

Tsat in Sanya, Hainan Province from the Perspective of Ethnic Identity

Yang Yuan^{1, a}

School of Humanities and Communication, University of Sanya, No. 191, Xueyuan Road, Jiyang District, Sanya 572022, Hainan, China

a.89402024@qq.com,

Keywords: Tsat Language, Ethnic identity, Language protection, Ethnic integration

Abstract: Language restricts and affects people's activities of understanding the world and language identity includes psychological identity of national culture. As a symbol of national cultural and psychological identity, national language has an important influence on the formation of language concept and the occurrence of national culture. Therefore, the study of Tsat language will also greatly promote the integration of ethnic minorities and mainstream culture in the process of modernization. This research adopts sampling questionnaire survey, case study and other methods to summarize the influence of language and culture, and continuously strengthen the ethnic identity of the Hui people in Sanya City, thus achieving the goal of ethnic integration.

Ethnic identity has been translated into China with the word "ethnic group" since the first half of the 20th century. Research on ethnic identity focuses on anthropology and psychology. The anthropological perspective of ethnic identity focuses on what is the basis of ethnic identity, which generates the theories of ethnic identity such as primordial theory, instrumental theory and boundary theory, and discusses the process of development and evolution of ethnic identity based on these theories. Psychology holds that ethnic identity is the concrete embodiment of social identity theory in minority psychology research, and is the individual's understanding and belief of the group or category to which they belong. No matter which field of ethnic identity, its connotation and constituent elements are the logical starting point for discussion. In various fields, language is regarded as the key component of ethnic identity, and language plays a fundamental role in shaping and developing ethnic identity.

As far as China is concerned, the role of minority languages in the process of ethnic identity has attracted the attention of researchers. China's ethnic minorities, with a small population or living in multi-ethnic areas, generally know the surrounding Chinese dialects or languages of other ethnic groups. For example, some ethnic groups in some counties of Yunnan Province, and men who often go out generally master Chinese and other ethnic languages. However, the Hui people in Sanya have more languages or dialects than others, and they are of a group nature. They know more or less two or more languages (or square words) regardless of whether they are men or women, old or young (usually over 89 years old). The reason why the Hui people here are multilingual is closely related to their living environment. Tsat language is one of the most special minority languages and is the original language of the local Hui people. It is only used in Tsat and Hui Xin villages in Yanglan Town, Sanya City. Tsat language is used in various occasions in the village. Tsat Language is not Arabic or Persian in the Middle East, nor is it the language of some ethnic groups in Hainan. It is a language brought from overseas hundreds of years ago and preserved to this day. This is a very strange phenomenon. We know that Hui people living in different parts of the country generally use local Chinese as their communication tool, but only Hui people in Huihui township of Sanya have kept their language intact.

Tsat language is regarded as the symbol of Hui nationality's identity definition and the link of emotional maintenance, and is the "living fossil" of studying Hui nationality's history and culture. The local Hui culture represented by Tsat language reflects the cohesion and centripetal force of the ethnic group.

Since Tsat language was discovered in 1956, scholars have demonstrated the historical origin, formation and distribution, cultural characteristics, protection and inheritance of Tsat language from

the perspectives of natural environment, human history, etc. in the research of minority languages and cultures. However, studies on Tsat language and ethnic identity are still rare. In fact, Tsat language has a natural connection with the Hui ethnic group and is of great significance and value to the identification of the Hui ethnic group.

1. Connotation and Elements of Ethnic Identity

1.1 Ethnic Group and Ethnic Identity

There are dozens of definitions of ethnic groups and Max Weber's point of view has a great influence. He holds the view that ethnic groups are certain groups that have a subjective belief in their common lineage due to the similarity of physical type, culture, or common memory during migration. This belief is very important for the continuation of non-related community relations and this group is called ethnic groups. However, no matter what kind of definition of ethnic group is, it emphasizes cultural factors. Culture is considered as the distinguishing sign of ethnic groups, which means that the concept of ethnic group is based on cultural understanding. Identity is translated from "identity", which includes identification and other different translation methods. It refers to helping individuals to create order in their own lives and helping individuals to stay in groups or get involved with collective identity.

