

Language and Ethnic Identity in Taiwan

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This paper intends to examine the relationships among ethnic identity, mother tongue, and language ability occurred in the younger generations that grew up under the national language policy. Taiwan is a multilingual and multiethnic society. Due to the national language that adopted Mandarin as the only official language for over fifty years, the native Taiwanese languages are declining while the use of Mandarin is increasing. The results of this study show that on one hand, the erosion of one's original ethnic language does not inevitably result in the erosion of ethnic identity itself; on the other hand, the maintenance of one's ethnic language is a contributing factor to maintaining one's ethnic identity.

Keywords: language, ethnicity, identity, ecology, Taiwanese

1. Introduction

Taiwan is a multilingual and multiethnic society. There are more than twenty native languages in Taiwan, including indigenous languages, Hakka, and Holo Taiwanese (Grimes 1996). Because ethnic identity is not invariant but changes from one occasion to another, it is difficult to clarify the boundary among ethnic groups (Fishman 1999:152). However, in order to provide the readers an overall idea about the ethnicity in Taiwan, subjective classification of the ethnic groups was given in general. There are currently four primary ethnic groups: indigenous (1.7%), Hakka (12%), Holo (73.3%), and Mainlanders (13%) (Huang 1993:21).

In addition to being a multiethnic society, Taiwan has been colonized by several foreign regimes since the seventeenth century. The most recent regimes are Japanese regime (1895-1945) and Chinese KMT regime (1945-2000). Due to the colonial language policy, the native languages were prohibited in public domain, and Japanese and

Mandarin Chinese were adopted as the official languages, respectively. In other words, Taiwanese people were not allowed to speak their vernaculars in public. Moreover, they were forced to learn the official language through the national education system. Consequently, most Taiwanese people nowadays are bilingual with their vernacular and official language. Moreover, many researches have revealed that there is a language shift toward Mandarin. Chan's (1994:iii) research shows that "proficiency in *Guoyu* [Mandarin] by the Taiwanese is increasing, while that in Minnanyu [Taiwanese] is decreasing." Young (1989:55) also indicates "there is increased use of Mandarin with succeeding generation." Huang (1993:160) even points out that the indigenous languages in Taiwan are all endangered.

This paper intends to examine the relationships among the three characteristics, ethnic identity, mother tongue, and language ability occurred in the younger generations that grew up under the Mandarin monolingual policy. In other words, for instance, we want to answer whether or not one is more likely to identify himself as ethnic Holo if he speaks Holo language; on other hand, is one more likely to be able to speak Holo language if he identifies himself as ethnic Holo?

2. Ethnic Background

The total area of Taiwan, including the main island and several small islands, is 35,961 square kilometers. The population of Taiwan in 2001 was around twenty three million. Generally speaking, there are four primary ethnic groups: aborigines (1.7%), *Holo* (73.3%), *Hakka* (12%), and Mainlanders (13%) (Huang 1993: 21). The Holo, Hakka, and Mainlanders are occasionally called Han people (漢人) and their languages are called Han languages in contrast to the aborigines. Even though they are called Han people and Han languages, they have different ethnic languages. That is, Holo, Hakfa, and Taiwan Mandarin that are not mutually intelligible (DeFrancis 1990: 54-57).

Some foreign languages such as Japanese and English are also used by Taiwanese people for the purpose of international trade. Besides, there are some new settlers such as

Vietnamese and Filipino who recently married Taiwanese spouses. They were all omitted in my descriptions of ethnicity and languages in Taiwan.

2.1. The Taiwanese aborigines

There are several aboriginal tribes who have resided in Taiwan for thousands of years. Today they speak about 12 languages, which belong to Austronesian-Formosan language family, and they live over the island of Taiwan (Grimes 1996). The classification of different tribes varies from scholar to scholar such as G. Taylor, 伊能嘉矩 (*Yoshinori*), 烏居龍藏, and Paul Li. Those tribes were traditionally divided into two distinct groups based on their social and ethnic relations with the Han people. First, *Sek-hoan* (熟番; ripe barbarians, sinicized barbarians) or *Penn-pou* tribes (平埔; plain tribes), which means they were more under daily Han control, and they mainly resided in the plains of western Taiwan. Second, *Chhenn-hoan* (生番; rude barbarian) or *Ko-soann chok* (高山族; mountain tribes). They were more unfriendly (from the viewpoint of Han people) and less under daily Han control. Most¹ of them resided in the mountainous areas (cf. Li 1997).

The Plain tribes include *Katagalan* (凱達格蘭), *Kavalan* (葛瑪蘭), *Taokas* (道卡斯), *Pazeh* (巴則海), *Papora* (巴布拉), *Babuza* (貓霧棟), *Hoanya* (洪雅), *Thao* (邵), *Siraya* (西拉雅), and *Qaugaut* (猴猴) (Li 1997b: 61). They were gradually oppressed by the Han immigrants from the late of seventeenth century onward. Consequently, they started to lose their own languages and customs (Tsuchida 1991:1).

The ‘mountain’ tribes include *Atayal* (泰雅), *Saisiyat* (賽夏), *Bunun* (布農), *Tsou* (鄒), *Rukai* (魯凱), *Paiwan* (排灣), *Puyuma* (卑南), *Amis* (阿美), and *Yami* (雅美) (Li 1997b:61).

¹ Some of them such as Amis reside in the eastern coastal areas of Taiwan.



