

Chinese Dialects in the Face of Standard Language Encroachment: The View from Diglossia & Societal Bilingualism

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OBJECTIVES

1. Contact between **regional** and **standard language**
 - Rapid spread of **Modern Standard Chinese**
 - Corresponding demise of **regional language varieties**
2. View from **sociolinguistics**
 - **Diglossia**
 - **Societal bilingualism**
3. **Analysis**
 - Fit between **theory & field observations**
 - **Predictions** of future development

Outline

- **Theoretical Background: Diglossia (definitions)**
 - **Narrow diglossia**
 - **Broad diglossia** (societal bilingualism/multilingualism)
 - Comparison of traits
- **Types of Chinese diglossia**
 - **Narrow diglossia:** Classical vs vernacular Chinese
 - **Broad diglossia** (societal bilingualism): Varieties of spoken Chinese
 - Shanghai
 - Taiwan (Hakka; Min)
 - Guangzhou
 - Malaysia
 - Singapore
- **Future prospects w/pertinent factors**
 - Demise of the dialects
 - Diversification of the standard

Working definition

- **DIGLOSSIA:** the existence of **two distinct speech varieties** (H, L) within the same speech community

Diglossia: narrow vs broad (after Fasold 1984)

- **Narrow diglossia** (i.e., classic diglossia – c.f. Ferguson 1959; Fishman 1967)
 - "the existence in some speech communities of two or more significantly discrepant but culturally legitimate speech varieties, one of which is a universally available vernacular variety (**L**), and the other a superposed variety (**H**), in the sense that it is **nobody's native speech variety** and, by virtue of its distinctness, is acquired as an additional variety only through exposure to specific formal channels of language education" (Hudson 1991: 13, parentheses, underline and emphases added)
 - "pervasive and rigid **functional compartmentalization** of the diglossic speech varieties, at least to the extent that the elevated variety (H) is **never used** by any member of the community for the purposes of within-group **informal conversation**" (Hudson 1991: 13, parentheses, underline and emphases added)
 - Ferguson (1959: 325, emphases added): diglossia involves "two or more **varieties of the same language**"
 - Fishman (1967: 30, emphases added): "diglossia exists not only in multilingual societies which officially recognize several 'languages' but, also, in societies which are multilingual in the sense that they employ separate **dialects, registers or functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind**"
- **Broad diglossia** (includes **societal bilingualism/multilingualism; standard-with-dialects**; after Fasold 1984)
 - "the reservation of **highly valued** segments of a community's linguistic repertoire for situations perceived as **more formal and guarded**; and the reservation of **less highly valued** segments of a community's linguistic repertoire for situations perceived as **more informal and intimate**" (Fasold 1984: 53, **emphases added**)
 - L language "learned first with little or no conscious effort" (Fasold 1984: 53)
 - H language "learned later and more consciously, usually through formal education" (Fasold 1984: 53)
 - No restrictions on the degree of linguistic relatedness between H and L (Fasold 1984: 53)

Diglossia: narrow vs broad (after Fasold 1984)

	Narrow diglossia	Societal bilingualism (Broad diglossia)
Acquisition of H vs L	H is nobody's native language, whereas L is everybody's native language	H is spoken natively by some, and L is spoken natively by some
Source of H language	Archaic literary language	(no restrictions)
Access to H language	Small elite with access to literacy	(no restrictions)
Differentiation of function	Functions of H and L strictly compartmentalized (minimal overlap)	Some degree overlap between functions of H and L
Stability	Typically stable (centuries or millennia)	Typically unstable (3 generations)
Dissolution of diglossia	Abrupt (revolution; breakdown of social order)	Gradual
Direction of change	H gives way to L	L gives way to H
New prestige language	L (with superstrate influence from H)	H (with substrate influence from L)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