The distinction and formation of ethnic groups are related to language, religion, customs, sources, regions, etc. Among them, language is regarded as an important factor and a primary force, and common language is regarded as the primary cultural characteristic of an ethnic group. Language is considered to be the most important and intuitive feature of ethnic history and culture because being able to understand a language is the most intuitive and effective way to divide one group from another. A person who can use a language together can find a certain familiarity and quickly establish a common sense of belonging and intimacy among members. The choice of language by a certain group indicates their choice and confirmation of their cultural identity. Therefore, the first cultural factor that distinguishes ethnic groups is language.

Ethnic identity includes individual's determination of self-identity and individual's sense of belonging to the group to which they belong, which is different from the sensitivity and emphasis of ethnic identity on politics. Ethnic identity emphasizes the role and significance of culture in the formation of ethnic community. Relevant researches on ethnic identity mainly include such theories as "culture theory", "primordial theory", "boundary theory" and "scene theory". The differences between these theories lie in what is the basis of ethnic identity, which factors have external or implicit influence on the formation of ethnic consciousness, and through what mechanism this effect is finally formed. Ethnic identity is not static and it is a dynamic construction process influenced by social changes.

1.2 Elements of Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is a complex structure with many influencing factors. It includes not only the cognition of members within an ethnic group to the group to which they belong, but also the distinction between ethnic boundaries outside the ethnic group. Common ethnic languages, origins, religious beliefs, cultural customs, etc. are all believed to be related to the formation and development of ethnic identity, which is used to explain the shaping mechanism of ethnic identity.

The elements of ethnic identity mainly include ethnic self-identity, ethnic belonging, ethnic attitude, ethnic involvement, etc. Ethnic self-identification, ethnic belonging and ethnic attitude belong to implicit factors, while ethnic involvement belongs to explicit factors. Ethnic self-identity is also called ethnic perception, which refers to the ethnic label that individuals choose for themselves. For children, ethnic self-identity mainly depends on whether children can correctly identify their ethnic identity. For adults, ethnic self-identity means how they choose their ethnic identity. Ethnic group belonging refers to the individual's belonging to the ethnic identification, as well as the internal feelings and external manifestations of emotion and behavior under this group identification. Ethnic attitude refers to the cognition, emotion and behavior with preference

tendency when facing different ethnic groups. Ethnic attitudes are positive and negative. Ethnic involvement is also called ethnic behavior and refers to the degree of participation in social life and cultural customs within an ethnic group.

2. The Value of Tsat language in the Perspective of Ethnic Identity

Tsat language is not only a tool for thinking, information transmission and cultural exchange of ethnic members, but also an important symbol for defining the identity of Hui ethnic group. From the perspective of ethnic identity, Tsat language has special significance and value for Hui ethnic identity.

2.1 The Manifest Signs of Ethnic Self-identity

Ethnic self-identity is also called ethnic consciousness, that is, how a person locates himself in the social scene of ethnic communication and has a common psychology towards which ethnic group. This concept can also be simply understood as: "Who am I? Where do I come from? "

The Hui people of Hainan Island live in Huihui Brigade of Sanya Yanglan Commune, Hainan Li and Miao Autonomous Prefecture. Tsat brigade is a pure Hui brigade with ten production teams, including six fishery production teams and four vegetable production teams. The brigade has about 700 families and more than 3,700 people, divided into two natural villages, namely the old village and the new village. Recently, it has been divided into two brigades according to two natural villages-Tsat group and Hui Xin group. The two villages are about 4 kilometers apart and are all in the coastal plain area.

