Macau English: status, functions and forms

ANDREW MOODY

The sociolinguistics of a small community of English users

A JOURNALIST for a local Macau English-language newspaper recently wrote to me and several other friends and asked us to describe Macau with one word. Many words came to mind: *historic*, *multicultural*, *casinos*, *growth*, etc.; but the word I chose to suggest does not necessarily come to mind until one has lived here, *small*. Indeed, Macau is a very small community. At the end of September 2007, the resident population was 531,400 and the territory occupied 28.6 sq km, although the largest concentration of population lives within the 9.3 sq km area of "Peninsular Macau" (DSEC, Macao, 2008). In terms of both population and land mass, then, Macau is a very small community, and this fact has influenced the status, functions and forms of English within the territory.

The possible influence of size, when examining a speech community, raises a number of interesting sociolinguistic questions. Are there general differences in the way that a small community like Macau uses languages and develops language policies? Must a community be of a certain size before it can be said to have its own variety of English or any other language? What unique types of pressures or influences affect a small community like Macau sociolinguistically? In order to address these questions, we should first examine the sociolinguistics of a small community in order to understand how they might differ from larger communities. Perhaps the clearest difference between Macau and its larger neighbours Hong Kong, Taiwan and China is the size of its economy. Although the economies of large and small communities may not differ qualitatively, the economy of a small community, which ultimately comes to shape the social structure of that community, relies heavily upon other economies for sustained growth. In the case of Macau, the local population is not large enough to sustain long-term growth in many aspects of economic development or infrastructure. Consequently, the economy must constantly respond to developments and opportunities from outside. Likewise, the status, functions and forms of English also respond to a number of different economic developments from outside the community, either directly in the form of language policy decisions, or indirectly as a result of demographic changes within the community.

Official policies toward English

English does not have legal status within the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) (Chinese Government, 1993) where Chinese and Portuguese are specified as the official languages of the territory. However,



ANDREW MOODY is an associate professor in the Department of English at the University of Macau, where he teaches Sociolinguistics, Varieties of English and General Linguistics. His PhD in English (University of Kansas, USA) was an examination of Hong Kong English. Currently he is working on a funded research project to examine the role of language shift and language maintenance among minority language communities in Macau. He has also published on corpus linguistics and the role of English in Asian popular culture.

doi:10.1017/S0266078408000242

 © 2008 Cambridge University Press

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

there is a widespread use of English within the government at various levels. Even the Basic Law is available in both of the two official languages, Portuguese and Chinese, and in English. Although English does not have a *de jure* official status, the availability of the Basic Law and other official documents in English suggests that the language nevertheless enjoys a *de facto* status within government agencies in Macau, the extent to which has rarely been examined.

Table 1 illustrates the degree to which Macau government services are potentially available on the Internet. The Macau government portal for internet services lists 63 government agencies or institutions within 8 different categories: Chief Executive, Legislation and Justice, Administration and Justice, Economy and Finance, Security, Social Affairs and Culture, Transport and Public Works and Anti-corruption and Audit (Macao Government, 2008). Among the 63, all have Chinese websites and all but three, the Technology Committee, the Institute for Tourism Studies and the Macao Polytechnic Institute, have Portuguese websites. This is, however, what would be expected from the Basic Law designating that 'in addition to the Chinese language, Portuguese may also be used' (Chinese Government, 1993; Chapter 1, Article 9). What is not expected, however, is that 44 (70%) government institutions that offer services on the Internet offer them in English in addition to Chinese and Portuguese. While there is no designation that English may be used, there is neither any prohibition within the Basic Law, and the use of English

Table 1: Chinese, Portuguese and English websites operated by the Macau government

	Chinese	Portuguese	English
Chief Executive			
Government Information Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Macao Foundation	✓	✓	✓
Technology Committee	✓		
Science and Technology Development Fund	✓	✓	✓
Research Centre for Sustainable Development	✓	✓	✓
Office for Personal Data Protection	✓	✓	✓
Legislation and Justice			
Legislative Assembly	✓	✓	✓
Court	✓	✓	
Public Prosecutions Office	✓	✓	
Administration and Justice			
Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau	✓	✓	
Legal Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	
Identification Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Printing Bureau	✓	✓	✓
International Law Office	✓	✓	✓
Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	
Legal and Judicial Training Centre	✓	✓	
Conselho Consultivo da Reforma Jurídica	✓	✓	
Economy and Finance			
Macao Economic Services	✓	✓	
Finance Services Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Statistics and Census Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Labour Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Social Security Fund	✓	✓	
Pension Fund	✓	✓	
Consumer Council	✓	✓	✓
Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute	✓	✓	✓
Macao Monetary Authority	✓	✓	✓
Human Resources Office	✓	✓	✓
Gabinete de Informação Financeira	✓	✓	✓

