

Status Quo and Comparative Study of Fujianese College Students' Language Abilities, Language Attitudes and Language Use

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Abstract: The study undertakes a diachronic comparative analysis of college students' Mandarin, dialect, English use status, language aptitude, and language attitudes between 2015 and 2020 using data from a questionnaire of Fujian Province college students. The findings show that: (1) Mandarin's function and status are increasing, resulting in a situation in which Mandarin is the dominant language and multiple language codes, such as dialects and English, coexist; (2) Mandarin use is increasing, while dialect use is decreasing; (3) Mandarin and English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are improving, while dialect listening and speaking skills are deteriorating; (4) Although Fujianese college students have a higher overall opinion of Mandarin, dialects, and English, their views toward Mandarin, dialects, and other languages are deteriorating. Based on this, the paper proposes curriculum ideology and politics in foreign language classes, as well as a variety of strategies to preserve Fujian's strong dialects and scientifically protect weak dialects and endangered minority languages.

Keywords: College students; Language; Diachronic; Comparative analysis

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1. Introduction

College students are the main language use period. During this period, their tasks are to develop professional languages and formulate language plans. People in this period are the most active in thinking, language, and language absorption and innovation ability, so they can best reflect the overall situation of social language competition and the current situation of their language use and they are the most effective predictors of the positive trend of social language use in the future. Therefore, paying attention to the usage, language ability and their attitudes of Mandarin, dialects, and English of this group have important practical values to the study of the language use and attitudes of the whole society, to the formulation of national language policies and language strategies, to enriching social language, and to a series of practical problems such as the theory of learning and the inheritance of Fujian culture.

In 2015, we conducted a survey on the language ability, language attitude and language use of Fujianese college students. Five years later, how about the language use and language ability of Fujianese college students? How have their attitudes toward Mandarin, dialects, and English changed? In order to understand these issues, in 2020, we conducted another survey on the language use and language ability of Fujianese college students, and their attitudes towards Mandarin, dialects, and English, and conducted a comparative analysis with the data obtained in 2015.

2. Research design

2.1. Research questions

This research aims to investigate the language ability, language attitude and language use of Fujianese college students in Mandarin, dialect, and English, and mainly answer the following questions.

- (1) How about the Fujianese college students' Mandarin, dialect, English language ability, language attitude and language usage?
- (2) Has it changed compared with 2015? What has changed?

2.2. Selection of research objects

University students from Fujian origin were randomly selected as the research objects, 2045 questionnaires were collected, 65 questionnaires not belonging to university students of Fujian origin were removed, and 1980 valid questionnaires were left. The current research is based on 1980 valid questionnaires. The situation is shown in **Table 1**. The comparative study was conducted on 321 subjects randomly selected from 1980 valid questionnaires and 321 subjects in 2015.

Table 1. Basic situation of survey subjects

Features of survey object	Criteria	N	%
Total sample		1980	
Gender	Male	513	25.9
	Female	1467	74.1
Major	English	326	16.5
	Chinese Language and Literature	47	2.4
	Other literature and history majors	1032	52.1
	Science and Engineering	575	29.1
English proficiency	EMT-8	10	0.5
	EMT-4	86	4.3
	CET-4	369	18.6
	CET-6	91	4.6
	No such situation	1424	72
Distribution of spoken dialects	East Fujian dialect(Fuzhou Dialect)	442	22.3
	South Fujian dialect (Minnan Dialect)	698	35.3
	Putian-Xianyou Dialect	173	8.7
	North Fujian dialect (Jian'ou Dialect)	108	5.5
	Hakka Dialect	206	10.4
	Central Fujian dialect (Yong'an Dialect, Shaxian Dialect)	50	2.5
	Jiangxi Dialect (Shaowu Dialect)	25	1.3
	She Dialect	10	0.5
	others	268	13.5
College	Undergraduate	1117	56.4
	Vocational and Technical College	863	43.6

2.3. Questionnaire

Follow the 2015 “Language Use Survey Questionnaire for College Students”. The questionnaire refers to Jiang Bingbing’s “Survey Questionnaire on Language Use of Shanghai Students” and Wu Meili’s “Language Use Questionnaire for Students of the National People’s University.” The questionnaire is divided into three parts: basic personal information, language use and language attitude, with a total of 52 items. The questionnaire design does not involve personal privacy, which is designed tactfully, flexibly, and follows the principle of self-consciousness. If a question cannot be answered, the respondent can give up it. The questionnaire uses a table format, which is clear at a glance. Respondents only need to tick it realistically.

2.4. Research methods and data collection

The survey adopted a combination of questionnaire survey and interview method. The questionnaire survey collected data online through the Questionnaire Star. Affected by the epidemic, the interview was conducted online. The data obtained is statistically analyzed by SPSS 22.0.

After the questionnaire survey, we randomly selected 3 subjects from various dialect distributions to conduct online interviews based on the content of the questionnaire. A total of 24 valid texts converted from recordings were obtained from the interview.

