

THE MALAY ELEMENT IN MELANESIAN PIDGIN

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Mi laik askim olsem: hamas tok bilong tok ples Malay ol i bin pulim i kam insait long Tok Pisin pinis? Orait mi bin kaunim sampela buk ol i lainim Tok Pisin long en na mi bin lukim sampela tok i olsem hap tok Malay tasol. Mi laik makim dispela tok na yupela ken lukim na tingim gut. Nau sampela hap tok Malay i stap insait Tok Pisin. Tasol ating bihain ol manmeri ol i pulim sampela moa Tok Inglis i kam insait Tok Pisin na ol i lusim sampela hap Tok Malay. Em tasol.

In the history of Melanesian Pidgin as it is spoken in Papua New Guinea, when we refer to 'Malay' contacts in the past, the term 'Malay' is not clearly defined: it may refer to people who were ethnically Malays--who spoke Malay daily as their mother tongue--or to people who came from an area of what is now Indonesia, but west of Irian Jaya (formerly West Irian), and who spoke a form or dialect of Malay as their second language for the purpose of trade (including slave-trade) or evangelisation--both Islamic and Christian. Rowley (1972: 53) gives data on these early contacts which start from as early as the fourteenth century A.D. and are still made much later, in the nineteenth century, when trading posts were established along New Guinea's north coast by 'Malays' who were probably people inhabiting the eastern part of Indonesia, i.e., Ceramese, Ternatans, and other 'Malay' adventurers. The latter seem to have gone as far as the coasts of eastern New Guinea and the islands of the Bismarck archipelago long before the nineteenth century. Chinese traders travelled along the routes these 'Malays' had followed (Rowley 1972; 54-57).

Dutch control since 1828 over the Western half of the island, which was then named Dutch New Guinea, further intensified the use of Malay in that area, where Malay had become the established lingua franca, particularly in the coastal districts, where Malay instead of Dutch had become propagated in education, mission work, and trade. In this connection, native mission workers from the christianised areas of Eastern Indonesia, i.e., the Moluccas, who spoke a dialect of Malay so-called 'Ambonese Malay', became engaged in further baptising the native population of Dutch New Guinea. With the take-over of Dutch New Guinea by the Indonesians in 1963 Bahasa Indonesia became legalised as the official state language, and its popular use in that area has been on the increase ever since.

As for the influence of Malay on the languages spoken in the eastern half of New Guinea island, no historic records are available; judging from what has been retained in current Melanesian Pidgin, this influence must be considered minimal. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to find out what had been transferred from Malay. Whether Malay structure

or certain features of it had also become part of Melanesian Pidgin syntax needs also to be investigated. Since Melanesian Pidgin structure is derived from the structure(s) of Melanesian languages spoken in Papua New Guinea, such a comparative research requires the knowledge of both Malay and Melanesian linguistics. For the purpose of this discussion I prefer to limit myself to the Malay lexicon which has become part of Melanesian Pidgin. [Editors note: In the discussion which follows I have included citations for Melanesian Pidgin words and their English glosses only where these are taken from some work other than that of Mihalic (1971).]

Some Data

In the current Melanesian Pidgin (hereafter referred to as MP) dictionaries, words marked as of Malay origin represent a minor part of their vocabularies. Professor Hall (1943: 9) has stated that "only 12% of the vocabulary is of non-English origin: 10% is derived from non-European (Melanesian, Polynesian, Malay, etc.), 1% is derived from German, and a scattering of words are from Romance and other sources". Dialectal variations both in Malay and in Melanesian Pidgin have enhanced diversification of adopted words, e.g., MP *kasang* from Malay *kacang* 'peanut' (*Arachis hypogea*) reportedly occurs commonly as *kansang* in the Morobe District of Papua New Guinea; the Malay watercress *kangkung* (*Ipomoea reptans*) described as "a vine which grows in water holes and whose leaves are used as greens" occurs either as *kango* or *kanggo* or as *kangko* (Murphy 1966: 73). I have been informed that in the Rabaul area the names "kangkong" or "kangkung" are more prevalent. It is interesting to note that MP *kongkong* is glossed as the species *Xanthosoma sagittifolium* and commonly named 'taro kongkong' or 'Singapore taro'.¹ Other names from the Malay flora that have been incorporated into MP in this way are: MP *mambu* 'bamboo, flute, pipe', derived from Malay *bambu* (species of *Bambusa*); MP *rotang* from Malay *rotan* 'rattan' (*Calamus* sp.); MP *yati* from Malay *jati* 'teakwood' (*Tectona grandis*); MP *yambo* from Malay *jambu* 'guava' (*Psidium guajava*) with two other 'Malay apple' species referred to as *laulau* or *lolo* (*Yambosa gomata*) and *aiai* (*Yambosa malaccensis*); MP *mango* via English from Malay *mangga* (*Magnifera indica*); and MP *kopi* most likely from English, with its Malay equivalent *kopi* 'coffee' MP *sayor* (Malay *sayur*) vegetables;² MP *kapok* (Malay *kapok*) 'kapok' (*Ceiba pentandra*) or 'cotton'; MP *lombo* (Malay *lombok*) 'red pepper' (*Capsicum annum*) or 'capsicum'.

