shows the increasing role of a language in society. As used by Cenoz and Gorter (2008) in their research on European Minority Languages, GIDS is a useful scale to evaluate specific threats to a given community language. Its strength lies in providing a structured way to connect intergenerational transmission within domain loss.

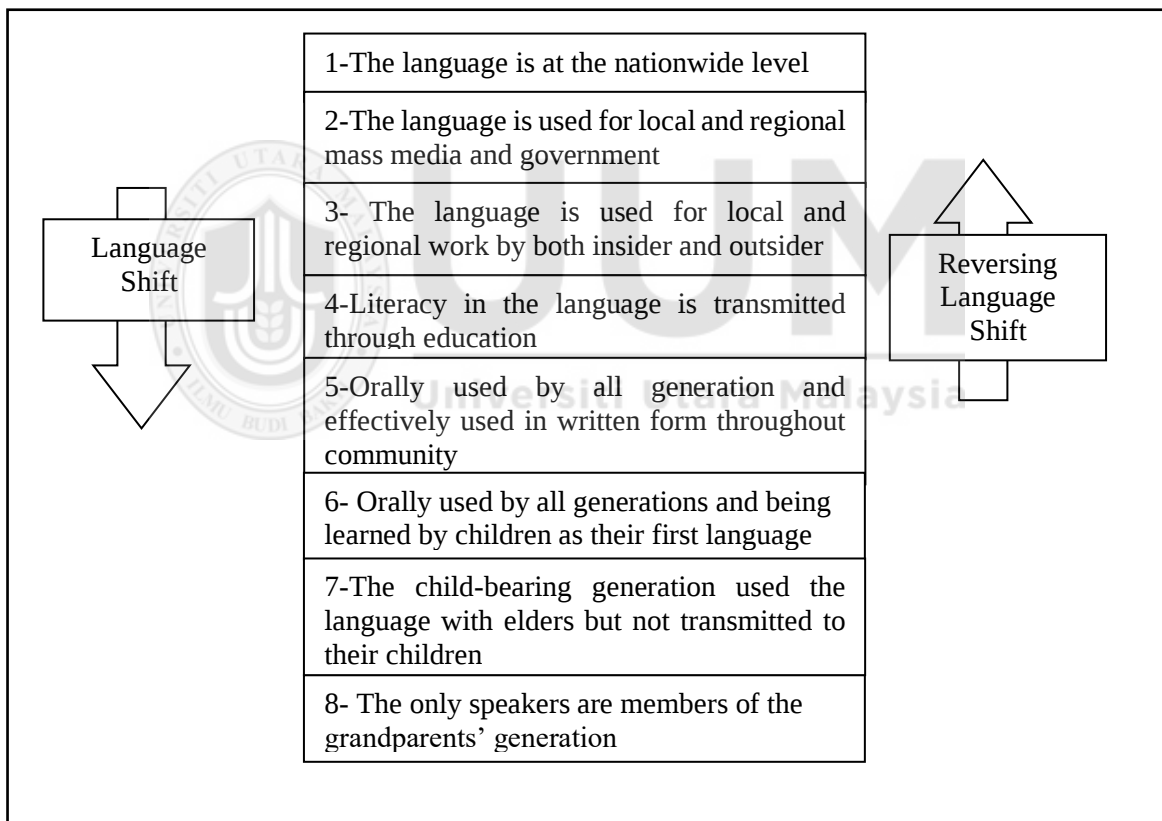


Figure 2.1: Stages of GIDS (Fishman 1991)

Source: Language documentation and cultural practices in the Austronesian (2015)

In regard to Baba Malay in Melaka, the usage of Fishman GIDS sheds light on the intricacies of language shift in this distinct linguistic and cultural setting. The analysis of

generational changes in language proficiency and use within a community can be effectively conducted by utilising Fishman GIDS. The impact of globalisation and modernisation on the preservation and transmission of Baba Malay across generations is better understood through this approach. The intricate dynamics of language maintenance and revitalisation of Baba Malay, viewed through GIDS provide a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of its significance.

The first generation in the GIDS framework is characterised by native speakers who possess complete fluency in the heritage language. The first generation of individuals in the context of Baba Malay refers to those who were raised in an environment where Baba Malay was the predominant language spoken. The primary language of communication for these individuals would have been Baba Malay, used both within their community and when interacting with outsiders.

The second generation, also known as G2, consists of the offspring of the first generation. The exposure to Baba Malay from birth among this generation can be attributed to its prevalence as the primary language spoken within their households. Despite potential exposure to other languages, individuals would maintain a high level of proficiency in Baba Malay and predominantly utilise it for their daily interactions.

The third generation is the turning point in the language shift. The increased usage of dominant languages, particularly in the professional and educational settings, may have this generation (G3) to keep their Baba Malay fluency for family social gatherings and cultural events.

By fourth generation (G4) under sustained shift pressures, usage and proficiency in Baba Malay, it is anticipated that the dominating languages would be noticeable in many facets of life. Hence, it will become limited and intergenerational transmission weakens or ceases. This pattern corresponds to Fishman's Stage 7 and 8 where the language is confined to elderly speakers and certain domains.

Thus, the application of GIDS to Baba Malay in Melaka highlights a worrisome pattern of language shift. The decline of Baba Malay language dominance reflects a progressive retreat from public and educational domains towards restricted use within family while the intergenerational transmission increasingly weakened. The shift has been significantly influenced by external factors, particularly the dominant languages..

Preservation of Baba Malay and the reversal of language shift are of utmost importance, especially within younger generations. As a unique cultural heritage of Peranakan community in Melaka, Baba Malay can only be sustained through deliberate revitalisation efforts. This include educational programmes, cultural initiatives, and community engagement.

2.3.2 UNESCO Nine Factors

As the problem of language extinction rise globally, UNESCO (2003) has built a theory of language vitality in order to identify languages that are on the verge of disappearance. The United Nations (UN) has also appointed world linguistics experts to study the extinction of minority languages in particular. This significance of global efforts demonstrates that the language of the Baba Malay community in Melaka also needs to be given attention because the language situation of this community is increasingly

threatened. UNESCO (2003) proposed nine factors for assessing language vitality; (1) intergenerational language transmission; (2) an absolute number of speakers; (3) a proportion of speakers within the total population; (4) trends in existing language domains; (5) response to new domains and media; (6) materials for language education and literacy; (7) governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies, including official status and use; (8) community members' attitudes toward language and (9) amount and quality of documentation.

The first six factors should not be utilised alone, and if a language is highly ranked on one criterion, it may require an instant and vital attention due to other factors. UNESCO'S multidimensional approach provides a nuanced picture of vitality, showing that endangerment is rarely caused by a single factor but by a combination of sociolinguistics pressure.

For the purpose of this study, Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission, Factor 4: trends in existing language domains and Factor 8: Community members' attitudes toward language will be focused as these factors are in relevance in answering the underlined research questions which Factor 1 will enable researcher to answer Research Question 3, Factor 4 will answer Research Question 1, whilst Factor 8 will answer Research Question 2. Following are the explanations for each selected factor:

Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission

The utmost common criteria in determining a language's life, according to Fishman (1991), is whether or not it is being passed down from one generation to another. In the effort to preserve a language, it is important for the speakers to passed down the language

to the younger generation. Comparative studies supporting this are the study of Ainu in Japan and Cornish in the UK where they showed that without family-based acquisition, revival efforts depend almost entirely on schools making sustainability fragile (Sallabank & Austin, 2022)

Hence, this study utilises Factor 1 to measure the vitality of Baba Malay Language in three generations based on study results by Coluzzi, Riget and Kitade (2018). The study shows that majority of respondents believe one of the significant criteria to be part of Peranakan is to be capable of speaking Baba Malay. Language's vitality can be measured on a scale ranging from stability to extinction. Table 2.1 predicts the six grades of scale, as described in UNESCO's nine variables to explain the language vitality index in a society, from 5 (safe) to 0 (extinct), as stated in Ma'alip (2018). Meanwhile, UNESCO (2003) has stated even if the vitality of a language is considered safe from the index, the condition still does not ensure linguistic vitality as the speakers may fail to pass the language on the next generation. That is why this study will be used as a framework to grade the vitality of the Baba Malay language.

Table 2.1

UNESCO Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Intergenerational Language Transmission
Extinct	0	No more speakers left.
Critically endangered	1	The speaker generation consists of grandparents and the older generation, and they do not master their mother tongue and use the only part of it.
Severely endangered	2	A language is only spoken by grandparents, while generations of parents may only understand it; they do not speak it with children or among themselves.
Definitively endangered	3	Youngsters no longer use their mother tongue at home.
Unsafe	4	Most youngsters can speak a language, but it may be limited to significant domains (e.g. home domain).
Safe	5	A language is spoken by all generations; There is no disruption in passing down the language from generation to generation.

Source: Language Vitality and Endangerment, UNESCO (2003)

Factor 4: Trends in Existing Language Domains

The trend in the existing language domain can be determined by pointing out where the language is used, with whom it is used, and the range of issues for which it is used, all of which have a direct impact on whether or not the language will be passed down to the next generation (UNESCO, 2003). Factor 4 is used together with Factor 1 as suggested by UNESCO (2003) to measure the use of language in the setting domain. This was justified by Coluzzi, Riget and Kitade (2018) that the most important domain for language maintenance is within the family members itself. Dwyer (2011) projected that language becomes stronger if the language is used consistently and persistently, and a language is ideal when it is used in all domains. Table 2.2 shows the six scales between 5 (universal use) and 0 (extinct) trends that existed in a language domain. In this study, the UNESCO factor 4 scale will define the trend of language use in the Baba Malay community based on domains that existed and language functions.

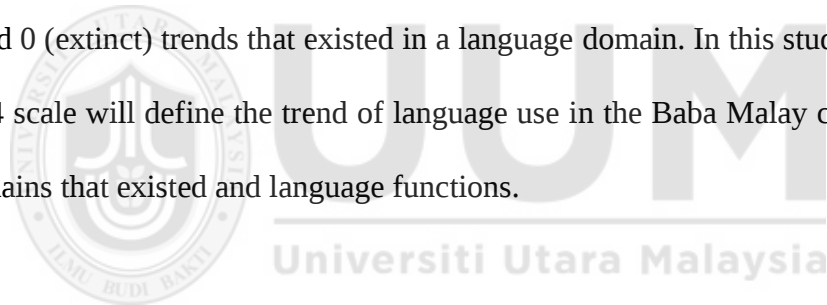


Table 2.2

UNESCO Factor 4: Trends in Existing Language Domains.

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Domains and Functions
Extinct	0	The language is not used in any domain and for any function.
Highly limited domain	1	The language is used only in very restricted domains and for very few functions
Limited or formal domain	2	The language is used in limited social domains and for several functions
Dwindling domains	3	The language is in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains.
Multilingual parity	4	Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions.
Universal use	5	The language is used in all domains and for all functions

Source: Language Vitality and Endangerment, UNESCO (2013)

Factor 8: Community Members' Attitudes toward Their Own Language

Language attitudes have been proven to be a major component in language maintenance (Baker, 1992) and ethnolinguistic vibrancy (Williamson, 1991). Even if the sentiments of a group of speakers toward their own language are usually not natural, however, if the sentiments are overwhelmingly favourable, the language might be seen as a key indicator of the group identity (UNESCO, 2003). However, the members of the community will also be able to develop negative attitudes toward their language by viewing the language as a limitation to economic mobility and assimilation into mainstream society. Factor 8 is used to acknowledge the Peranakan attitude toward Baba Malay language as they are using the language daily as justified by Ma'alip (2019) that language can be preserved if

the speaker uses the language daily and committed to preservation activities. The attitudes toward language will be evaluated using the six-degree scale of UNESCO Factor 8 as shown in Table 2.3. So, this study will use the scale of language attitudes to discuss the sense of belonging and the ways of preserving language as a whole community.

Table 2.3

UNESCO Factor 8: Community Members' Attitudes toward Their Own Language

Grade	Community Attitudes towards language
0	No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.
1	Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
2	Some members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
3	Many members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
4	Most members support language maintenance.
5	All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.

Source: Language Vitality and Endangerment, UNESCO (2013)

2.3.3 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS)

While Fishman's GIDS has provided a solid framework for assessing language shift, there are critics for its limited scope, especially in capturing the diverse situations of endangered and minority languages. To address these limitations, Lewis and Simon (2010) developed the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) as a direct extension of GIDS. EGIDS retains the emphasis on intergenerational transmission but expands the eight GIDS stages into thirteen categories, incorporating additional dimensions such as literacy acquisition, identity functions and symbolic status. Hence, GIDS and EGIDS are not competing models but complementary scale where GIDS offers the original

conceptual basis while EGIDS provides diagnostic precision. Table 2.4 below shows a summary of the EGIDS levels.

Table 2.4

The EGIDS levels

Level	Label	Description	UNESCO
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of functions.	Safe
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media and government at the nationwide level.	Safe
2	Regional	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.	Safe
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.	Safe
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education.	Safe
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community.	Safe
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.	Safe
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generation are transmitting it to their children.	Vulnerable
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children.	Definitely Endangered
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.	Severely Endangered

8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.	Critically Endangered
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency.	Extinct
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.	Extinct

Source: Assessing Language Endangerment or Vitality to Creating and Evaluating Language Revitalization Programmes (2010)

Even though the list in table 2.4 indicated ten levels, the label actually contains thirteen categories. Fishman's GIDS Level 6 corresponds to both levels 6a and 6b. Levels 8a and 8b, which correlate to GIDS at Level 8, are identical to this circumstance. Meanwhile, levels 0, 9 and 10 are entirely new. In addition, a fourth column was added to correlate to the nine factors identified by UNESCO. With this new model, Lewis and Simons (2010) have made an effort to achieve three key goals: (1) the layering of 'safe' languages to capture the diversity of their situations; (2) the definitive expansion of categories below 'safe'; and (3) the flexibility of the entire grid to represent a large number of the world's languages. In order to validate this adaptability, the explanation of how the questions based on five important keys are used to guide the diagnosis and evaluation process can be seen in the decision tree in Figure 2.2 below.