- Ferguson (1959) on Chinese
 - “Chinese should be cited because it probably represents **diglossia on the largest scale of any attested instance**” (Ferguson 1959: 337-338)
 - “Chinese, however, like modern Greek, seems to be developing away from diglossia toward a **standard-with-dialects** in that the standard L or a mixed variety is coming to be used in writing for more and more purposes, i.e., it is becoming a true standard.” (Ferguson 1959: 338)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Acquisition of H	H is “a written variety which is the mother tongue of nobody ” (Coulmas 1987: 117)	“No community spoke Classical Chinese as its native language” (Snow 2010: 160) “a classic written language that was learned in school by those fortunate enough to have the chance for education; it was not spoken by anyone as a native language ” (Snow 2010: 160)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Source of H language	H constitutes “ an archaism , a stage which the language reached some centuries ago, when it became ‘ frozen ’ by social conventions” (Bright 1976: 66)	“literary Chinese is...a written, conventionalized language that has its origins in the spoken vernacular of Warring States (403-255 B.C.) China” (Fuller 2004: 1) “writers continued to model their prose on this early literary language, and the written languages thus began to take on an archaic aspect as the spoken language underwent a very different and by and large independent development!” (Norman 1988: 83)
	H derived from a “ written tradition consist[ing] mainly of the society’s sacred writings ” (Sjoberg 1964: 892)	“the high social position of Classical Chinese was due, in large part, to the fact that it was the language used in an enormous heritage of philosophical, religious and literary texts stretching back well over two thousand years” (Snow 2010: 160)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Access to H language	“access to those more formal situations in which H is appropriate is asymmetrically distributed in favor of those educationally privileged, literate , or otherwise specialized classes in society most likely to have had the opportunity to acquire H formally” (Hudson 2002: 5-6) H is part of “a tradition of restricted literacy involving the written variety of a language that becomes increasingly distant (and therefore distinct) from the native variety of language spoken in a speech community that is overwhelmingly illiterate ” (Walters 1996: 161-162)	“in China, mastery of Classical Chinese was quite literally a road to power for aspiring candidates in the imperial examinations, and the fact that most people did not have sufficient schooling to compete in the examinations served to limit the number of potential rivals the elite had to contend with. To put it bluntly, the difficulty of Classical Chinese helped keep the uneducated masses out. The situation meant that social elites had relatively little interest in promoting knowledge of H among the population at large...” (Snow 2010: 161) “Mastery of Classical Chinese was thus closely connected with political power as well as cultural prestige ” (Snow 2010: 160)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Differentiation of function	diglossia requires “ specialization of function for H and L. In one set of situations only H is appropriate, and in another only L, with the two sets overlapping only very slightly” (Ferguson 1959: 328)	“there is the classical style, in which the Commentaries on the Sacred Books are written, as well as all works making the least claim to correctness, propriety and chasteness in lighter composition such as works on History, moral philosophy, political economy, geography, natural history, and medicine. All the sects of religion in China employ this style in discussing doctrines inculcating deities ” (Letter from Walter Medhurst, Alexander Stronach, and William Milne to the London Missionary Society (1851), in Zetzsche 1999: 93) “no person would deem his productions fit for the public gaze , and worthy of imitation, who did not write in this style ” (Letter from Walter Medhurst, Alexander Stronach, and William Milne to the London Missionary Society (1851), in Zetzsche 1999: 93) “Classical Chinese ... was also perceived as being a language suited to the expression of sophisticated and elegant thought ... These attitudes and beliefs naturally tended to discourage thoughts of replacing Classical Chinese with [the L language] as a vehicle for serious discourse” (Snow 2010: 160)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Stability	“Diglossia typically persists at least several centuries , and evidence in some cases seems to show that it can last well over a thousand years” (Ferguson 1959: 332)	Classical Chinese was “the pre-eminent language for writing in China for the past two thousand years ” (Fuller 2004: 1)

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Dissolution of diglossia	<p>Classic diglossia thrives in "preindustrial civil societies" with restricted literacy, and "is most often removed at an early stage of modernization" (Neustupny 1974: 40)</p> <p>"the processes of modernization, urbanization, mercantalism, and industrialization ... create [demands] for a literate labor force", accompanied by "the disestablishment of small ruling groups, the breakdown of rigid class barriers and increased fluidity of role relationships, and the democratization of education, literacy, and knowledge that tend to accompany these" (Hudson 2002:32)</p>	<p>"As China faced growing encroachment from western countries and also from Japan in the late 1800s and early 1900s, reformers increasingly felt that China needed to strengthen itself by promoting mass literacy and education, and that Classical Chinese was an unsuitable language to use for modern mass education, partly because of its close association with a traditional civilization that did not offer China a way forward into modernity and national power, and partly because it was simply too difficult to teach" (Snow 2010: 161)</p>
	<p>"decline of a classical variety is often accompanied by catastrophic political events involving the breakdown of classical society itself" (Hudson 2002: 34)</p> <p>The H-language "comes in with status and elitism", and "goes out under the pressures of popular movements which we call the naïvist rebellions" (Kahane 1986: 498)</p>	<p>The wholesale replacement of literary Chinese with vernacular writing coincides largely with the end of imperial rule in China, culminating in the Vernacular Language Movement (白話運動) of 1917 – this happening within two short decades of the introduction of western education in China, the abolition of Confucian-style civil service examinations, and the overthrow of the Qing dynasty. (Barnes 1982: 262)</p>