3. Statistics and analysis of research results

3.1. Comparison of college students’ language use

The language use of college students is the first topic of our investigation. We have designed the following questions to understand the language use of college students: “What language did you learn (or use) first?,” “What languages can you use to talk to people now?,” “Which language films do you usually watch?,” “Which language songs do you usually listen to?,” “Which language songs do you usually sing?,” “What kind of language do you usually use in writing?.” The results are shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Comparison of language usage among college students in Fujian

Language used	Year	Mandarin		Dialect		English		Others	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The first language to learn (or use)	2015	110	34.3	209	65.1	2	0.6	0	0
	2020	1027	51.9	931	47	9	0.5	13	0.7
Language that can be used to talk to people	2015	321	100	259	80.7	141	43.9	17	5.3
	2020	1950	98.5	1465	74	663	33.5	62	3.1
Which language films to watch	2015	185	57.6	3	0.93	114	35.5	19	5.9
	2020	1576	79.6	18	0.9	326	16.5	60	3
Which language songs to listen to	2015	214	66.7	10	3.12	78	24.3	19	5.9
	2020	1461	73.8	18	0.9	387	19.5	114	5.8
Which language songs to sing	2015	279	86.9	7	2.18	29	9.0	6	1.9
	2020	1716	86.7	18	0.9	139	8	87	4.4
Language usually used in writing	2015	306	95.3	2	0.6	10	3.12	3	0.9
	2020	1926	97.3	11	0.6	34	1.7	9	0.5

It can be seen from **Table 2** that the use of Mandarin is on the rise, while the use of dialects and English is on the decline.

- (1) The number of subjects who learned (or used) Mandarin for the first time increased by nearly 18% compared with 2015. On the one hand, this shows that our country's policy to promote the use of Mandarin is effective. The high popularity of the national common language is a sign of a country's progress and civilization ^[1]; on the other hand, most of the parents of college students are born around 1970, they are generally more educated than the parents of school students in 2015. According to the 2020 survey, 51.9% of college students at school communicate with their parents in Mandarin at home. "My family lives in a remote location, but my parents have been interacting with me in Mandarin since I was sensible," a student remarked in the interview. "I can understand, but not speak, the dialect of my hometown." "I was raised by my grandparents," another student explained. I could speak the dialect of my hometown when I was younger, but since elementary school, "I've always used Mandarin to converse with people. Now it's a little tough for me to communicate with folks in my native dialect."
- (2) The proportion of persons who were the first to acquire (or use) the dialect has decreased by 8%, while the proportion of people who can interact with others in their native tongue has decreased by about 7%. This is tied to the parents' educational level; on the other hand, as urbanization accelerated, particularly with the large-scale reorganization of primary and secondary schools at the close of the twentieth century, more and more rural inhabitants migrated to urban and rural areas. In 2020, do a survey. Only 27.2 percent of the subjects are from rural areas, whereas 59.6 percent are from county cities and higher. Furthermore, only 22.4 percent of subjects who grew up and went to school in rural regions before junior high school, and 78.6 percent of subjects who grew up and went to school in townships and above, grew up and went to school in townships and above. The use of home dialects has decreased as a result of the change of residence. The importance of dialect preservation cannot be overstated. Dialects are a carrier of regional culture as well as a direct manifestation of local culture. Protecting dialects means safeguarding regional culture. Only via dialects can historical memory be evoked, and only through dialects can people identify with the cultural and historical practices passed down from their forefathers, and only through dialects can the Chinese nations and culture's identities be realized.
- (3) In comparison to 2015, the percentage of people who can communicate in English has decreased by more than 10%. We interviewed some students to learn more about the causes. "After the iFLYTEK translator came out, I wasn't as keen to train and learn to connect with others in English," one student remarked. "China must be the hub of the world in the future," another student stated. As you can see, an increasing number of international students are learning Chinese, therefore it doesn't matter if they can speak in English." To some extent, this reflects the views of many students, showing that advances in science and technology, as well as the strengthening of China's national strength, are quietly influencing young students' attitudes toward language learning and usage.
- (4) In comparison to 2015, the proportion of people who watch Mandarin films and TV programs and listen to Mandarin songs climbed by 22% and 7%, respectively, while the proportion of people who watch English films and TV shows and sing English songs decreased by 19% and 5%. This demonstrates that as China's might has grown, college students have become more confident than ever before. Furthermore, as film and television production technology has advanced, China's film and television production has become increasingly sophisticated, with Chinese culture and elements in film and television works. This is also one of the most important factors in grabbing the attention of young students.

