How Political Regime Affects Language Policy Making:
Evidence from Taiwan

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Why do some linguistically diverse countries recognize minority languages – i.e., allow them to be taught formally in schools and to be used in mass media – while some countries prohibit minority language usage? I argue that the language policy outcome is the product of bargaining between the head of government, the linguistic minority in the opposition, and co-opted linguistic minority inside the ruling party or the ruling alliance. Specifically, the type of political regime affect the payoff of the head of government and their minority ally because institutional designs decide the degree to which it is worth for the head of government to win the support of radical nationalists and minority people. I propose a formal model to show that language policy made in democracies and absolute monarchies tend to have higher level of minority language recognition than military and civilian authoritarianism. I use the case of Taiwan to elucidate the mechanisms behind this theory by employing process tracing method to examine how political regime affects language policy making in Taiwan’s history. This paper sheds light on political institutionalist studies since researches on the effect of regime type on ethnic and cultural policies are still few.
The status of language is important in linguistically-diverse countries because language is an influential marker of ethnic (Albaugh, 2014) and national (Anderson, 1983) identities. Thus, language policy is highly related with symbolic politics (Horowitz, 1985: 216; Weinstein, 1990: 3). As the key component of language policy, educational language policy warrants the attention of political scientists. For scholars interested in political development, educational language policy represents a state’s nation-building strategy: to build a monolingual or multilingual society. This is a salient political issue in Asian and African states which gained independence from colonial states in the 1950s and 1960s. It is also important in many Western states where there are large numbers of migrants. For scholars studying political behavior and contentious politics, minority language recognition matters for individual’s social trust (Herreros and Criado, 2008; Liu et al., 2015). In Sri Lanka, the Sinhala Only Act passed in 1956 failed to recognize the largest minority language Tamil; moreover, it discriminated against Tamil speakers. This law led to a series of protests and riots (DeVotta, 2002: 86-88). For ethnic politics researchers, studies on educational language policy helps people understand how these policies shape cultural diversity. Scholars often measure ethnic diversity as stable over time (Alesina et al., 2003: 160); however, this is not true with regard to linguistic diversity. In 1980, only 11.6 percent of Singaporeans using English as their home language (Kaplan and Baldauf, 2003: 133), and this percentage became 32.3 in 2010 after the government appointed English as the medium of instruction in all level of schools.1

Political rulers have acknowledged the effect of language policy on ethnic politics and relations for hundreds of years. Not only in Western Europe where the rise of nation-state enhanced ruler’s concern about what language people are speaking (Grillo, 1989), but in ancient China, the Yongzheng Emperor, who reigned over the Qing Empire between 1723 and 1735, valued the influence of language policy on political stability. Since World War II, almost all of new countries built their state on a multiethnic and multilingual society. Today, there is a great variation in language policies ranging from unilingualism to multilingualism across the world. How do we explain such difference?

Many existing linguistic or sociological studies on language policy employ an ideological (Grillo, 1989; Hsiau, 1997; Gill, 2014) or a structural perspective (Haugen, 1972; Hornberger, 2002; Wu, 2011). The former approach examines the consideration of decision makers while the latter approach introduces contextual factors and offers a holistic analysis. However, the ideological perspective focuses almost exclusively on the decision makers themselves and neglects the influence of other political actors. Likewise, the ecological perspective focuses singularly on the particular social and political context of a country and in doing so overlooks more general patterns of language policy making across countries.

In this paper I propose a formal model to explain why some linguistically diverse countries recognize minority languages – i.e., allow them to be taught formally in schools and to be used in mass media – while some countries prohibit minority language usage. I argue that the

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language policy outcome is the product of bargaining between the head of government, the linguistic minority in the opposition, and co-opted linguistic minority inside the ruling party or the ruling alliance. Specifically, the type of political regime affect the payoff of the head of government and their minority ally because institutional designs decide the degree to which it is worth for the head of government to win the support of radical nationalists and minority people. Propositions of the model show that language policy made in democracies and absolute monarchies tend to have higher level of minority language recognition than military and civilian authoritarianism.

To test my hypotheses, I study Taiwan’s political development and language policy making from 1885 to the present-day by employing process tracing method (Collier, 2011; Mahoney, 2012; Ricks and Liu, 2018).Taiwan – over such a long temporal period – is a good case study for three reasons. The first reason pertains to the nature of the language politics. For a long time, the two languages spoken by the majority of the people in Taiwan – Hoklo (Min-nan) and Hakka – were perceived as local vernaculars or minority languages regardless of who was in power (whether it was Mainland China or Japan). Second, Taiwan’s history encapsulates the full gamut of language policies. We see times where there is no recognition of any minority language – whether it is Hoklo, Hakka, or Taiwanese aboriginal languages; and we see periods of complete recognition of all minority languages. There, there is also the full variation in political regimes. Taiwan was under the rule of absolute monarchs: There was the Qing Empire between 1683 and 1894, and then the Japanese Empire post-1895. When the Japanese government was militarized in 1936, it also enforced military rule in Taiwan. After World War 2, Taiwan remained under a military regime – albeit a different one (1949-1974). Between 1975 and 1995, a civilian dictatorship controlled the government. And since the 1996 presidential election, Taiwan has been a liberal democracy. In sum, both the outcome of interests and the explanatory factor show great variation in Taiwan, hence Taiwan provides observations for causal inference (Geddes, 1990).

**Language Policy and Its Studies**

Language policy aims to manage “all the language practices, beliefs, and management of a community or polity (Spolsky, 2004: 9)”, thus all forms of oral communication in public space (e.g. train announcements, candidate’s speech in campaign, or civil service provided by governmental agencies) are regulated by language policy. This paper focuses on two kinds of language policy which has deep impacts on daily life of linguistic minority group people: educational policy and mass media policy. Language-in-education policies regulate which languages should be and can be taught in formal educational system. It directly affects language heritage. Mass media policy indicates whether a language can be spoke or written in newspaper, radio and television program. It matters because if a dominated language cannot be used in mass media, and if its speakers do not know another language, they are effectively disenfranchised (Ginsburgh and Schlomo, 2011) – i.e, they cannot receive information from the government and public sphere.

There are numerous types of language-in-education policies. One extreme policy is that the state does not recognize a minority language, and so the minority language is prohibited in public schools (e.g. Spanish was not recognized by the State of Texas before the 1950s.) The
other extreme policy is that the state equally protects linguistic rights and sets up public schools which uses the minority language as the medium of instruction. For example, In Canada, there are public primary, secondary, and tertiary schools that use French as the primary language of instruction. Empirically, most countries have language-in-education policies that are between the two extreme points. In Japan, there is no formal Ryukyuan language course in schools (by 2017), but schools in the Okinawa Prefecture can occasionally include Ryukyuan language lessons in one subject “Integrated Studies” (Heinrich and Ishihara, 2017:170). In Malaysia, Tamil, spoken by the third largest linguistic group (Indian), is used as the medium of instruction in public elementary schools and taught as an optional subject in public high schools (Kaplan and Baldauf, 2003: 115).

Mass media policy also varies a lot across time and space. Some countries totally prohibit the usage of a minority language on any mass media publication (e.g. Kurdish in Turkey before 2002). Some countries allow radio and television station to use a minority language without any restrictions (e.g. the Māori Television in New Zealand). Like educational language policy, several mass media policies are between the two extreme points: they allow a minority language to be used in broadcasts but restrict the length or the geographic scope of broadcasting of these programs (e.g. Taiwan in the 1980s).

Due to the fact that there are multiple types of educational language policy and mass media policy and that these policies can be ordered by the degree of restriction, every language policy represents a point on the following spectrum ranging from “no recognition of a language” to “highest recognition of a language”.²

| No recognition of the language | highest level of recognition |

Many scholars attribute the variation in language policy to nationalism. It is language ideology which drive political rulers to make different language policies (Grillo, 1989; Hsiau, 1997; Gill, 2014). A decision maker believing in nation-state ideology tends to see linguistic heterogeneity as a problem, i.e., it causes national disunity and ethnic conflicts. And this is why they prefer monolingual policies. On the contrary, a decision maker who praises multiculturalism tends to view the use of minority languages as individual rights that should be protected (Ruiz, 1984). In this case, bilingual or multilingual educational policies are preferred. For a long time, the “melting-pot model” was a widespread language ideology in the U.S. society. This ideology encourages a variety of minority group to give up their cultural heritage and embrace the majority culture (Baker and Jones, 1998: 287). In the 1980s, this assimilationist ideology stimulated the English-Official Movement. Some members of this movement advocated making

² For example, before August, 2002, Kurdish was banned in schools and broadcasts by the Turkish Government. At the same time the Iranian government banned the usage of Kurdish in public schools but allowed it in local newspapers and media. In this case Iran had higher levels of recognition for Kurdish than Turkey in 2002.
laws to reject bilingual and multilingual education (Crawford, 1992). This approach perceives language policy making in the U.S. as the battle between assimilationist ideology and multiculturalist ideology.