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
Direction of change	<p>"H ... tends to be displaced by L through a process of structural convergence resulting in the emergence of a new standard more closely related to certain educated varieties of the vernacular" (Hudson 2002: 30)</p> <p>"the new socio-historical structure creates a new literary language out of the spoken language then current" (Pulgram 1950: 461-462)</p>	<p>"Perhaps the most widely publicized change in written language habits from the traditional period was marked by the decision, reached in 1917, to write in such as way as to approximate contemporary vernacular speech, discontinuing the centuries-old practice among literate individuals of writing in the classical style, which had centuries earlier ceased to function as a medium of communication" (Barnes 1982: 262)</p>

NARROW DIGLOSSIA: Classical vs vernacular Chinese

	Classic diglossia	Classical Chinese
New prestige language	<p>"it is L, in effect, that displaces H, incorporating certain superstrate influences from H in the process" (Hudson 1991: 10)</p>	<p>"the elevation to prominence of a writing style long available within the society but previously unsanctioned for serious writing purposes" (Barnes 1982: 262)</p>
	<p>end result is not complete displacement of the literary language with the vernacular, but rather a "merger of the original two norms" (Wexler 1971: 345-346, note 22)</p>	<p>"the grammar of the standard written language includes not only the syntax of the vernacular, but also elements of Classical Chinese convention that have made their way into modern standard writing" (Zhu 1988: 132)</p>
	<p>lexicon of H lives on in the new standard in the form of a "large-scale transfer of terminology" in the realms of "upper-class civilization, abstractions, and professional technologies" (Kahane and Kahane, 1979: 194)</p>	<p>"there is often considerable incorporation of classical elements – stereotyped phrases, truncated terms, even classical constructions – into what is ostensibly a vernacular piece of writing" (DeFrancis 1984: 294)</p> <p>Modern Standard Chinese is characterized by "ways of amalgamating Classical Chinese with modern writings [that] are essentially motivated and licensed by prosody" (Feng 2005: 17)</p>

Characteristics of societal bilingualism/multilingualism (broad diglossia)	
	Broad diglossia
Acquisition of H vs L	H is spoken natively by some, and L is spoken natively by some
Differentiation of function	Possible "leakage in function" , "mixing in form" (Faold 1984: 54) "[H and L] compete for realization in the same domains, situations, and role-relations" (Fishman 1985: 45)
Stability	Will not survive beyond a three-generational span if H and L are unable to carve out non-overlapping functional niches within the communicative ecology of the community (Hudson 1001: 14)
Dissolution of diglossia	"gradual hegemonic advance of the high variety and the displacement of the low " (Hudson 1991: 7)
Direction of change	"the language with stronger rewards sanctions associated with it wins out" (Fishman 1980 & 1985: 45) "the general tendency appears to be for the higher-prestige language eventually to invade the domain of the home, ultimately displacing the language of lesser prestige as a first language in the community" (Hudson 2002: 30)
New prestige language	"over the long term, it is H that typically displaces L , often incorporating certain substrate influences from L as it does so" (Hudson 1991: 10)

BROAD DIGLOSSIA (societal bilingualism/multilingualism) :
 Varieties of **spoken Chinese**

- Shanghai
- Taiwan (Hakka; Min)
- Guangzhou
- Malaysia
- Singapore

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS:

- **Shanghai**
 – intergenerational dialect decline

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Sun, Xiaoxian, Jiang, Bingbing, Wang, Yijia, Qiao, Lihua, 2007. **Survey on the use of Standard Mandarin and Shanghainese dialect among students in the municipality of Shanghai.** Yangtze River Academic 15, 1-10. (孫曉先、蔣冰冰、王頌嘉、喬麗華。2007。〈上海市學生普通話和上海話使用情況調查〉。《長江學術》15：1-10)
- Survey of **8,661 students in Shanghai area**

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Language used **in the home** (Sun et al 2007: 3)

	College freshmen	10th grade	7th grade	5th grade
(approximate age)	19	16	13	11
Shanghainese	71%	58%	45%	23%
Mandarin	7%	11%	20%	23%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Conversations **with peers** (Sun et al 2007: 5)