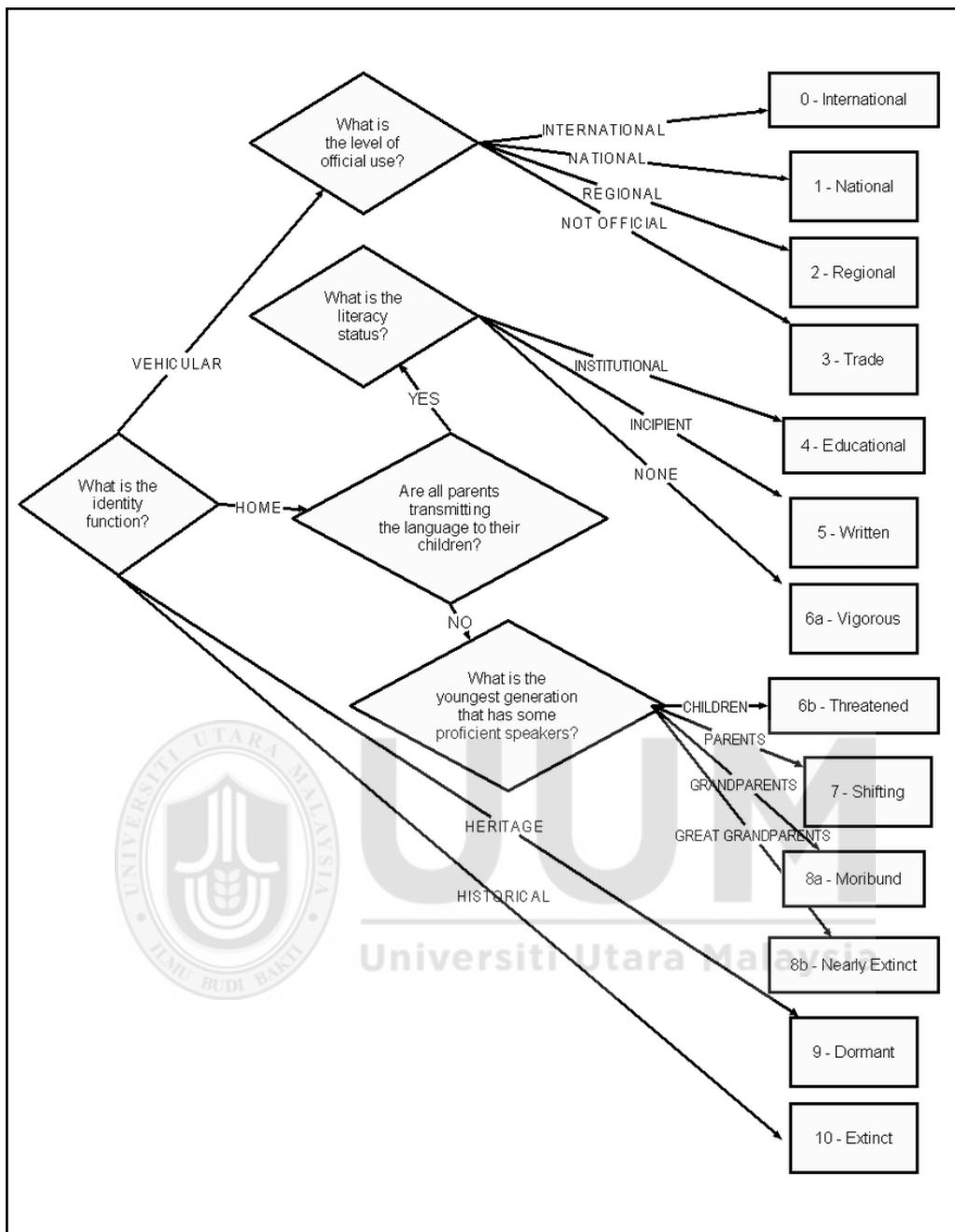


Figure 2.2: Decision tree of EGIDS (Lewis, 2010)

Key Question 1 poses the question, "What is the current identity function of the language?" to determine how the language is used. There are four potential responses to this question, which are listed in Table 2.5 below.

Table 2.5

Description to Assist the Answer of the First Question of EGIDS

Type	Description
Vehicular	The language is widely used not only within its native community, but by other language communities as well.
Home	The language is used by people of all generations within its native community in home and community domain.
Heritage	The language retains an identification function for its native community, but is no longer used fluently by all generations.
Historical	The language is no longer known or used by any speakers and no one maintains a sense of ethnic identity associated with it.

Source: Portraits of language vitality in the languages of Indonesia (2015).

Key Question 2 asks, "What is the level of official use?". When a language is fulfilling the vehicular identity role, this question assists in distinguishing between the potential EGIDS levels. There are four options, each of which corresponds to an EGIDS level ranging from 0 to 3 which are: International, national, regional, and unofficial.

Is it necessary to ask Key Question 3 if the answer to Key Question 1 is "home": Are all parents teaching their children the language? Yes, or No are the two potential restricting replies here. In order to ascertain if the community is at EGIDS Level 4, 5, or 6a, Key Question 4 must be answered Yes. If No, answer Key Question 5 to determine if the community is EGIDS Level 6b, 7, 8a, or 8b.

"What is the literacy status?" asks Key Question 4, and if the answer to Key Question 3 is "Yes," the status of literacy instruction in the community must be determined. This question can be answered in three potential ways: institutional, incipient (written), or none.

"What is the youngest generation of fluent speakers?" is the fifth key question. When the answer to Key Question 3 (Intergenerational Transmission) is "No," it's important to know how far language shift has evolved to determine the present EGIDS level: great-grandparent, grandparent, parent, and children. Thus, this study will use EGIDS to evaluate and determine the level of language vitality based on five crucial keys stated.

Thus for the purpose of this study, both GIDS and EGIDS applied in which GIDS provides a broad measure of Baba Malay's intergenerational shift, while EGIDS refines the assessment by situating the language between levels 7 (shifting) and 8a (moribund). The use of both scales offer stronger basis for the analysis.

2.4 Language Use

Gordon (2018) has defined communication as the needs for people to communicate to convey and exchange meanings with others using both shared verbal and non-verbal cues. Communication is a sort of social behaviour. Kottak (2013) also mentioned the spoken or written form also consist of the arbitrary, learnt association between words and things for which the speakers' stand. The shared understanding and usage of a language by members of the same social group has rendered it to be a marker of group identity, regardless of the level of the group, from micro, meso or macro (Hun et al., 2019).

While mother tongue frequently serves as the primary identifier at the micro and meso levels of an identity, things become more complicated at macro-level where the status of nation's official language is linked to the ideas of national identity, sovereignty and

political ideology rather than just the linguistic demography of its population as part of the processes of nation-building. The use of language as shown in Figure 2.3.

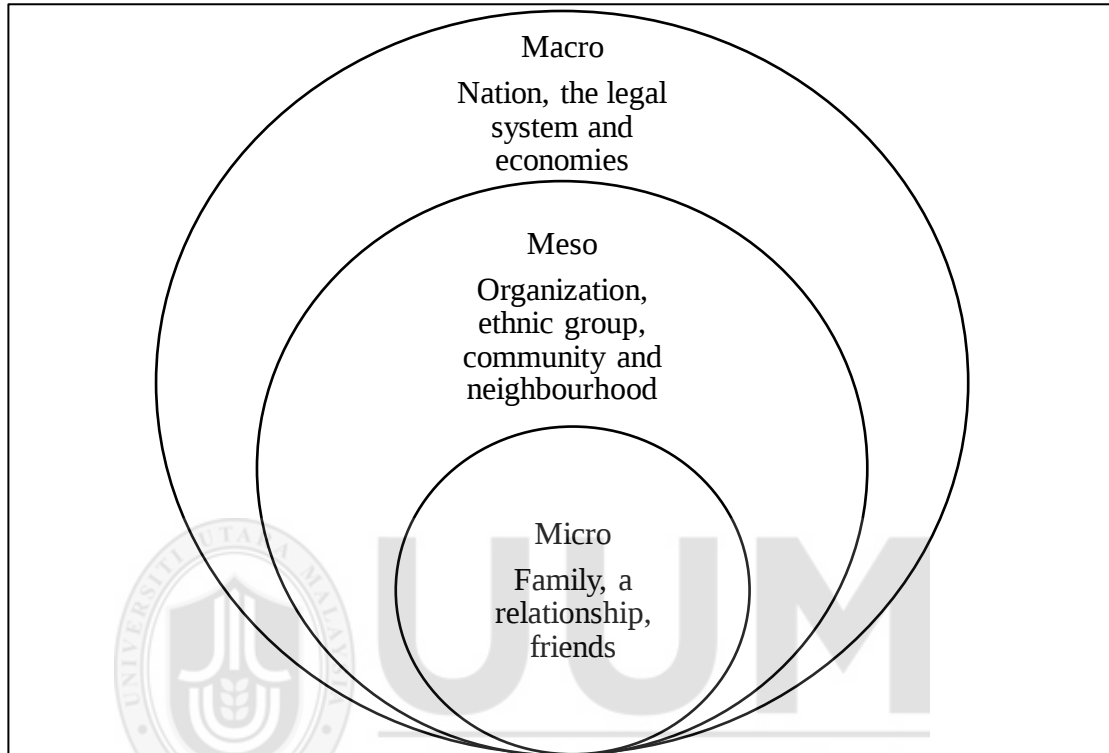


Figure 2.3: The level of language use

Source: Journal of Language Studies (2019)

2.4.1 Domain and Domain Analysis

Domain is the notion that each language or dialect has a particular role, role, or group of people in a society (Genemo, 2021). Commonly, speech communities consist of a number of domains which organise and define social life (Holmes, 2008). According to Fishman (2001) language domain theory, language users in ethnic minority populations begin to equate specific language with specific domains. For instance, the language used at home or in a certain community may differ from that spoken at school or at work (Rasinger, 2013). Based on Fishman (1972) theoretical model, there are five essential domains: which are family, friendship, religion, education, and work, and each of them is commonly associated with a particular language. This diglossic separation has been documented in diverse settings such as in Quechua in the Andes and Gaelic in Scotland where heritage languages remain in domestic use but yield to dominant languages in public life (Hornberger, 2022; McLeod, 2020).

In general, domain analysis can be defined as patterns of factors of location, topic, and participant (Fasold, 1984). Fishman (1972) stated the notion of domain analysis still relevant for describing and explaining the distribution and use of language in domains. Besides, the concept of this language domain is based on his well-known question of who speaks, what language to whom, and when to speak.

Table 2.6 shows the lists the examples of domain analysis of five vital domains as suggested by Fishman (1972).

Table 2.6

Domain of language use

Domain	Addressee	Setting	Topic
Family	Family member	Home	Planning a trip
Friendship	Neighbour	Neighbourhood	Sharing recipes
Religion	Priest	Church	Choosing the Sunday liturgy
Education	Teacher	School	Solving math problem
Work	Employee	Office	Applying for a promotion

Source: Sociolinguistics: A Brief Introduction, (1972)

Domain analysis basically allows derivation of some generalisations of the norms of language use in each domain. In the meantime, the decision can focus on the interrelationship function of the two speakers or the topic of discussion in which both view the domain in the identical way (Coulmas, 2005). In the context of Baba Malay, studies by Coluzzi, Riget and Kitade (2018) have shown that while some families continue to use Baba Malay at home, domains such as education, religion and workplaces are now overwhelmingly dominated by English, Malay and Mandarin. This restriction of Baba Malay to “low” domains reflects a global patterns in which minority languages lose public visibility, ultimately undermining their intergenerational transmission.

2.5 Language Attitudes and Identity

The definition of attitude according to Bainbridge (1994:400) is "the positive or negative evaluation of an object with anything, tangible or intangible, capable of being the object of an attitude." According to Othmen and Bashir (2000:449), who quote Johnson (1973:167), community language attitudes indicate opinions about the relative merits of a language or group of languages in terms of attributes like loyalty, prestige, utility, cognancy, or aesthetics. Language attitudes can be overt or covert, according to Wassink (1999:57).

According to Garrett (2010), defining the idea of attitude is difficult due to the vast scope of the term and the significance of several elements of attitudes. Moreover, Garret (2010) also categorized attitudes into three separate groups which are (1) cognitive, (2) affective and (3) behavioural. The cognitive dimension is concerned with how attitudes affect an individual's views of the world and specific situations; the emotional dimension is concerned with feelings in reaction to the attitude item; and the behavioural dimension is concerned with how attitudes affect behaviour. This framework remain influential in sociolinguistics because it allows attitudes to be studied not only as abstract beliefs but also predictors of observable behaviour such as code-switching, language choice in specific domains and support for revitalising efforts. Learning and applying a language are simpler for those with positive attitude towards the language and its speakers, since language attitudes can better predict how someone will react to the language (Scotton & Ury, 1977).

Based on the study by Silva-Corvalan (1994), language attitude is explored in language shift studies to forecast the mother tongue's survival. In order to determine language attitude, the survey questions indirectly involve speakers to evaluate the social worth of languages. From the survey there were few things to consider such as whether they consider a language is contemporary or conventional, or whether a mother tongue represents their ethnic identity, and the purposes of languages to speakers. Optimistic attitudes toward the mother tongue are likely will lead to preservation, whereas negative attitudes are likely to indicate a decline in the usage of the ethnic language (Silva-Corvalan, 1994). However, evidence found that sentiments for a language do not necessarily correspond to actual language use; for example, speakers who acknowledge devotion to an ethnic language may not utilise it in everyday interactions. The language may be valued as a representation of ethnic identity and group unity for social or affective reasons.

If there is a substantial relationship between language and identity, according to Appel and Muysken (1987:16), this relationship should reveal itself through people's attitudes toward languages and the speakers. As a result, as speakers associate language usage with the assumption of identity, attitudes about languages and their speakers develop. The framework that represents the creation of attitudes is shown in Figure 2.3 below:

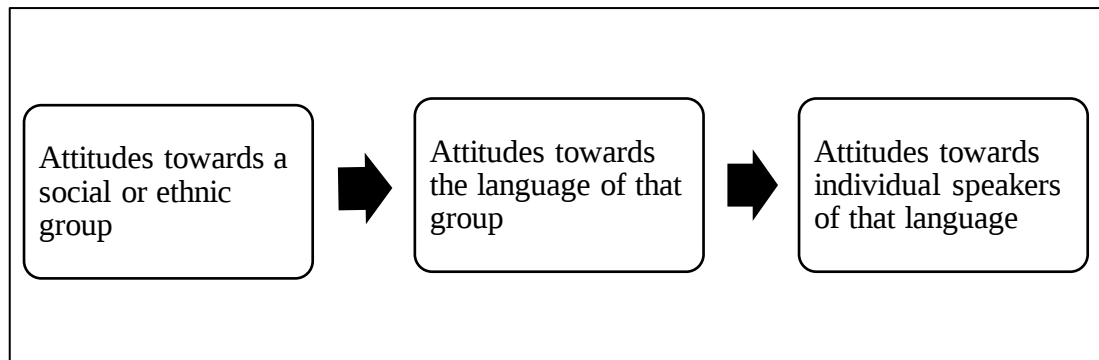


Figure 2.4: Schema representing the formation of attitudes

Source: Language contact and bilingualism (2005)

Finally. Broader social hierarchies also shape attitude. Socioeconomic or ethnic groups have specific views toward one another as a result of their disparities in social status. These views have an impact on general cultural perceptions of the group, including perceptions of its language, and this, in turn, has an impact on perceptions of language speakers. Even in monolingual nations, users of the language have significant attitudes insight about different languages (Lambert, 1979). For Baba Malay. This is particularly relevant as while the elder Peranakan may view the language as central to cultural heritage, younger generations often regard English, Mandarin or Malay as more practical and prestigious. Now help me to

2.6 Conceptual Framework

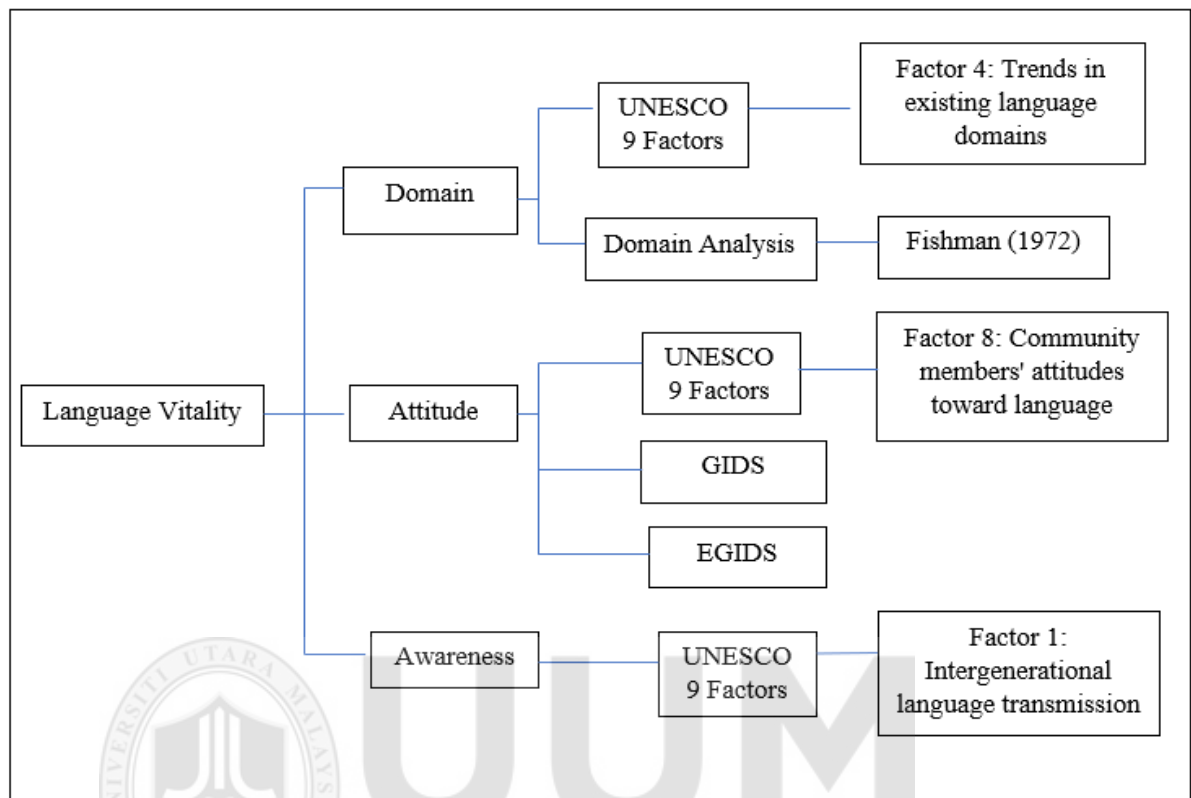


Figure 2.5: The conceptual framework of Baba Malay Language's vitality

Figure 2.5 illustrates the conceptual framework adopted in this study. It demonstrates how four major frameworks, UNESCO Nine Factors, Domain Analysis, the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) and the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) are combined to provide a comprehensive lens through which the vitality of Baba Malay is analysed.

