

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO THE TAIGI LITERATURE DEBATES

Preface

There was not only a debate about Taigi literature during the Taigi literature movement, but investigations reveal related topics for discussion. In the previous chapter, I describe the process of the development of the Taigi literature debates. And in this chapter, the development of the related topics for discussion concerning that debate will also be discussed. The discussion will be divided into four parts.

First is the view regarding the diversification of the Taigi script standardization issue. This part will investigate the claims regarding standardization of Taigi script made by the various academic groups within the interior of the Taigi literature camp. There were also claims made by those who had actually had practice in Taigi writing via actual participation. Basically, there were three major proposals, the writing style using Han-Roman mixed, Han characters only and Roman script only. These writing styles all sought to provide solid writing forms. It was also a display of Taigi seeking to become a high language.

Second is the investigation and implementation of vernacular education. It includes three parts. (1) The idea of vernacular education: Only when the mother tongue acquired educational language status, could the subjectivity of the Taiwan native language be recovered. (2) The implementation of vernacular education: If there have been textbooks or training for teachers provided for the native language then that would mean Taigi, as a low language, has been moving toward the goal of

becoming a high language. (3) The issues faced by the native language teaching: The mistaken concept regarding the native language held by society, the unwillingness of the government to implement education in the mother tongue and the uncertainty factors of the standardization of the mother tongue in written form all constitute reasons why the mother tongue is still a low language.

Third is the investigation of the language policy. In this section, the emphasis is on the alteration and effects of the National Language Policy imposed by the foreign political power after martial law was lifted. This emphasis came in two parts. (1) The National Language Policy imposed by the external political power: The policy imposed by the KMT was a language policy, which intended to assimilate Taiwanese people through the use of Mandarin. The policy treated Taigi as a low language. As a native language, it had to give up the language imposed by the KMT in order to recover its dignity. (2) Language policy with an independent quality: Language policy should be constructed on the system of fair justice, allowing native languages to grow and develop. The emphasis should be particularly placed upon the languages of the disadvantaged ethnic groups. This has been the basic requirement for a society equipped with multiple languages.

Fourth is the use of the language development of other countries as a model. The author continues to use the observations made by studying the state of the language development of Creole in Haiti, Swahili of Tanzania and Hindi in India as possible models for Taiwan's future language development.

4.1 Views about the diversification of the standardization issue of Taigi script

The issue of Taigi script standardization was an attitude held by scholars and writers. Taigi script standardization came to a halt under the language suppression of two external colonizing rulers. In 1930s, during the period of the debates about Taiwanese vernacular language and literature, there were already claims about Taigi script standardization. And in 1980s, after the democratization of Taiwan, this topic of concern again attracted attention. I think that the implementation and discussion of Taigi script standardization in 1980s when compared to that of the 1930s has shown solid results. It could be seen as a concrete attempt to construct a literary language. The current claims of scholars and writers could be divided into three writing styles. They have been Han-Roman mixed, Han characters only and Roman script only. By the use of these three writing styles, I will discuss separately scholars' and writers' claims about Taigi script standardization and the practical state of their creation.

4.1.1 The claim and effectuation of the Han-Roman mixed writing style

Although On Iok-tek¹ claimed the Han-Roman mixed in an earlier period of development, the fact that the Han-Roman mixed writing style had its place in the circle of Taigi literature should be accredited to the advocate and effectuation of Robert L. Cheng. During the KMT martial law period, he devoted himself to research work about Taigi script standardization while living overseas. Scholars who also believed in the Han-Roman mixed writing style include Khou Kek-tun, Ang Ui-jin and some others.

Robert L. Cheng is a linguist at Indiana University, USA and an East-Asia language professor at Hawaii University. Robert L. Cheng has exerted much effort regarding Taigi script standardization. He has paid close attention to the details of systemized analysis and structure of language writing such as the words, terms and

syntax. Cheng claimed that church Roman script should be mixed with Han characters in writing. Earlier works were written in Han-Roman mixed, including Cheng (1987; 1989a; 1990a). Cheng (1990a) was written partially in Han-Roman mixed. And later on, the essays were all written in Taigi. Cheng (1990a) believed Roman script has been more standardized, systemized and advantageous than the writing system of Han characters only. But he believed that a full Romanized writing would not be accepted in current Taiwanese society. There have been also difficulties if Taigi writing were composed of all Han characters, because Taigi has had many different words and phrases: it has not only retained the sound of ancient Han characters but also the Han characters contained in Taigi could be spoken in two ways. One of the ways is in reading the words from a written material and the other is in speaking casually. There are even sounds that cannot be written down in Han characters, and the amount of them is rather large. Taigi also contains ample exotic features from countries like Britain and Japan, Japanese Han characters and synaeresis terms. Thus he believed that a Han-Roman mixed writing style was just the solution to resolve the problems of Taigi writing when it came to special words and phrases. Cheng focused especially on church Romanized script as a part of the formal writing. This reduces the amount of usage of Han characters and can become a substitute for disputable words and phrases. Therefore a Taigi script can serve the purpose of indicating sounds and words and finally become a tool that is internationalized and modernized.

Khou Kek-tun received his PhD from Tokyo University, Japan. He majored in Oriental History Language and taught at Meiji University and Komazawa University, Japan. He also advocated something similar to a Han-Roman mixed writing style as well. Khou (1987) was all written in the Han-Roman mixed. Khou (1988) was also written partially in the Han-Roman mixed. These works of literature showed his

effectuation of Taigi script standardization, but mostly these books were still in Han characters. Khou (1998) mentioned ‘The direction of Taigi script standardization’, which has claimed the adoption of alphabetic writing and symbols to supplement Han characters. About 30% of Taiwanese words and phrases did not have a sound corresponding to any characters. Examples were onomatopoeia and many other exoticisms. The polysyllabic characteristics of the words and phrases were very difficult to handle with Han characters, but an alphabetic writing script could be adopted for use as phonetic symbol and writing. Furthermore, Han characters needed to have the aid of a tool such as phonetic notation. Nevertheless, no matter if it was measured by historical experience, applicable space or international standards, Romanization seemed to be the best consideration of all the possible choices. Khou Kek-tun might agree with Robert L. Cheng on orthography, which was a mixture of Han characters and Roman script, but he also thought that there should be some amendment made to the system of church Romanized script (Khou 1998).

