

# The Language Planning Situation in Taiwan

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This monograph presents a detailed study of the language planning situation in Taiwan. After a general account of the socio-historical context in which the planning activities have taken place, a brief review of what happened in terms of language planning in Mainland China under the Nationalist government between 1911 and 1945 is presented. The following section provides a critical examination of the language planning activities in both language policy and language cultivation that have happened in Taiwan since the island was returned to Chinese jurisdiction in 1945. A turning point in the short history of language planning in Taiwan was reached in 1987, when martial law that had been in existence for forty years was lifted. Many changes have taken place since then and many more are in the making. The final section is therefore a careful examination of some important recent developments in language planning. In that section an optimistic outlook for the future is provided and an explanation for that optimism is given.

## Introduction

### What is language planning?

Following Fishman (1974: 79), language planning in the present monograph will be broadly defined as 'the organised pursuit of solutions to language problems'. As implied by the definition, the scope of activities covered by language planning is rather wide, and within language planning scholarship, an important distinction is usually maintained between what is called policy or language determination issues, and cultivation or language development issues (Neustupný, 1970; Jernudd, 1973; Figueroa, 1988). Paulston (1984: 55) makes this distinction most clear when she states, 'I find it useful to distinguish between *language cultivation* and *language policy*, where language cultivation deals with matters of language and language policy deals with matters of society and nation' (Emphasis in original).

In reviewing the language planning efforts in Taiwan, I too find it useful to maintain such a distinction, as will be made clear in the following discussion.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, for ease and convenience of presentation, language-in-education issues will be examined separately from language planning issues, even though it is very clear that language education policy and implementation is a very important part of language planning.

### The design of the monograph

Before I take up the issues in language planning and language education, it will be useful to give a general account of the socio-historical context under which the planning activities have taken place (see following section). There follows a brief examination of what happened in terms of language planning in Mainland China under the Nationalist government 1911–1945. The next section provides a critical examination of the language planning activities that have

happened in Taiwan since the island was returned to Chinese jurisdiction in 1945. The final section is a careful review of some important recent developments in language planning in Taiwan. In that section I take a look at possible future developments, explaining at the same time why I am rather optimistic in my outlook.

## Socio-historical Context

Taiwan, which is separated from the south-eastern coast of the Mainland China by 150 kilometres of the Taiwan Strait, is an island with an area of 35,981 square kilometres and a population of about 21 million. This population consists mainly of four ethnic groups: the Taiwanese or Minnanren (Southern Min people), the Mainlanders, the Hakka and the Austro-Polynesian aborigines. According to Huang's (1991: 21) estimate, the percentage of population of each group is as follows:

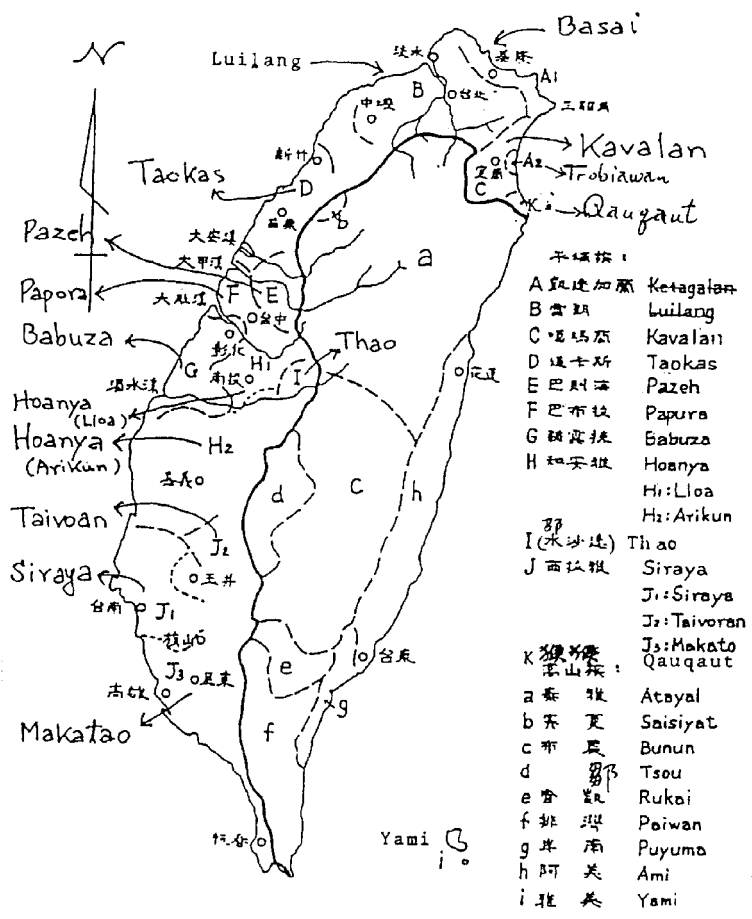
- Minnanren 73.7%,
- Mainlanders 13%,
- Hakka 12% and
- Austro-Polynesians 1.7%.<sup>2</sup>

Taiwan's complex and bitter historical past has left the country with this diverse ethno-linguistic heritage. The Austro-Polynesians are the aborigines of the island, who, according to the most up-to-date research in linguistics (Li, 1979, 1992, 1995), anthropology and archaeology (Chang, 1995) arrived on the island from the south-eastern coast of the Asian continent about 6000 to 8000 years ago.<sup>3</sup> Those early settlers, who are now generally believed to be the oldest known ancestors of the Austronesian people, were in time divided into two groups according to the places where they resided. Those who live in the coastal plains are called *Pingpu Zu* (the plain tribes) and those who live in the mountain areas are called *Gaoshan Zu* (the mountain tribes). Unfortunately, very little is known about the movements of these people either within or outside of the island. Chinese historical records on the contact between the Mainland and the island are few and scattered. The earliest record of Chinese contact dates as far back to AD 230, when, during the period of the Three Kingdoms, Emperor Sun Quan tried without success to send troops to conquer the island. A thousand years later, Emperor Kubla Khan (1260–1295) of the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty made two similar futile attempts. Unsuccessful as they were, it was these early efforts that paved the way for the gradual increase in contacts between the Mainland and Taiwan in later years (Chen, 1996).

But before the massive presence of Chinese on the island took place, the Dutch invaded the south of the island in 1624 and established colonial rule there (1624–1661). A year later, the Spanish, not to be outdone by the Dutch, invaded the north of the island and ruled the area until they were driven out in 1648 by the colonial government in the south. Even though the Dutch treated the indigenous aborigines like slaves, their language policies were not particularly oppressive and discriminatory. The missionaries that came with the colonial government even created a writing system for Siraya, an aboriginal language serving as a lingua franca in the south. The writing system, invented at first for missionary

purposes, was later used to keep records and to write contracts. It was in use for more than a hundred years before Chinese characters eventually replaced it.

During the Dutch colonial rule, the island was still largely inhabited by the Austro-Polynesian aborigines. According to Tsuchida's (1983) and Li's (1990, 1992) research, the *Gaoshan Zu* (the mountain tribes) and *Pingpu Zu* (the plain tribes) can each be further divided into nine tribes. The former consists of Atayal, Saisiyat, Bunun, Tsou, Rukai, Paiwan, inhabiting from north to south the central mountain areas, and Amis, Puyuma and Yami in the east. In addition to Siraya just mentioned in connection with the Dutch colonial rule, the latter group comprises, from north to south, Ketagalan, Kavalan, Taokas, Pazch, Papura, Babuza, Hoanya, and Thao. The exact geographical distribution of these groups of speakers is shown on the map (adapted from Li, 1992) in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** The distribution of Aboriginal languages in Taiwan in the 19th century (adopted from Li, 1992)

Having successfully driven out the Dutch in 1662, Zheng Cheng-kong (better known in the west as Koxinga), his Ming royalists and his family ruled the island for 21 years (1662–1683). As Zheng himself was from Southern Fujian, and his followers were mostly from the same region, they spoke the Southern Min dialect. Zheng's rule was replaced by the Manchus of the Qing dynasty and about two hundred years of Qing rule ensued (1683–1895). In the late Ming period and the early years of Qing rule, the coastal provinces of Fujian and Guangdong were suffering from economic hardship and political turmoil; many inhabitants in the area were forced to leave their home towns in search of a better life in south-east Asia or Taiwan. Those who went to Taiwan were mostly from the Quanzhou and Zhangzhou districts of Fujian province, speaking the Zhangzhou or Quanzhou variety of the Southern Min.

The Hakka mostly from Kuangdong province, speaking either the Hai-lu or Si-hsien variety of Hakka according to their place of origin, soon joined this new wave of immigration. When these different groups of immigrants came to Taiwan, they tended to occupy areas on the island similar to their home regions in the Mainland; Quanzhou people, being shop and factory owners or workers, settled mostly along the coastal areas and ports. Zhangzhou people settled mostly in the inland plains and were devoted to agriculture. The Hakka, who were skilled in farming in hilly areas, settled in table lands and foothill regions (Shi, 1987: 1–6).

The coming of all these different groups of people led to a number of fierce struggles. The Han settlers with their larger numbers, better farming and irrigation skills and often with the implicit support of the Qing government soon outmanoeuvred the Plain tribes of aborigines, who, as a result, lost their land and were fast assimilated. The Mountain tribes, being separated by high mountains and deep valleys, were kept out of harm's way, at least for the time being.

In 1895, a year after Taiwan was ceded to Japan by the Qing government as a result of losing the first Sino-Japanese war, the Han inhabitants on the island already outnumbered the aboriginal people by a clear majority, and among the Han, Southern Min speakers account for 82%, Hakka speakers for 16% and the rest for only 2% (Lamley, 1981: 291–293). By 1905, the year when the first census was taken, ethnic Chinese had emerged as the majority group by a sizable margin (2,970,000 Chinese vs. 113,000 aborigines) and they have remained so ever since.

The Japanese rulers made it clear at the very beginning of their occupation that they intended to integrate Taiwan fully into the Japanese Empire. To this end, policies of complete Japanisation were designed. The Japanese rulers, however, were pragmatic enough to realise that such an end could not be achieved in a short time. They therefore implemented these policies in three stages of educational planning which were increasingly assimilatory in nature. During the first stage (1895–1919), which is generally referred to as the stage of pacification, private Chinese schools called *Shu-fang* (book house), where ethnic Chinese sent their children to study Classical Chinese with Southern Min or Hakka pronunciation, were tolerated, while at the same time the Japanese government urged people in Taiwan to send their children to the public elementary school, where Chinese was taught as a required subject.

During the second stage – the stage of assimilation (1919–1937) – all private Chinese schools were banned and Chinese as a subject was made elective. During the final stage – the stage of complete Japanisation (1937–1945) – not only was Chinese banned in all public domains, but even the few Chinese pages of the basically Japanese newspaper *Xinminbao*, the largest in Taiwan at that time, and all other publications in Chinese were banned. The ethnic Chinese living in Taiwan were thus completely cut off from their Chinese cultural print tradition. Earlier, in 1938, a year which saw the beginning of the second Sino-Japanese war, the Japanese government in Taiwan, in order to further obliterate Chinese influence, launched a fierce ‘only-Japanese-speaking-families’ campaign whose purpose was to drive the indigenous languages out of the family domain, usually believed to be the best stronghold for language maintenance (Chen, 1996; Tsao, 1997a). With all these repressive and discriminatory measures in force, ethnic Chinese and native Austro-Polynesians were in fact second-class citizens and their languages could not but be seriously damaged.

When Taiwan was returned to China at the conclusion of the Second World War, the people in Taiwan were overjoyed, firmly believing that their social and political status would be greatly improved. However, as the irony of life would have it, their high expectations have never been realised, as we shall see in some detail in the following discussion.

In 1949, four years after Taiwan was returned to China, the Nationalist government lost Mainland China to the Chinese Communists and was forced to retreat to Taiwan. Those immigrants and their children, now known as ‘the Mainlanders’, constitute the second largest ethnic group in Taiwan, even though at the time of their arrival they did not form a homogeneous group as they originated from different parts of Mainland China, speaking a variety of Han dialects or minority languages. Most of the Mainlanders were at least receptive bilinguals when they arrived in Taiwan. They had acquired Mandarin either through educational channels or during army service. The better educated among them could certainly write Mandarin and probably also classical Chinese. Upon their arrival Mandarin was a natural lingua franca for inter-dialectal communication for the group. Most of their children also acquired it either as a first or a second language. Today, the majority of the Mainlanders are located in large cities, especially in Taipei, the capital city.

On the economic front, things turned out much better. In the early fifties, about ten years after the Nationalist government took over Taiwan, a very successful land reform programme was launched. This reform programme not only directly paved the way for agricultural development but also indirectly paved the way for later industrial development (Huang, 1998). This dynamic transformation started in the 1960s. The industrialisation of Taiwanese society took place between 1961 and 1980. In the total workforce, the proportion of agricultural workers decreased dramatically from 56% in 1953 to 19% in 1983, while the proportion of the industrial workers increased significantly from 18% in 1953 to 41% in 1983 (Wen, 1985). In the meantime, the per capita gross national product of the country rose from US\$203 in 1950 to US\$2344 in 1980 and to US\$12,439 in 1995.<sup>4</sup>

With the radical economic growth, education was no longer a luxury for the people of Taiwan. In 1950, there were 139.64 students for every 1000 people; in

1982, there were 255.18 students. In 1950, only 31.99% of primary school children continued their middle school education; in 1982, the percentage that continued education increased to 98.6%. As literacy became widespread and opportunities to receive higher education increased (Tsao, 1998), the indigenous residents (the Southern Min, the Hakka and the Austro-Polynesian people) were more likely to obtain better occupations and higher incomes, which in turn upgraded their social status. Today, with greater socio-economic and political resources, these less powerful groups are better equipped to compete with the Mainlanders.

