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LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG CHINA BORN AND UNITED STATES
BORN CHINESE STUDENTS IN SAN FRANCISCO:
CULTURAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

A Dissertation

Presented to

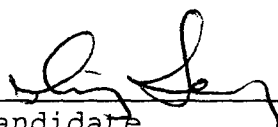
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Irving Leung

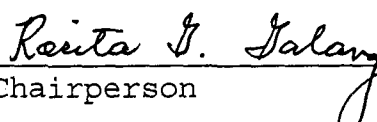
San Francisco, California
December 1998

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.


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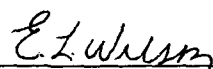
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CHAPTER I

The Research Problem

Introduction

In The Language Instinct, Pinker (1994), stated that

language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently. (p. 18)

Thus, language could be interpreted as an innate communicative tool people used to interact with others in a meaningful, spiritual, and artistic way. The level of word sophistication and comprehension was reflective of life and educational experiences. Yet, on a different level, de Saussure believed that "language is a system of values" (Gordon, 1996, p.44) that related words and sounds to thoughts. Although there was no universal definition of language, there was consensus on the different facets of language working interactively that provide the rhythm, value, and significance to words. The different components that existed in all spoken languages are prosody, pragmatics, semantics, morphology, phonology, and syntax

(Lyon, 1996). If the ultimate function of language was to allow people to communicate interculturally or intraculturally through the synthesis of words, then language could not just be a mental tool but a powerful resource that could lead to inequality and interrupted access to resources and power (Tollefson, 1991).

Language was ubiquitous in its role in culture. Since language is one component of the microculture or the macroculture, it had a symbiotic role of shaping the identities of the microcultures and macrocultures (Hamers & Blanc, 1995). Although language by design is neutral, its usage, implication, and manifestations were not. When the macroculture exuded advances in technology, business, political will, social ideals, and medicine advancement, the language spoken within those realms greatly enhanced the significant use and understanding of that language. When the status and significance of a language was enhanced, there were ramifications to the various people who were not functionally literate and proficient in the socially, educationally, medically, financially, and politically dominant language, which happened to be English in the United States. By not understanding and using the socially

dominant language, advancement in employment, education, and socialization would be seemingly limited (Holmes, 1992; Tollefson, 1991). What were considered to be fundamental human rights, such as the right to speak and use the birth language as a means to convey educational understanding or knowledge, were now caught in a web of deceit and were in need for justification and validation from the macro perspectives. At the micro perspective, ethnolinguistic individuals put forth great efforts to assimilate without losing their pride and sense of self. As a result of the inequality of power and status through the use of language, the necessity of speaking and utilizing the language of power and privilege was seemingly unavoidable (Hamers & Blanc, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

With the Chinese population in China and diaspora, Mandarin along with the various regional dialects of Chinese appeared to be thriving in most economic, political, and social realms (Li, 1994). However, the language issue took on a different role and meaning when individuals immigrated to a country like the United States of America. What was considered to be their lifeline and their medium for life

improvement, the immigrants' native language found itself in a state of flux and re-evaluation in the midst of a more dominant language.

Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) argued that the phenomenon of language shift occurred the moment immigrants landed on the shores of the adopted country, particularly in schools. Some Chinese immigrants adapting to America's educational system found academic success quite elusive (Wong, 1988). While "education is supposed to be the great equalizer" (Locke, 1996), there were some teachers who hold biased views of wanting the immigrant children to learn the socially dominant language at the expense of their birth language. Many teachers in the United States believed that speaking and utilizing English would better serve students' educational needs. More importantly, using English better suited their teaching style. The assimilation approach which most schools advocated and where the children were placed in English only classes immediately found home language and bilingual education as non-educational issues (Verma, 1987). In addition, this rhetoric was heard and supported by the near abolition or modification of bilingual education by some Latino members and ill informed people like Ron Unz. On

April 27, 1997, 83% of the Latinos responding to a Los Angeles Times poll opposed bilingual education (English First Org., 1997). By using English strictly as the sole medium of instruction when the students were not ready for it, teachers and administrators failed to understand that they were perpetuating the reduction or subtractive model of bilingualism (Lambert, 1977). As a result of incorporating the reduction model, educational inequalities and language disempowerment were favored (Cummins, 1986; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981). Spanish immigrant children had experienced this on-going phenomenon as described in Hakuta and D'Andrea's study conducted in 1992. Language shift could be attributed not only to teachers and their sophist ideology, but also to the establishments they worked in and represented.

More China born Chinese parents believed that knowing English would increase the opportunities for their children for future success thereby achieving the "American Dream." Ultimately, China born and United States born Chinese parents willingly wanted their children to learn English as soon as possible so as not to endure the lifestyle they are experiencing now (Leung, 1996). Thus, their motivation to master English was attributed to economic and social gains.

Such values were not exclusive to Chinese and Chinese Americans. In a language survey cited by Barone (1998) on Hispanic parents, he found 51% of the parents wanted their children to learn to speak, read, and write English as their primary language. Only 11% feel the same way for Spanish.

Is this rush for the Chinese students to learn English and assimilate quickly necessary? Furthermore, what happens when the "standard" of learning English had not been achieved adequately? There is no guarantee that learning English would equate to academic achievement or higher economic gains. Perhaps, the rush stemmed from the students' desire to be visible and important in the public's eye (Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994). Cummins (1984; 1986) had stated that it would take foreign language students at least 5-7 years to learn English. During that time, pedagogically, it was best for the students to continue learning in their native language while acquiring English. The reason for the use of this method was that development of their first language will lead to better understanding in English (Krashen, 1982). In the end, "the level of language competence played a crucial role in determining the effect of bilingual experience and future cognitive development"

(Hamers & Blanc, 1995, p. 54). Furthermore, "instruction conducted in the first language is developing a deeper conceptual and linguistic awareness that is related to the development of general literacy and academic skills" (Hamers & Blanc, 1995, (p.54-55). Nevertheless, students had the choice whether to learn English or not. To disregard one language for another was unconscionable but it was methodically and systematically done. The use of language is a right awarded to all individuals regardless of race, religion, or gender. It should be protected, advanced, or maintained in all dialects (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981).

When the individual's first language was being displaced by the more socially, educationally, economically, technologically, and medically favored language, a shift in language use and choice occurs. Language shift was defined as the gradual loss of fluency and competence over time by speakers of their native language for another language (Holmes, 1992). Fishman (1991) asserted:

Language shift is a by-product of unequal rates of social change and of growth in econotechnical power and, therefore, of self regulation, i.e. the very same process that also contributes to the widespread anomie and alienation that typify so much of modern life among the culturally dominant and the culturally recessive alike. (p.6)

Language shift was not an isolated phenomenon experienced by the Hispanic or Puerto Rican students living in the United States. To some degrees recent immigrants in United States will go through what Fishman (1964) describes as the four stages of intergenerational language shift. It appeared that most of the research conducted with language shift in America has been conducted with the Hispanic and Puerto Rican learners (Collier, 1992; Walsh, 1991). No study to the degree of language shift, from Cantonese to English, among Chinese and Chinese American students living in San Francisco was found by this researcher.

To understand the context of language shift among Chinese students, a brief history of the Chinese people and a description of their language are presented.

A Brief History of the Chinese People in America

Chan (1991), who described in detail the history of the Chinese people in America, wrote that the Chinese people who first sojourned in California and along the Western coastal states during the 1800s were from Guangdong (Kwantung) province. When China was isolated from the world, all of the major port cities were closed. Nobody could leave or enter the country except for people living in Guangdong province.

The royal court designated this area as an economic zone. If foreigners wanted to trade with China, they were required to enter through this region. To support the growing need of trade and merchandise, the people within this region became craftsmen or merchants. The status of business men were elevated because they were allowed to travel in and out of China to conduct their affairs. However, their status was not as distinguished as those of officials or scholars. Nonetheless, Guangdong experienced an economic boom.

Great Britain was one country that traded extensively with China. There was a trade imbalance between the two countries. Great Britain traded for tea and porcelain that were worth more than the merchandise that was offered to the court and merchants in China. The Chinese officials were not impressed with the wares that Great Britain offered. The Chinese government wanted silver bullion for their goods. Wanting to reverse the imbalance, Great Britain began increasing the shipment of opium to China. Realizing the detriment that opium would do, Lin Tse-Hsu, an official, confiscated and destroyed "thousands of chest of opium" (Chan, 1991, p. 7). The British officials were not happy with what Lin Tse-Hsu had done. To avenge their honor, the

British navy sailed to China and systematically defeated the Chinese navy and army.

As a result of the first of many Opium Wars (1839-42) where Great Britain emerged victorious:

The Chinese had to open five ports to foreign commerce, limit the amount of custom duty they could charge, pay an indemnity of 21 million silver dollars, cede the island of Hong Kong to Great Britain, allow Christian missionaries to preach in various localities, get rid of certain diplomatic protocol that irked the Europeans, and all Westerners were immune to Chinese law. (p.7)

With five new ports opening, and famine and hopelessness from interethnic conflict settling in, the economy in Guangdong became depressed. The people had to find other avenues to survive. Manual labor was then required in Hawaii's sugar plantations because of the growing consumption of sugar worldwide. Working in a sugar plantation was not a new experience for the Chinese men because Guangdong province was a sugar producing province. Therefore, Chinese men did not hesitate to go in the late 1840s. When their tumultuous service ended in Hawaii, some of the men returned to China while others, spurned by gold fever and adventure, journeyed Westward to California (Chan, 1991; Takaki, 1989). Although the Chinese men did not find

riches in the "Gold Mountain," they were instrumental in building the Transcontinental Railroad and developing the agriculture in the Central Valley of California.

In spite of the Chinese hard working mentality, they were continually discriminated against by the people in power. The Chinese as well as other Asian immigrants endured "prejudice, economic discrimination, political disenfranchisement, physical violence, immigration exclusion, social segregation, and incarceration" (Chan, 1991, p.45). The Caucasian men were fallaciously fearful of the Chinese people because the Chinese people and other Asians were an economic threat to them. A series of laws passed by California's legislature, such as foreign miner's license tax and commutation tax, were strategically designed to inflict hardship for Chinese survival (McClain, 1994).

In the twentieth century, the harsh laws that were passed were repealed. The Chinese and other Asian groups living in America now enjoy the freedom and rights granted and protected by the Constitution of the United States.

The Chinese Language

There is a common misconception that Chinese is one language or it consists of one language. In fact, Chinese was the outcome of the Sino-Tibetan language group which was better known as Han, a general term that described the eight major languages (Chang, 1997). People who spoke Han resided in the Eastern and South Eastern regions of China. The following hierarchy, as determined by the number of people speaking the language, represented the dialects most spoken by the Chinese people in diaspora: (a) Mandarin, (b) Wu, (c) Yue (Guangdong Hua), (d) Xiang, (e) Hakka, (f) Min Nan, (g) Gan, and (h) Min Pei (Grimes, 1992). The list excluded the communal languages spoken in isolated areas.

In this research, the emphasis was on the Yue dialect, also known as Cantonese. Cantonese was a term that had been anglicized. When referring to this dialect, the proper usage and reference is Guangdong Hua instead of Cantonese (Wong, 1988). The term Guangdong Hua and Cantonese were used interchangeably in this dissertation. From a linguistic point of view, Guangdong dialect was a creole influenced by Han and other minority languages (Cheung, 1997). The

Guangdong dialect is also the umbrella term for the eight regional variation of the sub-dialects within Yue.

Here in San Francisco, majority of the Chinese population could traced their ancestral roots back to one of the eight regional districts in Guangdong (Chan, 1991; Chao et al, 1998). Within each district, there were some variations of Guangdong Hua spoken, which are (a) Sam Yup, (b) Namhoi, (c) Punyu, (d) Shuntak, (e) Yanping, (f) Toishan, (g) Sunwui, and (h) Hoiping (Wong, 1988). Of course, there were similarities in cultural practices within all the districts, but they still contained their own identity distinct from others. Majority of the Chinese people living in San Francisco speak the "standard" variety of Guangdong Hua which was primarily Sam Yup or Toishan (Chao, et al, 1998). Ironically, Sam Yup was viewed as more prestigious than Toishan and the other dialects because it was used in commerce. The use of Sam Yup also suggested cosmopolitan sophistication when compared to the other seven rural dialects (Wong, 1988).

The Han language as DeFrancis (1989) described it as a morphosyllabic system and that each written character was a single syllable and a single morpheme. In addition, the

morphosyllabic system reinforced the sound elements of the language. "There are 1,277 syllabic phonemes counting tone, about 400 not counting tones. There are 40 phonemes in English and 400 toneless and 1,300 tonal syllabic phonemes in Chinese" (p. 116). Changing the tone of one syllable will alter its meaning significantly.

Although the written character was the same for the different dialects, the mutual intelligibility was greatly different (Cheung, 1997). However, the written language was more aligned with Mandarin than the other seven dialects.

As of the 1996-1997 school year, there were 61,198 students roaming the halls, or listening and interacting with teachers in all of the public schools in San Francisco. Of the entire student population, 27.3% or 16,682 were China born and United States born Chinese (Kelley, 1998). However, there were no statistics to indicate the exact number of all Chinese students speaking which particular dialect of Cantonese. It appeared that Sam Yup, Toishan, and other dialect speakers were categorized into one. In summary, the Chinese language is fairly complex. When studying the Chinese language and the Chinese people, educators or other professionals must be sensitive to their distinct nuances.

Purpose of the Study

It is apparent that English is considered to be the standard language that all should use in most instances in the United States. The overall purpose of the study was to investigate language shift among the Chinese students in San Francisco from cultural, sociological, and educational perspectives. Specifically, it looked at the variables and dynamics of language shift as it affected the family, education, and the self.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. To what extent and how does language shift occur among China born and United States born students living in San Francisco today?
2. What were the cultural, sociological, and educational, factors contributing to language shift among China born and United States born students in San Francisco?
3. To what degree were parents aware that by encouraging English only they were fostering their children's loss of their ability to speak Cantonese?

4. What were the ramifications of language shift at the home environment when English was favored over Cantonese?
5. How did Chinese parents and students feel about language shift?
6. How has language shift among China born and United States born Chinese students affected their education?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of language shift was derived from sociolinguistics, educational planning, and the Chinese cultural identity, in particular the relationship of immigration, accommodation, and assimilation of Chinese.