Direct transfer from Malay without semantic change occurs in the following cases: MP *bliong* (Malay *bliong*, *beliong* or *beliung*) 'hatchet' and MP *klambu* (Malay *klambu* or *kelambu*) 'mosquito net'.

A semantic change occurs in the following cases: Malay *atap* 'roof', occurs in MP as 'sagopalm fronds used for roofing' and in the Gazelle Peninsula (hereafter referred to as Gaz.) as 'kunai grass thatch'; Malay *tiang* 'pole', means in MP also 'a crotch' or 'a fork post used in building'; *binatang* a generic term in Malay for all animals, occurs in MP as 'bug, insect' and 'all small animals and creeping things except snakes', e.g., *binatang bilong saksak* 'sago grub worm' and *binatang bilong wokim umben* 'spider' (Murphy 1966: 119); Malay *pahit* 'bitter' occurs in MP as *pait* 'bitter' but also as 'to have a sharp taste, to have a disagreeable taste, poisonous', e.g., *marasin i pait* 'the medicine is bitter' (see also *pait* 'bitter, hot' (Healey n.d.: 228), e.g., *i pait* 'hot' (as curry)

or 'something of sharp, sour taste' (Steinbauer 1969: 136); Malay *mandor* 'foreman, over-seer', occurs in MP also as 'spokesman, leader'; and Malay *kranj* 'clerk', occurs in MP as 'a Malay trader' or 'a storekeeper' or as 'a Malay' (Murphy 1966; 77). An interesting case of semantic change occurs in MP *tandok* (Malay 'horn'-of cows, goats, deer, etc.), but in MP somehow must have been associated with English 'horn (trumpet)' and acquired the meaning of 'the signal for beginning and/or ending work for meals, for school or church'.

There are instances in which a MP word is not readily detectable as a Melanesian pidginisation of a Malay word, e.g., MP *amamas* meaning 'joy, gladness, delight, honour, to be proud of, in a good sense (as opposed to *hambak*), praise, to be happy, to rejoice about something, to boast, to flirt, to attract attention'. *Amamas* can also occur as *hamamas* (Healey n.d.: 130) in which case the initial *h* is often dropped (Steinbauer 1969: 68) a common feature also in 'bazaar Malay' as it is spoken as a trade vernacular. This word could be thought of as being a pidginisation of Malay *hormat* or *ormat* 'honour'. Other instances are the following: MP *kanda* 'cane, rattan, a species of *Calamus*' which is the Gazelle word for 'rattan' could as well be derived from Malay *gada* 'stick or club', through phonological adjustment of /g/ → /k/ and the prenasalisation of the /d/; MP *kaskas* 'scabies', with its Malay cognate *kadas* 'scabies'; MP *kambang* 'lime, slaked lime chewed with betelnut, a gourd in which lime is carried for betelnut chewing' has its cognate in Malay *gamping* 'lime';³ MP *kalang* 'earring, the long feather of a bird, the goldlip shell' could be derived from Malay *kalang* 'circle, cylindrical shaped', (Poerwadarminta 1959: 289), otherwise *kalang* is referred to as a Gazelle word; MP *barit* or *baret* 'stream, small river, ditch, furrow, rut, groove, wrinkle, corrugation' cognate with Malay *parit* 'ditch', while *baret* occurs in Malay as 'laceration' (Echols and Shadily n.d.: 37), while an apparent variation MP *parut* (Murphy 1966: 86) occurs as 'valley, drain, water race, gully, canal'; MP *panggal* 'coco-leaf, sago-leaf', are apparent derivations from Malay *pangkal* 'the beginning, the base, the starting point (of growth),' (Wojowasito and Poerwadarminta 1967: 162).