The economic prosperity, however, has not entirely been a blessing. In the course of development, the aboriginal people, who used to be protected by high mountains and deep valleys, have become more and more exposed to Han people. Furthermore, well-paved roads now lead right into their territory and television networks bombard them with Han language and culture. The inevitable result has been a rapid decrease in speakers of the aboriginal languages. In fact, of all eleven tribes among whom we can find speakers, seven have fewer than 10,000 speakers and are in serious danger of extinction.

In summary, Taiwan, as it stands today can be characterised as:

- a multi-ethnic and multilingual society with four major ethnic groups; the Mainlanders, the Southern Min people, the Hakka and the Austro-Polynesians;
- an immigrant society, the latest group being the Mainlanders;
- a Chinese society, and above all,
- a modern industrialised society.

## **A Brief Account of the Language Planning Efforts in China from 1911 to 1945**

As mentioned earlier, at the conclusion of the Second World War in 1945, Taiwan was returned to China. By that time a number of language policies had already been formed and implemented in Mainland China and so when the Nationalist government took over Taiwan, the laws and regulations pertaining to language and language education were simply taken over from China with very slight adaptations. Therefore, in order to fully understand the language planning situation in Taiwan after 1945, it is necessary to begin on the Mainland.

### **A brief history of the national language movement**

When the Republic of China was established in 1911, it faced two pressing problems: unification and modernisation. Ethnolinguistically, the country was composed of more than 50 ethnic groups, each speaking one or more languages, representing the Sino-Tibetan, Austronesian, Altaic, and Indo-European linguistic stocks. Even though the Han group was by far the largest, accounting for more than 90% of the population, it actually consists of seven major dialects, dozens of mutually unintelligible forms of speech and hundreds of sub-dialects. Yuan (1960: 22) lists the major dialects and population percentages as: Mandarin 70%, Wu 8.4%, Xiang 5%, Cantonese 5%, Min 4.2%, Hakka 4% and Gan 2.4%.

It is obvious that in a country with so much ethnolinguistic diversity and complexity linguistic unity has been a serious problem. Actually towards the end of the Qing dynasty as the Western powers encroached ever more upon China's

territory, leaders of the country realised that for China to become a strong country, it must have a unified national language and mass literacy.

The lack of a single language for use among all Chinese had long been taken to be a serious impediment to national unification and political, economic and social development. At the national level, it is reported that in the early days of the Qing dynasty the emperor had a hard time communicating with officials from the southern provinces, especially Fujian and Guandong. The problem actually became so serious that the government had to set up a special school to teach them Mandarin.

Another serious problem was mass illiteracy. Statistics on illiteracy in China in the early years of the Republic have never been more than rough approximations, but even as late as the middle and late 1950s estimates from a number of sources suggest that from one half to two thirds of the adult population were functional illiterates. The figure could only have been higher twenty or thirty years earlier.

But to tackle these two serious and urgent problems, two questions involving language planning needed to be answered: (1) which dialect should be chosen as the national language? and (2) how should it be written so that the mass could learn it in the shortest possible amount of time?

Realising the urgency of the problems, the new republican government worked on them immediately. On 10 July, 1912 a meeting on national education was held at the Ministry of Education (henceforth MOE) in Peking. An important resolution passed at the meeting was to organise the Committee for the Unification of Pronunciation (henceforth CUP) whose functions were:

- to examine and authorise the pronunciation of all the words in the national language (NL);
- to analyse the phonemes of the NL and decide on the number of phonemes;
- to adopt phonetic alphabets: one alphabetic symbol for each phoneme (Fang, 1965: 131).

Established officially on 15 February, 1913 as a subordinate committee of the MOE, the CUP had 45 members, representing different provinces and special districts of the country. At its first meeting, the important question of which dialect should be chosen as the national language was discussed. There were two serious contenders, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Considering everything, Mandarin should have been chosen as the national language as it has the following advantages over all other dialects:

- (1) Mandarin, as previously mentioned, is by far the largest dialect group, its speakers accounting for 70% of the total population, and furthermore, its four major sub-dialects, namely, Northern, Northwestern, Southwestern, and Lower Yangzi, are said to be mutually intelligible (Chao, 1943: 61).
- (2) Geographically, Mandarin speakers occupy a very broad territorial belt running all the way from the northernmost reaches of Manchuria to the borders of Yunnan and Sichuan in the south-west.
- (3) Peking has been the national culture centre for about a thousand years and much of the vernacular literature written in this long period was in Northern Mandarin.

- (4) The final advantage is that Peking has been the capital of China from Liao times through the Jin, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties up to today with only brief interruptions. Since Peking was the seat of government, officials from all parts of China had always had to learn a form of Mandarin (called *guanhua*, 'official speech') in order to be able to conduct government business. This *guanhua*, or lanqing *guanhua* 'blue-green Mandarin', as it was sometimes called because of traces of all kinds of different dialect backgrounds in the speech of its speakers, was regarded by many Chinese as the lingua franca of all China.

However, despite all of these advantages, in the meeting where all provinces and special districts were equally represented a compromise solution was more likely to be adopted. The national language finally chosen was actually an artificial form of Mandarin containing the maximum distinctions found in the major dialects: i.e. the entering tone, the jian-tuan distinctions (dental and velar initials occurring before a high front vowel respectively, FT), two mid-vowel phonemes /o/ and /e/ (where most northern dialects have only one). The choice seemed to be a happy one as it pleased most of the parties concerned, and that partially accounts for the fact that in the process of selection (even though there were heated debates interspersed with skirmishes involving flying teacups and saucers), when the NL was thus decided, there were no serious riots of the order of those in India and Sri Lanka, when Hindi and Sinhalese were selected as their national language. Another contributing factor to the relative smoothness of selection is that, as mentioned earlier, there was a common concern among the elites at that time about the necessity of establishing a national language to facilitate inter-lingual and inter-dialectal communication.

This compromise solution, while it seemed to be able to satisfy most of the representatives, actually contained an insurmountable difficulty for propagation. Since it was an artificial language, there was not a single teacher who could claim to speak it natively. Teachers who had to teach it were soon divided into two camps according to the strategy they adopted. Those who spoke a Northern dialect close to the Peking dialect used the Peking dialect as their basis, with an approximation of the entering tone used in reading pronunciation when they read Classical Chinese. Those who spoke a Southern dialect used the entering tone they had in their native dialects, which in actual pronunciation varies from dialect to dialect, and they had to approximate the other four tones found in Peking phonology. The two camps fought about what standard pronunciation was for more than a decade and this controversy has come to be known as 'Jing Gou zhi zhen' (controversy over Peking pronunciation and national language pronunciation) (Chao, 1976b; Tsao, 1987).

This serious drawback of trying to use an artificial national language, coupled with the fact that a majority of the Chinese people already spoke some type of Mandarin, finally tipped the scale in favour of Peking Mandarin as the NL of China.<sup>5</sup> In 1932, without publicly announcing any radical changes, the *Pronouncing Dictionary of the National Language*, which was authorised by the MOE in 1919 on the basis of the recommendation of CUP, was quietly revised in the form of the *National Pronunciation of Common Vocabulary* and was authorised by the MOE as the dictionary of standard pronunciation. It included 9920 words

and 2299 synonyms and was based exclusively on the educated speech of Peking (Chao, 1976b).

### *The selection of the writing system*

Let us now return to the question of what writing system should be selected for the national language. As early as the late Qing dynasty there were heated debates as to whether the Chinese characters, as they were at that time, were a suitable writing system for Chinese. The most serious drawback of the system is that it is too complex to be learned by a great number of people within a short time. Part of the reason for this difficulty is that a great many Chinese characters, chiefly due to historical sound changes, are at this stage of development devoid of any association with their pronunciation. This lack of association between sound and meaning certainly makes the learning task much more difficult as learners often have to resort to rote memory. To put it differently, the writing system is perceived as a great impediment to the promotion of mass literacy, which was regarded as imperative for the modernisation of China. On the other hand, it has been the medium with which Chinese culture and Chinese literature have been recorded and any drastic change in the writing system entails the danger of disconnecting the present from the cultural past. Various proposals were made which include keeping the character writing system intact but supplementing it with an auxiliary transcribing system to indicate the pronunciation, replacing it with simplified characters, and finally, using a romanised spelling system.

At the meeting on national education held at the MOE in 1912 (mentioned previously), an important decision was taken that Chinese characters were to be kept intact but an auxiliary system of phonetic alphabets was to be adopted in education. It was the CUP's duty to devise such a system.

In the year immediately after the CUP was convened, it was decided that the traditional transcribing alphabet rather than a Latin alphabet should be adopted as the official phonetic (transcribing) device supplementing the characters. This was essentially a spelling system that fell between the Latin alphabet and the Japanese syllabary in function, but was like simplified Chinese characters in shape.

After the close of the first meeting, the work of the committee was suspended because of political turmoil. However, in the private sector, the work continued. In the few years that followed, some 'transcribing alphabet classes' were established in Peking and in 1916 a periodical named the 'Transcribed Mandarin Paper' was published in which articles were printed in characters with the transcribing alphabets beside them (henceforth to be called 'transcribed characters' for short).

On 23 November, 1916 the transcribing alphabets were authorised by the MOE. The system consisted of symbols for 24 consonants, 3 glides, 12 vowels and 4 tones. From a purely linguistic point of view, these symbols, with the exception of the tone symbols, are not completely phonemic symbols. Some of them represent sounds (allophones) rather than phonemes. The tone symbols, however, represent phonemic tones, and morphophonemic sandhi rules are stated separately.

Immediately after the Committee for the Preparation of a Unified National Language (CPUNL) was founded in April 1919, its members set to work to improve the transcribing alphabets. The revised system formed the basis of the National Phonetic Symbols (henceforth NPS), which were officially promulgated by the MOE in 1930. These symbols were to play a very instrumental role in the propagation of the national language in Taiwan.

In 1928, the MOE on the recommendation of the CPUNL authorised a romanisation system for transcription, chiefly developed by Chao, Y.R. and Lin, Yu-tang, and promulgated the regulations for the romanisation of the national language. From then on until its revision in Taiwan in 1984, this romanised phonetic transcribing system, whose chief feature was the representation of the tones in spelling rather than by diacritic marks, was known as the second form of NPS (NPS2, for short).

*The change from 'Chinese Literature' to 'Chinese Language' as a subject in the elementary school*

Another major contribution of CPUNL was the change from 'Chinese Literature' to 'Chinese Language' as a subject in the elementary school. This change may appear to people unfamiliar with the traditional way of teaching Chinese as a trivial change of name, but in reality it involved a change of great consequence. Traditional Chinese literature had always been written in a special literary style closer to Classical Chinese than to the everyday spoken language. The transcribing alphabets, devised as an aid to the rapid spread of literacy and common education, were actually based on the spoken language. So in order for the transcribing alphabets to have the greatest effect and for the textbooks, which before the change were uniformly written in the literary style, to be readily readable for elementary school students, the content of the language course had to be changed and the textbooks re-written. Therefore, at the first meeting of the CPUNL, it was recommended that the textbooks on Chinese for elementary schools be revised so that all the lessons were written in the colloquial spoken style. In 1920, the required subject 'Chinese Literature' for the first two grades in the elementary school was changed to 'Chinese Language' by the MOE, and in time this change was extended to all six grades in the elementary school. In this way, the teaching of the literary style in elementary education went into history.<sup>6</sup>

**Language planning activities in connection with language development**

While it seems that much was going on in the area of language policy and policy implementation during this period, despite many interruptions due to political turmoil and the Sino-Japanese War, nothing much seemed to be happening in the area of language development. One noticeable exception was the work of the Institute for Compilation and Translation in the compilation of lists of vocabulary equivalents in scientific and technical fields. The Institute was founded as a branch office of MOE in 1932, and between its inception and the Nationalist government's retreat to Taiwan in 1949, it compiled and published 25 volumes of word lists covering a variety of modern scientific disciplines such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, various specialties in medicine, several branches of engineering as well as five areas in social science (including

economics, psychology and education). However, in spite of such a respectable showing in the standardisation in scientific terminology, language development was undeniably a peripheral concern at best during this period.

### Summary: Special features of the language planning activities in the period

A careful examination of the language planning activities in this period reveals the following important features.

Firstly, the process of the selection of the national language was in general quite smooth. To be sure, there were heated exchanges of words and blows in the meetings, but once the national language was decided upon, there were no serious riots. Two important reasons account for this relative smoothness. First, there was a general consensus among the opinion leaders in the late Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic that, in order for China to become a modernised, strong country, a unified national language was an essential. Second, a compromise selection was made in the sense that even though it was based on the Northern Mandarin, the national language also included some other features such as the entering tone found in other major dialects and this artificial version of Mandarin was able to satisfy all the parties concerned.

Secondly, even though the selection process was, comparatively speaking, rather smooth, the national language selected was not completely satisfactory. Being an artificial language based on the Northern Mandarin, the norm in some cases existed only on paper, there being no native speakers to exemplify the exact pronunciation. This lack of 'live norm' in the national language, so to speak, actually presented a serious challenge to its later propagation. The situation was not corrected until 1932, almost two decades after the norm was first conceived. This aspect offers a good lesson for those planners who wish to adopt a compromise-made language as a national language.

