Sociolinguistics today : Asia and the West

Bolton, Kingsley

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1 Sociolinguistics today: Asia and the west

Kingsley Bolton

BACKGROUND

The vast majority of the chapters in this volume were originally presented as papers at the First Hong Kong Conference on Language and Society, which was held at the University of Hong Kong from 24 to 28 April1988.[1]

The Hong Kong conference

The theme of the Hong Kong conference was 'Sociolinguistics today: eastern and western perspectives'. In broad terms, the aims of the conference were to provide a forum for an exchange of views between academics working within the field of sociolinguistics in Asia and their counterparts in western societies, to promote the study of language and society in Asia, and to facilitate the establishing of academic contacts between researchers in Asia and those working in western universities.

In the event, the conference was truly international in terms of the provenance of those who attended. Approximately ninety participants from sixteen countries presented papers at the conference. Of these sixteen countries, six were western, i.e. Australia, Britain, Canada, France, New Zealand and the United States of America. Ten Asian societies were represented; Hong Kong, Macau, India, Japan, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. In addition, approximately ninety other linguists and academics, primarily from the Asian region, also took part in the conference as observers.[2]

The Hong Kong conference of 1988 was neither the first conference to be held on sociolinguistic issues in Hong Kong, nor the first to be held in the region. Regional seminars and. colloquia have been regularly held on such issues over the years both in Hong Kong itself and in other Asian countries, notably Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. Many of these previous conferences, however, have either been predominantly regional in focus, or been overwhelmingly concerned with language in education and educational linguistics' (e.g. the Regional Language Centre conferences in Singapore, and the Institute of Language in Education conferences in Hong Kong, which are both held on an annual basis).

The Hong Kong Conference on Language and Society, then, was a 'first' in two senses. It was the first conference (to the best of one's knowledge) held in the territory *solely* on the broad range of issues associated with the whole gamut of studies known today as 'sociolinguistics'; and it was also the first conference of its kind in Hong Kong which explicitly set out to attract a large number of international contributors in the attempt to establish a forum for both western and Asian sociolinguistics.

Hong Kong - tension and change

It was also particularly appropriate that a major international conference of this kind was held where it was. Hong Kong has long enjoyed the status (albeit cliched) as 'a meeting-place of east and west'. It is a unique society, where western culture, politics and business mix and merge with the cultures of the Chinese from mainland China, and the 'overseas' Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan, as well as with the other Asian cultures - including Indian, Japanese, Korean and Philippine- that are represented here.

As the headlines of world media testify, Hong Kong is currently going through a period of rapid political and social change. In 1984, the Joint Declaration of the PRC and British governments set out the guidelines. for the political future of the territory. After what will be 155 years of British colonial rule, sovereignty over Hong Kong will revert to the Chinese government on 1 July 1997. Hong Kong, it is

proposed, will then become a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, but will enjoy 'a high degree of autonomy' in a system of one country, two systems'. Under the terms of the Joint Declaration, specific guarantees were also set out to ensure 'the preservation of Hong Kong's economic, legal and social systems, and the way of life of its people for 50 years beyond 1997' (Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons, Report, 1989).

The confidence of Hong Kong people in the terms of the Draft Agreement (particularly after the events of June 1989 in Beijing and what many perceive to be a subsequent 'hardening' of the attitudes of the Chinese leadership) and their confidence in the future 'stability and prosperity' of the territory, have fluctuated wildly since 1984. At the time of writing, confidence in the future has rarely been lower. Uncertainties relating to the increasing exodus of local talent in the form of emigration (currently running at around '50,000 people per annum), the right-of-abode issue in relation to the United Kingdom, and the question of representative government and the 'democratization' of Hong Kong's political structure all remain to be resolved.

Sociolinguistic issues in Hong Kong

The rapid changes and resultant uncertainties in the political and social life of Hong Kong are paralleled by changes and uncertainties in the linguistic profile of the society. Since the Second World War, the sociolinguistic situation in the territory has been most clearly characterized by a tension between English, the *de jure* language of government, law and education, and the dominant language of technology, commerce and international trade, and Cantonese, which is the vernacular lingua franca of the vast majority of Hong Kong Chinese. The prospect of social and political changes is mirrored by the prospect of changes in the sociolinguistic balance in the community, and many local linguists (see Pierson, 1988) currently suggest that it is inevitable that Putonghua (the national language of the PRC) will gain importance dramatically in the near future and may eventually surpass both English and Cantonese in some domains of society. The prospect, then, is one of a polyglossic situation with two high and one low language [with] Putonghua the language of politics and administration, English the language of technology and trade, and Cantonese the language of the family' (Pierson, 1988).

Issues of a sociolinguistic nature, inextricably linked as they are to the crucial political issues of the day, are therefore of acute interest in the Hong Kong community. Such concerns, moreover, are not limited to sociolinguistic researchers and academics in the two universities or the two polytechnics, they are also the very stuff of daily newspaper reports and television and radio programmes. They are the substance of daily conversations and discussions by interested 'lay people' from all walks of life and all strata of society; to a much greater extent perhaps than is typically the case in many western societies, where issues that might be described as 'sociolinguistic' in character are far less likely to make a dramatic impact on the general population.

In this context, conferences like the Hong Kong conference potentially have a crucial role to play. Not only can such gatherings inform and strengthen academic work, both in Hong Kong and in the Asian region generally, but they may also produce results in other areas as well, including language planning, language policies and work on language in education. It is therefore hoped that the two universities in the territory will continue to hold regular conferences well into the foreseeable future.

In the following sections, this chapter proceeds to discuss sociolinguistics as a field of study in terms of its development in the west, and to attempt to pro\'ide a brief overview of current sociolinguistic theory and research (in particular in Europe and the USA). It then goes ~n to present a survey of current sociolinguistic work in a number of Asian societies.

Finally, the chapter provides a short guide to the contributions included in the following sections (Parts II-V), and attempts to draw same preliminary conclusions about the issues discussed in this, the first chapter of the volume.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS TODAY

'Sociolinguistics' has been broadly defined) as 'a branch of LINGUISTICS which studies all aspects of the relationship between LANGUAGE and society' (Crystal, 1985). Whereas many sociolinguists might accept such a formulation as a starting-point, they might also, however, contend that such a definition is misleading. Some would argue that, whatever else,sociolinguists are certainly not concerned with *all* aspects of language andsociety {Trudgill, 1978a). Others might opt for an alternative gloss, one that focuses more precisely on the linguistics of the equation, such as 'the study of language in its social context' (Labov, 1972a), or 'the study of language in its socio-cultural context' (Lavandera, 1988). Others, too, would challenge the subordination of sociolinguistics to 'linguistics proper' and argue for the recognition of sociolinguistics as a discipline in its own right {Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier, 1987).

'Sociolinguistics', since its beginnings, has regularly faced a range of issues related to the adequate definition of its terms, and there have been frequent debates about its status as a field of study. Some see it as a 'discipline' in its own right, others as an 'interdisciplinary' endeavour; others view it as a part (or 'field' or 'sub-field') of general linguistics; while others see it as the central focus of *all* linguistics, and argue, as Robert Le Page does, that, in some senses, 'all sociolinguistics is linguistics and all linguistics is sociolinguistics' (Trans., 1988).

The development of sociolinguistics

Whereas sociolinguistics is a notoriously young field of inquiry, the study of language in relation to social life is not, and a number of accounts of the history of sociolinguistics take due note of this. Hymes, for example, pays tribute to such diverse influences as de Saussure, Hymes, Durkheim, Meillet, Malinowski, Firth, Boas, Bloomfield, Sapir, Whorf, Jakobson and Wittgenstein (see Hymes, 1972).

To some extent then, the work of linguists earlier in the century, and specific examples would include Sapir (1921), Malinowski (1923), Jespersen (1925), Firth (1937), Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1956), helped pave the way for the emergence, in the last twenty-five years or so, of this new field. This earlier work, however, hardly anticipated the sudden growth of sociolinguistics in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, as witnessed by the publication of specialist academic journals iii the field (notably *Language in Society* and the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language),* together with the rapid appearance of a large body of published work on the study of language and society (e. g. Hertzler, 1965; Bright, 1966; Fishman, 1972a; Giglioli, 1972; Pride and Holmes, 1972; Labov, 1972a; Hymes, 1974; and Trudgill, 1974a). The reasons for the sudden explosion of interest at this time were varied and interrelated.

First, in the USA and Europe (Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier, 1987), the growing interest in the area reflected the concerns of educationalists and sociologists in western industrialized countries about the relationship between language and social disadvantage (and, for example, issues related to language and social class in Britain, language and race in the USA, and language and immigration policies in West Germany and other European societies).

Second, there was the growing interest in sociology itself, both in the USA, where consensus paradigms such as structural-functionalism were predominant, and in Europe, where sociology was influenced by a variety of 'conflict theories' derived from the traditions of Marx and Weber (Giddens, 1988). Sociology as an academic discipline experienced a rapid growth in the 1960s and early 1970s and interest in the subject spilled over not only into the wider community (for example, through a growing awareness in the mass media of issues related to social class and feminism) but also into adjacent academic fields as well, of which linguistics was one. Thus, in some senses, the growth of sociology legitimized the interests of linguists in socially important questions, such as language and social class, language and sex, language and race, and language and immigration.

Third, among many linguists themselves in the 1960s dissatisfaction with the ascendancy of Chomskyan linguistics was increasing significantly. The central dichotomy in the Chomskyan approach between 'competence' and 'performance' (with its similarity to Saussure's earlier distinction between

'langue' and *'parole'),* together with his focus on the closed-system features of syntax, precipitated a strong reaction to the generativist orthodoxy of the day. As Lavandera puts it, 'a sizeable number of linguists struck out on their own, as it were, and devoted themselves to building alternative conceptions of language, in which its social function was regarded as paramount' (Lavandera, 1988). At the same time, such linguists also began to question the Chomskyan conception of linguistic competence, and to posit alternative theoretical constructs, most significant of which was Hymes's (1970) model of 'communicative competence' (see also Hymes, 1987).

Fourth, another major influence was the redefinition and reformulation of dialectology during this period; a process which was crucially connected with the work of William Labov. During the late 1960s and early 1970s Labov carried out ground-breaking work in 'urban dialectology' (Labov, 1966, 1972a, 1972b) which redefined the scope and methodology ofdialectologists (and anthropologists). Thus the new 'urban' or 'social' dialectology of Labov and others (including Trudgill, 1974b) arose as a reaction, in part, against 'traditional dialectology'. Traditional dialectologists in Europe and the USA, such as Orton and Kurath, had been concerned to map out the regional speech-forms of typically rural populations with largely no attention paid to social variation of any kind.

The new dialectologists were crucially concerned with the speech of city dwellers, and a focus on the study of the co-variation of language with social and sociological factors (e.g. social class, age, sex) was placed at the core of such work (Labov, 1966, 1972a, 1972b; Trudgill, 1974b, etc). Dialectology in this period underwent a modernization, as it were, and the new urban dialectologists began to redefine such work within the emergent field of sociolinguistics (Chambers and Trudgill, 1980; Milroy, 1980; Romaine, 1982b) sharing objectives derived from a 'secular linguistics' (Labov, 1972c), which 'aimed ultimately at improving linguistic theory and at developing our understanding of the nature of language' (Trudgill, 1983a; cited in Walters, 1988).

The scope of sociolinguistics

From the beginning, sociolinguists were involved in a good deal of debate and argumentation concerning both the goals and the scope of the new field of study. Dell Hymes (1974) set out three important goals for sociolinguists: (1) *the social as well as the linguistic;* that is, socially oriented work with practical goals (e.g. in education, with minority groups, and language policies); (2) *socially realistic linguistics,* by which was meant work (e.g. that of Labov and his colleagues) concerned with sociallyoriented approaches to 'mainstream' linguistic issues such as linguistic rules, sound change, etc.; and (3) *socially constituted linguistics,* the most important feature of which was that it would aim at a 'theory of language' not a 'theory of grammar', by which was meant a wide-ranging theory of language in use, of the type favoured by Hymes himself.

In both the work cited above (Hymes, 1974) and in an earlier article (Hymes, 1972), Hymes argued in favour of a sociolinguistics that was as broad and as 'interdisciplinary', or 'multidisciplinary', as possible:

> We find on every hand that if the goal of sociolinguistic research is to understand language as part of social life, its approach must be integrative. . . . It cannot be solely correlative of linguistic and social features, as separately identified within the present frames of reference of linguistics and other branches of the human sciences. . . . The greatest challenge for sociolinguistic research is to develop the methods, concepts and findings that will enable one ultimately to approach language from the linguistic side, not only as grammar, but also as language organized in use; from the social side, to approach social structure, cultural pattern, values, and the like, in terms of their realization in verbal and symbolic action. (Hymes, 1972).

