Looking at the world through 'Thai-tinted' glasses: The Sino-Thai and Malay Muslim identities

Received: *Febuary 21, 2022*
Revised: *June 3, 2022*
Accepted: *June 20, 2022*

Gritiya Rattanakantadilok
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand
gritiya.r@psu.ac.th

Abstract

Thai nationals of Chinese descent generally changed their Chinese last names into Thai while the Malay-speaking Muslim populace have not experienced language makeovers to the same extent. The Malay Muslim identity has been constructed around language issues, which, some suggest, should be addressed to combat inequalities that exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions. As a result of the promotion of a pro-monolingual language ideology to hegemonic status, Standard Thai has achieved dominance after the beginning of the twentieth century. The Chinese schools had been suppressed, resulting in the younger generation's inability to master the language of their ancestors. The Pondok, the religious schools in the southernmost provinces, were also suppressed, however, to a much lesser degree. Subsequently, the wave of languages that flow into one another do not feature Mandarin Chinese or other Chinese dialects in most ethnic Chinese families. The world is only seen through 'Thai-tinted' glasses as Thai has seeped into the production of an art form that deploys language. In their literary pursuits, Thai authors of Chinese descent speak about Chineseness within the non-Chinese nation that they can claim as their own. On the other hand, to be admitted to the Thai literary circle, Malay-speaking authors have to speak about Malayness in the Thai language even when the Malay language and Islamic culture shape their cultural identity.

Keywords: Monolingualism, language policy, minority languages, literary production, translation and ideology

1. Introduction

The paraphrase of Paul Gilroy's words (1990) by Ang that "for the migrant it is no longer 'where you're from', but 'where you're at' which forms the point of anchorage" (Ang, 2001, p.30) is an enabling principle of identity. Ang stresses that the meanings of Chineseness are far from being fixed and pregiven, but constantly renegotiated and rearticulated, both inside and outside China (Ang, 2001, p.25) yet overseas Chinese are always expected to speak Chinese language (and/or its dialects) or else they are despised by both their fellow Chinese and non-Chinese (Ang, p.33). For the Sino-Thais and the Malay Muslims, the Thai language is the measure and means of assimilation. However, for the Malay Muslims, it is Malayness, not Thainess, which forms the primary focal point of ethnic identification. For the Sino-Thais, Chinese diaspora calls forth the questions 'where you're from' and 'where you're at' whereas the Malay Muslims 'have always been from where they are at'. The Malay Muslim culture and mother tongue are not measured against the Malay culture and language (of Malaysia), but the Thai ones. The Sino-Thais, when asked if they can speak Chinese, are being measured against the absolute norm for Chineseness of the imagined homeland.

Ethnicity is assumed to be linked to language as language is the primary symbol-system of human species (Fishman, 1989, p.7). The assumed link between language and ethnicity occurs because language is heavily relied on to enact and celebrate all ethnic activities, creating high probability that language is recognized as symbolic of ethnicity (Fishman, p.32). Most Sino-Thais do not speak Chinese, but their food, dress, and patterns of worship, for example, become symbolic of their ethnicity. Fishman (p.38, 44) points out that ethnicity historically progressed to nationality and the organized manipulation of ethnicity can produce heightened language consciousness and language loyalty. The Malay Muslims are Thai by nationality and have continued to fight for Patani Malay to be recognized as an official regional language. It can be said that this heightened language consciousness helps solidify their identity. On the other hand, the Sino-Thais have lost their ancestors' mother tongues along the way.

Barth (1969, p.18) points out that members of all ethnic groups in a poly-ethnic society act to maintain dichotomies and differences. The Sino-Thai appearance relates to the 'fact of yellowness', identified among others by 'slanted eyes' (Ang, 2001, p.29). Ang uses 'yellowness' as an overseas Chinese living in the West and is considered as Other in the West but the Sino-Thai skin color is never described as 'yellow' in Thai society; rather that their skin color is 'white' or 'whiter' in comparison to that of Thai people. The 'slanted eyes' are a sign of notional Chineseness of overseas Chinese both in Thailand and the West. However, there is no clear definition of when an individual is no longer 'overseas Chinese' following generations of

intermarriage with the local population and becomes a local-born Chinese or Sino-Thai. Some would argue that the Malay Muslim community has maintained the differences by virtue of their religion, not so much of 'corporeal malediction', the term Frantz Fanon (1970) uses to refer to the fact of his blackness (Ang, 2001, p.28). They have maintained the ethnic boundary by various means, one of which is the use of their own mother tongue in rituals and education.