	College freshmen	10th grade	7th grade	5th grade
(approximate age)	19	16	13	11
Shanghainese	44%	43%	22%	20%
Mandarin	27%	25%	39%	44%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Interpretation of data
 - Authors' interpretation (correlation with **age**)
 - Use of and attitude to Shanghainese dialect changes as one gets older
 - "As subjects **get older**, the **more willing** they are to **speak Shanghainese** in the home" (Sun et al 2007: 3-4)
 - "As students **get older**, the more they are willing to **speak Shanghainese dialect**" (Sun et al 2007:5)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Interpretation of data
 - Li's interpretation (correlation with **generation**)
 - Use of and attitude to Shanghainese dialect varies according to generation (c.f. Taiwan Hakka data)
 - The younger the generation, **the less speakers are willing to speak Shanghainese**, and **the more willing they are to speak Mandarin**
 - The younger the generation, **the more important they regard Mandarin and English**, and **the less important they regard Shanghainese dialect**

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Shanghai

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Interpretation of data
 - Linear regression
 - Students born **after 1999** will cease to speak Shanghainese dialect to their peers

	College freshmen	10th grade	7th grade	5th grade
(approximate age)	19	16	13	11
Shanghainese	44%	43%	22%	20%
Mandarin	27%	25%	39%	44%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Shanghai**

(intergenerational dialect decline)

- Interpretation of data

	College freshmen	10th grade	7th grade	5th grade
(approximate age)	19	16	13	11
Shanghainese	71%	58%	45%	23%
Mandarin	7%	11%	20%	23%

- Linear regression
 - Students born **after 2032** will speak only Mandarin in the home
 - Birth of 普通話 (1955) to 2032 = 77 years
 - **3 familial generations** (3 x 25) = 75 years

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS:

- **Taiwan**
 - microcosm of linguistic developments in China



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Taiwan**

(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Mandarin promotion (1945-1987)**
 - **Success** of Mandarin Movement
 - Population is **90% Mandarin-speaking** (C. U 2009: 136-137)
 - Population has shifted to **using Mandarin in most domains** (S. Chen 2010: 86)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Taiwan**

(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition** (Too little too late?)
 - General decline in **language ability**
 - "The general complaint among most Southern Min and Hakka speakers with regard to language matters in the recent decade has been that their **children** (who very often can only speak Mandarin) **can no longer talk to their grandparents** (who can only speak the dialects)" (Tse 2000: 156)
 - **Use of dialect continues to decrease**, use of Mandarin continues to increase (Huang 1988; Young 1989)
 - "there is a good chance that the local languages will become obsolete as typewriters...Taiwanese has already started its decline towards **inevitable extinction**...the outlook for Taiwanese is very poor" (Beaser 2006: 16-17)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Taiwan Hakka**

(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - General decline in language ability
 - E.g., **Hakka dialect** attrition (Huang and Chen 2002: 57)

	Full proficiency (listening+speaking)	No proficiency (listening+speaking)
19 & under	19.2	28.9
20-29	44.1	13.2
30-39	69.7	5.2
40-49	79.2	4.7
50-59	89.4	1.4
60+	93.5	1.4

(Linear regression: no fully proficient Hakka speakers born after **2006**)
(NOTE: 2006-1945 = 61)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Taiwan S. Min**

(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - General decline in language ability
 - E.g., Mandarin phonological transfer in **Southern Min** (Luo 2005: 12-14)
 1. Voiced initial **[g]** pronounced as **zero initial** (as in Mandarin)
 2. Confusion of **alveolar sibilants [ts, tsʰ, s]** and **velars [k, kʰ, x]** before high front vowel (both categories palatalized and merged in Mandarin)
 3. Loss of **coda [m]** (Mandarin has no [m] coda)
 4. Loss of **stop endings [p], [t], [k]** (Mandarin has no stop endings)
 5. Denasalization of **nasalized vowels** (Mandarin has no nasalized vowels)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Taiwan
(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Causes of dialect attrition**
 - Neglect in **education**
 - Neglect in **media**
 - Changing **language attitudes**