Almost at the other end of the spectrum was the position taken by William Labov. In the preface to the influential chapter on 'The study of language in its social context' (1972a), Labov noted that the kind of work he was concerned to do covered the area generally referred to as 'general linguistics', and that his concerns centred on 'the forms of linguistic rules, their combination into systems, the co-existence of several systems, the evolution of these rules and systems with time'. Labov concluded his preface with the

assertion, by way of emphasis, that: 'If there were no need to contrast this work with the study of language out of its social context, I would prefer to say that this was simply *linguistics'*.

The 'sociology of language' and 'sociolinguistics'

Debates concerning the goals and scope of the field were mirrored by early arguments about names. Joshua Fishman, in particular, was concerned to promote the use of the term 'sociology of language' (Fishman, 1971, 1972a,1972b, 1972c, etc.), although the work most easily identified with this term comprised studies of 'macro' issues, such as survey work, language policies and language planning, and the 'sociolinguistics of society' (Fasold, 1984).Discussions and debate about the interdisciplinary nature of sociolinguistics have continued up to the present day. Significantly, however, Grimshaw (1987a) notes that up to the 1970s, if not to the present, the crossfertilization of sociology with linguistics has been far more noticeable in linguistics than in the field of sociology.

Certainly, there can be little doubt of at least a uni-directional impact if one considers the ways in which the investigative strategies and techniques of social-scientific inquiry, e.g. methods of data collection, including survey and questionnaire data, observation, ethnographies, data recording, etc.; and methods of data analysis, using both quantitative (typically statistical) techniques, or, less commonly, qualitative techniques of analysis, have come to influence the study of language and society. The impact of such methods and techniques on sociolinguistics has been dramatic and far-reaching. By the late 1970s, moreover, the term 'sociology of language' had come to be seen, especially in Britain, as referring to a sub-field of 'sociolinguistics', which was increasingly recognized as the superordinate term to refer to the wide range of studies concerned with the relationship of language and society.

'Macro' and 'micro' sociolinguistics

Another dichotomy, overlapping yet not isomorphic with that of 'the sociology of language' versus 'sociolinguistics', also developed with reference to the classification of studies in terms of 'macro' versus 'micro' sociolinguistics (Fishman, 1972a).

Today, this opposition is discussed in a number of ways amongst sociolinguists and sociologists. Within sociolinguistics, the 'macro' label is normally attached to 'large-scale' studies of language use (such as language surveys) which are concerned to describe languages in terms of group behaviour explained with reference to such constructs as languages, dialects, varieties, societal multilingualism, repertoires and domains. The 'micro' tag is usually reserved for the description of language behaviour in narrower detail, either as defined by the description of user characteristics (e.g. in terms of individuals or within small groups), or in terms of the detail accorded to linguistic description and analysis. Nevertheless, a certain amount of imprecision exists, and different linguists use the terms in a variety of ways; Cooper (1983), for example, distinguishes between the 'summative' approach of macrosociolinguistics and the 'interactionist' approach of microsociolinguistics.

Similarly, within sociology, a number of related definitions have been suggested. Grimshaw (1987b) suggests that the distinction for sociologists, generally marks 'a difference in theoretical interest behveen social interaction (action) and social structure - ordinarily accompanied by a commitment to "qualitative" and "quantitative" methodologies respectively'. Nevertheless, such a definition is only partly sufficient, and Grimshaw goes on to examine the issues relating to the 'level-relation' question in considerable detail (Grimshaw, 1987b).

Within sociolinguistics the terms 'macro' and 'micro' are frequently (and. rather vaguely) used throughout the literature. Thus, a great deal of work within 'the sociology of language' would be classified as macrosociolinguistics; although, again, this would depend on the level and type of detail present in such work. Conversely, work in 'secular linguistics' (and certain kinds of studies in the ethnography of speaking, social psychology of language and discourse analysis) is typically described as micro-sociolinguistics.

A more detailed taxonomic framework for describing the scope of sociolinguistics is put forward by Trudgill (1978a), which is shaped largely by the recognition of different *objectives* within the field of sociolinguistics.

Objectives

Trudgill (1978a) sets out to clarify the range of issues facing sociolinguistics by reference to the objectives of linguists working in this field (also see Trudgill,1988). He suggests that it is possible to divide studies of language into three groups: 'those where the objectives are purely sociological or social-scientific; those where they are partly sociological and partly linguistic; and those where the objectives are wholly linguistic'.

According to this classification, the first group of studies would comprise the work of those linguists *interested in the study of language and society chiefly in order to ' make statements about society*. This category would, then, include the work of ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel and Turner, as well as Bernstein's studies of 'codes'. The second group of studies comprises the work of those *concerned to make statements about both lanf!Uaf!e and society.* This second group thus comprises a wide range Objectives
Trudgill (1978a) sets out to clarify the range of issues facing sociolinguistics by reference to the objectives of linguists working in this field (also see Trudgill,1988). He suggests that it is possible to divide studies of language into three groups: 'those where the objectives are purely sociological or social-scientific; those where they are partly sociological and partly linguistic; and those where the objectives are wholly linguistic'.
and society chiefly in order to inform and illuminate areas of linguistic inquiry, such as linguistic change, linguistic variability and the structure of linguistic systems. In this category, Trudgill includes the 'secular linguistics' of William Labov, Bickerton, Le Page and others (including Trudgill himself).

Trudgill's classification is illuminating and relatively clear-cut. Today, it might be argued that relatively recent subject areas in sociolinguistics, such as 'politics and language' or 'critical linguistics' (e.g. Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew, 1979; Kress and Hodge, 1979), or 'sex and language' (Cameron, 1985; Lakoff, 1975; and Spender, 1980), or even 'creole sociolinguistics' (e.g. Mi.ihlhausler, 1986; and Romaine, 1988a) might also deserve separate listings in such a taxonomy. Trudgill's classification, however, framed as it is in terms of objectives, is sufficiently robust to accommodate areas of inquiry additional to those originally mentioned, including newer perspectives that have emerged over the last decade or so.

Current perspectives

Since the mid-1970s, work based on the various approaches to the study of sociolinguistics outlined in Trudgill (1978a), has expanded in scope and depth. The work of those researchers whose interests lie chiefly at the sociological end of the scale (e.g. ethnomethodologists and those interested in Bernstein's code theories) has continued to develop, and has continued to inform work usually seen as more 'linguistic' in orientation (see, for example, Schiffrin, 1988, for a recent account of the influence of ethnomethodology or 'conversation analysis'; and Hasan, 1988, for an indication of Bernstein's influence on recent work in discourse analysis).

'Mainstream' sociolinguistics, i.e. work by those whose objectives are typically concerned with both society *and* language, has also continued apace. Work on the 'sociology of language', in particular on such topics as societal multilingualism, bilingual education, diglossia, language planning, language policies, etc., has produced a substantial body of literature in the last decade or so (Fishman, 1976; Fishman, Cooper and Conrad, 1977; Spolsky and Cooper, 1978; Fasold, 1984, 1988a and 1988b, Spolsky, 1988).

Work on the ethnography of speaking and anthropological linguistics continues to make an important contribution, particularly in the qualitative analysis of language in use. Although work on the ethnography of speaking was originally based, to a large extent, on Hymes's early work (Hymes, 1964a, 1964b, etc.) the field of inquiry and research in this area has widened in numerous ways (see, for example, Bauman and Scherzer, 1974; Saville-Troike, 1982; Duranti, 1988). Not only has work of this kind made important

theoretical and methodological contributions to other areas, such as discourse analysis and applied linguistics, but cross-fertilization has taken place in the other direction too, with practising anthropologists turning increasingly to sociolinguistics and pragmatics for new insights concerning the study of language (see Macdonald, 1988).

'Discourse analysis' serves as a wide umbrella term for a multiplicity of studies of 'text', 'conversation', 'talk' and varieties of language use at a supra-sentential level. Its scope currently subsumes work in descriptive linguistics, psycholinguistics, artificial intelligence, pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistically oriented discourse analysis includes not only studies influenced by Hymes's framework for the study of speech events (Hymes, 1964a, 1964b; Saville-Troike, 1982), but also work influenced by pragmatics, conversational analysis and ethnomethodology (Brown and Yule, 1983; Leech, 1983; Stubbs, 1983), 'interactional sociolinguistics' (Gumperz, 1982a, 1982b), and is now even making inroads into areas more closely associated with secular linguistics (see Milroy, 1988).

As far as 'mainstream sociolinguistics' is concerned, it is also worth noting that work done within the 'social psychology of language' framework has also grown and developed extensively. Work in this area in the early 1970s was largely associated with 'reactions to accent' studies, and the study of language attitudes (Giles and Powesland, 1975; etc.). Since that time, however, social-psychological work on 'intergroup' and 'accommodation' theory (Giles and StClair, 1977; Giles and Byrne, 1982) and a wide variety of other topics (see Giles, Coupland and Wiemann, 1988, and Giles, 1988, iri Parts lll and V of this volume) has widened considerably in range and focus. Today, studies of this kind occupy a central position in sociolinguistics, with important contributions at the level of theory, methodology and findings.

Finally, we could also consider recent trends in secular linguistics, or 'quantitative sociolinguistics', as it is often called. Labov's work the 1960s and 1970s in New York has been followed by a series of associated studies in a number of different speech communities, including Detroit (Shuy, Wolfram and Riley, 1966; Wolfram, 1969), Montreal (Sankoff and Cedergren, 1971; Sankoff, D. and Sankoff, G., 1973; Cedergren and Sankoff, 1974), Norwich (Trudgill, 1974b), and Sydney (Horvath, 1985).

Important work of a somewhat different kind has been carried out in Belfast by James and Lesley Milroy (Milroy, J. and Milroy, L., 1978; Milroy, L., 1980; Milroy, L., 1987). The Milroys have, in their work, rejected a methodology based purely on correlations of linguistic variation with sociological variables such as social class, age, sex and prestige, and have instead turned to an explanation of group, and 'social network', membership as a causative factor in accounting for linguistic variation in speech communities, thereby extending and deepening earlier work in the Labovian framework (see Milroy, J., 1988a; Milroy, L., 1988).

A third type of approach within secular linguistics has been the contribution of Robert LePage and Andree Tabouret-Keller. Whereas Labov's work has been typically 'system-based' in his explanation of linguistic variation and the Milroys' work has been 'network-based' (Walters, 1988), Le Page emphasizes that the locus of all linguistic activity is the individual. LePage's work on creole-speaking communities in Belize and St Lucia (Le Page, 1972, 1978, etc.) and a number of other settings (LePage, 1988a), has helped Le Page to shape a durable and powerful theory of language behaviour as 'acts of identity' (LePage, 1968; LePage and Tabouret-Keller, 1985). LePage's identity theory has also had a major impact on current work throughout the whole field of sociolinguistics (Hudson, 1980; Trudgill, 1983b; J. Milroy, 1988a).

Other influential work in the field of secular linguistics has been carried out on socio-historical linguistics and pidgins and creoles by Suzanne Romaine (Romaine, 1982a, 1982b, 1988a, 1988b), who has also produced important work on an impressively wide range of other topics in sociolinguistics as well, including language acquisition and bilingualism (Romaine, 1984, 1989).

Trudgill's work has also extended from an earlier concentration on 'quantitative sociolinguistics' to encompass a number of other interests within secular linguistics, including 'geolinguistics' (Trudgill, 1983a, 1983b; 1986; 1988, this volume), as well as extensive interests throughout the whole field of sociolinguistics and applied sociolinguistics (Trudgill, 1974a; Hughes and Trudgill, 1979; Trudgill and Hannah, 1982; Trudgill, 1984a; Trudgill, 1984b).

The expansion of the whole field in the last decade or so, in terms of both the scope and quantity of sociolinguistic studies, can be attested to at a number of different levels. First, over the last fifteen years or so, there have been an increasing number of textbooks which have aimed at introducing university students to the subject of sociolinguistics. These include Fishman (1972a), Trudgill (1974b), Dittmar (1976), Hudson (1980), Penalosa (1981), Chaika (1982), Fasold (1984, 1990), Downes (1984), Montgomery (1986), and Wardhaugh (1986). By definition almost, these texts present only a partial coverage of the field, and, as introductions, summarize a range of research findings on the subject, usually from an Anglo-American perspective (although Dittmar, 1976, is an obvious exception here).

Second, at another level, over the years there have also appeared a number of highly influential collections and anthologies aimed chiefly at academics; and collectively these have augmented other work and have helped to establish a definitive canon of sociolinguistic literature. Work at this level thus includes such collections as Bright (1966), Hymes (1964a, 1964b), Fishman (1972d), Giglioli (1972), Gumperz and Hymes (1972), Trudgill (1978b), Ferguson and Heath (1981), Pride and Holmes (1972), Romaine (1982a, 1982b), and Trudgill (1984b).

Recent surveys of sociolinguistic studies

Two recent collections of papers on sociolinguistics have been published in the last few years, and both set out to present surveys of contemporary sociolinguistic work over a wide range of areas. These are *Language: the socio-cultural context,* volume IV of *Linguistics: the Cambridge Survey* (1988), edited by Frederick Newmeyer, and Sociolinguistics: *an international handbook of the science of language and soczety,* volume I (1987) and volume II (1988), edited by Ulrich Ammon, Norbert Dittmar and Klaus J. Mattheier.