Compared to the value-centered language ideological perspective, other scholars employ an ecological perspective to analyze the change of language policy. This approach assumes that “languages, like living species, evolve, grow, change, live, and die in relation to other languages and also in relation to their environment” (Hornberger, 2002: 33). It also emphasizes the impact of interactions between languages, their users, and the socio-political contexts of their users within the language ecology on language policy (Haugen, 1972), and the change of language policy also alters the language ecology (Wu, 2011: 17). This approach does not deny the existence of language ideology, but these interactions within the language environment can change the mainstream language ideology in the society. Therefore, according to this approach, the type of language policy in the U.S. depends on whether linguistic minority groups can win support given the language environment; and this support is generated by the efforts of language educators, non-government organizations, and multilingualism advocates who interact with other language users and the U.S. socio-political contexts.

The language ideology approach explains well why decision makers (want to) make a specific type of language policy. However, this approach neglects the influence of other political actors in the opposition or even in the ruling party. Nationalism may be the motivation of rulers to make monolingual policy; however, the policy outcome is a product of interactions between the decision maker and minority language education advocates. Therefore we need to know the mechanism that accounts for the decision making process in which different language ideologies are involved. Likewise, the linguistic ecological approach considers the interaction between actors and the macro-level context. Their structuralism-based explanations offer dynamic and holistic analyses and find the causality via detailed narratives. However, the term “context” in this approach refers to social, political, economic, and cultural environment (Wu, 2011: 16). And in doing so, this means every country’s context is unique and thus the findings are limited in scope – i.e., the may only be applied to the concerned country. While generalizability may not always be the desired goal, attention to just one singular country neglects the commonality of decision making process across time and space that political actors have inherent rationality to maximize their benefits when they consider their political action.

In sum, the language ideology approach over-simplifies the process of language policy making while the linguistic ecological approach over-emphasizes each country’s particularity. We need a model to frame the pattern of interaction between political actors within a specific political context. Political rulers in different political contexts consider language policies

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3 The former U.S. Senator Robert Dole said “we must stop the practice of multilingual education as a means of instilling ethnic pride or as therapy for low self-esteem or out of elitist guilt over a culture built on the traditions of the West. (Baker and Jones, 1998: 290)"

4 For example, the current official languages policy at the federal level in Canada is the outcome of negotiation between French Canadians and English Canadians. Even in countries where monolingual education is enforced, many social organizations have tried or are trying to bargain with the government by establishing schools for mother tongue education or proposing acts.
differently, but their primary goal is identical: to get as much political support of people or allies as possible. I will introduce the model in the next section.

**Theory: Formal Model**

My model draws on both ideological and ecological perspectives. In the process of language policy making, I consider the behavior of radical nationalists – who I assume will always advocate for assimilationist and a monolingual policy; I also allow the head of government’s decision to be affected by the political context. Where my model diverges is the assumption: it is the bargaining between political actors rather than language ideology which characterized the decision-making process. Moreover, this bargaining process is not particular to any one country; political actors interacting in similar political contexts should yield similar outcomes.

There are three major players in the bargaining game (See the Table 3.1 below). The first player is the head of government. The head of government is supported by the linguistic majority group or politically dominant minority group (e.g. White South Africans before 1994). The second player is the association representing the linguistic minority – one that is politically dominated. This association can be formally organized (e.g., an ethno-linguistic political party) or something more informal (e.g., an interest group). It takes the initiative in making educational language policy allowing its mother tongue education in schools. In general, it is in political opposition to the head of government. The third player is the partner of ruling elites. Like the second player, it is also an association whose members are from the linguistic minority group. They are either members of the ruling party or coalition partners in the ruling alliance with the head of government. For example, the in Malaysia, prior to the ouster of the long-ruling *Barisan Nasional* (National Front), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) was an ethnically-based political party and a member of the ruling alliance.

Table 3.1. Players of the Game

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Head of Government</td>
<td>(1) he/she is supported by the linguistic majority group or politically dominant minority group;</td>
<td>President of the U.S. Prime Minister of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) he/she is the major decision maker;</td>
<td>Sultan of Brunei</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) he/she does not actively make bilingual and multilingual policies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Association of the Linguistic Minority Group (Minority Opposition)</td>
<td>(1) it is organized by the linguistic minority or dominated group;</td>
<td>Society for Speaking Okinawan (Japan)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) it is not the ruling party;</td>
<td>Democratic Action Party (DAP) (Malaysia)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) it takes the initiative in making bilingual or multilingual policies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Partner of Ruling Elites (Minority Partner)</td>
<td>(1) it is organized by the linguistic minority or dominated group;</td>
<td>Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) (Malaysia)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) it is member of the ruling party or coalition partner in the ruling alliance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(3) it does not necessarily support bilingual or multilingual policies.

Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (U.K.)

*An interest group which aims to establish Ryukyuan language course at elementary and middle schools (Heinrich, 2005: 8).

**The DAP was one of the opposition parties between 1965 and 2018 while the MCA was one of the ruling parties between 1954 and 2018.

There are two assumptions about the prior position on language policy (that is, the position on language issue before a language policy is proposed) of each player. First, I assume that a head of government does not actively enhances the level of recognition of a minority language without negotiating with the linguistic minority oppositions or deliberating upon a minority group’s proposal of language policy. Without the request of a minority group, the head of government does not know to what degree the minority group demands their mother tongue education. Second, I assume that the partner of ruling elites does not necessarily support their co-ethnics’ proposal. Scholars verify the existence of ethnic favoritism based on rational choice approach: political elites distribute more public goods to their co-ethnics because they expect their co-ethnics people to repay them with political support (Chandra, 2004) or they would be punished by their co-ethnics if they fail to favor co-ethnics (Habyarimana et al., 2007) – in both scenarios elites are enforcing an equilibrium. However, the linguistic-minority partner of ruling elites has one additional provider of political benefit: the head of government. I assume that if the head of government is able to greatly benefit his/her linguistic-minority partner, then the partner may not insist on favoring co-ethnics when the head of government and the linguistic-minority group hold opposite opinions on an ethnic policy. These two assumptions help us outline the sequence of players’ move and know why the linguistic-minority partner of ruling elites plays a key role in language policy making process.

The three players accrue different benefits and costs depending on the policy outcome. The first is the strength of the partner of the ruling elites ($p$). The head of government obtains this benefit when the partner cooperates with them. The second is the allocation of political resources ($A$). The heads of government may distribute significant campaign funds to minority partners. In executive power-sharing regimes, the heads of government may reserve some political positions (e.g. cabinet minister) for their minority partners. The third is the resource for minority language education and mass communication ($R$). If the policy of “no recognition” is adopted, this means no resource is allocated to minority language education and mass communication ($R=0$); and conversely, if the policy is the “highest level of recognition”, then resources are fairly shared by the majority and minority languages ($R=1$). Lastly, there is the cost of contention ($C$). Here I define contention as a large scale of collective action that causes severe social disruption; it can be a protest, a riot, or even a civil war. Players who participate in the contention must pay this cost. When there is a contention, the opposition must pay the cost of mobilization, and the government must pay the cost of handling the contention.

5 In countries where minority language rights are highly protected (e.g. Canada and Switzerland), government budgets for minority language public schools and public broadcasting.
The three actors can also procure other types of benefits. When the minority association extracts resources for minority language education and mass communication \((R)\), it also wins political support of the minorities who value linguistic rights. And thus, as the level of resources distributed to the minority association increases, the more support the minority association accrues. In contrast, the head of government keeps what is not allocated to minority language education and mass communication \((1-R)\). And as \(1-R\) increases, the head of government accrues more support of those who advocate for assimilationist policies – i.e., the radical nationalists.  