In addition, Ang Ui-jin² also advocated a mixed writing style similar to Han-Roman mixed, but instead he put forward the idea that the phonetic transcription should use Hangul. As a writer, Ang (1986: 20-21) stated that the best method for Taigi standardization would be a method used by the Japanese and Koreans, which was a mixture of Han characters and phonetic transcription. He carried on by pointing out that Korean words were imitations of the characteristic design of Han characters, where one syllable corresponded to one Chinese character. If Han characters were to be phonetically transcribed, then Hangul was the most adequate system to use. For a Taigi script, currently none of the Hangul phonetic transcriptions were practicable, except for Han characters. Due to the restrictions regarding the establishment of the new style of Hangul and the practical consideration of the level of acceptance of the

general public, when he was writing Taiwanese he still used Han characters and annotated with Romanic phonetic notations after the words that were hard to read (Ang 1992: 137). When Taiwan was still under martial law in June 1986, he wrote with pure Taigi in the weekly publication *Liberal Taiwan* founded by the legislator, Jhu Gao-Jheng. That was his first time to use a Taigi script. (Lin 1997:78) In August 1989 he established the *Taigi Digest* to promote Taiwanese. He was very talented when it came to the selection of words to use in Taigi writing. The topics of concern he covered included Taigi script standardization, Taigi literature, languages, politics, local culture and ethnic groups. His relative works include, Ang (1986; 1987; 1992; 1995a,b), etc.

I think that the mixed writing style using Hangul and Han characters proposed by Ang Ui-jin has had high feasibility. Japan and Korea have both adopted similar methods in their language. In the earlier periods of both countries, they adopted only Han characters and used classical Han characters. They treated their own language characters as a low language and informal. But nowadays, they only partially use Han characters supplemented by phonetic transcriptions, which they invented traditionally, and the result is the script they are now using. Japan and Korea both pursued the independence of language writing and elevated their own language into official, high language. This has fully shown the subjective spirit of the nation's language literature. Regardless of the claims made by Cheng (1987) or Ang (1986), regarding Romanized or a mixed writing style using Han characters and Hangul respectively, they are all deemed as concrete contributions to Taigi script standardization and an aid to efforts to enable Taigi to become a high language.

4.1.2 The effectuation of Han characters only writing style

Scholars have talked a lot about having a theoretical basis for Taigi script standardization, but there have been only a few Taiwanese literary achievements, such as the authors Song Ze-Lei and Lin Yang-Min who promoted writing in actual Taiwanese in order to reach the goal of Taigi script standardization. Authors like A.D.Sakabulajo and Hu Min-Siang did not make special claims about standardization, but they have devoted themselves to the standardization of writing as well. The author Yang Cing-Cu edited dictionaries and Taiwanese chrestomathy and did his part regarding Taigi script standardization. Unlike the above scholars who advocated the Han-Roman mixed, at their first step of effectuation, these writers used full Han characters to write. In addition, where many schools at city or county level have promoted the teaching of the mother tongue, their chrestomathies are written primarily with Han characters and have phonetic notations as supplements.

Song (1987a) corrected several common mistakes made by the general public about Taigi script. (1) There are verbal sounds but no words. (2) Taigi script standardization would destroy the current unification phenomenon of language writing. (3). Language writing is only tool for communicating meanings. After Song's article was published, it promoted the combination of the two movements, Taigi literature and Taigi script standardization. In the preface of the long novel³ about 30,000 words, Song (1987b) mentioned how he wanted to use Taiwanese Han characters to write novels. He also agreed with the use of Romanized script for Taigi although its level of acceptance was relatively low. He also thought both the Han-Roman mixed and the Roman script only were good writing styles for Taigi script, but for the time being, he only suggested using Han characters.

The famous poet Lin (1988) talked about how there were originally two sets of

Taiwanese writing. One of them was Taiwanese writing with Han characters and the other was Taiwanese writing with Roman script. Since none of them were finalized, therefore it was still an issue of Taigi script standardization waiting to be resolved. But he insisted on a departure from the Han character system in order for the emergence of the flourishing development of culture to occur. He thought that Taiwanese writing ultimately had to discard Han characters and rebuilt script that were phonetic transcribed. Even if full phonetic transcription were not possible, it had to be established as the primary language for writing. The use of Han characters would have to be minimized and used only as a supplement. Currently, the use of Han characters was commonly accepted. The Han characters used are the original ones and they can be used to record any kind of the Han language. So, Lin proposed that in the initial stage of the reconstruction of Taiwanese writing, Han characters can be used. Finally, Lin (1988) stressed the point that no matter if it is Han characters or phonetic transcription, the best writing style should be changed from the old style to left-to-right horizontal one, and from top to bottom. Because of this goal set at the initial stage of the reconstruction of Taiwanese characters, he published *The Concise Taigi Dictionary* in 1991, strictly accompanied by a phonetic verification system. In addition, Lin (1992) was a collection of Taigi poetry and written in full Han character scripts with Mandarin as reference script. In 1995, he became the president of the Taiwanese Language and Literature Association and founded *The Gadang Taiwanese Literature Monthly*, which promoted the creation of Taiwanese literature.

There were also three writers who did not have special claim on the standardization of Taiwanese, but they have contributed a great deal of effort to the effectuation of Taiwanese writing. A.D.Sakabulajo under the Mandarin pseudonym Cheng Hui-Ying published Cheng (1991). This book was written with unique

Taiwanese Han characters. He believed that the issue of Taigi script standardization was a tough one to solve and so he temporarily used Han characters to write (Jheng 1991: 69). Hu Min-Siang, a writer that was in exile in America due to being placed on a blacklist in Taiwan during the martial law era, conducted a study of the history of the literature of Taiwan since 1980. In this history he investigated the debate about literary language form for Taiwan language and literature, which happened in 1930s. Also he read the Taiwanese works of literature by Lai He during that period. Then he began to investigate Taigi literature and edited the Mandarin edition of Hu (1989). Later the book of Hu (1995) was written with full Taiwanese Han characters. The contents of the book included prose, poetry and literary commentary. Yang Cing-Cu, in the later period of 1970s, was a typical representative of Taiwanese local writers. His major contribution towards Taigi script standardization was towards dictionaries and Taiwanese chrestomathies: Yang (1992; 1995a, b; 1995c). His dictionaries and chrestomathies are all supplemented with phonetic notations and some other special Taigi notations indicating Taiwanese Han characters. They are extremely helpful for the study of Taiwanese Han characters and writing Taigi. It is one of the phonetic notation tool books, which has to be used when reading chrestomathy with many Taiwanese characters.