Given that the Malay Muslim community has not lost the command over their language, the world is only seen through 'Thai-tinted' glasses as Thai has seeped into the production of an art form that deploys language. Literature written by the Sino-Thai authors, Malay Muslim authors and authors from other diaspora communities is mostly transmitted via Standard Thai. The monolingual production of literature is the norm in Thai literary landscape and for this reason, a multi-lingual presence in the Thai literary landscape is not forged. Thai authors of Chinese descent speak about Chineseness within the non-Chinese nation that they can claim as their own while Thai authors of Malay descent speak about Malayness within the non-Malay nation that they still wonder if they can claim as their own. The discussion on the national language policy that has not facilitated and supported the use of minority languages with the national language, Standard Thai, will be taken up in the following section.

2. Monolingualism

The majority, or 92%, of the population, speak Tai languages. There are 24 Tai languages or dialects, such as central Thai or *Thai klang*, southern Thai or *Paktai*, northern Thai or *Khammueang*, and north-eastern Thai or *I-san*, distributed all over the country (Premsrirat, 2007, p.76). The forced assimilation of diverse linguistic and cultural identities into the dominant culture has allowed the notion of ‘Thainess’ to be absorbed into the universal Thai psyche. Nationalism, which is the main cause of the change in the language ecology, leads to language shift and language loss[1].

Being Thai meant speaking Thai and nothing else. The Thai governing elite’s obsession with monolingualism ensured that Thailand would never be marked by the rivalry of other vernaculars. Malay, Chinese and other vernaculars had amalgamated into Thai (and its vernaculars) because Thai is the measure and means of assimilation.

Many researchers have paid attention to endangered languages of Thailand, particularly ethnic minority languages, such as Patani Malay (Premsrirat, 2007 and 2011; Bianco, 2019) while the Sino-Tibetan languages endangerment has not received the same level of attention. The speakers of Sino-Tibetan languages[2] comprise of 3.1% of the population[3] (Premsrirat,

2007, p.77). The Chinese varieties in this language group are Cantonese, Hainan, Hakka, Hokkien, Yunnanese, Mandarin and Teochew.

Premsrirat (2011) discusses at length the revitalisation project for Chong language, which is in the Austroasiatic language family, and the bilingual education research project in the southernmost provinces where Patani Malay is the locals' mother tongue. About 85% of the population in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat identify ethnically as Malay and religiously as Muslims (Bianco, 2019, pp.299-300). 82% of the residents of Pattani, 83% of those in Yala and 89% in Narathiwant provinces claim Patani Malay as their mother tongue (Klein, 2010, pp.20-21, 145-146).

One stark difference between the speakers of Chinese dialects and the Patani Malay is that the language issue has not been considered a political one and the Sino-Thai identity has not been constructed around language issues. Language has always been a key battleground in nationalist attempts at decolonisation in many parts of the world (Rafael, 2016). In the deep south, some may say historically speaking 'decolonisation' is the correct concept or some may argue that it is rather autonomy for all practical intents and purposes. Bianco (2019) has been an advocate for conceding to multicausality by also addressing the issues of language to combat inequalities that exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions in the restive south.

3. Identity politics in the deep south

Many academics discuss the root causes of the conflict in the deep south. Bianco's comprehensive summary of these causes are: (1) historical grievance of political disenfranchisement, (2) the incompatibility of officialised Buddhism attached to the monarchy attempting to manage and govern a geographically concentrated Muslim majority-minority, and (3) political separatism or irredentism associated with neighbouring Malaysian states (Bianco, 2019, p.316).