I set up the minority opposition as the first mover in this formal game since it is the advocacy association. It proposes a distribution of resources \(R \in [0,1]\), and then the head of government chooses to accept or reject this proposal. If the head of government accepts, then the game ends – with the minority partner supporting the head of government in this scenario. If head of government rejects the linguistic minority opposition’s proposal, the minority partner must then decide whether to be for or against this rejection – and the linguistic minority opposition must then choose to contend or comply with the minority’s partner’s decision. If (1) the minority partner supports the head of government’s rejection and (2) the minority opposition chooses to contend, then the linguistic minority opposition fights against the head of government – but note that the minority partner does not participate and remains neutral (because if it chooses to fight against its co-ethnics, it will be punished by the minority). However, if (1) the minority partner is against the head of government’s rejection and (2) the minority opposition chooses to contend, then the two minority actors will team up to fight the head of government. 

Each actor gets the following payoffs. If the head of government accepts the proposal, both minority opposition and minority partner gets the proposed resource distribution \((R)\) while the head of government gets the remainder \((1-R)\). If the head of government rejects the proposal and the minority opposition chooses to comply, then the minority opposition gets nothing and the head of government keeps everything – i.e., the maximum of \(R=1\). If fighting does break out, the winner can also get the maximum of \(R=1\), and the loser gets nothing. Therefore the minority partner is also able to get the maximum of \(R=1\) if it teams up with the minority opposition and the minority opposition-minority partner alliance wins.  

Because \(R=1\) means that resource is fairly shared by majority and minority language education and mass communication, by this definition \((1-R)\) is the “additional” resource for majority language.

6 In formal analysis, game players decide their behavior based on the comparison of utility between different strategies. In other words, analysts care about “whether the utility of this strategy is higher than others” more than “what is the total benefits and cost each player has if they play this strategy.” In this model, political support is crucial to both the head of government and the minority association. However, since political support of the minority group is proportional to the resources allocated and political support of radical nationalists is proportional to the difference (i.e., political support for M \(\propto R\) and support for H \(\propto 1-R\)), there is no need to create additional types of utility for the head of government and minority association given that resource and political support are linearly related (based on my assumption).  

7 This does not mean that minority opposition necessarily claims the maximum of \(R=1\) if it wins the fight against the head of government. However, given that minority opposition is able to obtain higher \(R\) than its proposed \(R\).
the total mobilization/military capabilities of all actors involved in the contention. Here, I assume that the mobilization/military capability of the head of government is greater than that of either the minority opposition and/or the minority partner \( m_H > m_M > 0 \) and \( m_H > m_P > 0 \) because the head of government controls the military and police force.

In addition, when the minority partner and the head of government are of the same position, the head of government will allocate political resource to the minority partner, and the minority partner will continue to affiliate with the head of government. This cooperative relationship benefits both the minority partner and the head of government: the former gets allocation of political resource \( (A) \), and the latter obtains the strength of the minority partner \( (Sp) \). Here, there are two conditions in which the minority partner and the head of government are of the same position. The first is that the head of government accepts the proposal (and in this case the minority supports this decision). And the second condition is that the head of government rejects the proposal and the minority supports this rejection. Under the latter condition, the head of government and the minority partner obtain \( Sp \) and \( A \), respectively – but only when the minority opposition chooses to fight and the head of government successfully oppresses the minority opposition.

Lastly and importantly, given that the allocated resources \( (R) \) affects the political support of specific groups, the model allows the head of government and the minority partner to decide the importance of such political support. There are two weights assigned to two types of political support, respectively. The first is that of the minority people \((\alpha)\); and the second is that of the radical nationalists \((\beta)\). When the political support of the minority people is lowly important, the minority partner may value the benefit of political resources more. When the political support of the radical nationalists is highly important, the head of government has to consider how to avoid irritating them. In sum, the minority opposition focuses on how much resources \( (R) \) it can extract, while the head of government and the minority partner have to consider the importance of these resources when they are making decisions. The following figure plots the form of the game.

Figure 3.1. Formal Model of Language Policy Making
Compared to other formal models of ethnic politics, this model makes two important departures. The first is that it considers the strategic role of a third player (i.e., the minority partner) in the decision-making process. And the second departure is that it allows the importance of political support to vary across contexts. Extant research often model two players (the majority group or the government and a minority group) in a bargaining game (Fearon and Laitin, 1996; Fearon, 2004; Caselli and Coleman, 2013; Mele and Siegel, 2017). Moreover, there is a common assumption that members in one ethnic group share the same policy preference and that this preference is opposed by the other group – and hence a centrist position on the policy spectrum is difficult to be kept (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; Horowitz, 1985). However, with regard to language policy making, it is plausible that some members of a minority group will not support a minority opposition’s proposal when they can benefit more by being in a ruling alliance with the head of government, and therefore this model elaborates the ethnic favoritism theory (Chandra, 2004; Habyarimana et al., 2007) that some minority elites’ position on ethnic policy is conditional on how much important the political support of their co-ethnics is.

Theory: Why Political Regime Matters?

In this paper I argue that political regime matters. Political regimes are constructed by formal and informal rules that determine what interests are represented in the leadership and how these interests affect policy choices of the leadership (Geddes et al., 2014). Based on this definition, I argue that these formal and informal rules directly affect how the head of government and minority partner calculate their utility and cost in the process of language policy making. Solving the model will help explain why the minority opposition’s proposed resource allocation is accepted by the head of government varies across political regimes.

Let \( R^* \) be the level at which the head of government accepts the proposal if the proposed \( R < R^* \). There are four propositions.
Proposition 1: When $C_M > \frac{m_M + m_P}{m_M + m_H + m_P} 1 > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} 1$, there is a subgame perfect equilibrium \{comply, reject, for\} with the payoff $(0, \beta + Sp, A)$. When minority opposition’s mobilization cost is higher than its expected utility of winning the contention even if the minority partner teams up with it, its proposal is always rejected by the head of government and the minority partner supports the government’s rejection. As a result, minority opposition chooses to comply.

In this equation, $\frac{m_M + m_P}{m_M + m_H + m_P}$ is two minority actors’ (minority opposition and minority partner) probability of winning the contention and $\frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H}$ is minority opposition’s probability of winning the contention. This proposition is applied to the linguistic-minority group whose population is few (e.g. the Ainu people in Russia), or the distribution of a linguistic group is disperse (e.g. Romani people), it is difficult for them to effectively threaten their central government.

Proposition 2: When $\frac{m_M + m_P}{m_M + m_H + m_P} 1 > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} 1 > C_M$, minority opposition can obtain more R if $\alpha$ is large enough. When minority opposition’s mobilization cost is lower than its expected utility of winning the contention, the decision of minority partner is influential to the value of $R^*$. If $\alpha$ is large enough (i.e. $\alpha > (\frac{m_H \times A}{m_M + m_H} + C_p)(\frac{m_M + m_H + m_P}{m_M + m_H})$, or the support of co-ethnics is highly important to minority partner), minority partner will be against the government’s rejection, and the $R^*$ under this condition is greater than the $R^*$ if minority partner is for the government’s rejection.

This proposition shows that when a linguistic minority group is strong enough (i.e. their utility of winning the contention is higher than their cost of mobilization) to effectively threaten the head of government, the decision maker accepts minority opposition’s proposal $R$ if $R \leq R^*$ to avoid contention. Furthermore, if minority partner determines to support minority opposition, then it can ask for higher level of language recognition (compared to the proposal made by minority opposition who fights alone against the government). How much important the support of co-ethnics people is to minority partner decides minority partner’s stance. Therefore, the greater $\alpha$ is, the higher level of language recognition the minority group is able to obtain, given that minority opposition’s military/mobilization capacity held constant. This proposition is applied to the linguistic-minority group whose population is large and is able to organize collective actions (e.g. the Shan people in Myanmar).

Proposition 3: When $\frac{m_M + m_P}{m_M + m_H + m_P} > C_M > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H}$, the head of government rejects minority opposition’s proposal if $\alpha$ is not large enough. If $\alpha$ is not large enough (i.e. $\alpha < (A + C_P)(\frac{m_M + m_H + m_P}{m_M + m_P})$, minority partner is for head of government’s rejection, and in this case the subgame perfect equilibrium is \{comply, reject, for\} with the payoff $(0, \beta + Sp, A)$. The government accepts the proposal only if $\alpha$ is so large that minority partner would be against its rejection.