The Newmeyer volume assigns sociolinguistics a slot as a sub-field of linguistics, which, by implication at least, is complementary to the study of 'linguistics proper'. The volume is dominated by North American contributions (9 out of 14), and surveys a range of sociolinguistic issues including dialectology, secular linguistics, the sociology of language, creole studies discourse analysis, the ethnography of speaking, and language and gender: The Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier *Handbook* is a massive work (amounting to almost two thousand pages), which is altogether more comprehensive and more ambitious. The objectives of the editors are not only to provide a state-of-the-art review of current work (at the level of theory and research), but also to relate the results of sociolinguistic research to applied fields and neighbouring disciplines, and simultaneously to chart the impact that other disciplines, especially those of the social sciences have made on sociolinguistics.

In the *Handbook* sociolinguistics is explicitly seen as a 'discipline' (albeit multidisciplinary in its foundations an applications) in its own right, informed by a distinct body of theory, with its own set of research practices, and its own priorities, issues and applications. The *Handbook* thus surveys the field from both a disciplinary and an interdisciplinary perspectives. The two volumes are divided into broad sections which deal with topic areas such as *sociolinguistic theory*, including sections on ‘theoretical aspects’ (10 articles), ‘basic sociolinguistic concepts’ (19 articles), ‘the history of sociolinguistics as a discipline’ (7 articles), and ‘historical sociolinguistics’ (16 articles). Second, there are groupings of articles relating to *sociolinguistic research and analysis*, with sections on ‘social problems, theoretical approaches and research results’ (27 articles), ‘problems of method’ (20 articles) and ‘research practice) (20 articles).

The view of *sociolinguistics as an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary field* is embedded in many other articles in the work which are grouped according to such sections as ‘basic sociological and socio-psychological concepts’ (20 articles), and ‘neighbouring and auxiliary disciplines’ (7 articles). The former section thus includes papers on such topics as age, class, ethnicity, domain, social networks and identity. The neighbouring disciplines that are identified include psycholinguistics, social · psychology, ethnology, sociology, dialect geography, social geography and political economy.

The work also acknowledges *applied sociolinguistics* in a section on 'application', comprising a selection of work (13 articles) on such topics as language policies, international languages, speech therapy

and rhetoric. Finally, volume II also contains a section on *problem areas*, which consists of 24 articles (written largely from a macro-sociolinguistic, 'sociology of language' perspective) surveying the sociolinguistic scene in ~uch diverse areas as Brazil, Peru, the Caribbean, the USA, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Scandinavia, the USSR, the Arabian language regions, Africa, South Africa, India, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, China and Japan.

The *Handbook* is impressive for a number of reasons. First, it sets out to argue for the recognition of sociolinguistics as an autonomous discipline identified by its own body of theory, research practices and methodology, with its own areas of interest and applied studies. Second, in its discussion of interdisciplinary (or multidisciplinary) influences it attempts to account for the influence of theories from adjacent areas of enquiry such as sociology, social psychology and political science with a degree of systematicity and detail rarely attempted in any previously published works.

Third, and most strikingly, the selection of a wide range of contributions from a variety of European and East European sources contributes a strong collective *European* statement on sociolinguistics which provides a healthy counterpoint to the normal Anglo-American dominance in the literature. Of the 193 articles in the *Handbook*, 145 are from European sources, including 78 from West Germany, 17 from eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and other contributions from Austria, Belgium, Britain, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark. The *Handbook* is also a 'bilingual' anthology, with 98 of the articles written in German and 95 in English. The strength of this European contribution to the *Handbook* has already been acknowledged by Hymes who notes in a recent review that 'the large and growing body of German language publications in the last 25 years or so has had scant attention in English language literature . . . it is now impossible to ignore it' (Hymes, 1989).

With only a few exceptions, 'regional' (i.e. non-Anglo-American) perspectives have only sporadically established their credit in the international (i.e. English-language) literature on sociolinguistics. Attempts at establishing alternative approaches have sometimes also been hampered by the ideological baggage of political orthodoxies of various kinds. JutronicTihoniirovic, in a. review of two English-language introductions to Soviet sociolinguistics (Svejcer, 1986; Svejcer and Nikol'skij, 1986), notes that,although both authors criticize western sociolinguistics in terms of the 'foreign science: of 'bourgeois linguistics' practised by 'foreign scholars', there is only a cursory discussion of the underlying issues (JutronicTihomirovic, 1989). In other areas, ideology of a different order has also attached itself to the sociolinguistics of national language choice and language development in post-colonial settings (Coulmas, 1988). Nevertheless, ideological and regional boundaries varv greatly in their determinacy and it would be misleading at present to suggest that there were neatly defined schools of 'North American', 'British', 'German', 'Soviet', or, indeed, 'Asian' sociolinguistics.

‘Western sociolinguistics’ versus ‘Asian sociolinguistics’

The case for 'western sociolinguistics', although fraught with many difficulties on many levels, is probably easier to establish, however, than the case for any other 'regional' branch of the discipline. First, the origins and development of contemporary sociolinguistics as a field of study are closely associated with a group of western scholars that includes Fishman, Gumperz, Hymes and Labov from the USA, and Le Page, the Milroys, Romaine, Trudgill and others from Britain. Second, the theoretical demarcation of 'sociolinguistics' as a distinct field of study occurred largely as a reaction to debates and issues that arose within the 1960s in the USA and Europe (see the section on 'the development of sociolinguistics', p. 8-10). Within the 1970s and early 1980s, moreover, the priorities of sociolinguistics varied markedly between the developed world, i.e. the west, and the 'developing world', which would include most societies in Central and South America, Africa and Asia.

In the developed world, where perceptions of language issues were influenced by stereotypes of such societies as relatively socially stabilized and socially stratified speech communities, the tendency was for sociolinguistics to concern itself with social dialect variation and immigrant language policies. In the developing world, by contrast, the issues of multilingualism, national language policies and questions related to the choice and uses of languages in education were usually perceived as the most vital issues of

the day (Mackey, 1983). Even here, however, the methods that were used in studying such questions were often explicitly western-oriented, in that they based their approaches to the study of language in society on theoretical models which had come from the west; including, for example, models of multilingualism derived from western scholarship in 'the sociology of language' tradition.

Today, throughout the non-western world generally, the dominant research paradigms followed by those working in the field of sociolinguistics are everywhere heavily influenced by western theories, research practices and traditions of scholarship; with many of the leading sociolinguists in Asia, for example, having first studied the subject at graduate schools in Britain and the USA. At the Hong Kong conference, contributors from the Asian region, commenting on the development of sociolinguistics in the various countries of the region, repeatedly made mention of the influence of the 'western' sociolinguistics in shaping the study of language and society in such communities as India, Singapore and Japan (see pp. 25-40). Typically, individual societies within the region might point to long-established traditions of literary stylistics, phonology, or dialectology, but acknowledge that in recent years the newly emergent field of sociolinguistics, in their academic communities, owed a much greater debt to the western tradition of sociolinguistics from the USA and Britain. In this sense, then, to speak of *Asian sociolinguistics* may be far less appropriate than to refer to *sociolinguistics in Asia*. Following on from this, we also need to at least mention a number of related, and potentially difficult, issues. If it is broadly correct to assert that sociolinguistics in Asia today is dominated (especially at a theoretical level) by western approaches to the study of language and society, how then can this be accounted for?

One possible explanation might in general terms refer to the current hegemony of western academic thought across the humanities generally, which would seem to involve a complex variety of casual factors, historical, social scientific and educational, related to the development of western traditions of scholarship, the place of the arts and social sciences within western universities, and also the material reality of educational funding and the comparative wealth of western tertiary institutions.

A second explanation is more specifically addressed, in one of the few articles (at least in the international literature) on this subject, by Jemudd (1981). In a paper entitled 'Planning language treatment: linguistics for the Third World', Jernudd makes a powerful case against the uncritical 'importation' of western linguistics into developing societies:

> Linguistics, which is a western creation . . . threatens the respect for, excellence in, and sensitivity of native-language study in the LDC's [less developed countries] because of the effects on the indigenous system of importation of 'modern', 'international' linguistics from 'developed' countries. . . . With modem methods come claims that their practitioners' performance is superior to that of traditionally trained language specialists. Such claims are not based on the linguists' contribution to the speech community but are a result of the high value placed on imported ideas and the desire to emulate at home methods that have succeeded abroad. The traditionally stable support structure for native languages is threatened and the consequences would be linguistic uncertainty, academic conflict, and uncertainties in pedagogical method for teaching the native language in school.

Jemudd suggests that the 'Anglo-American domination' in linguistics in the developing world is partly the result of historical factors linked to colonialism, and the continued interest of Britain and France, for example, in promoting their languages throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Another reason is the dependency of scholars on 'western models and language interests', including journals and other norms of international scholarship, as well as the links between the teaching of linguistics and the teaching of English in many universities in the developing world where English is also frequently used as a medium of instruction. Finally, Jernudd concludes that 'the full development of local, national, and regional languages may reciprocally liberate English for use as a truly international language, a role that today is tarnished by the misuse of English to prevent the economic, sociopolitical and cultural advancement of those who do not possess it' (Jernudd, ibid.).

A number of Asian societies might resent (or, indeed, no longer qualify for) the title of 'less developed country', but, nevertheless, a number of the issues Jernudd discusses do find a resonance within such communities. In Singapore and Hong Kong, for example, English-medium university education is the

norm, and the practice of sociolinguistics (in terms of both teaching research) is often closely associated with the teaching of English studies and the English-language literature on the subject.

In such settings as these, the (literally) thousands of students studying the subject (Luke, 1988; Tay, 1988b) are inevitably exposed to introductory textbooks chiefly written for university students in the relatively 'stable speech communities' of the west; they are presented mainly with western paradigms of research; and the learning of sociolinguistics is typically associated With *English* sociolinguistics, in a variety of forms. In other Asian societies, the challenge from both the western (socio-) linguistics 'establishment' and the expansionist tendencies of English referred to by Jernudd has been countered in a number of ways. In the Philippines, sociolinguists such as Andrew Gonzalez (see Gonzalez, 1988a) have been concerned to extend language planning theory and research to aid in the cultivation and 'intellectualization' of Filipino for educational purposes, and in Malaysia high priority in recent years has been placed on developing the national language to replace English in key domains such as government and education, including university education (Ward and Hewstone, 1985). In addition, there have been a range of other responses from individual Asian nations, such as India, Singapore and Japan, which have been shaped by the particular needs of their communities (see the next section of this chapter, 'Sociolinguistics in Asia', which deals with these issues in some detail).

The issues Jernudd raises deserve attention in much greater detail than one can attempt to offer here, as they raise huge questions not only for sociolinguistics, but also for education, political science, sociology and international relations, about which one would feel minimally competent to comment. One might, however, at least try to indicate a number of possible arguments, as these questions are both important and difficult.

They are important because the general dominance of 'western' models of linguistics and sociolinguistics does seem to be currently all-pervasive (as many of the accounts in the next section of this chapter, 'Sociolinguistics in Asia', testify). In a significant way, the western pre-eminence in approaches to sociolinguistics parallels the similar dominance of western approaches to applied linguistics, and language teaching, in many societies throughout the world. In a 1984 essay entitled 'The secret life of methods', Jack Richards mentions the way in which Anglo-American approaches to language teaching have been disseminated internationally, and the significant role played in this process by the apparent fortunate convergence of interest of western educational agencies (such as the USIS and the British Council) and the interests of Anglo-American publishing houses (Richards, 1984). A case, then, might also be made that a similar process has occurred in the 'selling' of western linguistics and sociolinguistics as 'academic products' to developing societies' and other, overseas, universities (Jernudd, 1981).

For those of us, in particular, working at English-medium institutions in Asia (and 'western linguists' working at other Asian universities, one would imagine) these arguments do carry weight. At the same time, however, they are also difficult; not least because there is an alternative case to be made in defence of a 'western sociolinguistics'. And that alternative case might be most clearly made in terms of an appeal to 'internationalism'; which would not only imply, for Asian academics, for example, membership of an 'international academic community' (which would seem desirable for all), but, also, and more importantly, the free and unfettered transmission and exchange of ideas and information across international frontiers; in spite of international politics, in spite of ethnic and racial tensions, in spite of all the control and manipulation that exists within societies as political entities and within the educational systems in those societies; in spite of, to use Le Page's words, 'the millstones of politics, economics, religion, and ethics' (LePage, 1984). Notwithstanding the west's own millstones of embedded ideologies, the counter-argument would suggest that western linguistics and sociolinguistics, then, perform an important role in providing international mechanisms for the relatively free exchange of ideas and information.

At the Hong Kong conference, a related argument was raised by Davies, who described the role of sociolinguistics (and all linguistics) as 'liberating', in the sense that 'it provides views of language and language learning which take away from myths about either' (Davies, 1988b). In many Asian societies, the sociolinguistic decision-making of politicians and educationalists has often been guided by responses to stereotypes of ethnicity, nationality and race; and the linkage between these stereotypes and stereotypes

of 'national', 'official' and 'named languages'. Questions relating to the ethnocentricity of nationally defined traditions of linguistics have been raised by Loveday (1986) and Umeda (1988b) in the discussion of sociolinguistics in Japan, but tensions ofthis kind also extend throughout many Asian societies. In these circumstances, 'western sociolinguistics' may also have a liberating role to play.