Words whose Malay cognates are easier to detect are the following: MP *tangir* 'tuna' (*Cybiium*) has a cognate in Malay *tenggiri* or *tengiri* (op. cit.: 240 and Poerwadarminta 1959: 786) with the same meaning; MP *kurita* 'octopus' or *wurita*, (Murphy 1966: 140) finds a cognate in *Gaz. urita* and Malay *gurita* 'octopus' (Echols and Shadily n.d.: 135).

Transfer via European languages has occurred, e.g., in MP *nanas* (Murphy 1966: 52) via German *ananas* 'pineapple' (*Ananas sativas*) from Malay *nanas* or *nenas* (Echols and Shadily n.d.: 254) MP *nanas* occurs also as *nanis* (Murphy 1966: 84) which suggests that this could be a direct transfer from Malay rather than via German. From English or maybe via Dutch, e.g., *kakatu* (Malay *kakatua*) 'cockatoo, parrot', while in Dutch it occurs as *kakatoe* or *kaketoe* 'a parrot species from the Australian area with a strong beak' (Koenen and Endepols 1956: 482). Similar to Malay, the derived meaning of *kakatu* is in MP 'pincers, a multigrip or a shifting spanner, the vulva', and in Dutch 'big pliers' (Koenen and Endepols 1956: 483). Another word is MP *karabau* (Hall 1943: 102) or *karabu* (Murphy 1966: 73) 'waterbuffalo' from Malay *kerbau* 'waterbuffalo' (*Bubalus caffer*) or in Dutch as *karbouw* (Koenen and Endepols 1956: 494).

There are words in MP which could have been introduced either from Malay or from one of the Austronesian languages spoken in Papua New Guinea,⁴ i.e., MP *talinga* an 'edible mushroom' (the shape of which can be associated with the shape of an ear) with cognates in Malay *telinga* and in Tolai (Gaz.) *talinga* 'ear'; MP *susu* 'milk, breast, udder, nipple', also 'the ear of a bag or sack' with cognates in Malay *susu* 'milk, udder, breast, nipple', and in Tolai *susu* 'milk'; MP *mal* 'genital string, loin-cloth' (Murphy 1966: 80) with cognates in Tolai *mal* 'clothes', Polynesian *malo* 'loin garment', (Walsh and Biggs 1966: 58), Malay *malu* 'ashamed'; MP *matmat* 'graveyard' with cognates in Tolai (Gaz.) *mat* 'to die', Polynesian *mate* 'to die' and Malay *mati* 'to die, dead'; MP *tuptup* 'cover, lid' presumably from Tolai *tuba* 'to cover' with a Malay cognate *tutup* 'cover, lid, to cover, closed'; MP *limbur* 'to amuse oneself, also a walk, a stroll, an outing, a hike, to take a walk, to go on an outing, to stroll leisurely, to move slowly...as of clouds, birds, animals, etc.' also 'leave, holiday, day off, recreation, to spend a day off', with cognates in Malay *libur* 'holiday, being idle', and in Tolai *libur* 'to play, to amuse oneself'; MP *mumu* 'earth-oven' from Polynesian *umu* or *imu* 'earth-oven', with *sumur* 'hole in the ground, artesian well', as a cognate in Malay.

In certain cases the Malay origin of the word is doubtful, i.e., MP *arere* 'edge, border, side, boundary, limit, alongside, along, to wait for, to lie in wait for, to lie in ambush for' has no apparent cognate in Malay. The same holds for MP *kuskus* 'clerk, secretary, book-keeper, tree-kangaroo, cuscus'; and MP *manki* 'boy, uninitiated boy, school boy, errand boy, male servant' (Mihalic 1971: 130 with the note "introduced by Malay traders", sic!), 'a male native child, native youth' (Murphy 1966: 81), monkey (Steinbauer 1969: 114).

Conclusion

The above mentioned data give us the range in which Malay vocabulary has been incorporated into Melanesian Pidgin. A number of loanwords represent plant names while the remaining can be distributed over several categories ranging from objects or utensils for daily use, e.g., 'mosquito net, roof, hatchet', to social functions, e.g., 'foreman, clerk, trader'.

