

Orthographic and Phonological Integration of Malay Words of the *Pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*

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ABSTRACT

Pantun and *Dondang Sayang* are two traditional Malay entertainment that originated in Malacca in the 15th century. These classical poetic art forms are considered a cultural heritage by UNESCO and are largely associated with the Malay and Chinese Peranakan communities called *Baba* and *Nyonya*. They have their own unique language called Baba Malay, which is now a critically endangered language with less than 1000 speakers daily. This qualitative study aims to record the spelling system of Malay words found in the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*, and analyse the orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay words of the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*. A total of 100 *pantun* from the book *Pantun Pilihan Baba Negeri Selat Negeri* (1910-1930) were purposively chosen. The data obtained was then analysed using Faizal's (2009) - Orthographic and Phonological of Malay Language, and Lee's (2022) - Baba Malay Grammar frameworks to record systematic orthographic and phonetic differences of Malay words found in the *pantun*. In addition, several *Dondang Sayang* performers were observed and interviewed to triangulate the data. The results of the study found that an acculturation process occurred with the Malay community where their *pantun* were influenced by the Malay language, yet their spelling system is based on their dialect and how they speak. The implications of the study will lead to the formation of the value of togetherness among the various races found in Malaysia using the Malay language. Furthermore, this study systematically preserved the endangered community's culture to uphold the heritage of a unique acculturation of *Baba and Nyonya* with the Malay language via *pantun* in *Dondang Sayang* to the younger generations.

Keywords: *Dondang Sayang*, Malay words, orthographic integration, *pantun*, phonological integration

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INTRODUCTION

Dondang Sayang, translated as 'love ballad', is a traditional Malay form of entertainment that originated in Melaka in the 15th century. It is performed both by the Malay and Peranakan Chinese communities in Melaka either at home, in public venues, or gatherings and theatres. The Peranakan Chinese refer to an ethnic group in Southeast Asia where the Chinese who originally arrived from mainland China have integrated and married local Malays. Their descendants are called *Baba* and *Nyonya*. Their culture is characterised by the combination of ancient Chinese culture and local cultures as a result of a long history of cross culture and interracial marriage.

In a *Dondang Sayang* performance, a man and a woman exchange extemporaneous Malay *pantun*, a form of traditional Malay poem, in a light-hearted and sometimes humorous style. The singers are normally accompanied by a violin, two Malay *rebana* (drums), and a *tetawak* (gong). Sometimes, other instruments like accordions, flutes are another violin are added. The music is slow with a violin introduction, followed by the *rebana* and then the gong. Its style is informal, and its lyrics usually consist of love poems. The *pantun* recited in a *Dondang Sayang* performance is often crafted and improvised on the spot, requiring the singer to be highly proficient in the

language. The art also calls for a sound knowledge of customs and references to compose a pantun relevant to their lifestyle and culture. It is a unique and vibrant form of musical and poetic art that reflects the rich cultural heritage of Melaka, a state in Malaysia.

Although *Dondang Sayang* and *pantun* are originally Malay traditions, the Baba Nyonya in the Straits Settlements started a Sino-Malay literary movement and developed a body of literature using Romanised Malay by the end of the 1890s (Ming, 2004). According to Datuk Donald Gan (2021), President of Peranakan Baba Nyonya Malaysia, the *Pantun Peranakan Baba Nyonya* was popular in the 1880s where cultural assimilation with the Malay community was recorded and became a strengthening element of local community relations, family, and the Peranakan community (Ronald Gan, 2021). These Peranakan *pantun* developed a distinctive spelling (orthographic) system that follows their way of speaking and accent (phonological, the sound). There are many similarities between the *pantun* of the Malay community and *Baba Nyonya*, especially in terms of hints and meaning. The influence of Malay culture later became the essence of the content rhymes and practices among them.

Since 2002, a database of *Baba Pantun* consisting of 11,204 *pantun*, *syair* (another type of Malay poem) and *Dondang Sayang* has been digitalised, according to ATMA (*Institut Alam dan Tamadun Melayu, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*). These were written and published in 35 books and periodicals between 1899 and the 1940s. Although these *pantun* were the significant creative writing of the *Babas*, they had received little scholarly attention (Ming, 2004). To date, standard Malay *pantun* books include only Malay *pantun* and omit *Baba* ones. One simple explanation may be that conservatives often consider the latter to be of poor taste, “adulterated” by many loanwords from Chinese dialects, particularly Hokkien and Teochew, unlike pristine Malay *pantun* (Ming, 2004). As a result, the *pantun* developed a system of distinctive spelling that follows their way of speaking and accent.

This study intends to investigate the orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay words in *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*. This is vital to Baba Nyonya’s new generations to preserve the critically endangered language. In addition, the study intends to record the spelling system of Malay words found in the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*, and analyse the orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay words of the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the spelling system of Malay words in the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*?
2. What is the orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay words of the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*?

This study will contribute to the field of morphology in two ways. First, methodologically, it will identify and classify orthographic and phonological integration of Malay words in *Baba and Nyonya pantuns* and find meaning and distinctive spelling systems involved in the words. Secondly, scholars, society, and readers can use this study to broaden their knowledge of orthographic and phonological integration, mainly Malay words involved in the *pantun*.

The following technical terms are described to ensure readers are familiar with the subject area, there will be consistent interpretation, and fundamental concepts highlighted:

1. **Orthographic integration** is a convention used for writing a language. However, the same as spelling, different cultures have developed various systems for recording their languages.
2. **Phonological integration** is the original structure of the donor language that can either be preserved as an innovation to fit the existing system of the recipient language.
3. The **Malay language** is an Austronesian language that is the official language of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.
4. **Pantun** is a Malay oral poetic form that expresses intricate ideas and emotions.
5. **Dondang Sayang**, a love ballad, originated in Malacca in the 15th century to exchange *pantun* in a light-hearted and sometimes humorous style.

BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

*Buah rambe (rambai) setangkai lebat,
Jatuh sebiji ke dalam lesung,
Nak ku lambai bukannya dekat,
Nak ku terbang bukan burung.*

Source: Ronald Gan (2021)

The following discussion examined scholarly articles, books, and other sources on *Dondang Sayang's* development from the 15th century to the present. It studied how *Dondang Sayang's* distinctive blend of music and poetry has inspired and been influenced by regional socio-cultural dynamics regarding the spelling system of Malay words and the orthographic and phonological integration of Malay words in *Dondang Sayang*. The influence of *Dondang Sayang* on Malay and Peranakan culture and its continued importance in Malaysia's cultural background is also explained. This evaluation highlights gaps in *Dondang Sayang's* research, enabling further research on this intriguing topic.

