Anwei Feng
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Trilingualism in Education in China: Models and Challenges

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This book is dedicated to teachers in the PRC working to promote trilingualism.

Preface

Trilingualism in Education at the Crossroads

Trilingualism has a long history. One of the first examples is the 6th century BC "Behistun inscription", which is a carving in a cliff authored by Darius the Great in Iran, near the city of Kermanshah. The text is in three languages: Old Persian, Elamite and Akkadian. Another example is the "Letoon Trilingual Stele" dating from the 4th century BC with texts in Aramaic, Greek and Lycian. This inscription was discovered in the Letoon Temple complex and is displayed in the Fethiye Museum in Turkey. A better known inscription displayed in the British Museum is the Rosetta Stone dating from 196 BC. It was found in the town of Rashid in Egypt and it is a text praising Pharaoh Ptolemy V. The inscription was written in two languages (Egyptian and Greek) but uses three scripts – hieroglyphic, demotic and Greek. Another example of a trilingual inscription is the 9th century trilingual inscription at Karabalgasun (Mongolia) in Old Turkic (Uighur), Sogdian and Chinese.

Trilingualism was also present in the Middle Ages. Latin, English and French were used in England and performed different functions for many years after the Norman Conquest in 1066. The "Glosses of Emilianus" (Glosas Emilianenses), a Latin codex with marginalia in Spanish and Basque, dating back to the 11th century is yet another example of trilingualism in the Middle Ages.

Trilingualism has gained increasing currency in the globalised world of the 21st century. The spread of English as a language of international communication has often added a third language to the linguistic repertoire of speakers in different parts of the world and to the school curriculum in many bilingual regions. In spite of its long history and its relevance in today's world, the study of trilingualism in education has not received much attention until recently. It is in fact only in the last two decades that we have witnessed a surge in publications, conferences and journals that go beyond the teaching and learning of two languages in education.

This volume reports research conducted in some areas of China where three languages are used in education: a minority language, Chinese as a national language and English. Three languages are also used in education in many other parts of the world. There is variation in the type of languages used at schools and the linguistic

aims of schools, but today a common factor for most schools in China and elsewhere is that English is one of the languages in the curriculum.

The study of trilingualism in education is multidisciplinary because it brings together linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic and educational dimensions. The languages that are an integral part of the multilingual repertoire of schoolchildren in trilingual education may differ in terms of linguistic distance; they may or may not share the same writing script. The process of language learning is not only related to psycholinguistic factors such as aptitude and strategies, but also to the vitality of the languages involved in the sociolinguistic context where the schools are located. As can be appreciated from this volume, the educational dimension allows for great diversity with regard to the linguistic models adopted by the school and the human and material resources employed therein.

The study of trilingualism at school not only brings disciplines together but also the areas of second language acquisition (SLA) and bilingualism. SLA has traditionally focused on the process of acquiring a second language by looking at different stages of acquisition and factors affecting this process. Bilingualism is more product-oriented and looks at the way languages are used by bilingual individuals and/or in bilingual communities. In the context of trilingualism in education the boundaries between learning and usage are blurred. Schoolchildren come in contact with three languages at school and they are able to use their multilingual resources as a scaffold when learning these languages. They are learners and users of the three languages at the same time. In view of this, the study of trilingualism in education is not merely one sided, in that it does not study only the process or only the product, or just one language or two languages at a time. The study of trilingualism in education focuses on the complete picture and can provide more insights than other perspectives that simply focus on acquisition or language use.

The combination of a minority language, a national language and English that we see in this volume provides a truly rich context because it relates education to the vitality of the different languages as reflected in their demography, status and institutional control. The volume also demonstrates how minority languages in China share some fundamental characteristics because of their status as minority languages. At the same time, the studies in this volume indicate that minority languages in China occupy different positions with reference to their demography, legal status and prestige. Trilingualism in education in China and other contexts is related to the specific characteristics and challenges of using the minority languages in education, including their legal status and recognition, the availability of qualified teachers and teaching materials, the standardisation of the languages, and finally, the attitudes of the people towards the use of minority languages in education. All of these issues are discussed in this volume, in addition to being shared by other minority languages (Cenoz and Gorter 2008; Cenoz 2009). One of the key points that can be illuminating for scholars outside China, who often refer to China as a linguistically homogeneous country, is the enormous linguistic diversity that is reflected in this book. This diversity is related to the linguistic characteristics of the languages, the demography and socioeconomic status of the minority language speakers in different parts of China.

The spread of English as a world language and a lingua franca in China and elsewhere is clearly seen in the case of Chinese education, where English has become one of the languages in the curriculum (see also Adamson and Feng 2014; Feng 2007, 2011; Ruan and Leung 2012). This volume clearly illustrates how the prestige commanded by the English language is extremely high, even when it is not used in everyday life. English is perceived as being associated with social mobility, although there are important differences between urban and rural contexts in terms of access. Moreover, the volume confirms the strength of the national language, Chinese, as compared to the many minority languages in the provinces. This situation shares several characteristics with trilingual education in some Spanish-speaking countries such as Bolivia or Peru, where there are speakers of minority languages such as Quechua and Aymara, who have Spanish, a widely spoken language, as their national language and English as a third language. Trilingual education in China also shares characteristics with minority languages in Spain (Basque, Catalan, Galician), where Spanish is the national language and English the third language or in France (Basque, Corsican, Breton) where French is the national language and English the third language.

This volume contributes very significantly both to China and other parts of the world for different reasons. It provides valuable information that brings together the different models of trilingual education in China, which in turn can serve as an important reference point for scholars, policy makers and educators in regions with three languages in education, to enable them to effectively learn from other contexts. It can also be of interest for other areas of China, in raising awareness about the diversity of situations and the policies developed in regions where a minority language is spoken. *Trilingualism in Education in China: Models and Challenges* provides pertinent and relevant information for scholars, policy makers and educators outside China. This volume will definitely appeal to a wide and varied global audience interested in multilingual education. Apart from making useful information available, this volume is crucial for studies on trilingualism in education because it goes beyond a mere description of the situations into a conceptual and theoretical discussion of different types of policy models. It correspondingly explores the differences on the subject of support for the minority language at school and its vitality in the Chinese regions, where trilingualism can be found in education. Anwei Feng and Bob Adamson have accurately managed to identify in this volume four major themes that can be used to compare the different regions: linguistic distance, the sociolinguistic context, attitudes of stakeholders and the use of the languages in education. At the same time, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods when conducting the studies allows for triangulation and more reliable outcomes.

This fascinating volume brings together a large number of models and contexts where trilingualism is developed in education and displays their dynamics in relation to the status of the languages and their use in the school curriculum. Finally and most importantly, the volume highlights the importance of being more knowledgeable about the interactions between languages. This is a central issue in the agenda for research on trilingualism in education in China and elsewhere in the world

because of the importance of enhancing the resources multilingual schoolchildren have at their disposal as a result of their wider linguistic repertoires.

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Researching Trilingualism and Trilingual Education in China

Anwei Feng and Bob Adamson

Abstract The introductory chapter gives the rationale and methodology of the chapters included in this volume. All chapters are research reports that emerged from a nationwide project on trilingualism and trilingual education in China. Traditionally, research in this area of study was conducted mostly in isolation in different minority regions or prefectures in the country. There was no known investigation done for gaining a comprehensive, comparable, and critical understanding of the contemporary situation of languages in use and language provision for indigenous minority groups. This chapter, firstly, provides the underpinning ideology and rationale for the nationwide project conducted through concerted efforts of research teams from key minority regions or prefectures and Guangdong Province which provides a particularly interesting case study. It then presents a detailed account of the design of the research, from the establishment of the nationwide network, the formulation of research questions, the methodology and methods used, the designing of research tools, to the organisation of the volume. The strategies used to deal with all these are clearly crucial from the point of view of comparability, validity and trustworthiness of research findings. Finally, the chapter lists the target audience of the volume, including policy makers, teachers and researchers in minority education.

Keywords China's ethnic minority groups · *Sanyu Jiantong* (mastery of three languages) · *Sanyu Jiaoyu* (trilingual education) · Policy making · Ethno-linguistic vitality · Additive trilingualism · Empowerment · Multiple case studies · Mixed methodology · Target audience

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1   Introduction

Trilingualism and trilingual education have long histories in China in various guises—the manifestation investigated in this book is a development of the twenty-first century—as schools have taught foreign languages (most notably English, but also at various times and locations Russian, Japanese and Albanian, *inter alia*), since the latter days of the Qing Dynasty, while local mother tongues have also been learned alongside standard versions of Chinese. The local mother tongues include Chinese varieties such as Cantonese, Shanghainese, Fujianese, Chiu Chow and thousands of dialects, and the languages of indigenous ethnic minority groups that mainly inhabit the borderlands of the country. The roles and status of local, national and international tongues have shifted over time under the influence of changing political ideologies and pragmatism, as reflected in education policies. Varieties of the Chinese language have tended to be neglected in the face of powerful promotion of a national unifying standard, and the fortunes of ethnic minority languages (along with those of English) have risen and fallen at different stages of nation-building. In recent times the confluence of disparate policy strands, each supporting the development of one component of trilingualism, has created an environment in which serious attention can be paid to the implementation of trilingual education. Ethnic minority languages are promoted (or side-lined or even covertly suppressed), Mandarin Chinese is emphasised, which has always been the case, and the learning of English is encouraged from upper primary school. These three policy strands have arisen independently, and therefore lack an underlying coherent theory of trilingual education, but policy implementation has increasingly demanded that education authorities weigh up their approach to fostering trilingualism. These developments form the central focus of this book, although we do acknowledge that trilingualism is not solely a matter for ethnic minority groups.

There are 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups in the People's Republic of China (PRC), and a substantial body of literature was developed on the diverse languages in use and in education for these groups, much before the current moves towards trilingualism in education occurred in the early years of the twenty-first century. Much of this literature, as Dai et al.'s work (2000) indicates, traces the history of minority languages and scripts, examines their features and interrelationships, explores the phenomena of bilingualism in regions where minority people live as a dominant group or in mixed communities, and debates issues surrounding bilingual education. Since the turn of the century, this body of literature has expanded even more rapidly. The increase is indubitably attributable to the fact that English language education has been officially promoted across the PRC, including minority dominated regions, much more robustly than ever before (Feng 2011). The spread of English has had a huge impact on minority groups and language provision for these groups has consequently become an even more complex and diversified task. While discussions on traditional bilingualism and bilingual education for minority groups continue, the past decade has witnessed a speedily-growing scholarship on *Sanyu Jiantong* (mastery of three languages, namely, the indigenous minority home language (L1), Mandarin Chinese (L2), and English (L3), or simply

trilingualism) and *Sanyu Jiaoyu* (trilingual education)[1] (Adamson and Feng 2009; Feng and Adamson 2011). While this seemingly new phenomenon has been studied and discussed by many, research is usually conducted in different regions in isolation and conclusions are normally drawn on the basis of limited empirical evidence. This volume aims to fill this gap. It provides an evidence-based, comprehensive, comparable and critical analysis of the contemporary situation of languages in use and language provision for the indigenous minority groups, as well as touches on issues affecting speakers of Cantonese.

2   Complexity of the Context

Investigating any aspect concerning minority groups in the PRC requires awareness of the complexity and dynamics of the overall context—more specifically, the interrelationship between centrality and diversity and between periphery and resilience. Very few researchers have questioned the notion that ethnic minority groups have much in common for the simple reason that they have been ruled by the same regime for more than six decades. As citizens under the highly centralised government, ethnic minority groups are subject to the same legislature and laws as the Han majority group and are constitutionally mandated equal rights. At the state level, for example, all five Autonomous Regions[2] and other areas where minority groups are concentrated are bound by China's *Constitution* (1982) and its language law (*[the] Law of ..., 2001*) as well as by the Regional National Autonomy Law (*[the] Law of* …1984), which specifically applies to minority groups. A common clause included in all these documents promotes Putonghua, the standard Chinese language, throughout the country including minority-dominated communities, though they are also granted constitutional rights to use and maintain their language and culture. These regulations create an apparent contradiction (Stites 1992, cited in

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[1] Like many other authors in China, we use the terms, trilingualism and trilingual education, to refer to education and competency in three languages—minority home language, Chinese and English—for minority groups in China. This is the situation *most* minority groups are facing today. However, it is important to note that the real situation is much more complicated than the terms suggest. Some groups had been traditionally trilingual or multilingual (Dai and Cheng 2007) before English was introduced into the school system, while some such as Hui, Manchu, She and Tujia have lost their L1 and speak Chinese as their home language due to historical reasons. Also some school programmes may be claimed to be trilingual, but the hidden aim is in fact monolingualism or limited bilingualism. Thus, the terms are simplistic labels for a very complex situation.

[2] Though indigenous minority groups are spread across the country, there are primarily five autonomous regions designated for the five largest minority groups in China, namely the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Tibetan Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Each region, as the name suggests, is given power to exercise self-governance, though critics such as Lundberg (2009) and Mackerras (1994) argue that due to the principle of 'democratic centralism', the model actually practised in these regions provides little real autonomy, particularly from the political point of view.

Lin 1997). Consequently, the past decades have seen a pendulum swing between the promotion of linguistic and cultural assimilation and of bilingualism, depending on the socio-political situation in the country. This phenomenon is particularly evident in regions, in which their ethnolinguistic vitality is relatively strong. In most regions, however, assimilation has been prevailing as governments at various levels have taken strong measures to promote L2, the standard Chinese, in schools and in society.

Ethnic minority groups, currently numbering over a hundred million people, are hugely diverse in terms of history, culture and language. Even within the 'same' group, substantial differences exist in all domains. Linguistically, any relatively large ethnic minority group, Tibetans, for instance, may speak several mutually unintelligible 'dialects' (Denwood 1999). There can also be vast differences in terms of state policies for various minority groups because of geographical, demographical, socio-cultural, historical and political factors. Let us consider the high stakes national college entrance examination for example. This examination is administered in Mandarin Chinese and six minority languages, namely Tibetan, Uyghur, Mongolian, Korean, Kazakh, and Kirghiz (Mackerras 1994). This is viewed as imperative, as these six languages are spoken by groups with a large population and long-established linguistic and cultural traditions, and they all live in strategically important areas bordering foreign lands. In addition to the visible differences, diversity among minority groups can also be attributed to individuals and groups with various socio-political and cultural backgrounds who determinedly stand up to negotiate their cultural identity and linguistic rights in specific contexts. In these situations, a more dynamic relationship exists between the minority group and the state or regional government (Schluessel 2007).

There appears to be a consensus in the literature that indigenous minority groups are often disadvantaged because most live in rural, desert or mountainous areas. According to statistics, nearly a third of the counties officially defined as poverty-stricken are located in the west mainly inhabited by minority groups (Yang 2005). Many minority schools, therefore, lack basic resources. Without access to modern facilities and qualified teachers, minority students are usually found to be poorer performers than their Han majority counterparts (Hu 2007; Jiang et al. 2007; Tsung 2009) and their dropout rate is usually high. Besides economic and geographical factors, some scholars believe that educational failure for many minority students often arises from the inappropriate use of languages in education. Although minority languages and cultures were widely seen as more respected in the PRC in the 1950s and in the 1980s, the goal of policy makers and educators since 1949 appears to have been to create a standardised education system—in terms of the syllabuses, textbooks and pedagogical activities—characterised by cultural and linguistic homogeneity and socialist orientation (Hansen 1999). The assimilationist stances adopted by key policy makers and the associated lack of value ascribed to minority languages are clearly reflected in the chauvinistic statement made in the early days of the PRC by Hu Qiaomu, the then personal secretary of the paramount leader, Mao Zedong, that the 'government must eliminate Han dialects within 10 years and

eliminate minority languages after we develop them into *Hanyu Pinyin*[3] scripts' (Tsung 2009, p. 88). When competence in Chinese became the determinant of their prospects in life, many minority students struggled to compete for scarce academic opportunities with the Han majority, for whom Chinese was the mother tongue. As a result, for decades they have had to depend upon 'preferential policies', which have proved to be double-edged swords (Feng and Sunuodula 2009). One key preferential policy, for example, is to allow minority students with lower marks than required in the high-stakes National College Entrance Examination to enter a higher education institution. However, once in the university, these minority students often fail to prosper in their academic studies, with many failing to graduate (Lin 1997; Adamson and Xia 2011), and even if they do succeed in completing their studies, they are stigmatised as recipients of preferential treatment, which substantially affects their prospects in the job market.

Despite the peripheral position in which many minority groups are situated, research proves that some groups have displayed persistent robustness in protecting their languages and cultures. For example, while some minority parents—especially those living in urban areas and those possessing socially privileged positions—might send their children to Chinese medium schools, many others are resistant or reluctant to do so, particularly from the point of view of literacy development (Postiglione 1999; Zhou 2000, 2004). These parents opt to send their children to minority language medium schools, where available. This is particularly true in rural areas in Xinjiang (Tsung 2009). In Yunnan, temple education is another way for minority children to develop literacy in their own language (Hu 2007). Hansen (1999) points out that despite its drawbacks, temple education tends to provide a window of opportunity for boys who cannot pass high stakes examinations in the state system. Furthermore, some researchers observe that minority groups seem to be seeking opportunities to negotiate their linguistic identity and rights. During the 1980s, minority groups sensed a favourable atmosphere and many schools returned to minority language medium instruction, particularly at the primary level (Tsung 2009). Some groups such as Uyghur, Yi, Dai, and Kazak even forced the reversal of a policy made in the 1950s that had reformed their writing scripts, and restored the originals. All these indicate that indigenous minority groups might be disadvantaged in geographical, demographic and socio-economic terms but they are resilient, taking advantage of any opportunities to claim their rights and negotiate their identity.

It is worth noting that not all indigenous minority groups are marginalised in the country. In statistical terms, some minority groups appear to be even more privileged than their majority counterparts. Comparing the educational level of 56 ethnic groups including the Han, Zhou (2001) established that some minority groups—most notably the Koreans and Russians—could boast a higher percentage of college degree holders than the national average. The Korean group are particularly strong because of the high demand for Korean graduates in neighbouring South Korea and

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[3] *Hanyu Pinyin* is the system used in the PRC to transcribe Chinese characters into Romanised script.

in companies set up by Korean entrepreneurs within the PRC (Lin 1997). In cases such as the Koreans, it is important to note that their empowerment does not stem from linguistic or cultural assimilation into mainstream society: on the contrary, they gain power by developing their multilingual competence and their economy, and by confidently claiming their identity.

As mentioned above, the turn of the century ushered in the era of *Sanyu Jiantong* (mastery of three languages or trilingualism) and *Sanyu Jiaoyu* (trilingual education). This shift from bilingualism to trilingualism or multilingualism, we argue, is attributable to various forces of globalisation in the wider context which triggered the promulgation of the official documents (Ministry of Education 2001a, b, c); to promote English language education at all levels throughout the country. Increasing tourism in many minority regions, joint ventures, international economic activities, such as the hugely impactful China-ASEAN Expositions held annually in Guangxi and other 'open-door' activities (Huang 2011), have all helped fuel enthusiasm for gaining English language competence not only in metropolitan areas such as Shanghai (Zou and Zhang 2011), but also in remote minority communities (Blachford and Jones 2011). Some minority students at universities, who find themselves in difficulty competing academically with their Han counterparts, perceive the requirement to learn English as an opportunity to demonstrate their learning capabilities (Sunuodula and Feng 2011).

Inevitably, the recent shift from traditional bilingualism to *Sanyu Jiantong* and *Sanyu Jiaoyu* in indigenous minority regions has made the complex situation even more intricate and perplexing. How do stakeholders in minority education react to the new need? How does the new need for English impact on the existing languages in use and in education? What is happening in minority schools and classrooms? Are there genuine efforts made and models developed for improving *trilingual* competence in pupils? If yes, how effective are these models? Over the past decade, as noted earlier, there has been some research and various discussions in an attempt to answer these questions, but there has been hardly any systematic and comprehensive endeavour to examine and assess the situation and its related issues. Hence, a nationwide project on trilingualism and trilingual education was initiated 5 years ago by the authors of this chapter and has been conducted in key regions in China to research into the diverse yet interrelated features of *Sanyu Jiantong* and *Sanyu Jiaoyu*. The majority of the chapters included in this volume are the reports of research in these specific regions.

3   The Trilingualism-in-China Project

As a nationwide project targeting such a huge population, it is necessary to give a detailed account of the process of the research, so as to gauge its validity and reliability. Because of the complex, dynamic and politically sensitive nature of the issues the research covers, we have taken a cautious, yet rigorous approach to ensure that what we report in any publication, including this volume, is thorough,

consistent and most importantly based on valid and reliable evidence. To this end, prior to the launch of the project, we spent about 2 years in 2006 and 2007, planning and piloting the project on a small scale. Since 2009, we have congregated and worked closely with a national network of researchers in ten key regions in the country. The following pages describe how the project evolved and the specific strategies and methods which we adopted to ensure its value as well as validity.

3.1 Initial Research

Back in 2006, with the publication of a review paper by the first author of this chapter on bilingual education and bilingualism for both the majority and minority groups in the PRC (Feng 2005), a small-scale project was initiated with the aim of gaining first-hand information on *Sanyu Jiantong* and *Sanyu Jiaoyu* in minority regions. Three case studies were conducted into trilingualism and trilingual education among minority students in a few universities in Guangxi, Sichuan and Xinjiang. These studies were essentially semi-structured interviews with students using a convenient sampling method. Data collected from the studies were richer and more significant than expected, and subsequently several papers were published on the basis of these case studies (Adamson and Feng 2009; Feng 2008; Feng and Sunuodula 2009). These papers helped shed light on the new phenomenon. However, we were well aware of the limitations of the initial studies in terms of scope, depth and rigour. For practical reasons, the subjects for our studies were chosen primarily from minority students and teachers at some universities in the three regions visited. We had neither the time nor financial resources to investigate primary and secondary schools in areas where indigenous minority groups concentrate. Key stakeholders such as primary and secondary school heads, teachers, parents, pupils and policy makers at various levels were absent from this initial research. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation with comparable data, a project to investigate the situation on a larger scale appeared to be the logical answer given the purpose of the study and diversity, in terms of ethnicity and sheer size of the minority population in each region.

3.2 The Concept of Additive Trilingualism

No research is conducted in a vacuum where a researcher could remain absolutely neutral. As critical educational researchers argue, research should not merely aim to give an account of the society and behaviour, but also to redress inequality and to promote good practice (Fay 1987). The initial research identified many issues in language provision for minority groups and gave clear evidence of the essential role of pupils' home language in education in general and trilingual education in particular. This led to our belief that the large-scale project would, first of all, examine the inter-play of all three languages in education, and on that basis it should aim to

promote strong models in trilingual education. This belief was built upon the litera-
ture and research findings on the benefits of additive bilingualism and trilingualism.
In an additive bilingual/trilingual situation, the addition of one or more than one
language and culture does not replace or displace an individual's home language
and culture. Moreover, there is overwhelming evidence that shows positive cogni-
tive and affective outcomes of additive bilingualism or trilingualism (Cenoz 2003;
Cummins 2000).

Although *additive trilingualism* is conceptualised differently in different con-
texts, we define it, bearing the Chinese context in mind, as *the development of very
strong competences both in L1 (minority pupils' home language) and L2 (Mandarin
Chinese), given its wide use and absolute importance for life opportunities in China,
and peer appropriate competence in L3 (a foreign language, usually English).
Peer appropriate competence in L3 refers to oral proficiency and literacy in L3
comparable to that of the peers of the majority Han group*. This definition takes into
account many key aspects essential for minority education in the new century: cog-
nitive and affective imperatives for L1 maintenance and development; economic
and socio-political needs for competence in L2; and international mobility and
competitiveness for L3 learning. It is this conceptualisation that underlies the en-
tire project, from formulating the research questions, designing the instruments,
collecting and analysing data, to dissemination research findings. Indeed, addi-
tive trilingualism thus conceptualised is the guiding ideology for some on-going
regional projects that aim to apply strong models of trilingualism (see Chap. 11 in
this volume) to minority school classrooms.

3.3   Research Questions

One of the challenging tasks at the planning stage was to decide what questions the
research project aims to answer (Thomas 2009). The major research questions for
this national project were primarily derived from the small-scale study described
above and identification of discrepancies between theories developed internation-
ally and the reports concerning trilingual education in minority regions in the PRC.

There seems to be general consensus in the literature of trilingualism and trilin-
gual education that bilinguals outperform monolinguals at learning a third language
(L3) and thereby, gain a cognitive advantage over them (Cenoz and Jessner 2000;
Clyne et al. 2004; Hoffmann and Ytsma 2004). Research by Cenoz (2003) and
Cenoz and Valencia (1994) demonstrates that students who are bilingual in Spanish
and Basque tend to achieve higher levels of proficiency in English than students
who were starting to learn English from a monolingual base. As Baker (2006) points
out, this can be explained by Cummin's (1986, 2000) interdependence hypothesis
that suggests academic language proficiency transfers across languages with re-
gards to phonological, syntactical and pragmatic abilities. In the emerging literature
in China, however, despite occasional reports that give support to the hypothesis,
many educators and commentators seem to claim that the reverse is true (e.g., Jiang
et al. 2007; Yang 2005; Zhang 2003). Instead of advantages, they report cognitive,

cultural and psychological problems minority students experience in learning L3. Therefore, not surprisingly, some scholars such as Bastid-Bruguiere (2001) argue that the national drive for English language education in China is bound to empower the already powerful Han group, leaving indigenous minority people even further behind. As minority pupils are required to learn Mandarin Chinese as a priority and because of the fact that minority groups usually live in impoverished and remote areas, Beckett and MacPherson (2005) conclude that the current expansion of English language education is inevitably widening the gap between the majority Han and minority groups and further augmenting the educational inequities that the minority peoples already face in the traditional system.

To address these commonly perceived issues, some educators in China suggest that special policies should be enacted for minority students (Yang 2006; Zhang 2003). This would actually signify setting standards for English language proficiency lower than the required levels specified in official documents issued by the Ministry of Education (2001a, b, c). Sunuodula and Feng (2011) point out that those making this suggestion seem to ignore the obvious consequences that, once such a special policy is made, minority pupils with lower standards than their majority counterparts in a school subject of ever-increasing importance will inevitably find it more difficult to compete for academic and career opportunities, and will be destined to be further marginalised.

What seems to be neglected in the literature is the essential role of pupils' L1 in education as their performance in L2 and L3 acquisition is often the focus of attention (Adamson and Feng 2009; Feng 2008). With this understanding, it was made explicit from the start that the project was not intended to be one focusing solely on L3 teaching and learning of minority pupils. Unlike many researchers working on *Sanyu Jiantong* and *Sanyu Jiaoyu,* this project would examine in-depth the inter-play of all three languages. Thus, the aim of the project was to address three interrelated issues as follows:

1. The objective and subjective ethnolinguistic vitalities of the minority group under investigation, plus an analysis of the language policies and other contextual factors.
2. Perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders towards *Sanyu Jiantong* in minority regions, including policy makers, teachers, parents and pupils, focusing on how they value each language, including L1, and how they react to the new phenomenon.
3. Languages in education. Is *Sanyu Jiaoyu* genuinely implemented in schools? That is, are all three languages taken into account in the curriculum? If not, why not? If yes, to what extent do political, cultural, economic and sociolinguistic factors affect *Sanyu Jiaoyu*?

All three are challenging, multiple questions. The first suggests a thorough investigation into the contextual factors in *Sanyu Jiaoyu*. They include language policies at macro-, meso-, and micro-levels and the objective and subjective ethnolinguistic vitalities. Contextual factors determine whether and to what extent *Sanyu Jiaoyu* could be implemented in a region. The second question signifies major empirical

studies to find out the perceptions and attitudes of the stakeholders. Their perceptions of and attitudes towards *Sanyu Jiantong,* including pupils' L1, are of great importance as they not only provide in-depth evidence to explain the forms of trilingual education, weak or strong, practised in a specific region, but also best reveal the subjective ethnolinguistic vitality that is characteristic toward making an ethnic group "likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intercultural situations" (Giles et al. 1977, p. 308). The perceived ethnolinguistic vitality demonstrated by minority language speakers, according to Giles (2001), is even more important than the objective ethnolinguistic vitality, for maintaining their language and their culture. The third question queries whether *Sanyu Jiaoyu* is actually on the school agenda. The literature and our initial studies indicate that many schools in ethnic minority regions have only L2, or L2 and L3 (if English can be offered), in their curricula. L1 is either inadequately incorporated or missing. A major task toward answering this question is to identify contextual factors that shape the policies and practices in schools. A comprehensive investigation into socio-political, cultural, historical, economic and linguistic dimensions is required for acquiring valuable data to address this question.

3.4   The National Network

The next task was to establish a network of researchers, which was done through our social and academic connections. Armed with a proposal, researchers in many regions were contacted. These included Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Jilin, Guangxi, Yunnan, Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Guangdong. Most researchers contacted responded very positively, although some, such as a Tibetan researcher, had to withdraw from the project, because permission was not given by the relevant authorities to conduct this study. At a later stage, the network expanded to include researchers working in Guizhou and a Ph.D. candidate researching Tibet at a UK university. These regions and provinces represent minority territories reasonably well, as they are either dominated by minority group(s) or have a mixed population living in autonomous prefectures or counties and are often the focus of attention when ethnic minority groups are researched. The selected regions also host the three types of minority communities defined by Zhou (2000, 2001) mainly on the basis of ethnolinguistic vitality. Type 1 consists of those minority communities, such as Uyghurs and Kazaks in Xinjiang, and Mongolians, Tibetans, and Koreans in Jilin, who have enjoyed a relatively stable form of bilingual education since the founding of the PRC in 1949[4]. Their language exists in both the spoken form and traditional written form and is widely used. Type 2 groups including the Dai, Jingpo, Lisu, Lahu, Miao, Naxi, Va and Yi living mainly in the southwest of the country have had only occasional bilingual education since 1949, while their functional writing systems are of only limited usage. The remaining 42 minority groups belong to

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[4] 1949 was the year when the PRC was founded. Many social scientists and educators use this year as a demarcation line in their discussions on society and education in China.

Type 3 which comprises those minority groups that have had limited or no access to bilingual education and whose writing systems were barely functional prior to 1949.

Type 1 and Type 2 minority communities are represented to a higher degree in this volume because of their stronger ethnolinguistic vitality than that possessed by the Type 3 communities—many of which are being increasingly assimilated into mainstream society. Some, such as the Manchu, Hui, She and Tujia groups, have either already adopted or are increasingly using Mandarin Chinese in both formal and informal domains (Tsung 2009). The concepts of trilingualism and trilingual education could hardly be applicable to these communities. However, recent developments confirm that huge efforts have been made in some Type 3 communities to revitalise the minority languages in language education for minority groups (Finifrock 2010; Huang 2013).

4   Methodology

The establishment of the national network for large-scale research enabled us to aim for findings that are comprehensive, comparable and generalisable. For this reason, there had to be a certain degree of consensus with regard to the approach and methods to be used for data collection and analysis by regional teams across the country. On the other hand, diversity in terms of the focus of research, data to be collected and methods to be used was not only inevitable but in our view, to be encouraged for the very reason that regions vastly differ in many crucial aspects of their geographical, historical, economic and socio-political contexts, as do the researchers' backgrounds, personal philosophies and ideologies, and available resources. Throughout this project, therefore, a balance had to be struck between consensus and diversity and this could be achieved by establishing general guidelines for the approach and data analysis, while simultaneously encouraging pragmatic measures taken by teams in their specific contexts. This diversity is reflected in the varied topics covered in the individual chapters of this book.

4.1   Single and Multiple Case Studies

As the chapters affirm, investigations conducted in some regions are typically single case studies of specific instances of trilingual education in action. According to Cohen et al. (2007) and Thomas (2009), this instance could be an individual, a particular school, a village, a county or an even larger community. Such a case study helps us understand a complex instance in a temporally, spatially and institutionally bounded system in great depth and enables us to perceive the dynamic interactions between this instance with others located in specific contexts, so as to lucidly illustrate a general phenomenon, i.e., to generate a theory that helps us understand and appreciate other similar cases and situations (Robson 2002). The studies conducted in Guizhou and Tibet are instances of such single case studies with a focus on one particular school.

However, when a region dominated by a minority group is studied, the researcher should bear in mind that the region may not only differ hugely from other regions but also within itself. It is not difficult to imagine, for example, how diverse the schools in Inner Mongolia are with regard to education resources, the degree of assimilation, economy and culture, given its huge population spread over its vast land. Taking this into account, many research teams, as the chapters in the book show, adopted what methodologists call multiple-case studies (Yin 2003), which enable researchers to explore the phenomena through the use of a replication research strategy, so as to achieve saturation of research data and to enhance validity and reliability of the research. Moreover, this approach would make the data easily comparable both internally—across different areas within a specific region itself—and externally—across regions in the country and beyond. In addition, such an approach would enable researchers to draw conclusions and generalisable statements from the data with more confidence.

The key for valid and reliable multiple-case studies is to select the most representative cases for study within each region. For our project, it was agreed that given a favourable environment and resources, a research team would choose nine cases from three areas for investigation according to the following criteria:

- Demographically, the three areas should represent the population typology of the region or prefecture. In most cases, one chosen area should be a county or town that is dominated by the minority group; the second, a mixed community with a (near-) balanced population in ethnic terms; and the third, the capital city with mixed population but usually dominated by the Han majority.
- Geographically, the three areas should represent the whole region or prefecture in terms of geographical features and transportation. One chosen area should be the most remote and the least accessible; the second area should be in a town with relatively easy access to modern transport; and the third area should ideally represent the centre, with modern transportation and population mobility.
- Economically, the three areas chosen should also represent the region or prefecture in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP).

In many regions, the first area would be the most remote, least developed, and dominated by a minority group at least in demographic terms. The second area would be a mid-sized town with a mixed population and reasonable economic vitality, while the third would be the capital city of the region or prefecture. In each area, three schools—two primary and one secondary—would ideally be chosen, with criteria similar to those defined above. In principle, the nine cases (schools) chosen from each area should be as representative as possible in terms of resources, demography, geographical condition, and so forth. With nine representative cases studied in a region, researchers would have sufficient proof to be confident in drawing conclusions and arriving at generalisations. Among the chapters that studied multiple cases, the one on the Yi group in Sichuan most meticulously adopted and followed the multiple-case approach.

Table 1 Operationalisation of major themes through empirical research

Sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic context	Policy analysis—ultimate goal
	L1 vitality (objective)
	L1 vitality (subjective)
	L2 use (in relation to L1 use)
	L3 use
Languages in education in schools	Language as school subject
	Language as medium of instruction
	Language(s) of examinations
	School environment
	Human resources for trilingual education
Attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders	Policy makers
	Teachers
	Parents
	Pupils/students
Linguistic distance	Language family

4.2   Operationalisation of the Research Questions

The three research questions listed above suggested broad themes for investigation. More specific issues had to be determined, so as to make each theme measurable or explorable through empirical means, that is, to operationalise the research questions. Table 1 specifies the issues that the project teams might wish to address under each theme.

To study the contextual factors of a trilingual education programme, five issues were listed for empirical study, namely policies, objective vitality, subjective vitality, L2 use and L3 use, if any, in the ethnolinguistic community. The second theme entails five sub-questions for data on how the languages, three or less than three, were taught and/or used in the school and classroom environment and the availability or lack of human resources for trilingual education. In close relation to the second question which was aimed at schools, perceptions and attitudes were sought from major stakeholders in minority schools and from policy makers wherever they were accessible. As linguistic distance between languages is usually an issue to be considered in multilingual education (Cenoz 2009; Ytsma 2001), a question on this dimension was added to the list. However, this question was not considered as significant as the others because it is only relevant in some cases.

A suite of research tools was designed to investigate all the (sub-)questions, on the basis of the 2006 small-scale research findings and further pilot studies. The design of the tools followed what is normally called the 'third paradigm', or the mixed methodology, i.e., a strategy that mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research methods and approaches in a single study (Greene 2008; Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998, 2003). The philosophy behind the mixed methodology is eclecticism and pluralism, which results in quality research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). This paradigm, therefore, suggests a belief in opening up to different perspectives and theories and selecting the most *appropriate* and at the same time

feasible model(s) and method(s) in *a specific context* to achieve a commonly-valued outcome. This feature was seen as essential for the nationwide project because, as research teams in various regions faced different and sometimes sensitive situations, they had to consider what could be done as well as 'fitness for purpose', which is the general guideline for selecting research methods (Cohen et al. 2007). For some teams, indeed, what could be done often determined whether they were able to conduct any research whatsoever in the first place.

The design of the suite of 12 research tools (see Table 2) followed two basic principles. First, they were compiled in accordance with the three general research questions. In addition to observation sheets, ethnographic study and archival research, major tools such as interviews and questionnaires contain items that seek to elicit data for all the questions. This was to ensure that researchers would have data relevant to all core issues, even if they could only use a limited number of tools. The other basic principle was that research teams in the field were free to use any tools in the list, or modified versions of these tools, in the language they deemed most appropriate for the subjects being studied. Thus, all the research tools uploaded onto the website specifically set up for the trilingualism-in-China project were subject to modification, change and translation into any language.

4.3 Rationale of the Research Design

Researchers were well-aware that it would be a challenge to investigate any issue listed in Table 1 and to use any instrument in Table 2 in the field of study. Clearly, any individual issue in Table 1 implies a research project in itself. Therefore, none of the teams would be expected to investigate all the issues enumerated above or use all the instruments given the timeframe. None of the chapters included in this volume could possibly be expected to address all the issues given the space constraints of a book. However, this research design was viewed as necessary for three reasons. First, as it is often pointed out in the literature, trilingualism in any context is "inherently complex, as it involves more than the simple addition of a new grammar and vocabulary to a speaker's repertoire but is intricately linked to identity, status, and usage" (Henn-Reinke 2012, p. 1) and it can occur in any domain and at any stage of one's life (Cenoz and Genesee 1998). Designing the research in order to investigate as many issues relevant to trilingualism and trilingual education as possible is recognition of this complexity. It is a reminder that a researcher should examine a wide range of contextual factors interwoven in the intricate web of trilingual education, in order to gain a comprehensive insight into the phenomenon.

Second, as a nationwide project with a huge diversity in research resources and accessibility to research subjects, a comprehensive set of research tools would provide maximal flexibility to individual researchers or teams of researchers to conduct research whenever and wherever possible. This flexibility is particularly important in minority dominated regions, where it is regarded as a sensitive issue, to conduct social science research in general. With the requisite tools at hand, a researcher would be better equipped to conduct a quick observation during breaks

Table 2 Research instruments for the Trilingualism-in-China project

Paradigm	Instrument	Objectives
Qualitative	Semi-structured interview with teachers and principals (mostly individuals)	To elicit data showing perceptions of and attitudes to trilingualism and each language, and their teaching experience focusing on language
	Semi-structured interview with policy makers (individuals)	To elicit data showing perceptions of and attitudes to trilingualism and each language, and their experience in language policy making and implementation
	Semi-structured interview with parents (for focus group or individuals)	To elicit data showing their attitudes to different languages, their knowledge of what is going on in schools and their experiences
	Semi-structured interview with pupils (for focus group or individuals)	To elicit data showing attitudes and experience in using and learning languages
	School observation	To elicit data showing Language environment: notice boards, signs, pictures, etc. Languages used by staff, pupils, etc.
	Classroom observation	To elicit data showing languages used by teacher and pupils, for activities, for note taking, for discussions, etc.
	Ethnographic study	To capture the language environment in a minority community
Quantitative	Teacher questionnaire	To elicit data showing teachers' perceptions of current practices, views of language use and views for language education
	Parent questionnaire	To elicit data showing parents' knowledge of current practices and views of language use and language education
	Student qquestionnaire	To elicit data showing students' attitude to current practices and views of language use and language education
	Subjective vitality survey	To elicit data to measure subjective ethnolinguistic vitality of a minority language
Other (archival)	Objective vitality study	To elicit data to measure objective ethnolinguistic vitality of a minority language by collecting data through archives, mass media, official documents, etc.
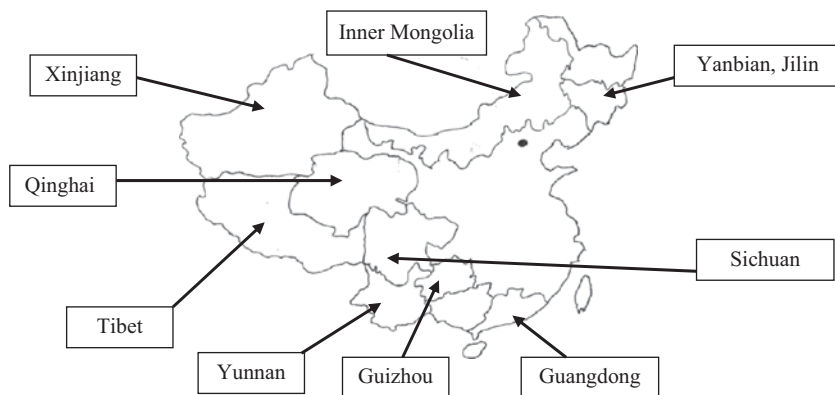
Fig. 1 Nine regions and provinces in China where investigations were conducted and reported

or classes or organise an interview with a teacher or a parent when an appropriate opportunity presented itself. The researcher(s) possibly would not always be successful in conducting the systematic investigations precisely as prescribed, but the accumulation of evidence collected over time against the checklist, would definitely contribute toward increasing their understanding of the situation. And lastly, with the list of research questions and the suite of the tools agreed upon and made readily available to the project members, the likelihood of gathering data that are comparable would be hugely augmented. Comparability of regional practices, policies and conceptions is a major rationale behind the establishment of the nationwide network for trilingualism research.

5 Organisation of the Volume

Nine teams have contributed to this volume and they represent autonomous regions and areas in other provinces where indigenous minority groups dominate/concentrate. Figure 1 marks the regions and areas where investigations were conducted. As noted above, geography and ethnolinguistic vitality are two major dimensions used to determine representativeness of the areas investigated. These two dimensions, which are not mutually exclusive, are also used for organising the chapters in this book. In general, minority regions such as Inner Mongolia, the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Jilin and Xinjiang in the northern part of China[5] are stronger in terms of ethnolinguistic vitality, with a more extensive tradition of bilingual education, than those regions in the south or southwest such as Yunnan

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[5] We are aware that, by geographic definitions, Xinjiang is part of the northwest; Inner Mongolia is in north China; and Jilin is in the northeast. For the purposes of this volume, we cluster them together as the northern group.

and Guizhou. The provinces that lie on either side of the southwest and the northwest, such as Qinghai and Sichuan, could be placed somewhere in the middle of the ethnolinguistic vitality chart, if such a chart were produced. According to these two major dimensions, the nine chapters reporting research findings are grouped into three parts, telling stories from *Meng-Chao-Xin, Zang-Qing-Chuan* and *Yun-Gui-Yue*[6] respectively.

The first part of the book comprises chapters that present an overview of policies and trilingual models in three northern regions with strong ethnolinguistic vitality and long traditions in bilingual or multilingual education. Chapter 2 reports a very extensive investigation in Inner Mongolia in 32 schools, from which different models of bilingual or trilingual education are identified. The third chapter presents a holistic review of the history, language policies and current practices with regard to bilingual and multilingual education in Yanbian and beyond. The fourth chapter on Xinjiang, like the third, starts with a comprehensive account of the history and language policies of the region and this overview is complemented with empirical data rigorously collected from stakeholders in different schools and regional or city/country-level government offices in Xinjiang. Thus, the first three chapters provide us with valuable information on language policies and bilingual/trilingual education models in the PRC's minority dominated regions.

The first chapter in Part 2, Chap. 5, is a survey carried out in three Tibetan dominated areas in Qinghai, with its focus on language allocation policies in schools and teachers' and students' views on languages and language education. Chapter 6 is a single-case, in-depth investigation into one school in Tibet, known as *Xizang* in the PRC. Within mainland China, the Tibetan Autonomous Region is regarded as a part of the West, an underdeveloped region with traditions, culture, and ethnolinguistic vitality stronger than most minority regions in the country. The two chapters complement each other to provide a holistic view of bilingual or trilingual education on the *Qing-Zang* Plateau. Chapter 7 is a report of an exhaustive study into the current practices and issues in trilingualism and trilingual education in the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan. This investigation was designed to cover nine schools, with the inclusion of each school being well justified. The rigorous investigation resulted in data that reveal not only the practical models adopted but also the causal factors behind the models.

In Part 3, the Yunnan chapter presents an interesting quantitative study on the perceptions and attitudes of key stakeholders in minority dominated areas in Yunnan, while the tenth chapter gives a unique account of a survey conducted in Guangzhou schools. The chapter on Guizhou begins with the encouraging story of an experimental study conducted in the last decade or so in a remote village school which has yielded very positive results through bilingual and trilingual education.

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[6] All provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities in China have abbreviated forms of current or ancient names that can be used in speech and writing. *Meng-Chao-Xin* in this volume refer to Inner Mongolia, Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Jilin and Xinjiang; *Qing-Zang-Chuan* stand for Qinghai, Tibet and Sichuan; and *Yun-Gui-Yue* for Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangdong.

The Guangzhou survey is distinctive as it focuses on Cantonese speaking secondary school students' attitudes towards Cantonese (*Yueyu*) in the city. The study is not situated in an ethnic minority region but it is concerned with issues surrounding trilingual education in China. The chapter is particularly valuable for two reasons. Firstly, even though Cantonese is normally claimed as a dialect of Chinese and shares a great deal of vocabulary with Mandarin, the two are not mutually intelligible, primarily because of substantial pronunciation and grammatical differences. Thus, Mandarin Chinese is, strictly speaking, a second language to many who speak Cantonese as their mother tongue (Snow 2004). This is clearly reflected in the 'trilingualism and biliteracy' policy adopted in Hong Kong (Lin and Man 2009), in which biliteracy refers to competence in written languages of Chinese and English and trilingualism is used to represent oral competency in Cantonese, Putonghua and English. Secondly, the inclusion of this study is a reminder that there are many varieties of Chinese spoken in different parts of China, and discussions on these varieties have important implications for education.

6 Target Audience for the Volume

It is apparent that key stakeholders in minority education in the PRC would benefit most from this volume, as the chapters provide research evidence for policy making, curriculum design, school selection and classroom planning. With insights gained from the research projects, policy makers and heads of schools would possess the ability to make informed decisions on languages in education and deploy resources for maximum benefit to their pupils. Trilingual education policies made on the basis of research evidence would help to address stakeholders' concerns, which in turn would contribute towards ethnic harmony and maintain political stability. Evidence-based decisions made by curriculum designers would help develop attainable and desirable curricula; teachers would have the appropriate skills to make use of the research data to plan their day-to-day lessons to maximise the effectiveness of bi/trilingual education. Parents, on the other hand, would become better informed in their decisions in selecting education for their children as many of them today wonder how their children would be well prepared for an age in which societies would becoming increasingly multilingual and multicultural. School selection today can be particularly challenging for parents of minority groups whose languages are often threatened by more powerful languages in economic and socio-political terms.

Beneficiaries of the volume could also include researchers and scholars in education studies, particularly those interested in bi/trilingual education and comparative education anywhere in the world. Theories, concepts and policies in bi/trilingual education and bi/trilingualism are, like many other countries such as those in North America and Europe, fiercely contested in China from linguistic, socio-political and cultural perspectives (Feng and Adamson in press). This large-scale project contributes to the debates with empirical evidence and conceptual discussions. Although this project focuses on language use and language provision for minority groups in

the PRC, we have taken into account the compatibility and comparability of the research, not only with cases inside China, but also with research in other parts of the world, such as the bilingual education research carried out by the ESRC Centre on Bilingualism at Bangor University, Wales, in the United Kingdom, and trilingualism and trilingual education studies in the Basque Country (Cenoz 2009). Hence, we state that the trilingualism-in-China project was informed by many other studies in terms of methodology, models and theory, but, in turn, with this volume and other publications by the members of the project, it contributes originality and insights to conceptual discussions and methodology internationally.

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Part I
Meng-Chao-Xin

</div>

Introduction

Meng-Chao-Xin are short forms referring respectively to the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Inner Mongolia lies in the northern part of China with Xinjiang to the northwest and Yanbian to the northeast. As Chapters 2-4 will show, they differ enormously in many aspects such as history, geography, politics, economy and culture, and thus policies and models used for language provision for the minority groups are vastly different.

Mongolian is one of the more powerful ethnic minority languages in the PRC and, as elsewhere in the country, schools in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR) are expected to offer students a trilingual education, with standard Chinese and English being taught in addition to Mongolian. Drawing on research that covered schools across the IMAR, Chapter 2 shows that there are considerable differences in the implementation of trilingual education. It identifies four distinctive models, ranging from those that place a strong emphasis on Mongolian to those that neglect it. The chapter discusses the various historical, demographic, sociolinguistic and other contextual factors that influence the choice of models. It concludes with a discussion of some implications of current trends in trilingualism in education in the IMAR for the future of the Mongolian language.

Korean communities, mostly in the north of China, are usually seen to have a very long and successful tradition of bilingual education in China. Chapter 3 starts with an overview of the history through a detailed account of the policies for bilingualism (usually favourable), research studies, models adopted, and textbooks compiled for Korean schools, particular those in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture. This account continues up to recent years when traditional bilingual education has developed into trilingual or multilingual education. Contextual factors with regard to demography, language vitality and language allocation in the classroom are then presented mostly with statistical data. Findings from case studies conducted in some schools in Korean communities are also reported showing evidence of vastly positive attitudes held by key stakeholders to trilingualism and trilingual education. In this chapter, the authors discuss the concept of double positive

transfer and also argue that teaching staff should be trilingual so as to serve as role models.

Occupying one sixth of China's total land mass, Xinjiang is officially designated as the Uyghur Autonomous Region. While traditionally Uyghur was used as the medium of instruction in schools dominated by Uyghur children, Chapter 4 finds that bilingual education as is enforced in these schools, as well as in ever-increasing merged schools, has increasingly come to mean using Mandarin Chinese as the medium of instruction (as well as teaching it as a school subject) throughout its education system. Uyghur children's home language is taught only as a school subject. To gain first-hand information about the models used in schools, case studies were conducted in some secondary schools and universities accessible to the authors. Findings approved commonly reported realities such as limited accessibility to trilingual education for Uyghur students. Using a combination of concepts such as cultural and symbolic capitals, identity and investment, the authors argue that, in many situations, Uyghur students actively reposition languages as economic, symbolic or cultural capital for investment and negotiate identity and power in the society.

Four Models of Mongolian Nationality Schools in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region

Fang Dong, Narisu, Yanhui Gou, Xinggang Wang and Jia Qiu

Abstract Mongolian is one of the more powerful ethnic minority languages in the PRC and, as elsewhere in the country, schools in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR) are expected to offer students a trilingual education, with standard Chinese and English being taught in addition to Mongolian. Drawing on research that covered schools across the IMAR, this chapter shows that there are considerable differences in the implementation of trilingual education. It identifies four distinctive models, ranging from those that place a strong emphasis on Mongolian to those that neglect it. The chapter discusses the various historical, demographic, sociolinguistic and other contextual factors that influence the choice of models. It concludes with a discussion of some implications of current trends in trilingualism in education in the IMAR for the future of the Mongolian language.

Keywords Trilingualism · Language policy · China · Inner Mongolia · Chinese · English · Mongolian

1 Introduction

Inner Mongolia forms a long and narrow strip in the north of China, with an extensive border with the nation, Mongolia. It is one of the PRC's four autonomous regions, together with Ningxia, Xinjiang and Tibet. Mongol power has declined since the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368), which was established by the great Mongolian

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ruler Kublai Khan in Beijing. During the Qing dynasty, for instance, agricultural settlement by the Han people reduced the concentration of Mongolians and had deleterious effects on the local nomadic, pastoral lifestyle (Burjgin and Bilik 2003). While the Han came to constitute the largest group in Inner Mongolia, Mongolians have striven to preserve recognition of their identity within the Chinese state and achieved the establishment of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Government (later renamed Region) in 1947 (Bulag 2002).

Mongolians make up the sixth-largest ethnic group in the PRC: the population has grown from 888,000 in the first census in 1953 to 4,240,000 in 2007. Almost 70 % of Mongolians in the PRC live in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR), with the rest distributed across Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces. As noted in Chap. 1, the equality of ethnic groups in the PRC is enshrined in law and protected by state institutions. The emphasis on the equality of citizens and their right to education and to use or study their ethnic language are assured by legislation. Like the majority Han and other minorities, Mongolian citizens "must receive 9 years of compulsory education free of charge", and the Constitution of the PRC states that, "Each nation has the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written language". Mongolian people enjoy a number of privileges: they have the option to establish educational systems in Chinese or Mongolian and to receive education in their mother tongue, Mongolian. They have the right to receive higher education in two language systems, Chinese or Mongolian. In entrance examinations, students in the Mongolian system are offered proportionally more chances of higher education with a separate acceptance rate. In the Chinese system, Mongolian students receive 10 bonus points in entrance examinations.

Mongolian is the dominant ethnic minority group in the IMAR. The Mongolian language still predominates in most rural areas, and is an official language alongside Chinese, which is the main language used in the cities. The Mongolian language, oral and written, has been used for more than 800 years (Caodaobateer 2004). Mongolian culture is found throughout the region, in the names of cities, districts, roads and streets, many of which are transliterations from Mongolian into Chinese. With the development of the tourism industry, Mongolian food culture has become a part of mainstream society and Mongolian restaurants are ubiquitous. There are Mongolian language television stations all over the IMAR, with Inner Mongolian TV broadcasting 24 h a day and its satellite broadcasts can be picked up across the whole country (Inner Mongolian TV 2014). Modern technology makes it possible for drivers to listen to Mongolian programmes on FM radio. Mongolian music and songs are popular with many citizens in Mongolia, regardless of their ethnicity. The hundreds of thousands of calls made every day to China Mobile's Mongolian language service 10086 (China Mobile Group and Inner Mongolia 2014) are an indicator of the vitality of the Mongolian language.

The strength of the Mongolian language is enhanced by its economic capital. Across the border lies Mongolia, which formerly belonged to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The opportunity for trade with this country, however, is hampered by differences between the two forms of the Mongolian language. Across

the border, the written form uses Cyrillic letters, while the spoken form reflects the Khalkha dialect. In the IMAR, the written language uses the traditional vertical script, ordered from left to right, and the spoken form is dialectically diverse. Recent efforts in the IMAR to bridge this linguistic gap by transforming the traditional script to Cyrillic have failed to gain popularity. Nonetheless, Mongolian remains one of the more powerful ethnic minority languages in the PRC on the basis of its ethnolinguistic vitality. Across the IMAR, the language is taught in the majority of schools at both primary and secondary levels. As elsewhere in the country, such schools are expected to offer students a trilingual education, with standard Chinese (usually from Primary 1) and English (at least from Primary 3). Some schools, known as Mongolian Nationality Schools (MNS), claim to use Mongolian as the medium of instruction. However, research for this project found considerable differences in the models of trilingual education within this category of schools. In this chapter, four distinctive models are identified and discussed.

Mongolians in MNS speak Mongolian as their first language and Chinese as their second language, with English becoming their third language to be learned for the future. Although the term "trilingual education", (ethnic language, Chinese and English) is not yet overtly referred to in official state policies and rhetoric, it increasingly receives widespread attention among ethnic groups (Zhao 2010). Mongolians are being educated trilingually; that is, three languages are taught at school for different purposes. The past two decades have witnessed growing proficiency from bilingualism to trilingualism among the Mongolian ethnic group. Primary school education is essential for language education. Primary and secondary schools offering Mongolian instruction exist throughout the region. Some universities within the IMAR offer higher education in Mongolian for Mongolian students. Recently, students educated in the Mongolian language system have blended into the mainstream educational system at the college level. Mongolian and Chinese are compulsory subjects at all levels of education, even at college. English is becoming a compulsory subject in a rapidly increasing number of primary schools, as opposed to just a few selected ones several years ago. This chapter discusses the four models of MNS and the trilingual education offered in such schools, focusing on the three languages in the curricula of Mongolian Nationality Primary Schools (MNPS).

2   Literature Review

A considerable amount of ethnic-group education research is conducted within China, such as the studies of ethnic languages in Yunnan. Although it is rare to find theses or articles on Mongolians or the Mongolian language, there has been some research on Mongolian students learning English (Bao and Jin 2010; Bai and Li 2006), on strategies for teaching Mongolians English starting at college level (An and Zhou 2009), and on the quality of teachers in primary or secondary schools (Zhou 2003; Lu 2010). The development and trends in Mongolian education have also been the subjects of numerous studies. It is claimed that the number of students

in the Mongolian language educational system will decline if Mongolians are able to choose freely between the Mongolian and the Chinese educational systems (Su 2009). Discussing language patterns and education policy, Iredale et al. (2001, p. 114) state:

> In terms of social use and importance, the Mongolian language is no match for Chinese and English. Both reality and popular thinking hold that Mongolian is for local and family use while Chinese and English are used elsewhere. Many Han people, as well as some Mongolian cadres and educators, argue that the teaching of Mongolian should be replaced by Chinese in higher middle schools. These groups maintain that Chinese is a key medium of the state and has a dominant status in political promotion, economic betterment and other social achievements.

In a case study (Zhao 2010:77) of 12 Mongolian graduates of the Mongolian Experimental School, where students receive trilingual education from primary to high school, the author concluded that:

> Trilingual Mongol students face fewer obstacles than those from Mongolian-Chinese bilingual streams for the reason that ethnic minority languages possess the least linguistic capital (compared with national and international languages), acquisition of an international dominant language seems to be able to balance their accumulation of human capital in interethnic competition and endow minority students with power in social relations

3 Mongolian Nationality Primary Schools in the IMAR

Mongolian, like Uyghur in Xinjiang or Tibetan in Tibet, is the dominant nationality in the IMAR. There is no doubt that ethnic education in the region has significantly improved since the 1960s, when primary schools on the grassland were called "primary schools on horseback", chiefly because the system of education tended to move with parents who took care of their flocks, with no permanent places for schooling. Now, however, almost every place with a Mongol population has an MNS that offers Mongolian instruction education from primary to junior secondary and even high school. These schools are run separately and are comparatively distinct from the Chinese educational system. The number of MNS at different levels and the number of students enrolled in them are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the total number of MNS as 2,188 and the pupil enrolment as 447,000, and these figures suggest that Mongolian education even today demonstrates dynamism and vigour. Young Mongolian children begin their schooling in a MNPS, in which teaching is organised and the courses are introduced in Mongolian. A completely Mongolian educational system in the IMAR makes it theoretically possible for Mongolians to complete their entire education from primary school through to higher education in Mongolian, because there are 13 universities and colleges with over 30 programmes and projects where the medium of instruction is Mongolian. This system enables a Mongol to complete his or her education, even if he or she is completely monolingual. It is not unusual to meet Mongolians with a Master's or even a doctoral degree. As of 2009, 413 monolingual Mongolians held a Doctorate or a Master's degree.

Table 1 Mongolian Nationality Schools in the IMAR. (Source: Inner Mongolian News 12 October 2009)

	Number of schools	Number of students
Primary school	2,188	447,000
Secondary school	262	248,900
General high school	66	31,100
Vocational secondary schools	50	22,300
Colleges with Mongolian System	13	11,800
Programmes in the Mongolian System	Over 30	
Doctorate and Master's Degree		413

3.1 The Study

Young Mongolians in MNS are increasingly being educated trilingually. To get a more coherent picture of the current situation in such schools, the data presented in this chapter were collected from different areas of the IMAR: from north-western Alashan Meng to the north-eastern Xilingguole Meng (the proper names are a transliteration from Mongolian into *Hanyu Pinyin*). In each Meng, which is a unique sub-administrative division in the IMAR, at least two MNS were chosen for data collection. Data collection was mostly bottom-up—it focused more on policy implementation in primary schools than on official documents. It covered all regions of the IMAR and data collection methods consisted of questionnaires, interviews with pupils, teachers, parents and principals, and analyses of school curricula and other school documents. Thirty-two schools were selected for the study. The size of the schools varied from more than 2,400 to less than 70 students, and the number of staff ranged from around 300 to 10. Some of the selected schools were visited by the project team members, while others were investigated by junior Mongolian students at the Inner Mongolia Agricultural University, who took the questionnaire back to their hometowns to be completed by their families or neighbours. The remainder of the schools were investigated by sending and receiving questionnaires by email.

3.2 Limitations of the Monolingual Mongolian System

Although the extent, the quality and the level of education have all increased dramatically in recent years, and Mongolian children theoretically have the choice to receive education in either the Mongolian or the Chinese systems, in practice, the choices for those whose first language is Mongolian and who live in more remote places are limited. When applying to a university, Mongolian students may appear to be at a disadvantage, because most Chinese universities offer only Chinese language study programmes and English is required for graduation. The Chinese, after all, are the majority, and consequently, there are few worksites or colleges which actually require Mongolian monolinguals. Even in the IMAR, as Table 1 clearly

indicates, there are only 13 universities or colleges offering Mongolian language educational programmes. Consequently, a large number of young Mongolians face a language barrier when taking the entrance examination and their educational options are markedly constrained on account of this barrier (Ma 2007).

3.3   Importance of Language Education

A primary concern is the extent to which languages in MNPS in the IMAR are increasingly affected. One of the chief reasons is that language education at school is considered very indispensable, and has the ability to make a difference to the quality of life a person will ultimately live. Another concern would be the fact that out of the different stages of schooling, language education in primary school is considered to be the most vital and important stage for language development. In addition, when compared with the number of junior secondary schools at 262, senior secondary schools at 66, plus 50 vocational secondary schools in Table 1, the number 2,188 of primary schools indicates that the distribution of Mongolian language schools is pyramid-shaped, that is to say, in the IMAR, MNPS are much more scattered. Varieties in schooling must necessarily be present. Consequently, the project research revealed that schools referred to as MNS can be classified into four models: Mongolian-dominant, bilingual Mongolian and Chinese, and Chinese-dominant with Mongolian class taught as a subject, and Chinese only (like mainstream Han schools).

4   Four Models of Mongolian Nationality School

The data from various schools in two large cities, Huhhot and Baotou, and across all Mengs in the IMAR, suggest that although schools under the label of MNS are in some ways quite distinctive, they can be roughly categorised into four models.

4.1   Model 1

In this model of schools, pupils and staff are almost all Mongolian nationals whose first language is Mongolian. The students come from remote areas and thus have to remain in residence during school days. Some schools are combined primary and secondary schools, called Mongolian Nationality Schools. For example, one MNS in Damaoqi, approximately 200 km *north-west* of Huhhot, had four teachers and 50 students when it first opened in 1950. Today, the school has 115 staff members and 900 pupils. Apart from one English teacher who is Chinese Han, the other teachers are all Mongolian nationals, whose first language is Mongolian. There are

10 primary classes and 16 secondary school classes, unlike other schools in the Mongolian system, in which primary and secondary schools are invariably separate. The overall population of Damaoqi is around 120,400, of which approximately 102,100 are Han, 17,300 are Mongolian, and 1000 are from other ethnic groups, like Hui and Man. Some Mongolian schoolchildren come from remote places around Damaoqi. Children attend school from primary school Grade One to junior secondary school Grade Three, thus most of them receive 9 years of compulsory education.

Within the school, Mongolian is used for all kinds of communication, from notices on the walls, to an introduction to the school in the hall of the main building. On the wall of the principal's office, there is a prominently placed portrait of Genghis Khan, the founder of the Yuan Destiny. The staff members communicated in Mongolian when they met in the principal's office, where the interviews took place. When asked for a copy of the curriculum, a computer printout of the whole school curriculum from 2009 to 2010 was swiftly presented to us. But when a copy of the curriculum in Chinese was requested, the answer was that the school did not have a Chinese curriculum, even in their computer documents.