Fishman (1991), a sociolinguist, asserted that language shift occurred because there was a compelling linear force within the dominant culture to assert its control over the ethnic group. Holmes et al (1993) indicated that shift may occur faster for some groups than others. However, the "direction of shift is inevitable" (p. 1). Fishman (1964) explains how bilingualism shifts from the native language toward the dominant language. According to him, there were four stages of language shift. During the initial stage immigrants learned concepts about the dominant language

through the primary language. The native language was used primarily to support and understand the adopted language. In the second stage, a certain level of proficiency had been achieved in the outside/dominant language, but not enough to converse or to function within that domain. The main language used was still the primary language. Again the primary language was an active agent that helped solidify the concepts using metaphors that they had established in the first language. During this stage, one would find code-switching and language-mixing in the people's verbal behavior. The third stage occurred with more mastery of the adopted language in different domains. As a result, the conceptual bases of the individuals had been reinforced. While the proficiency of the adopted language had been achieved, the primary language had taken a less active role and had taken the maintenance mode. The fourth stage occurred when the adopted language had become the primary source of communicative means in most if not all domains.

Sociological Perspective of Language Shift

Fishman (1964) explained that language shift occurred through the following:

1. Diffusion as the ultimate or long term context,

2. Spread from the top rather than from the bottom,
3. Urban focal points of spread,
4. Normal propagation channels as well as special ones
5. School as major formal vehicle of additional language acquisition,
6. Ongoing reward efforts, including access to power and resources,
7. Efficacy determination (evaluation) and reformulation of program. (p. 243)

Variable one, what Fishman meant in terms of "diffusion as the ultimate or long term context," was how the native language was being replaced in a linear direction. The adopted language was highly valued and reinforced by the print (books, newspapers, journals, magazines, and other information on the internet) and the print media (movies, television, and radio). The language was so pervasive and valued for its importance that it was hard to escape its attention. Unlike the native tongue, access to the print and other media was limited. When the print was limited, the native language relied on oral transmission. Such finding was consistent with Gupta and Siew's (1995) study of language shift in Singapore. They found that language shift occurred because there was no support for the native language. Furthermore, the native language was not

recognized widely as a medium for educational and vocational success. As a result, English was widely reinforced.

Variable two, the "spread from the top rather than from the bottom" had political and societal implications (Apple, 1995). Chinese born Chinese living in a new culture felt compelled to assimilate. Achieving any political means through the mastery of English was the conduit for self-empowerment. It had been said that the best education received is in the language of those in power (Liu, 1993). Such a notion was reinforced in Phillipson's (1992) idea of language power circle. Those in charge of various political and economic institutions purposely dictated policies and standards that would affect individuals living in the outer marginalized area. Furthermore, those living in the marginalized area wishing to get into the inner circle of power, must adhered to the standards and the language they use.

With the elite status and usage of the dominant language, a diglossic situation occurred where the dominant and the minority languages co-exist (Ferguson, 1973). A good example of this phenomenon is found in the San Francisco Chinatown speech community. Events created from past

discrimination practices have caused the creation of a safe haven (Chan, 1992). Individuals living and working in Chinatown need to speak and understand Cantonese in order to function and ascertain their financial, medical, or social needs. If one leaves Chinatown, one needs to speak English. North of Chinatown is North Beach where the individuals speak primarily English and/or Italian. East of Chinatown is the city's financial district where the language of choice is clearly English. South of Chinatown is downtown where the commercial establishments prefer to use English. West of Chinatown is a residential area that is predominantly populated by China born and United States born Chinese.

Variable three, "urban focal points of spread," was Fishman's belief of how language was transmitted through various means. In addition to the media, the schools, and political establishments, business industry were highly effective tools for influencing and persuading people to behave in a certain way. In the schools, core curriculum and policies had affected students to conform to values that have been legitimized by the elite and people of power (Ogbu, 1991; Apple, 1992). Thus, to attain this status,

individuals would need to follow the established course of direction and knowledge.

Variable four, "normal propagation channels as well as special ones" was Fishman's (1991) reference to competence and attitude toward language. He stated that individuals who were not proficient in their native language, tend to shift to another language. Attitude was not the sole significant contributor to language shift (Hakuta & D'Andrea, 1982). Holmes et al (1993), and Li (1982) contended that the quality of socialization with the family and institutions, such as churches, temples, restaurants, and work could be an indicator for shift. In essence, the purpose and desire for wanting to use the language could be another variable to investigate. Li's findings were consistent with Gardner et al's (1988) claim that attitudes, motivation, and confidence were variables hard to quantify yet relevant to language shift.

What Fishman determined as "normal" was the language that is dominant and widely used and therefore had set the standard for daily existence throughout society. For example, if English is the language used throughout the educational system, business institutions, media, and

service industry, it would be hard to avoid English. This variable was also cited by Baker (1993) who asserted that "employment requires use of the majority language, and ethnic identity was denied to achieve social and vocational mobility" (p.43) thereby creating a practical and greater need to use and understand the more dominant language.

Variable five, "school as major formal vehicle of additional language acquisition" was a definitive way of slowly and methodically shifting from the native language to the adopted language. Fishman joked about the efficacy of traditional English as a Second Language class as a euphemism for "English only" (Fishman, 1989, p. 517). However, the hidden curriculum and the ideology of the school played a role as well (Apple, 1990, 1992). To achieve academic and social success in the schools, one had to speak the language that would provide the means of empowerment and advancement (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986).

Variable six, "ongoing rewards efforts, including access to power and resources" was Fishman's (1991) reference to the need for meaning and value in life. According to him, rewards and power could be symbiotic. With the ethnic groups losing their native language due to

attitude change, lack of validation, or demographics, the adopted language was viewed as an important tool for attaining meaning and value.

Variable seven, "efficacy determination (evaluation) and reformulation of program" referred to the educational and language planning of the school (Fishman, 1991). If the native language was not valued, recognized, and used then the school would continued the curriculum with modification in the dominant language. This was a systematic approach where some teachers, administrators, and parents collectively planned to exclude or ignore the native language without understanding the educational and psychological ramifications of educating the children in their native tongue. As a result, a subtractive form of education was perpetuated and discriminatory educational practices were allowed (Cummins, 1986; Soto, 1997).

Educational Perspective of Language Shift

From the educational perspective, language shift occurred because there was a great urgency to conform within the rigid structure of schools. Schools had not been a hospitable environment for some immigrant learners. In fact, denigration may occur (Ma, 1994). For immigrants to succeed,

English had to be learned and mastered at any cost (Leung, 1996). When conformity was not reached, a level of "deviance" occurred (Apple, 1995, p.20). Apple (1995) contended that schools were mirrors of businesses and commerce. Furthermore, he advocated that the ideology and curriculum of schools must not continue to shape and form students for the purpose of filling a role left or created by others. The factory temperament was all too rigid that does not allow for diversity and humanness within the school environment. The attitude was reflected in the following quote, "Schools seem to contribute to inequality in that they are organized to distribute specific kinds of knowledge" (Apple, 1992, p.43). Subsequent to that quote was the school's insistence to maintain conformity of the curriculum which would validate and justify the elite status and knowledge (Young, 1971). As a result, power was achieved by implementing what should be taught and practiced and maintaining the "standard" through English by all possible means.

In regards to language shift, most teachers and the curricula were too rigid and unyielding to the linguistically diverse students because they are not trained

to teach this population (Guthrie, 1989). Conformity was the norm. It was very common to hear teachers at their schools exclaim their disapproval of bilingual education. A common sentiment is that the immigrants are now living in America, they ought to be speaking English as soon as possible (Bettag, 1994). Linguistically diverse students, specifically the Chinese who realized that schools were the vehicle that would elevate them to prized careers quickly shift from what is innate and personal to the language of the future and power. Language shift in the schools could be overt or covert. It was overt when the environment required and dictated all students to speak the dominant language and suffer recourse when speaking their native tongue. In a subtle fashion, most classes would incorporate cooperative learning groups as a learning tool. Unknown to the young children, these cooperative groups could lead to language shift because by design children would be in the context of having and needing to use the adoptive language to succeed in the task. They needed to socialize and communicate with other students to succeed (Hernandez-Chavez, 1978; Wong-Fillmore, 1991).

The paradigm of schools had to be more yielding and compassionate toward ethnolinguistic students. Instead of viewing them as people possessing deficits, they should be understood as people with knowledge, skills, and experience from different global perspectives (Freire, 1970). Cummins' (1986) Common Underlying Proficiency model had catapulted the necessity of instruction in the student's native language. The model supposed that there was a central operating system of cognition for two or more distinct languages to co-exist. With time and practice, individuals could move from cognitive and contextually based undemanding situations to more cognitive and contextually reduced situations. This theory works if the individuals were proficient in the native language which would enable them to facilitate English learning (Baker, 1993).

Cultural Perspective of Language Shift

Banks and Banks (1989) had indicated that "culture is used in several popular but confusing ways" (p.29). Regardless of our belonging to the different micro-cultures or macro-cultures in society, the relationship and the dynamics between the micro and macro culture must required rules to abide within an entity that would enable people to

gain wisdom and the means to pass it on to future generations (Alasuutari, 1995). Specifically, the role of language in the culture was "interdependent with the habits and values of behaving shared among members of that group" (Brice-Heath, 1983, p. 11,). It had been said that language is inextricably intertwined to culture and society (Sapir, 1953; Trudgill, 1995). Applying that statement to the China born or United States born Chinese students, could only mean that if these students failed to maintain their native language they would fail to carry on the customs and traditions of their heritage because they could not deeply and purposefully communicate with their parents, grandparents, and extended family members. Thus, they could be spiritually lost in a sea of faces.

The decree of being filial to parents, showing deference to elders, displaying fine acumen without arrogance, expressing honest speech without hurting, and always honoring benevolence and virtue is sacred and a time honored practice in the Chinese culture (Ozmon & Craver, 1995; Chan, 1973). These aforementioned qualities were influenced by the teachings of Confucius (Cheng, 1991). Along with these qualities, China born and United States

born Chinese students were expected to conform to social norms, respect authority, and overcome any ambiguity in their path (Kitano, 1980). Asian Americans who were not proficient in Cantonese may not be aware of the traditional practices of their culture, and yet, not totally acculturated to the "American" culture face a dilemma of understanding what it is to be an Asian living in America.

Traditionally, China born as well as United States born Chinese students succeed through effort and hard work. Such a mentality was greatly transferred to the schooling of their children. The belief was through hard work success and accomplishment would follow. The reward may not be immediate but it would manifest itself eventually. Self-worth was measured by how much one has accomplished (Endo et al, 1990). China born and United States born Chinese parents expected their children not just to value but also to succeed in education. Parents exerted demands that may or may not be reasonable "for achievement and upward mobility" (Zhang & Carrasquillo, 1992, p.10). When obligations, expectations, and conformity were not met, guilt was placed on the children to ensure "proper thinking".

When China born and United States born Chinese children were enrolled in schools, they seemed to have found an environment that was already familiar to them. Realizing the importance of schools and the implications of attaining a proper education, China born and United States born Chinese students diligently trudged through the educational process quietly with little to no questions asked. They succeeded in schools by listening to their teachers, listening to their parents, and learning in the language that would make their quest easier (Chan, 1991). Thus, if they were to succeed, they needed to participate in the educational process to reach their goal.

Significance of the Study

The challenge of understanding language shift in the Chinese community must be explored and explained. There were three reasons why this study proves important. First, it provides some understanding of language shift among China born and United States born Chinese students living in San Francisco from the cultural, sociolinguistic, and educational perspectives. Second, it points to the value of speaking the same language as the grandparents and parents in helping to unite and solidify the family. If the home

language was lost, the family dynamics and interactions would possibly be askewed. Without this interaction, it might be hard to maintain the culture. Third, the study provides insight into why people would want to shift from speaking Cantonese to speaking English.

Once language shift is understood within the Chinese and Chinese American context, it is hoped that there will be further dialogues to determine how to slow the process or possibly deter the shift from happening.

Definition of Terms

Bilingual education: Using the native tongue to help students learn the more dominant language in an educational setting (Baker, 1993).

Biliteracy: Reading and writing in two languages.

China born Chinese: A category of individuals who had origins from China who later immigrated to United States. Furthermore, these individuals who can speak, read, and write the language as well as practice the traditions and customs of the culture (Chan, 1991).

Common Underlying Proficiency: There are five components to this theory.

- /1/. There is one integrated source of thought.
- /2/. Bilingualism and multilingualism are

possible because people have the capacity to store easily two or more languages. People can function in two or more languages with relative ease.

/3/. Information processing skills and educational attainment may be developed through two languages as well as through one language.

/4/. Speaking, listening, reading or writing in the first or second language helps the whole cognitive system to develop.

/5/. When one or both languages are not functioning fully, cognitive functioning and academic performance may be negatively affected. (Baker, 1993, p.135)

Culture: "The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human intellectual formation and thought characteristic of a community or population" (The American Heritage Dictionary , 1976, p.321).

Deviance: The result of not conforming to specified academic norms and standards (Apple, 1992).

Elite: The arbitrary standard set forth by people in power whose agenda ultimately dictate certain events to happen in the greater populace. Thus, the arbitrary standard are perceived and perpetuated truths by the people (Apple, 1990).

Ethnicity: Pertaining to a particular ethnic group with distinct language and traditions (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1976, p. 450).

Ethnolinguistics: An union of two words symbolizing the ethnicity of the people and their language capabilities in the native tongue (Fishman, 1964).

English as a Second Language (E.S.L.): An umbrella term for the various types of bilingual classes where the aim is to use the native language to learn core subjects while learning the socially dominant language. Societal and educational aim are toward assimilation (Baker, 1993).

Fresh Off the Boat or Fresh Off the Jumbo Jet (FOB): A derogatory term used to describe immigrant Chinese.

Language: Using Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) definition, it is:

A system of symbols by means of which the individual is able to describe both the external world, the reality which surrounds his/her own internal world, and inner reality. The tools use to mediate between the individual and external circumstances. (p.2)

Another definition that is equally applicable is Pinker's (1994):

A complex, specialized skill which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal

instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently. (p. 18)

Language mixing: Using the native tongue to convey meaning and understanding with the use of the phrases or words from the dominant language (Baker, 1993).

