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NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
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Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

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List of Abbreviations

CL	: Chinese Language
C-E	: Chinese to English
E-C	: English to Chinese
N	: Number of students enrolled
SMC	: Speak Mandarin Campaign
CCA	: Co-curricular Activity
MTL	: Mother Tongue Language

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Abstract

In Singapore, misinterpretations leading to mistranslations happen often in official publications, sparking discussions pertaining to the vetting process of these translations and how they can be managed and prevented. This study seeks to examine the decline in bilingual ability in Singapore and its corresponding effects on translation quality. There are three research questions in this project. (1) How does the language education policy impact bilingualism in Singapore? (2) How does Chinese language proficiency level impact translation quality in Singapore? (3) How would elevating the socio-economic status of the Chinese language in Singapore improve the level of proficiency and the translation quality? These issues are analysed using the results of a questionnaire that was administered on professional translators and translation students. The results from this study will reinforce that it is crucial to raise the profile of the Chinese language by expanding its presence in everyday use among Singaporeans.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background information

Translation quality in Singapore took centre stage in 2002, when a Lianhe Zaobao reader wrote in to comment on poor translations that he found in a travel booklet at Changi Airport. One of the most-discussed errors was the Hungry Ghost Festival (中元节, zhong yuan jie), which was wrongly translated as The Hungarian Ghost Festival (匈牙利鬼节, *xiong ya li gui jie*). Another error was the River Hong Bao, which was translated as Singapore Ang Pow / Red Packet (新加坡红包, xin jia po hong bao), instead of its correct official Chinese name (春到河畔, chun dao he pan), meaning “Springtime at the River”.

These translation blunders even led to a parliamentary debate on translation quality and what should be done. In addition, there were many discussions on mistranslations, including a recent case where a poster by the Health Promotion Board to promote preventing falls (Fall Awareness) was translated to (推广跌倒意识, tui guang die dao yi shi), making it sound like a campaign that encourages falls-

These are basic linguistic errors in translation that should not have occurred in any frequency. These mistranslations indicate that Singapore’s translation (English/Chinese) standard is sub par.

Improving translation quality is crucial to Singapore for several reasons. For example, some people in Singapore only know their mother tongue. They are usually the older generation from the monolingual era who went to Chinese-medium schools in the 1950s until Singapore’s independence in 1965. To cater to their needs, official notifications and other information from the government need to be translated correctly to ensure that policies and information are well-communicated.

On a broader perspective, there is also an economic incentive to mastering the Chinese language. In the context of China’s fast-growing economy, there is a need for quality

translations from English (Singapore's official working language) to Chinese, for effective communication to occur.

Thirdly, there is also the need to preserve the Chinese language and keep it alive for the younger generation, for cultural reasons.

Catford (1965) defines language as a type of patterned human behavior; a way, perhaps the most important way, in which human beings interact in social situations. Translation, on the other hand, is likened to an operation that is performed on language, or rather, a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. Whether or not this operation is done properly is dependent on several elements such as source language (SL) proficiency, target language (TL) proficiency, bilingualism, knowledge of the both cultures, etc. Much discussion in the media over bad translation quality in Singapore revolves around critiques and opinions. This is prevalent in jobs that did not engage professionals, or were awarded to overseas translators with limited or no knowledge and awareness of the local culture.

While English continues to be the global lingua franca, increasingly more people are picking up the Chinese language for its economic imperative globally. However, in Singapore, the fact remains that English language as the first has a higher pragmatic value than Chinese language in common use. This paper aims to highlight that the standard of translation in Singapore is directly related by the decline in standards of the Chinese language. In order to raise the Chinese language standards in Singapore to a basic level, there is a need to keep the language active and prominent in the public domain where the masses are reached.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

This paper seeks to explore the importance of the relationship between bilingualism (English/Chinese) and its translation quality in Singapore. First, an overview of Singapore's bilingual policy is provided. This is followed by a discussion of how the dominance of the English language has led to a perceived low value of the Chinese language, and in turn, impacts the proficiency of the Chinese language in Singapore's

linguistic landscape. Lastly, the decline in Chinese language proficiency and its relation to translation quality issues in Singapore will be discussed.

To facilitate the above discussion, a three-part study has been conducted to gain a deeper insight into the topic and provide data for further analysis.

- i) A questionnaire was given to a group of 50 respondents, including translation students from the Masters of Translation and Interpretation at Nanyang Technological University, the Singapore Institute of Management, and professional translators.
- ii) The Speak Mandarin Campaign slogans over the years gives an idea of the focus of the campaign: it prioritises the socio-linguistic needs of the society at that specific moment and reflects the dynamic state of Singapore's linguistic landscape.
- iii) Primary research on the presence of the Chinese language in the public domain has been done by comparing the number of hours of current affairs and news programmes on English free-to-air channels (Channel NewsAsia, Channel 5) to the Chinese free-to-air channels (Channel U, Channel 8), as well as on the number of English radio stations to the number of Chinese radio stations in Singapore. Also, a survey of Singapore's sixteen ministries and sixty-four statutory board websites has also been done, and findings suggest that in both the public domain and mainstream media, the presence of the English language is significantly higher than that of the Chinese language.

When it comes to translation quality, the crux lies in Chinese language proficiency. There is a need to be constantly exposed to the language and to use it frequently. Attaching such importance to the Chinese language will greatly help in maintaining additive bilingualism in Singapore, while strengthening bilingualism is the key to improving translation quality. Additive bilingualism is defined as a situation where a second language is learnt by an individual or a group without detracting from the development of the first language, where a second language adds to, rather than replaces the first language. This is the opposite of subtractive bilingualism.

2. Literature Review

The first part of this chapter aims to illustrate the impact of declining standards of the Chinese language on bilingualism and translation quality. The second part aims to illustrate key literature on the linguistic ecology in Singapore, language proficiency and translation as well as on the socio-economic status of the Chinese language.

2.1 The linguistic ecology of Singapore

Lee (2012) traces the policies that lead to a decline in Chinese language proficiency in Singapore. She notes the different changes in the “language situation in Singapore” throughout history, underlining that the language shift in Singapore is guided predominantly by “pragmatism, globalisation, language policy, and economic forces of the world.”

According to Lee (2012), Singapore has been a multi-cultural and multilingual society since 1819, when the island city was established as a British trading post. The open-door immigration policy brought about a rapid influx of immigrants, with the majority originating from southern China, Malaya, the Indonesian archipelago, and South Asia. This massive immigration flow had shaped Singapore’s multilingual environment.

Chew (2010) discuss Singapore’s linguistic history from its early days of nation-building since 1959 and experienced the “experimentation, norming and integrating phase” thereafter. Firstly, between 1959 and 1965, the nation was “groping for solutions, experimenting with ideas, which included a political merger with Malaysia (1963-1965)”. With an aim to maintain racial, religious, and linguistic harmony, a multilingual platform that advocates linguistic equality was established.

After this initial phase, the nation went into a “norming” period between 1970s and 1990s, where there was the need to steer towards an efficient and productive economy. It became important for the people to be able to communicate with the world economy, and English was chosen as the nation’s lingua franca.

Being chosen as the main working language has led to English having higher importance and status compared to the mother tongue languages of the various ethnic groups. Pakir (1999) suggest that this results in English-medium schools becoming more popular, as many parents wanted to give their children an edge over others with an English education. Eventually, the Chinese-, Malay- and Tamil-medium schools saw a significant decrease in enrolment, and eventually ceased operations.

Implementing English as the official working language in Singapore propelled the shift towards English as the lingua franca within a short period of time. As Dorai (1969) observe from statistics in student enrolment of the four official language streams from 1947 to 1972, there was a significant shift from the Chinese, Malay and Tamil stream schools to the English streams. See Table 1.