Before liberation, the Hui people in Sanya of Hainan Island were mainly engaged in fishery production. A small number of them were engaged in vegetable production, handicraft production and small traders. Their fishing activities in Asia are mainly shallow sea rounding up, with limited income and exploitation by landlords and usurers of their own race and Han nationality. They generally lead a very poor life and many people have not paid off their debts by the early liberation. The Hui people in Sanya are also subjected to political discrimination. For example, stone tablets erected during the Qingganlong period that are now preserved in front of the old Muslim temple in the new village record the scope of activities of the Hui people. They are bounded in the east by the mountains that separate Sanya from Lingshui County and in the west by Huang Liu in the west of old Sanya. Nominally they are allowed to move in places larger than where they live, but in fact they are restricted from moving further away. After the Japanese invaders invaded Hainan Island, they demolished their temples and houses to build the airport and forced them to move to the present Tsat village (i.e. Xin village). It was not until the liberation of Hainan Island in 1950 that the Hui people in Sanya were emancipated. After the land reform, the Hui people were given land. With the help of Han, Li and other brothers, they once learned farming. In 1953, they began to organize mutual aid groups, in the winter of 1955 they became advanced societies, and in 1958 they organized people's communes like all parts of the country. Later they resumed fishing and growing vegetables. Now the production and life of the Hui people have greatly improved, and the appearance of the Hui region has also changed greatly.

From the perspective of language itself, Tsat language's uniqueness determines its position and role in ethnic self-identification. The special pronunciation and vocabulary reflect the Hui people's history, customs and thinking habits. The choice and use of Tsat language is the Hui people's actual practice of their ethnic identity. Tsat language has thus become an explicit symbol of the self-identity of the local Hui ethnic group.

2.2 It has a cohesive effect on ethnic groups' sense of belonging

An individual's sense of belonging to the ethnic group is the blood, language, religion and customs acquired in the group. This natural feeling makes the individual and other members with the same basic emotion unite as one.

The Hui people in Sanya of Hainan Island, like the Hui people in other parts of the country, believe in Islam and their cultural customs are influenced and restricted by religion. Men are all

dressed in Chinese except the older ones, who wear white hats and white dresses at ordinary times and during worship. Generally, older women wear black caps and black or blue tops. Young and middle-aged women like to wear brightly colored towel caps and turquoise blue or pale pinkish purple tops with wide black edges and silver buttons, which are very beautiful. Some people like to wear jackets made of several colors of cloth and make them look patched. In terms of diet, the Hui people in Sanya are the same as the Hui people in other areas. They eat beef, mutton and fish, and avoid meat such as pigs, horses, donkeys and mules and all died things. Marriage and funeral habits are basically the same as those of the Hui people in the mainland. They do not intermarry with foreigners. Since liberation, although some other people have married Han women, Hui women still do not marry foreigners. In terms of religious beliefs, five services are held every day, and every Friday there is a "main hemp day". The male groups go to the mosque to hold services, and bathe and clean before services. Every year, there are three major religious festivals, namely "Eid al-Fitr", "Eid al-Adha" and "holy day".

These important activities are undoubtedly the most concentrated and prominent manifestation of the Hui ethnic group's sense of belonging. Tsat language, as the only "working" language in the activities, plays a fundamental and key role in the coordination and promotion of the whole activities.

Judging from the language concept of the local Hui people, the traditional Hui people require their children to speak Tsat language. Although influenced by cantonese, min language, Li language and so on, Tsat language still maintains its own characteristics on the whole. The closeness of this language objectively enhances the Hui ethnic group's sense of belonging.

3. Reflect Ethnic Involvement

Ethnic involvement refers to the social participation and cultural practice of ethnic members. The extension of ethnic involvement is quite extensive. Language, religion and customs are all concrete indicators to measure ethnic involvement. Different ethnic groups have different cultural customs and lifestyles, and thus derive different ethnic group behavior patterns. Participation in social life and cultural customs within the ethnic group is used as a criterion for ethnic identity.