Another feature of the planning process is its almost exclusive concern with the pronunciation of the national language. The first official committee set up for planning purposes was called the Committee for the Unification of Pronunciation and it set the tone for the later processes. This exclusive concern with pronunciation was probably due to a misconception among the general public that the differences between different dialects lay mostly in the area of phonology. This misconception, in turn, was probably induced by the fact that in the Qing dynasty literate people in China were able to communicate through writing in Chinese characters even though they read the characters differently in their own dialect. Whatever the reason, this concentration on phonology in the early stages of the planning was probably justified, but the persistent emphasis on only the phonological aspect of the national language could justifiably be seen as being too restrictive in scope.

The fourth feature is that, as far as language planning activities are concerned, much attention was paid to language policy matters and very little to language development issues. This bias was probably due in part to the fact that there was no standing committee whose function was to guide all activities pertaining to language planning. Every committee was *ad hoc* in nature and once the assigned mission was deemed accomplished, it was dissolved.

Finally, no systematic evaluative measures are to be found in any part of the planning and propagation process in the period. The lack of an evaluation component is a feature common to many language-planning projects throughout the world as Rubin (1971) has pointed out. Since this feature also has persisted in language planning endeavours undertaken subsequently in Taiwan, I will examine its consequence more closely in a later section of the monograph.

## Language Planning Activities in Taiwan since 1945

For more than five decades that the Nationalist government has ruled the island of Taiwan, the most important language policy has been the propagation of Mandarin, the national language. I will therefore begin our discussion in this section with an account of the so-called National Language Movement (NLM) to be followed by a brief evaluation of the movement. However, as made clear in the previous section, since Taiwan is a multi-ethnic and multilingual society, the propagation of the national language has inevitably affected other languages spoken on the same island. At the same time, as much of the country's resources have been pumped into the propagation of the national language in the educational system, it has also had serious effects on the other languages, chiefly English, which are being taught in the school system. I will therefore go into the policy matters related to these languages in the second part of this section. Part 3 of this section focuses on language development issues, which have been gaining in importance as Taiwan has become modernised. The final part of this section sums up the previous discussion by pointing out the special features of the language planning activities in this period.

### National language movement in Taiwan

#### *National language movement: A historical account*

At the close of World War II in 1945, the Japanese government surrendered unconditionally to the Republic of China (ROC) and Taiwan was returned to the rule of the Chinese government. In the same year the Taiwan Provisional Provincial Government was set up with Chen Yi as its Administrative Head. Although the Nationalist government was not unprepared for the recovery of Taiwan (as preparatory work had started in 1944), when the end to the war began to seem inevitable (Kubler, 1985), the appointment of Chen as the administrative head was a hasty, ill-considered decision. Chen, a Nationalist general, who once ruled Fujian Province, turned out to be rather ill-prepared for the work lying before him to rule an island inhabited by millions of Southern Min, Hakka, and Austro-Polynesian speakers, most of whom had received some Japanese education and some of whom spoke fluent Japanese as a high language. His lack of preparation is clearly revealed in an interview with a Da-Gong Newspaper journalist before he took up his new post. He boasted in the interview that with his experience in the propagation of the national language in Fujian Province, he should be able to make great headway in four years. He also strongly advocated that strict measures should be taken in promoting the national language.

Very little is known about what Chen was able to achieve in Fujian Province, but judging from its present-day much poorer showing in the propagation of Mandarin (called Putonghua (PTH) in Mainland China) when compared with

that of Taiwan (Zhou, 1992; Tsao, 1997a), Chen's statement cannot be taken very seriously. It was also foolhardy of him to advocate strict promotional measures because the sociolinguistic situation of the island at that time can be roughly characterised as a diglossia without societal bilingualism (Fishman, 1967; Tsao, in press). In other words, in the Taiwanese society, there existed a ruling class of Mainlanders, most of whom could speak some form of Mandarin and a lower class of people comprising Southern Min, Hakka and Austro-Polynesian speakers, and there was no way for these groups to communicate with each other except through translation. The situation was extremely delicate and needed to be handled with care. In this connection, one is reminded of the well-thought-out and very cautious language policy of appeasement used by the Japanese when they first arrived on the island (see above). In sharp contrast to the Japanese, Chen advocated strict measures. Indeed in 1946, less than a year after he took up his post, he banned the use of Japanese completely in order to eradicate the Japanese influence in Taiwan. While the grounds for doing so might have been justifiable, the timing was unfortunate and the consequences were hardly what he had expected. As previously indicated, Japanese was the high language that many elites used in the public domain. This being the case, banning the Japanese language was like shutting their mouths, or taking away their voices. Little wonder that thousands of intellectuals strongly protested at this arbitrary act of the government (Hsu, 1991). Ill-considered acts like this coupled with the reports that a number of people from the indigenous groups were either deposed or demoted because of their poor proficiency in Mandarin soon turned the indigenous groups of people against the government and the Mandarin-speaking Mainlanders. This anti-government sentiment, enhanced by many reports of government inefficiency and corruption, reached its peak when the tragic February 28 incident broke out in which thousands of Taiwanese and Mainlanders were killed and the relationship between the indigenous groups and the Mainlanders was greatly traumatised. Soon after the tragic incident, Chen was deposed and was eventually executed on the grounds of conspiring with the Communist Chinese against the government.

On the national language promotion side, things were far more fortunate. The National Committee and Fujian Chapter of the Committee for the Promotion and Propagation of the National Language took active parts in the deliberation on the reconstruction of Taiwan as early as 1944 (Kubler, 1985). In November 1945, soon after the Japanese surrendered on 9 September of that year, several dozen members of the Mainland Committee of CPPNL, led by Wei Jiangong, a philologist, and He Rong, a grammarian, arrived in Taiwan to set up the machinery for the promotion of the national language there. Because there were still not sufficient teachers and promoters to staff the various Mandarin centres, some thirty primary school teachers with high proficiency in Mandarin from Fujian Province were brought in in the spring of 1946. Later, several dozens advanced university students in Mandarin training classes at various Mainland universities were also recruited for the same reason (Fang, 1965).

The Taiwan Provincial CPPNL was established in April 1946 subordinate to the Educational Department of the Provisional Provincial Government. It included among its charter members, Wei Jian-gong, He Rong, Fang Shiduo, Li Jiannan, Wang Yuchuan, Lin Shaoxian, Zhu Zhaoxiang, and Wu Shouli, several

of whom were to play important roles in the promotion of the national language in Taiwan for years to come. However, in addition to the main office of the Committee located in Taipei, other branch offices called Mandarin Promotion Centers were opened in Taichung, Taitung, Hsinchu, Kaohsiung, Changhua, Chiayi, and Pingtung. They were staffed by the recruits from Mainland China and they operated in close cooperation with the local school systems and city governments (Fang, 1965: 133). The Committee set to work at once; the first few urgent tasks that called for immediate attention were:

- to set up the standards (chiefly in pronunciation) for the national language,
- to devise the working outline of the NLM in Taiwan, and
- to compile the Standard Pronunciation Dictionary of the national language.

In the early days after Taiwan's restoration to China, enthusiasm for learning the national language was extremely high, but this high enthusiasm, instead of being fully utilised, was soon dampened by the bad administration of the Provisional Provincial Government headed by Chen Yi on the one hand and by the lack of qualified teachers, on the other. As can be imagined, teachers were from very different backgrounds, ranging from those who were native speakers of the national language to those who had had very little exposure to the national language and could only speak it with a very heavy accent. Standard textbooks were also unavailable. The members of the Taiwan CPPNL thus began a series of efforts to explain to the public through the mass media (mainly radio and newspaper) the meaning and the purpose of NLM, and the definition of the national language (Fang, 1965).

Another achievement of the Committee was to designate an outline for NLM in Taiwan. The following six principles were decided on:

- (1) to recover the Taiwanese dialect so as to enable the public to learn the national language by comparison between the dialect and the national language;
- (2) to emphasise the standard pronunciation;
- (3) to eradicate the influence of Japanese as reflected in the daily speech of the people;
- (4) to promote the contrastive study of morphology so as to enrich the national language;
- (5) to adapt the NPS so as to promote communication among people of different races and origins; and
- (6) to encourage the intention of learning the national language so as to facilitate the teaching of it (Fang, 1965: 131).

Of the six principles, 2, 3 and 6 all look practical and practicable. In fact, I have already mentioned some of the work done in accordance with the sixth principle. Principle 5 was a very wise decision, and NPS were to play a vital part in the propagation of the national language. I have more to say about this in connection with the Mandarin Daily News in a later section. Unfortunately, as Taiwanese society is becoming internationalised, this system is now facing a stiff challenge from competing romanised systems, especially the one propagated by the People's Republic of China. It is still too early to say what the outcome of this competition will be.

Principles 1 and 4 were either controversial or impractical. When Principle 1 was announced, it immediately spawned a heated debate. There were people who argued that dialects should be done away with once and for all, but there were other people who argued that the national language can be best learned through people's mother tongue, namely the dialect. It was not clear whether there was a consensus among the committee members and if so what that consensus was. Judging from the fact that there was only one series of textbooks called the 'Bridge Series' (which utilised the comparison method to teach the Southern Min speakers the national language), and, from the fact that no members of the Committee were known to take part in the debate, it seems fair to say that the Committee was not really too enthusiastic about this principle. As for Principle 4, it looks more like a utopian blueprint, as there were no experts on Taiwan at that time who were able to conduct a contrastive study of Mandarin and Southern Min, not to mention Hakka and the aboriginal Austro-Polynesian languages.

Yet another major effort of the Committee was the compilation of the Dictionary of the Standard Pronunciation of the national language. The first Taiwan edition was published in 1952. In the ensuing years, it became so popular that almost every teacher had a copy of it. It certainly played a very important role in the standardisation of the national language in Taiwan.

The Taiwan Provincial CPPNL was established in April 1946 and abolished in 1959. A lower-level committee in the Provincial Department of Education was founded to replace it. Three reasons were given for the abolition of the Committee:

- (1) the policy objective of NLM (i.e. standardisation and propagation) was deemed to have been achieved;
- (2) the cultivation of the NL, a long-term enterprise, could be continued through the joint efforts of the school, the media, and the whole nation; and
- (3) a lower-level committee was thought to be sufficient to guide the development of the national language.

As all three of the reasons given were highly questionable, the true reasons for its abolition remain a mystery. Kubler (1985) has argued that budget considerations must have played an important part as it was not too long after the battle of Quemoy with the Chinese Communists, and the Nationalist government could have been contemplating an expensive, large-scale military offensive. (I am of this opinion.) In any case, the feeling that much in terms of language planning remained to be done and that a lower-level committee was insufficient for guiding the operation soon became widespread. In 1980 the government was pressured into re-establishing under the MOE a body equivalent to the CPPNL, which had existed on the Chinese Mainland before the Nationalist government's retreat.

Scholars' evaluation of the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL seems to be in general favourable (Tse, 1986; Kubler, 1985). Three tasks in particular are held up as exemplars: first, there was a step-by-step promotion programme. Training of Mandarin promotion personnel was the first step. Training of primary and secondary school teachers was the second. Finally, training of students still in school as well as those already working in society was the third. This

step-by-step promotion method was deemed to be effective. Second, the effective Pronunciation Demonstrating Broadcasting Program was regarded by many as an excellent example as to how the mass media could be used as an aid in language planning efforts. Finally, the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL should be credited for its effort in the formulation of policy and strategy to teach only the spoken language through the NPS for the first 12 weeks in the first semester of the first grade in elementary schools. The policy was made on the basis of the experimental results conducted by the Committee on the improvement of teaching methods and teaching materials in the national language (Tse, 1986: 69).

In the 1960s and 1970s, with the disbanding of the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL, large-scale, organised efforts to promote Mandarin were largely stopped. Language planning activities in this period, however, took a new turn. Attention was now paid to areas that hitherto had been pretty much neglected – such as the teaching of reading and composition at the elementary school level. There were even plans to construct a Mandarin proficiency test including a taped interview for the oral section for all sixth-grade children in Taiwan (Zhang, 1974: 224).

There was also a movement, spearheaded by President Yen Jia-gan, to reform the language of official government documents. At that time most of the documents were composed using semi-Classical Chinese. The aim of the movement was to make the language more in line with the vernacular *Baihua* style.

In the late 1970s, the work of promoting Mandarin in Taiwan by the lower-level committee under the Provincial Department of Education and other educational organisations included activities such as school spelling bees, pronunciation competitions, Mandarin speech contests, as well as Mandarin adults' education classes and literacy programmes for employees of various government and private institutions. Research activities during the period included scientific character counts of different genres of current publications for use in reading research or textbook compiling, Chinese speed reading, Mandarin shorthand, Chinese typewriter development, and Chinese character computer technology, some of which will be reviewed more extensively in the section on language development (Kubler, 1985).

Special mention must be made in this connection of a movement that was very active in the late 1960s and 70s – the Chinese Cultural Restoration Movement. When the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL was disbanded in 1959, some of the language planning activities were picked up by the committee in charge of the Movement. As many of the committee members showed great concern over what they perceived to be a much slower rate of progress in the promotion of the NL since the disbanding of the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL, they passed a six-point resolution which they presented to the MOE. The MOE accepted and announced them on 26 November, 1970. These resolutions were (Chen, 1996; Kubler, 1985):

- (1) Immediately revive the Committee for the propagation and promotion of Mandarin in the Ministry of Education to make unified plans and positively oversee the promotion work of the Mandarin committees at every level.
- (2) Increase funding for personnel in the Committee for the Promotion of Mandarin in the provincial capital and the chief sites of each county.

