

A Sociolinguistic Survey of Fourth Movement 1919 in Zhejiang: Participants' Attitudes and Linguistic Perspectives¹

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Abstract

The term “ideology” has always been accompanied by its connotation as it is evident in its dictionary meaning as ‘a system of ideas, ideals especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy’. Therefore, this sociolinguistic research tried to check attitudes and linguistic perspectives regarding 4th movement 1919 in Zhejiang. This article discusses little-known aspects of the May Fourth Movement of 4 May 1919 in the Chinese province. Traditionally, the May Fourth Movement and the connected New Culture Movement and the Literary Revolution are associated with Beijing and Shanghai. However, one of the most important intellectual centers of China at that time was Hangzhou, a city with close economic links to Shanghai. Radical students in Zhejiang in 1919-1920 were active in publishing, and the New Tide magazine they published was in demand in China's largest cities, and solidified the status of Zhejiang as the vanguard of revolution. Looking closely at this collision, we may easily ascertain that the traditional Confucian society during an opportunistic economic upturn caused by World War I was fueling radicalism and at the same time was the object of their struggle. Anarchism was the key ideology of the May Fourth Movement in Zhejiang. This study contributes to the literature on language and identity within ethnic minorities, while at the same time showing language that minorities are internally different and far from homogenous.

Keywords: Sociolinguistic; May Fourth Movement 1919; Attitudes; Zhejiang; Literary Revolution; Linguistic Perspectives.

¹ Please cite this paper as follows:

Garayev, I. N., Martynov, D. E., & Martynova, Y. A. (2019). A sociolinguistic survey of fourth movement 1919 in Zhejiang: Participants' attitudes and linguistic perspectives. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 10 (SP), 1300-1306.

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1. Introduction

Sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and society's effect on language. It differs from sociology of language, which focuses on the effect of language on society. Sociolinguistics overlaps considerably with pragmatics. It is closely related to linguistic anthropology; some question the distinction between the two fields, emphasizing their historical interrelation (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008; Namaziandost, Hashemifardnia, & Shafiee, 2019).

It also studies how language varieties differ between groups separated by certain social variables (e.g., ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, etc.) and how creation and adherence to these rules is used to categorize individuals in social or socioeconomic classes. As the usage of a language varies from place to place, language usage also varies among social classes, and it is these *sociolects* that sociolinguistics studies (Namaziandost, Sabzevari, & Hashemifardnia, 2018).

The social aspects of language were in the modern sense first studied by Indian and Japanese linguists in the 1930s, and also by Louis Gauchat in Switzerland in the early 1900s, but none received much attention in the West until much later. The study of the social motivation of language change, on the other hand, has its foundation in the wave model of the late 19th century. The first attested use of the term *sociolinguistics* was by Thomas Callan Hodson in the title of his 1939 article "Sociolinguistics in India" published in *Man in India* (Stewart, 1968). Sociolinguistics in the West first appeared in the 1960s and was pioneered by linguists such as William Labov in the US and Basil Bernstein in the UK. In the 1960s, William Stewart and Heinz Kloss introduced the basic concepts for the sociolinguistic theory of pluricentric languages, which describes how standard language varieties differ between nations (Namaziandost, Neisi, Kheryadi, & Nasri, 2019).

It is generally agreed that there are somewhere between 5,000 and 6,000 languages spoken in the world today. However, experts predict drastic changes in this picture over the course of this century. A small number of languages including Arabic, Chinese, English and Spanish are being used by an ever-increasing percentage of the world's population, while a great many others are set to die out. Although just how many will disappear is widely debated, according to the more pessimistic predictions of Michael Krauss (1992), over 4,000 of the world's languages will cease to be spoken at the end of the century. The most threatened languages are usually those spoken by peoples who in the past entered into political, economic or colonial relations which favoured the use of one or more dominant languages or language varieties. In language contact situations, where economic and political power is vested in one language group, the position of the other language or languages becomes 'minorised'. Thus, the rise or decline of any language cannot be

seen as a ‘natural’ phenomenon that occurs without human or social agency. In a significant report on the ‘minorised’ languages of Europe, which was carried out by the European Union in 1996, Nelde, Strubell and Williams note the following: The concept of minority by reference to language groups does not refer to empirical measures, but rather, to issues of power. That is, they are language groups, conceived of social groups, marked by a specific language or culture, that exist within wider societies and states, but which lack the political, institutional and ideological structures which can guarantee the relevance of these languages for the everyday life of members of such groups (Singh, 1996; Namaziandost, Shatalebi, & Nasri, 2019).

While some theories on linguistics focus on the different varieties that language produces, among different sections of society, others focus on the universal properties that are common to all human languages. The theory of variation therefore would elaborate on the different usages of popular languages like French and English across the globe, as well as its smaller dialects and regional permutations within their national boundaries. The theory of variation looks at the cultural stages that a particular language undergoes, and these include the following.

