Lecture 10 & 11: Speak More Mandarin and Less Dialects

Speak Mandarin Campaign (SMC)

Link

Link

THE STRAITS TIMES

English most common home language in Singapore, bilingualism also up: Government survey

MAR 10, 2016,

ENGLISH SPOKEN AT HOME

36.9 per cent of people who are aged five and older speak English most often at home.

(32.3 per cent in 2010)

Thus based on this, SMC is both effective and not effective

-ppl speak less dialects,
-but ppl speak more english

THE STRAITS TIMES

Singapore must guard against losing its bilingual edge: PM Lee

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at an event to mark the Speak Mandarin Campaign's 40th anniversary, with (from left) National Heritage Board chief executive Chang Hwee Nee, Senior Minister of State for Information and Culture, Community and Youth Sim Ann, Promote Mandarin Council chairman Chua Chim Kang and Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

PUBLISHED OCT 23, 2019, 5:00 AM SGT

Citing data from the Ministry of Education to illustrate how the language environment continues to change, PM Lee said 71 per cent of Chinese households with Primary 1 children speak mostly English at home today. The figure was 42 per cent two decades ago.

The trend is similar for the other major ethnic communities.

Among Malay families, the corresponding figures are 67 per cent (18 per cent) and, among Indians, 70 per cent (55 per cent).

The Prime Minister acknowledged the difficulties of using Mandarin at home in a predominantly English-speaking environment.

Language shift in Singapore

Chinese dialects

Main Target: English + Chinese
Reality: English

TODAY
SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2020

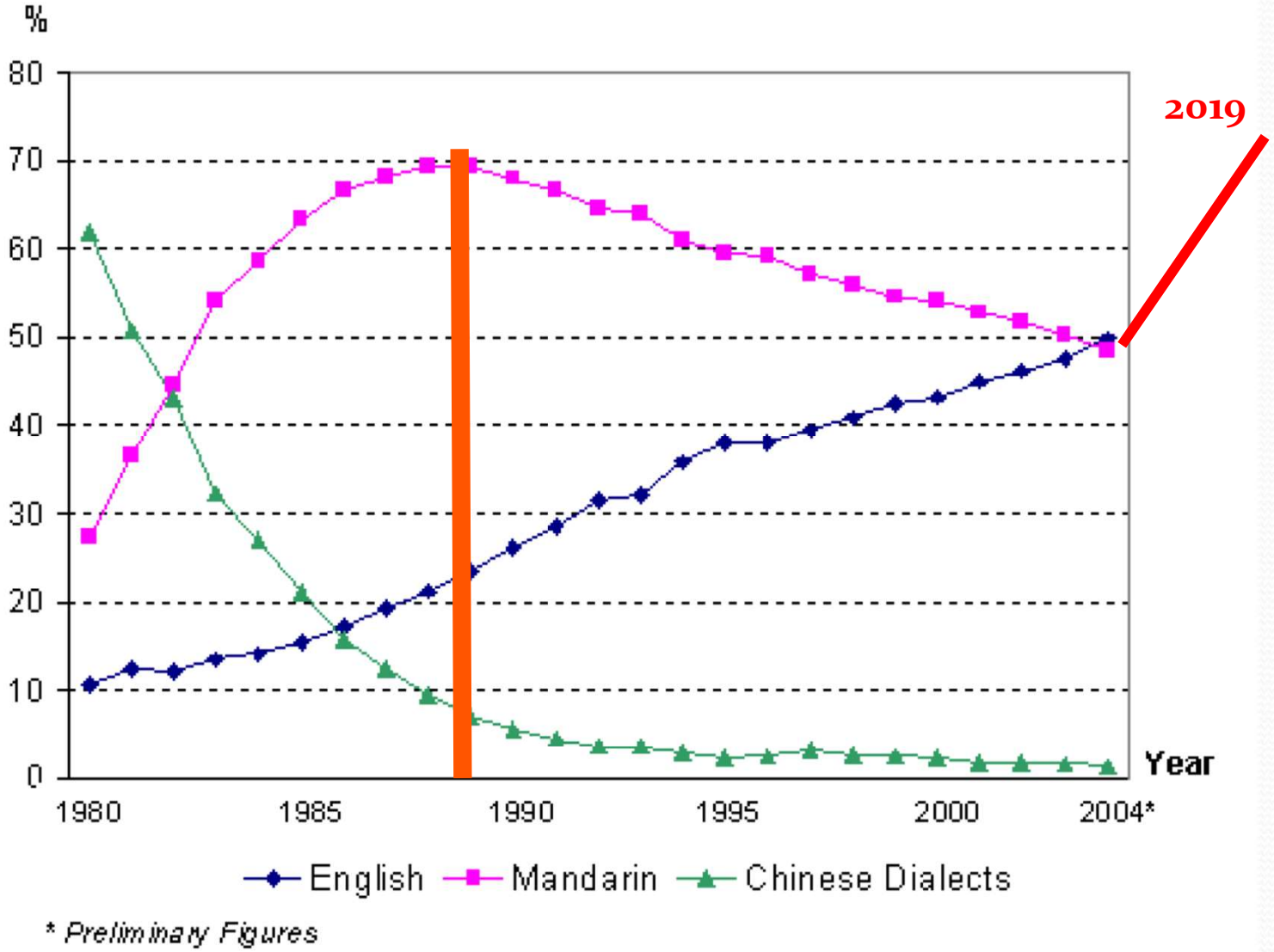
Speak Mandarin Campaign achieved 'good results' initially, but S'pore is losing bilingual edge: PM Lee

By JANICE LIM

Raj Nadarajan/TODAY

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the 40th anniversary celebration of the Speak Mandarin Campaign. Speaking in Mandarin, Mr Lee said that the Speak Mandarin Campaign "must adapt to this major shift".

Chart 1: Dominant Home Language of Chinese P1 Students: 1980 to 2004



Source: MOE Survey at Primary 1 registration

SEPT 7, 1979 (above): Mr Lee speaking at the opening of the Speak Mandarin Campaign at the Singapore Conference Hall. He made repeated pleas to Chinese parents to stop using dialects at home and to speak Mandarin to help lighten the learning load of their children. -- ST FILE PHOTO

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER

MR LEE KUAN YEW AT THE OPENING CEREMONY

OF THE "PROMOTE THE USE OF MANDARIN" CAMPAIGN

ON 7 SEP 79 AT SINGAPORE CONFERENCE HALL

Chinese Singaporeans face a dilemma. The Chinese we speak is divided up among more than twelve dialects. Children at home speak dialect; in school they learn English and Mandarin. After 20 years of bilingual schooling, we know that very few children can cope with two languages plus one dialect, certainly not much more than the 12% that make it to junior colleges. The majority have ended up speaking English and dialect.

Because Singapore is 25% non-Chinese, English will be the common language between different ethnic Singaporeans. And if we continue to use dialects, then English will tend to become the common language between Chinese of different dialect groups.

Eradication of Chinese dialects from the Singapore linguistic environment

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER

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It is frequent repetition, through constant use, that makes for easy immediate recall and fluency. It is the chicken and the egg. If our ancestors had come from northern China, most parents will be Mandarin-speaking. Then the few who do not will soon pick it up, just like everybody picks up Cantonese when they go to Hong Kong. All the same, we can create this Mandarin-speaking environment, if the majority of parents decide to lighten their children's learning load.

National Archives of Singapore

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National Archives of Singapore

Similar to Taiwan having a SMC:
After WW2, a long martial law era was held in Taiwan. Policies of the government in this era suppressed languages other than Mandarin in public use

Link

Measures taken

National Archives of Singapore

All government officers, including those in hospitals and clinics, and especially those in manning counters, will be instructed to speak Mandarin except to the old, those over sixty. All Chinese taxi-drivers, bus conductors, and hawkers, can and will be required to pass an oral Mandarin test, or to attend Mandarin classes to make them adequate and competent to understand and speak Mandarin to their customers.