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Taiwan
(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - Neglect in **education**
 - **Parental attitudes**
 - “Mandarin is the **common language** of today, and **English** is the language that will bring them to a **prosperous future**” (Beaser 2006: 11)
 - Experts believe that **dialects** need to be taught to children while young, because as they get older they will realize **how useless these languages are** and lose all motivation to learn (Chiang and Ho 2008: 99).
 - **Lack of unified writing system** (romanization)
 - “local languages are widely used as a spoken form of communication, but there has not been any significant move towards **standardizing** them and **making an official written orthography** for Taiwanese [dialects]” (Beaser 2006: 9)
 - **Lack of qualified instructors**
 - Even parents fluent in the dialects have trouble understanding what is written in the **textbooks**, and few teachers really know how to teach the dialects. Is it something that really needs to be taught? (Chiang & Ho 2008: 99)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Taiwan
(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - Failures of minority language **media**
 - **No audience**
 - Dialect media caters to an **aging and uneducated audience**; young people rarely ever listen to dialect media (Chen and Lin 2004: 4)
 - **No advertising revenue**
 - Advertisers unwilling spend on programming that reaches only a small audience (Chen and Lin 2004: 10)
 - **No competent broadcasters**
 - Hard to find broadcast professionals proficiently in all domains of dialect USE (frequent code-switching)
 - Broadcasting often left to **amateurs**, resulting in **low quality programming** (Chen and Lin 2004: 10)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Taiwan
(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - Changes in **language attitude** (J. Huang 2009: 8-10)
 - Correlation with **prestige**:
 - Mandarin as **elegant**;
 - dialect as **vulgar**
 - Correlation with **age**:
 - Mandarin for speaking with **young people**;
 - dialect for speaking with **old people**
 - Correlation with **class**:
 - Mandarin as **white-collar**;
 - dialect as **blue-collar**
 - Correlation with **development**:
 - Mandarin as **urban**;
 - dialect as **rural**
 - Correlation with **domain**:
 - Mandarin for all **formal domains**;
 - dialect for **informal domains** only

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Taiwan
(microcosm of linguistic developments in China)

- **Dialect attrition**
 - Changes in **language attitude**
 - “if a person is judged as speaking **Mandarin with a more standard accent**, he or she would be more likely to be considered as **highly-educated, high-class, smart, having higher income...**” (Liao 2008: 402)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS:

- **Guangzhou**
 - Summer 2010 **language demonstrations x 3**



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Media**
 - Cancellation of Cantonese television broadcasts
 - **Education**
 - Mandarin-only policies in elementary schools
 - **Politics**
 - Cleansing of symbols of Cantonese identity from public spaces

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Media** (Proposed policy change at **Guangzhou Television** (GVTV – city's only Cantonese language broadcaster)
 - BACKDROP: 16th Asian Games, Guangzhou (November 11-27, 2010)
 - Proposed change to broadcast policy (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Guangzhou Committee 中國人民政治協商會廣州委員會)
 - "In order to foster a positive linguistic environment, it is recommended that Guangzhou Television **change the broadcast language of its news and variety channels to Mandarin, or broadcast in Mandarin during prime time**, so as to cater to the linguistic needs of athletes and visitors to the city" (Hu 2010.07.07)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Media** (Policy change at **Guangzhou Television** (GVTV – city's only Cantonese language broadcaster in July 2010)
 - Popular **survey** (30,000+ samples) (Hu 2010.07.07)

Broadcast in Mandarin	10.5%
Broadcast in Cantonese	89.5%

Prime time broadcasts in Mandarin	20.5%
No change to broadcast language	79.5%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Media** (Policy change at **Guangzhou Television** (GVTV – city's only Cantonese language broadcaster in July 2010)
 - **Guangzhou Television management** (Hu 2010.07.07) :
 - ignore survey results
 - go ahead with **switch to Mandarin**
 - **Public sentiment**: a two-pronged attack on Cantonese (Jiang Wenxian, Chinese-language specialist at Sun Yat-sen University, in Hu 2010.07.07)
 - **Internal migration** on the one hand
 - the government policy of a "**common language** for a unified country and harmonious society"

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Education**: *Yangcheng Evening News* 羊城晚報 (2010.07.09)
 - "Granny Unable to Converse with Grandchild" 同聲同氣祖孫倆竟變成「雞同鴨講」 (Hu & Zi 2010)
 - South Zhixin Road **Primary School** in Guangzhou (typical of other schools in the region) requires pupils to speak **Mandarin only** both in and out of class
 - Pupils risk point deductions if caught speaking Cantonese dialect
 - As pupils become monolingual in Mandarin, they are **unable to converse with elderly relatives** who understand only Cantonese, creating communication barriers between generations

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Guangzhou** (Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
 - **Education**: *Yangcheng Evening News* 羊城晚報 (2010.07.09)
 - Reverberations:
 - **Intergenerational rift**: "Some Guangzhou parents complain their children are now reluctant to speak Cantonese, even at home." (Lai 2010)
 - **Decline of Cantonese-speaking population**: "the Cantonese-speaking community in the city has dwindled to less than half of the total population" (Lai 2010)