Figure 1. Distribution of languages in Taiwan.

2.2. The Holo people

The Holo people were the first immigrants in the history of Taiwan. They began to move massively to Taiwan after the Koxinga era in the second half of seventeenth century.

The *Holo* people are also called *Min-nan* people (閩南人 people of Southern Min). The ethnic language used by Holo ethnicity is *Holooe*, which is also called Southern Min. Moreover, *Holooe* is more widely called *Taigi* (台語) or *Taioan-oe* (台灣話), the Taiwanese language. The name ‘Holo’ may be written in different Han characters and interpreted by different scholars as having different meanings. One assumption is 河洛 (Lim 1991:7-8), which means the plains between the Yellow river (黃河) and the Lok river (洛水), which are the origins of Holo people. The second assumption was issued by Ang Ui-jin (1987:148), who asserted that correct Han characters for Holo should be 貉獠.

That means Holo people are the descendants of 貉獠, which was one tribe of Oat race (越族) in southeast China. Besides, Khou Kek-tun (1992:10-14) asserted that the widely used term 福佬 is more acceptable. That term means the people of *Hokkian* province (福建).

The Holo people of Taiwan were primarily from *Choan-chiu* (泉州 *Quanzhou*) and *Chiang-chiu* (漳州 *Zhangzhou*), where were two cities of Hokkian Province in southeast China. According to the census done in 1926, 44.8% of Taiwan's population were from Choan-chiu, 35.2% were from Chiang-chiu, and only 3.1% were from other cities of Hokkian (Khou 1992: 28).

Generally speaking, Choan-chiu and Chiang-chiu are two dialects of the Southern Min language. There are some differences between Choan-chiu and Chiang-chiu, such as /koe/ vs. /ke/ to represent the same meaning of word 'chicken.' Although Choan-chiu and Chiang-chiu were originally two different varieties of Southern Min, they gradually merged and became a new 'non-Chiang non-Choan' (不漳不泉) vernacular after they were carried to Taiwan (Ang 1992:71). Moreover, they were greatly influenced by the languages of the plain tribes, and the Japanese language during Japanese occupation of Taiwan. Today, this new 'non-Chiang non-Choan' language is widely called *Holoee* or *Taigi* (Taiwanese).

2.3. The Hakka people

Another immigrant group, aside from the Holo people, are the Hakka (客家). The reason for Hakka migration to Taiwan was mainly because of restrictions of the Ch'ing dynasty. Thus, Hakka migration is later than Holo people. For example, right after Ch'ing dynasty defeated Koxinga regime in 1683, the Ch'ing announced such restrictions as "people who lived in *Tio-chiu* (潮州) and *Hui-chiu* (惠州)(most of whom were Hakka people) were not allowed to move to Taiwan, because those places were suspected of being the bases of pirates." Such restrictions on Hakka were continued until 1760 (Su 1980:129).

Hakka literally means ‘guest’ in Chinese. The name was due to their continuing immigrations in the history of the formation of Hakka (Lo 1933; Kiang 1991). *Hakfa* (客家話) or *Hakkafa* (客家話) or the recent term *Hakka Taigi* (客家台語) all refer to the ethnic language of Hakka people. There are two main Hakka varieties in Taiwan, that is, *Si-yen* (四縣) and *Hoi-liuk* (海陸). *Si-yen* means four counties. This was because *Si-yen* speakers were mainly from *Moi* (梅縣), *Hin-nen* (興寧), *Chen-phin* (鎮平), and *Chhong-lok* (長樂) counties of the Canton Province of China. *Hoi-liuk* means *Hoi-fong* County and *Liuk-fong* County, because *Hoi-liuk* speakers were mainly from *Hoi-fong* (海豐) and *Liuk-fong* (陸豐) counties of the Canton province. According to the census data in 1926, around 65% of Hakka population were *Si-yen* speakers, and 35% were *Hoi-liuk* speakers (Khou 1992). Mainly because *Si-yen* and *Hoi-liuk* speakers settled in different places, they did not mix as much as Holo people did, the distinction between *Si-yen* and *Hoi-liuk* still exist today.

2.4. The Mainlanders

The third vast immigration of Taiwan was so-called *Goa-seng-lang* (外省人 Mainlanders or people from other provinces) or *Sin-chu-bin* (新住民 New Settlers).

In the year 1949, Chiang Kai-shek’s army was defeated in China, and then he and his followers moved into Taiwan. Around 1.2 million Mainland Chinese, including soldiers and refugees, came to Taiwan along with Chiang’s KMT political regime (Huang 1993:25). Those soldiers and refugees were from all provinces of China where they spoke different languages such as *Cantonese*, *Shanghai* (上海), or *Santong* (山東). Owing to the linguistic diversity and national language policy, most of mainlanders have switched from their first languages to Mandarin Chinese. Therefore, the Mandarin language is generally regarded as the lingua franca among the Mainlanders.

According to the census of 1988, 67.7% of the total population of Mainlanders

resided in the Great Taipei area² (Huang 1993:26). The remaining Mainlanders are found in other metropolitan areas of Taiwan.

Ong Hu-chhing (1993) pointed out that 54 percent of the Mainlanders still identified themselves as Chinese. Only 7.3% identified themselves as Taiwanese and the rest were neutral. Although most Mainlanders identify themselves as Chinese, some regarded themselves as *Sin-Chu-Bin* (New Settlers) to show their strong identity with Taiwan. It means that they were the recent immigrant Taiwanese instead of Chinese. Moreover, they organized *Goasenglang* Association of Taiwan Independence ([外省人]台灣獨立協進會) to promote Taiwan independence in 1992 (GATI 1992).