The Straits Times 25 September 1979.

MANDARIN AT GOVT COUNTERS

'Aim is to encourage, not compel

ALL government ministries, departments and statutory boards have been told to man their counters with Mandarin-speaking staff — to persuade dialect-speaking Chinese Singaporeans to use Mandarin.

A recent circular from the head of the Civil Service, Mr Sim Kee Boon, to all permanent secretaries said such staff must try using Mandarin when dealing with the public wherever dialects have tended to be used.

So long as the other person understands Mandarin, they should persist with it — even if the response should be in dialect.

The Straits Times, 14 November 1979

Survey of Health Ministry officers' Mandarin ability

THE Health Ministry is now surveying the Mandarin-speaking ability of all Chinese officers in the ministry's departments.

These officers have been asked to fill in an Oral Mandarin survey form.

Besides particulars of the officer's Chinese studies at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, the form also asks how often the officer speaks in Mandarin to the Chinese public in the course of his or her work.

Other questions include: How often do you need to use Chinese dialects in your work? What are your main reasons for speaking in dialects instead of Mandarin?

For the last question above, the alternatives are (a) I cannot speak Mandarin (b) The public cannot understand Mandarin (c) The public speaks to me first in dialect so I answer in dialect (d) Other reasons.

The Straits Times 4 November 1979.

Tags for staff who deal with public

CIVIL servants who can speak Mandarin will now display the fact proudly, in yellow or white plastic tags declaring in Chinese characters: "I can speak Mandarin."

The Ministry of Culture has distributed 30,000 tags to all ministries and statutory boards to be worn by staff who come in contact with the public.

A Culture Ministry spokesman told the Sunday Times yesterday: "The aim is for the public to identify the Mandarin-speaking government official and thus have the initiative to start speaking the language instead of dialects."

The Police Force has introduced tag-wearing on Friday. Uniformed officers — like mobile policewoman Ang Lay Hong, who was spotted by cameraman Tan Suan Ann at Selegie Road warning would-be traffic offenders — will now have three badges — their name, number and the Mandarin tag.

The Straits Times, 3 October 1979

Mandarin oral test proposal welcomed

ALL of the 12 Chinese civil servants interviewed yesterday about the suggestion that they and their colleagues sit for an oral Mandarin test to qualify for promotion welcome it — but some cautioned against any form of compulsion.

These officials said that any drastic measures to force the use of Mandarin on the English-educated would result in further misunderstandings about the objectives of the present campaign to promote the wider use of Mandarin among Chinese Singaporeans.

Already, they said, some people had the impression that Mandarin was being upgraded with the aim of making it a dominant official language.

Promotion

Others felt there should be incentives to encourage the learning of Mandarin among the Chinese civil servants.

They were all commenting on a statement made on Sunday by the Parliamentary Secretary (Culture), Dr Ow Chin Hock, who said civil servants might be required to pass an oral test in Mandarin to qualify for promotion in three to five years.

A senior official, who like all others, declined to be named, did not mind sitting for an oral Mandarin test, but was against any drastic measures being used to coerce the English educated.

When conducting Mandarin classes to help civil servants learn basic and normal conversational Mandarin, the present weekly Mandarin By Radio programme should be used as a guide, he said.

'Penalised'

The younger ones in the service were educated bilingually and therefore, should have no difficulty at all, they said.

However, one Eurasian senior official said it was unfair to require all his Chinese colleagues to pass an oral Mandarin test to qualify for promotion.

What about the Straits-born Chinese officials who only speak English at work and at home? Are they going to be penalised for not being able to learn Mandarin?" he asked.

If the campaign is carried out to an extent that affects their career, many officials would leave the public service to join the private sector, where there was no such requirement, he said.

Some Chinese-educated officials said the use of Mandarin among all their Chinese colleagues would benefit all in the long run.

Those who could not speak it presently should be able to do so in simple conversations in three to five years if they began learning it now, he said.

The Straits Times,

Drive to discourage dialect speaking

6 July 1979

TWELVE schools have launched a campaign to discourage Chinese pupils from speaking dialects among themselves.

The aim of Speak Our School Languages Campaign is to promote the speaking of English and Mandarin in school.

A Ministry of Education statement said: "If dialect speaking is not reduced in schools, pupils will not learn to communicateeffectively in English and Mandarin. Mandarin, in particular, will suffer and could become no more than a subject in the school curriculum.

During recess and at other times, teachers and prefects will check pupils who speak dialects and remind them to speak English or Mandarin.

SINGAPORE MONITOR

Speak Mandarin drive to focus on hawker centres

26 April 1983

HAWKER centres, which are still strongholds of Chinese dialects, will be the main target of this year's Speak Mandarin Campaign, which will be launched in October.

Representatives from all food centres and markets will meet Culture Ministry officials at the Victoria Concert Hall on Thursday to prepare the groundwork for the campaign.

Mr Ho Kah Leong, chairman of the Mandarin Campaign Committee, and Parliamentary Secretary (Education), will address the meeting.

Mr Ho told The Singapore Monitor yesterday that the theme of this year's campaign will be "Speak Mandarin at Hawker Centres and Markets."

"We want the hawkers to organise themselves so that they can help to promote Mandarin effectively in these places. We also want to get their views on how this can be done," Mr Ho said.

The Mandarin Campaign Committee has decided to focus on hawkers this year because many still speak dialects with their customers.

Dr Ker found this could be because food centre hawkers did not speak Mandarin or English, and that customers were more familiar with the names of the food in dialects.

Because of these reasons, he said that it would take a long time to persuade people at hawker centres to stop speaking dialects.

The Government hopes that by the end of the decade all Chinese Singaporeans will speak Mandarin instead of dialects.

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew set a 10-year target for the complete use of Mandarin, together with English, among Chinese Singaporeans when he launched the first Speak Mandarin Campaign in 1979.

He also said then that by 1985, all young Chinese should be using Mandarin instead of dialects.

- The campaign's focus every year targeted one area of social interaction traditionally dominated by the use of dialects:
  - In 1979, civil servants who came in touch with the general public at workplaces and over counters;
  - in 1982, the focus was on Chinese workers;
  - in 1983, on promoting Mandarin in the markets and hawker centres;
  - in 1986 on using Mandarin in coffee shops and restaurants, and in the annual Chinese 'seventh-month auctions'.

changing the main areas for conversing to become Chinese instead of dialects

Link

The Straits Times 16 August 1979

Mandarin will not hurt our aims, say clan assns

This is the final point of no return. The last bastions for dialects are willing to give way, thus no one fight back against removing dialects

MOST leaders of clan associations here believe that their switch from dialects to Mandarin as a business language will not necessarily nullify the purpose of their existence.

As they see it, language is just a communication tool by which the business is conducted.

Many clan associations are already using a mix of Mandarin and dialects in their meetings — with younger members speaking Mandarin and the older ones dialects in which they are more fluent.

There is no communication gap whatsoever because the older generation can understand Mandarin, though much as they wish to, they cannot speak it. And the younger generation has no problem in understanding dialects.

The president of the Kiung Chow Hwee Kuan (the Hainanese clan), Mr Wee Tin Teck, said: "Clan associations can still serve their purpose, irrespective of the language used."

"There is still a sense of clan identity and belonging because, for instance, Mandarin-speaking Hainanese will still know which dialect group they belong to, he said.

Mr Wee was commenting on the fear expressed by some clan association leaders that the use of Mandarin in their associations would diminish the raison d'etre of these dialect-based groups.

