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RAPID LARGE SCALE INTRA-NATIONALITY LANGUAGE SHIFT IN HONG KONG 1949-1971¹

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ABSTRACT

According to Tsou (1978), post-1949 Hong Kong has evolved from a multi-dialectal society to a Cantonese-speaking society, and that not only is the scale of the shift relatively big, its pace is also unusually fast. In addition there appears to be significant differences in the rate of shift among the four dialect groups identified in the study. However a validation of Tsou's observations and a more precise estimation of the pace and scale of the shift have been hampered by (1) the inherent constraints of census data used by Tsou, (2) the loose and inconsistent use of dialect-group labels and (3) the absence of a direct study of the groups concerned. This paper reports the findings of our attempts to address these issues via documentary (census and historical) evidence, and a sociolinguistic survey conducted from 2005-07 among members of the groups concerned. Specifically, findings from our study of the documentary evidence largely corroborate Tsou's observations as they indicate that (1) Cantonese-speakers' share of the population increased from somewhere between 51.8% and 57.2% *circa* 1949 to 88.2% in 1971; (2) a significant differential rate in the groups' shift to Cantonese is in evidence albeit the number of dialect groups involved should be seven instead of the aforementioned four. Findings of our sociolinguistic survey of six of the seven groups indicate that (1) bilingualism is in evidence among most immigrant (G-0) interviewees, suggesting the shift is already in progress among them; (2) the shift to Cantonese with the corresponding loss of native-tongue proficiency is relatively complete among most G-1 and G-2 interviewees but (3) there are sufficient difference in native-tongue retention among the groups to rank them according to this ability in descending order as follows: Weitou, Kejia, Minnan, Chaozhou, Siyi and Shanghainese. Moreover the survey data indicate that (4) the shift took place with a relative absence of linguism, and that (5) it might have been facilitated by an

apparent multiplicity in the number of factors that the survey participants use to define their nationality. Initial analysis of the data also indicates that the groups' settlement patterns might contribute to the differential rate of shift. It is further observed that Cantonese is not indigenous to Hong Kong, and that this shift may develop in tandem with the emergence of the Hong Kong identity. The shift may also be unique in the context of Modern China as it involves the replacement of the native tongues of both indigenous and immigrant populations by another non-indigenous dialect-group of the same nationality.

SUBJECT KEYWORDS

Cantonese

Hong Kong & Chinese identity

Language shift & maintenance

Linguism

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Sociolinguistics

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the Study

When speakers of different languages come into long-term, sustained contact in a given society, a probable outcome is that speakers of a particular language may change the habitual use of their language to another language, a phenomenon termed language shift by Uriel Weinreich in 1953 (1968, 68). In many situations, especially those involving immigrants, the shift may take three generations or between 60 and 90 years to complete (*cf.* Fishman *et al.* 1971; Fishman 1991). Language shifts may take place between different nationalities (Fishman 1972a, 3), i.e. groups with a distinct, non-localized, social-cultural identity. Incidents of such shifts can be found in immigrant settings (*cf.* Li Wei 1994), multi-ethnic settings (*cf.* Borbély 2002), settings with backgrounds of imperial conquests (*cf.* Huebner 1986), and language-contact areas where national borders meet (*cf.* Tsitsipis 1998).

Language shift may also take place between groups of the same nationality. For example, the latter part of the 20th century saw mass intra-nationality² language shift in at least four of the five polities within Greater China, *viz.* the popularisation of Putonghua and Guoyu (Mandarin) as a usual language in respectively the Chinese mainland (Ramsey 1987) and Taiwan (van den Berg 1986), the promotion of Huayu as a second-language among Chinese-Singaporeans in Singapore (Kuo 1984), and the

consolidation of Cantonese as the usual language of around 90% of the Chinese in Hong Kong (HK). Putonghua, Guoyu and Huayu are mutually intelligible varieties and they are named different mainly because of political considerations. The shift towards these three very similar varieties in the politics concerned takes a 'dialect to language' or 'minority-language to majority-language' form which involves the adoption as usual language of a full standard language with official and/or national status by speakers of a different language with neither official nor national status. In all these three politics, the shift was underpinned by overt government campaigns.

Against these backgrounds the language shift in HK is notable in at least three aspects: First, the shift is between dialects as Cantonese is not a full standard language. In addition both immigrants and members of indigenous groups are involved, and all the groups involved are of the same nationality³. Second, the shift to Cantonese in HK appears to have taken only around a generation to complete. Third, the shift in HK took place in the absence of overt government language campaigns. The HK case therefore presents itself as an exception at least in the context of Greater China that merits more attention than it has received so far.

1.2 Tsou's Observations about the Shift

The fact that post-1949 HK has evolved from a multi-dialectal society with Cantonese-speakers being the largest group to a mostly Cantonese-speaking society in the run-up to the new millennium has neither been disputed⁴ nor much discussed in academe since Tsou (1978) first drew the attention of the academic community to it. He at the same time highlighted two special features of this shift: (1) the shift was not only rapid but its scale was relatively large. From the 1950s onwards many speakers of Szeyap (四邑 henceforth Siyi)⁵, Out-of-Staters (外省), Hakka (客家 henceforth Kejia) and Chiuchow (潮州 henceforth Chaozhou), who together with other groups not identified in Tsou's paper constituted more than 40% of the population, shifted their usual language towards Cantonese (廣州話) at a pace so fast that it is readily visible when comparing the figures concerned in the censuses of 1961 and 1971 (Table 1 refers). (2) The same census data also suggest that the groups shift to Cantonese at differential pace. Tsou ranks them in descending order of language loyalty as follows: Chaozhou, Kejia, Out-of-Stater, and Siyi (Tsou 1996, 133).

Table 1: ‘Home/usual languages’ & % of their speakers 1961-71

Year of (by-)census	1961	1966	1971
Total population	3.175M	3.716 M	3.937 M
Population aged 5 & above*	2.076 M	NA	3.469 M
Usual language (%)			
Cantonese	79.0	81.2	88.2
Mandarin/Putonghua	0.9	2.8	NA
Shanghainese (上海話)	2.6		NA
Kejia	4.9	3.3	2.7
Hoklo (鶴佬) **	6.3	8.1 ⁶	4.2
Siyi	4.4	3.05	1.2
Others (+ missing data)	1.9	1.55	3.7

Sources: Barnett 1962 & 1967; Census and Statistical Dept. 1969 & 1972.

*In the 1961 & 1971 censuses, this item covers only persons aged five and above .

** i.e. speakers of Chaozhou and Minnan (閩南) (§1.5 refers)

1.3 What Needs to be Done to Validate Tsou’s Observations

When Tsou made the observations, the shift was almost complete; it was quite complete in the following two to three decades (endnote 4 refers). The shift therefore can be only studied *post hoc*. Furthermore, his observations are made mostly with census data. In addition to the usual constraints associated with such data, information about usual language is available not in each and every (by-)census. Specifically, the 1911 census was the first census which provides data about usual language. Similar data were not collected in the subsequent (by-)censuses until 1961 when the first post-war census was conducted. The practice was kept in the 1966 by-census and the 1971 census. It was then dropped until 1991. Consequently information required for the construction of baselines about the size of the groups involved in the shift *circa* 1949 is not available. As Tsou’s observations are not sufficiently borne out by the data of 1961 and 1971 alone, a more precise understanding of the magnitude and pace of the shift awaits the establishment of such baselines.