In this context, the best one could hope for might be a 'creative pluralism', however naive this may sound, which would accommodate both 'local' and 'international' (or 'western') traditions within the Asian region. But the problems Jernudd refers to are real issues in many Asian contexts and they obviously deserve as much sensitivity (and as much tolerance) as possible; on all sides, from scholars working from both 'local' and 'international' perspectives.

There is also another sense in which it is misleading, if not simply erroneous, to speak of 'Asian sociolinguistics', and this is crucially linked to the whole question of the status of the term 'Asia' and the range of meanings that attach themselves to it. As Said (1978), and others have pointed out, the term 'Asia' itself (together with the associated lexicon which includes the 'Orient', the 'East', the 'Far East', and so on) largely came into currency as an artefact of western geographers and 'orientalists' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; in order to internalize an 'Orient' of academic manageability, as much for psychic as for geographical purposes. The term 'Asia', therefore, has little geographical specificity, and it is more usual today, in regional discussions, to refer to the Asian region in terms of subregions such as South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka), South-East Asia (Brunei, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and East Asia (China, Korea and Japan). Alternatively, with some overlap, other terms such as 'Oceania' (which would include the Pacific islands) and the 'Asian-Pacific Rim' (South-East Asia, East Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the west coast of the Americas) are also widely used.

Despite reservations about the term 'Asia', however, the next section of this chapter will attempt to provide an 'overview' of some of the regional sociolinguistic issues that were raised at the Hong Kong conference. At the conference, the regional participants came from South, South-East and East Asia, and I shall use the term 'Asia' to refer collectively to countries in these regions for the purposes of our discussion. It is felt that it is important to include such an overview of 'regional' sociolinguistic issues for a number of reasons. First, there is the need to inform a wider international audience about sociolinguistics in Asia today; and, second, there is an equal need to inform academics and researchers in individual societies in the Asian region about developments in adjacent communities. Third, there is also a pressing need simply because of the almost complete dearth of books and articles which provide an overall guide to sociolinguistic issues from a regional perspective (although notable exceptions here would include Kuo, 1986; Noss, 1982; and Noss, 1984, on South-East Asia; Sebeok, 1967, on East Asia and South-East Asia; and Sebeok, 1971, on Oceania). There have also been markedly few international journals in the past for whom the study of sociolinguistics in the Asian region has been a major concern (although, again, it has to be emphasized that a crucial exception here has been the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language (IJSL),* which, under the editorship of Joshua Fishman, has consistently made major contributions in establishing and promoting sociolinguistics in Asia, in particular, through the publication of an important series of *IJSL* 'special issues' devoted to various Asian perspectives). From 1990 an important new journal is to be published, however, which will be directly concerned with such issues. This journal is entitled the *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication,* and will be edited by ~oward Giles, of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Herbert Pierson, of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* thus promises to make a vital contribution in this area in coming years.

It should also be noted that the following section on 'Sociolinguistics in Asia' represents a synthesis of two broad sources of information. The first source was a search of the literature on sociolinguistics in the Asia region and research on the subject. A second, extremely valuable, source was the Hong Kong conference itself, where participants from the various Asian communities presented position papers on sociolinguistics (including sociolinguistic issues, and the teaching of sociolinguistics) within their own societies. Acknowledgements to the various position papers are cited throughout this section.

It is intended, then, that this section will serve both as a regional survey and also as a resource for researchers, of whatever background, who are interested in the sociolinguistics of individual Asian societies. The treatment of issues in such societies, however, is necessarily brief (and frequently simplistic), but it is hoped that the bibliographical information which is included will serve as a useful guide to "more detailed research on particular issues (especially for scholars from outside the region, who may be unaware of the range of literature available on specific societies

Sociolinguistics in Asia

As indicated in the previous section, any attempts to characterize 'Asian' societies.in terms of broadly shared characteristics that discretely demarcate such societies from 'the west', would not only be ideologically suspect, but would also be essentially erroneous. The Asian region, as it has been defined, includes a wide range of societies remarkable not so much for their similarities, but more for the individualities of their sociolinguistic situations.

Nevertheless, in spite of the heavy qualifications that have already been made, there are a number of obvious connections across national boundaries that might be pointed out. First, in South Asia and South-East Asia, a large number of communities face language policy questions related to language planning in post-colonial contexts; such societies would include India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia (not represented at the conference), and also, at a rather different level, Hong Kong and Macau. For some of these societies, the response to such questions has been the promotion of an indigenous national language, as in the case of Malaysia and the Philippines. For others, the answer has been to compromise by adopting English as an 'ethnically neutral' language of wider communication for some official purposes, such as government and education, within their societies, as is the case of India and Singapore.

Second, within the Asian region, a number of shared interests and aims are also grouped around the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) block of countries. Not only do the ASEAN societies - Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand - share membership of ASEAN, and the complex of political and commercial interests associated with this association, but individual member states share other linguistic and ethnic similarities as well. Malay, for example, (or varieties of Malay, at least) is the chosen national language of four countries in South-East Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Within ASEAN, this shared heritage of the Malay language is at least perceived as a factor contributing to some kind of transnational solidarity. As Noss (1984) puts it: 'Since Bahasa Malaysia, Bahasa Indonesia, and Malay are in effect varieties of the same language, it can be said that, in one sense, there are only three separate national languages occurring in ASEAN countries. The national language of the Philippines also belongs to the same language family, so that, in this sense, Thai is the odd man out.' In addition, Malaysia and Indonesia have also co-operated on language planning with reference to the promotion of Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia for the last decade or so in their respective communities (see pp. 25-40).

Third, the sociolinguistic concerns of virtually all the societies in the Asian region, including China, Japan and Thailand, who avoided European colonialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (at least in terms of total military and territorial domination), are partly shaped today by the need or desire to promote the learning of English as an international language (see, for example, the sections on Japan, pp. 31-3, and Thailand, pp. 39-40). In. all societies in Asia, the English language still has strong associations with higher education, internationalism, modernity and, at a personal level, job mobility and career advancement.

In spite of the fact that we are able to make 'connections' (however broad) such as these across national boundaries in the Asian region, it would also be foolish to lose sight of both the diversity of the individual communities concerned, and the complexity of the issues facing sociolinguists in such societies. During the course of the Hong Kong conference, Le Page made the point that, in many aspects, not only were Asian societies some of the most diverse and fascinating but also 'some of the most sociolinguistically racked and tormented ·countries of the world', and part of the problem; here, Le Page emphasized, was

that,· within sociolinguistics in Asia, 'there seems to be an obsession, at an official or educational level with named languages and not a great deal [is] said about actual communication that goes on . . . how people actually communicate rather than what governments and universities do with named languages' (Trans., 1988; see also LePage, 1988a).

The confusion between standard languages and vernacular languages, or named languages and actual behaviour (or, at another level, between what people think they do when they engage in language behaviour and what they actually do) is not something that is peculiar to language studies in Asia, but LePage's admonition is perhaps appropriate when considering the summary of 'sociolinguistics in Asia' that follows now. The summary of Asian language issues presented here is, of course, reductive in effect (on a number of levels), but it is hoped, nevertheless, that it will go some way towards directing scholars to a more detailed and less simplistic investigation of language issues in the respective societies. This section will first consider sociolinguistics in those countries represented at the conference, and then add a short bibliography covering recent work in other Asian societies.

China

In linguistic, demographic and geographical terms, the diversity and complexities of the sociolinguistic situation in the People's Republic of China are immense.

The demographics of the language situation in China can be broadly summarized as follows: of a total population of 1,032 million people, 93% identify themselves as Han ('Chinese')."In addition, there are fifty five other nationalities, who occupy a sensitive position within China's multinational state, with their speakers accounting for only 6.7% of the total population, but crucially occupying 60% of the society's total area of land. The Han language serves as a standard language in both the PRC and Taiwan, and in spoken form 'Putonghua' is a lingua franca between speakers of the various languages and dialects intra-nationally. The ten largest minority (i.e. non-Han) languages of the PRC are Zhuang (with approximately 13.4 million speakers), Hui (7.2 million), Uygur (6 million), Yi (5.5 million), Miao (5 million), Tibetan (3.9 million), Mongolian (3.4 million), Manchu (4.3 million), Bouyei (2.1 million) and Korean (1.8 million); see Cheng and Pasierbsky (1988).

Minority nationalities are recognized partly through a system of 'autonomous regions' in the PRC. Such regions include Inner Mongolia, Zhuang, Tibet, Hui and Uygur. The constitution of the nation formally grants the freedom to minority nationalities to use their languages and the ten Institutes for Minority Nationalities which exist devote a significant part of their energies to the printing of minority language material. In spite of the recognition granted to minority languages (which also extends to media broadcasts and the law courts), the Chinese government has also been concerned to promote the use of 'the Han language', i.e. the spoken form (Putonghua) together with the Han writing system (Standard Written Chinese).

The various Han dialect groups in the PRC can be classified in terms of eight dialect groups (this system of classification is not uncontroversial, however; see Li and Thompson, 1987). These are set out in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 The major Han dialect groups in China

Dialect group	*Estimated promotion of the Han-speaking population*
Northern dialect group (Beijing, Nanjing and Chongqing)	71.9%
Jiangsu-Zhejian	8.5%
Hunan	4.8%
Jiangxi	2.2%
Hakka (Kejia)	3.7%
Northern Min (Fujian)	1.3%
Southern Min (Fujian)	2.5%
Cantonese (Guangdong)	5.1%

Source: Cheng and Pasierbsky, 1998

The majority of the Han population, Cheng and Pasierbsky (1988) suggest, 'looks down on the way of life minorities live as being "primitive"', and, in effect, non-Han nationality areas have either been colonized by establishing Han settlers in large numbers in non-Han areas, or by 'gerrymandering' the administrative borders of government to divide ethnic groups, as is the case with the Zhuang, who are divided among the Guangxi Zhuang Administrative Region, and the provinces of Guizhou, Guangdong and Yunnan.

Language planning in the PRC since the revolution has been presented in the form of a national 'language reform policy' (De Francis, 1953, 1967; Lehmann, 1975; Seybolt, 1979; Cheng and Pasierbsky, 1988; Chen, 1988). This policy attempts to tackle four main issues: (1) illiteracy, (2) the development and promotion of a standard national language, (3) the promotion of simplified Chinese characters, and (4) the promotion of the Latinized alphabetic writing system, 'Pinyin', for certain specialist purposes.

An attempt to tackle these issues along the policy guidelines set down by the national government would represent a massive undertaking even for the most economically and technologically advanced societies of the world. Given the demographics and economics of a society like China, the task of implementation almost defies description. illiteracy, for example, was estimated at over 95% at the time of the commumst revolution in 1949, and is still a major problem. The total of illiterates and semi-literates is now estimated at 230 million, and problems in this area are exacerbated by the obvious difficulties associated with the writing system (Cheng and Pasierbsky, 1988).

Similar difficulties have attached themselves to the policy to promote Putonghua ('common speech') throughout the nation; and the status and use of many dialects and other varieties is uncertain. Official policy seems to be the promotion of Putonghua in public life and the tolerance of regional varieties in private use, but it is currently impossible on available data to assess precisely to what extent the former objective has been achieved.

A simplified writing system was first introduced in 1956; by 1964, 2,000 characters had been simplified and this work has continued to the present day. There is strong resistance to the elimination of a character-based writing system, as the system is associated with a vast complex of historical and cultural values related to the great tradition of national thought and identity. Nevertheless, a phoneticized, romanized system of transcription, 'Pinyin', was introduced in 1958 and is used for a range of specialist 'functions today, including extensive use in the domain of education for language teaching; use in dictionaries; use in signs and on packages for manufactured goods; use in writing systems for minority languages; and use as the international standard for Chinese place-names.

At the Hong Kong conference, Shikai Zhao of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences reported on the scope of sociolinguistic studies in the PRC, making the initial comment that sociolinguistic studies had developed only in the last ten years or so. In particular, Zhao reported on the symposium *on* sociolinguistics held in Beijing in December 1987, which was the first national conference on sociolinguistics to be held in China. The conference was attended by some seventy participants from twenty provinces. The papers presented at the Beijing Symposium covered five areas:. (1) the scope and methodology of sociolinguistics; (2) linguistic variation; (3) bilingualism and bidialectalism; (4) 'speech

communication'; and (5) language and culture. There was considerable discussion on a number of these questions, Zhao reported. As far as the 'scope' of the subject was concerned, some saw sociolinguistics as an integral part of linguistics, while others viewed it as a subject that was essentially interdisciplinary in nature.