The Straits Times 23 September 1979

Clan assns' call to Chinese civil servants: Use more Mandarin

LEADING Chinese organisations yesterday called on Chinese civil servants to use Mandarin as much as possible in their dealings with Chinese Singaporeans.

This suggestion was made by representatives of Chinese trade, clan and civic organisations at a meeting at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) auditorium.

It was one of three resolutions passed at the meeting, urging Chinese Singaporeans to regard as part of their responsibil-

Seven Chinese clan representatives who also spoke at the meeting all urged Chinese Singaporeans to learn to speak Mandarin and make it their common tongue for greater self-respect, stronger unity and the spreading of cultural values.

Although all the speeches were made in Mandarin — which revealed the clans the speakers were from through their distinctive dialect accents — the one voice of support was clear and unanimous.

Why is this significant?

For instance, most of the clan associations were formed by those Chinese communities coming from the same region from China. Its main objective was to strengthen relations among their folks by providing necessary services to its members. They naturally use their own dialects which gave the fundamental bond. However, from the standpoint of promoting Mandarin nation-wide, these clan associations were blocks of obstructions for the spread of Mandarin which had to be removed in order for the campaign to succeed. Therefore, the campaign authorities applied pressures to encourage these clan associations to use Mandarin instead of their own dialects when conducting meetings. So far, there are no in-depth studies on the kind of measures or pressure imposed on these clan groups at that time. We can imagine such measures must have faced much resistance from such dialect-based strongholds. Regardless, the campaign pushed on, eventually producing some results. According to research conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information, there have been changes in the use of language at the clan meetings over the years. The percentages of clan associations using dialects in meetings had decreased from 79% in 1979 to 24% in 1988; whereas the number of council meetings which continued using dialects had also decreased from 79% in 1979 to 18% in 1988, showing a clear improvement in the use of mandarin after ten years.[13] Apparently, it is far more common for the clan associations to speak in Mandarin today.

I am still a Teochew though I could not speak Teochew

Language and Identity

Culture and Identity

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shibboleth

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Shibboleth

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see Shibboleth (disambiguation).

A **shibboleth** (/ˈʃɪbəlɛθ, -ɪθ/ (listen))[1][2] is any custom or tradition, usually a choice of phrasing or even a single word, that distinguishes one group of people from another.[3][4][5] Shibboleths have been used throughout history in many societies as passwords, simple ways of self-identification, signaling loyalty and affinity, maintaining traditional segregation, or protecting from real or perceived threats.

A New Orleans resident challenges out-of-towners there to protest against the 2017 removal of the Robert E. Lee Monument. Their inability to pronounce "Tchoupitoulas Street" according to the local fashion would be a *shibboleth* marking them as outsiders.

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5 In art
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Eradication of Chinese dialects from the home environment

Students will hear and speak Mandarin in the streets, on the buses, in the shops, in the hawkers' centres. If, however, the majority of parents secretly believe they can have English-Mandarin plus dialect for their children, then administrative action will not be wholly successful, because administrative action cannot reach the home where dialects, already entrenched, will prevail.

The Straits Times, 18 September 1979

In two years, a full switch to Mandarin?

RTS is expected to have all its Chinese programmes in Mandarin within the next two years.

Cantonese TV series imported mainly from Hongkong and Taiwan will be dubbed while Singapore-produced dialect programmes will be phased out.

This is aimed at promoting the use of Mandarin here and to do away with dialects.

RTS' campaign to concentrate on Mandarin programmes was started more than a year ago. Even advertisements in dialects were discarded and remade or dubbed, and from July last year, only Mandarin advertisements were allowed over TV.

It is understood that while no time schedule has been set for the complete switch of dialect programmes to Mandarin, RTS expects to take about two years to do this.

Link

The Straits Times, 10 November 1979

Dialect video tapes face longer wait at Censors

Dialect video tapes face longer wait at Censors

Priority for Mandarin material

A DISINCENTIVE, possibly a longer wait before the Board of Censors preview them, faces video tape dealers who submit dialect material for approval.

Last month, they were advised by the Board to import less video tapes in dialect and more, including those of films, television dramas and documentaries, in Mandarin.

A letter dated Oct 13 and signed by the Board's chairman, Mr Chiou Chee Pern, said priority of censorship would be given to video tapes in Mandarin, to promote the use of the language.

This means that Mandarin video tapes will be viewed before dialect tapes.

It is also learnt that the Ministry of Culture is looking into the possibility of advising record dealers to cut imports of dialect records and cassette tapes.

The message to these video dealers is similar to that sent by the Board on Sept 13 to at least seven Chinese film distributors, among which are Chong Gay Theatres, Cathay Organisation, Shaw Organisation, Golden Star Berhad and Eng Wah Theatres Organisation.

Amendment

Among other things, they were asked to "take steps to ensure" that Chinese sub-titles "are written in accordance with Mandarin expressions."

Cantonese expressions like "ho yeh" (very good) and "mo tak teng" (superb) should be avoided.

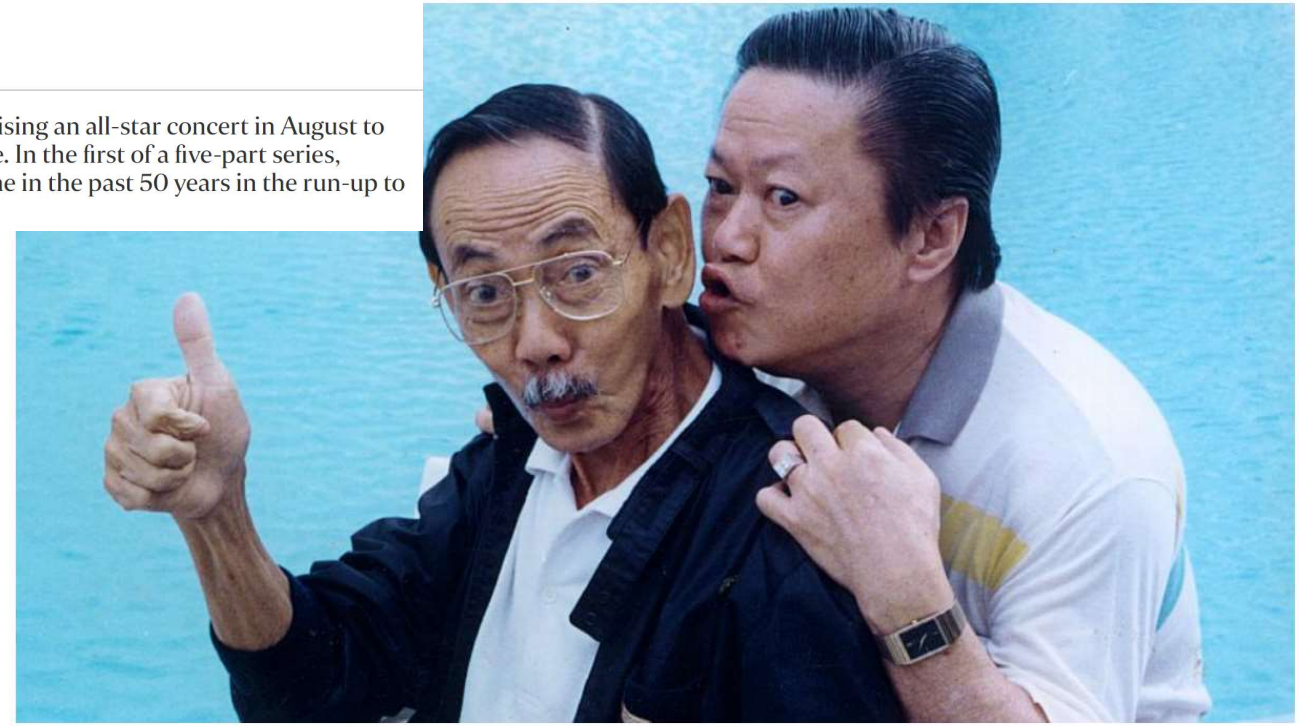
THE STRAITS TIMES

SING50

10 things to know about the 60s

PUBLISHED MAY 14, 2015, 12:01 PM SGT

The Straits Times and Business Times are organising an all-star concert in August to celebrate 50 years of popular music in Singapore. In the first of a five-part series, RACHEL CHAN looks at the entertainment scene in the past 50 years in the run-up to the concert



The iconic comedy double were said to be the Laurel and Hardy of the East and were among Singapore's first television stars.