2. Methods

This research is based on the general scientific principles:

- historicism, which as part of the system approach permits use of the source method, historical-genetic method, historical comparison method, chronological method and culturological method of research;
- systemacity, which allows looking at the phenomenon of a single sociocultural space and rebuilding elements of the political and legal system when reconstructing it if the historical data is insufficient.

This work also uses the historical genetic method.

3. Results

A special role in these events is played by Jing Hengyi (1877-1938) and Shi Cuntong (1898-1970), sons of rich landowners who were able to afford publishing and had spare time for intellectual discourse. Jing was a member of Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance, which he joined during his studies in Japan, and an active champion of a single national Chinese identity over the clan and village identity. Their intellectual development was based on the works of Yan Fu, who promoted social darwinism (Geng, 2014). Shi Cuntong promoted the Kropotkin mutual aid ethics, and contrasted anarchism against social darwinism and the limitations of nationalism against the universality of globalism. Later he moved to Shanghai, where

he founded a Marxism Study Society and championed the idea of abolishing the institution of family and marriage (Saich & Van De Ven, 2015).

Students of the teacher's college founded the Zhejiang New Tide, a magazine and a society, which became the vanguard of the revolutionary awakening. Members of this movement promoted the society of personal dignity and happiness, where "life", "happiness" and "progress" would become the universal goals of human existence (Yeh, 2000).

Most notable in this context is the fact that this system was based on the philosophical anthropology of Mencius, within which human nature is viewed as naturally kind, and therefore social injustice is not intrinsic to humans. Therefore the main task of the revolution was the elimination of authority, competition, competitiveness, excesses and coercion; all that was contrasted with individual conscience, brotherly love, harmony and mutual aid as part of everyone's work according to their ability.

4. Discussion

The relationship that holds between these different languages and their position in the educational domain in Morocco seems to be embodied the relationship of the field of study, as well as that of classes. Language use in this field of study mobilized by the modern Zhejiang state for the promotion of a developing nation is indicative of a class disparity, where SA is relegated to the study of subjects deemed unnecessary in writing or promoting the image of Morocco i.e., management and medical schools. The relationship between languages and their use in the educational domain are parallel to social relations created between subjects and class members. Therefore, education provides, as a tool of power, a clear picture of a socially-divided and class-fragmented Morocco, where the ability to access modernity, future, and economic prosperity is subsumed under an elitist education regimented through the acquisition of the French language. In fact, students in management and medical schools expressed the need to introduce English in the teaching of sciences while maintaining SA for social sciences, as they have started considering French more of a literary language. One of the medical school students stated that English is more likely to challenge the presence of French, not SA, in Zhejiang education.

We can state that out of all bipolarities that determine general cultural trends in the modern world, the most significant is the gap between the East and the West. Metacultural opposition may manifest as conflict or cooperation (Muhametzyanov, 2014). Through the history of radical movements in China, it is apparent that even the most leftist and progressive ideological movements can develop in a traditional society, which fuels their growth and becomes their enemy. At the same time, the Literary Revolution helped overcome phobias regarding politics, which was typical for many early Chinese liberals (Kai-wing et al., 2008) and launched the modern nationalist and communist movement in China (Dillon, 2013). The consequences of

that are still felt today (Ferdinand, 2016). Meanwhile, the most important task of modernization in Russia and in China is the government's attempts to increase its legitimacy in the eyes of their own population, and at the same time to integrate the country into the developed world. However, due to the lack of a unified legal framework and lack of unity in the society, a real modernization is replaced by symbolic steps, which causes youth to radicalize (Devyatkov & Makarychev, 2012; Margalit, 2013).

5. Conclusions

While it is generally agreed that the survival of a language depends on the degree to which it is used by members of a community (Fishman, 1991), changes in language use and behaviour are notoriously difficult to document on a large scale given the infinite number of linguistic practices existing in any particular speech community (Woolard & Gahng 1990). However, these accumulated practices can be more readily captured through an analysis of language attitudes. While previous research has found that attitudinal data are not always an accurate measure of actual language use, an analysis of language attitudes in this research will be used to provide insights into broad pre-behavioural trends in the Irish and Galician sociolinguistic contexts. It will therefore be argued that while language attitudes are not the only variables influencing the survival of a language, in order for language revitalisation to occur, favourable attitudes constitute a very important condition.

The narrative about the May Fourth Movement which concentrates on the events outside of the province does not give due credit to the May Fourth Movement in Zhejiang. A thorough study of radicalism in the Zhejiang province at the time when it started developing identified inflows and outflows of young people from mid-sized towns at a certain moment of history when a new social dynamic developed along with a structural transformation of the economy and the society in the province. In 1920s and 1930s, when such radicals as Shi Cuntong remained in Shanghai and transformed into urban leftist intellectuals, others had to "go down to the villages and up to the hills". Ideally, the communist movement that ultimately took over the power in Hangzhou and in the entire country would be able to restore its point of origin in a new and decisive manner. Regardless of whether that was the case, as seen from this perspective, radicalism of mid-sized towns was in the center, rather than on the sidelines of the structural transformations of the Chinese society in the 20th century.

Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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