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
- **Political gesture:** Removal of Cantonese dialect plaque from Yuan Chonghuan Memorial Park in Dongguan (Hu 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Background** – perceived encroachment of Mandarin upon Cantonese
- **Political gesture:** Removal of Cantonese dialect plaque from Yuan Chonghuan Memorial Park in Dongguan (Hu 2010)
 - Literally “Screw their mothers, force your way up” -- dialect battlecry of famous **Cantonese national hero** Yuan Chonghuan.
 - Plaque adorned the statue of Yuan Chonghuan, who defeated the Manchu army of Nurhaci in the 17th century.
 - Slogan used in the Hsinhai Revolution of 1911 and the Northern Expedition of 1920 – seen as a symbol of **Cantonese solidarity**.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Result** – series of **demonstrations** (Summer 2010)
 - **July 11:** Small scale demonstrations (80+) in **Guangzhou**
 - **July 25:** Large scale demonstrations (10,000+) in **Guangzhou**
 - **August 1:** Mid scale demonstrations (1,000+) in **Guangzhou** and **Hong Kong**

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **July 25 demonstration**
- **Tens of thousands** of young people of the 80s and 90s generation, mobilized via internet, gathered at Jiangnanxi Subway Station in Guangzhou in protest of government plans to curb use of **Cantonese dialect** (Apple Daily 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **July 25 demonstration:** Tens of thousands of young people of the 80s and 90s generation, mobilized via internet, gathered at Jiangnanxi Subway Station in Guangzhou in protest of government plans to curb use of Cantonese dialect (Apple Daily 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **July 25 demonstration slogan** -- 廣府話起錨，煲冬瓜收皮
 - “Kudos to **Cantonese**; to hell with **winter melon**”
 - (NOTE “winter melon” homophonous with “Mandarin”)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **July 25 demonstration** slogan
 - The people of Canton speak **Cantonese**;
 - Those who don't should go **back to the boonies!**



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **August 2 demonstration** (Hong Kong)



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **August 2 joint demonstrations:**
 - Hundreds of protesters rallied in support of their native Cantonese dialect in both **Hong Kong and Guangzhou** after a mainland Chinese political body called for cuts in Cantonese-language broadcasts, sparking fears that Cantonese culture is under attack from Beijing. (Mudie 2010)
 - Chinese officials have **denied reports** that thousands of people took part in mass protests in support of the Cantonese language in recent weeks. In a statement published on its website, the Guangzhou public security bureau said Sunday's gathering at the People's Park was the work of "**a small number of people with insufficient rationality and one or two with ulterior motives**" and that "**individual troublemakers would be punished.**" (Mudie 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Implications**
 - **Mourning loss of Cantonese language and identity**
 - The government wants everyone to speak the same language," said the 27 year-old Cantonese. "But they don't understand that Cantonese isn't just a language. It's part of our **culture**. It's part of our **identity**." (Krishnan 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Guangzhou
(Summer 2010 language demonstrations)

- **Implications**
 - **The town that didn't fight back (Nanning)** (X. Chen 2010)
 - "**From the mid 1990s onwards**, in the name of promoting Mandarin, Cantonese dialect was gradually forced out of various spheres of life: first Cantonese was **banned from broadcast media**, then **from public service announcements** – for example, recorded announcements on buses ceased to be bilingual and were given in Mandarin only. Finally, Cantonese retreated from the home: nowadays **couples speak to each other and to their children in Mandarin**, and **use Cantonese only to speak to elderly relatives.**"
 - "Statistics show that **less than 30% of the population** of Nanning still speak Cantonese dialect, most of which consist of the **elderly**. Of the younger generation, those born in the 1970s are proficient still in both listening and speaking, whereas those born in the 1980s can understand Cantonese but have trouble speaking the dialect – contributing to the perception that **Mandarin is classy whereas Cantonese is uncouth**"

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Singapore
(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Intervening factor -- government policy
 - Shift to **English**
 - Rise of **Mandarin**



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

- **Singapore**
 - Former **British colony**
 - **English** is widely promoted official language

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Singapore**

(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Predominant **household language** (Kwan-Terry 2000: 97; reference to 1990 population census)
 - All households

	Dialect	Mandarin	English
1980	59.5%	10.2%	11.6%
1990	38.2%	23.7%	20.8%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Singapore**

(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Predominant **household language** (Kwan-Terry 2000: 97; reference to 1990 population census)
 - Chinese households

	Dialect	Mandarin	English
1980	76.2%	13.1%	10.2%
1990	48.2%	30.0%	21.4%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Singapore**

(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Language **most frequently spoken at home** for Primary One Chinese pupils (Kwan-Terry 2000: 98; reference to *Business Times* survey of October 4, 1989)