They were talent spotted at a Teochew crosstalk show in New World Amusement Park and invited to host the weekly Chinese Variety Show on television launched in 1963. Wang Sha (also known as "Ah San" – Hokkien for skinny) and Ye Feng (also known as "Ah Pui" – Hokkien for fatty) incorporated dialects, pasar Malay and pidgin English into their skits and songs, pioneering a distinct brand of Singapore humour.

Not long after that, Wang Sa and
Ye Fong went their separate ways.

Link

Lunch With Sumiko

Lunch With Sumiko: Heng Swee Keat's steely resolve behind genial manner

Soft-spoken and polite, Heng Swee Keat comes with a solid CV and a wealth of experience

Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat in a cafe at Our Tampines Hub, Singapore's first integrated community and lifestyle destination. The Hub tapped residents' views to re-imagine how space can be used, with facilities grouped together to make them more convenient for users. It is an example of how innovation can improve lives, says Mr Heng. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

Sumiko Tan
Executive Editor

PUBLISHED MAY 13, 2018, 5:00 AM SGT

He's Teochew but speaks Hokkien more fluently. I ask him about rumours that his father was the late comedian Wang Sa of Ah Pui-Ah San fame. He smiles and says: "I'm very amused by that. Many people have asked me."

So is it true? "If they associate me with having some good humour, I don't mind. I'll take it with some good humour," is all he will say.

Rediffusion

- Rediffusion—Singapore's first commercial cable radio station—broadcasted multilingual programmes in English, Malay, and eight Chinese dialects. From the 1950s to the 1970s, it became an integral part of popular culture. By 1977, Rediffusion had garnered a staggering 90, 428 subscribers.

THE STRAITS TIMES

The Lives They Live

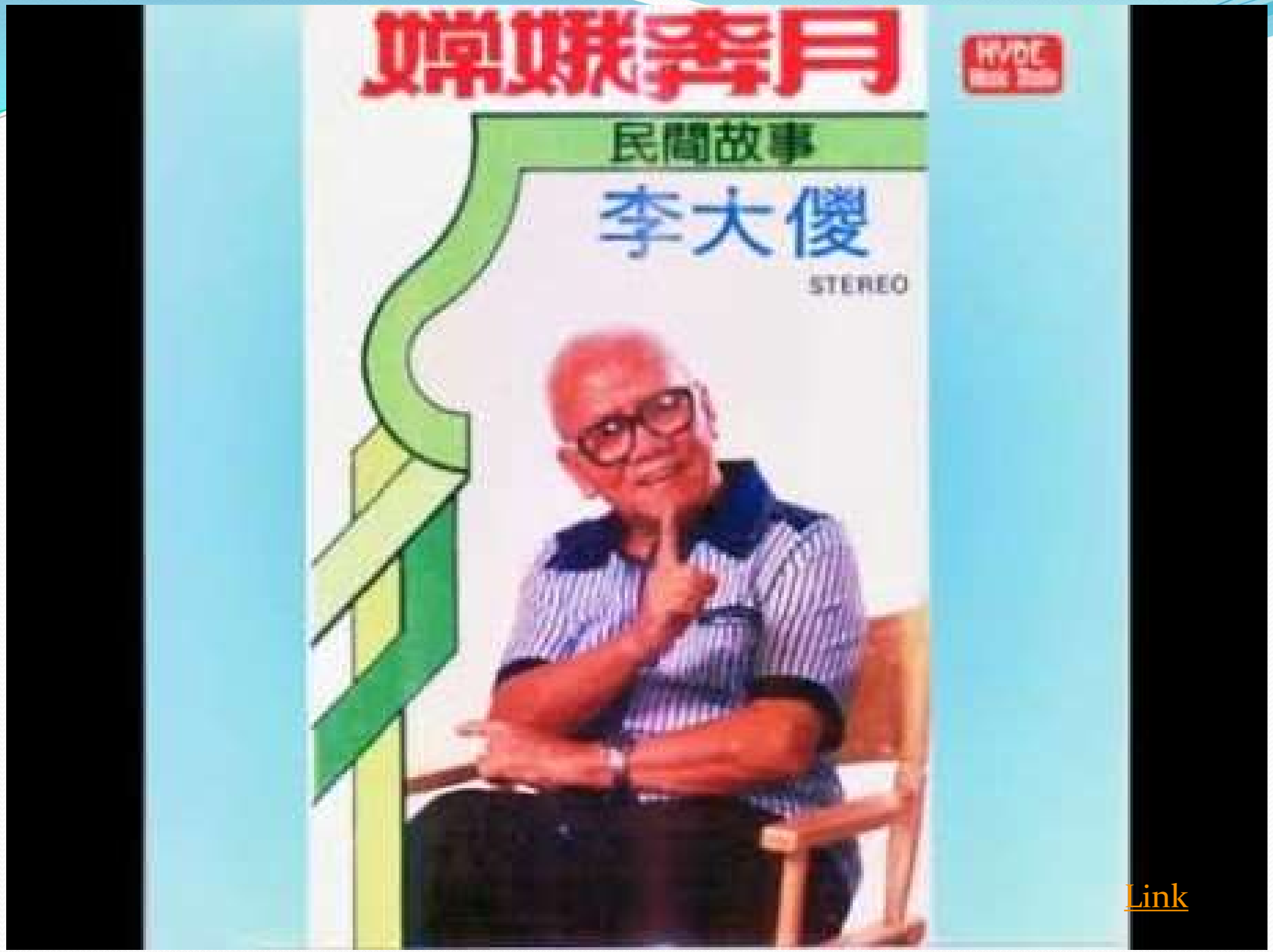
The Lives They Live: Blast from the past of Rediffusion's heyday

While the pioneer leaders were the original architects of Singapore, everyday heroes helped build society here. This is another story about such people in the series, The Lives They Live.

Rediffusion, Singapore's first cable-transmitted commercial radio station, started broadcasting in 1949, and reached its heyday in the 1960s and 1970s when Rediffusion sets were a common fixture in people's homes and coffee shops. Its offerings ranged from English pop songs to dialect dramas.

Singapore Cantonese Storyteller Lee Dai Soh

- Lee Dai Sor (1913–1989), or Lee Dai Soh, or Li Da Sha, was a renowned Cantonese storyteller. He was especially popular among radio listeners in the 1950s and '60s. Lee, together with Ng Yong Khern and Ong Toh, who performed in Teochew and Hokkien respectively, is regarded as one of Singapore's master storytellers.
- The launch of the Speak Mandarin Campaign in 1979 dealt a further blow to his career when Rediffusion and the local radio stations were made to cease all dialect programmes by the end of 1982.



Link

李春宗光
李貴宗光
福鴻宗光
偉洪宗光

Farewell to Rediffusion

3,021 views

The first time I became a Redifussion fan in 1960 when I was in Primary 5. I was then staying in Beo Lane at Bukit Ho Swee kampong.

My mother would stop whatever housework and I had to complete school homework before 9.00 pm to sit attentively on a stool beside the wooden partition of my next door neightbour. The Rediffusion was subscribed by my neighbour and kindly shared it with us free of charge. The radio was located nearest to our side of the wooden partition and the volume of the radio was turned on to its maximum.