The UNESCO Nine Factors highlight the central variables that determine vitality. In this study, three factors are applied. Factor 4: Trends in existing language domains enable researcher to seek whether Baba Malay language is being passed on to the next generation through where, with whom and topics which the language is being used. The degree of

endangerment will be able to be determined looking into the grade of the domains and functions as mentioned in Factor 4 of UNESCO Nine-Factors. As for domain analysis, Fishman (1972) stated that language use by people are heavily influenced by many factors. Subject, function and locality are the components what affect the concept of domain. The five domains that will be investigated are the domain of family, friendship, educational environment, relationship and transactional.

Looking into the attitude, answering research question two of whether the attitude in the use of Baba Malay language affect the endangerment of the language, UNESCO 9 Factors of Factor 8: Community Member's Attitude towards Language is applied. Speech community members are rarely impartial to their own language. When the attitude is positive, the language will be held as their identity as they value their family origin, traditions, and culture. From Factor 8, researcher is able to determine the level of grade for the Peranakan's attitude towards Baba Malay language. Secondly, Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) is also taken to measure the level of language endangerment. There are eight levels to evaluate the language endangerment focusing on the transmission of language maintenance. In GIDS, Fishman has identified social spaces known as domain of use. Finally, the extension of GIDS, Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) will also be taken into this research looking at the language attitudes. Baba Malay language can be measured by EGID by responding to the five essential questions of the functional identity, vehicularity, intergenerational language transmission status, literacy acquisition status and socioeconomic profile.

Lastly, to respond to the third research question, looking into the awareness of the Peranakan about their language status, again the UNESCO Nine-Factors focusing on Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission is used. This is the common factor used to investigate whether or not a language is being pass on from one generation to next. In Factor 1, there are six degrees of endangerment of zero to five.

Taken together, these frameworks do not function as isolated measures but as a complementary interpretive lens. UNESCO Nine Factors establish the core variables of vitality, while Domain Analysis operationalises these variables by mapping how language choice unfolds across specific contexts of interaction. GIDS provides a broad diagnostic of Baba Malay intergenerational shift and EGIDS provides more detail by adding categories that explain current position of Baba Malay. Used together, they allow this study to interpret findings more clearly, moving from patterns of use and attitudes (UNESCO and Domain Analysis) to transmission across generations (GIDS) and finally to the overall status and future of the language (EGIDS).

Accordingly, this study applies UNESCO Nine-Factors (Factor 1, 4 and 8), Domain Analysis, GIDS and EGID to provide a balanced evaluation of Baba Malay vitality. Each framework is used to corresponds to all research questions posed and achieve the objectives set, besides forming a strong conceptual foundation for this study.

2.7 Summary

This chapter reviewed the key sociolinguistic concepts of vitality, endangerment, maintenance, shift, domains and attitudes, and applied them to the case of Baba Malay. It showed historical, educational and sociocultural pressures, particularly from English, Malay and Mandarin have weaken Baba Malay across generations. The chapter also outlined the use of GUDS, EGIDS, UNESCO Nine Factors and Domain Analysis as complementary measures to access vitality, each highlighting transmission patterns, domain use and community attitudes. These frameworks provided the conceptual basis for analysing the current status of Baba Malay and interpret the findings.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the methodology of this study. It encompassed the overall flow of the process involved to obtain answers for the research questions outlining the research design, data collection procedures and instruments, determination of sampling and population, the method of data analysis, and reliability of the test. The research was designed based on the research questions outlined for the study.

In terms of data collection procedures, it was necessary to make it meaningful and impactful (Carberry, et. al, 2021; Hendriarto et. al, 2021). Since data collection was a sensitive area in research, seeking the right source and the right means was crucial (Mwita, 2022; Brown et. al, 2018; Barrett & Twycross, 2018).

This study adopted a mix-method approach to gain in-depth understanding of the Baba Malay usage among the Peranakan. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed providing a comprehensive understanding of Baba Malay usage and maintenance among the Peranakan community in Melaka.

3.2 Research Design

Research design serves as the structure of research that held all the elements in the research organised, or in short can be considered as the plan of the proposed research study. As the aim of this study was to validate the Baba Malay language used by the Peranakan community in Melaka and their attitudes towards the language, explanatory research was

used to explain occurrences through the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships. This study adopted the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative to explore the relationships between domains of language use, speaker attitudes and preservation measures. The quantitative phase utilised a questionnaire adapted from Coluzzi et al. (2018) to capture language use patterns and attitudes, while the qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with members of a Peranakan family across three generations. This allowed the study to capture not only statistical trends but also intergenerational perspectives on Baba Malay usage and decline.

3.3 Data Collection

The data in this study consists of both primary and secondary sources. In the initial phase of this research, the secondary data was used to support the primary data which would be obtained through the distribution of questionnaires and a semi-structured interview sessions. The primary data were collected through the respondent's answers from the distributed questionnaire and interview sessions. This method was chosen because it is considered as more accurate and reliable. In this study the secondary data were mainly obtained from various mediums such as journals, websites, articles, reports and books related to the study. Figure 3.1 showed the data collection procedure for this study.

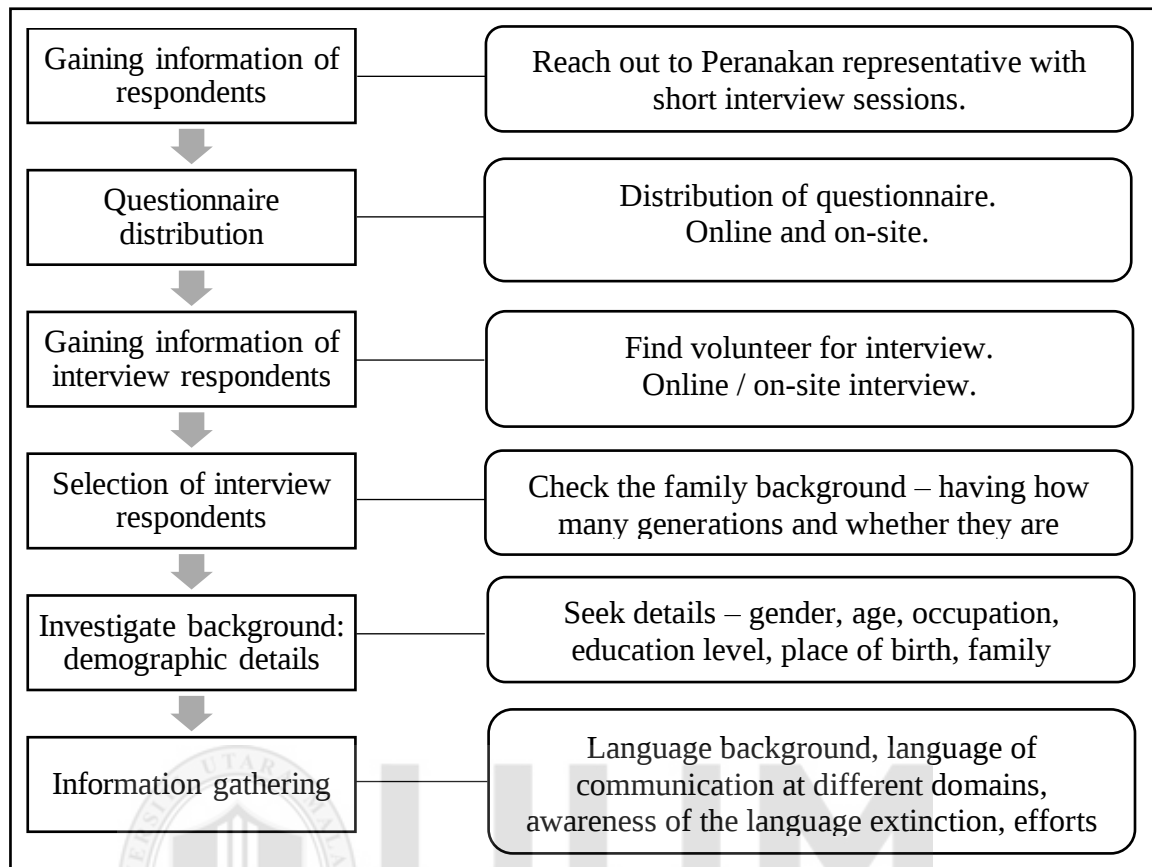


Figure 3.1: The steps in collecting data

The primary data collection was designed to collect input of significant respondents from the Peranakan community in Melaka. The primary data collection for this study was separated into two phases where the first stage was the interview session with the representative of the Peranakan to gain the information about the numbers of Peranakan members in Melaka apart from recognising the potential respondents for the interview session. Secondly, semi -structured interviews were conducted with the identified family with three generations in line.

The second method of the primary data collection was through the questionnaire distribution. The questionnaire will be distributed online using WhatsApp platform and

face-to-face. The procedure must be conducted online and offline as not many of the members are assumed to be not technologically savvy. Hence, the researcher assisted them to answer the questionnaire.

The secondary data of this research was derived from previous studies, journals, websites, articles, reports as well as books available online and offline.

3.4 Sampling and Population

The study adopted a purposive sampling strategy, focusing on Peranakan residing in Melaka. Since the Peranakan population is not officially recorded in the national census data, purposive sampling allowed researcher to specifically target respondents with relevant cultural and linguistic background.

Semi-structured interview approach is applied to elicit rich personal experiences, perspectives, and insights from respondents through mediated interaction (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Hayward, Simpson, & Wood, 2004; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Kitzinger, 1994; Morgan, 1996). For this study, a total of six semi-structured interviews was conducted with a family that fit the characteristics set by the researcher. 30 questionnaires were distributed to meet up the assumed 800 individuals in the community with level of confidence while the margin of error is reduced to 5% and standard deviation used is 0.5.

Table 3.1

The Process of Acquiring Primary Data Collection

No.	Primary data collection	No. of respondents	Aims
1	Interview with the representative from Peranakan	1	Preliminary information on procedures and profiling of the family to be interviewed
2	Interview with respondents of one family (3 different generations)	6	Qualitative data collection on background, language domain, attitude, and awareness.
3	Questionnaires to Peranakan born respondents	30	Quantitative data collection on acquiring background, language domain, attitude and awareness.

This study adopted a non-probability purposive sampling strategy, as respondents for both the questionnaire and interviews were deliberately selected based on predetermined characteristic relevant to the research objectives. Purposive sampling is considered appropriate because the Peranakan community represents a small, hard-to-reach population and the study require participants who could provide insights into intergenerational language use and attitudes towards Baba Malay.

3.5 Research Instruments

In the pursuit of comprehensively exploring the respondents' language utilisation and their attitudes towards Baba Malay, a methodological blend of a questionnaire and semi structured interviews was employed in this study. As emphasised by Gillham (2000), meticulous attention should be given to the formulation of the questionnaire items, ensuring its clarity, simplicity, and comprehensibility to minimise the likelihood of inadvertent errors. This approach aimed to help gather accurate responses and create supportive environment for the respondents to share their views and experiences about the usage of Baba Malay and its' importance in the Peranakan community. Thus, this study gained a detailed understanding of language practices and attitudes among the Peranakan.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire utilised in this study comprised of 17 questions, organised into three main sections – Language use in various domains (RQ1), Attitudes towards Baba Malay (RQ2) and Awareness and Preservation Efforts (RQ3).

In ensuring comprehensive data collection, the questionnaire distribution strategy encompassed both physical and online distribution methods. In specific, the researcher personally facilitated the distribution process, to ensure active involvement of the elder generation to complete the questionnaire. This hands-on approach not only enhanced the response rate, but also facilitated direct assistance to respondents who might require clarification or support during the completion of the questionnaire.

On the other hand, this enabled the researcher to gain a higher number of respondents apart from the distribution of an online questionnaire. An approach utilised to reached the

younger generation and those with technology savvy. In terms of the selection of the interview respondents, the representative was also expected to reveal or share information about the family background whether there were more than three (3) generations within the family. The rationale of having the knowledge about the generations in the family was to answer research question three (3) to determine the measures taken to preserve the Baba Malay language. Whether the language was passed on to the next generations was the crucial factor in this situation.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured interview

Interview sessions were conducted with a Peranakan family identified as one of the family that still practice some of their traditions and utilises the Baba Malay as their medium of communication. The main reason for choosing this family was that from the interview with the one of the Peranakan community representative, this family is said to keep track of their family tree history and the updated contact details of the family members. Hence, it was an advantage for this research. The interview sessions with different generations of the family enabled the researcher to seek the truth about the Baba Malay language usage domain among its users in the study area. The questions for the interview were divided into four sections, Section A- Demography, Section B - Language Domain (RQ1), Section C – Attitude(RQ2) and Section D – Awareness(RQ3).

At the beginning of the interview, the first few questions focused on the background of the respondents. The researcher intends to gain the respondents' origin – their place of birth, parents' origin, age, religion and race. They were asked about their educational background and occupation. Having this information enabled the researcher to gain perception into the respondents' mother tongue apart from knowing their language

exposure. The interview encouraged the development of critical analysis providing tangible concrete proof of the respondents. The interview questions were adopted from Coluzzi's (2018) earlier work. The semi-structured interview questions were derived from the questionnaire to gain better explanations from the respondents.

This is where researcher intended to seek answers for research question 1 (RQ1) as the questions were directed to the domains of language use in their daily life. Figure 3.2 shows the summary of the language domains. The second research question (RQ2) was elicited from the third section of the interview where the questions asked were directed to their attitudes about the declining of Baba Malay today apart from getting their opinion about the factors which they may think were the contributors to the declination of Baba Malay. Finally, the researcher would be able to attain the answer for the third research question (RQ3) from the last section of the interview in which the questions were prone to gain insight from the respondents regarding their awareness of Baba Malay current status and their effort in preserving the language as shown in Figure 3.3.