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 1 *continued*

	Chinese	Portuguese	English
Security			
Public Security Forces Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	
Public Security Police Force	✓	✓	
Judiciary Police	✓	✓	✓
Macao Prison	✓	✓	✓
Customs of Macao Special Administrative Region	✓	✓	✓
Fire Services Bureau	✓	✓	
Academy of Public Security Forces	✓	✓	
Social Affairs and Culture			
Health Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Education and Youth Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Cultural Affairs Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Macau Government Tourist Office	✓	✓	✓
Social Welfare Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Macao Sports Development Board	✓	✓	✓
Tertiary Education Services Office	✓	✓	✓
Institute for Tourism Studies	✓		✓
University of Macau	✓	✓	✓
Macao Polytechnic Institute	✓		✓
Macau Grand Prix Committee	✓	✓	✓
Transport and Public Works			
Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Cartography and Land Registry Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Maritime Administration	✓	✓	✓
Macao Post	✓	✓	✓
Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Housing Bureau	✓	✓	✓
Bureau of Telecommunications Regulation	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Protection Committee	✓	✓	✓
Civil Aviation Authority	✓	✓	✓
Gabinete para o Desenvolvimento do Sector Energético	✓	✓	✓
Comissão de Segurança dos Combustíveis	✓	✓	
Conselho Consultivo para o Reordenamento dos Barirros Antigos	✓	✓	
Infrastructure Development Office	✓	✓	✓
Gabinete para as Infra-estruturas de Transportes	✓	✓	
Anti-corruption and Audit			
Commission Against Corruption	✓	✓	✓
Commission of Audit	✓	✓	

in government services takes place without controversy.

Of course, the number of services and the amount of information offered on government websites may vary widely depending on the language that is used. Generally speaking, more information is available in Chinese on most of the websites. And it is no surprise that agencies like the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute and the Macao Government Tourist Office offer extensive services in English. The Internet is still dominated by the English language and these are sites that are, by their nature, directed primarily towards an audience outside Macau. But this is not the case for all of the English websites; a number of them are primarily for communication within the community. For example, the Legislative Assembly, Identification Bureau, Macao Monetary Authority, Macao Prison and Gabinete para Desenvolvimento do Sector Energético all have English websites. The use of English within Macau, therefore, is not restricted to communication outside the community, but English is also used as a governmental language of communication within

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Macau. Hence, English maintains a *de facto* status as an additional working language of the Macau government.

The prevalence of English as a *de facto* official language within the government is also illustrated by the government's own assessment of the language proficiencies within the civil service. According to statistics released by the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP, Macao, 2008), 18,911 civil servants, 97.8% of all civil servants, speak Cantonese, and 68.3% speak Putonghua (i.e. Mandarin). These rates of Cantonese and Putonghua proficiency in the civil service represent, in the case of Cantonese, slightly higher rates than within the Macau population, and, in the case of Putonghua, about 30% higher than in the local population (see Table 2 below). The proportion of Portuguese speakers within the civil service, however, represents the greatest difference in languages used within the civil service and within the Macau population. The ratio of civil servants who speak Portuguese is 18 times greater than within the general population, and there are only about 3500 Portuguese speakers in Macau (i.e. 30% of all Portuguese speakers) who are not civil servants.

This might at first appear to be a situation of 'diglossia without bilingualism', as described by Joshua Fishman (1967), but only in the most superficial of ways. Diglossia is a type of relationship in which two (or more) languages are used in a complementary distribution of domains. One language can usually be identified as an 'H variety' because its domains are associated with 'high' culture activities, such as literary writing, religious activities or formal government uses. The second language is usually identified as an 'L variety' because its domains are associated with 'low' cultural activities, such as family life, folk culture and informal public interactions (Ferguson, 1959). Fishman (1967) refines thinking on diglossia by noting that diglossia could develop with or without widespread bilingualism in a community. A diglossic community without bilingualism, also called 'broad diglossia', would be characterised by a powerful social elite class that uses an 'H language' in interaction with one another, but an 'L language' is used by all other members of the community for all interactions. There is no evidence, however, that this is what happens in the civil service, where only 430 (2.2%) civil servants don't speak Cantonese and Portuguese-speaking civil servants make up only 43% of civil servants. Instead, Cantonese is the preferred language of both the civil service and the general population, both within the 'high' domain of government and in other 'low' domains of public and private life. Although there is evidence that Portuguese and Cantonese probably were in a diglossic relationship with one another at a time when there were many more monolingual Portuguese speakers in the civil service (see Moody, in press 2009), the current situation can hardly be described as diglossic.

Instead, the importance of Portuguese within the civil service cannot be measured by its value as a medium of communication, but instead by its symbolic value, and this derives, at least in part, from Macau's small size. In the years before the handover of Macau from Portuguese to Chinese administration, Clayton (2001) notes that one aspect of the process of 'localisation' that was undertaken was 'replacing civil servants from Portugal with people from Macau' (172). However, the expected large departure of Portuguese administrators,

Table 2: Languages spoken by Macau civil servants and the resident population

	Number of speakers among all civil servants (n=19,341)	Percentage of speakers within resident population (n=492,291)
Cantonese	18,911 (97.8%)	91.9%
Mandarin	13,217 (68.3%)	38.5%
Portuguese	8,333 (43.1%)	2.4%
English	11,329 (58.6%)	16.6%
Others	205 (1.1%)	—

Source: SAFP, Macao (2008) and DSEC, Macao (2007)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