When Ong Toh, the Hokkien storyteller started telling us the gungfu stories, the "Heroes of Condor" serial on Rediffusion, we were enthralled for an hour of each evening before we went to bed. My elderly neighbours, my mother and I were the only interested listeners.

My father and elder sisters were not Rediffusion fans.

After the Bukit Ho Swee fire, Rediffusion offered free subscription to the fire victims at the Jalan Bukit Ho Swee "emergency flats". My mother was entertained with the Hokkien programmes on Rediffusion from 6.00 in the morning and ended at midnight daily. The Rediffusion set was easy to use and does not require electricity supply.

To these Rediffusion dialect listeners in the kampong, we miss the storytellers. The storytellers of Cantonese, Lei Dai Soh, Ng Jia Keng in Teowchew and Ong Toh in Hokkien.

Before the days of TV and computers, Rediffusion had given a great service to keep us entertained with music and songs, comedian "talk show"; informed by daily news; learning about moral and knowledge from
the storytellers.

潮州兒歌

黃正經

fhlew

The Straits Times, 8 September 1979

LEE'S PLEA: USE MANDARIN

QUOTE

'NANTAH MPs meet in Parliament, speak in dialect.'

— the Prime Minister elaborating on the influence of dialects on everyday life.

Drop dialects, Chinese parents urged

MR LEE KUAN YEW made repeated pleas last night to Chinese parents to drop dialects at home and speak Mandarin to help lighten the learning load of their children.

Elaborating on the dominance of dialects, Mr Lee noted that even Nantah MPs, meeting in Parliament, spoke in dialects.

"So either we make the psychological breakthrough or we are wasting our time in the schools.

"Within five years, once parents have decided that they can't have both — and I think Singapore partners are rational and they will decide, for their children's interest, that they will suffer an inconvenience, and lessen the learning load of the children by dropping dialects — then we can have an immediate and dramatic change in the environment.

Were these measures sufficient to change the sociolinguistic environment in Singapore?

The Straits Times, 22 September 1984, Page 1

Mandarin: We press on, says PM

'Ties to dialects must be broken'

SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW
AT THE OPENING OF THE SPEAK MANDARIN CAMPAIGN
ON FRIDAY, 21 SEP 84, AT THE SINGAPORE CONFERENCE HALL

All the same, we do well to recognise that Chinese still have deep emotional ties to dialects. These emotions hinder our complete acceptance of Mandarin. When parents registered their children's names, between Aug 82 to Jul 84, one-fifth registered only their dialect names, a total rejection. Over one-third registered their dialect names, with full Pinyin in brackets, a concession to their identification with other Chinese of different dialects, a tentative and reluctant acceptance. Nearly one-quarter registered their surnames in dialect and their personal names in Pinyin, a partial acceptance, i.e. they will not give up their total identification with their fathers' and grandfathers' dialect surnames but are prepared to concede an identification with Chinese of other dialects through using Pinyin, a full acceptance (Annex I). On another plane, over one-third of Chinese parents registered additional Western or Christian personal names for their sons and daughters. Twenty years ago (1964),

National Archives of Singapore

- Regulations were also put in place concerning the written form of Chinese. Rather than using the Romanised spelling based on dialect pronunciation, all public sectors were required to switch to *HanyuPinyin*, the Romanised version for Mandarin. (Pinyin is based on Mandarin pronunciation and is different from the Romanised version of the dialect pronunciation of the same character.)

The Straits Times 10 December 1979.

Hon: Adopt Pinyin for names of children

THE Finance Minister, Mr Hon Sui Sen, yesterday urged Chinese Singaporeans to adopt the Hanyu Pinyin spelling for the names of their children.

He said that in the long term, it is better for Chinese Singaporeans to have Hanyu Pinyin names.

Mr Hon, who is MP for Havelock, was speaking to the press when he visited flats in Upper Cross Street as part of the Speak Mandarin campaign.

He noted that most of Chinese-educated and English-educated Chinese Singaporeans speak both English and Mandarin.

At the same time, he recognised the problems facing elderly people in learning Mandarin.

MP for Havelock (1970-1983)

PRIME MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MR HON SUI SEN
IN PARLIAMENT ON 20 DECEMBER 1983

Hon Sui Sen was a big man. It will not be easy to find another Finance Minister to repeat this delicate exercise in on-the-job training with the budget. It

The Straits Times

PINYIN NAMES

(IN PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY ONE CLASSES) NEXT YEAR

20 November 1980

CHINESE pupils in pre-primary and Primary One classes will be known in school by their Hanyu Pinyin names from next year, in a Ministry of Education move to take the Speak Mandarin drive one step further.

Within the next three to four years, all Chinese pupils from pre-primary to pre-university will be known in school by their Pinyin names.

Initially, both the pupil's Hanyu Pinyin and statutory names will appear in the class register but he will be called by his Pinyin name, the Director of Education, Mr Chan Kai Yau, said yesterday.

A child may be used to having his parents and friends calling him by his statutory name, which appears on his birth certificate.

But when he starts school, he will be given his "new" name and will be called by that.

Mr Chan said the ministry's decision is in line with the Speak Mandarin campaign and will also have the effect of standardising Chinese names so that it will be impossible to tell which dialect group a pupil belongs to by simply looking at his name.

The ministry hopes that the switch to Hanyu Pinyin names will be completed within three to four years.

The Straits Times

Decision on the use of Hanyu Pinyin names 'irreversible'

26 June 1982

THE decision to use Hanyu Pinyin for the names of all Chinese students in schools is irreversible, Parliamentary Secretary (Education) Ho Kah Leong said yesterday.

He said a survey showed that, to date, 87 per cent of the schools said their teachers call students by their Hanyu Pinyin names.

He urged schools which have not done so to organise crash courses or use video teaching materials to aid non-Chinese language teachers who need help in mastering names in Hanyu Pinyin.

The Straits Times

Going overboard with Hanyu Pinyu

7 June 1982

THE drive to promote the use of Mandarin as a standard medium of communication amongst the Chinese in Singapore is commendable.

However, the compulsory use of Hanyu Pinyu names in schools is a case of going overboard by the authorities.

What is Hanyu Pinyin? Hanyu means the language of the Han people, i.e. the Chinese race. Pinyin means phonetic transcription. Hanyu Pinyin was developed by the People's Republic of China decades ago.

It is based on the Roman alphabet and is used as a phonetic aid in the teaching of their common spoken language, Mandarin Chinese.

Foreign students of Mandarin Chinese are familiar with the Wade-Giles and Yale phonetic systems popularly used in the West.

The decision to adopt Hanyu Pinyin is appropriate but its application should be restricted to its specific purpose of a phonetic aid in the learning of the language and not as a romanisation of written Chinese.

Would the schools council comment on the "success" of the Hanyu Pinyin names conversion exercise? Comments from teachers that I have asked vary from "its causing confusion," "futile" to "just another of the ministry's wind that will get nowhere."

Much of our national heritage and culture are known by dialect names, such as *Ching Gay*, and *Chap Goh Mei* — are we to change all these? Names are personal and sentimental issues, not forgetting the legal aspect as well.

If it is leadership by example, then why don't Ministers and Members of Parliament adopt their Hanyu Pinyin names?

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Singapore 1440

The Straits Times

Why have ministers not pinyinised?

22 September 1984

CHINESE Singaporeans have been encouraged to speak Mandarin and not dialect. Today, school children use their Hanyu Pinyin names.

Some street/place names have also been pinyinised.

However, teachers do not use their Hanyu Pinyin names. Why is this the case?