2.5. Ethnic relations

The ethnic relations in Taiwan are much more complicated than we can describe in this subsection. Gordon (1964) points out that intermarriage is the most difficult stage to achieve between ethnic groups. Therefore, we may use the proportion of intermarriage as an index to examine the current ethnic relations in Taiwan.

In Hu-chhing Ong's research, he divided his subjects into two groups, i.e. native Taiwanese (本省籍) vs. Mainlanders (外省籍); 9.7% (125/1287) of them are intermarried. He further concluded that "although intermarriage is becoming more popular, the factor of ethnicity still plays a role in choosing one's significant other" (1993: 77-85). For more information about ethnic relations in Taiwan, refer to the works such as *Ethnic Relations and National Identity* (Tiunn 1993) and *Ethnicity in Taiwan: Social, Historical, and Cultural Perspectives* (Chen 1994).

3. Methodology

The data used for analysis in this study were retrieved from the survey conducted in December 1998 for my previous study on language attitudes (Chiung 1999). The survey

² Including Taipei city, Taipei county, and Kelang (基隆) city.

was conducted in five undergraduate classes offered at Tamkang University³ and in an undergraduate class offered at Aletheia University⁴ in Taiwan. The subjects included a total of 244 students. Among the students, 157 were female and 87 were male; 138 were from Taipei area and 106 were from other places.

Students' background information was collected based on a self-reported written survey as shown in appendix I. Students' ethnic identity of their own was determined by question 6 on the questionnaire. There were 21 subjects who identified themselves as Mainlanders, 153 as Holo people, 18 as Hakka people, 2 as Aborigines, and 50 as others.

Students' mother tongue was determined by their response to question 7. There were 58 subjects who considered their own mother tongue to be Mandarin, 152 Taiwanese, 15 Hakfa, 2 as indigenous languages, and 17 as others. The data in this study show that many subjects regarded high ability in a language as the requirement to claim the language as their mother tongue. For example, the subjects who identified themselves as Hakka did not always consider Hakfa their mother tongue when their Hakfa speaking ability is relatively low.

Students' language ability was determined by their answer on question 14. For example, if a rater answered that her/his Hakfa-speaking ability is equal or higher than 3 (based on a 5-points semantic differential scale), then s/he will be assigned a Hakfa-speaking ability. Among the 244 subjects, 30 were Mandarin monolingual, 193 were Mandarin and Taiwanese bilingual, and 19 were Hakfa plus.⁵ Two subjects who did not finish answering question 14 were excluded, so there were a total of 242 here. Among the language categories, Mandarin speaking ability receives a mean of 4.82, Taiwanese 3.39, Hakfa 1.35, and English 2.67. This result reveals that the Hakfa speaking ability of

³ The classes were: Politics, offered by Department of Public Administration (公行系); Electronics, offered by Mechanical E.; Modern Japanese language, offered by the Japanese Dept.; Modern literature, offered by the Chinese Dept.; Translation, offered by the English Dept.

⁴ The class was Taiwanese language offered by the Taiwanese Dept.

⁵ Hakka plus means being able to speak Hakfa plus Holo or Mandarin.

the Taiwanese people is even lower than their English ability.

The non-parametric chi-square (χ^2) tests were employed for statistic analysis because ethnic identity, mother tongue, and language ability cannot be measured in units, but are of a yes-or-no type. In addition, because chi-square cannot compare more than two namable characteristics, i.e., we are not able to simultaneously compare ethnic identity, mother tongue, and language, they are arranged into three pairs: Ethnic identity versus mother tongue; ethnic identity versus language ability; and mother tongue versus language ability. The detailed procedure and results of chi-square tests were described and discussed in the next section.

4. Results and Discussion

First of all, the relationship between ethnic identity and mother tongue is examined. The 244 subjects were divided into different groups by ethnic background and mother tongue (characteristics). The classifications of ethnicity were Mainlander, Holo, Hakka, and others. 'Others' here consists of 'indigenous' and any identity other than Mainlander, Holo and Hakka. Indigenous was not treated as an independent category because there were only two persons who identify themselves as indigenous in the survey. The classifications of mother tongue were Mandarin, Holo, Hakfa, and others. Finally, each subject was assigned a category, which consists of ethnic identity and mother tongue characteristics.

Table 1 shows the number of each category by ethnic identity and mother tongue characteristics. For instance, among the 244 subjects, 21 identified themselves as Mainlanders; 153 as Holo people; 18 as Hakka people, and 52 as others; and, among the 21 subjects who identified themselves as Mainlanders, 14 of them regarded Mandarin as their mother tongue; 6 of them regarded Holo as their mother tongue, etc.