The above mentioned writers all went from creating works of literature in Mandarin to using Taiwanese as their writing language. Although the writing is in Han characters, which were not standardized, these writers had an open attitude toward the standardization of Taigi. Their attitude was to reach the goal of Taigi script standardization. They have extended the spirit of the Unification of speech and writing since Japanese colonial period; that was to write in Taiwanese in order to fulfill its destiny of becoming a literary language.

4.1.3 The debate of Roman script writing style and phonetic notations

Actually, Taigi had ever been a literary language in 1880s. TiuN (1999) thought the Romanization movement in church community was the first Taigi language and literature movement. The first Roman script writing was Peh-oe-ji, used by the Presbyterian Church. In 1865, Dr. James Laidlaw Maxwell came to Taiwan to preach and introduced Peh-oe-ji, which also called church Romanized script. The publications of the church have included the Peh-oe-ji Bible, dictionaries and the newspaper *Tai-oan-Hu-siaN Kau-hoe-po*, which was established in 1885 and banned in 1969. There were not only religious publications, but also mathematics, nursing, philosophy and literature related publications. Although the tradition of church Romanized script is not as long-standing as that of Han characters and its range of usage is restricted to Christians only, the recorded documents about Taiwanese and Taigi literature have made a great contribution and left impressive information nonetheless. Along with some others, Robert L. Cheng was trying very hard to recover the tradition.

Lin Ji-Xiong is another one who advocated a Roman script only writing style. He has a PhD in chemistry from Case-Western Reserve University, America and is a chemistry professor at Cheng Kung University. He proposed ‘The writing style of Modern script’ in 1987. It is a writing style using a full Roman script, which has been promoted both in America and Taiwan. ‘The writing style of Modern script’ adopts a European-American writing style to write and the hyphen used in the church Roman script is removed in the words and phrases with letter tone marks being added instead. It was his claim to have a full spelling modern script. In order to promote this to the Taiwanese people who are accustomed to Han characters, he adjusted his course of

action in 1989 by providing a Phonetic-Han writing style also known as the mixed Han-Roman script writing style. His major works include Lin (1988; 1990a,b,c).

Owing to the different opinions of scholars regarding the phonetic notation system of Romanization, some new phonetic notation systems emerged during the period of 1987 to 1996. This has caused a lot of debates. In June 1990, when the DPP governed six counties or cities, a research conference on the issue of native language education was held at Academia Sinica. National and international professionals and scholars were called together to formulate a working phonetic notation system. But there were too many different opinions and the result was a lack of agreement (Ang 1990). In 1992, scholars from the Taiwan Languages and Literature Society suggested the TLPA (Taiwan Language Phonetic Alphabet) phonetic notation system which can be treated as a revised version of the Church Romanized script system and they recommended it to the Ministry of Education. In 1996, a professor named Chiang Yuang-Chin (Gang Ying-Zin) suggested the Daiyim style spelling system, which was a spelling scheme different to the church Romanized script and TLPA system. Later on, it was applied to Mandarin and Hakka languages.⁴ (Chiang 1996)

I believe that the Romanized writing style uses a kind of phonetic script and it will become increasingly used around the world. "It will be easier to incorporate loan words from other languages, especially English." (Scott & TiuN 2007:67) Although church Romanized script has a history of more than 150 years in Taiwan, this is still revolutionary thinking here in Taiwan. "The use of a phonetic script can be seen as supporting Taiwanisation⁵ or Desinicisation⁶." (Scott & TiuN 2007:67) Because the mindset of Han characters of Taiwanese society is very profound, it cannot be changed momentarily. The development of Taiwanese writing systems is deeply

influenced by the culture and traditions of the mainland and the National Language Policies of Taiwan. (Scott & TiuN 2007) Therefore, the general public prefers to use the writing style of full Han characters. Since there are many elements of the words and phrases of Taigi constituted partly of non-Han language or even exoticisms, the issue of writing with full Han characters will need to be overcome. Thus when there are parts of the writing of Taigi where Han characters cannot be used, Roman script can then be substituted. Thus Han-Roman mixed writing style is produced. Regardless of the system of writing style that the Taigi writing has had to follow, I believe that the process of exploration about the issue of Taigi script standardization will eventually enable the standardization of Taigi writing. This was a concrete course of action of pursuing high language status.

4.2 The investigation and implementation of vernacular education

4.2.1 The ideology of vernacular education

The debate about Taigi literature not only elicited the topics of concern about Taigi script standardization, but aspects of mother tongue education were affected as well. A mother tongue originally referred to the language that the children pick up from their parents at home. But Taiwanese parents have taught their children Mandarin, the language their children have used at school, instead of Taiwanese native language. Here we could see the gravity of the Mandarin-only policy and the urgency for vernacular education. The mother tongue is not only a language but it covers the implication of intellects of the ancestors, cultural values and the recognition of ethnic groups. Si (1998) thought since the moment of one's birth, the mother tongue spoken by the parents to their children has been equivalent to the objects back at home, ways of thinking and habits of living. These are powerful enough to cast an effect on the life of a child. Therefore, vernacular education is very

important to the growth of children. But the Mandarin-only policy imposed by the KMT and known as the Nation Language policy caused great harm to the native language. If things had continued, the native language would have been doomed to extinction.

In the 1980s, during the period of Taiwan democratization, activists in political movement often used the mother tongue as a tool to communicate public opinions. The goal of using the mother tongue in Taiwanese education subsequently appeared. In 1989, the DPP who governed six counties or cities started to promote vernacular education and bring mother tongue teaching into the school system. This was done to oppose the National Language Policy of using only Mandarin. I think that Taiwanese society by using only Mandarin has its family morals and interpersonal relationship destroyed, problems occurred in the passing-down of the culture and the recognition of the ethnic groups. People do not get to know each other better because of the unfamiliarity of languages between different ethnic groups. If children were punished for speaking their mother tongue, the personality development would be injured. These have been all the consequences after the depreciation of the mother tongue. If vernacular education existed, then the problems could be improved. Ang (1990) believed in substituting mother tongue language with native language. He thought that with the aid of native language education, the tendency to be distant from people, the cultural displacement, recognition between different ethnic groups could all be resolved and the errors left by the Mandarin-only policy could be corrected. In addition, he also mentioned the building of confidence in local culture by using native languages for education. Tang (1997) also thought that Taiwan has been a multi-dimensional society with multiple ethnic groups. As such the mother tongue has been an important cultural heritage for every group. In order to respect the cultural

heritage, to raise the spirit of democracy and to harmonize between groups, the wrong language policy should be removed.