Table 1. Enrolment^a of Various Language Streams, Singapore, 1947-1972

Yr	Malay		English		Chinese		Tamil		Other		Total	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
1947	6,463	(7.0)	29,095	(31.6)	53,478	(58.1)	919	(1.0)	2,018 ^b	(2.2)	91,973	(99.9)
1952	8,579	(5.5)	63,386	(40.8)	74,104	(47.6)	1,205	(0.8)	8,248 ^b	(5.3)	155,522	(100.0)
1957	13,419	(4.9)	127,761	(46.7)	117,374	(42.9)	1,351	(0.5)	13,815 ^c	(5.0)	273,720	(100.0)
1962	24,763	(6.2)	200,062	(50.4)	154,384	(38.9)	1,454	(0.4)	16,343 ^d	(4.1)	397,006	(100.0)
1967	37,142	(7.2)	304,651	(58.7)	175,278	(33.8)	1,814	(0.3)	-		518,885	(100.0)
1972	20,946	(4.0)	338,043	(64.8)	161,385	(30.9)	1,278	(0.2)	-		521,652	(100.0)

(a) Including students from registered kindergarten to Pre-University II.

(b) Including Trade, Commercial and Technical Schools and other registered schools.

(c) Including Junior and Secondary Technical Schools and other registered schools.

(d) Integrated Schools.

Note. Doraisamy, T.R. (1969). 150 years of education in Singapore. Singapore; Teachers training college. Reprinted with Permission.

The bilingual education policy was then fully implemented in 1987, and English was formally established as the language of instruction for all school subjects in the education system, except for the designated mother tongue languages.

According to Spolsky and Kiwan (2014), in the 21st century, Singapore economy, politics, and linguistic directives restructures in the anxiety to engage with the forces of

globalization. As Chew (2009) put forth, it is possible to conclude that whenever bilingualism includes a powerful lingua franca, that bilingualism will, more often than not, be a “deficit” one. Survival and growth were the forces behind these changes in linguistic ecology. This has clearly led to English becoming the one dominant language in the country.

Schiffman (2007) notes that the English-knowing elites are very much drawn to the cultural capital available to them. Hence, since Singapore started using English in official and private domains, there has been a general decline in the bilingual competencies of the people, to the detriment of the mother tongue languages.

Kachru (1982) notes how Singapore's educational policy requiring all students to learn English and their ethnically assigned ‘mother tongue’ has produced ‘English-knowing’ bilinguals, i.e. bilinguals who have a better command of English than the mother tongue languages. This was the result of using English to teach non-language subjects. The mother tongue was the only subject that was not taught in English. Goh (2004) and Kaplan & Baldauf (2003) and many local and international scholars perceive this English-knowing bilingual policy as a success that has contributed to Singapore's economic ‘miracle’.

English as the working language has enjoyed a high social prestige since Singapore's early days, and through the years, there has been much discussion on how this has impacted the mother tongue languages. Much has been discussed in the media, where academics, educators, and the public have expressed concerns over the decline in Chinese language proficiency.

Chua (2010) highlights that with English language gaining strong dominance has made the Chinese language seem rather unimportant as compared to the 1980s to 1990s. Such a shift has been unavoidable in Singapore's drive for modernization and globalization.

Xu et al (1998) conduct the first large-scale survey on Singaporean Chinese in mid-1996. The goals included “(a) updating the sociolinguistic profile of the Singapore

Chinese community, and (b) evaluating the impact of language planning in Singapore”

(Xu et al., 1998: 133). The present discussion will focus on key findings of the survey relevant to this paper.

The massive and in-depth study was done through questionnaires and observations. Xu et al (1998: 135) administer over 4000 questionnaires distributed in selected schools, industrial and residential estates and Chinese clan associations. The database for the survey was built from 2778 usable responses. The sample was further narrowed down to 915 people that closely resembled the socio-demographic composition of the Chinese population in Singapore.

Xu et al. (ibid.) use self-reports by respondents to explore language used in different settings and different communicative functions. Respondents were required to compare the instrumental and affective properties of the English and Chinese language. They also commented on code-mixing, the functions of Mandarin, and the preservation of dialects for future generations.

Concurrently, observation fieldwork on Singaporean Chinese was carried out in four most populated residential areas. 3440 people were observed for their language choice at various public places, such as banks and hawker centers. Xu et al. (ibid.) find the population to be still predominantly Chinese-speaking, in spite of the significant shift towards English in the last few decades before 1998.

The majority of the Chinese population found learning English tough, and this is not surprising, as Mandarin was then the most commonly used language for most families. However, beyond the millennium, this trend changed. As English became the main language used in the community and at home, it became the language that people were more familiar with, and English and Chinese “switched positions”.

In addition, the results showed polarisation associated with English and Mandarin in terms of their instrumentality and affectivity. Most Singaporean Chinese felt Mandarin brought cohesion and unity, giving a sense of warmth and friendliness.

However, very few regarded it as a language with prestige and authority. English, on the other hand, was regarded by the majority of Singaporean Chinese as a language of power and less as a language of affection.

In a study by Zhao and Liu (2010), the immediate challenge of a rapid and continuous fall in the number of Chinese-speaking families is highlighted. While the acquisition of English was effected by pragmatism, the language itself has also come to gain more symbolic and cultural capital.

1200 respondents were involved in this study, with the result highlighting a home language shift from Chinese to English. That is, English has begun to have high values in terms of cultural, social and symbolic capitals on top of its legitimated economic value in official discourse. This shift grew further as shown in the General household survey 2015. Refer to Table 2.

Table 2. Language (English, Mandarin, Chinese Dialect) spoken at home among residents aged 5 Years and over, from year 2000 to 2015.

Spoken Language	2000	2005	2010	2015
Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
English	23.0	28.1	32.3	36.9
Mandarin	35.0	36.0	35.6	34.9
Chinese Dialect	23.8	18.2	14.3	12.2

Note. Department of Statistics Singapore (2015). *General Household Survey 2015*. Retrieved from https://www.singstat.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/publications/publications_and_papers/GHS/ghs2015/ghs2015.pdf

As shown in the table above, the percentage of people aged 5 and above who use English at home has grown from 32.3% in 2010 to 36.9% in 2015. By contrast, the percentage of people aged 5 and above using Chinese as a home language has dropped from 35.6% in 2010 to 34.9% in 2015. On closer examination of the figures below,

there is an almost 10% increase in English use at home over 10 years. This resulted in English language replacing Mandarin as the language most frequently spoken at home.

The Chinese population in Singapore is moving towards a less complex language situation where English is used in formal communication and Mandarin in informal communication, with Chinese dialects almost disappearing in Chinese communities. Lee (2011) highlights that by the late 1990s, three out of five Chinese students entering primary school spoke mainly English at home and with their friends. For some of them, learning Chinese is like acquiring a new language.

In 2011, speaking at an event organized by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry ¹(SCCCI), then-Education Minister Heng Swee Kiat shares that among the Primary 1 Chinese students enrolled in that year, 61% came from English-speaking families. He notes a significant drop in the number of families using Chinese language at home compared to the previous year. In view of this significant shift, Mr. Heng speaks on how the government had planned different initiatives to give more focus to mother tongue languages, including Chinese, to enhance bilingualism among young Singaporeans.

Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) note that in any bilingual or multilingual society, language policy has cultural, political, and economic significance as well as its own particular sensitivities among constituent communities. In the case of Singapore, English serves as an important tool of communication, both domestically and globally. Domestically, we need a common and “neutral” language of communication between different ethnic groups. Globally, English is also a common language.

Global language shift to English

On language shift, Fishman (1966:424) says: “The study of language maintenance and language shift is concerned with the relationship between change or stability in habitual language use, on the one hand, and on-going psychological, social or cultural

¹[www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20110929001/wps_opening_address_\(media\)\(checked\).pdf](http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20110929001/wps_opening_address_(media)(checked).pdf)

with each other. That languages (or language variants) sometimes replace each other, among some speakers, particularly in certain types or domains of language behavior, under some conditions of intergroup contact, has long aroused curiosity and comment.”

Singapore’s founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew stressed that Singaporeans must acquire a good command of English for the country’s economic survival. The country can only attract investors if Singaporeans speak a language foreigners can understand. According to Lee, English is “the language of international diplomacy, the language of science and technology, and the language of international finance and commerce. Singaporeans would have increased opportunities if they had a strong mastery of English.” (Lee, 2011: p. 59)

On the other hand, Tan (2011) explains that this shift towards English with the “anxiety of non-influence”. Building on the notion of “The anxiety of influence” by Bloom (1973), Tan proposed that when one’s language is different from others, it brings about anxiety, stemming from the desire to communicate, to be understood. Indeed, language is the basis for social cohesion.