Language patterns: The use of lexicons and phrases to convey meaning (Kuo, 1979).

Language planning: A conscious effort by the government in power to create and perpetuate written/printed materials, "standardization, modernization programs, and allocation of functions to particular languages within multilingual societies" (Tollefson, 1991, p.16).

Language shift: The gradual loss of fluency and competence over time by speakers of their native language for another language (Holmes, 1992).

Linguisticism: The "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources between groups through the means of language" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47).

Macro-culture: The pervasive environment where its rules, and mores influence the conditions of the microculture thereby creating an arena where people must relate to others socially, psychologically, and culturally (Banks, 1988).

Micro-culture: Homogenous groups of people interacting with their immediate environment where learning, communicating, and understanding are based on specific linguistic and cultural principles (Banks, 1988).

Pressure: A constraining influence or persuasion upon the mind or the will of an individual (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1976, p.1037).

Sociolinguistics: The study of the relationship between language and society. Primary purpose is to explain why language is spoken differently in different context as well as to identify the social function and its relationship of conveying meaning (Holmes, 1992).

United States born Chinese: A category of individuals born in the United States whose parents originally immigrated from China or Taiwan. Synonymous with this term are American born Chinese and Chinese American (Chan, 1991).

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Language shift is one of the topics in sociolinguistics. The literature on language shift discussed the factors affecting this phenomenon. These variables included language attitudes, language patterns, language choice, language usage, and educational planning. By using and analyzing these variables from the literature, the researcher attempts to make a parallel argument of language shift for the China born and United States born Chinese students in San Francisco.

The literature reviewed are presented in two main sections: (a) factors affecting language shift and outcomes of language shift, and (b) perspectives of language shift. In the first section, studies of language shift among China born and United States born Chinese students in diaspora are discussed. In the second section, the theoretical and historical aspects of language shift as discussed by different authors are presented.

Language Shift: Factors and Outcomes

Language Patterns and Language Use

Li (1982) examined the language pattern among unspecified Chinese or Chinese Americans participants in what appeared to be an urban setting in America. The researcher used a survey design to gather statistical data. To interpret the data, the researcher used partial effects and multiple logic analysis to analyze the numbers. However, what was abundantly cleared was the researcher's intent of measuring the native language (Chinese) as the dependent variable against three independent variables: (a) social economic status/educational attainment, (b) geographic location, and (c) cohorts. In this context, cohorts was referred to peers.

Socio-economic status was measured by educational and vocational attainment. Thus, the more education the subjects attained, the better their socio-economic status would be. The conclusion of the study revealed that individuals from low socio-economic background were likely to shift from Chinese languages to the English language faster. Whereas, the high socio-economic individuals were likely to maintain the native language because of the prestige of knowing

another language. Among cohorts, it was determined that a positive correlation to shift occurs because it ultimately determined what language to communicate when speaking to peers. These individuals mainly spoke English because their parents are third generation Chinese Americans who have grown accustomed to fashion and linguistic style of the Americans. Perhaps, the most significant variable attributing to language shift was geographical location. The researcher discovered individuals living outside a circle that did not use Cantonese in all realms such as; health care, banking, groceries services and merchandising, that there was a shift to English. However, individuals living within or close proximity of that circle had a "greater propensity" to resist language shift (Li, 1986, p.123).

The study drew logical conclusion as to why individuals living within the circle had to use the language that provided the many needs they required. They did not feel compelled to go outside of the circle to have their needs met. The context that the language was used provided a practice to maintain and possibly excel their language capabilities. Individuals living outside of the circle would naturally speak another language to have their needs met.

Ultimately, in order to maintain the mother tongue, people must speak it in a contextually embedded environment where it would be strongly reinforced. Otherwise, the inevitable will happen. The result of this study is comparable to Phillipson's thesis of language as a possible roadblock or access to power and resource in the community.

Language Attitudes and Language Use

From an anthropologic point of view, Kuo (1979) examined 44 Chinese families living in the Twin Cities area. All the participants were foreign born and have resided in the United States for at least a year. The primary focus of the researcher was to measure the parents attitudes toward bilingualism and language patterns. To get his data, Kuo used interviews followed by administering a questionnaire with the parents. However, a standardized measure was administered to the children. They were given the two versions of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT). The children had to take one form of the PPVT in English. The other test that was taken was just a translation from the standardized version form B to Cantonese. There was no mention of the participants background and socio economic status. There was also no mention of the appropriateness of

the testing measure for finding results on English attainment for this particular population.

Kuo (1979) discovered that when the wives initiated the conversation with their husbands, Cantonese was spoken 61% of the reported situations. Whereas, when husbands initiate the conversation with their wives, Cantonese was used 64% of the time. When speaking to another friend or colleague, the participants spoke Cantonese 84.2% of the time. When the fathers spoke to the children, it was reported they used Cantonese 81% from most situations to always. From the mother's perspective, the result was comparable. They too spoke Cantonese to their children 79% from most to all situations. However, the children painted a different linguistic scenario. When speaking to the father, the children would use English 59% from most to all situations and 0% for not using Cantonese. A similar result was yielded for the interaction of the children to the mothers. A dramatic drop of the use of Cantonese occurred when siblings talked among themselves. It was reported that 48% of the children would use Cantonese of most to all speaking situations. In addition, 8% of the children indicated that they never spoke Cantonese to their siblings.

The results of the PPVTs indicated that the children who were older had a higher score on the PPVTs. The younger children who were not as proficient in English and still favored Cantonese yielded a lower score. However, language use changes as a result of being placed in a preschool setting or kindergarten setting. The result indicated as the non English proficient students were placed in an educational settings, the use of Cantonese was replaced with English. Moreover, their older siblings who were beginning to become more proficient with English were now using it more frequently in most situations except speaking to the parents. The younger sibling witnessing the older sibling's linguistic behavior would soon follow.

Some of the parents were not at all comfortable with this arrangement but tolerated the transition for the children's education attainment in the United States. One of the more progressive parent made it a point to speak Cantonese inside the home but was not consistent enough to follow to such a claim. Even though he wanted Cantonese spoken in the house, there were times when the son would respond to him in English. When parents saw the change their children were exhibiting, the process was irreversible. The

language spoken at home could provide the stimuli for some basic literary skills. However, for the children to maintain what they had learned from the parents would depend on practice and support from their school and social environment.

From the parents' interviews, the following themes were discovered:

1. A gradual shift from Cantonese to English occurred when students entered school.
2. Children started responding to parents in English when Parents spoke and questioned to them in Cantonese.
3. Parents did not teach the children English. The environment did. Parents who felt maintaining the mother tongue was important feel it is a lost cause.
4. In spite of the importance of knowing Cantonese in the home environment, there was no support from the community to validate the recognition and the value of Cantonese.
5. Being bilingual was very useful. It did not hampered cognition in any way.

There was a lesson to be learned from Kuo's testing protocol. He should not have used the PPVT to ascertain

language results from these Chinese children. The test had not been adequately normed for this population. Moreover, this test could not illustrate any "evidence of a relationship between ability and achievement in language learning" (Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994, p. 133). In spite of the measure used, the credibility of the findings were questionable. For example, there was no indication when and in what context Cantonese was spoken and used, and no indication as to why the children responded to the parents in English instead of Cantonese. Nonetheless, it allowed some insight to the problem. Furthermore, it illustrated that there could not be one qualitative or quantitative measure to explore the complexities of language shift.

From a different sociolinguistic perspective on language shift, Holmes, Roberts, Verivaki and Aipolo conducted a study on three distinct ethnic groups in New Zealand (Holmes et al, 1993). Among the three groups that were examined was the Chinese. Essentially, the researchers wanted to reaffirm language shift by using a culmination of Fishman's research findings from 1966 through 1991. The particular themes for investigation were the social attitudes toward language shift and the dependency model

from the minority group to the majority populace. To understand the themes clearly, three factors were analyzed; (a) the number of people who claim to be proficient in their native tongue, (b) number of institutional resources available, and (c) the relationship of the people to the institutional resources.

Using questionnaires and interviews to gather their data, the researchers concluded that successive generations would become less proficient in the parents' language. Such finding was consistent to Fishman (1964). Moreover, in a family with more than one child, the older child was more proficient in Cantonese than the younger child. What was revealing was that the rate of language shift was dependent on the need and the availability of resources. If there was a need to use the language and there were resources to support the language, the shift would be slower. Within the Chinese Community, it was concluded that Chinese was spoken for specific social activities surrounding family gatherings. Outside of the family unit, English was preferred because the language could be used in more domains. If the trend continues, there will be more and more people speaking English than Cantonese. The authors listed

eight factors that would aid in language maintenance in the Chinese community:

1. regular social interaction between community members
2. use of the community language in the home
3. positive attitudes to the language and a high value placed on it in relation to ethnic identity
4. residential contiguity
5. resistance to inter-ethnic marriage
6. support for community language schools
7. community identified religious organizations
8. positive orientation to the homeland. (Holmes et al, 1993, p.15)

This study reaffirmed the practice and willingness to use Cantonese in any meaningful and purposeful context. Although the number of participants in this study were limited, the researchers' findings were consistent to Holmes (1994) and Gupta (1995).

Language Shift Affecting Communication at Home

In a third study of review, Yu Wen Ying (1994) analysis of children to parent bonding among 143 American and foreign born Chinese living in San Francisco was determined by demographics and language skills of the participants. Instead of looking at language shift from a linguistic perspective, Ying wanted to know whether or not the language could dictate the quality of interaction between the

children and parents, Ying looked at this problem from a socio psychological point of view. The researcher had determined that the level of proficiency of the native tongue determined the quality of bond and the number of contacts between the parents and children.

Participants who were selected for this study were randomly selected from a San Francisco telephone directory. Data was collected by means of interviews and questionnaires.

The result of the study indicated that the "unmarried foreign born women who are an only or eldest child, and whose father and mother lived in the San Francisco Bay Area had most contact with their parents" (p.41). Moreover, these individuals had the tendency to stay with the parents until they got married. These women had the language capabilities to converse with their parents. Unlike the Chinese Americans women, they left home because they could no longer understand their parents, in particular their fathers. The Chinese American females would questioned the people involved in the dynamics of the traditional family, such as: the appropriateness of the various traditions and customs after and during child birth. The Chinese American males had

a tendency to negotiate the responsibilities intended for them. There was more pressure for them because of the parental desire of maintaining the traditional family. They did not agree with the institution of the traditional family because it was too restrictive. Whereas, the foreign born Chinese would accept the duties resignedly. Ironically, the scores for Chinese and Chinese American males were comparable to the scores yielded by the Chinese American women.

The study did not mention the extent of the socialization of the American born Chinese females. Such a factor must be considered for it factored into the acculturation and assimilation of the western social values, such as; being more assertive, independent, vocal and rebellious toward existing standards. The women in the study may find these characteristics more appealing. Nonetheless, the study did not implicitly explain the causes for language shift. It did, however, implied an area of concern when the common language between the parents and the children was lost. The consequence of not having the language included the deterioration of the family communication, dynamics and ultimately the unity. It was important to maintain that the

quality of parental care was not directly linked to language shift among the children. Kuo had not list the possible sources that would justifiably measure and understand the shift that would allow for this consequence.

Language Planning

In a study where a government encouraged the use of two languages (Mandarin and English) over the minority languages, such as; Cantonese, Javanese, and Sindhi for educational, vocational, and governmental affairs, Gupta and Yeok (1995) examined how the language policy affected language shift within a Chinese family of fifteen people. This case study took place in Singapore.

The Singaporean government had attached a level of prestige to the use of Mandarin and English. Naturally, when one was uplifted, another had fallen. People were eagerly learning the official languages because of the rewards it brought in terms of status and vocation. In spite of the rewards of using Mandarin and English, there were other factors that seemed to hasten language shift among the Chinese living in Singapore. They were:

1. low status of the language
2. negative attitudes towards the transmission of the language

3. lack of support from the government and schools
4. exogamy
5. imperfect learning by the younger generation (Romaine, 1989 cited in Gupta and Yeok, p. 302, 1995).

As a result of the quick transition to the recognized languages, there were people who can not communicate with their extended family members in great detail and length. When the ability to communicate was lost, the ability to "transfer traditional and cultural values from one generation to another was also lost" (Gupta & Yeok, 1995, p.305). The grandparents and people who were older face a dilemma because they were not proficient in the official languages that are now spoken by their grandchildren.

The researchers designed three categories of people to better understand language loss within a particular family. People who were in their seventies, such as grandparents, were labeled as G1. (G is short for generation) Individuals who were in their thirties to fifties were labeled as G2. Individuals who were in the range of two to twenties were labeled G3.

Results from the interviews indicated that the people in G1 spoke and wrote Cantonese exclusively. People in G2 were proficient in Cantonese. They had some working

knowledge of English and Mandarin. People in G3 spoke Mandarin and English exclusively, but could understand rudimentary Cantonese to some degree. Moreover, people in G2 could effectively communicate with the people in G1 and G3 because they used and experienced the languages in schools, work, and social functions. However, people in G1 and G3 could not communicate with each other in depth because the people in G3 did not have the vocabulary and other expressive skills needed to speak Cantonese. The converse was also true. Individuals from G1 could not dialogue with G3 (grandchildren) because they lacked exposure and understanding of English and Mandarin. To have a meaningful discussion, people from G2 would either serve as translators for G1 and G3 or as mediators where they would attempt to answer for the G1 and G3. When G1 and G3 were alone and felt compelled to talk, the conversation was rarely initiated by the members in G3. In addition, G3 employed language mixing to try to convey their meaning.

In conclusion, the people in G3 and to some degree of influenced by their parents from G2 have decided to learn and use the official languages because of the status. More importantly, the realization of the official languages would

educational and vocational manifestation. These stations would eventually bring happiness to the self. r, how could the happiness be shared with the family when no common languages were spoken directly? The ment intentions of using English and Mandarin as the al medium across all domains had created an ill effect ne families. The implication that Cantonese and other ty languages had no real extrinsic value to gain. speakers of those languages do not matter. Contrary to vernment belief, the family unity was indeed sacred valuable to be replaced.

Perspectives on Language Shift

s Leading to Language Shift

olmes (1994) indicated the following factors that lead to language shift. In no particular order of ance, they were as follows:

- . Education
- . Political/economic
- . Social factors
- . Demographic factors
- . Attitudes, values, and motivation

and consequences of the past would conflict with those in the present and future.