Vernacular education not only has values culturally, but it also contributes to the work of bilingual education. Huang (1987) thought there have been three theoretical reasons why the mother tongue should be the teaching language: First, using the mother tongue of the children as the teaching language could retain the continuity of the ability of recognition. Second, using mother tongue as language, together with Mandarin could be used to prevent children from feeling a sense of repudiation and defeat. Third, worries about the effect that bilingual education might have on the teaching of the Mandarin have been overthrown already. Cheng (1988) thought that Taiwan has needed vernacular education for five reasons: (1) Being the improvement of interpersonal relationships, (2) The need for economical life, (3) The raising and retaining of personal dignity, (4) The requirement of the democratic politics, and (5) It has been an advantageous way to promote the learning of language and the process of bilingual education. I observe from the documents by Huang (1987) and Cheng (1988) that the so-called vernacular education has been a way to elevate the status of the mother tongue to be the language used in the schools. Through the process of becoming a school language, it can then obtain the same powerful status as the Mandarin and rank as a high language. It will not only improve the learning environment, but also improve the social morality relationships. A society filled with prosperity and harmony is created along with the construction of the value of multi-dimensional democracy.

Some people worry that because Taiwan is a society with many languages of different ethnic groups, if the education uses different mother tongues then the

country would fall apart. Actually, not only does the education of the mother tongue not lead to separation, but also it could unite the nation instead. This kind of education promotes unification because it is respectful to the languages spoken by every ethnic group. Ang (1989a) thought that the mother tongue would be a factor in the unification of the ethnic groups. Factors that will affect unification and harmony are those like mutual misunderstanding and disrespect to each other. If the mother tongue was given status as the language of education then the subjectivity of the native languages of Taiwan could be elevated to the level of the mother tongue as the high language characters. Shih and TiuN (2002:20) both said that “what the language represents is the phenomenon of politics and so it is rational to use politics to resolve the issue of language. If the issue is avoided, it will only prolong the existing inequality of the politics. Usually the issues of the ethnic groups of Taiwan are projected onto the issues of the languages. Therefore, in order to resolve the discord between the groups, a minimum requirement is to settle the difficult position that the language politic is in.”

4.2.2 The state of implementation of the vernacular education

In June, 1990 the DPP-controlled counties of Taipei, Yilan , Sinjhu , JhangHua, Gaosyong, and Pindong together with the Jiayi city government (which belonged to no party) held for the first time a research conference over “the issues of the native language education”.⁷ During the conference it was decided that ‘bilingual education’ would be used as one of the educational policies of the seven participating counties (Huang 2002). To effectuate the teaching of the mother tongue, the main jobs were to be the editing of text materials, the training of teacher resources and teaching activities. It was decided that once the mother tongue had entered into the school as a teaching language of the school, and if the textbooks were out and teachers were

trained, all these would indicate the movement of the mother tongue, from the status of the low language toward the goal of the high language. Below are the descriptions of the teaching of the mother tongue language pioneered by these three counties, Taipei, Yilan and Pindong.

Regarding textbook editing, the teaching of the mother tongue of Taipei County was carried out in cooperation with the Department of Education, the County cultural center and Sanchong city hall. In the cultural center, teacher's training classes in Taigi and Hakkanese were offered. This training of mother tongue teaching was intended to be long-term. The twenty or more completed trainees were then authorized to compile text materials in Taiwanese and Hakkanese. The texts were an introduction volume, first volume, second volume and the relative teacher's guide, six volumes in total. There was also the local chrestomathy of "Taipei County, our hometown" written in full Taigi. And together there were 13 volumes (Yu 1993). The department of education of Yilan County established the Promotion Committee of the native language in 1990 and also the editing committee of text materials. Yilan local writer Huang Chun-Min served as the convener of the committee. Local gentlemen, principals, deans and teachers of Yilan County who specialized in the teaching of native languages were invited to be commissioners, responsible for the edition of plans, activities and teachers guides. The teachers guide was characteristic of the teaching of native languages of Yilan; not only does the teaching comes with text materials, but there was also an accompanying teachers guide to offer the teachers complete teaching procedures. (Wun 1992) As to the editing of Pingdong mother tongue text materials, in 1992, there were two volumes for each of the four languages, Holo, Hakka, Paiwan and Rukai, eight volumes in total with ten tapes. In the four volumes of the text of "local teaching activities", there was one unit of mother tongue

teaching each in every volume. The orientation of the teaching of the mother tongue at this stage was to try to reach the goal of being close to real life interesting and localized. The content of the “Pindong County Mother Tongue Text” was based on local culture and vernaculars (Su 1992).

And about the training of the teachers and the teaching activities, since 1993, Taipei County has promoted the all-round teaching of the mother tongue. And in order to provide training to the teachers, study class of the teachers of Taigi and Hakkanese were offered in the Culture centers. There were three stages, the teachers’ class, intermediate class and the advanced class. More than 400 teachers who had finished the training are now teaching the mother tongue in different schools. Schools in Taipei County have arranged the time of club activity as a free choice of class either for Taigi or for Hakkanese. Mother tongue text materials were printed and sent to every school. (Deng 1995) On March 1991, Yilan County offered nine consecutive sessions of Text Material Study Conference for schools principles, deans and class teachers. The participants were more than a thousand people. Every elementary school from grade one to grade six in Yilan County arranged one of the classes of Language or club activity time as a fixed teaching session of the mother tongue. And in junior high, the teaching is offered in the form of a club, effectuated in the first and second grade and divided into groups based on their interests. (Wun 1992) In 1991, the Pindong County government appointed four different schools to be in charge of the teaching experiment of Minnan, Hakka, Paiwan and Rukai language. The schools were also in charge of the raising of instructor, handling demonstrations and observation of teaching, effectuating series of relative competitions and the results of the teaching of mother tongue was announced in every part of the county. (Wang 2002) In 1992, second semester from grade three to grade six of all county have mother tongue

lessons as their group activity time. (Su 1992) The effectuation of the mother tongue teaching has forced the government to face the pressure of localization. And the Ministry of Education finally implemented a 'local teaching activities' lesson once every week. The content of the lesson include History, Geography, Science, Art and Native language.⁸