The Malay Language

The Malay language belongs to the Austronesian Malayic subgroup (Blust, 2013) containing Gayo, Minangkabau, Iban, and local dialects of Malay in Borneo, Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia, and eastern Indonesia (Eades & Hajek, 2006). In Southeast Asia, 250 million people speak Malay (Tadmor, 2009). During the 19th century, Malay spread mainly through literature (Asmah, 2004). In Peninsular Malaysia, the standard forms of Malay are descended from Johor-Riau Malay because the dialects are highly intelligible (Asmah, 1992; Steinhauer, 2005) which has led the Malaysian government to adopt Johor-Riau Malay in 1998 as Malaysia's Standard Malay (SM) (Kassin, 2000).

The Modern Malay Language

The Malay language corpus was started in 1888 by the Society for the Learning and Teaching of Linguistic Knowledge. Years later, in 1935, the Royal Johor Society of Malay Language and Literary Works published guidelines for Malay spelling, grammar, punctuation, letters, essays, and terminologies. In 1936, Za'ba, the 'Father of Modern Malay Language', produced a Malay grammar series that modernised the classical language's structure. This updated variant established the foundation for modern Malay when it was standardised using Received Pronunciation (Asmah, 1992). Syntax changed most from passive to active. Then, in 1956, *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (DBP), a language planning agency, was founded to plan, develop, standardise, modernise, and publish in Malay (Hanewald, 2016). Their first duty was to lead planning and research to enrich Malay vocabulary for science and technology by creating technical words (Stephen, 2011). Since 1967, the Institute of Language and Literature issued publications, journals, and books for reference which resulted in a standardised spelling and pronunciation of modern Malay used in schools and textbooks. To date, Standard Malay (SM) has added 70,000 new terms.

Malay Orthography

DeFrancis (1989) and Mountford (1990) categorise writing scripts into three main types: *alphabetic, syllabic, and logographic*. These differentiate the mapping between orthography, phonology, and semantics in languages. In Malaysia, students are taught using the Standard Malay alphabetic writing script (Lee et al., 2013). The dominant form of the present orthography is based on Romanised or Rumi, a Latin alphabetic script standard for education (Lee et al., 1999) and almost all printed materials (Faizal, 2009). In addition, there is also the *Jawi* script, an adapted Arabic script primarily used in Islamic education (Yahaya, 2016). According to Helms-Park et al. (2016), in alphabetical script writing, the depth of orthographic structure can be divided into *shallow* or *transparent* (e.g., direct relationship between spelling and pronunciation) or *deep* or *opaque* (e.g., indirect relationship between spelling and pronunciation). Malay is an alphabetic language with a shallow orthography and simple syllabic structure (Lee et al., 2013). In shallow orthographies, there is an isomorphic relationship between spelling and sound; the mappings between orthography and phonology are transparent and predictable (Yap et al., 2010). The Malay language has several similarities to English, including the same Latin alphabetic script (Lee, 2008), subject-verb-object (SVO) grammatical structure (Young, 2001; Onwi, 2014), and 26 letters in its alphabet (Khoo, 2017).

Three categories of sounds represent the Malay language: *vowels, consonants, and diphthongs* (Sariyan, 2004). Five vowel letters represent six vowel sounds (Yunus, 1980; Sariyan, 2004; Fang, 2008; Yap et al., 2010; Clynes & Deterding, 2011). The letter /e/ in Malay has two different pronunciations (Faizal, 2009; Lee, 2008), symbolising the vowel sounds /ə/ and /e/ (Sariyan, 2004; Lee, 2008; Faizal, 2009; Yap et al., 2010; Nair, 2013). The three diphthongs in Malay each correspond to one phoneme: /ai/, /au/, or /oi/ (Sariyan, 2004; Fang, 2008). According to Lee (2008), the consonant letters and sounds of the language correspond to almost perfect one-to-

one. There are five digraphs in Malay, each corresponding to one phoneme: /gh/, /kh/, /ng/, /ny/, and /sy/ (Sariyan, 2004; Yap et al., 2010). The initial stage of teaching the Malay language is through the sound of the language by *bercerita* [storytelling], *pantun* [poem] and *lagu* [songs], followed by writing the alphabetic script (Gomez & Reason, 2002). According to Fern and Jiar (2014), the next stage is the articulation of the consonant sound together with the vowel sound (e.g., /b/ + /a/, /b/ + /i/) to form a syllable (e.g., /ba/, /bi/) and finally to combine syllables to form a word (e.g., /ba/ + /ca/ = *baca* [read]).

The Orthography Depth and Syllabic Structure of the Malay Language

The concept of orthographic depth refers to the consistency of the grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences of the orthography. Seymour et al. (2003) found that syllabic complexity and orthography depth are responsible for the essential linguistic knowledge among young learners, where the former affects decoding and word and non-word reading, and also influences the reading development rate. Thus, learners with shallow orthographic backgrounds (e.g., Finnish, Spanish, and Italian) had an advantage in reading development compared to their counterparts with deeper orthographies (e.g., French, Danish, and English). In shallow (regular) orthographies, the correspondences are direct and guided by simple rules. In contrast, in deep (irregular) orthographies, the relation between phonemes and graphemes is vague and opaque. The complex syllable contains a consonant cluster (a sequence of two or three consonants) after or before a vowel. In contrast, simple syllables do not have a consonant cluster.

Table 1: Classification of Languages Relatives to the Dimension of Syllabic Complexity and Orthographic Depth

		Orthographic Depth			
		Shallow		Deep	
Syllabic structure	Simple	Finnish	Greek Italian Spanish German	Portuguese	French
	Complex		Norwegian Icelandic	Dutch Swedish	Danish English

Adapted from Seymour et al. (2003)

Table 1 shows the classification of languages relative to the dimension of syllabic complexity and orthographic depth. Some have open CV syllables (C and V are consonants and vowels, respectively) with a few initial or final consonant clusters, while others have many closed CVC syllables and complex consonant clusters in both onset and coda positions. Regular to irregular alphabetic writing systems are orthographic depth.

Word phonology is predicted from orthography and/or syllabic structure to classify orthographies as deep/opaque, shallow/transparent, or simple/complex. Faizal (2009) added more languages, including Malay orthography, to the twin dimensions created by Seymour et al. (2003) to present syllabic complexity and orthographic depth (Table 2), which will be used as a theoretical foundation for this study. The syllabic structural dimension adjusted by Faizal (2009) clarifies the Malay-English orthographic difference.