A more precise understanding of the magnitude and pace of the shift is also hampered by the fact that in the early years the dialect-labels used in

censuses were relatively loose. For example, data provided in the 1911 census indicate that there were 359,892 *Punti*(本地)-speakers (Wodehouse 1911, Tables I, XI-XIII). In other words 81% of the Chinese population or 80% of the total population were *Punti*-speakers (in the following only the latter percentage is used for the sake of consistency *vis-à-vis* other census percentages). As *Punti* is often used interchangeably with Cantonese post-1911, if the 1911 figures of *Punti*-speakers are used to refer to the size of the Cantonese-speaking population, evidently they will undermine the potential validity of Tsou's observations: HK would have been a largely Cantonese-speaking society 60 years before 1971. Accordingly in order to validate his observations, the following tasks need to be done: (1) re-examine the census data concerned, especially those of 1911, (2) construct base-lines in the form of the size of the groups concerned *circa* 1949; (3) given the loose and varied use of dialect-group labels in the censuses, develop a consistent taxonomic framework to determine the groups that are included in this study, and then (4) corroborate the census figures, especially those used to infer between-group difference in the pace of shift.

1.4 Aims, Scope and the Case Made in this Paper

Lau and So (2005) is our first attempt to validate Tsou's observations. In this paper, building upon what we have achieved in the first and subsequent attempts (e.g. So & Lau 2008)⁷, we set ourselves to undertake the tasks spelled out in the foregoing paragraph; we also bring part of the findings of a study that we conducted between 2005 and 2007 to bear on the fourth task, i.e. the question concerning whether the differential rates of each group towards Cantonese is in evidence. The case to be made in this paper is: (1) the number of Cantonese speakers in HK broke through the 51.8%-57.2% range only after 1949; (2) the differential rate of shift among the groups concerned towards Cantonese is consistent with the findings of our 2005-7 study; (3) Tsou's observations are therefore largely valid, although the sociolinguistic structure of HK before 1949 was more complex than what is suggested in his papers and in the (by-)censuses concerned.

It is believed that this paper sets the scene for further investigation of factors that contribute to a mass, rapid shift of the usual language of speakers of various dialects to another dialect in HK between 1949 and 1971, and how it may inform our understanding of intra-nationality language shift in the Chinese context.

The period of study is set between 1949 and 1971 because the former

marks the rise of Chinese Communist government that triggered mass influx of migrants from the mainland to HK which in turn led to the closure of the borders in 1951. As a result, for the first time HK had a relatively stable resident population comprising immigrant and indigenous groups of various dialect backgrounds. Conditions for a shift to Cantonese were formed. The study does not go beyond 1971 because the census taken that year indicates that over 88% of the population speak Cantonese as their usual language, i.e. the shift was by and large complete 22 years after the 1949 establishment of the PRC.

1.5 The Linguistic Make-up of HK *Circa* 1949

According to Li (1987 §A1), ten regional, mutually unintelligible dialects are spoken among the Han Chinese, *viz.* Yueyu (粵語), Kejiahua, Wuyu (吳語), Minyu (閩語), Guanhua (官話), Jinyu (晉語), Huiyu (徽語), Gongyu (贛語), Xiangyu (湘語), and Pinghua (平話). The speakers involved in this shift come from the first four of these ten groups. Yueyu is spoken mostly in Guangdong and Guangxi provinces. Compared with the other regional dialects spoken among the Southern Chinese, the Yueyu speakers have arguably the most distinct culture and identity.

In HK at the time the Yueyu group was represented by respectively speakers of Cantonese, Weitouhua (圍頭話), Danjiahua (蛋家話), and Siyihua. Cantonese is the native-tongue of the residents of Guangzhou, the provincial capital of Guangdong, and enjoys the highest prestige among the constituents of this group. Cantonese-speakers came to HK in large numbers only after 1842 and they were mostly urban dwellers.

Whereas speakers of Weitouhua in the NW corner of HK have settled there long before it was called the New Territories (NT). The NT are so-called because the British government acquired it in the form of a 99-year lease in 1898, 56 years after the colony was founded in 1842. At the time the speakers of Weitouhua were mostly farmers and formed a major part of the rural population. Many of them preferred to reside in walled-villages, hence the label Weitou. The areas where their settlements concentrate remained rustic and undeveloped until urban developments took place in certain select places like Yuen Long (元朗) from the 1960s onward. Weitouhua is a branch of the Guanbao sub-dialect (莞寶片) spoken mostly along the eastern bank of the Pearl River. Although Weitouhua is considered a member of the Yueyu group, it is to a great extent unintelligible to Cantonese-speakers because in Weitouhua the codas -n, -t have been replaced by -ng, -k; and that tones 1, 3

and 5 are conflated. Weitouhua has also maintained a clear, phonemic distinction between n/l as onset, and borrowed a large amount of glosses from Kejiahua. In emic terms, the Weitouhua speakers also regard themselves as a visible and distinguishable ethnic group of long standing, and uphold their indigenous status vigorously.

Similar to the Weitous, the speakers of Danjiahua, as fishermen, have had a presence in the waters of and around HK for hundreds of years, and formed a major part of the floating population. As a visible and distinguishable group that has been around HK for centuries, they have been accorded indigenous status although before 1971, many of them spent much time beyond the coastal waters of HK and few of them had regular place of abode on land in HK. To untrained ears Danjiahua closely resembles Cantonese and the differences between the two may be perceived to be a matter of accent and style. In fact there are some big differences between the two dialects in vocabulary as well as in phonology, such as the absence in Danjiahua of the front round vowels: the [œ] and the [y]. Danjiahua is a distinct dialect genetically related to but distinguishable from Cantonese and is only partially intelligible to most Cantonese-speakers (see Chang and Zhuang, 2003).

Unlike the Weitous and Danjias, speakers of Siyihua are not indigenous to HK. Instead they are natives of the four counties, *viz.* Kaiping (開平), Nanping (南平), Taishan (台山), Xinhui (新會), which are situated about 60 to 120 miles SW of Guangzhou on the western side of the Pearl River estuary. Compared to the speakers of the aforementioned three Yueyu dialects, speakers of Siyihua are late-comers to HK. They at the time tended to reside mostly in western Kowloon. Unlike Danjiahua and Weitouhua, Siyihua cannot be readily understood among Cantonese-speakers mainly because of the different pronunciations in the onsets, for example. As a result speakers of Siyihua are entitled to interpreter service in the law courts of HK; so are the speakers of Kejiahua, Wuyu and Minyu.