- (3) To achieve the goals of the Mandarin movement, we should start simultaneously from the following four aspects:
  - (a) Strengthen Mandarin education in the schools and cultivate Mandarin-teaching personnel.
  - (b) Strengthen Mandarin education in society and start supplementary education programmes in the villages, in mines, factories, among adults in the aboriginal tribes, and for all those who lack formal schooling.
  - (c) Improve radio and television programmes. The amount of foreign language (i.e. English – FFT) and dialect (i.e. Southern Min – FFT) programming should be decreased and Mandarin programmes increased.
  - (d) Strengthen Mandarin education among overseas Chinese, making use of textbooks, records, and films, etc. to promote the Mandarin language abroad.
- (4) Ask the people's representatives to use Mandarin when speaking at conferences so as to increase its influence.
- (5) Require organisations, schools, offices, and all public areas to use Mandarin. Civil servants and, above all, teachers in the public schools should set an example for others.
- (6) To increase interest in speaking Mandarin, various kinds of contests and activities should be employed that increase awareness among the people of the importance of speaking Mandarin.

During the 1970s, some of these measures were put into effect. But as previously mentioned, the revival of the Committee for the Promotion and Propagation of Mandarin in the MOE had to wait until 1980.

After the Committee was established, language planning activities again became active on the national scene. The following are some of the most important things that the Committee has done since its establishment.

In 1984, the MOE announced a revised system of romanisation of the Chinese characters. The older system, originally developed by Y.R. Chao, Lin Yu-tang and their colleagues more than half a century ago, had been felt to be exceptionally complicated in that the four tones were represented by letters instead of by diacritic marks, and the rules of spelling tried to reflect not only the phonemic system, but also narrow phonetic information. The revised system employs diacritics for the four tones: – for high level, / for rising, 'v' for dipping and \ for high falling. These marks, which are quite iconic in their representation of the actual tone values, are also ones that are used in NPS, and in the Pinyin system used in Mainland China. In addition, the spelling rules are made to reflect only the phonemic system, thus greatly simplifying the system. This new revised system is mainly designed for the use of teaching Chinese to foreigners and overseas Chinese (i.e. those who cannot read Chinese characters) and for local people to use in transcribing their names in romanised forms (in letters). These last statements of purpose are felt to be necessary because the government wants to reiterate its stance of not abolishing Chinese characters.

Many critics, this writer included, have serious doubts about whether the revised system, created after the Pinyin system in use in Mainland China since

the 1950s and which has gained world-wide recognition, would be extensively employed in the teaching of Mandarin abroad. As for its local application in the area of the transcription of personal names and place names, it has scarcely been used since most people, including scholars and linguists, are not familiar with it. In a word, many scholars feel that its creation was more to satisfy the need of the policy than to meet any actual demand at that time.

In early 1999 the issue of whether NPS or some romanised spelling system should be used in the teaching of Mandarin was raised again and has been heatedly debated. In the discussion, the appropriateness of the new revised system has again been questioned. This issue will be taken up again in that larger context in the last section of the monograph.

In addition, in line with the Nationalists' claim to authenticity and its policy of not using simplified characters, the Committee has invested a great deal of its resources to standardise the Chinese orthography (the characters). Before the establishment of the Committee, an *ad hoc* committee spent six years (from 1973 to 1979) in the compilation of a list of standard orthography and another three years in its trial use (*Central Daily News*, 9 May, 1983). In April 1981, this list of standard orthography of commonly used characters was authorised and published by the MOE at the recommendation of CPPNL (*Central Daily News*, 27 April, 1981).

Any account of NLM in Taiwan would be incomplete without mentioning the role played by the army and the *National Language Daily*. In the 1940s and 1950s, all young men planning to enter the army were encouraged to enrol in a Mandarin course first since Mandarin was (and still is) the language of the Taiwan military forces. Later on, the army, in cooperation with the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL, published special manuals for teaching Mandarin as part of its basic training. Since two to three years' military service is required of every young man, many who had not had a chance to learn Mandarin picked up the language during their compulsory military service. This has not only helped propagate the national language, but it has helped promote literacy in the country as well (Tsao, 1998).

Another important factor that has contributed to the success of NLM is the *National Language Daily*, a newspaper using transcribed characters, which has been popular for the past fifty years especially among lower-grade students. Since its founding in 1948, it has made a great contribution to the standardisation and propagation of the national language. Its significance in the promotion of the national language was never more keenly felt than after the abolition of the Taiwan Provincial CPPNL. The National Language Daily Press Service Committee for national language education was organised in 1960 to provide service to education in the national language. Totally supported by the *National Language Daily*, it provides the following services:

- to compile and publish textbooks and teaching materials in the national language;
- to assist in the training of teachers and promoters of the national language;
- to answer, research, and experiment with problems related to the national language;
- to provide other services related to the education in the national language.

An evaluation

Like many other language planning programmes, evaluation, no doubt, is the weakest aspect of language planning endeavours in Taiwan. In fact, little is known about whether there has been any provision made for continuing evaluation of the NLM at the national or local level. To date, to the best of my knowledge, no official assessment has ever been attempted. Those essays that appeared in the anthology of papers collected by The Executive Yuan in 1982 were all impressionistic and, generally speaking, devoid of useful information. This lack of information makes this present attempt at evaluation a difficult, but a worthwhile task. Fortunately for our present endeavour, many evaluative reports about what has been going on in language planning in Mainland China since 1949 are readily available. In the evaluation which follows, these reports are cited for comparison whenever feasible.

Taiwan's successful propagation of Mandarin Chinese as the national language has been well documented (Tse, 1987; Zhou, 1992; Tsao, 1997a). While it is certain that Tse (1987) was over-optimistic in his estimate of the percentage of people unable to speak the national language (5%), as Huang (1993) and Tsao (1997a) have pointed out, he was not too far off the mark. A more realistic figure has been given by Ke (1990), who based his estimate on the school enrolment and people's educational attainment figures provided by the Executive Yuan, as displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1** Percentages of educational attainment for people above six in Taiwan in 1987

Elementary School	37.54%
Junior High	19.12%
Senior High	7.40%
Vocational School	16.17%
Junior College	5.15%
College	4.37%
Graduate School	0.22%
Self-study	1.65%
Illiterate	7.79%
Total	100.00%

His calculation is as follows. The total percentage of people with a middle school education or higher is 52.43%. If we then add 37.54%, the percentage of people who had only elementary education or who were at that time enrolled in an elementary school, then the total comes up to 89.97, roughly 90% of the population aged 7 or above. In other words, it is safe to estimate for those over six years old in Taiwan in 1987, roughly 10% of them were not able to speak Mandarin. This figure, though not as high as Tse's estimate, is actually quite remarkable. Zhou You-Guang, who is a very senior scholar and researcher in the propagation and development of Mandarin in Mainland China, is of the same opinion. In his recent book (1992), he compared the speed with which Mandarin Chinese has been propagated in Taiwan and Singapore with a dragon flying and that in Mainland China as a turtle's crawling.<sup>8</sup>

Two points should be made in connection with this phenomenal success of Mandarin promotion in Taiwan. First, being able to speak Mandarin Chinese means that speakers with this ability are able to make themselves understood in the language when called upon to do so. It does not include the ability to carry on a sustained conversation in the language, nor does it imply that they are able to speak like a Peking resident, as the norm suggests people should be able to do. Quite the contrary, after fifty years of strenuous propagation, a number of discrepancies in all aspects of the grammar, but especially noticeable in phonology (pronunciation), have been found (Cheng, 1985; Li, 1983; Kubler, 1985; Tsao, 1987). Many of the features have been fossilised to the extent that this variety has come to be known as 'Taiwan Mandarin'. Such discrepancies between the norm and the actual speech are not unexpected. It is this expected discrepancy between the norm and the actual performance in the speech community that has prompted both Rubin (1971) and Karam (1974) to stress the need for evaluation in language planning and of using the evaluation results to adjust the norm after the language has been propagated for a certain extended period of time. However, in the case of the propagation of the national language in Taiwan, either the authorities concerned are not aware of the need for doing an evaluation or they are reluctant to do so because they think that the issue is still politically sensitive. No evaluation of this kind has been done since the norm was set up some seventy years ago, and the failure to adjust the norm has caused language teachers a lot of problems. To begin with, they are torn between what they are expected to teach and what they feel they should teach. If they teach according to an unrealistic norm, they will be teaching their students a language that not many people use in Taiwan, but if they teach what they think they should teach, they are not doing the thing that they have been taught to do. To complicate the matter even more, they actually cannot teach what they are expected to teach in any real sense, since many of them are 'Taiwan Mandarin' speakers, and therefore they cannot serve as models for their students.

Secondly, the phenomenal success has been achieved at the expense of the indigenous languages, i.e. Southern Min, Hakka and the aboriginal Austro-Polynesian languages. In other words, while Mandarin has been gaining in popularity, the indigenous languages have been fast eroding. Many scholars (Huang, 1993; Li, 1994; Tsao, 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1997a, 1997b among others) have seen this as a natural consequence of the government's policy of promoting Mandarin, the national language, while neglecting and at times suppressing the indigenous languages, a subject which is examined in the next section.

## Language policy effects on other indigenous languages

### *The policy and its implementation*

Romaine (1995: 242), after an extensive study of the language policies of many countries has come to the following conclusion:

The traditional policy, either implicitly assumed or explicitly stated, which most nations have pursued with regard to various minority groups, who speak a different language, has been eradication of the native language/culture and assimilation into the majority one.

Taiwan's past experience shows clearly that it is no exception. Although this policy in an overt written form is nowhere to be found, all the indications are it has been the covert policy all along. Evidence for this is that when some open-minded scholars such as Hong Yen-chiu spoke up for the minority peoples' language rights and argued against a hard-line approach, he was immediately attacked by many hard-liners who criticised his views as not leading to national unity (Hong, 1978).

In fact, this hard-line, high-handed propagation of Mandarin was very prevalent up to ten years ago. Romaine (1995: 242) reported that in Australia, the United States, Britain and Scandinavia, minority children were until recently still subject to physical punishment in school for speaking their home language. In Turkey, where Kurdish is a minority language whose existence is not recognised, the situation was even worse. Thus one Kurdish woman who attended a special boarding school provided for Kurdish children described her heartbreaking experience vividly (Clason & Baksi, 1979: 79, 867, translated by Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984: 311–12):

I was seven when I started the first grade in 1962. My sister, who was a year older, started school at the same time. We didn't know a word of Turkish when we started, so we felt totally mute during the first few years. We were not allowed to speak Kurdish during the breaks, either, but had to play silent games with stones and things like that. Anyone who spoke Kurdish was punished. The teachers hit us on the fingertips or on our heads with a ruler. It hurt terribly. That's why we were always frightened at school and didn't want to go.

Many short articles, appearing in Lin's (1983) collection of essays, described similar experiences that many indigenous language speakers had in their early years of schooling. My own experience in learning the national language in a suburban primary school in Taipei also bore this out. Even though punishment was not as severe as the one the Kurdish sisters underwent, there were several ways of punishing a student when he or she was caught speaking Taiwanese Southern Min in school. However, as we were all indoctrinated with the idea of the imminent threat of communism as well as the importance of national unity, and therefore the necessity to speak the national language, these unnecessarily severe punishments were not thought to be very drastic at the time. Furthermore, many indigenous language speakers were informed by their teachers that their languages were base and vulgar and that they should feel ashamed for being speakers of such languages.

Control of newspapers and electronic media was equally oppressive. Newspapers were exclusively in Mandarin, with one or two English papers being the exceptions. In the fifties, soon after the Nationalist government moved to Taiwan, it was stipulated that, in view of the fact that most people did not know Mandarin, Taiwanese programmes in electronic media would be allowed on condition that they be gradually replaced by Mandarin programmes. In the seventies, it was further stipulated that programmes in the 'dialects', meaning Taiwanese and Hakka, would be aired for only one hour a day. The ban was in effect for about ten years before it was finally lifted together with the lifting of martial law (Huang, 1993; Tsao, 1997a).

Under the double oppression of school education and the mass media, it would indeed be odd if indigenous languages did not begin to die out.

### *The effect of the policy and its implementation*

Huang and Chang (1995), in a recent paper on the sociolinguistic history of the Gavaland Pingpu tribe, report that in I-lan area around 1650 there were nearly ten thousand Gavaland speakers, but by the time Professor Ruan did his field work in 1969, only about 800 speakers remained there. If we include the number of people who migrated to Hua-lian, the total would not exceed two thousand. But less than thirty years later even those 800 speakers have disappeared, leaving the I-lan area with no Gavaland speakers.

The Gaoshan group, though luckier than the Pingpu tribe as it is protected by the mountains, is actually not doing too well. According to statistics released by the government in 1989, the population of the nine Goashan tribes was:

- Amis 129,220
- Atayal 78,957
- Paiwan 60,434
- Bunun 38,627
- Puyuma 8,132
- Rukai 8,007
- Tsou 5,797
- Saisiyat 4,194
- Yami 4,335.

According to Huang's (1991, 1993) calculations, based on a questionnaire survey of Aboriginal College Students, the attrition rate was estimated to be 15.8% between two generations and 31% between three generations. If Huang's estimate was correct, almost half of the existing aboriginal languages are going to disappear from Taiwan in another two generations.