Emerging after 1400s, Patani was a sultanate and recognised centre of Islam (Abuza, 2011). It was fully absorbed into the Thai state in the early 1900s. Contestation over names Patani (ปาตานี, one t') and Pattani (ปัตตานี, two 't's) constantly invokes agitation: one-t'd Patani (ปาตานี) evokes, recalls, and conveys connotations of secessionist nationalism while two-t'd Pattani (ปัตตานี) identifies a modern province of the Kingdom of Thailand (Bianco, 2019, pp.312-313). McCargo (2008) adds that Patani (ปาตานี) refers to the pre-existing historic sultanate and its spheres of influence, territories today administratively dispersed into the provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and parts of Songkhla. Kummetha (2015) notes that to

the security authorities and a certain number of Thais the term 'Patani' (ปาตานี) is a thorn because they feel that it carries political connotations of separatism.

Bianco (2019, pp.301-302) marks the National Culture Act by 1944 as the crucial milestone in the Thai approach to minority assimilation.[4] This act ended the mandates of Muslim courts to manage civil cases. Further, school curricula were revised and the status of historically-used Jawi (ยาวี) was minimised in school curricula. Resistance ideologies and separatist movements were formed in the succeeding decades, but the patterns of insurgent violence became established in the early twenty-first century. They include attacks on police and military posts, drive-by shootings, market bombings, shop front and car bombings, school and public government office bombings, beheadings of Buddhist monks, and assassinations of teachers and school officials.

Following the decade-old violent insurrection in the southernmost provinces, the identity issue and cultural conflict have to be redressed. Some locals would want to maintain both their Malay identity and the Thai one simultaneously. Patani Malay, which is still used in children's formal education along with the official language, has received attention and resources have been allocated to build its strong presence in the educational system, not because of its endangered status but a political tool for reconciliation. Bianco (2019, p.295) states that one of the causes is the irreconcilable public claims for the symbolic and official recognition of Patani Malay. He claims that the locals resent the declining use of Patani Malay in urban areas, the creolized code (mixed Thai-Patani Malay) that is evolving and the practical extinction of the language in adjacent Satun province. He calls for analysts to acknowledge that insurgents demand language rights that are premised on language grievance.

Due to hierarchical structure that has defined the languages in Thailand, Thai has precedence and other vernaculars should be limited to translation. Active role in safeguarding the existence of multiple languages could not be played. Patani Malay, deemed a medium for the indoctrination of separatism, has received support for sustaining its use in the area. Similarly, the inter-ethic tensions were heightened in 1951 when Chinese languages were deemed a medium for the indoctrination of Communism, leading to the restrictions on Chinese education imposed by the nationalistic government in the name of assimilationist policy in Siam/Thailand.

3. Chinese immigration and educational landscape

Scholars on the history of Sino-Thai all indicate that Chinese immigrants could be found in Siam since Sukhothai (1238-1438) but their elaborate chapter standardly starts with the migration during Ayutthaya (1351-1438) (such as Skinner, 1957; Sng & Biaslputra, 2015). Skinner becomes the main source of historical information from which other scholars extensively quote. Skinner's latest work on Sino-Thai was published in 1973 and the history in discussion from 1975 onwards can no longer solely rely on Skinner's pioneering works. A comprehensive account of a sequence of transformations into today's state, particularly how the educational landscape was changed into Thai monolingualism, will be reviewed.

In Ayutthaya period, most Chinese migrants were Hokkiens and they worked for the crown. After that period, Teochews constituted the biggest group of migrants who came to Siam by junks. Hokkiens settled in southern Thailand, in Phuket, Pattani, Songkhla and Ranong. Teochews settled in Bangkok, Chacheongsao, and Chonburi (Chantavanich, 1991, pp.1-2).

During the first half of the 19th century, Siam, through the stimuli provided by its 'merchant-kings', carried a booming trade, primarily with China and conducted mainly by Chinese (Skinner, 1957, p.41). Up to the 1830s the trade was almost entirely in Chinese-style junks. The Chinese dominated Siam's foreign trade and shipping and closely co-operated with the Thai state trading; they commanded, navigated, and manned most of the king's ships (Skinner, p.99).