At the 1987 Beijing conference, papers on linguistic variation considered the relationship between sociological factors such as age, sex, occupation, etc., and language variation, and the relationship between language and variation and standardization. The discussions of bilingualism and bidialectalism typically focused on the relationship between Putonghua and various regional dialects, linguistic minorities, and diglossia in Chinese society. The section on speech communication was essentially concerned with the analysis of linguistic interaction with reference to discourse analysis, rhetoric and pragmatics. The section on language and culture included a number of papers on such diverse topics as politeness in speech, jargon, place-names, and the language of advertising. .

In addition to the key citations given above (noting especially the excellent review of contemporary sociolinguistics by Cheng and Pasierbsky, 1987), other references on Chinese sociolinguistics include Chen, E. S. H. 1988); Chen, J. (1988); Chen, S. C. (1988), Chen, P. (1988); Cheng (1986); Davies, P. (1988); Dil (1976); Egerod, (1967); Grabe and Kaplan (1985); Hao (1988); Jernudd (1986); Kalmar, Zhong and Ziao (1987); Lin (1988); Liu (1986); Parker and Parker (1987); Pride and Liu (1988); Rohsenow (1986); Sun (1988); Wang, D. X. (1988); You (1988); Zhang, X. (1988); Zhang, Y. C. (1988); Zhao (1988a, 1988b); and Zhou (1986).

Hong Kong and Macau

Whereas a number of Asian societies, such as India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, are attempting to deal with pressing sociolinguistic issues related to language planning and national self-development in post-colonial contexts, Hong Kong and Macau are unique in the Asian region in that their societies still have the formal status of European colonial territories, of Britain and Portugal respectively. This is an anachronistic and temporary situation, and the sovereignty of the territories will revert to the PRC in 1997, in the case of Hong Kong, and in 1999, in the case of Macau.

In Hong Kong, English is an official language of law and government, although Chinese was granted co-official status in 1974. In addition, English is widely used in secondary and tertiary education, and is the *de facto* language of international business, finance and trade. In Macau, Portuguese is the official language of government and law, and the language of the small number of Portuguese administrators that remain in the territory. English is also widely used in Macau as the language of banking, commerce and tourism, and it is also used as the major language of instruction at the newly established University of East Asia.

In Hong Kong and Macau, the lingua franca for the vast majority of the population is Cantonese. In addition to Cantonese, a wide range of other Chinese varieties, including 'non-standard' Cantonese dialects, together with other Chinese dialects such as Hakka, Chiu Chow, Hokkien and, increasingly, Putonghua, are used in the territory. Multidialectalism in Chinese thus overlaps with multilingualism in English and other 'foreign' languages.

In quantitative terms, the vast majority (around 98%) of the population would claim Cantonese or 'Chinese' as a mother tongue, but in qualitative terms, the impact of English in the key administrative and international domains has been of crucial significance in aiding Hong Kong's remarkable economic growth and social development in the period since the Second World War. At the same time, conditions in the territory have also helped create a distinctive local sense of belonging and identity' marked by a compromise or hybridization, between 'traditional' Chinese values on the one hand, and western or 'international' values on the other. Thus, what is at stake in the negotiations and positioning over the future of the territory is not just the question of the survival of an enclave of western capitalism in southern China, but also the survival of a sense of ethnicity or identity, amongst 'Hong Kong people' themselves.

One immediate sociolinguistic correlate of such an identity, moreover, is that Hong Kong people recognize the values of internationalism and modernity that attach themselves to bilingualism in the English language (Bolton and Kwok, 1990; Bolton and Luke, forthcoming). Linguistic tensions in the community, however, not only are linked to the balance, at a societal level, between English and Chinese, but also extend, as was noted in an earlier section of this chapter, to the relationship between Cantonese and Putonghua (Pierson, 1988).

At the Hong Kong conference, K. K. Luke of the University of Hong Kong described the sociolinguistic situation, with reference mainly to the teaching of sociolinguistics and research in the field. Sociolinguistics is currently taught at both universities, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong, and at the two polytechnics, the Hong Kong Polytechnic and City Polytechnic. At undergraduate level, large numbers of university students opt for courses in the subject, but the situation at postgraduate level, it was reported, was far less impressive, with very small numbers of students opting for sociolinguistic studies at PhD level. The research picture for academics was described as far more encouraging, with local researchers carrying out work on a wide range of issues, including research on Chinese dialects and dialectology; sociolinguistic survey work; language shift and language maintenance; bilingualism; code-switching and code-mixing; lexical borrowing; localized varieties of English; discourse analysis; interactional sociolinguistics; and language attitudes and the social psychology of language.

Mary Willes reported on Macau, commenting that the studies that had been carried out had been few in number and restricted in scale. In particular, Willes emphasized the need for a general survey of the language situation, commenting that despite an 'extraordinary and complex situation', little research had hitherto been carried out.

There is a growing body of sociolinguistic literature on Hong Kong which includes Bauer (1984); Bolton and Luke (1985); Bond (1985); Bruce (1988); Chan and Kwok (1986); Cheung (1985, 1988); Fu and Iu (1988); Gibbons (1982, 1983, 1987); Kwo and Bray (1988); Kwok (1988); Kwok, Chan and Sun (1972); Li and Cheung (1988); Lo (1988); Lo and Wong (1988); Lord (1979); Luke and Richards (1982); Lyczak, Fu and Ho (1976); Newbrook (1988); Piotrowska (1988); So (1988); Tsui (1987, 1988); Workman (1988); and Yu and Atkinson (1988). For Macau, see Harrison (1984).

India

The sociolinguistic situation in India is ma~ked by an extraordinary degree of linguistic diversity which parallels the ethnic and religious pluralism of the society (Kachru, 1988). Estimates of the total number of 'languages' and 'dialects' in the society run as high as 1,600 (but vary considerably; Le Page, 1964, for example, suggests a total of 844; see Fasold, 1984), of which fifteen are formally recognized as national languages: Assamese (spoken by approximately 2% of the population), Bengali (8%), Guajarati (5%), Hindi (30%), Kannada (4%), Kashmiri (0.4%), Malayalam (4%), Marathi (8%), Origa (3%), Punjabi (3%), Sindhi (0.3%), Tamil (7%), Teluga (8%), Urdu (5%) and Sanskrit (for which there are no figures available). Hindi is the official language of India, but English is recognized as a co-official (or 'associate official') language (spoken by 23 million people, according to Kachru, 1987, from which all the above estimates are quoted). Since the 1960s, the search for a viable post-colonial language policy has led to a compromise known as the 'Three Language Formula', which involves the school study of the regional language, Hindi and English.

With a huge population of around 780 million, India presents a picture of diversity.and pluralism unprecedented in North American and western European societies. There are four language 'families' represented in the nation (Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman and Munda) and state boundaries tend to be isomorphous with the boundaries of regional languages throughout the country. Fasold (1984) suggests that India is not so much a multi-ethnic nation as a 'multi-national state', analogous to a 'United States of Europe', in which, usually, each state will have its own repertoire of regional and local languages, with Hindi and English serving as languages of wider communication. According to Kachru (1988), the major sociolinguistic issues of the last twenty years or so have been concerned with language

contact, language variation, minority languages, writing systems, language planning, language standardization, and 'Indian English'. In particular Kachru cites work in these fields by Gumperz (1964); Das Gupta (1970); Brass (1974); and Kachru (1982a, 1982b and 1983).

Raja Ram Mehrotra of Banaras Hindu University reported on Indian sociolinguistics at the Hong Kong conference. He emphasized that the nature of sociolinguistic research had changed throughout recent years. Since the 1960s the study of 'caste dialects' has been surpassed by other research topics including multilingualism, especially in relation to language development and modernization; stratificational sociolinguistics of the Labovian type; ethnographic research, including forms of address, politeness and deference; pidgins and language hybridization; tribal languages; language shift; and issues in applied sociolinguistics such as language policies, mass communication, language teaching and literary criticism. Mehrotra' also reported that the study of sociolinguistics has developed rapidly at Indian universities over the last twenty-five years, and has been heavily influenced by western, particularly American, scholars. It is currently taught as an academic subject at twenty universities and at the three government language institutes of Mysore, Agra and Hyderabad.

Other recent references for Indian sociolinguistics include Aggarwal (1988); Annamalai (1986, 1989); D'Souza (1987); Daswani (1988); Khokle (1988); Khubchandani (1984, 1986); Krishnamurti (1986); Mahapatra (1989); Mehrotra (1985, 1986, 1988a, 1988b); Mohan (1989); Mukherjee (1989); Narang (1988); Nath (1988); Sridhar (1985); and Srivastava (1989).

Japan

Japanese society is often characterized in terms of cultural and linguistic uniformity, although sociolinguists vary in their description of the homogeneity of the linguistic situation in Japan. Sibata (1985), for example, claims that 'Japan is a monolingual, monocultural and monoethnic society'. Loveday (1986) is somewhat more cautious in his assessment, noting that while 'the nation of 119 million Japanese reveals a remarkable degree of linguistic homogeneity with Japanese spoken as the mother tongue of almost all its citizens . . . [and that] literacy is officially declared to be 99%, which underlines the uniformity (aimed at) in this community', such an official view might well belie the facts, as there is evidence of a substantial rate of functional illiteracy (estimated as high as 50-60% in the early 1960s; see Neustupny, 1984).

The largest racial minority in Japan are the 670,000 Koreans (of whom approximately 520,000 are classified as Japanese monolinguals); 45,000 Taiwanese; 20,000 Chinese from mainland China; and a total of 5,200 refugees, of whom 2,820 are Vietnamese. In addition, there are a small number of speakers of Ainu (a minority language unrelated to Japanese, of much-disputed origin), thought to number 16,500, but facing imminent 'language death' (Loveday, 1986).

The origin of the Japanese language itself is disputed by those linguists concerned with 'language family' analyses, and. it has been variously linked to a range of language groups including the Altaic, Austronesian, Dravidian, Indo-European, Korean and Sino-Tibetan. Japanese is not related to Chinese, but its writing system is based on Chinese characters, used together with the two 'kana' syllabaries (simplified Chinese characters used phonetically, known as 'hira-gana' and 'kata-kana') that began to develop after the eighth century AD (Loveday, 1986; Shibatan 1987). A large proportion of Japanese vocabulary (an estimated 50%) can be accounted for as lexical loans from Chinese, and recent years have also seen a dramatic growth in the scale of· lexical borrowings from English (Loveday, 1986). Given both the demographics of the Japanese situation, and the social-cultural matrix of a community where societal values are seen as all-important, the high degree of linguistic conformity evinced and discussed by Sibata and Loveday above may well be explained in terms of the powerful pressures towards cultural, social and linguistic 'focusing' (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985) that exist in Japanese society.

Notwithstanding such pressures, however, sociolinguistic variation in Japanese society takes a range of different forms. At the level of dialectal variation, standard modern Japanese (based on the Tokyo dialect) has been widely spread through the mass media and urbanization since 1945, but a range of other regional varieties has been described by dialectologists in recent years. At the same time, social variation related to

gender, age and group identity, as well as variation in spoken and written 'standards', has also been studied by sociolinguists working in these areas.

At the Hong Kong conference, Iwao Umeda of Kyoto Sangyo University gave a detailed report of the development of sociolinguistics in Japan. In his report, Umeda emphasized that the study of language and society amongst Japanese scholars is characterized by a relatively early tradition of investigative and academic work that was independent of a western tradition. 'Traditional' Japanese scholars set out to study *gengo seikatsu* (or 'language life') in the period before the Second World ·war, and work of this kind has continued to the present day with the support of the National Language Research Institute, whose chief interests have been concerned with Japanese dialectology and language standardization. In this way, there has been a noticeable divide between the *kokugo-gakusha*, the 'national language scholars', and *gengo-gakusha*, the 'linguists', who often specialize in European languages, usually English, and are heavily influenced by western linguistics and sociolinguistics (Loveday, 1986).

One salient feature of the 'traditional sociolinguistics' of the national language school, according to some (Ide, 1986; Loveday, 1986; Umeda, 1988b), has been a lack of theoretical approaches and an over-reliance on mere data collection and description. Ide, however, tempers criticism on this point with the observation that '[although] Japanese sociolinguistics would certainly benefit by acquiring the virtues of a theoretical approach . . . the Japanese way might represent a valuable addition for those not contented with the somewhat ethnocentric and/or doctrinaire approach of many sociolinguistic theories in the West' (Ide, 1986). Charges of ethnocentricity seem to run in both directions, however, with Loveday (1986) urging 'indigenous' Japanese sociolinguistics to liberate itself from its own 'academic ethnocentrism'. Referring to these issues, Umeda noted that important work at bringing together the two traditions of Japanese and western sociolinguistics had been started in recent years; and, in particular, Umeda cited the work of Fred C. C. Peng, and the activities of the International Christian University (ICU) symposia on sociolinguistics, which have been~ held annually since 1974 (see Peng, 1975; Haarman and Peng, 1986).