Speakers of Kejiahua are found in many parts of South China. Those settled in HK came mostly from the Meixian prefecture (梅縣) in northern Guangdong. They came to HK primarily in two waves: The first wave took place in the early part of the Qing Dynasty and these migrants settled mostly in the eastern part of the NT and formed part of the rural population there. The second wave came post 1949 and this group resided mostly in the urban area. Descendants of those who came during the first wave were given “indigenous inhabitants” status by the colonial government in the 1970s. However, as a

group, in emic terms, the Kejias regard themselves as a major ethnic group of long standing, rich in its distinct culture and steeped in history.

Most speakers of Wuyu came to HK post 1949. Many of them were members of the middle and upper classes from Shanghai. Given this background and also the lack of mutual intelligibility among the Wu dialects, the speakers of Wuyu adopted Shanghainese, the most prestigious dialect of the group, as their intra-group *lingua franca* in HK. They as a group in turn have been loosely identified as Shanghainese by the people of HK ever since. Most of them resided in the urban areas with concentrations in North Point (北角) on the Island, and on the peninsula respectively in Tsimshatsui (尖沙嘴), Hung Hom (紅磡) and Tokwawan (土瓜灣).

The Minyu group at the time the group was represented in HK by the Hoklos. Hoklo was a popular label used by the HK people before the 1970s to refer to respectively speakers of Minnanhua (閩南話) who are from Fujian and speakers of Chaozhou who are from eastern Guangdong near Fujian, probably because ‘Fu’ (福) is pronounced ‘Hok’ (鶴) in Minnanhua whereas ‘lo’ is a colloquial term meaning ‘guys’. Another explanation for this practice is that to untrained ears, Minnanhua and Chaozhouhua sound similar. Indeed the label Hoklo was used to cover both groups in the censuses until 1971. However the two groups clearly differentiate between themselves, not least in terms of provincial affiliation: the former regard themselves as people of Guangdong, whereas the latter people of Fujian. There are also big linguistic differences between the two dialects. For example, Minnanhua has seven tones, whereas Chaozhouhua has eight. In addition, unlike Minnanhua, Chaozhouhua has borrowed a lot of glosses from the Yueyu group and Kejiahua.

Within the Chaozhou dialect, there are about ten regional accents. However, unlike the Yueyu group in HK, speakers of these regional accents largely find themselves mutually intelligible. The Chaozhous in HK tended to reside in various districts in HK albeit concentrations could be found in the Western District (西環) on the Island and in the Kowloon City (九龍城) on the peninsula.

A fraction of the Minnanhua speakers, similar to the speakers of Danjiahua, are fishermen and have had their presence in the waters of and around HK for hundreds of years, and formed part of its floating population. But the majority of them came post 1949 and tended to reside in North Point on the Island.

2. BASELINES OF CANTONESE & NON-CANTONESE GROUPS IN HK

2.1 The Cantonese-speaking Group

Census data indicate that soon after the colony had attained its current geographical coverage, Cantonese-speakers became its largest group. Accordingly, the construction of the base-lines will have to commence with this group as it is the largest piece of the jigsaw. As mentioned, the 1911 census shows that 80% of the total population spoke *Punti* at home. However, this is probably a bloated figure if used to establish the baseline of the size of the Cantonese group. The source of the distortion lies in the two related practices adopted in the 1911 census: First, *Punti* literally means local &/or indigenous and apparently was used as a global term to cover speakers of respectively Danjiahua, Weitouhua and Cantonese. The first two groups were considered as speaking *Punti* probably because they were and still are regarded as ‘indigenous inhabitants’ of the territory (see §1.5). Cantonese speakers were considered speaking *Punti* probably because they were and remain the largest dialect group of HK.

Second, Cantonese as a term is understood in a rather loose manner in the (by-)censuses conducted in and before 1966. For example, according to the definition provided in the 1961 census, the term “Cantonese (or *Punti*) is used to denote, not simply the language of Canton City..., but ... the *Nam Tau* dialect (an offshoot of *Tung Kwun* [*Dongguan*]), although not readily understood by a man from Canton, and the somewhat similar dialect of the Tanka [*Danjia*] boat people ...” (Barnett 1962, 2:XLVII). From the way the definition is phrased, it is evident that Barnett was uneasy about the breadth of the coverage of *Punti* as it so described goes far beyond what Cantonese is meant to its speakers: the language of ‘the capital of Guangdong province’, i.e. Guangfuhua (廣府話 henceforth GFH). Therefore the size of the *Punti* (Cantonese) speakers returned by the census of 1911 is a result of a conflation of speakers of GFH and other dialects, especially Weitou and Danjia, which, if a narrow, more specific definition of Cantonese is adopted, would not have been grouped under the same label. We believe speakers of Weitou, Danjia and GFH should not be treated as members of the same group. Their differences are not just ethnolinguistic, but also of a geo-historical nature: the place of origin of GFH speakers is more than 70 nautical miles NNW of HK as the crow flies. Unlike Weitouhua, Danjiahua and Kejiahua, GFH was hardly heard in HK before 1842.

For the sake of clarity, in the following, GFH stands for the narrow definition of Cantonese. Where the term Cantonese is used, it is for the

purpose of consistency *vis-à-vis* the sources used and that it will refer to a broad definition of the dialect unless indicated otherwise. In this connection it is reiterated that by GFH and Cantonese are meant 'the language of Guangzhou/Canton' to highlight an important but often ignored fact that neither the language nor its speakers is indigenous to HK⁸. Only the Weitous, the Danjias and the Kejias are accorded such status (§1.5 refers).

2.2 The Influx of GFH-speakers and Their Share in the Pre-1949 Population Pie

By the dawn of the twentieth century, as indicated in the 1911 census, the aforementioned indigenous populations were overtaken in size by an immigrant dialect group, one which Tsou terms 'the basic Cantonese-speakers' (1996) and what we term GFH-speakers. Although mass influx of these speakers, which took place from the 1850s to the early 1950s, completely altered the sociolinguistic character of HK, a case is to be made here that, *circa* 1911, their share of the population had not yet reached the 80% mark. But first this question has to be addressed: Why is it that HK would have adopted as its usual language a dialect spoken in a city that in pre-1949 days would take commuters at least a day to reach even via modern transport of the times?

Lest it be forgotten, when HK became a colony, Guangzhou was already a provincial capital with a population of a million people; it was also foreign traders' major pathway to imperial China, albeit with periodic disruptions, since the sixteenth century. While HK was gradually developing into a thriving entrepôt, the volume and quality of opportunities offered by such an economy on its own would hardly attract immigrants away in large numbers from Guangzhou. Historical data suggest the strong presence of GFH-speakers in HK was mainly due to political instability in the Chinese mainland which triggered well-to-do residents in Guangzhou and the townships in its neighbouring areas to seek temporary refuge in the colony (So 1998, 155-56)⁹. Large-scale influxes of migrants from the region associated with the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64), the demise of the Manchu Dynasty (1911) and the retreat of the Nationalist regime to Taiwan (1949), for example, have been well documented (*cf.* Endacott 1973, Chapter 23; Carroll 2005, Chapter 2). The fact that regular ferry service between the two cities was made available as early as the 1840s and rail links in 1911 provide further indications that the volume of traffic of goods and people was sufficiently large to justify such heavy investment in infrastructure soon after the founding of the colony.