Bowring Treaty (1855) obtained by the British emissary abolished royal monopolies including those farmed out to Chinese by King Rama IV. By the 1860s, there was regular steam traffic between various south China ports and Siam (Skinner, pp.42-43). In 1873, the regularly scheduled steamer traffic between Bangkok and Hong Kong commenced. During the 1918-1931 period, Siam saw the unprecedented magnitude of Chinese immigration and in 1927/1928, over 150,000 Chinese poured in Siam, and in 1932/1933 the China-born Chinese population was at its all-time peak (Skinner, p.247). With the growing number of Chinese population in the country, education in the migrants' language of origin had to be provided.

In her PhD thesis, Sachakul (1984) discusses education as a means for national integration. Her focus is on Chinese and Muslim assimilation. The first Chinese school on an islet in Ayutthaya province was set up in the beginning of King Rama I's reign in about 1792 and prior to that the actual establishment schooling for Chinese children had been conducted in the home and in shrines where Chinese was taught (Sachakul, p.136). In 1852, an American missionary opened up a Chinese boarding school on a royally granted ground (Sachakul, p.137). Sachakul notes that a movement among the Chinese to set up a school for teaching Chinese to

their offspring began towards the end of King Rama V's reign (1868-1910). From 1911 to 1921, the Chinese from different speech groups set up their own schools where children were educated in their respective mother tongue (p.138). In the beginning of King Rama VI's reign (1910-1925), Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (1862-1943), the interior minister, provided guidelines that led to the formulation of rules and regulations the Chinese schools had to comply with. One of the guidelines concerned admission and language of instruction; both Thai and Chinese children must be admitted, and the instruction must be given in both Thai and Chinese languages (Sachakul, pp.139-141).

It should be noted that King Vajiravudh or King Rama VI had made the Chinese become the Dangerous Other Within. First published in 1914, *Jews of the Orient* was printed in the Thai press under the king's pen name 'Atsawaphahu'. The king compares the Chinese to the Jews and warns of the danger awaiting the country seeing as the Chinese exploit the country in which they reside and remain ungrateful. Both Wongsurawat (2019) and Chaloemtiarana (2014) agree that prior to the publication of *Jews of the Orient*, King Rama VI was not antagonistic towards the local Chinese. Wongsurawat (2019) concedes that the work is discriminatory in nature while Chaloemtiarana (2014) believes that the Thai monarch's work had some effect but did not result in lasting demonization of the Sino-Thai. Sng and Bisalputra (2015, pp.270-271) remark that the king's anti-Chinese essay was a vicious, racist, ideological attack on the Chinese and add that the king's campaign was confined to the ideological level as he never used nationalism to evict or exterminate the Chinese as in the case of German National Socialism. The king's harsh public statements were accompanied by restraint, since throughout his reign, no Chinese school schools or Chinese newspapers were closed (Wongsurawat, 2019, p.68).

Skinner specifies that after WWI, the new type of Chinese community schools became increasingly popular. The number in all of Siam had risen to 48 in 1925, to 188 in 1928 and to 271 in 1933. In 1932, there were 7,726 Chinese pupils in Chinese schools (Skinner, 1957, p.227). However, when compared with Chinese education in other countries, it was a poor showing.[5] In 1931, about 68% of the Chinese in Malaya were China-born while for Siam the figure is about 46% and for this reason Chinese education was naturally considered more desirable by China-born than by local-born parents. The Chinese in Malaysia during the first decades of the 20th century were more progressive and revolutionary than those in Siam. Living in European colonies, they were subject to stronger Western influence (Skinner, p.227). The Thai government controlled and restricted Chinese schools far more severely than the colonial governments in Malaysia prior to the early 1930s (Skinner, p.228).

Sachakul and Skinner agree that two legislations affected Chinese education: The Private Schools Act (1919) and Compulsory Education Act (1921). The former stipulated that all foreign teachers must study Thai and pass examinations in Thai six months and one year after they begin teaching and the Thai language must be taught at least three hours each week. The latter legislation required all children aged seven to fourteen to attend primary school for at least four years. They had to attend government or private schools which followed the regular Thai course of study and used books approved by the Ministry of Education. Skinner maintains that the law was never applied in Bangkok; its main effect up to 1932 was to limit the growth of Chinese education in selected outlying regions. On the basis of Compulsory Education Act, several Chinese schools were closed. Two Chinese schools and many more by 1930/31 were shut down (Skinner, 1957, p.228) when King Rama VII (1925-1935) ascended the throne because they refused to teach the Thai language (Sachakul, 1984, pp.145-146).