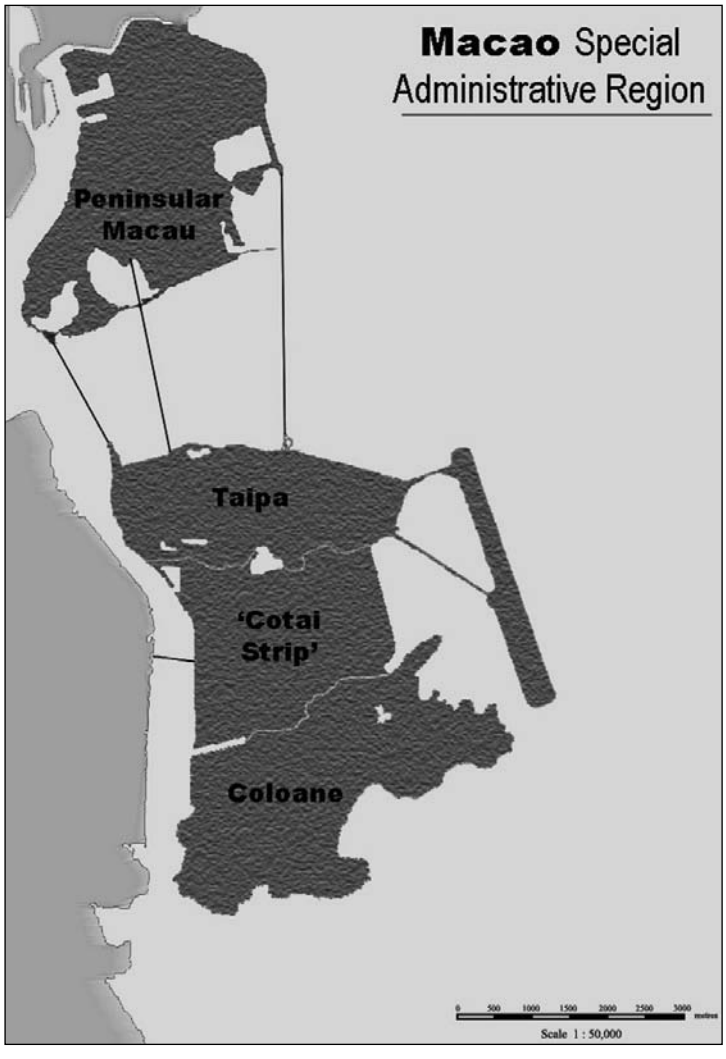


Figure 1: Map of Macau

especially within the higher ranks of the government, would potentially have produced a number of vacancies that could not easily be filled by local Macau Chinese because the number who were highly qualified at that time was relatively small. Portuguese as an official language of the civil service in the wake of the 1999 handover, then, had two effects. First, it maintained stability within the civil service by encouraging a number of mid-range civil servants who did speak Portuguese to remain in their posts. Second, it discouraged the filling of civil service posts from a much larger pool of qualified administrators from Hong Kong or China. In effect, the Portuguese language within the civil service came to symbolize that employees are 'local' and are more qualified to hold highly coveted government posts. To this degree Portuguese remains an important language within the civil service, although it is rarely used communicatively.

Although 8,333 civil servants speak Portuguese, the number who speak English is roughly 36% greater, in spite of the fact that English does not hold any *de jure* official status within Macau's Basic Law. Nevertheless, the *de facto* official language of English is more widely spoken than is the *de jure* official language of Portuguese. But English does not offer a civil servant any overt advantages in career advancement or opportunities the ways that Portuguese does because it does not symbolise local identity. Instead, the use of English within the civil service appears to be related to other more general trends within Macau's population, which are suggested by

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

comparing the number of English speakers in the civil service to the number of English speakers in the population. Whereas the proportion of Portuguese speakers in the civil service is 18 times greater than within Macau's resident population, the proportion of English speakers is only about 3 times greater than the proportion of English speakers within the population. The 11,329 English speakers in the civil service make up only 14% of all English speakers in Macau, suggesting that English fulfills functions in a wider range of functional domains in Macau than does Portuguese.

English as a language of education

Most writers about Macau's educational system note that there has been a marked lack of language planning or policy formulation (see Berlie, 1999; Bray, 2001; and Tang, 2003). While this might have produced more chaotic consequences within a larger territory, the dynamics of Macau's small size instead meant that it was easy for individual schools or educators to look outside the territory for models of education, and for policies on medium of instruction (MOI). While the tendency to look outside the territory for directions in policy has in part been politically driven, it has also typically been driven by Macau's small economy. Hence, a sort of laissez-faire approach to education policy regarding the MOI in Macau has allowed several competing approaches to develop alongside one another within the territory.

According to regulations from Macau's Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ), government schools only operate with one of the two official languages – Chinese or Portuguese – as a medium of instruction. However, government schools make up a very small proportion of primary and secondary schools in Macau, and many have extremely low rates of enrolment. There are no regulations regarding MOI for fully private schools, many of which adopt English as the MOI, although a few also adopt Chinese or Portuguese.