4.2.3 The issues faced by the teaching of the mother tongue

The first issue to be mentioned was the mistaken ideas about mother tongue teaching that are present in society. We started to discuss about the topic from the effects of the Mandarin-only policy. Generally speaking, most people are used to speaking Mandarin or they might involuntarily feel that the use of the mother tongue is low class, informal-like and treat the mother tongue as a low language. They then abandon the need to continue studying the mother tongue. They might also think that the learning of a second language would cause a chaotic state of mind for the children, and thus is no good for the study of the children's normal lessons. Many parents give up the teaching of the mother tongue at home. In fact, the truth is the opposite to what they might think. An extra language for the children will give rise to another cultural value perspective and it is a positive thing for the thinking of the children. Huang (1995) thought "A child who processes bilingual ability will be more flexible with regards to his/her thinking and inference than those who can only speak one language. This cognitive flexibility affects directly the development of a child's intelligence and it contributes positively to the advancement of a child's study". (Huang 1995: 342)

The general public typically had mistaken ideas about vernacular education and even the county governments, which were supporting the vernacular education. The county governments restricted vernacular education to only one session of teaching weekly in every group activity time. The best teachers of vernacular education could do at the

most was the random teaching along with some other subjects. The principle for the county governments was not to influence the normal Mandarin teaching.

Imperceptibly, this displayed the esteemed status of the Mandarin and vernacular education was seen as an aside, and as a low language.

The second issue to be mentioned was the unwillingness of the government to effectuate the teaching of the mother tongue. Since the general public knew very little about the vernacular education, there was no way for the society to urge the government on the effectuation of the mother tongue policy. The once-a-week session of the local teaching activities, which contained History, Geography, Science, Art and Native language, was only an evasive action for the people of Taiwan from the government. The emphasis of the lesson was local-related teaching and not the mother tongue teaching. The lesson was once-a-week session, and native language had only eight minutes of the total time allocated, which, I believe, was simply not enough for the teaching of the mother tongue. Chiang (1996) thought that the once-a-week session of the 'local teaching activities' seemed to have matched the cry of the culture of multiple languages superficially, but practically the result would be a very limited one. The future teaching of the language education of Taiwan would not be ascertained on the basis of language equality and the road to multiple language society would be blocked. Moreover, there were no colleges to cooperate with the teaching of the training of local teachers. The establishment of the related mother tongue literature research was tardy as well. It was therefore hard to believe the sincerity of the central government with regards to the vernacular education. Up to 1996, only one Taiwan literature graduate program was established, which was subordinate to China Literature Institute of Providence University in Taichung County. Other colleges of Taiwan literature waited until the following years to establish such

programs such as the Taiwan Literature College of the Aletheia University and the Master's Program of the Institute of Advanced Studies of Taiwan language and language-literature education of National Hsinchu University of Education started its enrolment in 1997.⁹

The last issue to be mentioned was the issue with regards to the standardization of the written forms of the vernacular education and it was an issue that needs urgent attention. Please refer to the first section of this chapter about related topics on the investigation of the issue of standardization of the Taiwanese written forms. Since Taigi has represented the majority of the languages in Taiwan, when it came to the editing of the text, Yilan county was the only exception which insists on the 'no script, no phonetic symbols' for the teaching of the vernacular education, and counties like Taipei or Pingdong printed Han characters with their Taiwanese teaching text materials. Taipei County used Romanization to annotate while Pingdong County used phonetic symbols. All the other counties were inconsistent on the use of Romanization, TLPA or phonetic symbols.¹⁰ (Dong 1998) Since Han characters and phonetic symbols were not standardized, Yilan County did not use the written forms of the mother-tongue text. However, this did bring out the issue of the written form and made the issue more prominent. TiuN (2003) criticized the mother tongue is still treated as a low language and has no literate education in the school although it has included in the regular curriculum. Thus, TiuN (2003) suggested the literate education of native languages in the regular curriculum. It could reserve the languages and establish the equality of all ethnic groups and the ideal society of the multi-culture and the justice.

4.3 The investigation of the language policy

4.3.1 The National Language Policy of the external political power

This thesis talked about the dark age of the post-war development of Taigi as mentioned in Chapter 2.2, and the Mandarin-only policy imposed by the KMT also known as the National Language Policy was also discussed. This section focused on the changes and effects of the National Language Policy after the lifting of martial law and also discussed the kind of language policy that Taiwan might need. The previous language policies were imposed either by the Japanese or by the KMT government. It was thought that by the use of the dominator own language, the people under the domination would be assimilated. After 42 years of ruling of Taiwan, in 1937, a language assimilation policy known as the Japanization movement was implemented severely in Taiwan. In 1940, the percentage of Taiwanese people who spoke Japanese was about only 51%. When the KMT took over the political power of Taiwan, the strict National Language Policy was immediately effective, and 46 years after KMT domination began, in 1991 the percentage of people who spoke Mandarin was as high as 90%, (Huang 1995). We could therefore see that the Nation Language policy was indeed a very powerful one. No wonder that Ang (1989a) thought that the effectiveness of the KMT's National Language Policy was far beyond than that of Japanization movement. It was the most arbitrary language policy ever imposed from all the other policies imposed by external dominators.

Unfortunately, the National Language Policy was not abandoned even after lifting martial law. There were only minor amendments made to the policy itself. In August 1987, the Ministry of Education issued an order to revoke the punishment of children or students speaking Taiwanese at school, but still nothing has changed in the Mandarin-only policy. In 1990, Lee Teng-Hui was elected as the first Taiwanese president of Taiwan, but the monopoly of Mandarin was still in existence. On July

1993, the Legislative Yuan approved the repealing of the 20th article of the Radio And Television Act, which imposed the restriction of using dialects on TV and radio stations (Huang 1995). However the Mandarin-only policy was still in effect. In addition, although in 1996, the Ministry of Education implemented the local teaching activity session, the session was limited to only once a week and the native language only occupied about 1/5 of the allocated time (8 minutes). This simply showed the unwillingness of the government to effectuate the vernacular education (see also ch2). It was done only to partially provide its people with satisfaction.