My son has had his surname "Chua" pinyinised to "Cai". He is, however, surprised that he still has to call his teacher Mr Chua.

Similarly, although some ministers have in the past announced that they would be using their Hanyu Pinyin names, they have yet to do so. Why is this so?

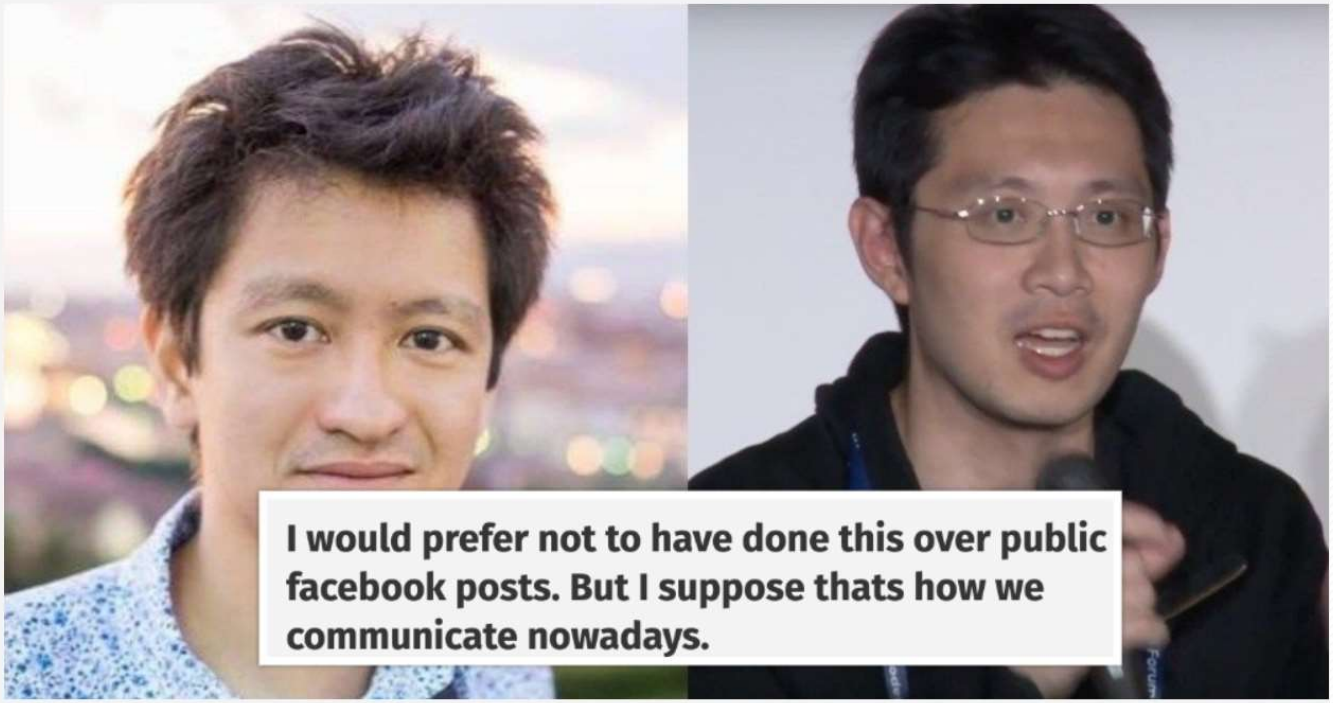
SPEAK MANDARIN
Singapore 0314

Li Hongyi asks Li Shengwu to leave him out of his issues with S'pore govt in public FB post

Shengwu posted within 30 mins of Hongyi's post.

Nyi Nyi Thet | January 23, 09:48 pm

397



Dialect names can appear first in school records from next year [A...

Page 1

The Straits Times, *14 December 1991* | Microfilm Reel NL17594

Dialect **names** can appear first in school records from next year K wan Chooi Tow Trend shows parents prefer children to keep dialect sur**names** By THE Education Ministry has decided to allow dialect **names**, instead of the **pinyin** version, to appear first m school records from next year. But pupils

Dialect names for pupils 'not a change in bilingual policy' [ARTICLE...

Page 3

The Straits Times, *15 December 1991* | Microfilm Reel NL17595

Dialect **names** for pupils 'not a change in bilingual policy' Govt has no plans to promote dialects: BG Yeo THE Education Ministry's decision to allow the use of dialect **names** m schools does not signal any change m the Government's bilingual policy. Minister for Information and the Arts George Yeo

Dialect names for pupils 'not a change in bilingual policy'

Govt has no plans to promote dialects: BG Yeo

THE Education Ministry's decision to allow the use of dialect names in schools does not signal any change in the Government's bilingual policy.

Minister for Information and the Arts George Yeo said yesterday there were no plans to promote dialects, and the Government would not deviate from the speak-Mandarin policy for Chinese Singaporeans.

He was responding to press queries on the move by the Education Ministry to allow dialect names, instead of pinyin ones, to appear first in school records from next year.

Asked if the Government might go further and introduce dialect television programmes and if it intended to change its Mandarin policy, Brig-General (Res) Yeo said:

"I don't think we should send the wrong signal to Singaporeans about our intention to make Mandarin the common language for the Chinese. Even if there was a demand for dialect programmes, the policy should continue."

On the possibility of street names in pinyin being reverted to those in dialect, BG Yeo said that there was a committee which reviews street names, but he had no details about it.

The minister made these comments after presenting free textbooks to students at the Darul Ihsan Orphanage off Sims Drive.

Dialect names can appear first in school records from next year

Trend shows parents prefer children to keep dialect surnames

■ ST, Dec 14.

An Education Ministry statement on Friday said the change was based on data which showed that an overwhelming number of Chinese parents prefer their children to retain dialect surnames.

Since 1981, all Chinese students have been known by their pinyin names. This meant that in school records, their pinyin names came first, followed by their statutory or dialect names in brackets.

But most Chinese parents registered their children with dialect surnames and pinyin given names on their birth certificates.

Two MPs yesterday expressed different views on the ministry's decision.

Supporting the move, Mr Lew Syn Pau, MP for Tanglin and head of the Government Parliamentary Committee for Education, said that many parents, including himself, preferred their children to retain their dialect surname.

"I guess it is being sentimental, but we find it more meaningful if our kids' surname reflects the dialect."

But Mr Loh Meng See, MP for Kampong Glam, felt that the move spelt a slight change in the Mandarin policy and said that the Government should come out clearly on this matter.

"Does it mean that pinyin names of MRT stations, streets or places will be back in dialect?" he asked.

"Whatever changes or adjustments that the Government makes on dialects should not be piecemeal as it can lead to confusion."

He added that in his view, the change by the ministry was not necessary as parents were slowly getting used to giving their children pinyin names and surnames.

Language Planning in Singapore: On Pragmatism, Communitarianism and Personal Names

Wendy D. Bokhorst-Heng [a] & Lionel Wee [b]

2009

According to *The Straits Times* editorial (Pinyin and pragmatism, 1991), after a full decade, people simply 'have not bought' the government's argument for Pinyinising names, forcing the government to reverse its decision in early December 1991 (and notably, following the August 1991 elections when one of the opposition party members – who used dialect in his campaigning – gained a seat in parliament) (Dialect names can appear first in school records from next year, 1991). Resistance also came in the form of what P.K.W. Tan (2001) calls the Englishisation of names in Singapore.

THE STRAITS TIMES NOV 16, 2017,

Trends in Chinese names: Out with Ah Kow and Char Bor, in with Wei Jie and Hui Min

Nearly four decades after the Speak Mandarin Campaign was launched in 1979, dialect given names have fallen out of favour.

In the 1980s, parents were encouraged to give their children hanyu pinyin names, which were used in schools. But there were many who preferred not to, so as to avoid the confusion of parent and child having different surnames.