After 1932 revolution, serious difficulties for Chinese education began. The provisions of Compulsory Education Act were applied for the first time to Bangkok. Inspection of Chinese schools became strict and unyielding. Chinese schools throughout the country could teach Chinese only as a foreign language and for a maximum of seven hours a week (Coughlin, 1960, p.149; Skinner, 1957, p.229). To conform to the law, Chinese schools could either accept only students under ten and over fourteen years of age and operate according to the provisions of the 1919 Act or they could comply with the rigid restrictions of the Compulsory Education Act of 1921 and operate as ordinary schools (Skinner, 1957, p.229). Between 1933 and 1935, some seventy-nine Chinese schools out of 100 Chinese schools were closed for infractions of the law, many being the only Chinese school in their respective towns or communities (Skinner, pp.228-229; Sachakul, 1984, p.164). The number of Chinese schools decreased from over 8,000 to less than 5,000 in 1933-1934 when the campaign to Thai-ify the Chinese schools were carried out most vigorously (Sachakul, 1984, pp.162-163).

The Thai government restrictions necessitated a greater reliance on local-born Chinese and Thai teachers. By 1938, most Chinese schools employed more Thai than Chinese teachers. The standard of Chinese reached in 4 years of lower primary school had to be reduced in accordance with the limited number of hours devoted to its instruction. A small minority of Chinese children attended Chinese schools. The wealthy merchants hired private tutors for their children or sent their sons back to China or Chinese schools in Malaya or Hong Kong (Skinner, 1957, p.233; Sachakul, 1984, p.171). The other alternatives to the majority of Chinese children in Siam were the government schools and Thai or mission-operated private schools where few offered Chinese even as a foreign language after 1933 (Skinner, pp.233-234; Sachakul, p.171;

Landon, 1939, p.277). The Ministry of education tried to remake the schools financed by the Chinese themselves into agencies of forced assimilation. In spite of the rapid expansion of Thai government schools, there were never adequate even for the needs of the Thai population. The majority of Chinese children took no formal schooling in Thailand before the end of World War II (Skinner, 1957, p.234).

Phibun (Po) Songkhram, the leader of the militaristic right-wing and exponent of hyper-nationalism, became the prime minister in 1938. Phibun promised the radical changes in the areas of national life most affecting the Chinese (Skinner, p.261). During its first year, the new administration carried out an intensive program of economic Thai-ification and firmly adhered to the policy of containment in its dealings with the Chinese[6] (Skinner, pp.261-262). Further, in 1939, the Ministry of Education issued new orders that students in the compulsory age limits (seven to fourteen) could study Chinese only two hours a week and that all other subjects must be taught in Thai. Strict inspections were resumed, and during the months of April through July, twenty-five Chinese schools were closed by the authorities (Skinner, p.266). In July and August 1939, all the larger important Chinese schools were closed (Skinner, p.267). In 1940, a few of the Chinese schools closed down in 1939 were allowed to reopen as compulsory private schools, with instruction entirely in Thai and only a few hours of Chinese language instruction per week. Many of the largest schools in Bangkok, were refused registration as Chinese schools; some changed their names and registered as regular Thai private schools, teaching no Chinese (Skinner, p.269).

In June 1940, Phibun issued the ninth Ratthaniyom (รัฐนิยมฉบับที่ 9), which extended the Thai culture program to the areas of language usage. It required all Thai nationals to know and use the Thai language. It was aimed specifically at local-born Chinese (and Malays), who had never learned or did not habitually use Thai (Skinner, p.269). Skinner contends that the ninth Ratthaniyom was the signal for a mass closure of Chinese schools. By the end of 1940, only sixteen Chinese schools located in Bangkok remained but were subsequently closed in 1941 and all Chinese primary schools were not in operation by 1944 (Coughlin, 1960, p.147).