This proposition is applied to the linguistic-minority group that has a significant proportion of elites allying with the head of government. Minority partner plays a decisive role in
language policy making in the sense that its position decides whether minority opposition should contend against the government if decision maker rejects its proposal. Once again, the significance of co-ethnics’ support to minority partner (\(\alpha\)) deeply impacts the final outcome.

**Proposition 4:** When \(R > 1 - \frac{m_{H}}{m_{M} + m_{H}} > 1 - \frac{m_{H}}{m_{M} + m_{H} + m_{P}}\), the government accepts the proposal if \(\beta\) is small. Low \(\beta\) means that the importance of radical nationalists’ support to the head of government is low. When all other parameters are fixed, proposal is acceptable if the head of government is able to neglect political influence of radical nationalists within the ruling party or the government.

Propositions 2, 3, and 4 show that the value of \(\alpha\) and \(\beta\) are crucial to policy outcomes. Here, I argue that the values of [alpha] and [beta] are affected by political regime type. In addition to democratic/authoritarian rule, the leadership group – who makes the most important political decisions – also influences whether and how ethnic interests are represented in the decision making bodies (Geddes et al., 2014a), and thus we may observe variations in language policies not only between democracies and dictatorships but also between different types of dictatorships. Following Cheibub et al. (2010) and Geddes et al. (2014a), I classify political regime into four categories: military, absolute monarchy, civilian dictatorship, and democracy.

Military governments tend to recognize a minority language at the least level than other types of political regime since its value of \(\alpha\) is low while \(\beta\) is high. In the 1970s, scholars found that some characteristics of the military heavily shape officers’ preference on ethnic policies. First, military officers tend to highly value national loyalties and integration (Nordlinger, 1977: 42). For military governments, political order is a top priority, and therefore if the ethnic divisions within the country are a threat to national integration, they will try to eliminate it. Second, the officer corps is usually not representative of the ethnic structure in the society. Instead, it is common that officers are from a certain communal group, and hence when they take control of the government, their “nationalization” policy is to impose their group’s value on the other ethnic groups – that is, military officers still maximize interests of their own people (ibid.). Third, when facing controversies, military officers prefer coercion to compromise and bargaining because “[to military officers,] conciliatory behavior is generally seen as less than honorable and is interpreted as a sign of weakness, a lack of resolve, and a failure of nerve (ibid.: 154).”

Although the military may prefer an assimilationist nation-building strategy, it is the institutional design of military regimes that transform this strategy into policies. In general, military officers come to political power via coups, and they tend to significantly weaken the legislature – if not outright abolish it. There may be reserved seats for the military (e.g. Indonesia under Suharto’s rule). Even if legislation is done by the national assembly, the military still effectively controls the decision-making process (Cheibub et al., 2010). Furthermore, military regimes either prohibit or severely control general elections (e.g. the military government, the State Peace and Development Council, of Myanmar, 1988-2011). These institutional designs make a military dictatorship highly autonomous from civil society (low \(\alpha\)). In general, military junta is the core decision making body in institutionalized military regime, and military dictators face the allies’ rebellion issue (Svolik, 2012) – they usually need to cooperate with and make
credible commitments to other junta members (Geddes et al., 2014b). Even if a military dictator him/herself is not a radical nationalist, it is difficult for him/her to make concessions to a minority group when there are other radical nationalist junta members (high $\beta$). As such, military dictators (H) and their partners from dominated linguistic groups (P) have few incentives to please minority groups (low $\alpha$) and irritate their nationalist allies from the military junta (high $\beta$). As a result, a military government is highly likely to make assimilationist policies based on the ruler’s and allies’ preferences. In sum, ethnic policy is usually geared to the interests of the dominant group under the military rule.

Sudan is an example of how military interference in politics leads to prohibition of minority language usage. When Sudan became independent in 1956, ethnic tensions rose quickly. The majority group comprised of light-skinned Muslims living in the north (70 percent of the population) and speaking Arabic. The minority groups were dark-skinned southerners; they were Christians or followers of traditional African religions and spoke various indigenous African languages (most of them belonging to the Nilo-Saharan language family). In 1958, when General Abboud established a military government, he adopted radical assimilationist policies. The government closed Christian schools, built institutes of Islamic education, and even appointed Arabic as the single language of education and administration in the south (Nordlinger, 1977: 156).

In comparison, the value of $\alpha$ is high while $\beta$ is low in democracies, and they tend to have the highest degree of de jure recognition. In democracies, political succession is decided by free and competitive elections (Dahl, 1971) and legislators have de facto legislative power.9 Therefore not only is the cost of political participation for minority groups lower than in authoritarian regimes, but the political leader also has stronger incentive to recognize minority groups to obtain electoral benefits (Liu, 2016). A linguistic minority group can organize as interest groups or political parties to exert its influence on decision making (Liu et al., 2016). And when a minority group can bring significant electoral benefits to the ruling party’s minority partner (high $\alpha$),10 we see higher levels of language recognition. In Texas, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which was formed in Corpus Christi in 1929, played an important role in fighting for Mexican-American’s educational and judicial rights in the 1950s by lobbying the Texas Legislature (Newell et al., 2013: 98).

In addition, it is difficult for radical nationalists to enjoy the same political influence in democratic governments as they do in military governments. Compared to dictatorships, democratic government is more likely to promote power-sharing between majority and minority groups. In Mauritius, there were two ethnic parties, the Parti Mauricien (PM) and the All Mauritius Hindu Congress (AMHC), originally holding racial racist assertions in 1965, but the majoritarian electoral rule pushed them to form multiethnic coalitions in the following election. To this end, the PM leader even prohibited any discourse in the party that hinders inter-ethnic

9 Checks and balances is one criterion adopted by the Freedom House and the Polity IV project to evaluate the degree of democratic rule in a country. With regard to the concept of separation of powers, see David Held’s discussion in his book Models of Democracy (2006).
10 Behavior of voting for co-ethnic candidates has been verified by Posner (2007) and Chandra (2004).
coordination (Selway, 2015: 167). In some democracies, formal rules force cabinet to be multiethnic (Lijphart, 2004). Even without such formal rules, ethnic parties are able to achieve an equilibrium in which they can coordinate a centrist strategy in democracies (Chandra, 2005). As a result, radical nationalist opinion is likely to be marginalized in the core decision making body in democracies (low β).

The value of α and β are low in absolute monarchies and their level of de jure minority language recognition can range from moderate to high. For minority political elites, getting promotion or not depends much more on supervisor’s appreciation than their popularity among their co-ethnics. During the Qing Empire, a linguistic minority – Zhuang, the largest minority group in China – political elite, Cen Yuying, had served as two provincial governors, one regional viceroy, and the Ministry of War before his death in 1889. He was promoted to be the provincial and regional chief executive because of his great performance at his government official work. Therefore, compared to minority elites in democracies where they need political support from their co-ethnics to enhance their bargaining power, minority elites in absolute monarchies have lower incentives to please their co-ethnics (low α).

Like military regime, absolute monarchies have relatively closed decision making body. The royal family and kin members play a direct role of governance and political succession (Cheibub et al., 2010). However, compared to military regime, it is more difficult for radical nationalists to exert their influence on the monarch (low or moderate β). In general, when military officers initiate a coup or grasp ruling power, they usually claim that a state of emergency is needed to cope with internal disorder or external enemy (Geddes, 2003), thus national integrity and assimilation sound to be attractive. However, nationalism is not necessarily the top priority for absolute monarchs. For many traditional monarchs, how to deal with rapid social and economic change is the key problem (Huntington, 1966). Historical evidences show that ruling monarchs were not zealous to eliminate a minority language – at least gradually. In the 19th century the Habsburg Monarchy governed a great part of Central Europe. Within the Austrian Empire, German had been the socially-dominant language, and many Austrian elites advocated appointing German as the single official language. However, the Habsburg Monarchy still allowed for the use of one minority language, Czech, in government offices and courts in the Bohemia region (Komlosy, 2015: 420).¹¹ In China, the Qing Empire was also ethnically and culturally diverse. In its early period of rule, it enforced multilingual policy in western regions because it "was intended to demonstrate the Empire's legitimate authority over the cultures and peoples of Inner Asia (Schluessel, 2014: 148)."