Hence, as in the case of Singapore, with the larger, multicultural community moving towards English, it is likely that this shift happens because individuals are all drawn to the need to master English to overcome the anxiety. The expectation to communicate in English is established in both formal and informal contexts, and the motivation to master one’s mother tongue language is very much reduced due to the socio-linguistic dominance of the English language.

And then as the country progressed, the shift towards English became more prominent. Chinese language scholars, Liu, Zhao and Goh (2007) predicts that just as the last school-going generation saw a shift from Chinese dialects to Mandarin, the next generation may see a shift from Mandarin to English. As can be seen from the evidence presented earlier, this prediction has been realised, in Singapore’s context.

In a larger sense, English is the dominant language not just in Singapore but also the world. According to the British Council, it is in fact the lingua franca of the world in the 21st century. Mark Robson, Director of English and Exams at the British Council, noted that English is spoken at a useful level by some 1.75 billion people. In fact, the British Council predicted that by 2020, two billion people will be using English or learning to use it. English is almost like the ‘operating system’ of that global conversation. Globally, it has been observed that the economically active, the thought leaders, the business decision-makers, the young, the movers and shakers both present and future, are learning and speaking English.

In a report in the Asian Correspondent, Christopher McCormick, head of the EF Research Network, explained that countries in Asia have prioritised English language proficiency. Data from the English Proficiency Index suggests a strong relationship between English language proficiency and economic performance, with a positive correlation between English proficiency and per capita income. For the individual, strong English language proficiency also provides financial benefits, which can result in salary increases of between 30-50 percent.

According to Statista the Statistics Portal (www.statista.com) as shown in Figure 1 below, English is the most spoken language worldwide. Although Chinese is ranked as the second most spoken language worldwide, its concentration is likely to be in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. By contrast, most active users of English are non-native speakers.

Figure 1. Statistic of Native and non-Native English speakers.

2.2 Decline in Chinese proficiency

According to May (2006), previous macro-language planning in Singapore has been described as effective and successful. Gopinathan (1998) observes the mounting evidence that shows how Chinese language proficiency of students in Singapore is declining and how Chinese language teachers face increasing challenges in motivating students to learn the language.

Even the initiator of Singapore's bilingual education policy, founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew expressed his concern during a dialogue session at World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention² that more families in Singapore are speaking English at home. His worry was that this would eventually lead to younger Singaporeans being unable to speak their mother tongue.

In his 1997 National Day Rally speech³, then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong stresses the need to preserve Chinese heritage, because the English-dominated educational system meant that there would be no new generation of Chinese-educated elite in 20 years. He reiterated what Mr. Lee Kuan Yew said about the importance of maintaining

² <http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne+News/Singapore/Story/A1Story20111008-303955.html>

³ <http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/speeches/view-html?filename=199708240e.htm>

the sense of rootedness and cultural identity and how this has helped Singapore achieve social and political cohesion. He also stressed that with the emergence of China as the ascendant economy, many would need the Chinese language to do business in China.

In 1991, the Chinese Language Review Committee, chaired by then-Deputy Prime Minister Ong Teng Cheong, came up with detailed plans to scaffold Chinese-language learning, in a comprehensive effort to raise the level of language proficiency in schools. However, the implementation of these measures recommended in this report had to be modified later by lowering language proficiency expectations. This was in view of parents of English-speaking students who were opposed to any attempt to raise the bar of Chinese proficiency for their children.⁴

2.3 Raising the prestige of the Chinese language

According to Gupta (1994), empirical findings show that not only is the number of Chinese users in steady decline, the prestige of the Chinese language had also fallen far behind English, as manifested in the division between those in the higher socioeconomic brackets who mainly use English and those in the lower brackets who prefer Chinese. Even now, the status of the English language is still seemingly higher than that of the Chinese language.

Dixon (2012) finds that it is not uncommon in many societies for one language to clearly enjoy higher status, and to often be associated with education, wealth or power. This language of power is often the language of the majority of society, and can be called the societal language. Other languages in this context may be spoken only by a certain ethnic group that forms a portion of the larger society, and can be referred to as ethnic languages. Gathercole and Thomas (2009) note that the dominance relation between languages may create challenges for maintaining ethnic languages, especially for immigrant languages in countries where the societal language is strongly dominant.

The research by Miccio et al. (2005) on bilinguals find evidence showing that bilingual Puerto Rican children in the United States (US) mainland, where Spanish has a lower

⁴ <http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/otc19910618s.pdf>

status than English, showed lower gains in learning Spanish compared to similar children in Puerto Rico, where Spanish has a higher status. Similarly, Spanish-English bilingual children in the strongly bilingual community of Miami, US, all showed a preference for speaking English, regardless of their home language exposure or school instructional language. Again, this indicates the challenge in maintaining ethnic languages, in context of a dominant societal language.

Liang et al. (2011) feels that one possible area of improvement is through the media, which is a valued domain of language use for children. The Chinese language needs to be used in a way that gives it a valid and prestigious position in that domain. It is also highlighted that children learn very fast by watching television. In Liang et al's, (ibid.) research, secondary school students interviewed expressed that the media is lacking in interesting Chinese programs for broadcast that could help students learn Chinese effortlessly. Any attempt to raise the proficiency level of Chinese should involve bringing in quality Chinese programmes that engage school-goers.

Apart from the predominantly cultural reason for using the Chinese language, Wee (2003) argues that the gradual rise of China's economy means that the value of the Chinese language has shifted to become primarily economic. In 2009, speaking in Shanghai, Mr Lee Kuan Yew (2011) shares his earnest wish that ⁵“if Singaporeans are willing to learn Chinese, they will be able to enjoy the fruit from China's economic progress.” He also stresses that one stands to lose out if we do not learn the Chinese language.

Silver (2005) rearticulates the same tension between ethnicity and pragmatic economics in Singapore's bilingual policy, referencing Bourdieu's theory of capital and fields. As suggested, English has a high economic but low symbolic value; in contrast, the 'mother tongues' are viewed as having social and symbolic value rather than economic value. The learning of a 'mother tongue' is considered a must because it is seen to 'give one the sense of belonging to a culture, and increases self-confidence and self-respect' (Lee, 2011: 60).

⁵ <http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne+News/Singapore/Story/A1Story20111008-303955.html>

Stroud and Wee (2007) show that Singaporeans are class-aware language consumers who, when faced with language choices, are motivated by a new pragmatic position in favour of a display of consumption, rather than a government's paternalistic construction of the old politics revolving around cultural heritage and ethnic identity. Similarly, Chew (2007) points out that in materialistic Singapore, language is seen more as an important economic resource rather than an emblem of culture and nationhood.

According to these scholars, the new planning models dominating the country's language planning history are now being driven by societal changes manifested in instrumentalism, cultural capital sociolinguistic consumerism or a globalising orientation.

2.4 Review of the Speak Mandarin Campaign

The Speak Mandarin Campaign is examined in this study to observe how its focus has changed, according to the changing socio-linguistic landscape. When it first started in 1979, the target was to encourage people to use Chinese instead of the other Chinese dialects. Over the years, the campaign's focus has changed to adapt to the decreasing proficiency level of the target audience. Table 3 below shows the different target audiences and slogans for the campaign.

Table 3. List of Singapore's Speak Mandarin Campaign Slogans and Target Audience from year 1979 – 2012.