The vast majority of schools, however, fall under the category of 'private schools following the government curriculum'. These schools are privately administered, but agree to cooperate with the Education Bureau's curricula and standards; at the same time, the government heavily subsidizes these schools so that the schools must offer free education. Unlike government schools, Macau's educational regulations state that these private schools following the government curriculum 'can use the official languages or other languages to be the medium of teaching' and that 'private schools using other languages as the medium of teaching should provide the opportunity of learning at least one of the official languages' (DSEJ, Macao, 2008). Although the law appears to give a wide degree of freedom in the choice of a MOI, an older regulation specifies that any choice of MOI other than one of the official languages must first receive Bureau approval. In further clarification of the educational law for junior secondary (i.e. Forms 1–3) DSEJ notes that '… as the mechanism of educational transmission, the main language of instruction and the second language may be chosen from among Chinese, Portuguese and English' (DSEJ, 1994; author's translation). For the choice of language instruction in senior secondary (i.e. Forms 4–6) Macau law notes that:

> As the mechanism of educational transmission … the main language of instruction and the second language of instruction must be chosen from among Chinese (including Putonghua instruction), Portuguese or English.
> (DSEJ, 1997; author's translation)

As within the civil service, English maintains a *de facto* official status within the Macau educational system. Unlike the civil service, however, this status is codified within government educational law that puts English on an equal level with Chinese and Portuguese as a possible medium of instruction. A school that chooses English as the MOI would presumably find the choice approved as easily as one of the two *de jure* official languages as a medium of instruction.

One of the primary functions of English within Macau, therefore, is in the domain of education. Moody (in press 2009) points out that, even though Chinese is the most widely used medium language of instruction for Macau students (85.7%), 13.4% of Macau students are enrolled in schools that use English as the medium language of instruction. But most, if not all, of Macau's Chinese-medium secondary schools teach English as a subject. The 2006 By-census (DSEC, Macao, 2007) reports that 16.6% of the population can use English. Considering, however, that 13.4% of Macau students are enrolled in English MOI schools and that nearly all of the remaining 86.6% of students study English as a subject, the percentage

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of English speakers in the territory will undoubtedly rise dramatically in coming years.

Once again, the dynamics of Macau's small size contribute to the importance that English retains within the domain of education. The fact that the territory did not have a strong centralised curriculum or language policy was in part responsible for the degree to which Macau's educational system has been influenced by external models and policies, but size also matters. Curricula and MOI of individual schools in Macau have been influenced by models from Portugal, China, Taiwan and most notably Hong Kong, where English is an official MOI within the education system.

The different MOI and curricula used in Macau's schools also result, in part, from what was, until somewhat recently, a lack of viable tertiary education in Macau. The tradition of sending students abroad for post-secondary education allows the government to respond quickly and directly to perceived needs within the community. For example, the 2007/2008 public notice for overseas post-secondary scholarships specify that 20 scholarships are reserved for students to attend any university to study speech therapy, art education and library science – three subjects for which one cannot earn a degree in Macau – in any university. The guidelines also offer scholarships to students studying Portuguese culture or law in Portugal (DSEJ, Macao, 2007). Currently there are several local institutions like the University of Macau that offer higher degrees. But in the past secondary schools chose their curricula and MOI based upon an assumption of tertiary education outside Macau; usually Hong Kong, Taiwan, China or Portugal. Despite the growth of tertiary education in the territory, however, Macau retains the tradition of overseas scholarships for specific programmes of study. This tradition encourages the polymodel approach to school curricula. Hence, the pluricentric educational system that has been allowed to freely develop in Macau largely results from the territory's small size and limited access to local educational resources.

English as a language of media

Because Macau is a small territory and it is very close to both Hong Kong and China, the market does not easily sustain local media sources. Nevertheless, there is easy access to English-language media both produced within Macau and imported from Hong Kong. While the vast majority of local media within Macau are Chinese-language resources, the government does maintain and subsidise Portuguese-language media. For example, there are two television and two radio stations owned and operated by the government; one in each of the media broadcasts primarily in Cantonese, and the other broadcasts primarily in Portuguese. While it may appear that there are few chances to hear English broadcasts in Macau, however, it must be noted that, because it is close enough to Hong Kong to receive all Hong Kong radio and television broadcasts, English within the free broadcast media is as easily accessible in Macau as it is in Hong Kong.

Like broadcast media, local Macau print media are relatively small in comparison to those in Hong Kong, and both Chinese and English books, magazines and newspapers from Hong Kong are readily available in Macau. Two local Chinese-language newspapers are the most widely circulated in Macau. There are also three Portuguese-language newspapers printed within Macau, although the circulation of the most popular paper never exceeds 3000 (Lam, 2008). Contrary to expectations, Macau also publishes two English-language newspapers. Perhaps symbolizing a developing interest in and use of English within the community, the Macau *Post Daily* began circulation in August 2004 and the Macau *Daily Tribune* began printing an English daily in April 2007. These publications respond, at least in part, to the needs of a growing number of English-speaking business professionals working within Macau.