If we allow the policy of Nation Language to exist without intervention, we believe that the native language might suffer from language death. We observe that Mandarin has corroded into every family and many young parents are incapable of speaking the mother tongue. Young parents have the fear that their children may not get a good start and so stop teaching them the mother tongue. As a result, Mandarin used at school has become the mother tongue for many children nowadays. Thus the native language has been left with no room for existence even at home. Ang (1989a) said that because Mandarin education adopts direct pedagogy, if students do not speak Mandarin well, then their grades would not be good. Many families have volunteered to be the “national language-only family”¹¹. Lin (1997) thought that although the society of Taiwan has been democratized and there has been no more suppression of the native language, the Taiwanese people who had been enslaved have become indolent when defending the frontline of culture. This has placed the native language into a state of natural death.

In 1944, before the government of KMT took over Taiwan, the plan to use Mandarin in order to assimilate Taiwanese people into Chinese was already drafted.

While China at the time did not vigorously promote the Mandarin language on the Chinese mainland, Taiwan was already forced to implement the National Language Policy (see also ch2.2). Li (1996) thought that no matter if it was KMT or the Communist party, the language policy they effectuated in China was a language policy with Chinese subjectivity to Chinese people. But the language policy imposed by the KMT on Taiwanese people was somehow forced.

I believe that in order to recover the dignity of the language of every ethnic group, we have to begin with the recovery of the status of the mother tongue. According to the analysis of the position of Taiwanese language by Huang (1995) (see also ch1.4), the status of the Taiwanese native languages is lower than that of westernized Mandarin and Mandarin. The language policy of the colonial political power forced Taiwanese people to learn the language spoken by the colonial rulers, and in the process the language spoken by them was treated as a high language. That dominating language was used on formal occasions like in parliament or diplomatic situations. It was also the standardized language to be used in schools, the media and official documents. The Taiwanese native languages were then regarded as low languages. The usage and the chance for development of Taigi was restricted, since it was only used in informal occasions such as inside a house, private meetings or folk activities. In addition, the writing was not standardized. Although about 75% of the Taiwanese population is Holo ethnic group, because education is carried out in Mandarin, the number of young people who speak Holo language has decreased markedly. Any Taiwan native language has to get rid of its status of being a low language, and the government needs to give up the language policy imposed by the colonial political powers, the so-called Mandarin-only policy, in order to construct a language policy with subjectivity.

4.3.2 Language policy with subjectivity

A language policy with subjectivity is built on a fair and rational system. It is a language policy with Taiwanese native languages as its primary consideration. This allows the native languages to be rooted in the culture and hence developed. Citizens with multiple language capability can then be raised and correspond to the natural ecology of Taiwan's multiple languages culture. Ang (1989a) thought the harm done to the ecology of Taiwan language culture must be healed and man-made interferences must be stopped. He believed that native languages should be allowed to take their natural course, to develop with subjectivity and flow while blending in. Cheng (1990a) agreed with the policy of language unification in the bilingual forms. For instance, in areas where no Mandarin is spoken, both the Mandarin and mother tongue should be granted their legitimate status. In these areas, Mandarin could then be learned as a second language. In areas where Mandarin is mainly spoken, Mandarin could be the only formal language, and people who know how to speak the Mandarin could not be required to learn another language except when they move to a non-Mandarin area. Huang insisted "the ideal National Language Policy should stand firm on the ground of justice and distribute the language resources of the nation. The policy should fulfill the need of the language as a tool and satisfy the cling of affections" (Huang 1995: 447). He carried on by saying that the cling of affections refers to the effectuation of the vernacular education, this is the basic language attitude; the need as a tool refers to the strengthening of the education of common language and exoticism.

The passive conduct of the language policy with subjectivity is the elimination of the Mandarin-only policy while the positive conduct should be the rescue of the

native language culture of the disadvantaged groups, especially the aboriginal languages. Taiwan is a country where many different languages are spoken. Not only does it have the Han language systems of Holo, Hakka and Mandarin, but there are also thirteen aboriginal languages belonging to the Austronesian language systems. They are cultural assets of Taiwan, which are all hard to come by. If the society with multiple languages is to be effectuated, then the development of the language culture of every ethnic group has to be respected in order for ethnic groups to respect and tolerate each other. Conduct like this agglomerates groups and produces unified living communities. This further promotes the prosperity of the society financially and results in the advancement of the society as a whole. (Shih & TiuN 2002: 2) said, “In a country with multiple ethnic groups and on behalf of the minority, the existence of its language represents the lifeline of a co-existence. And the status of the language symbolizes the equality of power between every ethnic group”. Cheng (1990a) thought that the language policy of every nation has started to notice the difference in languages. Before, it was agreed that the elimination of differences provides political unification, but now tolerance, respect or even admiration is acceptable. Only if the language culture of every ethnic group is treated as equal, can harmony emerge among different ethnic groups, just like in Switzerland, Singapore or Canada.

However, in order to be respectful of the differences between the languages of ethnic groups, there must be assurance for the constructed system. For every nation in the world, if the nation is filled with different languages of the ethnic groups, the official language policy will generally be used. There are still some that have even used the language of the minority as their official language. This tolerance of the language promotes unification politically. In order to protect the language culture of the disadvantaged ethnic groups, Huang (1995) thought that at least two designs of

system were required: (1) The status as an official language must be given constitutionally to the language of the disadvantaged ethnic groups. (2) Within the area of the disadvantaged ethnic groups, (area-dependent) the official language status must be given and the language used as the teaching language. Now we will discuss some of the cases in which they have used the language of the disadvantaged ethnic groups as their official language. The population of Romansh only occupies about 1% of the total population of Switzerland but the language is one of the official languages. Swedes make up about 7% of the total population of Finland but their language shares the same status as the official language, Finnish. The population who speak Tamil comprises less than 5% of the total population of Singapore, but still it is one of the four official languages. Irish-speakers are only about 2% of the total population, but it is also an official language along with English in the Republic of Ireland (Huang 1987). Although the population ratio of the languages of the disadvantaged ethnic groups is little in these civilized countries, the language is nevertheless treated as the official language.

We can see the respect given to the disadvantaged ethnic groups from the above examples, and we should really learn from those and make them a model for Taiwan as well. Taiwan native languages should all be given the status of official languages and be announced as teaching languages. This is to be done so that we can raise confident citizens with dignity just like those developed countries. Taiwan has become a democratic society, and the people need to be equipped with knowledge, and the conscious of being a host.