Table 2: Classification of Languages Based on Orthographic Depth and Syllabic Structure

		Orthographic Depth			
		Shallow		Deep	
Syllabic structure	Simple	Turkish Malay Hebrew & Finnish Persian (voweled)	Greek Italian Spanish	French	Hebrew & Persian (unvoweled)
	Complex		Serbo-Croatian German	Dutch	English

Adapted from Faizal (2009)

Like Turkish and Finnish, Malay has a more straightforward syllabic structure and shallow orthographic depth than other European languages (Table 2.2). The Malay and English orthographies differ in transparency, syllabic structures, inflectional morphemes, letter-phoneme and letter-syllable ratios. According to Lee et al. (2013),

Malay has a more transparent grapheme-to-phoneme correlation than English. Malam [night] in Malay has five graphemes and five phonemes. In English, the word [night] includes five letters (e.g., ‘n’ + ‘i’ + ‘g’ + ‘h’ + ‘t’) but only three phonemes (e.g., /n/ + /ai/ + /t/). Malay is an alphabetic language with salient syllabic structures.

Most Malay manuscripts use bi-syllabic word forms such as CV+CVC, CV+CV, V+CVC, and CVC+CVC (Lee et al., 2013). Unlike English, this shows that early Malay reading intervention programmes must include bi-syllabic word stimuli. In Malay, inflectional morphemes like prefixes, suffixes, and circumfixes affect the meaning of root words. When suffixed with -an, /makan/ (eat) becomes /makanan/(food). Adding /player/ to the verb /play/ makes it a noun. Malay, spoken by 250 million people, has a shallow alphabetic spelling, simple syllable patterns, and transparent affixation, unlike English (Yap et al., 2010). Like shallow orthographies, lexical variables make Malay easier to read and spell (Faizal, 2009). Duncan et al. (2013) argue that learned grapheme-to-phoneme rules can improve reading and writing in shallow orthographies but not deep orthographies like English. Orthographical complexity among languages is shown in two dimensions. In conclusion, Malay and English orthographies differ in transparency, syllabic structures, inflectional morphemes, and letter-phoneme and letter-syllable ratios.

Sound Structure in the Malay Language

The SM language comprises 18 primary and six secondary consonants (including the glottal stop), six vowels, and three diphthongs representing 33 phonemes. The following discussions explain the SM writing and sound system using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols to describe pronunciation.

Standard Malay Vowels

In the Malay language, there are five vowel letters: /a/, /i/, /e/, /u/, /o/. These vowel letters are related to six vowel sounds: ‘a’, ‘i’, ‘e’, ‘ə’, ‘u’, and ‘o’. The vowel /e/ is related to two phonological forms, /e/ and /ə/, as in *enak* /enak/ [delicious] and *emas* /əmas/ [gold]. It is also in a few homographs, for instance, *perang*, which can be pronounced /peran/ [blond] or /pəran/ [war], and *beri*, which can be pronounced /beri/ [berry] or /bəri/ [give]. As such, Clynes & Deterding (2011) and Fern & Jiar (2013) argue that the articulation of a word is unpredictable in certain positions. Table 3 outlines the six vowel phonemes in SM according to the IPA symbols.

Table 3: Standard Malay Vowels in the Quadrilateral

	Front	Centre	Back
Close	i		u
Close-mid	e	ə	o
Open		a	

Adapted from Clynes and Deterding (2011)

Some words illustrating the occurrence of these six vowel letters are:

Phoneme	Word	Transcription	English Translation
/a/	<i>marah</i>	/marah*/	[angry]
/e/	<i>petak</i>	/petəkʔ/	[plot]
/ə/	<i>kena</i>	/kəna/ or /kenə/	[hit]
/i/	<i>bilik</i>	/biliʔ/	[room]
/o/	<i>orang</i>	/oran/	[person]
/u/	<i>buluh</i>	/buluh/	[bamboo]

Standard Malay Diphthongs

Teoh’s (1988) studies in Malay phonology suggest that SM consists of three phonemic diphthongs: /ai/ (e.g., *cukai* [tax]), /au/ (e.g., *pulau* [island]) and /oi/ (e.g., *baloi* [worthy]). Furthermore, he documents that these three diphthongs are only present in disyllabic or trisyllabic morphemes and morpheme-final morphemes. However, Clynes & Deterding (2011) and Deterding & Ishamina (2017) point out that these diphthongs are a monophthong followed by an approximant: /ai/ represents /aj/ (e.g., /tʃukaj/ [tax]), /au/ represents /aw/ (e.g., pulaw [island]), and /oi/ represents /oj/ (e.g., baloj [worthy]). The last analysis shows no phonological diphthongs in the SM language (Clynes, 1997) because diphthongs in the Malay language are a phonological issue.

The Standard Malay (SM) Consonants

In SM, there are 24 consonants in total and 18 consonants /p, b, t, d, k, g, s, h, ʃ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, l, r, j, w/ that are native to the Malay language. With the Malay consonants, the symbol /ʃ/ is represented by the letter /c/ (e.g., *chawan* /tʃawan/ [cup]), /dʒ/ is represented by the letter /j/, (e.g., *jalan* /dʒalan/ [walk]) and /j/ is represented by the letter /y/, (e.g., *ya* /ja/ or /jə/ [yes]). In a variation of the Malay language spoken in Malaysia (Zahid & Mahmood, 2016), the consonant /t/ is dental /t̪/ rather than alveolar /t/. The other six consonants /f, v, z, ʃ, x, ʔ/, are borrowed principally from Arabic and English. The glottal stop /ʔ/ is still debated among linguists because some argue that it is native to the language, while others believe it is from Arabic (Asmah, 2008). The language consists of five digraphs /gh, kh, ng, ny, sy/, in which two consonants are presented next to each other and represent a sound in a word. The digraph /gh/, which is represented by the symbol /x/ in the IPA table, only appears in borrowed Arabic words (e.g., *ghaib* [disappear] and *khidmat* [service]). However, the symbol /ɣ/, which is common in Arabic, is not presented in the consonant inventory because it is replaced by the symbol /r/ due to the absence of laryngeal and pharyngeal sounds in the Malay language (Othman, 2003). The symbols /ŋ/-/ŋ/ represent the other three digraphs, /ny/-/ŋ/ and /sy/-/ʃ/. Table 4 shows the IPA symbols for SM consonants and the non-native consonants that only occur in borrowed words presented in parentheses.