Year	Target Audience	Chinese Slogan	English (Official)
1979	Chinese Community	多讲华语，少说方言	Speak More Mandarin, Speak Less Dialects
1981	Chinese Community	学华语，讲华语	Learn Mandarin, Speak Mandarin
1982	Work Place	在工作场所讲华语	Speak Mandarin while at work
1983	Markets & Food Centres	华人讲华语，合情又合理	Mandarin's In. Dialect's Out
1984	Chinese Parents	请讲华语，儿女的前途， 操在您手里	Speak Mandarin. Your Children's Future Depends On Your Effort Today
1985	Public Transport Workers	华人•华语	Mandarin is Chinese
1986	Food and Drink Establishments	先开口讲华语，皆大欢喜	Start With Mandarin, Not Dialect

1987	Shopping Centres	会讲华语，先讲常讲	Start With Mandarin, Speak It More Often
1988	White Collar Workers	多讲华语，亲切便利	Better with more Mandarin, less dialect
1989	Chinese community	常讲华语，自然流利	More Mandarin, Less Dialect. Make It A Way Of Life
1990	Senior Executives	华人•华语	Mandarin is Chinese
1991	English-educated Chinese Singaporeans	学习华语认识文化	Mandarin for Chinese Singaporeans: More Than a Language
1992	English-educated Chinese Singaporeans	用华语表心意	Say it in Mandarin
1993	English-educated Chinese Singaporeans	讲华语•受益多	Speak Mandarin. It helps
1994/ 1995	English-educated Chinese and business professionals	华语多讲流利	Mandarin. Use It or Lose It
1996/ 1997	English-educated Chinese working adults	讲华语开创新天地	Speak Mandarin, Explore New Horizons
1998/ 1999	English-educated Chinese working adults	讲华语.好处多	Speak Mandarin, It's An Asset
2000		讲华语? 没问题!	Speak Mandarin? No Problem!
2006/ 2007	Post-1965 English-Speaking Chinese Singaporeans	华语 COOL	Mandarin Cool!
2007/ 2008	Post-1965 English-Speaking Chinese Singaporeans	讲华语, 你肯吗?	Speak Mandarin, are You Game?
2009/ 2010	Youths	华文? 谁怕谁!	Be Heard in Chinese!
2011/ 2012	Youths	华文华语 多用就可以	Mandarin. It Gets Better With Use

Note. Speak Mandarin Campaign. Retrieved from <http://mandarin.org.sg/>

This research on the Speak Mandarin Campaign's slogan showed three distinctive phases. From 1979 to 1989, the main focus was on encouraging the switch from the different Chinese dialects to using Mandarin. Upon inception, the SMC's task was to encourage the use of Mandarin in place of the various Chinese dialects. It was critical for the varied dialect groups to be able to communicate with a common Chinese language. The campaign was an effort to reduce miscommunication and in turn, avoid misinterpretation, with a subsequent shift to encourage the use of Mandarin in public

From 1990 onwards, there was a significant shift towards using more English, leading to the Chinese language facing the challenge of losing its social standing and a decline in proficiency. At the time, the focus of the SMC was on encouraging the population to keep using Chinese. The themes of the campaign focused on preserving one's culture and roots. As Wee (2003) highlights, economic value of Mandarin is increasing with China going into economic transformation. The pragmatism behind using Chinese as a means of accessing opportunities brought about by the rise of China did have a small but positive impact.

3. Research Methodology

The purpose of this research is to obtain important referential information for subject sampling, as well as valuable background information to facilitate data analysis process. This allows for a better understanding of the participants' perceptions on the subject matter, based on data consolidated from the survey. The survey questions were carefully crafted so as to draw useful observations from data collected.

3.1 Research question

The research is interested in:

- How does the language education policy impact bilingualism in Singapore?
- How does Chinese language proficiency level impact translation quality in Singapore?
- How would elevating the Socio-economic status of the Chinese language in Singapore improve the level of proficiency and translation quality?

3.2 Empirical research

3.2.1 Profiles of subjects

The data were gathered through an online questionnaire using Google Survey. Respondents are individuals who are currently studying or had completed translation and interpretation degree or post graduate course in NTU and SIM. The criteria of selecting respondents is based on the level of relevant knowledge on the translation and interpretation profession, as this factor would determine if respondents are able to

Figure 2. Nationality of the respondents participated in the Survey for this paper.

3.2.2 *Language Proficiency*

Participants of this survey are from translation and interpretation courses, and generally, their Chinese language proficiency level are higher. The majority (42%) of the respondents were aged 20 to 29. 27% of the respondents are between 40-49, they are the first batch of students since the full implementation of the Singapore education policy.

54% out this group rated themselves as being equally good in both Chinese and English. However, in the younger groups, percentage of those who rated themselves as being equally good in Chinese and English falls to 33% (for those between 30-39) and 25% (for those between 20-29). This could be an indication that the bilingualism is on the decline.

Some of the changes in the Chinese language education include allowing more pupils to take Higher Chinese in secondary schools from 1995 onwards. Then in 1999, the Ministry announced that the pool of students offered Higher Chinese would be enlarged at both primary and secondary levels.⁶ The cohort we see who are below 30

⁶ <https://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/1995/pr01895.htm>

would very likely be those who have had a chance to take up higher Chinese as a subject in primary school and secondary school. This could be the reason for 55% of them rating themselves better in Chinese.

Table 4: Feedback on the language proficiency level from respondents of different age group.

	40 - 49	30 – 39	20 – 29
English Better	23%	40%	20%
Equally Good	54%	33%	25%
Chinese Better	23%	27%	55%
TOTAL	27%	31%	42%

Seventeen respondents felt that they are equally good in English and Chinese, which is only about one third of the 48 respondents. This suggests that Singapore's bilingual education system may not be totally effective, otherwise there would probably be more people saying they are equally good in both languages. However, this could also be a reflection of the respondents' high expectations of themselves.

Many respondents seemed to lack confidence in their English proficiency, as the number of people who said that they are better in English is the lowest. This also leads to a question of whether our English language education is also not as good as we assume it to be.

The largest group who perceive themselves to be more proficient in Chinese than English is within the 20-29 age group. This is rather surprising, because during the compulsory schooling years for this group, Singapore's bilingual education system was already established, with the emphasis on English rather than Chinese. However, we have to bear in mind that these respondents have a special interest in the Chinese language and has more exposure to it.

3. 2. 3 *Social situation and use of language*

Most people learned Chinese mainly at home and from the media, while English is learned at school and work. The majority of respondents rated themselves high in

Chinese listening, speaking and reading ability, while fewer people rated themselves as having very high ability in writing Chinese. Fewer people said they “strongly agree” that they have high English language proficiency. Figure 4.

Figure 3. Different language use in different social situation

Most of the respondents describe themselves as using more Chinese than English among friends in casual settings. This may be because they feel more comfortable using Chinese, as compared to conversing in English, which is the "formal" or working language. On the other hand, this could also be an indication that the respondents are not confident or comfortable using Chinese at formal levels.

3.2.4 Research Design

A survey format was chosen as it is able to reach a sample number that can provide representative result. Since it was anonymous, it allows respondents to answer with more candid and valid answers.

Berger (2014) states some other advantages for gathering data includes:

1. Inexpensive to conduct.
2. Allow researcher to gather a large sample.
3. Obtain up-to-date information.
4. Obtain several data at one time to save time and money.
5. Provide data for quantitative analysis.

The survey focused on the respondent's observation and attitude with regards to bilingualism, language proficiency and translation quality. The participants were asked to complete the survey in 20 minutes.

Pilot & Hungler (1983) defines a pilot study as a trial run of what is intended to be a larger project. Cohen, et al., (2006) highlights that a pilot study helps in assessing and increasing validity of the study. A pilot study was done with a few respondents to ensure that the technical settings are in place and feedbacks were gathered on typos and other errors. After these were done, the actual survey was sent to the selected respondents.

No monetary reward was involved in this survey. Participants acknowledged at the start of the survey that they were taking part as volunteers, and consented to the anonymous use of information collected.

Participants for the study were recruited through the social networks of students at Nanyang Technological University, including professional translators and current or previous translation program students. This practice of gathering data within social network is sometimes known as the "friend of a friend" approach. According to Milroy & Gordon (2003), it is built on the notion that data within a particular social group can most successfully be gathered through people who are part of that social group themselves, or are introduced as friends of a person within the social group.

This method was adopted in order to reach the target audience that the project intends to achieve. An impressive return rate of almost 100 per cent of the questionnaires demonstrates the usefulness of the 'friend of a friend' approach in effectively collecting the required data within a short time.

Technology plays an important role in this research. The questionnaire was designed using Google Survey, and the survey link was sent through emails and Whatsapp messages to the respondents, and it was convenient for them to click the link to fill the questionnaire. Apart from the convenience of the internet in reaching out to the respondents, the ease of filling the forms was likely one of the main reasons for the high response rate.

The survey consists of a total of 25 questions, with four types of questions to establish (a) general language background and profile, (b) language use profile, (c) educational and socio-economic profile, and (d) language attitude profile. These four components will be discussed and illustrated later on.