The implications of English language planning indicated the superiority of the language over others. It also heightened the differences of materialistic values and customs between groups. Before English displaced the first language, an evaluation would be needed to determine the philosophical foundation of English, such as; could people continue to advance economically, scientifically, socially, and politically without using English?

Reasons for Language Shift

From a less political point of view, Fishman (1991) indicated that language shift occurred for three reasons: "physical and demographic dislocation" (p. 57), "social dislocation" (p.59), and "cultural dislocation" (p.62).

Physical and demographic dislocation. Creating and using what the land had to offer dictated years of practical survival. By understanding the land, people could know what their limitations and boundaries were. In midst of the physical connection to the land, the people could obtain a level of livelihood which ultimately reflected their values

and knowledge. When they were uprooted, they appeared seemingly lost.

Physical dislocation was caused by two events. One was naturally induced by the forces of nature and the other was unfortunately induced by pestilence of people. With the result of these two events, voluntary and involuntary migration occurred to escape personal tragedy to another place that is conducive for life. However, in the new land that was conducive to life, there would be new rules, laws, language, traditions, and cultural practices that may be contrary to those that were brought forth. As a result, the people who migrated had the option of maintaining two cultures and languages or choosing one over the other.

Social dislocation. Fishman (1992) referred "social dislocation" as the unequal balance of power between people from the host country to the immigrants. In the past, ethnolinguistic people were socially disadvantaged because of their relatively low education attainment. Compounding their second class status, the lack of political representation and dearth of control over natural and people made resources had made them yearn for equity. With the search for equity, the education system welcomed all to

participate but at certain cost such as; giving up the mother tongue and values.

Cultural dislocation. Cultural dislocation had two implications. One manifestation found one oppressive regime of the dominant power directly imposing their will, values, and historical significance onto those who are disempowered. Even in a hegemonic system, ethnolinguistic people in a democratic society were still "enticed and rerouted from their customary areas" (p, 62) found and espoused in the mainstream, but these people have choices. Ultimately, if these ethnolinguistic people wanted to fully participate and integrate in a democratic society, they had a dilemma where they could remain loyal to their native tongue and cultural heritage of which they were not valued in the host country or assimilate the knowledge, values and culture of the host country and give up their ancestral past. Fishman (1992) argued that "modernization and democratization were enemies of those wanting to reverse language shift because they undercut the very cultural and identity distinctions on which minority language maintenance must be based" (p, 63). This manifestation was more subtle and further created a "dependency" of the host culture to continually reassert its

dominance and legitimization of what was good for all in society.

Language Planning

Working from two theories on language planning, Tollefson's thesis was:

The penetration of English into major political and economic institutions on every continent of the globe is a result of the economic and military power of English speaking countries and the expansion of the integrated global economic market which they have dominated. The process that bring about the spread of English have come to known as modernization (p.82).

Once English had become legitimized in society, it inevitably "consciously affect and institutionalize the power of language as a basis for distinction among social groups" (Tollefson, 1991, p. 16). Hence, language policy was an inexpensive tool to control and dictate social mobility and hegemony.

Tollefson arrived at this conclusion by analyzing language planning through the use of Neoclassical and Historical-structural approaches. With the Neoclassical framework, the onus of understanding language was within the individual. Thus, this framework would be adequate to

explain the motivation of wanting to learn and speak the language of power. Material and psychological cost for learning language of power were immaterial. The language of power in this reference was the language that was required by commerce or education which happened to be determined by economic forces. Ultimately, "the ideological use of language at work is a major basis for controlling access to work, and therefore to economic resources and political power" (p.208). In spite of this perspective, this framework could not adequately address some issues, such as; "why did some groups learn languages easily or lose it entirely? or What were the mechanism by which change in language structure and language use take place?" (p. 29).

From a historical-structural approach, there were four factors that were fundamentally different from the neoclassical approach.

1. the level of analysis used
2. the role of the history
3. the criteria used to evaluate language plans and policies
4. the role of the social scientist (p. 31).

As the name implies, the primary focus of this approach was to understand language planning through "historical and structural pressures that led to particular policies and

plans that constrain individual choice" (p.32). Tollefson referred structural as the institutionalized powers within society where the status quo was maintained and often repeated. As a result of this repetition, the knowledge and language generated within these institutions became accepted as historical truths. Furthermore, Tollefson declared historical process was symbiotic to structural considerations which reinforced the power base. Nonetheless, these historical truths could be viewed as hegemony. The individuals seeking equality and truth could work to change hegemonic conditions. Transformation would definitely occur at the personal level, however, the same success may not be generalized on the societal level.

The Neoclassical approach addressed language planning at the personal level whereas the Historical-structural approach viewed language planning from the societal perspective. Each were valid in describing the consequences of language planning. Ultimately, what was the relationship between language planning to language shift?

In spite of the freedom awarded to individuals to pursue life, liberty, and happiness, some choices were fraught with psychological and social costs that limit their

degree of liberty and the quality of success. The decision to enter the road of any measured success began indirectly with the proficiency of the dominant language. When the language of empowerment had been dictated by the various social, economical, technological, educational, medical, and political entities, the pursuit of happiness became convoluted especially for the ethnolinguistic members. For the elite and ruling class, language planning was very beneficial. Not only were their interests being preserved, they were in positions to use language to mold people. With the shaping of minds, this researcher could not resist the incorporation of Freire's (1970) knowledge banking metaphor. Although the metaphor was often used in educational context, it was quite relevant and useful to understand the purpose and philosophy of language planning.

There was always a choice for the individuals to decide whether they should learn the more dominant language. From the language planners' perspective, the choice seemed predetermined and easy to decide.

Summary

The findings of the studies reviewed were consistent with the theoretical and historical discussions of different

authors reviewed in this chapter. If Cantonese was to be maintained, the individuals must be able to use it consistently in a contextually rich and reinforcing environment. At the microlevel, speaking Cantonese at home was a good start, but there had to be other social outlets and participants willing to carry the level of language. Ironically, very little was mentioned about pride in regards to being a factor for language shift. Motivation to learning the dominant language had been cited as one factor for shift because of the advantages the it is associated with. However, this motivation may be artificially induced by the allure of the status, power, and social significance of the socially dominant language. It appeared learning English was one resource to achieve any kind of economic and social success. However, little had been said on the psychological ramifications if this standard had not been reached.

It appeared language shift could not be attributed to one entity, such as; politics, education, or economic. For it to happen, a myriad of events that interlocked within society and the family created the time and space for shift. Language shift was a phenomenon that must somehow find legitimization either during the process or at the end. The

choice to speak the dominant language may stemmed from personal reasons. However, the decision to switch was made easier for which the language was much more prevalent throughout various infrastructures within the community. Certainly the values of speaking the dominant language could reap some personal, economic and social success. However, what if ethnolinguistic individuals choose not to learn and utilize the dominant language? Could they not achieve the same personal, economic, and social success? The answer to that question would be a definite yes. It is yes but the quality of success may be somewhat "limited" by definition created by the macro-culture. For example, a family of four Chinese immigrants arrived to the shores of San Francisco. The parents would speak little to no English. Their relatives who had been living in the city had arranged their living and working situations for them. They would live in an area where there would be a concentration of Chinese immigrants. The work would be in a setting where there would a big portion of Cantonese speakers as well. Furthermore, it was a laborious job with little contact with English speakers and print.

The children who also spoke little to no English were enrolled in a Chinese Bilingual class at a public school. As the parents work, the children were methodically acquiring the dominant language, English. As the children were continually exposed as well as mastering the dominant language, they begin to equate what the language could bring them. Whereas, the parents who were not proficient in the dominant language, but may use a few colloquial phrases were content. Like any parents, they would want their offspring to achieve more than they. At home, the children would do homework that the parents could not help them with. When homework is completed, children would watch programs in the dominant language because of personal interest, and motivation, and social acceptance. Communication at home became stagnated because the children were beginning to respond to the parents in the dominant language. It was not unusual to hear the parents speak to their children in Cantonese and have the children respond to them in English. What was the value of not conversing within the family?

As the children were beginning to understand the macro-culture better, they would soon understand some of the underlying meaning and values associated with the macro-

culture. Because they could understand how and what was being said in the dominant language, the children may adopt or modify those values into their belief systems. However, such acceptance may not be accepted by the parents due to the lack of understanding in the dominant language. With language shift, the vehicle of change was limitless.

This example could not be generalized. However, the implication determined that individuals participating with any part of the macro society would need to utilize the more dominant language. At a young age, the willingness to speak and utilize the more dominant language was externally driven and was reinforced by society (Wong-Fillmore, 1992). It was also apparent that the consequences of language shift meant losing the capability to speak in the mother tongue to the relatives. Thus, family unit was in question. Furthermore, there were hidden psychological manifestations. However, the value of language shift stemmed from the purpose of the language that would enable the individuals to function within the macro-culture. Which was more important?

At this point, no study on language shift among Chinese and Chinese American students in San Francisco has been found by the researcher.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a participatory research design. This design was selected because (a) it allowed for deeper probing of the research questions without the constraint of traditional research paradigms, and (b) the dialogues and reflections empowered the participants and freed them from being afraid of change to knowing that they could strive for social change or action (Freire, 1992). The risk of being biased was not a major concern for the primary purpose was to delve into the root of the problem and to discover the truth in the process of searching for the answer from within (Park, 1993). Thus, the goal of participatory research was finding the truth that would bring change to the status quo (Freire, 1994).

In order for participatory research to succeed the involvement of the participants was necessary. As a form of a sociological methodology, the participants could not be treated as "subjects" and of little importance. They were treated as equals. They were individuals with knowledge that propelled the study into a meaningful and spiritual realm.

Participatory Research

Freire (1970) was among the first to identify participatory research as a viable method of sociological and cultural research. This form of research allows people to embark on a dialogic quest for truths while experiencing the transformation and creation of knowledge. The most fascinating aspect of this research is that participants were empowered to make changes via critical reflection in their lives (Park, 1989).

Participatory research is an egoless and humbling experience where the participants and the researcher have equal partnership in the investigation to better understand certain manifestation in reality (Kieffer, 1981). The starting point of this inquiry is focused on themes that are pervasive in the people's lives. Whether positive or negative, these themes require some resolution or understanding. When the common themes have been identified among the participants, they are openly discussed to develop a conceptual understanding of those themes. Once the themes have been operationalized, the participants can freely discuss them in the appropriate context (Freire, 1970).

Some aspects of participatory research are similar to ethnography (Agar, 1986). However, participatory research differs by coupling action components with critical analysis. This allows participants not only to grow collectively and learn together in a scholarly manner but instill the confidence and hope to change the status quo (Park, 1989). In sum:

Participatory research is a means of putting research capabilities in the hands of the "deprived" and "disenfranchised" people so that they can transform their lives for themselves. (Park, 1989, p.1)

The Participants

The researcher invited four China born and three United States born Chinese students as participants. These individuals graduated from or were attending high school or college in the San Francisco Bay Area. Their ages ranged from 15-22 years old.

The researcher turned to the Community Education Service (CES), a Chinatown based outreach program designed to tutor China born Chinese high school students with their English acquisition, for their assistance in finding willing participants. As for finding United States born Chinese students, the researcher sought the help of former students

or friends who were interested in this topic and were willing to discuss it.

China Born Chinese Students

Participants were given the option to use pseudonyms but they all decided to use their real names.

Agnes. Born and raised in Guangdong, China before immigrating to America in 1989. When she arrived in San Francisco, she enrolled at Mission High School. After her high school graduation, she attended San Francisco State University. She is bilingual and biliterate in English and Cantonese. She is now working for an apparel manufacturer in the accounts payable department. She has two younger siblings.

Lena. She was 15 when she immigrated from Guangdong, China. She attended Galileo High School. She has a younger sibling. She is now working at the Community Education Center as an assistant director for tutorial programs. She, too, is a graduate of San Francisco State University. Like Agnes, she is proficient and fluent in reading and writing Cantonese.

Kim. She, too, was born and raised in Guangdong, China before immigrating to America in 1987. She was a classmate

of Lena at Galileo High School. Kim and Lena met Agnes and became friends during the tutorial given by CES. She is now working as an administrator in a hardware store. She is a graduate from San Francisco State University, and has two younger siblings.

Kim is proficient in reading and writing Cantonese.

Jenny. She was born and lived in a rural village outside of Guandong. She immigrated to America just seven months ago. She is very fluent in her village dialect as well as Cantonese. Presently, she is in the eleventh grade at Newcomer High School in San Francisco. She is the youngest of three children.

United States Born Chinese Students

Brian. He was born and raised in San Francisco, he attended parochial and public schools during his academic years. He has aspirations of becoming an elementary teacher. He speaks Cantonese but does not write nor read the characters. Presently, he is a second year student at San Francisco State University. He has an older brother.

Stefanie. She was born and raised in San Francisco, she graduated from Wallenberg High School in 1998. She is now attending San Francisco State University. She has not

formally declared a major but is leaning towards teaching. She does not read nor write Chinese characters but is able to speak Cantonese reasonably well. She has a younger brother.

Clinton. He was born and raised in San Francisco. He too is unable to read and write Chinese characters and is not too confident of speaking Cantonese. He is a student at San Francisco State University. He has not declared a major but has an interest in business. He has a younger sister.

Entry into the Community

The researcher was a former tutor at the Community Educational Service (CES). He was familiar with the people who operate the program and the type of students enrolled in the tutorial program. The administrator, who runs CES, refereed willing participants to the study. The participants agreed to be included because it allowed them the opportunity to expand on their English conversation skills and use them as an outlet to reflect on their precarious balance of Cantonese and English. It was recommended that a presentation be made in order for the students to know the researcher and understand what he was planning to do with their knowledge.

The researcher delivered a presentation to a group of selected young students to inform them of the purpose and reasons for conducting this investigation. After the presentation, the question and answer period did not generate any responses or remarks from the audience. It appeared that they were not interested in participating in the project except for one individual. They seemed reticent about sharing their school, language, and life experiences to an apparent stranger. However, the assistant director who organized the meeting was interested in the research more than the intended audience. She had some issues she wanted to convey. Furthermore, she also had two other friends who shared similar feelings toward language, school, and family.