When two principals—who were in charge of two English teaching groups, one a primary and the other a secondary school group—were interviewed, they spoke fluent Chinese and claimed to be bilingual. As to their English background, they both said they had graduated from the Mongolian Teacher Institute with social degrees, having studied at college for less than 4 years, before proceeding to complete their undergraduate courses before 2005. They were both qualified teachers. One of the teachers mentioned that a group of teachers was conducting research on trilingualism, funded by the school. When we enquired if they had email addresses, one of them promptly wrote down her address and signed her name for us, in beautiful Chinese characters. What was particularly impressive was that most of the classrooms were equipped with multimedia equipment, networking and spacious areas for different activities. There were computer rooms, newly painted dormitory buildings and a plastic-surfaced playground, which is rarely seen, even in schools in Huhhot. When we probed about whether these changes had taken place recently, the principal proudly replied, "Of course, you can see it". He then proceeded to provide us with some colourful drawings of school buildings, and pointed out that the buildings would be completed during the summer vacation. "If you come again next summer, you will see the final results of the changes. What is shown in the photos will become a reality. The funds are already in place", the principal informed us very confidently.

4.2   Model 2

The second model of MNS differs from Model 1. The first distinction is that the staff and students are not only Mongolians but also Han Chinese or other ethnic groups. Although the Han Chinese staff comprise no more than 50 % of the total staff strength, the influence of mainstream culture is more evident in this school.

These schools have two instruction systems, Mongolian and Chinese. Although Mongolian students continue to be educated in Mongolian, the schools tend to be located in cities and towns where the geographical and living conditions are more influenced by the majority Chinese culture. The students are bilingual in and out of school, rather than monolingual like students in Model 1 schools.

One of the MNPS in Jining City, the main city in Wulanchabu Meng with a population of 272,000, is an example of this model. The school was founded in 1952, the student enrolment is 402 (60 % Han) and the number of faculty is 65 (33 % Han). Over half of the Mongolian students in the Mongolian system are from Wumeng (Wulanchabu Meng) District, and most of the remaining students are from the northeast, with a small number from Xilingguole Meng. Many of the children are boarders at the school. There are two classes with about 20 pupils in each grade. In contrast to the Mongolian system, although there is only one class in each grade in the Chinese system (which is attended by students from the suburbs surrounding Jining City or from families without citizenship in the city), these classes have more than 40 pupils. Nevertheless, compared with class sizes of over 60 in other local schools, a class size of 40 is still deemed to be comparatively small. This is one of the reasons why some parents are willing to send their children to MNPS, as they believe children will receive greater attention and therefore learn better in smaller classes. About a third of the pupils in the Chinese system are Mongolian by nationality but cannot speak Mongolian. When exploring the reasons for the smaller size of Mongolian classes, one principal explained that "There are not so many parents who would like to send their children to be educated here'. He also informed us that his only son attended another local school in the Chinese-only system, although he had a strong Mongolian background. The principal and his wife both graduated from the Ethnic Teacher Institute in the Mongolian instruction system, majoring in mathematics. With an occasionally recognisable Mongolian accent, he spoke fluent Chinese, and yet he evaluated his Chinese speaking skills to be 'not good'.

> "It was difficult deciding whether to send him to my school or another Chinese system school. If he came here, he would know almost everybody, and my colleagues would give him too much attention. He is naughty. It wouldn't be good for him. Instead, I consulted some of my friends and considered his future. Chinese will be more use than Mongolian when he grows up".

The principal shook his head when asked about his son's Mongolian language skills at present. Although he deliberately spoke to his son in Mongolian, his son replied in Chinese. When questioned whether he wanted his son to learn Mongolian, his answer was, "No. As a pupil in China, he is busy enough. He has no time to learn Mongolian. He probably won't have chance to visit my home town".

After the interview, the researchers were taken on a tour of the campus. They noticed that the administrative office was completely disorganised, with computers, documents and papers strewn everywhere. One staff member explained the chaos by clarifying that the school had only recently moved to the site, which previously belonged to the Mongolian Nationality Secondary School, which in turn had moved

to a new zone under the policy of developing the western region. One significant detail that caught the researchers' attention was that the curricula for all grades in both the Chinese and the Mongolian systems were in Chinese.

4.3   Model 3

The distinguishing characteristic of Model 3 schools is that there is only one instruction system in such schools, but it is Chinese rather than Mongolian. However, the Mongolian language is taught as a major subject in such schools. For example, in one MNPS in Guyang County, about 40 km from Baotou City, although all pupils are educated in the Chinese instruction system, nonetheless, they all learnt Mongolian, regardless of their nationality, from Grade One to Six. Among the eight Mongolian staff, there are only two whose first language is Mongolian: these two teach Mongolian. There is only one lesson for each class every week from Grade One to Grade Six. The research team observed a Mongolian lesson in a Grade Three class. The class period was 40 min. The topic of the lesson was transportation, and the teacher wrote words such as *plane*, *ship*, *train* and *bus* in both Chinese and Mongolian on the blackboard, before organising some activities to practise them. During the break, when asked if they liked learning the Mongolian language, the pupils replied, "Yes." In a Grade Six English lesson that was observed, one girl was outstandingly active. After class, she said she had an extra English class during the weekends, and explained the reasons: "My mum told me that if I want to enter a good college, my English must be good." Four other pupils claimed that they learnt "London English" at the weekend and three boys explained that they went to extra Mathematics classes at a tutorial school named "Olympic". The English teacher concluded that an increasing number of parents sent their children to learn English at private tutorial institutions. "They pay serious attention to English", she revealed to us. The vice-principal claimed that, from 2011, English has been taught from Grade One rather than Grade Three.

It was late afternoon by the time the secretary, an important official in the school, was interviewed. She was of Mongolian nationality, but could not speak the language at all. She was in charge of taking the pupils in Grades Four and Five to another school for lessons because their classroom building was being rebuilt. "Look, the playground is like a workshop! What a mess! But we need a new building with better conditions, more spacious classrooms and laboratories. It is expected to be finished next year". She informed us that the number of staff increased from 90 to 160 last year because the schools in different *Xiangs*, the administrative divisions in the countryside, were closing down and the teachers from those schools were incorporated into schools in the town, along with the pupils. "The pupils from far away can go to boarding schools", she commented. As to the teachers from *Xiangs*, she evaluated them as being in an "older age range and lower quality, that is, from a poor educational background."

4.4   Model 4

The distinctive feature of MNS in Model 4 is that these schools have no relation whatsoever to Mongolian nationality, except by virtue of their name. A typical example is an Ethnic Primary School in Liang City, with over 80,000 official inhabitants, a few of whom are from minority ethnic groups such as Mongolians, Manchus and so on. Most of the pupils at the school are Han Chinese and they are educated in the Chinese instruction system, much like other local primary schools. One teacher was selected for an interview as she was a Mongolian national. She introduced herself as a native speaker of Chinese and confessed that she could not speak any Mongolian whatsoever. She also revealed an interesting fact, that a few Mongolian nationality pupils could neither speak nor understand Mongolian.

> In fact, although our school is called an ethnic primary school, the pupils we accept are the bottom students in our town. If they are not accepted by the First School or the Second School, we do that job, so actually it's an ethnic primary school in name only. The Mongolians in our area have already been assimilated by the Han. They are not different at all, nor are their classes.

As to the importance of languages, she expressed this view:

> It depends. For the Mongolians in this area who don't speak Mongolian, the answer is clear, Chinese is the most important. No matter how important the native languages are, they have to use Chinese in their daily lives.

Among the 32 schools, 17 were classified as Model 1 and 13 as Model 2 schools. Models-3 and 4 were each represented by only one school.

5   Discussion

Historically, MNS have existed in all parts of Inner Mongolia since 1949. It is not unusual for children to board at such schools, even in primary schools, although this is rare in mainstream Han schools. This only appears to be a conspicuous factor in Model 1 schools. When exploring the current state of affairs within schools in the IMAR, in terms of the composition of enrolment and other conditions, four models emerged under the name of "Mongolian Nationality Schools". Model 1 schools, which comprise more than half of the 32 sample schools, are like a Mongolian island society, in which almost all pupils, faculty and staff are Mongolian. Some schools (8 schools out of 32) are combined primary and secondary schools. Due to the policy of "giving priority to the development of ethnic education", these schools generally have superior conditions and facilities, when compared to the local Han schools. The children are immersed in their inherited Mongolian culture, conventions and customs. The views of the interviewees were supported by what we observed in the sample schools. A particular case in point is the MNS in Damaoqi, where all of the school buildings were in a Mongolian architectural style and with school notices, decorations and directions in Mongolian. A strong sense of Mongo-

lian ethnic identity was perceived and was very apparent in our communication and interactions with principals and teachers during the course of our interviews.

Model 2 schools differ from Model 1 schools in a numerous ways: firstly, they are located in more densely populated areas; secondly, they offer two language instruction systems, Mongolian and Chinese; and thirdly, these schools do not have a high percentage of Mongolian staff and students. In two of the sample schools, Mongolian, Han Chinese and other ethnic groups each comprised around a third of the pupils. Keeping in mind their geographical locations and the composition of their staff and students, these schools offer a more bilingual environment than Model 1 schools. For instance, when we visited the MNPS in Jining, the teachers and students communicated amongst themselves in both Mongolian and Han. The curricula for all grades, posted on the walls of the office, was in Chinese, as were the signs and directions around campus; whereas in Model 1 schools, the teachers would speak Chinese merely when talking to non-Mongolian speakers and the schedules were all in Mongolian. In the sample school in Jining, an additional unexpected detail was the fact that pupils in the Chinese system learned Mongolian by engaging in conversation and with self-produced textbooks.

The other so-called MNS, a Model 3 school, used the Chinese, rather than the Mongolian instruction system. However, in this school, Mongolian was taught as a major subject from Grade One to Six, regardless of pupils' nationalities. Finally, the last model of school appeared to be no different from local Han schools, but was "the alternative school for pupils with poor academic records", as one interviewee succinctly termed it.

From the survey of these 32 sample schools, the changes are apparent and very obvious; from Mongolian-dominant in Model 1 schools to bilingual in Model 2, then to Chinese-dominant in Model 3, then to completely Chinese in Model 4, with merely the name being associated with MNS. The situation prevalent in these four models of schools, presents a vivid picture of the process of language assimilation, with a shift from Mongolian to Chinese, as more people choose the mainstream Chinese system rather than the Mongolian system, or as the decline in demand for the Mongolian education system forces some schools to switch from Model 1 or Model 2 to Model 3 or Model 4. As China becomes an increasingly industrialised, developed and modern nation, the language, cultural practices and traditional religions of ethnic minorities, including the Mongolians, are currently in serious decline. Although some measures have been put into place to help them survive, this is the steep price of modernisation and urbanisation. What is so obviously discernible in urban areas now is definitely setting the precedent for what will happen in the future. A case in point is Huhhot, the capital of the IMAR, where there is a Model 1 school with a Mongolian language instruction system. It is reasonable to expect Mongolian pupils to go to such schools, yet very few parents actually decide to send their children to the Mongolian school, when compared with the high Mongolian population in the urban area. Of the 2,400 pupils at the MNS in Huhhot, 1,400 are boarders, thus more than half of the pupils live far away from Huhhot. Another example is the interviewee in Jining MNPS, who sent his only son to a Han school because he and his wife thought it would improve his prospects in the future, even

though the parents were both native Mongolian speakers. They desired that their children be immersed into mainstream schools and have the same education as Han Chinese children, right from the initial stage of their education. A majority of the new generation of Mongolians living in urban areas are fast losing their ethnic language roots, and are either monolingual in Chinese or "semi-lingual", and are not regarded as sufficiently competent in their ethnic language (Baker 2006).

The models of education offered by schools appear to be based upon a few factors. Firstly, MNS are strongly supported by government policies and are distributed throughout the administrative divisions across the region. In Huhhot, there are Model 1 and Model 2 schools. Parents possess the option to decide whether their children will be educated in an MNS, no matter where they live, whether in a city or the remote countryside. Despite the decline in the number of pupils in the Mongolian system, the other three models of MNS continue to struggle for survival. Secondly, in areas with enhanced facilities for transportation a nd telecommunications, schools are required to choose whether to convert to a Model 2 or Model 3 school, in order to survive. Thirdly, the geographical location of a school also determines its model. All of the four models outlined above exist around Huhhot, where there are satisfactory Model 1 and Model 2 schools, whereas in the more Chinese-dominant areas, over 150 miles from the capital, Model 3 schools also work as effectively as the others. Fourthly, in areas where few parents choose to educate their children in the Mongolian system, Model 4 schools are a frequent feature, although it will not be long before they change their structure from being MNS to becoming general Han schools.

Currently, some Mongolian parents may attempt and engage in serious efforts to be members of an ethnic minority, in order to assist their children to get admission into better schools as well as obtain other privileges. In urban areas, many people prefer simply to retain their minority status, rather than to foster their culture and language. The evidence suggests that it is difficult to find part-time bilingual education classes, even in the regional capital. Issues relating to minority identity or cultural heritage are not important and have little or no influence on their lives, and parents are more likely to send their children to English classes in their spare time, rather than to Mongolian classes. As a result, people tend to use two different phrases to indicate their Mongolian status. If someone tells a person that he belongs to a Mongolian minority, the emphasis is on the status of the person, without any implications as to their language or culture. However, if someone claims he is a Mongolian, or a Mongolian student, that statement involves both status and language information and implies that he speaks Mongolian as his first language and has completed his schooling in Mongolian. What emphasises the difference is the critical point that most Mongolian parents focus on: there are bonus scores for Mongolian students not only when entering college, but for going to secondary even primary schools, and subsequently, being able to gain priority admission to schools with higher standards, superior educational settings and favourable reputations.

In accordance with the implementation of the urbanisation strategy in the *Eleventh Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the*

Long-Term Programme through to 2020, some remote districts, in which Mongol groups are isolated by poor transport facilities must be merged into urban areas within 5 years. What is happening in Gu Yang, where primary schools at the county level have been moved into towns, is a typical example. As more districts are urbanised, the chances of the Mongolian education system surviving are in decline. Once Mongolians have the freedom to choose, Mongolian will inevitably become the second choice of language and increasingly larger numbers of children will be amalgamated into the mainstream educational system. More schools will inevitably have to convert from being Model 1 or Model 2 schools to becoming Model 3 or Model 4 schools.

The critical issue for the Mongolian Nationality Schools (MNS) is how to maintain an equal balance between fostering the Mongolian language, which is strongly related to retaining their Mongolian identity and cultural characteristics, while at the same time developing competence in Chinese and meeting the challenges of mastering English. Developing these skills to meet the demands of modern society has become a critical issue. It is imperative that Mongolians are given the same rights and opportunities as the Han, whilst retaining their Mongolian identity.

6 Trilingual Education in the MNPS Curriculum

Although the development of the four models of MNPS was confirmed after analysing the collected data, the inclusion of three languages in the curriculum has at all times been the central focus of the project.

6.1 Trilingual Curriculum in the Four Models of Schools

With China's reforms and opening to the outside world since the late 1970s, language education in MNS has faced increasing competition from both Chinese and English. The acquisition of national and international languages such as Chinese and English has been strongly embraced to facilitate modernisation and economic development. Although the term "trilingual education" (Mongolian, Chinese and English) is not yet overtly mentioned in official state policies and rhetoric, the term increasingly receives widespread attention among ethnic groups (Zhao 2010). Apart from Chinese, which is the national and second language, English has been promoted to a significant position as an international language. With the addition of English, language learning at schools has progressed, and subsequently, language learning is now trilingual. Language proficiency and capability are closely related to education, and the arrangement of the curriculum and the subjects included in a course of study can have a substantial effect on language acquisition and learning. Therefore, data on the curricula from Grades Three to Five were collected from the 32 sample schools.

Generally speaking, we can say that trilingual education and trilingualism constitute important features of MNS. The curriculum in MNS generally includes the ethnic language Mongolian, the mainstream language Chinese, and the foreign language English. However, this is not necessarily true for all four models of MNS. In Model 1 or Model 2 schools that essentially use the Mongolian instruction system, Mongolian is the first language to be learned, as Chinese is in mainstream schools, while in Model 3 schools, it is just one of the main subjects in the curriculum, and in Model 4 schools, there is no instruction at all in Mongolian. Chinese was a part of the curriculum of all of our 32 sample schools. Although the age at which Chinese teaching is introduced may vary from Grade One to Grade Two or three, and the amount of time spent on language teaching varies among schools, it is nevertheless safe to state that all Mongolian pupils learn Chinese during their primary school years. As for English, five of the sample schools did not offer any English classes.

In Model 1 and Model 2 schools that use the Mongolian instruction system, Mongolian is traditionally on the curriculum and learned as the first language from Grade One, and sometime even from pre-school and kindergarten or nursery. Classes last around 40–45 min per class and are scheduled five to ten times a week. Mongolian pupils in these particular schools begin Chinese classes in either Grade One or Grade Two, with the classes ranging from three to seven classes a week, and with only one school starting at Grade Three. Most of the schools introduce English classes at Grade Two or Three; six sample schools began English classes at Grade One, while, as noted above, five of the schools did not offer any English classes. The number of classes was most commonly three or four, although the number also ranged from two to five a week. In Model 3 schools, which use the Chinese instruction system, teaching of all three languages, Mongolian, Chinese and English, commenced in Grade One. There were between three and four classes a week for language teaching, depending on the grade in Model 3 schools. The Model 4 school offered neither Mongolian instruction, nor Mongolian classes.

All MNS begin teaching Chinese during the early years. Half of the sample schools introduced Chinese to the curriculum in Grade One and the other half in Grade Two, with only one delaying Chinese instruction until Grade Three. The majority of schools scheduled Chinese classes five times a week, thus most children were invariably taught Chinese every day at school. Four of the sample schools offered between three and seven Chinese classes a week. More than a third of the schools scheduled equal amounts of time for both Mongolian and Chinese classes. Yet others devoted more time to Mongolian classes than Chinese, which appeared to occupy a secondary status on the schedule.

Of the 27 out of 32 schools offering English, 15 introduced English classes at Grade Three, 7 at Grade Two and 5 at Grade One, with an average of three or four classes per week.

The Mongolian language clearly plays an important role in education for young Mongolians in Model 1, 2 and 3 schools, precisely in the same manner as the Chinese language does in mainstream schools. Primary school children in Mongolian schools have at least one Mongolian class on every school day and use Mongolian

language for communication and instruction. In more than half of the MNS, where almost 100 % of the staff and students are Mongolians, Mongolian culture and language are well evolved and developed. To cite an example, when visiting Damaoqi, we observed that Mongolian was used for communication both within and outside of the school. In terms of food culture, the school lunch consisted of lamb, mutton chop, broth, sausage or kebab. When we requested rice with our meal, it was served in a mutton broth. From this action, we determined that Mongolians consume meat as their main course, whereas the Chinese prefer grain.

The question, 'In which grade do you begin to learn Mongolian?', revealed an unforeseen fact that pupils from 10 schools claimed to have started learning Mongolian during preschool or kindergarten, and pupils from five schools claimed they learned not only Mongolian but also Chinese before commencing primary school. Children who start to learn a second language during nursery or kindergarten are able to acquire that language without formal instruction (Baker and Jones 1998; Thompson 2000). This would support the development of early ethnic education in the IMAR. Many other studies confirm that language acquisition before the age of nine is undoubtedly so important that it can make a vital difference to whether a person becomes monolingual, bilingual or multilingual (Baker 2006). Thus, educators and parents should focus on language education at the kindergarten stage, so as to ensure that larger numbers of children grow up to be bilingual or even trilingual.

For historical and geographical reasons, the relevance and influence of neighbouring Mongolia are unlikely to decline. In the MNPS in Baotou, there have been two classes of pupils from Mongolia in each grade since 2003, and in turn, there are also some Mongolian students from the IMAR studying in Mongolia. The written form of Mongolian, one of the rare languages read from left to right and in a vertical rather than horizontal line, is challenged by the reform of the writing system across the border in Mongolia from "Mongolian" to "New Mongolian". The new form of the language uses letters very similar to Russian letters, and ultimately Latin ones. Although both Mongolian and New Mongolian are both forms of alphabetic writing, they are from two distinctive systems. Some Mongolian advocators in the IMAR continue to campaign for "New Mongolian" education, to keep pace with the reform of the writing system in Mongolia, which is consanguineously linked in culture. It seems necessary for pupils in Mongolian schools to learn the Mongolian language, employing two systems of writing. Additionally, the Chinese education system also requires pupils to master two different written forms, namely characters and *Hanyu Pinyin*, which is the Romanised version of Chinese characters. Pupils would unquestionably expend greater time and efforts in learning the language, to become familiar with the different forms or to interchange from one to another.

In all the questionnaires gathered from the sample schools, the replies were written in Mongolian or Chinese, and the response to the item, "New Mongolian" was "not required", making it evident that New Mongolian has yet to become a dominant language. However, the question arises as to what will happen in the future? The future will be dependent on the development and expansion of Mongolia over the border. With its rich resources, the possibility exists that Mongolia will grow

and evolve to become a powerful country. Regardless of the currently prevalent situation in schools, there is apprehension over the prospect of "New Mongolian" taking over from "Mongolian", at some time in the near future.

Language is defined not simply as a medium of communication but also reflects power relations (Glastra and Schedler 2004). Within the PRC, the dominant position occupied by the Chinese language is self-evident. For Mongolians, knowledge of the majority language leads to an accumulation of human capital, or in other words, better socioeconomic status in mainstream society (Pendakur and Pendakur 2002). The point of ensuring access to equivalent educational resources and ensuring equal rights and opportunities to receive education, is more about acknowledging and endorsing mainstream education, whilst simultaneously preserving Mongolian characteristics, rather than about developing a separate Mongolian language education system. The concrete purpose of teaching Chinese as a second language for Mongolians is to allow them equal access to college education, which therefore conforms to the concept of spending more time on learning Chinese. The aim of bilingual education is to promote the two languages in a relatively monolingual educational environment for language minority children, so that both languages progressively reach the same position in the curriculum, shifting the children from the home minority language to the dominant language (Baker 2006). The collected data provided evidence that all 32 sample schools have introduced Chinese in their curricula, and more than half of these schools have even arranged for the same period of time (three or four classes) to learn the two languages. This data demonstrated that children are presumed to achieve equal linguistic competence in Mongolian and Chinese from the primary school stage itself.

English is a foreign language for Mongolian pupils, but, with the dramatic development of communication technology, national boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred and replaced by the global sharing of information. For Mongolians at school today, the data confirm that less than 20 % of students learn English for more than 3 years before they enter college (Dong 2003). However, the situation appears to be fast changing. Firstly, more and more schools are introducing English as a compulsory course, rather than only a few selected schools, as was the case a few years ago. Secondly, in over half the schools, the introduction of English has shifted from Grade One in junior secondary school to Grade Three in primary school. An identical shift is occurring in mainstream schools. Four of the sample schools started teaching English at Grade Two, and three schools actually commenced English classes at Grade One. Thirdly, the number of English classes offered in schools ranged from five to a mere two classes per week, and even no classes at all in five of the sample schools, although these were all small schools, located in remote areas; for instance, sample school 4 had only 87 pupils. Classes consisted of pupils from different grades, and the teacher would lecture one grade of pupils, while the other pupils completed their English language schoolwork tasks and activities. Nevertheless, there are still a number of pupils who only begin to learn English at junior secondary school.

The evidence from the data is predictable to a certain degree. On the one hand, as China becomes an industrialised, developed and modern nation, increasingly

involved in globalisation, international languages become increasingly important. Mongolian schools face growing challenges from both Chinese and English. The acquisition of national and international languages has been strongly embraced by the state government to facilitate modernisation and economic development. The requirements for Mongolians have increased from bilingual Mongolian and Chinese, to trilingual Mongolian, Chinese and a foreign language. Over time, the foreign languages learned in schools have gone from English, Japanese, and Russian, to exclusively English. Moreover, the global use of telecommunications technology makes international communications increasingly uncomplicated and effortless. The awareness and significance of English as an international language should serve an impetus to encourage English education in the IMAR.

On the other hand, the training of teachers does not keep pace with these expanding requirements. The lack of qualified English teachers is one of the key issues encountered in imparting English education in the IMAR. The data from three schools, where the pupils began learning English in Grade One, with the lesson time increasing every week, reflects the growing demand for English. However, some schools had neither the facilities nor the staff to offer English instruction. Even in schools with enhanced facilities and resources, there persists a shortage of qualified teachers. A case in point is the MNPS in Damaoqi. When the head teacher was probed on whether the school experienced any problems with teaching English, she replied that they would require more English teachers, as the teachers with the school at present were "not permanent" teaching staff. She further explained that her group itself comprised of two temporary English teachers.

6.2   Challenges and Ways Forward

Since parents, ethnic intellectuals and local government officials worry that a lack of international languages may exacerbate the educational inequalities between the majority and minority groups (Beckett and MacPherson 2005), attempts have been made to implement trilingual courses in primary and secondary schools, previously termed as "experimental trilingual classes" (Zhao 2010). However, from the data we observe that the "experimental" model has now been extended to almost all Mongolian schools. Three languages play an essential role in the curricula of the sample primary schools.

It is encouraging that the younger generation of Mongolians are growing up to be trilingual and are improving and constantly cultivating their competency in three languages, Mongolian, Chinese and English. Under these circumstances, it seems reasonable to plan for more lessons and therefore devote more time for languages in the curriculum. However, it is vital that the younger generation learn Mongolian as their mother tongue in order to retain their identity, study Chinese to enter mainstream society, and finally, acquire English to meet the challenges and needs of globalisation. The critical argument is that they have a heavier educational burden and responsibility than the Han. When observing a sample school curriculum at random,

it was noted that there were 5 h devoted for teaching Mongolian, 5 h for learning Chinese, and 4 h for imparting English language education, a total of 14 h per week for languages. What is impressive is that when a pupil was questioned about the number of hours he studied languages, he replied with a scowl, "I don't remember exactly, but the schedule is full, too full!" A further problem for Mongolian pupils is the confusion arising from the fact that English and *Hanyu Pinyin* both use the same alphabet, but some of the letters have different pronunciations. Fortunately, "New Mongolian" is not yet required. How difficult would it be for students to learn, if there was one phonetic system for three respective languages? What would be a logical, rational and sensible schedule for learning three languages? How can students develop competence in three languages and how can we set up a scientifically designed curriculum to balance the needs of our modern society? These are crucial issues for ethnic educators, intellectuals, local officials, teachers and even parents to address. Developing a schedule based on evidence from scientific experiments and statistics, rather than what is perceived to be effective and efficient, is a critical topic to be tackled.

In America or Europe, there are two main models of bilingual education; one is the transitional model and the other is the maintenance model. The former aims to shift the child from the home minority language to the dominant, majority language, whereas the latter attempts to foster the minority language, thereby affirming the rights of an ethic minority group in a nation (Baker 2006). In China, there is an independent system for minority languages for ethnic group students at different levels of education; the case in point being the IMAR. There is a relatively complete Mongolian language system, from primary to higher education. Mongolian children, in most rural areas, finish their education from primary school to college, even if they are totally Mongolian monolinguals. Compared with the bilingual educational systems in America and Europe, it is clear that the Mongolian system is more a maintenance, rather than a transitional system. Perhaps the aim should be to develop a transitional system, to assist and aid children to shift from Mongolian to Chinese, during their compulsory education and ultimately, to merge into the mainstream during their college career.

There are several reasons for ensuring that children develop competence in Chinese before college. First, learning a language is an extended process. Research has proved that it takes 3–5 h for children to develop competence for daily life in the second language (L2), and more notably, it takes a further 2 to 3 years before L2 can be used for academic learning. This is because the language used for acquiring knowledge of Mathematics, Social Studies or Science is relatively different from the language utilised for daily life activities; it is often quite abstract, and there may be fewer concrete visual clues to support meaning (Gibbons 1998).

Currently, in the IMAR, the growing numbers of students in the Mongolian language instruction system are merging into the Chinese mainstream at college level, with 1 year of "pre-college" study to help them keep up with the programmes in the Chinese system. Although signs of inflexibility and maladjustment are undeniably present, the mere fact that most of the students are willing to continue to study in the mainstream, where they are evaluated by similar standards as Chinese students, thus

Table 2 Number of Mongolian students in the mainstream and Mongolian systems

Number	Year			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Students merging into mainstream system	73	251	408	424
Students remaining in Mongolian system	2008	2820	2877	2985
Total	2081	3071	3285	3409

putting them at risk of comparatively low marks or even failure, is evidence enough that this situation is still worthwhile. As the final point of access for bilingual or trilingual Mongolian students in the Mongolian language system, college education has evolved to meet various transformations over the past several years.

Table 2 indicates that the number of Mongolian students in the Mongolian language system increased from 2,081 in 2006 to 3,409 in 2009. The number of students in "pre-college" increased rapidly from 73 (0.35 %) in 2006 to 424 (14.24 %) in 2009. From these figures, it is safe to conclude that the number of MNS students blending into mainstream education at the college level demonstrates an increasing trend and therefore, the development of bilingual education has been a positive success.

For students who merge into the mainstream, language plays such an indispensable role that it often proves to be the main barrier for many students and failure at college is almost always due to language difficulties. The purpose of college is to study academically and to nurture the ability to work in a scientific field, rather than to learn languages. However, many students often find themselves struggling to learn new words, inferring translations instead of understanding and summarising what is taught in class, and making notes that omit vital details. Language is crucial for their learning of other subjects. But, their main efforts should be to remain focused and concentrate on their academic fields, rather than on language learning and mastery. Improvement in language learning is so critical that this skill accounts for the difference between success and failure in academic fields.

It is an undeniable fact that there should be more effective and efficient solutions for imparting language training to Mongolian students, such as the 1 year preparation for college. During that year, languages and other courses would be taught by teachers who possess greater sensitivity and understanding of the reasons why language is essential for a well-grounded education, and who, moreover, understand the concept of "language across the curriculum" (James and Garrett 1992). With teachers who are knowledgeable and self-aware, the language strategies used in lectures or classes, facilitate effective and efficient understanding in students. Another practical solution is that other subjects, rather than just language classes, could be taught in Mongolian or Chinese. Bilingual or trilingual education is comparable to acquiring a skill, rather than mere lecturing in class.

When students enter college at ages ranging from 17 to 19, they have already exceeded by a large margin the ideal age (7–11), for acquiring languages naturally. Developing language competence in primary and secondary education appears to be the inevitable solution, as students would have very limited and inadequate time to improve their language abilities in a college curriculum.

Although politically, Mongolian is said to be an official language in the IMAR, it is clear that Mongolian is rarely used in urban centres. Maintaining equilibrium between the majority Chinese language and the minority Mongolian language—or how to educate Mongolians through language instruction into becoming truly bilingual—is an issue that is closely connected to the development and progress of ethnic groups. In the long run, the method adopted to manage this issue will ensure the improvement of the complete minority educational system in the IMAR. The most critical topic in the IMAR is political, which is a major difference from the situation prevalent in Europe. Take the Galician education system as an example. Galicia is one of the 17 autonomous communities that make up the Kingdom of Spain (Lasagabaster and Huguet 2007), and the level of priority given to the minority and majority languages is regulated by Law 3/1983. When completing their statutory education, pupils must be able to speak and write to the same level in Galician as in Spanish (Lasagabaster and Huguet 2007). In China, the teaching of Mongolian is regulated by law, but schooling in the majority language, Chinese, is not. This actually may be the fundamental difference: bilingual language competence should be regulated by law.

With China's dramatic progress toward modernisation, industrialisation and globalisation over the past two decades, the requirements for language education have changed from monolingual to bilingual to trilingual. To meet this need, the Mongolian educational system has also moved forward. Traditional Mongolian Nationality Schools (MNS) have become differentiated and can be classified into four different models. Model 1 schools are Mongolian-dominated and almost all of the pupils and staff are Mongolian. Model 2 schools have two language instruction systems, Mongolian and Chinese, and a more bilingual environment. Model 3 schools use the Chinese instruction system, with the Mongolian language taught as a core subject regardless of pupils' nationality. Model 4 schools differ from the first three models as they only employ the Chinese teaching system.

Regarding the teaching of the three languages—Mongolian, Chinese and English—in MNS, Mongolian is learned as the first language in Model 1 and 2 schools, occupying a principal position in the curriculum and with more than one class imparting Mongolian language training per day. More than half of the sample schools timetabled the same amount of time for teaching Chinese and Mongolian, reflecting the requirement for a new generation of Mongolians to be educated bilingually, with equal competence in both languages. The maximum modification in school curriculums is witnessed in English language instruction. The teaching of English at the primary level first changed from selective to compulsory. Then, in the majority of sampled schools, the grade for introduction of English lessons was amended from junior secondary school grade a few years ago, to primary school Grade Three today. Finally, although some of the smaller sample schools are yet to offer English education, some schools have commenced English classes from primary school Grade One, or even from pre-school. To conclude, a growing number of students from the Mongolian instruction system have merged into the mainstream education system at the beginning of their college careers.

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Trilingual Education in China's Korean Communities

Zhen'ai Zhang, Liting Wen and Guanghe Li

Abstract Korean communities, mostly in the north of China, are usually seen to have a very long and successful tradition of bilingual education in China. This chapter starts with an overview of the history through a detailed account of the policies for bilingualism (usually favourable), research studies, models adopted, and textbooks compiled for Korean schools, particular those in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture. This account continues up to recent years when traditional bilingual education has developed into trilingual or multilingual education. Contextual factors with regard to demography, language vitality and language allocation in the classroom are then presented mostly with statistical data. Findings from case studies conducted in some schools in Korean communities are also reported showing evidence of vastly positive attitudes held by key stakeholders to trilingualism and trilingual education. In this chapter, the authors discuss the concept of double positive transfer and also argue that teaching staff should be trilingual so as to serve as role models.

Keywords Yanbian · Korean · Bilingual education history · Policy · Double positive transfer · Language vitality · Language allocation · Attitudes

1 Introduction

As this volume explains, trilingual education for the 55 ethnic minority groups in the PRC differs hugely from one region to another, with each group having its unique features. Trilingual education in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture

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(YKAP) appears to be a strong model, according to the typological grid put forward by Feng (2011) from the perspective of sociolinguistics. The Korean minority group in Yanbian has often been portrayed as one of the best educated minorities in China. A complete bilingual and more recently, a trilingual education system from kindergarten, primary school and secondary school up to tertiary level has been built up over the past 60 years. The YKAP is now recognised as a Model Autonomous Prefecture for the two-language education system in China (Li 2012).

Going back through history, we notice that foreign language education in Korean senior secondary schools has been in existence since the 1950s. Foreign language provision started in junior secondary schools in the 1980s; and consequently in primary schools in the 1990s. Although trilingual education in Korean schools in China has experienced its fair share of good and bad times, thousands of bilingual, trilingual or multilingual talents have been effectively nurtured in the YKAP. With the development of the foreign language education system covering both primary and secondary schools, the concept of trilingualism and trilingual education has surfaced in the region, drawing attention from educators, students and other people in various sectors of society. Furthermore, the nature of its development and research into the phenomena of trilingualism and trilingual education has attracted scrutiny and close examination nationally and internationally.

Globalisation intensifies international competition, and at the same time, enhances cross-national social, cultural, economic, technical, and personnel exchanges. This process creates the need for higher standards and a requirement for multilinguals in the twenty-first century. Trilingual and multilingual individuals, who additionally possess the requisite professional knowledge, are in high demand throughout the world. Genuine trilingual education has theoretically and practically proved to be effective to foster trilingual talents.

2   Literature Review

Scholars from inside and outside China have been discussing the concept of trilingual education based on concepts of bilingual teaching and learning for many years. However, it may also be regarded as a new topic, since research studies into trilingual education and multilingual education have only become more rigorous during the past decade (Cenoz et al. 2001; Cenoz 2003). In China, trilingual education for ethnic Koreans is a new research field, which has opened up on the basis of bilingual education. Since the implementation of reforms and the open-door policy that became effective in the 1980s in the PRC, Korean-Chinese bilingual education for ethnic Koreans in Yanbian has improved with the assistance of a favourable national ethnic minority policy. The development of ethnic Korean bilingual education has long attracted scholars (Jiang 1998; Li 2004; Xu 2006). The books by Piao (1989, 1991) could claim to be the most comprehensive in describing systematically the history of education for ethnic Koreans in China. Other works, such as those by Nan et al. (1995), Xu and Jiang (1997) and their four-volume *Historical Collection*

of Ethnic Korean Education History, and Li (1992, 2006), all provide a systematic account of ethnic Korean education history, the history of the Korean language in education, and the relationship between the Han and the Korean languages, and serve to lay down a concrete and convincing foundation for research into bilingual and trilingual education.

Research into Korean bilingual education increased in the 1980s, with a major focus on reforms in Korean bilingual education. Jiang (1988) set out a typology of Korean bilingual education: he stated that the aim of bilingual education for the ethnic Koreans was to foster educated and competent bilinguals in both Chinese and Korean. The target proficiency level of the two languages would be determined by the needs and conditions of the stakeholders. Li (2012) then undertook a research project into ethnic Korean bilingual education in Yanbian (supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China, an organisation directly affiliated to the State Council) and produced a summary of the experiences and lessons gained during the implementation of Korean bilingual education, as well as an analysis of the constituents of bilingual education and their interrelationships. The research concluded that the salient characteristics of Korean bilingual education included the facts that this system was the first to enshrine bilingual objectives for Chinese and Korean in the local laws in China; that the bilingual curriculum system at the stage of basic education was comprehensive; and that the recipient base of bilingual education was broad (that is, students receiving bilingual education were in the majority amongst all students in Korean primary and secondary schools). In addition, it was established that the Korean bilingual education model had a significant impact on the education of other ethnic minorities in China, in terms of theory as well as practice.

Jiang (1988) advanced various suggestions for the further reform of bilingual education for ethnic Koreans. Firstly, the medium of instruction in the classroom could be changed from monolingual to bilingual; secondly, adjusting the teaching of subjects, textbook contents and teaching methods to a bilingual mode could lead to higher efficacy of bilingual education; and thirdly, teachers from Korean schools should receive language training to improve their bilingual competence, thereby making them better qualified for bilingual teaching. These suggestions eventually led to a book (i.e., Jiang 1998), which described the state of ethnic Korean bilingual education, analysed the existing problems and recommended reform directions. Li and Li (2010) argued that bilingual teaching should be reformed in line with the broader national reform agenda, including internationalisation, in addition to meeting the expectations of Korean parents and the needs of Korean students for their lifelong development. Adopting a similar line of thinking, Piao's (2010) analysis of the problems that had been encountered in developing bilingual teaching resulted in three proposals on how to further develop bilingual teaching: the national ethnic minority policy should be followed up to build an improved environment for sustaining bilingual teaching for the long term; macro-control should be strengthened to facilitate the development of effective bilingual teaching; and more research studies should be conducted in order to enhance the validity of the varied approaches to bilingual teaching.

Against the backdrop of these proposals, several education reforms were carried out in Korean primary and secondary schools. In 1979, the Experimental Primary School in Jilin piloted bilingual education reforms for Korean primary and secondary schools in China. Textbooks published by the Yanbian Education Press were used for the Korean course, while textbooks commonly used by the majority Han schools were adopted for Chinese. It was recommended that the Korean course should focus on training the students' listening and speaking abilities, while reading and writing should be learnt at the same time, albeit to a lesser extent. For the Chinese course, in contrast, greater emphasis was to be placed on reading and writing. In the 1980s, Yanji Xinxing Primary School, Shulan Korean Experimental Primary School and Tumen Korean Experimental Primary School implemented reform measures in an attempt to improve bilingual education. Yanji Xinxing Primary School adopted the teaching model known as "learning two languages, but using one of them as the medium of instruction", which involved teaching the Korean course and the Chinese course independently, while using the Korean language as the medium of instruction for other subjects. By adopting this approach, the students were able to learn Chinese as a school subject. However, in practice, it was observed that this system failed to achieve the goal of Korean-Chinese bilingualism.

In 2003, a new round of education reforms were initiated, including using Chinese as the medium of instruction for some subjects, such as English, Computer Studies, Physical Education, handicrafts and Mathematics. Korean continued to be employed for certain subjects, because the content matter could not be accurately grasped and understood without the use of the students' mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Based on the programme of "Developing ethnic Korean students' bilingual competence simultaneously", Shulan Korean Experimental Primary School explored a new model of bilingual education, and developed corresponding bilingual teaching materials. In addition, the school designed a system for evaluating the success of bilingual education. Tumen Korean Experimental Primary School, by embracing the principles of "keeping the core syllabus of Korean teaching, intensifying Chinese teaching, and optimising foreign language teaching" as its education reform goal and "fostering bilingual teachers" as the reform focus, improved students' learning methods and teachers' pedagogy, in order to significantly enhance and develop the quality of bilingual education.

After years of education reforms in schools, trilingual education for ethnic Korean students has already become established and entrenched itself as a comparatively thorough curriculum system. Koreans who have received 12 years of education from the primary school stage up to secondary school have learnt the three languages in a systematic manner, to the extent that those with secondary school qualifications tend to have a command of the three languages, but to varying degrees. However, compared with the work carried out in the field of bilingual education, research into the area of trilingual education for ethnic Koreans is nonetheless at an initial stage. The reason appears to be based upon the fact that trilingual education research is probably best conducted by individuals who have been through the experience of learning the three languages themselves, have developed sufficient competence in Korean, Chinese and English and have simultaneously acquired the

ability to conduct research into trilingual education. This is a demanding checklist and there may be only a limited number of research personnel who would be sufficiently qualified to perform this task effectively. Moreover, trilingual education is a relatively new concept in its current form and, as such, is under-researched by experts and scholars.

The research that has been conducted in trilingual education for ethnic Koreans to date has been primarily connected with two interrelated areas. In the field of education, some scholars focus on describing the history, the status quo and the policies of trilingual education (e.g., Li 2004; Che 2006), while others have been interested in analysing the current challenges that have arisen in implementing trilingual education in primary and secondary schools. The latter analysis tends to focus on issues such as the design of the curriculum and teacher preparation and development. With regard to the curriculum design, the strategy of increasing the class hours allocated to the three languages to guarantee sufficient time for trilingual education is often criticised for making the design of the curriculum too intense. The rationale behind this argument is that a large number of class hours devoted to language study are responsible for creating too much of a learning burden for students. In relation to the teachers, one of the major problems that have emerged is the potential mobility of individuals proficient in the three languages, in view of the fact that individuals with such talents are in high demand in other sectors of the economy. Moreover, there are also problems associated with teachers' training, such as a disconnection between pre-service training and in-service training, and inappropriate resource allocations (Li 2004; Che 2006). A third strand of discussion focuses on the study of the reforms carried out in the field of trilingual education for ethnic Koreans. In order to tackle the difficulties that have emerged in recent reforms, researchers have advocated such measures as establishing the concept of multicultural education and attempting to promote a positive attitude in students towards learning the three languages; improving the standards of teachers employed by schools and developing alternative and more effective teaching methods; clarifying the position of the three languages in terms of the curriculum design; and finally, revising teaching materials through optimum utilisation of the available education resources (Li 2004; Che 2006).

Trilingual education research has also delved into the field of language acquisition study. This research strand concentrates on the acquisition of a third language from a bilingual base. Although the acquisition of the third language is often viewed as merely an extension of second language acquisition, there exist apparent differences between the processes for acquiring a second and a third language. With courses for the three languages increasing gradually in ethnic minority schools, third language acquisition has already been placed on the research agenda as an issue of growing importance. In China, trilingual education for ethnic Koreans is linked with and carried out on the basis of English as the third language which has to be acquired. The first author of this chapter, Zhang Zhen'ai, has been commissioned to conduct research projects in this area since the 1990s. She has conducted a comprehensive investigation into foreign language education for ethnic Koreans by leading research projects such as *The Backward Status and the Potential Advantages of Ethnic Koreans Learning English in China (Zhang 2000), The Characteristics of*

learned language   **initial learning stage**   **target language**
                              compare English to Korean

mother tongue (Korean)

                              positive transfer   English

                              compare English to Chinese

second language (Chinese)
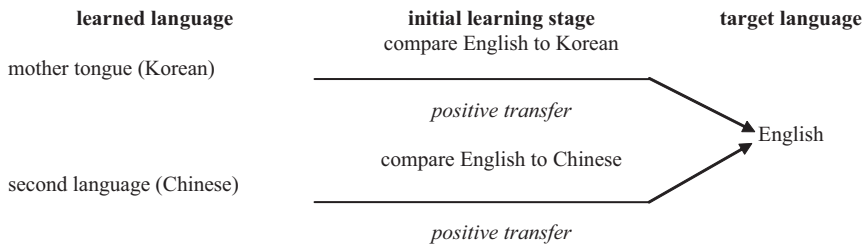
                              positive transfer

Fig. 1 The double positive transfer teaching mode. (Zhang 1998)

English Acquisition by Monolinguals and Bilinguals (Zhang 2001), Review of the Strategy to Develop Ethnic Multilinguals and *60 Years of Korean Trilingual Education in China and its Relationship with National Identity* (funded by the National Social Science Foundation of China).

Zhang has conducted several studies investigating aspects such as the relationship among the first, the second and the third languages; the establishment of trilingual education systems; (Zhang 2004) the teaching models of the three languages; and the theoretical systems of foreign language education (Zhang 2003, 2005). Based on her research findings, Zhang (1998) concluded that the effectiveness of English education for ethnic Koreans in China is fundamentally dependent upon the quality of Korean-Chinese bilingualism. This conclusion served to provide the theoretical basis for planning foreign language education for ethnic minorities and effectively enabled her to propose the concept of third language education. A double positive transfer teaching and learning model (see Fig. 1) was first proposed in China. In 2000 and 2001, with this model, experimental teaching for beginners in several primary schools was carried out initially. The differences in the acquisition of English by Chinese monolinguals and Korean-Chinese bilinguals were confirmed by this experimental teaching exercise. The necessity of building a trilingual education system was put forward by Zhang (2008), based on the double positive transfer teaching mode.

The double positive transfer teaching mode is formulated from the concept of bringing about acquisition of the third language (English) through teaching and learning based upon the students' Korean-Chinese bilingualism. From the perspective of language development, first language (L1) acquisition is the process of foundation building, while second language (L2) learning is accomplished through a framework of specific language rules. That is, the existing knowledge of L1 can be used as a reference point for learning L2. The transfer is effected during the process of comparing L1 and L2. When Korean-Chinese bilinguals learn English (L3), both the Korean language and the Chinese language can be employed as points of reference for learning English, and thus a dual structure of language rules is formed. When the target structure in English is similar to that of their L1 (Korean), Korean-Chinese bilinguals would be able to use Korean as a support, which is a positive transfer. When the target structure in English is similar to that of their L2 (Chinese), Korean-Chinese bilinguals would be able to use Chinese as a support,

which is again a positive transfer. The double positive transfer takes effect during active comparisons by learners among the three languages, and thereby provides an efficacious process in the initial stages of learning the target L3.

The research conducted by Zhang denoted the first comprehensive studies in China in this field and contributed to national recognition of the leading position enjoyed by ethnic Koreans in terms of trilingual education. However, studies on trilingual education and multilingualism are still at the stage of infancy. Further research is necessary to understand in depth the processes of multilingual learning (Hoffman 2001).

3 Yanbian Context

3.1 Demographic Context of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture

The population of ethnic Koreans in China includes millions of descendants of Korean immigrants with Chinese citizenship, as well as other smaller groups of South and North Korean expatriates. Chinese citizens of Korean descent are referred to as *Chaoxianzu* in Chinese and *Korean Chinese* in English, and they constitute one of the officially recognised 55 ethnic minorities in the PRC. In 2000, there were 2 million ethnic Koreans, most of them living in Northeast China. The largest concentration of Koreans is in the YKAP in eastern Jilin Province. Under its jurisdiction are the cities of Yanji and Tumen, and the counties of Yanji, Helong, Antu, Hunchun, Wangqing and Dunhua, covering a total area of 41,500 km^2.

The YKAP was founded in September 1952. It is the largest region where ethnic Koreans live in compact communities and the only minority prefecture in Northeast China. Located in the Changbai Mountains in south-western Jilin Province, the prefecture borders Russia in the east and is separated from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the Tumen River in the south. The YKAP has a population of 2.2 million, of which 59 % are Chinese, 39 % Korean, and the remaining 2 % belong to other minorities. Yanji City is the capital of the prefecture.

3.2 Language Policies in Yanbian

In 1984, the Compulsory Education Law stated that "Mandarin Chinese should be promoted at primary and secondary schools as the national language". It also legalised the use of commonly-adopted minority languages as the L1 in educational settings wherein the students were mainly from ethnic minorities. During the 1980s and early 1990s, almost all local autonomous governments, from the provincial levels to the county levels, passed legislation on bilingual education in their jurisdictions. By 1995, 23 ethnic minorities (Mongolians, Tibetans, Koreans,

Uyghurs and Zhuang among others) were using their own language, or both their own language and Chinese, as the medium of instruction in schools. Eight provinces had set up their own publishing houses for printing textbooks for minority schools (*People's Daily*, 21 November 1995).

The local official framework for the language policy of the YKAP is mainly comprised of three regulations: the Autonomy Regulations of the YKAP (with the revision in 2002 being the current version), the Korean Education Regulations of the YKAP (the 2004 version), and the Korean Language and Writing System Regulations of the YKAP (also revised in 2004). The Autonomy Regulations of the YKAP set the precedence for using the Korean language over Chinese in civic spheres. The Korean Education Regulations of the YKAP aim at fostering balanced Korean-Chinese bilinguals by prioritising the development of Korean. The Korean Language and Writing System Regulations of the YKAP stipulate correct and accurate usage of the Korean language and the writing system in social practice and education. All the three Regulations affirm that the legal framework for regulating language use, in particular the use and development of the local ethnic language, is in line with national laws. Although there are some articles that are related to the use of bilingualism, nothing is stipulated beyond requiring bilingualism for formal social gatherings and mandating the proper use of the languages.

The educational programme for the Korean ethnic schools parallels the one that is used in the majority Han schools. Primary education lasts for 6 years. Secondary education is divided into two stages: 3 years for junior secondary school and a further 3 years for senior secondary school. Except for the learning of the Korean language and other courses related to Korean culture, the curriculum of Korean ethnic schools and their assessment processes are very similar to those employed by the Han schools. The major national or provincial examinations are administered in Korean and students are required to finish test items in the Korean language.

The Korean language is not only a subject but also the dominant medium of instruction for other subjects. The Chinese language class is introduced from the beginning of Grade One, with the same syllabus as that of the Han schools. Chinese is not to be used as the medium of instruction until junior secondary school (Piao 2004). However, the domination of the ethnic language in the educational setting is often challenged by the growing demands from parents, who debate about improving the proficiency level of their offspring in Chinese, particularly in terms of speaking and listening skills. In May 2002, it was stipulated in the Curriculum Programme for Korean Schools for Compulsory Education that the number of class hours allocated for Korean, Chinese and English should conform to the principles of balance, comprehensiveness and selectiveness, and the ratio of the three languages should account for 38.4% of the entire curriculum. In 2003, the Decision on the Promotion of the Reform and Development of the Korean Ethnic Education (Draft for Feedback) (2003, p. 1) stated:

> The Korean heritage and language should be taken into account in the formulation of educational planning, strategy, reform procedures, syllabus design, curriculum development, teaching material and medium of instruction in order to ensure that education maintains Korean characteristics.

The class period allocation in trilingual teaching should be scientifically planned with the goal of keeping Korean language teaching at the core of the curriculum, intensifying Chinese teaching, and optimizing foreign language teaching. Specific measures should be taken to increase the number of class periods for Chinese and to start teaching English in lower grades. At the primary school level, the sequence of language learning is recommended to be Korean, Chinese and a foreign language; in the junior high school, the order should be Chinese, Korean and the foreign language; in the senior high school, Chinese and the foreign language classes should take precedence over the Korean language".

3.3 Language Vitality in Yanbian

Language vitality, also language vigour, refers to the functions of a concrete language in use (UNESO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Language 2003). Different languages have their own functions owing to societal, historical and cultural reasons, as well as to the characteristics of the language itself. Language vitality is measured through the number of speakers of the language, the scope and frequency of language use and the needs of society for the language (Dai 2006, p. 309). As for the language vitality in Yanbian, according to research by Huang (2000, pp. 96–101), the vitality value of the Korean language in China is 56–71 % of the vitality of the Chinese language. The rate of the Korean language being used as the native language in the Prefecture is nearly 100 %

The Korean language has its own written language and writing system. In Korean schools in Yanbian, the Korean language is used as the medium of instruction from Grade One in primary school to graduation in senior secondary school for all the science courses. Even in higher education, all the courses in the College of Korean Studies in Yanbian University are taught in the Korean language, while courses in other colleges are taught in Chinese. In terms of Chinese language vitality (L2) in Yanbian, the use of the language is balanced proportionately with the native language. Chinese is taught from Grade One in primary school to Grade Three in senior secondary school, and is used as the medium of instruction for all the arts and humanities courses, such as History and Politics.

In order to guarantee the implementation of the bilingual programme in Korean schools, the education and ethnic affairs authorities in the Prefecture approved a number of regulations, stipulating that the government organs of the Prefecture should lay particular emphasis on native language education (Zhang and Li 2007). The Korean language should be compulsorily used as the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools in the Prefecture. Both Korean and Chinese should be used in language teaching, with a stress on the former, so that students could possess a good command of the two languages

Outside of schools, the requirement to use the two languages is compelling for societal purposes and activities. The Yanbian Education Publishing House, the Ethnic Korean Education Publishing House in the Northeast and The Ethnic Publishing House publish magazines and newspapers in Korean. Furthermore, the sign boards

of shops, trademarks and government documents are required to be published bilingually, utilising both standard Korean and Chinese.

In summary, in terms of language vitality, it is pertinent to contend that the Korean language is probably the most stable and successfully maintained language, when compared with many other ethnic minority languages in the PRC.

4   Implementation of Trilingual Education in Schools in Yanbian

4.1   Distribution of Korean Schools

The Korean schools in Jilin Province can be categorised into seven main types: primary schools, junior middle schools, senior middle schools, combined schools I (primary + junior middle school), combined schools II (junior middle school + senior middle school), combined schools III (primary + junior middle school + senior middle school), and secondary teachers' schools. There are 111 Korean primary schools in Jilin Province; 75 of them are located in the Yanbian area, making up 68 %. The total number of students is 26,199; 20,207 of these students are in Yanbian, adding up to 77 % of the total number of students in the schools. In Jilin Province, there are 66 Korean junior middle schools in all, 61 of which are based in Yanbian, accounting for 92 %. The number of students in these junior middle schools is 22,593, and 22,160 (98 %) of them are in Yanbian. The number of Korean senior middle schools is nine, with all the schools being situated in Yanbian. 14,760 students study in these schools. There are eight combined schools I; six of them are situated in Yanbian. The distribution of Korean schools in the Yanbian area and in Korean scattered areas is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

4.2   Trilingual Education in the 21st Century

As mentioned above, from the beginning of the new century, Yanbian primary and middle schools have increased the momentum of reforms in the teaching of the three languages, Korean, Chinese and English. In February 2001, the Ministry of Education promulgated the document, *Basic Requirements for English Curriculum Education in Primary Schools*, specifying that learning a foreign language is a basic requirement for citizens in the twenty-first century. The Ministry of Education was determined to reinforce foreign language education in minority nationality regions, as it deemed English to be a crucial component of curriculum reform in primary schools. By September 2001, English had already become popular in primary schools in Yanji. Most schools offered English from Grade One; a few offered it from Grade Three. Table 3 illustrates the total class hours allocated to English, Chinese and Korean in Korean schools in 2002. We are able to clearly observe that the

Table 1 Korean schools in Yanbian area (Northeast Korean Ethnic Group's Education Research Institution 2005)

School type	No. of schools	No. of students		
Primary school	75	20,207		
Junior middle school	61	22,160		
Senior middle school	9	14,760		
Combined school I	6	663/627		
Combined school II	3	2,376/1,096		
Combined school III	1	163/400/650		
Total		Primary = 21,033	Junior middle school = 25,563	Senior middle school = 16,506
Secondary teachers' school	1	1,301		

Table 2 Korean schools in Korean scattered areas

School type	No. of schools	No. of students		
Primary school	32	5,992		
Junior middle school	5	433		
Senior middle school	**0**	0		
Combined school I	2	143/69		
Combined school II	8	3,852/3,718		
Combined school III	2	167/148/117		
Total		Primary = 6,302	Junior middle school = 4502	Senior middle school = 3,835

ratio of English to Korean and Chinese increases with each passing year from Grade One of primary schools to Grade Three of senior middle schools, while the ratio of Korean courses shows a downward trend.

After 3 years of implementation, it was established that offering three languages all together from Grade One in primary schools would overburden the students. Hence in 2004, the education authorities adjusted their strategy for the compulsory education curriculum of the Korean ethnic group. The starting point for teaching English moved from Grade One to Grade Three. Table 4 depicts the class hours and ratios of the three language courses in Korean primary schools according to the 2004 revisions.

From Table 4, we can appreciate that although there are 124 more total class hours allocated to languages in Korean primary schools in 2004 than in 2002, this specific distribution of hours appeared to be more manageable for students. From then onwards, all Korean schools in Yanji offered English from primary Grade Three. The class hours allocated to the three languages in Chinese and Korean schools in Yanji in 2009 are presented in Table 5.

The effect of the adjustments in 2004 was to alter the ratio of the three languages to 38.8 % of the curriculum, with the total number of English class hours reduced and the class hours for the other two languages increased (Table 6).

When we examine the school timetable for 2009 which reflects these changes, there is greater emphasis on the L1 and a moderation of the hours allocated to the

Table 3 Class-hour allocation of English, Chinese and Korean in a Korean school in Yanbian (2002)

		Primary school						Junior secondary school			Senior secondary school		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	1	2	3
E	Total (year)	108	108	108	144	144	144	180	180	216	180	180	216
	Ratio (%)	20	21.4	21.4	28.6	28.6	28.6	33.3	35.7	40	41.7	41.7	46.1
C	Total (year)	216	216	216	216	216	216	216	180	180	144	144	144
	Ratio (%)	40	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8	40	35.7	33.3	33.3	33.3	30.8
K	Total (year)	216	180	180	144	144	144	144	144	144	108	108	108
	Ratio (%)	40	35.8	35.8	28.6	28.6	28.6	26.7	28.6	26.7	25	25	23.1

One class hour: 40 min in primary schools; 45 min in junior and senior middle schools
E English, *K* Korean, *C* Chinese

Table 4 Class-hour allocation of three languages in Korean primary schools (2004)

		Grade (primary school)					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Class hours (per week)			3	3	3	3
	Class hours (per year)			108	108	108	108
	Ratio (%)			20	20	20	20
Chinese	Class hours (per week)	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Class hours (per year)	216	216	216	216	216	216
	Ratio (%)	50	50	40	40	40	40
Korean	Class hours (per week)	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Class hours (per year)	216	216	216	216	216	216
	Ratio (%)	50	50	40	40	40	40
Total		512	512	540	540	540	540
		3184					

L2 and the L3. This indicates a growing sophistication in the approaches to trilingual education in the YKAP.

5 Case Study

China's ethnic minority policies provide support for the minorities to undertake trilingual education, to develop competence in the three languages, and to become talented trilinguals. As noted above, the increasing popularity of trilingual education is resulting in the emergence of related research. However, research into ethnic teachers' and students' perceptions of identity in the context of trilingual education is

Table 5 Class-hour allocation of English, Chinese and Korean in a Korean school in Yanji (2009)

		Primary school						Junior secondary school			Senior secondary school		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	1	2	3
E	Total (year)			72	72	108	108	144	144	144	216	216	216
	Ratio (%)			15.4	16.7	23	23	30.8	30.8	30.8	42.9	42.9	37.5
C	Total (year)	252	252	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	144	144	216
	Ratio (%)	50	50	38.5	41.6	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	28.6	28.6	37.5
K	Total (year)	252	252	216	180	180	180	144	144	144	144	144	144
	Ratio (%)	50	50	46.1	41.7	38.5	38.5	30.8	30.8	30.8	28.6	28.6	25

Table 6 A comparison of the total class-hour allocation of English, Chinese and Korean between 2002 and 2009

English		Chinese		Korean	
2002	2009	2002	2009	2002	2009
1908	1440	2304	2268	1764	2124

rare. Their attitudes towards trilingual education have a direct impact on its quality, and therefore, our research team conducted a study of three issues: stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards trilingual education; stakeholders' attitudes towards the relationship among the three languages; and students' perceptions of the teachers of the three languages.

From August to September 2007, the authors conducted a questionnaire survey of 196 secondary school Korean students and 96 teachers, as well as 3 policy makers and 6 parents. The secondary school students came from Korean schools in Longjing City in Yanbian and Korean schools in Changchun. The teachers were from Korean schools in Longjing City and a Korean Secondary School in Yanji. One of the policy makers worked in the local education bureau of Yanji; the other was the headmaster of a Korean school. The parents were ethnic Koreans whose children were receiving trilingual education in a Korean school. The methodology included a questionnaire with multiple choice and open-ended questions to gather information on the attitudes of the students and teachers. In order to further explore the attitudes of different stakeholders, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the policy makers and parents. The data were recorded by two methods: note-taking during the interview to record subtle paralinguistic features and body language, and transcription after the interviews based on the tape-recordings. Furthermore, a documentary study was carried out, covering a broad range of materials: written policies, scholarly reports, textbooks, curriculum guidelines, teaching plans, students' achievement reports, school timetables, and students' homework and examination papers.

5.1 Attitudes Towards Trilingual Education

Some of the Korean students (40.74%) believed that they must learn the three languages, which displays a positive attitude towards trilingual education, while 93.85% of the Korean students regarded competence in the three languages as an advantage. Only 6.15% of the students viewed this competence as a disadvantage—and through personal interviews, it was ascertained that such students simply experienced frustration at the task of learning languages, and this led to them being negatively disposed towards trilingual education. An affirmative attitude toward trilingual education and competence in the three languages was held by 90.82% of ethnic students, which bodes well for the development of talented trilinguals.

Interviews revealed that most of the parents held positive attitudes towards trilingual education. One parent opined that:

> It's very necessary for ethnic Korean students to learn the three languages, because the foreign language can provide them with access to the international arena, Chinese is a must for communication nationally, and the Korean language can ensure communication within the ethnic group.

The interviews with the policy makers confirm that they also viewed trilingual education as necessary for the ethnic Koreans in Yanbian. One of the policy makers expressed his views on trilingual education thus:

> In the time of the planned economy, the scope of the ethnic Koreans was comparatively narrow, and only the Korean language was needed for their daily life. Since the start of the economic reforms and the move from the planned economy to the socialist market economy, the living conditions among Koreans have been greatly changed. Communication with the Han people and foreigners is gradually increasing, and it's impossible to communicate with them only in Korean, so Chinese and foreign languages become more and more important.

The double positive transfer teaching mode (see Fig. 1) is generally supported, as demonstrated by the results of the questionnaire: 45.59% of the teachers considered that knowing the ethnic language was helpful to the students in learning Chinese; 32.35% teachers reasoned that the students' existing ethnic language knowledge would have more positive effects than negative effects; and a mere 5.88% of the teachers reflected that there were only negative effects. This suggested that experience and knowledge in learning the L1 are viewed as having positive effects on learning the L2 and the L3. 82.09% of the teachers believed that there is an intrinsic relationship among the three languages, and this indicated the view that teachers were aware of the necessity of establishing a reasonable foundation in the L1 and L2, in order to enhance L3 learning. The results of the questionnaire survey among the students indicated that most ethnic students utilised their existing linguistic knowledge merely as a reference point when learning another language. For example, the word order in a simple sentence in both English and Chinese is Subject-Verb-Object, while it is Subject-Object-Verb in Korean. Hence, the Korean students referred to their knowledge of Chinese when they learnt English sentence structures. Likewise in phonetics, the vowel [æ] in English is absent in Chinese but exists in Korean, so their mother tongue would prove useful in this particular case.

This process of selecting a reference language also involved the students drawing comparisons across the three languages. The double positive transfer method appears to impart ethnic students with a distinct advantage over monolingual students when it comes to learning English.