	Dialect	Mandarin	English
1980	64.4%	25.9%	9.3%
1984	26.9%	58.7%	13.9%
1989	7.2%	69.1%	23.3%

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Singapore**

(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Intervening factor -- government policy
 - Shift to **English**
 - Lee Kuan Yew (1978): "The way our economy has developed has made it necessary for those who want to reach executive or professional grades to **master English, spoken and written. The earlier in life this is done the easier and better the mastery**" (Kwan-Terry 2010: 99)
 - Economic utility -- English speakers command higher income (Composition of Singaporeans in the highest income group, after Kwan-Terry 2010: 100)

English only	66.1%
English and Chinese	20.5%
Chinese only	2.0%
Malay only	0%
Tamil only	0%
 - Parents who didn't speak English made sure that their children did (Kwan-Terry 2010: 100)
 - Household language in the 1980s – Chinese with parents, but English with siblings (Kwan-Terry 2010: 100-101)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Singapore**

(former British colony, **English** widely promoted)

- Intervening factor -- government policy
 - Rise of **Mandarin**
 - Government-launched "**Speak Mandarin**" campaign (1979)
 - **Dialects banned** in radio and television
 - (If not English), use of Mandarin encouraged in the home to assist in the **development of literacy**
 - Chinese-medium schools teach only Mandarin – **dialects** seen as "**low status**" (Kwan-Terry 2000: 102)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS Malaysia

- Decline of the **Chinese dialects**
- Encroachment of **Mandarin**
- Two holdouts
 - **Hokkien** (a.k.a. Southern Min, Taiwanese)
 - **Cantonese**



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Malaysia**

- Decline of the **Chinese dialects**
 - “The Chinese in Malaysia are fighting a losing battle in trying to keep their colourful dialects alive.” (Ng 2010)
 - **Language Attitude**: “Many among the younger generation view the use of dialects as **outdated and unfashionable**.” (Ng 2010)
 - **Generational Attrition**: “Most of the **younger generation** now could not speak dialects in their pure and uncorrupted form. They tend to use Malay, English or Mandarin words because they do not know the word in dialect for certain terms, especially modern and technological terms.” (Ng 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Malaysia**

- Encroachment of **Mandarin**
 - “Listen in to conversations among Chinese in a shopping mall or a restaurant, and chances are that most of them would be speaking Mandarin or English or a mix of both languages.” (Ng 2010)
 - **Economic utility**: “The Chinese are practical. For a language to be relevant and important to them, it must have other values apart from the cultural aspect ... Mandarin, unlike the dialects, **has economic value**, thanks largely to the growth of China as an economic powerhouse.” (Ng 2010)
 - **Education**: “Today, a large number of Chinese children are in Chinese primary schools where Mandarin is the **medium of instruction**.” (Ng 2010)

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: **Malaysia**

- Two **holdouts**
 - However, two Chinese dialects, **Hokkien** and **Cantonese**, are still widely used in the community and there are several reasons for this.
 - **Cantonese** – “thanks to the thousands upon thousands of Cantonese movies and popular TV series being produced [in **Hong Kong**], not to mention all those catchy Cantonese songs and gorgeous pop stars.” (Ng 2010)
 - **Hokkien** (Taiwanese; Southern Min) – “Hokkein TV series produced in **Taiwan** are also popular among Chinese in the region, including Malaysia.” (Ng 2010)
 - “**Entertainment** is keeping the two languages popular among Malaysian Chinese. It is sad as our dialects have to depend on entertainment and not the cultural value or as an heritage”. (Ng 2010)

FUTURE PROSPECTS

- WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?
 - (Rapid) **demise of dialects** (3 generation rule)
 - (Rapid) **spread and diversification of the standard**

FUTURE PROSPECTS: **Demise of dialects**

- Pertinent **factors**
 - **Education** (language of instruction)
 - **Media** (broadcast news and entertainment)
 - **Intergenerational attrition / language attitudes**
 - “as the [younger generation] starts to create their own households and have children, what will the language of their home be? Base on this model, we would assume it would become **Mandarin**, the language they are most comfortable speaking” (Beaser 2006: 12-13)
 - **Turning point**: when children who only speak the standard language can **no longer communicate** with grandparents who only speak dialect

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Direction of change** (c.f. Malaysian data)

The illustration shows three cartoon figures. The largest figure on the left is labeled 'Mandarin' and wears a red sash. The middle figure is labeled 'Regional H' and wears a blue sash. The smallest figure on the right is labeled 'Local L' and wears a yellow sash.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Direction of change** (c.f. Singapore data)