(5) The percentage of people who watch movies in dialects and listen to songs in dialects is extremely low, and it is declining. On the one hand, it demonstrates that the prospects for dialect preservation and local cultural inheritance are dim; on the other hand, it demonstrates that there is a severe shortage of dialect-based films and television series, as well as songs. Film and television productions, as well as songs and other kinds of art, are powerful carriers of regional culture. Taking Fuzhou's regional culture as an example, traditional art forms such as Fujian opera, Pinghua, Niyi, and Shifan music, which have been listed on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list, are all inherited from the Fuzhou dialect as a carrier and are continuously enriched and developed. The survival of these national intangible cultural heritages is under jeopardy: there are few practitioners, and skills are vanishing.

3.2. Comparison of language choices in different occasions

Studies have shown that people who speak multiple languages will choose to use different languages on different occasions, such as with (grand) parents, with brothers and sisters, in the hometown, in the occasions of meeting fellow villagers, etc., where they usually choose to use the dialect of the hometown that is most familiar to each other; while in public places, such as government departments, schools, banks, and railway stations, airport, shopping, seeing a doctor, etc., people usually choose to use Mandarin; while meeting foreign friends, they choose to use English for communication. This survey also paid attention to the differences in this area, and the results are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Comparison of Fujianese university students' language choices in different occasions

Occasions	Year	Mandarin		Dialect		English		Others		No such situation	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
With grandparents	2015	84	26.2	297	92.5	1	0.3	3	0.9	7	2.2
	2020	537	27.1	1367	69	9	0.5	19	1	48	2.4
With parents	2015	162	50.5	284	88.5	2	0.6	4	1.3	1	0.3
	2020	1027	51.9	914	46.2	13	0.7	25	1.3	1	0.1
With brothers and sisters	2015	227	70.7	250	77.9	15	4.7	3	0.9	3	0.9
	2020	1304	65.9	608	30.7	11	0.6	17	0.9	40	2
In hometown	2015	191	59.5	277	86.3	2	0.6	3	0.9		
	2020	871	44	1086	54.8	10	0.5	13	0.7		
On campus	2015	314	97.8	4	1.3	2	0.6	1	0.3		
	2020	1932	97.1	36	1.8	15	0.8	6	0.3		
(On campus) meeting fellow villagers	2015	214	66.7	105	32.7	1	0.3	1	0.3		
	2020	1600	80.8	358	18.1	12	0.6	10	0.5		

Notes: "No such situation" refers to the death of grandfather (mother), father (mother) and no siblings.

The data in **Table 3** shows that (1) In addition to communicating with grandparents, whether in private or public places, students tend to use Mandarin-the ratio is basically above 50%, while proportion of using

dialects is higher in private occasions and in more free and casual occasions, such as in hometown, or meeting fellows of hometown, especially in hometown or communicating with parents or grandparents. There may be four reasons for this choice of language code. To begin with, the elderly grandfather (mother), most of whom have no formal education, most of them do not speak Mandarin or speak Mandarin poorly, and the opportunities to use Mandarin are limited. In the 2nd place, the aged always hold a conservative attitude in language choices. They hope that the younger generation can speak their native dialect and inherit the local culture. Under this circumstance, habit is formed over time, so when communicating with father (mother) in their hometown, they will subconsciously choose dialects to communicate with others. Thirdly, dialects are the first language they learnt, and Mandarin is generally learned after primary school, and the proficiency of Mandarin is naturally not as good as dialects. Lastly, dialect has powerful functions of expressing feelings and expressing meaning. The local accent and rhyme make people feel the deep nostalgia, which can express expressively incisively and vividly ^[2]. In social communication, dialect is still a kind of “glue,” it can reflect a person’s social attributes, and can bring people who speak the same dialect together, shorten the distance between them, and make each other feel cordial and harmonious ^[3].

The use of Mandarin on different occasions showed a slight upward trend, while the use of dialects on different occasions showed a sharp decline, both in private and public places, ranging from nearly 15% to nearly 50%, which further confirms the above-mentioned view that “the use of Mandarin is on the rise, while the use of dialects is on the decline.”

3.3. The phenomenon of code mixing and its cause analysis

Any symbol system used in communication, such as language, dialect, style or register can be called code ^[4]. In the 21st century, most people have mastered two or more language codes, so in daily communication, it is normal for several language codes to be mixed together and used. Code-mixing refers to “under bilingual (or multilingual) conditions, one language code is the main language, and other codes are mixed together” ^[5]. For example, the mixed use of Chinese and English codes is the act of using Chinese as the base language and English as the donor language, and mixing some English words or phrases in the Chinese expression. The role of borrowed language is to provide additional materials for the base language materials, thereby forming a unique register and pragmatic culture.

In recent years, with the development of science and technology, the popularization of the Internet, and the deepening of cultural exchanges, the phenomenon of code mixing has become very popular among young people and students, and there have been frequent examples of code mixing even in many mainstream media. Our survey also paid attention to the phenomenon of code mixing among college students, and the results are shown in **Tables 4, Table 5, and Table 6**.

The above data shows that a considerable proportion of respondents believe that they use mixed language codes when communicating with others. The main reason is that some words are not in Mandarin (or dialect), and some words are more convenient to use Mandarin (or dialect, English).