These days, many young Chinese Singaporeans have names that comprise a dialect surname, a pinyin given name and a Western name, such as actor Aloysius Pang Wei Chong.

Some of lawyer Maurice Oon's young clients named themselves after South Korean idols such as Rain and "almost unpronounceable" nicknames that they used in gaming forums - which are so hard to recall that he could not cite any.

Mr Oon has also seen a "slight" increase" in Singapore-born Chinese who change their names as they do not want to be mistaken for Chinese immigrants, though some new citizens do this too. Usually, this involves adding a space between the last two characters, and replacing a pinyin surname with a dialect version: Zhang Haiming, for example, becomes Teo Hai Ming.

Associate Professor Lee Cher Leng from the National University of Singapore's Department of Chinese Studies has spent the past few years teaching a module titled "Bridging East and West: Exploring Chinese Communication".

"We are at the crossroads of East and West," she said. "Some of my students, who have Western names, also have Chinese names that were picked through fengshui."

She said that about 40 per cent of the 350 or so students who took her module this year have Western names. About 7 per cent have names with traditional dialect romanisation.

She has also seen more students with Western names, and Chinese names that echo or complement the sound of these Western names. For instance, Anna Yeo might simply be "Yang An Na" in Chinese.

- Special committees were even set up within the Ministry of Culture to standardise the Pinyinisation process of food items on signboards in the hawker centres (food courts) and markets, the names for new companies and businesses, new Housing Development Board towns (public housing), new street names, and private estate and building names.
- As a result, fried kuay teow (Hokkien), a popular local noodle dish, became chao guo tiao (Mandarin), and the town Nee Soon (Hokkien) became Yishun (Mandarin).

Nee Soon East
Community Club

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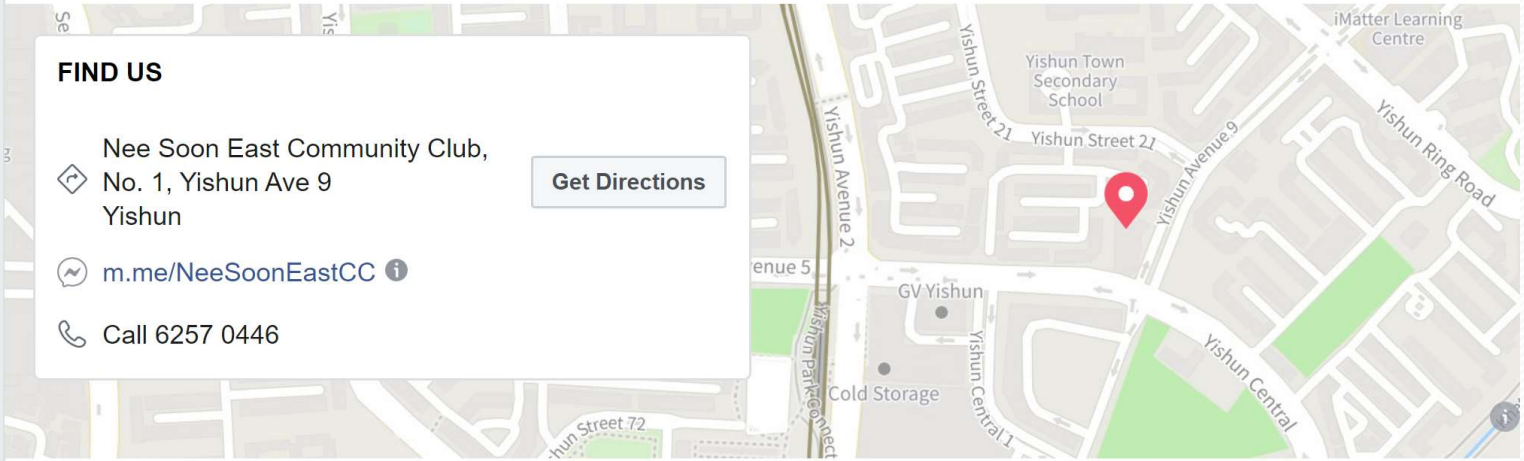

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Nee Soon East

Chat

PUSAT TEKKA
தேக்கா நிலையம்
TEKKA CENTRE
ATM
ATM

Tough to recognise

Zhujiao...proved most tricky for those surveyed.

The Straits Times, 20 March 1987, Page 18

The Straits Times

'Poll' showed no one knew where Zhujiao Centre was

24 March 1987

AS a non-Chinese I would like to thank profusely our new Minister for National Development for his intention to "preserve these (place) names so that our future generations will know the origins of these names" (ST, March 19).

The fact that many Members of Parliament spoke on the same subject reflects the concern of many of us.

Using new pinyin names for locations is definitely beyond the scope of reference of the Speak Mandarin Campaign.

Therefore, in the name of integration and multiracialism may we exhort the Housing Board to rename the alien-sounding Zhujiao Centre by calling it either Tekka Centre or Kandang Kerbau Centre (the old KK Market).

I carried out a poll to determine if people knew where Zhujiao Centre was. I spoke to car drivers and ordinary working people in Orchard Road, Rochor Road and Kampong Ubi. None of the 10 Chinese and 20 Malays knew where Zhujiao Centre was.

Consequently, if the HDB were to gather some feedback from residents and the public in general it might discover that even after five years it would neither be difficult nor confusing to call Yishun by its Singaporean name Nee Soon.

My children are asking me if Defu and Simei were places in China. When I explained that they were the names of HDB estates, they asked why weren't Singaporean names given. Would the HDB please explain this to our younger generations?

MOHAMED YUSOF B. AWANG
Singapore 1440

Tekka market

- When Tekka Market was demolished in 1982, most of the store-holders relocated to the new Zhujiao Market across the street, with the new name being a hanyu pinyin rendition of “Tekka” in the Chinese transliteration system.
- However, the market was later renamed Tekka Centre in November 2000 to reflect the history of the place after public feedback that “Zhujiao” bore little resemblance to its old name.

Singapore Monitor - 2nd Edition, 26 December 1984.

Please don't change place names to Pinyin

THE HOUSING and Development Board (HDB) has plans to create a new town in Seletar to be called Shilida New Town.

It is a cause of concern for those Singaporeans who are proud of their heritage to see names of places being changed to Hanyu Pinyin.

What is so objectionable about Seletar that its name cannot be retained? And why Yishun instead of the more appropriate and meaningful Nee Soon?

It is incredible that while, on the one hand, we are doing so much to preserve our cultural heritage and perpetuating the memory of our pioneers, we are dismantling one of the solid props upon which this same policy stands – a sense of pride in our past – by bestowing "alien" names to our localities.

Please, therefore, let Seletar, Nee Soon, Chong Pang, Kreta Ayer, Kandang Kerbau and other familiar names remain as they are.

Now a feeling of uneasiness

The Straits Times, 10 November 1979, Page 19

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL10390

Now a feeling of uneasiness

THE Speak Mandarin campaign started off with people, including ourselves, agreeing to the importance of a common language among the ethnic Chinese in Singapore.

However, recent developments have created uneasiness.

DISGUSTED,
Singapore 0315.

ED: This letter, abridged for publication to avoid repetition of points, carries 17 signatures.

More welcome Premier's assurance on Mandarin

The Straits Times, 26 November 1979, Page 11

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL10391

More welcome Premier's assurance on Mandarin

MORE non-Chinese yesterday welcomed the Prime Minister's assurance that they need not learn Mandarin, claiming that the campaign had veered from its original objective of phasing out the use of dialects among Chinese Singaporeans.

Mr Lee Kuan Yew gave this assurance to non-Chinese in a television discussion with three journalists on language competence and multilingual societies on Friday night.