The illustration shows four cartoon figures. The largest figure on the left is labeled 'English' and is a superhero. The second figure is labeled 'Mandarin' and wears a red sash. The third figure is labeled 'Regional H' and wears a blue sash. The smallest figure on the right is labeled 'Local L' and wears a yellow sash.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Reasons for change**
 - Prior to 1950s (very limited social mobility)
 - **Parents:** local L language
 - **L1:** local L language
 - **L2:** regional H language (limited access)
 - **L3:** Standard Mandarin (extremely limited access)

A pyramid diagram with three distinct levels. The top level is a small blue pyramid labeled 'Standard Mandarin'. The middle level is a larger pink pyramid labeled 'Regional H'. The bottom level is the largest yellow pyramid labeled 'Local L'.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Reasons for change**
 - 1980s (limited social mobility, greater access to Mandarin)
 - **Parents:** local L language
 - **L1:** local L language
 - **L2:** regional H language or Standard Mandarin (equal access)

A pyramid diagram with four levels. The top level is a small red pyramid labeled 'Standard Mandarin'. The second level is a larger cyan pyramid labeled 'Regional H'. The bottom level is the largest yellow pyramid labeled 'Local L'.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Reasons for change**
 - 2000s (greater social mobility, widespread access to Mandarin)
 - **Parents:** bilingual Or trilingual (local L, regional H, Mandarin)
 - **L1:** parents' choice

A pyramid diagram composed of many small spheres. The top level is a small green sphere labeled 'Mandarin'. The second level is a larger blue sphere labeled 'Regional H'. The third level is a larger yellow sphere labeled 'Local L'. The bottom level is the largest red sphere labeled 'English'.

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Demise of dialects

- **Reasons for change**
 - 2000s (greater social mobility, widespread access to Mandarin)
 - **Parents:** bilingual or trilingual (local L, regional H, Mandarin)
 - **L1:** parents' choice – intervening factors
 - **Availability** (social mobility brings cross-dialect intermarriage; local L unavailable)
 - » "[Couples] may not understand each other's dialect, and will end up speaking another language which is most likely to be English or Mandarin" (Ng 2010)
 - **Prestige + economic utility** (Mandarin, English)
 - » "Even in Guangdong and Fujian, the strongholds of the Cantonese and Min dialects, more and more parents are abandoning their native dialects in favour of Putonghua, believing this will give their children **better access to education and jobs**." (Yu 2010)
 - » "Children **have to speak Putonghua at school anyway**, so it's better for them to get used to it at home too," said a mother from Guangzhou, who speaks Putonghua to her son. (Yu 2010)
 - » "Many parents in my hometown feel the southern Min dialect is **useless** so they opt for Putonghua when speaking to their children," said Chen Weirong, a university student from Quanzhou, Fujian. (Yu 2010)

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Diversification of standard

• **FLIP SIDE: Diversification of the standard**

– Development of **regional Mandarins**

- **Mandarin in Taiwan** (substrate influence)
 - **Dialect vocabulary** in Taiwan Mandarin (Wei 1984: 88; Tang 1989: 141; Her 2010)
 - **Southern Chinese syntax** in Taiwan Mandarin (Wei 1984: 88-89; Cheng 1985; Kubler 1985)
 - “there is a good chance that Taiwanese and the other local languages of Taiwan will become extinct. But even if this should happen, Taiwanese language has already **left its mark in... help[ing] to shape and mold Mandarin** into a language more suitable to the Taiwanese people and their culture” (Beaser 2006: 16)
- **Mandarin in Nanning** (Cantonese-speaking region)
 - “As Mandarin spreads, it will no doubt undergo regionalization. In the future there will come to exist a type of ‘Lingnan Mandarin’ or ‘Canton Mandarin’, which in their nature are dialects, but are just not referred to as such.” (X. Chen 2010)

FUTURE PROSPECTS: Diversification of standard

• **FLIP SIDE: Diversification of the standard**

– **Cosmopolitan Mandarin** (Zhang 2005: 444-458)

- Mandarin used by Chinese yuppies in corporate settings in Beijing selectively incorporates **features of Mandarin spoken in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore** (Zhang 2005: 444-458)
- Use of “Cosmopolitan Mandarin” rather than “Beijing Mandarin” not for the purpose of communication, but for signal distinction in **social status** (Zhang 2005: 454-455)
- Speakers switch between regional Mandarin and “Cosmopolitan Mandarin” according to domain of language use – new type of **Mandarin-based diglossia**

THANK YOU

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