English as a language of commerce

Lo (2005) notes that the liberalization of Macau's casino economy in 2001 to allow initially three, and later six, casino operators was a move to promote social stability within the territory. The previous licensing of a single casino franchise created an environment in which casinos were easily infiltrated by gang (i.e. triad) members who operated lawlessly and violently. With the liberalization of the industry, the previous gaming monopoly, owned by Stanley Ho, was granted one of the 6 concessions, one was granted to the Hong Kong Galaxy Entertainment group, one was granted to the Australian/Macau co-owned Melco PBL corporation, and the other three

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

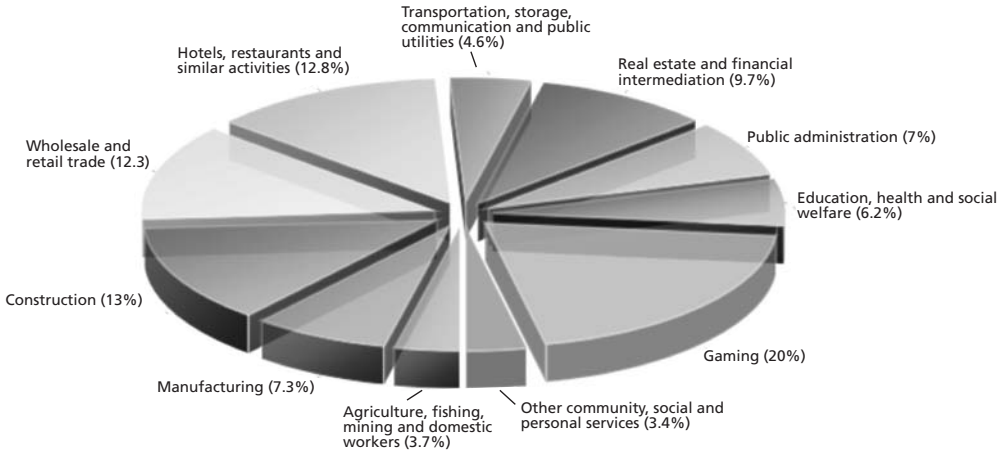


Figure 2 Distribution of work force by industry

were granted to US-owned casino operators, Wynn, Sands/Venetian and the US/Macau co-owned MGM. With the influx of international investment, particularly from the US casino market, the demand for English has grown within the commercial domain (Lam, 2007).

Opening the gaming market to six franchise owners also encouraged further development of the tourism and entertainment industries that have grown steadily throughout the 1990s. Since 2001, however, Macau has seen unprecedented growth. Once again, the dynamics of a small community are operative with economic growth because the impact of high growth rates is amplified within a small economy. For example, the growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the 3rd quarter of 2007 was 30.9%, contributing to an annual growth rate over the year of 37.3% (DSEC, Macao, 2008). While this tremendous level of growth has an impact in all aspects of the economy, none is more obvious than in the employment sector. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of Macau's workforce by industry, where the three largest employing industries are gaming (20%), construction (13%) and hotels, restaurants and similar activities (12.8%).

One response to the growing demand for English-language services within the commercial sector can be found in the 2003 publication of an unofficial English translation of the Macau *Commercial Code* (Godinho, 2003), which was approved by decree law at about the same time that the decision was made to liberalize the casino industry in 1999. The translator explicitly states that the translation is in response to 'the importance of the English language for business' and that it is intended to 'contribute to the economic development of Macao, as well as the diffusion of its legal system' (iii). Although the translation does not carry any legal status, it is consistent with the government's treatment of English as a *de facto* official language of communication throughout the territory. As international business, commerce and investment grow within Macau at unprecedented rates, so does the importance of English within the community. And the dynamics of Macau as a small community are apparent as an English translation of the legal code – unofficial, yet commissioned by the government – is only deemed necessary because of investment from Hong Kong, Australia and the United States.

Features of Macau English

Little attention has been given to the features of Macau English, perhaps because the small size of the community does not seem to warrant a description of the community's English. However, as we have already seen about the status of English in Macau, unique and distinctive functions of English – especially in relation to Macau's Chinese languages and Portuguese – emerge on closer examination. It is not clear whether or not there are any clearly identifiable differences between English in Macau and Hong Kong English. There is a long and rich history of English in Macau (see Bolton, 2003) before the establishment of Hong Kong in 1842, and there has been a continual exchange of

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

trade and infrastructure between the two territories from that time until the present. Cantonese is the dominant language in both the SARs (Special Administrative Regions) and much of the English-oriented infrastructure in Macau that this paper describes (media, education and, to some extent, the civil service) has been strongly influenced by Hong Kong English. It may be that distinguishing the Englishes of Hong Kong and Macau is as difficult as distinguishing the history, economy and structure of the two societies. However, a number of studies of Macau English suggest that the differences between Macau English and Hong Kong English are a rich area for research in the region.

Although it has never been conclusively shown that there is a difference between spoken English in Hong Kong and Macau, both varieties are heavily influenced by Cantonese, usually spoken as a first language by more than 86% of the population in either territory. There may be differences between the Cantonese varieties of Hong Kong and Macau (Bauer & Benedict, 1997), yet we expect to see very similar influences from Cantonese phonology onto English in Macau. These are described extensively in Bolton & Kwok (1990) and Hung (2002) and recently in Deterding, Wong and Kirkpatrick (2008). The following features have been described as Hong Kong English features and can also regularly be heard in Macau English:

- A lack of qualitative contrast between tense and lax vowels, or the lack of quantitative contrast between long and short vowels results in a reduction of the vowel inventory.
- A single central vowel [ʌ] is used.
- Open front [æ] is usually realised as back [ɑ] or front [ɛ].
- An apparent contrast between [aɪ] and [ʌɪ] is likely borrowed from Cantonese.
- A lack of voicing on alveolar and alveopalatal fricatives and affricates produces [s] in words like *zip* or [ʃ] in words like *measure*.
- Interdental fricative /ð/ is sometimes realised as [d], while /θ/ is sometimes realised as [f].
- Voiced labio-dental /v/ may be realised as either [f] or [w].
- Lateral /l/ may be realised as either a velar glide [w] (similar to 'dark l' [ɬ]) or an alveolar nasal [n]; hence, *pill* may be either [piw] or [pin].
- High-rising intonation is typically used in questions.
- Levelling of difference between strong and weak syllables, especially when the contrast is between content and function words, gives function words a greater degree of prominence.