The last regime type is the civilian dictatorship. The effects of this regime type on minority language policy depends on whether the civilian dictator allows multi-party general elections. Electoral authoritarianism or competitive authoritarianism holds regular general elections and allows opposition parties, but the ruling party uses non-democratic ways to bias the political competition and manipulate the election results (Diamond, 2002; Greene, 2007; ¹¹ Notice that the Habsburg Monarchy also recognized Hungarian language because Hungarian was a powerful minority group; it was strong enough to force the monarch to build the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1867. In contrast, Czech was a weak minority group living in Bohemia – a peripheral province of the Austrian Empire.
Levitsky and Way, 2010). In electoral dictatorships, if the linguistic minority group has strong bargaining power, their language is likely to be recognized at a level on par with democracies. For the dictator, if the minority group can bring significant votes or financially contribute to their party, it is worth to establish patron-client relations with the minority group (high $\alpha$) and neglect radical nationalist’s influence (low $\beta$). However, if the civilian dictators monopolize political power and general elections do not exist or are highly biased, then they are less likely to highly recognize minority languages because they have neither royal family networks nor weapons. They need to use the patronage system to collaborate with other elites in the authoritarian ruling party (Cheibub et al., 2010). It enhances the bargaining power of radical nationalist elites in the ruling party (high $\beta$) and lower the incentives for minority ruling partners to support their co-ethnic oppositions when their patronage benefits are totally controlled by party leadership (low $\alpha$).

In conclusion, regime type affects the value of $\alpha$[alpha] and $\beta$[beta]. This in turn affects the process and outcome of language policy-making. The following table summarizes the relationship between regime type and level of de jure language recognition.

Table 3.1: The relationship between Political Regime and de jure Language Recognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regime Type</th>
<th>$\alpha$[alpha]</th>
<th>$\beta$[beta]</th>
<th>de jure Recognition level (R*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Monarchy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate to High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Dictatorship</td>
<td>Low to Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate to High</td>
<td>Low to Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Case Study: Ethnicity and Language in Taiwan**

In this section, I examine Taiwan’s language policy to verify my hypotheses. Following Ricks and Liu (2018), I use pieces of evidence to construct the causal process through which the explanatory event (political regime) preceding the outcome event causes the outcome (language policy) in Taiwan. Taiwan is an island located in the Western Pacific. Nowadays, there are four major “ethnic” groups in Taiwan: the indigenous (Austronesian people), Hoklo (also known as “Min-nan”), Hakka, and Mainlander. Such classification is based on the time the group arrived in Taiwan and the mother tongue they use (Liu, 2012). The indigenous have been living in Taiwan for more than five thousand years. Although each indigenous subgroup has its own mother tongue – they all belong to the Austronesian language family – people from different indigenous subgroups identify themselves as a whole “indigenous” group today. Hoklo people’s ancestors migrated from southern Fujian (mainland China) between the 17th and 19th century, and they speak the Hoklo language. Hakka people’s ancestors migrated from several Hakka-speaking areas in Fujian and Guangdong Province (mainland China) between the 17th and 19th century and they speak the Hakka language. Mainlanders are strictly those who came in 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party won the civil war. Note that despite the term “Mainlander” being
geographical, it is a temporal reference. The first generation of Mainlander’s native language is the local language of their hometown in China, but they used Mandarin Chinese as a lingua franca.

Today, the Austronesian languages, Hoklo, Hakka, and Mandarin Chinese are the four major native languages of Taiwanese. There are two main characteristics of language use in Taiwan. First, these four languages are not intelligible to each other – even though the Hoklo, Hakka, and Mandarin Chinese are classified into the Han Chinese language family. For example, the following sentence “I want to drink a cup of tea” is pronounced as “wo xiang yao he yi bei cha” in Mandarin Chinese and as “guá siūnn beh lim tsit pue tê” in Hoklo. Second, although Min-nan has been the most populous ethnic group since the 17th century, Hoklo has never been the politically dominant language. Before democratization in the 1990s, either Mandarin Chinese or Japanese was spoke by all political rulers of Taiwan and used as the medium of communication between Taiwanese people and government officials.

**Development of Regime Type in Taiwan**

Since the 17th century, Taiwan has experienced all major regime types. Between 1683 and 1936, it was under the rule of a couple different absolute monarchs; between 1937 and 1974, under a military dictatorship; between 1975 and 1995, under a civilian dictatorship; and since 1996, it has been a liberal democracy.

**Absolute Monarchy (1683-1936)**

The Qing Empire first governed western Taiwan in 1683 after it defeated the Kingdom of Tungning (1661-1683). It did not, however, expand its ruling power to eastern Taiwan, where the indigenous people were living, until the 1880s. The Qing Empire ceded Taiwan to the Imperial Japan in 1894 as a result of the First Sino-Japanese War. With the Chinese defeat, the sovereign authority of Taiwan was transferred from one ruling monarchy to another. Although the Constitution of the Empire of Japan (enacted in 1890) set up a parliamentary system, it reserved substantial ruling power for the emperor. Moreover, the cabinet and the prime minister were accountable to the emperor rather than to the parliament and the people. The governors of Taiwan enjoyed far-reaching powers – executive, legislative, and even judicial – but they were supervised by the government of Imperial Japan. Technically, the 1919 Taiwan Education Act was passed by the Privy Council – i.e., the advisory council to the emperor – rather than by the governor of Taiwan.

**Military Regime (1937-1974)**

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12 By this definition, even Han Chinese who came from the Min-nan or Hakka speaking area are classified as Mainlanders if they migrated to Taiwan in or after 1949. Mainlanders are not necessarily Han Chinese, few of them are Tibetan, Mongolian, or other minority ethnic group people.


14 The Governor of Taiwan was supervised by the Colonial Administration Department (1896-1897), the Prime Minister (1897-1929), The Ministry of Colonial Affairs (1929-1942), and the Minister of Home Affairs (1942-1945).
In 1936, Japanese politics changed greatly. After a failed coup in February 26\textsuperscript{th} (the February 26 Incident), military demanded that two cabinet positions – the Ministers of War and of the Navy – should be active officers, and the government agreed this request. This concession effectively gave the military veto power: their ministers could at any point resign to force a cabinet collapse if the prime minister held a position incongruent with that of the military. In January 1937, the military refused to provide Kazushige Ugaki – the newly appointed prime minister – with a Minister of War, and then Emperor Hirohito had no choice but to choose a different prime minister. This event shows that the military formally controlled the politics in 1937. Eventually, the military-controlled government initiated the Second Sino-Japanese War in July 1937, and both Taiwan and Mainland Japan were under rule of military governments until 1945.\textsuperscript{15}

After World War II, Taiwan fell under the rule of the Republic of China (ROC) – once again becoming the periphery to another regional power. At the beginning, the ROC maintained the political structure left by the Japanese colonial government to govern Taiwan. Things changed with the February 28 Incident in 1947. Due to the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), the National Assembly of ROC passed the Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion Provisional Act to empower President Chiang Kai-shek supreme executive power to fight against the Chinese Communist Party. Based on this law, the Chiang Kai-shek government enforced military rule in Taiwan and Mainland China before 1949.\textsuperscript{16}

The ROC government was defeated and moved to Taiwan in 1949. Between 1949 and 1974, Taiwan was still under military government’s rule (Svolik, 2012). The ruling party KMT (\textit{Kuomingtang}, literally meaning Chinese Nationalist Party) suspended all general elections for the central government and the parliament,\textsuperscript{17} enforced martial law and the Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion Provisional Act, and established a quasi-Leninist authoritarian regime (Cheng, 1989). Also, Chiang Kai-shek was a generalissimo and obtained presidential power without general elections. Furthermore, between 1957 and 1972, 24% of high-ranking officials in the Taiwan Provincial Government were active military officers (Huang, 1994: 47). During this period, Mainlanders monopolize Taiwanese politics while people from other three ethnic groups concentrate on economic activities (Cheng, 1989: 482).