4.4 The language development of other countries as a model

The debate of Taigi literature elicited topics of concern such as the

standardization, vernacular education and language policy. This is similar to the post-war countries, which have also been colonized before. Just like in Chapter 3, through the observations made by Creole in Haiti, Swahili of Tanzania and Hindi of India, I will use these examples as the model for the development of native languages in Taiwan.

4.4.1 The process of the script standardization of the Haitian Creole

In the early period, there were debates about the spelling method of Creole, but a final unified version was published. In 1941, an Irish priest named Ormonde McConnell based on the literacy work of Frank Laubach, produced *The McConnell-Laubach orthography*. This spelling method purposely excluded the use of the French spelling method, and he instead designed IPA letters corresponding to one character with one sound. As expected, this method enraged the elites of Haiti and they opposed the idea of making Haitian Creole a high language. Some other intellectuals from Haiti agreed with this method of spelling, but they further thought about the requirement of the accommodation of high and low language (Valdman 1968).

Charles-Fernand Pressoir developed a method different than that of the McConnell-Laubach orthography. This method not only retained the bidirectional correspondence between phonemes and graphemic units, but also the French customary practices on spelling symbols. The Pressoir orthography did not change fundamentally, and so was used by government educational departments and literacy lesson offered by Christian and Catholic schools. Pressoir also pointed out that the main drawback of the McConnell-Laubach orthography was the bad selection of speech sounds. Pressoir thought that the replacement of urban speech sounds with

remote speech sounds was the wrong choice for standardization. He believed that the urban speech sounds of Creole are closer to that of the original speech sounds.

Although linguistics analyzed Creole as a fine language, but the standardization was been put off for more than 25 years (Valdman 1968).

When Haitian Creole finished its method of spelling, the work of the codes was not yet complete and was delayed for many years. Although the constitution of 1987 assured its language status, its usage in literature was only minor. Therefore it was tough for Creole to replace the status of French in Haiti. This is the difficult position a low language can be in if the language wanted to become the high language. There is an obvious gap in the process of Taigi script standardization when compared to Creole. Haitian Creole and French have the same phonetics system and vocabulary, the difference is on the characteristics of the grammar. This is pretty similar to the relationship between Taigi and Mandarin too. But, Creole soon had its unified orthography. The emphasis of their debate was on the selection of speech sounds. In contrast, the written form of Taigi still has not been decided yet, till today. Government has only announced the phonetics symbol system and no standards on the use of the Han characters too. It is a luxury to even think about the idea of having codification for Taigi. There is no official language status for Taigi. I believe, while being the same low language, Haitian Creole has its status as an official language, but under the competition of French, its development has been slow. Taigi has no official language status and is still under the monopoly of Mandarin, the road of Taigi standardization appears to be a very long one.

4.4.2 The state of vernacular education of Swahili in Tanzania

In the process of a low language becoming a high language, the difficult position

faced by Swahili should be used particularly as the model for other languages. Unlike the language of Creole, which is used by majority of Haiti, Swahili is used only by merely 10% of the population but the language is valued very much by the government. Government educational departments and community culture departments are involved deeply in the development of Swahili. From the Ministry of Education to every local school, they value education using the language of Swahili. They have not only focused on the application of the language in the realms of mathematics and science at elementary level, but also on the language amendments and examinations at junior high level as well. There is also a possibility to prolong the teaching of the language until the entrance test of university. (Whiteley 1968) Even so, Swahili at present has stopped being taught at the elementary level¹² due to the lack of vocabularies, text, literature works and teachers. (Fasold 1984)

First, the problem was caused by the insufficiency of vocabularies. Even at the level of elementary schools, the Swahili vocabularies to translate scientific terms are seriously lacking. Thus the topics in which one can have a discussion about in Swahili are limited. People will think of Swahili as a language without efficiency. Many lessons are conducted in English. And everyone expects to use English to have more in-depth conversations.

The next problem is the text. The texts of Swahili are out-dated. Until now, there have been very few texts that are written beyond the junior high level. The reason is that the elites preferred to write in English rather than Swahili. People with ability and enthusiasm do not have the time. And then there is the lack of literary works. There are no good literary works in Swahili that can match the works in English and no works worthy of being a guide for the young to emulate.

Finally, there is the problem with competent teachers. After the nation declared independence, teachers who teach Swahili at school are not the regular teachers like before the independence. These teachers are usually immigrants who have been exiled from overseas or teachers from some other subjects. They can teach Swahili for many reasons because Swahili cannot be used in Science subjects. Therefore community development and national cultural department turned its orientation into the development of the national culture and established numerous culture committees to encourage people to speak Swahili (Whiteley 1968).

The above is the dilemma faced by Swahili on the way from a low language becoming a high language. Although there are many difficulties in its development, both the government and its people treat Swahili as the pride of the nation. When we apply the case of the language development of Swahili to Taiwanese mother tongue teaching, there are many points worthy of our reflection. Mother tongue teaching in Taiwan is allocated only one hour per week whereas Swahili has three hours allocated time weekly. Swahili faced the problems of vocabulary insufficiency, lack of texts and literary works and the insufficiency of teachers training. Taiwanese did not suffer more than Swahili. The elites of Taiwanese have problems similar to those of Tanzania. These problems are the preference of the Mandarin of the people and the unwillingness of the learning of the mother tongue language. But more than 75% of the population speaks Taigi in Taiwan. There seem to be no problems with the amount of vocabulary and no issues with the training of teachers. Furthermore, there are some accumulated literary works in Taigi, whether it is classical Han literature, Taiwanese vernacular or modern literature. The conditions of the codes of Taigi are not bad at all, but because of the insufficient recognition of the mother language of its people and

the government, I suspect the road for Taiwanese to turn from low language to high language is rather a very long one.

4.4.3 The efforts of the standardization of Hindi in India

I believe that in the process of turning from the low language to the high language of Hindi in India, the example set by the Hindi language is worthy of a model for Taiwan to learn. The rise of the Hindi in India aided by not only the HSS organization, which helped the unified standardization of the language, mentioned in Chapter three, but also many scholars who have also helped this situation. They encouraged the literary language, and were also of great influence in the language projects of the India government. Combining all these factors, Hindi was made the official language of the nation. English may still be playing its part, but more and more official business is adopting the use of Hindi. In order to develop the language of Hindi, whether the State government or the central government all have language committees set up to manage the construction of the professional technical terms (Gupta & Gumperz 1968).