Code mixing is a social phenomenon and an important phenomenon of language fusion. Code mixing is a reflection of people’s cognitive activities, the result of language users’ selection of language variants in order to meet emotional and expression needs, and it is also the realization of pragmatic meaning, a kind of communication strategy ^[3] and the result of the integration of different cultural exchanges. Code mixing expands the pragmatic functions and meanings of dialects, Mandarin and English, brings vitality to language selection and language use, and reflects the beauty of language change. The mixed use of language codes is more conducive to the inheritance, enrichment and development of dialects, Mandarin and English, and is conducive to the harmonious coexistence of various languages.

Table 4. Phenomenon and reasons for the mixed use of Mandarin and dialect codes among Fujianese college students

Mandarin and dialect codes mixed phenomenon				Reason for existence	Year	No.	%
Existence	Year	No.	%	Some words are not in Mandarin.	2015	98	36.2
					2020	482	24.3
	2015	271	84.4	Let others know that I am a bilingual person.	2015	3	1.1
	2020	1422	71.8		2020	20	1
Non-Existence	2015	50	15.6	Some words are more concise and convenient in the dialect of their hometown.	2015	98	36.1
					2020	397	20.1
	2020	558	28.2	It's just a habit, meaningless.	2015	72	26.6
					2020	523	26.4

Table 5. Phenomenon and reasons for the mixed use of dialect and Mandarin codes among Fujianese college students

Dialect and Mandarin codes mixed phenomenon				Reason for existence	Year	No.	%
Existence	Year	No.	%	Some words are not in dialects.	2015	132	48.9
					2020	571	28.8
	2015	270	84.1	Let others know that I am a bilingual person.	2015	3	1.19
	2020	1447	73.1		2020	23	1.2
No-Existence	2015	51	15.9	Some words are more concise and convenient in Mandarin.	2015	84	31.1
					2020	450	22.7
	2020	533	26.9	It's just a habit, meaningless.	2015	51	18.9
					2020	403	20.4

Table 6. Phenomenon and reasons for the mixed use of Mandarin and English codes among Fujianese college students

Mandarin and English codes mixed phenomenon				Reason for existence	Year	No.	%
Existence	Year	No.	%	Some words are not in Mandarin.	2015	18	8.5
					2020	122	6.2
	2015	212	66.0	Let others know that I am a bilingual person.	2015	4	1.9
	2020	751	37.9		2020	34	1.7
Non-Existence	2015	109	34.0	Some words are more concise and convenient in English.	2015	110	51.9
					2020	252	12.7
	2020	1229	62.1	It's just a habit, meaningless.	2015	80	37.7
					2020	343	17.3

However, the phenomenon of language code mixing has also caused various publications such as newspapers, periodicals, books, audio-visual products, e-books, and the Internet to randomly mix dialects and English and other foreign words in the Chinese language, directly use English words or abbreviations,

and create some vocabularies from neither Chinese nor foreign languages, and unclear words and phrases which have misled the misuse of Mandarin, harmed young people, severely damaged the standardization and purity of Chinese language and characters, destroyed a harmonious and healthy language and cultural environment, and caused undesirable social impact^[6]. The General Administration of Press and Publication issued a special document to regulate the use of text in publications in 2010, and the phenomenon of language code mixing has been curbed. The data in Table 6 also shows that there is a downward trend in code mixing.

3.4. Comparison of language ability

Any language use is based on language ability. The prerequisite for a language user to choose a language is that he or she has the ability to make such a choice. This study compares the linguistic abilities of Fujianese college students' Mandarin and English in terms of "listening and speaking" and "written expression." For dialects, we only compared their "listening and speaking" abilities. The results are shown in **Table 7**.

Table 7 shows that in terms of listening and speaking abilities, 98.7% of the respondents are proficient in using Mandarin, which is close to the results of the survey on Mandarin in the above-mentioned language use (that is, 98.5% of the respondents can communicate with others in Mandarin). The data is also close to the 2015 survey results (98.1%). However, only 65.7% of the respondents are proficient in using dialects, which is a drop of nearly 16% compared with 2015. Another 44.4% of students can use English basically or proficiently to communicate with others, which is almost the same as the 2015 survey results (43.6%), but there is a large deviation in the results on English in the above-mentioned language use (ie.33% of respondents can communicate with others in English). Since 2002, our country has been carrying out the reform of college English teaching, mainly to change the teaching goal of college English from reading and writing to listening and speaking, and to comprehensively improve the ability to use English^[7]. After 15 years, English listening and speaking in universities has received special attention, and the students' "deaf-mute" English situation has been greatly improved. This survey is the proof.