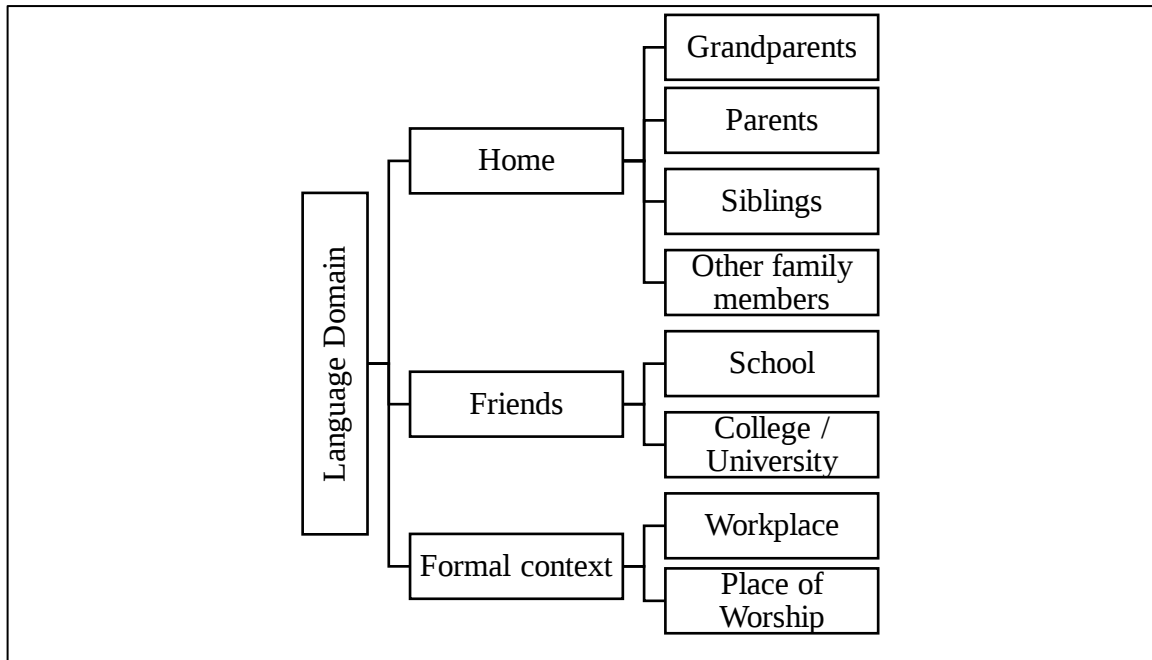


Figure 3.2 Research question 1 (RQ1)

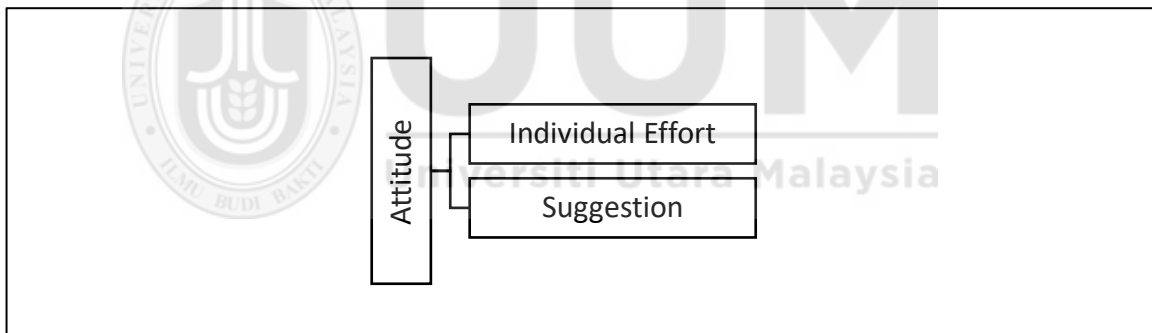


Figure 3.3: Research question 2 (RQ2)

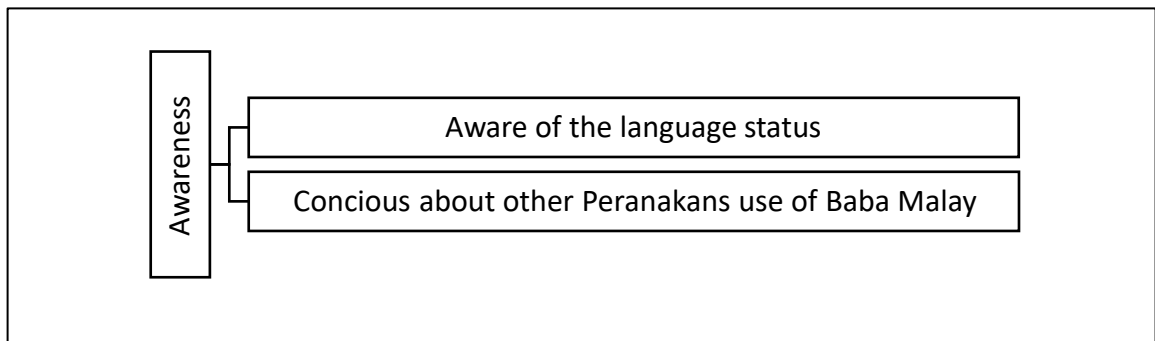


Figure 3.4 Research question 3 (RQ3)

Table 3.2

Questionnaire / Interview Based on Research Questions

NO.	ITEMS	RQ 1	RQ2	RQ3
1	What language (s) are you fluent in?	/		
2	What is your mother tongue?	/		
3	Do you think that it is important to be able to speak Baba Malay to be part of the community? <i>(Interview)</i>	/		
4	Have you ever been discriminated for speaking Baba Malay language in front of anyone? Why do you think so? <i>(Interview)</i>	/		
5	What language do you use to communicate with your parents and siblings?	/		
6	What language do you use to communicate with your grandparents?	/		
7	What language do you use to communicate with your uncles and aunties?	/		
8	What language do you use to communicate with your cousins?	/		
9	What language do you use to communicate with your spouse and children (if any)?	/		
10	What language do you use to communicate with your friends?	/		
11	What language do you use to communicate with your neighbour?	/		
12	What language do you use to communicate with your colleagues?	/		
13	Do you think that there's differences between the Baba Malay spoken today and the Baba Malay spoken by the older generation?		/	
14	Do you think that you need to improve your Baba Malay language? Why so?		/	
15	Are you aware that the Baba Malay language is at the verge of disappearing? Why?		/	
16	Do you think Baba Malay language should be protected?		/	
17	If Baba Malay is spoken less today, what do you think will happen to the language?		/	/
18	As one of the Baba Nyonya community, what do you think you can do to ensure that the language stays alive?			/
19	In your opinion, what other measures could be done to keep the language?			/

The questionnaire and interview questions were reviewed by two established experts in sociolinguistics with extensive experience in minority and endangered languages. The first expert consulted for instrument validation is a senior academic with over fifteen years of research in sociolinguistics, particularly in minority and endangered languages. His scholarship has significantly contributed in understanding language vitality and multilingualism in Southeast Asia. His feedback was therefore instrumental in refining the questionnaire design to ensure it was theoretically rigorous while remaining sensitive to cultural realities.

As for the second expert, is also an established sociolinguist with extensive research on language use, contact and policy in Malaysia. His work has explored how national language policies influence minority languages, demonstrating the sociopolitical dynamics that shape language shift and maintenance in multicultural contexts. This experience was particularly valuable in validating the questions. His review ensured that the instruments were contextually appropriate and capable of answering the research questions outlined for this research.

Based on their recommendations, several refinements were made including rewording of items, removal of redundancy and improved specificity in phrasing. Following this, a pilot study was carried out to further test the refined instrument for clarity, reliability and usability prior to the main data collection.

3.6 Pilot Study

In order to ensure the understanding of the questions that researcher has been build, a pilot test was conducted to test the instrument. It involved 10% of respondents from the total of sample size in this research which amounted to 26 individuals. The main purpose was to identify the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The pilot study was administered online using WhatsApp platform. This platform is selected due to its convenience and efficiency in reaching the respondents who are residing in Melaka. The participants were given a Google Form link to answer the questionnaire within a specific time frame.

3.6.1 Objectives of Pilot Study

The pilot was conducted with the following objectives:

- i. to evaluate the clarity and relevance of the questionnaire items,
- ii. to ensure the instrument adequately addressed all three research questions of this study, and
- iii. to improve the overall flow and usability of the questionnaire.

The feedback gathered from this preliminary phase was used to enhance the instrument and minimise the risk of misinterpretation r data quality issues in the main data collection.

3.6.2 Modification Following the Pilot Study

Using the analysis of responses and feedback gathered from the pilot study, several modifications were made to enhance the clarity and functional flow of the questionnaire. These modifications were made to minimise potential misunderstandings, making it aligned with the research objectives and improve respondent engagement.

Firstly, several questions were rephrased to eliminate unclear words that could confuse the respondents. This is to ensure the items were interpreted consistently across different age groups and educational backgrounds.

For instance, the initial question 3 in the questionnaire “To what extent is proficiency in Baba Malay essential for inclusion and identity within the Peranakan community?” was modified to a simpler sentence “Do you think that it is important to be able to speak Baba Malay to be part of the community?”.

Next, rewording of the instructions and prompts. Some respondents expressed their uncertainty about how to respond to the options of answers given whether they can select more than one language. Hence, clear guidance were revised to make it clearer. Clarifying phrase such as “Select the language you most often use when communicating” was added.

Lastly streamlining the questionnaire structure. The questionnaire was adjusted to group related to the questions under clearly marked section headers such as Family, Friends and Community and Formal Settings. Respondents were confused when being asked almost similar questions in most of the questionnaire. Hence, this helped respondents better understand the logic of the instrument and improved completion rates.

These modification ensured the final version of the questionnaire was both accessible and contextually appropriate for the respondents. By addressing the potential weaknesses

identified during the pilot phase, the research instrument was refined to improve the reliability of the data collection and contributing to the aims of this study.

3.7 Data Analysis

Questionnaire

3.7.1 Reliability Test

Reliability test conducts to study the properties of measurements scales and the items that compose the scale. The purpose of reliability test is to measure the stability and consistency of the variable (Sekaran and Boungie, 2010). The test used Cronbach's Alpha to determine the reliability of the questionnaire construct which was when the value close to 1, the higher the internal consistency and reliability (Sekaran, 2003). If the value at 0.9 above is consider excellent while in between 0.8 to 0.9 is depicted good results (George and Mallery, 2003). Meanwhile, those above 0.7 were deemed acceptable, and below 0.5 was considered unacceptable.

There were 17 questions from the questionnaire analysed using the Cronbach's Alpha in which it aimed to reflect the correlation with each other and provide consistent measure of underlying construct of Baba Malay usage being investigated.

3.7.2 Descriptive Analysis

In this study, descriptive analysis was employed to systematically summarise and interpret the data collection.. For certain anthropometrics data or demographics data, the use of mean and frequency is needed for describe the sample population. Frequency is explained in summary of frequency within individual values in every variable in distribution.

(Trochim, 2006). The mean values are calculated by summing the responses and divide them by the total number of respondents. It is to indicate the central tendency or average response within each variable or category. Standard deviations are calculated along the means, illustrated the variability or consistency of responses around these mean values.

To be specific, when analysing UNESCO Factor 4 (Trends in Existing Language Domains), the collected data was categorised from the respondents' language choices in various communication contexts (e.g. grandparents, parents, siblings, etc). Respondents selected language they typically use in each context from the given choices (Baba Malay, Standard Malay, Mandarin, English, or Other Chinese Dialect).

This numerical recoding and subsequent calculation used statistical analysis software (SPSS) to generate the descriptive analysis – mean and standard deviation. Thus, this enable clear identity trends, tendencies and consistency in Baba Malay language usage across different social contexts.

3.7.3 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Pearson correlation is utilised to illustrate the direction and depth of the relation of two variables (Pallant, 2010). This study will utilise the correlation coefficient in order to find the relationship between Baba Malay language and the attitudes of the speakers. A positive correlation denotes that as one variable increase, the other will also increase. Meanwhile, negative correlation indicates that as one variable improves, the other variable quantity will decline. While a correlation of 0 indicates that there is no association between the two

variables, a perfect correlation of 1, or -1, indicated that the value of one variable can be precisely calculated by understanding the value of the other variable.

In this study, age groups were numerically recoded in which 20 to 40 = 1, 41-60=4 = 2, 65-74 =3, and above 75 = 4; to facilitate the analysis. Baba Malay usage in each relationship context was also coded as Baba Malay = 1, Bahasa Melayu = 2, Mandarin = 3, English = 3, Chinese Dialects = 4, and Others = 5.

This analysis enabled researcher to detect generational patterns in Baba Malay usage within the familial domain, where the intergenerational transmission is most likely to occur and thus, provide empirical insight into the stability or declining of language use across the age group.

The findings of this analysis interpreted within the framework of Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) revealed the attitudinal and behavioural tendencies, besides contributed to the mapping of the vitality and endangerment level of Baba Malay.

3.7.4 One Way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests differences in means. In this study, ANOVA is used to the respondents' demographic and the independent variables. According to Keun (2009), it is to examine any statistically significant difference between the means for the independent variables. Using ANOVA will allow the researcher to reveal the variations between groups of data that are statistically substantial.

In this study, the ANOVA was employed to look at the relationship between age groups among the Peranakan and their utilisation of Baba Malay. From here, researcher was able to analyse the attitude of the Peranakan when it comes to the use of the language whether it stays only in the family domain or extended to other domains.

ANOVA was selected to compare means value of multiple groups and identify whether observed differences are statistically significant. The independent variable in this study is the age group and the dependent variable is the perception of whether the Baba Malay spoken by the older generation is similar to the current generation. The dependent variable was constructed by calculating the average score of language use across domains. Each response was coded according to the language use where Baba Malay =1, Standard Malay = 2, English = 3, Mandarin =4, and Other = 5. Lower scores indicated higher use of Baba Malay.

Even though these codes represent ordinal categories, numerical coding was applied to facilitate practical statistical analysis. This approach follows practices in sociolinguistic research where ordinal data is often treated as quasi-interval when exploring broad trends (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Tayeh et al., 2020).

The aggregated family mean scores provided single composite dependent variable per participant, representing their overall Baba Malay usage within familial interactions. This analysis constituted a between-subjects design, as each participant belonged to only one age group and contributed a single mean score.

The resulting F-values and p-values were used to assess whether generational differences in perception are statistically meaningful. This analysis complemented the correlation findings by adding depth to the understanding of attitudinal variations across generations within the Peranakan.

Semi-Structured Interview

The semi-structured interviews were documented and transcribed accordingly. Strauss and Corbin (1998) methods of coding techniques for analysing text data (open, axial, and selective) were utilised in this research. Researcher created a coding and examined the relationship between the categories.

The process of identification of key concept and key ideas was carried out from the transcriptions and then explicitly mapped back to the research objectives. For instance, codes related to language used with family, peers and neighbours were grouped under RQ1 (Language Domains), codes reflecting perceptions of language importance or intergenerational differences were aligned with RQ2 (Attitudes); while codes on awareness of endangerment and suggestions for preservations were assigned to RQ3 (Preservation Measures).

This study involved the investigation of the generations from the elder generations to the younger generations who are from the Peranakan family. Thenceforth, the representatives for the interview will involve participants across generations to ensure that intergenerational differences in use, attitudes and awareness could be directly addressed in relation to the three research questions.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity is a fundamental component of a research especially when engaging with minority communities and investigating culturally sensitive topics such as language endangerment and identity. This study adhered strictly to the ethical research standard in compliance with the academic guide.

All participants were fully informed about the nature, objectives and procedures of the study prior to the data collection. Participants were given detailed scope of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation and the right to withdraw any time without consequence. As for the interview respondent, they were briefed before the interview sessions were conducted and verbal consent were obtained and recorded with permission.

Strict confidentiality was maintained through the research process. Personal identifiers such as names, addresses or specific familial ties were not recorded. Each respondent was assigned with a coded identifier such as R1 and R2 for both transcription and analysis purposes.

3.9 Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology for this study. It highlighted the methods adopted by the researcher to achieve all the objectives outlined for this research and to answer all three research questions being elaborated from basic information to the understanding of the research procedures. Data sampling which targeted a focused group of Peranakan community in Melaka to ensure the accuracy of data collection utilising instruments such as questionnaires and semi-structured interview were explained in

detailed manner in this chapter as to seek the understanding of the attitude's development by the respondents towards language use in the community. The questionnaire was pre-tested through a pilot study and modification were made to improve the clarity and structure. In sum, this chapter provided comprehensive explanation of the methodological approach taken to investigate this study, intended to answer all the three research questions outlined.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained supporting the objectives of the study conducted. Section 4.1 discusses the domain in which Baba Malay is being used by the Peranakan. The domains determine the precincts of the language utilisation. Section 4.2 focuses on the attitude of the speakers towards the endangerment of the Baba Malay language in which includes the analysis of the primarily collected data supported by the interview statements. Meanwhile, section 4.3 looks into the measures as perceived by the respondents to preserve the Baba Malay language within the Peranakan.