Nevertheless, the ethnolinguistic structure of the HK Chinese population at around 1911 was probably more complex than what is reported in the census which shows only 18.8% of the population were non-Cantonese speakers, *viz.* 14.9% Kejia, 1.9% Hoklo and 2.0% others. In other words, not counting 'others' and GFH, only two, or three dialect groups were in evidence. Instead we believe if more specific dialect-labels as those shown above are used, at least six dialect groups, *viz.* Weitou, Kejia, Danjia, Chaozhou, Minnan, GFH, were already present in significant numbers¹⁰ at the time. In this connection, by taking away the Weitous and the Danjias from the 80% figure, it will show that the number of GFH-speakers at the time would have been around 57.2% of the total population¹¹. HK was therefore not yet a GFH-speaking town as it is today; Tsou's observations remain potentially valid. As shown below, the percentage of GFH speakers probably shrank further between 1911 and 1949 as a result of large influx to HK of dialect groups from other parts of the mainland, in addition to Guangzhou and its adjacent areas.

2.3 The Influx of the Other Dialect Groups

The presence in the early days of the colony of dialect groups of a significant size other than GFH-speakers is probably related less to political stability but more to the mass emigration to various overseas destinations that flourished along the southwest coast of China soon after the first Opium War (1840-1842), *i.e.* the Coolie trade. From 1845 onwards, Xiamen (Amoy), Shantou (Swatow), and Macau took turns to become a centre for recruiting Chinese coolies from around the delta areas of Jiulongjiang (where Minnanhua is spoken), Hanjiang (where Chaozhouhua is spoken), and Zhujiang/Pearl River (where Cantonese is spoken). The major destinations of the coolies were mines and railway construction sites in the Americas and plantations in SE Asia. HK also played a role in this trade by being a servicing station for the coolie ships before they embarked on their long voyages (see Yen 1985, 32-71). After the trade was suppressed around 1873 because of its inhuman mode of operation, HK emerged as a major port of departure for 'free' Chinese emigrants from the same regions to the same and other destinations.

It is believed that the number of Chaozhous, Minnans and especially Siyis grew steadily in HK from the late 1880s; the influx intensified further after the collapse of the Manchu dynasty and the emergence of warlordism in the Chinese mainland afterwards. From the latter part of the 19th century to 1949, the colony emerged as a favourite way-station for many of the returning emigrants, including those from these three groups (see Williams

2004). Through these emigrants, their fellow native kin got to know about the opportunities in HK. In addition, as most of the emigrants who came back for marriage could not bring their ‘newlyweds’ overseas, some of them brought their newly-weds and related kin to HK for the attractions it offered¹².

Accordingly, for the first century following its colonisation, being a safe refuge, a point of departure for Chinese emigrant workers and a way-station for returning emigrants, HK had a population much larger than what one would expect to find in an entrepôt of its size. At the same time this population was largely of a transient nature, as late as 1931, the census of the year shows that only around 33% of the Chinese population were local born (Carrie 1931, 43). The other two-thirds of the population were attracted to HK probably as a result of the aforementioned opportunities. Therefore, at the dawn of the 20th century, there were seven major Chinese dialect groups in HK, *viz.* the six groups mentioned in §2.2 plus Siyi. In §2.6 the rationale about the inclusion of six of these seven groups in our 2005-07 study will be provided.

Table 2: Home/usual languages & adjusted % of their speakers 1911- 1971

Landmark Years	1911	1949	1961	1971
Total population	0.4501M	2M+*	3.175M	3.937M
Home/Usual language	% (A)**		% (B)**	
No. of GFH speakers	0.2575M*	1.036M*	2.508M	3.4685M
GFH	57.2*	51.8*	79	88.2
Weitou	10.5*	2.5*	NA	NA
Danjia (floating)#	12.3	3*	NA	NA
Putonghua	NA	1*	0.9	NA
Kejia	14.9	7*	4.9	2.7
Hoklo (Chaozhou & Minnan)	1.9	12*	6.3	4.2
Siyi (Szeyap)	NA	19*	4.4	1.2
Shanghainese	NA	3*	2.6	NA
Others(+groups designated NA)	3.2*	0.7*	1.9	3.7

Sources: Wodehouse 1911; Barnett 1962 & 1967; Census & Statistical Dept. 1969 & 1972; Hayes (1983, 4). #A fraction of this population may speak Minnan

*Our estimates; **(A) of Chinese population; (B) of population aged five and above

2.4 The Size of the GFH-group *Circa* 1949?

It is estimated in the above that in 1911 the percentage of GFH speakers was around 57.2%. On the basis of this figure the percentages of the Weitou and groups not identified in the census are derived (Table 2 refers). These estimates will serve as a basis for the construction of 1949 baselines of the groups concerned. Before tackling the estimation of these baselines at the start of the shift, it is also necessary to ascertain whether the figures relating to time close to the completion of the shift, i.e. the related census data of 1961 and 1971 can be taken at their face value. We are aware that the 1971 census keeps the previous practice and has Danjia grouped under the Cantonese label (Census and Statistics Department 1972, 19). However, we believe the census statistics do not require major adjustment for the following assumptions: first, by the 1960s, the size of these indigenous groups relative to the total population has shrunk by a very large measure. Therefore, even if they were lumped together as GFH-speakers as before, the confounding effects are probably tolerable. Second, in the censuses of 1961 and 1971, Cantonese has replaced *Punti* as a dialect label. The enhancement in specificity means that any persons at the time who identified their 'home/usual language' as Cantonese, even if they were Weitou/Danjia speakers, would have to be either Cantonese-Weitou or Cantonese-Danjia speakers as they were required to demonstrate the validity of their claims. The gap between the broad and narrow definitions of Cantonese might also be narrowing as a result of the growth in GFH speakers. We therefore believe the figures of 57.2% and 88.2% provide a fairly accurate picture of the size of the GFH-speaking population between 1911 and 1971.

Accordingly the percentages of GFH-speakers in HK are around respectively 57.2, 79 and 88.2 in 1911, 1961 and 1971. Given the aforementioned influx of Chaozhou, Minnan and Siyi speakers between 1880 and 1951, the percentage of GFH speakers in 1949 therefore probably lies below 57.2. To derive the estimate of this percentage, first we have to derive a number to serve as a coefficient to adjust the 57.2 figure. Also, given that we assume the size of the estimated percentage will be smaller than 57.2, the coefficient will be smaller than one. As the 1961 census is the census closest to 1949, we decide to work with the number of people who were born in HK, and outside HK as reported in this census. The figure of the former is 1,486,646, the latter 1,643,002. There are good reasons to believe the great majority of the latter were non-GFH speaking immigrants who settled in HK between the late-1880s and 1951, the year when the borders were closed.