Table 7 also shows that five years have passed and the Chinese writing ability of college students has made great progress, but 33.8% of students still have obstacles in writing in Chinese. This phenomenon must arouse the attention of relevant parties. It is an indisputable fact that the written expression ability of college students is not satisfactory. The phenomena of typos, confusing and obscure writing in campus posters and graduation thesis are shocking. This is certainly due to the influence of the popularity of English and smart phones, the impact of online languages and social environment, but factors such as the bias of the national language policy and the unsuccessful language education are also to blame. Written expression ability is an advanced communicative ability and an important indicator of a country's degree of civilization. It will directly affect a country's development and international competitiveness. What is gratifying is that the written expression ability of college students has been greatly improved, and more than half of college students can communicate with people through written forms relatively or very proficiently. This has important practical significance for absorbing the world's advanced scientific and technological achievements, promoting the development of my country's scientific and technological productivity, and promoting Chinese civilization to the world. But from another aspect, China's language strategy is facing the impact and challenge of English^[2].

In order to further understand the development and changes of Fujianese university students' language abilities in the past five years, we conducted a paired sample T test on Mandarin, dialect, English listening and speaking skills, and Mandarin and English written expression skills of Fujianese university students in 2015 and 2020. The results are shown in **Table 8** and **Table 9**.

Table 7. Comparison of Fujianese College Students' Language Abilities

Language abilities	Items	Year	Mandarin		Dialect		English		
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Listening & Speaking	fluently without any obstacles	2015	242	75.4	138	43.0	12	3.7	
		2020	1764	89.1	615	31.1	91	4.6	
	proficiently with some obstacles	2015	73	22.7	123	38.3	28	8.7	
		2020	190	9.6	685	34.6	145	7.3	
	can talk, but not proficient	2015	6	1.9	34	10.6	100	31.2	
		2020	13	0.7	330	16.7	644	32.5	
	Can understand, but not very good at speaking	2015	0	0	14	4.36	61	19	
		2020	3	0.2	231	11.7	420	21.2	
	Can understand some, but can't speak	2015	0	0	7	2.18	87	27.1	
		2020	5	0.3	84	4.2	550	27.8	
	Can neither understand nor speak	2015	0	0	5	1.56	33	10.3	
		2020	5	0.3	35	1.8	130	6.6	
	Written expression	Very skilled and barrier-free	2015	172	53.6			18	5.6
			2020	1243	62.8			121	6.1
Relatively skilled, a little obstacle		2015	140	43.6			126	39.3	
		2020	669	33.8			900	45.5	
Unskilled, big obstacles		2015	9	2.8			146	45.5	
		2020	59	3			856	43.2	
cannot at all		2015	0	0			31	9.7	
		2020	9	0.5			103	5.2	

Table 8. Comparison of the listening and speaking ability of Fujianese university students in Mandarin, dialect and English (t value)

Listening & speaking abilities	Year of 2015	Year of 2020	t
Mandarin	5.726±0.542	5.844±0.468	-2.897**
Dialect	5.109±1.071	4.689±1.182	4.735***
English	3.122±1.182	3.237±1.265	-1.140

Notes: **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 9. Comparison of written expression ability of Fujianese university students in Mandarin and English (t value)

Ability of written expression	Year of 2015	Year of 2020	t
Mandarin	3.505±0.565	3.564±0.562	-1.384
English	2.408±0.741	2.570±0.726	-2.793**

Notes: **p<0.01

Tables 8 and Table 9 show that the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin and English of Fujianese college students have improved to varying degrees, and the listening and speaking

skills of Mandarin and English writing skills have reached a significant level, while the listening and speaking ability of Fujianese college students' dialects is on the decline, and has reached a significant level, which is basically consistent with the above survey results.

3.5. Comparison of language attitudes

Language attitude is an important research topic in sociolinguistics and social psychology. Language attitude is an important content of sociolinguistic research. It refers to an individual's value evaluation and behavioral tendency of a certain language or dialect [8]. It is a very important potential factor that affects language use and inheritance. It is also a reflection of people's social psychology and has an important influence on language development and change.

In this essay, the attitudes of Fujianese university students to dialect, Mandarin and English have been compared from three dimensions, which are affective factors, cognitive factors and behavioral orientation. Among them, the emotional dimension includes two items of whether the language is good to hear and whether it is friendly, the cognitive dimension includes two items of whether the language is useful and whether it has social influence, and the behavioral orientation includes one item of whether it is necessary to learn a certain language, scoring for reverse. The results are shown in **Figure 1**, **Figure 2**, and **Figure 3**.

From the emotional dimension of language attitudes, the proportion of people who think Mandarin and dialects are very pleasant and friendly has increased to varying degrees, indicating that college students' recognition of Mandarin and dialects is still quite high. This also shows from the other side that contemporary college students identify with local culture and traditions.

From the cognitive dimension of language attitudes, the usefulness and social influence of dialects are not satisfactory, but the social influence of English cannot to be underestimated, which is close to our national language. This is closely related to the development of technology, times and society. In recent years, with the popularity of smart phones, communication between people has become more and more flat, and there are fewer and fewer opportunities for face-to-face communication. It is not surprising that dialects without text support are becoming more and more marginal. On the other hand, the 21st century is an era of globalization and internationalization, and English has become an indispensable tool for international communication. Therefore, the social influence of English will remain at a high level.