5.2   Requirements for Foreign Language Teachers for Ethnic Koreans

When asked about the desirable qualifications for teaching ethnic Koreans, 66.67 % of the teachers rationalised that the most suitable foreign language teachers should be ethnic-Chinese bilingual teachers who also know English. A slightly smaller percentage, 48.72 %, of the ethnic students expected their foreign language teachers to be ethnic-Chinese bilinguals. From the interviews, we concluded that the students believed that ethnic-Chinese bilingual teachers can ensure effective communication between teachers and students and can also effectively understand how the students learn three languages. The policy makers and the parents demonstrated an attitude similar to that of the students and the teachers towards foreign language teachers. One of the parents articulated his views to us by stating:

> In my opinion, I think the most suitable foreign language (English) teacher for the ethnic Koreans should be Korean-Chinese bilingual teachers. As such, they can understand accurately the students 'difficulties in learning English, and then find reasonable ways to help the students to learn the third language.

6   Discussion

The research findings on the perceptions and attitudes of ethnic Koreans towards trilingual education indicate that the establishment of an appropriate trilingual education system for each ethnic minority group requires additional attention from academics and policy makers. For establishing an effective trilingual education system, numerous factors need to be taken into account, including: theories of ethnic education; philosophies for general education and language education in particular; an understanding of the relationship between language acquisition and the interrelationship among the three languages; the learner's experience, knowledge structure, cognitive ability and learning strategies, and the effectiveness of the teachers' pedagogy. We have initiated the process of exploring these aspects with relevant research projects and based upon this initial research, we are in a position to be able to suggest the following guidelines for establishing a strong trilingual education system. First, the curriculum should facilitate the linking of the three languages as the basis of acquisition and cognition. Second, teaching resources for one language should explicitly draw upon the students' knowledge of, and competence in, the other two languages. Third, the curriculum organisation should incorporate effective

trilingual learning principles by setting appropriate and feasible starting points for the ethnic language, Chinese and English. Fourth, the teaching staff should be trilingual, and thus serve as role models for learners. Fifth, the pedagogy should be informed by the double positive transfer model.

The ethnic language, Chinese and foreign language education are three essential subjects in primary and secondary school education. However, trilingual learning constitutes an impressive challenge and may eventually lead to disparity of learning quality. This has been a key question that has regularly attracted the attention of educators and academics internationally. At this point, this chapter presents two theoretical issues worthy of further research. The first issue is the cognitive potential of minority trilingual students which accumulates in the process of L1, L2 and L3 learning. Some research has already proved that this potential can be transformed into creative thinking and metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok 2001; Zhang 2001). We accept these findings as very significant and advocate that more research has to be conducted in the Chinese context. The second issue is the requirement to establish a more reasonable assessment and examination system to measure the multilinguistic competence of ethnic students. In other words, additional intelligence and competence in learning and using one more language demonstrated by students should be captured by a formative technique because, in due course of time, the multiple competences and experiences that they have accrued can be transformed in a highly productive manner, under suitably favourable conditions. Under the current assessment system (especially in college entrance examinations), the knowledge and abilities of ethnic minority students are not subjected to an integrated, objective and scientific evaluation. Instead, the 'inferiority' and 'weakness' of their proficiency in the dominant language, Chinese, have consistently been highlighted. As one of the more vital aspects of human capital, multilingualism has enormous social and economic value in an ever-developing and expanding multilingual and multicultural society. It is imperative, though challenging, to establish a more objective and scientific assessment system, to better measure the knowledge and ability of ethnic minority students.

7   Conclusion

Since the establishment of the PRC, with the support of national policies for ethnic minorities, national language policies and education policies for ethnic minorities, trilingual education for ethnic Koreans has made considerable progress. Today, the YKAP has developed a standard trilingual education model encompassing the complete school education system. Trilingualism is also developing at a fast pace in the Yanbian society. The increasing necessity for the three languages leads in turn to further development of trilingual education and also offers talented trilinguals ample opportunities to capitalise upon their abilities. Nevertheless, making the trilingual education model even more effective is a long term goal for educators and other stakeholders in minority education.

In our view, the key determinant of the success of any trilingualism and trilingual education project is the basic need for the people of each minority group to re-evaluate their own linguistic and cultural identities. At the same time, they must explore the methods by which the three languages interact with each other in the language learning process and thereafter, establish the trilingual education system that is best suited to their own context (Zhang 1998, 2004). Furthermore, the establishment of this trilingual education system should be accompanied by a reasonable assessment system, which requires the cooperation of all stakeholders in education and the persistence of several generations in order to achieve this goal.

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Language Learning and Empowerment: Languages in Education for Uyghurs in Xinjiang

Mamtimyn Sunuodula and Yu Cao

Abstract Occupying one sixth of China's total land mass, Xinjiang is officially designated as the Uyghur Autonomous Region. While traditionally Uyghur was used as the medium of instruction in schools dominated by Uyghur children, bilingual education as it is enforced in these schools, as well as in ever-increasing merged schools, has increasingly come to mean using Mandarin Chinese as the medium of instruction (as well as teaching it as a school subject) throughout its education system. Uyghur children's home language is taught only as a school subject. To gain first-hand information about the models used in schools, case studies were conducted in some secondary schools and universities accessible to the authors in Xinjiang. Findings approved commonly reported realities such as limited accessibility to trilingual education for Uyghur students. Using a combination of concepts such as cultural and symbolic capitals, identity and investment, the authors analysed the data to argue that, in many situations, Uyghur students actively reposition languages as economic, symbolic or cultural capital for investment and negotiate identity and power in the society.

Keywords Xinjiang · Uyghur · Census · Ethnolinguistic vitality · Bilingual education · Outside-Xinjiang boarding class · Three options policy · Economic capital · Cultural capital · Symbolic capital · Investment · Empowerment

1 Introduction

The passage and coming into force of the *National Common Language Act* in 2000 and 2001 marked the beginning of a new era in language planning and policy in China (China Government 2000; Xu 2001). The law placed a renewed emphasis on

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Mandarin Chinese as the national official language and provided a legal framework for language planning and policies to promote and enforce the standard language nationally. This was followed by provincial and local implementation directives and policy guidelines issued by governments at sub-national levels (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Government 2004; Kumul City People's Government 2006). While the law and the sub-national level directives and guidelines reinforced the ongoing efforts to promote and enforce Mandarin Chinese as the standard spoken language in areas where other spoken dialects of Chinese were in use, the effects of the law on areas with predominantly non-Han populations, many of whom were proficient only in their mother tongue, were much greater. These minority areas, which enjoyed an official autonomous status, with their main local languages recognised as regional official languages along with Mandarin Chinese, began to implement a type of "subtractive bilingual" (Baker 2006, pp. 213–226) education policy, in which Mandarin Chinese replaced the minority languages as the language-in-education at schools and enforced Chinese writing, instead of minority scripts, thereby effectively forcing the minority languages to assume the role of mere school subjects. These changes originated against the backdrop of the rapid spread of information and communication technologies, increased population mobility, high economic growth and rapid social transformation, accelerated economic and political integration across different regions and populations and growing individual, ethnic and regional disparities.

At about the same time, perhaps not so coincidently, the rise and spread of the English language in the People's Republic of China (PRC) accelerated dramatically and was hailed as one of the major educational and linguistic stories of the contemporary age. With the rapid integration of China's economy into the world trading system and the country's fast growing international stature and global economic influence, the pressure for its citizens to acquire proficiency in English has grown to an all-time high. This unprecedented rise in the importance and status of English and the growing demand for English language proficiency, has brought about unique changes with significant consequences for education, the economy and society in general. This phenomenon has attracted widespread attention and comment from scholars, educationalists and policy makers alike, both within and outside the country (Bolton 2006; Adamson 2004; Wang and Gao 2008; Feng 2007; Feng 2011). Three policy documents were issued by the Ministry of Education to promote English language education in 2001. The first of these documents stipulated that English provision should start from Year three in all primary schools by the autumn of 2002 (China Ministry of Education 2001a). The second document, which was intended for secondary schools, established specific English standards for secondary school leavers (China Ministry of Education 2002). The third document was intended for universities (China Ministry of Education 2001b) and required that five to ten percent of the undergraduate curriculum be conducted in English within three years. Such pressure has also fuelled the demand for thousands of private English language schools and a nationwide Utopian drive for Chinese–English

"bilingual education". English has become a prerequisite for high paying jobs and subsequent promotions, and it is a mandatory subject starting from as early as kindergarten in some areas. Chinese–English bilingual education involves using the English language to teach non-language school subjects, with the aim of achieving subject learning and English proficiency simultaneously. Again, critics used the term, "Great Leap Forward", to draw parallels with the 1950s style Utopian drive for social and economic development, which resulted in disastrous consequences (Hu 2008).

It is estimated that there are currently 400 million English language learners in China and several scholars predict that the number of Chinese English language learners will exceed the total population of all English speaking countries in the near future. This figure can be understood as indicative of the status and importance of English in today's society, and the popularity and belief in the language among the populace, as not all of them speak English fluently or even speak any English whatsoever (Gil and Adamson 2011, pp. 23–45). English language teaching has become a multibillion dollar business, doubling in market size in the five years between 2005 and 2010, with more than thirty thousand private English language training institutions, operating outside the mainstream state or public education sectors. For many Chinese citizens, English has become not only a tool for international communication, but also a step for socioeconomic advancement (Zhan and Sun 2010).

In the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, where indigenous ethnic minority peoples make up about 55 % of the total population and are traditionally educated in their own native languages, the government campaign to promote the use of Mandarin Chinese in minority language schools and improve proficiency in the language has been widely dubbed in official discourse as "leap frog development" in ethnic minority education and progress (Xinjiang Education Work Conference 2011; Gu 2010). Some critics have even gone so far as to use the familiar term "great leap forward" (Ma 2009), invoking memories from China's disastrous industrialisation campaign in the late 1950s. Within that context, a dual track linguistic "leapfrog development" has taken shape in terms of language education policy and practice in the last decade, more or less simultaneously and on a parallel course, but with different aims. On the one hand, minority language speakers are required to become proficient in Mandarin Chinese, regardless of the effort involved, keeping in mind the State's explicit aim of achieving socioeconomic development, national unity, and unified national identity and citizenship (Hu 2010; Bekri 2009). The promotion of Mandarin Chinese was also presented as a project to bring economic prosperity to impoverished minorities and improve their conditions and achieve long lasting peace and stability for the country. On the other hand, the promotion of English is aimed at achieving communicative competence in the language, in order to conduct foreign trade, increase China's interaction and integration with the outside world, expand its international influence and learn and acquire advanced Western technological and management skills (Li 2005).

2   English Language in Education

As a result of implementing national policies and being influenced by a number of external and internal drivers, today the English language exercises a profound impact on education, society and the economy in general, in Xinjiang. As in other places in China, English language education officially begins at the primary level in schools dominated by Han majority pupils (Han schools, hereafter). It then goes on to become a compulsory school subject at secondary level education and university students graduating from Han schools, compulsorily study English for at least two years and pass the College English Test 4 (CET−4), in order to graduate. Knowledge of English considerably influences the assessment and evaluation of the qualifications required for entrance into the postgraduate programmes at Master's and doctoral levels, and the stakes associated with test outcomes are high throughout the education system. As English is one of the three core subjects along with mathematics and Chinese, students are tested to evaluate their English proficiency levels for entrance into junior and senior secondary schools. Satisfactory performance along with securing passing grades in English language tests, is moreover one of the basic requirements for gaining professional qualifications and promotions in many fields. English skills are tested for all those seeking promotions in governmental, educational, scientific research, medical, financial, business and other government-supported institutions (Cheng 2008).

As for those linguistic minorities who are mainly educated in their own native languages, national policies place additional emphasis on achieving proficiency in Mandarin Chinese and implicitly exclude them from the promotion of English language education. The directive (China State Council 2002), for example, states that, in bilingual education, "the relationship between the minority language and Mandarin Chinese should be correctly managed. English should be offered in regions where favourable conditions exist". The directive offers no explanation of how 'correct management' is defined and what 'favourable conditions' are, but it appears that two of the main factors which influenced this directive were, firstly, the State's priority for those minorities in terms of second language (Mandarin Chinese) acquisition, and, secondly, the conditions on the ground in terms of resources to implement the national policies.

The dual track language education policy and practice contradict the State's aim of providing equal educational opportunities for all its citizens (China Government 1995), creating or even increasing the gap in terms of human, cultural and other forms of capital between the rich and the poor, between the city and rural areas, between majority and minority populations (Bahry et al. 2009, pp. 103–129; Bastid–Bruguiere 2001; Beckett and MacPherson 2005). There exists either very little or no provision for foreign language education in the curriculum for ethnic minority students, whereas Mandarin Chinese is becoming the norm for language-in-education for all students, through a government campaign to merge minority schools with Han schools.

Table 1 Major ethnic groups in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. (Source: Tabulation on the 2010 population census of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region)

Ethnic group	Population	Primary languages	Population proportion (%)
Uyghur	10,001,302	Uyghur language	46
Han	8,829,994	Mandarin Chinese	40.5
Kazakh	1,418,278	Kazakh Language	6.5
Hui	983,015	Mandarin Chinese	4.5

The largest of the linguistic minorities affected by the dual track language policy in Xinjiang are the Uyghurs. Consequently, most of them are obligated to learn Mandarin Chinese at the expense of English or any other foreign languages, as well as their native language. Since they live in economically disadvantaged peripheral areas, a very small number of Uyghurs can actually afford private English lessons for themselves or their children, as in other wealthier parts of China. Those who can and are sending their children to Chinese schools risk losing their native languages, cultures, and identities (Salahidin 2006, pp. 31–39; Upton 1999, pp. 285–340). Therefore, it is generally assumed that English is exacerbating the educational inequities confronting minority and indigenous peoples, who already encounter significant educational and literacy disadvantages.

3   Languages and Language Education in Xinjiang

Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is situated in the northwest of the People's Republic of Chinaand occupies one sixth of the country's total land mass. It borders with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and Mongolia and has a complex mixture of ethnic composition and a great potential for international exposure, both in sociocultural terms and economic activities. As of 2010, it was home to a number of officially recognised ethnic groups with a total population of just under 22 million (Office for the Population Census of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, 2012, pp. 34–73). The largest ethnic group in Xinjiang are the Uyghurs with a population of 10 million (Table 1), and this is closely followed by China's dominant Han ethnic group, whose population in the region has increased from less than seven percent to over forty percent in the last half century (Institute of Ethnography 1994, pp. 39–40).

Language policy has been at the heart of Chinese nation building. Shortly after the inception of the PRC, language policy in China's border regions was responsive to local conditions (Dwyer 2005). From the end of the "Cultural Revolution" in the late 1970s until the promulgation of the Xinjiang bilingual education policy in 2004, the education system in Xinjiang was largely divided into two parallel subsystems: minority language medium education for the ethnic minority students, with Mandarin Chinese as a second language school subject, and Mandarin Chinese language medium education for the Han population, with English as the preferred second language school subject. Thus, in this system, the schools were divided along ethnic

Table 2 Number of ethnic minority students at ethnic minority schools in 2004. (Source: *Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region education statistics* (2005))

	Primary school		Secondary school		High school	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Uyghur	1,021,101	47.63	579,868	50.28	93,135	24.01
Kazakh	114,489	5.34	69,215	6	22,606	5.83
Mongolian	6,024	0.28	4,078	0.35	1,913	0.49
Sibe	1,349	0.06	876	0.08	615	0.16
Kirgiz	13,931	0.65	9,601	0.83	1,689	0.45

lines on the basis of the language of instruction and, as Uyghur is one of the two official languages in the Autonomous Region, most Uyghurs were educated in their mother tongue with varying degrees of knowledge of Mandarin Chinese, depending on the areas where they lived and the possibilities for them to interact with the Han population (Benson 2004, pp. 190–202). An official survey conducted in 1986 disclosed that only 4.4 % of the Uyghurs reported that they were completely communicative in Mandarin Chinese, with 90 % reporting that they did not possess basic communicative skills in the language (Institute of Ethnography 1994).

In 2001, there were 6,221 primary schools in Xinjiang of which 56.37 % (3,507) were Uyghur language medium schools; there were 1,457 lower secondary schools of which 39 % (566) were Uyghur schools; at higher secondary school level, the proportion of Uyghur schools was under 34 % (158) of a total of 472 schools (Zhao 2004). According to Zhao (2004), the percentage of ethnic minority students receiving education in their native language medium schools represented somewhere between 65–70 % of the total number, but in the south of Xinjiang where the Uyghurs are dominant, the percentage could be as high as 96 % of the total. A recent survey confirms that the proportion of Uyghur university students who graduated from Uyghur language medium schools continued to be over 90 % (Cui 2005). Those Uyghur students, who had not attended Uyghur language medium schools, attended other schools, where the medium of instruction was Mandarin Chinese. These included Mandarin Chinese language medium schools in Xinjiang, special boarding classes set up for ethnic minority students in higher secondary schools across major cities and provinces outside Xinjiang (Outside–Xinjiang Boarding Class hereafter), specially set-up boarding programmes for ethnic minority students in Mandarin Chinese language medium schools in Han majority areas in Xinjiang (Inside–Xinjiang Boarding Class hereafter), mixed Uyghur-Han schools and experimental Mandarin Chinese language medium-based classes in Uyghur language medium schools (see Table 2,which gives the number of ethnic minority students at ethnic minority schools in 2004). Reports on educational statistics concerning ethnic minority schools appear to have stopped after 2005. This is probably due to the bilingual education campaign aiming to merge ethnic minority and Han schools (Tsung and Cruickshank 2009). In an attempt to provide updated information on numbers, statistics published in the Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook (2013) are given in Table 3.

Out of the numerous language policies officially promulgated in the history of Xinjiang, it can be argued that the one which has caused the most significant and

Table 3 Number of ethnic minority students enrolled at various education institutions. (Source: Xinjiang Statistical Bureau. (1998–2013). Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook.)

Years	Higher education	Secondary education	Primary education
2005	75,744	993,338	1,369,400
2006	77,627	975,346	1,329,400
2007	81,978	958,643	1,313,200
2008	85,942	935,350	1,304,400
2009	91,243	927,939	1,303,100
2010	94,708	933,338	1,293,700
2011	102,358	940,729	1,292,500
2012	106,893	939,713	1,301,000

extensive impact is the region-level document promulgated by the Xinjiang government on the promotion of "bilingual education" (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Government 2004). The 2004 "bilingual education" document stipulates that Mandarin Chinese be made the primary or the sole language of instruction in primary and middle-school classrooms. "Bilingual education" has come to mean that Mandarin Chinese is *the* medium of instruction from primary school onwards and minority languages are to be relegated to the status of a school subject (Ma 2009). An increasing number of Uyghur pupils in mixed communities or cities attend Chinese medium schools or Chinese–Uyghur mixed schools from childhood, or the so called "bilingual kindergartens" (Tsung and Cruickshank 2009). In 2009, around 994,000 students ranging from kindergarten to senior secondary school, received such "bilingual education", accounting for 42 % of minority students; while the number reported in 2005 was merely 145,318 (Ma 2009).

Meanwhile, large scale school-merging campaigns were launched in 2000, with the ostensible aim of creating a better Chinese language environment for Uyghur and other ethnic minority students by requiring Han schools and minority schools to transfer and operate under the same roof. Between 2000 and 2007, an increase of 71 % in the number of merged schools was reported, up from 461–791. Correspondingly in the year 2000, the first cohort of Outside–Xinjiang Boarding Class was inaugurated. This was a four-year boarding programme aimed at minority students, which involved relocating them to senior secondary schools in predominantly Han-populated and economically-advanced coastal cities. The programme admits only the highest achieving minority students from Xinjiang and at least ninety percent of them are expected to succeed in securing places at top universities. The number of students in the Outside–Xinjiang Boarding Class programme has risen from 1,000 in the year 2000–5,500 in the year 2009. Following the same trend, in 2004, Inside–Xinjiang Boarding Classes for Uyghur and other ethnic minority students were introduced at secondary schools in predominantly Han populated cities and areas within Xinjiang. Unlike their counterparts in ethnic minority schools, the Uyghur and other ethnic minority students in both these boarding programmes follow the national curriculum alongside the Han students at the host schools.

The drastic increase witnessed in the number of students attending these programmes is also the direct result of a series of new measures adopted by the Xinji-

ang government, among which the most coercive and influential was the Bilingual Curriculum Plan in Compulsory Education Phase, also called the Three Options Policy, formulated in 2007. Compared with previous bilingual education policies, which were largely experimental and focused on limited courses, the new plan claims to extend an intensified course of Mandarin Chinese to the whole region.

Depending on the available teaching resources, each minority school in Xinjiang is required to select one of the three suggested options. The three options differ from each other in terms of the amount of Mandarin Chinese used as the medium of instruction, with the largest proportion of Chinese being used in Option 3 and the smallest proportion being used in Option 1.

Option 1 requires that scientific subjects such as Mathematics, Nature and Information Technology in primary schools, and Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Information Technology and foreign languages in junior secondary schools, should be taught in Mandarin Chinese. Other subjects can be taught in minority languages. Option 2 requires further input of Mandarin Chinese. Except for Music and the minority language and literature, all subjects should be taught in Mandarin Chinese. Option 3 follows the same curriculum as Han schools, where all subjects are taught in Mandarin Chinese. The principal difference between minority schools which follow Option 3 and Han schools lies only in the fact that the former are supposed to organise classes for teaching the minority language and literature.

Based on the Three Options Policy, two different curricula standards (Curricular A and Curricular B hereafter) have been issued by the Xinjiang Education Bureau, aimed at students in minority schools from Grades 1–9. Mandarin Chinese continues to be the overwhelming priority. For instance, in Curriculum A, Mandarin Chinese as a school subject takes up most of the students' time: 25 % in primary schools and 17.6 % in junior secondary schools. If students follow curriculum B, they will spend 26.9 % of their time in primary schools and 16.7 % in junior secondary schools in learning Mandarin Chinese. Compared with Han school students, the minority students spend much less time learning a foreign language. In the case of Curriculum B, schools have the option to set up a foreign language course at Grade 4, but are allocated only two class hours per week, which is far less than the seven class hours assigned to Chinese language study. In the meantime, the minority native language is placed in a disadvantaged position. Taking Curriculum B as an example, the amount of minority language and literature class periods aggregate to a total of only 7.7 % in primary schools and 5.6 % in junior secondary schools. Foreign language education is listed in both curricula, but schools can opt to postpone the course, which is the case in most schools (Xinjiang Education Bureau 2011).

During senior secondary school, learning Mandarin Chinese receives even greater attention than in primary school. Minority students who take the College Entrance Examination in their own native languages will be tested in six subjects, and Mandarin Chinese is one of the three essential subjects, with the other two being the minority language and mathematics. Some minority students, usually those studying in bilingual classes, may choose to take the College Entrance Examination in Mandarin Chinese. In contrast to the consequential position of Mandarin Chinese, a foreign language test is optional, and the test results merely serve as a reference,
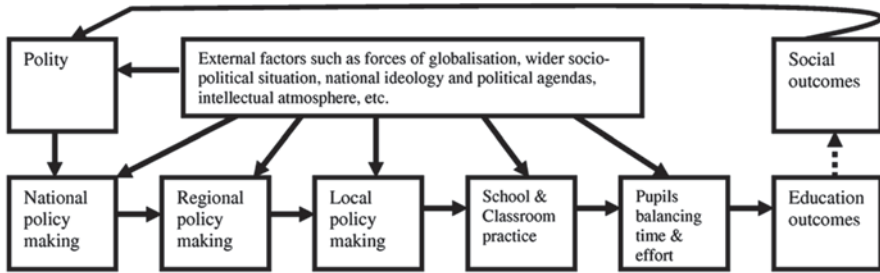
Fig. 1 An analytical framework for minority educational policies in China

with regard to college admissions. Though a bigger proportion of foreign language credits can be observed in the curriculum designed for senior secondary school, this allocation has no substance or value, as few students would devote much time to a course for which they will not be tested.

Emphasis on Chinese and lack of foreign language provision in schools is also noticeably demonstrated by the fact that tertiary institutions have policies that require minority students to pass the Chinese Proficiency Test for admission and graduation, but exempt them from taking the nationwide College English Test 4 (Yang 2005).

4 A Policy Studies Model

In comparing empirical evidence obtained in several different minority populated regions in China, Feng and Sunuodula (2009) proposed an analytical model for the process of minority language education policy making. The evidence indicated that education in different regions had different degrees of integration into the national curriculum and language education policies and practices differed from region to region, depending on different conditions on the ground and interpretation of national policies by the local actors, in accordance with the local priorities (see Fig. 1).

The dotted line between educational and social outcomes suggests a weak link between the two, as social outcomes would usually derive from the entire society, with schools forming only part of that society (Feng and Sunuodula 2009).

The stark difference in the implementation of two different sets of language education policies in Xinjiang, i.e. the processes of implementing English language education policy and the Chinese–Uyghur bilingual education policy, illustrates the dynamic relationship among the key actors and factors in a clear picture. For the policy process, with its aim of promoting Chinese–Uyghur bilingual education, all actors specified in the model are fully mobilised to play their respective roles. The literature and the data reveal distinctly that policy makers at regional, prefectural and county levels tend to carry the state policy to an extreme level exceeding guide-
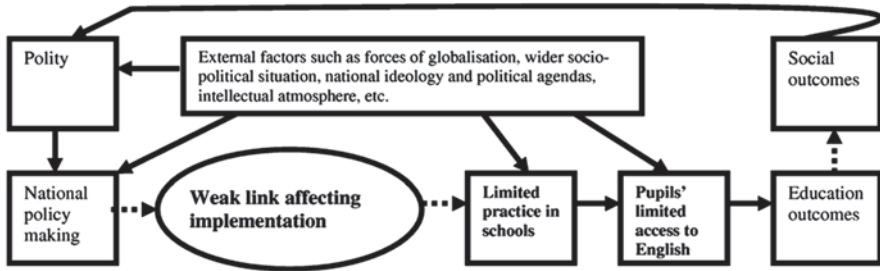
Fig. 2 The process for implementing English language education policy in Xinjiang

Table 4 Numbers of international tourist arrivals in Xinjiang (excluding overseas Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong and Macao tourists). (Source: State Statistical Bureau. (1998–2012). China Tourist Statistical Yearbook.)

Years	Xinjiang	National total
1997	157,067	7,428,000
2002	233,700	13,439,500
2007	402,700	26,109,700
2008	327,688	42,753,133
2009	318,400	44,198,831
2010	454,444	54,111,187
2011	487,701	59,205,897

lines, by over emphasising the promotion of Chinese, whereas parents and pupils exploit the system to their advantage, to balance the benefits and time and resources invested in it. The policy cycle regarding English language provision for ethnic minority students, on the other hand, shows a weak link at the regional, prefectural and county levels (see Fig. 2). Without active participation by these key actors, there is no guarantee or assurance of the resources and supplementary preconditions for policy implementation, resulting in limited practice in schools and limited access for pupils.

   While English language provision for minority students, particularly those who live in remote areas and study in minority language medium schools, is limited, the demand for English in the region is clearly on the rise. Ever-growing tourism levels (see Table 4) and the presence of multinational companies (see Table 5) are two indicators, which suggest increasing opportunities for people with foreign language competence.

   With regard to English, some issues appear obvious from the evidence presented here. Firstly, while it is obvious that the demand for personnel with English language skills is growing, it appears that an insufficient number of people with a minority background are truly qualified for the market, since they have no opportunities to study the language as part of their normal education. Secondly, there is a clear difference between the national education policy and the regional policy in foreign language provision in Xinjiang, due to the dual track education systems followed by the Han majority group and the minority groups. And thirdly, as many

Table 5 Number of foreign owned enterprises and their employees in Xinjiang (excluding Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao owned). (Sources: Xinjiang Statistical Bureau. (1997–2013). Xinjiang Stastical Yearbook; State Statistical Bureau. (1998–2012). China Labour Statistical Yearbook)

Year	No. of companies	No. of employees
1997	76	6129
2002	64	6428
2006	421	11374
2007	341	13152
2008	317	13482
2009	315	12352
2010	499	13105
2011	491	19029

authors (Beckett and MacPherson 2005; Bastid–Bruguiere 2001) assert, the current drive for dual track linguistic "leapfrog development", is further empowering the already powerful majority Han group, leaving minority and indigenous peoples even further behind. It is widening the gap and augmenting educational inequities minority peoples already face in the traditional system. The political, economic and symbolic status and power of Mandarin Chinese has been considerably elevated as opposed to minority languages. Although, English has been promoted with pronounced vigour as an international language and a necessary cultural capital, most minority students are excluded from the opportunity to acquire it through state education. Minority students learn Mandarin Chinese as a mandated but very difficult priority, and a limited number of families can actually afford private English lessons for themselves and/or their children.

5   Analytical Concepts

We have conducted both qualitative and quantitative investigations in Xinjiang at different locations, using the ethnographic research method adopted for social and educational research, in order to gain insight into the specific language related issues faced by the Uyghurs, as well as broader socioeconomic factors influencing their language learning decisions and behaviours. Drawing from the quantitative evidence and semi-structured interviews with Uyghur students attending secondary schools and universities, we will examine how the learning of three languages, i.e., Uyghur, Mandarin Chinese and English is perceived by Uyghur students. We have applied specific theoretical concepts and the framework developed in recent years in sociolinguistics of second language acquisition, to gain a more generalised understanding and derive general conclusions from the case studies.

To analyse the unequal power relations among different languages with the data collected, we have drawn on the notions of capital, market and symbolic power, originally developed in the works of Bourdieu (1977, 1991), and applied them to multilingual contexts in Xinjiang. Our intention is to go beyond describing languages as a means of communication in a narrow sense, to focus on the symbolic relations and signs by which language becomes a medium of power. The need for

such a focus will become obvious in the later sections, in which we critically review current practices as revealed by our studies on "bilingual" education, and English language in education, or the lack of it, for the Uyghurs.

Bourdieu (1986, 1991) has proposed that capital comes in four guises, that is, the various forms of capital that function in relation to each other in terms of their conversions. For Bourdieu, economic capital is directly convertible into material wealth. Cultural capital, on the other hand, entails accumulated knowledge and skills and the institutions or objects that realise this type of capital. Culturalcapital is potentially, but not directly, convertible into economic capital. According to Bourdieu (1977), cultural capital consists of ideas and knowledge that people draw upon as they participate in social life. Everything from rules of etiquette to being able to speak and write effectively can be considered as cultural capital. Bourdieu's original focus was on the unequal distribution of cultural capital in stratified societies and in what manner, such inequality disadvantages people. This is especially true in schools and other institutions, where ignorance of what the dominant classes define as basic knowledge, makes it difficult for those in marginal or subordinate groups to compete successfully (Johnson 2000). Uyghur students, for example, do not perform creditably in some school subjects, first and foremost because they lack the cultural capital presumed by the education system, in which knowledge and authority are essentially defined by the dominant group. Bourdieu refers to this lack as cultural deprivation.

Yet another area of capital is social capital. Bourdieu defines this as the aggregate of an individual's group memberships and social connections. It may be convertible into economic capital through mutual agreement but, perhaps more importantly, social capital depends on symbolic exchanges which allow it to be established and maintained.

The fourth guise of Bourdieu's capital is symbolic capital, which is seen as accumulated prestige or honour. Symbolic capital derives from all or any of the other guises of capital, when they are recognised as legitimate (Bourdieu 1989). Bourdieu offers the official language as an example of the legitimate language in use, thus imbuing it with symbolic capital. Bourdieu goes on to state that, "The official language is bound up with the state, both in its genesis and in its social uses. It is in the process of state formation that the conditions are created for the constitution of a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language" (1991, p. 45). He further elaborates, "All linguistic practices are measured against the legitimate practices, e.g. the practices of those who are dominant" (1991, p. 51). This brings in the notion of power and how it plays out in relation to different forms of capital.

By identifying language as an area in which power relations are created and exercised, Bourdieu (1977, p. 648) shows that the act of speaking does not merely involve exchanging information: 'Language is not only an instrument of communication or knowledge but an instrument of power.' Bourdieu argues that the value ascribed to speech cannot be understood apart from the person who speaks, and the person who speaks cannot be understood apart from larger networks of social relationships—many of which may be unequally structured. The acquisition of certain

types of socially valued linguistic behaviours may then allow a person to access additional resources that can be translated into material wealth. The ability to speak a language and use it in certain ways, therefore, signifies a measure or subcategory of cultural capital, i.e., the linguistic capital a person possesses (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). Although the notion of linguistic capital is coined by Bourdieu, primarily to explain the 'hidden mediations through which the relationship (grasped by our tests) between social origin and scholastic achievement is set up' (p. 116) in a given society, many educators make use of the concept to explore power relationships in social interactions where a powerful language, or languages, is used and/or taught as a second/foreign language (e.g., Abdullah and Chan 2003; Lin 1996; Norton 1997).

A *linguistic marketplace (or field)* is generally defined as a symbolic market, constituted of various social domains within which linguistic exchanges take place. Linguistic products are not equally valued in a linguistic market. The language legitimised by the market sets the norm against which the values of other ways of speaking and varieties of language are defined (Bourdieu 1977). Those who command the legitimate language possess the linguistic capital, a form of symbolic capital, which may bring them rewards (both material and symbolic) from the market. The power of Bourdieu's linguistic market as an analytical tool for language use and practice lies in the nature of the market as part of a larger structured symbolic domain. The construct of the linguistic market is especially relevant to examining the relationship between language use and practice and socioeconomic change in the current context of Xinjiang. As explained in greater detail in the next section, the rapid restructuring of the economic system and the commodification forces of the market economy, have changed the means by which material and symbolic resources are used and valued in the reconfiguration and construction of (new) social distinctions.

Norton (1997) extends Bourdieu's (1977) social theory into second language learning, by questioning how relationships of power in the social world, affect social interactions between second language learners and target language speakers. Norton proposes a theory of social identity, which assumes power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. She introduces the notion of investment, instead of second language learning motivation. The notion of investment attempts to capture the relationship of the language learner to the changing social world. It conceives the language learner as having a complex social identity and multiple desires. The notion of investment presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus, an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space. If learners invest in a second language, Norton (1997) points out that they do so with the explicit understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners

will expect or hope to have a good return on that investment—a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources.

Norton (1997, p. 410) defines social identity as the process of "How people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future." She also takes the position, following West (1992), that identity relates to desire—desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation and the desire for security and safety. In this view, a person's identity will shift in accordance with changing social and economic relations.

Furthermore, relevant to our discussion is Vaish's (2005) argument about the groups who have historically been linguistically 'subalternised' and have only now gained more equitable access to linguistic capital, due to the market forces of globalisation. His argument is based on the notion of 'subaltern', a term popularised by Antonio Gramsci (1971) to refer to depressed groups in society that suffer from the hegemony of the ruling class. Vaish proposes the "peripherist" view of English language use in India, which disagrees with those sociolinguists who think that English endangers local languages and perpetuates inequality. He views this as Orientalism disguised as liberal sociolinguistics, which in fact, reproduces the inequitable distribution of linguistic capital and fails to acknowledge the tenacity of indigenous cultures in being able to maintain their longevity (Vaish 2005). The technique of teaching English adds a domain to the multilingual/multi-literate repertoire of subalterns, a workplace literacy domain that can help them break the constraints of class and caste (Vaish 2005).

This chapter employs all of these concepts, namely capital, field, power and identity that are related to desire, which in turn, may or may not, directly or indirectly be related to economic or material rewards that are believed to be at play in second or third language learning and the linguistic market place.

6 Research Site and Research Methodology

Our research consists of two parts, targeting both secondary school and tertiary-level ethnic Uyghur students. Firstly, we elected to conduct qualitative case studies of students at the tertiary level for the obvious reason that, unlike many other regions, as the context section confirms, most Uyghur students do not begin learning English until they go to university. Our focus was on their perceptions of the third language, English, in relation to their home language and Chinese, their second language, their willingness to invest in the third language and the process of social identity negotiation and transformation (Olsson and Larsson 2008, pp. 10–11). Ten tertiary level students were chosen for two rounds of ethnographic interviews, which involved a first round of minimally structured interviews, followed by a second round of semi-structured interviews, with a focus on emergent themes from the first round. The interviews were conducted in Uyghur.

The second part of our study was the quantitative research which was carried out in the period between July 2010 and May 2011, at four research sites: a senior secondary school in X County, a senior secondary school in Y City, an Inside–Xinjiang Junior Secondary School Class in which Chinese was the medium of instruction, and an Inland Xinjiang Class. The first two schools are located in Kashgar Prefecture, Southern Xinjiang, where the population is predominantly Uyghur speaking. We refer to these locations as X County and Y City and the schools as M School and K School. The Inside–Xinjiang Junior Secondary School Class is located in a Han-dominant city in northern Xinjiang. The Inland Xinjiang Class lies in a city in northeastern China. They are referred to as T school and H school hereafter. Overall, 190 students completed the questionnaires. Two teachers and four policy-makers were selected as key informants for further interviews. The method of data collection included participant observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaire surveys and document search. Questionnaires and interviews with teachers and education officials at these locations were conducted in Mandarin Chinese.

A site visit was conducted at two schools, K School in Y City and M School in X County in July 2009. With a history spanning 54 years and a track record of sending ninety percent of its students to universities, K is an elite school with an eminent reputation throughout Xinjiang. K school established its bilingual education department in 2007. As of 2010, there were 420 Uyghur students receiving senior secondary education at the school. The language of instruction for all subjects is Mandarin Chinese, with the exception of the Uyghur Language and Literature, which can be said to follow Model 3. Students study Mandarin Chinese intensively from Grade 10 through to Grade 12. During the first two years, students have three English classes per week. In Grade 12, they have one English class per week. As most minority students possessed no English learning experience prior to Grade 10, the school had selected primary English textbooks, from the regular textbooks used by Han students in Grades 7 and 8, for their use. For Uyghur students in bilingual classes, English is a minor subject which receives far less attention than their major subjects. For example, English classes often tend to be cancelled, in anticipation of certain important examinations. Since English is not a subject which is tested in the College Entrance Examination, the school cancelled the English course for Grade 12 students. Three English teachers, all with bachelor's degrees, were assigned by the School to teach in the bilingual department.

While Uyghur students at K School were enthusiastic about learning English, one factor that hindered their progress was the substantial demands presented by the College Entrance Examination. However, for Uyghur students in M School, an additional factor prevented and deferred their learning of a third language. This was the insufficient supply of English teachers as well as bilingual teachers of other subjects, which significantly impeded the advancement of trilingual education.

X County has a population of 210,000, of which 95% is Uyghur. According to statistics communicated orally by officials from the Education Bureau of the County, the County has a total of 26 English teachers, and 24 of these teachers are employed at M school, a consolidated school made up of Han and Uyghur campuses, separated by a wall and employing a different teaching and learning system.

Table 6 Number of question-
naire respondents (students)

School	No. of students filling in questionnaires
M	51
K	99
T	12
H	28

Two English teachers reside at the Uyghur campus, teaching English to six bilingual classes from Grade 10 to Grade 12, two periods per week, while the remaining 22 teachers work on the Han campus. In terms of the language policy, since the school does not have a sufficient number of bilingual teachers, the six bilingual classes on the Uyghur side of the wall adopted Model 3. It is a noteworthy fact that most Uyghur teachers do not speak fluent Mandarin Chinese. Efforts were believed to have been undertaken to remedy and thereby, improve the situation from 2009 when the school commenced a policy of sending teachers for bilingual teaching training sessions during summer and winter vacations. Tables 6, 7 and 8 show the number of participants from each school and information regarding the interviewees.

Students who participated in the quantitative investigation can be categorised into two groups, based upon their choices of the "bilingual education" model and their living and study environments. The first category comprises students from M and K schools. They attended experimental bilingual classes and their schools followed the Option3 "bilingual education" curriculum, which denotes that a large proportion of the subjects are required to be taught in Mandarin Chinese. These students live in predominantly Uyghur neighbourhoods and their contact with Mandarin Chinese is limited to the hours when they are at school. The second category includes students from T and H schools, which follow the same curriculum as the majority Han students. They live in predominantly Han neighbourhoods and cities and all their teachers are from the majority Han ethnicity. Their medium of instruction is Mandarin Chinese and they have constant contact with Mandarin Chinese in their daily lives as well as at school. The above mentioned factors are inclined to influence students' perceptions of and attitudes toward trilingual issues, which will be elucidated and clarified in the latter part of this chapter.

7   Findings

The findings of our research with respect to perceptions of language learning can be categorised under the following subheadings, which are interrelated. It should be noted that while the statistical data given below were collected exclusively from the four secondary schools, the interview data were a combination of data collected from secondary students, teachers, policy makers and from tertiary-level students, as mentioned before.

Table 7 List of key informant interviewees (teachers)

No	From where	Ethnicity	Gender	Anonymous name
1	K city	Uyghur	Male	Mr. L Physics Teacher
2	T school	Han	Female	Ms. H English Teacher

Table 8 List of key informant interviews (policy makers)

No	From where	Ethnicity	Gender	Anonymous name and position
1	U city	Han	Male	Mr. C, director of Bilingual Education Office
2	K city	Uyghur	Male	Mr. M, director of Bilingual Education Office
3	M county	Uyghur	Male	Mr. A, official of county education bureau
4	M county	Han	Male	Mr. Z, official of county education bureau

7.1   *Mandarin Chinese as Economic Capital*

The current language policy discourse in Xinjiang explicitly links economic development, citizenship, language and education. English language, Mandarin Chinese as well as the minority languages are considered to be linguistic capital that can be exchanged within Xinjiang's multilingual linguistic marketplace; their value is embedded in the predispositions of those engaged in the exchange and the power relations in the linguistic field. Language policy discourse consistently presents justifications and rationales, which distinguish Mandarin Chinese from the other languages of China as the language of modernity, economic progress and national unity.

As a measure of human capital, learning and proficiency in Mandarin Chinese by ethnic minorities is portrayed as a crucial part of their human resource development in policy discourses in Xinjiang. Current Mandarin Chinese—Minority Language "bilingual" education policy and practices, which position Mandarin Chinese in an all-powerful position, are unfailingly defended with utilitarian economic and political justifications, rather than with cultural or other reasons. As professional and technical jobs, by definition, require higher education certificates, and higher education in Xinjiang is only conducted in Mandarin Chinese since the early twenty-first century, Mandarin Chinese performs the role of a guardian or monitor, which allows, or prevents, choice of continued education and, thus, future job opportunities for the individual and fulfilment of labour market needs for the society.

Consequently, Mandarin Chinese has become the language of political power and prestige, socioeconomic mobility and advancement, in complete contrast to the government's discourse on symbolic capital, associated with ethnic minority languages (see Table 9). However, the political and administrative decisions adopted, cannot completely explain the means by which the boundaries of the linguistic field are set or changed. As Mandarin Chinese has slowly but surely come to represent more economic capital, it has assumed near complete dominance in the linguistic field in terms of the value of human capital at the expense, in particular, of the minority languages. This in turn, has reduced the need for Mandarin Chinese—Minority Language bilingualism, in sharp contrast to stated policies. As the market

Table 9 Ethnicity and Language Requirements Specified in Civil Servant Recruitment Examination in Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia in 2010. (Source: Tursun (2010))

No. of vacancies	Language requirement			Ethnicity requirement			
a. Xinjiang uyghur autonomous region							
1973	Mandarin chinese	Uyghur	Unspecified	Han	Minorities	Two ethnicities	Unspecified
	1385 (70.2%)	209 (10.6%)	379 (19.2%)	1196 (60.6%)	541 (27.4%)	43 (2.18%)	193 (9.78%)
b. Tibet autonomous region							
1986	Unspecified			Han	Ethnic minorities	Unspecified	
	1986			23 (1.16%)	58 (2.92 %)	1905 (95.92 %)	
c. Inner mongolia autonomous region							
3408	Unspecified	Chinese/Mongol bilingual	Unspecified	Ethnic minorities (Ewenki, Daur)			
	3235 (94.93 %)	173 (5.07 %)	3397 (99.68 %)	11 (0.32 %)			

develops, the value of capital can change, as can perceptions of what constitutes capital. Bourdieu's theory helps to illustrate how boundaries in the fields of politics, ethnicity, education and economics intersect, and in what manner individuals and institutions situate themselves, in relation to these fields.

Our questionnaire and interview data below illustrate how Uyghur students viewed the changing fortunes of capital in the linguistic market place in Xinjiang, and exactly how they intend to invest their time and resources, in relation to their mother tongue and Mandarin Chinese.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of answers to one of the key questions asked in the questionnaire survey (see Appendix A) and the analysis of the responses:

As shown in Fig. 3, a significant majority of respondents (80%) supported the strengthening of Chinese language learning in their school curriculum. Based on the interviews and responses to open-ended questions on the student questionnaire, it can be observed that Uyghur students displayed strong extrinsic orientations about learning Mandarin Chinese. The following are some of their comments about learning Mandarin Chinese:

"Mandarin Chinese is very important for me to find a job."
"I want to be a teacher in the future. It is a must that I learn Mandarin Chinese well."
"My parents hope me to learn Mandarin Chinese well."
"Mandarin Chinese is our national language. We have to learn it to communicate with others outside Xinjiang."
"I will take College Entrance Examination in Mandarin Chinese, so I will need to study it hard."

All the four policy makers who were interviewed were very supportive with reference to the active and aggressive promotion of Mandarin Chinese in Xinjiang. They believed that teaching Mandarin Chinese to Uyghur students will lead them to better employment opportunities, which would imply greater economic benefits.

S2

Fig. 3 Percentage of answers to the statement: "Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in my school". *1* strongly disagree, *2* disagree, *3* neutral, *4* agree, *5* strongly agree

They opined that the Uyghur language is also important, but ranked it lower in comparison with Mandarin Chinese. As one official at the Xinjiang Education Bureau put it:

> It is a choice between development and culture. If Uyghur people hope to raise their incomes and improve their living conditions, they must learn to speak Mandarin Chinese. It is a basic tool for them to participate in the country's economic development. It is unavoidable that minority language and culture will be affected to some extent. But they have to make the choice.

They also expressed serious concern about the lack or shortage of qualified bilingual teachers. This proved to be a major challenge for implementation of Mandarin Chinese–Uyghur bilingual education, and to quote a remark by one of the officials:

> To improve our education, the precondition is the quality of teachers. We are in great need of bilingual teachers who can teach in Mandarin Chinese. Good teachers won't stay. The natural environment is bad here and salary is not high.

The teachers interviewed observed that the students devoted long hours, investing their valuable time and energy in learning Mandarin Chinese, to overcome the language barrier for their education. One Uyghur physics teacher explained:

> They are very hard working. They get up very early and spend all day studying. You don't know how much energy they put into study.

In terms of importance, the two teachers we interviewed selected Mandarin Chinese as the most important school subject for Uyghur students, indicating the high level of mobilisation of critical actors required to actualise the "bilingual education" policies, which are vigorously promoted in Xinjiang.

7.2   *English as Cultural Capital*

With the implementation of the dual track bilingual education policy and practices, the English language is only offered as a school subject at schools, where the medium of instruction is Mandarin Chinese in Xinjiang. Despite the recent school merger

Table 10 A class timetable for Grade 12 Uyghur students in a school in Kashgar

	Time	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
1	9:00–9:45	Chemistry	Biology	Uyghur	Chinese	Math	Chinese	
2	9:55–10:40	Chemistry	Physics	Uyghur	Biology	Biology	Chinese	
3	10:50–11:35	Math	Physics	Physics	Biology	Biology	Chemistry	
4	11:45–12:30	Math	Math	Physics	Uyghur	Chemistry	Chemistry	
5	12:40–13:25	Biology	Math	Chinese	Uyghur	Chemistry	Biology	
6	16:00–16:45	Chinese	Uyghur	Math	Math	Physics	Math	
7	16:55–17:40	Chinese	Uyghur	Math	Math	Physics	Math	
8	17:50–18:35	Physics	Chemistry	Chemistry	Physics	Chinese	Uyghur	
9	18:45–19:30	Physics	Chemistry	Chemistry	Physics	Chinese	Uyghur	Chinese
10	21:00–21:45	Chemistry	Physics	Biology	Uyghur	Math		

campaigns and phasing out of the Uyghur language as a language-in-education in favour of Mandarin Chinese across all levels of education, the provision of English language education, for students in classes traditionally taught in Uyghur and attended by Uyghur students, has seen very little improvement. Our investigations at two of the merged or bilingual education schools disclosed the following realities.

In School K, one teacher explained:

> Han students in Grade 12 need to have at least eighteen English classes each week, but Uyghur students do not have any. They spend that time studying Mandarin Chinese.

One of the Uyghur high school students interviewed expressed grave concerns about the growing gap between Uyghur and Han students, in terms of English language skills:

> There is a very wide gap between us and Han students in terms of English level. It will be hard for us after we go to college. I am worried.

The lack of English classes is evident in the Timetable for Grade 12 Uyghur Students in a school in Kashgar (see Table 10.)

Despite the unfavourable conditions and potential obstacles in learning a foreign language encountered by Uyghur students, the respondents to our questionnaire survey and the university students we interviewed demonstrated a determined and resolute willingness to invest in learning English, as well as confidence in themselves to be successful in achieving better results than their Han counterparts, provided that they were accorded equal opportunities for education.

As shown in Fig. 4, two–thirds of our questionnaire respondents have strongly supported the strengthening of English language education at their schools and ninety percent have agreed with that statement, which is the highest level of support for any of the three languages in question.

Contrary to the claims made by some authors and policy makers about English being perceived as an additional burden by minority students and therefore, not attaching sufficient importance to learning it, our respondents resoundingly rejected, by a large margin, the statement that the English language should be excluded from the curriculum for Uyghur students because they are unable to learn as thoroughly and satisfactorily as the Han students. As presented in Fig. 5, 77% strongly disagreed with that statement and 98% disagreed, with only 2% agreeing with it.
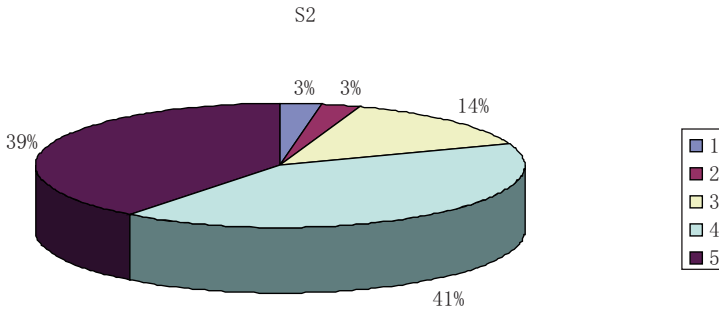
S3
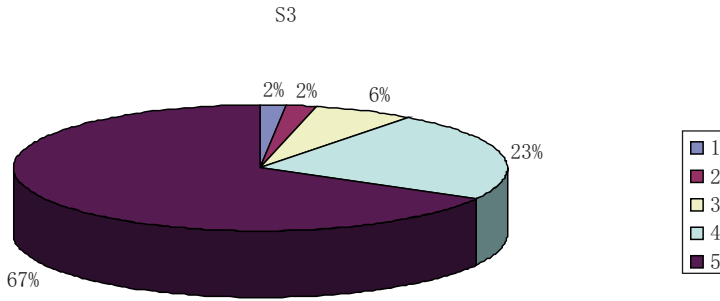
Fig. 4 Percentage of answers to the statement: "English language teaching and learning should be improved in my school". *1* strongly disagree, *2* disagree, *3* neutral, *4* agree, *5* strongly agree

S10
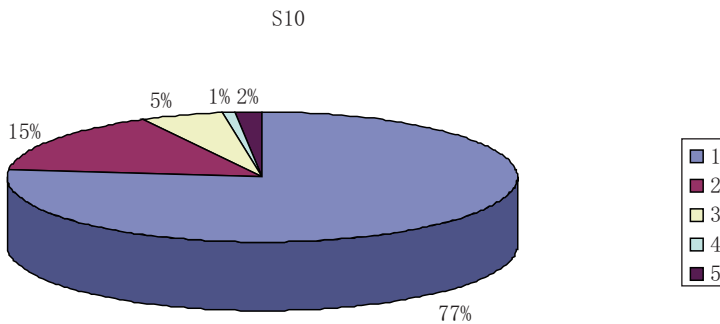
Fig. 5 Percentage of answers to the statement: "Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them". *1* strongly disagree, *2* disagree, *3* neutral, *4* agree, *5* strongly agree

Given below is a statement made by one of the policy makers, regarding the provision of English language in education for minority students:

English is useful, but minority students should learn Chinese in the first place. English instruction is a long-term plan, not for now.

The high degree of discrepancy between the policy makers' views about the provision of languages in education for the Uyghurs, and the views and actions of students and their parents, illustrates the scope of the agency and power, which the agents on the ground possess and exercise in the multilingual linguistic marketplace in Xinjiang. This enables the agents to obtain valuable capital and attempt to shift the balance of symbolic power in their favour.

The following are comments from several students on the value of the English language as a linguistic capital:

English is a world language; and I hope to go abroad in the future.

English can help me know the world better, because so much information is in English on the internet.

I should pass College English Test Band 4 and Band 6; and I can get a well-paid job.

One of the general questions in the interviews sought to elicit the perceptions of the interviewees, with regard to the English language. The answers below are representative of some of their perceptions:

English is an important language. It is a world language. … It is important to know English for learning new and cutting edge academic knowledge and scholarly exchange. Many Han scholars publish their work in English. English dominates the academic literature published.(Student 6, Uyghur male, first year MA in Humanities)

English is now a popular language in China. A few years ago, knowing Chinese was sufficient for getting a job. Now everyone knows Chinese, so learning English gives extra qualification to get better jobs. (Student 2, Uyghur male, fifth year in Social Sciences)

I wanted to learn English because when I went to see my sister in Beijing where she was studying, I came across her speaking English with some of her friends. I think English is easier to learn than Chinese. But my sister is now a teacher in Kashgar region and her English is wasted. (Student 4, Uyghur female, fourth year in Humanities)

As an MA student, the Uyghur male who provided the first quote, viewed the language as an access point to 'cutting edge academic knowledge and scholarly exchange', namely the linguistic capital, which is essential for him to acquire, so as to be able to participate in his specialised field and "imagined community" successfully. In the third quote, the word, '*wasted*', reveals everything; the student's sister had gained linguistic capital but failed to convert that capital into the life opportunity that would typically go with it. In all the above quotes, the importance attached to the English language is very apparent, and motivation on the part of the students to acquire the language, is equally obvious.

However, even though Uyghur students typically start English learning at a later stage than their Han counterparts, many students set idealistic goals for themselves, for e.g., to pursue studies abroad and to achieve the necessary competence to access information through English:

I am studying English because I have a desire to continue my studies in a European country. I also want to learn about the world through the medium of the English language, rather than the limited and filtered information I get through the Han language. Europe has been leading the world in cultural and technological terms for hundreds of years and many important inventions were discovered by Europeans, for example, trains, Newton, Shakespeare, Dante, Rousseau, Picasso, these are just a few. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth-year in Journalism)

I would like to go abroad to study if I get the opportunity. English is also a very important tool to learn about what is happening around the world, rather than reading about it in Chinese translation or re-interpretation. Knowledge of English has also become important for finding employment and being able to use computers. Teachers in my hometown (in Kashgar region) are required to have the knowledge of English and being able to offer English language classes. (Student 1, Uyghur female, fifth-year in Sociology)

In addition to their high expectations, it is also worth noting that both these interviewees aspired to learn and stay informed about current events around the world, through the medium of English directly, and not through their second language,

Mandarin Chinese. This suggests that, to the interviewees, the meaning of obtaining a multilingual and multi-literate repertoire goes beyond economic benefits, to include socio-political and cultural gains and of visualising themselves as global citizens.

7.3 Mother Tongue in Education

Uyghur is a south-eastern Turkic language spoken by about ten million speakers in Xinjiang and neighbouring countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan as well as in smaller diaspora communities around the world. It has an extended history, with the written language tracing its roots back to the 8th century AD. Uyghur culture in terms of literature, medicine, arts and music is among the most sophisticated in the world (Engesæth et. al 2009). It is closely linked with other Turkic languages spoken in countries and regions neighbouring Xinjiang and beyond and the Uyghurs traditionally maintained strong cultural, religious and historic ties with the Turkic peoples of Central and Western Asia in particular. Uyghur was the language-in-education in formal education for the vast majority of Uyghurs, especially in southern Xinjiang where the Uyghurs are in an absolute majority, from primary to tertiary levels. Uyghur as the language-in-education remained unchanged, until the large scale introduction of Mandarin Chinese, as the sole or principal language-in-education across the whole region, beginning with university education in early 2000. In fact, for most people who reside in the countryside, the Uyghur language is the sole language that they use in their daily lives and they are only aware of and have knowledge of this language. The Uyghur language was, and still is, used extensively in private and public domains by Uyghurs in Xinjiang and any attempt to weaken its practice and usage, in addition to its social and political significance, is viewed as a threat to Uyghur cultural, ethnic and historical identity. The Uyghurs are zealous in their efforts to use and maintain their language and offer considerable resistance to efforts undertaken to attempt to change the status quo. Uyghur ethnic, cultural and social identity is deeply embedded in the Uyghur language.

It was not unexpected then, that the interview data disclosed distinct evidence of confidence, in maintaining the Uyghur language and culture.

> I am confident that Uyghur language will survive in future and my aim of learning other languages is to learn the valuable aspects of other cultures. (Student 1, Uyghur female, fifth year in Sociology)

> I do not worry about the threat to Uyghur language and culture. Uyghur culture and language are well advanced and deeply rooted among the Uyghurs. Uyghur culture has had many influences on the Han culture in things such as food, dress, and respect for the elderly. … Uyghurs possess a well-developed tradition of commerce and trading. This is also very important for preserving the Uyghur identity. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth year in Journalism)

These views could be understood as an illustration of what Vaish (2005) terms the tenacity of indigenous cultures. However, several interviewees also exhibited

anxiety about the rapid increase of the majority Han population and its growing economic and socio-political influence in the region; the diminishing status of the Uyghur language in official discourse; the negative influence on their education with regard to being educated in a language that they did not fully grasp; and about their own future, as they were acutely aware of lacking competence in Mandarin Chinese. The same male student studying for his fifth year in Journalism had the following to say:

> I am more worried about the great influx of Han immigration into Uyghur areas. This trend will have greater impact than the language assimilation policy. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth year Journalism)

> Mandarin Chinese is a difficult language to learn. I am required to write my thesis in Mandarin Chinese. There is little originality and creativity in it, because I don't have deep enough knowledge of Mandarin Chinese to fully express myself. What is happening is language assimilation, not bilingual education. Most lectures are about politics, Han China's history and culture. I can't relate myself to what was taught about Qing history. (Student 6, Uyghur male, first year MA in Humanities).

> I am very concerned about the overwhelming influence and pressure to learn Mandarin Chinese. Uyghurs are least knowledgeable in Mandarin Chinese compared with most other minority nationalities in China. I am not sure if I will be able to progress to Master's degree course when I finish my BA. (Student 2, Uyghur male, fifth year in Social Sciences)

> I used to be able to compose poetry and short stories in Uyghur and had a lot of creative imagination when I was at school. My mother tongue is the essential tool for me to think and create and it can never be replaced. I am now becoming a passive learner because I lack proficiency in Han language and I am not able to think creatively in Han language. I am losing interest in the subjects as I am not able to understand, digest and internalise the knowledge I have learned using Han language. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth year in Journalism)

Decades of rigorous, top-down promotion of Mandarin Chinese language education does not appear to have accomplished its desired outcomes. The data as a whole, suggest that the strong influence of the majority culture and the government policy to promote it (Feng 2007, pp. 271–272), cause anxiety and even resistance, which may well be the major hurdles for minority students to acquire the Mandarin Chinese language.

Findings from our quantitative questionnaire data also point to the fact that our respondents perceive the role of their mother tongue in their formal education as holding immense significance, with 84% expressing support for further strengthening of mother tongue education in their schools. Additionally, the students voiced considerable support for their schools employing more Uyghur teachers for their education (Figs. 6 and 7).

7.4   Investing in Languages

Norton's (1997) notion of investment has great relevance to the interview data collected by us. The investment can be either in the form of time, through self-learning,

S1
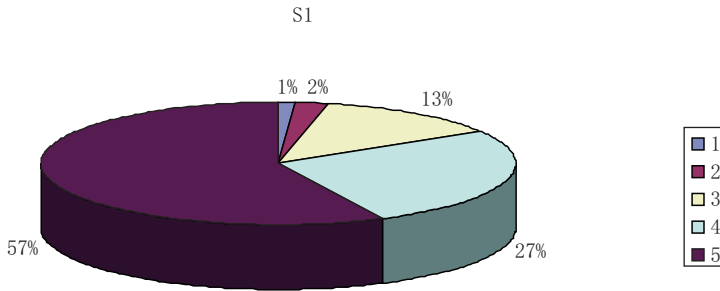
Fig. 6 Percentage of answers to the statement: "Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in my school"

S4
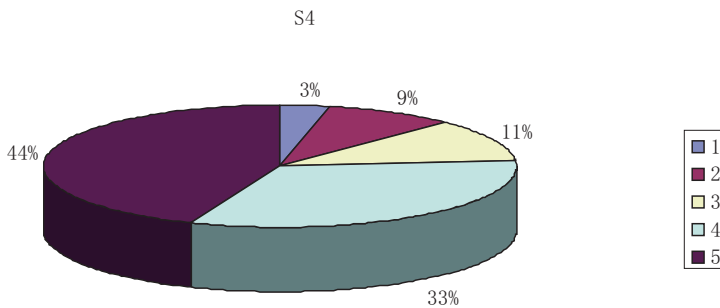
Fig. 7 Percentage of answers to the statement: "More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by my school because they know minority pupils' needs better"

or in the form of financial resources, by paying to attend private English learning lessons available in the market.

> I started studying English because I wanted to progress to Master's level programme. I also wanted to explore the possibility of studying abroad. English is the language of international contact and exchange. I studied English by myself, but also attended some private tuition. I did not even know the English alphabet when I started. (Student 5, Uyghur male, majoring in Humanities)

> Learning Uyghur, Han and English languages will provide me with greater employment opportunity. I learned English by myself but stopped when it became too hard. I would like to go abroad for visits if I get the chance. I feel confident about finding employment and my knowledge of English will be an asset for that. (S −4, Uyghur female, fourth year in Humanities)

Despite the difficulties the Uyghur female student in Humanities encountered, she was prepared to make the time investment, with the implicit understanding that the value of her cultural capital would eventually be increased. Some students may well have actually begun cashing in on the demand for the language, with their hard-acquired competence.

> I started learning English in 2002. I heard of English being offered to experimental classes (selected class for top performing students) only while at high school. I am now privately coaching Uyghur primary school children in English at home. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth-year in Journalism)

7.5   Acquiring Symbolic Capital and Desire for Equality and Recognition in Identity Negotiation

The most striking evidence disclosed by our data is the strong desire expressed by the interviewees to be recognised by society and get equal opportunities to access linguistic capital, typically English, based upon their perceptions. This is in conformity to Norton's (1997) and West's (1992) conception of identity, which relates to such desires.

When they talked about English language learning especially, most of the interviewees demonstrated a keen interest in the subject and there appeared to be a consensus that Uyghur students would be capable and perhaps have better positive prospects to compete with their majority Han counterparts.

> Uyghur children perform better than their Han counterparts in learning English because they are genuinely interested and motivated to learn it, rather than only interested in passing examinations. I have now passed the Level 4 English language test for university students. Han people also recognise the Uyghur students' ability to learn new languages. (Student 3, Uyghur male, fifth year in Journalism)

> If a lecture is delivered in English and other factors being equal, Uyghurs can compete with the Han students. In the oral English language classes that I have recently attended, most Uyghur students perform better than their Han counterparts attending the same class, despite the fact that the Hans would have studied English at least seven or eight years longer than the Uyghurs. (Student 5, Uyghur male, majoring in Humanities)

Most interviewees agreed that the motivation to learn English among Uyghurs is very strong and this 'genuine interest' is not similar to learning Mandarin Chinese. The intrinsic motivation to learn English demonstrated by many interviewees, such as the two students quoted above, seems to be derived, at least to some extent, from the desire to confirm their competitiveness or capability of learning.