Therefore, the ratio of these two figures, with the latter as denominator, may be a good choice, in lieu of better ones at our disposal at the moment, to be used as the coefficient to scale down the 57.2 figure. Accordingly the figure 57.2 is adjusted, by using 0.9048 as the coefficient, to a value of 51.8. We believe this and 57.2 may be regarded as respectively the low-end and the high-end of the estimate of the percentage of GFH-speakers in HK in 1949. We also believe either of these two estimates provide a more accurate picture of the scale of shift towards GFH between 1949 and 1971 than the one shown in the census.

2.5 The Size of the Other Dialect Groups *Circa* 1949

Based on the estimate that the percentage of GFH-speakers *circa* 1949 was around 51.8, the baselines of the size of the other groups are constructed with reference to Lau & So (2005) wherein it is observed that the Siyi group at the time had become the next largest dialect group, to be followed by the Hoklos (with a Chaozhou majority), the Kejias, Danjias, Shanghainese, Weitous and the Putonghua-speaking Northerners. Accordingly the percentages of these groups are worked out as follows: Siyi: 19%, Chaozhou: 8%, Minnan: 4%, Kejia: 7%, Danjia: 3%, Shanghainese: 3%, Weitou: 2.5%, Putonghua: 1%, and others 2.3% (Table 2 refers). We believe these estimated baselines together with the one related to GFH help rectify the distorted number of Cantonese speakers returned by the 1911 census, and lend support to Tsou's observations as from 1949-1971 HK saw the population share of GFH-speakers increase by 70% and their numbers increase from 1.036 million to around 3.468 million¹³.

2.6. The Rationale for Having the Six Dialect Groups in this Study

Having sorted out the first two of the four issues that this paper attempts to address, further efforts are made here to provide a rationale behind having six groups, *viz.* Kejia, Shanghai, Siyi, Weitou, Chaozhou, Minnan included in our 2005-7 study¹⁴ instead of the four groups in Tsou (1996) (§1.2 refers). The main thrust of our argument is that all these groups have a distinct ethnolinguistic identity and a significant number of speakers. The case for Kejiahua is the most straightforward, it is included because it is a regional-dialect spoken by a significant number of people in HK at the time.

In Tsou's study, the speakers of Shanghainese were grouped with other Northern-dialect speakers under the label of Out-of-Staters even

though it is a distinct sub-dialect of Wuyu. It was probably because pre-1949 the number of its speakers was too small to merit a separate treatment (Wong 1988, 16). However, as the result of the influx of people from and around Shanghai between 1948 and 1949, the number of people who spoke or claimed to speak the dialect swelled to close to 3% of the HK population and renders this community a significant dialect group in HK. Accordingly they are treated as a separate group in our study.

The remaining four are also sub-dialect groups. As indicated in §1.5, Siyihua and Weitouhua are sub-dialects of the Yueyu group, whereas Chaozhouhua and Minnanhua are sub-dialects of the Minyu group. In Tsou's study only Siyihua and Chaozhouhua are represented. For reasons stipulated in §1.5 and for the fact that the number of speakers of Weitouhua and Minnanhua is considerable, these two groups are given separate treatment. There is another reason to treat the Weitous as a separate group. According to the 1971 census, about 63,000 Weitous still lived in walled villages in the NT, preserving most of their rural customs which have become 'foreign' to the urban population. A good fraction of them have maintained this pattern of living to this day. It is believed that their special pattern of residence and life style will contribute to our investigation of the differential rate of shift among these groups towards GFH.

3. EMPIRICAL VERIFICATION OF TSOU'S OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Design and Execution

The study population of our investigation therefore comprises these six dialect groups. Within these groups the target subjects are adult residents of HK between 1949 and the early 1960s as well as their descendants. They are categorised into three groups: (a) Generation-0 (G-0) are the immigrants or members of the indigenous groups who are expected to be aged 65 and above, (b) Generation-1 (G-1) are children of G-0 who are born in HK; they are expected to be aged 45-64, (c) Generation-2 (G-2) are children of G-1 who are born in HK; they are expected to be aged 44 and below.

The investigation takes the form of face-to-face, questionnaire-based interviews. Sampling was designed on the assumption that many of the G-2 targets are studying at universities. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and The City University of Hong Kong were chosen as major sampling sites. The principal sampling frame for G2 targets is students' e-mail address lists of the two universities. During the period of data collection between February 2005 and April 2007 the two universities had an undergraduate

enrolment of respectively around 7,105 and 6,856 students. Letters were sent via e-mail to all the students to invite those of relevant ethnic background to participate in our study. Where possible, invitations were made in class too. A website was created for potential participants to have access to a short form of the interview questionnaire to enable them to have a better idea about the nature of the study.

As for the G0 and G1 targets, it was believed at the start of the investigation that most of them could be recruited via referral made by G-2 participants with the shortfall to be covered via the investigators' own networks. The recruitment via G-2s' referral worked relatively well except for the Kejia, the Shanghainese and the Weitou groups. For these three groups, the majority of G-0 and G-1 targets were recruited via the personal networks of the research team¹⁵. (Table 3 refers)

Table 3: Subjects by group & mode of recruitment

Group	(A) via email and referral	(B) via Team's own network	Sub-total (% A)
1. Chaozhou	35	24	59 (59.3)
2. Kejia	18	27	45 (40)
3. Minnan	19	12	31 (61.3)
4. Shanghai	10	19	29 (34.5)
5. Siyi	37	24	61 (60.7)
6. Weitou	7	24	31 (22.6)
Sub-total	126	130	256 (49.2)

Where possible, the interview was conducted by two investigators and held at a time and in a venue convenient to the interviewee. The interviews usually took around an hour for the G-0s, around half an hour for the G-2s, and forty-five minutes for the G-1s. Whenever observations about proficiency in one's native dialect were made, requests for outputs on several preset topics would be put to the interviewee and the interviewers would then make a judgement about whether or not communicative proficiency, in the form of fluency and intelligibility, was indeed in evidence¹⁶.

3.2 The Sample

3.2.1 Characteristics of the Sample

A profile of the essential characteristics of the sample is provided in Tables 4-5. At the start of the study, the minimum planned sample size is 180 which is derived from 6 (groups) x 3 (generations) x 10 (subjects). At the end, the objective is over-achieved for all groups except for the G1 of the Shanghainese group and the G0s and G1s of the Minnan group. The main reason for the former is that the number of students of Shanghainese background turns out to be quite low at the two universities and close to two-thirds of the subjects have to be recruited through the research team's network. As for the latter group, while the number of students of Minnan background is not low, their parents are less responsive to our interview invitation.

Table 4: Subjects by group, generation & gender (male)

Group.	0	1	2	Subtotal
1. Chaozhou	11(5)	20(16)	28(11)	59(32)
2. Kejia	10(6)	15(13)	20(6)	45(25)
3. Minnan	7(3)	8(8)	16(8)	31(19)
4. Shanghai	11(7)	7(5)	11(7)	29(19)
5. Siyi	10(5)	18(14)	33(20)	61(39)
6. Weitou	10(5)	11(9)	10(5)	31(19)
Sub-total	59(31/53%)	79(65/82%)	118(57/48%)	256 (153/60%)

The higher percentages of interviewees of the male gender, *vis-à-vis* the population at large, shown in census data among the G0 (53% vs. 46% in the population concerned) and G1 (82% vs. 47.7%) are an artefact of our sampling strategy because our preferred choice of interviewee is the head of household and in traditional Chinese households the head is a male unless he is deceased, which is often the case among the G-0s¹⁷.