In spite of such initiatives, however, a great deal of work in Japanese sociolinguistics has never reached an international audience. Sanada (1988) estimates that over 1,000 articles and books on sociolinguistics have been published in the last fifty years or so. These cover a wide range of topics relating to language and society, including methodology, speech varieties, jargon, language behaviour, language life-style, language contact, language change, language attitudes, language acquisition and language planning. Only a small fraction of these studies has been translated into English, although Umeda cited Haarmann and Peng (1986) and Mey (1986) as notable exceptions in this context, and referred to the growing body of work now available in English (see below). Umeda also emphasized that, in spite of the large number of publications in the field, the number of sociolinguists in Japan is still relatively small, and few courses in 'sociolinguistics proper' are held at undergraduate university level. Interest in the sociolinguistic dimension of foreign language learning, however, especially with reference to English, has grown remarkably in recent years (Umeda, 1988b).

In concluding his presentation, Umeda outlined future research directions in the field in Japan. These included the study of the Japanese language in its social context; the study of language and 'social problems', including bilingualism and linguistic minorities (e.g. Koreans in Japan, expatriate Japanese childr~n returning home); studies of cross-cultural communication; and the study of English as an international language, including the use of localized varieties of English, and the intelligibility and communicability of 'Japanese English'.

In addition to the works cited above, recent references on Japanese sociolinguistics also include Chandralal (1988); Egawa, Nomoto, Minami and Sugito (1986); Grootaers and Sibata (1982); Haarmann (1986); Haarmann and Peng (1986); Hill, Ide, Ikuta, Kawasaki and Ogino (1986); Hori (1986, 1988); Ide (1986); Ide, Hori, Kawasaki, Ikuta and Raga (1986); Inoue (1986); Loveday (1982, 1986); Mey (1986); Neustupny, (1984); Sanada, (1988); Shibamoto (1987); Shibatan (1987); Tanaka and Lee (1986); Umeda (1988a, 1988b); and White (1989).

Malaysia

The British colonial period in Malaysia lasted from the late eighteenth century until1957. During the late nineteenth century, the British extended their colonial rule throughout the Malayan Peninsula and also established the colonies of Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei on western Borneo. At the same time, substantial numbers of Chinese and Indians emigrated to the region. By 1911, when the first census was carried out, the colony of Malaya registered 1.5 million Malays, 900,000 Chinese and 267,000 Indians (Lowenberg, 1988). The major language spoken at the time included Malay (and Malay dialects), Hokkein (and other varieties of Chinese), Tamil (and other Indian languages and dialects); see Platt and Weber (1980); Lowenberg (1988). Later, English-medium schools were established and gained popularity in towns and cities until 1957, when the Federation of Malaya gained its independence. At independence, the Malayan government chose Malay as the sole official language in order 'to unify the cultural and national aspirations of Malaya' (LePage, 1962, cited in Lowenberg, 1988).

In the years immediately after independence, English maintained, if not increased, its position as the predominant language of education. The enlarged state of Malaysia, incorporating Sabah and Sarawak, came into existence in 1963. Singapore, however, seceded from the new nation in 1965, and formed its own mdependent city-state, in whose population the Chinese had a substantial numerical majority. In Malaysia, the growing racial tensions of the time exploded in a series of violent Malay-Chinese riots in the late 1960s (Lowenberg, 1988). From the mid-1960s onwards, the Malaysian government began to place much greater emphasis on the promotion of 'Bahasa Malaysia' (the 'Malaysian language'). This was done through a series of Acts of Parliament and policy initiatives aimed chiefly at the domains of government, law and education. The National Language Act of 1967 legislated that Bahasa Malaysia would be the sole language of official written communications, and the primary language of Parliament and the courts. In 1969 the process of phasing out English-medium education was started. Today almost all primary and secondary instruction is given in Bahasa Malaysia, and the use of Bahasa Malaysia as a medium of instruction at university level has grown considerably (Ward and Hewstone, 1985; Lowenberg, 1988; Gaudart, 1987). At the same time a closely related form of Malay called 'Bahasa Indonesia', is also the national language of Indonesia (population 160 million), and since the late 1970s the Indonesian and Malaysian governments have co-operated in joint ventures in language planning, especially for the creation and adaptation of technical terms (Lowenberg, 1988; Prentice, 1987).

Notwithstanding recent moves in language planning, however, the sociolinguistic profile of Malaysian society is still one of immense diversity and plurality. The basic demographics of the current situation (Gaudart, 1987) are these: Malaysia now has a population of some 15.8 million people, who speak a total of a hundred identifiable 'languages'. In 1985, the population could be classified into Malays and other *bumiputra* ('sons of the soil') including the Malays of the Malayan Peninsula and the native tribes of Sabah and Sarawak, who account for almost 9.5 million (60.1% of the population); Chinese, numbering 4.9 million (31%); Indians estimated at 1.32 million (8.3%); together with 102,300 (0.6%) classified as 'others', e.g. Thais, Filipinos, Burmese, Europeans, Eurasians, etc. (estimates, however, vary som,ewhat; see Ward and Hewstone, 1985; Lowenberg, 1988).

Within these larger ethnic groupings, moreover, thei:e is considerable linguistic diversity. Malays can be further subdivided into speakers of regional Malay dialects and speakers of tribal dialects (such as the Dayaks and Kadazans of East Malaysia). Similarly, Chinese speakers can be grouped according to dialects, including Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese Chiu Chow, Hainanese and others. Indians are further classified as speakers of Tamil, Teluga, Punjabi, etc. As Ward and Hewstone (1985) point out, Malaysia is the home of a uniquely large Chinese minority, and linguistic tensions within the society run hand in hand with ethnic tensions. So much so, in fact, that language has been typically seen as a 'sensitive' matter; according to the Sedition Act of 1971, for example, the discussion of language issues was prohibited by law (Gaudart, 1987). Furthermore, given the racial and ethnic composition of Malaysian society, it is not surprising that mixed reactions to post-independence language policies have been noted by a number of commentators (Gaudart, 1987; LePage, 1984; Lowenberg, 1988; Ward and Hewstone, 1985).

At the Hong Kong conference, Loga Baskaran of the University of Malaya reported on sociolinguistics in Malaysia, noting the importance of issues related to multilingualism. The linguistic diversity of

Malaysian society has been in large part, Baskaran noted, a result of several phases of colonialization which affected the indigenous Malay speakers (Austronesians), their Austroasiatic counterparts (aboriginal tribes), and a 'settler populace' of Chinese, Indians, Arabs and Eurasians. Today the most significant languages in circulation are Malay (Bahasa Malaysia), Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, Hokkien, etc.), and Tamil (together with other minority Indian languages) in West Malaysia. In East Malaysia, Kadazan and Iban are major vernacular languages. In addition, English is also used, in a variety of different forms. The official national language today is Bahasa Malaysia. Commenting on changing official attitudes to English, it was noted that before both 1967 English and Bahasa Malaysia were both official languages, but since 1967 the status of English has been that of a 'strong second language'. 'Vernacular' status is accorded to the Chinese language (Mandarin), Tamil, Iban in Sarawak, and Kadazan in Sabah.

Sociolinguistics is currently taught as a subject at three universities the University of Malaya, the National University of Malaya and the Science University of Malaysia. Postgraduate research in the field in recent years has covered such topics as language attitudes, Bazaar Malay, terms of address, and language contact. A number of conferences on sociolinguistics, including a national conference on 'The Language Situation in Malaysia' (held in 1987), have also taken place in recent years. In her review of sociolinguistic research, Baskaran gave particular mention to the work of Asmar on language planning and language policies (see Asmar, 1974, 1976, 1979, 1982, 1983).

In addition to the citations given above, other references for Malaysian sociolinguistics include Baskaran (1988a); .de Terra (1980); Heah (1988); Kob (1988); Kuo (1979), Llamzon (1978), Noss (1982, 1984), Rogers (1982); and Platt (1977).

The Philippines

The Philippines experienced the longest period of western colonialization of all Asian societies, with Spain occupying the Philippines from 1521 to 1898, and the USA from 1898 to 1946. As in India, Malaysia and Singapore, policy questions relating to language planning and language development have tended to dominate sociolinguistics since the 1960s.

The Philippines, today, is a developing nation that is characterized by a high degree of linguistic diversity. Estimates of the number of indigenous languages of the country (which belong to the Austronesian language family) vary from 80 to 150 (Asuncion-Laude, 1970; Sibayan , 1971). Of these, 8 are considered 'major' languages, and collectively identified as the 'mother tongues' of over 86% of the population; indicating that only 14% of the population speak the 'minor' languages of the nation. The percentages of the population claiming to speak the major languages of the Philippines in the early 1960s were as follows: Cebuano (24.1%), Tagalog (21.0%), Ilocano (11.7%), Panay-Hiligaynon (10.4%), Bikol (7.8~), Waray (5.5%), Pampa-go (3.2%) and Pangasinan (2.5%) (Asuncion Laude, 1970; Sibayan, 1971). At the same time as these figures were collected as part of the national census, reports of language use emphasized that most Filipinos were bilingual and many were multilingual. Thus, while only 21% reported that Tagalog was their 'mother tongue', a total of 44.4% claimed to speak it either as a first or second language .. This figure can becompared with the total of 39.5% claiming to speak English, which was, and still is, widely used as a medium of instruction in schools. At the beginning of the 1970s, Sibayan identified three main problems for language planning in the Philippines: (1) the learning of English as an international language, (2) the promotion of Tagalog (or 'Filipino', the Tagalog~ based national language), and (3) the preservation and maintenance of regional languages (Sibayan, 1971).

Since the 1960s, the language situation, as measured by census and survey reports, has changed significantly. Gonzalez (1988a) now reports that, in spite of some resistance from Cebuano-speaking areas, Tagalog has now been accepted as the basis of the national language. The revised 1987 Constitution of the Philippines now states that the national language of the Philippines is 'Filipino', i.e. 'Tagalog-based Philipino with lexical enrichment from all the languages of the Philippines and other languages too (presumably Spanish, English, Arabic and others)' (Gonzalez, 1988a). Figures derived from the 1985 census indicate that around 77% of the population now speak Filipino (compared with a figure

of 64.5% claiming to speak English), and Gonzalez further estimates that by the year 2000, 97.1% of the population will be conversant in the language, as part of 'an ongoing ineluctable process' in which Filipino is disseminated as the national lingua franca (Gonzalez, 1988a; Gonzalez and Bautista, 1986; Sibayan, 1986).

Many problems related to the promotion of the national language still remain, however. In 1973, the National Board of Education adopted bilingual education as the official education policy, with the objective of promoting bilingual competence in both Filipino and English. The Bilingual Education Policy of 1973 stipulated that Filipino and English were to be used separately as media of instruction in public schools according to the subject area involved; with English designated as the medium of instruction for mathematics, science and technology, and Filipino as the medium for social science subjects, music, art and physical education. The revised 1987 policy now states that English will continue to be a second medium of instruction, but also states that English should be used as the 'non-exclusive' language of science and mathematics, and does not rule out the use of Filipino for teaching purposes in the future.

The implementation of the Bilingual Education Policy has been beset by difficulties of various kinds. Kapili (1988) reports on a noticeable shift to Tagalog in Metro-Manila in all domains, and notes the high frequency of code-mixing in education, even for subjects designated as English-medium, suggesting that the use of 'mix-mix' or 'Taglish' is fast becoming the norm for most public schools. At the same time, there are obvious difficulties at university level, where the language skills of undergraduates have been found to be increasingly inadequate for university education (Gonzalez, 1988a).

Andrew Gonzalez commented on the current situation in the Philippines at the Hong Kong conference. As noted above, language planning and language policies have been matters of acute concern for sociolinguists over the last few decades. A great deal of work in recent years has focused on language development, language 'cultivation' and the 'intellectualization of Filipino'. The crucial questions, at present, according to Gonzalez, relate to the use of the national language, Filipino, in the domain of education. In this context, most initiatives are currently taking place at university and teacher-training levels in the expectation that the effects of advances at this level will 'trickle down' to the other strata of the educational system (see Gonzalez, 1988a, for a detailed and illuminating account of current research on these questions). Other areas where substantial sociolinguistic work has taken place include language surveys, applied linguistics and bilingual education. The Summer Institute of Linguistics has also been involved, for a number of years, in recording and describing indigenous minor languages. Centres for sociolinguistic research in the Philippines include the Linangan ng mga Wika sa Pilipinas (Centre for the Development of Philippine Languages), the University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, Philippine Normal College, and StLouis University at Baguio.

In addition to the references cited above, recent work on sociolinguistics in the Philippines also includes Aranas (1988); Bautista (1983, 1988); Cubar (1983, 1988); Gonzalez (1983, 1985a, 1985b, 1986); Gonzalez and Bautista (1986); Gonzalez and Sibayan (1988); Kaplan (1982); Llamzon (1983); Macdonald (1988); Miller (1981); Pascasio (1983); Pestgan (1988); Rafael (1978); Sibayan (1981, 1984, 1985); and Tollefson (1986).

Singapore

Like Malaysia, Singapore is a multiracial, multilingual society, and its language policies since independence from Britain have been shaped partly by the need to come to terms with the legacy of colonialism, and partly by the desire to facilitate its development as a 'newly industrialized country' and Asian financial centre.