Table 4: The Standard Malay Consonants

Mode of Articulation	Place of Articulation						
	Labial	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Labial-velar
Plosive/affricate	p b	t d	ʃ dʒ		k g	(ʔ)	
Fricative	(f) (v)	s (z)	(ʃ)		(x)	h	
Nasal	m	n	ɲ		ŋ		
Trill		r					
Approximant				j			w
Lateral		l					

Adapted from Cylnes & Deterding (2011)

The native consonants are illustrated as follows:

Phoneme	Word	Transcription	English Translation
/p/	<i>parang</i>	/paraŋ/	[machete]
/b/	<i>barang</i>	/baraŋ/	[goods]
/t/	<i>tua</i>	/tua/	[old]
/d/	<i>dua</i>	/dua/	[two]
/k/	<i>kaji</i>	/kadʒi/	[examine]
/g/	<i>gaji</i>	/gadʒi/	[salary]
/ʃ/	<i>cari</i>	/tʃari/	[search]
/dʒ/	<i>jari</i>	/dʒari/	[finger]
/r/	<i>rumah</i>	/rumah/	[house]
/m/	<i>masih</i>	/masih/	[still]
/n/	<i>nasi</i>	/nasi/	[rice]
/ŋ/	<i>nyanyian</i>	/ŋaŋian/	[singing]
/ŋ/	<i>ngeri</i>	/ŋəri/	[horror]
/s/	<i>sari</i>	/sari/	[essence]
/h/	<i>hari</i>	/hari/	[day]
/j/	<i>bayang</i>	/bajaŋ/	[shadow]
/w/	<i>bawang</i>	/bawaŋ/	[onion]
/l/	<i>laki</i>	/laki/	[male]

The borrowed consonants are illustrated by the following:

Phoneme	Word	Transcription	English Translation
/f/	<i>fikir</i>	/fikir/	[think]
/v/	<i>vitamin</i>	/vitamin/	[vitamin]
/z/	<i>zaman</i>	/zaman/	[era]
/ʃ/	<i>syak</i>	/ʃak/	[suspect]
/x/	<i>khas</i>	/xas/	[examine]
/ʔ/	<i>saat</i>	/saʔat/	[second]

The consonant sounds in the Malay language may be similar to English; however, certain exceptional cases should be given attention. Teoh (1994) indicates that /r/ is clearly articulated as a final letter in a penultimate syllable (e.g., *kertas* [paper]) and before a vowel (e.g., *pasaran* /pasaran/ [market]). However, it is observed that if /r/ falls in a final syllable, it is unheard (e.g., *lapar* /lapa:/ [hungry]) and also in the use of the prefix *ber-* when it is before a consonant (e.g., *bermain* /be:main/ [playing]). Othman (2003) highlights that the consonant [h] is silent or faint when it falls in the initial (e.g., *hulu* /: ulu/ [interior]) or final syllable (e.g., *lebah* /leba:/ [bee]), but clearly articulated if [h] is in the middle of two vowels (e.g., *pahat* /pahat/ [chisel] and *bahu* /bahu/ [shoulder]). He also points out that when the consonant /k/ is the final syllable, it is replaced by the /ʔ/ glottal stop (e.g., *budak* /budaʔ/ [child]), but when /k/ is the initial syllable, it is pronounced (e.g., *kelas* /kelas/ [class]).

Syllable Structure of the Malay Language

Syllable structures can be divided into two categories: open and closed. The Malay language's syllable structure lies in the language's characteristics (Adawiyah, 2017), which have clear syllable boundaries (Poh, 2017) because Austronesian languages typically contain disyllabic words (Clark, 2009). Malay is a disyllabic language with a four-syllable structure: V, VC, CV and CVC (Gomez & Reason, 2002; Lee, 2008), with V and CV as open syllable structures and VC and CVC as closed syllable structures (Fern & Jiar, 2013). These four basic forms (e.g., V, VC, CV and CVC) can be integrated into some ways to form two-syllabic or more complex word forms (Lee et al., 2013). For instance, the Malay word *bola* [ball] has a two-syllabic word structure, CV + CV, whereas more complex words such as *mesyuarat* [meeting] have the form CV + CV + V + CVC.

Moreover, Gomez and Reason (2002) indicate that seven new syllable structures were introduced in Malay based on English loanwords: CVCC as in *teks* [text], VCC as in *abstrak* [abstract], CCVC as in *prinsip* [principle], CCV as in *glukos* [glucose], CCVCC as in *plastik* [plastic], CCCV as in *strategi* [strategy] and CCCVC as in *struktur* [structure]. There are also a few mono-syllabic words found in the Malay language. These are mostly functional (e.g., *di* [at] and *ke* [to]) or loanwords (e.g., *kad* [card] and *beg* [bag]) (Lee et al., 2013). In addition, Azmi et al. (2016) point out that English loanwords in the Malay language are divided into two categories. The first category is where the original spelling of the English word is retained; for example, the word *atom* in the Malay language is spelt and pronounced as the word [atom] in English. The second category is where the changes in the spelling are noted but pronounced as the English word; for example, the word [carbon] in English is spelt as *karbon* in the Malay spelling, but the pronunciation remains the same. This resemblance is mainly influenced by English orthographic structure; for instance, the word [psychology] is spelt as *psikologi*, not *saikologi*.

The Malay language does not have consonant clusters in initial and final position syllables. Consonant clusters are only found in the middle position, and letter sequences are not in the Malay language (Gomez & Reason, 2002; Yap et al., 2010). However, when the vowels 'a' and 'i' or 'a' and 'u' are together as a closed syllable, they are pronounced with a syllable boundary among them. For example, *lain* [other] and *laut* [sea] are both two-syllabic words (Lee et al., 1999). Additionally, with the influence of English in Malay vocabulary, the following letter strings are accepted in English loanwords: /aa/, /ea/, /eo/, /ie/, /io/, /ue/, and /uo/ (Gomez & Reason, 2002).

Malay Morphology

The Malay language has little inflectional morphology but is rich with derivation affixes that are generally polysyllabic (Gomez & Reason, 2002). Polysyllabic or multisyllabic words are regular since Malay is agglutinative (Yap et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2013). Therefore, they are used regularly to express the relationship between grammar and new word formations (Faizal, 2009). Thus, the boundaries of a Malay word can be noticeably defined by separating it into discrete morphemes (Knowleds & Mohd Don, 2006). In addition, derivational morphology also uses reduplication, the only nonconcatenative feature in the language for which morpheme boundaries are difficult to handle (Onwi, 2013). Table 5 represents the seven most typical word-formation processes in Malay: affixation, reduplication, compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and borrowing. In the Malay language, three formations (e.g., affixation, reduplication, and compounding) are mainly

used in terms of grammar and in forming new words (Karim et al., 2008). This study developed morphology awareness measures based on these three formations (e.g., affixation, compounding, and borrowing).