Similar results also were obtained in Lin's (1995) survey report. After surveying one thousand junior high school students studying in 25 schools, Lin found that, for the aborigine students, only 37% claimed that the aboriginal language was the one most frequently used at home. Only 68% claimed that they could speak their parents' language and among the latter group only 16% claimed to be fluent.

The Hakka students' performance was only slightly better than that of the aborigines; 40% of the students surveyed said that Hakka was the most frequently used language at home. Elsewhere, according to Huang's (1993) survey of 327 Hakka students in the Taipei area and 404 Hakka Taipei citizens, only 70% of those people whose parents were both Hakka speakers claimed that they could speak Hakka.

As for Taiwanese, both Huang's and Lin's survey results indicate that it too shows signs of erosion, although the rate is relatively slow. Furthermore, Chan's study (1994) shows that the domains traditionally attributed to Taiwanese, such as the home and the marketplace, are shrinking, indicating that the dominant language, Mandarin, has made inroads upon it as well.

Based on an island-wide telephone survey of 934 subjects conducted by the Formosa Cultural and Educational Foundation, the relationship between the

**Table 2** Relationship of ethnic group identity and mother tongue identity in three age groups for Hakka

	<i>I</i> <i>Ethnic group identity(%)</i>	<i>II</i> <i>Mother tongue identity (%)</i>	<i>III</i> <i>III/I (%)</i>
L (18-30)	7.4	5.7	77
M (31-40)	13.5	12.2	90
H (41-50)	11.9	10.6	89

N.B. Figures in Columns I and II of the table refer to the percentages of subjects in that age group who claimed that identity out of total survey population, and those in Column III are the percentages obtained by dividing the figure in Column II by that in Column I.

**Table 3** Relationship between ethnic group identity and mother tongue identity in three age groups for Taiwanese

	<i>I</i> <i>Ethnic group identity(%)</i>	<i>II</i> <i>Mother tongue identity (%)</i>	<i>III</i> <i>III/I (%)</i>
L (18-30)	80.2	70.8	88
M (31-40)	76.9	74.2	96
H (41-50)	76.9	79.1	99.4

proportion of subjects claiming to be of Hakka ethnic descent, and that of subjects claiming to have Hakka as their mother tongue, for three age groups, is shown in Table 2. Table 2 clearly indicates that the erosion of the Hakka language has intensified among younger people (those aged below 30), with the erosion rate reaching a dramatic 13% decline between younger and middle-aged Hakka.

For comparison, consider the corresponding figures from the Taiwanese group shown in Table 3. From Table 3 it is quite clear that the Taiwanese group shows signs of erosion as well, although the rate is slower, being 8% between the mid- and low-age groups, as compared to 13% for the Hakka group.

My own large-scale survey (Tsao, 1997a) also yields basically the same result, i.e. while Mandarin was gaining popularity, all the indigenous languages were rapidly fading. These two tendencies are clearly demonstrated in Figures 2 (Mandarin proficiency) and 3 (mother tongue proficiency) respectively. From the above statistics it is clear that the indigenous languages in Taiwan are disappearing with the aboriginal languages declining the fastest, Hakka close behind and Taiwanese less markedly. This shows unmistakably the effect of the government's policy on the indigenous languages other than Mandarin, the national language.

Teaching English and other foreign languages in Taiwan

Like many developing countries in the world, Taiwan's past language-in-education policy has been to a large extent determined by two main factors: (1) nationalism and national unification and (2) modernisation and economic growth. These two factors are not in agreement at all times. The language-in-education system can be seen as a resultant state of the interaction

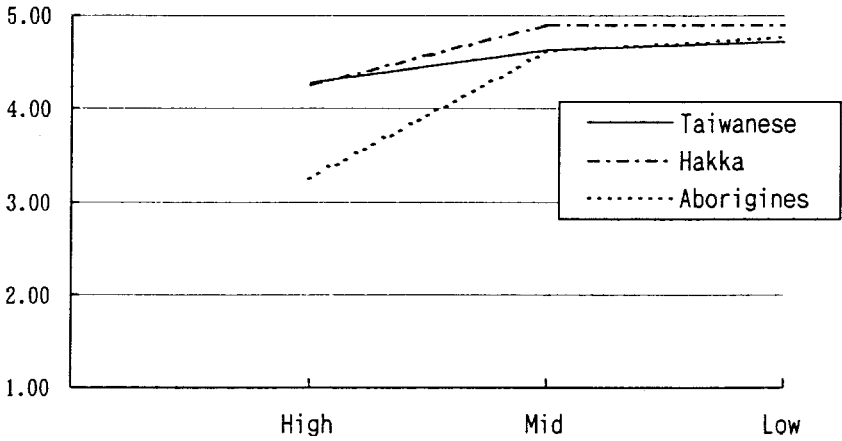


Figure 2 Comparison of Mandarin proficiency in the three ethnic groups

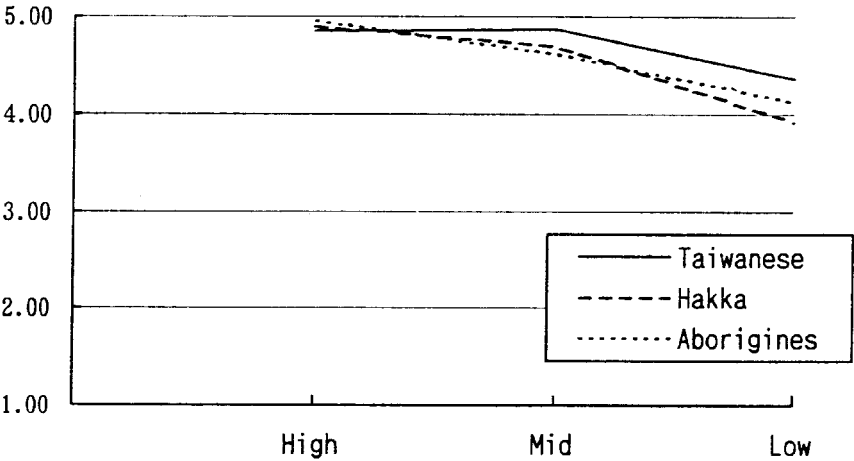


Figure 3 Comparison of mother tongue proficiency in the three ethnic groups

between these two factors, but to see this clearly, we need to take a look at the system first.

In describing a language-in-education system, Bamgbose's (1991: 62) characterisation is very useful. He suggests characterising a language-in-education system by seeking answers to the following three questions: (1) What language? (2) For what purpose? and (3) at what level? For our present purpose, the languages involved can be classified into three types: the mother tongue, the national language, and other languages used for wider communication. As has been shown in the previous sections, in Taiwan the mother tongue may be Southern Min, Hakka, Mandarin or one of the aboriginal Austro-Polynesian languages. The major language of wider communication (LWC) taught in Taiwan is English, but French, German, Spanish and Japanese are also taught.

**Table 4** Language type and function in education in Taiwan

	<i>Literacy</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Medium</i>
Mother tongue	O	O	O
National language	X	X	X
LWC	O	X	O

If we now concentrate on the first two major questions, namely, ‘what language?’ and ‘for what purpose?’ we may arrive at nine possibilities, each represented by a cell in the matrix shown in Table 4. By filling in the possibilities that are actually realised with ‘X’, and those unrealised as ‘O’, we get the table as shown.

Educational practice as represented by Table 4 has existed almost unchallenged for fifty years.<sup>9</sup> As is apparent in the table, Mandarin, the national language, has played a very important role in the system. It is taught to everybody, regardless of their mother tongue or home language, as a language for literacy. It is also a subject taking up at least five hours of instruction every week from the first grade up to college freshman level, and is by far the most important subject in all elementary and secondary courses. Finally, it is the sole medium of instruction in the school system. Competency in it plays a decisive role in a student’s scholastic achievement.

In distinct contrast is the role of English in the system. It is required of every student in the secondary school and the first year of college. It used to take up five hours of instruction per week in all years of secondary education. However, when compulsory education was extended from six years to nine in 1970, the hours of instruction were cut to two or three in the first two years of junior high school.

Despite its widely recognised importance in literacy, the mother tongue, except where it is also Mandarin, played absolutely no role in the system officially until the 1997 school year, when mother tongue education began to be allotted one hour per week in the elementary school programme. I will have more to say about this change in the final section of this monograph when some recent developments are examined.

The mother tongue was excluded from the system on the grounds that it has been seen as an impediment to national unification. However English, as a representative of the so-called languages of wider communication, has been included for the purpose of providing information access to the world of technology and science which Taiwan needs for social modernisation and economic growth. This role for English, however, has never been emphasised because it is, at the same time, perceived as a potential threat to nationalism. The equilibrium was achieved by assigning English the role as set out in Table 4.

This being the case, it came as no surprise when a national survey of English teaching in Taiwan was conducted in 1974–1976 and a number of problems were found, these problems did not receive much attention from the media or the authorities concerned. The survey was part of a cooperative project between the Department of Linguistics, University of Southern California (USC) and the English Research Institute, National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU). It was

jointly conceived, planned and implemented by Prof. Robert B Kaplan of USC and Prof. C. M. Yang of the NTNU. Dr Philip Sedlak, who spent about two years in Taiwan implementing the plan, conducted the actual survey. The survey was able to gather a wealth of data about English teaching in the secondary school in Taiwan, but for some reason, the first report, which was published in June 1976, was so hastily composed that it left much to be desired. As pointed out by Tsao (1982) and Tse (1987), there are specifically three important shortcomings:

- much of the data collected in the survey was left unanalysed;
- the statistical analysis was not very revealing; and
- some of the recommendations proposed were highly impractical.

Fortunately, these shortcomings were corrected by Tse, who reanalysed much of the raw data gathered in the survey. The results were reported in Tse's PhD dissertation written at USC in 1979 and later published in a slightly revised form in Taiwan (Tse, 1987).

The reanalysed survey presented a large number of significant findings, which tell us much about English teaching in the secondary schools in Taiwan at that time. The important findings include the following:

- (1) Most English teachers were inadequately trained, both in English and educational methodology.
- (2) Learning and writing had been emphasised in their training.
- (3) Despite being highly desirable, the availability of in-service training was low.
- (4) The weekly hours of English instruction were inadequate.
- (5) Grammar and translation were given disproportionate emphasis.
- (6) Most tests focused on reading and writing.
- (7) Audiovisual aids were woefully inadequate and underutilised.
- (8) English contact outside school was very limited.

This amended survey gave a true picture of English teaching at secondary level, and yielded a number of important shortcomings that called for immediate attention. However, for some reason, it did not have as much impact on the English teaching profession as had originally been planned. As a result, English teaching remained pretty much the same for some twenty years after the survey was conducted with only two possible exceptions. First, in-service training is now much more available to teachers, although what effect such a change has brought to actual teaching remains to be examined. Second, English teachers' educational training does seem to have improved over the years. This is clearly revealed in Table 5, where the English teachers' educational training in 1976, the time when the survey was conducted, is compared with that in 1996.<sup>10</sup> However, this upgrading of teachers' educational training has been due in large part to the general expansion of universities and graduate schools in Taiwan. The effect of this upgrading of teachers' qualifications remains to be determined.

These shortcomings notwithstanding, in all fairness it might be said that judging from the economic success of Taiwan in the past 30 years, some credit has to be given to the successful implementation of this particular area of educational policy.

**Table 5** Secondary school English teacher’s educational training in 1976 and 1996

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Master and Doctorate</i>	<i>Normal university graduates</i>	<i>Graduates of other universities or colleges</i>	<i>Graduates of junior college and others</i>
1976	100%	0.4%	28.30%	61.30%	10.0%
1996	100%	9.8%	44.64%	35.66%	9.9%

Prior to the reanalysis of the survey data, Tse conducted a small-scale survey of language use in Taiwan. Among its many interesting findings, the following are particularly notable (Tse, 1987: Chapter 4):

- (1) English is the foreign language most often used at work. After English, Japanese is most often used. German and French are rarely used.
- (2) Even English is not frequently used at work.
- (3) When English is used at work, reading and writing skills are most often required.
- (4) Cram schools and English programmes sponsored by employers generally are not considered helpful.
- (5) Although significantly more respondents’ attitudes towards English were positive, over one-third of them have an unfavourable attitude for nationalistic reasons.

Points 1 and 5 deserve some further comment. The respondents’ attitudes as revealed in the survey were basically in line with the government’s language policy, but even as early as twenty years ago, there were signs that nationalism was slowly giving way to pragmatic considerations. This comment applies to English as well as to Japanese. Recall that in the mid-1940s, when Taiwan had just been restored to the Republic of China, the language policy was to wipe out the Japanese influence in the indigenous languages and culture. However, by the late 1970s, because of Taiwan’s heavy trade with Japan, Japanese had already replaced French and German as the second most frequently used foreign language in Taiwan. This change was to be reflected in the educational language policy in the 1980s and 90s when enrolment in Japanese classes offered by various universities showed a rapid increase and several Japanese departments were established in national as well as private universities. At the same time the enrolment figures in German and French classes offered at universities dropped considerably.

As far as English is concerned, the pragmatic attitude of the people has actually made English become increasingly popular. This general popularity coupled with the general affluence of the populace and traditional Chinese people’s emphasis on children’s education has induced many parents to send their young children to English language classes, which have mushroomed in the past decade. As this trend has grown rapidly, it has recently pushed the government into changing its earlier policy of beginning English education in secondary school, a matter that I will take up in some detail in the next section.

## Language planning activities connected with language modernisation and development

Similar to what happened in Mainland China under the Nationalist administration, language planning activities in Taiwan have been centred on the problem of language unification, especially pronunciation. Comparatively little has been done in the area of language development and modernisation. However, as the national language has been increasingly used in various domains and in the educational system in the Republic, a number of problems occurred that called for solutions.