It is interesting that there have been Uyghur representations in the final round of the toughest English competition in China, the China Central Television (CCTV) Cup English Speaking Contest, almost every year since 2004 (see Table 11).

The programme is broadcast nationally and internationally by CCTV and watched by millions of enthusiasts all across China, including Uyghur students in Xinjiang. This would undoubtedly rate as an exceptional and rare success story for any minority group in China. The winner of the 2010 competition, Ümüt Haji, began learning English through a systematic approach, mostly at his own expense by utilising his spare time for acquiring English, while studying Economics at Xinjiang Finance University. Ümüt had the opportunity to study English only after he

Table 11 List of Uyghur finalists for the CCTV English Speaking Contest since 2004

Year	Name	Prize achieved	Place of study	Place of birth
2010	Ümüt Haji	Champion	Xinjiang Finance University	Urumqi
2008	Faruk Mardan 法鲁克买尔旦	Semi-finalist	Xinjiang Medical University	Urumqi
2007	Nasrulla 纳斯热拉	Qualifying round, Shaanxi Province	Xi'an Petroleum University	Kashgar
2006	Sabahat 沙巴海提	Judges choice award	Tianjin Foreign Languages University	Xinjiang
2005	Adiljan abdukerim	Runner up (2nd prize)	Xinjaing University	Xinjiang
2004	Kasimjan abdureyim	3rd prize	Xinjiang University	Xinjiang
2004	Azimat Rustam	Best pronunciation award	Xinjiang Medical University	Xinjiang

entered University and because he was inspired by an earlier Uyghur contestant (Haji 2010).

A quote from the Uyghur finalist of 2008, Faruk Mardan, while answering one of the judges' questions with reference to English, is very enlightening:

> I have to tell you that people in Xinjiang are really enthusiastic about learning English, because we have lots of youngsters who are willing speak English, who are willing to learn English. There are lots of ethnic groups in Xinjiang. They are passionate and enthusiastic. They like new things, English is really new and it is like new blood in their body. (Mardan 2008)

A female Han English language teacher comments that it is necessary to teach minority students a foreign language. She also appears to agree that, on average, her Uyghur students learn English quicker than their Han counterparts. Furthermore, their pronunciation is better than their Han peers. The aforementioned advantages can be attributed to a gift for learning English among Uyghur students.

> I very much welcome the opportunity to study the subjects in English. This will provide both Han and Uyghurs with the same starting point and equal footing and the Han student will get the taste of how it is like to learn subject knowledge in a foreign language. I think Uyghurs are better in learning languages. (Student 5, Uyghur male, majoring in Humanities)

> When I was at primary and secondary schools, there was no English offered to us. So at the university, I had to learn English all by myself. I found myself quite confident. Unfortunately, I had to drop the language because of other pressures… However, I feel that if Uyghur students are put on equal footing with Han students, we can compete with them. (Student 8, Uyghur female, fourth year History)

These quotes demonstrate that most of the interviewees were conscious of their minority status. But at the same time, in the words of Vaish (2005), they conveyed the impression that they were cognisant of the fact that the national drive toward English education, may present them with an excellent opportunity for equitable access to the linguistic capital, which is highly valued in today's society.

Table 12 Mean score of questionnaire statements by research sites (see Appendix A)

School	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10
K	4.5	4.41	4.59	4.11	2.78	4.76	4.21	2.76	4.65	1.24
M	4.56	4.04	4.6	4.32	3.24	4.82	4.22	2.96	4.7	1.43
H	3.93	3.25	4.14	3.75	2.33	4.43	3.59	2.71	4	1.64
T	3.5	4.17	4.42	3	2.83	4.82	3.73	1.83	3.92	1.25
Total	4.37	4.12	4.51	4.05	2.84	4.73	4.1	2.75	4.52	1.35

7.6 Influence of Linguistic Context and Ethnolinguistic Vitality on Language Perception

A closer examination of our quantitative research data reveals a variation in the students' perceptions of language learning and language use, which are strongly correlated with the location of the school and their linguistic landscape (Table 12). Judging from the mean scores of Questionnaire Statements 1–9 (S1 to S9 hereafter), Uyghur students from H and T schools, which are located in Han-dominant neighbourhoods, attach less value to their native language as compared with their counterparts in Kashgar Prefecture. The mean of S4 makes it evidently clear that their demand for minority teachers is also not as strong as the students in Kashgar. In addition, Uyghur students in H school, an Inland Xinjiang Class, exhibit decreased enthusiasm in learning Mandarin Chinese, which is indicated by its low mean in S2. This conforms to the finding of an earlier systematic study of a similar Xinjiang Class carried out by Chen (2008, p. 184).

Unlike the Schools H and T, the Schools K and M are located in a predominantly Uyghur speaking environment in Kashgar, where the Uyghur language plays an essential role in the lives of the students concerned. Here, the use of the Uyghur language is much more visible and prominent in society and the Uyghurs play an active and important role in the political and economic spheres. Further to this, the Uyghur language is a test subject in the College Entrance Examination, which can have a considerable impact on students' perceptions. In comparison with Schools K & M, the students at Schools H and T are constantly immersed in a predominantly Mandarin Chinese environment; they are taught by Han teachers and live with Han students on the same campus. For them, Mandarin Chinese is not only a test subject but also the test language. Hence it is obvious, that they would prefer relatively less inputs in their native Uyghur language. But this also does not necessarily signify that their native language is insignificant for them; it is just not as important as the Han language, from an examination perspective. It is widely acknowledged that senior secondary school education in China is extremely test-oriented, for the College Entrance Examination is deemed as the opportunity of a lifetime, which ultimately determines the future of students. Thus, achieving a successful examination score epitomises students' choices of learning and investing in languages, as well as their perceptions of the values assigned to different languages in the linguistic marketplace.

8   Discussion

Trilingual education remains a privilege for a limited number of Uyghur students, who either have an outstanding academic performance, which serves as a bridge for them to pursue better and higher education, or who live in Han ethnic group neighbourhoods, in affluent cities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Alternatively, for the vast number of Uyghur students living in remote and undeveloped towns and villages, learning their mother tongue, Standard Chinese and a third language simultaneously, is an elusive and distant dream.

Uyghur students in general display a dedicated and earnest inclination toward learning English. They demand higher quality teachers, ideally both Uyghur and Han, who excel in teaching, and they aspire to learn the language with computer aids in language labs. Some students expressed their dissatisfaction with their school's decision to cancel English classes. In addition, they unequivocally disagreed with the assertion that Uyghur students are inferior to their Han peers, with regard to English learning.

No objections were raised with reference to the intensive instruction of Chinese, since Mandarin Chinese is chiefly viewed as a tool to gain employment opportunities and the competitive edge necessary to participate in mainstream society. Despite the fact that the Uyghur language and culture may play a secondary role in their future, students reached a general consensus that their native language is important, and would always play a vital and integral role in their lives.

By contrast, provision for learning English still continues to be a privilege and an entitlement for a restricted number of minority students, who are relatively fortunate to be living in bigger cities. Despite the fact that the demand for English language provision in Uyghur communities is on the rise, there are no specific policies formulated in response to this ever-growing need. Nonetheless, to achieve trilingual education in Xinjiang, English provision is indispensable.

As presented in the literature review section, the majority of authors who have expounded on the effect of the national drive for English language education on linguistic minorities such as the Uyghurs, have held the view that the drive for English would, in fact, strengthen the hand of the already powerful majority Han group and give them more power, as this group sets the rules and has access to vastly superior cultural and economic resources for achieving that goal. This would in turn, further marginalise linguistic minorities. Our data show that Uyghur students at both the secondary and the tertiary levels did perceive the importance of the English language and were extremely motivated to learn English, even though they faced additional difficulties when compared with their Han counterparts, in view of their inadequate education in English or even a complete absence of English education in the early years of their schooling. The origins of this motivation, frequently exhibited by the students we interviewed, can be complex as both extrinsic—socio-economic, political, cultural and historic as well as intrinsic—psychological and cognitive factors can be at play here. However, their determined desire for recognition and for equal conditions in education, and their eager willingness to invest in

learning, signified that they were aiming to acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which would gainfully increase the value of their cultural capital. Consideration of economic and material gains through second or third language learning, as argued by several authors reviewed above and by some policy makers, is not the only factor influencing second or third language learning by linguistic minorities. As social groups, Uyghur and Han students are inevitably situated in a dynamic power relationship, which significantly influences their investment in linguistic capital. Despite the fact that the Uyghur students are confronted by innumerable difficulties whilst adjusting to learning and education at university in their second language, Mandarin Chinese, they are also well-aware that this very fact places the Han students in an advantageous position, because of their linguistic capital. English, which is a foreign language for both the groups, may indisputably be the decisive factor to provide Uyghur students the perfect opportunity to equal the balance of power in their relationship. Our data confirm that Uyghur students were cognisant about this fact and in view of it, many students invested substantially in mastering the third language. This may also explain why Faruk Mardan, the winner of the Most Energetic Speaker Award at the CCTV Cup English Speaking Contest 2008, was quoted as saying figuratively, "English is really new and it is like new blood in [the Uyghur youth in Xinjiang] body."

A related issue we wish to discuss at this juncture is the question of whether there should be 'special policies' to institute English standards, which are lower than those mandated by the National Curriculum Standards (NCS). This is a formal request, which often appears in literature pertaining to trilingual education but has seldom been debated. Relevant literature (e.g., Yang 2005) enumerates numerous issues connected with this request. Nevertheless, financial issues such as inadequate resources and a lack of funding cannot justify the request, as these problems can and should be addressed progressively, by a country whose economy is developing so rapidly. If the requirement to lower the standards is based upon the argument that minority students attach inadequate value to foreign languages and/or they face additional cognitive and affective barriers than their majority counterparts in English language learning, this argument is undeniably refuted by the data presented in this chapter. Moreover, the interviewees exhibited steadfast motivation to learn the third language and were able to clearly discern the advantages involved in learning English. Thus, we wish to re-state the earlier argument made by Feng (2008) and Feng and Sunuodula (2009) that, if minority groups are expected to be structurally integrated into mainstream society, which is a widely-acknowledged political objective, it is then misguided and erroneous to make formal requests for lowering the English curriculum standards. Such policies, once they become effective, would not benefit minority groups in any manner, but would segregate them further from mainstream society and place them on an unequal footing for prospects in life. Having restated this view, we also make it explicit that we do not dispute the case for special policies that have provided necessary benefits, both nationally and internationally for minority groups, such as 'preferential policies' or positive discrimination in education

(Feng and Sunuodula 2009). On the contrary, in the case of English provision, we agree with many other authors that special policies to provide additional funding, resources and incentives for minority regions are not only obligatory but crucial. These policies can help and benefit minority people, by creating 'equal conditions' (Feng 2008) for them to engage with the nation and the world.

9   Conclusion

Having reflected on our findings in terms of all four forms of capital, as articulated by Bourdieu (1986) and the means by which these four forms relate to language, social identity, and dynamic power relations between the languages and their speakers in Xinjiang's multilingual linguistic marketplace, we acknowledge that we are in a position to contend that Uyghur students, at least some of them, realise the substantive opportunity of investing in learning the English language. The students accept that it would yield a breakthrough in shifting the balance of cultural and symbolic capital and symbolic power in their favour. They have been under intense political and economic pressure in recent years to become fully proficient in the national language, Mandarin Chinese, at the expense of their native language and English, the crucial foreign language. However, by electing to invest their precious time and resources in learning a third language and continuing to maintain their mother tongue simultaneously, under current living conditions, the students are making a conscientious decision to increase not only their economic and political worthiness, but also their cultural, social and symbolic capital. The students in Xinjiang are keenly aware of their ethnic and social identities and very conscious of how they relate to the world around them and their possibilities for the future. With this in mind, they constantly organise and reorganise their relationships and invest their time, efforts and resources towards issues which matter most to them and which offer them the best returns for their investment, not only in terms of material gains, but also in terms of symbolic value. This challenge may not necessarily result in further marginalising them as predicted by many individuals. Conversely, the situation could mobilise and energise Uyghur students and motivate them positively to negotiate their identity by investing in linguistic capital. There is evidence at present in the literature of language provision for minority students, that the key stakeholders, as mentioned above, do not understand language education solely from the point of view of third language acquisition. Nevertheless, they also reflect on the role of the first language in relation to second and third language learning and the socio-political, cultural and economic dimensions of language use and language education. This may lead to a repositioning of languages for classroom use and a restructuring of curriculums, and produce a lasting impact on language provision for minority groups, which, indeed, has long been a fundamental requirement.

Appendix: List of Student Research Questionnaire Statements

Statement 1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in my school.

Statement 2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in my school.

Statement 3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in my school.

Statement 4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by my school because they know minority pupils' needs better.

Statement 5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.

Statement 6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for my school.

Statement 7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that we can integrate better.

Statement 8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.

Statement 9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.

Statement 10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.

The responses are measured on a scale of 1–5:

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

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Part II
Qing-Zang-Chuan

Introduction

In this part, three stories are told about the *Qing-Zang-Chuan* neighbouring provinces and a region located in the southwestern part of China. *Qing* is short for Qinghai Province, which has a large Tibetan population; *Zang* refers to the Tibetan Autonomous Region; and *Chuan* stands for Sichuan Province.

Chapter 5 reports the findings of an on-going study of trilingual education practised in bilingual schools in three Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in Qinghai Province. Ethnolinguistic vitality is examined objectively mainly through secondary sources. Language use and teaching in the classroom and perceptions and attitudes of secondary school teachers and students towards the ethnic language, Mandarin Chinese and English were collected through empirical investigation. It was found that lack of qualified trilingual/bilingual teachers seriously hinders development of multilingual education in these schools. What could be more worrying is the finding that some key stakeholders hold negative views about the use and teaching of students' mother tongue as they see Mandarin Chinese as the language of power and the lingua franca in the country and beyond. The schools with stakeholders holding these views are more likely to adopt the Chinese-Tibetan model in which Chinese is used as the medium of instruction for most school subjects.

The Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) is of great significance to the Chinese state because of its geographical size and abundant natural resources. At the same time, Tibetans are among the most religious minority groups in China, which often causes state schooling in the TAR to be a highly contentious topic. Since the 1950s, bilingual education policies in the TAR have swung between Chinese-dominant and Tibetan-dominant models, depending on the preferences of leadership and the way in which Tibetans responded to the authority exercised by the leadership. With English added to the mix, the complexity of language education policies has increased. Chapter 6 traces the evolution of linguistic models in Tibet, and then examines the relationship between those models and linguistic capital. It argues that the educational reality in Tibet is socially constructed, historically deep and representative of diverse interests of different groups.

Among the 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups in China, the Yi are the seventh largest, with a population of about 7.7 million. They are unevenly distributed across the mountainous regions of southwest China, primarily in three provinces, Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou. Chapter 7 focuses on the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, home to speakers of Nuosu. Nuosu is not an endangered language but it is becoming vulnerable because of the power of Chinese and changes to the demographic makeup of society. The chapter uses an educational linguistic approach to investigate trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan. It finds that, in common with many other ethnic minority languages in China, the maintenance of Nuosu is hindered by historical, political and sociolinguistic factors, and suggests a number of measures to improve the situation.

Ethnolinguistic Vitality, Language Attitudes and Language Education in Tibetan Schools in Qinghai

Fu Ma and Renzeng

Abstract This chapter reports an on-going study of trilingual education practised in bilingual schools in three Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in Qinghai Province. While objective ethnolinguistic vitality is examined mainly through secondary sources, language allocation in the classroom and perceptions and attitudes of secondary school teachers and students towards the ethnic language, Mandarin Chinese and English were collected through empirical investigation. It was found that lack of qualified trilingual/bilingual teachers seriously hinders development of multilingual education in these schools. What could be more worrying is the finding that some key stakeholders hold negative views about the use and teaching of students' mother tongue as they see Mandarin Chinese as the language of power and the lingua franca in the country and beyond. The schools with stakeholders holding these views are more likely to adopt the Chinese-Tibetan model in which Chinese is used as the medium of instruction for most school subjects.

Keywords Qinghai · Tibetan · Ethnolinguistic vitality · Bilingual policy · Tibetan-Chinese model · Chinese-Tibetan model · Perceptions · Attitudes

1   Introduction

Ethnic minority groups in China have their own distinctive features in education. One feature as shown in policy documents is the requirement that school children have to learn their mother tongue in addition to the national language (Chinese) and even the third language (English) from the third year or fifth year onwards in primary school. This implies that from the commencement of their education, ethnic minority pupils are expected to grow up at least as bilinguals, if not as trilinguals.

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It is often claimed that bilinguals have an advantage over monolinguals in learning school subjects in general, and in learning a third language in particular. However, there is little evidence available of the advantages enjoyed by ethnic students in Qinghai, a province dominated by ethnic groups in Western China. The Tibetan group can be cited as an example. This ethnic group accounts for more than one fifth of the population in the province. Ethnolinguistic vitality of Tibetan in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures is very strong and Tibetans enjoy a specific system of language education to satisfy their needs. According to our investigation conducted in 2009, different language policies have been enacted since the founding of the People's Republic of China, with the aim of catering to different requirements of language teaching in schools. Minority groups are supposed to be able to use either their mother tongue or the national language as the media of instruction in school teaching, depending on the local situation. However, after more than sixty years of implementation of these language policies, there is little evidence to demonstrate that Tibetan ethnic groups have the benefit of cognitive advantages in school or language subjects. Instead, we frequently discern that Tibetan students often experience various cognitive, cultural and psychological problems in learning a third language (Zhang 2010).

What are the reasons behind the current situation in education for Tibetan students? What are the language policies and their effectiveness? What are the language teachers' qualifications and dispositions? What are the attitudes and perceptions of the key stakeholders, including the students? With these questions in mind, the Qinghai project team of trilingualism research in bilingual schools conducted investigations with the aim of gaining an overall understanding of ethnolinguistic vitality and trilingual education for ethnic groups in Qinghai. More specifically, the studies were designed to examine the trilingual situation, to investigate the ethnolinguistic vitality of the major ethnic groups, to observe the language allocation in real classrooms, and to understand the perceptions and attitudes held by the local stakeholders. After more than three years of investigation, the research team collected valuable information on the state of ethnolinguistic vitality and trilingual implementation in bilingual schools. Trilingual allocations, teachers and students' attitudes, parental and stakeholders' understanding are all presented in the following pages on the basis of an analysis of the context, history and language policies.

2   The Research Context

Qinghai province is located in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Its vast territory is the source of the Yangtze, the Yellow and the Lancang River. It is named after the Qinghai Lake, the largest inland saltwater lake in the territory. It is the largest province in area, the highest in altitude, the smallest province in population density, and the highest in terms of percentage of minority population.

Qinghai has administrative jurisdiction over two cities: Xining and Ge'rmu. Xining, the capital of Qinghai, is the political, cultural and economic centre. Haidong

is one prefecture of the province consisting of eight agricultural counties around Xining. There are six Tibetan autonomous prefectures, namely Haibei, Hainan, Huangnan, Yushu, Guoluo Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures, and Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. There are 51 counties many of which are autonomous counties. The minority autonomous regions make up 98 % of the whole province.

A north-western inland province, Qinghai is famous for its extensive territory, with its total area amounting to 720,000 km^2. It has a population of 5.6 , among whom 46.9 % belong to minority nationalities such as Tibetan, Hui, Tu, Sala, Mongolian and other nationalities. Tibetans are the largest minority, at approximately 1.1 million.

The investigation targeted what are normally termed as Tibetan bilingual schools. It aimed to collect data that could reflect Tibetan vitality, peoples' language attitudes and policy implementation. Based upon the statistics of the Qinghai Provincial Education Bureau (*Qinghai Jiaoyuting* 2011), there are 868 primary and secondary schools with more than 540, 000 students belonging to ethnic minority groups. Most schools in Tibetan dominated areas use Tibetan as the medium of instruction in classroom teaching and daily communication. However, in some schools, Chinese is used as the medium of instruction for subjects except for the Tibetan language. In order to find out the true nature of implementation of language policy in schools, the research team of Qinghai conducted an investigation on ethnolinguistic vitality and trilingual education in thirteen Tibetan bilingual schools, which extend throughout the province. At the beginning of 2010, the team visited five Tibetan primary schools and seven Tibetan secondary schools, distributed throughout five Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures. Approximately one thousand questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students and interviews were held with headmasters, teachers and students' representatives.

The investigation resulted in questionnaire collection from 120 teachers and 531 students in secondary schools with Tibetan ethnic minorities and data from interviews with 16 headmasters or directors in charge of school education, to understand and evaluate their understanding of ethnolinguistic vitality and their attitudes towards trilingual education in their schools.

2.1 Bilingual Education Policies in Qinghai

Literature on language education and language policy review indicates that bilingual education in Qinghai began as early as the time when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949. The Education Plan (*Qinghai Jiaoyuting* 1950) approved by the Provincial government in 1950, stated that education for different ethnic groups would be restored and further developed. The Policy at that time confirmed that in Tibetan bilingual schools, the medium of instruction in ethnic schools should mainly be the native minority language. Teaching materials were typically compiled by local ethnic teachers with teaching experience. Corresponding to the Plan, the provincial press of editing and translating published four volumes of

Tibetan language textbooks, six volumes of arithmetic textbooks, four volumes of history textbooks, four volumes of geography textbooks and two volumes of nature textbooks (Du 2006). In 1962, the provincial government initiated a movement for enforcing the promotion of quality in ethnic minority schools. It produced a report in relation to the basic situation prevalent in ethnic minority schools and made proposals for future implementation. One proposal was that the native minority language as the medium of instruction principle had to be strictly implemented and ethnic minority students had to improve their proficiency in native language use. In 1963, the provincial education bureau proposed opening primary boarding schools in pastoral areas. The bureau specified that a bilingual education system should be applied to students in higher grades in boarding schools. The pupils were expected to learn their ethnic mother tongue as well as Chinese in the early stages of their schooling.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976), bilingual education in ethnic minority schools of Qinghai province experienced a 'stagnancy stage' (Zhou and Sun 2004), similar to the situation prevailing in other areas, when the ethnic language was regarded as unnecessary and redundant and thus, largely overlooked. Chinese acquired the most prominent position in classroom instruction and the Tibetan language was discontinued as a medium of instruction.

With the development of the social economy and integration of the Chinese language after 1978, Tibetan students in different areas varied in their bilingual proficiency. Many Tibetan students in areas of Chinese domination possessed listening and speaking abilities in Chinese and they adopted mainstream public education. But Tibetan students in pastoral areas experienced difficulties in learning school subjects. This was because they had not developed their Chinese speaking and writing skills and experienced numerous obstacles in learning school subjects.

The significance and function of the ethnic minority language as the medium of instruction in ethnic schools was re-emphasised in the provincial report of 1979, with reference to strengthening education in the ethnic minority language (Du 2006). The next ten years witnessed an increase in the number of bilingual schools in pastoral areas. During that period, there were 895 primary Tibetan schools with a total number of 43,368 pupils, and 16 primary Mongolian schools with 1,415 pupils. As a result, Tibetan schools made steady progress in subject teaching and language learning through two models of education, which were implemented based exclusively upon the local situation, in ethnic minority schools. They were the Tibetan-Chinese model (Model 1) and the Sino-Tibetan Model (Model 2). The provincial educational bureau (*Qinghai Jiaoyuting* 1979) issued a further regulation to strengthen the teaching of ethnic languages, requiring that the ethnic language be the principal medium of instruction for most ethnic minority schools. The education conference held in April 1980 under the auspices of the government resulted in an emphasis that ethnic minority schools in different regions had special characteristics and their own distinctive features. They could perhaps have different planning strategies in terms of administration requirements and management organisation. Documents issued by the provincial government in the following year stated clearly that the medium of instruction in ethnic minority schools should be the ethnic

language. Chinese began being taught as a required subject from Grade Three of primary schools.

The institutional support for the ethnic minority language as the medium of instruction in Tibetan schools played an active part in the development of ethnolinguistic vitality and bilingual education in Qinghai. In bilingual schools, bilingual teachers increased in numbers. Tibetan schools using Model 1, with Tibetan as the medium of instruction, were predominant in the 1980s and 1990s. Publications of textbooks in Tibetan comprised main school subjects such as Mathematics, language, Physics, Chemistry, and so forth.

Various research studies were also conducted on issues in Tibetan bilingual education in Tibetan Autonomous prefectures. The method by which Chinese proficiency of students could be improved was identified as the key issue in Tibetan bilingual schools. In 1993, a reform experiment was conducted in Tongren county of Huangnan prefecture, the aim being that Tibetan students master Chinese as swiftly as time permitted, through the training of their skills in listening to and thereafter, speaking Chinese.

As to the statistics provided by Qinghai Education Bureau (2001), there were 1,040 bilingual primary and secondary Tibetan schools with a total number of 108,441 students. Tibetan schools in different areas adopted Model 1 or Model 2 as their option of education for reasons of practical implementation. Bilingual Schools in Huangnan, Hainan, and Guoluo prefectures preferred to implement Model 1. While many Model 1 schools were effective, some were found less so in Chinese language teaching compared with the bilingual schools in Yushu and Haibei prefectures, which mostly implemented Model 2. Some schools therefore became flexible in their approach to conducting classes, using both Model 1 and Model 2 in order to better cater to the students' wishes and needs. In some Tibetan schools in Hainan, for example, classes were grouped into Model 1 and Model 2 classes.

In the new century, education in ethnic regions has become well developed with regulations imposed on teaching languages. The Qinghai government has paid deliberate and conscious attention to the quality of language instruction. The guidelines proposed by the Qinghai Educational Bureau in 2003 on strengthening and improving bilingual teaching accept Model 1 as the principal model for implementation in ethnic Tibetan and Mongolian schools. Chinese as the medium of instruction can be the option, in conformity with the local practical situation. Examinations for language proficiency have to be administered under the organisation of local education administration departments. Papers of the National Examination for university entrance are written in the ethnic language and Chinese. The scores in the ethnic language and Chinese subjects are recorded (out of a hundred percent) independently.

To ensure the quality of Chinese proficiency in ethnic schools, the implementation of Chinese Examination was carried out in 2004. Ethnic students educated in their native language, and teachers under the age of 45 in ethnic schools, were required to take and pass the Chinese proficiency examination (MHK).

English courses were introduced in ethnic minority schools in the new century. Some primary schools in Huangnan Prefecture commenced English instruction

from Grade Three, with two classroom hours a week. English teaching is customarily scheduled from Grade Five onwards in ethnic minority schools, with four classroom hours a week. There is no requirement for an English course examination in the National Entrance Examination for colleges or university, though English examination results tend to be marginally taken into account, if the examinee attains a score of over 60 points. Hence, English study in ethnic schools can be a part of the formal process of education, without any guarantee of proficiency qualifications.

In the following sections, we assess some empirical findings of ethnolinguistic vitality in some minority-dominated areas and the perceptions and attitudes of key stakeholders in these areas about the languages they use and/or learn and bilingual/trilingual education.

3 Case Studies

The research team conducted case studies in three Tibetan autonomous prefectures, namely, Huangnan, Guoluo and Yushu. The case studies were carried out through questionnaire surveys, interviews and observations in particular selected schools. The three prefectures have a similar percentage of Tibetan population (over seventy percent) and thus a similar education system. They regularly benefit from strong governmental and institutional support. The case studies were carried out primarily in the Tibetan language. We decided to choose schools in those three prefectures, because they are representative of Tibetan-dominated areas in terms of the economy, geography, demography and socio-political status. Through questionnaire surveys, interviews and observations in the selected schools in these areas, as stated before, we aimed to understand the present educational status of Tibetan students, the language policy, the language teachers, and the attitudes and perceptions of key stakeholders.

The Qinghai government implements a well-accepted and commonly approved policy for ethnic language education. Huangnan prefecture is the first example in the government document (1994). Ethnolinguistic vitality can be observed both in the community and in bilingual schools. Tongren County in Huangnan, for example, is dominated by Tibetans, who make up 75 % of the population. The Tongren Ethnic School, visited by our team, is a typical Tibetan bilingual school in Qinghai. It was founded in 1975. As a boarding school with the oldest history and the biggest scale in terms of area—some 32,001 m², with a building footprint of 12,010 m²—it is truly unique. The school comprises a multipurpose building, two lecture buildings and four accommodation blocks, including facilities for dining halls. During our visit, we learnt that the school was equipped with modern facilities such as language labs, computer rooms, and Physics and Chemistry experiment rooms. The school adopts Model 1 as its system of education, i.e., Tibetan is used as the medium of instruction in most subjects, with Chinese and English taught as subjects.

Our first impression of this school during our investigation was that Tibetan ethnolinguistic vitality in the school was distinctly strong. During the morning break,

Table 1 Classroom hours for Language Instruction in Huangnan Primary Schools

Grade	Tibetan (h/week)	Chinese (h/week)	English
1	7	7	0
2	9	9	0
3	8	10	2
4	9	10	2
5	7	9	5 h/week
6	8	6	7 h/week

as a replacement for the usual school broadcast, gymnastics or stretching exercises witnessed in ordinary schools, we noticed that students formed groups and danced in the school playground to the tune of Tibetan music emanating through the school loudspeakers. Tibetan staff and students were the dominant majority in the school and they communicated with each other in Tibetan, unless their listeners were not Tibetan themselves. The school environment was unmistakably Tibetan, abounding in slogans, notices and regulation articles in Tibetan. Occasionally though, a few notices were published in Chinese. A point to note is that all staff and students could communicate effortlessly in Chinese when we conducted interviews. The Mathematics lesson we observed was completely conducted in Tibetan, while the Chinese lesson was taught in Chinese by a native Chinese speaking teacher and English was taught with some interpretation in Tibetan. Textbooks in Tibetan, Chinese and English were stacked up all together on students' desks. One of the teachers suggested: "If we can make progress in education, we have to use a similar teaching syllabus and curriculum (as) for the Han majority". He further explained that the level and teaching contents are equal to those implemented in mainstream public schools, except for Tibetan transcriptions.

Bilingual Schools in all the three Tibetan autonomous prefectures we visited displayed features equivalent to the Tongren ethnic school in their basic practical implementation of trilingual education in terms of language instruction periods, and attitudes of students and teachers. Furthermore, we collected information on the number of classroom hours allotted to each language taught in their curriculum, as illustrated in Tables 1, 2 and 3. From these tables, we perceive the class hours allocated to each language as a school subject, in Huangnan, Yushu and Guoluo. The schools attached almost equal importance to the pupils' home language (L1) and Chinese (L2), although a few more hours were specified for L2 in Grades Three to Five in primary schools. We recorded that English language instruction in the primary schools in the two prefectures commenced in different years. Huangnan Primary schools started at Grade Three, while Yushu Primary schools began English education from Grade Five.

English language provision has been implemented in Tibetan schools since 2004. Schools in Huangnan prefecture initiated English provision from Grade Three, which is comparable to the national syllabus requirement. Genuine implementation of L3 teaching in Tibetan primary schools confirms that Tibetan bilingual schools have no inclination to lag behind mainstream schools, in terms of their proficiency in language learning. Their students intend and aim to complete the required

Table 2 Classroom hours for Language Instruction in Yushu Tibetan Primary Schools

Grade	Tibetan (h/week)	Chinese (h/week)	English
1	7	7	0
2	9	9	0
3	8	10	0
4	9	10	0
5	7	9	5 h/week
6	8	6	7 h/week

Table 3 Classroom hours for Language Instruction in Tongde Tibetan Secondary School

Grade	Tibetan (h/week)	Chinese (h/week)	English (h/week)
7	6	6	5
8	5	5	5
9	6	6	4

contents in the national syllabus for primary schools in China, in order to compete for future life opportunities with those attending mainstream schools.

4   Students' Views of Three Languages and Language Education

In this section, we compare students' views of the three languages in question and language education for Tibetan secondary schools in three different areas (Table 4). Using a five-point Likert scale, the investigation results undoubtedly indicate the different views held by students in the three schools, in terms of their mother tongue (L1) in relation to L2 and L3. The findings help to increase our understanding of language policy implementation in minority-dominated schools in Qinghai. For the first, second and third statements, students in different schools differed vastly in their views on language promotion. Students from schools in Huangnan and Guoluo that have primarily adopted Model 1 sought to increase the promotion of the three languages, particularly L1, but students in the school in Yushu were not similarly inclined. Schools in this prefecture mostly follow Model 2, which may imply that they wish to further enhance the use of Chinese as the medium of instruction as early as possible in primary schools. Surprisingly, the data indicate that students in Yushu schools were not as positive as Huangnan and Guolou students with reference to the promotion of all the three languages. The only probable explanation could be that Yushu students were, in general, content with current school practices.

   For statements 4 and 5, most Tibetan students do not hold strong or firm views on whether they are taught by either Tibetan or Han Chinese teachers. In terms of school facilities and learning conditions (statement 6), understandably, minority school children desired to study in better equipped classrooms. They were extremely keen on the improvement and enhancement of teaching and learning facilities.

Table 4 Comparison of students' views on languages and language education in Tibetan secondary schools

Statement	Huangnan N=114		Guoluo N=96		Yushu N=50	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in my school	4.33	0.75	4.78	0.66	3.5	1.39
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in my school	4.07	0.798	4.38	0.62	3.56	1.25
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in my school	4.27	0.88	4.43	0.59	3.3	1.76
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by my school because they know minority pupils' needs better	4.09	1.03	3.41	0.68	3.9	1.23
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers	3.4	1.2	3.06	1.35	3.26	1.29
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for my school	4.49	0.77	4.66	0.69	4.12	1.35
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that we can integrate better	3.77	1.11	4.45	0.89	3.36	1.27
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ	3	1.18	2.41	0.968	3.28	1.5
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English	4.39	0.89	3.93	1.33	3.78	1.54
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them	2.17	1.2	2.38	0.997	1.92	1.77

"Investment for the education should be greatly promoted", one interviewee proposed. For the option of priority in language learning, most students took a clear position on the three languages. They attached great importance to their mother tongue. "I like my ethnic mother tongue, and make my best to learn it well", explained one of the interviewees. They desired to be treated equally in education and did not wish to be marginalised. This would, in fact, explain the reason behind Statement 10 having the lowest score—hardly any students agreed or approved of the statement that minority pupils cannot learn L3 (i.e., English) as well as Han pupils. They were genuinely interested in retaining L3 in the school curriculum.

Table 5 compares the views of the teachers in areas identical to the ones in which the students were surveyed. It must be emphasised at this juncture that the sample size of the teachers is small, as access to teachers in these three regions was limited. In view of the fact that the project is still continuing, we intend to increase the

Table 5 Comparison of Teachers' views on Languages and Language Education in Tibetan Secondary Schools

Statement	Agree (Huangnan) N=17			Agree (Guoluo) N=34			Agree (Yushu) N=12		
	Mean	*Std*	*%*	*Mean*	*Std*	*%*	*Mean*	*Std*	*%*
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well	3.7	0.98	74	4.18	0.87	83.5	3.5	1.57	70
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subject	2.23	1.2	44.7	2.26	0.58	45.2	2.55	0.93	46.6
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils	2.24	0.97	44.7	1.79	0.67	32.9	2.67	1.49	53.3
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages	2.24	1.14	44.7	1.79	0.67	39.4	2.89	1.19	56.7
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly	1.53	0.62	30.5	1.76	0.496	34.7	2.33	1.23	46.7
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese	1.64	0.93	32.9	1.59	0.45	34	1.58	1.16	31.7
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the NES	3.29	1.1	65.9	3	0.92	60	3.33	1.23	50
8. The language used to teach and learn English should be the minority language, not Chinese	3.7	1.04	74	2.74	0.79	60.6	3.18	1.53	58.3
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, forgetting their minority language	1.35	0.61	27	2.12	1.2	42.4	2.27	1.27	41.7
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is first of all to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects including Chinese and English equally well	3.94	0.97	78.8	4.09	1.05	81.8	3.58	1.56	71.7

sample size to enhance the reliability of the findings. The data presented in this table may perhaps, therefore, be appreciated as work in progress.

As we can see, most of the statements in the questionnaire for teachers are phrased negatively and thus we need to analyse this part of the data cautiously. From the table above, we perceive that teachers' views on the three languages are fairly consistent. A remarkably noticeable and obvious finding is that the teachers scored considerably highly for Statements 1 and 10, both of which emphasise the importance of students' L1 in learning. It should be pointed out that more than ninety per cent of the teachers are Tibetan, and they possess great comprehension and a broad understanding of the importance of the mother tongue in subject learning. Naturally, individual teachers in different areas espoused their personal views about language in use and language policies. However, our data confirm that, in general, teachers in Guoluo were united with regard to the advantages of mother tongue improvement in education. This can be explained by the density of the Tibetan population (90.95%) in Guoluo and perhaps its strong desire to maintain traditions in language provision, when compared with other prefectures.

In terms of Chinese learning, when comparing the data presenting teachers' views with those held by students, we could appreciate that both teachers and students recognised the value of learning Chinese, but teachers in Guoluo were determinedly opposed to the concept of using Chinese as the only medium of instruction. This could be attributed to the fact that the majority of teachers who were Tibetan perceive bilingual education differently. To them, pupils' native language is more effective than any other language in teaching school subjects

Interestingly, while the students did reflect on the fact that they were capable of learning English satisfactorily, the teachers displayed no confidence in visualising an improvement in the present situation, with reference to English language learning. More than half of the teachers in Yushu opined that English is too difficult and challenging for ethnic minority students. It can be argued that the pessimistic attitudes held by the teachers would negatively affect their efforts and hinder the development of English language provision for ethnic minority students in the region.

5   Discussion

Existing literature and our investigation of the current situation of trilingual education in Tibetan ethnic minority schools in Qinghai give clear evidence of the strong ethnolinguistic vitality of Tibetan in Qinghai, particularly in areas dominated by ethnic Tibetans. Trilingual or bilingual education is institutionally supported in terms of provincial policies. However, many issues remain for real world implementation of the policies. Research reported in the literature shows evidence of a severe lack of qualified teachers for trilingual education. More significantly, our research shows that practitioner teachers differ hugely in terms of their perception of and attitudes towards the languages they teach and their understanding of the crucial role of each language. In some of the schools we visited, while most teachers

could function well both in daily life and in academic situations, others lacked even basic Mandarin proficiency. It is not difficult to imagine these teachers would not serve as good role models for pupils and students in bilingual schools.

Similarly, our research shows that the majority of the students and teachers in the Tibetan schools we visited desired to learn and maintain their language and culture, and at the same time to improve their Chinese and English proficiency. Some others, particularly those in schools where Model 2 is adopted, demonstrated lack of genuine recognition of the value of the mother tongue in education, which would present risk and uncertainty for the future development of bilingual education. Some teachers in these schools claimed that as the Chinese language is "international" and a language of the economy, it should be the main language for learning or even the sole medium of instruction for all school subjects. Some explicitly stated their objection to bilingual education for fear that the study of Tibetan would slow down the learning of Chinese. Several teachers went so far as to advocate the view that the reason why some Tibetan students reject anything foreign native, not foreign is because Tibetan culture is backward, which is clearly a profound misconception of culture.

The initial stages of English teaching in primary schools in Qinghai also require further discussion. Primary schools in different areas begin teaching English at different grades. There does not seem to be a provincial policy that corresponds to the national policy which stipulates the start of English teaching from the third grade of primary schooling. It can be argued that it is imperative for ethnic minority schools to comply with the national English teaching syllabus, so as to prevent minority students from being disadvantaged and deprived of opportunities for education equality.

Despite the fact that the project is on-going, we are confident that we have gained a better understanding through research that certain policies encourage the promotion of strong forms of bilingual/trilingual education which have produced positive outcomes and some do not. We saw many ethnic minority schools in Qinghai adopt effective strategies that aim to develop trilingual pupils with strong competence in their home minority language (L1) and Mandarin Chinese (L2), and peer-appropriate competence in English (L3), that is, additive trilingualism (Feng and Adamson, in this volume). During this process, schools may encounter issues with regard to facilities, teachers' qualifications and their language proficiency. These issues are thorny but could be addressed through favourable policies over time. What is more difficult to tackle is the negative attitudes and perceptions of some key stakeholders concerning the use and education of the three languages.

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When English Meets Chinese in Tibetan Schools: Towards an Understanding of Multilingual Education in Tibet

ZhiMin Xiao and Steve Higgins

Abstract By tracing the evolution of linguistic models for state education in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) of China, this chapter shows that bilingual education policies in the TAR oscillated between Chinese-led and Tibetan-led models since the 1950s. By presenting the rise and fall of specific linguistic models under a social and historical light, the study demonstrates that Tibetan students' underperformance in subjects like English and Maths today is historically given and economically driven. In other words, the educational landscape as we see in Tibet today is socially constructed and represents competing interests of different groups. With English added to the mix, the complexity of language education policies in the TAR has increased. Upon interviewing students of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds from across the TAR and looking into their past and present schooling experiences, the authors argue that the dynamics between linguistic models and linguistic capital in the TAR articulate ethnic sentiments, leadership preferences, and the myriad ways in which Tibetans responded to the authority exercised by the leadership.

Keywords Trilingualism · Language policy · China · Tibet · Chinese · English · Tibetan

1 Introduction

"English, there is no way, I think, for me to learn it well. I don't know why. Even though I attended additional private tutorial courses during summer and winter vacations, it simply didn't work … for me, English is no longer a possibility. I think

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Mandarin Chinese is now the most important, because most people speak it, so I will do my best to learn it well. But English, no matter how hard I study, I just can't get it. Every English class is too long for me to survive. Anyway, we Tibetans don't use English that much. We use Mandarin Chinese to communicate with people from different ethnic backgrounds. English is spoken in classrooms only … [But] for a Key class like ours,[1] the average score in English is a little more than 20 or 30 [out of 150], like what we usually get in Mathematics" (Diki).[2]

This interview excerpt reveals how one Tibetan student from a relatively affluent family bemoaned her poor performance in English when ZhiMin, the first author of this chapter, spent 3½ weeks in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in early 2011. During his stay in School Basum, located in Town Bami, which is about 350 km away from Lhasa, he was struck by the frustrations students and teachers encountered in their learning and teaching of English—it was not just the student above who faced challenging demands, many other students interviewed in this study reported similar experiences. Importantly, it was not only students who sometimes expressed their loss of hope in learning English; the teachers also experienced similar difficulties and obstacles, in making themselves understood, despite the fact that Basum is a key school in the TAR. How can we account for this problem in Tibetan schools then? To date, considerable debate has centred on linguistic issues in education. Which language should be used as the medium of instruction? If it is Tibetan, how can students reach competence in Mandarin Chinese as the lingua franca in China? If it is Chinese, what measures should be taken to ensure that students learn by efficient and effective means, while Tibetan culture and ethnic identity are respected and preserved at the same time? When and how should Chinese as the medium of instruction be introduced? When English is added as a third language that Tibetans must learn as early as Grade One in primary schools today,[3] what impacts does it have on learning and teaching in Tibetan schools? How should policy makers of minority education strike a balance between development vs. stability and consistency vs. continuity? It is evident that policies related to bilingual education in Tibet since the 1950s have oscillated between Chinese-led and Tibetan-led models—they primarily depended on the leadership and the way in which Tibetans responded to the authority exercised by the leadership (Bass 1998; Ma 2011; Zenz 2010). Indeed, education can have many competing aims, and the balance between the retrospective value of understanding one's past culture, history, and linguistic tradition must be weighed against the prospective value of equipping learners for the world they will inherit (White 1982). Where there is no shared view of the past,

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[1] High schools throughout China usually divide their classes into Arts and Science tracks, within which Key and Ordinary classes are categorised according to their students' attainment in their studies.

[2] While the data reported in this chapter accurately communicate the spirit of our work as researchers, all names and identifying information in the study, except for those of the authors, have been altered.

[3] In this study, all interviewees, 16 in total, started learning Mandarin Chinese at Grade One and English at either Grade One (Karma), Grade Two (Diki), Grade Three (Champo), or Grade Four (Cetan, Zenji) of primary school.

nor a shared vision for the future, it is not surprising that these aims come into more problematic conflict (Nima 2001, pp. 95–96; Johnson 2000).

To better understand and then address the problems related to minority education in general, significant empirical research has been conducted in several regions of China (Adamson and Feng 2009; Cobbey 2007; Feng and Sunuodula 2009; Huang 2007; Wan and Zhang 2007). However, little has been attempted to understand tri-lingual education in the TAR as a social and educational phenomenon, that is, to borrow a few words from Farmer (2005, p. 9), "historically given, economically driven," culturally shaped, and politically structured. And yet, Tibetans have been persistently labelled as underachievers in education (Barnett 2008; Hannum 2003; Zhu 2008), despite the fact that substantial financial investment from the central government (Liao 2008) and culturally specific educational policies (or "prefer-ential policies" as they are termed in China) have been made and promulgated to ameliorate the educational situation in the TAR. Moreover, as Chen and Postiglione (2009) note, Tibet is of great concern to the state, not just because of its geographi-cal size and abundance of natural resources, but also because Tibetans are among the most religious minority groups in China, which often causes state schooling in the TAR to be a highly contentious topic.

Although the living standards of many Tibetans have steadily improved (Gold-stein et al. 2003, 2010; Steel et al. 2009), political tensions continue to be a part of their lives.[4] Therefore, evidence-based empirical research in the TAR is likely to help and assist China to improve the situation in Tibet, by making it "more econom-ically prosperous, culturally visible, nationally integrated, and politically secure" (Postiglione 2008, p. 4). We hope the findings and analyses presented in this chap-ter will contribute towards that aim. But, at the outset, it is necessary to review in what way multilingual education in the TAR has evolved, for history can, as Jeremy Greene suggested, help us "defamiliarise the present and provide critical distance on current practices, and the rupture between past practices and present situations offer key insights into the process of meaningful social change" (personal commu-nication, 24 September 2013).

2   From Two to Three in Tibet: Languages in Minority Education

The provision and quality of education in Tibet have improved significantly since 1959 (Nima 2009, p. 51). However, official statistics in the earlier days rarely col-lected or revealed linguistic data (Ma 2011, p. 4). In Tibet, a fundamental issue in education today is not about whether Chinese should be learned or not learned, but about when and to what extent should Chinese be promoted (p. 7). The section

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[4] In framing the situation in Tibet, we try not to problematise the issue in question. But ZhiMin's experience in the TAR enabled us to write it that way. For instance, when he took a photo of a school there, somebody immediately came out and questioned him about his intention. This was not a problem at all when he visited other schools in inland provinces of Hunan and Guangdong.

which follows will explain why this is no longer an either-or question, by tracing the history of education in Tibet.

In November 1961, the then Tibet Work Committee required all community-run primary schools to offer Tibetan, Arithmetic, and Politics. In these schools, Tibetan was the medium of instruction and all textbooks were produced in Tibetan. Chinese was introduced according to school circumstances and the level of acceptance by the local populace (Zhang 2007, p. 14, cited in Ma 2011). Meanwhile, state-run schools were instructed to add Chinese from Grade Three, but Tibetan remained the primary medium of instruction (Nima 2009, p. 51). However, there slowly emerged Chinese-medium schools in urban areas, where Mandarin Chinese was the primary language of instruction and Tibetan was taught from Grade Three (Ma 2011, pp. 8–9). It is worth noting that in this period, it was not just Tibetan teachers who were encouraged to learn Mandarin Chinese, but Han Chinese teachers in Tibet were required to learn Tibetan too. This was deemed necessary to teach in Tibetan schools (Zenz 2010, p. 301). However, as students progressed onto the secondary level, schools encountered greater challenges, whilst attempting to teach higher-grade science subjects in Tibetan. In other words, Tibetan-medium schools had to confront the shortage of bilingual teachers and lack of textbooks in Tibetan, even though the government's basic policy of adopting Tibetan as the primary language of instruction remained unchanged.

The second phase featured the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), a countrywide campaign aiming to eliminate the "four olds" (old culture, old customs, old ideas, and old habits) and to advance to socialism (though only culturally and spiritually, given the level of economic development at that time). In this period, the Tibetan language was associated with Tibet's old custom of slavery in society and was subject to crude attacks (see Goldstein 1997, pp. 59–60 for an account of the Revolution), as were countless teachers (Nima 2001, p. 93), leading to schools in the TAR remaining closed for years (Nima 2009, p. 51; Bass 1998). Although many schools gradually re-opened in the 1970s, the Tibetan language was judged under-developed and impractical for a long time. The policy which was established at that point, demanded that students learn Chinese from Grade One of the primary level and that first and foremost, their Chinese should be improved (Ma 2011, p. 9). Another point worth noting during this period, is that learning was limited to Mao's thoughts, for earlier textbooks were associated with feudalism, capitalism, or revisionism, which were anti-revolutionary and anti-socialist. Therefore, they had to be attacked and abandoned. Like elsewhere in China that time, Mao's Little Red Book (quotations of Mao's thoughts, compiled by his Defence Minister Lin Biao) was used as *the* correct and precise textbook in many schools (Zhang 2007, p. 43, cited in Ma 2011). However, in 1974, Mao did call upon the Han Chinese in Tibet to learn Tibetan and in turn, the Tibetans to learn Chinese. Subsequently, schools frequently taught both Tibetan and Chinese, although the year group in which Chinese was introduced, varied from Grade Three to Five at the primary level (Nima 2001, pp. 93–94; Zhang 2007, pp. 36–37, cited in Ma 2011).

Following the Cultural Revolution, the central government adjusted its system of governance in Tibet and appointed local aristocratic leaders to various institutions. These individuals in due course of time endeavoured to promote Tibetan language

and culture. In 1980, the government required students of all ethnic backgrounds in Tibet to learn Tibetan and at that juncture, advocated a system in which Tibetan was declared the primary medium of instruction (Ma 2011, p. 11). This period, thus, witnessed a process of what Zenz referred to as "Tibetanisation" (2010, p. 295) in Tibetan schools. However, at this point in time very few students actually progressed onto secondary level. In 1987, 99 % of graduates from 2,250 Tibetan-medium primary schools were compelled to spend a preparatory year for junior secondary education in forty middle schools (Ma 2011, p. 10), where the language of instruction was primarily Chinese. For those who did enter secondary level after the foundation year, it proved to be a very difficult task for them to understand and appreciate some, particularly science, subjects taught in Chinese. Therefore, the disjuncture between primary and secondary levels posed a formidable obstacle for the progress towards a largely Tibetan-medium education.

In response to the above challenges, diverse opinions emerged in the late 1980s. Some argued that the state should create opportunities and thereby, enable Tibetan students to learn in Tibetan at all levels. Yet others suggested the legalisation of a Tibetan-led model. However, some Tibetan cadres in cities such as Lhasa contended otherwise. They reasoned that it was important to maintain a dual system, where people could choose between Tibetan and Chinese-medium schools. These people also emphasised that students learned better when Chinese was the primary medium of instruction, and that students from Chinese-medium schools benefitted and experienced additional opportunities for higher education in inland China (Nima 2001, p. 95). In addition, knowing Chinese was an added advantage in their interactions between the TAR and inland provinces (Ma 2011, p. 11). This view was contrary to the widely held belief that Tibetans learned better in their native language (Bass 1998, pp. 237–238). In any case, these differing opinions reflected the challenges in striking a balance between the two languages. However, in 1987, all parties ostensibly agreed that Tibetan should be the primary medium of instruction; Chinese could be introduced at higher grades only if it had no negative impact on learning and teaching in Tibetan. Beyond primary level, Tibetan continued to be the primary medium of instruction with Chinese also being learned, and if conditions permitted, the addition of a third language was allowed. This Tibetan-led model was reinforced by a later regulation, which specified that starting from 1993, most middle school subjects, except for Chinese and foreign languages, should be taught in Tibetan; from 1997 onwards, the model should apply to all high schools; and from the year 2000 onwards, higher education institutions in Tibet should gradually adopt the model (Ma 2011, p. 12).

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, there were Chinese-medium schools in the TAR, wherein Chinese was the primary medium of instruction, and Tibetan was introduced as an additional language in Grade Three. These schools were mainly for children of Han Chinese cadres in Tibet, and the separation between Tibetan and Chinese-medium schools was very strict. According to Ma, the policy did not allow the Chinese schools to accept Tibetan students who desired Chinese instruction. Consequently, the implementation of the Tibetan-led model encountered certain hurdles, particularly in towns and cities (Nima 2001, p. 96), where many Tibetan families preferred to have their children educated in Chinese-medium schools,

or ideally in inland Tibetan schools,[5] even though some groups publicly stressed the significance of establishing a Tibetan-led system across all levels (Ma 2011, pp. 13–14).

In many schools, Chinese was once again accorded increasing influence and authority. Chinese-medium schools stopped offering Tibetan in 1994, suggesting Han Chinese students were no longer required to learn Tibetan in Tibet. Meanwhile, the government advocated a bilingual model, in which a degree of importance was attached to Tibetan, and students were expected to achieve proficiency in both Tibetan and Chinese (*zang han jian tong*), and some schools were even encouraged to offer a third language, in order to meet the demands of an expanding market economy (Zhou 2003, p. 111). By the year 2000, although over 95 % of all primary schools still adhered to the Tibetan-led model (Zhang 2007, p. 29, cited in Ma 2011), most schools beyond that level adopted the Chinese-led model, where most subjects were taught in Chinese and Tibetan was a compulsory subject. It is worth mentioning that the TAR's Education Committee emphasised in 1999 that no single model should dominate all schools, for conditions in different areas varied substantially. The Committee encouraged local schools to experiment and adopt a model (or models) that best fitted their unique circumstances (Ma 2011, p. 17). However, the People's Congress in the TAR directed that Tibetan and Chinese be the basic instruction languages in compulsory education and a third language be added accordingly (Zhou and Gesang Jiancun 2004), which amended the 1987 policy that Tibetan be the primary medium of instruction.

As greater prominence was attached to Chinese, fortunately, the number of Tibetan teachers who could teach in both Tibetan and Chinese also rose, partially due to the return of inland-educated Tibetans. However, there were more Tibetan teachers at lower levels of schooling than at higher levels. For instance, Tibetan teachers of Mathematics constituted less than 30 % of all Maths teachers at senior secondary level in 2005, whereas the percentage in middle schools was over 57 % (Ma 2011, p. 18). From 2001, all primary schools in urban areas of Tibet began to teach Chinese from Grade One (Zhang 2007, p. 40, cited in Ma 2011), and some schools offered English from Grade Three (Lu 2005). The consequence of this action was that in many primary schools, most subjects were taught in Tibetan (except for Chinese and Mathematics in some cases), but in middle schools, most subjects were taught in Chinese, except for Tibetan (Lu 2005, pp. 232–233), and very few high schools had Tibetan as the primary medium of instruction (Nima 2009, p. 52). This implied that some students were compulsorily subjected to an abrupt shift from a Tibetan-led model at primary level to a Chinese-led model at secondary level. This shift probably accounted as one of the reasons for the student's low achievement levels in English proficiency tests as exemplified at the beginning of this chapter.

Nonetheless, this period revealed greater flexibility in the fraternisation and socialisation of students from different ethnic backgrounds than had been allowed by the policy sanctioned in the 1980s. According to Qulina (cited in Ma 2011, p. 19), there were Chinese and Tibetan-medium classes in Lhasa No. 1 Middle School,

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[5] From 1985 to 2006, over 30,000 Tibetan students studied in inland schools (Ma 2011, pp. 13–14).

and students were free to select either stream for junior secondary education. In Lhasa No. 6 Middle School, bilingual teachers gradually reduced the use of Tibetan in higher grades and students' performances improved each year. But the decline of students' competence in Tibetan also concerned numerous sections of society—they began to doubt if the aim of bilingual education (*shuangyu jiaoyu*) would eventually lead to proficiency in both languages, particularly after Qinghai Province's announcement of an Education Outline for 2010–2020, which aimed to move towards a Chinese-led model by 2015. Although some middle schools in the TAR were still demanding a "pure Tibetan" model (Zenz 2010, p. 301) with all subjects taught in Tibetan, except for Chinese and English, such a model would eventually lead to students being highly competent in Tibetan, but barely proficient in Chinese (p. 302), and ultimately experiencing disappointment in job markets (Nima 2001, pp. 95–96).

Two social theories can help explain the oscillation of linguistic models in Tibet. The first is "the social construction" model advocated by Berger and Luckmann (1967). The theory maintains that the social world is first a product of human work, which is often interpreted as a reality in the process of socialisation. The "objectivated" world then exerts its influences on how individuals behave in specific social contexts (pp. 82–83). The construction of the social world, the authors argued, partly results from the making of institutions, where people typify actions and attach meanings to them, so as to predict and control behaviours of others and/or their own (p. 74). When a new generation is socialised into this constructed world, particularly through the use of its language or narratives, the constructed reality functions as if it were an independent reality, which influences not only the new generation, but also those who constructed the social world in the first place (p. 79).

The educational landscape in Tibet can be understood as a constructed reality, which involves "reciprocal typification of habitualized actions" (Berger and Luckmann 1967, p. 72) by all relevant actors. However, the institutions established as a result of the reciprocal interpretations are not subject to any reading by any members of the society. There are legitimate ways of reading those linguistic models, and the interpretations must be "consistent and comprehensive in terms of the institutional order, if they are to carry conviction to the new generation" (p. 62), suggesting that any deviations from the legitimised ways of organising the TAR's social and political lives are likely to be viewed as inappropriate or even dangerous, and their actors are subject to sanctions or reactions. This theory thus acknowledges the macro socio-political structure, within which any linguistic model situates. It does not only realise that the educational reality in Tibet is a product of human actions and represents diverse interests of different groups, but it also emphasises that the socio-politically constructed landscape in education has impacts on how students learn and teachers teach. This links to the second theory called "the unanticipated consequences of purposive social action" (Merton 1936).

By purposive action, Merton (1936) meant human behaviours that involve motives and choices between alternatives (p. 895). The design and implementation of competing linguistic models in Tibet are purposive social actions, which have

intended and unintended consequences for education, and other aspects of daily lives in the TAR, such as career prospects of Tibetans in the market economy. According to Merton (1936), social actions do not always have clear purposes, nor do purposive actions imply "rational" actions (p. 896). It follows that purposive actions do not necessarily bring about desired outcomes, or those which are necessarily desirable. For instance, the desired outcomes to China may not be desirable for all Tibetans. Unanticipated and undesirable consequences often occur due to numerous forces, among which, according to Merton (1936), are the "lack of adequate knowledge, ignorance and error, and imperious immediacy of interest" (pp. 899–902).

In designing an optimal policy for education in Tibet, knowledge is not always evenly distributed among all stakeholders. Even the state at various points in history struggled in finding the "best" model. Even if "scientific knowledge" is available, policy makers and interest groups are equally inclined to act on "opinions and estimates" (Merton 1936, p. 900). In addition, we often assume that actions that had desired and desirable outcomes in the past and elsewhere would continue to be so "*under any and all conditions*" (p. 901, original italics). Policy makers in China have been extremely successful in testing their ideas on a small scale prior to applying them more widely. Multilingual models that have proved successful in other countries may not work (well) in Tibet either. Moreover, the current imperious immediacy of interest in Tibet, as analysed earlier, is political stability and ethnic unity, which means, any linguistic model, however scientifically sound it may be, must function in a socio-politically stable environment that is friendly to educational experimentation.

3   Linguistic Capital and Multilingual Models

Having traced the evolution of linguistic models in Tibet, we will examine the relationship between those models and linguistic capital in this section. According to Bourdieu (1977), resources individuals have, be they cultural or linguistic, have different market values in different social systems. A language may have a relatively low value, if it is not the mother tongue of a group. Therefore, the social system or "linguistic field" within which a language is positioned, can be more important than the intrinsic value of the language, for all groups in any society have their own linguistic capital, which refers to "the ability to utilize appropriate norms for language use and to produce the right expressions at the right time for a particular 'linguistic market' … there are many linguistic markets in which rare or high status forms result in profit for the user, and where non-standard or low-status language use is assigned a limited value" (Corson 1993, p. 10). As in economic systems, market values of languages fluctuate from time to time and vary from place to place. However, the time and place depend on the power relations between groups, which change from one linguistic field to another, as does linguistic capital (p. 15). Models of multilingual education for Tibetans in China are vivid expressions of such a

power relationship. For example, Tibetanisation (such as adopting a "pure Tibetan" model and replacing nationally practised morning exercises with traditional Tibetan dancing in schools) was more likely to occur in Tibetan-majority areas and schools where headmasters were ethnic Tibetans, than in Tibetan-minority areas or schools where persons in charge were non-Tibetans (Zenz 2010).

In the recent past, although Chinese was accorded increasing influence and authority in the TAR, different linguistic models did exist. For example, Dunzhudanzeng (2006) reported three models of bilingual education: an urban school in Lhasa used Chinese textbooks from Grade One to Six, and the primary medium of instruction was Chinese; a county school adopted Tibetan textbooks and Tibetan as its primary medium of instruction; a rural school utilised Chinese textbooks and taught students in Chinese from Grade One to Three, then switched to Tibetan textbooks and Tibetan from Grade Four to Six. The research we conducted with students in School Basum also confirmed the existence of such a variety largely at the primary level. Partly following Dan McAdams' method of exploring stories people live by (cf. 1993, pp. 251–275), ZhiMin interviewed sixteen Grade Two students of Basum. During the interviews, which lasted between 30 to 60 min, he requested students to divide their educational experiences up to 2011 into chapters. Each chapter focused on their learning of languages and relevant school experiences. The data collected indicated that in both junior (middle) and senior (high) secondary schools, all sixteen students, though coming from widely dispersed areas of Tibet and from various socioeconomic and socio-linguistic backgrounds,[6] received Chinese-medium instruction and used Chinese textbooks for all subjects, with the exception of Tibetan Language and Literature, in secondary schools. However, the students were exposed to two major models of trilingual education (*sanyu jiaoyu*) at the primary level, namely, a Tibetan-dominated Model in agricultural and nomadic areas, and Chinese-dominated Model in towns and cities. They all commenced learning Chinese in Grade One and English in either Grades One, Two, Three or Four of primary school.

The variety in students' experiences of multilingual education testifies, in some measure, to the choices made by different schools according to the relationship between linguistic models and the capital they confer (though implicitly). In any respect, the choice of one linguistic model over another, reflects the level of economic development, sociocultural composition, and proportion of Tibetan and

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[6] The primary purpose of the fieldwork was to investigate the level and nature of students' engagement with the Internet and mobile phones. In School Basum, ZhiMin first requested four classes of Grade Two students (including students from both Arts and Science, Key and Ordinary classes) to fill in a survey. Based upon the survey responses, such as answers to parental education level, home access to computer, and personal ownership of mobile phones, he was able to select students from varied socioeconomic backgrounds for the interviews. In addition, ZhiMin interviewed students from both urban and rural/nomadic areas, where Tibetan and Mandarin Chinese were spoken to varying degrees. As such, he was confident of adhering appropriately to the variety principle. For a detailed description and reflection of the methods employed in the study, see Xiao (2013, Chap. 5, Sect. 6).

Han Chinese population in an area, for such factors have an impact on the language that is spoken by a particular fraction of a particular group (X. Chen 2008, p. 89; Hong 2007, pp. 40–42). For instance, an area with Han Chinese as the majority is likely to exhibit a linguistic pattern called *min jian han* (a minority people using their native minority language most of the time, only occasionally using Chinese). As the size of a minority population increases from one place to another, the pattern may gradually change to *han jian min* (mainstream Han using Mandarin Chinese most of the time, only occasionally using a minority language), or *min jian min* (one minority group, such as *Luoba* or *Menba*, using their native minority language most of the time, but occasionally using another minority language, such as Tibetan). When the Tibetan population overwhelmingly outnumbers the size of the Han population, as in those Tibetan-majority areas mentioned in Zenz (2010), it is likely that the pattern will evolve to *han jian min*. Having examined choices of linguistic models by schools and communities, we proceed to study by what means parents arrive at such decisions.