Other sample biases are also expected given university students and their family members are a major constituent of the sample; it is hereby acknowledged that participants with higher education level and high-status occupations are over-represented. For example, according to the 2001 census (Table 3.18), the percentage of professionals and associate professionals together constitute 16.3% of the working population. Whereas the percentages for the parents of our G2-interviewees are respectively 6.4% and

16.9% (i.e. 23.3%, see Table 5). Therefore the findings should be read and interpreted accordingly.

Table 5: Subjects by group, occupation of parents of G-2

Groups* Occupations#	A	B	C	D	E	F	Subtotal	%
1	9	2	3	1	4	1	20	8.5%
2	6	3	2	1	7	2	21	8.9%
3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.4%
4	13	11	9	4	17	3	57	24.2%
5	4	1	0	0	0	0	5	2.1%
6	4	2	1	1	5	2	15	6.4%
7	10	6	4	9	6	5	40	16.9%
8	7	12	11	5	21	6	62	26.3%
9	3	0	0	1	5	1	10	4.2%
10	0	2	2	0	1	0	5	2.1%
Total							236	100.0%

*A= Chaozhou, B = Hakka, C = Minnan, D = Shanghai. E = Siyi, F = Weitou
#1=Entrepreneurs including Shop/factory owner; 2=Self-employed (skilled);
3= Self-employed (unskilled); 4= Housewife; 5=Sales; 6= Professional, 7=
Associate professional; 8= Salaried worker (skilled); 9=Salaried Worker
(unskilled); 10= Not available (NP)/Others

3.3 What are Measured and Findings Concerning the Groups' Rapid Pace of Shift

In the questionnaire-based, face-to-face interviews, in addition to relevant personal details, information pertaining to the following composite variables is sought: (1) language experience in education, (2) evidence and degree of bilingualism, (3) the distribution of the languages concerned across social domains, (4) places of residence in HK, (5) social networks, (6) sentimental attachment *vis-à-vis* native-place, native-tongue and HK, as well as (7) social identity construction at different levels.

The findings indicate that the shift may have taken its full course within 20-odd years. For example, according to the transition matrix model (cf. deVries 1973), a crucial piece of evidence indicating whether language shift is in progress is the presence of bilingualism among the individuals

concerned. As shown in Table 6, findings related to item (2) indicate that fluency in GFH is already widespread among the G-0 subjects, suggesting that the shift may have already started with them. Specifically, only 15 or 25% of the G-0 subjects claim to have good to very good fluency in GFH upon their arrival to HK. Whereas 54 or 91.5% of them are showing good to very good fluency in GFH at the time of the interview. As for the G-1 and G-2 subjects, their performance in the interview shows that GFH is their usual as well as stronger language. Which indicates that the shift is by a large measure consolidated at the time when the G-1s are entering their adulthood, i.e. around 1966 and thereafter.

Table 6: G0's GFH fluency at arrival (self rating) & at interview (observed)

Group	Arrival			Interview		
	0-2	3-5	NR	0-2	3-5	NR
Chaozhou	9	2	0	0	11	0
Kejia	3	6	1	0	8	2
Minnan	5	2	0	0	7	0
Shanghai	10	1	0	0	11	0
Siyi	1	2	7	0	10	0
Weitou	1	2	7	1	7	2

The self-rating scale is from 0 meaning with 'nil proficiency' to 5 meaning 'very proficient'; NR = no specific response

To account for language shifts, conceptual resources commonly used are, for example, those of Fishman's domain theory (1972b) or the nine-factor model developed by Tsunoda (2005). Given space constraints, however, we would like to highlight an ethnolinguistic trait among the HK Chinese which could be a major factor behind the shift's rapid pace. As indicated, this shift involves members of both immigrant and indigenous groups of the same nationality, albeit speaking largely mutually unintelligible dialects, with the outcome of most members of these groups changing the habitual use of their native tongues to that of the GFH group. Not only did this shift get completed within a relatively very short time, it also went smoothly, without triggering any native-tongue revival movements

and/or civil disturbances. Or, in the words of Geertz (1963), without a significant presence of linguism¹⁸.

Table 7: Subjects' views about what determines ethnic identity

Group	A	A&B	A&O	A&B&O	B	B&O	O	Row total
G0	10	3	5	0	14	6	21	59
G1	10	1	14	2	24	3	25	79
G2	29	2	25	2	31	4	25	118
All	49	6	44	4	69	13	71	256

A: native tongue proficiency; B: ancestral place of birth; O: others (including no-opinion)

The fact that the Chinese people, especially those in the South, are speaking mutually unintelligible dialects, and at the same time maintain they are speaking the same language has intrigued many sociolinguists (e.g. Wardhaugh 1986, 28). This trait is borne out by the findings related to items (6) and (7). As shown in Table 7, only 49 subjects (19% of total) make native-tongue proficiency the sole defining factor for ethnic identity. Whereas 69 subjects (27%) choose place of birth of one's ancestors. More significant is the finding that 153 subjects (60%) do not include native-tongue proficiency in their responses. This finding suggests to us that unlike the South Asians and many of the Europeans, linguism does not have a strong presence in these HK Chinese people's construction of ethnic identity¹⁹. Instead the construction is rested upon multiple foundations, including those that are native-place-based and surname or blood-based. Therefore this between-dialect shift might not have led to major identity-shattering consequences. Hence the processes have been rapid and smooth.

Furthermore, the HK Chinese also share a nationality identity which is rested upon the fact that China is a Type-B nation, i.e. one with a single great tradition (*cf.* Fishman 1969). We believe the aforementioned trait is closely related to this great tradition while language, including writing, is only one of its many major constituents. This tradition-based identity apparently provides a buffer for the G-0 subjects. When asked whether they are first a Chinese, or Hongkongese, or one of the six ethnicities covered in the study, or Guangdongese, close to 40% of the G-0s say they are Chinese first. The

great majority of them are able to readily identify what they are, with only 24% declining to give a specific response (Table 8 refers). We believe this overarching-identity underpins the aforementioned trait and moderates, for the HK Chinese concerned, the potentially traumatic language-shift effects.