This list of features, primarily adapted from Bolton & Kwok (1990) and Hung (2002), is not a comprehensive list of the phonological features of Macau English, but it does provide several points of comparison to Hong Kong English (HKE) in that each of these HKE features can also be observed in Macau. However, regarding the influence of Cantonese phonology, Hung (2002) notes, 'though HKE shows the influence of Cantonese, its phonological system cannot be reduced entirely to the phonology of either Cantonese or English' (139). While there is likely to be a great deal of correspondence between the two Cantonese-influenced varieties, differences may develop as a result of the separate social and economic development of the two territories. This has clearly happened to produce distinctly different English varieties in Hong Kong and Guangzhou (i.e. the Cantonese-speaking city which is also known as Canton), and it may have produced differences between Macau and Hong Kong.

Studies of the lexicon of Macau English, and how it differs from Hong Kong English, are complicated by the Chinese and Macanese diaspora that have taken place, especially into Hong Kong. Indeed, the earliest studies of the lexicalization of Chinese Pidgin English (CPE) and 'China Coast' English involve vocabulary that was first used in Macau. A complete list of this lexicon and a discussion of it can be found in Bolton (2003). Items from Bolton (2003) that are still in widespread use in contemporary Macau – as well as contemporary lexical items that are part of both Hong Kong English and Macau English – are listed in Panel 1 below. From a historical point of view, therefore, one could argue that what is currently known as Hong Kong English derives from the vocabulary of Macau English. Nevertheless, an examination of Macau English lexicon suggests that there could be observable differences between Macau and Hong Kong. First, there are a number of Portuguese-influenced loanwords in Macau English that, although they are often included as HKE lexemes, may appear more frequently in Macau than they do in Hong

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Chinese Pidgin English, 'China Coast' English and Hong Kong English vocabulary that can be observed in Macau (selected from Bolton, 2003)

1

Chinese Pidgin English and 'China Coast' English

ai yah!	an exclamation of surprise
bird's-nest	the edible nests of swallows, used in soup
chop	a seal or stamp
Dragon-boat Festival	a Chinese festival
Hakkas	a distinct ethnic group in southern China
kung he(i)	an expression of congratulations
lorcha	a type of sailing boat in South China
monsoon	seasonal winds and rains
piece (piecee)	a classifier e.g. 'one piece man'
triad	a Chinese secret society

Hong Kong English

aunty	a female friend of the family (also *auntie*)
autopay	an automatic payment
bat gwa	an ornamental eight-sided fung shui mirror (also *pat kwa*)
Canto-pop	a style of Cantonese popular music
Ching Ming	a spring festival in the Chinese calendar
dragon's eye	a variety of fruit (also *lungan* or *longan*)
Fourteen K (14K)	a type of secret society, or triad
helper	from domestic helper
laisee	a packet of money placed in a special red envelope and given as a gift at Chinese New Year, weddings, etc.
overseas Chinese	people of Chinese birth or Chinese descent living abroad
Special Administrative Region (SAR)	a province or region in the People's Republic of China which is allowed a degree of administrative and political autonomy
Tin Hau festival	a festival honouring Tin Hau, the Goddess of the Sea

Kong. These include, from Bolton (2003), *amah, aya*, *joss*, *lorcha* and *vinho*. Second, Macau government agencies frequently use acronyms from Portuguese rather than English, even when conversation or description of the agencies is in English. Therefore, the counterpart to the Hong Kong ICAC (Independent Commission against Corruption) in Macau is known as the CCAC (Comissariado contra a Corrupção). Academic institutions such as Macau Polytechnic Institute or the Institute for Tourism Studies frequently use their Portuguese acronyms IPM (Instituto Politécnico de Macau) and IFT (Instituto de Formação Turística). Finally, the method of Romanizing Chinese words – especially when it is used in personal and place names – reflects Portuguese spelling conventions more than English spelling conventions, and is therefore different from the Romanization conventions used in Hong Kong. Therefore, two common Chinese family names, which are spelled *Wong* or *Yu* in Hong Kong, would be spelled *Vong* or *Iu* in Macau. Similarly place names in Macau like *Iao Hon* or *Cheoc Van* are spelled distinctively different than they would be in Hong Kong.