The survey questions were in English because English serves as the official working language in Singapore. This would reduce translation errors and would be simpler for the participants completing the survey. The questions were simple and straightforward so that respondents could readily understand them, and participants only needed to select the appropriate answers to the questions.

However, some of the questions also call for a more in-depth investigation, rather than simply attitude measurement through direct techniques. In consideration of this, sentence completion (including single-word) items have been included in the questionnaire, to reveal associations and perceptions on a deeper level than what would be obtainable through attitude scales. According to Cohen & Manion (1994), these questions allow for free response and hence may bring out situations or discussions that are not anticipated.

The answers to these completion items are analysed with Google Survey analysis function, a useful way to summarise the data.

3.2.5 Sampling and Administration of Questionnaire

Invitation links were sent to 50 students and professional translators aged between 20 and 49 years old. Of these, 48 questionnaires were completed. All of these questionnaires were of usable quality and constituted the sample size for this study. The composition of the sample is described below. Out of 48 respondents, 36 were Singaporeans, 4 were permanent residents and 8 were students from China. All surveys were completed online. All surveys were completed within 1 week.

Respondents were reminded that they could email or call for any clarification. This reduces the possibility of incorrect responses due to the lack of support to assist in the comprehension of these questions, if any.

3.3 Research on the presence of Chinese language in the public domain in Singapore

A separate research was done on three aspects in the public domain to find out about the presence of Chinese language in the public domain against the English language. The research method used is by searching through the online information on (1) Singapore's main TV channels, (2) Singapore's main radio frequencies, and (3) the Government and Statutory board's websites.

4 Findings and Discussion

In the following discussion, only data that is relevant to the discussion on translation quality is used.

4.1 Translation quality

Figure 4. Impact of Chinese on translation quality

About 44% of respondents strongly agreed that there is a need to improve Chinese proficiency to improve translation quality, as compared to 38% who say the same about English. Thirty-four respondents feel that one needs to be strong in the target language, while 30 respondents think being strong in both the source and target language is essential to produce good translations. In terms of translation competency, respondents cited accuracy as a result of high Chinese proficiency, while 50% of respondents think bilingualism plays a major role in translation quality. Most respondents gave translation quality in Singapore an average rating.

With regards to translation quality, more respondents feel that improving Chinese standards is important in raising translation standards, but fewer say the same about English. This seems to suggest that perhaps at a subconscious level, they perceive Chinese to be harder to understand, as compared to English.

Most respondents (62.5%) feel that being strong in both target and source language is important for good translations. This means that they are likely to recognise the challenges and strategies in translation, and the different considerations that go into a good translation, such as culture and target audience.

It is also reflected in the survey that most people agree that translation standards in Singapore can be improved.

4.2 Socio-economic status of Chinese language

Most respondents use English at work and with friends. Most agree that consistent and frequent use of the language is important. Consumption of Chinese media also helps in language proficiency. Some 63% of respondents feel that their Chinese language proficiency is much better than when they took Chinese as a subject in school. This could be due to the fact that they are constantly in touch with the Chinese language as they have personal interest in the language, and are also required to use it consistently for their jobs.

The current research found that 63% of the respondents felt that the presence of Chinese language in our everyday life will help to maintain proficiency, while 72% believe that immersion in an environment that exposes them to the Chinese language in their daily life will improve their Chinese language proficiency. Many indicated in their responses that frequent exposure to Chinese language in the media helps to improve their language proficiency.

Do you think the presence of Chinese language in our everyday life, (train announcements, Road Signs, Notice Boards, Websites ect) will help in maintaining the language proficiency?

(48 responses)

● YES
● NO

Figure 5. The impact on Chinese language proficiency in the environment according to the respondents participated in the Survey for this paper.

Apart from the effort by the government, the community and families too, plays a very important role in the “conservation” of the Chinese language. The use of the Chinese language should be encouraged at home. If parents do not use the language with their children, Chinese language will remain as a subject to the children with no pragmatic or functional usage and all the efforts will be futile.

4.3 Presence of Chinese language in the public domain

TV

The annual Nielsen Media Index Report conducted between July 2015 and June 2016 on 4,660 people aged 15 and above found that free-to-air television continues to be the top platform for local audiences to access news and entertainment.

The same report said 85.5 per cent of local viewers tuned in to free-to-air television on an average weekly basis, while pay TV had a weekly viewership of 51.7 per cent. It is hence interesting to look at the presence of the Chinese language in this domain.

Information was obtained from www.toggle.sg from 20 Feb 2017 to 26 Feb 2017. A comparison was made between the total number of hours of news and information on Channel News Asia and Channel 5 (English) and on Channel 8 and Channel U

(Chinese). The number of programme hours were consolidated and presented as shown

in the Figure 2 below. There are a lot fewer Chinese programmes as compared to English ones.

Figure 6. Amount of News & Current Affairs Programmes for the 4 main free-to-air channels.

Radio

There are 19 radio frequencies in Singapore, operated by three radio broadcasters: Mediacorp Radio, SPH Radio and SAFRA Radio. Of these, only 5 are Chinese stations, and 10 are English stations.

Government and statutory board websites

Information was gathered and consolidated from across eighty government and statutory board websites, to check for Chinese versions of these websites that are accessed by the general public for information. Out of the 80 websites researched, only two had the option of content to be displayed in Chinese: yoursingapore.com and sentosa.com, both under the Singapore Tourism Board.

4.4 Discussion

The brief historical overview of Singapore mentioned earlier showed how policies were set in the various stages of Singapore's nation-building, and how proficiency in English, the official and underlining language, became increasingly important for livelihood as well as in prestige, leading to a steady decline in the use of Chinese as a

common language. In its early struggles as a young nation, this was Singapore's trade

Realising that the mother tongue languages will remain as an important tool to maintain the cultural identity of the country, the Government had in the late seventies started the Speak Mandarin Campaigns (Table 3). However, in terms of the Government's language-in-education policy interventions, to further Singapore's bilingualism proficiency level, the results obtained from the various literature reviews shows that it is still far from the desired outcome.

This paper also highlighted the relation of lowered level of Chinese language proficiency, and thus a lowered level of bilingualism, resulting in a shrinking pool of qualified translators and proof-readers.

The responses received from the 50 translation and interpretation students and professionals, reflects a need to elevate the perceived status of Chinese language to improve general fluency, to encourage more common use as well as to promote the quality and appreciation of standard and advanced Chinese.

At the 'Bridging Two Worlds: Bilingualism and Translation In Singapore' Public Forum held at SIM University in 2012⁷, Professor C.Y. Kuo shares that issues in translation and interpretation have extended to the problem of language and bilingualism. Goh (2005) also note that Chinese proficiency in Singapore is low, as one can easily spot many typos on the advertisements and information in the Chinese newspapers. He cites a Tiger Beer print advertisement with the slogan “举世之最，却无错过”. He highlights that “却无” (none) is supposed to be “切勿” (do not miss). Another example is the Singapore Bank Association's congratulatory message to Singapore in 2001:

“新加坡共联合国独立 36 周年国庆纪念”. Here “共联合国” should have been “共和国”.

He raised his concern that many of these errors are from established firms and even

⁷ www.sim.edu.sg/News/NewsClippings/Documents/290412%20ZB%20Pg%2010.pdf

Goh (2005) emphasised that the linguistic environment in Singapore does not support the growth of the Chinese language. He notes that way back in 1977, Mr Lee Kuan Yew said in Parliament that setting Chinese as a criterion for university admission would make students strive for good results. However, this policy was modified in 2004. Students are still required to pass Chinese as a second language, but it has no weightage for university entrance.

4.5 Recommendations

Duursma et al. (2007) suggest that the amount of input received by a bilingual child in a particular language is strongly related to the child's proficiency in that language. Pearson et al. (1997) also report that the length and volume of language exposure is significantly related to vocabulary learning in 2-year-olds. In their research, Scheele et al. (2010) also find that the more Dutch language input to 3-year-old children in Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch families, the larger the children's Dutch vocabulary. Similarly, the more input in ethnic languages (Tarifit-Berber or Turkish), the larger their ethnic language vocabulary.