One of these problems has to do with whether in printing Chinese horizontally, the direction should be from left to right or from right to left. Traditionally, Chinese texts are printed vertically and are read from right to left. This was fine until Chinese was used for materials in science and technology, which often consist of quantitative data and sometimes include special terminology in Roman letters which are read from left to right. This kind of printed material, therefore, often contains matters printed in different directions, causing great confusion in reading.

A related debate broke out in the seventies about the direction of printing Chinese horizontally between the traditional purists and the modernists, and the MOE was called upon to provide a set of guidelines governing the printing of Chinese. Finally, after much deliberation and discussion, a compromised solution was reached. When printing vertically, the direction should be from right to left, but in order to accommodate scientific exposition, when printing horizontally the direction from left to right is allowed. Such a compromise, which might seem to have pleased the contenders of both camps at the time, actually ended up not solving all the problems it was intended to solve. In fact, it has created a number of others. Let us take a concrete example. In Taiwan there are two major newspapers, the *China Times* and the *Liberty Times*. While both follow the guidelines propagated by the MOE in printing vertically, i.e. from right to left, they do it differently when printing horizontally. The *China Times* prints from right to left, thus creating confusion when numerals and roman letters appear, whereas the *Liberty Times* prints from left to right, thus requiring readers to adopt different strategies when reading vertically and horizontally.

Standardisation of orthography of personal names and place names has been promoted to facilitate the use of the Chinese language with computer technology. Specifically, the issue is that some characters used in personal names, both surnames and given names, and place names, are very rarely used items or in some extreme cases, are the idiosyncratic inventions of the individuals concerned. As such, they can complicate computer processing and have to be standardised (*Central Daily News*, 29 March, 1983).

A major contribution of the CPPNL after its re-establishment in 1980 has been the re-compiling and updating of the *Dictionary of the National Language* (henceforth the Dictionary), which was first published in 1936 in Mainland China and enlarged and brought up to date in 1981. The recompilation work began in June 1988 and was completed in January 1994. The Dictionary with its 160,000 entries boasts the largest list of Chinese characters in existence. It has been posted on the computer network since 1993 by the MOE and recently a CD version of the

Dictionary has been made available to the general public for only the cost of mailing. A concise version is being compiled and is expected to be completed soon (*The Sixth Educational Yearbook of ROC* 1996: 1853).

Developing efficient computer input systems for Chinese characters has been a common concern of the CPPNL and the Institute for Information Industry. The latter is a non-profit organisation founded in 1979 with the following main functions (The Institute for Information Industry, 1998):

- (1) to assist the government in information industry planning and in promoting national information construction;
- (2) to introduce information and communication techniques and concepts and to promote information industry development;
- (3) to propagate information science and to train information science professionals;
- (4) to create a milieu and a condition favourable to the development of the information industry and to assist its development; and
- (5) to assist the government in setting up information and communication standards.

Since its establishment the Institute has taken a very active part in these functions. However, in the area of developing new ways of processing Chinese characters, it is fair to say that private companies have done the lion's share of the work with the Institute playing the role of the coordinator. The Institute and the CPPNL have cooperated over the years to complete successfully registration with the International Standardisation Office (ISO) for the standardised coding of all the standardised Chinese characters (*The Sixth Educational Yearbook of ROC*, 1996: 1850).

Finally, there is the perennial problem of the unification of technical terminology. In Taiwan, as in Mainland China under the rule of the Nationalist government, the agency responsible for this has been the Institute of Compilation and Translation whose roles, since its inception in 1932, have been stipulated as:

- (1) the reviewing and compiling of all books on Chinese culture, the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences and of all textbooks for all levels;
- (2) the translating and reviewing of all the translated works on world literature, humanities, social sciences and natural sciences;
- (3) the translating and compiling of technical terminologies for different sciences; and
- (4) the compilation of textbooks for all levels (*The Fifth Educational Yearbook of ROC*, 1974: 895–913, Taipei: MOE).

In recent years, however, the Institute has been chiefly concerned with the compilation of textbooks at all levels and the compilation of books on Chinese culture. Even though there is still a section on Natural Sciences, it has been understaffed and very few advances have been made in the area of the unification of technical terminology. From 1932 to 1974, 66 specific scientific and technical terminologies had been authorised by the MOE through the Institute of Compilation and Translation. However, since 1974 only two more have been added and, to date, no effort has been made to evaluate how well these terms have been accepted and put to use (The National Institute for Compilation and

Translation, 1997: 13). There is every indication that they have been neglected. There are probably two reasons for this. First, according to Liu (1970), a former Director of the Institute, in a number of cases in the wordlists prepared by the Institute and authorised by the MOE, more than one translation equivalent occurs. While this practice may actually reflect the current situation, it is definitely against the principle of standardisation and is a reflection on the inefficiency of the Institute. Second, and more importantly, authors and teachers who are familiar with the foreign language in which the loan terms originate, tend to use the original form rather than the loan (Barnes, 1974: 473).

## Recent Developments in Language Planning

The language planning scene in Taiwan as depicted in the previous section may seem rather unremarkable to some people, and I can readily agree with that observation if our focus is on what had been done before 1987, the year in which martial law was lifted. However, since its lifting, a number of exciting things have been happening. As most of them lie in the area of language-in-education planning, it is in this area that I will begin my discussion.

### Recent changes in language-in-education policies

#### *Shifting of emphasis to Baihuawen in Chinese courses in secondary education*

As discussed in the previous section, in China for more than a thousand years before the founding of the Republic, the extreme linguistic diversity meant that Classical Chinese had always served as a written lingua franca, much like the role that Latin played in medieval Europe. Thus, Classical Chinese was the school language as well as the language used in the government and in the civil service examinations. As a consequence, a huge volume of fine literature was produced in the language. Therefore, in the earlier years of ROC, when the school language was changed from Classical Chinese to Mandarin, it took effect quietly and only in the elementary school. This difference in content was reflected in the names used to identify the programmes. In elementary school it was called *Guoyu* 'National Language' and in the secondary school *Guowen* 'National Literature'. When the Nationalist government came to rule Taiwan, this distinction was preserved. Even though the *Baihua* (vernacular) literature flourished in the 1930s and 40s in Mainland China, especially for fiction, much of it was tinged with pro-communist ideology and was consequently banned in Taiwan. In practice, this strongly biased the contents of the Chinese courses in the secondary school and the curriculum of the Chinese departments in the universities, including the normal university, towards Classical Chinese literature and against the modern language and the vernacular literature. Let us take for example the Chinese Department of the National Taiwan Normal University, the leading department where thousands of Chinese teachers were trained. In the Chinese Department at the university, there are about 70 faculty members, about 20 of whom are listed under the linguistics section. However, in actuality, half of those twenty were teachers of Mandarin pronunciation, a course which up to five years ago used to be required of every normal university student. Nine out of the remaining ten professors specialise in philology rather than modern linguistics.

Another indication that modern linguistics and the methodology of language teaching have been flagrantly neglected can be clearly shown by examination topics for the masters' theses and doctoral dissertations that have been written at the department. From 1961 to 1995, a total of 158 doctoral dissertations were written falling under the following categories:<sup>11</sup>

Chinese classics	64
Chinese philology	24
Chinese history	2
Chinese literature:	61 (classical, 57; modern, 4
others	7

The 531 masters' theses produced from 1958 to 1995 fall into the following categories:

Chinese classics	180
Chinese philology	74
modern Chinese studies	7
Chinese history	21
Chinese literature	231 (classical, 224; modern, 7)
Chinese arts	7
others	11

Looking at these dissertations and theses from another perspective reveals that there is not a single thesis or dissertation on anything remotely related to language teaching. Another point that cannot be missed is the extremely skewed distribution towards classical as opposed to modern Chinese; in the case of dissertations 153 relate to classical topics, 5 to modern, and in the case of theses 517 are classical, 14 are modern.

It does not take much imagination to see how effective a Mandarin teaching programme can be, when it is taught by teachers trained in a programme with such a strong bias towards Classical Chinese literature. In fact, Taiwan's college-bound students are found to be quite low in their written Chinese proficiency. As a language professor at a leading Taiwan university, I frequently have been surprised by the number of complaints I have received from my colleagues in science and technology about the poor command of Chinese that their graduate advisees have as reflected in their reports, papers, and theses.

The students' low proficiency in Chinese must have been the reason that prompted the MOE to re-examine its earlier policy of placing so much emphasis on the teaching of Classical Chinese in the secondary school curriculum. In the end, a sensible decision was made in the curriculum standard; as of the 1997 school year, the ratio of modern Chinese to Classical Chinese in the first year of the junior high (equivalent to the 7th grade in the United States) was to be 8 to 2, but the Classical Chinese proportion will be gradually increased as the students progress through their secondary education.

This is in fact a long overdue change in the right direction. However, like so many other changes that will be discussed, there is a serious hiatus in the decision making. The change was made without taking the teachers' prior training

into consideration and hence no provision has been made to retrain or re-educate them.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, its expected effect on promoting students' Chinese proficiency remains to be seen.

### Issues concerning the national phonetic symbols

A heated debate has been raging in Taiwan for the past three years having to do with the National Phonetic Symbols (NPS). Recall that there are actually two sets of NPS. NPS1, which employs components of traditional Chinese characters as symbols, was promulgated by the MOE on 23 November 1918 and has played a very important role in promoting Mandarin, the national language, in Taiwan. NPS2, which employs romanised letters as symbols, was first devised by the famous linguist, Y.R. Chao and his colleagues, and was promulgated in 1926. NPS2 was later revised in Taiwan on the ground of its extreme complexity and promulgated by the MOE in 1986. The revision of NPS2 was evidently prompted at least in part by the fact that the set of phonetic symbols promoted by Mainland China since 1956, officially known as *Hanyu Pinyin Fangan* 'Chinese Phonetic Scheme' (henceforth CPS), has become so widely accepted that the very existence of the original NPS2, and even NPS1, was threatened.

In Taiwan this has led to a debate, on-going now for some time, that has to do with two closely related issues:

- (1) In teaching Mandarin Chinese to Chinese people and to speakers of other languages, is NPS1 a better scheme than one employing romanised symbols?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is no, then which of the three currently available schemes, i.e. NPS2, CPS or Tong-Yong Phonetic Scheme (Yu & Xu, 1998) (henceforth, TYPs for short), a newly devised phonetic scheme designed by an anthropologist working at Academia Sinica, is the most suitable one? These questions are addressed in the following two sections.

#### *NPS1 vs. a romanised phonetic scheme*

Opinions with regard to the first issue have been divided. On the one hand, we have the traditionalists who argue that NPS1 should continue to be used, pointing for their support to the following two observations. First, since Taiwan's policy is to continue to teach Chinese characters, the NPS1, being made up of symbols derived from components of traditional characters, inevitably is more compatible with writing and printing of Chinese characters. The fact that its symbols are derived from Chinese characters will also enable it to provide a better transition from learning the phonetic symbols to learning Chinese characters. Second, and perhaps more importantly, NPS1, as has been repeatedly pointed out, has played a very important role in the promotion of Mandarin Chinese in Taiwan.

The modernists, on the other hand, have argued that a romanised phonetic scheme should be employed in the teaching of Mandarin, at home and abroad. They have two arguments in support of their view. First, the continued use of NPS1 is an impediment to the modernisation of the Chinese language since it fails to provide either a universally available way of indexing or an easy input system to the computer, as the system is only known in Taiwan and some restricted areas of the world. Second, NPS1's presumed advantage of being a

better instrument than a romanised phonetic scheme is called into doubt since a romanised phonetic scheme has never been tried in Taiwan and since a romanised system has been in use in Mainland China for more than forty years with no reported undesirable effects.

Currently (in 1999), the issue is still unresolved, and it is difficult to see what the outcome of this policy deliberation will be. However, I am of the opinion that since Taiwan has internationalisation as a major objective, easy access to information exchange and communication through the computer will be a factor that will only gain in importance with time. This consideration, coupled with the fact that many children actually recognise letters in the English alphabet even before they enter elementary school, will eventually tip the scale in favour of using the romanised phonetic scheme instead of NPS1.

### Which of the three romanised phonetic schemes is the most suitable?

There are three romanised phonetic schemes currently in use in Taiwan (namely, the NPS2, the TYPs, and the CPS), but which one is the best? To answer this question, let us first set up some criteria for comparison. In devising a phonetic scheme or more commonly a writing system for a language, there are three important considerations: economy, consistency and convenience (Fishman, 1968). Economy usually means that a phonetic scheme is primarily based on the phonemic system of the language, i.e. there is a symbol for each phoneme and where there is no phonemic contrast no additional symbols need be provided. Consistency means that one symbol stands for one sound and there are no other symbols that stand for the same sound. Conversely, one sound is represented by only one symbol and there are no other sounds represented by the same symbol. There are a number of notions subsumed under the general rubric *convenience*. First, a set of phonetic symbols is regarded as convenient if it can be easily learned. For example, the symbols are so devised that the letters can be easily associated with the sounds they represent. Secondly, a set of phonetic symbols is also convenient if it is easily processed in writing and in printing, which in our present day technology means easily processed by using a computer. Finally, a set of symbols is taken to be convenient if it can be generally used, allowing for slight modifications, in a number of closely associated languages.

Since the CPS promoted in Mainland China is the oldest system, I will begin my discussion with the CPS and then compare it with the other two schemes. The CPS, which was approved by the Congress of the PRC in February 1958, can be briefly summarised in Table 6.