Looking at the reliability of the questionnaire, it is found that the Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be at the value of 0.75 as shown in Table 4.1. Generally, Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 indicates a good level of item reliability as suggested by Hair et al., (2006). This reliability coefficient, suggests that the items in this research instrument are reasonably dependable in measuring the targeted construct. While it falls within an acceptable range for this research purpose, the data is interpreted cautiously in answering the three research questions posed in this research.

Table 4.1

Cronbach's Alpha Value

	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Questionnaire</i>	17	0.75

4.1 Domain of Baba Malay Language

Language is the definitive sign, when it comes to group identity, especially ethnic identity. Language is a tool for communication, but it also serves as a conduit and a means of transmitting the cultural essence of a community across time and distance. The following analysis provide justification for the first research question; *What are the domains where the language is being utilised?*

For this analysis, responses were aggregated across responses from five categorical language-use items (e.g., for Home: Grandparents, Parents, Siblings, Children, Extended Family), Each item was numerically coded based on the language used where, Baba Malay =1, Standard Malay = 2, English =3, Mandarin =4, and Other =5. The total possible score per domain ranges from 5 to 25. A lower score reflects greater usage of Baba Malay across the domain. While numerical codes were used to allow statistical aggregation, the responses remain ordinal in nature. Therefore, the aggregated domain scores serve as an indicative rather than precise interval-scale representation of language use frequency.

4.1.1 UNESCO Factor 4: Trends in Existing Language Domains

The descriptive statistics in table 4.2 provide insights into Baba Malay usage across specific communication contexts. Mean and standard deviation values highlight the tendency and variability of language use among the Peranakan community.

Table 4.2

Trends in Language Domains

	HOME					FRIENDS		FORMAL		
	<i>Grandparents</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Siblings</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Extended Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	<i>Neighbours</i>	<i>Shopping</i>	<i>Doctor</i>	<i>Colleague</i>
Mean	1.625	1.688	2.125	2.750	2.125	2.281	2.094	2.125	2.156	2.313
Std. Deviation	1.129	1.176	1.289	1.646	1.289	0.772	0.777	0.609	0.574	0.471

In the context of a family, the mean value for grandparents is 1.625, which indicates a relatively low frequency of Baba Malay language usage when communicating with their generation. This is similar to parents ($\mu = 1.688$), as it also has a low mean value. When it comes to siblings, the mean ($\mu=2.125$) suggested slightly higher frequency in the use of Baba Malay when interacting with the siblings compared to the grandparents and parents. Meanwhile, for extended family ($\mu = 2.125$), there is a moderately high frequency of Baba Malay language usage when interacting with the extended family members, such as aunts and uncles.

Interview responses reinforces these findings, as R3 explained, “*As true blue of Peranakan, I use Baba Malay to speak with my siblings because we grow up using the language.* Similarly, R4 said, “*...when I see my family members my brothers and sisters, I use Baba Malay. Also during Chinese New Year, when meeting my other relatives, I use the language.*” These reflections demonstrate the persistence of Baba Malay in family interactions.

On the other hand, in the contexts of friends and formal, the mean for friends suggested moderately high frequency in which some did use Baba Malay to converse in Baba Malay. It is similar to communication neighbours which also indicated a moderate frequency ($\mu=2.079$). However, if we look deeper, it is found that those in the age range of 36-60 and above did use the language of Baba Malay mixing it with other languages such as standard Malay and English. It is evident by one of the respondent, R5 who said that “.. *this Baba Malay is something like standard Malay, you know, only different terms here and there..*”

“When I use Baba Malay, kind of way to speak my friends, my colleague will get weird. But when they know I am from Peranakan descendants, they’re like.. oh, okay.. so they also say it is almost same as standard Malay.”

Also R4, “.. *I use standard Malay I think, but I see that as the same as Baba Malay. Because it is almost the same.*”

Finally, as we look at the context of formal, as when communicating with doctors ($\mu=2.15$) and colleagues at work ($\mu=2.31$), both suggested high frequency. Responses illustrate this decline,

R2 : *“It depends , people can understand me when I speak Baba Malay, but, I have to use standard Malay and English most of the time when I go to clinic and any government departments because it is much easier to understand.”*

R3 : *“I definitely use standard Malay. I work in government sector. So, zero Baba Malay is allowed. I use English occasionally for other communication purposes.”*

While R5 and R6 confirmed the use of Standard Malay at work.

Looking at the standard deviation values, in general, the standard deviations are relatively low for most contexts, indicating a certain degree of consistency in Baba Malay language usage across different communication settings. The lower standard deviations suggest that the frequency of Baba Malay language usage is relatively consistent with each context. As can be seen in Table 4.2, the formal context where communications happen when shopping, seeing doctors and with colleagues shows standard deviation values of $\sigma=0.0609$, $\sigma=0.574$ and $\sigma=0.471$ respectively. Contrasting with the values of the standard deviation in the family context of grandparents $\sigma=1.129$, parents $\sigma=1.176$, siblings $\sigma=1.289$ and extended family members $\sigma=1.289$.

In sum, this analysis implies that Baba Malay language usage is most resilient in family interactions but vulnerable in external contexts. The data also suggests that national language policies promoting Standard Malay and English for official purposes contribute significantly to the decline of Baba Malay.

4.1.2 Domain Analysis

Reviewing the descriptive data from the following Table 4.2, focusing on the Fishman (1972) language domains. The following table (Table 4.3) shows the descriptive analysis of domains in different settings.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Analysis of Domains

	<i>Home</i>	<i>Friends</i>	<i>Formal</i>
Mean	37.75	16.00	24.00
Std. Deviation	36.36	13.95	31.02

Analysing the result for Domain Analysis according to Fishman (1972), the home domain has the highest mean value of $\mu = 37.75$. This is an indication of substantial frequency of Baba Malay language use within the home context. This also suggested that the majority of the communication using Baba Malay language, represented by the respondents takes place in the home setting. On the other hand, the relatively high standard deviation $\sigma = 36.36$ in home domain implies variability in language use within the home domain. This is an indication of communication practices or differences among the respondents in terms of their language preferences and habits at home. It can be evident by the interview in which respondents responded to the questions “what language do you use to communicate at home” as all respondents mentioned that they use the Baba Malay with their grandparents. However, they still have the tendency to mix the Baba Malay language with other languages such as the standard Malay, English and other Chinese dialects as they are used to the language outside of the family context.

Next, looking at the perspective of friend's domain, it is quite low with the mean value at $\mu = 16$. It is an indication that the interaction happened is less likely or to none when communicating with friends. Same goes with the standard deviation value of which $\sigma = 13.95$, where it implies some variability in Baba Malay usage within the friend's domain. While the mean is lower, the standard deviation suggests that the respondents may have diverse language practices when interacting with friends.

In the meantime, the formal domain shows a mean value at $\mu = 24$. This is a moderate frequency of Baba Malay usage in formal context. Somehow, this is an indication that there are respondents who engage in a considerable amount of Baba Malay in the formal settings, nonetheless, the interview implied that they consider themselves as using Baba Malay as it is understandable and is similar to standard Malay. Supporting this, the standard deviation value of $\sigma = 31.02$, which entails significant variability in the use of the language influenced by the differences or diverse language practices in different formal contexts.

Overall, Baba Malay is the strongest in the home domain, aligning to Fishman's expectation of higher language use within the family setting. The lower mean in friend's domain suggests that Baba Malay might not be as commonly used among friends, also aligned with Fishman's concept of lower language use in more informal social settings. The moderate mean in formal context suggests a considerable use of the language as it was deemed to be as similar to standard Malay and understandable by others, however not dominant. This addresses RQ1, showing that the language is still utilised at home but has limited and inconsistent use in other social domains.

4.2 Speakers' Attitude towards the Language Endangerment

Attitudes of a language speaker may determine the inter-transmission of one language. The belief, perceptions and sentiments held by an individual towards their language significantly impact its intergenerational transfer. Positive attitudes, pride and a strong sense of cultural identity associated with a language often contribute to its preservation and successful transmission from one generation to the next.

To investigate community attitudes, one of the questionnaire asked whether Baba Malay spoken by the elder generation is perceived to be the same as that spoken by younger generation today. This question served as an indicator how consistently the language is recognised across generations and whether speakers perceive it as undergoing change.

Table 4.4 below shows the mean perception scores by age group. Even though there are small differences existing in the group means, they are not statistically significant. ANOVA was applied not as a pre/post comparison, but to test whether perceptions of language difference varied systematically across age categories.

Table 4.4

Group Means of Perception towards Baba Malay Differences by Age Range

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Mean</i>
20-35	1.50
36-60	1.79
Above 60	1.75

To determine whether these differences were meaningful, a one-way ANOVA was conducted as shown in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5

Age Range and Perception towards Baba Malay Differences

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.262	2.000	0.131	0.545	0.586	5.678
Within Groups	6.957	29.000	0.240			
Total	7.219	31				

Based on Table 4.5, the F-statistics (0.545) is lower than the critical F-value of 5.678. Since the F-statistics is less than the critical F-value, there is no evidence to reject that the older generation usage of the Baba Malay is not the same as the younger generation spoken Baba Malay. This also suggest that the variability between the age groups and perceived similarity in Baba Malay language usage is not significantly different. The p-value supports this conclusion confirming that there is no significance between the age group and perceived similarity in Baba Malay language. Therefore, there is no difference in Baba Malay spoken by the elder generation and the younger generation. This suggests a shared perception across generations that Baba Malay remains largely unchanged. The interviewees viewed it as close to Standard Malay, with minor differences. For instance:

R4: *“I see Baba Malay as the same as Standard Malay, just some different terms.”*

R5: *“When I speak Baba Malay, people think it’s just Malay.”*

In summary, the quantitative and interview responses both point towards relatively consistent perception towards Baba Malay across generations.

4.2.1 UNESCO Factor 8: Community Members' Attitude towards Language

In order to look into the attitude of the Peranakan towards Baba Malay language, a descriptive analysis is utilised to achieving the result.

Table 4.6

Respondents Attitude towards Baba Malay

<i>Do you think you need to improve your Baba Malay</i>	<i>Do you think Baba Malay should be protected?</i>
Mean	10.667
Std. Deviation	5.033

Looking at Table 4.6, the mean value for both the need to improve Baba Malay among the Peranakan and their perception whether the language should be protected is at $\mu = 10.667$. The similar mean values for both variables is suggesting that on average, respondents perceive a moderate level of the need to improve their Baba Malay skills and assign a similar level of importance to the protection of Baba Malay in general. The higher value of standard deviation $\sigma = 5.033$ and $\sigma = 15.144$ respectively for the need to improve and the need to be protected shows a wider range of opinions within the community regarding the importance of protecting the language.

For example, some respondents expressed pride and attachment towards the language:

R2: *"We should protect Baba Malay, it is part of our identity."*

Meanwhile, others were less emphatic, highlighting its similarity to Standard Malay,

R6: *"It is almost the same as Malay, so I don't think it needs special effort."*

In sum, the descriptive findings under UNESCO Factor 8 suggest that although there is a generally positive orientation towards Baba Malay, the intensity of this attitude varies considerably. The Peranakan appears united in recognising the language's cultural role, but divided in the degree which active protection and revitalisation are viewed as necessary.

4.2.2 GIDS

The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Fishman, 1991) provides a framework to assess the vitality of language across generations. Baba Malay language when mapped into the GIDS model can be seen as being at Level 7 in which the younger generation does not transmit the language to their offspring. This places Baba Malay in the critical stage of language endangerment where intergenerational transfer is minimal.

To further examine intergenerational trends, Pearson correlation analyses were conducted between respondents' age groups and their reported frequency of Baba Malay use across five family relationship domains (grandparents, parents, siblings, children, and extended family). Age groups were coded numerically (20–35 = 1, 36–60 = 2, above 60 = 3), while language use in each domain was coded on an ordinal scale (Baba Malay = 1, Standard Malay = 2, English = 3, Mandarin = 4, Other = 5). Lower scores reflected greater use of Baba Malay. The resulting correlation coefficients (r) indicate whether higher age group codes (older respondents) are associated with higher or lower Baba Malay use in each relationship domain.

Although the language-use scores are ordinal, Pearson correlation was applied here following common practice in sociolinguistic and language vitality research, where

ordinal responses are treated as numeric to explore association trends (Jamieson, 2004). Accordingly, the results are interpreted as indicative of trends rather than strictly parametric tests.

The result of this study shows that the co-existence of dominant and non-dominant language in Malaysia has affected the use of Baba Malay within the Peranakan. The dominant language, standard Malay and English has changed the usage of the language at home. Looking in the trends in the language domain at home, the following table (Table 4.6) of Pearson Correlation analysis shows the relationship between different age groups and the use of Baba Malay language in various family relationships at home.

Table 4.7

Age Range and Use of Baba Malay in Different Relationships

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Grandparents</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Siblings</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Extended Family</i>
20-35	-0.170	-0.538	0.014	-	0.014
36-60	0.137	-0.036	-0.151	-0.461	-0.151
Above 60	-0.347	0.733	-0.347	-0.302	-0.347

Those at the age range of 20-35 have a weak negative correlation of ($r = -0.17$) in which it suggests a slight tendency of utilisation of Baba Malay language to decrease when dealing with grandparents at this age. For parents, a moderate negative correlation shows an indication that there is a notable decrease in the use of Baba Malay among the younger generation as they interact with their parents. When it comes to the siblings, the close to zero correlation ($r = 0.014$) shows little to no linear relationship in which these generation uses the language with their siblings. On the other hand, looking into the extended family

communication from this age group, it is similar to siblings in which the correlation is close to zero ($r = 0.0014$) where little to no linear relationship between the age range and the utilisation of Baba Malay when interacting with the extended family members such as their aunties and uncles.

Meanwhile, for those at the range age between 36 – 60, the correlation value is at $r = 0.137$, an indication of weak positive correlation in which it shows that the communication happens in Baba Malay language. When it comes to parents, there is a close to zero correlation of $r = -0.036$ in which there is little relationship between the age range of 36 – 60 with the Baba Malay utilisation. This is because there is a mixture of the language use where more dominant language such as standard Malay, English and other Chinese dialect has taken over the language usage. Marriage is factor here in which the descendants got married with other race.

Next, looking at the communication between the siblings of the generation, the result shows a weak correlation ($r = -0.151$) where this is suggesting the decrease in the use of Baba Malay when interacting with siblings. On the other hand, a moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.461$) implies a notable decrease in the use of Baba Malay language when it comes to the children for this age group.

Finally, looking into those in the range age of 60 and above, there is a moderate negative ($r = -0.347$) correlation that indicated a low usage of the Baba Malay language when dealing with grandparents in this age range. This is because these respondents' grandparents from this age are the elderly generations in which they are Chinese from the Mainland. Hence, the communication is based using Hokkien and Cantonese. As they

spoke to their parents, there is a strong positive correlation suggesting a significant increase ($r = 0.733$) in the use of Baba Malay.

However, there is a significant notable strong positive correlation ($r = 0.733$) when communicating with parents. There is increment in the use of Baba Malay when they communicate with their parents.

Besides communication with grandparents, communication with siblings, and extended family has also shown moderate negative correlation of each having $r = -0.347$. It is believed that the dominant language such as standard Malay and English has taken their influence in which people need to practice the use of standard Malay for education purpose and also English in professional settings. Hence, the decline of the use. Those in the age range of 60 and above is characterised by a significant increase in the use of Baba Malay language when communicating with their parents but there is a notable decrease when interacting with siblings and children as well as the extended family.