Unlike Malaysia, however, the so-called 'overseas' Chinese of Singapore occupy a numerically dominant and politically powerful position in the island city-state. The demographics of Singapore are broadly as follows: The population, which totals approximately' two and a quarter million, is about.76% Chinese, 15% Malay, 7% Indian, and 2% others, including Eurastans, Arabs, and Europeans (Tay, 1982).

Singapore first became self-governing in 1959, and government policy at the time was to proceed towards membership of the Federation of Malaya. However, initially Malaya balked at the prospect of increasing the new nation's Chinese population by 1.1 million, which would have given ethnic Chinese an overall majority within the federation. Partly to reassure the Federation of Malaya, therefore, Singapore adopted Malay as the national language? and the primary medium of instruction in schools, in 1959. Accordingly, Singapore became part of an enlarged nation of Malaysia, subsuming the federation, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak, in September 1963. Political and ethnic conflicts between Singapore and Malaya led to unrest and riots in Singapore in 1964, however, and Singapore seceded from Malaysia in August 1965 (Lowenberg, 1988). Nevertheless, since that time, Singapore has retained Malay as a sole national language, largely as a result of *international* concerns, and the desire to promote co-operation with Indonesia and Malaysia, two of its most important ASEAN neighbours, rather than as a consequence of any *intra-national* motivation (Lowenberg, 1988).

In addition to the national language, there are also four official languages in Singapore: English, Chinese (Mandarin), Malay and Tamil; but the status and vitality of these languages vary considerably. English is the dominant language of education, government law and commerce, and virtually all schools use English as the medium of instruction. English also functions as a lingua franca' between the different ethnic groups in the society, although 'Bazaar Malay' is also used. Malay, Chinese dialects (such as Hokkien, Teochew [Chiu Chow] and Cantonese) and Tamil are maintained with varying degrees of vitality as in-group languages of home and solidarity for the four ethnic groups in the society. Government policy in recent years has attempted to promote the use of Mandarin at the expense of other dialects. The use of a localized variety of English, Singaporean English or 'Singlish', has also met with government disapproval, but its vitality seems, if anything, to be on the increase rather than the wane (Platt, 1988(b); Platt and Weber, 1980; Tay, 1982).

Mary Tay of the National University of Singapore described current trends in sociolinguistics at the Hong Kong conference. Sociolinguistics is widely taught as an academic subject at undergraduate and postgraduate level at the National University of Singapore (NUS), within both the Department of English and the Department of Sociology. Recent research at the NUS has included a pilot sociolinguistic survey of language in Singapore. Sociolinguistic research and teaching are also carried out at the Regional Language Centre (RELC). Important areas of sociolinguistic research of current interest were identified as (1) an examination of models of description and research methodology with reference to their application to research in Singapore; (2) research on 'standard languages', with specific reference to English, Mandarin and Malay; (3) studies of localized language 'varieties' including Singapore English and Singapore Mandarin; and (4) studies of language maintenance and language shift.

In addition to the references given above, recent work on sociolinguistics in Singapore includes Mrendras and Kuo (1980); Anderson (1985); Crewe (1977); D'Souza (1988); Foley (1988); Gupta (1986, 1988); Harrison (1980); Kandiah (1988); Kuo (1980, 1984a, 1984b, 1986); Kwan-Terry (1988); Le Page (1984); Newman (1988); Pakir (1988); Platt (1982); Tay (1985, 1988a, 1988b); Van Naerssen (1988); and Ward and Hewstone (1985).

Thailand

Thailand evaded colonialization by European powers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and thus avoided the imposition of a European language on its society. Consequently, Thailand has not been affected by language rivalries in the way that many South and South-East Asian societies have, and the sociolinguistic situation has been depicted in terms of 'stability' and 'unity' (Smalley, 1988a).

The standard language is 'Thai', sometimes referred to as 'Siamese' or 'Central Thai'. Thai is classified as part of the Tai language family, which subsumes the languages spoken in Assam, northern Burma, Thailand, Laos, northern Vietnam, and the provinces of Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi in China. Thai is designated as the official national language and is used by the government, by the mass media and in education. Of the total population of 47 million, around 80% are believed to speak at least some Thai (Hudak, 1987). Smalley estimates that there are only 12 million 'native speakers' of the language, but

notes, nevertheless, that the position of Thai as the national language is 'unquestioned and unthreatened' (Smalley, 1988a). At the same time, however, individual multilingualism is the norm throughout the society. In addition to Thai there is also a range of other regional dialects including Northern Thai, Southern Thai and Lao (North-Eastern Thai), together with a range of other Thai languages, including Lue, Phythai and Phuan, as well as a number of minority languages, including nearly 4 million Chinese dialect speakers, and speakers of 'marginal languages' such as Kuy in the northeast and various 'hill tribe' languages in the north. Regional and social identities in Thailand overlap throughout the society and millions of Thai people speak two or more languages constantly as members of a speech community which has been characterized as 'a case study in linguistic diversity and national unity' where language use takes place within the framework of a 'hierarchy of multilingualism' (Smalley, 1988a).

In recent years, English has also gained in currency as an 'external' or 'international' language. After 1945, and especially during the period of the Vietnam War, Thailand became a major recipient of economic aid from the United States, and sizeable numbers of US embassy and service ·personnel either were stationed in the country or visited Thailand regularly. In recent years, the demand for the English language has increased as Thailand has expanded its manufacturing (particularly textiles and garments) and tourist industries, and today English is seen as 'a powerful vehicle for carrying on international business, strengthening the economy and improving technical knowledge' (Masavisut, Sukwiwat and Wongmontha, 1986).

At the Hong Kong conference, Prapart Brudhiprabha of Srinakharinwirot University reported on sociolinguistic research in Thailand. A good deal of work has been carried out on language planning and minority languages both by individual scholars and by institutions such as the Tribal Research Centre of Chiangmai, and the Institute of Language and Culture 'for Rural Development. Sociolinguistics as an academic discipline is, however, according to Brudhiprabha, still in its 'infancy' and there is a need for increased research, particularly into the sociolinguistic dimensions of the learning of English (and other languages) as a foreign language.

Further references for sociolinguistics in Thailand include Beebe (1981); Brudhiprabha (1979, 1982, 1986, 1988a, 1988b); Diller (1988); Gething, Harris and Kullavanijaya (1976); Gurevich (1976); Harris and Chamberlain (1975); Juntanamalaga (1988); Khanittanan (1988); Llamzon (1979); Prasithrathsint (1988a, 1988b, 1988c); Scupin (1988); Smalley (1976, 1988a, 1988b); Smalley, and Prasithrathsint, (1988); Strecker (1987); Tingsabadh (1988); and Warie (1977).

Sociolinguistics in other Asian societies

Sociolinguistic research on other areas in the· Asian region varies a great deal in terms of quantity and scope. Within South Asia, *Bangladesh* is discussed by Moniruzzanam (1979); and the language situation in *Sri Lanka* is discussed by Dharmadasa (1977), Fernando (1977), and Suseendirarajah (1980). In South-East Asia, *Cambodia* is discussed by Weber (1989), and *Vietnam* by Nguyen (1979, 1980, 1987). References on *Indonesia* include Diah (1982); Lowenberg (1988); Nabadan (1979, 1985); Noss (1982, 1984); Prentice (1987); Tanner (1967), and Uhlenbeck (1971). In East Asia, recent references for *Taiwan* are: Cheng, R. L. (1985); Huang (1988); Tse (1983, 1986); van den Bergh (1986, 1988); and Young (1988). Recent articles on *Korea* include Kim, K. H. (1977); Kim, K. O. (1985); Kim, N. K. (1987); and Park (1983). Further afield in the Asian-Pacific region, the sociolinguistic scene in *Australia* was discussed at the Hong Kong conference by Platt (1988a) and the situation in *New Zealand* was reported on by Gordon (1988b).

So far, in this chapter, the discussion put forward has attempted to cover a number of related topics, including the development and scope of sociolinguistics; current perspectives on language and society within this field; and 'western sociolinguistics' versus 'Asian sociolinguistics'. The final sections of this chapter will now go on to discuss future directions and the relationship between linguistic theory and sociolinguistic theory, and will also attempt to provide an introduction to the 'international perspectives' included in this volume.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

To attempt to map out precisely the directions in which sociolinguistics and the study of language and society will move in the next ten or twenty years is an exercise doomed to failure from the outset. As indicated in previous sections in this chapter, the current scope of the subject - traversing, as it does, the 'sociological' to the 'linguistic'- is at present so wide and the interests represented so pluralistic that it is impossible to predict future directions with any degree of certainty.

Within this current plurality of interests in the subject, some broad trends may be discernible, however. At the 'secular linguistic' end of the continuum,. for example, it seems likely that work within the 'Labovian paradigm', which now represents something of a methodological orthodoxy, is likely to increase and diversify across a wide range of speech communities (see the postscript to Labov, 1982) as will the related work of others such as Trudgill and the Milroys already cited above. The Labovian framework for 'doing sociolinguistics' has won powerful support from many linguists in the field who essentially favour a 'linguistic sociolinguistics' (or 'sociolinguistics proper') in which the focus of study'' is languages and language systems. At the other end of the spectrum, we find European sociolinguists such as Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier (1987, 1988) whose objectives extend to the establishment of a 'discipline' of sociolinguistics, embedded far more within a framework of contemporary social science (especially sociology and social psychology), which takes current sociological work into far greater account in the formulation of 'sociolinguistic' explanations of language behaviour.

Within what have been referred to as 'mainstream' approaches to the enterprise, a variety of approaches coexist, including the sociology of language, 'anthro-linguistics', discourse analysis and the social psychology of language. Of these approaches, in recent years, noticeable advances have been made in the social psychology of language, whose scope now widened, from an original base largely associated with language attitude studies, to take on board the investigation of such issues as communication and context, language use and life-span, and crosscultural studies of sociolinguistics (see Giles, Coupland and Wiemann, 1988, and Giles, 1988, both in this volume). Discourse analysis as an area of investigation has similarly had an influential impact on sociolinguistics in recent years, across a spectrum of studies. One way in which this influence has been realized is in the accommodation of language variation at a discoursal level into 'secular' studies of language variation (see Milroy, this volume; and Thibault, 1989). Another recent, and potentially exciting, movement in discourse analysis is that represented in recent work on 'critical language study', which focuses on the critical analysis of discourse samples by relating its approach not only to the 'functionalist' perspectives of linguists, such as Halliday, but also to current sociological thought on power and ideology, derived from such sources as Habermas, Althusser and Foucault (see Fairclough, 1989).

Within the range of the 'plurality of interests' within sociolinguistics, however, one central concern at present is the substantial tension between 'formalist' approaches and 'functionalist' approaches to the subject, at the levels of both theory and research.

‘Formalist’ versus ‘functionalist’ approaches

This perceived tension between 'formalist' and 'functionalist' conceptions of linguistics emerged quite clearly at the Hong Kong conference. The second half of the 'round table' held on the final day of the conference was mainly concerned with sociolinguistic theory. Discussion during this 'theoretical' round table was dominated by one of the questions that were suggested by the organizers of the colloquium which was: 'To what extent has "the sociolinguistic enterprise" made substantial progress in recent years in moving towards a unified sociolinguistic theory of language?' James Milroy and Ralph Fasold both presented position papers on this question (which are included in full in Part V of this volume), in which each attempts to deal with the divide between 'formalist' and 'functionalist' approaches, not only within sociolinguistics but within linguistics as a whole.

Fasold (1988b) broadly argues in favour of a tolerance of both approaches to linguistics. Formalist issues, he argues, such as those which concern syntacticians working on government and binding theory,

rarely concern functionalists, such as 'mainstream' sociolinguists, pragmatists and discourse analysts. At present these approaches exist, apparently independent of each other and apparently governed by different sets of principles. One way to differentiate these two approaches might be to allocate the term ‘grammatics' to refer to formalist approaches and to reserve the term 'linguistics' for functionalist approaches to language; but, given the current state of the art, there was little opportunity at present for incorporating both into a unified sociolinguistic theory of language use (Trans., 1988).

James Milroy voiced his own doubts about the prospects for an 'integrated theory' of sociolinguistics, noting the current plurality of approaches ranging from quantitative social dialectology to interactional approaches of vanous kinds. The integration of these approaches, Milroy (1988b) argues, would be at present premature as differing interests apply in different types of study; Labov's work is *system-based* as a result of his interest in linguistic change and linguistic systems; whereas interactional sociolinguists favour an approach that is *speaker-based.* Milroy then goes onto argue that the explanation of 'human linguistic behaviour in social groups' should employ speaker-based rather than system-based approaches; and, in this context, sociolinguistics should also be informed by work in sociology, anthropology and psychology, noting that a unified sociolinguistic theory might ultimately be seen as a contribution to social science in general rather than linguistics' (Milroy, 1988b). In the discussion of this issue at the round table, a number of points were taken up by other participants on the panel and in the audience. John Gibbons argued that sociolinguists should first strive to formulate adequate *functional* explanations, and to regard as arbitrary only that which cannot be socially explained. He also emphasized that currently linguists were handicapped in argumentation by the traditional Ideology and terminology of linguistics, citing as instances of this the way in which such indeterminate terms as 'a language' or 'a dialect' continue to influence sociolinguistic argumentation (Trans., 1988; see also LePage, 1988a).