In examining the scheme, the following points may be noted (De Francis, 1967):

- (1) The symbol *u* represents a high back rounded vowel except after *y* and the palatal initials *j, q, x*, when it represents a high front rounded vowel. This is a fairly ingenious solution to the problem of the symbol *?*, the use of which can now be confined to combinations with *l* and *n*.
- (2) The symbols have been so chosen that there are but rare occasions to use the juncture symbol.

Table 6

Initials					
	Unaspirate <i>d stops</i>	Aspirated <i>stops</i>	Nasals	Fricatives	Voiced <i>continuants</i>
Labials	b	p	m	f	
Alveolars	d	t	n		l
Alveolar sibi- lants	z	c		s	
Retroflexes	zh	ch		sh	r
Palatals	j	q		x	
Gutterals	g	k		h	

Finals (Rimes)	
1.	simplex rimes: a, e, i, u, <i>u</i>
2.	duplex rimes : ai, ei , ao, ou, an, en, ang, eng
3.	semivowels (as initials): y, w
Tones	
1. ma-; 2. ma /; 3. mav3; 4. ma \; 5.ma (neutral tone)	
Juncture	
	pi'ao

- (3) The symbol *i* represents a high front unrounded vowel except after retroflexes and alveolar sibilants when it represents the two distinctive vocalisations of these two sets of initials.
- (4) The schema is in general quite economical in that it is based on the phonemic system of Mandarin. Take *i* mentioned in point 3 for instance. Even though phonetically at least three different pronunciations can be found depending on the kind of consonant that precedes it, only one symbol *i* is used since these different pronunciations are non-contrastive.
- (5) It is also in general quite consistent. The only point at which the question of consistency may be raised is in the fact that the symbol *h* is used both for the glottal fricative and for retroflexion as in the case of *zh*, but since in the latter case it is the second part of a digraph and in the former it occurs independently, the possibility of causing ambiguity is very small.

With respect to convenience, it has the following merits. (1) Digraphs are rarely used, there being only three in the initials. (2) All the 26 letters in the English alphabet are put to use in representing one sound or another, thus making certain that the English keyboard is fully utilised. (3) Diacritic marks have been reduced to the minimum, there being four for the five tones and the umlauting mark for *ü*, which we just observed has been reduced to two cases, i.e. after *l* and *n* where minimal pairs between *ü* and *u* can be found. On the other hand, some symbols used have been found to be not so easily associated with the

**Table 7** Differences between CPS and NPS2

	Initials							Finals (Rimes)		
	Dental sibilants		Palatals		Retroflexes	Semivowels (as initials)		Simplex vowels		Complex vowels
CPS	z	c	q	x	zh	y	w	i	ü	ao
NPS2	tz	ts	ch	sh	j	i	u	Ø (after r,z)	iu	au

sounds they represent, namely, *c*, an alveolar sibilant, *q*, an aspirated palatal, and *x*, a palatal fricative. In this way, they complicate the acquisition of these symbols.

With this brief description and evaluation of the CPS as backdrop, we can now proceed to compare CPS with NPS2 and TYPS. Table 7 summarises the differences between CPS and NPS2. From Table 7, it is clear that, as far as initials are concerned, the major differences lie in how the alveolar sibilant series and the palatal series are treated. While NPS2 stresses the virtue of sound–symbol association, thus choosing digraphs to represent affricates, CPS attempts to find some letters in the English alphabet as yet unoccupied by other Chinese sounds with a view to fully utilising the English keyboard.

In the area of vowels, the differences are few and of minor importance. Take the case of high front rounded vowel for example. CPS chooses *ü*, a letter found in French and German, but not in English, thus requiring a diacritic mark if English keyboard is adopted. NPS2, on the other hand, selects a digraph *iu* to represent the sound, obliterating the need for a diacritic mark but at the same time running up the cost in typing as two keys have to be pushed instead of one.

Overall, however, it seems to many that the two schemes are actually quite similar. But since NPS2 was devised about thirty years later than CPS, it has to be better in some way to justify its existence and this consideration is fully reflected in the final choices made.

This general attitude is also reflected in TYPS, the most recent invention, as can be clearly seen in Table 8, which shows that TYPS is even more similar to CPS than NPS2. Actually, the inventor, Mr Yu, has made a virtue of the fact that the scheme can be easily converted to either NPS or CPS and can also be easily modified to represent other Han dialects such as Southern Min and Hakka, as well as the aboriginal Austro-Polynesian languages spoken in Taiwan. This is the reason

**Table 8** Differences between CPS and TYPS

	Initials				Finals (Rimes)			
	Dental sibilants				Simple		Complex	
CPS	j	q	x		I	ü	en	eng
TYPS	z	c	s		ii*	yu	un**	ong***

\* only after dental sibilants and retroflexes

\*\* only after w

\*\*\* only after w & f

why the inventor calls his scheme *Tong-Yong Pinyin* 'literally, general-use spelling' and has actually written a few pamphlets demonstrating how this can be done.

Returning to our comparison between TYPs and CPS, we find that our previous remarks on the differences between CPS and NPS2 can be applied here, i.e. the two systems are basically the same with some adjustments made by TYPs as 'improvements' over the CPS. These 'improvements' are necessary, as in the previous case of NPS2, to justify its existence. However, there is another more important factor that should be taken into consideration in the final decision regarding these modifications, and this factor has to do with how Taiwan perceives itself in relation to the Mainland China, a topic that I will discuss in the next section. Here, in order to facilitate discussion, I will assume that Taiwan tends to perceive itself as a separate entity, independent of Mainland China, even though at the same time it admits that culturally it is closely related to the latter and there is a very strong need for communication. This self-perception and general attitude towards Mainland China are fully reflected in the designs of NPS2 and TYPs, i.e. against the general backdrop of similarity, there are some differences to keep them distinct. Since NPS2 is official while TYPs is not, the former tends to be more conservative than the latter.

It is still too early to say for sure how this issue will be decided, but the whole issue has aroused the attention of the Executive Yuan and the MOE. As this writer was working on this monograph, the Minister of Education, Dr Lin Qing-Jiang announced on 11 February, 1999 that a meeting will be held in March to deliberate on the issue. He has proposed that the scheme to be used be determined according to the following three principles:

- (1) The scheme should be instrumental in helping the nation to promote internationalisation.
- (2) It should be easily learnable given the present language-education situation in Taiwan.
- (3) The selection should take into consideration the fact that the MOE decided in 1996 that, as of that year, the street names and road signs should use NPS2; some counties and cities have already allotted some money for the change (*China Times*, 11 February, 1999: 9).

### **An arising new supra-ethnic identity**

As indicated in our discussion of the socio-historical context, Taiwan is, among other things, an immigrant society and like many immigrant societies, it is beset with problems of ethnicity, language loyalty and group (i.e. supra-ethnic) identity. In fact, there is perhaps no other place in the modern world where people are as divided in their opinions with respect to their group identity as in Taiwan. Fortunately, as a result of some recent socio-political developments, a new group identity seems to be emerging, indicating that ethnic harmony could be achieved if the trend continues. There have been clear indications that more and more Taiwan residents have come to identify themselves with the place in which they live and call themselves 'Taiwanese'. In order not to be confused with 'Taiwanese' in its old sense of referring to the indigenous people of Taiwan in contradistinction with 'Mainlanders', a new term has been

coined – ‘New Taiwanese’ – to refer to this rising new supra-ethnic identity. In this section, in addition to identifying what this new identity is, I explain why it has taken so long for this new group identity to emerge and what role language plays in the process.

### *Socio-political context: A brief recapitulation*

Recall that earlier we said that during the Qing dynasty as more and more Chinese immigrants from Kuangtong and Fujian came to settle on the island, four ethnic groups were gradually formed: the Zhangzhou people, the Quanzhou people, the Hakka and the aboriginal Austro-Polynesian, the first two groups being Southern Min speakers with different accents. Small-scale ethnic conflicts were almost daily occurrences during that period, and large-scale bloodshed and feuds were not uncommon (Lamley, 1981). However, when it was announced at the conclusion of the First Sino-Japanese War that Taiwan was to be ceded to Japan, people in Taiwan felt frustrated and humiliated because they had been deserted by their motherland, and because they felt an urgent need to do something to protect themselves. It was this sense of humiliation and the fear of being ruled by a foreign people that stirred them into action. The First Taiwan Republic was hastily founded on 16 May, 1895. Unfortunately, the Republic, lasting only 148 days, was soon defeated and overthrown by the Japanese army. This incident, together with other signs, was interpreted by Huang (1993) as the beginning of the process of transforming Taiwan society from a purely immigrant one into one of more-or-less native ethnicity (different from their ethnic Chinese origins).

When the Japanese came to rule the island, they of course did everything they could to prevent this group identity from coming into being, as this trend was diametrically opposed to their interest in Japanising Taiwan. This being the case, no progress in the formation of group identity was made during those fifty years of Japanese administration. However, being put under a repressive foreign rule evidently created a feeling of being ‘related’ or being ‘in the same boat’. In addition, during that half century the Chinese immigrants were largely cut off from their ancestral home in Mainland China and ethnic Chinese on the island gradually came to identify with the places in which they resided (e.g. *Zhanghua* or *Tainan*) rather than their places of origin on the Mainland. Partly because of this changing concept of their place of origin and partly because of the Japanese government’s policy forbidding fighting between ethnic groups, ethnic conflicts gradually died down.

When Taiwan was returned to China in 1945, people in Taiwan, having been placed under oppressive, discriminatory foreign rule for half a century, warmly welcomed the opportunity to become citizens of the Republic of China, expecting to be treated as equals under the new government. This high expectation, as I indicated earlier, never materialised. Misunderstandings abounded during those few years when the rulers and their followers from the Mainland came into contact with the local people because they lacked a common language and they did not share a collective memory, having been completely cut off from each other for fifty years. However as it turned out, the misunderstandings, instead of being removed through patient and careful explanation, were actually

increased by the inefficient administration of the Provisional Government headed by Chen Yi.

On 28 February, 1947, the tragic 228 incident broke out, killing thousands of people, Mainlanders as well as the indigenous inhabitants; the relations between the indigenous groups of the people and the Mainlanders were severely strained. Even though this accident was soon put down by troops from Mainland China and even though Chen Yi, the administrative head, was sentenced to death, the relationship between the indigenous people and the Mainland newcomers was not truly restored until very recently. For many people the tragic event was the seed of separation that later developed into the Taiwan Independence Movement.

Two years later, the Nationalists, having lost their war with the Communists, retreated to Taiwan, bringing about a million followers with them. Even though this group was composed of people from virtually every province of Mainland China, speaking all the major Han dialects and a number of minority languages, they and their children born locally after 1949 were perceived as *Waishenren*, 'Mainlanders' by the indigenous people, who referred to themselves as *Benshenren*, 'Taiwanese', or to use the more colourful metaphor of the local people, the distinction is between *yam* 'Taiwanese' and *taro* 'Mainlanders'.<sup>13</sup>

The Mainlanders (partly because many of them were associated with the Nationalist government in one way or another, partly because they were, on average, better educated than the local people at that time, and partly because most of them could manage to communicate in Mandarin, having learned Mandarin in school or picked it up in the military) occupied most of the important positions in the government (see Huang, 1993, and the references cited therein). These discriminatory official hiring practices continued for about thirty years, even though the educational level of the local people soon caught up with that of the Mainlanders. That hiring practice began to change in 1972 when Chiang Ching-Kuo, the former ROC president who was then serving as the Premier, began to introduce young local talent into his cabinet.

On the language front, things were no better. The language policy of the Nationalist government can be briefly described as uni-directional bilingualism (Chan, 1994), i.e. while all speakers of a local language have to learn to speak Mandarin, the national language, the Mainlanders, most of whom could speak some form of Mandarin were not required to study a local language. This policy was implemented more effectively in schools where those who spoke their mother tongue were punished. Students were taught that it was unethical and unpatriotic to speak their mother tongue if it was a language other than Mandarin. In the mass media, the use of indigenous languages was, for a long time, severely restricted. With all these repressive measures in effect for more than thirty years, it is little wonder that the use of the indigenous languages has declined significantly and that some of them face extinction in a generation or two.

The adoption of these relatively discriminatory policies in language and in the appointment of public officers, especially at higher levels, was conducive to conflicts between ethnic groups. These ethnic conflicts, in their turn, worked against a genuine group identity. As a consequence, people were split in their

views on identity, with most Mainlanders considering themselves Chinese and most local people considering themselves Taiwanese.

In addition, the government's policy towards Mainland China had been ultra-conservative. For about forty years, the Nationalist government considered Taiwan a temporary residence, their final goal being to recover Mainland China. While most Mainlanders understandably honoured and cherished this policy, most local people had long ago realised how unrealistic and wishful such a policy was. This split of opinions also contributed to widening the ethnic divide and was again not conducive to the emergence of a supra-ethnic identity.