In the Singapore context, Zhao et al. (2007) find that kindergartners with more Chinese exposure demonstrated more varied vocabulary in Chinese, with fewer code-switches to English, than children with mixed or English-dominant language exposure. As we could infer from the research, exposure to the language is one of the key to elevating the proficiency. Fishman (1989) discuss about the importance of meting out policies that is not restricted to the schools. He stresses that an enrichment language policy limited or restricted to the schools will not be successful.

One of the ways to keep the language alive and not alienated to the youth, is to allow the language to stay "active" in their everyday life. Over the years, the government has been creating opportunities to immerse the students in Chinese-speaking environment like China and Taiwan to help improve their language proficiency. In his speech at the

opening ceremony of the Speak Mandarin Campaign in July 2012⁸, Mr Heng Swee Kiat had urge the youth to be exposed to Chinese-speaking environments by sending them on a one-year program where they live, work and study in China for the entire year.

He also highlights that in 2011, the government had been investing in opportunities to put even younger students in touch with Chinese-speaking environments. In 2011 alone, more than 15,000 students visited China and Taiwan for school immersion, cultural exchanges and CCA competitions. The bulk of them were from our primary and secondary schools.

The fact remains that the classroom time is limited. Educators strive to make sure that it is utilized to the fullest. The Ministry of Education has implemented a new curriculum since 2016. Based on the recommendations of the 2010 MTL Policy Review Committee, the new curriculum has two new learning outcomes – oral interactive and written interactive – aim to teach communication skills.

The aim of this new curriculum is to develop them to become confident and effective communicators. The Ministry aims at helping the students gain confidence in the use of their mother tongue and hope to encourage them to have a love for learning. This interactive approach, hopes to help students see meaning in learning the Chinese Language as the language is part of their everyday life and not just an exam-based language.

In her article on The Straits Times on “The battle to speak Mandarin” published on February 29, 2016, columnist Tee Hun Ching shares her experience on how she gets her children to communicate in the Chinese language. Despite starting them early by using Chinese at home, she notices how the habit was quickly broken when they started school. She noticed that many parents, despite their own fluency in the Chinese language, speak to their children in English. She also shares about her own challenges

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http://mandarin.org.sg/ch/~media/smc/documents/goh%20minister%20heng%20swee%20keat_smc%20launch%20speech_270712.pdf

to keep her children using the Chinese language, where they are being immersed in an almost entirely English learning environment.

It is also important to note that apart from making sure that students do well for the Chinese language in school, efforts to maintain the language proficiency is also of great importance. Many working adults have shared that one of the main reason of not being able to use the language proficiently after joining the work force is the lack of use after they are immersed in an entirely English speaking working world.

5 Conclusion

This study has looked at responses of translation and interpretation students and professionals on the possible reasons of bad translation quality and highlighted on how the decline in the Chinese language proficiency is one of the key challenge we are confronted with. If we do not rectify the situation now by raising the “status” of the Chinese language by giving it more pragmatic presence, it will be difficult for interest and/or proficiency to improve. Singapore, which has long prided itself on bilingualism, may inevitably be in for more cringe worthy moments due to translation gaffes such as the “Hungary Ghost Festival”.

Associate Professor Lee Cher Ling of the Chinese Studies department at the National University of Singapore (NUS) laments in a media interview: “Such mistakes are unforgivable and we can laugh at them within ourselves. But now that it is covered in foreign media, it is no longer that funny to us already right?”

It is agreed that the lack of usage or practice leads to a weak command of any language. In the same media interview, Lee also suggests that it would be good, if some other subjects in the curriculum can be taught in Chinese, so as to give students more exposure.

In conclusion, it is hoped that as shown from the survey and the research outcomes, we need to encourage the use of the language by allowing it more presence in our everyday life so that the bilingualism we achieved from school is kept alive even after we leave school. One effective way is allowing a larger presence of the language in our public domain. This will allow the language to have genuine pragmatic use and probably indirectly raise its socio and economic status too. It is also hoped that this

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APPENDIX A
DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

Name	ANG CHING HOON
Matriculation No	G1503533C
Course Code	TI 6301
Course Title	DISSERTATION
Supervisor	ARISTA KUO
Submission Date	13 TH MARCH 2017

Plagiarism and Collusion

Plagiarism: to use or pass off as one's own, the writings or ideas of another without acknowledging or crediting the source from which the ideas are taken.

Collusion: submitting an assignment, project or report completed by another person and passing it off as one's own (as defined in the NTU Honour Code

<http://www.ntu.edu.sg/Pages/home.aspx>

I understand the nature of plagiarism to include the reproduction of someone else's words, ideas or findings and presenting them as my own without proper acknowledgement.

I understand that there are many forms of plagiarism which include direct copying or paraphrasing from someone else's published work (either electronic or hard copy) without acknowledging the source; using facts, information and ideas derived from a source without acknowledgement; producing assignments (required to be independent) in collaboration with and/or using the work of other people; and assisting another person to commit an act of plagiarism.

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I understand that the work submitted may be reproduced and/or communicated by the University or a third party authorized by the University for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Penalties for Plagiarism and Collusion

The penalties associated with plagiarism reflect the seriousness with which NTU view cheating, and its commitment to academic integrity. This could include the award of a failing grade for the assignment (or the course), or expulsion from the University. This policy applies to all work submitted, including oral presentations and/or written work.

Keep a copy of the Assignment

Be sure to make a copy of your work. If you have submitted your assignment electronically, also make a backup copy.

Declaration

I declare that this assignment is my own work, unless otherwise referenced, as defined by the NTU policy on plagiarism. I have read the NTU Honour Code and Pledge.

Signed _____
Date 13TH MARCH 2017

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Declaration

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Signed _____

Date 13TH MARCH 2017 _____

APPENDIX B

List of Translation Blunders¹⁰

s/n	Correct	Blunder
1	Hungry Ghost Festival (中元节)	Hungarian Ghost Festival (匈牙利鬼节)
2	River Hong Bao (春到河畔)	Singapore Ang Pow (新加坡红包)
3	London Cab (伦敦德士)	London Carriage (伦敦马车)
4	Fall Awareness Campaign (预防跌倒意识运动)	Campaign to encourage Falls (推广跌倒意识运动)

¹⁰ www.sim.edu.sg/News/NewsClippings/Documents/210412%20ZB%20Pg%2033.pdf

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire Survey Form

APPENDIX D

Content of Questionnaire

The survey consists of a total of 25 questions, as provided in Appendix I. The first section of the survey is for confirmation of consent. Questions 1 to 8 are designed to gather background information on respondents, such as socio-demographic data (e.g. nationality, ethnicity, age, gender, occupation, highest educational level). The response on age was to aid in gauging if respondents were affected by the language policy in Singapore.

Respondents' occupations were inquired to determine if they are required to actively use translation in their work.

Questions pertaining to their educational level would provide an overview of how the respondent's education has been affected by the implementation of the bilingual policy in Singapore. In particular, question 7 asks whether the respondent received their primary and secondary school education in Singapore, which is indicative of whether the respondents had gone through Singapore's bilingual education system.

Bilingualism has been a cornerstone of Singapore's education system since 1987, and it was useful to survey attitudes towards language among respondents from various age groups, to find out the influence of the bilingual education system on them.

For example, respondents aged 20-29 were born between 1988 and 1997, the batch that went through bilingual education since they started their education. They thus showed higher proficiency in the English language.

Language Use

Questions 14 to 16 find out the frequency and the type of circumstances respondents would use English and Chinese, and the language respondents are more accustomed to. In other words, their "lingua franca" amongst friends, co-workers and family.

Question 17 identifies the main language that the respondent learnt to speak and write in various settings, such as at home, in school, at work or in the media.

Language attitude

Question 10 aims to find out the motivation behind taking up a translation and interpretation course. Questions 11 to 13 inquire about respondents' self-perception of their English and Chinese proficiency, as well as how bilingual they perceive themselves to be, on a Likert scale. Question 18 also seeks the respondent's perception of their ability to write, speak and listen in English or Chinese on a Likert scale of "Strongly disagree", "Disagree", "Neutral", "Agree" and "Strongly agree".

Question 21 asks respondents on their perception of their Chinese language proficiency after leaving school, and gets respondents to compare their current Chinese language proficiency to the time they took Chinese as a subject in school.