The age range plays a significant role in the utilisation of Baba Malay language within different family relationships. Younger individual (age ranging from 20 to 35, tend to use more Baba Malay language with their parents than with their children. The middle-aged individuals (age range 36-60) show varies correlation, with slight increases with grandparents, but decrease with siblings, children and extended family. Older individuals (aged 60 and above) on the other hand, exhibit a significant increase in the use of Baba Malay when communicating with parents but decreases with siblings and children as well as the extended family.

In sum, the weak correlation among the younger generation (20-35 of age range) with parents suggests a decline in Baba Malay usage, aligning with the GIDS level 7 scenario. The mixed correlation in the middle aged group (36-60) indicates varying trends, with the potential in reflecting the influence of dominant languages in Malaysia such as standard Malay, English and Chinese dialects. Finally, the older generation (aged 60 and above) exhibits a significant increase in Baba Malay usage with parents, indicating a more positive transmission, on the contrary, with a decline with siblings, children and extended family.

4.2.3 EGIDS

With reference to Table 4.2 it can be seen that communication with grandparent and parents suggest a relatively stable use of Baba Malay within family setting with lower standard deviation indicating less variability. Nonetheless, communication with siblings, children and extended family have relatively higher means. This is an indication that there is a potential disruption and the standard deviations also suggest varying language use within these family subdomains. Getting into the correlation with EGIDS, the family domain, specifically the interactions with grandparents and parents exhibit higher EGIDS value, emphasising the stability of Baba Malay language in these relationships.

On the other hand, the means for communication with friends and neighbour indicate slightly disrupted use of Baba Malay, with moderate standard deviations reflecting some variability in language use within these social circles. This is an indication of slightly lower EGIDS values. It also denotes that the Baba Malay language use is not as stable among friends and neighbourhood compared to family domain. Meanwhile, in more

formal settings such as doctor visits and interaction with colleagues, suggest almost no interactions using the language.

The EGIDS framework on the whole assist in the overall vitality and stability of Baba Malay across various domain in Melaka. These analyses on the EGIDS level aids in identifying the areas where Baba Malay language stability is higher and those facing challenges of disruptions, contributing to a comprehensive evaluation of Baba Malay vitality in Melaka.

Overall, the analysis of community members' attitudes towards Baba Malay usage, assessed through UNESCO Factor 8, provides insights into the endangerment of Baba Malay. The data analysed based on the attitudes of the Peranakan towards Baba Malay and explores the correlation between age groups and language usage affecting the endangerment of the language.

The ANOVA testing reveals that the perceptions of Baba Malay differences between older and younger generation do not significantly differ. Interview affirms this, in which the respondents expressed consistent views that the language remains unchanged among the Peranakan although there is mixture of certain words from the more dominant language such as standard Malay and English as well as other Chinese dialects. The descriptive analysis indicates a moderate level of perceived importance in both improving Baba Malay skills and protecting the language, though opinions within the community vary widely.

Mapping Baba Malay onto the GIDS model highlights a level 7 status indicating minimal intergenerational transmission. Pearson correlation analysis underscores generational shifts in language usage, with younger individuals showing decreased usage with parents but increased usage with grandparents. Middle-aged respondents display mixed correlations, influenced by dominant languages like standard Malay and English. However, older respondents exhibit usage of Baba Malay with parents but decreased usage with siblings, children and extended family members.

The EGIDS framework reveals stable Baba Malay usage within family context, particularly with grandparents and parents, as indicated by lower standard deviations. However, interactions with friends and neighbours shows slightly disrupted usage with moderate standard deviations suggesting variability. Nonetheless, formal settings demonstrate minimal Baba Malay usage.

The given analysis shows that the Peranakan's does show concern about the declining of the language and are aware of the endangerment of Baba Malay. While there is recognition among the Peranakan community about the language's declining usage and endangerment, there are varying opinions on the matter. Nonetheless, the findings underscore the importance to preserve and promote Baba Malay within the community.

Nonetheless, despite the decreasing use of Baba Malay usage in the daily life the Peranakan, it does not harbour negative sentiments towards the language. Intriguingly, several respondents from the Peranakan as reported by Sa'adiah Ma'alip and Rahilah Omar (2018) study, some are embarrassed to communicate using the language. Coluzzi, Riget and Kitade (2018) on the other hand reported positive attitudes towards the language

within the community as individuals expressing desire to learn considering it as part of their cultural identity as members of a Peranakan community. Apart from that, the attitude of the speakers was also heavily influenced by the pragmatic approach towards Malay as they recognise the significance of it as a crucial language for academic certification (How et al., 2017). On the contrary, certain minority linguistics communities exhibit robust language loyalties, using their language to maintain their ethnic identity (Pandharipande, 2001)

4.3 Measure to Preserve Baba Malay Language

Preserving the linguistic heritage is paramount for maintaining the Baba Malay language and foster intergenerational connection within the community. The following section addresses Research Question 3: What are the measures taken to preserve the Baba Malay language in Melaka.

4.3.1 UNESCO Factor 1 Intergenerational Language Transmission

UNESCO Factor 1 refers to the Intergenerational Language Transmission where in this study look into the relation between the awareness of the Peranakan community and how they would preserve the language. In this study, thematic analysis of interviews and open ended questionnaire responses revealed various efforts suggested by respondents to preserve Baba Malay. These themes were categorised and analysed to reflect community awareness and commitment to language transmission.

The following Table 4.7 presents thematic categories and their associated strategies based on qualitative data.

Table 4.7

Thematic analysis of measures to preserve Baba Malay in Melaka

<u>Youth engagement</u>	<u>Language preservation</u>
• Encourage more learning channels for youth to explore Baba Malay. • Ensure active engagement of the Baba community with youths. • Promote the use of Baba Malay among the youth, emphasising on the cultural significance.	• Stress the importance of the usage of Baba Malay in everyday life. • Organise community programmes to attract younger generations to learn and use the language. • Compile Baba Malay language into a book for preservation and wider dissemination.
<u>Publication and education</u>	<u>Cultural Awareness</u>
• Increase the availability of publication in Baba Malay. • Conduct community classes to teach Baba Malay language. • Develop more programmes and books to share Baba Malay with the public. • Emphasise the importance of Baba Malay in cultural festivals.	• Foster awareness about cultural significance of Baba Malay. • Encourage mingling with more Peranakan to strengthen cultural ties. • Emphasise preservation of the Baba Malay is synonymous with preserving the culture.
<u>Community involvement</u>	<u>Personal Commitment</u>
• Increase social activities within the Peranakan community to engage in Baba Malay conversations. • Reach out to more Peranakan descendants to foster a sense of community. • Ensure Baba Malay language is actively used within family settings.	• Encourage consistent use of Baba Malay whenever possible. • Make own compilation of Baba Malay books for preservation. • Emphasise on daily use of Baba Malay language.

<u>General transmission</u>	<u>Awareness building</u>
• Encourage parents to speak Baba Malay with their children. • Emphasise the role of community in passing down the language to younger generations. • Create awareness of Baba Malay importance to prevent extinction.	• Promote awareness campaign on the importance. • Advocate for increased communication in Baba Malay within family members settings.

Analysing the importance of table 4.7 above, in relation to UNESCO Factor 1, pertaining to Intergenerational Language Transmission, the Peranakan community are aware of the declining of the language. In particular, the responds categorised in the youth engagement encourages more learning channels for youth to explore Baba Malay reflects an acknowledgement of the need to engage younger generations in learning and using the language. Active engagement from the youth of the Peranakan is crucial in fostering intergenerational language transmissions and ensuring that the language is passed down to future generations. Promoting the use of Baba Malay among the youth emphasises the cultural significance of the language which can instil a sense of pride and identity among the younger generations.

Besides that, suggestion of having resources such as publications and organisation of community classes create accessible avenues for learning and preserving Baba Malay. These efforts cater to different age groups within the community facilitating intergenerational transmission. Younger generations can learn the language through formal instructions, while the older generations may benefit from materials that reinforce their existing knowledge. While cultural festivals can serve as a platform for celebrating and showcase unique cultural practices, including Baba Malay language.

Another theme is the community involvement. Increasing social activities within the Peranakan community centred around Baba Malay conversations indirectly actively promoting the language use among the community. These social gatherings provide ample opportunities for individuals of all ages to engage in the informal language practice, reinforcing their linguistics skills and confidence in using Baba Malay.

On the other hand, in making sure that the language is being transmitted to another generation, the respondents stated that the language should be used actively within the family settings. Family settings play a crucial role in intergenerational language transmission, children learn language from their parents and the elderly. The respondents are aware of the declining of the language and have taken some measures on their own to reinforce the utilisation of the language, in particular, within the family domain.

In order to assess the frequency of each suggested theme, Table 4.8 presents a descriptive analysis of measures proposed to preserve Baba Malay by the Peranakan community. The mean value reflect the number of mentions across themes, while the standard deviation indicated the variability in how consistently these themes were mentioned.

Table 4.8

Frequency Distribution of Suggested Preservation Measures

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Measures according to theme	3.2	0.78

Analysing this in context of UNESCO Factor 1, Intergenerational Language Transmission, the findings can be interpreted as follows.

The responses were rated on a The mean score of 3.2 suggests a relatively high level of agreement or importance placed on the identified measures to preserve Baba Malay. The mean score indicated that on average, the respondents perceived that these measure as significant for the preservation of the language. Indirectly, this reflects a positive attitude towards the importance of preserving Baba Malay within the Peranakan. Meanwhile, the standard deviation of 0.78 indicates the variability or dispersion of responses around the mean. A low standard deviation here suggests that responses are clustered closely indicating a relatively consistent agreement among respondents regarding the importance of these measures.

Looking into the perspective of UNESCO Factor 1, the high mean score indicates that the measures identified for preserving Baba Malay usage are crucial by the Peranakan. This aligns with UNESCO Factor 1, in which it emphasises on the importance of intergenerational language transmission. The measures outlined likely contribute to creating an environment conducive to language preservation, particularly within family settings where language transmission traditionally happens. The low standard deviation on the other hand suggest consistency of a shared understanding and agreement within the community regarding the significance of these proposed preservation efforts. It is an indication of a collective recognition of the importance of safeguarding Baba Malay for future generations.

These measures depicted the recognition of the importance of intergenerational transmission, aligning with the objectives of UNESCO Factor 1. By implementing these measures, the aim of the Peranakan community focuses on the continuity and vitality of Baba Malay passing it down to future generations as a vital aspect of their cultural identity and heritage.

4.3.2 Suggested Measure to be Taken

The final item in the questionnaire was an open ended questions in which respondents are free to express their opinion regarding the methods they think is appropriate to preserve the language. The following table (Table 4.9) outlines the emergent themes derived from the responses to the questionnaires aligning with the research questions. It illustrates the perspectives of the respondents obtained from both the open-ended questionnaires and interviews.

Table 4.9

Questionnaire and Emergent Themes

Questions that address the research question	Theme that address the question
If Baba Malay is spoken less today, what do you think will happen to the language?	Consequence identified : Language disappear / forgotten if not actively used.
As one of the Baba Nyonya community, what do you think you can do to ensure that the language stays alive?	• Personal commitment • Language preservation • General transmission • Publication and education • Community engagement
In your opinion, what other measures could be done to keep the language?	• Publication and education • Awareness building • National promotion • Linguistics compilation

The above table offers insights into measure aimed at preserving the Baba Malay language, addressing the third research questions.

The analysis provided valuable insights into the proposal of measures to preserve Baba Malay language. The respondents shared their fair share of the measures to be taken as individuals and collectively. Analysing further, Figure 4.1 demonstrates the percentile of responses.

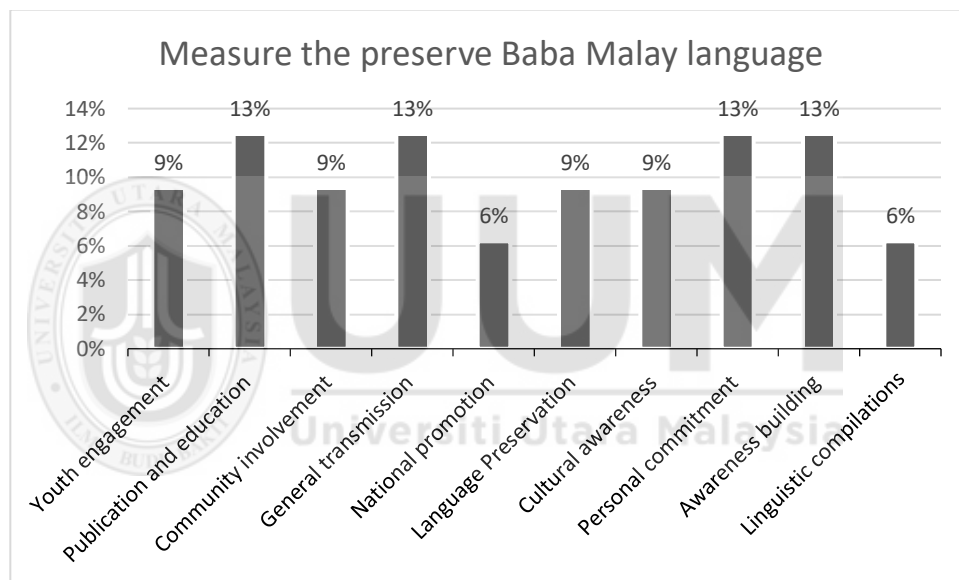


Figure 4.1. Proposed measures to preserve Baba Malay

Based on Figure 4.1, it can be depicted that publication and education, general transmission, personal commitment and awareness building has the highest percentile of suggestions of 13%. This is an indication of significant interest among the Peranakan to have educational initiatives and publications to preserve Baba Malay. Similarly, general transmission, has a noteworthy proportion in which it shows the perceived importance of passing down Baba Malay within the Peranakan communities. Apart from that, personal

commitment also has a high proportion. This is an indication that many individuals know that in order to ensure the language prevail, there is an urge for them to be recognised as the key agents in the preservation of the language. Correspondingly, the respondents are also aware of the need to create awareness as key agents to ensure the language not to disappear.

It can be seen also when the respondents were asked the questions regarding periodical publication of Baba Malay, the mean value suggests that on average, respondents perceived the publication measure to be slightly above the midpoint scale value 1.094.

Table 4.10

Descriptive Analysis of Respondents towards Periodic Publication

<i>Publication</i>	
Mean	1.094
Std. Deviation	0.296

This indicated a generally positive perception of the importance of publications in preserving Baba Malay. The standard deviation value at 0.296 signify a degree of variability in the respondents' responses. While the mean suggests a generally positive perception towards publication of Baba Malay periodically, the standard deviation indicates that some respondents may have different views on the need to have published materials.

The analysis suggested that overall, respondents view publication measure positively as one of the way to preserve Baba Malay. The responses indicate consistent and moderate varied perceptions among the respondents.

Next, youth engagement, community involvement, cultural awareness, and language preservation initiatives contributes to 9% respectively in which the respondents are agreeing that the Peranakan community and actions on preservations should be taken seriously together in the maintenance of Baba Malay.

Finally, the lowest percentile of suggestions for measures are the national promotion, and linguistics compilations where each contributed 6% of the proportion. The suggestion for national promotion is relatively low probably because they do not prioritise the national-level initiatives as much as other measures. The same could be said for linguistics compilations.

Nonetheless, one of the interviewee, R3 did talk about preservation efforts with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. *“The Peranakan Association is currently working with DBP, to publish a glossary on Baba Malay language and... uh... it’s expected to be published somewhere next year.”*

Looking into the statistical value for this thematic analysis, the mean value is at 3.2. This suggests that, on average the respondents perceive the proposed measures to be moderately important for the preservation of Baba Malay. While, the standard deviation value at 0.788 indicates a moderate variability in the respondents’ responses. Some measures might be of what they believe more relevant respectively.