In May 1948, the Education Minister's plan was to reduce the number of Chinese schools in the country to 152. The reduction was to be effected by closing schools permanently for infractions of the regulations and by refusing to permit any new schools to open (Skinner, 1957, p.366). Chinese primary schools were allowed to reopen under strict control while middle schools were closed everywhere in the country (Sachakul, 1984, p.186). In 1951, the system of subsidies was expanded to induce Chinese schools to reduce the number of hours devoted to

Chinese; only schools teaching less than six hours of foreign language per week could receive a subsidy (Sachakul, p.187). Many schools in desperate financial plight were constrained to change their curricula so as to qualify for the subsidy (Skinner, 1957, p.368). Subsequently, only 244 Chinese primary schools remained in the country.

In 1955-1956, there were only 22,000 students in all Chinese schools outside Bangkok. In 1956, the total enrolment was about 27,000 in Bangkok (Skinner, p.370). Between 1948-1956, the decrease in the number of students in Chinese schools in eight years, from over 175,000 to less than 50,000, represented a change of tremendous importance to the future of the Chinese in Thailand (Skinner, p.371). Every Chinese school in the kingdom had more Thai than Chinese teachers so students read, wrote, and understood Thai far better than Chinese but learned practically nothing of Chinese culture, history or geography. When 10 hours per week could be devoted to Chinese lessons, there was not enough time to cover the simplified Chinese textbooks in the four-year program (Skinner, p.371).

From 1948-1982, the number of Chinese schools decreased, from 276 to 145 (Sachakul, 1984, p.207). Skinner (1957, p.371) concludes that the absence of any formal Chinese secondary schooling for eight years meant that very few of the local-born Chinese now entering adulthood had any suspicion of the richness and traditional grandeur of Chinese culture. Murray (1964, p.71) notes that no other South East Asian government began so early and has gone so far to restrict Chinese schools in an effort to force assimilation as Thailand. Watson (1976, p.449) affirms that the government watered down the Chinese aspects of Chinese education with the result that the majority became Thai schools with predominantly Chinese students. Sachakul (1984, p.207) confidently states that the government had pursued the policy to drastically limit Chinese education to eventually eliminate Chinese schools.

In 1992, the government led by Anand Panyarachun changed the policy, permitting Chinese education at all levels. The Sino-Thai were deprived of Chinese education at secondary-school level for forty years. According to Office of the Education Council (2016, p.1), Chinese is taught in 769 primary schools, 707 secondary schools, 173 vocational colleges and 58 higher-education institutions in 2016. Of all primary schools, there are ninety-two 'Chinese schools' nationwide, twenty in Bangkok and seventy-two in other regions.

It is not presumptuous to claim that the Sino-Thai lost battle in the educational sphere. They fought for the control of the educational process but the Siamese/Thai government insisted on educating the ethic Chinese in the state-run educational system in which the basis of Chinese education was undermined.

Assimilationist policy and institutional monolingualism (one national language) oblige the ethnic Chinese to learn the national language and operate in it. The assumption that the Chinese in Thailand represent a model minority of assimilation is rooted in the Skinnerian 'Assimilation Paradigm'. In his pioneering work, Skinner (1957, 1973) concludes that the Chinese assimilation into Thai society was encouraged by intermarriage, the access to elite status and the state's pro-assimilationist policies. This paradigm has influenced most of the scholars studying Thailand's ethic Chinese in the 1970s but it was challenged from the 1980s onwards (Tungkeunkunt, 2010, p.78, 80).