Judging from the behavioral tendency of language attitude, more than half of college students think it is necessary to learn Mandarin, dialect and English.

In order to further understand the development and changes of Fujianese university students' language attitudes in the past five years, we conducted a paired sample T test on the overall situation of Fujian university students' language attitudes and various dimensions of language attitudes in 2015 and 2020. The results are shown in **Table 10**, **Table 11**, **Table 12** and **Table 13**.

Table 10, **Table 11**, **Table 12** and **Table 13** show that, overall, the language attitudes of Fujianese university students are on a downward trend, which is statistically significant. From the perspective of all dimensions, in addition to the upward trend of the emotional dimension of dialects, all dimensions have shown a downward trend, especially the cognitive dimension of dialects which has reached a significant level.

Internet language and micro-emoji symbols are a popular communication carrier from the media. Their concise, vivid, free, humorous, casual, easy-to-understand, colloquial and personalized expressions are deeply favored by the "indigenous people" of the Internet. As some students said in interviews, "We basically don't use formal words when chatting online. Internet language and micro-emojis are enough." This affects their language attitude to some certain extent.

The voices of dialects are popular among young people because they are different from standard Mandarin, and have been greatly influenced by films and television dramas, Hong Kong and Taiwan

dialects, Northeastern dialects, Cantonese, and foreign languages. This kind of language with rich regional characteristics is close to life of Netizens, so it is easier for them to be adapted into online languages. That is the reason why the emotional dimension of Fujianese college students is on the rise, especially the cognitive dimension, which has reached a significant level.

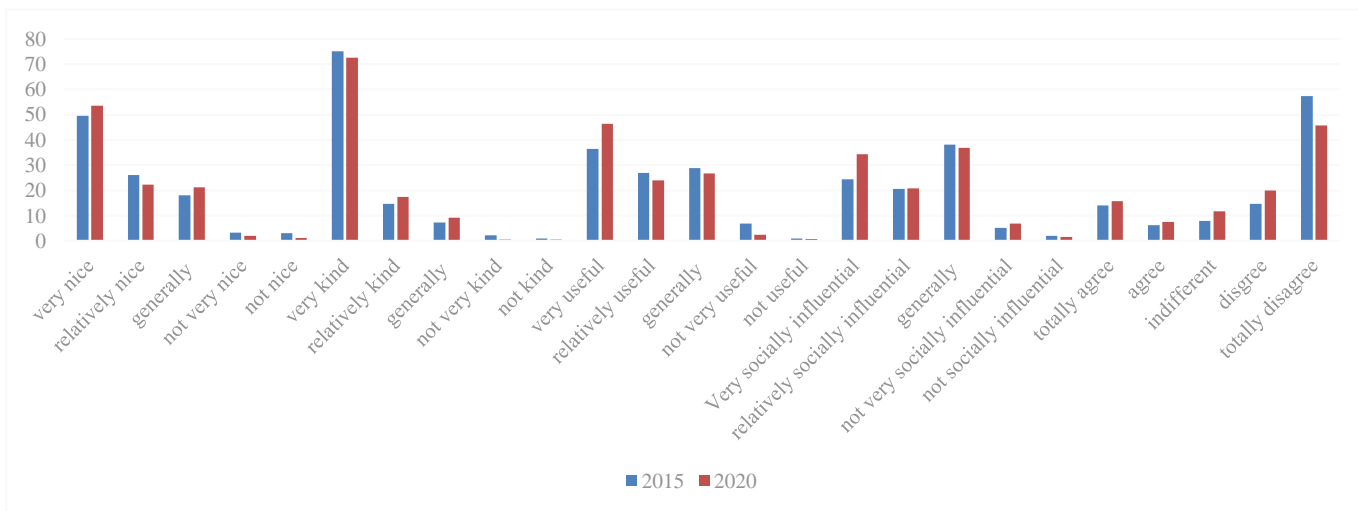


Figure 1. Comparison of Fujianese university students' attitudes towards Mandarin (%)