He said it was a matter of time before the truth would dawn on the non-Chinese that they need not learn Mandarin and would not be at a disadvantage for not knowing it.

Fears

Some Indians, Eurasians and Europeans interviewd yesterday said objectives of the Speak More Mandarin and Less Dialects campaign had been very vague from the start even though the campaign was directed at the Chinese.

A shipping executive, Mr S. Maniam, said the organisers of the campaign went about it in the wrong way when trying to get support for the campaign.

He said: "Many people had taken advantage of the campaign, creating fear among the other races that the Mandarin language would be imposed on them." "Employers were also demanding in advertisements that appli-

The result

LANGUAGE SHIFT IN A SINGAPORE FAMILY

Anthea Fraser Gupta and Siew Pui Yeok[1] (1995)

Department of English Language & Literature, National University of Singapore, Kent Ridge, Singapore 0511

Language Shift in Singapore

Chinese	Increasing shift to both English and Mandarin from Chinese 'dialects' ('dialects' is the term used in Singapore for varieties of Chinese other than Mandarin, such as Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hainanese).
Malays	Increasing addition of English without loss of Malay. Among minority groups within this community, switch to Malay from other Malayo–Polynesian languages (e.g. Javanese, Boyanese).
Indians	Increasing shift to English from Indian languages.

The single most vital factor in language maintenance is the ability and desire of parents to transmit the ancestral language to their children (Greenberg, 1965). Many factors inhibit this transmission (Romaine, 1989) including the following five which are relevant for the Singapore Chinese:

- low status of language
- negative attitudes towards transmission of language
- lack of support from government and school
- exogamy
- imperfect learning by the younger generations

Watson argues (1988: 55) that the 'generation gap' gives rise to younger speakers failing to 'benefit from intercourse with the oldest generation of speakers' as 'the acquired wisdom of such old folk is not generally highly regarded by modern young people whose preoccupations lie mainly outside the scope of these old people's experience and who also may lead much of their daily lives in English'. Dorian (1981) shows how strong cross-generational ties outside the nuclear family can mitigate some of the effects of parents failing to pass the ancestral language on to their children. In our study, the eldest generation were certainly more interested in communicating with the youngest than the youngest with them, but we would add that differences in linguistic repertoire can also cause a generation gap as well as result from one, if there is no common language between the eldest and youngest generation (which is not now the case in the Gaelic-speaking Scotland and Ireland, where everyone speaks English). Where shift is initiated and ended in only one generation, grandchildren may simply not have a language in common with their grandparents.

Affective domain

- Do you feel a sense of regret that you could not really connect with your grandparents whenever you visited them during Chinese New Year?

Rapid language shift may thus result not only in a handicap to communication and interaction between members of different generations, which diminishes their personal lives, but also in a reduction of the ability of families to transfer traditional and cultural values from one generation to another. This represents a discontinuity in transmission of culture which has been exacerbated in Singapore by concomitant rapid social change:

The result

After 10 years of active promotion, Mandarin had almost completely replaced dialects to become the common language among Chinese by end of 1980s, rendering preliminary success of the first phase of the campaign. However, one of the side effects of replacing dialects with Mandarin was to change Mandarin from the original "high language" used by the elites educated in Chinese schools to a "low language" for common people. At the same time, English had become the dominant language used nationwide, eroding the social status and function of Mandarin even further. To safeguard and continue the promotion of Mandarin, the Promote Mandarin Council made a pivotal switch of target audience from the middle lower to the "higher" white-collared sector of the population, rolling out the second phase of the campaign.

2000

Mother tongue → English as 1st language + Mandarin as 2nd language

2013-10-07

Dear 14-year old Me Who Hated and Looked Down on Mandarin

Current Affairs Commentary 10 Jan 2018

Most importantly, I wish you had tried, not because someone else wanted you to or said that you should, but because knowing a different language is knowing a different way of seeing both the world and yourself.

That might not mean anything to you now but trust me, it will.

Good luck,
Your 28-year old self.

we were “not like the neighbourhood school kids” who could only speak broken English?

Young Chinese score low on ethnic pride

12% of those polled would rather be Caucasian, whereas more Indians and Malays would keep their ethnicity

By EUNICE LAU

ABOUT a quarter of young Chinese Singaporeans do not wish to be Chinese, according to a survey by a National University of Singapore academic on ethnic identity.

If given a choice, they would rather be Caucasian.

In the survey of the three major ethnic groups, the Malays scored the highest in ethnic pride. Nine out of 10 chose to retain their ethnicity.

Among young Indian Singaporeans, 17.9 per cent chose not to be Indians. Most of them also preferred to be Caucasian.

About 800 students from secondary to tertiary level were surveyed and they were representative of the population in terms of race and gender.

Dr Chang Han Yin, a senior sociology lecturer, said the finding came out of a larger survey he is doing on the values of Singaporeans and the part they play in the country's economic success.

The full survey is not ready but the finding on ethnic identity was mentioned by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and an MP for Tanjong Pagar GRC, Dr Ow Chin Hock, at a Singapore 21 forum on Saturday.

In an interview with The Straits Times, Dr Chang said initial research finding showed that young Chinese Singaporeans who have weak ethnic identity tend to be more educated and speak English at home.

Government data show that four out of 10 Primary 1 pupils now come from English-speaking homes, compared to just two out of 10 a decade ago.

He said the pervasive influence of Western literature and technology may lead young Chinese Singaporeans into thinking that Western

What they would rather be

	Caucasian	Chinese	Malay	Indian	Japanese
CHINESE	11.8%	78.4%	1.5%	1.7%	8.2%
MALAY	4.9%	2.9%	91.9%	0.0%	1.0%
INDIAN	15.3%	5.1%	1.6%	82.1%	0.0%

Source: Dr Chang Han Yin

Loss of the Affective value for Mandarin

Evolution of SMC

The instrumental value of Mandarin

Linguistic Instrumentalism in Singapore

In recent years, however, there has been a shift towards emphasising the economic value of the mother tongues as well as their role in preserving traditional values. This shift was motivated by the anticipated economic development of China, and in 1985, Ong Teng Cheong, then Second Deputy Prime Minister, suggested that:

> The Chinese learn and speak Mandarin not only because it is the common spoken language of the Chinese community, representing our roots, but also because the economic value of Mandarin is increasing, particularly after China has started its economic transformation and adopted the open-door policy … We shall no doubt face competition in our trade and economic activities with China, but we have an edge over others in our bilingual ability … Recently, an American computer company has arranged for China's computer personnel to receive training in Singapore because our computer experts can speak both Mandarin and English. They are able to explain to the Chinese in Mandarin. (Bokhorst-Heng, 1998: 254)

Notice that the rationale for being bilingual in English and Mandarin is no longer simply because Mandarin provides the 'emotionally acceptable mother tongue' that counters Western decadence; rather, being bilingual in English and Mandarin provides a strong economic advantage in the context of China's open-door policy. This emphasis on the economic value of Mandarin is clearly an appeal to linguistic instrumentalism, and undermines the strict complementarity between English and the mother tongues since Mandarin no longer functions only as a transmitter of traditional Chinese values, but, like English, is seen to have a strong economic value.

A Pandora's box has been opened

In a sense, a Pandora's box has been opened but there was never really any choice about the matter. It would have been foolish of the Singapore Government not to have exploited the economic advantages that Mandarin-speaking Singaporeans have in dealing with China. However, doing so raises corresponding questions about the economic values of Malay and Tamil. Thus, the twin demands of economic development and managing racial diversity were more easily dealt with in the previous narrative structure, where the mother tongues were only expected to act as transmitters of cultural knowledge. In contrast, the shift towards linguistic instrumentalism creates a new situation where ethnic sensitivities are intertwined with, rather than separated from, economic gains.