4.4 Discussions

4.4.1 Domain of Baba Malay

Aligning the above findings to the first research objective, in identifying the domain of Baba Malay usage among the Peranakan, it is crucial to underscore the significance of language as a marker of group identity, particularly in this study is the ethnic identity.

Language serves as a vessel for transmitting cultural heritage across generations. The examination of existing language domains as in UNESCO Factor 4 reveals insights into the Baba Malay usage which is limited to the family context. Within the familial domain Baba Malay emerges as the predominant mode of communication, in particular with the grandparents (Tayeh et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). This pattern aligns with broader research on heritage languages, in which intergenerational language transmission often happen within family interaction, particularly in the context of ethnic identity and cultural preservation (Ong & Ting, 2022; Suhailin & Sujud, 2020). Interviews with the respondents affirm this trend highlighting Baba Malay's central role within the family circle. Despite the occasional mixing with other languages, Baba Malay remains integral to family's interactions.

Language is critical for the preservation of ethnic identity and cultural history. According to Smolicz (1980), language is a key value of culture, serving as an avenue for passing down cultural history across generations. This is consistent with the findings where Baba Malay is predominantly utilised in the family settings, notably among the grandparents, retaining its cultural identity (Smolicz, 1980; Phinney et al., 2001).

Conversely, Baba Malay usage varies significantly in social contexts outside the family. While some individuals maintain its usage with others, most opt for languages like standard Malay or English, influenced by factors such as cultural background and social acceptance. In formal settings, Baba Malay takes a backseat to more widely accepted languages like standard Malay or English. The analysis of standard deviation values underscores the consistency of Baba Malay usage within family context.

Exploring the analysis from Table 4.3, narrowing it to the interpretation in relation to UNESCO Factor 4, the overall trend suggests that Baba Malay language usage reflected a certain level of continuity in certain level and various communication context. The higher mean values in the family contexts suggest a robust and sustained usage of the language contributing to the language resilience in the daily lives of Peranakan individuals (Lee, 2022; Neo, 2020). Addressing UNESCO Factor 4, these trends in the existing language domain can serve as a foundation for further investigation into the sociolinguistics dynamics and cultural significance of Baba Malay language among the Peranakan. Identifying the strongholds of Baba Malay language usage can inform language preservation efforts and contribute to the UNESCO's goal of safeguarding the linguistic diversity.

Within the familial domain, there are noteworthy patterns seen. It shows that Baba Malay is used more frequently when interacting with grandparents and parents, and also to the siblings and the extended family members such as aunties, uncles and cousins. Interviews with the respondents support these findings, emphasising Baba Malay primary usage within the family circle, particularly to the elder generation.

Conversely, the usage of Baba Malay shifts notably in social context outside the family. While some individuals use Baba Malay with friends, especially those with similar cultural backgrounds, others prefer using standard Malay or English. Despite occasional mixing of language, Baba Malay still being spoken, underscoring its significance in maintaining ethnic identity (Lee, 2023; Ong & Ting, 2022). Informal settings like workplaces or professional communication, although Baba Malay is present, most respondents opt for standard Malay or English due to its acceptance.

Further insights from Fishman's domain analysis highlight distinct usage patterns across different social settings. The home domain emerges as the primary setting for Baba Malay usage, reflecting its role as a cornerstone of familial communication. However, variability in the language practices within this domain underscores individual preferences and linguistics diversity. This is also supported by Mufwene (2002) who stated that the dominance of Malay as Malaysia's vernacular has undoubtedly come at the cost of numerous other indigenous languages. Leo and Abdullah (2013) who also conducted a study using Fishman's domain analysis agree with the findings of this study in which they revealed that English is used more often considering people's perception about the use of English and the connection in sense of social solidarity and social identity.

The findings of this study is in line with the result from Coluzzi, Riget and Kitade (2018) who discovered 79% of the Peranakan utilise Baba Malay within their family settings, followed by other languages such as standard Malay and English. Their study also revealed a trend in which Baba Malay is predominantly used with grandparents and its usage declining as the age of the speakers' decreases.

4.4.2 Speaker's Attitude towards Baba Malay

In correspondence to the second research objective, examining the speakers' attitude towards Baba Malay language endangerment, through the statistical analyses and qualitative insights, it sheds light on the perceptions and behaviours of the Peranakan towards the endangerment of the language.

The ANNOVA testing conducted revealed no significant difference in the perceptions of Baba Malay between the older and younger generations. Despite this statistical findings, the qualitative data from the interviews supported a consistent sentiment among the respondents that the language has not been overtly influenced by or changed within the Peranakan community, though terms from dominant languages such as standard Malay, English, and other Chinese dialects are occasionally mixed in the discourse (Lee,2020; Nah et al., 2021). Additionally, it was noted that the younger generation demonstrate higher proficiency in English than Baba Malay. While some individuals of the community still do maintain their traditional language understanding, the findings are also suggesting that Baba Malay could be in tangential movement with the trends of those more dominant languages, which may lead to decline of its usage within the community (Sharbawi & Abidin, 2021; Renddan et al., 2020; Ma'alip & Omar, 2018).

Upon examining the aforementioned findings in relation to UNESCO Factor 8 on the community's attitudes towards language preservation, it is evident that there exists a degree of recognition among the Peranakan community regarding the importance of Baba Malay. A recent research by Lee (2020), indicates that younger generations regard refined varieties of Baba Malay as a representation of cultural identity, despite their growing

proficiency in other languages. Heritage language preservation such as the Ambonese Malay and Thai-Melayu communities highlights the crucial role of strong parental and community attitudes in maintaining and transmitting native languages across generations (Lekatompessy, 2021; Tayeh et al., 2020).

However, some does not see the relevance to preserve the language. There is also an acknowledgement of the challenges and differing opinions surrounding its preservation. Thus, any efforts aimed at safeguarding Baba Malay should take into account the diverse perspective within the community and work towards fostering a shared sense of ownership and commitment towards the continuity of the language. The descriptive analysis (Table 4.5) further highlighted a moderate level of perceived importance among the Peranakan in both improving their Baba Malay skills and protecting the language. Nonetheless, there is a wide range of opinions within the community regarding the urgency of the language preservation. Some respondents expressed scepticism about the need to presented Baba Malay, citing its limited utility of the Peranakan community.

The analysis of language domain trends and domain analysis in the context of Baba Malay language use reveals interesting insights into its sociolinguistics dynamics and cultural significance. This first research question in which to seek the domain of Baba Malay usage among the Peranakan where the correlation between the domains and various social settings were explained.

Additionally, the analysis considers standard deviation values assessing the consistency of Baba Malay usage across different communication settings. It is found that Baba Malay

usage is more consistent with family contexts but more varied in social contexts, reflecting diverse linguistics practices among respondents.

With some respondents expressing sentiment of indifference towards the preservation of Baba Malay, this stance aligns with UNESCO Factor 8 at Grade 2. The following table (Table 4.11) shows the degree of endangerment based on the attitude of the Peranakan community towards Baba Malay.

Table 4.11

Community Members' Attitudes towards Baba Malay

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Community Members' Attitudes toward Language	Baba Malay
Safe	5	All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.	
Unsafe	4	Most members support language maintenance.	
Definitely Endangered	3	Many members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.	
Severely Endangered	2	Some members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.	/
Critically Endangered	1	Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.	
Extinct	0	No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.	

Table 4.11 is evident from the findings in which certain respondents disagree with language preservation and are indifferent with Baba Malay usage as it is only used within family context. Some even mixed Baba Malay with other dominant language. Nonetheless, the numbers of respondents who are indifferent is relatively low compared to those who have high positive attitude towards Baba Malay and would want to preserve the language. For example, there is research on Ambonese Malay where parental commitment maintaining the language within their familial domain (Lekatompessy, 2021). It is similar to Javanese speakers as there is positive language attitude that impact the likelihood preserving its minority languages (Kumala, 2021). In the case of Baba Malay, most of the respondents are eager to preserve the language as part of marking their cultural identity (Lee, 2023), even though the usage of the language is at minimum in the public domain.

In terms of GIDS model mapping of the Baba Malay, the findings elucidated a Level 8(a) status, indicating a very minimal intergenerational transmission of the language. This trend is common in many endangered languages globally. Dominant language such as English or national languages hinder the transmission of languages within families. For instance, similar challenges faced by Ladino and indigenous languages in the US, community efforts are needed much for revitalition (Kirschen, 2020; Dorzheeva, 2021).

In addition, the Pearson correlation analysis (Table 4.7), revealed that generational shifts in the language usage where the younger individuals showed decreased usage with parents but increased usage with grandparents. Younger generations seemed to have the tendency to decrease the use of Baba Malay with their parents, having to utilise more dominant

language such as English and Malay. Nonetheless, they showed increase usage of Baba Malay with the older generation such as grandparents. Middle-aged respondents displayed a mixed-correlations, with influence by dominant languages such as standard Malay, English and other Chinese dialects. Conversely, the older respondents exhibited consistent usage of Baba Malay with parents but decreased usage with siblings, children and extended family members. This pattern is reflecting broader trends in linguistics shifts, where the younger generation is engaging with dominant languages within family contexts. Grenoble and Osipov (2023) indicated that in shifting language ecologies, the younger generation have the tendency to avoid the use of heritage language while the middle-aged and older generations displayed mixture of correlations influenced by their exposure to both heritage and dominant language.

Meanwhile, the EGIDS framework provided insights into the stability of Baba Malay usage across various domain. While interactions within the family context, particularly with grandparents and parents, the usage outside the familial domain shows disrupted usage. Research demonstrated language transmission is most successful in the familial context, while external factors such as school in dominant language (such as Malay, English and Mandarin) leads to language shift, especially to the younger generations (Ong & Ting, 2023; Verhaeghe et al., 2019). Similarly, in Germany, once the children begin to interact into broader societal structures, the decline in their mother tongue is declining (Gordon & Meir, 2023). Lack of reinforcement outside the familial setting is another attribution to the decline of heritage language usage (Sibanda, 2023).

The correlation analyses and qualitative findings collectively highlight complex interplay between the speakers' attitude towards the endangerment of Baba Malay and the actual usage patterns within the community. It can also be said that an individual attachment to their own language and cultural identity (Al-Saggaf, Kader, Alias & Abdul Raof, 2020) is another potential attitude that lies among the Peranakan. While there is a recognition of the Baba Malay declining usage and endangerment among the Peranakan community, varying opinions exist regarding the urgency of language preservation efforts.

4.4.3 Measures to Preserve Baba Malay

Finally, the analysis of thematic analysis in Table 4.8 is looking at the measures to preserve Baba Malay showed the varying degrees of emphasis on different measures for preserving Baba Malay among the Peranakan. While some measures are relatively higher proportions, some are considered as less crucial, since it was based on personal opinions. The moderate mean and standard deviation reflect a balanced yet diverse perspective on the importance of these proposed preservation measures. There are research studies that also showed similar findings in which the efforts to preserve language indicate that individual and community-level engagement are the central to preservation strategies (Aziz et al., 2020; Lao, 2022).

The importance of publication and education appears to be most frequently suggested measure of preservation. When asked about the publications, the findings showed that most of the Peranakan agree to have periodical publication – this result goes in tandem with the findings from a study at Russia in which they had almost 40 of its indigenous languages obtained the official status of the country (Kuzmin, 2020). In addition, this also align with Kibrik (2021) who emphasises the creation of teaching materials and

documentation of languages as the fundamental strategies for revitalisation programmes, in which it provides both the current speaker and new learners the necessary tool to maintain and learn the language. The mean in Table 4.9 coherently shows positive reception towards educational initiatives among the Peranakan community.

Looking deeper into this, a work on Australian Indigenous languages by Forrest (2018) emphasises on the effectiveness of publication for course books and language documentation. He found that resources aiming at young learners contributed significantly to the revitalisation of the indigenous language. In correspond to this, Russia has programmes where they produce children's literature and learning materials as part of broader efforts to preserve their languages (Seredkina & Koptzeva, 2018). Recent efforts to preserve Baba Malay, as suggested by the Peranakan community has actually take place as we can see books and research has been done to highlight its linguistic variations and historical significance (Neo, 2023; Lee, 2023). Media and promotion of cultural heritage also play a vital role in garnering the attention of Peranakan younger generations and raise awareness about the importance to preserve the Baba Malay (Zanzaizman et al., 2023).

In essence, the analysis suggested measures to uphold Baba Malay as perceived by the Peranakan, encompass a wide array of perspectives and recommendations. These proposals indirectly reflected the deep-rooted concern for the preservation of Baba Malay. Within this framework of ideas, certain measures are seen prominent and significant. The distribution of suggestions across various thematic categories illustrates the wide landscape of initiatives aimed at preserving Baba Malay. While some proposals resonate strongly with a sizable segment of the community, others receive less traction, indicating

the diversity of perspectives and priorities within the Peranakan community. Basically, the diversity underscores the multidimensional nature of language preservation endeavours, recognising that a singular approach cannot fully address the intricate challenges confronting Baba Malay in this contemporary society.

Despite variations in emphasis and perceived significance, the prevailing sentiment among the Peranakan community regarding the preservation of Baba Malay remains as collective responsibility and dedication. This is in line with Darmayanti & Bahaudin (2020; 2021), where their research highlighted crucial need to preserve the culture as it is facing threats due to forces of modernisation and societal transformation. The moderate mean and standard deviation values (Table 9) associated with these preservation measures reflect a balanced but varied perspective, highlighting the complexity inherent in navigating the realm of language conservation hence, correspond to the third research question. Aligning this to the UNESCO Factor 1 which is the intergenerational language transmission, the suggested measures in preserving Baba Malay suggest a strong alignment with the objectives of UNESCO Factor 1. All the preservation measures shared by each respondent demonstrated proactive approach ensuring the continuity of the language within family settings aligns directly with UNESCO Factor 1 in which seeks to promote long term sustainability of the Baba Malay language. In addition, the Peranakan also are not embarrassed in using Baba Malay language, hence positively influence the preservation of their linguistic heritage (Ma'alip & Omar, 2018).

4.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the results and the analysis of the results. All research questions were answered according to the subsections. Research Question 1 was answered in subsection 4.1 which discusses about the domains of the Baba Malay. It was further detailed in 4.1.2 and 4.1 where UNESCO Factor 4: Trends in existing language domains and Domain Analysis of Fishman (1972) was taken into account in the elaboration.

As for Research Question 2 of what are the attitudes of the Peranakan in regards to the Baba Malay language, while analysing and discussing the results, UNESCO Factor 8: Community members' attitude towards the language, the GIDS and EGIDS were taken into the consideration.

Finally, Research Question 3, was answered in the analysis and discussions for awareness looking into Factor 1: Intergenerational language transmission and a thematic analysis of the measure suggested to be taken for the preservation of Baba Malay language.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter draw together the threads of this study, presenting a comprehensive conclusion of the study. The research objectives, summarisation of key findings and the implications for theory and practice, and recommendations for future research are presented.

5.1 Conclusion and Overview

5.1.1 Domain of Baba Malay (Research Objective 1)

The investigation into Baba Malay usage among the Peranakan provides a rich understanding of language's profound significance as a marker of ethnic identity and cultural heritage. Aligned with UNESCO Factor 4, which examines trends in existing language domains, and Fishman's domain analysis, this study explores unto the intricate fabric of Baba Malay's presence within the community's social landscape.

Within the familial domain, Baba Malay emerges as a key for communication, particularly pronounced interactions with grandparents. Through intimate family bonds, Baba Malay serves as a conduit for preserving the language of their own. It fosters a sense of continuity and connection to the cultural roots. Conversely, outside the family domain, the usage of Baba Malay exhibits variability influenced by factors such as cultural background and social acceptance. While the older generation individuals maintain its usage in social contexts, others opt for languages perceived as more socially prestigious, such as standard Malay or English. This variability emphasise the dynamic nature of language usage within

diverse social spheres, reflecting how linguistic identity and social interactions influence each other.