Table 1. Observed number of each category by ethnic identity and mother tongue characteristics

<i>obs.</i>		<i>Ethnic identity</i>				<i>total</i>
		Mainlander	Holo	Hakka	others	
<i>Mtongue</i>	Mandarin	14	23	4	17	58
	Holoee	6	126	1	19	152
	Hakfa	0	1	12	2	15
	others	1	3	1	14	19
<i>total</i>		21	153	18	52	244

After all subjects were assigned a category, chi-square tests were conducted. **Table 2** shows the expected frequency of each category. It reveals that the observed number is higher than expected frequency in each bold pair of observed and expected frequencies. On the other hand, the observed numbers are smaller than the expected frequency in the pairs other than boldface. For instance, the observed number of the Mainlander-Mandarin category in **Table 1** is 14, which is higher than 4.99, the expected frequency of the same category in **Table 2**. Besides, the observed number, 6, of the Mainlander-Holoee category in **Table 1**, is smaller than the expected frequency 13.08 in **Table 2**. Moreover, the chi-square value 195.99 is substantially larger than the critical value 16.92 (degree of freedom is $3 \times 3 = 9$) at the 5% significance level. Although some frequencies in the expected table (**Table 2**) are less than 5 (usually, greater than 5 in each expected cell is required), it still shows that the chi-square value is larger than the critical value after re-classification, which made all cells greater than 5. The re-classification is Mainlander vs. native Taiwanese (Holo + Hakka + others), and Mandarin vs. Taiwanese languages (Holoee + Hakfa + others). Therefore, we could reject the null hypothesis, which hypothesizes that there is no association between the two characteristics. In other words, the preliminary conclusion is that ethnic identity and mother tongue are interdependent. That is, if a person identify Holoee as her/his mother tongue, then s/he is more likely to

identify herself/himself as an ethnic Holo. Or we could say that if a person identifies herself/himself as an ethnic Holo, then s/he is more likely to accept Holo as her/his mother tongue. The term ‘preliminary conclusion’ was used here because we need further evidences to confirm or modify this conclusion. The further evidences and discussion were described in the following paragraphs.

Table 2. Expected frequency of each category by ethnic identity and mother tongue characteristics

exp.		<i>Ethnic identity</i>				<i>total</i>
		Mainlander	Holo	Hakka	others	
<i>Mtongue</i>	Mandarin	4.99	36.37	4.28	12.36	58.00
	Holo	13.08	95.31	11.21	32.39	152.00
	Hakfa	1.29	9.41	1.11	3.20	15.00
	others	1.64	11.91	1.40	4.05	19.00
	<i>total</i>	19.36	141.09	16.60	47.95	244.00

$$x^2=195.99 > 16.92 \text{ (df=9)} \quad *p < 0.05$$

Although the chi-square test of **Table 1** indicates that there is a preliminary interdependent relationship between ethnic identity and mother tongue, there is a contradictory phenomenon deserving our attention. That is, among the 58 Mandarin speakers (in the first row of **Table 1**), only 24% (14/58) of them identify themselves as Mainlanders. Comparing with Holo speakers, which consist of 83% (126/152) identifying themselves as Holo people, or comparing with Hakfa speakers, which consist of 80% (12/15) identifying themselves as Hakka people, it reveals that Mandarin speakers are not highly correlated to the identity of Mainlanders. Therefore, **Table 1** was rearranged based on the following classification for further analysis: if a person’s ethnic identity coincided with her/his corresponding mother tongue, then s/he was assigned to the ethnic category ‘same;’ on the other hand, if her/his ethnic identity did not coincide

with her/his corresponding mother tongue, s/he was assigned to the ethnic category ‘different.’ The observed numbers of new arrangement were listed in **Table 3**. The corresponding expected frequencies were listed in **Table 4**. Comparing **Table 3** with **Table 4**, the observed values of Holoee, Hakka, and others in the column ‘same’ are greater than the corresponding expected values. On the other hand, the observed value of Mandarin in the column ‘same’ is smaller than its expected value. Further, the chi-square value 68.09 is substantially larger than the critical value 7.82 (degree of freedom is $3*1 = 3$) at the 5% significance level. The comparisons between **Table 3** and **Table 4** reveal that Holoee and Hakfa speakers are more likely to coincide with the ‘same’ ethnic identity, but the Mandarin speakers are more likely to coincide with the ‘different’ ethnic identity. That is, Holoee/Hakfa speakers are more likely to identify themselves as ethnic Holo/Hakka people, but Mandarin speakers are not likely to identify themselves as ethnic Mainlanders. Does this finding automatically tell us that Holo/Hakka people are also more likely to regard Holoee/Hakfa as their mother tongues? No, further analysis is needed to answer the question. Thus, **Table 1** was rearranged into **Table 5**.

Table 3. Observed number of ethnic categories “same” and “different” by mother tongues

obs.		<i>Ethnic id.</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Mtongue</i>	Mandarin	14	44	58
	Holoee	126	26	152
	Hakfa	12	3	15
	others	14	5	19
<i>total</i>		166	78	244

Table 4. Expected frequency of ethnic categories “same” and “different” by mother tongues

exp.		<i>Ethnic id</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Mtongue</i>	Mandarin	39.46	18.54	58
	Holoee	103.41	48.59	152
	Hakfa	10.20	4.80	15
	others	12.93	6.07	19
<i>total</i>		166	78	244

$$x^2=68.09 > 7.82 \text{ (df=3)} \quad *p < 0.05$$

Table 5 was arranged based on the classification: if a person’s mother tongue coincided with her/his corresponding ethnic identity, then s/he was assigned to the mother tongue category ‘same;’ on the other hand, if her/his mother tongue did not coincide with her/his corresponding ethnic identity, s/he was assigned to the mother tongue category ‘different.’ The corresponding expected frequencies were listed in **Table 6**. Comparing **Table 5** with **Table 6** in the ‘same’ column, only the observed value of ethnic Holo greater than its corresponding expected value. The comparisons between **Table 5** and **Table 6** reveal that only ethnic Holo people are more likely to coincide with the ‘same’ mother tongue, but the Mainlanders, Hakka people, and others are more likely to coincide with the ‘different’ mother tongue. That is to say, Holo people are more likely to regard Holoee as their mother tongue, but the Mainlanders/Hakka people are not more likely to regard Mandarin/Hakfa as their mother tongue.