\textit{Civilian Dictatorship (1975-1995) and Democracy (1996-potential)}

\textsuperscript{15} Whether or not the Emperor Hirohito held both \textit{de jure} and \textit{de facto} power after 1936 is still on debate. John Whitehead, a former United Kingdom's ambassador to Japan, argued that the emperor were not able to prevent the Japanese military from initiating the war. See the article “Emperor Hirohito 'too weak' to stop Japan entering second world war, declassified documents show” posted on the South China Morning Post in July 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2017. (https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/east-asia/article/2103390/powerless-hirohito-opposed-japanese-involvement-second-world-war)

\textsuperscript{16} Many regime type indicators classify China between 1945 and 1949 as a military dictatorship (Svolik, 2012; Cheibub et al., 2010)

\textsuperscript{17} All members of three central level legislative bodies – National Assembly (an agency that elects the President and amends the Constitution), Legislative Yuan (an agency which makes laws), and Control Yuan (an investigatory agency which monitors the executive bodies) – elected in 1947 can serve until abolish of the Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion Provisional Act in 1991.
After Chiang Kai-shek’s death in 1975, Taiwan entered a period of civilian authoritarian rule (Svolik, 2012). Between 1975 and 1988, Chiang Ching-kuo (Chiang Kai-shek’s son) served as the political ruler. Although he substantially reduced the proportion of active officers to high-ranking ROC government officials by recruiting more members from the other three ethnic groups into the government (Hsu, 2014: 52) and held regular supplementary elections for the central level legislative bodies, he still maintained the centralized and quasi-Leninist authoritarian rule and suppressed political oppositions. Re-election of national representative bodies was still suspended. However, facing increasing pressure from democratic movements within Taiwan and from the U.S. government, Chiang Ching-kuo eventually lifted martial law in 1987.

Taiwan was gradually democratizing from a dictatorship to a democracy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Chiang Ching-kuo’s successor Lee Teng-hui subsequently lifted the Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion Provisional Act in 1991 – the end of 40 year long state of emergency that aimed to consolidate KMT’s rule (Chu and Lin, 2001). Taiwan hold its first legislative re-election in 1992 – the end of First Legislative Yuan (1948-1991) – and its first direct presidential election in 1996.

Since the 1996 presidential election, Taiwan has been a liberal democracy. Multi-party general elections are competitive and civil liberties are protected. Nowadays, Taiwan has been perceived as a consolidated democracy that enjoys high quality of governance (Diamond, 2012).

**Regime Type and Language Policy in Taiwan**

This section introduces the language policies under rule of each regime in Taiwan’s history. The major goal of this section is to construct the timeline on which regime change occurred before changes in language policy (Ricks and Liu, 2018).

**Absolute Monarchy (Qing 1683-1894; Japan 1895-1936)**

The official languages of the Qing Empire were Mandarin Chinese and Manchu, while Imperial Japan used standardized Japanese as its official language. None of these languages is mutually intelligible with the major native languages spoken in Taiwan – thereby posing great challenges to many state officials. Often, these state officials had to rely on translators to communicate with the local Taiwanese. This was common throughout the whole Qing Empire period and the first three decades of Japanese colonial period since most Taiwanese did not learn the official languages in schools.

There are many differences in political, economic and social policies between the Qing’s and Japan’s rule in Taiwan, but their language policies (before 1919) share the same characteristic: they allowed the Taiwanese mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools. The Qing emperors are ethnic Manchus – one of the minority groups in China today. During their rule, they never recognized a southern Chinese language as an official language.

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18 Geddes (2003: 72) argues that in Taiwan before 2000, the ruling party faced few limitations on its power that can quickly and easily restore political repression. However, viewed from an institutional design standpoint – and with perhaps some ex post knowledge – since 1996 all Taiwanese presidents have assumed power via competitive general elections. Moreover, Taiwanese citizens have enjoyed high levels civil liberties.
Among the eight Qing emperors who also ruled over Taiwan, only one (Emperor Yongzheng) made it a policy to promote Mandarin use in southern China (1728). This policy sought to establish four Academies for Correct Pronunciation\(^\text{19}\) (to teach students how to pronounce “correctly”) in Taiwan – where the medium of instruction would be Mandarin. Emperor Yongzheng believed this policy would eliminate the language barrier between the north and the south. However, this policy – including the Academies for Correct Pronunciation – was subsequently abolished by his successor, Emperor Qianlong (1735-1796) (Lin, 2012). By the 19\(^{th}\) century, all schools – both private schools and state-owned Confucian schools – in Taiwan used mother tongues as the medium of instruction. In 1885, the first newspaper in Taiwan, Taiwan Prefecture City Church News, was published by a church located in southern Taiwan. This newspaper was printed in Romanized Hoklo language and not Mandarin Chinese.

The language-in-education policy changed slightly under Japanese colonial rule. In 1898, the Japanese government set up three types of public primary schools: elementary school (shogakko, teaching in Japanese), public school (kogakko, enforcing native Taiwanese-Japanese bilingual education), and public schools for Taiwanese indigenous children (banjin kogakko 1898-1922). However, the traditional private schools using mother tongue as the medium of instruction were still allowed until 1919. That year, the Taiwan Education Act formally abolished traditional private schools, and mother tongue education was downgraded into a language course in the public schools (Chen, 2009: 72; Wu, 2011:30). Regarding mass media, the most widely circulated newspaper in the island, Taiwan nichichinenpo, began publication in 1898. Between 1905 and 1911, there were two versions of the newspaper: one in Chinese and one in Japanese. But by 1911 (and through 1936), the newspaper was only published in Japanese with two pages in Chinese. The Japanese colonial government would also set up the first radio station, Taiwan Broadcasting Association (Taiwan Hoso Kyokai) in 1928. This radio station made two time-limited mother tongue programs for the Taiwanese audience (history stories and Taiwanese music).

In the 19\(^{th}\) century, the Qing Empire did not intervene in the languages used in schools and newspapers in Taiwan. The Imperial Japan enforced more assimilationist policies in the 1910s. However, these policies were gradual and more moderate than the following military rule period. For example, although the 1919 Taiwan Education Act abolished the traditional private schools, some of them still existed in 1930 (Huang, 1994: 90). As a result, Taiwanese were still fluent in their mother tongue and frequently used it in daily life up through the 1930s.

**Military Government (Japan 1937-1945; ROC 1946-1974)**

In 1937, when the Japanese military controlled the Tokyo government and started appointing active generals as governors of Taiwan again, the language policy changed greatly. The military government enforced radical assimilationist policies in Taiwan (kominka kyoiku, the movement aiming to make Taiwanese “Japanization”): all schools were prohibited from teaching Taiwanese mother tongues. In fact, Taiwanese students could not even converse in their mother tongues in

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\(^\text{19}\) Academies were a type of school in ancient China, Korea, and Japan. In Taiwan, most Academies were private-owned but supervised by the Qing government.
schools. The governor also ordered the state-owned newspaper, *Taiwan nichichi shinpo*, to stop printing in Chinese. The two mother tongue programs on the radio station were also rendered effectively extinct.

After World War II, the KMT government replaced the Japanese colonial government, but it continued enforcing the assimilationist policies. From 1946 through the 1950s, the government encouraged – but did not force – radio stations to use Mandarin as much as possible. School teachers were allowed to teach in Taiwanese mother tongue to help native Taiwanese student understand textbooks before 1956. However, these seemed moderate assimilative policies indeed violated linguistic rights of native Taiwanese. The government’s language policy during this period focused more on the total prohibition of using Japanese and on the promotion of learning Mandarin than the elimination of Taiwanese mother tongue. Thus the KMT government banned and destroyed all publications in Japanese in 1946, and this is destructive to most young Taiwanese who could not read Chinese words and used Japanese to learn knowledge and compose (Huange, 1994; Chou, 1995).

In the 1960s, we see more restrictive monolingual policies. In 1963, the government adopted the first legal restriction on language use in mass media. The Regulations to Guide Broadcast and TV Station Programs reduced the proportion of Taiwanese mother tongue program to less than 50 percent. In 1966, the government passed the Plan for Further Enhancement of Using National Language. This new regulation empowered schools to punish students for speaking “dialects” on campus (Chen, 2009).

Both the Japanese and ROC military governments adopted highly repressive policies to force the Taiwanese people to only use the official language (Japanese and Mandarin Chinese, respectively) in their daily lives. To this end, both military governments humiliated the Taiwanese mother tongue by claiming that “native Taiwanese languages are inferior to Mandarin Chinese (Huang, 1994: 366)”, “speaking native Taiwanese language is shameful” or “a patriot should always speak the national language (Chen, 2009)”.