Related to lexical studies is the study of code switching in Macau English. Ng (2006) examines the behaviour of English code switching in Hong Kong and Macau Chinese newspaper' advertisements and concludes that, although there are no substantial differences in the words (i.e. usually single lexical items) that are used in code-switched advertisements, the products that use code-switched ads in the two territories are somewhat different. Furthermore, the form

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of code switching in Hong Kong and Macau may not be substantially different, but the ways that English appears within a Chinese-language matrix frame text may differ.

The syntax of Macau English has been examined somewhat more carefully than other features of the variety. For example, Wu (2006) explores the written English of Macau students with a learner corpus compiled from student writing at a local secondary school. Although it is written from a point of view that merely allows for the examination of ungrammatical sentences, Leong (2007) argues that topic prominence, as opposed to subject prominence, is a highly salient feature of Macau English. Most significantly, Loi (2004) offers an examination of past tense marking by Macau English speakers and the social and linguistic factors that favour the loss or retention of past tense marking. For example, he argues that 'phonologically salient forms' (e.g. irregular verbs), 'change-of-state verbs with clear results' and 'aspectual perfectives' are the most likely to retain past tense marking (i). More importantly, Loi demonstrates that preceding nasals, laterals or vowels favour retention of past tense marking, while preceding obstruents form an environment that favours loss of marking.

Two additional applied studies of Macau English are noteworthy because they reflect upon attitudes toward formal features. First, Cheung (2006) examines the lexical collocational data from the Macau *Post Daily*, the only English-language newspaper that was in print at the time of her study, and from stories about Macau in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*. She concludes that different ways of referring to Macau are observable in the two newspapers and that this subtly represents different evaluations of Macau by the local press versus the Hong Kong press. In a second study, Shen (2008) uses a 'vocal guise' technique to test secondary students' subjective reactions to three English accents, Cantonese English, Philippine English and Chinese English, according to two scales, status and solidarity, and according to the suitability of the variety as a medium of instruction. Although the Cantonese English accent was rated highly on both scales, it was surprisingly not considered the most prestigious on the status scale. Chinese English was not valued on either scale, nor as a medium of instruction. Philippine English, however, was rated highly on both the solidarity and the status scales, and was consistently chosen as a suitable medium of instruction. Although the conclusions require further examination, the study suggests that Philippine English may have a significant effect on secondary students' choice of a target English variety.

A note on the spelling of Macau

2

There are two dominant spellings of the region known in Cantonese as *Oumuhn* (or Putonghua *Aomen*): *Macau* and *Macao*. Both spellings are used in both Portuguese and English documents, although the OED notes that *Macao* is attested in English as early as 1602. There is a common belief, however, that *Macau* is the Portuguese spelling of the region, while *Macao* represents the English spelling. Since the 1999 handover of the territory to administration as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, *Macao* has become the preferred spelling in most governmental institutions. Within the paper I have faithfully rendered the name according to the spelling that is used in cited sources, but have also chosen to use *Macau* as my own preferred spelling.

Conclusion

How, then, do small communities develop language policies and varieties differently from larger communities? In the case of Macau, it seems that the community is frequently overlooked because it is small. There was clearly a time when Macau was the centre of English contact in China. But as English has become a part of larger community that neighbours Macau, namely Hong Kong, China and Taiwan, the presence and importance of Macau English is easily forgotten. It seems, then, that two of the key differences between small sociolinguistic communities, like Macau, and the larger ones that most of us are familiar with are *sustainability* and *plasticity*. It is very difficult for a small community to sustain growth, infrastructure, language policies or linguistic forms without reference to a larger economic or political power, and this seems to have had a very important effect on the development of Macau English. Because Macau must constantly look to larger economies for sustenance and

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

growth, the language policies and even the linguistic forms are easily borrowed or adapted from those larger economies and political bodies. At the same time, the social structure of a small community is relatively malleable and adapts easily to shifting economic or political power relationships. Because Macau's population is so small, the emigration – or immigration – of only a few thousand individuals can have a profound impact on how the economy functions, who manages the territory or what languages are influential. This also seems to have occurred in Macau where, in the space of less than a decade, the English language has come into use in each of the sectors of media, education, commerce (Lam, 2007), and has even been given a *de facto* semi-official status within the government. These kinds of sociolinguistic changes seem to take place at a much slower rate in larger communities.

Macau's small size, therefore, is not just an aberration that demands sociolinguists take care not to repeat the errors of the past and overlook its variety of English. Instead, Macau's small size offers unique insights into how languages can grow in status and functions in a very short time, insights that are difficult to examine in larger communities. Therefore, Macau English should not be overlooked because the community of users is small, or because they have a tendency to emigrate to communities with greater economic potential, or because they rely on external standards, techniques and infrastructures. Instead, each of these is an important reason why Macau English should be recognised. ■

References

Bauer, Robert S. & Paul K. Benedict, eds. 1997. *Modern Cantonese phonology*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Berlie, J. A. 1999. 'Macao's education: a question of language – Chinese, Portuguese, and English.' In J. A. Berlie, ed., *Macao 2000.* Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, pp. 71–104.

Bolton, Kingsley. 2003. *Chinese Englishes: a sociolinguistic history*. Cambridge: University Press.

— & Helen Kwok. 1990. 'The dynamics of a Hong Kong accent: social identity and sociolinguistic description.' *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 1:1, pp. 147–72.