By chance, a trio of China born women were willing to dialogue with the researcher. When the assistant director and her friends understood the purpose of the investigation, they appeared more enthusiastic about validating and sharing what they already knew.

Finding United States born Chinese participants was less problematic. The researcher asked former students who had attended the elementary school where he presently teaches. Stefanie was the only one who responded during the

call for participants. Moreover, she highly recommended Brian and Clinton for this study. They were her childhood friends who appeared to be interested in Chinese language and culture.

The researcher used Cantonese or English to dialogue with the students. However, it was onus on the participants to decide which language to use. The China born Chinese students decided they wanted to speak in English except for Jenny. The United States born Chinese participants spoke in English because they had a better command of it than Cantonese.

Research Procedures

The researcher used participatory research to investigate language shift amongst Chinese students in San Francisco. Ada and Beutel (1993) discussed the five-step procedure for implementing participatory research. These steps were followed accordingly:

1. Recruit and dialogue with participants and transcribe the dialogues.
2. Share the transcripts with the participants for examination and reflection.
3. Analyze the data: Transcription of recorded dialogues into text and discussion of that text with the participants and search for generative themes.
4. Reflect on the emancipatory nature of the dialogues with the participants.
5. Construct the meanings of the first and second

dialogues, and the experiences overall, using all the previous reflections.
(Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 6)

Data Collection

After the participants agreed to join the research project, the inquirer formulated generative themes to start the dialogue. Thematic questions were asked to drive the dialogue initially but not to the point of steering or controlling it in a specific direction. Opinions were heard as the participants were encouraged to speak freely. Whether the meeting was held in public or in private, the emphasis was on the participants' preference. If discussions could not take place in the classroom, the researcher conducted the dialogue either in the researcher's or the participants' home. Furthermore, it was imperative that the dialogues took place in a friendly environment where the participants felt comfortable. Before any dialogue could start, trust had to be established (Park, 1987). Ideally, when the safe surrounding was established and the purpose of the research was clearly stated, this researcher held expectations that participants had searched deep within, and had challenged perspectives and the content of published literature, instead of using words and phrases to satisfy the

researcher. This researcher strove for a "dialogical teaching process of sharing experiences that create a situation where teaching is reduced to a form of group therapy that focuses on the psychology of the individual" (Freire & Macedo, 1995, p.380).

The researcher made contact with the participants on three separate occasions. Twice the contacts were in person and once through a phone interview to touch base and to further clarify various issues. There were many laughs as there were deep probing moments during the candid conversations. Some participants were not at all shy with their comments. Others seemed to trudge through the process. Yet, they all spoke with confidence and appeared at ease. They made sure they established eye contact when talking. The dialogue was conducted in a one on one format. All of the dialogues lasted an hour to an hour and a half except when speaking with Agnes, Lena, and Kim. They preferred to meet as a group.

Data Analysis

After each session, the researcher transcribed the tapes verbatim and brought the printed text to the following meeting with the individuals for further reflection and

confirmation. As a result of such a process, construction of meaning could be achieved (Maguire, 1987). Participants at this point were now known as co-researchers because their knowledge had value and importance. The researcher did not want to be a centralized power figure because power and knowledge was to be shared and constructed among the group (Maguire, 1987).

The participants were overwhelmed with the words and the task involved in generating a deeper meaning of language shift. Overall, they made cosmetic changes to their word usage or sentence structure but not in content. Nevertheless, as a group, we looked for pervasive themes from the transcripts and further discussed their meanings and implications (Ada & Beutel, 1993).

In analyzing the dialogues for research question one, themes were generated based on their interpretation of how language shift occurred in San Francisco among Chinese youths. These themes gave an overview of how language shift occurs.

In analyzing the dialogues for research questions two to six, themes were generated based on their interpretation of the perspectives of language shift.

Questions that Guided the Initial Dialogue

Research Question 1: *To what extent and how does language shift occur among China Born and United States Born Chinese students living in San Francisco today?*

1. Do you speak only Cantonese at home with your parents and your extended family members or do you use a mixed language?
2. In what ways is Cantonese spoken to your friends?
3. Do you watch any of the Chinese television programs or watch any of the Chinese movie theaters?
4. Do you like to listen to any Chinese lyrical music?
5. Do you read any Chinese printed texts or materials?

Research Question 2: *What are the cultural, sociological, and educational factors contributing to language shift among China born and United States born Chinese students in San Francisco?*

Cultural Factors

1. What do you believe is Chinese culture?
2. How does your family celebrate Chinese culture?
3. Do your parents explain to you the meaning of the major Chinese festivals?

4. Do you and your parents honor any of the Chinese traditions and Chinese festivals?
5. Do your parents explain to you the symbolism of the different Chinese food ingredients we eat?
6. What are the traditions you will likely pass on to your children and why?
7. Are you comfortable using and speaking Cantonese amongst your peers?
8. Do you feel it is important to maintain Cantonese?
9. Were you encouraged to speak and use English more than Cantonese?
9. Do you want to maintain your Cantonese? If so, how would you go about doing so?

Sociological Factors

1. Do you speak Cantonese for peer acceptance?
2. Did your parents ever enroll you in a Chinese language and culture school?
3. How do you feel when you start responding to your parents or elders in English rather than Cantonese?
4. Do you prefer to use English in a certain context and Cantonese in another? Why or why not?

5. How do you celebrate the four major Chinese festivals?
6. How often are you in contact with your grandparents or extended family?
7. How often do you go to Chinatown?
8. Why do you go to Chinatown?

Educational Factors

- 1) Do you speak English or Cantonese at school?
2. Do you wish to speak more Cantonese at school?
3. Should American schools encourage more teaching in Cantonese? Why or why not?
4. Did attending the Chinese language and culture school help you with your Cantonese?
5. Do you like being in bilingual or English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) classes?
6. What can you do to make bilingual or E.S.L. classes better?
7. Would learning Cantonese help you with your mastery of English?

Research Question 3: To what degree were parents aware that by encouraging English only they were fostering their children's loss of their ability to speak Cantonese?

1. Do you and your parents feel English is more important than Cantonese? Why and why not?
2. What can English utilization give that Cantonese can not?
3. Why do you think your parents want you to learn English instead of Cantonese?

Research Question 4: What were the ramifications of language shift at the home environment when English was favored over Cantonese?

1. What happens when you reply to your parents in English instead of Cantonese?
2. Do you find yourself talking to your parents in Cantonese less or more?
3. Do you find it easier to speak to family members in English? If so, why?

Research Question 5: How did Chinese parents and students feel about language shift?

1. What do you think is happening mind when you are responding to your parents in a language they do not understand?
2. Do your parents encourage you to speak Cantonese more often? If so, why and where?
3. What can you do to improve or maintain your Cantonese?

Research Question 6: *How has language shift among China born and United States born Chinese students affected their education?*

1. Does knowing Cantonese inhibit you from learning English?
2. Which language do you believe is easier to learn?

Protection of Human Subjects

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects of the University of San Francisco (See Appendix A). Participants were not compensated for their participation and were free to withdraw from the study without suffering any consequences.

Reading lab. In spite of his ability to speak English fluently, reading comprehension through informal or formal testing did not seem to be on par. He was well aware that the other United States born Chinese students spoke English exclusively and were doing academically better than he. The difference, though subtle, created an inferior attitude which appeared to be linked with language mastery and schooling. He knew that his academic success depended on learning English as soon as possible. Furthermore, he knew English was the language of acceptance among peers because it did not carry a social stigma. While using English exclusively, his Cantonese started to stagnate and deteriorate due to lack of use. Now that he is older, he regrets not maintaining Cantonese literacy skills which are currently needed to communicate and survive in a global context.

The researcher obtained a bachelor's degree in biology and a Master of Arts in Education in 1986 and 1988, respectively from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. Currently, he teaches at Yick Wo Elementary School in San Francisco as a Chinese bilingual teacher at

the fourth and fifth grade level. He has been teaching in this school for ten years.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

Introduction

The findings were presented according to the themes generated from the dialogues on how language shift occurred and the perspectives of language shift. Research question one was answered in the section on how language shift occurs among China born and United States born Chinese students and research questions two through six were answered in the section on perspectives of language shift.

How Language Shift Occurs among China Born and United States Born Chinese Students in San Francisco

These themes were generated from the dialogues: (a) lack of use/attrition, (b) self-denial/ashamed of oneself, and (c) power.

Theme 1: Lack of Use/Attrition

The China born Chinese women believed that language shift was a product of not using or deepening their understanding of the first language while increasing the use of the more socially dominant language for work and in the home. Even though they were quite proficient in Cantonese,

there were numerous times they could not find the translation of an English word in Cantonese. Furthermore, English was now required for work purposes.

Sometimes, when my dad asks me a word in English that I hardly ever use in Cantonese, I have a hard time explaining it. I have to look in the dictionary. (Kim)

When my family first came over, none of my family speak English. I had to translate a lot of letters for them. It forced me to get better. The more practice the better I got speaking English. But my Cantonese was not getting any better. (Kim)

I used English more for work because they do not understand Cantonese. (Lena)

These women maintained their proficiency in Cantonese by reading newspapers, watching videos or movies, or speaking to family and friends in this language. Writing Cantonese was a harder task for them now. Such an admission reinforced the complex nature of the writing component of Cantonese. Nevertheless, language as a tool must be used and refined whenever possible.

I had a hard time writing a short simple letter for my cousin. I haven't practice my Chinese in a long time. Since then I have lost many of the characters. (Kim)

With the United States born Chinese participants, the consensus was they could carry a conversation in Cantonese better than they could read or write in Cantonese. When communicating to peers or family, they combined their English with Cantonese in order to complete the sentence. More English was used when the conversation became more technical and detailed.

Theme 2: Self-Denial/Ashamed of Oneself

Another aspect as to why language shift occurred among the Chinese youth was the low status and value attached to the language. With this mindset, individuals consciously spoke English for what it could offer.

People are ashamed of their language
because they feel it is not proper. (Stefanie)

Having no pride in it (Cantonese), and finding
it useless. Not using it because it is useless.
It was never endorsed. (Clinton)

When people looked down at their language and culture,
Stefanie had this reaction:

It makes me ashamed of them. It makes me upset.
I can not do anything about it.
I can not help them.

Parents and schools could be active agents to reverse this denial. However, Stefanie believed that the change must come from within once they had considered the cost and consequences. When asked if school could lead to language shift, she said:

Only by choice, if they want to. They are not forced to. It is not as if they are forced to speak English. If they speak Cantonese to socialize, then it will help them maintain it. But if they are ashamed and they make their own decision, school will affect it.

Theme 3: Power

One participant had the hindsight to equate English learning to power acquisition. He concluded that whether success was in business, or in school, English was dominant and preferred. He came to this conclusion by studying Noam Chomsky, a linguist, in college. In the end, he strongly believed that language was a tool made to control and dictate people's lives. However, such control was contingent on the amount of money being spent and the cause being promoted. Thus, if people wanted some level of power or success, they would need to learn how to be proficient in English rather quickly.

If you do not speak the language (English)
you will be left out of the loop.

You will not get the money in the end.
 If you can not speak English, it is least
 likely you will succeed in the U.S. or
 any English dominated country. (Clinton)

Brian, Jenny, and Agnes who had not studied Chomsky or
 other leading voices in language shift shared comparable
 views to Clinton. According to them:

If you want a good job and do well in life,
 you must speak English well. Cantonese will
 not have that kind of power in San Francisco.
 (Brian)

The value of knowing Cantonese is
 important with friends and family.
 I also get satisfaction of knowing how
 to read and write Cantonese when I need to.
 However, English is even more important
 because this country is strictly English
 speaking. (Jenny)

Generally, when people speak better
 English, they have better jobs. (Agnes)

In an ideal world, all languages would be equally held in
 high esteem. Unfortunately, we do not live in such a world.
 If one language, such as English was regarded as the
 language to learn in order to ascertain economic or
 vocational advantages, then what about the implications of
 the other languages such as Cantonese?

I know there are positions in Marketing, they
 require people to speak two languages. There
 is value of knowing another language. But
 compare to English, it is not that valuable.
 (Lena)

In a lighter moment of the dialogue, Agnes had this to say about knowing Cantonese.

Cantonese is useful in Chinatown. Like in Chinese restaurants, there are two kinds of menus. Chinese would be helpful.

What needs to be made clear was the difference between the concept of power of language and the value of language. One aspect of this form of power was exerting its authority and agenda. With that, certain privileges and recognition were awarded over other minority languages. If and when successfully mastered, status will be elevated (Tollefson, 1989). Language as a form of power can be made to oppress and further promote the insignificance of the native language (Phillipson, 1986). Whereas, the value of language was determined by individuals who realized the usefulness, meaning, and purpose for wanting to speak the language. Such determination may not be due to economics, academics, or vocation, but the virtue and righteousness of wanting to speak the language.

In conclusion, the participants seemed to have echoed what the researchers had declared as the factors for language shift. What had to be made clear was that no one

theme could operate alone. Participants realized various themes were necessary to be present before language shift could occur.

Perspectives of Language Shift among China Born
and United States Born Chinese Students in San Francisco
Cultural Perspective

Talking about the Chinese culture generated a great deal of pride among the participants. They liked utilizing the best of two cultures at their convenience. In addition, knowing another language seemed to elevate their esteem. The themes that were generated from answering research question two were: (a) rigidity/strictness within the culture, and (b) celebration of the culture.

Theme 1: Rigidity within the Chinese culture. Answering the questions regarding the Chinese culture was quite simple for the participants but making a connection to language shift proved to be a harder task. Dialogues surrounding the Chinese culture seemed to reflect the traditional holidays and the festivals. A few participants gave insightful accounts into the meaning and the purpose of the Chinese culture. However, they all tied the meaning of culture to

the activities of the festivals or the celebrated traditions. When asked the question, "What does Chinese culture mean to you?" This participant said the following:

The traditional culture is restricting. Respecting elders no matter what is vital. Realistically, the culture acknowledges that our race is a small minority in America where assimilation has been stressed. Because of assimilation, maintaining the culture is hard. Therefore, we celebrate the main festivals. There are other aspects to the Chinese culture but we don't honor because we do not see it enough or the parents don't acknowledge it. Time seems to tarnish or change things. (Clinton)

Stefanie appeared more reflective with her insightful response.