Many dictionaries were published because of this reason. The government department of technical terms was established in 1950 and was ready to construct more than 350,000 technical terms. In 1963, 290,000 terms were completed. In addition, many new departments were established in order to proceed with the construction of the files of the new technical terms. There were also glossaries, dictionaries or encyclopedia edited and published either directly by the government or by the appointed local organizations. In 1956, the organization Narari Pracharani Sabha, which promotes Hindi, was appointed for the editing and writing of a series of encyclopedia. Six volumes were published in a period of ten years. These technical

terms are all easy to understand, in fact, they are close to the literary language style as promoted by HSS. All these newly created technical terms came from the language of Sanskrit of India, and they resisted the effects of English and Urdu (Gupta & Gumperz 1968). Not only are the written form and script of Hindi unified, but also more can be seen from the compilation of the codes. All these ensured the status of Hindi as a high language and its dignity.

From the contribution made by HSS regarding standardization, to the compilation of dictionaries and terms of the government, they all originated from the same source, which is the language Sanskrit. I believe that everything the Indian government and people have done is to get rid of the effects cast by the British government on India. They were trying to develop a language with subjectivity. The Haitian Creole and Swahili of Tanzania have shown no such discreetness with respect to the development of the structure of the codes when compared to the India government and its people. The Hindi is a successful case. If we look back on the environment of Taigi, the work of the integration of the script is dreadfully slow. No matter if it is the phonetics system or the claim of the Han characters there are always deviations in the power of the folk groups. No common consensus is reached in the claim of the written forms. Therefore, the compilation of every dictionary is based on their own claims. The government might be starting the work of phonetic symbols systemization and Han character standardization, but the orientation of the native languages is still an uncertainty. The language policy imposed by the government still has the element of the Mandarin-only language policy. It would be too much of an expectation to say that Taigi can be developed as Hindi has been, by the India government and people.

Brief summary

In order to pursue the status as a literary language, the Taigi literature debate has elicited some related topics of concern, such as the issue of Taigi script standardization, the investigation of the vernacular education and language policy, etc. These topics of concern have elevated the mother tongue significantly into the path of the high language.

In addition to the above investigations, the Taigi literature debate has also produced some implications for the future development of Taiwan. Basically it can be categorized into three aspects: (1) Extension of the room of existence for Taigi literature. This ensures the existence of the language of Holo, and the development of the language's functionality. (2) Striving into the high language-The dilemma and the self-conscious movement of the language culture of aboriginal and Hakka groups. (3) The promotion of the balanced development of localization and globalization. I will discuss these three aspects in detail in chapter 5.

Endnotes:

¹ Ong Iok-tek (1924-1985) claimed that Roman script and Han characters were mixed in the Taigi writing system in an earlier period of development. He was awarded a PhD in Chinese Literature from Tokyo University in Japan, later becoming a professor of Meiji University. In 1964, at his final lecture on *Taiwanyu Jiangzuo* [*Taiwanese Lecture*], he mentioned his ideas regarding script standardization. He thought a script with full Roman script would be hard to read, but the inclusion of Han characters would make it easier to read. However, difficulties arose because it was hard to use full Han characters to express Taiwanese words and concepts. Hence, he suggested using Han-Roman mixed writing system. This was Ong

Iok-tek's assertion regarding Taigi script standardization made in his old age. He never formally presented a mixed Han-Roman script, however, and this idea only became popular after the 1980s when Robert L. Cheng promoted. (Hong 1992: 16-17)

² Ang Ui-jin received his PhD degree in Linguistics from National Tsing Hua University in 2003. He served as the first chair of the Taiwanese Language and Literature department of National Taichung University in 2004. His major interests are linguistics and folk literature. His specialized areas of research include: sociolinguistics, phonology, Minnanyu cultural heritage learns, Minnanyu historical phonology, Minnanyu dialectology, and civil literature.

³ See Song (1987c)

⁴ The Taipei City government implemented the 'Tongyong Pinyin Romanization System' in February 1998. The Executive Yuan announced the 'Taiwan Mandarin Tongyong Pinyin Scheme' in August 2002. The Ministry of Education announced the 'Taiwan Hakkanese Tongyong Pinyin Scheme' on February 27, 2003. However, the Taigi Romanization scheme was different with the Ministry of Education announcing the 'Taiwan Minnanyu Romanization System' on October 14, 2006.

⁵ Taiwanisation is the assertion of stressing the subjectivity of Taiwan.

⁶ Desinicisation means to reduce the influence of the Chinese language and culture. See Chiung (2005).

⁷ This conference planned to make the creation of a system of phonetic symbols feasible, but it failed to do so. (see ch4.1)

⁸ In 2000, the local languages of Minnanyu, Hakkanese and various indigenous languages were included in a required course from grade one to six at elementary schools and as an elective course in junior high schools. These classes consisted of one forty-minute session a week.

⁹ Taiwan literature departments and institutes at university level established after 1997 included the following: Cheng Kung University, Chung Shan Medical University, Taichung University, Tsing Hua University, Taipei University of Education, Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan University, Chung Cheng University, Chung Hsing University, and so on. (Chiung 2006)

¹⁰ Up to now, The Ministry of Education only suggested the Taiwan Minnanyu Romanization System and didn't announce it as a standard one. Neither did Taiwanese Han characters. Most publications juxtapose Han characters with Roman script and the phonetic symbols used include the national phonetic alphabet, the Tongyong Romanization System or the Taiwan Minnanyu Romanization System.

¹¹ Taiwanese were encouraged to speak the 'National Language' during the Japanization movement in the Japanese colonial period. Those families who spoke Japanese all day would enjoy the privilege of being a 'National Language Family'. That meant they had to abandon their own mother tongue completely. In addition to a signboard shown on the front door of the house honoring them, they could also enjoy extra treatment like food subsidies. (Li & Lin 2003b) However, at that time less than 1% of the population joined the 'National Language Family' program. During the KMT regime this kind of 'National Language Family' program was not used but the ratio of Mandarin speaking between two generations increased by up to 51% in Taipei City, based on the investigations of Huang (1987) (Cited from Li 1996)

¹² In the article of Rubagumya (1991) speculated that although Swahili had successfully been promoted as the medium of primary and adult education, at secondary and tertiary levels of education, its position was still unsteady.