4   Education for Upward Social Mobility: Financial, Linguistic, and Cultural Calculations

Tibetan parents, especially those who missed out on opportunities for themselves, attach profound value to their children's education. They are often willing to send their children to schools, despite the fact that they may have to apply for loans or postpone further major family plans. This was strongly affirmed by a student (Tashi) from a nomadic background in this study. Tashi's mother once requested him to attend to the family flock during the 2010 winter vacation. He confessed that herding animals in the cold and remote plateau of Tibet was a demanding and lonely occupation, particularly in the winter. However, the family males were expected to carry out this particular task. His mother held the view that setting him up to work in such harsh conditions would make the student more earnest and keen about his studies. During the 42 min long interview, Tashi revealed that his family attempted to apply for loans through the government in order to pay for his high school fees of about RMB 1,600 *Yuan* per annum (£160 GBP). He also confided that it was often tricky and complicated for such an application to be successful, if the head of the village was unwilling to act as a guarantor. Financial difficulty for most Tibetan families probably best explains the reason behind the progression rate from middle to high schools being very low, so that even in 2009 the figure was only approximately 55 %; and also the reason why the senior secondary level was the weakest link of education in Tibet (Ma 2011, p. 16). As evidenced from this particular case, education was undoubtedly viewed as a means to escape poverty and hardship in rural and nomadic Tibet. The good news for students such as Tashi was that, from autumn 2011, high schools in Tibet converted to being tuition free, as did the nationwide 9-year compulsory education programme, which does not yet cover senior secondary level, even in Beijing (Hasmath 2011, pp. 1844–1845).

Another explanation about the value parents attach to education for their children would be the linguistic inconvenience they themselves encountered. Today, those who are unable to speak Mandarin Chinese are more likely to be disadvantaged in urban Tibet (Nima 2001, p. 96). They would be inclined to regret their inability to speak Mandarin Chinese, and as one informant in Yi Lin's study commented: "This is what I can never forget—I cannot even write a *qing jia tiao* (a note asking for leave) in Chinese. If I could have gone to school in those days, I would have probably been a county magistrate (*xian zhang*)" (2008, p. 70). That was perhaps the motive behind a student (Norbu) interviewed in this study, being sent to a primary school for Grades Four and Five in Chengdu, an inland city near Tibet. His well-educated parents are employed at state units, where Mandarin Chinese is the working language (formal documents usually come with a Tibetan translation). It was not surprising that they wanted their son to learn Chinese effectively and satisfactorily, and receive greater exposure to Han culture in his formative years, to improve his future prospects and career. However, the student in fluent Mandarin Chinese recalled that he was so homesick in Chengdu, that he wept every day in the expensive Chinese-medium school, where there were about twenty Tibetan students from wealthy families in the TAR. Eventually, his parents came to the conclusion that he would attend a school in Tibet for his final year of primary education, where the student lamented frequent corporal punishment by Tibetan teachers because of his poor performance in Tibetan. Nevertheless, similar to the findings in Yi's study (2008, p. 75), students of agricultural and nomadic backgrounds in this study generally went to primary and junior secondary schools, which were located in places where the Tibetan language and culture were dominant. But the shift of the medium of instruction from Tibetan to Mandarin Chinese between primary and junior secondary levels could be one of the causes of significant difficulties for some students, as ascertained from the response of Tashi in this study:

> Yes, it was difficult, particularly for students like us with such a poor foundation [at the primary level]. My performances suffered a great deal. Fortunately, I had a good Chinese teacher. I had many face-to-face conversations with him and he offered me a lot of support.

Although Tibetan is often viewed as less beneficial than Mandarin Chinese, some Tibetan parents do consider it necessary for their children to learn Tibetan satisfactorily. Informants in Zhu's study regarded the Tibetan language as a symbol of being Tibetan and expressed grave concerns, with reference to their incompetence in their native language (2007). In Yi's study, parents contended that if their children had a good command of Tibetan, they would be able to communicate better with locals, upon completing their higher education and returning to their home communities (2008). This explanation appeared reasonable and understandable, because it was not uncommon in the past for Tibetan students who had spent years away at inland boarding schools, to discover that they were unable to read documents written in Tibetan upon their return to Tibet (Postiglione et al. 2007, p. 66). But it also appears that Tibetans have internalised the notion that, no matter how commendably and meritoriously they perform in inland China, they are expected to return to Tibet. In fact, the notion of returning to Tibet has been consciously imparted, through their

curriculum and routine activities of their daily lives, to Tibetans who study in inland schools (Zhu 2004).

The studies mentioned above were conducted outside the TAR; but what does learning Tibetan in a satisfactory manner mean to those students who attend schools in Tibet then? According to Dunzhudanzeng, 92 % (22) of the teachers and parents surveyed in his study strongly disagreed with the statement that it was solely important to learn Mandarin Chinese thoroughly; 40 % (19) believed that greater emphasis should be placed on Chinese in schools; only 4 % (2) insisted that the emphasis should be on Tibetan; and 71 % (17) of the parents opposed the use of Tibetan textbooks and the idea of teaching their children in Tibetan (2006, p. 79). However, it is rather difficult to make meaningful inferences from the findings reported in the above study due to its limitations in sampling. In Tibet, while parents generally assumed that it was disgraceful if their children were incapable of speaking Tibetan and communicating freely in the language with their fellow countrymen, the number of people who think Chinese should be the primary medium of instruction "is increasing at a remarkable rate" (Nima 2009, p. 53).

In this study, two out of the sixteen students mainly communicated in Mandarin Chinese at home with their parents, but all the parents insisted that they should be capable of communicating in Tibetan. Norbu's parents spoke poor Tibetan themselves, and hence, they desired their son to have a better and improved command of the language. For Karma, it was imperative to learn Tibetan, because people around him appeared easily distraught when he communicated partially in Chinese and partially in Tibetan with them. Moreover, Karma's teachers likewise stressed that learning Tibetan thoroughly could help boost his overall examination performance in the College Entrance Examination (*Gaokao*), which has very significant implications for life opportunities for countless youths across China, including Tibet.

The above cases in this study presented no indication that Tibetan was a devalued subject, as reported in Yi's study in Qinghai (2008, p. 84). Instead, both students and teachers in Basum viewed Tibetan as imparting them with a competitive advantage in the *Gaokao*—they simply could not afford to score low marks in Tibetan, even for those students who preferred Chinese to Tibetan. For instance, Norbu initially believed that he would not be required to take Tibetan in the *Gaokao*, for he had studied in a Chinese-medium school in Chengdu. But as a Tibetan, he was required to take Tibetan, regardless of his weak foundation in the subject, owing to the two years he had devoted to studying in inland China. Norbu felt obliged to take Tibetan, and for his parents, and more decisively, on account of being a Tibetan, he stated:

> Chinese is the easiest for me. But the most important language is still Tibetan, even though Mandarin Chinese and English are also important. My parents would be very upset if I can't speak Tibetan well. But it is becoming rather challenging, because I did not have a good foundation in the language.

5   Promoting the Chinese-led Model and Coping with its Consequences

Promoting a Chinese-medium education in the TAR arguably runs the risk of alienating Tibetan students, in some measure because Chinese textbooks are often said to bear little relevance to students' daily lives (Yi 2008, p. 84), or by undermining their ethno-religious identity through the loss of their ability to read and write in Tibetan (Postiglione et al. 2007, p. 69). To what extent are those arguments well grounded and reasonable? Is it always essential for textbooks to be directly related to students' life experiences? What does it really mean to have culturally relevant textbooks? Does the learning of Chinese necessarily result in a loss of competence in Tibetan? Are Tibetans truly passive victims of state education? The answers, if any, to some of these questions, can never be straightforward and unambiguous, due to the following reasons.

Firstly, the majority of the students in School Basum in this study were Tibetan and they communicated in Tibetan with classmates and flatmates whenever possible, albeit they were primarily taught in Chinese (all subjects except for Tibetan). Indeed, when ZhiMin interviewed two or more students together, they often discussed his questions in Tibetan with one another. Nevertheless, they expressly stated that they communicated with teachers in Mandarin Chinese (Tibetan teachers in Basum were able to speak Mandarin Chinese fluently) and spoke Mandarin Chinese in class. Postiglione et al. pointed out that students in their study from different regions of Tibet had very different dialects and eventually had to communicate with one another in Chinese (2007, p. 63). In this study, this aspect appeared to be less of a problem, as Norbu opined: "[students from] *Naqu* and *Ali* have different dialects, but [we are] now used to them, so we understand them. They also learn our dialect upon arrival to the School, so there is no difficulty in communication [in Tibetan and Mandarin Chinese]." Consequently, according to interviewees like Chime and Chewa, they typically spoke Tibetan in daily life.

Secondly, over 50 % of the students surveyed in this study owned mobile phones, despite the school's restrictive policy on mobile phone usage on campus. Students reported that they often called home and chatted with their parents in Tibetan. Moreover, they kept in touch with their friends studying in other schools, and the language of communication was also Tibetan. This finding largely confirmed Dunzhudanzeng's report that very few Tibetan students spoke Mandarin Chinese alone, in order to communicate with family members, although the number of families using both Tibetan and Chinese was marginally larger than that of families using only Tibetan in his study (2006). However, in precisely the same way as mobile phones in this study facilitated long-distance communication in Tibetan, televisions in Tibetan families were increasing Tibetans' exposure to Mandarin Chinese and Han Chinese culture. Over 80 % of young Tibetans in Dunzhudanzeng's study expressed their preference for Chinese programmes, which they believed were richer in their

choices of options and easier to follow (2006, p. 76). Students (Tashi, Chime, and Tara) in this study likewise expressed a similar preference.

Apart from the sociocultural impacts, the Chinese-led model's academic implications are equally open to further scrutiny. At the present time, it would be unwise to conclude that underachievement in education by Tibetans resulted from the fact that they were compelled to learn three totally different languages simultaneously. But, it was indisputable that the students were seriously frustrated by the fact that their methods of learning were so ineffective that they were often required to spend over 40 min merely to memorise a Physics theorem in Chinese (Yi 2008, p. 80), and that their average scores in English and Mathematics could hardly reach a third of the averages in many inland schools. For instance, Zeng (2010, p. 170) reported that the average score her students achieved in 2009 was 35.6 out of 150 for English, even lower than 38.3 in 2008 and 37.9 in 2007. Their average entrance scores in English were 34.6, 23.8, and 32.1 out of 100 in 2009, 2008, and 2007 respectively. These figures indicated that the foundation of English language education in Tibet was relatively poor. Therefore, it is not unexpected that Tibetan students attending higher education institutions in inland China often have to study harder to draw level with other students, besides having to cope with the psychological consequences of "falling", from once being a top student in high school back home in Tibet to a "laggard" in an inland university.

In view of the predicament mentioned above, teachers of English in Basum often devoted almost half of their first year undertaking remedial actions, which subsequently resulted in their failure to meet the targets set by the curriculum for the subject. An English teacher (Gao) whom ZhiMin encountered deplored the difficulty and efforts involved, in teaching the language to her students. She conveyed that she had to translate each and every word into Chinese, before she was comprehensible and understood by her students. The average score of her students in English was not much different from the score established by Zeng (2010). The teacher confided that even though she copied exactly the same problem sets from textbooks to examination papers, her students exhibited no sign of faring better in English. Students on the other hand, perceived the subject as being despairingly challenging and demanding. Most of the students (such as Tashi, Diki, Norbu) interviewed, emphasised the point that English along with Mathematics were the most difficult subjects. As Tashi revealed: "Most of them [his classmates] have simply quit the subject." Norbu had the following to add:

> English is simply too difficult. Following it is like listening to an alien language (*tian shu*), I get a headache every time I see words in English. It is the most difficult subject … the most salient problem in English is the fact that I can't remember what I learn. As a result, I become reluctant to spend too much time in memorising anything. It's too boring … and useless. I can't use it anywhere. It's my weakest subject. The subject I feel proudest of is now Chinese.

6 Accounting for the Predicament: Who is Responsible?

Various factors are believed to have contributed to the underachievement by Tibetan students. Firstly, Zeng (2010) affirms that English textbooks are not designed specifically for students in Tibet: the content is too difficult for students with a poor foundation to follow; and these textbooks in general ignore the fact that Tibetans have to learn English as a third language. The targets set in the curriculum are too demanding. As for textbooks for other subjects, criticism has also been raised about the mere translation of Chinese editions, and the fact that these translations are often inaccurate or insensitive to regional differences that exist in Qinghai, Sichuan, and Tibet (Dunzhudanzeng 2006, p. 78). Such criticism about textbooks, however, has to be balanced with the fact that China has gone to great lengths to produce textbooks for ethnic minorities (Hailu and Tengxing 2007; Postiglione et al. 2011, p. 13), with textbooks now compiled in 22 different minority languages. The team responsible for the task has visited several other countries and studied the methods of multilingual education in different contexts. Nevertheless, the process of updating Tibetan textbooks is slow and expensive, and the effects of the new 2010 textbooks reforms policy are yet to be observed. A teacher (Cao) in this study revealed that the new textbooks for all subjects except for Chinese were compiled by the People's Education Publication House, suggesting that learning English could become even more challenging and demanding for Tibetan students. Teacher Cao and his school responded to the reforms by conducting additional English lectures in evening sessions.

Secondly, as Zeng (2010) also reasons, it continues to be a very difficult task to employ teachers, who are capable of teaching the three languages equally well. In reality, most English teachers are Han Chinese, they largely have limited or no knowledge of Tibetan, and allegedly understand less than their Tibetan colleagues do about Tibetan students' approaches to learning, in addition to the assertion that learning a third language through an intermediate language is itself a different process from learning it through a mother tongue. As noted above by the English teacher mentioned earlier, Tibetan students often encounter twofold linguistic obstacles, first through translation from English to Chinese and then from Chinese to Tibetan, when learning English. Postiglione et al. (2011, p. 13) deem it fundamentally necessary for students to achieve a threshold level of proficiency in Chinese as their second language; or else, using Chinese as the medium of instruction is likely to have limited or even a damaging effect on academic performance, particularly in terms of the learning of English as a third language through their second language. Moreover, Tibetan parents and teachers in Tibet may favour Chinese as the medium of instruction from a very early age, due to the language's currency in the job market or its promise of enhanced opportunities in higher education. Postiglione et al. also point out that parents are not acquainted with the well-researched practice

that students must achieve a sufficiently high level of proficiency in a second language, before they are able to satisfactorily learn subjects taught in that language (see Baker 2011).

Nevertheless, the explanations given above assume that learning of English through Chinese is a linear process. Moreover, it is perhaps difficult in practice to define strictly what is a sufficiently high or a threshold level. However, Taylor, in her PhD thesis, emphasised the importance of additive multilingualism, which means adding a second or third language to the repository of skills that language learners have "at no cost to the development of their first language" (2001, p. 13). According to this theory, less can lead to more (Cummins and Swain 1986), which implies that Tibetan students receiving less instruction in Chinese (and more instruction in Tibetan) can learn English better than if they are solely instructed in Chinese. This is contradictory to the intuitive maximum exposure hypothesis, that the more one is exposed to a language, the better one masters that language, than if she/he is less exposed to the language (Cummins 1996; Cummins and Swain 1986).

Following the then Party Secretary Hu Yaobang's visit to the TAR in May 1980, the less-is-more model was once implemented in four secondary schools of Tibet, and proved to be very successful. In 1989, Xigaze Prefectural Middle School, Shannan Prefecture Middle School No. 2, Lhasa Middle School, and Lhasa City Middle School No. 1 were selected to conduct the experiment, in which Tibetan and Chinese were two separate subjects but the primary medium of instruction was Tibetan. All teachers in the experiment were bilingual, and most textbooks, except those for Fine Arts, Music, and Physical Education, were in Tibetan. According to Zhou (2004) as well as Danzengjinmei et al. (1996), the 161 students in the experiment all scored higher grades in examinations, than their counterparts in regular Chinese-medium classes. Their performance in Mathematics was exceptionally impressive, being ten points higher than the average score of conventional class students. In 1995, 79.8% of the students in the experiment passed the *Gaokao*; whereas in the conventional class, the pass rate was 39.3% (Zhou 2004, p. 65).

Unfortunately, the model was eventually aborted due to regional, national, and international political disturbances during that period, which witnessed a series of uprisings in Tibet, Tiananmen Pro-Democracy Demonstrations in Beijing, and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Predictably, hardliners within the Party concluded that the liberal approach to minority governance failed, and excessive freedom only denoted excessive separatist sentiments (Zenz 2010, p. 307). Since that time, the paramount mission of minority education has become ethnic unity and political stability (Bass 1998, pp. 54–60). This is apparently the present day mission too, as publicised in school posters on the campus of Basum. However, students interviewed in this study did report on some experimental classes in the pre-high schools they once attended. For instance, Norbu divulged that his Tibetan-medium school had a Chinese class, and Cimba's Chinese-medium school had one Tibetan class. But in both cases, *han yuwen* (Chinese Language and Literature) and English were taught in Mandarin Chinese and *zang yuwen* (Tibetan Language and Literature) in Tibetan.

Thirdly, micro-interactions between educators and students also gain importance. Cummins (2000) presented an intercultural-assimilationist continuum within which

most educators fall. Those with a multicultural orientation are more likely to view minority language and culture favourably, because they comprehend that minority students can "add a second language and cultural affiliation while maintaining their primary language and culture" (Cummins 1996, p. 147). By contrast, educators who hold an assimilationist view are inclined to request minority students to relinquish their customs and languages, before entering the school (p. 150; also mentioned in Hailu and Tengxing 2007). Unfortunately, according to Yi (2008), some teachers in minority schools are at the exclusionary end of the continuum or culturally insensitive, somewhat similar to the American professor and students in Yu Tianlong's study. As a non-Buddhist Chinese, Yu had to read the Dalai Lama's "religious teachings" in class, with lights turned off and candles lit around the room (2010, p. 1). According to Cummins' model, teachers with assimilationist sentiments would probably view Tibetan students as intellectually inferior and would tend to believe that Tibetans should be responsible for their own failure or underperformance because of their pejorative group characteristics, such as the outdated language, genetic inferiority, or parental apathy (Cummins 1996, p. 5). In this study, one teacher did remark on the technique of raising Tibetan children, when queried to account for underachievement by Tibetan students. She pointed out in a rather amused manner that Tibetan parents unlike Han parents normally carry their baby on their backs during their childhood and rarely engage in conversation with the child.

Teachers with exclusionary views should unquestionably be censured for their lack of cultural knowledge or even Han chauvinism, yet the root cause of the problem appears to lie more in the structure of education, than in the factors mentioned above. Today, high schools and teachers are primarily evaluated by their students' examination results. In order to retain a competitive edge, schools often resort to strict punitive regulations imposed upon teachers, who in turn, frequently transfer the pressure onto their students, so as to meet examination targets. Teachers, who cannot mentally cope with the pressures of teaching, simply leave their teaching jobs for better opportunities elsewhere. In School Basum for instance, a few students (Norbu, Cimba, Indira, Tashi, and Garma) pointed out that their school seriously lacked qualified English teachers. Up to the time of the students' interviews, three teachers had already been involved in teaching English to their class. Tashi explained that the first teacher was competent at teaching the subject, but requested leave for a year because of a health problem. The second teacher paid more attention to spoken English, but quit the school for an unknown reason. Unfortunately, teachers are vulnerable to becoming scapegoats and shouldering the blame for wider issues. In Tibet, there are teachers, be they Tibetan or Han, who are at the positive end of Cummins' continuum. For instance, Norbu praised his Han teacher's fluency in Tibetan by explaining: "There was one Han teacher who spoke better Tibetan than I did. He got a master's degree in Tibetan Studies and he is now working in *Gongga*". Dechen also praised her English teacher: "He is good at lecturing, and every term he engages with us in different ways. The first term he may focus on reading comprehension, then the second term on building vocabulary".

Clearly, teachers like the ones mentioned above did manage to discover what they could learn from students and Tibetan communities, and how such learning

could enhance their quality of instruction and enrich students' learning experiences. Chime and others in this study also reported a positive relationship with their Han teachers. Students, particularly those from key classes, asserted that their teachers were very responsible, accomplished and qualified at what they taught, and treated them with respect. A few teachers (Cao, Gao, Xie, and Qiao) involved in this study similarly confirmed that they largely enjoyed what they were doing in Tibet. They did complain from time to time, almost certainly as many teachers do elsewhere. It is important, however, to bear in mind that their families are often thousands of miles away, their children miss them a great deal, and it is sometimes difficult to see "anything green" [perhaps due to the snow and rare patches of trees in the plateau] in school surroundings often for weeks at a stretch. One educator (Yang), who was informally interviewed, arrived to teach in Tibet in 1983 with a highly respected degree from a prestigious normal university in inland China. He confided that when he first arrived in Bami, it was extremely problematic for him to even purchase vegetables for dinner, and when compared to the past, the roads have now been repaired and are in a more desirable or significantly improved condition than before.

It is also important to note that the notion about teachers being culturally insensitive might actually stem from their cultural hyper-awareness. They are clearly aware that Tibetan Buddhism is a core element of Tibetan culture. But religion may perhaps be a sensitive topic in state schools. Teacher Guan advised ZhiMin to exercise caution when meeting with Tibetan teachers—he should avoid discussing religion, ethnic relations, and drinking alcohol with them, as they could imbibe more alcohol than most foreigners. Nevertheless, according to Yi (2008), religion for many Tibetans has the power of cultivating moral character and nourishing one's nature (*xiushen yangxing*). Unfortunately, students in schools are not usually allowed to practise their religion. Yi (2008, p. 78) also contends that those who do express their religious belief in schools, are habitually teased by other students, even by their fellow Tibetans. Teachers largely discourage students from carrying "minority things" (*minzu de dongxi*) into schools, for these particular practices are generally viewed as eccentric (*xiqiguguai*) or unhealthy (*buliang*).

In this study, Tashi narrated his experience in primary school. He confided that he had to repeat Grades One to Three, when he was mysteriously afflicted with an illness. His mother then changed his name to his present one, and ever since the adoption of his new name, he performed commendably at school, and retained a firm position in his class, as a student in the top five. At the end of the interview, he intentionally stressed the point that: "They [his parents] are superstitious." It is worth mentioning here that in today's ideological ranking system, Tibetans place superstition at the lowest level. They respect religious practices as customs, for which they have the highest esteem, and religion is positioned somewhere between the two (Yi 2008, p. 80).

Finally, all of the aspects raised above appear to have overemphasised the roles educators are able to play in minority education, while overlooking the attitudes students bring to their interactions with educators. As Ogbu (1992) notes: "School success depends not only on what schools and teachers do, but also on what students do" (p. 6), and "minority children do not succeed or fail only because of what schools do or do not do, but also because of what the community does" (p. 12). It

is, therefore, necessary to examine the values and attitudes that communities instil in Tibetan students and which students bring with them to schools; for the ways in which students view school education and the attitudes they develop towards educators have substantial impacts on how schools and educators react. For example, the acceptance by students and parents of one linguistic model over another may have indicated to policy makers and school leaders that the model they had initiated was indeed the correct model. This is described as the "let-the-market-decide" mentality (Postiglione et al. 2007, p. 52). But then again, attitudes and values can be skilfully directed or even manipulated by state propaganda. Today, it is not difficult to find in Tibet, and throughout the country, street billboards, banners, campus posters, magazines, TV programmes, and newspapers that promote education as a means for upward social mobility and self-empowerment. The responses of communities to this propaganda presumably have an impact on the development of students' values and attitudes towards state education, and these values and attitudes in due course, will affect students' reactions, interactions, and attainment levels in their schools.

7   Competence in Chinese: A Note of Caution

Based on the 1989 experiment, would it be safe to claim that Tibetan students' performance in English could be considerably improved, perhaps if English were taught in Tibetan? Does Mandarin Chinese continue to be a problem for high school students in Tibet, in order to thoroughly grasp the knowledge of English, despite Chinese being a compulsory subject from Grade One at the primary level? In this study, most students confirmed they were able to understand lectures and Chinese language instruction was not a problem. However, two students (Tashi and Diki) attested that as regards the study of English, the struggle to comprehend was significant, and lectures consistently seemed to be never-ending. ZhiMin was convinced during his interviews that most students could easily understand what he was trying to say (in Chinese), although a few of them did display some difficulty in expressing in Chinese what they wanted to say. It is, therefore, logical to envisage the students facing the same or more severe problems, when they attempt to express themselves in English in the classroom, particularly when being taught through Chinese. For those students from an agricultural or nomadic area, Chinese as the medium of instruction is likely to have posed even greater challenges. In this study, students from these backgrounds (Zenji, Garma, and Dawa) conveyed little additional information in response to ZhiMin's questions (this might of course have been due to their personalities or preferences). These students mainly relied on body language, gestures such as nodding and smiling, to confirm his statements. It is, thus, important to note that the level of students' proficiency in Chinese varies from person to person. In addition, the sharp shift from Tibetan to Chinese as the medium of instruction from primary to middle schools, may have long-lasting impacts on the academic performance of certain groups of students (Postiglione et al. 2011).

However, interviewees in the study did say that they could understand most lectures. We, therefore, have some confidence in their competence in Chinese, at least

at what Cummins terms the "basic interpersonal communicative level" (in Taylor 2001, p. 14), and this was more transparent and easier to recognise during conversations with them. Nevertheless, this does not denote that they have skilful command of their cognitive-academic skills in Chinese, when they study subjects taught and assessed in Chinese. During ZhiMin's stay in Tibet, he was unable to collect first hand observation data of class interactions and/or documentary data about students' performances, in order to evaluate the knowledge garnered from various subjects taught in Chinese. This level of proficiency is more complex to measure and less visible than the former. Nonetheless, ZhiMin was able to learn that their average scores in Mathematics and English were unusually low. Furthermore, in Tibet, the pass level for students to enter higher education was by far lower than that in many other parts of China, and high school graduates in Science usually require only just over 200 to get into higher education (Sun 2009). For instance, one student in Basum scored about 470 in the 2010 *Gaokao* and went to Peking University, although the normal requirement was a score of over 600 in most provinces. According to informants in the study, the school was awarded about a million RMB because of this achievement. In view of this achievement, School Basum now attracts more top-ranking students from across the autonomous region.

By mentioning the relatively low scores set for higher education in Tibet, we are not attributing Tibetan students' relative academic weakness to poor cognition skills or low aptitude levels, nor are we tracing the origin of their linguistic underdevelopment in English per se, and viewing it simply as an internal and individual possession of multilingual capability. Instead, we concur with Baker that there are "skills within skills" (2011, p. 7) in language ability, and that external factors, be they economic, political, or cultural, co-exist with multilingualism. We are also aware of the viewpoint in Cummins (1996) that communicative skills can develop more swiftly than cognitive-academic skills can, and the gap in time for the two skills to match can reach up to 5 years (Taylor 2001, p. 14). We are, therefore, restrained and cautious in arriving at a conclusion, for the skills ZhiMin observed during those interviews in a café, may be qualitatively very different from the ones required in another context, such as the classroom or for an examination. We, therefore, maintain that students' ability in a language is multi-dimensional, and this multi-faceted nature of linguistic competence will probably have broader impacts on students' overall academic performance.

8   Pursuing the Li: Towards a Conclusion

According to Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi (1130–1200) of the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279) in China, there is a Li (理), principle of coherence, underlying everything in the universe (P. Bol, personal communication, Fall 2011; see also Theodore De Bary and Bloom 1999, pp. 697–701). In order to thoroughly understand the things and events of the world, we must tirelessly investigate them, before we become aware of the Li (*gewu qiongli* 格物穷理). Is there such a Li in

Tibet that defines an ideal linguistic model, a model that is conductive to meaningful, efficient, and effective learning and teaching? If there is no such Li, then what is the principle that we should adhere to, while making and/or adjusting policies related to linguistic models? Looking back at the history of Tibet, we perceive that there was no such Li underlying those linguistic models, or the Li purely persisted and endured in our minds—we, the Tibetans and the Han Chinese, followed what we felt was right for the education of Tibetans.

In the eyes of Wang Yangming (1472–1529), a Ming dynasty (1368–1644) philosopher, both Tibetans and Han Chinese in Tibet could be sages in Education. However, the problem of universal sage-hood was that the two sides could not agree on what comprised the best model. And it appears that the real sages on the stage, educators and practitioners in schools, were left out of the equation—teachers wielded little power in deciding what to teach and in which language(s) to teach, despite their knowledge and understanding of the context. We, therefore, argue that the Li is to be achieved by following Zhu Xi's method and allowing educators in Tibetan schools to experiment as educators to find the balance between the competing aims for education in Tibet. However, it is crucial to differentiate here between the Chinese notion of experimental classes or schools as distinct from that of the West, as a methodology to establish causal relationships. The aforementioned experiments in 1989 adopted a Tibetan-led model. Although the students in those experiments came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, the teachers assigned to experimental classes, according to R. Zhou (2004), were "more proficient in both Tibetan and Chinese, more experienced in bilingual education, more organised and responsible, and have greater expertise in their specific fields" (p. 64) than those in the control groups. In addition, the experimental classes had additional morning and evening sessions during term time and extra tutorials in winter and summer vacations (p. 65). Therefore, the impressive results as cited earlier were at best misleading. In other words, the achievements could not be said to come solely from the Tibetan-led model. Without randomisation, it is difficult to rule out "outside influences" (Karlan and Appel 2011, "Randomized Control Trials," para. 6).

Even if the schools followed rigorous procedures in experimental design, it is still better to make moderate causal claims in education. Otherwise, one would risk making the same mistakes as Walsh McDermott and his team committed at the Navajo Reservation of Many Farms in America, when they set out to alleviate the burden of diseases for American Indians and narrow the gap in health between the natives and other groups in 1952–1962 (Jones 2002). With good intention and great faith, the team successfully eradicated tuberculosis of hospitalised Navajo patients by turning every treatment into an experiment and testing the power of post-war medical technologies such as isoniazid, a new antibiotic. And yet, they failed to establish a "hospital without walls", where they aimed to cure not just the tuberculosis of hospitalised patients, but also other diseases of almost all members in the reservation (p. 774). The pure biological and experimental approach failed because "medicine made many demands on patient behaviour and took certain things for granted" (Jones 2002, p. 787), for instance, windows in a house and water in a room. Recalling the mismatch of medical services to local socioeconomic conditions, McDermott later commented:

"Researchers could measure the value of physician's technology, but not the value of their compassion" (p. 789), by which, he meant the trust upon which good patient-doctor relationships relied. Likewise, the good relationships between teachers and students (such as the one between Tashi and his Chinese teacher), schools and communities, or the "samaritanism" as McDermott termed it, are equally "intangible, unmeasurable, and outside the bounds of experiment" (p. 753). But they are vital for success in education, perhaps even more so than a correct linguistic model.

It is, therefore, important to recognise that the linguistic problem we have presented is not merely an educational problem. Instead, the educational reality in Tibet is also socially constructed. It is historically deep and represents diverse interests and aims for the education of different groups in society. The models as discussed in this chapter are thus socio-politically specific—in the same way that they have been constructed, the models chosen today will influence how education develops tomorrow and how social reality unfolds. Policy makers and interest groups in Tibet today are capable of making positive changes for tomorrow, so long as they take into consideration the fact that their purposive actions may well have unintended consequences. In order to avoid undesirable and achieve anticipated outcomes, it is necessary to study local conditions thoroughly, and realise that models that were successful before or which function well elsewhere may not work in Tibet. In the words of Robert Merton, the "other-things-being-equal" condition may not satisfy in Tibet (1936, p. 904). But above all, it is perhaps time to change the imperious immediacy of interest in Tibet from political stability and ethnic unity to effective learning with healthy human and social development. This change, however, requires all sides to act on knowledge and wisdom rather than political opinions and ethnic sentiments.

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A Multi-case Investigation into Trilingualism and Trilingual Education in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture

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Abstract Among the 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups in China, the Yi are the seventh largest, with a population of about 7.7 million, unevenly distributed across the mountainous regions of southwest China, primarily in three provinces, Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou. This chapter focuses on the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, home to speakers of Nuosu. Nuosu is not an endangered language but it is becoming vulnerable because of the power of Chinese and changes to the demographic makeup of society. The chapter uses an educational linguistic approach to investigate trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan. It finds that, in common with many other ethnic minority languages in China, the maintenance of Nuosu is hindered by historical, political and sociolinguistic factors, and suggests a number of measures to improve the situation.

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1   Introduction

A person who conversed only in Chinese would find inter-ethnic communication challenging in Old Liangshan, Sichuan, before 1978, for as a Yi-dominated region, a majority of the population there at that time, merely communicated in the Yi language, with little knowledge of Chinese (Chen et al. 1985). Visiting Liangshan almost 30 years later, it is now obvious that the Chinese language has achieved public status, which is equal to or even superior to the Yi language. The reason for the change is the advantageous socio-economic benefits achieved from learning Chinese and the slow-paced policy process related to the Yi language. Given the limited and constant class hours of language education, stakeholders of bilingual education constantly face a dilemma, over whether to maintain the minority language or to spread standard Chinese (Putonghua). Moreover, with the implementation of the 'Open Door' policy since the late 1970s, English is also required to be taught as a subject from the third year in primary schools (Ministry of Education 2001a, b). Thus, the addition of a foreign language in education creates an even more complex state of affairs.

   In this chapter, an educational linguistic approach is adopted to investigate language use, language provision and language attitudes in Liangshan, focusing particularly on trilingualism and trilingual education in the Yi language, Chinese and English. It seeks to contribute to multilingual studies by two methods. Firstly, the status quo of trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan will be examined for the first time; secondly, based on the data gathered, a comparative analysis will be conducted not only between the cases in Liangshan, but also with other cases nationwide and internationally.

2   Background

2.1   Demographic Context of Liangshan

Among the 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups in China, the Yi are the seventh largest, with a population of about 7.7 million, according to the Fifth National Census conducted in 2000. Geographically, the Yi are unevenly distributed across the mountainous regions of southwest China, primarily in three provinces, i.e. Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou. Nearly 45.5 % of the Yi people live in concentrated communities and the rest of them are extensively scattered and segregated. Yunnan has the largest population of Yi (4.7 million). Besides the 1.5 million Yi people who have settled in and are concentrated in two major Yi autonomous prefectures (i.e. Chuxiong and Honghe), the others are segregated and dispersed across the province. About 800,000 Yi people are distributed over the north-west corner

Fig. 1 Map of contemporary Liangshan and old Liangshan

of Guizhou. Another remarkable feature of their inhabitancy is their long-term co-existence with the Han and other minority groups, which results in their shared vernacular language and customs.

Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture in southwest Sichuan is the principal con-centrated community of the Yi, with a population of about 2.2 million, accounting for 47.22 % of the overall prefecture population. Between its founding in 1952 and expansion in 1978, the total figure for Yi people in Old Liangshan, of which nine Yi-dominated counties were under the administration, reached over 77.10 %. In 1978, the Xichang region, which administered six Han majority counties, and two mi-nority autonomous counties, i.e. Yanyuan Yi autonomous county and Muli Tibetan autonomous county, merged with Old Liangshan. Therefore, the current Liangshan has seventeen counties within its territory, as illustrated by Fig. 1. The capital city of the prefecture was moved from Zhaojue, a Yi-dominated county, to Xichang, the present economic and political centre with Han people making up 79.06 % of the population. Since the field trips to present study did not extend westward as far as Muli Tibetan autonomous county and the Yi-dominated Yanyuan County, the re-search described in this chapter is limited to the other fifteen counties that formed, historically, the Xichang region and Old Liangshan.

2.2   The Yi Language

The concept of the Yi language covers a wide range of genetically-related languages spoken mainly in Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou. It is called the Yi group by Sun (1998) or the Loloish languages by Bradley (1997). Nuosu, spoken in Liangshan, is one of the group, which belongs to the Burmese-Lolo language group of the Tibeto-Burman language family. Matisoff (2003) proposes a three-way subdivision of the Burmese-Lolo languages: Northern, Central, and Southern. This categorization covers all the Loloish or Yi languages. Nuosu is in the Northern subdivision.

Yi people in Liangshan are speakers of Nuosu. Nuosu in Liangshan has three major varieties: Shynra, Suondi, and Yynuo. Shynra has the most speakers; it is used primarily in Xide, Yuexi, Xichang and Mianning. Yynuo speakers are mainly found in Meigu, Ganluo and Zhaojue, while Suondi is used in places such as Butuo and Dechang. In our investigation, we visited only Shynra- and Yynuo-speaking regions. In the following discussion of the Liangshan case, to avoid confusion, we will use "Yi" to refer to the nationality and "Nuosu" or "Nuosu Yi" to the language.

2.3   Language use of Nuosu and Chinese

Overall, Nuosu is not an endangered language. Intergenerational transmission is still uninterrupted. But because of pressure from Chinese, it is becoming vulnerable. Although most children still speak the language as their mother tongue, its usage is restricted to certain domains. Meanwhile, language use in Liangshan is also determined by the demographic makeup of its society.

In the counties of Old Liangshan, Nuosu is widely used in informal domains. Meigu County can be cited as an example. Yi make up 98.74% of its population, with the remainder consisting of Han and other minority nationalities including Tibetan, Mongolian and Hui. Orally, Nuosu is used on a daily basis for intra-ethnic communication among Yi people of various ages and in all walks of life. In some situations, Nuosu in fact, serves as a language for inter-ethnic communication. For example, we interviewed a primary school teacher of Mosuo origin who has been working in Meigu for over 10 years and now speaks Nuosu fluently. But when he first arrived in Meigu, he knew nothing of the language. He recalled that "it is a necessity for life and work here, and I acquired the language very quickly within three months".

However, this does not imply that the Yi people in Old Liangshan are monolingual. On the contrary, they have equal competence in Sichuan Mandarin, a dialect which is similar to standard Chinese, with only minor regional differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Sichuan Mandarin is used for inter-ethnic communication between the Yi and the Han. Apropos language use in formal domains, such as schooling, meetings, TV and radio programmes, it is Chinese that dominates; Nuosu is simply used for particular reasons such as pre-meeting small talk or in limited spectra like in Yi language classes where Nuosu is taught.

In terms of the written languages, two types of Yi scripts are available: the classical Yi and the modern Yi. The former is a syllabic logographic system, reputedly dating back to the seventh century or even earlier (Wu 1991). With around 10,000 characters, the classical Yi script is mainly used by Bimo, the Yi shaman who is highly knowledgeable in every aspect of Yi culture and performs religious rituals for his people. The modern Yi writing is a standardised syllabary with 819 basic glyphs (Li and Ma 1983). The modern Yi script was reformed in 1974 and popularised in 1980. Since then, it has been utilised by ordinary Yi people for reading and writing. Nowadays, many Bimos also transcribe their scripture in modern Yi script. Based on our observations, shop signs in Old Liangshan are all written bilingually in both modern Yi and Chinese. Most of the mass media like newspapers, radio and TV programmes in Old Liangshan are in Chinese, but some of them continue to be in Nuosu Yi, such as the *Liangshan Daily* (the Nuosu version), Yi radio programmes and the Yi TV Channel.

With reference to the former Xichang regions which administered six Han majority counties from 1952 to 1978, Sichuan Mandarin is used in practically every informal domain. Nuosu is only spoken, but not necessarily, in places where most people belong to the Yi nationality or among Yi family members. In formal domains, Chinese is the dominant language, such as standard Chinese for class instructions and Sichuan Mandarin for meetings. But, Yi TV programmes are available in the former Xichang regions. As for written languages, the prevailing situation is almost similar to that in Old Liangshan.

In Liangshan, English is occasionally employed for certain purposes. But it is more commonly used in the former Xichang region than in the counties of Old Liangshan. For example, Xichang is a famous tourist destination because of its splendid scenery and the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre. Therefore, many signs in Xichang are trilingual. Besides, Xichang is also very actively involved with many international collaborations and exchanges. Although English is not easily encountered in Old Liangshan, there are occasions on which English is used, for example, some international NGO projects and academic conferences, specifically, the Sino-Britain project for AIDS prevention and control in Zhaojue County, and the international conference on Yi studies in Meigu.

Moreover, the topography has a remarkable influence upon language use by the Yi people. According to *Hnewo Tepyy*, the Genesis of Yi, the Han people lived on flat land and around lakes and rivers; the Yi people lived in mountainous regions and on steep slopes of river gorges. Although many Yi people have now moved from the mountains to flat land, their general pattern of habitation remains unchanged. Therefore, those living in mountains have less interaction with the Han people; they can barely speak the Chinese language. Those who live on flat land have frequent interactions with the Han people. Historically, according to He (1980), the economy of the Han people was based on salt, rice and iron products, which they sold to the Yi people; the Yi people, in turn, traded in fur merchandise and herbal medicines with the Han. Agriculturally, Han crops such as rice, corn and wheat were introduced to the Yi regions; politically, those living with or close to the Han people replaced their traditional hierarchical relationships of slavery

with relationships under the feudal system. Currently, the frequency of interactions between the Han and the Yi peoples is even more marked and noticeable than before. But it is evident that the influence from the Han is much stronger. Thus, this group of Yi people are capable of speaking acceptable Chinese, and since many of them have fewer opportunities to converse in Nuosu, their Chinese can even be deemed as praiseworthy.

2.4 Language Policies in Liangshan

Since 1949, three basic principles underlie all major policies decreed on the topic of minority languages in China. They are: (1) all languages are equal; (2) all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own languages; (3) all nationalities should be encouraged to learn each other's languages on the basis of their free will.

Besides the general directives from the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* at the national level and the *Statute of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture* at the local level, three important policies prescribe language use and language education in Liangshan.

The Yi standardised written plan: From 1949 to the present, Tibetan, Mongolian, Russian, Korean, and Xibo are the only five continuously used and intact minority written languages in China. The remaining minority languages have gone through, to different extents, reforms initiated by appropriate governing bodies. The Yi language reform is often cited as a successful example (Zhou 1993; Mahe 1985). The Yi people had their classical written language; but it was used to a limited degree, by only 1.7–2.75% of the population (Mahe and Yao 1993). Therefore, the Chinese government developed a plan to reform the traditional Yi written language into a Latin-alphabet-based new form, from 1950 to 1957. However, the Yi people had strong emotional feelings and linguistic attachment towards their own writing system. Thus, with the support of the prefecture government, the Yi people developed their own written language based on the traditional Yi script (Blachford 1999). This language was much favoured and spread rapidly across the region. The plan was officially approved by the Sichuan provincial government in 1975 and the State Council in 1980.

The statute of spoken and written languages in Liangshan: The first version was approved by the prefecture and provincial people's congress in 1992. This version primarily focused on the bilingual use of Nuosu Yi and Chinese in administrative, juridical, cultural and educational domains. Nuosu and Chinese are placed on an equal platform. But there was a tendency for people to have better competence in Chinese than in the minority language. To remedy this situation, a revised version was implemented in 2009; it favours strengthened competence in Nuosu. For instance, balanced bilinguals in Nuosu Yi and Chinese have enhanced job opportunities and more promising futures career-wise. Moreover, the new version stipulates management and supervision of language usage, as well as the legal responsibility and implications, associated with contravention of any articles in the statute.

Bilingual education, two models, two allocations, four-levelled planning, and two connections: The two models policy is the essence and guiding principle behind bilingual education in Liangshan. Given the language policies and the nature of Nuosu-Chinese bilingual society, in 1978 and 1984, Liangshan launched two models of bilingual education programmes (Teng 2001). The first model requires that schools, where a maximum number of students are of Yi nationality, must use Nuosu as their medium of instruction (MoI) and teach standard Chinese as a school subject. This model, categorised by Baker (2001) as the strong form of bilingual education, was designed for the cultivation of specialised knowledge in the Yi language, literature, and culture. In the second model, the roles of Nuosu and Chinese are reversed; it was the weak form of bilingual education (Baker 2001), and designed for the inheritance of Yi culture. Accordingly, before students entered a higher school, they were allocated to the two models, in terms of educational resources and their own will. To ensure a satisfactory number of first model students, the urban and township government is responsible for planning sufficient first model classes in its primary schools; the county government plans for classes in junior secondary schools; the prefecture government for classes in senior secondary schools; and the provincial government plans for colleges. Further, in order to ensure that students of the first model were admitted by universities in Han-dominated regions, since 2000, Nuosu was adopted for first model students in the national college entrance examination (CEE); and the students were independently considered for admission standards. While education in first model schools improved, Yi students of the first model would not be independently tested, until 2005, although their entrance examination continued to be in Nuosu. However, these students would have more options for tertiary education.

3 Literature Review

Three bodies of literature are identifiable for bi/trilingualism in Liangshan: language use and attitudes, Yi-Chinese bilingual education and foreign language education.

Wei (2008) surveys language use and language attitudes of the Yi people in Ganluo, a county in the northernmost part of Liangshan. It is established that Nuosu is the most important communication tool in Ganluo; but the Yi people there are eager to learn and master Chinese and parents attempt to create a favourable environment of Chinese learning for their children. Therefore, bilingualism is a common phenomenon in Ganluo. Teng (2001) adopted an ethnographic and educational approach to study stakeholders' attitudes towards bilingual education in Liangshan. He concluded that there was broad consensus on the implementation of bilingual education; but the programme had flaws in terms of both planning and implementation, such as the achievement of language proficiency and of educational goals. Therefore, a realistic and timely plan was urgently needed for bilingual education in Liangshan in the twenty-first century. Teng also conducted a historical survey of bilingual education in Liangshan. Many other authors, too, (e.g., Shi 2009; Pu 1999) have commented generally on current bilingual education models.

Furthermore, a growing number of discussions have focused on foreign language education in Liangshan. In 1999, a middle school in Xichang began an experimental teaching practice, entitled *the Yi-English bilingual programme,* in which Yi students whose competence in Chinese was low were able to learn English through the medium of Nuosu. Positive findings were reported by Xiao (2003), when he affirmed that Yi students were progressing and showed a marked improvement, in both their English learning and general school performance. Regrettably, we discovered that the programme had to be cancelled, due to significant shortages and a scarcity plus unavailability of Nuosu-English bilingual teaching materials. Aga (2007) argued for the feasibility of the implementation of trilingual education for Yi students. By examining language attitudes of Yi students towards Nuosu and English, he concluded that a great number of secondary schools in Yi-dominated regions in Liangshan were not qualified to provide trilingual education.

In addition to these research findings, the literature also demonstrates that bilingual education in Liangshan in both balanced (Model 2—see Chap. 2) and accretive (Model 1) forms has historical, social and educational foundations, but there is no foundation for English. Therefore, trilingual education should be further clarified in a Chinese context. Narrowly defined, trilingual education is the practice where three languages are taught as school subjects and meanwhile, used as the MoI (Ytsma 2001). Accordingly, language education in Liangshan cannot be viewed as a case of trilingual education, since L3, i.e., English, is only taught as a school subject. However, Cenoz and Genesee (1998) maintain that multilingual competence in several languages is not equal to monolingual competence. Schools in Liangshan where Nuosu, Chinese and English are taught only aim for additive trilingualism (Lambert 1974, cited in Bhatia and Ritchie 2005). For instance, schools adopting the first model strive for complete bilingualism in Nuosu and Chinese, whereas the goals for English education are limited to competence in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Moreover, Ytsma (2001, p. 12) elucidates on this subject, by further suggesting that besides education *through* target languages, additive trilingualism can also be achieved by education *in* target languages, which means that the languages can be taught each week as school subjects for one or more lessons. Thus, a broad definition of trilingual education is selected for the current project by including both ways of establishing trilingualism. Trilingual education in China should in fact be studied based on such premises.

4 Multi-Case Comparative Studies

4.1 *Methodology*

Three issues are addressed in the present study: (1) the roles of L1, L2 and L3 in classroom practice; (2) stakeholders' perceptions of and attitudes towards trilingual education; (3) the major influences upon the policy process of trilingual education in Liangshan. Thus, the following questions are examined:

1. What is the linguistic typology of language allocation in classrooms in different schools in different areas of Liangshan?
2. How do different stakeholders perceive the importance of L1, L2 and L3?
3. What are the major influences upon the policy-making and implementation of trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan?

To make the data comparable within a region and between the various regions, the counties are sampled in terms of their demographic, geographic and socio-economic typology; and the schools are chosen as representative of demography, resources and geography, which indicate one primary school in a relatively poor and remote area (minority village school); one primary school in an area that is better-off than the above school (a town school with better resources); and one secondary school for children of the minority group. Thus, the following counties and schools were selected and numbered in the format of "initials of the regions + number":

I. Xichang, the capital, located in central Liangshan with mixed ethnic groups: 17.18 % Yi and 79.06 % Han;
   XC1.—Village Primary School, Second Model, with 1064 students and 99.81 % Yi;
   XC2.—Township Primary School, ordinary, with 2267 students and 16.10 % Yi;
   XC3.—Minority Middle School, First Model and Second Model, with 2588 students and 90 % Yi;

II. Mianning, located in northern Liangshan, immediately adjacent to Xichang with mixed ethnic groups: 35.74 % Yi and 62.24 % Han;
   MN1.—Village Primary School, Second Model, with 443 students and 100 % Yi;
   MN2.—Township Primary School, ordinary, with 1640 students and 49 % Yi;
   MN3.—Minority Middle School, Second Model, with 1010 students and 89.80 % Yi;

III. Meigu, located in north-eastern Old Liangshan, among the poorest counties of the prefecture, with 98.47 % Yi and 1.49 % Han;
   MG1.—Village Primary School, Second Model, with 238 students and 100 % Yi;
   MG2.—Township Primary School, Second Model, with 1566 students and 90.61 % Yi;
   MG3.—Minority Middle School, Second Model, with 1330 students and 97.60 % Yi.

We conducted a 15-day field trip to the three counties in Liangshan in June 2010 to obtain the data. Four major techniques were employed in data-collection:

Questionnaire Multiple choice and Likert scale were used in the questionnaire to gather data on basic information, language learning/teaching, language use and language attitudes of the stakeholders. Three versions of questionnaires were designed for students of senior secondary, junior secondary and primary schools. Based on whether English classes were offered in primary school, two different forms of questionnaires were designed.

Interviewing For the purpose of this study, different types of informants were required. At the prefecture level, officials, administrators and researchers were the ideal informants for language policy and language attitudes. At the school level, the major source of information for language attitudes and priorities were school principals, teachers, students and parents. In this study, interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. The data were recorded by two methods: note-taking during the interviews and note-making after the interviews, based upon the tape-recording. The recordings were carried out after being granted permission by the informants.

Non-participation observation Observational data included language provision in classroom practices and language use in school and social contexts. Thus, information was collected on how policies are implemented in bi/trilingual education. Observations were recorded in the forms specially designed for the case study.

Documentary review The documents, published and unpublished, reviewed for the study comprised a broad range of materials: socio-economic communiqués, written policies, scholarly reports, textbooks, curriculum guidelines, teaching plans, students' achievement reports, school timetables, students' homework, examination papers, etc. However, certain statistics were not available since there was no official data in some of the sampled schools.

4.2 Findings

The data gathered from the present study will be compared in three dimensions (Feng and Adamson 2011): sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic contexts, language education in schools and the attitudes of stakeholders. It is found that the three dimensions are closely related with the forms of education, their educational resources, the educational stages, the demographic makeup and the economic status.

4.2.1 Sociolinguistic and Ethnolinguistic Context

Two elements will be examined in this segment: ultimate goal of the policy and L1 vitality. They are related to the forms of education and/or the regional demographic makeup.

A. Ultimate Goal of the Policy

Primary and secondary schools in Liangshan are categorised into two types: bilingual schools and ordinary schools. Compared with the data from Teng (2001), the absolute number of Yi students who received bilingual education in bilingual schools in Liangshan increased from 70,576 or 35.49 % in 1997, to 261,147 or 63.41 % in 2009. However, schools offering different forms of bilingual education were unevenly balanced to a significant extent. The number of Yi students choosing

the second model jumped over four-fold from 62,233 in 1997 to 254,159 in 2009, while those choosing the first model fluctuated from 6046 in 1990 to 8343 in 1997 to 6988 in 2009. An identical trend was observed in the numbers of schools, students and bilingual teachers at each educational level.

In Liangshan, bilingual schools aim for trilingualism and triliteracy, while ordinary schools aim for bilingualism and biliteracy. Schools of the second model and ordinary schools follow the national curricula for Chinese and English; those of the first model follow the national Chinese curriculum too, but they have a lower standard (Teng 2001). For Nuosu, bilingual schools follow the Yi curriculum developed by the Sichuan provincial education department. We had an opportunity to read the second model Yi curriculum; but not the Yi curriculum for the first model. Table 1 represents what the students are expected to achieve at the end of primary school and junior secondary school in each of the three languages: the characters or words known, reading speed and reading amount.

From the table, for example, we note that in their 9th year, students in bilingual schools (second model) should know how to use the 819 Yi characters, 3500 Chinese characters and 1200–1400 English words; they should be able to read materials written in Nuosu at the speed of 200 or more characters per minute. Their amount or volume of English reading should exceed 150,000 words.

Another important factor related to the ultimate goal of language education in Liangshan is the demographic makeup of the particular areas. A maximum number of bilingual schools are located in Yi-dominated areas; and although some schools are in Han-majority regions, their target students are Yi. At the county level, among the three sample regions, Meigu is Yi-dominated, Xichang is Han-dominated, and Mianning has a population with a mixed community. Therefore, each school in Meigu implements bilingual education and aims for trilingualism and triliteracy. The goals of language education in Xichang and Mianning are further determined by the demography at the village level. Since XC1 and MN1 are located in two Yi-dominated villages, their purpose is the same. Likewise, XC3 and MN3 in the present study are two ethnic minority secondary schools, and they also have similar goals. By contrast, XC2 and MN2 are in Han-majority areas, and their goals are different.

However, the reality is not always as expected. In the following section, we will show how each sample school varies in its methods of following the curricula and achieving its goals.

B. Vitality of Nuosu

The vitality of Nuosu is primarily related to the regional demographic makeup. To measure the ethnolinguistic vitality, we adopt the approach from Giles et al. (1977), in which ethnolinguistic vitality is defined to refer to the liveliness "which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intercultural situations" (p. 308). It can be measured by researching three classes of factors, namely status, demography and institutional support, according to the taxonomy of

Table 1 The ultimate goal of language education in the 6th and 9th year

		Ultimate goal	Emphasis	Requirements				Reading		
				No. of characters or words to be known						
				Nuosu	Chinese	English	Nuosu	Chinese	English	
6th year	Ordinary schools	*Bilingualism* in Chinese & English / *Biliteracy* in Chinese & English	Chinese	NA	3000	600–700	NA	300/m	Simple reading	
	Bilingual schools — First Model	*Trilingualism* in Nuosu, Chinese & English / *Triliteracy* in Nuosu, Chinese & English	Nuosu	–[a]	2500–3000	600–700	–[a]	<300/m	Simple reading	
	Second Model	*Trilingualism* in Nuosu, Chinese & English / *Triliteracy* in Nuosu, Chinese & English	Chinese	819	3000	600–700	150	300/m	Simple reading	
9th year	Ordinary schools	*Bilingualism* in Chinese & English / *Biliteracy* in Chinese & English	Chinese	NA	3500	1200–1400	NA	500/m	150,000	
	Bilingual schools — First Model	*Trilingualism* in Nuosu, Chinese & English / *Triliteracy* in Nuosu, Chinese & English	Nuosu	–[a]	3000–3500	1200–1400	–[a]	300–500/m	150,000	
	Second Model	*Trilingualism* in Nuosu, Chinese & English / *Triliteracy* in Nuosu, Chinese & English	Chinese	819	3500	1200–1400	200	500/m	150,000	

[a] no official data

the structured variables (Giles et al. 1977, pp. 308–309). Thus, following the continuum of vitality (Giles et al. 1977, p. 317), objective measurement suggests that Nuosu vitality in Meigu is medium-high. Because of the larger Yi population, the status of Nuosu is higher than that in the other two regions. Nuosu vitality in Mianning and Xichang is respectively medium and low-medium. For the current project, we did not conduct any subjective measurement of Nuosu vitality in Liangshan.

4.2.2 Language Education at Schools

In this section, a comparison will be made in five categories: (1) language as school subject; (2) language as MoI; (3) language(s) of examinations; (4) school environment; and (5) human resource for trilingual education. These five topics are related to the forms of education, and they can be additionally affected by other factors such as education resources, educational stages and regional economy.

A.   Languages as School Subjects

The offering of language classes is related to the forms of education and the educational resources at hand, teachers in particular.

A typical pupil in China is expected to complete 16 years of education, from primary schooling up to tertiary education. The first 9 years, namely Grade One to Grade Nine, comprise compulsory education, which includes 6 years for primary education and 3 years for junior secondary education. Grade 10 to Grade 12 is for senior secondary education. A unique feature of this stage is that since there are two streams for the college entrance examination (CEE)—arts and science—the students have the option to choose whether to study arts or science after the first semester in senior secondary education. Currently however, this practice has been discontinued in some provinces as part of the educational reforms process. But in Liangshan, the practice remains unchanged.

According to the curricula, bilingual schools in Liangshan should offer Nuosu and Chinese classes from the start of primary school, and English classes from the third year onwards; ordinary schools should offer only Chinese and English classes and similar arrangements should be made in terms of time allocation for each language. But there is a significant difference between the reality (see Table 2) and requirements.

With regard to the nine sample schools, all of them offered Chinese classes, which accounted for 77.74–91.75 % of the three language classes. For primary schools, 6–11 h of Chinese classes were guaranteed each week; for secondary schools, the number ranged between 5 and 9 h. Furthermore, all the seven bilingual schools offered Nuosu classes, which accounted for 12.37–23.40 % of language education. Nevertheless, the sample schools embraced different practices for Nuosu language education. Some schools continued with the Yi curriculum standard (YCS) like XC1 and MN1, while others did not follow the YCS. For instance,

Table 2 The weekly class hours of the Yi language, Chinese and English in the nine sampled schools

School	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4			Grade 5			Grade 6		
	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E
XC1	2	7	0	2	7	0	2	7	0	2	7	0	3	7	1	2	7	2
MN1	3	8	0	4	8	0	3	7	0	4	7	0	3	7	0	3	7	0
MG1	0	7	0	0	7	0	2	6	0	2	6	0	2	6	0	0	11	0
XC2	0	7	0	0	8	0	0	7	2	0	7	2	0	7	2	0	7	2
MN2	0	9	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0
MG2	0	10	0	0	10	0	1	8	1	1	8	1	1	8	1	1	8	1

School	Grade 7			Grade 8			Grade 9			Grade 10			Grade 11			Grade 12		
	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E	N	C	E
XC3 *Second Model*	2	8	8	2	9	7	2	8	8	2(A) 3(S)	9(A) 8(S)	7(A) 8(S)	2	8	8	2	8	8
First Model	4	8	8	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5	7(A) 8(S)	8(A) 8(S)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
MN3	3	9	9	3	8	8	3	8	7	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
MG3	1	6	7	1	5	6	0	6	6	0	6(A) 5(S)	6	0	5(A) 6(S)	6	1	9	10(A) 9(S)

N Nuosu, *C* Chinese, *E* English, *A* arts, *S* science

according to the timetable of MG1 and MG2, the Nuosu classes commenced later than recommended in the YCS. Moreover, the Nuosu class at MG1 was actually a 1-year practice. Due to a paucity of teachers, Yi students learnt the Yi script in grade 6, before they were tested in this subject. A similar situation prevailed in MG3, where senior secondary students acquired knowledge of Nuosu in grade 12, before appearing for the CEE.

The offering of English classes in the sample schools was even more inconsistent and unreliable. All the three secondary schools offered English classes. However, English was fundamentally overlooked in primary schools. Only two primary schools followed the English curriculum standard (ECS). As for the other schools, they either started teaching the course later than the grade recommended by the ECS or did not offer any English classes at all. What transpired at XC1 is a typical case often perceived in Liangshan. The timetable of the school attested that one to two class hours of English were taught each week. But in reality, the English classes were cancelled after several years of practice. No-one in the school could confirm when the classes would restart.

Teachers are the most important educational resource in a school. The severe shortage of teachers is one of the major reasons for failure to conduct English classes in Liangshan. It was established that a higher number of English teachers worked at urban and township primary schools than at village primary schools. Similarly, more Nuosu language teachers worked at village primary schools than at urban and township primary schools. This equation suggested that English teachers were more likely to choose schools in areas with an advanced economy and Nuosu language teachers were constrained by choice to work in village schools, since numerous urban and township schools were located in Han-dominated regions.

Besides the availability of teachers, their qualification is another factor to be taken into consideration. Among the 610 teachers from the nine sampled schools, most of them (49.55%) had an Associate Degree (3 years); 44.20% of them had a Bachelor's Degree (4 years); and 6.25% of them had merely completed their secondary education (see Table 3). We noticed a significant difference between teachers' qualifications in secondary schools and those in primary schools, and verified that trilingual teachers in secondary schools possessed superior qualifications. This could be the reason why secondary schools followed the YCS and ECS relatively rigidly and many primary schools were unable to adhere to these curricula.

B.   Language(s) as Medium of Instruction

The languages used as the MoI are related to the forms of education and the regional economy. In accordance with the curricula, the second model bilingual and ordinary schools should use Chinese as the MoI from the earliest grade in all classes, except for Nuosu class; and first model bilingual schools should use Nuosu as the MoI from the earliest grade in all the classes, except the Chinese classes. But based upon our observations, several variations existed in the schools.

Table 3 The number and academic background of the teachers of Nuosu, Chinese and English in the nine sampled schools

School	N				C				E			
	Total	B	A	S	Total	B	A	S	Total	B	A	S
XC1	2	–[a]	–	–	22	–	–	–	3	2	1	0
MN1	2	0	2	0	6	0	5	1	NA	NA	NA	NA
MG1	3	–	–	–	7	–	–	–	NA	NA	NA	NA
XC2	NA	NA	NA	NA	35	7	24	4	3	1	2	0
MN2	NA	NA	NA	NA	21	19	2	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
MG2	1	0	1	0	40	2	37	1	4	1	3	0
XC3	11	4	5	2	19	14	3	2	19	12	3	4
MN3	5	2	3	0	9	6	3	0	9	5	4	0
MG3	2	2	0	0	18	12	6	0	17	10	7	0

B with Bachelor's Degree or above, *A* with Associate Degree, *S* with Secondary certificate
[a] no official data

Table 4 Linguistic typology of language allocation in classes of Nuosu, Chinese and English

	N	C	E
XC1	Mixed	Mixed	Chinese-aided
MN1	Mixed	Mixed	NA
MG1	NA	Nuosu-aided	NA
XC2	NA	Chinese as MoI	Chinese-aided
MN2	NA	Chinese as MoI	NA
MG2	Mixed	Chinese as MoI	Chinese-aided
XC3 Junior	NA	Mixed (Second Model)	Chinese-aided
XC3 Senior	Mixed (Second Model)/Nuosu as MoI (First Model)	Chinese as MoI (First Model)	Chinese-aided
MN3	Nuosu as MoI	Mixed	Chinese-aided
MG3 Junior	Chinese as MoI	Chinese as MoI	Chinese-aided
MG3 Senior	NA	Chinese as MoI	Chinese-aided

We observed the language allocation of 26 classes (40 min for each class), including seven classes for Nuosu, eleven for Chinese, and eight for English. All the classes could be categorised into three models in terms of the MoI (see Table 4). The three models for the Nuosu class were Nuosu as MoI, mixed MoI and Chinese as MoI. 28.57% of the Nuosu language classes used Nuosu as the only MoI. 57.14% of classes used both Chinese and Nuosu as MoI; but it was Nuosu that dominated and accounted for 76.18–99.60% of the oral instruction. However, one teacher used Chinese for 87.36% of his instruction.