In addition to being able to speak Chinese Hainan dialect (Minnan dialect), "Jun dialect" (southwest mandarin), "Mai dialect" (a local dialect of Guangdong dialect) and Guangzhou dialect, the Hui people in Sanya of Hainan island still retain their own languages. The specific proportion of users is shown in the following figure:

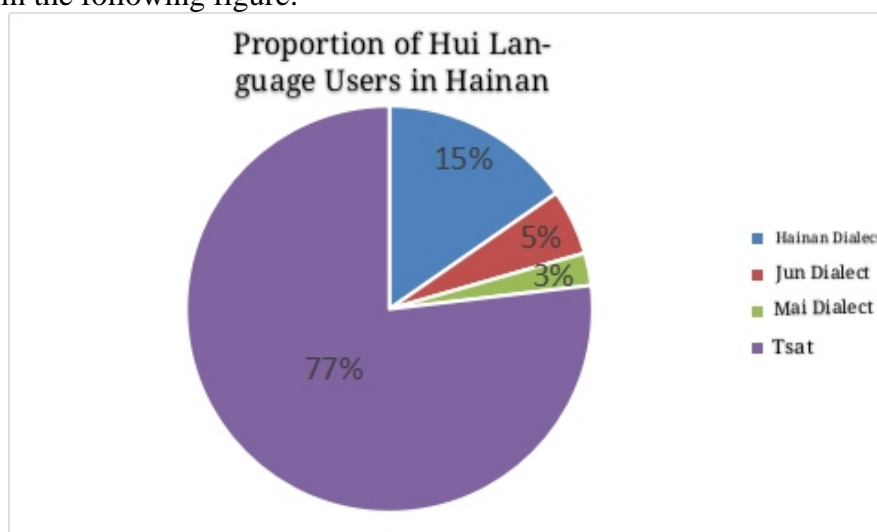


Figure 1. Proportion of Hui Language Users in Hainan

The native language mentioned here refers to the national language now used by the Hui people living in Huihui brigade of Sanya Yanglan commune in Hainan island rather than what the entire Hui people originally said. They usually communicate in their own language within their own

ethnic group, and their communication with the Han people varies according to their target. If the other party speaks Hainan dialect, they speak Hainan dialect, while the other party speaks "military dialect", they speak "military dialect" and communicate with Li people in Li dialect or Hainan dialect. The school reads the text in Mandarin and explains it in native language. The production team also uses the native language for meetings. Only when reading documents can they use Putonghua or Hainan dialect, but the native language is still used for explanation and discussion. Tsat brigade has two primary schools-Tsat primary school and Hui Xin primary school. Teachers and students are all Hui nationality of our team. Therefore, in addition to reading texts in class, other activities between teachers and students are conducted in native language. In addition, due to the need of religious activities, some men learned Arabic in the past, and in recent years Arabic has been specially taught to some people who voluntarily study. Among the minority nationalities in Hainan Island, the culture of the Hui nationality in Sanya is relatively high. They generally understand Chinese, which is a very favorable condition for realizing the four modernizations and improving the scientific and cultural level.

4. The Future Development of Tsat language from the Perspective of Ethnic Group Identity

Tsat language records and preserves the history and culture of the local Hui ethnic group, which is an important cohesive force for the cohesion of the local Hui ethnic group's identity. However, the decline of Tsat language is an indisputable fact. Based on the deep connection between Tsat language and ethnic group identity, we need to hold a serious attitude and carefully consider the way out of Tsat language.

4.1 Unite Ethnic Groups to Strengthen Protection and Inheritance of Tsat Language

Tsat language has become an obvious symbol of ethnic self-identity due to its unique pronunciation and vocabulary, and its historical and cultural connotation has become an implicit force of ethnic identity. However, Tsat language is confronted with the big environmental problems of minority languages such as the decline of the number of users, the contraction of the usage environment, the interruption of intergenerational transmission, and the loss of language components. More importantly, with the promotion of Putonghua, the advantages of Tsat language gradually fade away. This paper makes a questionnaire survey on the emotional attitude, identification degree and value evaluation of Hui people in Sanya on Tsat language and Putonghua. The number of people surveyed is 87 and 80 valid questionnaires have been collected. The specific analysis is as follows:

Table 1. The emotional attitude, identification degree and value evaluation of Hui people in Sanya

	Military dialect score	Mandarin score	The same score
Degree of sweet-sounding	12.70%	65.70%	21.60%
Degree of kindness	60.30%	21.80%	20.70%
Degree of friendliness	29.70%	36.40%	33.80%
Practical value	13.20%	70.50%	18.30%
Accurate expression	10.80%	66.20%	21.60%
Identity symbol	8.30%	67.10%	23.90%
Symbol of authority	4.10%	80.60%	14.70%

The results show that Putonghua is significantly higher than Tsat language in terms of use value and emotional identification. Therefore, it is urgent to strengthen the protection of Tsat language.