Correlations between Chinese language proficiency and translation quality

The section on bilingualism and translation quality uses attitude statements to investigate language attitudes towards Chinese-English bilingualism. Question 18 evaluates the respondent's perception on the need to improve their Chinese or English language proficiency to improve translation quality. Question 19 asks respondents to gauge if they think that "One needs to be strong in the target language to produce good translations", "One needs to be strong in the source language to produce good translations", or if "One needs to be strong in both the Source and Target language to produce good translations".

Question 19 seeks the respondent's opinion on whether being stronger in the source language or target language is more important, or if both are important. Question 20 is another opinion question on whether the respondents think it is important to have the Chinese language in our everyday life and how it will help improve proficiency.

Question 22 is a short answer question for the respondents to rate their Chinese language proficiency. Question 23 asks respondents to discuss the factors that have impacted their Chinese language proficiency. Question 24 asks respondents to provide a short answer about how Chinese language proficiency has impacted translation competency.

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Question 25 asks respondents to rate translation quality in Singapore on a Likert scale.

Question 26 is a multiple choice question for respondents to choose the factor that has the greatest impact on C-E and E-C translation.

APPENDIX E

Survey Findings

Main Factors that played a part in shaping current Chinese Language Proficiency

Environment	Media	Education	
72%	17%	11%	
33	8	5	46

in your opinion, what factors have played a part in shaping your current Chinese language proficiency?	Main Factors	Secondary Factors
Listening to UFM 1003	Media	
Frequent speaking, reading and listening	Environment	Media
exposure to overseas chinese media, frequent use in cultural activities	Media	
Education.	Education	
Education, reading and of course, using them	Education	
Home speaking environment as well as school subject combination	Environment	
reading and listening to news	Media	
TV programmes	Media	
The immediate environment.	Environment	Media
Exposure to it at home	Environment	Media
Interest in the language, reading newspapers on a daily if not regular basis.	Media	
Having to use the language at work, and picking up more Chinese vocabulary through reading the Chinese papers.	Environment	Media
speaking and,reading in daily life	Environment	Media
Education and family environment	Environment	Media
Working in the localization industry	Environment	Media
Interest	Environment	Media
Communications with friends and news-reading	Environment	Media
Reading, listening	Environment	Media
Consumption of Chinese media due to Taiwanese idols	Media	
Work requirements	Environment	Media

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Home background, daily and frequent use both at home and at work, lots of reading (books, media)	Environment	Media
Reading	Environment	Media
Learning environment	Environment	Media
Reading	Environment	Media
Surrounding/peer pressure.	Environment	Media
lack of use in a professional way at work, mainly used for casual daily communication.	Environment	Media
Teachers and home environment that is conducive, reading in Chinese medium helps too.	Environment	Education
Frequent usage	Environment	Media
thinking in the language/ translating thoughts in Eng over to Chi	Environment	
Constantly use.	Environment	Media
Living in China, doing translation as part of my work, Chinese girlfriend	Environment	
Regular, sustained use of the language.	Environment	Media
Interact with PRC in Chinese and read more.	Environment	
Mandarin TV shows and free bilingual Mypaper	Media	
Exposure and interest in the language	Environment	Media
Previous work experience in Chinese Radio	Environment	Media
Increased usage in current work	Environment	
The amount of reading, reciting and writing practice.	Environment	Media
reading and work	Environment	Media
Good language foundation established in secondary school and media exposure	Education	Media
N/A		
Taking a bachelor's in Chinese	Education	
Interest	Environment	Media
Mostly from lessons in school when I was in China studying.	Education	Environment
Constant exposure to the language	Environment	Media
Continuous use of the language	Environment	Media
Reading and watching Chinese movies	Media	

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Main Factors that played a part in shaping current Chinese Language Proficiency

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Language Proficiency Level of Different Age Group

Please tick the relevant boxes [Age]	On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest), rate your English language proficiency level.	On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest), rate your Chinese language proficiency level.	Classify
40 to 49	4	3	Eng Better
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	3	4	
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	5	
40 to 49	5	4	Eng Better
40 to 49	4	3	Eng Better
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	4	equally good
40 to 49	4	5	
30 to 39	5	5	equally good
30 to 39	4	3	Eng Better
30 to 39	5	4	Eng Better
30 to 39	4	4	equally good
30 to 39	3	4	
30 to 39	4	5	
30 to 39	4	3	Eng Better
30 to 39	5	3	Eng Better
30 to 39	5	3	Eng Better
30 to 39	4	5	
30 to 39	4	3	Eng Better
30 to 39	4	4	equally good
30 to 39	3	4	
30 to 39	4	4	equally good
30 to 39	4	4	equally good
20 to 29	4	4	equally good
20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	4	4	equally good
20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	5	4	Eng Better

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	4	5	
20 to 29	5	3	Eng Better
20 to 29	3	5	
20 to 29	4	5	
20 to 29	4	5	
20 to 29	5	4	Eng Better
20 to 29	4	4	equally good
20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	3	4	
20 to 29	4	3	Eng Better
20 to 29	4	4	equally good
20 to 29	3	3	equally good
20 to 29	4	5	

	40 - 49	30 - 39	20 - 29
English Better	23%	40%	20%
Equally Good	54%	33%	25%
Chinese Better	23%	27%	55%
TOTAL	27%	31%	42%

Language Proficiency of Different Age Group

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Please tick the relevant boxes [I need to improve my Chinese language proficiency to improve my translation quality.]	Please tick the relevant boxes [I need to improve my English language proficiency to improve my translation quality]
Agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Disagree	Strongly agree
Disagree	Neutral
Agree	Agree
Disagree	Agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Agree	Strongly agree
Neutral	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Disagree	Agree
Neutral	Neutral
Strongly agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Neutral
Disagree	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Agree	Agree
Agree	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Neutral	Strongly agree
Agree	Agree
Agree	Strongly agree
Agree	Neutral
Agree	Neutral
Strongly agree	Strongly disagree
Agree	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Strongly agree	Agree
Neutral	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Neutral	Neutral
Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Agree	Agree
Agree	Agree
Agree	Agree
Agree	Agree
Strongly agree	Strongly agree

No. of Participants believe that they need to improve their Chinese language Proficiency to improve translation

StronglyDisagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
0%	10%	10%	35%	44%	100%
0	5	5	17	21	48

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

No. of Participants believe that they need to improve their English language Proficiency to improve translation					
StronglyDisagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
2%	0%	13%	48%	38%	100%
1	0	6	23	18	48

Note

1. So what does this shows?
2. From the table, there are more participants that agree they need to improve their English proficiency level in order to improve translation, 48%. whereas for those that strongly agree they need to improve their Chinese proficiency level in order to improve translation, the figure is 44%.
3. Majorirty still believes (Agree + Disagree)

COMMENTS: difficult to conclude anything from this chart

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

No. of Participants believe that they need to be strong in both their Chinese and English Language Proficiency to improve Translation Quality					
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
0%	2%	0%	33%	65%	100%
0	1	0	16	31	48

Presence of Chinese Language in our Everyday Life will help to Maintain the Proficiency Level			
	YES	NO	
	63%	38%	
	30	18	48

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

Translation Quality in Singapore					
Bad (1)	Below Average (2)	Average (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	
0%	10%	75%	15%	0%	100%
0	5	36	7	0	48

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

What is the greatest Impact on EC-CE Translation Quality in Singapore			
Language	Cultural Understanding	Economic Value	
67%	23%	10%	
32	11	5	48

APPENDIX F

List of Websites

Ministries, Statutory Boards, Organs of State, Other Organisations, Public Services				
S/N	Websites	Governing Authorities	Language	Remarks
	<u>MINISTRIES</u>			
1	www.mci.gov.sg & www.gov.sg	Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI)	English	www.gov.sg have listening feature, but is only in English
2	www.mccy.gov.sg	Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY)	English	
3	www.mindef.gov.sg	Ministry of Defence (MINDEF)	English	
4	www.moe.gov.sg	Ministry of Education (MOE)	English	
5	www.mof.gov.sg	Ministry of Finance (MOF)	English	
6	www.mfa.gov.sg	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	English	
7	www.moh.gov.sg	Ministry of Health (MOH)	English	
8	www.mha.gov.sg	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	English	
9	www.mlaw.gov.sg	Ministry of Law (MINLAW)	English	
10	www.mom.gov.sg	Ministry of Manpower (MOM)	English	
11	www.mnd.gov.sg	Ministry of National Development (MND)	English	
12	www.msf.gov.sg	Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)	English	
13	www.mewr.gov.sg	Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR)	English	
14	www.mti.gov.sg	Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)	English	
15	www.mot.gov.sg	Ministry of Transport (MOT)	English	
16	www.pmo.gov.sg	Prime Minister's Office (PMO)	English	