The three models for the Chinese class were Chinese as MoI, mixed MoI and Nuosu-aided MoI. The classes (54.55%) taught by the Han teachers used standard Chinese as the only MoI, though sometimes they did switch to Sichuan Mandarin, which was aimed at achieving a desired result through their instruction. 36.36% of the classes used up to 99.11% Chinese for instruction, but it was justifiable to use Nuosu for actions such as greeting friends, relatives and colleagues, questioning, one-to-one conversations, references to traditional Yi culture, and similar acts of

daily life. Both Han and Yi teachers adopted this practice. 9.09 % of Chinese classes were Nuosu-aided. For instance, the teacher at MG1 switched between Chinese and Nuosu 74 times[1]; and 59.37 % of the MoI was Chinese and 28.63 % Nuosu. It was solely the Yi teachers who utilised Nuosu-aided MoI. It was also discovered that students in urban and township schools were more competent in Chinese than those in village schools, and these students did not use Nuosu as an aid or support during classes. But students at rural schools necessarily required help with Nuosu in Chinese or other classes.

On the subject of English classes, all teachers used Chinese-aided MoI. English was used at a maximum of 69.66 % and for at least 13.75 % of the instruction. For the purpose of explaining English vocabulary, grammar and usage, an average 52.96 % of the MoI was Chinese. It was ascertained that English teachers in urban primary schools possessed more suitable meta-linguistic abilities than their counterparts in rural schools. Primary school English teachers used the target language more frequently as the MoI than teachers in secondary schools.

C. Language(s) of Examinations

The choice of language or languages used in examinations is influenced or determined by the forms of education. Ordinary schools used Chinese exclusively as the language for examinations. The second model bilingual schools used Chinese for every subject except Nuosu, whereas the first model bilingual schools used Nuosu for every subject except Chinese.

The language of examinations for first model bilingual schools was more complex. The Chinese and Nuosu examination papers were monolingual and had to be answered in the target language, and the examination papers for the other subjects were bilingual in Nuosu and Chinese. The students could answer questions in either the Chinese or Nuosu.

D. School Environment

"School environment" signifies on-campus language use, including talks, wall newspapers, slogans, and so on. This variable was firstly related to the demographic makeup of the school, and subsequently, to the forms of education.

It was noted that if the majority of students on campus were Yi, then Nuosu was more frequently used for all school activities and functions. All the nine sample schools had a varying proportion of Yi students. Thus, their language use was, to a certain extent, bilingual. Chinese was the dominant language for formal domains, such as classroom instruction or meetings. Additionally, Nuosu was also used on campus, but typically for informal domains. The questionnaire confirmed that, in

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[1] One switch is counted when the speaker uses one language to talk minimally for a time length of two seconds.

Table 5 Number of bilingual teachers in 2009

Total	Model 1			Model 2		
	Primary school	Junior secondary school	Senior secondary school	Primary school	Junior secondary school	Senior secondary school
1564	167	73	60	1039	195	30

urban and township primary schools, Yi students use much less Nuosu (23.21%) than students in village schools (85.82%). 76.78% of on-campus talks in the three secondary schools, were conducted in Nuosu.

Moreover, English was also employed on campus, especially for classroom wall newspapers. In most schools, the wall newspaper was written customarily in Chinese; the topics ranged from Chinese proverbs and an introduction to common sense knowledge to guidelines on fire prevention. However, in some schools, the newspapers were trilingually written. We refer to one wall newspaper at XC1 as an example. From left to right, we perceived firstly a demonstration in Chinese of a mathematics problem, and then a passage in Nuosu about Yi education. This was followed by a passage in Chinese about the fire torch festival, which is a very significant Yi festival, and was succeeded by an English passage entitled "Mr. Tin is a short and fat man", and the wall newspaper finally concluded with several Chinese proverbs.

Moreover, we were unable to locate any wall newspapers and slogans in Nuosu at ordinary schools. This could be attributed to the reason that they sought to establish their "ordinary" identity very evidently and obviously.

E.   Human Resources for Trilingual Education

We identified that among the 610 teachers from the nine sample schools, the Nuosu language teachers all had Yi ethnicity. 63.52% of the Chinese teachers were Han and 31.76% of Chinese teachers were Yi. The Han constituted 76.37% of the English teachers and a mere 10.91% of English teachers were Yi. Most of the teachers were monolingual in Chinese. Teachers of Yi nationality tended to be bilingual and two or three English teachers were, in fact, trilingual. The distribution of teachers in schools was related primarily to the forms of education.

Teachers in ordinary schools were mostly monolingual, though a few of them were bilingual. At XC2 and MN2, we identified a few Chinese teachers of Yi nationality. However, we were unable to find an appropriate or favourable occasion to investigate their language competence. Nine Model 1 and 102 Model 2 bilingual secondary schools promoted education in the prefecture. Looking at Table 5, we see that Model 1 secondary schools had more bilingual Nuosu-Chinese teachers than Model 2 secondary schools, given the total number of schools.

It was determined that in bilingual schools, even though some of the teachers were monolingual Chinese speakers, they did acquire minimal essential competence in Nuosu for teaching. A former English teacher at XC1 discontinued teaching

English in 2007. In order to replicate for us one of her English classes, she demonstrated for one class hour, the method by which she taught English to her students. During the course of instruction, she constantly used Yi words such as "ax yi wox" (children) and "ngex w" (right?), to confirm that the students understood what she was explaining to them. Several teachers with trilingual competence taught in secondary schools, and all of them were Yi and teachers of English.

4.2.3   Attitudes of Stakeholders

Four types of informants participated in the interviews or/and filled in the questionnaire; they were policy makers, teachers, parents and students. Different stakeholders assumed different attitudes toward trilingual education (see Table 6). A remarkable and striking feature was that as the hierarchy descended, perceptions became increasingly more diverse. Moreover, the attitudes of stakeholders were related to the forms of education, the educational stages and economic status.

A.   Policy Makers

From the perspective of policy makers at the prefecture and county levels, bilingual schools should aim to establish trilingualism and triliteracy. But different forms of education have different emphases. In our interviews, policy makers reasoned that the three languages were indeed important, but not equally. Chinese was considered the most important for almost every school in the prefecture, except for first model bilingual schools, due to its role as the lingua franca across the country. Policy makers argued that Nuosu and English should be placed on an equal footing of secondary importance. Nuosu should be inherited and preserved and English was the bridge that connected China with the outside world. Therefore, the policy makers responded actively and enthusiastically to bilingual education requirements in Nuosu and Chinese. For instance, in each county, bilingual education supervisors were appointed to guide and supervise bilingual education at schools within their jurisdiction. One policy maker elaborated upon his attitudes toward bilingual education:

> I could not speak any Chinese before Grade One in primary school. When I was in Grade Three, I could barely communicate in Chinese, and I could speak fluent Chinese when I was in Grade Five. But till now, I have to think in Nuosu before using Chinese expressions. If students could receive bilingual education from primary school, the obstacle might be overcome….It was Nuosu that significantly helped improve the literacy of the Yi people. And I was one of them; without the language, I could not go to the Southwest University for Nationalities[2]. Although the development of Nuosu is not as good as Korean, Tibetan and Uyghur, it is not near the edge of extinction; developing the language is still what we need to do now….

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[2] Southwest University for Nationalities: founded in 1951, the university is located in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan province. Its student population is largely composed of ethnic minorities, but it has recently opened up to Han Chinese and foreigners as well.

Table 6 Language attitudes of stakeholders

Policy makers

	C>N=E
Primary	100 %
Junior secondary	100 %
Senior secondary	100 %

School principals

	C>N>E	C>E>N	C=N>E	C=N=E	C=E>N
Primary	28.57 %	42.86 %	28.57 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Junior secondary	20.00 %	40.00 %	0.00 %	20.00 %	20.00 %
Senior secondary	0.00 %	25.00 %	0.00 %	25.00 %	50.00 %

Teachers

	C>N>E	C>E>N	C=E>N	N>C>E	E>C>N
Primary	92.31 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	7.69 %	0.00 %
Junior secondary	20.00 %	60.00 %	10.00 %	10.00 %	0.00 %
Senior secondary	0.00 %	57.14 %	14.29 %	0.00 %	28.57 %

Parents

	C>N>E	C>E>N	C=N>E	C=N=E	C>N>E	N>E>H	E>C>N
Primary	30.77 %	15.38 %	0.00 %	15.38 %	23.08 %	7.69 %	7.69 %
Junior secondary	–a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Senior secondary	50.00 %	0.00 %	50.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %

Students

	C>N>E	C>E>N	C=N>E	C=E>N	N>C>E	C=N=E	N>E>C	E>C>N	E>C=N
Primary	40.00 %	20.00 %	5.00 %	5.00 %	10.00 %	0.00 %	5.00 %	10.00 %	5.00 %
Junior secondary	11.11 %	33.33 %	0.00 %	11.11 %	0.00 %	22.22 %	0.00 %	22.22 %	0.00 %
Senior secondary	0.00 %	20.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	20.00 %	0.00 %	60.00 %	0.00 %

> more important than, = equally important, *C* Chinese, *E* English, *N* Nuosu

a – no data

It appeared that policy makers were not interested in promoting English education in primary schools. Most of them were progressive and unbiased but adopted a laissez-faire attitude. However, when it came to secondary schools, their attitudes were totally at variance with their attitudes to primary schools. Since English was deemed an important subject for the CEE, they were very proactive in promoting trilingual education in bilingual schools.

B.   Teachers

This section examines the attitudes of the second type of informants, i.e., the teachers, including school principals. They implement policies at the school level and are responsible for enforcing the policies too.

   We have to admit that school principals are policy makers to a certain extent, for they select the language which should be given more importance and, in turn, the language which can be safely discounted. Generally, the understanding and comprehension of different school principals differ with respect to the same policy, and in so doing, they may all follow different practices. For example, 49 % of the students at MN2 were Yi; but the school principal was not convinced about the importance of Nuosu, and consequently, no Nuosu classes were organised for the students.

   Primarily, the attitude of the school principals and teachers is related to the forms of education and educational stages. Based upon our observations, school principals as well as teachers were extremely proactive in promoting Chinese education. In fact, teaching Chinese appeared to be the sole and most important concern of ordinary schools. In order to learn Chinese more competently, the students at XC2, for example, participated in a Chinese poem recitation performance every 2 weeks as part of the school's "Scholarly Campus" event. The results from our questionnaire also suggested that rural teachers attached greater importance to Chinese, more so than urban and township teachers, probably because of weaker competence demonstrated by students in Chinese.

   A few of the bilingual schools were active in responding to bilingual education needs in Nuosu, though not with the same fervent intensity as displayed for Chinese education. To recount an example, the school principal and teachers at XC1 reflected that the Nuosu class was very significant and devoted considerable attention to the class. The teachers of Nuosu language at XC1 were rewarded for teaching Nuosu effectively and the Han teachers were actually encouraged to learn Nuosu. In another case, the teachers at MN1 assumed a permissive and indifferent attitude toward the Nuosu class and toward competence of students in Nuosu. This was the most commonly discernible attitude of teachers to Nuosu education among the six sample primary schools.

   English was, to a large extent, overlooked and discounted in primary schools. But in secondary schools, it assumed a role of equal importance and prominence with Chinese because of its function in the CEE. Therefore, teachers were proactive in promoting trilingual education in secondary schools. At this juncture, we must elaborate on specific practices in selected schools connected with the three

languages. We refer to certain cases, such as the Chinese language teachers at XC2, who expected their students to maintain a diary and use the Chinese books in the school reading room to their fullest advantage; to help the students understand western culture, the English teachers at MN3 held an annual Christmas party; Nuosu language teachers at MN3 replaced some complicated and difficult Nuosu essays in textbooks with folk literature which was easily understood and accepted by the students. The teachers at XC1 helped Yi students to perform Nuosu dramas and songs, and watch Nuosu movies; XC3 held Nuosu speech contests and traditional cultural exhibitions, aimed at promoting the language.

C.   Parents and Students

The third and fourth types of informants were parents and students. A majority of them were in agreement about the importance and meaning attached to the three languages, but differed in their opinions as to the extent and degree of that significance. Secondary school students regarded English as the most important language to learn and Nuosu the least important. In primary schools, Chinese was considered more important than English and Nuosu. Moreover, rural students dedicated more time and attention to learning Chinese and Nuosu; English was regarded as markedly important by their urban and township counterparts. A similar stance was noticed in the attitudes displayed by parents to trilingual education. Our interviews revealed that while students were keen to achieve trilingual proficiency, their parents were equally proactive and enthusiastic in their support of trilingual education.

To summarise, the key factors related to the three dimensions discussed above are the form of education, followed by the demographic makeup of the particular region. It was an unpredicted finding that the influence of economic status was not strong. In view of the interdependent relationships among each factor, the roles of less important factors cannot be overlooked. Up to this point, the first two research questions have been answered. In order to address the third question, a unique characteristic of trilingual education in Liangshan should be identified.

5   Dilemmas in Trilingualism and Trilingual Education in Liangshan

According to Feng and Sunuodula (2009), three indigenous minority groups are representative of minority groups in China, in terms of geographical location and degree of integration with the Han. They are the Uyghur in Xinjiang, the Yi in Sichuan and the Zhuang in Guangxi. They are defined by Zhou (2000, 2001) respectively as follows:

Type 1 community: those with writing systems of historically broad usage;
Type 2 community: those with writing systems of historically limited usage; and
Type 3 community: those without functional writing systems.

Therefore, minority groups belonging to Type 1 and Type 3 communities find it easier to reach an agreement on exactly how to implement language policy or choose their language priority. But minority groups of Type 2 community, like the Yi in Sichuan, do not have a well-defined and distinct path to follow. Different people have a different, or even conflicting, understanding of the language policy, thereby reaching diverse language choices. The dilemma commonly confronting most people is a choice, primarily between the Chinese and Nuosu.

A typical example is a Yi parent expressing his views about his child's choice of schooling. The parent gained his Bachelor's degree from the Southwest University for Nationalities. He was the principal of a remote village primary school. His child attended MN2, where no Nuosu classes were offered. When he was questioned about his child's Nuosu proficiency, he responded:

> There is no difficulty for my child to speak Nuosu, but it is still necessary for my child to learn Nuosu at school, because the instruction at home is not systematic … and attending the present school is not an ideal choice. But I have no better choice. The child needs to take the examinations [to go to higher schools] …. My primary school has Nuosu classes; but it is too far away, I didn't send my child there.

The parent wanted his child to attend a school where Nuosu classes were offered. But if these particular schools were not available in regions with more improved educational resources, the child was compelled to attend more suitable schools, at the expense of the ethnic language. Therefore, three dilemmas are very obviously noticeable here: (1) the lack of coherence between the personal aspirations of the Yi people and the actual reality; (2) the tension between the spread of Putonghua and the survival of the minority language; and (3) balancing the three languages in the light of the increased importance ascribed to English.

5.1 Personal Aspirations Versus Reality

Out of the 796 Yi students in the present study, 70.48 % of them assumed a positive attitude towards their Yi identity; 71.86 % of these students reflected that the Yi people must be able to speak their own language; and 61.93 % of them could speak Nuosu fluently. However, proceeding from our observations and interviews, hardly any students, except students of the first model, were capable of reading and writing with the Yi script. The Nuosu language teacher at MG2 declared: "Only one or two in a class of about 50 students can write and read without much difficulty in the Yi script. The rest of them can barely follow the class."

Disproportionate opportunities in the field of education and later, in finding an appropriate job and career were the major reasons to justify the inadequacy and deficiency of Yi students, and their lack of Nuosu literacy; these were also the principal reasons for this dilemma. Among the 562 primary schools in Xichang, Mianning and Meigu, 50.36 % of them were Yi-majority schools. However, 89.29 % of the urban and township primary schools were Han-majority schools, which, in turn, implied that most primary schools with superior and therefore, preferred educational facilities were Han-majority schools and offered no Nuosu language classes.

In the case of higher education schools, only 19.30 % of secondary schools in the three counties were Yi-majority schools, and a greater number of secondary schools did not offer Nuosu language classes.

Furthermore, Yi people believed that learning Chinese from the outset could transform the process of learning and education, making it more advantageous and accessible. Attending secondary school was a matter of priority and acquired inordinate importance on the agenda of Chinese people. All the subjects, except English, for the vital entrance examinations in China were in Chinese; and sitting for the examinations in Chinese denoted obtaining an equal chance for abundant opportunities in future education. For instance, Yi students of the first model who took the examinations in the Nuosu language were only permitted to choose limited majors in several colleges; on the other hand, Yi students who sat for the Chinese examinations could choose any major in any college across the country. The implementation of preferential policies, such as lower standards for admission for all minority students in China, made Yi students even more competitive than the Han students. Therefore, 98.3 %, or 404,864, of Yi students in Liangshan favoured taking secondary school examinations in Chinese. When Yi students entered college, the MoI was Chinese; those with low Chinese proficiency, such as students of the first model, were bound to be at a noticeable disadvantage. Thus, we concluded that despite the fact that the Yi people had strong ethnic identity and the personal will to learn Nuosu, they were obliged to take reality into consideration.

Upon completing their schooling, the Yi people discovered that nearly all jobs required adequate proficiency in Chinese, and jobs involving the use of Chinese only were more profitable and even easier—and less demanding—than those necessitating the use of Nuosu. We refer here to the Nuosu language teacher at MG3 as an example. He was the only teacher of Nuosu for twenty classes of students at MG3. He taught one class hour of Nuosu language for each class every week, which was acutely insufficient to achieve the aims of language learning. The teacher experienced a sense of utter frustration at the state of affairs in the school, and lost his motivation for teaching.

It must also be emphasised that teachers for first model students were expected to use the Nuosu language and script to teach every subject except Chinese and English. Thus, besides knowing the Nuosu language, teachers were supposed to have specialised knowledge of subjects like Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics. Consequently, teachers who only possessed knowledge of the Nuosu language underwent further training in specified subjects. But the rewards were not commensurate with their increased efforts and work-load. A faculty member from Xichang College commented on the lack of bilingual teachers:

> Our college started to enrol Yi students in the Nuosu-Chinese bilingual programme in 1989…. At least 1400 students have graduated as registered Nuosu-Chinese bilingual teachers…. However, only half of them continue to work as teachers.

This statement is supported by the results from the questionnaire, which clearly indicated that only half of the Yi students in the nine sampled schools thought that learning Nuosu could benefit them to gain employment.

5.2 *Propagation of Putonghua and the Survival of Nuosu*

In attempting to trace the roots of the personal dilemma from a social context, a separate dilemma emerges for the community in Liangshan from the viewpoint of the minority language policy. Blachford (2004) surveys historically the reform of the Uyghur and Kazakh written languages and the spread of Putonghua in Xinjiang; an identical paradigm can explain the status of Nuosu in Liangshan from 1949 to the present day. Blachford (1999, 2004) elucidates that the first decade after the founding of the PRC in 1949 witnessed total development of the general minority language policy and an active use of minority languages. Later, in view of the limited use of the traditional Yi written form, the government assisted the Yi minorities to reform their written language.

However, two political campaigns, from 1958 to 1977, i.e., the Great Leap Forward[3] and the Cultural Revolution[4], recalibrated the policy away from encouraging diversity to assimilation. The reformed writing system was banned. The formerly optional Chinese was the only official language in every social domain. But the majority of the Yi people in that period could communicate exclusively in Nuosu. Teng (2001) affirmed that all the textbooks at that time were in Chinese; hence, numerous schools had only three grades, because the students dropped out before Grade Four.

The Yi people were reluctant about replacing their language with Chinese or even the Latin-based written Yi. Thus, they developed their own written language, based on the traditional Yi script. Admittedly, this bottom-up reform was a success; but Putonghua was undoubtedly the language which spread and developed during the "turmoil" for almost 20 years, and subsequently, many Yi people learnt Putonghua.

Two years after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, Deng Xiaoping acquired power. The government agenda changed from political movement to economic development. However, a major debate ensued over minority language policy. Finally, a compromise was reached, which ended the controversy between the pro-Putonghua and pro-minority groups. A bilingual policy prevailed in minority regions. However it also provided the grounds for the spread of Putonghua among the minorities. In reality, since 1958, along with the reform of the Yi writing system, the policy of disseminating Chinese was carried out and accomplished "with more central support, more political rightness, more openness and with greater enthusiasm" (Blachford 2004, p. 112).

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[3] The Great Leap Forward: an economic and social campaign of the Communist Party of China, reflected in planning decisions from 1958 to 1961, which aimed to use China's vast population to rapidly transform the country from an agrarian economy into a modern communist society through the process of agriculturalisation, industrialisation, and collectivisation. However, this campaign turned out to be the prelude to a series of economic disasters.

[4] The Cultural Revolution: a social movement that took place in the People's Republic of China from 1966 through to 1976. It was designed to further cement socialism in the country by eliminating capitalist elements from Chinese society. This process involved major changes to the political, economic and social landscapes of China. Social norms largely evaporated and previously established political institutions disintegrated at all levels of government.

5.3   Dilemma over English Classes

Unlike Nuosu, which students learn as a projection of their ethnic identity, the English language is purely learnt as a subject for examinations. The reason that the MoI in all English classes is Chinese-aided (see Table 4) can be ascribed to the above statement, for using Chinese is the most efficient approach towards enhancing the students' understanding of grammar and other language details, within a limited scope of time.

The controversy with reference to English is whether the course should be offered in primary schools. Although all school principals and teachers of primary schools in the present study concurred unanimously that English should be taught as a school subject, only half of the six sample primary schools actually conducted English classes. Many schools in Liangshan followed a system whereby secondary schools started English teaching afresh, irrespective of whether or not students had graduated from a primary school with English classes. If this was indeed the prevalent system, as corroborated by several primary school principals, there was no essential necessity for students to learn English in primary schools, especially when many village schools lacked a supply of credible English teachers. Therefore, the requirement in the new curriculum for English is not obligatory, and its implementation is totally decided based upon the acumen and understanding of the concerned school principals. What is more, a prejudice appears to have developed against primary school English education, which is regarded as time-consuming and laborious but inefficient.

6   Discussion

In this section, two perspectives will be adopted from policy analysis and functional linguistics to explain the above-mentioned dilemmas and address the third research question.

6.1   The Non-Autonomy of the Autonomous Prefecture

Chinese law is one of the oldest legal traditions in the world, where ruling through the superior power, exercised by an individual or a group, has long been the convention. That particular individual or group decides and implements the ideologies and policies. Blachford (1999, pp. 102–122) identifies the communist power structure and interplay among each of the organisations, at various policy levels. She concludes that the central-local relationship is neither complete central dominance nor comprehensive regional autonomy. Nevertheless, the balance of interdependence appears to be largely in favour of the centre.

In the case of Liangshan, its superior actors are the national and provincial government organs. Despite inter-agency relationships, they exert stronger influences on Liangshan than the reverse impacts. Therefore, the policy relating to Nuosu as educational outcomes initiated by Liangshan Prefecture cannot be implemented because of conflicting policies at the national and provincial levels. According to an official from the Language Commission of Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture[5], in reality, the party and government bodies at each administrative level in Liangshan urgently require Nuosu-Chinese bilingual civil servants. For example, the use of Nuosu on a daily basis to deal with legal cases is compulsory in people's courts. Therefore, an additional examination in Nuosu should be conducted for these employees, as stipulated in the '*Regulations with Regard to Spoken and Written Languages in Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture*'. The Sichuan Provincial Department of Personnel, which is in charge of holding the examination and assigning the qualified examinees to their posts contends that there should be an additional test of Nuosu; however, the leaders reason that such an examination is unjustifiable for qualified Chinese monolingual examinees, as they would be placed at a disadvantage. Therefore, learning Nuosu alone is not a stipulation to guarantee that bilingual examinees have a strong desire to compete and succeed; and departments that have to recruit bilingual staff face difficulties and obstacles in accomplishing this task.

A further setback to Nuosu language education, to the first model in particular, is that Nuosu is replaceable in the CEE. It is as an accepted practice that Model 1 students answer examination questions in Chinese. Therefore, this practice undermines the aims of the first model. Consequently, motivation levels for first model students are low, when it comes to learning Nuosu, and they favour the more convenient language, Chinese.

6.2   Language Functions: Efficiency vs. Equity

Halliday (1994) categorises the three metafunctions of language as ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function. The tension between the first two metafunctions appears to be the key reason for the afore-mentioned dilemmas. In a multilingual context, people on the one hand tend to choose the most accessible language(s) to construe their experiences of the world for the sake of efficiency; and on the other hand, they are inclined to communicate in the language(s) which best indicates their ethnic identity for the sake of equity. Here, *efficiency* refers to the extent to which time or effort is best used for intended communication, and *equity* connotes the equal right for the co-existence of cultural identities involved

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[5] The Language Commission of Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture: a government body which makes the policy of language use at the prefecture level and supervises its implementation, including implementation of Chinese and other minority languages within its jurisdiction. It also sets and implements the standards of language use, both spoken and written. In practice, its main job is to facilitate the spread of standard Chinese.

in intra- and inter-ethnic communication. When these two communicative ends are in contradiction, bilingual or multilingual speakers more often than not experience difficulty in language choice. They have to seek a balance between the ideational function and the interpersonal function, or between efficiency in communication and equity in ethnic identity. One important technique of displaying that equity is to use the ethnic language.

In Liangshan, the Yi people have to choose one language as an efficient tool of communication and meanwhile, decipher and determine their ethnic or cultural identities. It has been observed that efficiency outweighs equity in the communication process. Yi students purely use Nuosu for the purpose of intra-ethnic communication; in inter-ethnic communication, they use Chinese to communicate with Han students at the cost of equity in the Yi identity. In terms of different domains, 67.65 % of Yi students exclusively or primarily used Nuosu at home. In educational domains, Chinese was considered a more efficient language for examinations. For socio-economic activities, the dominant communicational language, both spoken and written, was also Chinese. The minimum use of Nuosu in the educational and socio-economic domains indicates the sacrifice of the equity in ethnic identification. Therefore, the equal status of Nuosu, a significant symbol of ethnic identity, cannot be guaranteed by law; it is determined by efficiency in real language use.

Additionally, people from villages use Nuosu for approximately 83.64 % of all their communication; but the corresponding percentage is 11.49 % for people from towns within the same county. Thus, it is noteworthy that the more developed the regional economy, the smaller the number of Yi people who use Nuosu. As the economy further develops and expands within the prefecture, people will be confronted by a greater dilemma, in the absence of suitable measures.

Based on the discussion, the third research question has already been answered. We have identified two major influences upon policy-making and the implementation of trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan. Firstly, unsuccessful coordination between the upper and lower policy bodies of government is the main reason which leads to the status quo. Although the lower policy bodies formulate the process of trilingual education, it is the upper ones that determine the contradictory or impracticable outcomes. Secondly, the legally equal status of Nuosu and Chinese cannot be realised, because Chinese is in greater demand in more domains. The Yi people have relatively fewer possibilities to use Nuosu as a symbol of maintaining the equity in ethnic identity.

7 Conclusions and Implications

The present study has surveyed the status quo of trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan and provided comparative studies in three dimensions. We have also identified the dilemma faced by the Yi people in trilingual education. The most important findings are as follows:

1. There is a significant gap between the curricula and the practice, in Nuosu and English education in Liangshan.
2. Chinese is more favoured in Liangshan than Nuosu and English, for it is a more efficient language of communication in important domains.
3. The Yi people have strong ethnic identity but are compelled to use Chinese, for they face a series of dilemmas arising from their history as well as from reality.

Based on the findings, three sets of implications emerge in three related fields: language planning, language use and language education.

Since the Chinese language meets social needs and helps to obtain many benefits, it is widely recognised and accepted by the minority people in Liangshan. Nuosu and English education have scope for improvement, if people acknowledge and understand the following.

In language planning:

1. In the prevalent Chinese power structure, to maintain the minority language, policy makers must realise the importance of cultural diversity and multilingualism.
2. The policy enforced by superior administrative levels should ensure that the end never contradicts the process; the policy at each level should be consistent.

In language use:

1. Measures should be taken to realise the legal equality of Nuosu in real situations; Nuosu should be recognised as more efficient than Chinese in certain social domains.
2. The use of Nuosu, both spoken and written, should be mandatory in some important domains.

In language education:

1. Bilingual education alone cannot maintain the minority language; other socio-economic, historical and political factors correspondingly have a role to play in this aspect.
2. Bilingual education can be achieved only if teachers are comprehensively and adequately trained, the teaching material sufficiently compiled and sufficient class hours ensured.
3. Education, including the teaching and learning processes and examinations for the first model must be enlarged, standardised and strictly enforced, in accordance with its original purpose.
4. English education between primary and secondary schooling must be efficiently linked, to ensure that it is no longer a burden for primary schools, which at present have no educational resources or intentions to offer English classes.
5. The existing gap between rural and urban schools should be reduced as far as possible.

Despite the unique features of trilingualism and trilingual education in Liangshan, it has many common aspects with other minority groups in China. The knowledge acquired from this study may shed significant light on trilingualism and trilingual

education across the country, or even in other parts of the world. In the process of follow-up studies, an important concern to be addressed is the establishment of an improved model of trilingual education for minority students in particular regions. Accordingly, detailed research on each factor of the above-discussed three dimensions, in addition to other influences such as linguistic distance and recency in language acquisition should be examined.

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Introduction

The third part of this volume contains reports of vastly different projects conducted in *Yun-Gui-Yue* (standing for Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangzhou in Guangdong Province). The chapter by the Yunnan team presents findings from a large-scale survey conducted in different schools with a focus on three minority groups. Chapter 9 gives a fascinating account of a trilingual education experiment conducted in a remote village school in Guizhou. Chapter 10 is distinctive as it focuses on Cantonese-speaking secondary school students' attitudes towards Cantonese (Yueyu) in the city.

Chapter 8 is a research report on Yunnan, the province with the most diverse population in the PRC in terms of ethnicity. The 25 ethnic minority groups live side-by-side in mixed or compact communities where one or two groups dominate(s). Primarily through questionnaire surveys, this investigation focuses on language use and language teaching and on perceptions of and attitudes towards the three languages—the minority language(s), Mandarin Chinese and English—in primary and secondary school classrooms where Bai, Yi and Zhuang students are present or dominant. It was found that, except for occasional use of the minority language to explain teaching contents orally in some primary school classrooms, pupils' mother tongues are largely ignored in primary and secondary education. Despite the gloomy situation of the mother tongue in compulsory education, the survey found that the teachers and students had fairly positive views about their mother tongues with regard to their identity and self-esteem. The surveyed respondents showed doubts about linguistic assimilation and they tended to agree that trilingualism or multilingualism is the way forward.

Statistically the poorest province in China in terms of monthly per capita income, Guizhou is overwhelmingly rural with many minority groups such as Miao, Bouyei and Dong living in remote, mountainous areas. Traditionally, the transition model is used in minority dominated schools in which children's mother tongue is used unsystematically at the initial stage to support primary schooling, before shifting to the use of Mandarin Chinese as the sole medium of instruction. Chapter 9 reports the findings of a longitudinal research project conducted in a Dong village

school over ten years from 2000 to 2010, with a focus on the effectiveness of a trilingual experiment carried out in 2005 and 2007. Both statistical and qualitative data give clear evidence that a model that aims to develop additive bilingualism in Dong and Chinese is far more effective than the traditional transition model with regard to children's overall school performance, including third language acquisition. Furthermore, the former enabled the children to have more confidence to aim high and more self-esteem to claim their ethnic identity.

Cantonese is a southern Chinese dialect, spoken mainly in Guangdong Province. Cantonese is occasionally viewed as a stronghold against the popularisation of Mandarin Chinese, which has been promoted as the national language. However, the language does not enjoy the same legal status as the languages spoken by ethnic minorities, who are allowed to use their languages as the primary teaching language. Meanwhile, officials in Guangdong Province have strongly supported the learning of English in schools. Chapter 10 reports on a study that examined the attitudes and perceptions of the students who are confronted with such a trilingual environment. This study found that the secondary school students in the major city of Guangzhou had favourable attitudes towards the three languages, with Cantonese rated as their preferred language. English came second for its instrumental value, while respondents displayed mixed emotions towards Mandarin Chinese.

A Survey Report on Trilingualism and Trilingual Education in Yunnan

Yichuan Yuan, Deying Hu, Peng Li, Honghua Zhu, Jinjun Wang, Yun Shang and Hongbin Ba

Abstract Yunnan is the province with the most diverse population in terms of ethnicity. The 25 ethnic minority groups live side by side in mixed communities or in compact communities where one or two groups dominate(s). Primarily through questionnaire surveys, this investigation focuses on language use and language teaching and on perceptions of and attitudes towards the three languages, the minority language(s), Mandarin Chinese and English, in primary and secondary school classrooms where Bai, Yi and Zhuang students are present or dominant. It was found that, first, except for occasional use of the minority language to explain teaching contents orally in some primary school classrooms, the pupils' mother tongues are largely ignored in primary and secondary education. Despite the glooming situation of the mother tongue in compulsory education, the survey found that the teachers and students had fairly positive views about their mother tongues with regard to their identity and self-esteem. The surveyed respondents showed doubt about linguistic assimilation and they tended to agree that trilingualism or multilingualism is the way forward.

Keywords Yunnan · Sociolinguistic profile · Quantitative approach · Language allocation · Perceptions · Attitudes · Assimilation · Bilingual and trilingual education

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1   Introduction

This research seeks an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and views held by major stakeholders towards trilingualism and trilingual education in minority dominated regions in Yunnan, China. Discussions on trilingualism and trilingual education have become frequent since 2001, when the National English Curriculum Standards (NECS) was promulgated by China's Ministry of Education (MOE) to promote English language education all over the country. Research into this new phenomenon has been reported but this type of research is often isolated and limited to one individual region or educational institution (Hu 2007; Huang 2007; Jiang et al. 2007). There is no known research project designed to examine the whole situation and to gain a comprehensive understanding of the forces that shape the policy and implementation of trilingualism and trilingual education, of the linguistic typology of language allocation in real-world classrooms, and of the perceptions and attitudes held by the stakeholders towards trilingualism. The current nationwide project aims to fill this gap, as stated in the Introduction of this book, and our research contributes to the project by providing empirical evidence of the perceptions and views held by major stakeholders in Yunnan.

2   Sociolinguistic Profile of Yunnan

Yunnan, the eighth largest province of China, lies in the southwest of China with Kunming as its capital city, adjoining Guangxi, Guizhou, Sichuan, Chongqing and Xizang (Tibet). Of a total land area spanning 394,000 km^2, 94 % consists of mountains and plateau regions. This province borders Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam on the west and south. Of the 56 nationalities in China, 26 can be found in Yunnan each with a population of over 4000 members. With the exception of the Han people who are the majority in China, Yi, Bai, Hani, Dai, Zhuang, Miao, Lisu, Hui, Lahu, Wa, Naxi, Yao, Jingpo, Zang, Bulang, Buyi, Pumi, Archang, Nu, Ji'nuo, De'ang, Mongolian, Shui, Man, Dulong and Dong comprise the other 25 ethnic minority nationalities. In this sense, Yunnan can be viewed as a multilingual and multicultural mirror of minority nationalities in China (Hu 2007, p. 16).

Yunnan, in Chinese, means "South of the Clouds" and it has a generally mild climate with pleasant and fair weather because of the province's location on south-facing mountain slopes, receiving the influence of both the Pacific and Indian oceans. Topographically, the average elevation is 1980 m. The mountains are highest in the north, and Kawagebo Peak reaches up to 6740 m; the lowest point is in the south, near the Vietnamese border, with an altitude of 76.4 m. On account of the highly mountainous terrain, transportation facilities are poor in this province. The ethnic minority nationalities live in range after range of mist-shrouded mountains. Their compact communities, without much communication with other ethnic minorities, have resulted in diverse living conditions for all these communities (Hu 2007, p. 16).

Table 1 Top six minority groups in terms of population. (Source: http://news.163. com/11/0509/16/73KJ2R4R00014JB5.html Retrieved 13 November 2013. [In Chinese])

Nationality	Population	Percentage (%)
Yi	5.028 million	10.94
Hani	1.630 million	3.55
Bai	1.561 million	3.40
Dai	1.222 million	2.66
Zhuang	1.215 million	2.64
Miao	1.203 million	2.62

It was reported by the authorities of the Sixth China National Census on 9 May 2011 that currently the total population of Yunnan province is 45,966,000, among whom 30,629,000 are of Han nationality, and make up 66.63 % of the provincial population. The 25 ethnic minorities number 15,337,000, and comprise 33.37 % of the population in Yunnan. Table 1 provides data for the top six minorities, each with a population of more than a million people.

3   Profiles of the Three Targeted Ethnic Minority Nationalities

This study targeted three of the ethnic minority nationalities in Yunnan, namely Bai, Yi and Zhuang, who make up the majority of the investigated population. A small number of participants from other nationalities were also included. Elaborated below is a brief description of the three major groups.

3.1   The Bai Nationality

The population of the Bai nationality is 1.561 million. They live in compact communities mainly in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture. Other sections of the community are scattered in Kunming, Yuanjiang, Lijiang and Lanping. The Bai nationality has a long history. Since ancient times, the Bai people have established a close relationship with the Han and the Yi in the interior or the neighbouring regions. After the fall of the Nanzhao Dynasty (738–902 AD), specifically during the Dali Dynasty (937, 1254 AD), the Bai people from different areas merged into a single nationality, with a similar language, culture and economic structure. They have their own spoken language that belongs to the Tibeto-Burman stock of the Sino-Tibetan Language family. In addition, numerous Bai people are conversant with the Chinese language. They adopt Chinese characters as their written system. Although they have their own script, that script is not popular with them nowadays. Besides Buddhism and Taoism, the worship of their Patron God is most popular with them. The Patron God Temple can be found in almost every village. The Patron God is the Guardian of a village or a region.

The Bai people regard white as an honourable colour and prefer white clothes. Men often wear white coats with black vests. Bai women too, choose to wear white or blue jackets, paired with black or blue vests. Unmarried women style their hair in a pigtail, or wear beautiful headdresses that depict the four features renowned in Dali, namely the flowers in Shangguan, the wind in Xiaguan, the snow on top of the Cangshan Mountain and the moon reflected in the Elrhai Lake. The favourite festival of the Bai people and the grandest show of the year for them is The Third Month Fair in Dali. It falls on 15 March, as per the Chinese lunar calendar and lasts for 7 days.

3.2   The Yi Nationality

The 5.028 million Yi people occupy the largest portion of the ethnic minority population in Yunnan (10.94%). Most of them are farmers or herdsmen, scattered in mountains all over the province. They have their own language, which belongs to the Tibetan-Burmese sector of the Sino-Tibetan family. They speak six Yi dialects consisting of 25 local dialects. They are well-known for their rich culture and religious beliefs, for example, the Yi Solar Calendar, believed by scholars to date back to 10,000 years. The altitudinal differences of the Yi areas directly affect the climate and precipitation of these areas. These striking differences are the basis of the old saying that "The weather is different a few miles away" in the Yi area. This is the primary reason why the Yi in various areas are so different from one another in the ways they make a living. Chuxiong is the sole Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan.

The Yi were once a strong, independent and populous ethnic group and they are very proud of their history, which spans centuries. The Yi have a rich heritage and culture, and they have their own religion, which is a form of animism. The Yi worship nature and their ancestral Gods. In contemporary history, foreign missionaries, in some measure, had an effect on the education of the Yi people (Huang 1995). The study of the Yi people, Yiology, was established by different levels of the local government and international conferences on Yiology are regularly held both at home and abroad. The Yi script was originally logo syllabic like Chinese, and dates back to at least the thirteenth century. Under the New-China government, the script was standardised as a syllabary. Syllabic Yi is widely used in books, newspapers, and street signs.

3.3   The Zhuang Nationality

With a population of 1.215 million, the Zhuang Nationality represents 2.64% of the total population in Yunnan. Most of them live in the Wenshan Zhuang and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, in the southeast part of the province. Predominantly, the Zhuang follow traditional animist practices, which include elements of ancestor

worship. There are also a number of Buddhists, Taoists, and Christians among the Zhuang. They have a very proud and long history. It was only in recent history that the Zhuang developed a written language. In 1955, the government worked with them and invented a script. Their spoken language is the Zhuang-Dai branch of the Zhuang-Dong group of the Sino-Tibetan family. Many of them can communicate in Mandarin Chinese. The Zhuang are noted for their brass drum culture.

4   Literature Review

4.1   Bilingual and Trilingual Studies Internationally

Hornberger (1989) contends that the development of complete L1 proficiency offers not only cognitive and social advantages for mother tongue use but also benefits the attainment of L2 proficiency. To test the functions of L1 to L2 or L3, Shama (1991) and Lin (1997) conducted studies on the Zhuang people in Guangxi province and other minority nationalities in China, and established that the use of the minority language helped students to learn English because students could identify with English more than with Mandarin Chinese. One of the reasons for this finding was that the languages of many of the ethnic minorities and English are similar in script. Shama (1991) even reported that bilingual education improved the overall quality of learning and enhanced self-confidence among minority students. To address this issue, Feng and Sunuodula (2009) conducted empirical as well as archival researches in three minority dominated regions (Xinjiang, Guangxi and Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan). Their findings were also reported in Adamson and Feng (2009) and Feng (2007, 2008). Several issues come to the fore in relation to this subject. Firstly, the experience of minority pupils in developing their competence in languages in general, often lacked symmetry. Thus, a large majority of minority pupils failed to acquire age-appropriate competence either in their minority home language or the majority language, Han Chinese. Without reaching the age-appropriate level in either language, according to the threshold theory (Cummins 1976, 1984, 2000), such a pupil was unlikely to avoid the negative consequences of bilingualism. This statement proved to be true in most cases which were investigated. Secondly, while some minority regions responded to the official 2001 National English Curriculum Standards by enhancing English provision, other regions appeared to pay only lip service to the NECS, and their priority continued to be the further enhancement of Mandarin Chinese teaching and learning. With regard to motivation of minority students to learn a foreign language, English in particular, the empirical findings of Feng and Sunuodula also indicated a gap between the literature and reality.

4.2   Bilingual and Trilingual Studies in Yunnan

Lin (1990) states that bilingual education in China, in many cases, implies that "minority children learn Chinese" (also see Blachford 1997 and Cummins and Corson 1997, p. 163). There is a huge volume of literature, particularly in Chinese, on bilingual education and bilingualism with Yunnan as the focus, given the fact that the province is the most diverse in China in terms of ethnicity (Dai 1996). Much empirical research has been done to investigate the status quo of bilingual education in schools in different regions (e.g., Cao 2007). In recent years, quite a number of in-depth studies have also been conducted on what attitudes minority students hold towards different languages they use or face in their lives and how they negotiate identities in their own communities (Hansen 1999; Lee 2001; Wang 2011; Yang 2013; Yuan 2008). Discussions on trilingualism and trilingual education, however, are relatively rare. There are research studies conducted in recent years with a concern about trilingual issues, but most of these studies are focused on how minority students acquire English without in-depth discussion on the complex and dynamic relationships of the three languages involved.

Trilingual education is normally defined as the learning of three languages, with Chinese either at the centre of the three or as the medium of instruction of all school subjects. The first language is the ethnic minority learner's mother tongue (the language in which the learner should have developed the most proficiency, but it is often ignored); the second is Chinese (Mandarin, or Putonghua, or standard Chinese, or the local Han dialect, any of which may be used as the medium of instruction for part or for the entire curriculum); and the third is English, which is usually regarded as a foreign language in China (Hu 2007, p. 32).

As Yunnan is comprised of 25 multi-ethnic nationalities, they all have their own characteristics and patterns in terms of language learning (Zhang and Cheng 1997; Li 2000; Xue 2000; Zhang et al. 2001; Li and Yuan 2001). It is apparently inappropriate to teach ethnic minority students English with the same syllabus, textbooks, methodology and learning strategy as teaching Han students. Thus, some educators argue that a special policy would have to be formulated on how to deal with ethnic minority students learning L2 and L3 (Zhang et al. 2001, p. 135). Such a policy has to be evidence-based. Hu's (2007) investigation in Xishuangbanna in Yunnan highlighted four features, (a) bilingual education was insignificant to the ethnic minority students' L3 learning; (b) ethnic minority students' ideology of "Inferior" L1 led to their lack of self-confidence; (c) The proposal of applying ethnic minority students' L1 to L3 instruction was unwelcome; (d) The success of ethnic minority students in learning L2 did not necessarily lead to their success in learning L3. Hu's (2007) research also determined that students' overall English learning outcomes had little to do with ethnicity, except for specific minor linguistic items like pronunciation or memorisation of vocabulary. The research of Li and Yuan (2001), however, indicated that ethnic minority students differed from Han nationality students in the aspects of their English learning objectives, attitudes towards teaching, and requirements for teaching and studying. Various English proficiency tests (Zhang and

Cheng 1997; Zhang et al. 2001; Li and Yuan 2001) revealed that ethnic minority learners in secondary schools lagged far behind their Han Chinese counterparts. This indicated then that high levels of bilingualism (both ethnic L1 and Mandarin L2) were not achieved by the students, as the cognitive and social advantages of third language learning by balanced bilinguals widely found in research were not demonstrated by these ethnic minority students.

5 Research Questions

Different research results beg further questions requiring investigation into the real situation of language education in the region. To make the current situation in Yunnan comparable with other minority regions in China, as stated in the Introduction, we conducted several surveys in 2009, which addressed the following two basic questions:

1. What is the linguistic typology in terms of language allocation in classrooms in different schools in minority dominated areas of Yunnan province?
2. How do different stakeholders in minority education perceive the importance of trilingual education?

5.1 Methodology

This investigation was carried out in September 2009, in four ethnic minority regions in Yunnan Province, southwest China, i.e. Dali Bai People's Autonomous Prefecture, Shiling Yi People's Autonomous County, Shizhong County and Kunming City.

The investigations were undertaken at seven schools, of which two were primary schools (one in a village, another in a township) and five secondary schools (one was in a township and four in the cities). Most of the participants were in the age group of 15–17 years old. In China, typically, primary school students do not exceed the age of twelve, and secondary school students range from 13–18 years old.

The population for this study was composed of three groups of stakeholders, namely students, teachers (including educators) and parents. 801 students from seven primary and secondary schools participated in the investigation, out of which 241 were Han students. 85 teachers and administrators took part in the survey, and 37 belonged to the Han nationality. 264 parents, 97 of whom were from the Han nationality, and with children studying at the schools, were also invited to join in the investigation. Hence, the gross population totalled to a figure of 1150. Since the Han belong to the ethnic majority in China and their inclusion in this chapter would be contradictory to the theme of this research, Han participants were deleted from the database. Thus, the valid population finally added up to a figure of 775: 560 students, 48 teachers and educators, and 167 parents.

Table 2 School level and ethnic groups

School level	Gender (*N*=560)			Ethnic groups (*N*=560)				
	Male	Female	Total	Bai	Yi	Zhuang	Others	Total
Primary school	84	55	139	0	42	97	0	139
	60.4%	39.6%	100%	0.0%	30.2%	69.8%	0.0%	100%
Secondary school	176	245	421	260	100	18	43	421
	41.8%	58.2%	100%	61.80%	23.80%	4.30%	10.20%	100%

The investigation was conducted following a quantitative approach. The instruments consisted of three questionnaires designed by the project group, which were mostly statements on 5-point Likert scales with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree", plus some open-ended and close-ended questions. The questionnaires were mainly concerned with the views of students, parents, teachers and administrators, on languages and language education respectively. The questionnaires were in Chinese, translated from the English version.

All survey data collected in this study were entered into the SPSS data analysis programme for the following statistical analysis: (1) frequency analysis, to measure the percentage of the open and close-ended index; and (2) descriptive statistics, to determine the mean values and standard deviations of the Likert scale items.

6   Results

6.1   Students' Responses

Table 2 shows that all together 560 students participated in the survey, 139 of whom were primary school pupils and 421 were secondary school students. (The primary school students could not fully understand the questionnaire, so their teachers were invited to help explain the questionnaire items.) In terms of the sample population, the first three ethnic minorities were Bai (260), Yi (142) and Zhuang (115), and they made up 89.8% of the total subject population. The other ethnic groups were each too small to be statistically significant and thus, were organised into the "Others (43)" group (see Table 2).

With regard to linguistic background, Table 3 suggests that the students rated their knowledge of their ethnic minority language as "Fluent" (73.4% for primary and 59.6% for secondary school students) and their Chinese (Putonghua) as "OK" (84.9% for primary and 64.6% for secondary school students). But they stated that their knowledge of English was "limited" (82.7% for primary and 51.3% for secondary school students), and knowledge of other minority languages, was either "limited" or that they had "no knowledge at all" of other minority languages.

On the positive side, of the 560 participants, 353 (102+251, 63%) believed that they were able to speak their minority language fluently, as specified by their acceptance of "Fluent", which indicated that the minority spoken language continued to be popular amongst the participants.

Table 3 Linguistic background

School Level	Language	Fluent	OK	Limited	No knowl-edge at all	Missing	Total
Primary school	Minority language	102	12	15	7	3	139
		73.4%	8.6%	10.8%	5.0%	2.2%	100%
	Chinese (Putonghua)	20	118	1	0	0	139
		14.4%	84.9%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	English	3	9	115	9	3	139
		2.2%	6.5%	82.7%	6.5%	2.2%	100%
	Other minority language	2	21	83	18	15	139
		1.4%	15.1%	59.7%	12.9%	10.8%	100%
Secondary school	Minority language	251	78	49	41	2	421
		59.6%	18.5%	11.6%	9.7%	0.5%	100%
	Chinese (Putonghua)	138	272	8	3	0	421
		32.8%	64.6%	1.9%	0.7%	0.0%	100%
	English	9	182	216	12	2	421
		2.1%	43.2%	51.3%	2.9%	0.5%	100%
	Other minority language	8	18	146	169	80	421
		1.9%	4.3%	34.7%	40.1%	19%	100%

6.2   Analyses of Students' Answers to the Questionnaires

In this part, we analyse the students' answers to the questionnaires. From Table 4, we see that only 18 (12+6) of the participants reported that they were taught minority languages at school, however 542 (127+415) stated that their schools did not teach them any minority language.

Table 5 shows that 83 (81+2) of the students stated that some subjects were taught in their ethnic mother tongues. However, according to our lesson observations at the two primary schools, the ethnic minority teachers only occasionally used their own languages to explain the content. On no occasion was the pupils' L1 used as the medium of instruction to teach a school subject. No ethnic minority language was spoken in classes, as observed by us, in the three secondary schools. Nevertheless, 83 (58.3%) of the primary school pupils had experienced occasional use of their home language in the classroom, but 476 (58+418) of the participants had never experienced minority language teaching in the classroom.

Table 4 Whether the school teaches a minority language to minority students

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Yes	12	8.6
	No	127	91.4
	Total	139	100
Secondary school	Yes	6	1.4
	No	415	98.6
	Total	421	100

Table 5 Whether the school uses a minority language to teach school subjects

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Yes	81	58.3
	No	58	41.7
	Total	139	100
Secondary school	Yes	2	0.5
	No	418	99.3
	Missing	1	0.2
	Total	421	100

Table 6 Whether Mandarin Chinese is used as the only language to teach school subjects

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Some subjects	22	15.8
	All subjects	117	84.2
	Total	139	100
Secondary school	Some subjects	89	21.1
	All subjects	320	76
	Missing	12	2.9
	Total	421	100

The results in Table 6 are somewhat obscure, because 111 (22+89) respondents stated that "some" school subjects were taught in Mandarin Chinese but 437 (117+320) respondents said that "all" subjects were. Maybe some participants meant to convey that in English classrooms, teachers used English as the teaching medium but all other subjects were taught in Chinese. Alternatively, it could also be surmised that the local Chinese dialect which was used by some teachers was not understood to be Mandarin Chinese by these students.

The responses in Table 7 appear not to agree with the reality, when 446 (116+330) of the respondents answered "No, English was not taught to us in school". Currently in China, English is offered in primary schools from Grade 3 onwards. In some village primary schools, English is not offered because of a lack of qualified English teachers. It seems especially contradictory that 330 secondary school students answered "No", when they should have undoubtedly, been taught more English than primary school pupils. Their replies could be construed as suggesting that their schools did not offer English exclusively to ethnic minorities, and that they studied English along with the mainstream Han students.

Table 7 :Whether English is taught to minority students in school

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Yes	22	15.8
	No	116	83.5
	Missing	1	0.7
	Total	139	100
Secondary school	Yes	87	20.7
	No	330	78.4
	Missing	4	1
	Total	421	100

6.3   Views on Languages and Language Education

While analysing the factors related to the students' views on languages and language education (Table 8), it was perceived that the students scored Item 6 as the highest (4.81/4.4), i.e., the schools needed more teaching facilities and equipment. Items 2 and 3 received the second and the third highest points respectively (4.59/3.97 and 4.22/4.33), indicating that most of the students agreed that both their Chinese and English should be further enhanced and improved. It was apparent that they were not satisfied with the learning environment.

Item 7 received the fourth highest score of 4.33/3.94, signifying that the participants had a greater preference for mixed ethnic group schools than sole ethnic dominated schools. The students provided the lowest minimum scores of 2.08/1.70 to Item 10, and the second and third lowest scores were given to Item 5 (2.97/2.23) and Item 8 (1.78/2.44). Item 8 implied that they had a strong sense of ethnic identity and confidence in learning English required by the school curriculum as efficiently and capably as their Han peers. The students also assessed the importance of the employment of minority teachers (Item 4: 3.01/3.36), as having significantly more priority than that of Han teachers (Item 5: 2.97/2.23). The students believed that their ethnic mother tongue teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously (Item 1: 3.28/3.56).

6.4   Minority Language Learning

Table 9 indicates that the ethnic minority participants scored Items 4 and 6 very high. The first two highest means (4.08/4.39 and 4.27/4.19) suggested that they had confidence in their ability to learn English as well as their Han peers, and also learn the three languages equally as well as successfully. The third highest score was for Item 1 (3.71/3.94), which implied that ethnic minority students regarded their minority language as useful and valuable and also, asserted that they could learn it competently. The students gave the lowest points to Item 2 (1.56/1.59). The standard deviation of Item 2 is also the lowest (0.869/0.794).

Table 8 Students' views on language education

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously.	Primary	138	1	5	3.28	0.861
	Secondary	418	1	5	3.56	0.978
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced.	Primary	139	1	5	4.59	0.867
	Secondary	415	1	5	3.97	0.776
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved.	Primary	139	1	5	4.22	0.808
	Secondary	412	1	5	4.33	0.848
4. More teachers of minority nationalities should be employed because they know minority pupils' needs better.	Primary	139	1	5	3.01	0.771
	Secondary	415	1	5	3.36	0.994
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed because they are generally better than minority teachers.	Primary	139	1	5	2.97	1.383
	Secondary	415	1	5	2.23	0.980
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided.	Primary	139	2	5	4.81	0.550
	Secondary	416	1	5	4.4	0.798
7. There should be more schools with students of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	Primary	139	2	5	4.33	0.674
	Secondary	416	1	5	3.94	0.851
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority students, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.	Primary	139	1	5	1.78	1.166
	Secondary	417	1	5	2.44	1.159
9. Minority children should know their own minority languages first, then Chinese and English.	Primary	139	1	5	3.77	1.421
	Secondary	417	1	5	3.12	1.133
10. Minority students cannot learn English as well as Han counterparts. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for us.	Primary	139	1	5	2.08	1.440
	Secondary	416	1	5	1.70	0.974

Table 9 Views on Minority Language Learning

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. I like my own minority language and hope to learn it well.	Primary	139	1	5	3.71	0.934
	Secondary	413	1	5	3.94	0.929
2. I don't care too much about my own minority language as it is not useful in the future.	Primary	139	1	5	1.56	0.869
	Secondary	413	1	5	1.59	0.794
3. My parents want me to learn the minority language as well as Chinese.	Primary	139	1	5	4.17	1.087
	Secondary	413	1	5	3.54	0.971
4. I think English is important. We should and can learn it as well as the Han peers.	Primary	139	1	5	4.08	0.964
	Secondary	413	1	5	4.39	0.851
5. I think Chinese is most important. We should focus only on learning Chinese.	Primary	139	1	5	3.44	0.902
	Secondary	412	1	5	2.96	1.009
6. I think it is possible to learn three languages equally well.	Primary	139	1	5	4.27	0.977
	Secondary	413	1	5	4.19	0.894

Table 10 Whether minority nationality's written language is taught as a school subject

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Yes	8	53.3
	No	6	40
	Missing	1	6.7
	Total	15	100
Secondary school	Yes	1	3
	No	32	97
	Total	33	100

6.5   Teachers' Responses on Trilingualism

Of the 48 teachers and administrators, 15 were primary school teachers and 33 were secondary school teachers and educators. Bai (29), Zhuang (8) and Yi (7) teachers dominated the investigation, with four participants from other ethnic minority nationalities. 68.8% of the teachers had a Bachelor's Degree and 25.0% graduated with an Associate Degree. Their teaching careers spanned from 1 to 18 years, and their ages ranged from 26 to 45 years. Encouragingly, 35 out of the 48 participants rated their eloquence in their ethnic mother tongue as "Fluent".

Table 10 reveals that, of the 15 primary school teachers, eight teachers confirmed that they taught the ethnic minority's written language as a school subject to the pupils, while six teachers answered in the negative. Whereas, for the 33 secondary school teachers, a solitary teacher confirmed teaching the ethnic minority's writ-

Table 11 Whether Chinese (L2) is used as the medium of instruction for school subjects

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	Yes	13	86.7
	Missing	2	13.3
	Total	15	100
Secondary school	Yes	31	93.9
	No	1	3.0
	Missing	1	3.0
	Total	33	100

Table 12 Time allocated to English per week

Level	Time allocation	Frequency	Percentage
Primary school	2 periods	12	80.0
	Missing	3	20.0
	Total	15	100
Secondary school	2 periods	1	3.0
	5	2	6.1
	6	8	24.2
	7	3	9.1
	8 periods	17	51.5
	Missing	2	6.1
	Total	33	100

ten language as a school subject and 32 teachers replied negatively. Hence, it was inferred that the minority language was used as the medium of instruction in some primary schools, but not in secondary schools. Additionally, it could be inferred that it was only occasionally that some primary school teachers, who belonged to the minorities themselves and who were able to speak minority languages, explained the difficult texts in the ethnic mother tongue to their class, in order to scaffold the minority students and to aid their understanding.

Thus, it is understandable that 86.7%/93.9% of the teachers answered that Mandarin Chinese (L2) was used as the medium of instruction for school subjects as shown in Table 11.

The time allocated in English (L3) classroom teaching and learning was significant, to measure the emphasis placed by the educational administration and school curriculum on English. From Table 12, we perceive that English teaching periods (one period = 45 min in secondary schools, and 40 min in primary schools) per week ranged from two periods to eight in secondary schools. Based on the National English Curriculum, two periods per week for English should normally be offered in primary schools and 6–8 periods in secondary schools. From the figures in the table, we ascertain that English education was greatly valued (eight periods) in secondary schools, as a majority of the schools which were studied allocated the maximum number of hours to English teaching and learning.

Two of the fundamental reasons for offering extra time (6–8 periods) for English to secondary school students were to prepare them for college entrance examina-

Table 13 Whether the proportion of English teaching to minority students is satisfactory for future opportunities of higher education and job markets

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percent
Primary school	Yes	8	53.3
	No	6	40.0
	Missing	1	6.7
	Total	15	100
Secondary school	Yes	31	93.9
	No	2	6.1
	Total	33	100

tions and future job markets. This leads to the inquiry of how these functions were judged from the points of view of the teachers and administrators. Table 13 illustrates that 53.3/93.9 % of the teachers reflected that their school provided a reasonable amount of English teaching to minority students, so that they were not in any manner disadvantaged in future higher education and in the job market. However, 40.0 % of primary school teachers were not satisfied with the performance of English education.

6.6 Teachers' Views on Languages and Language Education

With reference to the teachers' views on languages and language education (Table 14), Item 1 (3.13/3.38) and Item 10(3.13/3.25)were evaluated to receive the first and the second highest mean scores respectively, and Item 9 (3.27/2.56) was ranked third. Since Items 9 and 10 have contradictory statements as Item 9 favours following the same syllabuses as the Han students and ignores the minority language and Item 10 allocates importance to the minority L1, we can understand that the declarations of pros and cons are even or very close.

Teachers assigned a score lower than 2.78 to all other items, thereby implying that they supported the other statements that the minority language was imperative and valuable to the learning of all school subjects. Moreover, the teachers affirmed that English was also beneficial and sufficiently important to justify the time and effort spent in learning it by minority students and they were as capable as their Han counterparts of learning English.

6.7 Teachers' Views on How to Improve Current Language Practice

Items 6 and 10 in Table 15 were graded with the first and second highest mean scores (3.93/4.66 and 3.87/4.34), which attest to the fact that schools required added teaching facilities and equipment and that the minority students could learn English besides mastering their own minority language and Chinese as efficiently as their

Table 14 Teachers' views on language and education

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well.	Primary	15	1	5	3.13	1.246
	Secondary	32	1	4	3.38	0.751
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subjects.	Primary	15	1	5	2.40	1.121
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.41	1.103
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils.	Primary	15	1	4	1.67	0.976
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.34	1.004
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages.	Primary	15	1	3	1.53	0.640
	Secondary	32	1	5	1.91	0.963
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly.	Primary	15	1	5	1.60	1.056
	Secondary	32	1	3	1.44	0.564
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese.	Primary	15	1	3	1.53	0.640
	Secondary	32	1	3	1.53	0.567
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the New English Standard.	Primary	15	1	5	1.93	1.033
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.78	1.263
8. The language used to teach and learn English, interlanguage, should be the minority language, but not Mandarin Chinese.	Primary	15	1	4	2.47	1.060
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.22	0.941
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, without bothering to learn the minority language.	Primary	15	1	5	3.27	1.335
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.56	1.134
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is, first of all, to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects, including Chinese and English equally well.	Primary	15	2	4	3.13	0.834
	Secondary	32	1	5	3.25	1.047

Table 15 Teachers' views on language practice

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in schools where minority students dominate or attend.	Primary	15	1	5	3.20	1.014
	Secondary	32	2	5	3.59	0.875
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in schools where minority students dominate or attend.	Primary	15	2	5	3.33	1.047
	Secondary	32	2	5	4.00	0.803
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in schools where minority students dominate or attend.	Primary	15	2	5	3.80	0.941
	Secondary	32	2	5	4.06	0.878
4. More English teachers of minority nationality should be employed by minority schools because they know minority pupils' needs better.	Primary	15	2	5	3.60	1.121
	Secondary	32	2	5	3.78	1.070
5. More English teachers of Han nationality should be employed by minority schools because their English is generally better than their minority counterparts.	Primary	15	2	4	2.87	0.743
	Secondary	32	1	4	2.41	0.798
6. More hardware such as computers and language labs should be provided for minority schools.	Primary	15	2	5	3.93	1.033
	Secondary	32	2	5	4.66	0.653
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	Primary	15	2	5	3.33	1.047
	Secondary	32	2	5	3.97	0.695
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.	Primary	15	1	4	2.53	0.990
	Secondary	32	1	5	2.31	0.998
9. Linguistic assimilation will not work, but serious bi/trilingual education will. So we should promote bi/trilingualism, not assimilation.	Primary	15	2	5	3.47	1.060
	Secondary	32	2	5	3.91	0.893
10. Given equal conditions, minority pupils can learn English as well as Han peers, in addition to mastering their own home language and Chinese.	Primary	15	2	5	3.87	0.915
	Secondary	32	2	5	4.34	0.701

Han counterparts, under equal conditions and circumstances. Items 3 and 2 with the third and fourth highest points respectively (3.80/4.06 and 3.33/4.00), suggest that most of the teachers agreed that their students' Chinese and English learning skills should be further enhanced and improved. Items 9 and 7 placed fifth and sixth (3.47/3.91 and 3.33/3.97), which implies that the participants did not approve of linguistic assimilation, and would definitely prefer mixed ethnic group schools rather than single ethnic dominated schools.