Table 5: Seven Types of Word-formation in Malay

Word-formation	Example
Affixation	Berperikemanusiaan (prefix ber...an) [humane]
Reduplication	Ramai-ramai [a group of people]
Compounding	Peri + kemanusiaan = perikemanusiaan [humanity]
Blending	Cerita + pendek = cerpen [short story]
Clipping	Mak – emak [mother]
Acronyms	Berita Nasional Malaysia = BERNAMA [name of a news channel]
Borrowing	Borrowed from Arabic, such as <i>syukur</i> meaning [thankful]

Adapted from Ranaivo-Malancon (2004)

The Malay language is agglutinative because new words are formed by adding inflectional morphemes such as prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes to the root words (Lee et al., 2013). In the Malay language, there are four basic types of derivational affixes; there are nine prefixes (e.g., ber... as in *bermain* [playing] from the root word *main* [play]); three suffixes (e.g., ...an as in *makanan* [food] from the root word *makan* [eat]); 13 circumfixes (e.g., ke...an as in *kesihatan* [health] from the root word *sihat* [healthy]); and four infixes (e.g., ...er... as in *rerambut* [capillary] from the root word *rambut* [hair]). These derivational affixes are commonly used in spoken and written language (Lee et al., 1999), and they bring new meaning to the root word (Azmi et al., 2016). For example, the verb *minum* [drink], when added to the suffix -an, becomes *minuman* [beverages].

Pantun and Dondang Sayang

Generally, *pantun* is used to advise and rebuke with full symbolism and allusion. Gan (2021) adds that *pantun* is used to express love and tease through distinctive language in a simple but attractive way. Interestingly, Baba and Nyonya *pantuns* combine Javanese and Hokkien dialects and Malay to make them unique and distinctive through smooth presentation and Peranakan songs. To date, more than 15,000 Baba Nyonya poems have been traced, and most of them are produced spontaneously based on the subject of nature, trees, animals, fruits, and whatever comes to mind. Rhymes are usually also used as advice, praise, admonishment, affection, teasing, riddles, love, and notice. They are usually recited before meals while chatting and cracking jokes at weddings and parties to cheer up the events. However, it is more synonymous when presented during the reciting *pantun* activities and at *Dondang Sayang* with the motive of advice and jokes that symbolise joy, warmth, and love. According to Gan (2021), the *pantun* proves the community's close relationship with the Malays for a long time through intermarriage, which developed as a cultural heritage of the community.

*Dalam panton macham dikata,
Boleh di-sebot apa di-chita,
Biar jatuh serata-rata,
Jiwa manis di-dalam mata.*

Source: Berita Harian (2016)

METHOD

The following discussion elucidates the diverse data collection and analysis approaches pertinent to the research. The qualitative methodology chosen in this study encompasses various aspects, including the study's geographical setting, research design, sampling techniques and sample size determination, data kinds, data gathering methods, and data management strategies. Qualitative researchers primarily analyse data by presenting major themes backed by excerpts from participants' writings (Bazeley, 2009). The following explains the process of gathering insights into orthographic and phonological aspects in *Dondang Sayang*, examining the impact of this phenomenon on Malay and Peranakan culture and its enduring significance within Malaysia's cultural heritage.

Research Design

A comprehensive qualitative approach was used to accomplish the aims and goals of the study as it allows for detailed research without being controlled by a fixed exploration category. The study uses document analysis to analyse selected samples from the *pantun* of *Dondang Sayang*. Knowledge is focused on findings; evidence can be in pictures, artifacts, or videos in the empiric process. This approach stresses the openness and adaptability of definition knowledge categories such as orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay language. The essence of the current research is qualitative and corpus-based study.

Data Collection Method

Using purposive sampling, a library study was conducted to gather information, focusing on targeted Malay words in the Baba and Nyonya *pantun* collected from *pantun* books and *Peranakan* magazines. After viewing the various sources via technography, the targeted words are recorded for further analysis. The samples are then tabulated according to their orthographic and phonological integration. To triangulate the data, the researchers visited respondents in Melaka for semi-structured interviews and conducted observation (via Facebook). Interviews were conducted with the Baba-Nyonya community leaders and elders in *Dondang Sayang* to support the study results.

A final list of 100 *pantun* in *Dondang Sayang* is extracted and catalogued for analysis using various references, such as the book *Pantun Pilihan Baba Negeri Selat Negeri, 1910-1930*, compiled by Ding Choo Ming (Figure 1), magazines (*The Peranakan*), and the Baba Nyonya books (*Mas Sepuloh, The Babas*). These samples are described according to the Malay words, morphological, orthographic, phonological integration, and word-formation processes to disseminate the targeted words from the *pantun*.

Data Analysis Method

This study conducts an analytical sampling process that relies on various qualitative testing designs emphasising objective sampling. Analytical approaches allow study designs to be more adaptive, allowing particular protocols to be implemented as required to achieve a goal. Using Faizal’s (2009) and Lee’s (2022) frameworks, the analysis processes are illustrated in Figure 1.

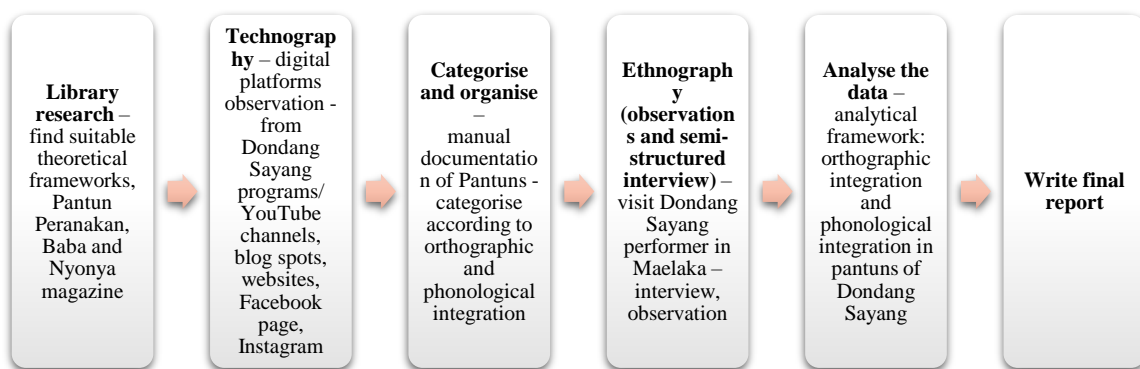


Figure 1: Flowchart of Data Analysis Process

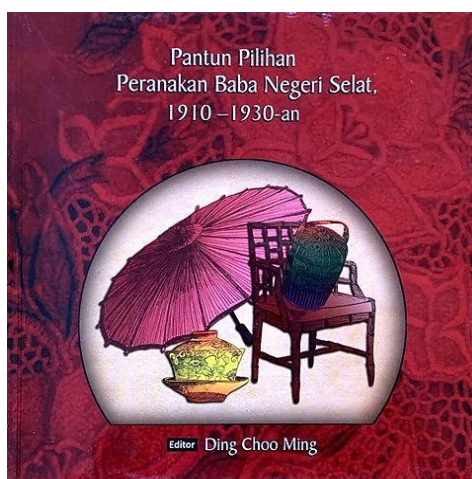


Figure 2: *Pantun Pilihan Baba Negeri Selat Negeri, 1910-1930*, compiled by Ding Choo Ming



