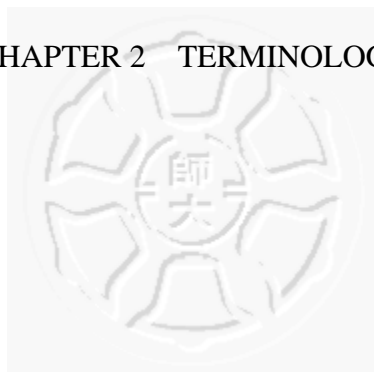


CHAPTER 2 TERMINOLOGY



The relevant terms in the discussions and studies of Taiwan Mandarin were not unified in previous literatures. The present study defines these terms as follows.

2.1 Taiwanese Mandarin

Taiwanese Mandarin refers to the Southern-Min accented Mandarin. This is mainly because Southern Min has the largest population among the language groups in Taiwan; the people as well as language of Southern Min are thus generally named Taiwanese. It is noteworthy that equalizing Southern Min with Taiwanese has been recently criticized as one type of Southern Min chauvinism. Thus the overgeneralization of Southern Min to Taiwanese in Taiwan is gradually waning.

Taiwanese Mandarin, in many aspects, is phonologically affected by Southern Min.³ Since the speakers of Taiwanese Mandarin acquire Mandarin as a second language and usually speak it only when speaking to non Southern-Min speakers,

³ For details, see section 3.4.

Southern Min remains the daily language they can most comfortably manage. These people are relatively aged in the population in Taiwan. In general, Taiwanese Mandarin is a stigmatized variety of Mandarin because for decades “Standard Mandarin” had been exclusively promoted for decades in the education system, as well as the mass media. Cheng (1997, p.IH:39) analogized Taiwanese Mandarin⁴ with ebonics in that both maintained unique structures and systems, but were stigmatized and not officially recognized.

2.2 Taiwan Mandarin/ *Guoyu*

Taiwan Mandarin, like Taiwanese Mandarin, also refers to a variety of Mandarin spoken in Taiwan. The differences between these two varieties lie in the phonological features and the status. As described above, Taiwanese Mandarin is stigmatized, but Taiwan Mandarin is not. Contrastively, Taiwan Mandarin refers to the Mandarin natively spoken by people in Taiwan, particularly the young people. The Southern Min features that stigmatized Taiwanese Mandarin are in general no longer observable in Taiwan Mandarin. However, Taiwan Mandarin, due to its constant contacts with local languages in Taiwan, remains distinct from the Mandarin spoken in China, and has developed its own stable linguistic system. The speakers of Taiwan Mandarin are

⁴ Though Cheng (1997) adopted the term “Taiwan Mandarin”, the features discussed in that study are more properly categorized under Taiwanese Mandarin.

generally bilingual of Taiwan Mandarin and (one of) their parents' first language(s), but with better capability of Mandarin. Some younger speakers are even Mandarin monolinguals. The ethnicity of Taiwan Mandarin speakers can hardly be recognized via their Mandarin accents.

Guoyu, literally meaning “national language”, refers to the “Standard Mandarin” taught at schools in Taiwan. It was mainly modeled after Beijing Mandarin, especially at the phonological level, but with some modifications. However, the idealized Beijing Mandarin “standard” has never pervaded Taiwan, probably due to the relatively small number of native Beijing Mandarin speakers among the Mandarin promoters in Taiwan, and the frequent contacts between Mandarin and Taiwan local languages (Cheng 1985). In Taiwan, the “myth” that Standard Mandarin roughly equals Beijing Mandarin has gradually shifted to the reality of the existence of Taiwan Mandarin. In the present study, *Guoyu* and Taiwan Mandarin are used interchangeably.

2.3 *Putonghua*

In the present study, *Putonghua*, literally meaning “common languages”, loosely refers to the Standard Mandarin promoted and spoken in China. As *Guoyu*, *Putonghua* was mainly modeled after Beijing Mandarin.

2.4 *Benshengren*(本省人)

The ethnic groups in Taiwan can be broadly categorized into four groups, They are Southern Min, Hakka, Mainlander, and Aborigines. As Southern Min has the largest population among these four groups, Southern Min people are usually overgeneralized as Taiwanese, or *Benshengren*, literally meaning “the people of this province” with “this province” referring to “Taiwan”. They are the descendents of the Chinese immigrants from Southern Min dialect areas of Fujian (also named Min) Province during the period of late 17th to late 19th century.

2.5 *Waishengren* (外省人)

Waishengren, literally meaning “the people from other provinces”, refers to Mainlanders, or the Chinese immigrants to Taiwan after World War II and their descendents. The first generation of *Waishengren* are from various dialect areas in China. In other words, Standard Mandarin, the language that had been promoted in China since early 20th century is not the first language of most of the first generation of *Waishengren*.

However, politically and communicatively, Mandarin, the national language promoted by a national government policy, has been aligned to *Waishengren*. The

large-scaled immigration of Waishengren to Taiwan was politically activated, and a large portion of the first generation Waishengren then started to work in the government, as school teachers, in military service, or other governmental institutes. Politically, Waishengren thus generally adopt Mandarin as their language. Communicatively, although most of the first generation Waishengren are not native speakers of Beijing Mandarin, the closest Mandarin dialect to Standard Mandarin, many of them are native speakers of various dialects of Mandarin. Mandarin, in a broad sense, naturally becomes the lingua franca among Waishengren. Contrastively, the local languages in Taiwan, mainly southern Chinese languages, are geographically and etymologically more distant to Standard Mandarin. Thus, in terms of political and linguistic aspects, Waishengren are generally associated with Mandarin. In other words, the linguistic background of Waishengren has been overgeneralized and they are thus regarded as the speakers of Standard Mandarin, the code promoted by the government.

It is noteworthy that since the term Waishengren carries the modifier “*Wai*”, literally meaning “outside”, implying exclusivity and alienation, some friendly new terms have been coined recently to refer to Waishengren, such as *xin1yi2min2* (the new immigrant 新移民) and *xin2zhu4min2* (the new resident 新住民). The current study still adopts the term Waishengren instead of such new terms because they are,

comparatively, not as widely used as Waishengren. Furthermore, the ethnic standoff between Benshengren and Waishengren has been significantly reduced to nearly in-existent among the people of Taiwan. It is believable that most people of Taiwan, as the current study, simply neutrally use these two terms as proper nouns when ethnicity is referred.