Table 5. Observed number of mother tongue categories “same” and “different” by ethnic identities

obs.		<i>Mtongue</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Ethnic id.</i>	Mainlander	14	7	21
	Holo	126	27	153
	Hakka	12	6	18
	others	14	38	52
<i>total</i>		166	78	244

Table 6. Expected frequency of mother tongue categories “same” and “different” by ethnic identities

exp.		<i>Mtongue</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Ethnic id.</i>	Mainlander	14.29	6.71	21
	Holo	104.09	48.91	153
	Hakka	12.25	5.75	18
	others	35.38	16.62	52
<i>total</i>		166	78	244

$$\chi^2=54.87 > 7.82 \text{ (df=3)} \quad *p < 0.05$$

In short, the chi-square tests mentioned above reveal two points: (1) Holoee/Hakfa speakers⁶ are more likely to identify themselves as ethnic Holo/Hakka people, but Mandarin speakers are **not** more likely to identify themselves as ethnic Mainlanders. (2) Holo people are more likely to regard Holoee as their mother tongue, but the Mainlanders/Hakka people are **not** more likely to regard Mandarin/Hakfa as their mother tongue. The relationships between ethnic identity and mother tongue in Taiwan are

⁶ Here, Holoee/Hakfa speakers are defined as the speakers who identify Holoee/Hakfa as their mother tongue.

illustrated in **Figure 2**. The results in **Figure 2** reflect some phenomena in Taiwan: (1) the relationship between mother tongue of Holo and ethnic identity of Holo people is interdependent. (2) Even though a person identifies herself/himself as ethnic Hakka, s/he may not regard Hakfa as her/his mother tongue. The primary factor might be the increasing language shift from Hakfa toward Mandarin. This phenomenon implies that even though a person's mother tongue has shifted, s/he may still maintain her/his original ethnic identity for a while. This phenomenon coincides Edwards' address that "the erosion of an original language – at least in its ordinary, communicative aspects – does not inevitably mean the erosion of identity itself" (Edwards 1985:48). (3) Mandarin speakers may not identify themselves as Mainlanders. Owing to the Mandarin language policy, Taiwanese people have been taught Mandarin through the national education system since 1945. Consequently, some people may regard Mandarin as their mother tongue. Even so, they may still maintain their original ethnic identity. In this investigation, among the 58 Mandarin speakers, only 14 identify themselves as Mainlanders, the others (i.e., 44) identify themselves as Holo or Hakka people. We may want to know what factors caused these Mandarin speakers to maintain their original ethnic identity. After tracing the Mandarin speakers' background, it reveals that their parents and grandparents' frequently used languages might play an important role in maintaining their original ethnic identity. For instance, among the 44 Mandarin speakers who did not regard themselves as Mainlanders, 13 reported⁷ that their parents both speak Holo, 20 reported their parents both speak Mandarin (Among the 20 persons, 14 of their grandparents speak Holo or Hakfa, only 3 of their grandparents speak Mandarin), and the remaining number did not report their answer. On the other hand, among the 14 Mandarin speakers, 10 of them report that their parents both speak Mandarin, and only 1 reports that her

⁷ The information of parents and grandparents' frequently used languages is based on question item 13 in the questionnaire. For instance, if a subject reports that the frequency s/he speak Mandarin to her/his father is 3 or higher than 3, then Mandarin was assumed her/his father's frequently used language.

parents both speak Holo.

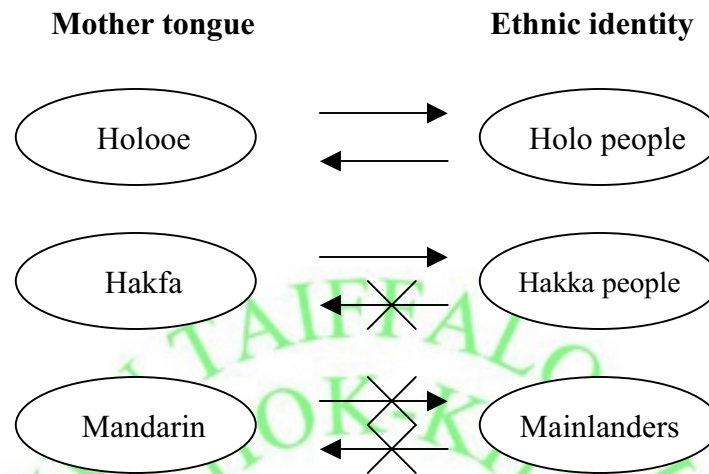


Figure 2. Relationship between ethnic identity and mother tongue in Taiwan.

After doing the chi-square tests for the relationship between ethnic identity and mother tongue, the other two pairs, that is, ethnic identity versus language ability; and mother tongue versus language ability, were also tested and listed in the following paragraphs. Because the procedures of chi-square tests have been described above, only the observed tables and results of the two pairs are briefly mentioned in the following paragraphs. The types of language ability consist of Mandarin-only, bilingual in Mandarin and Holoee, and Hakfa plus (Mandarin-Hakfa or Mandarin-Holoee-Hakfa).

Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9 show the data of ethnic identity versus language ability. **Figure 3** illustrates the relationship between ethnic identity and language ability.

Table 7. Observed number of each category by ethnic identity and language ability characteristics

obs.		<i>Ethnic id.</i>				<i>total</i>
		Mainlander	Holo	Hakka	others	
<i>Lang ab.</i>	M-only	7	15	2	6	30
	M-Holoee	13	135	3	42	193
	Hakfa plus	1	2	13	3	19
	<i>total</i>	21	152	18	51	242

Table 8. Observed number of ethnic categories “same” and “different” by language ability

obs.		<i>Ethnic id.</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Lang ab.</i>	M-only	7	23	30
	M-Holoee	135	58	193
	Hakfa plus	13	6	19
	<i>total</i>	155	87	242

$$x^2=24.67>5.99 \text{ (df=2)} \quad *p<0.05$$

Table 9. Observed number of language ability categories “same” and “different” by ethnic identity

obs.		<i>Lnag ab.</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Ethnic-id</i>	Mainlander	7	14	21
	Holo	135	17	152
	Hakka	13	5	18
	others	0	51	51
	<i>total</i>	155	87	242

$$x^2=140.48>7.82 \text{ (df=3)} \quad *p<0.05$$

Figure 3 indicates (1) Holo/Hakka people are interdependent with M-Holoee/Hakfa plus. (2) Mainlanders and M-only are not interdependent with each other. **Figure 3** reveals that although Mandarin is highly used, people may still maintain their original ethnic identity. This phenomenon corresponds with Lu's (1988:99) finding "the relationship between ethnic identity and language use in Taiwan was not one of cause-and-effect. Speaking Mandarin may be either due to an instrumental consideration or a conditioned language behavior. They do not have to change their ethnic identity."

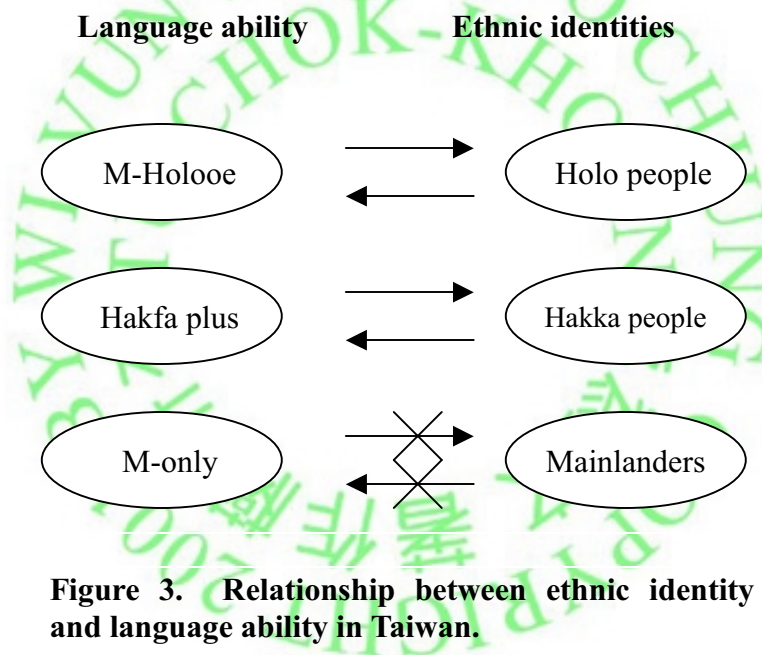


Figure 3. Relationship between ethnic identity and language ability in Taiwan.

Table 10, Table 11, and Table 12 show the data of mother tongue vs. language ability. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between mother tongue and language ability.

Table 10. Observed number of each category by mother tongue and language ability characteristics

obs.		<i>Mother tongue</i>				
		Mandarin	Holoee	Hakfa	others	<i>total</i>
<i>Lang ab.</i>	M-only	15	12	0	3	30
	M-Holoee	41	137	2	13	193
	Hakfa plus	1	2	13	3	19
	<i>total</i>	57	151	15	19	242

Table 11. Observed number of mother tongue categories “same” and “different” by language ability

obs.		<i>Mtongue</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Lang ab.</i>	M-only	15	15	30
	M-Holoee	137	56	193
	M-Hakfa	13	6	19
	<i>total</i>	165	77	242

$\chi^2=5.27 < 5.99$ (df=2) $p > 0.05$

Table 12. Observed number of language ability categories “same” and “different” by mother tongue

obs.		<i>Lnag ab.</i>		
		same	different	<i>total</i>
<i>Mtongue</i>	Mandarin	15	42	57
	Holoee	137	14	151
	Hakfa	13	2	15
	others	0	19	19
	<i>total</i>	165	77	242