### *Signs of ethnic reconciliation and the emergence of the new identity*

The first sign of ethnic reconciliation appeared when indigenisation of the island's politicians occurred in 1972, under the process begun by Chiang Ching-kuo. Soon after that, in order to make his intention clear, Chiang, who was born and raised in Mainland China, proclaimed, 'I'm a Taiwanese, too' (Chung, 1999). Later, he chose Lee Teng-hui to be his successor, and when Chiang died in 1988 the latter went on to become the first Taiwan-born Hakka to govern Taiwan.<sup>14</sup>

Democratisation in politics began in 1986 when the first opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (henceforth DPP) (whose members were chiefly Taiwanese natives advocating separatism) was founded and was tolerated even while the repressive martial law was still in effect. The DPP gained strength when martial law was revoked in July 1987. In 1992, the party made an impressive showing in the first major democratic legislative election based on universal suffrage, winning about one-third of the seats in the Legislature, which had been occupied by Mainlanders since the Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan in 1949. Meanwhile, the ruling party also underwent democratisation as more and more Taiwan-born Kuomintang legislators appeared. As the voice of the local majority began to be heard, relations between different ethnic groups improved.

In 1993, a second opposition party, the New Party (which was mainly composed of Mainlanders who advocated unification with China) was founded and Taiwan was on its way to experiencing preliminary multi-party democracy. In March 1996, the people of Taiwan elected Lee Teng-hui as their president through direct general election for the first time in the history of the island. As political resources have become increasingly proportionally distributed among the ethnic groups, ethnic disharmony began to thaw, giving the new supra-ethnic group identity a chance to emerge.

Not everything, of course, has gone well. On the diplomatic front, setbacks have come one after another since 1970 when Taiwan (known as the Republic of China) left the United Nations in anticipation of the passage of a resolution admitting the People's Republic of China, and expelling Taiwan from the world organisation. This traumatic event started a three-decade-long process of diplomatic setbacks with the United States taking the lead in severing diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (ROC).

But fortunately, as Taiwan experienced the setbacks which greatly reduced its international diplomatic space, a new sense of group identity began to emerge – more and more people in Taiwan came to identify with the island instead of

Mainland China, where they or their ancestors originated. The changes were accelerated in 1996 when, during the height of the presidential election, the Mainland Chinese conducted a series of military exercises and missile tests with the obvious intention of intimidating Taiwan people into voting against separatism. However, this sabre rattling backfired and helped many people in Taiwan decide to identify themselves with the place in which they lived. This change can be clearly seen by the following comparison of survey results. In a 1992 survey, 26.9% of the respondents identified themselves as Taiwanese (Wang, 1993). When the same categories were calculated in a 1996 survey taken immediately after the missile threat (Sun and Ma, 1996), the figure was 46%, indicating a strong shift towards the Taiwanese and away from the Chinese end of the identity spectrum within the short time span of four years.

Meanwhile, government policies also showed changes in the same direction. As previously mentioned, since 1997 Taiwanese Southern Min as well as Hakka and the aboriginal languages have been promoted on the island to the extent that they are now taught in elementary schools. When compared to the national language, Mandarin, all the indigenous languages, especially Southern Min, are getting more and more attention and now are spoken in public by many government officials in the hope of relating better to the general public.

At the same time, some of the villages for military dependants around the island have been reconstructed into new communities where Taiwanese residents mingle with the original residents of Mainland origin.

Another major measure that reflects the government's desire to blur the line between ethnic groups was taken when the Ministry of Internal Affairs decided to change the format of ROC identification cards. For cards issued before 1992 there was a small box printed on the back of the card that provided a space for the identification of the cardholder's 'native place', which meant the place from which his or her father originated on the China mainland (if the father immigrated to Taiwan around 1949), or the place in Taiwan which was considered the cardholder's home town (if his or her father had arrived prior to 1945 or was a Taiwan native). This box was removed from cards issued after 1992. Such a change signalled a de-emphasis on one's connection with Mainland China and an emphasis on personal identity with Taiwan.

In line with this governmental attitudinal change was a view expressed by Chen Shui-bian, Taipei's former mayor and a presidential hopeful likely to represent DPP in the upcoming presidential campaign in 2000. Chen dismisses the metaphor of 'yam' and 'taro', preferring the image 'peanut'. 'In fact, we are all peanuts', he said at a public gathering in late 1998, adding that, just like peanuts, people in Taiwan should take root easily and be able to identify with the land on which they dwell and which they think of as their permanent home (Chung, 1999: 8). Such a message coming from a high-profile figure in the DPP strongly indicates that the DPP is taking a pragmatic approach and will likely embrace ethnic reconciliation in its platform in the forthcoming presidential election.

### *The role language has played in the process*

Mandarin chauvinism, as I reported earlier, used to be quite common in Taiwan. But with the concept of 'New Taiwanese' becoming prominent, will Southern Min, a language spoken by about 70% of the people in Taiwan, take the

place of Mandarin? While some observers express apprehension about this (see Chung, 1999), others have reported that the role played by language in characterising this new supra-ethnic identity does not seem particularly salient. According to Sun and Ma's (1996) survey, only 22% of the young people considered a Taiwanese to be a person who could speak Southern Min, and only 9% defined a Mainlander as a person who could not speak Southern Min. These results indicate that the ability to speak Southern Min is not an important criterion in distinguishing a Taiwanese from a Mainlander. The more salient factors, according to the same survey, are being born in Taiwan (55%); living in Taiwan (49%); regarding oneself to be Taiwanese (39%); and having Taiwan listed as 'native place' (38%) (items allowed for multiple choices).

From these findings, it does seem that language plays a salient role in characterising the emergent concept of 'New Taiwanese'. However, if we examine the role that language has played while the new identity concept has been developing, we will find another story. The strenuous promotion of the national language in the first thirty years after Taiwan's Retrocession in 1945 resulted in the functional allocation of the four major languages in Taiwan. Mandarin served as the high language and Southern Min, Hakka and the indigenous aboriginal languages served as the low languages, forming a diglossic society with societal bilingualism where Mandarin also served as the effective lingua franca. If the promotion of Mandarin had been kept at this level, the resultant state would have been a lot more acceptable to all ethnic groups concerned. However, as we have repeatedly pointed out, the repressive policies were kept for too long, and as a result all languages except Mandarin are either quickly diminishing in use or are on the verge of extinction. The sad state that many indigenous languages were in caused great resentment among the people. Once martial law was revoked, the resentment that had been suppressed for so long broke out in strong protests in some cases, or manifested itself in the increasing use of the local mother tongue as a symbol of defiance against the government authority or simply as an expression of ethnic identity.

For a while it seemed that language would serve as a dividing force rather than as a unifying one in Taiwan. But as the concept of 'New Taiwanese' began to take shape, a change of attitude with regard to the use of language took place – the use of language began to be 'less emotionally loaded and more pragmatically oriented' (Tse, to appear). This trend towards pragmatism can be detected in the use of language in the televised campaign speeches given by the four sets of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in 1996 (Tse, to appear) as well as in the more recent Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral elections and the legislative election (Chung, 1999; Kuo, 1998). To be more specific, a common characteristic in all these campaign speeches was the use of language to win votes rather than to rally for ethnic identification and division. In other areas involving the use of language, the same attitude is also found. A radio station run by the New Party, which is largely composed of Mainlanders and sympathisers for reunification with China, has certain call-in programmes conducted in Southern Min.

As the attitude of treating language more as a means of communication and less as a marker of ethnicity gains ground, Mandarin, which has developed into a lingua franca in Taiwan, is likely to be used more by people who used to employ Southern Min or Hakka as a gesture of defiance. Indeed, it has been observed that

some politicians of the DPP show less apologetic attitudes when they use Mandarin in public domains, especially in the mass media (Tse, to appear; Kuo, 1998). Today, the only group of people who insist on using Taiwanese as a symbol of group solidarity are the members of the Taiwan Independence Party (TIP), a newly established breakaway group from the DPP, dissatisfied with the less radical and more practical stance on the separatist issue. This view on the use of language is not even shared by DPP Legislator Ye Ju-lan, who otherwise is a great sympathiser with the TIP. Instead, Ye advocates the idea that the term 'Taiwanese language' should be used to refer to all languages used on the island rather than for Southern Min alone (*Global Views Monthly* 121, June 15, 1996. pp. 79–80).

### Summary

To summarise, in Taiwan in the past few years we can clearly see a new sense of group identity emerging. This emerging sense of new identity, which has been termed 'New Taiwanese', has more to do with the shared feelings among people of different ethnic groups, towards the land in which they live, Taiwan, towards modernity and democracy, and towards the uncertainty of their future relations with Mainland China. In short, it is an identity built on a shared way of life and the common fate of living on the same island under the military threat of the People's Republic of China. While this newly arising group identity is not tied to any language at this moment, language has been observed to play an important role in its development.

### A Look at the Future

In this monograph, after a brief account of the socio-historical context, I have ventured to examine critically the language planning situation in both Mainland China before the Nationalist government moved to Taiwan and in Taiwan after its Retrocession, paying special attention to some recent developments occurring after martial law was lifted in 1987. While this examination seems to have found more inadequacies than strengths, I am, nonetheless, quite optimistic when thinking about how future language policy and planning might develop. This optimism stems from the following observations.

- (1) To begin with, language policy-making before martial law was lifted in 1987 had always been a one-way affair, i.e. it had always been top-down, allowing very little input from the general public and from experts. Now there are clear indications that, as Taiwan moves towards democracy, public opinion and expert advice are playing an increasingly important role in the process of language policy making. This is something that people in Taiwan could hardly have imagined even ten years ago. As far as policy implementation is concerned, we find that the legislative body of the government is paying more attention to it so that its practice may be sound.
- (2) In the closely related area of language education, the old system (as represented in Table 4), that existed for about forty years unchallenged and unchanged, has been closely examined since the lifting of martial law. Some changes, such as adding one hour of mother-tongue instruction to the elementary school curriculum, have been implemented. Other changes, like

beginning English education in the fifth grade and starting the instruction of other LWCs in secondary school, will be implemented in 2001.

- (3) Plans are now being made to reduce the class sizes in primary and secondary schools from the present 45 to 50 per class to about 30 per class. When implemented, these plans will certainly greatly facilitate language teaching and learning.
- (4) An important improvement in teacher training has been implemented beginning in 1997. Previous to that, the three normal universities and nine teachers' colleges were the principal sources of primary and secondary school teachers. It is easy to imagine that problems might have emerged out of such a closed system over the years. Realising the ills, the Ministry of Education decreed two years ago that universities and colleges other than those normal universities and teachers' colleges will be allowed to train primary and secondary school teachers. It is hoped that this new addition to the teacher supply can provide the additional teachers needed as a result of the planned class-size reductions. At the same time, by making the job market for teachers more competitive, the development should induce changes in the old teacher training institutions, which had become stagnant due to lack of competition.
- (5) Finally, and most importantly, as the use of language is becoming less emotionally charged and more pragmatically oriented, inter-ethnic relations in Taiwan between the four major ethnic groups have shown signs of improvement. There is hope that Taiwan will be able to emerge healthy from its bitter past, which was full of ethnic conflicts and tensions. While ethnic harmony may not be easily achieved, ethnic reconciliation may well be in sight. Rather than 'yams' or 'taros', people may choose to be 'peanuts'.

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## Notes

1. Bamgbose (1991) in his chapter on language planning also maintains this distinction although he does mention some overlapping cases. In this monograph, whenever such a case occurs, an arbitrary decision will be made as to which category it belongs to.
2. No census data are available because questions concerning people's ethnolinguistic background were considered too sensitive to be included in the previous census questionnaires.
3. See Li (1992) and the references cited there for a summary of arguments in support of this view.
4. *Taiwan Statistical Data Book*, various issues, Council for Economic Planning and Development as cited in Shieh (1998).
5. For a general discussion of the drawbacks in selecting an artificial or made-up composite language as the national language see Bamgbose (1991).
6. In retrospect, it is certainly a great pity that the extension was stopped at the elementary school level, for language education in a living language in all four skills cannot be completed in six years. The effects of this oversight have been keenly felt in Taiwan today. Please refer to the section on 'Recent changes in language-in-education policies' for more discussion.

7. The February 28 incident, commonly known in Taiwan as the 228 incident, occurred on 28 February, 1947. Although there have been a number of theories as to why it occurred, no consensus has been reached. It is doubtless, however, the most serious ethnic conflict in Taiwan during this century. Among its many far-reaching effects is the spawning of the Taiwanese Independence Movement (TIM) that has been in existence for more than forty years. Official studies of the incident were forbidden under martial law and reconciliatory measures such as making 28 February a public holiday were taken only after martial law was lifted in 1987. For further discussion relating to the incident see the section on the 'Socio-political context' of this monograph.
8. Knowledgeable as Zhou was, he was not able to give an estimate of how many people in Mainland China in about 1990 were able to speak Mandarin. A survey conducted by *Kuang Ming Daily* in 1998 indicated that only 22% of the respondents claimed to be native speakers of Mandarin. The report, however, did not mention how many are able to speak it as a second language (*China Times*, 14 December, 1998, p. 14).
9. The only minor change in the system in its fifty years of existence is the addition of four hours of mother-tongue instruction in the third to the sixth grade in elementary schools, starting in the 1997 school year.
10. Data for the year 1996 were adapted from Table 3-5 of the *Statistical Abstract of Education in the Republic of China*, 1997, published by the MOE. The figures in the original table refer to secondary school teachers as a whole but since we have no reason to expect that English teachers as a group will be different from secondary school teachers, we have used the figures for comparison.
11. The data are adapted from the appendix to *Papers by the Faculty and Graduate Students at the Graduate Institute of Chinese, National Taiwan Normal University*, Vol. 39.
12. The lack of training in teaching modern Chinese also explains why, soon after the MOE made the announcement of the change in 1994, many Chinese teachers went into a panic and protested.
13. The local people call themselves 'yam' because on the map, Taiwan looks like a yam.
14. Lee Teng-hui is ethnically a Hakka, but his first language is Southern Min.

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