5.1.2 Attitudes of the Speakers towards Endangerment of Baba Malay (Research Objective 2)

Exploring into the speaker's attitude towards the endangerment reveals an in-depth understanding. Statistical analysis indicates no significant generational differences in perceptions, yet the qualitative insights reveal a consistent sentiment among respondents regarding the language's enduring importance. Despite occasional linguistics adaptations, Baba Malay retains its significance within the community.

The descriptive analysis further shows moderate level of perceived importance among the Peranakan, both in enhancing their Baba Malay proficiency and safeguarding the language. However, there exist a spectrum of opinions within the Peranakan community regarding the immediacy of language preservation efforts. Some despondence expressed scepticism, citing the limited utility of Baba Malay outside the family domain. The scepticism aligns with UNESCO Factor 8 at Grade 2 indicating level of indifference towards language preservation. Table 4.10 illustrates the varying degrees of endangerment based on the community's attitude towards Baba Malay, with a notable proportion expressing indifference or even support for language loss.

The correlation analyses and qualitative findings highlight the complex interactions that exist between community opinions regarding Baba Malay endangerment and the actual usage patterns. Individual ties to language and cultural identity also show up as important

attitudes among the Peranakan. Although Baba Malay is becoming less widely spoken and is endangered, there are differing views on how urgent it is to preserve the language.

5.1.3 Measure to Preserve (Research Objective 3)

The examination of Baba Malay's endangerment status via the GIDS model and EGIDS framework uncovers complex generational shifts and disrupted patterns outside the family domain. These insights illuminate the intricate interplay between attitudes towards language preservation and actual usage dynamics within the community.

Looking into the analysis, when examining the data through the lens of UNESCO Factor 4, pertains to the vitality and resilience of a language within its community, it is evident that the usage of Baba Malay demonstrates a noteworthy level of continuity. Specifically, the consistently higher mean values observed within family settings indicating a robust and enduring utilisation of Baba Malay among Peranakan individual. Thenceforth, playing a significant role in maintaining the linguistic traditions and fostering a sense of cultural identity in their everyday lives.

5.2 Research Implications

The study of Baba Malay and its role in the Peranakan community carries valuable implications across various domains, including cultural preservation, education, sociolinguistics and policy development. These implications underpin the importance of targeted efforts to maintain and promote the language, ensuring its vitality for future generations.

5.2.1 Linguistics and Cultural Identity

The research emphasises the importance of Baba Malay in preserving the Peranakan community's cultural identity. Language serves more than only as a means of communication; it is also an important avenue for conveying cultural history and reinforce group identity. This conclusion supports Smolicz's (1980) argument that language is a fundamental culture value required for passing down cultural history across generations. The widespread of Baba Malay in family setting, particularly with grandparents and parents, highlighted its role in preserving cultural identity and maintaining intergenerational bonds (Smolicz, 1980; Phinney et al., 2001). This indicated that there is a need for targeted efforts to preserve the language as an integral aspect of cultural continuity.

5.2.2 Language Policy and Education

Moderate frequency of Baba Malay usage in formal settings and significant decline usage among younger generations highlighted the trend in which impacting the language policies and the need for educational programmes supporting the learning and use of Baba Malay. Integrating Baba Malay into language programmes in community centres can enhance its visibility and usage. Educational policies should prioritise the inclusion of minority languages to foster a more inclusive linguistics environment and support cultural diversity (Mufwene, 2002; Leo & Abdullah, 2013).

Policymakers can use the insights from this study to create supportive frameworks that promote the use of Baba Malay in various social and formal contexts, this includes developing language preservation policies, providing funding for language programmes, and supporting community-driven initiatives. Effective language policies would help in

mitigating the effects of language shifts and ensure the sustainable use of Baba Malay (Herzberger, 2008).

5.2.3 Community Engagement and Empowerment

The study shows critical role of community engagement in language preservation. Community-driven initiatives such as cultural events, language classes and publications are essential in fostering sense of pride and encourage the younger generation to learn and use Baba Malay. Empowering the community to take active role in language preservation can lead to more effective and sustainable outcomes (Coluzzi, Riget & Kitade, 2018).

5.2.4 Intergenerational Transmission

Ensuring the intergenerational transmission of Baba Malay is crucial for its survival. This study highlighted the importance of family settings in maintaining the language, where intergenerational bonds facilitates the natural transmission of linguistic and cultural knowledge. Encouraging families to use Baba Malay in daily interactions and providing resources to support this may strengthen the language's transmission across generations.

Since the foundation element in any language revitalisation, especially on endangered language is intergenerational transmission, Baba Malay language should not only be learned, but to also lived and experienced daily. It hinges significantly on the ability of the families to pass the language to their children within the home context (Fishman, 1991).

Both younger and older generation in learning and using Baba Malay, where language nests, elders teach Baba Malay to young children in an immersive environment (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006).

5.3 Recommendation

The findings of this study offer several avenues for future research and practical action to address the preservation and promotion of Baba Malay within the Peranakan community. Firstly, there is a need for further research to explore deeper into the factors influencing the variability in Baba Malay usage across different social domains. Qualitative studies could explore individual motivations and attitudes towards language choice, while longitudinal studies could track changes in language dynamics over time. A wider sampling should also be taken into consideration in which this study has been limited to a small portion of the community. Getting more respondents would provide a more concrete evident and insights in which may shed lights about the usage, attitudes, awareness and measure for preservations. Such research and population would provide more in depth understanding of the complex interplay between language, culture and identity within the Peranakan community.

Community engagement is paramount in language preservation efforts. Involving community members in the design and implementation of initiatives can ensure their cultural relevance and effectiveness. Forming advisory committees comprising members of the community leaders, educators and language experts would facilitate collaboration and collective decision-making in language revitalisation projects. Additionally, foster greater awareness and understanding of Baba Malay through educational materials,

targeting both Peranakan youth and the broader community lead to increase appreciation for the language and its role in preserving cultural heritage.

Linguistic documentation is crucial for preserving Baba Malay for future generations. Comprehensive linguistic studies and collection of oral histories from the speakers can provide valuable insights into the structure, usage and historical context of the language. This documentation serves as a resource for linguists, historians, and even educators interested in studying and revitalising Baba Malay. Moreover, advocacy for supportive policies is necessary to institutionalise language preservation efforts. Lobbying for funding's for the Baba Malay revitalisation programmes and raising awareness among policy makers about the cultural and historical importance of the language are vital steps in this essence.

In sum, the implementation of the above recommendations, can lead to stakeholders to work towards ensuring the continued vitality and resilience of Baba Malay as a cherished aspect of Peranakan heritage and identity.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has provided valuable insights into the domains of Baba Malay usage among the Peranakan, addressing three research objectives. Firstly, the investigation revealed significance of Baba Malay with family domain, serving as a crucial means of communication, particularly among generations. However, there are variability in usage was observed outside the family domain, influenced by factors such as cultural background and social acceptance. Secondly, the exploration on the attitudes towards the

endangerment of Baba Malay, finding consistent sentiment regarding its enduring importance among respondents despite varying levels of perceived urgency in preservation efforts. Finally, the awareness and preservation efforts uncovered generational shifts and disrupted patterns, highlighting the need for targeted initiatives and interdisciplinary collaboration. Overall, the findings emphasise the importance of community engagement, linguistic documentation, policy advocacy and capacity building in safeguarding Baba Malay as a vital aspect of Peranakan heritage and identity. Through collaborative efforts and informed action, stakeholders can work towards ensuring the continued vitality and resilience of Baba Malay for future generations.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 : Expert Validation Form – First Reviewer.



EXPERT REVIEW FORM

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I have reviewed the items (interview protocol) developed by Lieyana Teo binti Mohd Zulkifli Teo, a master's degree student at the School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy, Universiti Utara Malaysia under the supervision of Dr. Hasliza binti Abd.Halim.

As an Expert Reviewer of this study:

On the whole I think the questions are fine. I just edited the following questions:

What language do you use **mostly** to communicate with your parents and siblings? (in this and similar questions 'mostly' should be added)

Do you think that there **are any** differences between the Baba Malay spoken today and the

Baba Malay spoken by the older generation? (I amended the grammar)

In your opinion, what other measures could be **taken** to keep the language? (I changed the verb)

In your opinion, do you think that you need to improve your Baba Malay? Why do you say so?
--

Do you think that you need to improve your Baba Malay? Why so?
--

(These two sentences are repetitions)

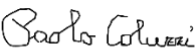
If **not enough people in** the Baba Nyonya community speak Baba Malay, what do you think will happen to the language? (I amended the sentence)

As **a member of the** Baba Nyonya community, what do you think you can do to make sure this language **is going to be** used by the younger generations? (I amended the sentence)

However, I don't think your questions are directed to find out what the factors are that are endangering the language. I think that either research question 2 or your questions should be changed.

Expert name : Paolo Coluzzi

Expert Institution : UM

Expert Signature : 

Date : 4-7-2022



Appendix 2 : Expert Validation Form – Second Reviewer.



EXPERT REVIEW FORM

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I have reviewed the items (interview protocol) developed by Lieyana Teo binti Mohd Zulkifli Teo, a master's degree student at the School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy, Universiti Utara Malaysia under the supervision of Dr. Hasliza binti Abd.Halim.

As an Expert Reviewer of this study:

See attached

Expert name :

Expert Institution :

PROF. EMERITUS DATUK DR. TEO KOK SEONG

Felo Utama

Institut Kajian Etnik (KITA)

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Expert Signature :

Teo Kok Seong.

Date :

28/07/2022

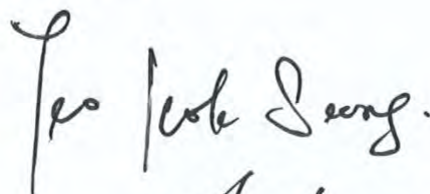
“Maintaining Baba Malay: The Use of the Language” with three research questions as the main research issues, besides being well stated by 19 semi-structured (questionnaire-typed) questions, and some semi-structured (open) interview questions, constitutes the scope of a study that is appropriate of a master’ s level.

The word “use” in the thesis’ s title should be reconsidered. Although “use” and “usage” are oftentimes utilized interchangeably in the English language, as linguistic terminology, these two (sociolinguistic) terms are not exactly similar.

“Use” denotes “*purpose – effect, benefit and value*” while “usage” indicates “*way – manner, mode and practice*”. By employing the phrase “the use of the language (Baba Malay)”, it refers to the purpose(s) for using it – one of them is for Baba-Nyonya identity. And by utilizing the phrase “the usage of the language (Baba Malay), it alludes to mean the (many) ways it is used, amongst them in domestic domain – family dan community.

Evident from the semi structured questions, both “use” and “usage” of the language are investigated and inquired from the community, with more emphasis on “usage” and less on “use” .

Perhaps both terms should be used with equal/balanced importance, i.e., “penggunaan, yakni amalan” (usage) dan “kegunaan” , iaitu tujuan (use) dalam pengekaln bahasa Melayu Baba (Melaka).


28/07/2022
PROF. EMERITUS DATUK DR. TEO KOK SEONG
Felo Utama
Institut Kajian Etnik (KITA)
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Appendix 3 : Questionnaire



**THE USE AND MAINTENANCE OF BABA MALAY LANGUAGE AMONG
THE PERANAKAN IN MELAKA**

Dear Respondents,

This study is conducted as part of a Master's thesis. The aim is to examine how Baba Malay is used, maintained, and preserved among the Peranakan community in Melaka.

All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Information you provide will only be used for academic purposes. No personal details will be disclosed in any reports or publications.

This questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation will make an important contribution to this research.

Best regards.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Researcher: Lieyana Teo binti Mohd Zulkifli Teo
Phone no. : 0137120028
Email : lieyana@uum.edu.my

Supervisor : Dr. Hasliza binti Abdul Halim
Email : hasliza@uum.edu.my

Part 1: This part is your background information. Please tick the box that is applicable to you.

Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

Education level :

☐ Primary School
☐ High School
☐ Certificate
☐ PhD.

☐ Diploma
☐ Bachelor's Degree
☐ Master's Degree

Part 2: Language Background

Please choose one answer to each question below.

1. What language (s) are you fluent in?

☐ Baba Malay
☐ Bahasa Melayu

☐ Mandarin
☐ English

☐ Chinese Dialects
☐ Others

2. What is your mother tongue?

☐ Baba Malay
☐ Bahasa Melayu

☐ Mandarin
☐ English

☐ Chinese Dialects
☐ Others

3. What language do you use to communicate with your parents and siblings?

☐ Baba Malay
☐ Bahasa Melayu

☐ Mandarin
☐ English

☐ Chinese Dialects
☐ Others

4. What language do you use to communicate with your grandparents?

☐ Baba Malay
☐ Bahasa Melayu

☐ Mandarin
☐ English

☐ Chinese Dialects
☐ Others

5. What language do you use to communicate with your uncles and aunties?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

6. What language do you use to communicate with your cousins?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

7. What language do you use to communicate with your spouse and children (if any)?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

8. What language do you use to communicate with your friends?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

9. What language do you use to communicate with your neighbour?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

10. What language do you use to communicate with your colleagues?

☐	Baba Malay	☐	Mandarin	☐	Chinese Dialects
☐	Bahasa Melayu	☐	English	☐	Others

Part 3: Awareness

Write your answer in the space provided.

11. Do you think that there's differences between the Baba Malay spoken today and the Baba Malay spoken by the older generation?

12. Do you think that you need to improve your Baba Malay language? Why so?

13. Are you aware that the Baba Malay language is at the verge of disappearing? Why?

14. Do you think Baba Malay language should be protected?

15. If Baba Malay is spoken less today, what do you think will happen to the language?

16. As one of the Baba Nyonya community, what do you think you can do to ensure that the language stays alive?

17. In your opinion, what other measures could be done to keep the language?

Appendix 4 : Interview



**THE USE AND MAINTENANCE OF BABA MALAY LANGUAGE AMONG
THE PERANAKAN IN MELAKA**

Dear Respondents,

This study is conducted as part of a Master's thesis. The aim is to examine how Baba Malay is used, maintained, and preserved among the Peranakan community in Melaka.

All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Information you provide will only be used for academic purposes. No personal details will be disclosed in any reports or publications.

Your participation will make an important contribution to this research.

Best regards.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Researcher: Lieyana Teo binti Mohd Zulkifli Teo

Phone no. : 0137120028

Email : lieyana@uum.edu.my

Supervisor : Dr. Hasliza binti Abdul Halim

Email : hasliza@uum.edu.my

Introduction

I am interested in finding out your language use and your opinion about issues related to Baba Malay language. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. All information you share will remain confidential and will be used only for academic research purposes.

With your permission, I would like to record this interview to ensure accuracy in capturing your responses. The recording will not be shared outside this research.

Do I have your consent to proceed with the interview and record this session?

Part 1: Background Information
Gender / age / race
Education level & current occupation
Place of birth / parents' origin
Part 2: Language Background
What language (s) are you fluent in?
What is your mother tongue?
Do you think that it is important to be able to speak Baba Malay to be part of the community?
Have you ever been discriminated for speaking Baba Malay language in front of anyone? Why do you think so?
What language do you use to communicate with your family members?
What language do you use to communicate with your friends?
What language do you use to communicate with your neighbour?
What language do you use to communicate with your colleagues?
Part 3: Awareness
Do you think that there's differences between the Baba Malay spoken today and the Baba Malay spoken by the older generation?
Do you think that you need to improve your Baba Malay language? Why so?
Are you aware that the Baba Malay language is at the verge of disappearing? Why?
Do you think Baba Malay language should be protected?
If Baba Malay is spoken less today, what do you think will happen to the language?
Part 4: Preservation effort
As one of the Baba Nyonya community, what do you think you can do to ensure that the language stays alive?
In your opinion, what other measures could be done to keep the language?

Closing

That brings us to the end of our interview. Thank you for your time and sharing your thoughts. Your contribution is truly valuable to this research.

Thank you again.