Dennis Preston suggested that the position that the formalist and functional approaches were two distinct entities is difficult to maintain in view of the way that grammatical theories regularly make claims about the organization of the brain in any language. To the extent, therefore, that a theory of grammar 'makes a claim about the organization of language operations on the brain', then 'there is a conduit to sociolinguistic behaviour, and, conversely, If there are claims in variation studies, or pidgins and creole studies, about the mental organization of language then a similar link or conduit is established, and 'that conduit ... is precisely open to the degree to which either side makes psycholinguistic claims' (Trans. 1988). '

Of all the participants, Le Page put the case most strongly for an unified approach to a sociolinguistic theory of language: 'The primary role of language for each of us', Le Page argued, 'is to find out who we are, to define ourselves in terms of our relationships to other people, and to the objects which we discern in the universe. I cannot recognize a division, therefore, between the social aspects of language and the psychological aspects of language. It seems to me that each of them implies the other. . . . The study of language is absolutely essentially an integrated study of this universe of worlds in which each of us has our separate existence, but in which we are trying to relate ourselves to one another, and find our identities.' He then goes on to assert that grammatical models (of the 'formalist' kind) can only be tested against language use, a *person's* language, and in that sense, and in the ways indicated above, 'all sociolinguistics is linguistics, and all linguistics is sociolinguistics' (Trans., 1988).

At this point it is worth noting that the issues relating to a 'unified' sociolinguistic theory of language have also been recently addressed elsewhere in the linguistics literature. First, Dittmar, Schlobinski and Wachs attempt to address this question in a paper entitled 'Components for an overarching theoretical perspective in sociolinguistics' (in Dittmar and Schlobinski, 1989), which takes as its starting-point the thesis that 'sociolinguistic theory can only be developed to .the extent that one manages to build a constructive, interdisciplinary bridge between language systems and language use, between the life world in a specific culture and the institutionalised social system' (Dittmar, Schlobinski and Wachs, 1989), a position influenced by a matrix of sociological thought derived from Habermas and others.

However, the question of a 'unified' or 'integrated' approach to, the study of language in its social context has also been addressed, in a number of books and articles, by Harris (1980, 1981, 1987a, 1987b) whose perspective is shaped largely by a critical consideration of the development of linguistic theory.

Linguistics theory: ‘segregationalism’ versus ‘intergrationalism’

Harris has been chiefly concerned in his work to present a powerful counterblast against many of the linguistic orthodoxies and ideologies that currently pervade 'linguistic science', particularly those associated with Chomskyan linguistics, and the range of related 'formalist' approaches that have travelled with it in recent years. For Harris, contemporary linguistics has succumbed to the effects of a set of fallacies about language which cumulatively have helped propagate the 'language myth', first established, at least within the framework of a formal discipline of 'linguistics', by Saussure, but subsequently perpetuated by Chomsky and other linguists throughout recent years. In brief, Harris argues that the foundations of Chomskyan mentalism and the concern of linguistic theory with the 'competence' of an ideal speaker-hearer can be traced back to myths of determinacy, telementation and fixed-code mechanism-embedded in the theories of language associated with Saussure, who, more than any other, was largely responsible for establishing linguistics as a separate discipline throughout the course of this century (see Toolan, 1989). This influence., Harris argues, has had an immense impact on the development of contemporary language studies:

> General linguistic theory in the course of the twentieth century has seen the emergence of two contrasting approaches. The mainstream approach has been, and remains, a segregational approach. Founded by Saussure, continued in the USA by Bloomfield and today by his generativist successors, segregational analysis treats language and languages as objects of study existing in their own right, independently of other varieties of communication and amenable to description in terms that are quite separate from those used in any other discipline. The alternative approach, the integrational approach, sees language as manifested in a complex of human abilities and activities that are all integrated in social interaction, often intricately so and in such a manner that it makes little sense to segregate the linguistic from the non-linguistic components .... The segregationalist approach to language typically abstracts from the linguistic community and from the communication situation and proceeds by setting up decontextualized systems of linguistic units and linguistic relations. The integrationalist, on the other hand, insists that language cannot be studied without distortion except in its normal functional context.
>
> (Harris, 1987b; in Love, 1990)

'Sociolinguistics', Harris goes on to suggest, began as something of a compromise, as the term itself suggests that sociolinguists study 'only one aspect or subdivision rather than the totality of language [thus leaving] segregationalists free to insist that the study of language structure rather than the study of linguistic communities constituted the disciplinary heart of linguistics and linguistic theory' (Harris, ibid.). Notwithstanding Harris's misgivings about the origins of sociolinguistics, there are a number of signs that the 'discipline' is now moving towards an integrationalism of sorts, and the theoretical distance between, for example, Harris and Milroy and Le Page may not, on consideration, be that great. Others too, including Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier (1987; 1988), as has been noted, are also currently concerned to map out an enlarged multidisciplinary perspective for the subject.

In another paper, 'Making sense of communicative competence' (1990), Harris emphasizes that 'experience is not neatly compartmentalized into the linguistic and the non-linguistic . . . [and] words are not separate from situations: They are part of situations, both socially and psychologically. Furthermore, without that essential integration, we could neither learn a language, nor function efficiently as language users.' Part of coming to terms with language in society, therefore, may be to redefine both the 'ideology' and 'metalanguage' of language study (see Gibbons in Trans., 1988; LePage, 1988a) not only properly to accommodate the altered, and altering, perspectives on linguistics and linguistic systems that have emerged in recent years, but also more effectively to map the correspondences between linguistic behaviour and the other behaviours involved in human communication, to chart more exactly the 'multidimensional space' (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985) of language and communication. In this sense, the various attempts of sociolinguists to come to terms with those aspects and artefacts of human behaviour which impinge on human communication, such as identity, ethnicity, race, social class, gender,

age, social networks, social groups, attitudes, politics, ideology and so on (Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier, 1987, 1988), is a very real response to a need already felt to integrate the study of sociolinguistics more completely with the study of individuals, social groups, societies and human behavior generally.

Whatever the desirability, theoretically or methodologically, in moving towards a 'unified' approach to sociolinguistic theory and research, however, the picture of sociolinguistics today (both 'west' and 'east') is one of pluralism and diversity, as indicated consistently throughout the course of this chapter. Trudgill gave explicit recognition of this when he returned to the question of 'objectives' in sociolinguistics in the course of the round table at the Hong Kong conference. In brief, Trudgill argued that different sociolinguists are 'doing sociolinguistics' today from a range of different perspectives, as anthropologists, dialectologists, psychologists, social psychologists, sociologists, language teachers and so on, and that objectives naturally vary accordingly. As a result, he noted, hopes for 'a unified theory of sociolinguistics' are unlikely to be fulfilled, at least in the short term. Given that what we now have is a pluralism of interests in the field, Trudgill suggested that linguists might do well to exercise as much tolerance of others' objectives, approaches and interests as possible; and thus avoid the excesses of intra-disciplinary acrimony which frequently surface within the field (Trans., 1988).

Earlier in this chapter it was argued that the tension between a 'western sociolinguistics' and 'Asian sociolinguistics' might be most easily dispelled in an academic climate that allowed for a 'creative pluralism' of interests, and it would also seem that a spirit of creative pluralism might be the best we could hope for in other areas of debate within sociolinguistics as well. And part of this spirit of 'creative pluralism', by definition, would also be the recognition of the potential for 'creative internationalism' within sociolinguistics today, not only through increased understanding of languages and language issues world-wide, but perhaps, too, through the de-mythologizing and 'liberating' effects that the study of language, at its best, provides.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS TODAY: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The collection of chapters compiled in this volume attempts to represent a range of objectives and interests in sociolinguistics today, throughout a variety of international settings.

The chapters in the rest of the volume are classified (though by no means discretely) into a number of parts: Part II comprises articles on 'sociolinguistic theory', Part III deals with 'language variation, culture and society'; Part IV deals with 'multilingualism'; and Part V deals with 'current perspectives on sociolinguistics'.

The collection in this volume is 'international' in at least the following senses: of the fourteen full-length articles included in Parts II-IV, six are concerned mainly with the examination of sociolinguistic issues in Asian societies (i.e. the contributions from Chen; Cheung; Davies; Gonzalez; Gupta and Macdonald); five with issues of prominence in Europe and the west (Hasan; Milroy, J., Milroy, L.; Tabouret-Keller; and Trudgill); and three with sociolinguistic problems of relevance to both Asia and other international settings (Fasold; Giles, Coupland and Wiemann; and Le Page). In addition, there are also three short 'position papers' on current sociolinguistic theory and research, which are included in Part V (from Fasold; Giles; and Milroy).

The section headings for Parts II-IV are by no means entirely watertight or exclusive; Part II is intended to comprise material of chiefly theoretical interest; Part III is intended mainly to present empirical work of various kinds; and Part IV deals with the wide spectrum of issues referred to generally as 'multilingualism'. The 'leakage' between such categories should be obvious to the reader. For example, Hasan's and Le Pag~'s papers in Part II are not only theoretical, but also present detailed reports of various empirical investigations as well; in Part III the papers from Milroy, J., Milroy, L., and Giles, Coupland, and Weimann are not only empirical in focus but also have implications for sociolinguistic theory as well. To some extent, therefore, the grouping of papers into classified sections is an ad hoc device but at the same time it is hoped that such sections will serve as' a general guide to readers of this volume, from whatever background.

The study of language and society is, as this chapter has attempted to demonstrate, a field of activity encompassing a wide range of interests. This volume, by definition almost, is aimed chiefly at those who would identify themselves (at least in some senses) as 'sociolinguists'. It is, however, also the hope of the editors that this work will also reach as wide an audience as possible, amongst all those interested in the study of language and society

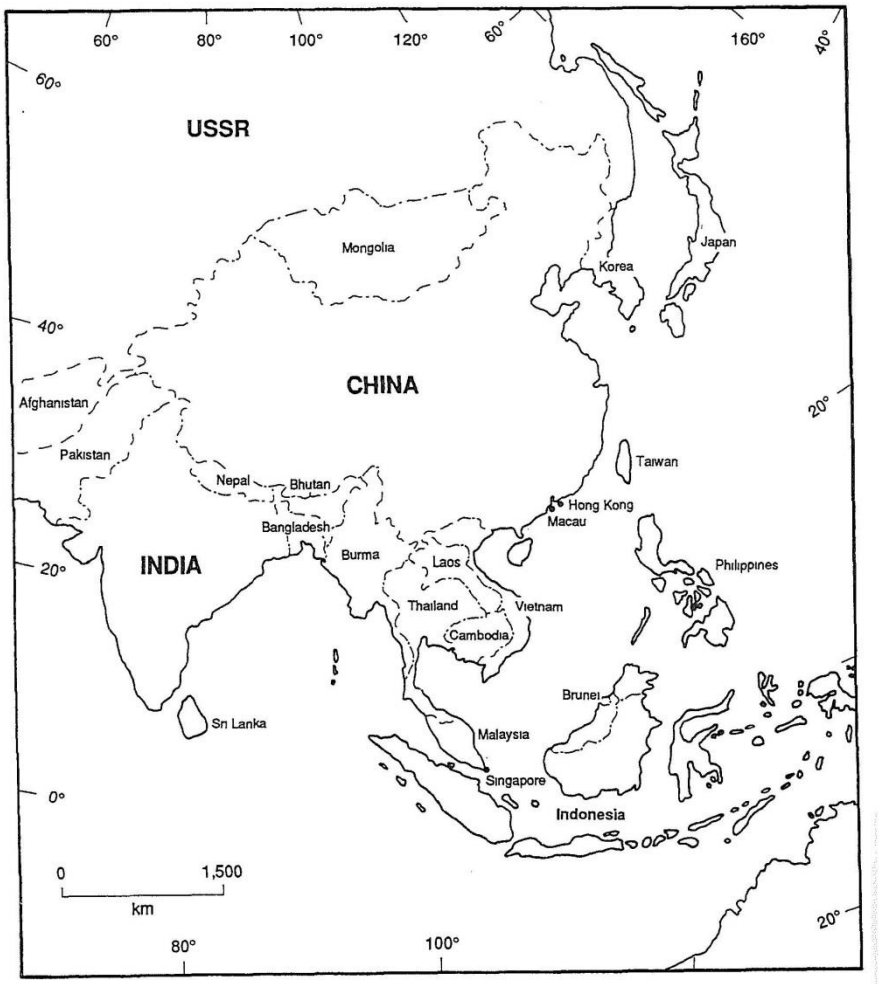

Figure 1.1. South Asia, South-east Asia, and East Asia

NOTE

1 All the chapters in this book were presented as papers at the First Hong Kong Conference on Language and Society with the exception of those by Bolton and Le Page, which were specially written for this volume.

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