The teachers provided a minimum score (2.53/2.31) to Item 8 and the second lowest score to Item 5 (2.87/2.41), and from Item 8, it could be inferred that they believed that their minority students had strong ethnic identity and confidence in learning English required for the school curriculum, as competently as their Han peers. Additionally, the teachers accorded more prominence to the employment of minority teachers (Item 4: 3.60/3.78) than Han teachers (Item 5: 2.87/2.41). The teachers declared that their ethnic mother tongue teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in the school (Item 1: 3.20/3.59). In general, all the teachers concurred that linguistic assimilation would not succeed in schools, but serious bi/trilingual education would, hence it would be in the best interests of the students to promote bi/trilingual education, not assimilation (Item 9: 3.47/3.91). The teachers conveyed the impression of giving responses similar to those of the students, as regards their views on how to improve current teaching and learning practices.

6.8   Parents' Responses on Trilingual Education

Overall, 167 parents participated in the survey. The men (118) outnumbered the women (49) by up to 71%. The Zhuang (93), Yi (35) and Bai (33) minorities comprised the overwhelming majority of parents in the survey. A mere 7.2% of the parents had university degrees or had studied further and acquired a Master's Degree; 49.1% had graduated from secondary school or its equivalent and 38.9% had graduated only from primary school, which denoted that many of the parents had limited educational qualifications.

In terms of their linguistic backgrounds, an overwhelming majority of the parents rated their Mandarin Chinese ability as "OK" and their ethnic mother tongue ability as "fluent", but their English ability was "limited", and their knowledge of other languages was either "limited" or they professed having "no knowledge at all".

6.9   Language Education Issues

Children attended schools where a few of the minority teachers occasionally used the minority language to scaffold children's learning and understanding of what the teachers wished to convey in Chinese. Consequently, 22.9% of the parents assumed that schools indeed taught the minority language to minority students.

Table 16 Whether school offers subjects in minority language

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percent
Primary school	Yes	56	43.1
	No	74	56.9
	Total	130	100
Secondary school	No	37	100
	Total	37	100

Table 17 Whether English is taught to minority students

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percent
Primary school	Yes	112	86.2
	No	16	12.3
	Missing	2	1.5
	Total	130	100
Secondary school	Yes	33	89.2
	No	4	10.8
	Total	37	100

Table 18 Whether school attaches importance to students' home language and culture

Level	Answer	Frequency	Percent
Primary school	Yes	108	83.1
	No	20	15.4
	Missing	2	1.5
	Total	130	100
Secondary school	Yes	26	70.3
	No	11	29.7
	Total	37	100

However, when questioned as to whether the school used a minority language to teach any additional school subject(s), only 43.1 % of the primary school pupils' parents believed that this was true (refer to Table 16). However, not a single secondary school parent contributed a positive response to this query.

Table 17 demonstrates that 16 of the primary school pupils' parents were not convinced that English was offered in their children's schools. In other words, they reflected that their children attended village primary schools where there was no provision for English language learning. But, it was encouraging feedback that 145 (112+33) out of the 167 parents reported that their children's schools taught English.

As indicated by Table 18, 31 (20+11) of the 167 parents thought that their children's school did not attach sufficient importance to the language and culture of minority pupils, but an overwhelming majority, 134\parents, answered this question positively.

6.10   Parents' Views on Languages and Language Education

Table 19 suggests that parents held the view that schools needed enhanced teaching facilities and equipment and Chinese teaching and learning should be further improved in schools.

Items 1 and 7 indicate that a high number of parents concurred that there should be greater support and encouragement with respect to teaching the minority language to their children and the parents keenly advocated the concept of mixed ethnic group schools, rather than single ethnic dominated schools. The parents gave a minimum score of 1.74/1.54 to Item 10 and the second lowest score (2.49/2.26) to Item 8, leading to the inference that they reflected that their minority children had strong ethnic identity and confidence in learning English required for the school curriculum as competently as their Han peers. Besides, the parents attached higher importance to the employment of minority teachers (Item 4: 3.62/3.40) than of Han teachers (Item 5:3.45/2.71), which is similar to the evaluations by the students and teachers. The parents opined that English teaching and learning should be improved in their children's schools (Item 3: 3.83/4.31). Furthermore, the parents agreed that minority children should know their own minority language first, and then Chinese and English.

The results in Table 19 confirm responses similar and comparable with the students' and teachers' views on languages and language education, along with their beliefs on improving current practices in teaching and learning.

7   Conclusion

This investigation studies the views of stakeholders in minority education including students, teachers (educational administrators) and parents in Yunnan by means of three survey questionnaires. Through data analysis above, we are in the position to draw the following conclusions that are relevant to the research questions.

In terms of the language allocation in classrooms, the absolute majority of the stakeholders surveyed reported that Chinese (L2) was predominantly used as the medium of instruction for most or all school subjects in the school. The mother tongue (L1) of minority students was occasionally used orally by some ethnic teachers in primary schools to aid explanations of the texts. This study gives strong evidence of linguistic assimilation in schools in Yunnan.

On the importance of trilingual education, the overwhelming proportion of stakeholders held the view that schools attached sufficient importance to the two languages: Chinese and English. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, our data revealed that ethnic minority languages are largely ignored in secondary schools, although they may still play a limited role in some primary schools. This may inevitably lead to replacive or subtractive trilingualism (see Chapter 11) in that students are acquiring Mandarin Chinese and English at the expense of their home language.

Table 19 Parents' views on language and education

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in this school.	Primary	130	1	5	4.28	0.800
	Secondary	35	2	5	3.71	0.710
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in this school.	Primary	130	2	5	4.48	0.718
	Secondary	35	1	5	4.66	0.765
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in this school.	Primary	130	2	5	3.83	0.827
	Secondary	35	1	5	4.31	0.832
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by this school because they know minority pupils' needs better.	Primary	130	1	5	3.62	0.884
	Secondary	35	2	5	3.40	0.775
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.	Primary	130	1	5	3.45	1.162
	Secondary	35	1	5	2.71	0.987
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for this school.	Primary	130	1	5	4.59	0.814
	Secondary	35	1	5	4.46	0.817
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	Primary	130	1	5	4.14	1.160
	Secondary	35	2	5	3.91	0.981
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.	Primary	130	1	5	2.49	1.259
	Secondary	35	1	5	2.26	1.010
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.	Primary	130	1	5	3.39	1.384
	Secondary	35	1	5	3.20	1.052
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.	Primary	130	1	5	1.74	1.158
	Secondary	35	1	5	1.54	0.919

The participants also pointed out that schools need supplementary teaching facilities and equipment, that both Chinese and English teaching should be further enhanced and improved, and that mixed ethnic group schools rather than sole ethnic dominated schools, were more desirable.

A large number of participants believed that minority students displayed strong confidence in learning English required for the school curriculum as competently and efficiently as their Han peers and ethnic mother tongue teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in schools, because the minority language is regarded as beneficial and valuable. As Holiday (cited in Hu 2007) points out, if there is any break in the attainment of positive self–esteem or self-confidence through the full development of the learner's mother tongue as a valued means of communication or if the learning of the learner's mother tongue and subsequent languages leads to semi-lingualism, the learner's general cognitive development, motivation for learning, and educational progress will be stunted. Fortunately, through the investigation, we comprehended that the participants' ethnic minority self-esteem and self-confidence, at least in their spoken languages, was still strong, which could serve as a sound platform for developing educational programmes that facilitate the cognitive development of all these children.

Both minority students and teachers accorded more priority and importance to the employment of minority teachers than of Han teachers. The teachers were in agreement that belief that linguistic assimilation was not feasible, but genuine and serious bi/trilingual education would work; hence, it would be advantageous from the students' point of view to promote bi/trilingualism, not assimilation. This finding presented similar responses from students and their parents with respect to improvement and upgrading of current educational practices.

In the Chinese context, the definition of bilingual education is restricted to a Chinese educational background, for numerous scholars have defined the term to mean "a speaker of one ethnic group (who) can speak the language of another ethnic group", and "in addition to the mastery of one's own mother tongue, an ethnic group or an individual are/is able to produce one or more languages of other ethnic group(s)" (He 1998, pp. 180–184). In this sense, those ethnic minority students who are able to speak their L1 and also the Han language are all to a greater or lesser extent bilingual (Fishman 1999, pp. 403, Hu 2007, p. 20).

Nevertheless, the pedagogical use of ethnic minority languages has encountered at least three main problems. The first problem arises due to historical reasons: the vocabulary repertoire of specific ethnic minority groups is limited and cannot wholly serve its pedagogical purposes. This is the case with some minority groups in Yunnan. Therefore, "The standardization of new words and terms and the information processing of minority writing [and spoken] systems are two urgent tasks" (Huang 2003, p. 3). The second problem is that in a classroom with children from different linguistic background it would be impractical to adopt only one or two ethnic minority languages, whilst ignoring the others. The third problem, as Fishman et al. (1985, p. 66) point out, is that "language shift of any kind is an indicator of dislocation. It implies the breakdown of a previously established societal allocation of functions". Language shifts may diminish the zeal of students in learning languages seen as less useful. There are proposals such as that by Malone (2003)

to establish education programmes that enable learners from ethnic communities to achieve their educational goals, without having to sacrifice their linguistic and cultural heritage. However, to deal with the problems effectively in the specific context of Yunnan, there might have to be some fundamental changes made in policy making and trilingual education, such as revitalisation of some endangered languages and empowerment of minority groups.

With hindsight, we are able to identify certain limitations of the survey report, as some results are somewhat contradictory. An essential prerequisite that is missing is the knowledge of causal factors behind these views and attitudes. Clarification of ambiguity and the causal factors require further research. Nonetheless, the survey has enabled us to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of key stakeholders and their attitudes towards trilingual education.

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Emerging Trilingualism among the Dong Minority in Guizhou Province

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Abstract Statistically the poorest province in China in terms of monthly per capita income, Guizhou is overwhelmingly rural with many minority groups such as Miao, Bouyei and Dong living in remote, mountainous areas. Traditionally, the transition model is used in minority dominated schools in which children's mother tongue is used unsystematically at the initial stage to support primary schooling, to shift to using Mandarin Chinese as the sole medium of instruction. This chapter reports the findings of a longitudinal research project that was conducted in a Dong village school over 10 years from 2000 to 2010, with a focus on the effectiveness of a trilingual experiment carried out in 2005 and 2007. Both statistical and qualitative data give clear evidence that a model that aims to develop additive bilingualism in Dong and Chinese is far more effective than the traditional transition model with regard to children's overall school performance, including third language acquisition. Furthermore, the former enabled the children to have more confidence to aim high and more self-esteem to claim their ethnic identity.

Keywords Guizhou · Southern Dong · Language vitality · Instrumental motivation · BICS · CALP · Mother-tongue based bilingual education · Trilingual education experiment · Effectiveness

1 Introduction

In the village of Zaidang[1] (Rongjiang county, Qiandongnan Miao-Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province), a bilingual education pilot project was conducted between 1999 and 2009. This project consisted of an 8 year mother tongue

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[1] At the inception of the project, it was understood by the project stakeholders that the project implementation process and results would be openly reported to a wide audience. Thus, publications

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based bilingual preschool and primary school programme, which has been pre-
viously described in academic journals (Long et al. 2001; Geary and Pan 2003;
Malone 2007; Cobbey 2007; Yang 2005, 2006, 2007). Within the overall frame-
work of this pilot project, a comparative study on the impact of mother tongue
based biliteracy on third language (English) acquisition was conducted from 2005
to 2007 (Finifrock 2010). This chapter details that project and ensuing results, and
aims to shed light on the role of mother-tongue based bilingual education in de-
veloping trilingualism. This is achieved by observing two groups of children from
Zaidang village, and by comparing the last group of village children to study prior
to the bilingual education project with the first group of children, who received
their entire pre- and primary school education within the scope of the project. This
investigation is set in an overview of the minority language educational situation in
Guizhou, specifically of the Southern Dong[2] people in the autonomous prefecture
of Qiandongnan.

1.1 Situation Sketch (socio-cultural)

Guizhou is among the poorest of all the Chinese provinces, with a 2006 monthly per
capita income of 776.6 yuan, ranking last, when compared to Beijing, which ranks
first at 1878 yuan.[3] Census data (National Bureau of Statistics et al. 2003) show that
a third of the population are members of 1 of the 55 official minority groups recog-
nized in the PRC. However, this does not represent the population distribution, as
over 50 % of the surface area of Guizhou is designated as a minority autonomous
area on different administrative levels—including three prefectures and eleven ad-
ditional counties. The main minorities are Miao (32.2 % of Guizhou's minority
population), Bouyei (20.98 %), Dong (12.21 %), Yi (6.33 %), and Shui (2.77 %).

   Guizhou is overwhelmingly rural. According to the 2000 census, 28.8 million
people in this province live in rural county districts, or *xiangcun*, equalling 76.04 %
of the total population, with the remaining 24 % evenly distributed between cities
and towns. Studying official household registration records, or *hukou,* this distribu-
tion creates the impression of being even more extreme: of the 13.35 million mi-
nority people in Guizhou, 12.04 million (91.08 %) have a farming *hukou*. This is in
striking contrast with the nationwide figure for the Han Chinese majority, of whom
only 75.6 % have a farming *hukou*.

   The ethnic-minority communities of Guizhou can be divided into two separate
groups: those who mainly speak the language of their own ethnicity and observe
their own distinct culture, versus those communities whose members are largely

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both in Chinese and English have included the actual place names involved, and the current au-
thors have continued to use this convention.

[2] Dong is the Chinese name of this minority group, often called Kam in international literature.
The word Kam comes from the Dong people's self-appellation (Long and Zheng 1998).

[3] http://dzh.mop.com/whbm/20061223/0/OSSS7I6df70b8a7z.shtml.

sinicised. This division can be observed in all major minorities in Guizhou and often manifests itself regionally.

The Dong minority, as identified by Chinese government records, is often viewed by outside anthropologists and linguists as two different groups, Northern Dong and Southern Dong, on the basis of dialectal differences, *inter alia* (Geary and Pan 2003; Ou and Geary 2007). The Northern Dong are generally more integrated with the Han Chinese, and their language use is more heavily sinicised. By contrast, the Southern Dong tend to be more separated from the Han Chinese and are generally less sinicised. The cultural and linguistic vitality of the Southern Dong is fairly high, as evidenced, for example, by the recent entry of the Dong Grand Song into the UNESCO list of intangible heritage[4], performances of the Dong Grand Song regularly being performed in national events, and Amy Tan's (2008) recent description of the Southern Dong village of Dimen in Liping county in National Geographic Magazine.

Joshua Fishman proposed a system for evaluating language vitality in different communities in 1991, called the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). An Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption (EGID) scale has been proposed by Lewis and Simmons (2010) and is used to effectively assess language vitality. The EGID scale combines elements from the Fishman GIDS scale, UNESCO (2009) Language Endangerment Framework and the Ethnologue Vitality Categories into one assessment tool. The EGIDS places languages on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being an extremely vital international language and 10 being an extinct language. Languages ranked between 1 and 6a are deemed as 'safe' languages that are not in danger of becoming extinct in the current generation. Languages ranked as 6b are listed as vulnerable, 7 and 8 as endangered, and 9 and 10 are termed extinct. On the basis of the EGID scale, the Southern Dong language has been assessed as 6a, *vigorous*—("*The language is used orally by all generations and the situation is sustainable*") with language vitality in some Southern Dong communities possibly being as strong as 5, *and evaluated as*—("*The language is vigorous and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community though literacy is not yet sustainable*" (Lewis et al. 2013)).

The Northern Dong, however, over the last 200 years have been much more assimilated into Han culture, and it is estimated that the percentage of Dong speakers amongst the Northern Dong is significantly lower than that amongst the Southern Dong (Long and Zheng 1998, pp. 12–13). Northern Dong language vitality according to the EGID is classified as 6b, *threatened*—("*The language is still used orally within all generations but there is a significant threat to sustainability because at least one of the conditions for sustainable oral use is lacking*"), with a tendency to shift to 7– ("*The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves but they do not normally transmit it to their children*" (Lewis et al. 2013)).

Figures in the national census include all Dong, whether they are Han-assimilated Northern Dong or linguistically more vital Southern Dong. This combination of subgroups in the national census data creates a very ambiguous picture of the actual

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[4] See: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/RL/00202.

economic and educational reality for most Southern Dong. In reality, the Southern Dong share much more in common, in terms of geography, income, education, and language vitality with the Shui minority, than they do with the Northern Dong. For this reason, referring to the census data (especially for education and income levels) for the Shui people serves to bring the census figures for the Southern Dong into sharper focus. The Shui primarily live in Sandu autonomous county and the neighbouring Libo county in Qiannan autonomous prefecture. Sandu county borders the Dong counties of Rongjiang and Congjiang to the west. Linguistically and culturally, the groups are closely related and their socio-economic and educational situations are comparable. According to the national census (National Bureau of Statistics et al. 2003), the proportion of Shui who had achieved an education level higher than lower-secondary school was 5.3 % (Dong 9.8 %, Han 16.1 %) and their official illiteracy numbers were 19.2 % (Dong 9.1; Han 7.3 %).

1.2 Guizhou Education

With the exception of a few pilot projects, the language of primary education in Guizhou is fundamentally conducted in some form of Chinese, both orally and in written form. Most students from monolingual minority village backgrounds are equally non-proficient in any form of Chinese when they enter school. In order for students from these environments to succeed, they must learn to speak some kind of Chinese and read and write *Hanzi* (Chinese characters) as well the Romanised sound representation script of *Hanyu Pinyin,* through which students learn the pronunciation and tone of a Hanzi. In most cases, the children do not receive any opportunity to develop oral proficiency in Chinese, before being confronted with these two script systems.

If teachers and students in rural primary schools share a minority language, the teachers in lower grades often try to support the learning of the students and bridge the gap between home language and school language by using the mother tongue unsystematically in the classroom. Teachers in these areas often express the view that using the mother tongue systematically in the classroom is a disservice to the students, as it hinders them from performing satisfactorily in the annual comparative examinations that are conducted in Chinese. As children progress through school, it is assumed that their Chinese level will automatically increase and as a consequence, a lesser extent of mother tongue support is given to students. In smaller, more remote villages a large percentage of primary school teachers share the children's language, making unsystematic mother tongue support feasible. Educational authorities are often supportive of this and it is one of the forms of "bilingual education" in Guizhou. However, in schools in small roadside towns or in *xiangcun,* a larger percentage of teachers either use linguistically distant varieties of the local minority language, or do not speak the minority language at all. In these schools, even unsystematic mother tongue support is impossible to provide, leaving minority children to learn entirely through the local dialect of Chinese which is not spoken in their home and is rarely spoken in their village. With increasingly larger

numbers of fully qualified teachers from other areas and often other ethnicities being employed and posted to countryside schools, the likelihood that the L1 of the teachers and students coincides is further reduced, forcing many minority children to study in an unfamiliar second language.

The brand of education used in minority areas of Guizhou can be defined as "transitional bilingual education" (Baker 2006). This type of instruction merely uses the L1, until the children have been exposed to sufficient Chinese as to allow the teacher to stop using the L1 and make further progress in teaching. Without systematic L1 support for students, Chinese is used in all facets of academia. The materials, language, and methods of instruction are all designed to teach mother-tongue speakers of Chinese. For minority children, however, for whom Chinese is a second or sometimes third language, the situation demands an L2 instructional methodology. Consequently, children with a low or middle achievement range frequently end up as limited bilingual mono-literate students in L2. It is often difficult to encourage alternative practices related to oral language usage in the classroom. Teachers, parents and educational officials in these communities are sceptical of the use of the minority language as being truly beneficial to a student's educational outcomes, influenced by the notion that the use of L1 will delay proficiency in Chinese and risk educational advancement.

The Chinese language is the language of power, control and success, especially in the school environment (Zhou 2001). This leads to a polarisation: on the one end, are children with high instrumental motivation (Hudson 2000), with supportive parents who are literate in Chinese, and with higher abilities, who acquire an effective knowledge of Chinese and embark on a relatively successful schooling career. On the other end, are children with lower instrumental motivation, low parental support or lower abilities, who do not acquire an effective knowledge of Chinese and lose all motivation for learning. Therefore, they either drop out of school or simply proceed with tedious slowness through their school life, waiting for the time when they complete schooling and leave the area to work in factories. In both these cases, the result is language reduction in mother tongue usage. Very few children actually become balanced bilinguals, irrespective of their Chinese language ability or consequential success in school.

As a secondary effect, the time spent in full time schooling separates students from their family and community, for extended periods of time. In children with high instrumental motivation, their success in schooling, leads to prolonged absence from home. Once in junior secondary school, where there is often a mixed ethnic student population, Chinese becomes the major language for social interaction for such students. The lack of initiation into their own culture, (absence from home during certain family events, vanishing rites of passage) leads to a type of cultural estrangement. Older people have informally expressed that by the time children reach primary school, they often do not participate in festivals, a phenomenon which is heightened during the junior secondary school years. When children enter senior secondary school, their initial instrumental motivation is often exchanged for an integrative one, (Crookes and Schmidt 1991) as they feel increasingly uncomfortable going home during major cultural events, and in the long term this contributes to language loss (Baker 2006).

2   English Teaching in Rural Guizhou

In the Guizhou education system, requirements for teachers differ depending on the level of school where they teach. Primary schools are staffed by less qualified teachers than junior secondary schools, which are staffed by less qualified teachers than senior secondary schools. This correspondingly implies that the more highly educated teachers are concentrated at the higher levels of the education system. This situation affects English language education negatively by exposing new English language learners to teachers, who have less English language ability and are unable to model appropriate language use. Students in turn, thus develop inferior English communication habits, poor pronunciation, and the mind-set that they are not 'good' at learning English.

As these students move to junior secondary school, their instructors generally have more English language ability, yet lack the aptitude and skills to appropriately correct the habitual errors created by previous years of inferior instruction. The cyclical pattern continues into senior secondary school, where teachers with the most English language knowledge and communicative capabilities are concentrated. These teachers often report and comment on the fact that their students coming from junior secondary schools are vastly unprepared to study texts at the senior secondary level (Joanna Yates, Shirley Liu, personal communication, 6 April 2011). For students developing trilingual abilities in these rural areas of Guizhou, the simple truth is that the longer a student is enrolled in school the greater the chance that they will be exposed to adequate English teaching pedagogy and natural language modelling, in order to produce a lasting effect on the English language learner.

2.1   Socioeconomic Factors

As mentioned earlier, Guizhou is the poorest province in China and this is particularly true for the minority areas. Since the late 1990s, the living costs in rural Guizhou have been continuously increasing. Two government measures positively impacted the relationship between increasing costs of living and a relatively low but stable farming income: In March 2005, the government abolished the rice tax in Guizhou, but even this reduction in taxes for farmers could not counteract the rapidly increasing costs of living. In 2005 and 2006, the Guizhou administration implemented the new national schooling policies by increasing compulsory schooling to 9 years and at the same time, abolished the tuition fees for primary and middle schools (Grades One to Nine). For minority families with children, many of whom do have the two children allowed for minority families with a farming *hukou*, this initially led to considerable savings.

Between 2000 and 2010, an increasing number of people were leaving their farms for at least half the year, to work outside the province as migrant workers, a phenomenon known in Chinese as *dagong*. While in 2000, the percentage of minority people who were working their farms was between 92.2 and 94.8 %, only 88 % of

the Han ethnicity with a farming *hukou,* continued to do so. During the following 10 years, these numbers rose significantly, though the exact number will only become available in the yet unpublished 2010 census report. However, for the Dong people in Zaidang, the high point of people leaving their towns and villages to *dagong* was reached in 2007 and 2008, just before the economic crisis began to impact China and led to multiple factory closures. Since 2003, when compulsory education was increased from 6 to 9 years, a growing number of families found themselves in an economic bind. They could permit their children to continue education beyond Grade Nine, which in itself was a significant financial burden. But that could only be accomplished if at least one adult left for *dagong,* or, the child quit school after Grade Nine at the age of 16 or even earlier, if he/she managed to evade the system, and generated income for the family's second child by going *dagong*. In Zaidang and other rural areas in Guizhou, the pressure to forego education for income, even prior to the completion of Grade Nine, is extreme, especially for mediocre students, who are not expected to qualify for senior secondary school.

2.2   Situation in Zaidang

At the time of the inception of the Dong-Han Bilingual Pilot Project in 1999, the project village of Zaidang in Zaima district had a population of about 1500[5]. All community members spoke Dong and the level of Chinese spoken by the adults differed, depending on their previous education levels. Less than ten adult residents of the village had completed 12 years of education. As a village, Zaidang was sufficiently large to accommodate a primary school, but in 1999, the village could not sustain Grades Five and Six due to student withdrawals from schools and a lack of qualified teachers. Students wishing to continue their education until the end of primary school had to transfer to the primary school in the village of Bakuang. They would board at the school in Bakuang from Monday to Friday, then return home to spend the weekend in Zaidang. The change of the national schooling policy to 9 years of compulsory schooling and the abolition of school fees for primary schools reduced the dropout rate significantly, with the result that by September 2005, the village was able to sustain Grade Five, and by 2007, Grade Six classes commenced too.

Children in Zaidang village converse exclusively in Dong at home, and have had little exposure to Chinese, prior to attending school. Finifrock (2010, pp. 37) reports that in 2005, fewer than ten percent of Grade Five students in the English Research Component of the Zaidang project had travelled on any occasion to a predominantly Chinese speaking area. In 1999, the village obtained access to the power grid, and televisions with Chinese programming were slowly available in the village. When the English Research Component commenced in October 2005, fewer than fifty

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[5] For more details on Zaidang village at the time of the inception of the Bilingual Education (BE) project, see Geary and Pan (2003).

percent of the homes in the village had televisions, and there was no print media accessible in the village.

From 2005 onwards, a greater number of adults from Zaidang commenced work in the factories of south-eastern China, directly impacting the schooling pattern of countless students: Some students accompanied their parents for one or two semesters at a time. A different group of students commuted back and forth to the primary school in Bakuang, because the children could reside in school dormitories, while their parents went to *dagong*. It was also a common practice for parents to leave their children behind, to be taken care of by older relatives, who were often less educated than the students' parents.

3   Theoretical Background

Both the Dong-Han Bilingual Education Pilot Project and the English Research Component were based on the premise that early education, especially literacy in the learners' L1, systematic teaching of oral L2 before L2 literacy, oral L3 instruction via L1, and ongoing bilingual instruction and literacy via both L1 and L2, have a positive impact on children's learning ability in general and the learning of L1, L2 and L3[6] (Baker 2006). The target of the project was to produce balanced bilinguals in order to support cognitive development, promote school retention, and lay the foundations for a successful schooling career. In order to achieve this, the objective was to ideally reach a threshold, where bilingualism had no negative effects on the children and where the impact of bilingualism was a positive one (Baker 2006, pp. 170–173). Based on research done by Jim Cummins, Colin Baker, Nancy Hornberger, and Ellen Bialystok, Susan Malone (et al. 2008, 2010) formulated models, which have been used by SIL International in different forms and contexts for bilingual and multilingual education. The term bilingual education was used in the context of both the BE Project and the English Component, to refer to the number of languages used as medium of instruction, within the school. Since English was taught as a subject only but not used as an instructional language, the project was at all times referred to as bilingual, even though through three languages were taught and participating children, may have successfully developed as trilingual (hence our use of the term "emerging trilingualism").

Based on Cummins' Threshold Theory and his distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), material developers within the Zaidang Project concluded that the

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[6] The Dong Pilot Project was introduced successively in each grade level, as the top cohort reached that grade. Therefore L3 (English) became part of the teaching within the project, as the children reached the grade in which English was to be taught according to the local stipulations of the time (Grade Four). To research the impact of the teaching of L1 on the acquisition of L3, the English Research Component was therefore conducted when the children reached Grade Five.

children needed an oral head start before entering a learning situation, where they were taught L2 literacy or had to rely on any Chinese language ability, when it was used as an instructional language. Children studied 1 year of oral Chinese before starting Chinese literacy and continued these lessons through the first year of Chinese literacy.

As explained above, the assumption of consecutive bilingualism that underlies the Guizhou educational system is not systematically supported in schools but rather assumed as an automatism. Generally, the only contact village children have with the Chinese language[7] before entering preschool/primary school is through television, and in primary school, Chinese literacy is systematically taught whereas oral Chinese is not. This means that the language learning process for Chinese is a type of unsupported language acquisition, rather than systematic language learning (Krashen 1985). Hence, children acquire a restricted amount of BICS; however, they are highly pressurised to acquire CALP, both orally and in writing, (Cummins 1984, 2000; cited in Baker 2006, pp. 174–177) in order to perform credibly on tests. In Mathematics for example, children are taught very specific terms and related Chinese characters very swiftly. These characters and terms derive from everyday language in Chinese, but these terms are often unknown to minority children, as they have not yet developed BICS in Chinese. This makes the learning of the terms, the learning of the characters and the learning of the concepts significantly more difficult for them, than for children who have high oral BICS in Chinese.

4 Implementation and Methodology

The project was initiated by a Dong professor at Guizhou University of Nationalities, and implemented through the cooperation of many stakeholders, including the Guizhou Province Minority Affairs Commission, the Rongjiang County Education Department, the village leaders and school of Zaidang, and SIL International (Geary and Pan 2003). Instruction started in the project in September 2000 and continued until January 2010. Prior to the project, there was no preschool or kindergarten available to children in Zaidang village. Students began school in Grade One, using the national curriculum in Chinese, which is not commonly spoken in the village. The headmaster of the school (at the time of the study) and teachers who were involved in the BE project were long-standing permanent village residents, and native Dong speakers. In addition to the nine primary school teachers, six preschool

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[7] When the term Chinese language is used, this refers to multiple varieties. According to national law, Mandarin Chinese is the language used in schooling. In Guizhou, different varieties of Chinese are used, most of them related to Mandarin Chinese. Many teachers in the *Dong* area do not speak very good Mandarin Chinese, but tend to use local forms of Chinese in the classroom. This means that sounds that are especially distinct in Mandarin Chinese, in comparison with Dong, are not well taught in primary school.

Table 1 Language of instruction comparison for groups A and B

	Group A Language of instruction *start of chinese*	Group B Language of Instruction *start of chinese*
Lower preschool	1999/2000 Dong	1999/2000 Dong
Upper preschool	N/A	2000/2001 Dong
Primary one	2001/2002 Chinese *start yuwen (written chinese)*	2002/2003 Dong *sart oral chinese*
Primary two	2002/2003 Chinese	2003/2004 Dong and Chinese *start yuwen (2nd semester)*
Primary three	2003/2004 Chinese	2004/2005 Dong and chinese
Primary four	2004/2005 *Start of English* Chinese	2005/2006 *Start of English* Dong and chinese
Primary five	2005/2006 Chinese English research component	2006/2007 Dong and chinese English research component
Primary six	2006/2007 Chinese	2007/2008 Dong and chinese

teachers were recruited by the project. All the teachers were trained to use methods for using the Dong language as the medium of instruction for classes that were both modern and learner-centred.

4.1 Project Implementation

The project was implemented in yearly stages. The first stage commenced in September 2000, with the inception of four preschool classes representing two grade levels. These two grade levels will be the focus of our comparison in this chapter. For ease of description, we will simply label them Class A and Class B. Class A was initially comprised of children who were 6 years old (divided into two sub-classes of fifteen and sixteen students), and Class B of children who were 5 years old (in two sub-classes of eighteen and seventeen students). During the first stage of instruction, both grade levels were taught the same mother tongue based preschool content that had been developed by the project (Geary and Pan 2003, pp. 283–4; Table 1).

In stage 2, class A (now 7 years old) entered the regular primary school curriculum of the area with Chinese as the language of instruction and no systematic mother tongue support, and was therefore referred to as the "last non-project class". Class B (now 6 years old) continued for a second year, with more preschool studies

in Dong, (upper preschool) while a third group (Group C, 5 years old) entered lower preschool.

In stage 3, beginning in September 2002, Class B reached primary Grade One. They were taught most subjects based on the content of the national curriculum through the medium of Dong. In the second semester of Grade One, oral Chinese was added as a subject, using a method called Total Physical Response (TPR) as outlined by Asher (1965).

It was only in stage 4, (Grade Two for Class B from September 2003) that children began receiving instruction through the medium of Chinese, using Chinese textbooks in an increasing number of subjects. In the second semester, they started studying written Chinese in *yuwen* class. They continued to study the Dong Language, Music, and Ethics, using Dong as the language of instruction (up to Grade Six). Following a specific progression, Class B used only 4.5 years (instead of 6 years for Class A) to study 6 years of *yuwen* texts. Through this progression, they were eventually able to catch up with Class A, in terms of Chinese language instructional content, by the end of Grade Six.

In the following years, the teachers (Grades Three to Five) were constantly encouraged to use both Dong and Chinese systematically as the medium of instruction, but the actual implementation was determined based on the authority of the teachers and was not controlled or documented. The informal impression from class observations was that the amount of systematic dual language usage increased during the later stages of the project, as the teachers gained further confidence in the methodology. However, a small number of teachers in the project school did not sufficiently incorporate systematic bilingualism and biliteracy in their teaching, in pursuance of implementing the prescribed practices in classrooms.

Class A reached Grade Five in September 2005, followed by Class B in 2006. During this fifth year of primary school, the children entered the English Research Component of the project (see below), to determine whether there was any indication that mother tongue based education had any impact on third language (English) acquisition (Finifrock 2010).

Classes A and B completed Primary School in 2007 and 2008 respectively, and all students who completed Grade Six appeared for the countywide examination.

4.2   *English Research Component*

The English Research Component was designed as a baseline study to examine the effects of participation in the Zaidang BE program on English acquisition. It was understood from the outset that because the village school had limited enrolment, the quantitative data would be based on a small sample and should not be taken as incontestable "scientific proof". Nonetheless, the Zaidang BE project offered a rare opportunity for research, as it was unique in its design and methods, and the first project of its kind in Guizhou. The English research component was carried out between October 2005 and April 2007 in Zaidang village.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

As previously stated, children in Class A had received all of their previous educa-
tion in Chinese (except for 1 year of Dong preschool in 2000–2001) and were in
Grade Five at the time of the study. Children in Class B were taught in Dong dur-
ing 2 years of preschool, and transitioned into using Chinese. These students were
a grade behind Class A, and both groups were approximately the same age during
their respective year of instruction. Every student in each group was an L1 Dong
speaker who had lived exclusively in the Dong speaking area. Each class had only
received 1 year of English instruction prior to the study, not the 2 years mandated
by the government. The year of English instruction that each group received prior
to the study created no discernible impact (see Finifrock 2010).

A notable difference between the groups was that the Class A students entered
their sixth year of schooling, while Class B students entered their seventh year of
schooling, by virtue of the fact that they had 2 years of preschool studies, as com-
pared to 1 year of preschool for Class A.

No socioeconomic control was exercised on the study, as there was no discernible
socioeconomic stratification in the village. All efforts centred on rendering identical
instruction to each group. In Class A, there were 34 students (19 boys and 15 girls)
during the first semester. Their ages ranged from 10 to 14 years. Six students (2
boys and 4 girls) transferred out of the class between the first and second semesters,
leaving 28 students (17 boys and 11 girls). Class B started with 24 students (10 boys
and 14 girls), ranging in age from 9 to 13 years. Eight students (five boys and three
girls) transferred from the school between semesters, thus leaving sixteen students
in all (five boys and eleven girls) in Class B.

4.4 Teaching Method and Content

The two English teachers for the English Research Component were foreigners, and
were both professionally trained teachers. Throughout the course of two months
of training, each group received seventy class periods of English instruction, with
each period lasting for 40 min. The seventy sessions practically equalled a complete
year of English studies, for a Grade Five class in rural China. The students received
pre-instruction evaluations and were periodically tested in the different skills im-
parted to them throughout the year, and upon completion of the 70 sessions, the
students were further evaluated individually. The teaching methodology employed
was primarily Total Physical Response (TPR), as first proposed by Asher (1965)
and additionally, outlined by Krashen (1982). Songs, games, chants, posters, and
pictures with simple text captions were also integrated into each lesson to provide
broad exposure to language and to maintain interest. The students were introduced
to the Grade Three text, which was primarily used as a TPR prop to learn its content,
such as letters of the alphabet, body parts, numbers, and colours. Supplementary
props, such as coloured cards or other realia were used on a daily basis, to aid in

Table 2 t-test results between Class A and Class B final testing performance

Measure	Max. score	Mean$_A$	Mean$_B$	P value
Week 7 spelling dictation	14	6.89	11.38	0.007**
Alphabet recognition	26	19.04	24.94	0.006**
Noun recognition	14	4.29	9.63	0.0003**
TPR evaluation	13	8.71	11.13	0.015*
Oral interview	10	5.64	7.35	0.048*

active processing, memory, and recall. Instructional content naturally increased in complexity, as students mastered basic content through TPR and were able to enter into more conversational content.

5 Results

5.1 English Project Results

5.1.1 Post-test Results

The data collected during the 2 year English Research Component was evaluated using standard statistical *t*-tests. The empirical results of the post-testing showed significant differences between the two groups, with Class B outperforming Class A on all five post-instruction measures. The literacy-based measures were significant at the 1% level. The TPR test and oral interview were both significant at the 5% level (see Table 2).

Both the quantitative and qualitative data evince differences between the two groups, with respect to learning English. Such findings are in concert with the belief that bilingual competence in both L1 and L2, assists in learning an L3 (Baker 2006; Cummins 2000). Class B significantly outperformed and surpassed Class A, as proven statistically in the three literacy dependent measures (the Week−7 spelling dictation test, the final English alphabet test, and the common-noun reading recognition test) and this was to be expected with the emphasis the Zaidang project placed on reading and writing in a Romanised script. Students with 6 years of practice, using a Romanised script and phoneme-based pronunciation system, would certainly be expected to have a distinct advantage in English literacy over students who were only briefly introduced to Pinyin and rapidly advanced into studying *Hanzi* (Chinese characters). The TPR and oral interview test results were of particular interest, because the results were not dependent on script similarities between *Dong* and English. It appeared reasonable to partly attribute the differences to participation in a systematic additive bilingual education programme. The Interdependence Hypothesis Cummins (1986) suggests that a child's second, or in this case,

third language competence is partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first language. Also relevant at this juncture, are the possible cognitive advantages of being more functionally bilingual and biliterate (Baker 2006; Lee 1996).

According to Bialystok (1998), bilinguals display some cognitive advantages over monolinguals in nonverbal tasks that require selective control. In this case, however, we were not comparing bilinguals with monolinguals, but rather bilingual biliterates with limited bilingual monoliterates in L2, within an ethno linguistically homogenous community. In addition, we were observing linguistic and verbal problem solving skills, in both the TPR response and the oral question and response measures. The more complex items in these measures, such as "Touch your right ear with your left hand" and "If today is Saturday, what day is it tomorrow?" required higher-level processing abilities to understand and answer accurately. It was a probability that Class B had developed a superior language-related problem solving ability and language-processing ability, due to their deeper understanding of their own language and subsequent ability to engage with Chinese, and then English, at a more sophisticated level than Class A. It could be argued that the methods that were used to teach Class B, starting in preschool, were equally deserving of credit as the language of instruction, for producing the differences that were documented between the two groups in the study.

Determining the degree of influence is difficult to factor into the results, because the methodological intervention was bundled together with the linguistic intervention. However, in a setting like Zaidang, it would be impossible to successfully employ similar methods during the earliest years of education using any means other than a child's L1. In qualitative terms, students in Class B displayed characteristics similar to monolingual Chinese students from the more developed regions of China, where teaching methods and materials were more modern and learner-centred (Hu 2003). Class B exhibited traits of successful language learners such as self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, problem-solving ability, and willingness to take risks; conversely, Class A largely revealed no such characteristics. It was reasonable to assume that after becoming increasingly biliterate in Dong and Chinese, Class B developed confidence that they would learn English competently, because they had experienced previous language-learning success with Chinese. In addition, it could also be surmised that the value that the project had conferred on their language and culture, had accorded Class B the motivation that was painfully lacking in Class A. As Cummins (2001, pp. 19) states: "When the message, implicit or explicit, communicated to children in the school is 'Leave your language and culture at the schoolhouse door', children also leave a central part of who they are—their identities—at the schoolhouse door. When they feel this rejection, they are much less likely to participate actively and confidently in classroom instruction."

5.2 English Research Component Qualitative Results

Finifrock (2010, pp. 41–42) reported that there were extreme qualitative differences between the classroom behaviours of Class A and Class B, during their Grade Five year.

A teacher journal was maintained to record qualitative observations. These notes indicated that Class A was:

- Consistently more apprehensive to answer questions than Class B.
- Less confident encountering new material or being asked to demonstrate understanding of previously studied content.
- Less willing to work cooperatively to decode new written content.
- Less proficient in demonstrating mastery of *Hanyu Pinyin* and *Hanzi*.
- Less likely to attend class.
- Less likely to complete assignments.
- Less meticulous in their written work.
- Less interested in scholastic activities.
- Less likely to state long-term academic goals.

5.3 Grade Six examination performance for Class A in 2007 vs. Class B in 2008

Regional examinations in language and Mathematics, upon completion of Grade 6, use only Chinese characters and are administered at a neutral test site. Although the examinations differ in details from year to year, the content and level of difficulty is generally accepted to be similar, and results are adopted by education officials to evaluate school performance. The test results given to the project by Zaima school district, but not controlled in any way by the Zaidang Project, suggested that the biliterate Class B students not only displayed an advantage over Class A for English literacy, but also for literacy in Chinese and especially in Mathematics. The 17 students in Class B scored higher than the 25 students in Class A, who completed Grade 6. Out of 100 possible points for each subject, Class B averaged 55 points for language and 55 points for Mathematics, whereas Class A averaged 28 points for language and 16 points for Mathematics, as presented in Table 3.

2008 was the very first year that students from Zaidang School (Class B) participated in a Grade Six test. In previous years, (including 2007 when Class A sat for these examinations) all children from Zaidang aiming to attend Grade Six, were compelled to attend the school in a neighbouring village.

The project was also provided data for the 2008 testing year, which allowed us to compare students in Class B with other schools in Zaima *xiang*, who took the same examination on the same day; although no parallel data was available for Class A. The data demonstrated that students educated in the Zaidang project revealed no evidence of being hindered or slowed down by the amount of time devoted to L1

Table 3 Class A and B Sixth Grade Examination Scores

	Chinese	Math	Comprehensive
Class A 2007 (n=23)	28.28	15.52	43.8
Class B 2008 (n=17)	54.94	55.41	110.35

Table 4 Class B (Zaidang) sixth grade examination performance 2008 district comparison

	Chinese	Math	Comprehensive
Mean District score	46.66	33.14	79.80
Village 1	47.18	31.20	78.38
Village 2	51.13	**44.79**	**95.92**
Village 3	46.79	*27.84*	74.63
Village 4	*23.72*	*19.09*	*42.81*
Village 5	*36.82*	*24.46*	*61.28*
Zaidang	**54.94**	**55.41**	**110.35**
Village 7	49.84	38.59	88.44
Village 8	**58.80**	37.80	**96.59**
Zaidang+	**56.57**	**52.13**	**108.70**

Marks in italics: lower than average; Marks in bold: higher than average; only those averages calculated by t-test as being significant were marked

instruction. On the contrary, the performance of Class B students surpassed that of students of other schools in the district, even students from more affluent areas, despite learning for only 4.5 years in *yuwen* class.

Three hundred and fifty-two students were tested, of whom 299 were of Dong nationality, 32 of Miao nationality and 21 of Han Nationality. Of these, the ratio was 184 male students and 168 female students. The schools were located in eight villages in Zaima district, with one village boasting two schools. The children were examined in two subjects, Chinese and Mathematics, both marked on a theoretical scale from 0 to 100. The marks were then added to return a third value on a scale of 0–200. All tests were completely written as well as administered in Chinese.

Seventeen students from Zaidang village participated in the examinations. However six additional students who took the examinations, after having studied in a neighbouring village, (Village 3 in Table 4) for up to four semesters, had previously studied for at least six years in Zaidang and been part of the Zaidang project to a certain extent. These children joined the school in Village 3 for a varying number of semesters, beginning from the second semester of their Grade Four year. Five of them attended the school in Village 3 for four semesters, and one child for merely 2 semesters. For this reason, two average marks were calculated for Zaidang: "Zaidang" for those students who appeared for the examinations after attending the final semester in Zaidang (Class B) and Zaidang + including the six students who had attended several semesters in Village 3, and finally, appeared for the examinations as "Village 3 students".

Among the ten highest scoring students in the district were two students from Zaidang, including the student with the overall highest marks. The highest achieved marks were 90 for Chinese, 86 for Mathematics, and 169 Comprehensive.

6 Post-Project Results

6.1 *Interview methodology*

In June 2010, interviews were conducted with fourteen former project students from both Class A and Class B, along with background interviews with their teachers and their parents. The children at this stage were in Grades Two and Three of junior secondary school. The aim of these interviews was to perform a comparative qualitative assessment of the children's attitudes toward their three languages, their home culture, and education. With permission obtained from the local school authorities, the interviews were conducted in the children's schools, by a female Dong employee of the Zaidang project. A male Dong project employee was also present at the interviews, and he took notes, parallel to a continuous audio recording. A Dong education official and a foreign researcher were present at the interviews too. (During the interviews in the first two schools, some police officers were present as observers but they were not within the interview zone of the room; they were sufficiently far away from, and beyond the sightline of the students, so as not to be disruptive.) The students were welcomed in English by the foreign researcher, known to all of the students at least by sight. They were asked their English names, given to them in Grade Five, during the English Research Component. The interview was subsequently conducted by the Dong project personnel, in the students' language of choice (all students opted to be interviewed in Dong).

The scheduling of the interviews did not facilitate interviewing those students who had dropped out of school, to work in factories, as they only returned home for the Spring Festival holiday.

The student interviews consisted of eight main questions (see below), encompassing: experience in early schooling, experience of learning Chinese and English, perceptions of current activity (schooling) and future professional perspective, perceptions of home village and festivals, language of thought and finally, impact of learning written Dong.

These questions were chosen based on three areas of interest, stemming from the English Research Component:

1. The impact of mother tongue instruction on language attitudes and learning.
2. The impact of mother tongue instruction on perceptions of social and linguistic background.
3. The impact of mother tongue instruction on general attitude of the students' current situation and future opportunities.

As noted above, attitudinal differences towards education and different levels of Chinese ability between Class A and Class B were observed during primary school. Towards the end of junior secondary school, a significant number of students from Class A had already dropped out of school, hence, it was a predictable conclusion that only those students with a higher level of Chinese and a favourably affirmative attitude towards education would continue in school. For this reason, two potential

outcomes could be anticipated from the research, with reference to the direct impact of early mother tongue instruction: If no difference in attitude and perception between group A and B could be identified, it could be tentatively concluded that the impact of mother tongue schooling was especially high among the middle and lower tier students in Class B. The reason being that the mother tongue intervention had imparted to them the requisite skills and motivation to persevere in school, while their counterparts in class A had quit school. If, however, the research indicated a systematic difference in attitude between even the higher achieving members of both groups in at least some areas at this stage, it could indicate an overall impact of mother tongue instruction on all members of Class B, because we would see differences even in the more successful students in both classes.

6.2   Interview Data

The following interview data contribute an insight into the self-perception of several students in both Class A and Class B, when they were in their second and third years of junior secondary school respectively. The data reveal their thoughts regarding their education, memories of learning Dong, English, and Chinese, and their perceptions of their current academic abilities, as they progress in the future. As the full content of the interview responses exceeds the space assigned for this chapter, the answers are summarised below, and one or two representative quotations from each class, are included for reference.

QUESTION 1: Could you please tell me about some of your good and bad experiences/impressions from your education from preschool through Grade Three?

In general, both classes had positive memories of their schooling, and most negative memories had to do with unhappy interpersonal experiences with other children.

A1 Female: "Singing Dong songs for the guests who come here for travelling, and also we sang songs when the village had some activities, the old people and teachers taught us those songs. The unhappy thing was quarrelling with other children. I never learned Dong writing, my parents did not want me to learn, [they] said learning Dong is no use".

B3 Male: "We learned Dong from Grade One to Three in primary school. I think Dong songs are pretty good. [One year] we didn't have enough time to finish the Chinese text book, so it took the Dong course time".

It was interesting and significant to note the fact that almost every student mentioned singing in Dong as being an important part of their school experience.

QUESTION 2: You first studied some Dong, then Chinese, how was your experience studying Chinese? How do you feel about it now?

Overall, Class A reported more hardship and mental stress, in studying Chinese than Class B. Class B generally reported that they learnt Chinese with ease and simplicity, and currently, experienced greater satisfaction learning Chinese than Class A.

A5 Female: "When I started to learn Chinese I just memorised it, I did not know the meaning and I did not understand".

B3 Male: "Dong is very similar with Chinese pinyin, but I think Chinese pinyin [is] easier to learn than Chinese characters. Now I like to learn Chinese".

QUESTION 3: In junior secondary school, when you started learning English, how was it for you?

Both classes reported difficulty in studying English, though Class B students were inclined to express their enjoyment of English study, more willingly and enthusiastically.

A5 Female: "I started to learn English in primary school; I learned it by memorising during that time. My memory is bad, so it was very difficult for me to remember the words. The way to learn English is the same as Dong, spelling and reading are similar as well. Hard to remember the words, because they are very similar"

B6 Male: "Mr. Chen[8] came and taught us when we were in primary school. From that time, I liked English and after I went to junior secondary school we learned phonetic symbols, I still like it [English]. The way to learn English is the same as Dong, easy to read but difficult to write".

QUESTION 4: What are your current thoughts about studying?

Both classes equally acknowledged the value of studying and their desire to learn.

A5 Female: "I feel that studying is very good".

B6 Male: "When I first went to school, it was a lot of fun. After I went to junior secondary, I heard the teachers say that studying can get me a good job and is very useful, so I even enjoyed studying more".

It was especially noteworthy that class B students articulated their enjoyment of their early years of education; years that emphasised the Dong language as the medium of instruction.

QUESTION 5: What language do you use when you think about problems?

Answers to this question revealed the students' self-perceptions of internal language processing. It was expected that Class A would report less balance and would favour Dong usage over Chinese. Class B had more students who reported favouring Chinese (4 to 3), with one reporting balance. Class A favoured Dong 5 to 1, though they also reported using Chinese to think frequently.

A2 Female: "First I use Dong, sometimes I also use Chinese".

B3 Male: "I think in Dong, Chinese, and English, but most of time I think in Chinese".

These representative quotations indicated that although class B devoted more time to Dong language studies than class A, they possessed a self-perception of greater cognitive functioning in Chinese.

QUESTION 6: Does having learnt Dong writing have any influence on you now?

Even though no students in Class A were functionally literate in Dong, all of them reported positive attitudes towards, and usefulness of Dong literacy, and even voiced remorse that they were not literate in Dong. Similarly, Class B overwhelmingly asserted the usefulness of Dong literacy.

A1 Female: "I regret that I didn't study Dong writing".

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[8] Mr. Chen is a reference to Jacob Finifrock.

B6 Male: "Yes, it does. When I study English, I can use [Dong] to remember pronunciation. It's helpful for learning English. It also was helpful for learning Hanyu Pinyin".

Several students in both classes referenced the usefulness of using the Dong language, while writing down the lyrics of traditional songs.

QUESTION 7: What would you like to do when you are an adult? How will you go about realising that goal?

Finifrock (2010) reported that Class A had difficulty articulating future goals beyond manual labour. Yet 4 years later, five out of the six interviewees from Class A who continued in school, were able to eloquently enunciate their goals. Obviously, by this time, about two-thirds of the class had already dropped out of school, and the remaining students were generally perceived as the higher-performing members of the class. (Unfortunately, at the time of writing, no students from Class A remained in the school system, with the vast majority leaving the area to work in factories on the East coast. All students from Class B that were interviewed currently remain in school.) Class B fundamentally enumerated the same types of goals, as class A.

A6 Female: "When I am older I want to be a doctor".

"Study hard."

B3 Male: "If my English is good enough, I want to go and study abroad or I can use English to communicate well when I am doing things [related to work]".

"Take notes well in class, then review after class. Read more".

QUESTION 8: How do you feel about life in the village the way it is now? Do you enjoy the festivals?

Students in both classes held favourable views towards the festivals, with Class B expressing a seemingly more pragmatic yet rustic view of festivals. They tended to portray a first-person involvement in festival activities. Both classes affirmed grave dissatisfaction at the underdeveloped condition of sanitation facilities in the village.

A4 Female: "The village seems not to have changed".

> Yes [I like it]. Sometimes it is very quiet, and sometimes it is very lively, like when there is the sound of firecrackers during Spring Festival.

B1 Female: "Now in the village life is much better, but I still feel it is not good enough".

> We usually have the festivals such as Dragon Boat, Spring Festival and San Yue San etc. During these festivals sometimes there are some people who come from other villages to sing with us. We sometimes also sing to welcome outsiders who come to visit. I also like these festivals very much.

7   Current Situation

Following the above interviews, which took place in 2010, the nine students from Class A who completed junior secondary school, received the opportunity to appear for the senior secondary entrance examination, or *zhongkao*. However, only one

Table 5 Dropout and completion rates between the two classes

	Class A (n=27)	Class A%	Class B (n=16)	Class B%
Dropped out following:				
Grade 5[a]	1	3.7	0	0
Grade 6[a]	7	25.9	0	0
Grade 7[a]	8	29.6	0	0
Grade 8[a]	2	7.4	3	18.7%
Completed Grade 9[a]	9	33.3	13	81.3%
Qualified for Senior Secondary School	1	3.7	11	68.8%

[a] denotes compulsory education

of the students from Class A passed the *zhongkao* (Student A6 in the interviews transcribed above, who wished to become a doctor), but because she did not receive conclusively credible scores and the cost of senior secondary school was significant, her parents convinced her to forego further schooling and encouraged her to leave the area to *dagong*. Currently, there are no students from Class A who are enrolled in what would have been their second year of senior secondary school; the vast majority having left the area entirely to *dagong*.

Class B took the *zhongkao* in the spring of 2011. Of the 13 students who completed junior secondary school, 11 of them passed the *zhongkao*. All 11 students are currently enrolled in Grade One of senior secondary school (Table 5).

8 Conclusion

This chapter examined the differences in academic performance between two groups of L1 Dong-speaking children. One group was previously instructed, primarily via a transitional model to Chinese (a weak model according to Baker 2006) and the other through Dong and Chinese additive bilingual education. The group receiving education bilingually in Dong and Chinese consistently outperformed the former throughout the course of their schooling. The bilingually educated students demonstrated a greater ability to learn English, had higher examination scores in English, Chinese, and Mathematics, and perhaps most importantly, have persisted longer in education, increasing their likelihood to develop trilingual proficiencies. Qualitative differences in approach to learning and attitudinal differences were also observed that point to the bilingually educated students being more balanced bilinguals. They also displayed more positive attitudes toward education in general, and especially towards language learning, thus demonstrating greater potential to be functional trilinguals. When combined, these differences are intriguing, especially considering that the students participating in the study come from an isolated and homogenous community. As many of the factors affecting education, such as socioeconomic and language use issues, are identical for these two groups, it follows that

prior participation in the Zaidang Bilingual Education project, in which L1 and L2 (both spoken and written) were developed using modern learner-centred methods, should be granted considerable significance in determining the fundamental reason for the differences.

The limitations of the current study are apparent: the small sample size and the fact that Class B received one extra year of formal education than Class A (2 years of preschool in contrast to 1 year), make it difficult to generalise all results. Though the period of preschool education does not necessarily have a linear effect on resulting education levels, the additional practice in formal schooling might adequately affect learning attitudes in the lower grades. Further research is needed to examine these findings on a larger scale and in greater depth.

The results of this study, which appear to support the findings reported by Cummins (2000) on the subject of L3 acquisition, could be accurately considered applicable to language minority communities such as the Dong, (in isolated ethnic minority villages of China) who continue to have a strong L1 identity and extensive language usage, yet must additionally learn both Chinese and English.

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Language Attitudes of Secondary School Students in Guangdong

Qiyun Zhu

Abstract Cantonese is a southern Chinese dialect, spoken mainly in Guangdong Province. Cantonese is occasionally viewed as a stronghold against the popularisation of Mandarin Chinese, which has been promoted as the national language. However, the language does not enjoy the same legal status as the languages spoken by ethnic minorities, who are allowed to use their languages as the primary teaching language. Meanwhile, officials in Guangdong Province have strongly supported the learning of English in schools. This chapter reports on a study that examined the attitudes and perceptions of the students who were confronted with such a trilingual environment. This study finds that the secondary school students in Guangzhou had favourable attitudes towards the three languages, with Cantonese rated as their preferred language. English came in second for its instrumental value, while respondents displayed mixed emotions towards Mandarin Chinese.

Keywords Trilingualism · Language attitudes · China · Guangdong · Guangzhou · Mandarin · Putonghua · English · Cantonese

1 Introduction

Cantonese is a southern Chinese dialect, spoken by 3 % of the population in the mainland of China and by 93 % of the population in Hong Kong (Erbaugh 1995). Cantonese speakers mainly reside in Guangdong Province, where their numbers reached about 34 million in 2000 (Luo 2006). Cantonese is occasionally viewed as a stronghold against the popularisation of Mandarin Chinese, which has been painstakingly promoted across the country by the government as a means to uphold national unity. However, Cantonese does not enjoy the same legal status as the languages spoken by ethnic minorities, who are allowed to use their languages as the primary teaching language (Feng 2009), since Cantonese speakers do not belong to an officially recognised ethnic minority group. Furthermore, in recent years, Guangdong Province has enthusiastically embraced the national policy of English

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learning. A local English TV channel is available and English education is accessible in primary schools up to universities—selected kindergartens even offer the language, which is taught by qualified teachers (Feng 2009).

How does this context influence the stakeholders, in particular, students who are directly confronted with such a trilingual environment? How do they perceive and respond to this dynamic sociolinguistic situation? To date, there is little research and literature on these specific issues. This chapter will endeavour to bridge the gap by examining the attitudes and perceptions of these learners.

2 Cantonese in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province and its Influence

Guangzhou Cantonese is considered to be the most prestigious and standard form of all Cantonese varieties (Asher and Simpson 1994). Traditionally, Cantonese is spoken in all domains by natives of Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong Province. The city is located some 2,300 km from Beijing, the conventional political power centre of China. It is adjacent to two other flourishing Cantonese speaking cities, Hong Kong, the formerly colony of Great Britain, and Macao, the formerly colony of Portugal, some 200 and 145 km from Guangzhou respectively. The origin of Cantonese in Guangdong is unclear, but it is generally acknowledged that modern Cantonese on the one hand inherits the characteristics of ancient Chinese and on the other hand, incorporates some features of the languages spoken by aboriginal tribes who were dispersed over the region more than 2000 years ago (Shao and Gan 2007).

Additionally, among all the dialects in China, Cantonese contains the largest number of foreign words (Shao and Gan 2007), including English, as a result of language contact by the inhabitants with foreign language speakers. This is closely linked with the strategic location of Guangdong, especially Guangzhou, the biggest trading port in southern China and the one with the longest history. The Maritime Silk Road, which had its origins during the Eastern Han Dynasty (AD 25-AD 220), extended from Guangzhou to the Southeast Asian countries, and then on to the Persian Gulf and eventually to Roman ports. From the time of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), and especially during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), Guangzhou (then also known as Canton) was the only port in the country allowed to conduct maritime trade with the outside world. It gradually lost its unique trade position to Shanghai and Hong Kong after the first Opium War (1839–1842) between China and Great Britain. Nevertheless, Guangzhou has revived its foreign trade relations since the implementation of the Open Door policy in 1978. Contemporary Guangzhou boasts of frequent trade ties with the outside world. The biannual China Import and Export Fair held in Guangzhou attracts business people from different parts of the world. Statistics from 2010 confirmed that 98,000 overseas purchasers from 201 countries and regions attended the first 4-day session of the 108th Canton Fair, and the total trade volume reached 21.15 billion dollars (Xinxi Shibao 2010). In 2007, the total import and export volume of Guangdong Province achieved a re-

cord of 630 billion dollars (Nanfang Ribao 2008). In the same year, the total import and export volume of Guangzhou was 73.49 billion dollars (Guangzhou Statistics Bureau 2008).

Despite the fact that within mainland China, the use of Cantonese is limited to Guangdong and a few adjoining southern regions, which partly justifies its status as a dialect, Cantonese has spread far and wide among overseas Chinese communities in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, some European countries, Southeast Asia, Central America, South America, and even Africa. The number of Cantonese-speakers overseas is estimated to be 9 million (Yangcheng Wanbao 2008).

Standard Mandarin Chinese (including the spoken form known as Putonghua) has developed on the basis of a Beijing dialect. Some linguists believe that the difference between Cantonese and Mandarin Chinese is as great as that between two languages in Europe (Pan 2000). In 1955, the Chinese central government launched a language-reform campaign and prioritised the promotion of Putonghua. Since that time, Guangzhou residents, along with the rest of the country, have learnt Putonghua. Nevertheless, for a long time, the learning of Putonghua was hindered by low literacy rates and the fact that Cantonese speakers considered it difficult to learn a language which was so different from their mother tongue (Pan 2000). The situation did not improve significantly until the 1990s, when a booming Guangdong economy quickened the pace of communication with other parts of China, and Putonghua began to serve as the lingua franca. Nowadays, Putonghua is visible in every aspect of life in Guangzhou. Meanwhile, Cantonese appears to be receding, especially in formal situations.

3   Literature Review

Language attitude as a psychological construct has attracted the attention of researchers in the field of sociolinguistics and language policy. In social psychology, attitude is defined as 'a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects' (Garrett et al. 2003), or, as Baker (1992) puts it, attitude is 'a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour'. Language attitude has a pivotal role in the life of a language, the success of a language policy and language learning. Baker (1992) argues attitude appears to be important in language restoration, preservation, decay or death. In other words, a favourable attitude towards a dialect or language may serve to maintain its vitality, just as a positive attitude to healthy eating and exercise may increase life expectancy. A survey of attitudes indicates what current communities think, believe, prefer and desire (Baker 1992), which a language policy cannot afford to ignore. To ensure its success, especially in the system of education, a language policy should take into account the attitudes of those likely to be affected (Lewis 1981).

There are numerous language attitude studies in cross-linguistic settings and these roughly fall into research categories. Linguists in the first category demonstrate a keen interest in immigrants or study-abroad settings. They mainly approach

the perceptions of the language learners in home and host countries through observations, interviews, and discourse analyses (for example, Huguet and Janes 2008; Ibarraran et al. 2008; Lawson and Sachdev 2004; Yu 2010; Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe 2009). Researchers in another category pay close attention to the language learning experiences of ethnic minority groups (for example, Broermann 2007; Echeverria 2005; Lasagabaster 2005). In China, several studies have covered some of its 55 official ethnic minority groups (for example, Gao 2009; Ojijed 2010; Yuan 2007; Zhou 1999).

Though not fitting into the above research categories, Guangzhou has also attracted some attention in this field primarily because of its rich linguistic context. Most studies have focused on Guangzhou, as an example of a monolingual or bilingual context, with the exception of the small-scale study of trilingualism by Gao et al. (1998). Kalmar et al. (1987) elicited judgments from 24 university students in a match-guised experiment. Their findings confirmed the sociolinguistic theory regarding a "high" (Putonghua) and a "low" (Cantonese) variant in a multilingual society.

A supplementary influence of Putonghua is found in later studies. Wang and Ladegaard (2008) reported that Putonghua promotion was beginning to have an effect and acquire importance in Guangzhou. They also emphasised that Guangzhou was a reasonably stable diglossia, where Putonghua and Cantonese served different functions.

This chapter will address the language attitudes of young Cantonese speakers in Guangzhou toward the three languages by conducting a survey, attempting to answer the following questions:

1.   What are the perceptions of young people in Guangzhou towards Putonghua?
2.   What are the perceptions of young people in Guangzhou towards English?
3.   What are the perceptions of young people in Guangzhou towards Cantonese?

4   Research Methods

Since Guangzhou is similar to Hong Kong with regard to linguistic resources, the author replicated Lai's (2005) study, which was targeted at identifying language attitudes among Hong Kong youth, and then added qualitative data to substantiate the research. Through the questionnaire, Lai explored the students' attitudes vis-à-vis their integrative and instrumental orientation to the three spoken varieties, Cantonese, Putonghua and English. Integrative orientation refers to a positive inclination towards a language, so as to be better integrated into the language community, and instrumental orientation, a favourable inclination to a language for its instrumental values such as securing a job or passing a test (Gardner and Lambert 1972). Moreover, integrative orientation implies a special interest not only in a given language, but also in the cultural group speaking that language. An extreme case of integra-

tive orientation would be emotional identification with the language community (Gardner 2001).