Bilingualism and its impact on translation quality in Singapore

	<u>STATUTORY BOARDS</u>			
1	www.acra.gov.sg	ACCOUNTING AND CORPORATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY (ACRA)	English	
2	www.a-star.edu.sg	AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH (A*STAR)	English	
3	www.ava.gov.sg	AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (AVA)	English	
4	www.boa.gov.sg	BOARD OF ARCHITECTS (BOA)	English	
5	www.bca.gov.sg	BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY (BCA)	English	
6	www.cra.gov.sg	CASINO REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (CRA)	English	
7	www.cpf.gov.sg	CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND BOARD (CPF)	English	
8	www.caas.gov.sg	CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (CAAS)	English	
9	www.cscollage.gov.sg	CIVIL SERVICE COLLEGE (CSC)	English	
10	www.ccs.gov.sg	COMPETITION COMMISSION OF SINGAPORE (CCS)	English	
11	www.cea.gov.sg	COUNCIL FOR ESTATE AGENCIES (CEA)	English	
12	www.dsta.gov.sg	DEFENCE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCY (DSTA)	English	
13	www.edb.gov.sg	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD (EDB)	English	
14	www.ema.gov.sg	ENERGY MARKET AUTHORITY (EMA)	English	
15	www.tech.gov.sg	GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY AGENCY (GOVTECH)	English	
16	www.hpb.gov.sg	HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD (HPB)	English	
17	www.hsa.gov.sg	HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY (HSA)	English	

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18	www.hlb.gov.sg	HOTELS LICENSING BOARD (HLB)	English	
19	www.hdb.gov.sg	HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD (HDB)	English	
20	www.imda.gov.sg	INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)	English	
21	www.iras.gov.sg	INLAND REVENUE AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (IRAS)	English	
22	www.ite.edu.sg	INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION (ITE)	English	
23	www.ipos.gov.sg	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF SINGAPORE (IPOS)	English	
24	www.iesingapore.gov.sg	INTERNATIONAL ENTERPRISE SINGAPORE (IE)	English	
25	www.iseas.edu.sg	ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (ISEAS)	English	
26	www.jtc.gov.sg	JTC CORPORATION (JTC)	English	
27	www.lta.gov.sg	LAND TRANSPORT AUTHORITY (LTA)	English	
28	www.muis.gov.sg	MAJLIS UGAMA ISLAM, SINGAPURA (MUIS)	English	
29	www.mpa.gov.sg	MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (MPA)	English	
30	www.mas.gov.sg	MONETARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (MAS)	English	
31	www.nyp.edu.sg	NANYANG POLYTECHNIC (NYP)	English	
32	www.nac.gov.sg	NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL (NAC)	English	
33	www.ncss.gov.sg	NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE (NCSS)	English	
34	www.nea.gov.sg	NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (NEA)	English	
35	www.nhb.gov.sg	NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD (NHB)	English	
36	www.nlb.gov.sg	NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD (NLB)	English	
37	www.nparks.gov.sg	NATIONAL PARKS BOARD (NPARKS)	English	

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38	www.np.edu.sg	NGEE ANN POLYTECHNIC (NP)	English	
39	www.pa.gov.sg	PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION (PA)	English	
40	www.peb.gov.sg	PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS BOARD, SINGAPORE (PEB)	English	
41	www.pub.gov.sg	PUB, Singapore's National Water Agency (PUB)	English	
42	www.ptc.gov.sg	PUBLIC TRANSPORT COUNCIL (PTC)	English	
43	www.rp.edu.sg	REPUBLIC POLYTECHNIC (RP)	English	
44	www.science.edu.sg	SCIENCE CENTRE BOARD (SCB)	English	
45	www.sentosa.com.sg	SENTOSA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (SDC)	English / Chinese	
46	www.sac.gov.sg	SINGAPORE ACCOUNTANCY COMMISSION (SAC)	English	
47	www.score.gov.sg	SINGAPORE CORPORATION OF REHABILITATIVE ENTERPRISES (SCORE)	English	
48	www.sdc.gov.sg	SINGAPORE DENTAL COUNCIL (SDC)	English	
49	www.seab.gov.sg	SINGAPORE EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT BOARD (SEAB)	English	
50	www.slf.gov.sg	SINGAPORE LABOUR FOUNDATION (SLF)	English	
51	www.sla.gov.sg	SINGAPORE LAND AUTHORITY (SLA)	English	
52	www.smc.gov.sg	SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL (SMC)	English	
53	www.snb.gov.sg	SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD (SNB)	English	
54	www.spc.gov.sg	SINGAPORE PHARMACY COUNCIL (SPC)	English	
55	www.sp.edu.sg	SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC (SP)	English	
56	www.stb.gov.sg	SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD (STB)	English	
	www.yoursingapore.com	Global English / Australia English / Chinese / German / Indian / Indonesian / Japanese / Korean / Malay / Philippines / Vietnamese / Thai		12 languages

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57	www.skillsfuture.sg	SKILLS FUTURE SINGAPORE (SSG)	English	
58	www.sportsingapore.gov.sg	SPORT SINGAPORE (SPORTSG)	English	
59	www.spring.gov.sg	SPRING Singapore (SPRING)	English	
60	www.tcmpb.gov.sg	TCM PRACTITIONERS BOARD (TCMPB)	English / Chinese	
61	www.tp.edu.sg	TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC (TP)	English	
62	www.toteboard.gov.sg	TOTE BOARD (TOTE BOARD)	English	
63	www.ur.gov.sg	URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (URA)	English	
64	www.wsg.gov.sg	WORKFORCE SINGAPORE (WSG)	English	

APPENDIX G

List of Radio Stations in Singapore

Frequency	Station	Language
88.3 MHz	883JiaFM	Chinese, English
88.9 MHz	BBC World Service	English
89.7 MHz	Ria 89.7FM	Malay, English
90.5 MHz	Gold 905FM	English
91.3 MHz	One FM 91.3	English
92.0 MHz	Kiss 92FM	English
92.4 MHz	Symphony 92.4FM	English
93.3 MHz	Y.E.S. 93.3FM	Chinese
93.8 MHz	938LIVE	English
94.2 MHz	Warna 94.2FM	Malay, Arab
95.0 MHz	Class 95FM	English
95.8 MHz	Capital 95.8FM	Chinese
96.8 MHz	Oli 96.8FM	Tamil, Hindi, English
97.2 MHz	Love 97.2FM	Chinese, English

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Frequency	Station	Language
98.0 MHz	Power98FM	English
98.7 MHz	987FM	English
99.5 MHz	Lush 99.5FM	English
100.3 MHz	UFM100.3	Chinese

APPENDIX H

TV

Tabulate Local Productions on Free-to-Air TV Channels (based on programme schedule 20th to 26th Feb 2017)					
1	Channel 5 - English Channel	Programme (mins)			
	<u>Analysis</u>				
	(1) News	225			
	(2) Current Affairs	300			
	(3) Total	525			
2	Channel News Asia - English Channel				
	(1) News	4317			
	(2) Current Affairs	2244			
	(3) Total	6561			
4	Channel 8 - Chinese Channel				
	(1) News	375			
	(2) Current Affairs	990			
	(3) Total	1365			
5	Channel U - Chinese Channel				
	(1) News	225			
	(2) Current Affairs	180			
	(3) Total	405			
6	Overall Comparison (minutes)	8856			
	News & Current Affairs Programme Weightage between English and Chinese Language in Singapore's Free to Air Channels				
	English	Chinese			
	80%	20%			
	7086	1770	8856		
	Amount of News & Current Affairs Programmes of Channel News Asia, Channel 5, Channel 8, Channel U				
	Channel News Asia	Channel 5	Channel 8	Channel U	
	74%	6%	15%	5%	
	6561	525	1365	405	8856

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