I think Chinese culture is what separates me from other people. It makes me different and unique. My interpretation of Chinese culture is that I belong to a community that I must respect and interact with. It has a lot to do with staying together as a group/family and helping each other out. It makes me what I am and is an unchangeable part of me. The skills I adapt from the Chinese culture can be transformed and used in any situation outside of the community.

For a simpler view of the Chinese culture, this participant said the following.

Chinese culture is a conglomeration of food, clothes, languages, and old traditions. (Brian)

It was commonly agreed that the product of culture was manifested in its people. However, the relationship between people and their culture must be mutually symbiotic. Yet, as Clinton pointed out, culture by design is a dynamic entity. Time along with assimilation will no doubt redefine certain parameters and meanings.

Theme 2: To celebrate or not to celebrate. The participants did not like how this research question was phrased. The way the question was phrased, it appeared that Chinese culture itself was responsible for causing people to lose interest in their Cantonese. Collectively, there was agreement that Chinese culture could not lead to language shift. Instead of the culture being the change agent, the participants agreed that the parents were.

The participants' view of what Chinese culture was based on their parents' interpretation and practice. Based on the Confucian model, the parents often show love and care to their children by incorporating the rigid standards they once adhered to as they were growing up. Without giving much thought, they often overextended their control which conflicts with the host society's ideology and popular beliefs. Their demand for their children to be ever loyal

and obedient to them caused the participants to search for a common ground that would equally satisfy their parents as well as their needs. When faced with the option of having to choose the ways of their "repressive or rigid" culture or to integrate the ways of the host country, in most cases, participants would choose the latter in order to cope better. Ironically, valuing human dignity and individuality as advocated by the host country could make it unattractive for the participants to want to understand the idiosyncrasies of their own culture. Again, it must be made clear that the child rearing practices were conducted by the parents. They may have been influenced by certain cultural mores. Nonetheless, participants seemed to agree that the Chinese culture can be based on superstitions that were irrelevant for the present times. Yet, they continued to practice and celebrate the various holidays because their parents were doing it.

For me, I really don't care. It's my parents who still celebrate it. It doesn't mean anything. I could not feel the spirits they are feeling. (Kim)

The environment is different. If we were still in China, we would feel very excited because everybody is into it. Here everybody does things differently. (Lena)

Kim and Lena's sentiments were reflected in Brian's and Clinton's reactions. Overall, they celebrate the traditions and values but do not seemingly understand why they are doing it. Ironically, they are willing to carry on certain traditions because it carried a particular meaning in their lives.

Do you understand why you are celebrating the festivals? (Irving)

I do not know. All I know it has something to do with the harvest or something like that.
(Brian)

Do you celebrate any of the Chinese festivals? (Irving)

Only because of my parents. (Clinton)

Do you understand the meanings of the festivals? (Irving)

No, well, there is New Year and the fifteen of August where you eat mooncakes.
(Clinton)

Are there any festivals you are willing to carry on? (Irving)

The Mooncake festival isn't as big as it used to be. People do not bring it to my mother as much. I'll do New Years. (Clinton)

What are some of the traditions you will pass on to your kids? (Irving)

Probably passing out the red envelopes.

The New Year's food and all the vegetables you have to eat on New Years day. (Brian)

Stefanie had a different account of the cultural festivities. She enjoyed the traditions tremendously because

her paternal grandmother made it fun. It was always a large family gathering. The large gathering added the uniqueness of culture and family.

Do you celebrate the Chinese festivals? (Irving)
Yes, It used to be more festive because of my paternal grandmother. I remember loving, enjoying, and being excited about it.

In spite of the participants' willingness to continue the traditions they were raised with, two participants believed that the shift from Cantonese to English would impact the transmission of Chinese culture. How they celebrated the traditions was based on what they had experienced earlier in life.

If your Cantonese is not strong, can it impact you from celebrating the festival or carrying on the traditions? (Irving)
I think so. Even though I am Chinese, I am Americanized. (Brian)

Probably, but it will be different. I still would celebrate it because it is still part of the culture. I can not shut it completely off. (Stefanie)

Kim and Lena believed that not knowing Cantonese should not inhibit people from celebrating the cultural festivities. If the people are interested in the culture as well as the festivals, language barrier should not stop them.

Does not knowing Cantonese stop you
 from celebrating the culture? (Irving)
 I do not think so. There are so many people
 who do not speak the language celebrate it.
 Lena: There are Caucasian people who
 celebrate it. (Kim)

In the end, Clinton discussed the importance of bridging the two cultures to form a perfect blend. A blend that would nourish the soul and spirituality from the East yet be "Americanized" to interact with people. Clinton also alluded to personal identity associated with the language and culture. This identity could be a form of motivation for wanting to learn or at least maintain Cantonese.

Ideologically, I will push acknowledging the Chinese culture more. I would want my children to learn more in depth about the history and language than I. (Clinton)

Sociological Perspective

Dialogues on the sociological factors for language shift focused on four themes: (a) peer acceptance, (b) language mixing, (c) family and connection to Cantonese, and (d) parental influence.

Theme 1: Peer acceptance. Under this theme, the participants defined peer acceptance as people within the same group socializing and appreciating each other's

company. Similarly, the theme covered the peer relationship between the United States born Chinese and the China born Chinese students.

Two participants believed that language shift among United States born and the China born students stemmed from the people you associated with. Peer acceptance and approval were certainly considerations for the individuals to develop a sense of belonging. However, the acceptance was predicated on language use.

It might be who you associate with. That will influence what language you speak. If you do not know Cantonese, you'll have to speak English.
(Brian)

In our circle, the ABCs or FOBs have to assimilate to be like us. Like wear the same fashion or speak the same lingo. When the FOBs came, they were no longer called FOBs but Hks. Why? because they had English education in Hong Kong. Their English was more proper. (Clinton)

Kim wanted to relate well to her friends because they were the ones who could really understand her.

Definitely, because you want to express yourself and try to talk to people and not be laughed at.

In spite of the people trying to belong with those who are similar to them, little has been done to interact with those who had a different upbringing and linguistic background. The interaction between the United States born Chinese and the China born Chinese students had always been non-existent or a cause of derision from whatever side. There was always a quiet competition. Some United States born Chinese students viewed the China born Chinese students as lazy, poor English speakers, self-centered who seemed to excel in math, and had an inclination to join gangs. Yet, some United States born Chinese students viewed the China born Chinese students with a great deal of indifference. The China born Chinese students viewed the United States born Chinese students as cultural ignorants and an undisciplined lot (Ma, 1994).

It was revealed that the rivalry between the two groups stemmed from the chivalrous notion of not wanting to "lose face" when confronted. There seemed to be a constant showcasing of the China born Chinese students trying to prove to the United States born Chinese students that they were better if not equal to their counterparts in sports, and to some degree in academics. The China born Chinese

students would retaliate by surpassing the United States born Chinese student's achievements. However, if the attempt failed, some of the United States born Chinese would overtly mock the China born Chinese students for failing. A severe name calling would be comparing the lack of achievement of the United States born Chinese to a China born Chinese students (Leung, 1994). Ma (1994) believed that the language policy of the school was the culprit for the division. With an induced separation, the social mindset had been established within the China born Chinese that they were different and less proficient in communicating in English. Ironically, some of the participants voiced similar concerns.

I still remember the situation in Galileo High School. There are many Asians students. One side is we immigrant students and one side ABC. We really don't get along. The ABCs look down on us. They don't care about us. Most of the ABCs have attitudes because we are new immigrants. (Lena)

Agnes interjected at this point:

New immigrants with accents. They do not see the long run. Besides, they have accents too.

Lena continued:

The ABCs hear us but do not say anything. We know that the know how to speak Cantonese because we hear them use it at school.

They look down at us. They do not want interact with us even though they know the language. (Jenny)

What complicated this barrier was that the China born Chinese students felt the same treatment from their relatives.

Most of my relatives I know have attitudes. They are not better than us. They think they are. I have some cousins. They are ABCs. I do not like them. They look down at us when we first came here and I do not think that is right. I do not have a good impression about ABCs. I have not seen a good side yet. (Lena)

I think it is the family influence. The ABC who grew up here were treated differently by the parents. Immigrant kids are treated with the attitude to be not as successful. (Agnes)

What is your relationship with your relatives? (Irving)

There is hardly any communications with them. Even though we speak Cantonese, we do not speak more than a few sentences. (Jenny)
Don't you find that strange especially among relatives and family? (Irving)
Yes, so what that we're family. They are set in their ways and they do not seem to have a strong command in Cantonese. I believe they look down at me. They think I do not have culture. I do not know how they can view me as such. (Jenny)

Confirming Ma's observation of indifference, some of the United States born Chinese had this to say about the China born Chinese students.

I respect them because it is very hard for them. They have a hard time making friends and with school They stuck together. Everyone at school got along with them and respected them, but they stuck together because it is easier to help one another and communicate. (Stefanie)

During your days at St. Marys or high school, were you in contact with any foreign born students? (Irving)

Very seldom. (Brian)

And if you did come in contact with those students, would you interact with them? (Irving)

Not really, I am more Americanized. (Brian)

Theme 2: Language mixing. Under this theme, it was revealed that some of the participants, such as Stefanie, Brian, and Clinton consistently mixed languages (Cantonese and English) when they spoke with their friends and family. They felt it was perfectly natural to do so because their parents did it as well and they had been mixing two languages for a long time. They understood they were language mixing when they were speaking to their parents. However, they did not believe this could lead to language

shift. Stefanie called this language mixing "Chinlish" (Chinese/English). They preferred to use English more than Cantonese because of their command of the former.

It does not bother me that much because we have been doing it for so long. And my mom, she understands English pretty well. With my dad, I just have to be patient because he knows English but is more comfortable with Cantonese. (Brain)

My dad speaks Cantonese and mother speaks English. That is how I got mixed. When I speak, I do not really think about what language I should use because the words just comes out. (Stefanie)

It is so common in my house that even my parents would answer me in English when I asked them a question in Cantonese. (Clinton)

The China born Chinese participants did not experience language mixing. Naturally, they favored Cantonese more than English. Whenever they had to use English, they would speak succinctly and not engage too much in conversation. To their credit, they would not shy away from speaking English regardless of their skills. Instead of language mixing, they language switched depending on the situation.

With the people I haven't seen a long time, I will speak to them in Cantonese. But when they switch to English, I will do so too. (Kim)

It should also be pointed out that the China born Chinese students switched languages whenever they had to translate

letters and formal correspondence for their parents. As mentioned earlier, translating letters not only improved their receptive and expressive skills in English, but also translation skills from English to Cantonese.

Theme 3: Connection to the language. Holmes et al (1993) determined that individuals who retained their first language were physically connected with the family or a place that consistently used the language. However, when the language was not intrinsically valued, switch inevitably occurred. This question was posed to the participants and surprisingly the answers were mixed. In spite of the strong family background, a shift in language occurred. Going to Chinatown on a regular basis, does little to maintain or advance proficiency in Cantonese. More importantly, all participants agreed that speaking Cantonese at home is important in understanding their parents.

You mentioned that English is prestigious, and it has value. Can Cantonese be just as prestigious and valuable? (Irving)
 I think it does in the traditional sense.
 If you know both languages, it is good for you.
 If you know Cantonese, chances are you will have family values. The other advantages is international communication. Of course, if you do not know English, it will not be beneficial to find a job. (Stefanie)

What does Chinatown mean to you? (Irving)
To get Chinese stuff. (Agnes)

Very dirty and crowded. I do not think
Chinatown can have that affect on someone.
Chinatown isn't the one speaking and listening
to Cantonese. (Kim)

Chinatown is very important place for
new immigrants and older people like my
parents. For the younger people, they can go
to Chinatown and get a sense of community.
However, the younger people like us who can
speak a different language can leave
Chinatown. (Lena)

The United States born Chinese participants responded this
way.

How often do you go to Chinatown?
And can Chinatown affect language maintenance?
(Irving)
I do not go that often because it is too crowded
with too many cars. Yes, it can maintain the
language because there are schools that teaches
Cantonese. (Brian)
Have you been back to Hong Kong? (Irving)
Nope, I want to go to Hong Kong but it
is too dirty for me. I can't stand it. It's
too filthy for me. The air is different. (Brian)

How often do you go to Chinatown? (Irving)
During elementary school, I went there everyday.
(Stefanie)

What are your impressions of Chinatown? (Irving)
Crowded. I like it. I think it is a cool place.
To me it is like the feeling when I go to Hong
Kong. Hong Kong is a big, big Chinatown. You just
feel close to everyone. You hear people talking
Cantonese all the time. (Stefanie)

What if you did not speak Cantonese, would you still "hang out" in Chinatown? (Irving)
Probably. I have some friends who don't speak Cantonese. Their impressions of Chinatown is completely different from mine. They hate it. They think it is horrible. The ones who don't like Chinatown are the ones who do not speak Cantonese. (Stefanie)

Being physically connected to the language where all the people utilized it did not play a role in maintaining the language. Such findings were different from what Holmes (1994) had indicated. However, the United States born Chinese participants did voice that knowing and speaking Cantonese to friends and family gave them a feeling of superiority over others. This connection led to a notion of superiority that was based on deception where its main purpose was to exclude others from knowing and understanding what was being said.

Stefanie: With friends and family, I speak Cantonese. In class, I use Cantonese to speak about other people. Use it so that people would not know what we are talking about. By speaking Cantonese, it makes me feel closer to the person I am talking with. It's a status thing as well.

Brian: It is a habit of speaking Cantonese to friends. I do not know how and where it started from. Sometimes when we talk about other stuff and we do not want other people to know or hear about it, we speak Cantonese. But I had a bad experience with that.

Further analysis of the dialogues showed that this false superiority led to a level of personal pride involved in wanting to maintain Cantonese. Because of this pride, these United States born Chinese students could not be looked down upon by China born Chinese students or others because they knew how to speak Cantonese. Ultimately, when the United States born Chinese students spoke Cantonese, it made them feel closer to the person they were talking to.

Theme 4: Parental influence. Parents are the children's first teachers. They could influence their children's linguistic tendencies. Whether positive or negative, children followed their parents' footsteps. However, if parents made a conscious effort not to use Cantonese when the participants were born, there was no shift in language. It appeared that the some parents realized the importance of Cantonese in the home environment but not in the macro culture. The macro culture would be the center where their future lies. Therefore, if they want their sons and daughters to succeed in America, they would want them to learn English.