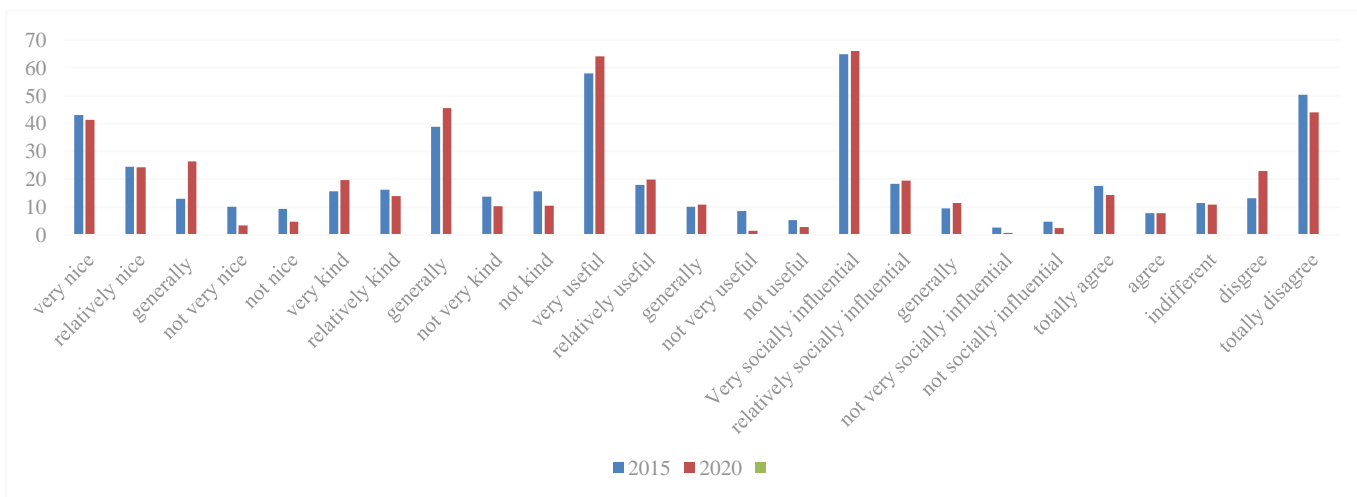


Figure 2. Comparison of Fujianese university students' attitudes towards dialects (%)

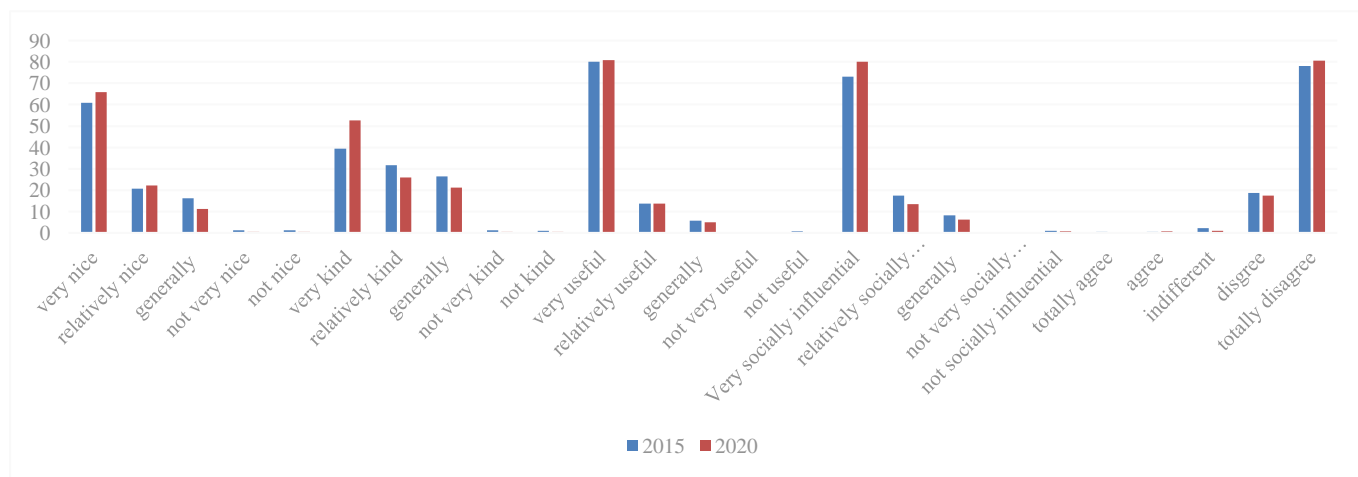


Figure 3. Comparison of Fujianese university students' attitudes towards English (%)

Table 10. Comparison of language attitudes among Fujianese college students (overall) (t value)

Year	2015	2020	t
Language attitudes	3.632 ± 0.836	3.469 ± 1.076	2.121*

Notes: *p<0.05

Table 11. Comparison of Fujianese university students' attitudes towards dialect, Mandarin and English (Emotional Factor Dimension) (t value)

Emotional Factor Dimension	Year of 2015	Year of 2020	t
Mandarin	3.287±1.252	3.196±1.441	0.810
Dialects	2.994±1.289	3.109±1.431	-1.067
English	4.813±1.953	4.726±2.130	0.536

Table 12. Comparison of Fujianese university students' attitudes towards dialect, Mandarin and English (Cognitive Factor Dimension) (t value)

Cognitive Factor Dimension	Year of 2015	Year of 2020	t
Mandarin	2.589±1.343	2.474±1.043	1.307
Dialects	4.446±1.799	3.922±1.720	3.781***
English	3.899±1.406	3.682±1.465	1.449

Notes: ***p<0.001

Table 13. Comparison of Fujianese University Students' Attitudes to Dialect, Mandarin and English (Dimension of Behavioral Tendency Factor) (t-value)

	Year of 2015	Year of 2020	t
Dimension of Behavioral Tendency Factor	3.899±1.406	3.682±1.465	1.916

4. Conclusions

The function and status of Mandarin are on the rise, demonstrating that Mandarin is the mainstay with the coexistence of multiple language codes such as dialects and English. With the continuous deepening of the "Publicization" work, the continuous advancement of the urbanization process, the continuous improvement of the education level of college students' parents, and the continuous improvement of China's comprehensive national strength, the function and status of Mandarin are on the rise.