The questionnaire was slightly adapted to suit the context of this study. It consisted of the following parts: Part I, personal information; Part II, seventeen statements devised on a 4-point Likert scale (4=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree, etc.); Part III, six statements devised on a 4-point Likert scale, requiring respondents to evaluate the three target languages on the same statements. The statements for Parts II and III were devised along the same parameters, but separated into different sections for reasons of format. The questionnaire was designed to explore the subjects' integrative inclination (such as Statement 3.6a, 3.6b, 3.6c) and instrumental inclination (such as Statement 3.2a, 3.2b, 3.2c) towards the three spoken varieties.

In view of the need for triangulation, semi-structured focus-group interviews were devised to collect some qualitative data. The interviews were centred on the questionnaire completed by the participants. They were encouraged to elaborate on the items towards which they had strong feelings and report on their daily use of the three languages, both at home and school.

4.1   Data Collection Procedures

Through convenience sampling, three mainstream secondary schools in the urban centre of Guangzhou participated in this study. For the sake of anonymity and convenience, they were labelled School X, Y and Z. Five senior 1 or senior 2 classes (about fifty students in each class, aged between 15 and 17 years) were selected from each school, again through convenience sampling, to complete the questionnaire. A total of 750 questionnaires were distributed to the three schools, that is, 250 copies for each school for each of their five classes. Overall, 695 completed questionnaires were returned.

At a later stage, four to five students from each of the schools were invited to join focus-group interviews. They were offered the chance to choose the language in which they preferred to be interviewed. Except for one interview that was conducted in Putonghua, the other two interviews were carried out in Cantonese. The students were also informed in advance that the interviews would be recorded for the purpose of research.

4.2   Profiles of Respondents and Interviewees

Firstly, data cleaning was performed to detect and repair any anomalies in the data. Next, the 551 survey responses were entered into analysis software for subsequent data analysis. The respondents were aged between 15 and 17 years. Except for four cases where the data were missing, the majority of them (N=479, 84.9%) were born in Guangzhou, while 45 were from other parts of Guangdong Province—four did not indicate their birthplace; 21 were born outside of Guangdong Province,

and 2 students were either from Hong Kong or Macao. With regard to their home language, the large majority (N=401) used only Cantonese at home; while the language used by the rest varied greatly. The detailed results are not reported in this chapter due to limitations of space. However, some of the data will be referred to later on in the chapter when necessary. With respect to cultural identity, among those who gave analysable answers, most respondents (N=304) claimed a double identity as Guangzhou-Chinese; 134 claimed a local identity as Guangzhouers; 87 identified themselves as Chinese; 2 of the participants assumed a Chiuchow identity; 1 participant claimed to be a Singaporean.

Fourteen students in total—five males plus nine females—from the three schools participated in the focus-group interviews. Twelve of them reported Cantonese as their home language, one reported using Putonghua, and the last participant used another dialect at home. Each of the participants is referred to by a two-letter code in later sections, for the sake of anonymity. The first letter of the code indicates their school while the second, the sequence in which they were interviewed. For instance, XA refers to the first interviewee from School X. Therefore, XB is the second interviewee from the same school.

4.3 Data Processing

Prior to the processing of the data, the researcher carried out initial data cleaning. 144 problem questionnaires were discarded, either because the credibility of the responses was dubious (for instance, the same answer to all questions) or the questionnaire was only partially completed. Ultimately, a total of 551 questionnaires were included in the statistical analysis. Data were then reverse-coded using SPSS as some of the scale items were negatively worded (for example, Statement 2.9, 2.10, 2.12, 2.16, 2.17). Thus, value 1 (strongly disagree) for a negatively-worded statement became value 4 (strongly agree) for its corresponding positively-coded statement (Qin 2003). Following the same method, value 2 for negative statements converted to value 3 for positive statements.

Subsequently, an exploratory factor analysis was employed to test the construct validity of the questionnaire. Four components were extracted from the data, whilst two other components were excluded because they contained too few variables (Qin 2003)—the fifth component consisted of two variables and the sixth component, one variable only. To confirm the construct validity of the questionnaire, factor analysis was performed again with the four remaining components, which were labelled attitude to Putonghua (A to P), attitude to English (A to E), attitude to Cantonese (A to C) and integrative orientation to non-mother-tongue (IO to NMT) respectively. The fourth component was branded as IO to NMT, since the questionnaire was based on the study of Lai (2005) in which these items (Item 2.6, 2.7, 2.8) fell into the category of integrative attitude. The eigenvalues of the four factors were all above 1.0, the acceptable value, (see Field 2000, pp. 436–437; Rietveld and Van Hout 1993, pp. 273–274). The cumulative variance reached 56.719%, which ac-

Table 1 Attitude towards Putonghua (α=0.914)

No.	Statements	Mean	SD
3.2c	Putonghua will help me much in getting better opportunities for further studies	3.09	0.842
3.1c	I like Putonghua	2.82	0.825
3.6c	I like the speakers of Putonghua	2.97	0.930
3.3c	Putonghua will help me much in getting better career opportunities in the 21st Century	3.16	0.843
3.5c	I wish to master a high proficiency in Putonghua	3.30	0.867
3.4c	Putonghua is highly regarded in Canton society	3.01	0.896
2.16[a]	Putonghua is NOT an important language in Guangzhou	2.29	0.879
2.4	Putonghua should be more widely used in Guangzhou as Guangzhou is part of the PRC	2.45	0.919
2.15	If Putonghua is widely used in Guangzhou, Guangzhou will become more prosperous	2.24	0.867
2.3	As a Chinese, I should be able to speak fluent Putonghua	3.34	0.677
2.10[a]	I'm afraid that if I speak fluent Putonghua, others will think I am from inland China	2.40	0.909
Composite mean of Factor 1		2.88	0.925

[a] The means for the negatively-worded Statements 2.16, 2.10 are 2.71 and 2.60 respectively when reversed

counted for the variance of the whole scale (Qin 2003), and the loading of each variable of each factor fell between 0.467 and 0.862, far above the acceptable value of 0.30 (Qin 2003). Thus, the construct validity of the questionnaire was satisfactory. To ensure the internal consistency of the above factors, Cronbach's reliability test was applied. Means and standard deviation (SD) were also calculated on each item in the questionnaire. Any mean greater than 2.5 would suggest a positive inclination, while a large SD would indicate a great difference among the respondents. In addition, composite means were calculated for each factor as a whole.

The recording of each interview was transcribed in the language used. In the following sections, when the data drawn from the interviews are referred to, they are translated into English.

5   Results

To answer the research questions set out for this study, exploratory factor analysis was used to assess the quality of individual items and to explore the possible underlying factor structure of variables.

How do the respondents perceive Putonghua? As revealed in the composite mean value for Factor 1 in Table 1 (A reversed mean is arrived this way. If the mean for a statement is 2.40, it means that it is 1.40 away from the lowest end of the scale (i.e. 1); when reversed, it should be 1.40 from the highest end of the scale (i.e. 4). Since 4–1.40 equals 2.60, the reversed mean of 2.40 is therefore 2.60.), the secondary

school students showed a positive inclination to Putonghua. Little resistance to Putonghua was displayed, judging from the relatively low mean (2.40) of the reversely-coded Statement 2.10. Moreover, the respondents were in agreement that they were strongly integratively-oriented towards Putonghua, suggested by the high mean of Statement 2.3, and there was little disparity in this regard. Instrumental inclination was supported by the high means of Statement 3.2c, 3.3c, 3.5c too, yet diversity was detected in the responses, as indicated by the relatively large SD values. In fact, except for the low SD values of Statement 2.3, other items related to Putonghua had high SD, which, therefore, implied a great difference among the attitudinal inclinations of the respondents.

The interview data also consistently suggest that Putonghua was well received in Guangzhou. All the interviewees admitted that Putonghua was very dominant in their class hours, with the result that they were accustomed to speaking with ease in both languages, either with teachers or among their peers. One of the interviewees (YG) ridiculed the poor Putonghua of the older generation citing the example of her grandmother, hinting that nowadays, a majority of people in Guangzhou acquired Putonghua.

Sharing the same belief, another student (YI) recounted that her television viewing habits were different from her father's generation, as she had begun to accept watching Putonghua-speaking programmes. Moreover, a boy (YH) acknowledged the significance of Putonghua to Guangzhou and China through the following comment:

> (YH) "… not many people understand Cantonese. The command of Putonghua is necessary, an essential skill. A shared language is vital to a nation. Otherwise, it would be too complicated to communicate with each other".

YG also concurred on this subject. On the other hand, some of the interviewees were ambivalent about Putonghua, which was also detected from a large SD in some items of the survey.

How do the respondents perceive English? The high means and low SD values in Table 2 suggested that the respondents endorsed that they were instrumentally inclined towards English, with little disparity on this topic among them. They believed that for individuals, some knowledge of English would bring enhanced career and academic opportunities; for the city of Guangzhou, the use of English would increase its competitive edge and thereby, contribute to its prosperity and overall future development. Consequently, all the students displayed a strong motivation to learn English proficiently, as indicated by Statement 3.5a.

A similar mentality was reflected in the interviews. All the students interviewed readily acknowledged that English as an international language played an important role in their future and in Guangzhou's future too. The interviewees from School Y showed consensus in this respect. One interviewee (YH) actually emphasised the fact that an enhanced level of English among citizens would contribute to an improved image of Guangzhou, which in turn would attract more foreign investment.

Moreover, the students from School X expressed similar opinions in their group discussion. Likewise, a girl from School Z held that learning English was a part

Table 2 Attitude towards English ($\alpha=0.882$)

No.	Statements	Mean	SD
3.3a	E will help me much in getting better career opportunities in the 21st Century	3.77	0.548
3.2a	E will help me much in getting better opportunities for further studies	3.70	0.573
3.6a	I like the speakers of E	3.36	0.769
3.5a	I wish to master a high proficiency in E	3.64	0.667
3.1a	I like E	3.10	0.750
3.4a	E is highly regarded in Canton society	3.46	0.692
2.14	To increase the competitiveness of Guangzhou, the E standard of Guangzhou people must be enhanced	3.20	0.647
2.13	The use of E is likely to contribute to the success of Guangzhou's prosperity and development today	3.19	0.718
2.11	E is more important in Guangzhou than it used to be	3.09	0.815
Composite mean of Factor 2		3.39	0.735

of social requirements. She elaborated by pointing out that during the 16th Asian Games, even taxi drivers were trained to learn some English, so that they could better serve foreign visitors coming to Guangzhou for the games. She was convinced that the acquiring of English was an imperative trend for the growth of Guangzhou.

Aware of the value of English to their children's future, some parents with a knowledge of English had begun to coach their children in the language. This was exemplified by the case of Interviewee XE, whose father often practised English dialogues with her. She explained that this was because she had to take English tests at school and also kept in contact with relatives abroad using English. The use of English at home by this girl coincided with that by nine other respondents in the survey, who claimed that they used English in addition to Cantonese and/or Putonghua in a familial context. It was entirely probable that these nine respondents practised their English with family members at home too.

It is also worth noting that all the interviewees from the three schools reported the occasional use of English vocabulary or familiar idioms by their Chemistry, Mathematics or Chinese teachers, who attempted to stimulate their students' attention and create an animated classroom environment through the unexpected use of English. In addition, it was discovered that some of the interviewees subconsciously included English expressions in their speech. A case in point is that during the interview, a male student from School X used an English idiom in his Putonghua speech, whilst a female student from School Z employed an English word in her Cantonese speech. The use of mixed languages appeared to come naturally to the interviewees. The students from School Z reported occasional use of English in their daily communication too. In a way which was similar to their counterparts' way of speaking in Hong Kong, this type of code-switching was also encountered among other age groups in Guangzhou (Xu 2008). This point will be further discussed in the next section.

How do the respondents perceive Cantonese? As shown by the high composite mean (3.69) in Table 3, strong integrative inclination to Cantonese is detected in

Table 3 Attitude towards Cantonese (α=0.862)

No.	Statements	Mean	SD
3.1b	I like Cantonese	3.74	0.493
3.6b	I like the speakers of C Cantonese	3.75	0.528
2.2	I like Cantonese because it is my mother tongue	3.53	0.718
2.1	As a Guangzhouer, I should be able to speak fluent Cantonese	3.65	0.574
2.5	Cantonese is the language which best represents Guangzhou	3.82	0.419
3.5b	I wish to master a high proficiency in Cantonese	3.78	0.473
2.12[a]	Cantonese should be replaced by Putonghua since it is only a dialect with little value	1.24	0.540
2.17[a]	The importance and status of Putonghua will soon be higher than that of Cantonese in Guangzhou	1.64	0.786
3.4b	Cantonese is highly regarded in Canton society	3.79	0.449
Composite mean of Factor 3		3.69	0.583

[a] The means for the negatively-worded Statement 2.12, Statement 2.17 are 3.76 and 3.36 respectively when reversed

Factor 3. The respondents seemed to agree unanimously that "Cantonese is the language which best represents Guangzhou" (high mean and low SD value). In view of this, they disagreed on Cantonese being replaced by Putonghua. Furthermore, they did not accept as true the statement that the importance and status of Putonghua would soon be higher than that of Cantonese in Guangzhou.

The comments by three of the respondents written in the margin of the questionnaire without being invited to do so were very revealing in this context. One of them penned a curse in Cantonese beside Statement 2.12. Another jotted down three exclamation marks to illustrate her strong emotions, alongside the choice of strongly disagree. The translation of the comment reported by the other respondent reads, "Cantonese has been corrupted by Putonghua. It is a sad thing to find the use of Putonghua is compulsory. Look at what is happening in Hong Kong". Clearly, the writer compared the situation in Guangzhou with that in Hong Kong, where Putonghua has been made another official language in addition to Cantonese and English with the introduction of biliteracy and the trilingualism policy after the handover of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China (PRC), and portrayed a rather dismal outlook.

The attitudes towards Cantonese discovered in the survey parallel those in the interviews. According to the interviewees, Cantonese was often spoken, by both teachers and students in their interactions in and out of class, though not as frequently as Putonghua. Three students from School Z related cases of telephone conversations in Cantonese initiated by their teachers, who wanted to converse with them or their parents. A boy from School X, an immigrant from an adjacent province who did not speak Cantonese though he understood it well, was favourably inclined to speaking in Putonghua. This student recounted several interesting occasions of code-switching by the teachers when he was present in school. (XI):

> In class, my teacher could not help using Cantonese. Then suddenly he would … I would remind him to consider my feeling. I was unhappy. He would immediately switch back to Putonghua.

At home, most of the interviewees conversed in Cantonese. From time to time, a family member aspired to conserve their native language, by insisting on using Cantonese. For instance, the father of one girl expressed disapproval when she attempted to speak Putonghua at home. (YI):

> … at times I use Putonghua at home when I find it difficult to express something in Cantonese. Then my Dad is upset, scolding me for forgetting Cantonese after a few years of schooling … he hopes I can speak more Cantonese.

Interestingly, the family of interviewee XJ switched back to using Cantonese as their home language instead of Putonghua, after her grandparents retired from school where they had used Putonghua.

In terms of home language, the family of interviewee XD was an exception. After moving to Guangzhou 10 years previously from a province bordering Guangdong, his parents learnt Cantonese but communicated with him in Putonghua. However, the father endeavoured to persuade his son to learn and speak Cantonese, assuming that learning Cantonese would be a swifter method for his son to better integrate into his school life, in spite of resistance from the son.

Like their fellow students responding to the questionnaire, the majority of the interviewees exhibited identical feelings towards Cantonese. Responding negatively to Item 2.12 suggesting that Cantonese should be replaced by Putonghua, since it was only a dialect with little value, a student (YI) protested by defending the significance of Cantonese and pointing out that it was alleged to have almost been chosen as the national language by Dr. Sun Yatsen in the early twentieth century. Moreover, she affirmed that Cantonese speakers had an edge in learning classical Chinese and foreign languages such as Korean and Japanese. (YI):

> Cantonese as a language is part of our southern Cantonese culture. You can't simply replace it like that. Nowadays many dialects are replaced by Putonghua … However, [Cantonese] is similar to classical Chinese …. Some foreign languages like Korean and Japanese share this characteristic.

Her classmate (YG) was conscious of Cantonese as a linguistic heritage too, as can be seen from the following excerpt. (YG):

> The language is our local feature. How could you substitute it like that? … A Guangzhouer, a native Guangzhouer, won't like using Putonghua, [instead] they are fond of speaking Cantonese.

The pride in Cantonese and the recognition of their linguistic heritage was shared by four native Cantonese speakers from School Z. They argued in unanimity against Item 2.12 too. The pride in Cantonese is likely to be reinforced by the attention Cantonese-speakers perhaps receive when visiting other places in China. The boy mentioned earlier, who refused to speak Cantonese after living in Guangzhou for 10 years, related precisely such an occasion. (XD)

> Do you think Cantonese is useless? No, absolutely not! … when you speak Cantonese in other parts of China, people regard you as someone with higher status, [though] you can't feel that in Guangzhou…. Once we travelled to Qinghai [Province]. My Dad was calling back to Guangzhou, talking with his colleague over the phone while we were waiting for a taxi. A passer-by just gazed at my Dad like this [the boy demonstrated a look of admiration].

His opinion was supported by a girl with a similar travel experience. Besides, the interviewees expressed confidence in the future of Cantonese. As two interviewees XD and ZL put it, given the comprehensive spread of Cantonese in Hong Kong, Macao and other places, it would not be overpowered by Putonghua.

On the other hand, a few of the interviewees vented their concerns about Cantonese. (XE):

> Look at Hong Kong entertainment circle. The singers often sing in Putonghua nowadays[1]. There are fewer songs in Cantonese. … They hope to reach the market of inland China. That is a huge potential market. … And Putonghua is promoted in every corner of Guangzhou.

Interviewee ZL actually conveyed her apprehensions about a hypothetical Putonghua-only Guangzhou. Thus, some of the students were strongly convinced that measures to strengthen Cantonese were necessary. Some students suggested that elective Cantonese courses be established in schools, as a technique of preserving tradition and integrating newcomers into life in Guangzhou.

6   Discussion

The results denote a generally positive attitude to the three varieties of languages, which is of statistical significance. Surprisingly, Cantonese the low variety, instead of Putonghua the high variety, was rated highest, and opinions towards Putonghua were considerably diversified as indicated by the comparatively large standard deviation of Putonghua (0.925). The questionnaire findings were corroborated by the student interview data. Additionally, the interviewees projected an impression of pride for their mother tongue, Cantonese. However, with respect to the future of Cantonese some apprehension was detected, despite their overall confidence in its future. A few students contended that the establishment of Cantonese courses was essential to conserve the language and culture. With regard to English, the respondents and the interviewees appeared to dismiss the idea of associating English with socio-economic status and intelligence, notwithstanding the overwhelming recognition of the instrumental value of English. To understand the results, the roles of Putonghua, English and Cantonese in the community of Guangzhou are further considered and examined below.

6.1   *Putonghua on the Rise*

The results presented in the previous section clearly indicate the success of Putonghua in Guangzhou. A generally positive attitude towards Putonghua is reflected in both the survey and the interviews. Even if the interview data are examined in

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[1] In the 1990s, songs by Hong Kong singers in Cantonese became very popular throughout most of China.

isolation, the pervasive influence of Putonghua is easily perceived in modern day Guangzhou. Especially, in recent years, business activities and economic exchanges between Guangdong and other parts of China have gained more momentum, in conjunction with an influx of more migrant workers and highly-skilled labourers into Guangzhou. As a lingua franca, Putonghua has spread pervasively in Guangzhou.

6.2   Pride in Cantonese

The overwhelming integrative orientation to Cantonese revealed by the respondents was striking. The highest composite mean (3.69) and lowest standard deviation (0.583) of this factor, among all the four factors, suggests almost uniform consensus towards a favourable integrative inclination. A similar attitude was identified in most of the interviewees too. Their response to Item 2.12, which suggested that Cantonese should be replaced by Putonghua since it is only a dialect with little value, was most forceful and convincing. The lowest point scored by this item markedly demonstrated the students' distinct disapproval of the statement. The interviewees too expressed their dismay with this item, as stated earlier.

In reality, the discovery of a preference for Cantonese displayed by local young people was not new. Wang and Ladegaard (2008) reported that their local group of subjects, in contrast with an outside group, opted significantly for Cantonese only, when questioned about their language use with regard to Putonghua and Cantonese. Not only young natives but Cantonese speakers in general take great pride in their first language. There is voluminous research evidence that the prestige of Cantonese in Guangdong (e.g., Zhan 1996; Lin 1998; Zhang 2001), partly contributed to the slow progress of Putonghua in the past.

Cantonese constantly attracts growing numbers of speakers, including newcomers such as Interviewee XJ and XD. The spread of Cantonese in inland China probably reached its peak by the end of the 1980s and early 1990s. Scholars consistently acknowledged the increasing popularity of Cantonese in non-Cantonese-speaking areas within China (e.g., Erbaugh 1995; Zhan 1993; Zhu and Chen 1991). As Cantonese swept through China, some Cantonese lexis was adopted in Putonghua (Qian 1995).

The popularity enjoyed by Cantonese in other parts of China including Beijing and Shanghai, in turn, contributes to the natives' confidence in their language and culture and enhances the awareness of their linguistic heritage by the local people.

6.3   Pride and Prejudice

On the other hand, this pride may well entail two closely-related mentalities among some native Cantonese speakers, explicitly, a concern for the future of Canton-

ese under the presumed threat of Putonghua and discrimination against Putonghua speakers. Given the status of Putonghua as a national language and the expansion of Putonghua across the country, some local people are justifiably apprehensive about the promotion of Putonghua at the expense of Cantonese.

The interplay of this pride and this concern could result in sensitivity exhibited by the natives to language issues. On the eve of the 16th Asian Games, the natives were provoked into protesting vociferously, when some local members of the political advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, proposed increasing the length of the Putonghua news broadcast on an existing Cantonese TV channel, in order to cater to the needs of the spectators of the Games. Fearing for the fate of Cantonese, a large group of native Cantonese speakers held a protest demonstration against this proposal. Reflecting on this disturbance, Zhan (2011) sternly criticised the failure of publicity regarding the national language policy. While urging more work was required to eliminate ignorance about the nation's language policy, she insisted that Cantonese could never be erased from existence. In fact, another lesson could be deduced from this incident too. The natives' emotions would have to be prudently tackled when making, adjusting or changing any language policy related to a prestigious language such as Cantonese.

Another mentality associated with pride in their mother tongue is prejudice against Putonghua speakers. This bias was clearly demonstrated by two of the interviewees (YG and YI). Both Erbaugh (1995) and Zhang (2001) acknowledged the discrimination displayed by local people. They also considered that there was indeed a link between the prejudice and the economic boom in Cantonese-speaking areas. Zhang (2001) elaborated on this issue by pointing out that a large number of Putonghua-speaking migrant workers engaged in menial jobs in Guangdong Province served to diminish the reputation of Putonghua. The image of Putonghua and its speakers are further tainted as social problems caused by migration such as theft, robbery and fraud, give rise to hostility on the part of local people. Prior to the early 1990s, those who only spoke Putonghua could easily find themselves discriminated against in public places (Chen 1989).

Nevertheless, the situation has improved considerably with the rise of Putonghua in Guangzhou during the last decade or so, as was discussed in the previous section. In this study, merely two out of the fourteen interviewees specifically commented negatively about Putonghua speakers. Furthermore, no explicit negative sentiment was observed in two of the schools. One reason for the absence of unfavourable sentiments in School X could be attributed to the fact that the Cantonese-speaking students sought to avoid offending the solitary Putonghua-speaking interviewee (XD) present during the interviews. Hence, no overwhelming disapproval was manifest in the interviews. The above may thus imply that discrimination against Putonghua and its speakers is much less and not as apparent as before, in spite of its possible existence among a small number of natives.

The mentalities described above, the pride in Cantonese, the projection of an apparent threat by Putonghua and the bias against Putonghua speakers, might underlie the large SD (0.925) of Putonghua, despite a general positive orientation (with a mean of

2.88 in the first factor) in the survey, as local people are increasingly divided between their recognition of Putonghua and a strong identification with their mother tongue.

6.4 Towards a Trilingual Guangzhou

The fact that the informants in this study rated English so highly for its instrumental values mirrors the soaring demand for English among the Guangzhou community. The reported use of English by parents and teachers of subjects other than English in the interviews confirms this trend. Similarly, Gao et al. (1998) established that English was rated highest by the respondents, as regards its status, and Lai (2005) reported that her subjects in Hong Kong exhibited the strongest instrumental orientation toward English as well. This is justified by the status of English as an international language. In the case of Guangzhou, frequent and close contact with the outside world accurately justifies the prominent role played by English in Guangzhou.

Guangzhou is not alone in eagerly embracing English. It reflects the fervour demonstrated by the entire country for English. The role and status of English in China have reached unprecedented heights (Feng 2009). English has spread at an exponential rate especially since the turn of the century, when the central education authorities promulgated a series of documents promoting the language in schools and tertiary institutions (ibid). The fervent pursuit of English is also the voluntary choice of average people.

Vigorous foreign trade activities call for additional use of English, which is recognized as a global language in international trade, education, cultural exchange and so forth. Mass media cater to this need and facilitate the spread of English too. A local English channel, the first of its kind in mainland China has broadcast English programmes, since 2006. Besides, every Guangzhou household has access to two English channels hosted by Hong Kong TV stations. In 2010, as host of the 16th Asian Games, Guangzhou strove to further promote English learning through the mass media. Radios too transmitted programmes teaching listeners simple English for dealings with foreign visitors.

More importantly, in the education sector, emulating many economically developed regions in China, English classes are provided from the third year onwards in primary schools in Guangzhou. A few anxious parents are eager to get their children into an English class as early as kindergarten believing that this will enable their children to have an edge over their peers. Competent parents themselves coach their children in English as observed from the example of the father of interviewee XE. Young people in Guangzhou also occasionally include one or two English words in daily communication with their friends, as demonstrated by the interview data in this study. As Guangdong Province continues to strive for economic advancement, the trend will continue and perhaps even more English words will appear in daily Cantonese communication, especially among the youth.

Another factor which offers a boost to the spread of English and cannot be ignored is emigration. The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council announced in 2010 that about 45 million overseas Chinese were distributed over

180 countries, and China had become the largest emigration country in the world, ranking first in the world in emigration numbers. Currently, China has become the second largest immigrant source country to the United States after Mexico, with over 80,000 immigrants each year. It was estimated that emigrants of Guangdong origin accounted for 50% of all the emigrants in the country in 2009. Among those moving out of China through investment emigration, residents from Guangzhou accounted for 30% (Xin Kuaibao 2010).

The rise of English and the prominence accorded to the language do not necessarily imply a higher socio-economic status for its speakers, as revealed in both the survey and the interviews. This could conceivably be explained by the accessibility of English education in Guangzhou, exposure to English and a generally affluent Guangzhou community. Feng (2009) recognised that from kindergarten onwards, learners of English in major economic and political powerhouses such as Guangzhou were more likely to enjoy various facilities and resources ranging from qualified teachers to private tuition by native speakers of English, perhaps even study or pleasure tours abroad. Enjoying easy access and an enormous amount of exposure to English, the learners evidently do not realise their advantage over innumerable students in inland China or rural areas, who are unable to afford these luxuries.

7   Conclusion

This study established that the youth in secondary schools in Guangzhou had favourable attitudes towards the three languages, which proved statistically significant. Among them, Cantonese, their mother tongue, was rated as their preferred language with the least amount of dispute, and English came second for its instrumental value, which is consistent with similar findings in other research. Putonghua was rated the lowest and the respondents had diverse attitudes towards Putonghua. The results give us a glimpse of the language scenario in modern Guangzhou. Pride in the mother tongue is deeply rooted in the native Cantonese population, who have a strong awareness of linguistic heritage. Out of a deep-rooted concern for the future of Cantonese, local people tend to react strongly when the spread of Putonghua appears threatening. Though prejudice against Putonghua-speakers is rare and unlikely to happen publicly, the bias continues to exist among a limited number of natives. This bias may probably disappear eventually, in view of the enhanced communication between Guangdong and other parts of China through their economic connections. In addition, English has steadily extended through the length and breadth of Guangzhou, as it has in the rest of the country, but with a much more pervasive presence. However, the findings also suggested a weak link between English and higher socio-economic status.

With the rise of Putonghua, Guangzhou has developed into a stable bilingual society. The popularity of Putonghua is unprecedented, with its use by a larger population in an extensive range of areas. The dynamic development of the three languages is Guangzhou can be ascribed to the influential power of economic ad-

vancement, though, understandably, it may not be the sole reason. If the economy of Cantonese-speaking areas maintains its momentum, and the ties between Guangdong and the outside world continue to expand at the current rate, the development and co-existence of the three languages in Guangzhou will endure, as a consequence of the constant movement of all related forces, with each language serving different functions.

Compared with the total number of secondary students in Guangzhou, the sample number in the survey was insignificant. Moreover, since the respondents were mainly descendants of Cantonese-speaking families, it is probable that the findings reflected only the attitudes of Cantonese-speaking natives. Today one third of Guangzhou's entire population is comprised of newcomers. The results would perhaps offer a completely different picture if an investigation was targeted at schools consisting mainly of students from newcomers' families. In conclusion, we may sum up that more research has yet to be undertaken to portray a complete picture of the linguistic scenario in Guangzhou.

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Trilingualism in Education: Models and Challenges

Bob Adamson and Anwei Feng

Abstract This concluding chapter discusses a number of themes emerging from the book, in order to present a consolidated view of trilingualism in education in China. It presents a detailed discussion of the four models of trilingual education identified in earlier chapters—the Accretive, Balanced, Transitional and Depreciative Models, and argues that the Accretive and Balanced Models of trilingual education possess substantial potential to foster additive trilingualism in students, thereby granting numerous social, political, economic and educational advantages to students and Chinese society. In comparison, models such as the Transitional and Depreciative Models, which promote limited trilingualism or essentially aim to achieve solely bilingualism or monolingualism, are weak. However, popularising the strong models of trilingual education requires overcoming considerable challenges, such as establishing a consensus among stakeholders, setting realistic linguistic targets, and flexibly taking local contextual factors into account when implementing the strong models

Keywords Trilingualism · Language policy · China · Chinese · English · Ethnic minorities

1 Introduction

As noted in Chap. 1, the authors of the chapters in this volume formed part of a research network that explored trilingual education, most notably in the ethnic minority regions, and the effectiveness of different models in fostering trilingualism. The project was a large-scale, multilevel study and it addressed a series of issues that include ethnolinguistic vitality, policy making and implementation, as well as

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the perceptions and attitudes of different stakeholders. The research involved documentary analyses, interviews, surveys, and field trips to a representative sample of primary and secondary schools. The selected schools were located in major cities, towns, and more remote rural areas; they had different mixes of ethnic minority and majority Han students; and they were supported by communities with different socioeconomic statuses. The research agenda of this network sought to fill a significant gap in knowledge caused by the scarcity of multilevel, comparative work aimed at mapping different forms of language policies across the country and assessing their impact.

This book has been selective in presenting the research. It does not aim to encapsulate the full complexity of the context—the large and diverse population, the different historical relationships among the groups, the geographical differences and so on—or for that matter, all the findings of the project. Instead, it focuses on the four main models of trilingual education that have emerged as a result of the expectation that students will learn a local language, Chinese and English. This chapter connects a number of threads from the book, in order to present a consolidated view of the phenomenon and a few of the factors that have created, shaped and sustained the four models. In conclusion, it attempts to consider some of the implications of the research.

2   Models of Trilingual Education

The four distinct policy models of trilingual education are explicitly mentioned in Chap. 2, in the context of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. Other chapters describe similar models. It is not claimed that these are the only models—indeed there are several other forms that will be described later—but it is clear that these four models are found, to a varying extent, in different regions of the PRC. Each model is described below in detail.

2.1   The Accretive Model

The Accretive Model (Fig. 1) is found in areas where the minority language has strong ethnolinguistic vitality, such as the Korean-dominated parts of Yanbian and Changchun in north-east China or the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR). In these regions, the minority language tends to be well established and there is a powerful sense of cultural heritage and ethnic identity, which may also be supported by economic capital being associated with proficiency in the language—which is the case with Korean because of the potential for trade with both North Korea and South Korea, and with Mongolian because of trading links with Mongolia and the Mongolian-speaking parts of Russia. The Accretive Model can be seen as fostering additive trilingualism, in that all three languages are valued
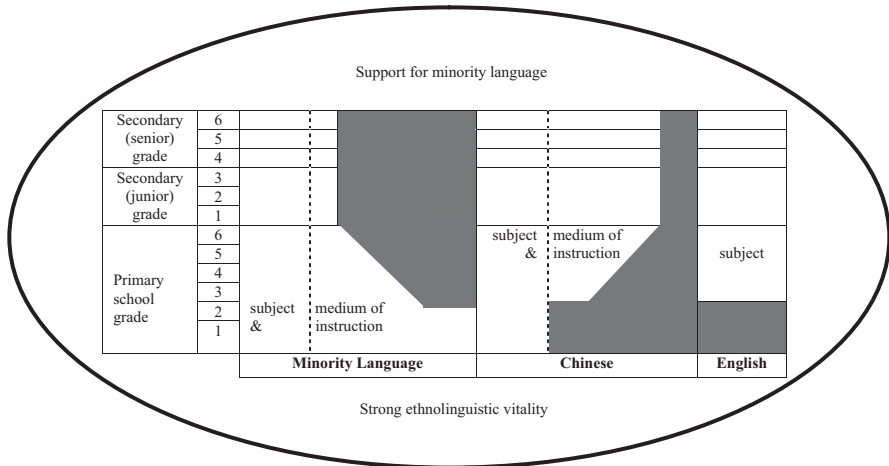
Fig. 1 Typical conceptualisation of the Accretive Model

and are taught at least as school subjects, throughout the primary and secondary curriculum (see Zhang, Li and Wen in Chap. 3), although to differing degrees. In the early years of primary school, the ethnic minority language is taught and also used as the medium of instruction. Chinese is taught as a language subject. Around the third year, the medium of instruction gradually shifts to Chinese, with the ethnic minority language still being taught as a subject. English is also introduced as a subject at this time. The model is accretive in the sense that the three languages are gradually strengthened in stages, the minority language first, then the national language and subsequently, the foreign language, with proficiency in the new language being built upon proficiency in the existing language(s). As a result, students are offered the chance to acquire a high degree of proficiency in the ethnic minority language in social domains of use. They also receive a durable foundation in the national language, Chinese, in both social and academic domains, thereby preparing them for access to further studies and other life opportunities in the PRC. English, which as a foreign language is less frequently used in private and personal life, receives less attention and the goal is purely to provide the students with basic proficiency that can be developed later in secondary and possibly tertiary education. Figure 1 illustrates the Accretive Model.

An example of this model can be found in Jilin Province, in the ethnic Korean primary school visited by project team members. The school principal explained that all the children hailed from families that spoke Korean at home, but that they were also proficient in using Chinese in their daily life. The first class observed was a Korean language lesson for Primary five students. The children were taught a Korean song and given an illustration on how to accompany the song with the aid of a traditional cylindrical drum beaten at both ends. (Due to a shortage of drums, most students used the two sides of their desk.) The teacher and students conversed

in Korean with each other, throughout the class. The second lesson was Chinese and consisted of a short story with a moral message that the students discussed. The lesson was conducted in Chinese, although the teacher did make occasional references to Korean equivalents when presenting new vocabulary. The third lesson was a Mathematics class, again conducted in Chinese. The fourth and final lesson of the morning was an English class, with simple English being used for instructions and questions; however, both Chinese and Korean were employed occasionally to clarify language points. The children appeared to adequately cope with the linguistic demands of the four lessons. All four teachers (indeed, all staff members) were bilingual in Korean and Chinese, and the English teacher possessed good proficiency in her third language. Pictures and decorations around the school and playground emphasised Korean culture. Notices were either bilingual or trilingual.

A similar example from Inner Mongolia is described by Dong et al. in Chap. 2. In both cases, the schools displayed a strong commitment to all three languages, with students being consistently exposed to appropriate opportunities to maintain a high standard in their ethnic language and to acquire an advanced level of competence in Chinese and a basic level in English. Both schools relied greatly on the availability of bilingual and trilingual teachers. Interestingly, the Jilin school example originated from a major city that was relatively affluent, while the Inner Mongolian school was located in a rural and relatively poor area.

2.2   The Balanced Model

Where the first model prioritises the minority language, at least in the early years of primary education, the second model (Fig. 2) offers a more balanced approach. This model is observed in areas where the demographics indicate a relatively even mix of the ethnic minority people and the majority Han group, as is typically evident in towns and cities (other than the provincial capital and other metropolitan areas) in Inner Mongolia, Sichuan, Qinghai, Guizhou, Yunnan and similar contexts in which there is a genuine desire for bilingualism (in particular) and trilingualism to be promoted. In such places, schools must cater to students from minority and majority backgrounds and there is sufficient community support for the minority language for it to be offered in schools. People's attitudes in these places reflect a desire for social harmony through mutual respect for different languages and cultures.

The Balanced Model seldom exists in secondary schools, as the student population often become more diverse in ethnicity at that level and it is difficult to maintain a fine balance. The model tends to be encountered in schools that have a roughly equal proportion of students and teachers from one particular ethnic group and from the majority Han group. This model focuses on the development of simultaneous bilingualism to a certain extent, because both the minority language and Chinese are taught as subjects and used as the medium of instruction from the beginning of primary school. Take for example the school in a town in Inner Mongolia visited by the research team and described in Chap. 2, where the ratio of Han teachers to Mongolian teachers was 33:67, and of Han students to Mongolian students was 60:40.
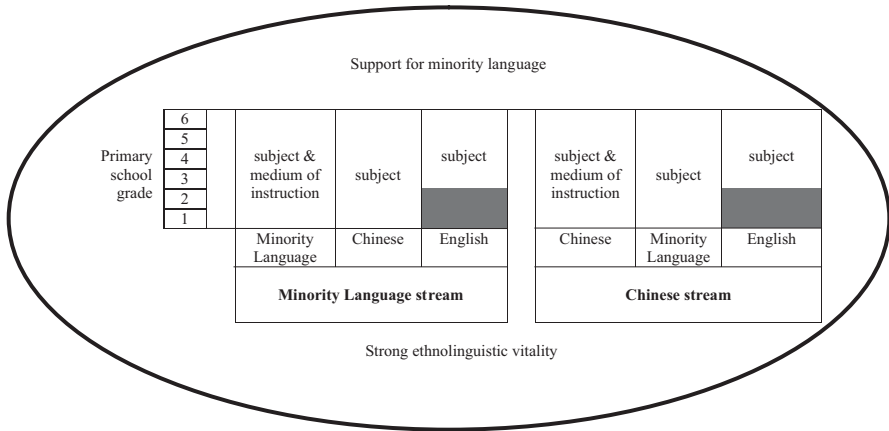
Fig. 2 Typical conceptualisation of the Balanced Model

The school had two streams, one that used Mongolian as the medium of instruction and the other had adopted Chinese. The school environment was bilingual, with signage and decorations in the minority language and Chinese or, more commonly, in both the languages. In the English lessons (which began in Primary 3 in accordance with state regulations) observed by the team, the teachers used either Mongolian or Chinese to explain vocabulary or points of grammar, depending on the preferred language of the students and the ethnicity of the teacher.

As with the Accretive Model, the aim of the Balanced Model is to achieve additive trilingualism, with different levels of competence. The ethnic language is supported, and the educational needs of the students to learn school subjects through a familiar language are respected through the use of the streaming system. The cross-referencing between languages facilitated by the bilingual environment permits the development of strong competence in both Chinese and the minority language and establishes a good basis for learning the third language, English. Unlike the Accretive Model, the Balanced Model allows for the minority language to be used as the medium of instruction throughout primary school, which could lead to some initial academic problems for the students when they enter secondary school, considering that Chinese is most likely to be used in secondary schools as the medium of instruction.

2.3   The Transitional Model

The Transitional Model (Fig. 3) is so-called because it prioritises Chinese ahead of the minority language. There are two variations of this model. The first is identified in areas such as towns and cities that have a significant Han presence and where one or more minority languages are spoken. The ethnolinguistic vitality of the minority languages tends to be moderate or less strong than that of Korean and Mongolian.
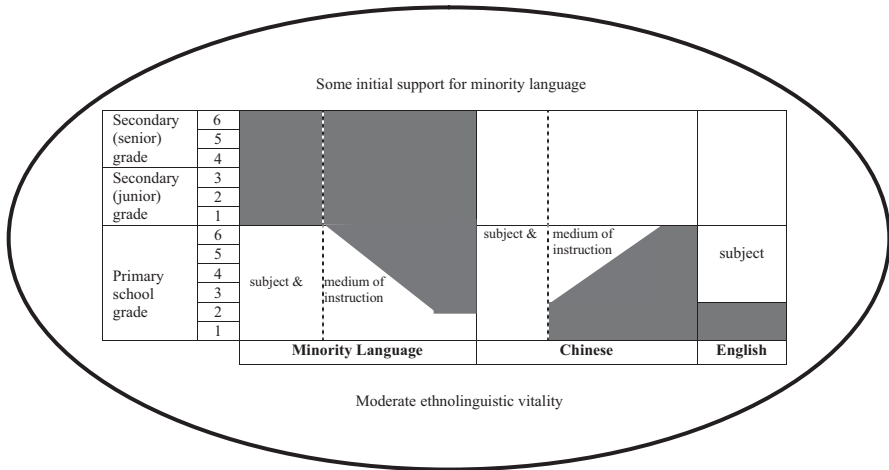
Fig. 3 Typical conceptualisation of the Transitional Model (Variant 1)

In some Type−1 communities (Zhou 2001; see also Chap. 1) in regions such as Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang, there is an interest to preserve the ethnic minority language and to propagate it among the Han population, while, Type−2 and Type−3 communities evince a desire to revitalise a weak minority language. Hence, in such areas the minority language is taught merely as a subject in the curriculum because it possesses a degree of vitality. However, the efforts made towards teaching the minority language are limited to primary education. Ultimately, Chinese becomes the dominant language in school and the minority language eventually disappears, prior to secondary education.

As Fig. 3 illustrates, this variant of the Transitional Model is, on the surface, similar to the Chinese stream in the Balanced Model in that Chinese is used as the medium of instruction and the major minority language is taught as a subject to all students in the school, irrespective of their ethnicity or mother tongue. The similarity arises from the fact that both this variant and the Chinese stream in the Balanced Model serve to fulfil the needs and requirements of a student body with a notable Han presence. The difference lies in their support for the minority language. While the cultural value of the ethnic minority language tends to be acknowledged, its vitality in the community is often insufficient for the ethnic minority language to be adopted as the predominant language in the school. The minority language is seldom discernible in daily discourse or in the school environment and the parents and teachers do not appear to attach much importance towards students' proficiency in learning the language—this attitude may arise out of an ignorance of the potential cultural value of learning the ethnic minority language. Instead, Chinese and to a lesser extent, English are viewed as key languages for the children's futures.

The second form of the Transitional Model (Fig. 4) resembles the Accretive Model in terms of curricular arrangement, but it also differs in that the degree of ethnolinguistic vitality supporting this model tends to be weak. This variant is typically
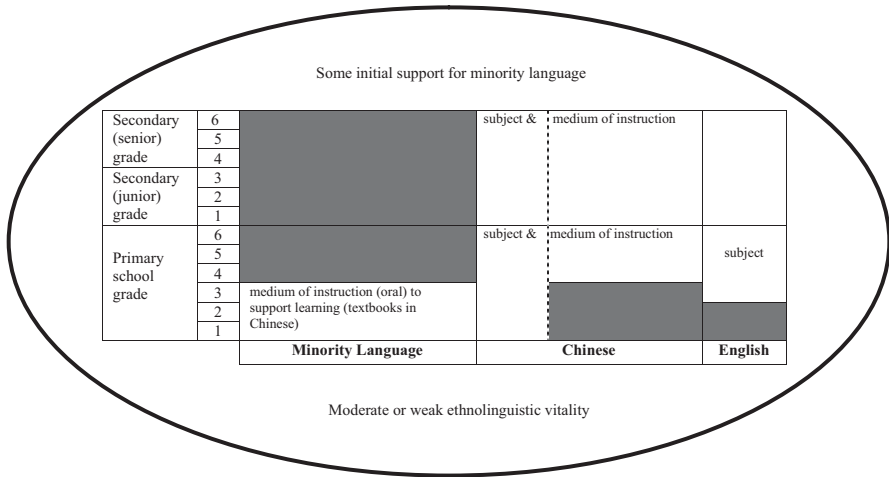
Fig. 4 Typical conceptualisation of the Transitional Model (Variant 2)

noticed in schools in remote, rural settings where one minority group dominates. These communities may or may not have their own written scripts, although they generally maintain a strong oral tradition. According to this variant, the minority language is used as the medium of instruction for the first two to three years with Chinese taught as a subject. In many cases, the textbooks of school subjects are in Chinese. After two or three years, Chinese replaces the minority language as the medium of instruction from Primary 3 or 4, with all subjects being taught in Chinese. As with the first variant, English, if offered, is taught as a subject, with Chinese being used when necessary in those lessons to aid students' comprehension of language points. A common feature of these two variants is that the curricular arrangement is unlikely to foster additive trilingualism. Instead, the result is more likely to be a form of replacive or subtractive trilingualism, in that attention to the minority language is weak and students are being prepared to accept Chinese as their first language.

2.4 The Depreciative Model

The fourth model (Fig. 5) is characterised as depreciative on the basis that the potential for developing trilingualism is denied to the students in favour of bilingualism in Chinese and English. It is an explicit form of subtractive trilingualism.

This linguistic depreciation may occur even in schools that claim to offer trilingual education in their curricula. In reality, such schools are only trilingual for the simple reason that particular students and staff have the capacity to be trilingual because of their ethnic backgrounds. But no concrete provisions are put in place by the school leadership in terms of employing the minority language as the medium
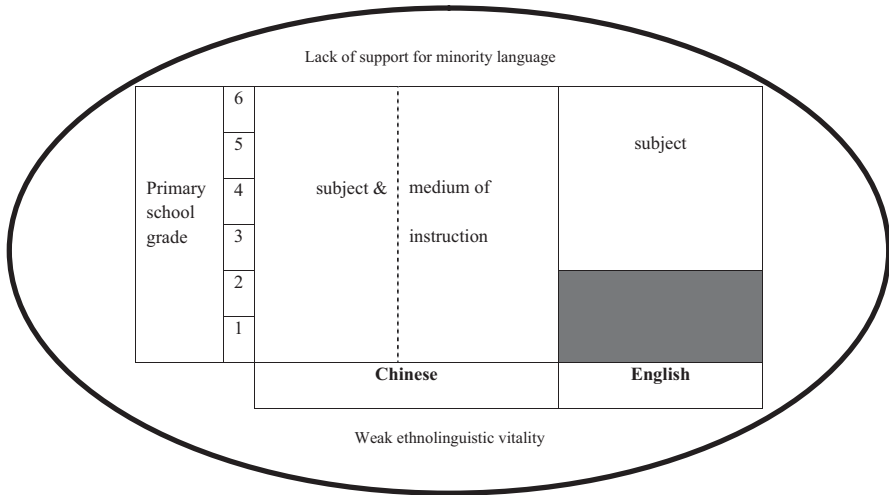
Fig. 5 Typical conceptualisation of the Depreciative Model

of instruction, or offering it as a subject or even encouraging its use as a language of daily discourse in the school. The ethnolinguistic vitality of the minority language in the local community is usually weak—occasionally because there are several different minority languages spoken and occasionally because the dominant minority language lacks a written form. The outcome is almost inevitably the loss of the minority language. This model is identified in numerous areas of Guangxi, Yunnan, towns or cities in Inner Mongolia, Sichuan, Gansu and Guizhou.

A case in point of the Depreciative Model is the school in a hilly and remote area of Yunnan visited by members of the research project. The students were mainly, although not exclusively, from the Yi minority group, as were several members of staff. As the school had received investment funds from the education authorities, several well-qualified teachers had been recruited from Kunming, the provincial capital, and most of these teachers belonged to the Han majority group. The School Principal explained that recruiting good Yi teachers was problematic, as suitable candidates often preferred to move to urban areas, whereas some young Han teachers were keen to experience rural life for a few years or to seek better promotion possibilities away from the highly competitive big cities. Discussions with students' parents revealed that there was a laissez-faire attitude towards the Yi language in their local community, and the students conclusively preferred that Chinese and English proficiency should be developed in order, as one father mentioned, that their children could enjoy a better standard of living than they themselves had experienced, with their little or limited Chinese and English language skills. Although the School Principal professed commitment to the Yi language and trilingualism, notices around the school exhorted students to "Please speak Putonghua". Almost inevitably, the Depreciative Model contributes to the weakening or even loss of the minority language and erodes the children's sense of ethnic identity.

The education model for speakers of Cantonese and similar varieties of Chinese is also a Depreciative Model, although schools would not claim to offer trilingual education. The status of these varieties is insufficient to merit official attention in the state school system.

2.5   Other Models

Around the country, the practice of trilingual education investigated by the project team members can be seen as corresponding to or nearly corresponding to the four models outlined above. However, some special arrangements have been made, often for ethnic groups from contexts that are deemed politically sensitive (Adamson and Feng 2009) and the relationship with the Han has been antagonistic at times, occasionally erupting into violence. The Tibetans and Uyghurs are representative of this category. Traditionally, these students would follow what are customarily termed as *min kao min* and *min kao han* routes in education. The former refers to a system in which minority students, particularly those in remote minority-dominated areas, take most, if not all, school subjects in their home language with Chinese only as a school subject, if it at all Chinese was offered. A foreign language is not usually offered, either due to a lack of resources or due to bilingual policies which ignore foreign languages (Sunuodula and Feng 2011; Tsung 2009). This model is frequently perceived as weak, for students will neither appropriately acquire Chinese (L2) nor a foreign language (L3). One of the consequences of adopting this model would be that, as tertiary courses are taught in Chinese, students who do manage to enter university would have to learn Chinese for at least one year before they were allowed to take the normal courses (Yang 2005). Alternatively, some minority pupils follow the *min kao han* route, by simply attending schools for Han pupils and following the national system. This would be characterised as a typical Depreciative Model.

A recent measure is the provision of *neidiban* (inland classes or Outside-Xinjiang Uyghur Class (see Chap. 4 by Sunuodulla and Cao)), whereby Tibetan and Uyghur students leave their home to attend schools situated in major cities nearer to the heartland of the PRC. The curriculum of these schools generally provides a Transitional or Depreciative Model of trilingual education, although the students come from minority groups that traditionally have strong ethnolinguistic vitality. The influence of that vitality is reduced when the students are relocated.

Yet another set of approaches is the *min han hexiao* (minority and Han merged schools) in Xinjiang described in Chap. 4. Under the Three Options Policy, possible models include one that involves teaching an increasing number of core academic subjects in Chinese, and cultural subjects plus a diminishing number of academic subjects in the minority language (such as Uyghur); a second model that teaches even fewer subjects using the minority language as the medium of instruction; and finally, a third model, in which the minority language is ignored completely as a subject and not used in any way whatsoever as the medium of instruction. The first variant is similar to the Accretive Model, with the difference being that policy

documents have a tendency to be tolerant rather than supportive of the minority language, meaning that the impact of this variant is more akin to that of a Transitional Model. The second variant inclines more emphatically towards the Transitional Model. The third variant is clearly a Depreciative Model.

Yet another model practised in particular Type−2 or Type−3 communities is what is ordinarily referred to as *minzuyu tuji kaoshi ban*—short courses that are set up for students who sit for examinations in minority languages. Thus, this model is examination-oriented. These classes would, for instance, train students for entrance examinations to tertiary education in universities that have special arrangements for minority students. By taking an examination in their home language, minority students add marks to the aggregate marks mandatory for entrance to tertiary education. Minority students achieving the requisite standard in the minority language would be allowed to enter universities, with lower scores in English than their Han counterparts, in recognition of the linguistic challenges that constantly confront them.

3   Factors Underpinning the Models of Trilingual Education

In this section, we identify contextual factors that play a role in shaping trilingual education policy and the different forms of implementation that have been discussed above. The factors explored below are not discrete and by no means comprehensive, but we identify them as having a noticeable influence on policy making and implementation.

3.1   Policy Making Factors

The fact that there are such wide variations in the models of trilingual education can partly be attributed to the nature of relevant policies and policy making in the PRC. The policies regarding minority language education, Chinese and English (or other foreign languages) were actually separate strands that came into force at different periods in time. There was no single coherent policy that espoused trilingual education. The promotion of minority languages is a singular feature of the recent decades of economic modernisation, when precise measures were implemented to develop western regions of China, which were relatively backward. The forced assimilationist policies that had prevailed in the 1960s and 1970s were replaced by increasing (albeit uneven) efforts to preserve and promote ethnic minority groups and their languages (Lam 2005; Adamson and Feng 2009). The propagation of standard forms of written (with simplified characters) and spoken Chinese dates back to the immediate aftermath of the founding of the PRC as an integral part of nation-building (Adamson 2004) and, of the three language policies under discussion, is the only

policy that has remained unwaveringly consistent across time. The emphasis on foreign language in education policy has veered from Russian in the 1950s, to English in the early 1960s, to the repudiation of nearly all foreign language teaching during the Cultural Revolution, to the massive investment in English since the turn of the millennium (Adamson 2004). The lack of a unified response to the confluence of the three strands may be explained by the decentralised nature of policy making that has allowed provincial and regional governments and, to some extent, lower levels of government, increasing autonomy over educational affairs since 1985 (Lewin et al. 1994). This decentralisation implies that local formulations of trilingual policies take into account the particular features of the contexts in which they are to be implemented. Several of these features are discussed below.

3.2 Ethnolinguistic Factors

In the four models illustrated earlier in this chapter, an important variable is ethnolinguistic vitality. Models of trilingual education that promote additive trilingualism tend to be found in contexts where the ethnolinguistic vitality of the minority language is strong. This suggests that the widespread community use of a vibrant minority language (usually existing in a written as well as a spoken form) and positive attitudes towards that language among members of the community can provide the impetus and support necessary for Accretive or Balanced Models of trilingual education in the local schools. However, strong ethnolinguistic vitality does not guarantee the presence of these models, as evidenced by some of the special arrangements for minority students such as the inland classes and the Three Options in Xinjiang.

3.3 Political Factors

Trilingual education policies also reflect the political attitudes of the Han majority towards the ethnic minorities in a particular region (Adamson and Feng 2009). Some ethnic groups have a long history of integration or of relatively harmonious co-existence with the Han. The Zhuang in Guangxi Province, for instance, do not display a heightened sense of differentiation, while several of the minority groups in Yunnan Province are viewed as living peacefully and cooperatively with the majority group. In such cases, the Han-dominated authorities have proved themselves to be amenable in supporting the preservation and revitalisation of the ethnic languages where there is local demand. The rationale for this support is that respect for the cultural heritage and identity of minorities can help to maintain social cohesion and provide economic benefits, such as advantages arising for the region from tourism.

On the other hand, some minority groups, as noted above, have been associated with independence movements that threaten the integrity of the state. Sporadic outbreaks of unrest have been reported involving Tibetans and Uyghurs, among

others. Their antagonism dates back to the initial integration of Tibet and Xinjiang into China, which was viewed by some minorities as being an outcome of military aggression by the Chinese empire. While portraying the relationship between the Han and these groups as one of stark confrontation would fail to reflect the more nuanced complexities of the reality, it is apparent that different approaches, generally more coercive and depreciative in nature, have been adopted in the language policies for schools in those regions (Tsung and Cruickshank 2009). The motivation for more vigorous promotion of Chinese is ambivalent—it could be viewed as a benevolent act of empowering a marginalised section of the population to enjoy greater access to the social, economic and political life of mainstream society, or as an act of suppression to fight against any separatist tendencies that might be aroused by ethnic pride (Adamson and Feng 2009).

3.4 Economic Factors

The instances of Additive and Balanced Models of trilingual education described in this volume usually benefit from economic capital in different forms. One form is economic investment that allows schools to recruit well qualified teachers proficient in the respective languages, including the ability to use the ethnic minority language as the medium of instruction. (The Transitional and Depreciative Models are more likely to occur when such teachers are unavailable because potential recruits have left the local community for employment in the cities.) Economic investment requires decision making. Resources for education have to be prioritised and investment in specific minority languages could be regarded as a worthwhile venture. Alternatively, if there is a mix of various ethnic minority groups, imparting education in all their languages could be considered economically inefficient.

Another form of economic capital accrues from the prestige of languages such as Korean and Mongolian in view of the opportunities they afford for cross-border trading and the concomitant career prospects. However, appealing to this form of economic capital as the basis for promoting trilingual education is often a weak argument: it is vulnerable to market forces and political changes and furthermore, it runs a risk of excluding and endangering many minority languages, including some with a long history and strong ethnolinguistic vitality. Trade can also work against the minority language. The beautiful natural scenery that forms the backdrop to the habitats of many ethnic minority communities has attracted investors and visitors. Tourism may have greatly expedited the pace of opening up many remote regions to opportunities to display their culture; but tourism in turn builds enduring national and international connections, which only serve to reinforce the perception among ethnic minority groups that proficiency in Chinese and English is essential, to the detriment of their own language.

3.5   Geographical and Demographical Factors

Ethnic minorities live, study and work in diverse settings, including major industrial cities, medium-sized towns, mountainous regions, grasslands, and deserts. They can form homogenous ethnic groups or become an integral part of heterogeneous groups in which they constitute a majority, equal or minority proportion. The homogeneity often occurs in remote areas; heterogeneity occurs when populations become mixed, such as in towns and cities where trade draws different groups together. The economic modernisation drive in the PRC that was launched by the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping in 1978, initially concentrated on industrialisation, which consecutively produced rapid urbanisation. In many cases, this process diluted the ethnolinguistic vitality of the minority language in towns and cities. The Accretive and Balanced Models of trilingual education are more or less associated with homogenous, and therefore, more remote areas where ethnolinguistic vitality is strong; the Transitional and Depreciative Models are typically perceived in more urban areas that have a heterogeneous populace. These are generalities and there are exceptions to these trends, but the evidence of the chapters in this book—the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region is a prime example—suggests that they are valid to a large extent.

3.6   Educational Factors

The seclusion of many ethnic minority groups can lead to a number of disadvantages for students: educational supervision and provision can be limited, standards of literacy can be low, and the majority of teachers can be relatively poorly trained to meet the demands of trilingual education. On the other hand, students who develop additive competence in three languages through an Accretive Model can enjoy more cognitive and affective benefits than those who learn one or two languages, as indicated by the experimental study in the Dong-dominated area in Guizhou (see Chap. 9) as well as numerous other studies conducted in several parts of the world (for example, Cenoz and Jessner 2000; Hoffmann and Ytsma 2004). This argument for a coherent model of trilingual education has yet to be accepted throughout the PRC and educational factors are often outweighed by political and economic factors. Nonetheless, it provides added support for the development of strong models of trilingual education.

4   Challenges for Trilingual Education

In this book, we contend that the Accretive and Balanced Models of trilingual education possess substantial potential to foster additive trilingualism in students, thereby granting numerous social, political, economic and educational advantages

to students and modern Chinese society. By comparison, models such as the Transitional and Depreciative Models, which promote limited trilingualism or essentially aim to achieve solely bilingualism or monolingualism, are weak. There are, however, considerable challenges to overcome in establishing strong models of trilingual education. Some of the key factors listed in the previous section can be seen as facilitating or hindering the implementation of strong models. The challenges facing policy makers and implementers lie in strengthening the facilitating factors and working around the barriers.

The first challenge is securing a determined commitment from all key stakeholders towards additive trilingualism, which has the potential to enhance social harmony by boosting the self-identity of ethnic minority groups and empowering them with the linguistic tools to access opportunities in mainstream society and in the global community. This is in fact the stated goal of state policies at the national level, even though it is expressed somewhat incoherently across three different policy streams. Failure to maintain an expected standard and to fulfil the goals occurs at the regional and local levels as numerous contextual factors come into play, including the fear that cultivating linguistic and cultural diversity could weaken the integrity of the nation. Achieving consensus would necessitate engagement, debate, give-and-take, persuasion and investment in teacher professional development to engender creative and context-specific solutions that incorporate positive attitudes and a supportive environment for Accretive or Balanced Models.

Further empowerment arises from the cognitive and affective advantages that trilinguals command over bilinguals and monolinguals. All things considered, additive trilingualism possesses the potential to lift ethnic minorities from a marginalised and disadvantaged status in society to a position of strength. The capital amassed from the sum of three languages can be greater than that from the individual parts. A triathlete may not beat a champion swimmer, cyclist or distance runner in a single leg of a triathlon, but he does have a greater probability of winning the entire competition (Feng 2010). A related educational challenge is setting appropriate linguistic outcomes (and appropriate assessment mechanisms) given the available economic and human resources, prevailing ethnolinguistic vitality and demographical profiles in the areas in which additive trilingualism is to be cultivated. Clearly, high levels of proficiency across a wide range of social, academic and professional domains in all three languages are not a realistic target. Differentiated outcomes would be a better solution, with a curriculum design that aims to produce strong competence in the mother tongue (the minority language for ethnic students, Chinese for Han); a sound, functional competence in the second language (Chinese for ethnic students, the minority language for Han) and competence in English that matches the national standards set for all students throughout the PRC. The allocation of the three languages in the curriculum would also vary across the different ethnic minority regions, to take into account their specific contexts and language needs. Remedial action would be necessitated in remote areas, for instance, if the students' displayed weak Chinese and English skills, or in urban areas with poor proficiency in the ethnic minority language. Minority languages with no written script would need support, as has been provided in the past in numerous cases, to

enhance their sustainability. This diversity would require flexibility in formal assessments, although caution should be exercised to ensure that the downsides of affirmative action—especially the stigma attached to those who benefit from such action (see Adamson and Xia 2011)—are mitigated.

While we advocate the propagation of strong models of trilingual education, the significant challenges outlined in this section—in addition to others that have not been discussed—entail a pragmatic, incremental approach that sets achievable targets. Education authorities, schools and local communities should move towards establishing strong models at a pace that takes into account their capacity to change, with reforms being pitched within what Vygotsky (1978) terms the "zone of proximal development" of stakeholders.

5 Conclusion

The research reported in this book suggests that China is pioneering innovative approaches to trilingual education. Through the work of officials, educators, community leaders and other stakeholders, the PRC now has a platform for effective trilingual education in primary schools, with the potential for social, political, economic and educational benefits that could empower millions of citizens. However, there is still much to be done across the regions to establish ideal settings that support the development of additive trilingualism on a large scale, as the research also indicates that trilingual education in the PRC varies in its models and effectiveness. Where the conditions are supportive, two strong models have emerged—termed in this book as the Accretive and the Balanced Models—that have the potential to develop trilingual proficiency in students. Unfortunately, these models are not, at present, generally discernible across the ethnic minority regions. Instead, weaker models, the Transitional and Depreciative Models, prevail as regional and local forces counteract the intentions of national policies, which are haphazard in formulation and problematic to implement. In many cases, the gap between policy aspirations and grassroots realities is immense, thereby endangering some minority languages.

Considering all aspects, supporters of additive trilingualism have reason to be cautiously optimistic about developments in China. Additive trilingualism is a concept whose potential has been seized with alacrity in some regions, such as the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region and the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. The challenge lies in disseminating strong models of trilingual education around the country and throughout the education system as a whole, embracing secondary and tertiary education, where arrangements are currently sporadic and unsystematic. If China is successful in this task, it will make a powerful contribution to the theory of the study of trilingualism and to the practice of trilingual education in supporting national development.

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