In the process of protection, special attention should be paid to the "living" inheritance of Tsat language. One is to strengthen the instruction of the local Hui ethnic group's children's language concept and language learning. The old Hui people who have mastered the pure Tsat language are getting old, and this task is extremely urgent. The second is to create a relaxed environment for Hui people to use Tsat language, encourage young and middle-aged Hui people to use Tsat language in their families and daily life, and spread Tsat language consciously. In a word, the local Hui people from all walks of life are the main users of Tsat language and should assume the responsibility of spreading and inheriting Tsat language. To protect and inherit Tsat language from the perspective of ethnic identity, we should actively create conditions, especially pay attention to the role of Hui people of all ages and classes, and promote the protection and inheritance of Tsat language.

4.2 Combining the Protection of Tsat Language with the Cohesion of Ethnic Consciousness

Tsat language is the explicit symbol and implicit strength of the local Hui ethnic identity. It is the material carrier of the cohesion of ethnic group consciousness. Tsat language and ethnic identity have many coupling points. Therefore, while protecting Tsat language, attention should be paid to combining the protection of Tsat language with the cohesion of the local Hui ethnic consciousness.

One is to strengthen the collection and arrangement of Tsat language and culture. The second is to use modern information technology to build a virtual network platform, carry out communication, spread Tsat language and culture, and enhance the cohesion and centripetal force of ethnic groups. The third is to strengthen the research, exploration and creation of Tsat language and culture, add new elements, constantly introduce the old and bring forth the new, promote Tsat language in new forms, and gather ethnic consciousness.

4.3 Give Full Play to Tsat language to Promote Ethnic Identity and National Identity

In the long-term development and practice, the local Hui ethnic group has formed a sense of ethnic identity characterized by extensiveness, obstinacy and self-consciousness. But at the same time, we must see that the Hui ethnic group is a member of the big family of the Chinese nation. The fate of the Hui ethnic group has always been closely related to that of the Chinese nation. The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the rise of all Chinese, including the Hui ethnic group. Therefore, in the process of transmission and dissemination of Tsat language, we should not be limited to the small circle of ethnic identity. We should realize the high consistency between Hui ethnic identity and Chinese ethnic identity, and unify the understanding and practice of Hui ethnic identity with Chinese ethnic identity and national identity.

Acknowledgements

This paper is the result of the special scientific research "one teacher, one project" of Sanya college *Study of National Cultural Identity and Tsat Language in Sanya from the perspective of Linguistics* (project number: USY18YSK047).

References

- [1] Wan Minggang. Multicultural Perspective: Research on Value Investigation and Ethnic Identity [M]. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House, 2006.
- [2] Ma Rong. Social Ethnology[M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004.
- [3] Xu Baicai. Ethnic Identity Research of Minority College Students[M]. People's Publishing House, 2012.
- [4] Claire Kramsch. Language and Culture. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- [5] Wan Minggang, Wang Zhou. Development, Measurement and Research Methods of Ethnic

Identity[J]. World Nationalities, 2007, (3).

[6] Weber, Mzx. Economy and Society: An outline of inter pretative sociology. Guenther Roth and Class Wittich, eds. New York: Bedminister Press, 1968.

[7] Zheng Yiqing. Hui Nationality and Its Language in Sanya, Hainan Island[J]. Ethnic Studies, 1981,(6).

[8] Zeng Xiaoyu, Yin Shiwei. Second discussion of the nature and characteristics of Tsat Language [J] National language, 2011,(6).

[9] Ouyang Jueya. Tsat Language in Daoya county of Hainan island[J]. National language, 1983,(3).

[10] Lan Linyou. On Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Identity Theory[J]. Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities(Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 2003, (3).

About the Author

Yang Yuan, lecturer and postgraduate in the School of Humanities and Communication, University of Sanya, the research direction is sociolinguistics.