Talking about losing Chinese, I know of a family who moved to Benecia, a small community. They really wanted to get into American life. There is no Asian community

around. The parents did not allow the children to speak Cantonese. They wanted them to speak English. (Lena)

My Cantonese is so weak. My grammar and word choice are incorrect. I am disappointed in myself being that Cantonese was my first language. It is easy to point fingers at my mom and dad because I see a friend who has a similar background to me but her Cantonese is better than mine. Cantonese is used more in her house. My parents sometimes want us to speak Cantonese but if we didn't, we were not punished. (Clinton)

In summary, this section discussed the sociological nature of language shift. The participants felt peer acceptance played a key role in language shift. Language mixing as a form of communicating did not lead to shift but indicated preference. Family gatherings and interactions did not influence or negate shift in language because the language patterns used had already been established. The language patterns the researcher referred to were (a) responding to the grandparents or parents strictly in English when the participants were asked in Cantonese, or (b) mixing their English with their Cantonese to complete their sentences. Language shift did not occur overnight. Thus, parents from the onset could influence the linguistic capabilities of the children.

Clinton summarized this aspect the best:

Social reasons appeared more influential to

language shift because humans would always want to interact and socialize. It is sad to be alone.
(Clinton)

Educational Perspective

Learning a foreign language for the first time could be a daunting task. Chinese students have a hard time understanding and speaking English initially because the intonations are different from the ones they are used to hearing (Cheng, 1987). Students know what they want to say, *Like ANYONE ELSE LEARNING A LANGUAGE* but they do not have the command of words that would allow them to express freely as they normally would when speaking their native language. The confusion they encounter when learning English could be exacerbated by the use of Cantonese for instruction. The progress was further delayed by trying to master the use of idioms and slangs. To help these students succeed, teaching and appropriate educational placement were necessary to advance their native language abilities while learning another.

From the educational perspective of language shift among Chinese students in San Francisco, the following themes were generated from the dialogues: (a) teacher apathy, (b) inappropriate curricula and placement, and (c) language choice.

Theme 1: Teacher apathy. The China born Chinese students did not like the style of teaching they experienced in their respective high schools not because they were enrolled in English as a Second Language classes, but because of how the teachers cared little for them.

In China, the teachers want you to learn and master the skills before you can move on. Here my teachers hardly care whether I learn the skills or not. I don't really like it because the teachers do not pay any attention to the students. I know I am not bright. If I have a question, I would ask the person sitting next to me for clarification or the person would ask the teacher for me. I do not think the teachers know what I am going through. (Jenny)

Jenny's sentiments were reflected by the following participant's comments.

To me, my E.S.L. teachers don't really care. They let you do whatever in class. They assigned something, like today you have to write a paragraph and you do it by yourself without much teaching. (Agnes)

I think most of the teachers in high schools are like that. You do not get much. I do not think I learned much in English class. (Kim)

E.S.L. teachers are not ready. I did not learn enough in high school to prepare for college. (Lena)

Lena finally declared that E.S.L. teachers should have the proper training before teaching students. Besides training, they should have some of the language capability to support instruction when needed. If they were not proficient in writing and reading the language, they should at least be able to speak the language.

Perhaps, teacher apathy stemmed from the wide range of students teachers needed to service and discovering that finding one true curricula and method for all appeared impossible. Thus, they chose the innocuous method.

It is kind of hard for the teachers because the immigrant students come from different background and they all learn differently. They teach the general stuff. Some students may find it helpful and some do not. (Kim)

Theme 2: Inappropriate curricula and placement. Almost all of the China born participants claimed that high school was a waste of time for them. Not only was it not fun, but it was also boring and unchallenging. Due to their test scores and level of proficiency in English, these participants were placed in E.S.L. classes. In spite of the remedial nature of the classes, they strongly felt they could have learned more subject matter than conversation or survival skills.

During the four years in high school, I did not learn English grammar and structure. If I did learn those skills, how could I write? (Lena)

The materials in the books was not what I wanted to learn because I had learned it already. If I learned the materials I had in college back in high school, it would be better. (Kim)

Sometimes we learned the materials in our home country. When we come here, the materials are already familiar to us. (Agnes)

For example, in English class in college, we had to write essays about our experiences. We had small group discussions then put it in writing. Then we had to present it to the class. We did not do this in high school. (Lena)

As far as placement is concerned, the China born Chinese students were only enrolled in E.S.L. classes throughout their high school years. It was not until they were in college that they got rid of the E.S.L. label. They really enjoyed their collegiate experience because it gave them the opportunity to learn new things. These participants agreed that in high school, if more Cantonese was used for classroom instruction and for certain subjects, for example in literature and history, they would have not been bored with school. Even though they were placed in an E.S.L. setting, there was no transition of any sort from Cantonese to English.

What were your experiences attending
the E.S.L. classes? (Irving)
I felt comfortable. (Kim)

We needed time to adjust to the school
system so we were not ready to be mixed with
the native speakers. (Lena)

Kim, Agnes, and Lena were "encouraged" but never "forced" to speak more English than Cantonese by their teachers because they were now living in America. Since they did not learn all that much in the E.S.L. classes in high school, they relied mostly on friends for support and self motivation to learn English in greater depth. Their motivation for wanting to speak English were obvious. They did (a) not want to be different from others, (b) not want to look unfavorably by others, (c) want to enjoy academic success like other students, and (d) want to feel confident of a brighter future. They could no longer be afraid to aim higher when they have a better command of English.

Jenny, the fifteen-year-old, had a different viewpoint from Kim, Lena, and Agnes. She claimed it would be better for her to be placed in an English only classroom than in an E.S.L. class to learn English. If she was to learn English, it better be in an environment that used it continually. Ironically, Agnes, Kim, and Lena felt being proficient in

their native language did not help them learn English better or faster.

Does being proficient in Cantonese
help you learn English better? (Irving)

There is no relationship. (Kim)

As long as you have the skills to analyze
the structure of words. The language does not
have to be Cantonese. It can be any language.
I am glad Cantonese was my first language
because English is an easier language to speak.
(Kim)

Ever since Kindergarten, the United States born Chinese participants were placed in English only classes. They did not receive bilingual services of any kind. Thus, learning Cantonese was viewed as an "additive measure" (Cummins, 1986). Clinton, Stefanie, and Brian did not receive any formal Cantonese instruction besides what the English school had provided. During some part of the instructional day, 20 minutes were set aside to instruct students Cantonese. However, Clinton was placed in an E.S.L. class for remedial reason. His teacher assumed that since he was Chinese and was not progressing with the class, his native language was hindering him from learning English properly. There was no formal testing of any kind to support such judgment. The judgment was based on class work and teacher observation.

In second grade, I was stuck in an E.S.L.

class because of the D grade I received in English. (Clinton)

How did you feel about being placed in that class? (Irving)

I felt really smart because my English was better than the other students. I was the star student. I had no problems with my English. It was a confidence booster. It wasn't that I spoke broken English or with an accent. I finally got kicked out because the teachers felt I no longer needed it. The class was boring. Nothing to do but to pay attention. At times, I would think about my friends and wondered what they were learning and doing. (Clinton)

It was quite peculiar that other avenues of non intrusive services, such as the teacher shortening the assignment for him, or having a para-professional work one to one with him, or asking a fellow student help him organize his work, were not explored. Instead, the most intrusive measure was done by removing him from the proper setting to a more restrictive environment.

Unfortunately, Clinton's experience continues. This researcher teaches in an elementary Chinese transitional/maintenance bilingual class in San Francisco. Twenty four of the 27 students in his class are United States born Chinese or China born Chinese students. The other two students are African Americans and one is Caucasian American. The African American students are in the

class because they did not score well on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), and the class has a reputation for low achievers or behavioral immature students (Leung, 1997). The Caucasian American student was placed in the bilingual class in order to separate her from another student. The reasons for these students being placed in the class were not warranted; thus masking the real truth of the matter. Parents do not seem to mind because the principal does a good job of selling the rationale of the placement. As the flux for low achieving students increased, the principal continually exited some of the high achieving students out of bilingual classes, but not all, out of the class.

Theme 3: Language use in the school. All the participants were capable of speaking Cantonese before entering formal schooling. The United States born Chinese participants naturally favored the use of English throughout their schooling. On the other hand, the China born Chinese participants favored speaking Cantonese. The reason for this stemmed from their comfort and command of the language. The United States born Chinese students first noticed that they

started to speak more English and less Cantonese when they started school.

During middle school, I noticed the change that I was speaking English more than Cantonese. I probably started at my elementary years but I was too young to notice. (Stefanie)

As for Clinton,

Pre-school. It was endorsed by the teachers. There were constant reminders to speak English. If I said something in Cantonese, the teacher would say, "You could had said it this way in English."

The irony of the situation was that Clinton's teachers at the pre-school were all Chinese bilinguals. Stefanie believed language shift occurred because of the influence of the schools.

I think school is influential to shift. We do not have a choice in school. We are forced to learn and use English.

Brian had this to say:

The schools pretty much control what you learn right? They force feed whatever they want. Even though I had half an hour of Cantonese instruction at St. Marys, the rest of the instructional day was conducted in English.

The participants' dialogues seemed to indicate that Cantonese was not a factor for instructional purposes as long these students understood English regardless of their

level of proficiency. Cantonese has no formal role in the schools except for students using it to clarify any questions and concerns they might have after the teacher's instruction. To do this, they often had to whisper to another peer.

English learning and usage became more dominant because of training from schools and desire to be accepted by peers. Similarly, China born Chinese students did not want others to know that they were not proficient in English. Thus, success in the schools was predicated on learning and using English.

All the classes were conducted in English
so that was what you are expected to speak.
(Brian)

I felt pressure from the teachers for not
speaking and writing English more. (Kim)

The China born Chinese participants agreed that Cantonese should be used as a tool for teaching. However, it did not mean that these participants preferred Cantonese over English. They were not adverse to learning English but would have preferred a transition that bridged two different languages that would increase their academic, social, and cultural learning. Furthermore, the bridge would have shortened the confusion period experienced by the students.

It depends on what subject it is because there are lot of terms. Literature is a good subject to be taught in Cantonese because I still read novels as I am learning to read in English. (Kim)

The support systems that the high schools provided were not conducive to learning English. They believed E.S.L. was an oxymoron. They were not learning enough English or their native language. When they entered high schools, they felt the teachers were unprepared to teach them. Even though the teachers were Chinese, they had little command of Cantonese. More importantly, the atmosphere in the school created a threatening environment for the China born Chinese students to maneuver. They did not have to be told that English was their key to success. They somehow had the impression instilled into them from their days of walking through the halls to their classrooms.

In school, we had to learn English not only to speak to the teachers but not let others look down at us. And our parents told us to do well in school. We gave ourselves pressure to do well. If English is not learned, we can not find a good job. (Lena)

I think schools are not doing a good job teaching bilingual children. How could 30 minutes of Cantonese instruction compete with 5 hours of regular English instruction? (Stefanie)

Furthermore, not learning English definitely affected performance in school. The lack performance was predicated on language mastery.

If do we not learn English well, we would become more passive learners and we would be ashamed. We would not be as involved or interested in the class. We would not ask for help. Once we get over the "confusion period" we learn just as quickly if not better than the regular students. (Lena)

When asked what would they do to improve E.S.L. education, the following participant had this to say:

I would have the teacher speak slower, explain things more clearly, and give homework that is not too hard. Better to have an instructor to speak English and Cantonese in the class. (Jenny)

Some of the participants felt it would be improbable to change the status quo of the school. However, Agnes summed their frustrations by saying the following:

Even if the schools did not change, I would had preferred the high school teachers to teach us meaningful skills. Skills that are important for us to think. We could always open the book and learn the material by ourselves because we are used to that. But there are times we needed to know how and why we are learning the stuff.

In summary, this section discussed language shift from the educational perspective. The China born Chinese and the United States born Chinese students had different

educational experiences but the results appeared the same. The outcome was still learning English as quickly as possible to ensure academic success which would ultimately determined future academic, vocational, and social success.

Researcher's Reflection's on the Dialogues

This researcher learned that shift from Cantonese to English occurred among the China born Chinese and United States born Chinese participants. It appeared that speaking Cantonese in San Francisco has some intrinsic but hardly any extrinsic values. Other than speaking and using it to communicate at home and for shopping in Chinatown, Cantonese was seldom used. Whether the participants wanted to use Cantonese or English, the decision already had been made for the participants as to which language was favored and therefore should be used.

In terms of language capabilities, the United States born Chinese participants appeared to have the most to lose when compared to the China born Chinese participants. If the shift goes unchecked, the United States Chinese participants would not be able to speak, read, or write Cantonese. For the China born Chinese participants, shift occurred mostly in the written form. At least, they are still capable of

speaking and reading Cantonese. More importantly, as an instructional tool, the China born Chinese could use their Cantonese to help in their acquisition of English. However, it was not known whether the United States born Chinese participants would use English to learn Cantonese.

Sociological and educational factors appeared to be the strongest driving factors for language shift among China born Chinese and United States born Chinese students. However, cultural factors established the tenor and degree of language shift.

Cultural perspective had two inherent meanings. In one instance, cultural perspective may have caused language maintenance or acquisition of Cantonese because of the participants' pride in wanting to preserve their ethnic heritage. In another instance, cultural perspective indicated the school environment that was already familiar to them. The students generalized their understanding of their own culture to the school culture because of the nature of their upbringing. These children were taught to respect their elders, show deference and humility to others, and master learning (Chan, 1973).

When the parents told these participants that education would be the foundation of their future success in life, the parents expected them to succeed in school. These participants never overtly questioned nor challenged their teachers, learning, and the environment they were in. Being true to their cultural upbringing, they did what they were instructed to do.

From an educational perspective, the China born Chinese participants could have benefited from formal Cantonese instruction at all grade levels. Using Cantonese in a contextually rich organized class would serve two purposes: (a) decrease the confusion period for the China born Chinese students and strengthen the connection between Cantonese and English, (b) increase the status and affirmation of Cantonese. Since majority of the China born and United States born Chinese students attending San Francisco Unified School District speak Cantonese, educators, administrators, parents, and students should understand the relevance and necessity of promoting the language at all grades because it is usually the language spoken at home.