*Civilian Authoritarianism (ROC 1975-1995)*

As the theory predicts, between the death of Chiang Kai-shek in 1974 and the first direct presidential election in 1996, the twenty-year-long period of civilian authoritarian rule (under the KMT) had the greatest variation in language recognition level. In 1976, the Radio and Television Law further restricted the portion of mother tongue programming to 30 percent. This regulation pushed Taiwanese mother tongue to the highest degree of restriction since 1946. However, radical nationalist elites within the KMT were still not satisfied with the progress of Mandarin-only policy, thus the Ministry of Education drafted the Language and Word Act in 1985 (Chen, 2009). This act further transformed Taiwan into a monolingual society. It required all meetings, speeches in public spaces, and commercial advertisements to exclusively use Mandarin Chinese.

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20 Between 1911 and 1945 the ROC government made effort to standardize the Mandarin Chinese. See Tsao (1999) for introducing the process of standardizing Mandarin Chinese to make it the national language. Therefore the Mandarin today sounds slightly different from the Mandarin used in Qing’s period.

21 Hoklo, Hakka, and Austronesians were viewed as dialect
Eventually this act was withdrew due to strong opposition from the civil society (Huang 1994: 55-56), and the KMT authoritarian government stopped proposing any radical monolingual policy.

The abolishment of martial law in 1987 signaled an increasing political liberalization in Taiwan. Hakka people initiated the “Return My Mother Tongue” protest in 1988. Because the prohibition of organizing new political parties had been lifted, the 1989 local election would be Taiwan’s first multiparty competitive election. The largest opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), won the mayoral election in six counties. Several DPP mayors used executive orders to prohibit teachers from punishing students from speaking their mother tongue in schools and to restore mother tongue classes in schools. Since these mother tongue classes were after-school programs – as opposed to formal courses included in the national education curriculum – local governments had the authority to decide whether schools would offer such courses. The central government did not agree to include mother tongue class in formal courses (Huang, 1994: 60), but the Minister of Education did not compel these local governments to cease these programs as well.

The central government further abolished the restriction of language use in broadcast and formally included mother tongue classes into the national education in 1993 – one year after the first general re-election for central-level legislators. Although mother tongue class was optional, this marked the first time since 1937 that it would be offered formally. In 1995, the government permitted a private-owned radio station using mostly a mother tongue in their programs to operate.22

Democracy (ROC 1996- )

Taiwan has been a stable democracy since 1996. Between 1996 and 2000, there were more scholars, language specialists, and passionate mother tongue speakers participating in mother tongue education and broadcasting during this period. The Education Act For Indigenous Peoples was passed in 1998. This act requires the government to preserve indigenous culture and promote indigenous education. In 2000, the Ministry of Education announced that mother tongue class would be upgraded from an optional course to a required course. After the first ruling party turnover in May 2000, the DPP government set up the Hakka Television Station in 2003. This is the first public-owned broadcasting station using Hakka in all programs. Another public-owned media platform, the Taiwan Indigenous Television, was launched in 2005 based on requirement of the Education Act For Indigenous Peoples.

Even after the KMT retook the presidency in 2008, the multilingual policy principle remained largely unchanged. President Ma Ying-jeou (2008-2016), a mainlander whose mother tongue is Mandarin, appointed many mainlander elites as cabinet ministers. In 2019, the National Language Development Act, which was rejected in 2007, was passed. According to this law, all

22 It is the GreenPeace Broadcasting Station, on which almost all the programs are using Hokkien-Taiwanese. In fact, there were many illegal radio stations using mother tongue in their programs after 1987, but they were banned when the government found them. For example, the Formosa Hakka Radio Station (mostly using Hakka) started broadcasting in 1994, but it was not recognized by the government and banned frequently, and it was finally legalized in 1997.
the four major languages would be listed as the official languages and enjoy equal status in Taiwan.

**Causality: How Regime Change Matters?**

To analyze the relationship between the recognition level of mother tongues and regime type in Taiwan, I code the major types of language policy and show how Taiwan’s language policy changed over time. I then explain how changes to the political regime – which affects the value of $\alpha$ and $\beta$ - causes the changes in language policies.

The Qing Empire forced all Han Chinese to wear the Manchu queue[^23] but did not try to unify the diverse Han Chinese dialects. Such policy shows that what the Qing emperors wanted was obedience rather than cultural assimilation.[^24] For those Hoklo and Hakka officials (i.e., minority partners), their official career depended on the monarch’s – and not the people’s – approval. And thus, they did not have strong incentives to cooperate with their co-ethnics – e.g., the Hoklo and Hakka people who wanted mother tongue education (low $\alpha$). However, the Qing emperor (i.e., the head of government) also had weak incentives to reject the minority opposition’s demands to set up schools in their own languages. This is because they did not have to please Chinese nationalists in order to keep their ruling power (low $\beta$).[^25] As a result, except for the Emperor Yongzheng’s partial and short-lived monolingual education policy, language policy towards Taiwanese during this period was laissez-faire.

Under the Imperial Japan’s colonial rule, native Taiwanese people never enjoyed the same social and political status as ethnic Japanese people. However, a few Taiwanese were recruited into the colonial government to serve as consultants. One of them, Koo Hsien-jung, was appointed by Emperor Hirohito to be a member of the House of Peers. These Taiwanese consultants – i.e., minority partners – had no strong incentive to fight against the government given that they benefited much more from the political resources allocated from the emperor – i.e., the head of government – than the political support from the ordinary Taiwanese (low $\alpha$). In Mainland Japan, civilian elites and different military factions competed for the emperor’s trust. Radical nationalists were influential but not powerful enough to monopolize decision-making (moderate $\beta$). As a result, although the Japanese government had decided to enforce assimilationist policies in Taiwan in the 1900s, the Taiwan Education Act (1919) was relatively moderate: abolish traditional Chinese schools but keep mother tongue classes in public schools.

The formal game was played in the 1920s. The most significant minority opposition organization, Taiwanese Cultural Association (TCA), proposed higher level of Hoklo recognition. These native Taiwanese elites asked the Japanese government to 1) restore mother tongue classes as required course and 2) enhance the quality of mother tongue classes (Huang, 1994: 93). The head of Japanese government clearly rejected their requests, and none of his Taiwanese ruling partners supported the TCA’s request (because of low $\alpha$). Without support

[^23]: A specific hair style that “hair on top of the scalp is grown long and is often braided, while the front portion of the head is shaved.” (the article “Queue (hairstyle)” on Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queue_(hairstyle)

[^24]: The Qing government used the hairstyle to judge whether a Han Chinese male obeyed its rule.

[^25]: Chinese nationalists did not possess strong bargaining power in the imperial palace until the 20th century.
from co-ethnic ruling elites, leadership of the TCA chose to comply the government’s rejection. The outcome of this game is \{comply, reject, for\}. However, on one hand the Japanese government gradually downgraded the status of mother tongue classes in public schools (from required course to optional class in 1922), on the other hand it did not close all private schools using Hoklo as the medium of instruction through the 1920s.

Things changed after 1936: no moderate civilian elites were able to influence policy making, and all cabinet positions were controlled by radical nationalist military officers. Under such conditions, \(\alpha\) (alpha) was still low – Taiwanese people hardly possessed any political influence – but \(\beta\) (beta) became extremely large, and thus not only native Taiwanese languages but also all minority languages in Japan (i.e. Ryukyan and Ainu) were severely prohibited in public and even private places in 1937. This situation did not change when the KMT ruled Taiwan in 1946. Few native Taiwanese elites were recruited into the government because most native Taiwanese elites could not speak Mandarin. Before 1990, radical Chinese nationalists were powerful in the government and legislative bodies (high \(\beta\) ). For example, the Taiwan Provincial Government claimed that “Dialectal diversity is harmful to spiritual unity of a nation and symbolizes a backward nation” in their report in 1971 (Chen, 2009: 143). One Mainlander legislator argued that speaking dialect (all native Taiwanese languages) will divide our country (ibid.: 109). Because general elections for central level officials and legislators were suspended, Hoklo, Hakka, and indigenous elites in the KMT – i.e., the minority partners – had no incentive to stand with their ethnic cohorts in demanding for multilingualism (low \(\alpha\)).