$\chi^2=124.51 > 7.82$ (df=3) $*p < 0.05$

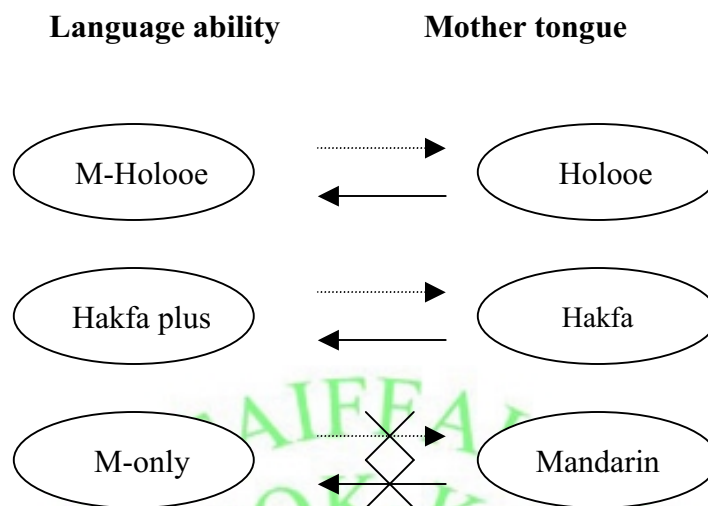


Figure 4. Relationship between mother tongue and language ability in Taiwan.

The dotted line in **Figure 4** means that the statistical p value was not substantially smaller than 0.05. The result that language ability does not always correspond to their mother tongue is reasonable because a person may possess the ability of several languages but only recognize one as his/her mother tongue. **Figure 4** indicates (1) people with Holoee/Hakfa as a mother tongue are more likely to possess M-Holoee/Hakfa plus ability. (2) People with Mandarin as a mother tongue do not necessarily possess Mandarin-only ability.

In summary, the chi-square tests reveal that only Holo people show substantially interdependent relationships among the three characteristics, i.e., ethnic identity, mother tongue, and language ability (see **Figure 5**). Hakka people show partly interdependent relationships among the characteristics as shown in **Figure 6**. As for Mainlanders, there is no interdependent relationship among the characteristics as shown in **Figure 7**.

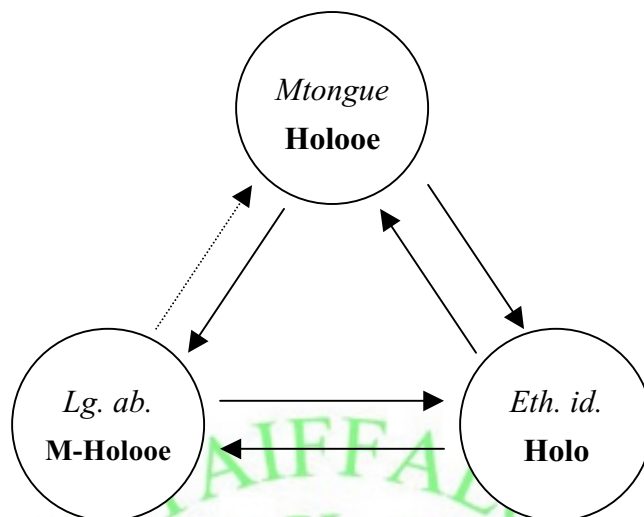


Figure 5. Relationships among Holoee speakers, M-Holoee ability, and Holo people.

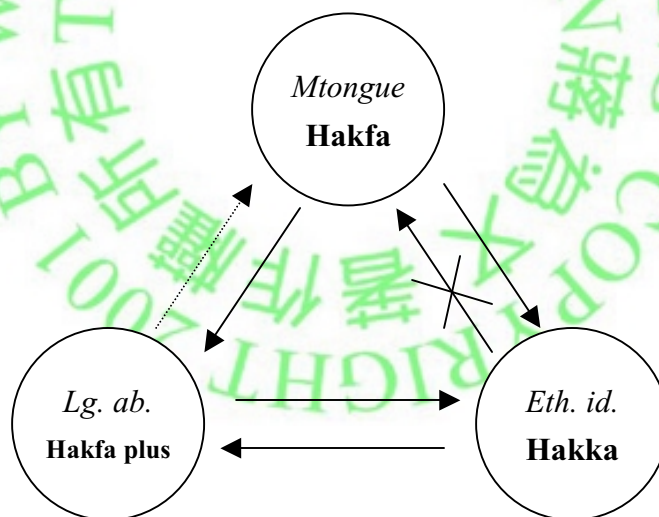


Figure 6. Relationships among Hakfa speakers, Hakfa plus ability, and Hakka people.

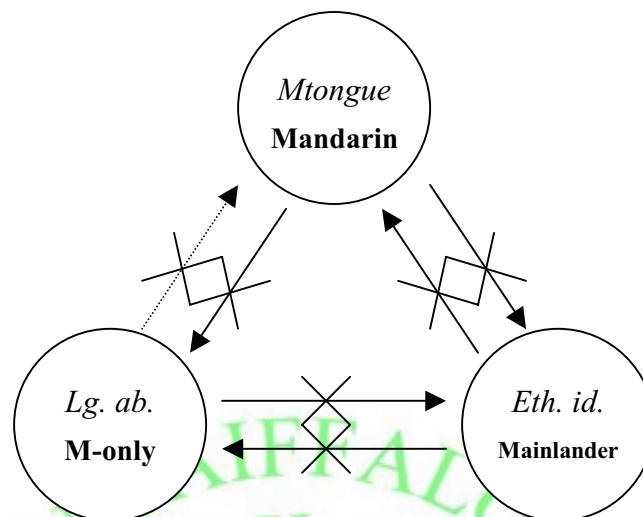


Figure 7. Relationships among Mandarin speakers, M-only ability, and Mainlanders.