We also believe the shift contributes to the emergence of the HK identity, which in turn accelerated the shift. As shown in Table 8, 50.8% of the G-2 subjects say they are ‘Hongkongese first’. Which is more than double, in percentage terms, the G-0 and G-1 figures. Given most of the G-2 subjects were born in the late 1980s, one may surmise that this local and new identity, emerging in the early 1970s, was already well established at the time of their birth (*cf.* Tsang 2004, chapter 14). The fact that the shift was peaking at a time when this identity was emerging may not be a matter of mere coincidence. For example, 1974 is the year that saw the Cantonese TV drama *The Story of Three Loves* (啼笑姻緣) turning out to be an enormous hit. In addition, its theme song also marks the birth of Cantopop (Wong 2003, 92). Whereas before 1974 mainstream popular entertainment was mostly in the medium of either Putonghua or English. In other words, the shift to GFH was reflected in the media as well. Post-1949, HK was on its way to becoming essentially a ‘Cantonese town’. HK and GFH, to a great extent, have become both sides of the same coin. Hence the current lack of awareness that GFH was an alien tongue 170 years ago.

Table 8: Subjects’ views about what is their primary socio-ethnic identity

Group	Chinese	HK (%)	X	GD	NR	Total
G0	23	11 (18.6)	4	7	14	59
G1	30	16 (20.3)	7	4	22	79
G2	31	60 (50.8)	8	14	5	118
All	84	87 (34.0)	19	25	41	256

X: a native of one of the six ethnicities covered in this study; GD: a native of Guangdong; NR: non-response

3.4 Findings Concerning the Groups’ Differential Shift Rates

The groups’ differential rates of shift towards GFH are assessed by way of the scale and degree of retention of native-tongue proficiency among the G-1 and G-2 subjects. As shown in Table 9, between-group differences in native-tongue maintenance are pronounced among the G-1 subjects. If the

50% mark is used as a rule of thumb to differentiate the G-1 groups with high vs. low language loyalty, they fall neatly into two groups with the Weitous, Kejias, Chaozhous in the high language-loyalty category, retaining by a good measure their native tongue and Minnans, Shanghainese and Siyis in the low category, showing a major shift to GFH. This is consistent with the corresponding observations in Tsou (1996), although Weitou is conflated with Cantonese in his analysis.

Among the G-2 subjects, the shift to GFH with native-tongue loss is quite complete. At the same time, differences in the retention rate are more pronounced among these subjects; based on these differences, the groups readily fall into three tiers instead, with the Weitous (50%) at the top in terms of language loyalty, the Minnans (44%) in the middle, and all of the rest, i.e. Kejias (10%), Chaozhous (8%), Siyis (6%), Shanghainese (0%), at the bottom tier. However, when the G-1 and G-2 figures are compared, the Minnan speakers stand out as its G-2 percentage in fact goes up from 38% to 44%. This ‘bounce’ could be simply a matter of data fluctuation. In order to smooth such fluctuation, the sum of G-1 and G-2 percentages are averaged to form a crude indication of language loyalty. As shown in Table 9, the groups may then be ranked as follows: Weitou, Kejia, Minnan, Chaozhou, Siyi and Shanghainese, which, we believe, represents a more precise picture than the one shown in Tsou’s similar list, and corroborates the group’s shift towards GFH at differential pace.

Table 9: % of G-1 & G-2 subjects with native-tongue proficiency

G-1		G-2		(G-1 + G-2)÷2	
Group	%	Group	%	Group	%
1. Weitous	91	1. Weitous	50	1. Weitous	70.5
2. Kejia	80	2. Minnan	44	2. Kejia	45
3. Chaozhou	60	3. Kejia	10	3. Minnan	41
4. Minnan	38	4. Chaozhou	8	4. Chaozhou	34
5. Shanghai	14	5. Siyi	6	5. Siyi	8.5
6. Siyi	11	6. Shanghai	0	6. Shanghai	7

Table 10: Index of degree of clustering in settlement patterns

A		C1 (C2)	D (C1:C2)	INDEX (D÷B) x100
Weitou	5	33 (40)	0.825	16.5
Minnan	5	23(47)	0.4894	9.8
Shanghai	7	39 (62)	0.6290	9.0
Chaozhou	5	52 (134)	0.3881	7.8
Kejia	7	54 (102)	0.5294	7.6
Siyi	4	30 (124)	0.2419	6.0

B: No. of districts lived for > 2 years; C1: Frequency of mention of the districts in B

C2: Frequency of all districts mentioned

This differential pace is examined here only via the perspective of settlement patterns of these groups because of space constraints. Guldin (1977) demonstrates the usefulness of the ethnic-neighbourhood concept in his study of Minnan speakers' adaptation to HK, and shows to some extent that their tendency to settle in the form of an urban cluster is helpful to their identity maintenance. Given, as mentioned in §1.5, post-1949 HK found the establishment of a good number of such clusters in addition to Little Fujian in North Point, data related to 'places of residence' (item 4) are used to construct an index with a maximum value of 100 to reflect the degree of clustering in the settlement patterns of the groups. Specifically, the subjects are asked to identify all the districts where they have lived, and among the named, to identify further those that they have lived for more than two years. As shown in Table 10, the index is derived from a ratio between the frequency of '2-year+districts' and 'all districts' mentioned, which is to be divided by the number of '2-year+districts' identified. The dividend is then multiplied by a hundred to set the maximum value to a hundred, i.e. $C1/(C2 \times B) \times 100$. Accordingly if all the subjects of a particular group return only a single district on both 'all districts' and '2-year+districts', the value of C1, C2 and B will be equal to one, and the index value will be equal to 100. The actual indices derived, however, range from Weitou's 16.5 to Siyi's 6.0. When read with the final column of Table 9, and in terms of 'predicting' the groups' differential rates, the indices score respectively a direct match in case of the Weitou and the Chaozhou speakers, and a close match for the Minnan and the Siyi speakers. If the index is further adjusted *vis-à-vis* the number of the '2-year+districts' of the group vs. its size, we may have an

additional match with the Shanghainese as its index will have become much smaller if not the smallest given its value of B is among the highest and its group size is the smallest. Accordingly settlement pattern could indeed contribute to a better understanding of the groups' differential pace of shift.

4 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It is hoped that via baseline provisions, specification of group-labels, and empirical data provided by our 2005-07 study, HK's, non-GFH dialect groups' rapid and mass shift of 1949-71 to GFH and its between-group differential rate, which have been indicated in census data and noted by Tsou, have been made clearer in this paper. It is also hoped that the foregoing discussion has demonstrated that this case will not only enrich our understanding of intra-nationality language shift in general, it will also provide us with a glimpse of the following: the connection between the shift and the emergence of the HK identity; the HK Chinese's ethnolinguistic ideology; the multiplicity of the foundations available to them for their construction of socio-ethnic identity and for coping with between-dialect shifts, if and when they settle in a different dialect region within Greater China.

NOTES

1. The research that underpins observations made in this paper was supported by a competitive general research grant provided by the Hong Kong Research Grant Council. The grant code is B-Q787. We also wish to acknowledge that when preparing the final version of this paper, we have been greatly benefited from the input of the anonymous reviewers who thoughtfully and rigorously examined its earlier drafts.
2. By intra-nationality is meant within and among the Han-Chinese (henceforth Chinese).
3. This shift may be unique in modern China in that the usual language of both the indigenous and immigrant populations are replaced by another, non-indigenous dialect-group of the same nationality.
4. For example the census of 2001 indicates that Cantonese was the home/usual language used by 89.2% of the population (Census and Statistics Dept. 2002, 4-5) *vis-à-vis* the 1961 figure of 79.0% (Barnett 1961, 10-11). Similarly, based on both census data and findings of two sociolinguistic surveys conducted respectively in 1983 and 1993 about the population's

‘mother-tongue’, ‘language repertoires’ and ‘abilities in English’, Bacon-Shone & Bolton (1998, 57) makes the same observation that home use of the non-Cantonese dialects “appear to decrease rapidly in the thirty years between 1961 and 1991.”