With regard to the plant names, certain plants such as coffee were new to Papua New Guinea (Ryan 1972(1): 192), but since Papua New Guinea and Indonesia share more or less the same climate, many plants would be found in both areas. It seems reasonable to assume that many of the objects and plants whose Pidgin names appear to be of Malay origin were originally referred to by their diverse local names, and acquired their Malay names only when they were drawn into the sphere of early barter or trade with the Malays. In a sense, Malay served as a unifying factor in the inter-tribal language relations, which is precisely the role English has fulfilled in the formation of Melanesian Pidgin.

No linguistic colony of Malay has ever been created in the area of Papua New Guinea (something that did happen in Eastern Indonesia). This is due to the fact that in the area of Papua New Guinea contacts between Malay speakers and the indigenous population were limited to irregular visits; there is no evidence of permanent settlement. In contrast with British, Australian and German involvement in the administration of Papua New Guinea, the early control of 'Malay' sultans over a few coastal

areas in the northern part of the island was merely tributary. This did not need a bureaucratic system of foreign officers stationed in the subject areas.

To explain the phonological change in Malay loanwords one may hypothesise that the 'Malays' who introduced Malay words into Melanesian Pidgin spoke dialects of Malay or their respective regional languages and probably introduced words already in their dialectal form, e.g., *lombo* (Malay *lombok*) 'chilli pepper'; MP *sayor* (Malay *sayur*) 'vegetable(s)'. In several Malay dialects /o/ and /u/ in a number of Malay words are phonemically non-distinctive.

With relevance to evangelisation, it is noteworthy that whereas Melanesian Pidgin has incorporated religious words, even from Fijian, e.g., *lotu* 'worship' and *talatala* 'Protestant' which were brought into Papua New Guinea by Fijian evangelists, no trace can be found of Islamic vocabulary in Melanesian Pidgin, despite the fact that early 'Malays' who came from Ternate, Tidore and Bachan Islands were Moslems. In an isolated case such as in MP *Yakabor!* 'an exclamation of surprise' one could suggest the pidginisation of *Ya, Allahu Akbar!* 'Oh, Allah is Great!' often expressed by Moslems also as an exclamation of surprise.

In daily usage the MP words derived from Malay rank competitively with their equivalents derived from English or the respective local tongues, depending upon the locality where MP is spoken. Examples are: *kasang* or *pinat* or *galip* (Gaz.);⁵ 'pineapple' *anas* or *painap*; 'pipe' *mambu* or *paip*; 'cover' *tuptup* or *karamap*; 'hatchet' *bliong* or *tamiok* or *plangis*; 'water-buffalo' *karabau* or *bikbel*; 'cotton' *kapok* or *katen*; 'holiday' *limbur* or *holide*; (Steinbauer 1969: 66) 'mosquito net' *klambu* or *taunam*. We may assume that in New Ireland, for instance, where *taunam* is a local word, this word will be preferably if not exclusively used instead of *klambu*. "Melanesian Pidgin is not a stable language and has a natural indecision in the placing of the words", (Murphy 1966: ii). This statement holds for its lexicon as well as the further coinage of new vocabulary. English as the main supplier of lexical terms will influence MP most in its future development. There is a definite correlation between the spread of MP and English through schooling and the modern public means of communication (Oliver 1973: 188). With its increasing orientation toward English, it is probable that words derived from Malay which so far have been retained in MP will in due course be replaced by English derivatives, and ultimately will become archaic. Even local words may ultimately have to give way to English substitutes. Thus, an account of this anglicisation of MP which seems unavoidable. Before long a standard form of Melanesian Pidgin which at present contains many local variations, may become reality.

Notes

¹ According to another text MP *kongkong* can be used to mean 'China-man' or 'Malayan' (Murphy 1966: 76). 'A Malay' or 'an Indonesian' occurs also as *Malai* (Steinbauer 1969: 110).

² Note: deviating from its meaning in Malay, *sayor* is glossed as 'greens (esp. hibiscus)'; (Hall 1943: 115).

³ In Tinata, a dialect in the Gazelle Peninsula, 'lime' is listed as *kabag* (Waterhouse 1939: 37).

⁴ Cf. Essai (1963: 32), Hastings (1969: 15) and Murphy (1966: ii). [Editor's note: The Tolai vocabulary is taken from Kerr and Franklin (1968).]

⁵ *Galip* 'the Tahitian chestnut' (*Canarium polyphyllum*) is not identical to 'peanut' which is otherwise indicated with *galip bilong giraun* (ground-galip) (Murphy 1966: 67).

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