Figure 3: Baba Allan Wan is Performing *Dondang Sayang*

(Source: <https://pre-www.bharian.com.my/rencana/sastera/2023/09/1154092/kalau-tidak-berdondang-sayang-hilanglah-seni-orang-melaka>)

The incorporation of Malay words from the *pantun* into the *Dondang Sayang* is achieved by utilising the Romanised script for orthography. The Romanised script is a transliteration of the Malay language devised by the Baba Nyonya community in the Straits Settlements during the latter part of the 19th century. The Baba Nyonya community comprised individuals who were progenies of Chinese males and Malay females. The utilisation of the Romanised script facilitated the Baba Nyonya group in cultivating a distinctive body of literature rooted in their refined native language, Baba Malay.

The phonological integration of Malay terms from the *pantun* into the *Dondang Sayang* involves utilising the Malay language. The *pantun* in *Dondang Sayang* are distinctive Malay cultural elements regarded as forms of traditional poetry. These stories are commonly transmitted through oral tradition from one individual to another and over different generations. Occasionally, Malay, Mandarin, and English languages in which songs are sung in Melaka. Sometimes, dialects like Hokkien and Cantonese are also used in the lyrics. This reflects the linguistic diversity and cultural richness of the people in Melaka.

Ethical Consideration

This study made use of secondary and publically accessible sources. However, a prior agreement was sought before using the data in some situations (such as removing *pantun* from respondents' Facebook posts). Before meeting, filming, or photographing respondents for the study, the researchers got their consent. Manokaran and Nian (2023) assert that developing trust is a prerequisite for conducting information-gathering research among minorities. Proper rules will be followed during the performance of this study to provide a safe and secure environment that protects the respondents from physical, psychological, or emotional harm.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following discusses the findings of this study to answer the two research questions.

1. What is the spelling system of Malay words found in the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang*?

The spelling system of Malay words found in *Dondang Sayang pantun* follows the Romanised script, a version of the Latin alphabet. Malay is typically written using the Rumi script, and this script includes the basic 26 letters of the Latin alphabet. In addition to these letters, diacritics or accent marks represent certain sounds specific to Malay phonetics. Malay spelling is generally phonetic, meaning how a word is written corresponds closely to its pronunciation. However, some Malay spelling and pronunciation features may differ from English (see Table 6).

Table 6: The Spelling System of Malay words in *Pantun* of *Dondang Sayang*

Sounds	Descriptions
Vowels	As in English, Malay also has five vowel phonemes: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/. The vowels can be pronounced straightforwardly, and their pronunciation is generally consistent.
Consonants	Consonants in Malay are usually pronounced the same as in English, but there are some differences. For instance, the letters /c/, /g/, and /j/ can have different sounds depending on whether they are followed by /e/ or /i/.
Diacritics	The Malay script may include diacritics or accent marks to indicate specific sounds. For example, the /c/ with a cedilla (ç) represents the /ch/ sound as in /chat/.

The spelling system adheres to the Romanised script with any necessary diacritics to accurately represent the pronunciation of the words within the rhythmic and melodic structure of the oral performance of *Dondang Sayang*. Renowned *Dondang Sayang* artist Allan Wan scripted his *pantuns* using the dialect of Baba Malay and used that spelling system and dialect when performing on the live stage. According to Baba Ronald Gan, the spelling system of Malay words in *pantun* was spelled as its pronunciation using the dialect of Baba Malay. For example, the word /tahun/, written as *taon* in Baba Malay, is still pronounced as /taon/ although spelt as /tahun/. (Refer to this site: <https://translate.google.com/?hl=ms&sl=auto&tl=ms&text=taon&op=translate>)

While the Romanised script is commonly used in written Malay, the *Jawi* script, an Arabic-based script is also used although less common today. The Malay language has a phonemic orthography. This means that words are spelled the way they are pronounced, with few exceptions like the distinctions between /ə/ and /e/, where it is both written as E/e. The Malay alphabet consists of the 26 letters of the ISO basic Latin alphabet. The letters /f/, /q/, /v/, /x/, and /z/ are not used in spelling native Malay words. The consonants /f/ and /z/ occur in loanwords from Arabic (e.g., *fatah*, conquest, and *zaman*, era) and from European languages (e.g., *faktor*, factor). It can also be seen in Baba Malay the changes of the /f/ letter to /p/ as in *nafas* to *napas* (breath).

The spelling system of Malay words found in the *pantun* in the *Dondang Sayang* is the Romanised form of the Malay language. The use of Romanised script in Malay literature dates back to the late 1880s when the Baba Nyonya community in the Straits Settlements began using it to write their literature. The Baba Nyonya community was a group of people of Chinese and Malay descent who had their own unique culture and language. The use of Romanised script in Malay literature was a significant development that marked the beginning of a Sino-Malay literary movement (Ming, 2014).

For Baba Malay, an orthographic system of oral, uncodified language with no structured written form, has been created for ease of use and simplicity. This seemed preferable to phonetic transcription because, despite its challenges, the main emphasis of this investigation is Baba Malay's syntactic structure. The Standard Malay system served as a model for the orthographic method used for Baba Malay to facilitate cross-referencing. It should be emphasised that Baba Malay has been rendered unintelligible across these pages due to the employment of an orthographic system. Hence, any individual pronunciation quirks of the informants, as well as elisions and contractions of natural speech, are not disclosed.