5. Among the source materials that underpin this study, the names of ethnolinguistic groups and the dialects concerned are spelled different. For the convenience of readers, these labels are provided in *Pinyin* and accompanied by Chinese characters as and when appropriate.

6. This bulge of the group may be related to the influx of migrants *circa* 1962 from the mainland as a result of the collapse of the Great Leap Forward. In this particular influx, people living along the coastal areas close to HK like the Hoklo speakers enjoyed better access via the sea to HK than those who travelled on land as land mass transport facilities were under tighter control of the government.

7. The estimates in these three works vary. We believe the ones in this paper are an improved version.

8. What is suggested here is not that there is a lack of awareness that HK is a city of immigrants, but that few HK people readily infer from it its linguistic and other implications, e.g. Chinese-language education taught in GFH has always been done within an exonormic framework.

9. The HK’s attraction as a safe haven should be read in relative terms as the colony had its own share of teething problems in terms of socio-political disturbances in its early years (see Tsai, 1993).

10. In this paper it is understood as having a one percent share or more of the total population.

11. The figure is derived from the subtracting 12.3% (percentage of the floating population at the time according to Wodehouse (1911) and 10.5% (percentage of the Weitous estimated with reference to Endacott (1973, 276) and Hayes (1983, 4) from 80%.

12. Such practices may contribute to this observation shown in of the 1911 Census Report, “The percentage of adult Chinese females to males continues to rise. In 1901 it was 26.8, in 1906 31.5 and in the present year 36.6...” (page 3)

13. It is possible that this increase was primarily a result of natural population growth and immigration. However we believe otherwise for the following reasons: According to Fan (1974, 3-4), between 1950 and 1971, there were on average seventy thousand births per year. With GFH-speakers having a population share of between 51.8% and 57.2% at the start of the period, natural growth would have contributed by 1971 around 0.84 million

GFH speakers to the population, i.e. only a fraction of the 2.43 million. In the case of immigration, between 1948 and 1973 it was estimated that around 0.66 million migrants came to settle in HK via legal and illegal channels. (Fan 1974, 3) The adjusted figure for the period between the early 1950s and 1971 should be around 0.57 million. The question about these migrants' ethnic backgrounds was addressed in Lau & So (2005), and we concluded, with reference to data related to 'Place of Origin' (籍貫) reported in 1966 by-census and 1971 census, that only around half, or 0.285 million of the migrants spoke GFH as their native tongue. In other words only about 1.125 of the 2.43 million or 46.8% of the additional GFH-speakers returned by the 1971 census can be accounted for by natural growth and immigration.

14. The Danjias are not included in our investigation because their number relative to the population by 1971 has fallen below one-percent, making it not sufficiently large in size to merit separate treatment.

15. Between October 2004 when the research project started and September 2007 when the project was completed, a total of 11 persons, including the authors of this paper, were members of the team for at least one year. All of them had made contributions to the recruitment of subjects for the project.

16. The fieldwork team comprised a chief interviewer and three assistant interviewers. The chief interviewer's native tongues are Kejiahua and GFH; he is also fluent in Putonghua and has passive fluency in Siyihua and Weitouhua. The assistant interviewers speak GFH as their native tongue; two of them have passive fluency in respectively Chaozhouhua, and Minnanhua. For Shanghainese, assistance was sought from the spouse of the principal writer of this paper.

17. The over-representation of the male gender in the sample was therefore foreseen; the fact that the 'gender gap' among G-1 would be much bigger than that among the G-0s was also anticipated. This sampling strategy was adopted for the following reasons: G-0 female heads of household contacted invariably referred us to as well as deferred to their male spouse if he was available and accessible. It was the same among G-1 female heads of household, albeit to a lesser extent. Secondly, compared with female heads of household, male ones were more forthcoming by a significant measure when responding to our interview questions.

18. Linguism is a concept developed and used by Clifford Geertz to capture a cultural trait, which is particularly prominent in South Asia, that puts one's native language at respectively the heart of human existence and devotion, as well as the centre of social behaviour and action. The apparent absence of

linguism among the HKChinese, including the Minnanese, during this period provides an interesting contrast to the apparent emergence of linguism among the Taiwanese who use the native tongue as a major means for ethnic solidarity since the 1980s.

19. For a similar view rendered from a different perspective, see Blum (2005).

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香港“非广州话”族群快速及大规模的语言转移 1949—1971

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题要

根据邹嘉彦(1978)的观察,香港在 1949 年后,由一个多方言的社会,演变成一个广州话为主的社会。这个演变的规模不仅较大,发展亦比较迅速。他同时认为他所研究的四个方言族群之间,方言转移的速度各有不同。但是如要考证邹氏这些观点,以及较准确评估这个转移的规模和步伐,则往往受到以下条件的限制:(1)被邹氏大量采用的人口普查资料的内在局限,(2)过往界定方言族群的标准以及标签比较宽松和不划一,(3)对涉及的方言族群缺乏直接研究。为此,本文利用文献数据(人口普查及历史资料),以及一项在 2005-2007 年间,对各个有关族群成员进行的社会语言学调查,重新探讨了这个问题。根据我们对文献数据的研究显示,邹氏的有关观察大致正确。我们同时观察到:(1)操广州话的人口,由 1949 年前后的 51.8%至 57.2%之间,上升到 1971 年的 88.2%,(2)不同方言族群转移到广州话的速度有明显的差异,但涉及的族群数目,应该是七个而不是前述的四个。我们对七个有关族群中的六个进行了社会语言学调查,发现(1)大多数移民(G-0)受访者已经普遍操双语,显示转移早在他们这一代已经开始;(2)广州

话已经是大多数 G-1 及 G-2 的母语，他们亦同时失去用本族方言沟通的能力；但是(3) 各个族群对本族方言的保留能力，也有明显的差异，由强至弱的排列为：围头话、客家话、闽南话、潮州话、四邑话和上海话。此外，我们的研究资料显示，(4) 转移不受到语言中心主义的影响，而(5) 这可能是由于受访者界定个人身份时，母语只是其中的一个因素。另外初步的分析指出，转移的速度差异与族群的居住模式有关。我们同时强调广州话并非香港本土语言，并且认为这个转移与香港身份的浮现是同步衍生。这个转移牵涉到一个非本土的方言取代了同宗族的本土和非本土方言，成为地方的主要方言。我们相信同样的现象，不容易在现代中国其他地方找得到。

关键词:

广州话

语言中心主义

城市双语现象

语言维系与转移

香港人以及中国人身份认同

社会语言学