Teachers can not help me that much because they do not know how to speak Cantonese fluently that would help me understand what is being said in the classroom. (Jenny)

More importantly, the affirmation of Cantonese leaves no ambivalence toward the self. Whether the individuals are China born or United States born, Cantonese will be the language that would link the soul of the family to the spirit of the self (Rickford, 1998).

It is disconcerting when the San Francisco Unified School District would allow Cantonese instruction at the elementary level but hardly at the middle or high school levels (Kelly, 1998). By the time the China born or United States born Chinese students reach high schools in San Francisco, the Asian languages that are endorsed are Japanese and Mandarin. Why is Cantonese not promoted or at least maintained among the students attending the public schools at all grade levels when they already have some command of it?

In sum, language shift was bound to happen because of the internal and external expectations placed on the participants. Ultimately, the participants' success in the school was determined by success in learning and using English more than Cantonese.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and

Reflections

Introduction

This chapter has four sections: the (a) summary, (b) conclusions, (c) recommendations, and (d) participants' reflections on the research process.

Summary

The aim of this research was to investigate language shift among China born Chinese and United States born Chinese students living in San Francisco from cultural, sociological, and educational perspectives. The study sought to determine from the students' perspectives how language shift affected educational attainment, family interactions, and the self in relation to others. With the numerous questions asked regarding language shift, the fundamental questions on the occurrence and extent of language shift for these individuals were answered whether they were aware of it or not. There are many reasons to justify the learning of English. The speaker of the English language is awarded certain privileges and status unlike speakers of other languages in America. However, what seemed to be the issue

was how English is methodically replacing and dominating the other modes of communication and masking the identity of people.

According to the findings of this research, there were two considerations that could impede language shift. One was the individual's level of proficiency in Cantonese. If the proficiency levels were high, shift was less likely to occur. Learning English would simply be an additive process. Nonetheless, at this level, there was competition between English and Cantonese because of the growing use of English and the lack of opportunity to use Cantonese. The other consideration was the way and the frequency Cantonese was used to converse with people. Thus, the purpose of speaking Cantonese stemmed not only from want but also from need.

Participatory research was deemed appropriate for this study because the participants were not viewed as mere subjects. They had some control and ownership of the research. The researcher enjoyed the interaction during the dialogue that allowed the co-researchers and the researcher to really learn and modify what had already been published in this subject. Dialogues and reflections clarified some of the misconceptions about other people's schooling and life

experiences. More important, the reflection allowed the individuals to redefine their knowledge that altered their way of thinking and knowing. The only regret this researcher had was not organizing the research sub-questions in a form for the participants to answer. This questionnaire would have been a point for the dialogues to begin.

During the last meeting with all the participants gathered at the researcher's home, a missed opportunity occurred when we failed to address the relations between the United States born Chinese and the China born Chinese students in depth.

Conclusions

Language shift was bound to happen more with the United States born Chinese individuals than with the China born Chinese students. The shift may not have been that dramatic or overt because the process of language shift was quite subtle. The participants believed that language shift was a symptom or casualty of a greater ill. Although the results of this research pertained to these participants, some of the results could be generalized to the greater mass of Chinese people. Unwarranted teacher expectations and inflexible curriculum, pressures related to academic

advancement, and desire for social acceptance may lead to some degree of conformity that may lead to language shift. In general, people, whether they make a conscious decision or not to shift languages, provide the internal reason for shift and the macro society reinforce their reasons for doing so.

It appeared that no single factor could lead to language shift. A combination of the discussed themes must be institutionalized before it could influence individuals to shift in language.

In the end, teachers could not be blamed for not teaching these Chinese students accordingly. The onus fell on teacher education program for not clearly understanding the cultural and linguistic differences within the Chinese population in San Francisco. If teacher educators do not have a clear understanding of the cultural and linguistic differences of the Chinese students, how and what are they teaching the future teachers about educating the China born and United States born Chinese students?

I am not sure whether these ESL teachers have the proper training and experience before they become classroom teachers. They do not know what the students need. (Lena)

My family can not help me that much because of the language barrier. They tell me I must rely on myself. (Jenny)

Recommendations for Future Research

As we concluded the final interview, Lena (1998) said, "This is only the beginning." Her words hold truth where there were some areas that needed to be explored. Although her doubts and concerns did not pertain to language shift exclusively, they had some implications for future investigation.

One area this researcher can look into is the educational placement of the Chinese students in San Francisco. This researcher would like to study the various Chinese bilingual programs in the San Francisco Unified School District in order to understand how Cantonese is being used in Chinese bilingual classes and to understand what subjects are being taught in Cantonese. Such a study would allow the researcher to understand whether Chinese bilingual classes in San Francisco Unified are beneficial to these students. Furthermore, the researcher would like to understand whether there is a stigma attached to the students when they are instructed in Cantonese. The intended population will be teachers and students. In addition,

through a questionnaire, the researcher would like to compare the answers of the teachers to the students.

Another area the researcher can look into is teachers working in San Francisco Unified School District. This researcher would like to compare United States born and the China born Chinese teachers teaching in bilingual classes in San Francisco. The purpose is to understand which group would be more effective bilingual teachers and to identify what important characteristics are needed to instruct Chinese immigrant students.

Another area this researcher could investigate is teacher education programs. The purpose of this investigation is to understand how universities in the San Francisco Bay Area are teaching the future Chinese bilingual teachers. The emphasis will be on identifying the characteristics needed to become effective classroom teachers and to link current theories with practices that would engage and stimulate the students. The intended population would be the students and teachers in the teacher education programs.

Another possible area to investigate is whether third generation China born and United States born Chinese

students still speak Cantonese. The purpose of the study is to understand why Cantonese is used in certain areas and not in others. Furthermore, the study could focus on whether using and learning English provided a better quality of life than using and speaking Cantonese.

Participants' Reflections

During this phase, a reflection of the themes took place at the researcher's home. All of the participants except two came to participate in this task. We dissected the particular themes singularly as to why they were important conceptually, psychologically, and socially to language shift. Based on the dialogues, we determined the linkage of certain themes. Again, the co-researchers were encouraged to voice their opinion and feelings freely. In addition, the co-researchers were encouraged to share their feelings about participatory research as to how it had changed their lives (Doyle, 1997).

It was nice to have all the involved participants to meet each other and share their life experiences with each other and not via the researcher. Stefanie, Clinton, Agnes, Kim, and Lena claimed that the most important themes that led to language shift were social acceptance (peer

acceptance) and education. Amazingly enough, they further claimed that power was the main outcome of social acceptance and education. In their minds, language shift happened to be a casualty of the process of gaining acceptance and achieving success in education. Clinton was most vocal of all.

By being more educated, you'll get more power. When you have more power, the greater chance of success and survival you would have. But, in order to get the power, you'll need to know what language is used and how it is used.

In terms of shifting from Cantonese to English, education played the most active part for the process to occur because education is very pervasive and dominant in their lives. Education did not only address academics, but also encompassed social interaction inside and outside of the classroom. They cited teacher preparation and inexperience as main reasons for not educating the students better. Specifically from the China born Chinese students' point of view, the teachers failed to understand the practicality of including some level of their native language to educate the students. Rather than using a critical approach to teaching, the teachers, whom the participants had, employed the recipe method where they

followed a pre-determined curriculum and guide. Rarely did they deviate from those guides. Their inexperience was also evident in selecting inappropriate textbooks that merely promote "tokenism" regarding cultures and people. Instead of treating these students with respect, the teachers treated them all of them as passive learners.

Peer acceptance was the second leading factor for shift in language. Whether the language was spoken in school or with peers, the participants all agreed that they wanted to belong and not be excluded. By feeling included, they felt more "normal." Paraphrasing Kim's words, "One of the reasons I learned English was to avoid humiliation from people. And if I did not learn English quickly, I could not have asked my classmates for help. I would be a passive learner." Schools were partly responsible for establishing teacher-student relationship, and student-student relationships. In the end, success in high schools meant not just learning English but also surviving.

Outside of the classrooms, the socialization process continued with the parents. In regards to school, their message to the participants was always the same: Do well in school to ensure a better way of life later. This message

was overt or covert depending on the mood of the parents and the story they wanted to tell. The participants knew that school success depended on learning English. They also knew that they wanted to be accepted and not be looked down upon. The pressure from the parents, school work, and peers combined with the pressure from within stirred a great deal of mental angst. Sometimes success did not mean just to do well but to overachieve. In general, the adaptation was easy to make while for some, the adaptation seemed hardly a fair choice.

When asked about their opinions about their participation in this research and how it had impacted their life, a few of them had this to say.

I was enlightened by the process. Change can happen. I am not always powerless.
(Stefanie)

Made a change in my life. Whether big or small, change has occurred. (Clinton)

I am thankful for allowing me to speak my opinions. It is just the beginning.
(Lena)

Kim and Agnes were too tired to think of anything to say because the group dialogue went into the late evening hours. Watching these people from various backgrounds

interact really gave credibility to participatory research. They were acting like scholars probing into the truth, supporting or contradicting statements, and evaluating and re-evaluating their thoughts for clarity. For a group of people who had not met each other before, or participated in any type of formal research, this researcher was quite happy with the outcome and how these people worked cooperatively.

During construction of meaning and action phase, the co-researchers were asked about what they would do collectively or individually with the knowledge gained from the intellectual quest (Freire, 1994). If no action was taken, at least they could find solace in the fact that they had found and redefined the truth about language shift during the process of knowing and becoming.

It was generally agreed by the participants that losing any part of the native language was bad. Although they all speak and write English fluently and participate in the "American" way of life, they still refer to themselves as Chinese. If they were to refer to themselves as such they should know something about being Chinese and their role in their respective family. The participants agreed that there were two paths they could take. First, the United States

born Chinese participants would make a concerted effort to relearn their Cantonese. They recommended to study Cantonese on their own to bolster their proficiency in the language. They would either attend a class at the local junior college, or interact and talk to their elderly family members more and not take them for granted, or develop friendships with the China born Chinese where the emphasis would be on growing and learning from each other and less on competing against each other.

For the China born Chinese, they would choose to study Mandarin because they are already proficient in Cantonese. Studying Mandarin would be phonetically challenging, yet the participants would still be connected by orthography. Another reason for studying Mandarin is its official status and usefulness when conducting business in China. If future businesses are established in China, Mandarin has to be utilized. Thus, being proficient in this language will be an asset when seeking employment.

The second road to take was to be socially active by letting others know the importance of the native language and how it relates to the self and to the macro-culture psychologically and socially. They envisioned that this

would effect changes at the universities mostly because the institutions are responsible for educating and molding the teaching force.

The co-researchers said that the first step was to define the motive and philosophy of such a cause. The second step was to get supporters at the grass roots and university levels; specifically, the teacher education programs. Stretching beyond the universities, ideally they envisioned their cause to reach politicians who ultimately might change the laws that would protect and recognize all linguistic rights in America, although the participants fear the lack of political clout. The universities were achievable targets because they seemed to be more attuned to the people now and for the future. They believed that the universities would want to study, interpret, and document the ever growing and changing dynamics of people. Language shift as a process has sociological, psychological, and educational implications. Furthermore, changes at the universities could happen faster than reaching the politicians. As universities changes, so would the attitudes and pedagogy of future teachers.

The participants generally agreed that with the changes as to how teachers were being taught, ethnolinguistic

students would be more responsive in the classrooms. When these teachers are better educated, they would be more capable and comfortable to base their teachings on humanistic multicultural perspectives instead of one that is predicated on Eurocentric/American views. Participants believed that teachers could make the subject matter come alive and seemingly relevant. More importantly, the teachers would not be afraid to show students how to deconstruct pre-existing knowledge to construct and formulate higher truths and virtues. Such a practice was necessary to combat idle mind and the status quo. On a personal level, the teachers would encourage all students to maintain or excel in their language and still be able to teach according to the class needs. Last but not least, teachers would take the time to get to know and really understand their students. If the pedagogy of teachers does not improve, the students of future generations will encounter the same fate as these participants.

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APPENDIX A

University of San Francisco

Consent To Be a Research Participant

Responsible Investigator: Irving Leung. Graduate School of
Education, USF

Title of Dissertation: Language shift among immigrant and
American born Chinese students in San Francisco:
Sociological, cultural, and educational perspectives.

I will be asked to join a participatory research
investigation that will probe into the phenomenon of
language shift as it affects educational, sociological, and
cultural attainment of Chinese students. If I agree, I will
participate in three separate one to one dialogues with the
researcher. Each dialogue will last between an hour to an
hour and a half. Due to some personal questions asked, I am
free not to answer any of them. If I am uncomfortable with
the one to one dialogue arrangement, I may have a friend or
adult accompany me during the interview. In that case, the
dialogues will not be fully confidential. The dialogues will
be recorded and later transcribed for clarification and
construction of meaning. During the investigation, cassettes

and transcriptions will be locked in the researcher's file cabinet to ensure confidentiality of the participants and proper use of the information. After the investigation, the cassettes will be destroyed, but the transcriptions will be securely stored and saved. The purpose for saving the transcription is to resolve any discrepant issues among professors interpreting the results or publishers wanting to publish the findings of this investigation.

With the outcome of this study, I will benefit by learning more about my language and cultural identity through dialogues and reflection. I will gain a better understanding and appreciation of the Chinese language role in the family, for educational attainment, and for maintaining friendship. The results of this study may be published, but no information that could possibly identify me would be included. I will not be reimbursed for participating in this study.

If you have any questions or comments about this research, they may be addressed to Irving Leung, the principal researcher, at (415) 567-8883. Any complaints or questions about my rights can be addressed to IRBPHS which is

concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may contact IRBPHS office by three means. 1) calling the office telephone number at (415) 422-6091 and leaving a message on the voice mail, or 2) e-mailing to IRBPHS@USFCA.edu.com, and 3) writing to the Psychology Department, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080

Participation in this research is voluntary. No service of any kind to which I am otherwise entitled will be withheld from me, lost , or otherwise jeopardized because of my choice not to participate in the study. During the investigation, I may freely withdraw from the study without prejudice or encounter any negative consequences.

Participant's Name

Participant's Signature Date

The signature of the researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named participant in the research and attestation that the subject has been fully informed of his/her rights.

I, the participant, will retain a copy of this consent form to keep. Another copy will be retained by my parents. A third copy will be kept by the researcher.

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date