Tables 7 and 8 presented the patterns of alignment of vowels in the Baba Malay spelling system. However, based on the analysis of 100 chosen *pantun* of *Dondang Sayang*, this study found new alignment patterns (the coloured columns) of Baba Malay are shown below:

Table 7: Patterns of Alignment of Spelling System in the Baba Malay

Patterns	Examples	Examples from Pantuns	Patterns	Examples	Examples from Pantuns
make a distinctive and unusual addition	<i>memulakan</i> → <i>mulaikan</i> <i>Kebersihkan</i> → <i>kbersehan</i>	<i>ijo</i> → <i>hijau</i> <i>jereki</i> → <i>rezeki</i>	pronouncing the /i/ sound at the end of a word as /ik/		<i>biji</i> → <i>bijik</i>
change the vowel /i/ at the end to /ik/	<i>bagi</i> → <i>bagik</i> <i>cari</i> → <i>carik</i>		mispronounce many words	<i>ambil</i> → <i>ambek or amek</i>	<i>empat</i> → <i>ampat</i>
change the vowel /u/ to /o/		<i>pukul</i> → <i>pukol</i> <i>hibur</i> → <i>hibor</i>	remove the /h/ sound at the end of the word	<i>rumah</i> → <i>ruma</i>	<i>susah</i> → <i>susa</i>
change the diphthong /ai/ to /e/	<i>sungai</i> → <i>sunge</i> <i>sampai</i> → <i>sampe</i>		remove the /h/ sound at the beginning of the word		<i>hitam</i> → <i>itam</i>
change the diphthong /ai/ to /ay/		<i>pantai</i> → <i>pantay</i> <i>serai</i> → <i>seray</i>	add the /h/ sound in the middle of the word		<i>saya</i> → <i>sahya</i> <i>percaya</i> → <i>perchaya</i>
change the final syllable /au/ to /o/	<i>pulau</i> → <i>pulo</i> <i>kalau</i> → <i>kalo</i>		change of consonant /f/ to /p/		<i>nafsu</i> → <i>napsu</i> <i>nafas</i> → <i>napas</i>
change the middle syllable /au/ to /ao/		<i>tahun</i> → <i>taon</i> <i>laut</i> → <i>laot</i>	change the meaning	<i>bilang (cakap, memberitahu)</i>	
pronouncing the /a/ sound at the end of a word as /ak/	<i>bapa</i> → <i>bapak</i> <i>bawa</i> → <i>bawak</i>	<i>bawa</i> → <i>bawak</i> <i>juga</i> → <i>jugak</i>	likes to use /punya/	<i>emaknya</i> → <i>dia punya emak</i>	

Adapted and modified from Shellabear (1913)

Table 8: Patterns of Alignment of Vowels in the Baba Malay Spelling System

Patterns	Examples from Pantun (Baba Malay)	Patterns	Examples from Pantun (Baba Malay)
<i>a – a</i>	<i>brapa, blajar, chachat</i>	<i>i – a</i>	<i>chinta, hilang, brikan, chichak</i>
<i>a – i</i>	<i>mati, mari, chari, kati,</i>	<i>i – i</i>	<i>istri, sedikit</i>
<i>a – u</i>	<i>kalu, slalu</i>	<i>i – o</i>	<i>ikot, hidop, trubok</i>
<i>a – o</i>	<i>masok, tarok, panchor,</i>	<i>i – e (pepet)</i>	<i>itek</i>
<i>a – e (taling)</i>	<i>Acheh, chantek</i>	<i>o – a</i>	<i>sorang, sobat</i>
<i>a – e (pepet)</i>	<i>kaseh, ayer, tarek</i>	<i>o – e (taling)</i>	<i>koh-cheh</i>
<i>e (pepet) – a</i>	<i>krena, slendang</i>	<i>o – o</i>	<i>roboh, pontong, chochok,</i>
<i>e (pepet) – i</i>	<i>kechik,</i>	<i>u – i</i>	<i>kuching</i>
<i>e (taling) – e (taling)</i>	<i>petek</i>	<i>u – u</i>	<i>turut, umbun, sungguh</i>
<i>e (taling) – o</i>	<i>chelop, lemo</i>	<i>u – o</i>	<i>gunong, dudok, buyong, burong, gugor</i>

When interviewed, *Dondang Sayang* performer Allan Wan shared that he scripted his *pantun* for the live stage and all occasions used the Baba Malay spelling system to tie up the connections between the first and second stanzas (Figure 5). This is because such a spelling system is applied to be good at pronunciation. He added that the Baba Malay spelling systems differentiate them (Baba-Nyonya) from Malays in Malaysia. He expressed that culture is the root of every human being’s life because it teaches much about being a person. During the interview, he penned 2 sets of pantuns, shown below to express his love, spontaneity and enthusiasm in writing and scripting for *Dondang Sayang*.

Set 1:

Sayang anak buang budaya, [a] – 1st
Adat temurun sua lupakan, [b] – 2nd
Hidop Baba ingatkan si muda, [a] – 3rd
Wujudnya Melaka orang Peranakan. [b] – 4th

Set 2:

Wujudnya Melaka orang Peranakan, [a] – 1st
Dua budaya jodoh satukan, [b] – 2nd
Dondang Sayang Baba nyanyikan, [a] – 3rd
Kenangan budaya dalam hiburan. [b] – 4th

**Spelling System of
 Baba Malay → Standard Malay**

1. *temurun* → *turun-temurun*
2. *sua* → *semua*
3. *hidop* → *hidup*
4. *satukan* → *disatukan*



Figure 5: Allan Wan the *Dondang Sayang* Performer and *Pantun* Writer (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100010530036290>)

2. What is the orthographic and phonological integration of the Malay words of the *pantuns* in the *Dondang Sayang*?

The *pantun* typically consists of four-line stanzas; each line usually has eight to 12 syllables. Malay words' orthographic (written) and phonological (pronunciation) aspects in the *pantun* and *Dondang Sayang* are closely tied to the Malay language's structure. However, according to Baba Ronald Gan, Baba Allan Wan and other performers, the writing and pronunciation are in Baba Malay. Malay is written using the Latin alphabet, and the pronunciation is generally phonetic, meaning that the way a word is written reflects its pronunciation. Table 9 shows the Malay writing system and pronunciation.

Table 9: Malay Writing System and Pronunciation

Integration	Descriptions
Orthographic Integration	☞ Malay uses the Latin alphabet with additional diacritics, known as Romanised script. The alphabet includes the basic 26 letters of the Latin alphabet.
	☞ Diacritics are used to represent certain sounds that are not present in English. For example, the letters /c/, /g/, and /j/ can have different sounds depending on whether they are followed by /e/ or /i/
	☞ The orthographic representation in <i>pantuns</i> follows standard Malay spelling conventions.
	☞ Malay is a syllable-timed language, and each syllable tends to be given equal time in pronunciation.
Phonological Integration	☞ Vowels play a significant role in Malay phonology. There are five vowel phonemes: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/.
	☞ Consonant clusters are generally avoided, and words are often syllabified with a consonant followed by a vowel.
	☞ The stress pattern in Malay is generally less prominent than in some other languages. Stress tends to fall on the penultimate syllable but is not as distinct as in English.