In terms of language utilization, interviewees employ a variety of languages depending on the situation. Mandarin is utilized for more formal situations, while dialects are used for private gatherings and more free and relaxed occasions. However, Mandarin is becoming more popular, whereas dialects are becoming less popular.

From the point of view of language ability, Fujianese college students have good overall abilities in Mandarin, dialects, and English. Nearly half of the college students have the ability to use "Mandarin-Dialect-English" multilingual codes. However, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin and English are on the rise, while of dialect on the decline, both of which are statistically significant.

In terms of language attitudes, Fujianese university students give Mandarin, dialects, and English a positive overall rating. They not only pay attention to the acquisition and usage of lingua franca and foreign languages, but also pay attention to the inheritance of dialects, and they have strong identification with

Mandarin, dialects and English. On this foundation, a multilingual identity has emerged. Foreign languages, in particular, have a similar identity to common languages and dialects. This should pique our interest and make us more vigilant. In general, however, respondents' opinions toward Mandarin, dialects, and foreign languages showed a statistically significant negative trend.

5. Suggestions

5.1. Implement curriculum ideology in foreign language courses

Language is the carrier of culture. Language and culture are inseparable. In a sense, language education is cultural education. Chinese students learn English from elementary school, even from kindergarten to university. More than ten years of foreign language learning has enabled nearly half of the interviewees to form a foreign language identity, which is manifested in the instrumental identity of the foreign language and the emotional identity of the foreign language and culture. At present, China's national cultural awareness has not been fully established, and cultural soft power is far behind the Western developed countries such as Britain and the United States. This kind of unrestricted English education will seriously affect China's language and cultural awareness, thus affect Chinese civilization and Chinese culture. Therefore, the integration of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation into foreign language courses is of great significance for strengthening the linguistic identity of college students with the common language of the Chinese nation.

5.2. Take multiple measures to inherit the strong Fujian dialect

The listening and speaking abilities of Fujianese college students are currently deteriorating. The three dominant Fujian dialects, Fuzhou dialect, Hokkien dialect, and Hakka dialect, have only decreased by 7% in the last five years, but their use frequency and ability have shifted with time. It is an undeniable fact that international inheritance is deteriorating all the time. The three strong dialects of Fujian are among China's eight major dialects. It was formed and refined by the hard labor of Fujian's forefathers over decades and years in the practice of extended social life as the native language of Fujianese. It extols Fujian culture's traditions and pervades the traits and spirit of Fujian culture. The "Sea Silk" journey begins in Fujian. The Fujian dialects are widely spoken in Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, and they have a significant impact both at home and abroad. It is an important carrier for spreading the symbols of the Silk Road and promoting the Silk Road culture. There are more than 60 million overseas Chinese and overseas Chinese, of which 25% are from Fujian. They are distributed in 198 countries and regions in the world. They have certain economic strength, extensive personal connections, and cultural advantages in integrating Chinese and foreign cultures. It plays a unique and important role in soft power building ^[9-10]. In addition, among the overseas Chinese, those who use four dialects, such as Minnan (Quanzhou) and Hakka, account for about 80% of the total number of overseas Chinese ^[11]. Therefore, increasing the promotion of the protection of strong Fujian dialects, adding dialects to classrooms, adding dialects to teaching materials, adding dialect broadcasts and programs to radio and television, and holding various forms of dialect contests, etc., can not only enhance the understanding of the local language and culture of Fujianese youths, but also help Fujianese overseas Chinese to build their identity with Chinese language and culture, which play a role as a bridge and bond.

5.3. Scientifically protect vulnerable dialects and endangered (minority) languages

In Fujian Province, there are weak dialects such as the Wu dialect in Ningde City's north-central Pucheng, Mandarin dialects in Nanping City and Xiqin Town, Hangcheng Town Qinjiang Village in Changle District, Fuzhou City, and endangered languages such as "She dialect" in Ningde and other places, and the Junjia dialect of Zhongshan Town, Wuping County, Longyan City, and others. On the basis of inquiry records,

preservation, and presentation, we should pay attention to the vitality maintenance and continuous development of these vulnerable dialects and endangered minority languages. We should focus on young people in terms of inheritance and protection, and use new media to organize the enthusiasm of civil society groups and individuals^[12-14]. Dialects and minority languages can better perform the duties of language services and cultural inheritance if the subjectivity of Mandarin is preserved.

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