Bray, Mark. 2001. 'Higher education and colonial transition in Macau: market forces and state intervention in a small society.' In M. Bray and W. O. Lee, eds, *Education and political transition: themes and experiences in East Asia*, [CERC Studies in Comparative Education 1, 2nd edn]. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, pp. 139–61.

Cheung, Wai Astrid. 2006. *A study of Macao's identity in a local English newspaper*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

Chinese Government. 1993. *The basic law of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China*. Macao: Legal Affairs Bureau.

Clayton, Catherine Hope. 2001. *'If we are not different, we will cease to exist': culture and identity in transition-era Macau.* Unpublished PhD dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Deterding, David, Jennie Wong & Andy Kirkpatrick. 2008. 'The pronunciation of Hong Kong English.' *English World-Wide* 29:2, pp. 148–75.

DSEC (Direcção dos Serviços de Estatística e Censos), Macao. 2007. *Global results of By-census 2006*. <http://www.dsec.gov.mo/index.asp?src=/english/html/e_demgraphic.html>. Accessed 12 January 2007.

—. 2008. *DSEC Web*. <http://www.dsec.gov.mo/e_index.html >. Accessed 13 February 2008.

DSEJ (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude), Macao. 1994. *Faling di 39/94/M hao 7 yue 18 ri: chuzhong jiaoyu zhi kecheng zuzhi* [Law no. 39/94/M, 18 July: organization of junior secondary school curriculum]. <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/~webdsej/www/edulaw/basic/d3994mc.htm>. Accessed 12 February 2008.

—. 1997. *Faling di 46/97/M hao 11 yue 10 ri: gaozhong jiaoyu kecheng zuzhi* [Law no. 46/97/M, 10 November: organization of senior secondary school curriculum]. <http:// www.dsej.gov.mo/~webdsej/www/edulaw/basic/4697mc.htm>. Accessed 12 February 2008.

—. 2007. *Tonggao* [Announcements]. <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/~webdsej/www/func_viewnews_layout1_page.php?board_name=newstemp&searchnews=%E9%80%9A%E5%91%8A&pageis=0&start_msg_date=1998-06-01&end_msg_date=2007-05-14&howcount=130&mode=c&nolimit=1&gsearch=1&board_name=cnews&&msg_id=3044>. Accessed 28 February 2008.

—. 2008. *Lei n.º9/2006 — Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo Não Superior.* <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/~webdsej/www/edulaw/law_9_2006/content/chap07-e.htm>. Accessed 10 February 2008.

Ferguson, Charles A. 1959. 'Diglossia.' *Word* 15, pp. 325–40.

Fishman, Joshua. 1967. 'Bilingualism with and without diglossia: diglossia with and without bilingualism.' *Journal of Social Issues*, 23:2, pp. 29–38.

Godinho, Jorge A. F., translator. 2003. *Commercial code, approved by Decree-Law no. 40/99/M, of August 3, as amended by Law no. 6/2000, of April 27: English unofficial translation*. Macao: Government Printing Bureau.

Hung, Tony T. N. 2002. 'Towards a phonology of Hong Kong English.' In K. Bolton, ed., *Hong Kong English: autonomy and creativity*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 119–40.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Lam, Iok Fong. 2008. 'Huiguihou aomen puwen baozhang de shengcun celüe ' [Post-handover survival strategies of Macau Portuguese newspapers]. *Radio and television of Hong Kong media digest*. <http://www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20041014_76_120137.html >. Accessed 4 March 2008.

Lam, Kai Chong aliás Pedro Lam. 2007. *English in post-1999 Macau: the functions and status of English*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

Leong, Veng I. 2007. *Topic-prominence and subject-prominence: exploring the influence of Chinese topic-based sentence features on Macau students' English writing*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

Lo, Shiu Hing. 2005. 'Casino politics, organized crime and the post-colonial state in Macau.' *Journal of Contemporary China* 14:43, pp. 207–24.

Loi, Raymond. 2004. *Variation in past tense marking in L2 English in Macao*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

Macao Government. 2008. *Portal do Governo da RAE de Macau*. <http://www.gov.mo/egi/Portal/s/safp/links/index_en.html>. Accessed 10 February 2008.

Moody, Andrew. In press 2009. 'English-medium higher education at the University of Macau.' In C. Davison and N. Bruce, eds, *Language Issues in Asia's English-medium Universities*. Hong Kong: University Press.

Ng, Hong Chao. 2006. *A study of the mixing of English in Chinese newspaper advertisements in Hong Kong and Macao*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

SAFP (Direcção dos Serviços de Administração e Função Publica), Macao. 2008. *SAFP*. <http://www.safp.gov.mo>. Accessed 15 February 2008.

Shen, Cheng-Ling. 2008. *In search of a medium of instruction: Macao secondary students' attitudes toward three English varieties*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

Tang, Kwok Chun. 2003. 'The social origins and development of Macau's decentralized education system.' In K. H. Mok, ed., *Centralization and decentralization: educational reforms and changing governance in Chinese societies*, [CERC Studies in Comparative Education 13]. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, pp. 59–79.

Wu, Jianing. 2006. *Corpus-based lexical and syntactic analysis of the writing of high school students in Macao*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of English, University of Macau.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000242 Published online by Cambridge University Press