The critical factor that pushed the government to give up the monolingual policy is reorganization of legislature in the early 1990s rather than political liberalization in the late 1980s. When martial law was lifted in 1987, many opposition legislators and provincial legislators – i.e., minority opposition – demanded for multilingual education and media policies. In 1988, a large scale of “Return My Hakka Language” protest occurred in Taipei. These proposals were rejected by the government. Although there were regular supplementary elections – a regular occurrence since the 1970s – the bargaining power of the native Taiwanese elites was not comparable to Mainlander elites. Mainlander legislators who were elected in Great China in 1948 still occupied a majority of seats by 1990. Even though political liberalization protected the opposition’s rights to express opinions and organize collective actions, language policies did not change (low \(\alpha\) and high \(\beta\)).

The KMT government greatly changed its assimilationist policy beginning in 1992 - the year of complete re-election of national legislature and end of first legislative yuan session (1948-1991). On decision making, the KMT government had to count on its Hoklo, Hakka, and indigenous ruling partners – they spoke their mother tongue and, more importantly, they were able to mobilize their co-ethnics’ vote – given that radical Chinese nationalists could no longer control the national legislature. An increase of minority voter’s influence (\(\alpha\)) and a decrease of radical nationalist’s influence (\(\beta\)) led to two results. The first is that many Mainlander politicians started to speak Hoklo or Hakka in election campaigns. Ironically, some of these politicians had previously called for and enforced assimilationist policies. The second results was that as more Hoklo, Hakka, and indigenous politicians within the KMT – i.e., minority partner – started
holding preferences congruent with their co-ethnics in opposition (minority opposition), it forced the KMT – i.e., the head of government – to accept minority opposition’s proposal in the formal game. Therefore we observe the restrictions on the proportion of mother tongue programming were lifted and the Ministry of Education added optional mother tongue classes to the elementary school curriculum in 1993. From this moment all Taiwanese native languages were recognized by the ROC government. New institutional designs made it difficult for radical Chinese nationalist elites to monopolize political power; it also provided opposition voters advocating for multilingualism a better opportunity to exert their influence on policy making.

Alternative Explanations

There are several alternative arguments may also explain the change of language policy in Taiwan. First, it is possible that regime type is changed in order to resolve ethnic and linguistic issues, therefore language policy is not exogenous to political development. This is not true. The Japanese military controlled the politics in 1937 to enforce their expansionist strategy while the ROC government established military rule after 1945 due to the Second Chinese Civil War. Regarding democratization in Taiwan, it cannot be denied that ethnic cleavage between mainlanders and other ethnic groups was a major issue at the beginning of democratic movement. However, Cheng (1989: 498-99) indicates that after the KMT recruited more native Taiwanese in the 1980s, ethnic issue did not monopolize the democratization process. Multiple social cleavages (e.g. social class and environmental protection) and interests were involved in the bargaining process between oppositions and the KMT.

Second, economic development may matters because multilingual policy can be more affordable to a rich state than a poor state, and there seems to be a positive relationship between GDP per capita and language recognition level since 1951 in Taiwan. However, this argument has two weaknesses. First, during Japanese colonial period, when economy in Taiwan was getting better, the level of recognizing native Taiwanese languages was decreasing. Second, many scholars have pointed out that economic development provides a environment in which middle-class people, intellectuals, and capitalists thrive and become democratic forces to promote democratization (Lipset, 1972; Rustow, 1970; Cheng, 1989). Thus even if there is correlation between economic growth and language policy, their relationship should be indirect.

Third, pre-modern emperors might not know the idea of nationalism and realize how language policy can affect nation building because the concept of “nation state” originated in Europe and Chinese nationalism was not widespread among Han Chinese elites until the late 19th century. This is not true as well. In the 17th century, the Qing emperors required Manchu children to learn Manchu language in order to keep their own ethnic identity; they even made rules that Manchu people who could not speak Manchu language were not qualified for official positions. This fact shows that Qing emperors might not know the term “nationalism” but clearly knew that language education is crucial to consolidate connections of an ethnic group.

Conclusion

In this paper, I combine formal analysis and process tracing to examine how political regimes affect language policy making. The formal model considers the impact of language ideology by
including the influence of radical nationalists and theorizes the interactions between political actors in a specific political context—i.e., a political regime. Taiwan demonstrates how political regime affects decides the weight value of dominated group people’s support ($\alpha$) and radical nationalist’s support ($\beta$), and how $\alpha$ and $\beta$ further decide political actor’s strategy and policy outcome.

Beyond the findings in this paper, several questions are yet to be answered: are the findings in this paper also applied to other countries and regions? What is Taiwanese citizen’s attitude toward monolingual and multilingual policy today? Does Taiwanese voter’s position on language policy affect their vote behavior? Nowadays there are some private kindergartens using Hoklo as the medium of instruction in Taiwan, will there be requests for public formal schools using Hoklo as the medium of instruction in the future? We still need further researches on language policy.

**Proof**

To make this section easier to read, I use “M” to denote the minority opposition, “H” to denote the head of government, and “P” to denote the minority partner of ruling elites.

**Proposition 1:**

When $C_M > \frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - 1 > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} - 1$, because $\frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - 1 - C_M < 0$ and $\frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} - 1 - C_M < 0$, M never contends when H rejects the proposal. Therefore P is always for H’s rejection because $A > 0$. Under this condition, H always reject M’s proposal because $\beta + Sp \geq \beta (1 - R) + Sp$.

**Proposition 2:**

When $\frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - 1 > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} - 1 > C_M$, because $\frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - 1 - C_M > 0$ and $\frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} - 1 - C_M > 0$, M always contends when H rejects the proposal.

(2-1) P is against H’s rejection when $\frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} \alpha - C_p > \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} A \rightarrow \alpha > (\frac{m_H \times A}{m_M + m_H} + C_p) \frac{m_M + m_H + m_p}{m_M + m_p}$. Under this condition, H accepts the proposal if $\beta (1 - R) + Sp > \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} \beta - C_H \rightarrow R^* < \left[\left(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p}\right) \beta + C_H + Sp\right] \beta$.

(2-2) P is for H’s rejection when $\frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} \alpha - C_p < \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} A \rightarrow \alpha < (\frac{m_H \times A}{m_M + m_H} + C_p) \frac{m_M + m_H + m_p}{m_M + m_p}$. Under this condition, H accepts the proposal if $\beta (1 - R) + Sp > \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} (\beta + Sp) - C_H \rightarrow R^* < \left[\left(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H}\right) (\beta + Sp) + C_H\right] \beta$. 
The \( R^* \) in (2-1) is greater than the \( R^* \) in (2-2) because \( 1 > \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} > 1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} \). To be specific, \( \left(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p}\right) \beta > \left(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H}\right) \beta \) and \( S_p > \left(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H}\right) S_p \). Therefore if P cooperates with M to fight against H, then the minority group can obtain more R.

**Proposition 3:**

When \( \frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} > C_M > \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} \), since \( \frac{m_M}{m_M + m_H} - C_M < 0 \) and \( \frac{m_M + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - C_M > 0 \), M chooses to contend if P is against H’s rejection and not to contend if P is for H’s rejection.

\[ (3-1) \text{ P is for H’s rejection when } A > \frac{m_M + m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} \alpha - C_p \rightarrow \alpha < (A + C_p) \frac{m_M + m_H + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p}. \]

Under this condition, H definitely rejects any proposal because \( 1 + S_p \geq 1 - R + S_p \).

\[ (3-2) \text{ P is against H’s rejection when } \alpha > \left(\frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H}\right) \frac{m_M + m_H + m_p}{m_M + m_H + m_p}. \text{ Under this condition, H accepts the proposal when } \beta (1 - R) + S_p > \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} \beta - C_H \rightarrow \]

\[ R^* < \left[\frac{(1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p}) \beta + C_H + S_p}{\beta}\right]. \]

**Proposition 4:**

When \( R > 1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} > 1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} \), the formula in (2-1) can be written as \( \beta < \frac{C_H + S_p}{R + \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H + m_p} - 1} \), and the formula in (2-2) can be written as \( \beta < \frac{C_H + (1 - \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H}) S_p}{R + \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} - 1} \); and the formula in (3-2) can be written as \( \beta < \frac{C_H + S_p}{R + \frac{m_H}{m_M + m_H} - 1} \).

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