5. Conclusion

Much research such as Ross (1979:4) has pointed that the relationship between language and ethnicity is not static, but subject to considerable alternation as the environment around them changes. In this study, the different relationship patterns among the Hakka, Holo, and Mainlanders categories reveal the effects of monolingual policy on the ecology of languages in Taiwan.

In the Hakka category, the one-way dependent relationship between mother tongue and ethnic identity reveals that people are losing their Hakka mother tongue faster than their Hakka identity. Since the Hakka are a minority compared to the Holo, the monolingual policy has had a greater impact on the Hakka than the Holo. On the other hand, the two-way interdependent relationship between language ability and ethnic identity reveals that Hakfa still plays a crucial role in constructing their Hakka identity. The case of Hakka has shown: 1) On one hand, the erosion of one's original ethnic language does not inevitably resulted in the erosion of ethnic identity itself. 2) On the other hand, the maintenance of one's ethnic language is a contributing factor to the

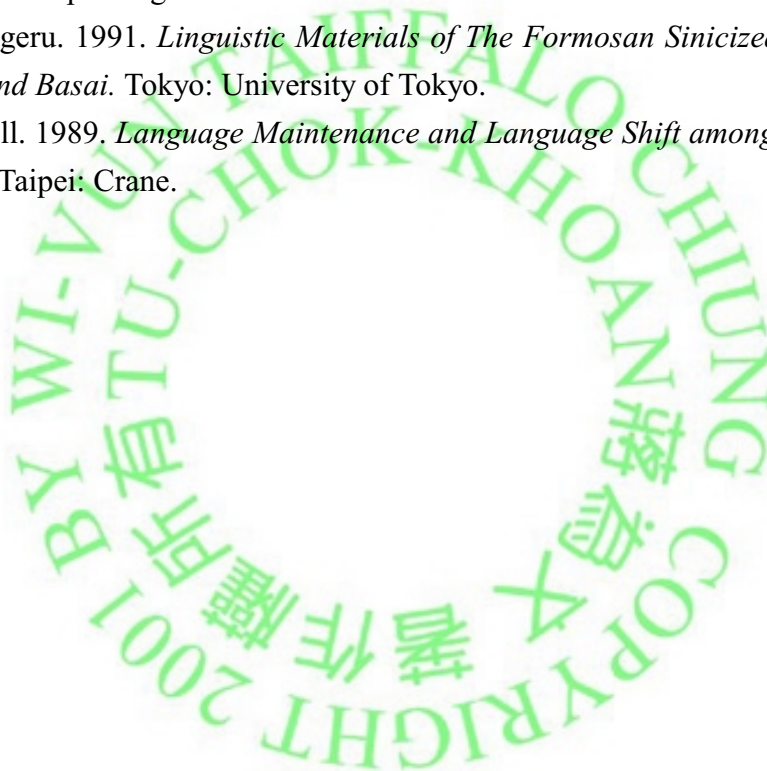
maintenance of one's ethnic identity. These findings imply that the promotion of the Taiwanese language(s) is a plus to foster the identity of Taiwanese, although, people with Taiwanese identity do not necessarily own the ability of speaking the Taiwanese language(s).

As for the Mainlanders category, the interdependent relationships among the Mandarin mother tongue, Mandarin ability, and Mainlanders are not yet well established since Mandarin was introduced as the official language or lingua franca in Taiwan only about 55 years ago. In general, ethnic identity is contextually constructed (Fishman 1999:154). Language may be a primary defining characteristic of a collectivity, while in the meantime, it may play only a modest role (Ross 1979:4). For the Mainlanders, their collective memory of the Chinese civil war and anti-colonialism in the first half of the twentieth century probably plays a more crucial role than Mandarin in constructing their identity of the Mainlanders. For the people other than the Mainlanders, Mandarin is primarily considered a medium of communication rather than a characteristic of ethnicity. Consequently, speakers' ability or mother tongue in Mandarin does not necessarily refer to their identity of Mainlanders.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire

1. Sex Female Male
2. Age _____
3. Major Taiwanese English Chinese Public Administration
 Mechanical E. others _____
4. What class are you in, as you complete this survey? _____
5. In which city have you lived the longest amount _____
6. What 's your ethnic identity ?
 5 Mainlander (New settler) 4 Holo (Southern Min) 3 Hakka 2 Aborigines 1 uncertain
7. What do you feel your "mother tongue" is?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
8. In which language do you speak most fluently?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
9. What is the language you learned before attending elementary school ?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
10. What is the language you use most often?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
11. What is the language your father uses most often?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
12. What is the language your mother uses most often?
 5 Mandarin 4 Taiwanese 3 Hakka 2 Aboriginal language 1 uncertain
13. Please indicate the frequency of each language you use when you talk with these persons.
(leave it blank if you don't understand that language)

Frequency scale 5 always 4 often 3 sometimes 2 seldom 1 almost never

	Grand-p.		parents		Siblings		Friends		Significant other
	G.pa	G.ma	Pa.	Ma.	Bro.	Sis.	male	female	
Mandarin									
Taiwanese									
Hakka									
others									

14. What degree do you feel your listening and speaking ability of these languages might be?

Listening

Mandarin	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
Taiwanese	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
Hakka	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
English	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero

Speaking

Mandarin	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
Taiwanese	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
Hakka	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero
English	5 native	4 no problem	3 so so	2 a little	1 zero