Baba Ronald Gan continued, saying that the community must work together to preserve Baba Nyonya's unique accent and culture and make more efforts to expose young people to their cultural heritage. One way this might be done is by publishing a dictionary specifically designed to help people learn the orthographic and phonological integration of Malay words. Sometimes the Babas have difficulty pronouncing some letters in Malay. They cannot pronounce the letter /r/ or /d/, always change the ending /s/ to /t/, and make other changes that suit their peculiarities. The Baba mispronounce Malay words because they think their way of spelling is easier or because they think it is more elegant. They have difficulty sounding the letters /b/ and /l/, but instead of /ambil/ (take) they say /ambek/ or /amek/, and for tinggal (stay) it sometimes sounds /tinggek/. The suffix /ai/ always changes to /e/ and /au/ to /o/, like *sungai* → *sunge* (river) and *pulau* → *pulo* (island). The suffix /ai/ changes to /ay/, as in *pandai* → *panday* (smart) and *kedai* → *keday* (shop).

The corruption of the sound of this last letter causes much confusion in some words; for example, they always pronounce *chari* as *charik* or *charek* and do not know that this is a very different word meaning to *merobek* (*mencarik-carik*). There is also a similar confusion between *bawa* (bring) and *bawah* (under). They do not distinguish between the final sounds /ai/ and /eh/; both are pronounced /e/. On the other hand, the ending /a/ is generally pronounced as /ak/; accordingly, instead of *bawa* (bring), *juga* (also), and *pula* (anyway), they say *bawak*, *jugak*, and *pulak*. In addition, the ending /i/ becomes /ik/ as in *biji* → *bijik*.

Furthermore, the last letter /h/ is not sounded at all; *susah* becomes *susa*, and *tumpah* becomes *tumpa*. Babas omit the letter /h/ in the beginning of words (e.g., *hitam* → *itam*, *hinggal* → *inggal*) and drop the letter /h/ in the middle of words as in *mahu* (want) → *mau*. The letter /h/ added in the middle words such as *Jumaat* → *Jumahat* (Friday), *rencana* → *renchana*, *percaya* → *perchaya* (believe), *cacat* → *chachat* (disable) and in *bunga* → *bungah* (flower), the letter /h/ is added at the end of the word. In a special case, the letter /h/ shifts the position from the middle to the end of the word, as in *pecah* → *pecha* (broken). The sound and spelling of /c/ change to /ch/ in the Baba Malay orthographic system. For example, *chanteke*, *chinta*, *perchaya*, *chelop*, *bochor*, *chek*, and *chachat*.

There are many words in Baba Malay where the vowel /e/ is omitted in *kroh* (keroh), *s'kali* (sekali), *prau* (perahu), *sblum* (sebelum), *sbla* (sebelah), and *trubok* (terubok). The word of Arabic origin is corrupted (e.g., *mesohor* for *mashyur*, *rejeki* for *rezeki*). Additionally, the syllable /se/was changed to /sa/ as in *sa-orang* as a substitute for *seorang*, and the syllable /ke/was changed to /ka/, *ka sana* instead of *ke sana*. It can also be seen in Baba Malay the changes of the /f/ letter to /p/ as in *nafas* to *napas* (breath) and *nafsu* to *napsu*. Ronald Gan added that Babas write what they pronounce and follow the dialect while engaging *pantuns*.

According to Baba Ronald Gan, the *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (DBP) is responsible for determining and specifying Baba Malay's phonologic and orthographic rules. As a result, he works with DBP to protect and maintain the endangered language. To introduce Baba Nyonya's distinct accent to the younger generation and the broader public, DBP is compiling a vocabulary of the dialect. There are now 2,000 words in the vocabulary with Baba Nyonya accents which serves as a resource to the general public, academics, and youth. To support the effort, Baba Gan recommended that adults and the elderly actively practice Baba Nyonya's tradition so that young people can develop their identity by learning about and practicing their ancestry.

Limitations of the Research

The analysis of the study is restricted to linguistic aspects, particularly orthographic and phonological integration, focussing on the integration of Malay words into the pantuns of Baba and Nyonya in Malaysia. In addition, the study's context is restricted to the state of Melaka in Malaysia. Moreover, the *pantun* in *Dondang Sayang's* are the exclusive subject of the Malay word integration. As a result, the sample is too small to support the study's generalization.

CONCLUSION

The study found an acculturation process occurred in the Peranakan Baba society through the *pantun* in *Dondang Sayang*. The data obtained is a fundamental record for systematic orthographic and phonetic differences of Malay words found in the *pantun* chosen through the book *Pantun Pilihan Baba Negeri Selat Negeri, 1910-1930*, compiled by Ding Choo Ming. The study's implications led to the formation of the value of togetherness among the various races found in Malaysia using the Malay language. This study recorded and revealed the orthographic and phonological integration found in *Pantun Peranakan*. Since Baba Malay is a critically endangered (Lee, 2022) language with less than 1000 speakers, this study is an initiation to preserve the *pantun*, which is available with systematic analysis. Furthermore, it gives scholars and younger Peranakan generations an eye-opener to preserve and conserve the heritage of the unique community.

In *Pantun of Dondang Sayang*, integrating orthography and phonology would involve using the Malay writing system to accurately represent the pronunciation of the words within the rhythmic and melodic structure of the oral performance. The oral tradition of *Dondang Sayang* emphasises not only the words and their meaning but also the performance's delivery, rhythm, and musicality to preserve and conserve for the next generations. As a result, *Dondang Sayang* was recognised by UNESCO as a Representative List of The Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 29 November 2018, during the 13th Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (IGC-ICH) at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre, Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius.

IMPLICATION and RECOMMENDATION

Integration of orthography and phonology in pantuns uses the Malay writing system to appropriately express word pronunciation inside the rhythmic and melodic oral performance. *Dondang Sayang*'s oral tradition prioritises words, meaning, delivery, rhythm, and musicality to pass on. UNESCO recognised *Dondang Sayang* as a Representative List of The Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on November 29, 2018, at the 13th Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (IGC-ICH) at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre in Port Louis, Mauritius. *Dondang Sayang*'s orthographic and phonological effects on Malay and Peranakan culture and Malaysia's cultural heritage were examined in this study. This study will instigate interest in exploring the Peranakan culture of the community that can be found in Penang, Singapore, Phuket, Thailand, and Medan, Indonesia.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Both authors designed the study and prepared the semi-structured questions and abstract. The digital data collection and compilation, as well as the online observation of respondents was conducted by Komalata Manokaran who then analysed the data and wrote the manuscript. Ong Shyi Nian, who supervised the research contributed to the final version of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest as this study will benefit the Baba-Nyonya community.

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DECLARATION OF STATEMENT

We declare that the article is an original contribution and that all the statements presented as facts are from the authors' research.

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