Morita (2003, pp.488-489) remarked that the decline of Chinese schools and education was possibly the single most important factor causing the Sino-Thai in Thailand to shift from Chinese dialects to the Thai language and she concluded that the same factor led to assimilation. Though she still maintains that Thailand had greater success in integrating Chinese immigrants into its society in comparison to Malaysia and Indonesia, she admits that the presumption of assimilation is misguided (Morita, 2007, p.43). Those who rejects the paradigm include Tarkulwaranont, Chan and Tong (2001), Tong and Chan (2001) and Burusratanaphand (2001). Tarkulwaranont et al. (2001, p.229) note that the Chinese are not just assimilated into the Thai culture and society since many aspects of the Thai culture and society have also been influenced by the Chinese elements. Tong and Chan (2001, p.9) affirm that assimilation is at least a two-way process which will leave the Chinese with something Thai and the Thai with something Chinese. Further, Burusratanaphand (2001, p.70) states that the Chinese will remain Chinese as long as they still believe in their Chineseness, even if parts of the culture may be different from those of their ancestors. Elaborating on the ability to adapt, Pongsapich (2001) discusses economic and political strategies adopted by the Chinese to survive. Ramsay (2001, pp.55-56) examines one of the strategies that is not in line with Skinnerian thesis, the retention of Chinese identity for practical purposes. He concludes that retaining Chinese identity was critical to maintaining personal relationships and networks for business.

It is not surprising that Skinner's contemporaries, Watson (1976, p.451), to name one, who indicates that there are prospects for even closer assimilation, subscribes to Skinnerian thesis. However, there are a number of more recent works that affirm Skinnerian 'Assimilation Paradigm', one of which is Chansiri's (2008). He supports Skinner's hypothesis that the ethnic Chinese become assimilated by the fourth generation, but they have been less willing to assimilate than argued by Skinner. Some who argue against Skinner's thesis contend that Chinese cultural tenacity should be accounted for.

The integration narrative emphasizing assimilation and conformity seems to disregard the battle in the cultural sphere. In the educational sphere where the retention of mother tongues was fought for, Thai language replaces their ancestor's language of origin. Thai becomes a new common ground among the overseas Chinese and their offspring from separate speech groups. When the main instrument of perpetuating the Chinese languages and culture had been suppressed, the younger generation's inability to use the language of their ancestors ensued.

5. Malay assimilation and educational landscape in the southernmost provinces

Sachakul (1984), Yamirudeng (2017) and Pherali (2021) discuss the attempts of the Thai government to assimilate the Malay speakers. Through the 1921 Compulsory Education Act that legislated four years of state-prescribed compulsory primary education, government schools were introduced in Southern provinces, reducing the provision of Islamic studies to only two hours per week (Pherali, 2021). In 1932, after the revolution, initial steps were taken to integrate the Malay Muslims by teaching the Thai national anthem, Thai history, and the Thai language without much success (Sachakul, 1984). In 1938, under Phibun's administration, attempt was made forcibly to assimilate this populace (Yamirudeng, 2017). The promulgation of the Thai Rathaniyom (รัฐนิยม) altered the cultural practices of the people. The Thai Muslims were pressed to wear modern Thai dress, adopt Thai names, recognise Sunday as the weekly day of rest and speak only the Thai language (Sachakul, 1984). The government authorities considered abolition of the Pondok (ปอเนาะ), the religious institutions whose graduates supposedly lacked knowledge about Thai history, language and necessary technical skills that would enable them to access economic opportunities and secure stable livelihoods (Pherali, 2021). Liow (2009, p.26) stresses that the Thai state was also concerned about threats to national unity ‘arising from suspicions that the Pondok perpetuated Malay-Muslim narratives of resistance and separatism’.

Pondok first came into being in Egypt and spread into Malaysia and later Thailand in the Pattani region (Sachakul, 1984, p.226). The oldest Pondok in the south had been operating since 1899. Pondok is a Malay word, literally meaning 'a hut'. A 'Babo' (บาบอ) teaches in the Pondok (Thai PBS, 2016) but students must build their own 'hut' as their quarters in the school's compound, cook their own meals, and study in the Babo's place (Sachakul, pp.226-227). In the old way of teaching, there was no curriculum and fixed schedule. Classes were given when the Babo was free since most Babo had another job. In the operation and management of the

Pondok, politics tended to mix with teaching and some used religion and the Pondok as a cover (Sachakul, p.228).

Pherali (2021, p.7) adds that to avoid widespread resistance, the government pursued a more cautiously approach of easing Thai language instruction into the Pondok through the dispatch of Thai teachers and educational materials to the South. In 1960s, the state adopted a policy of registration of the Pondok which would receive financial resources to improve their infrastructure and facilities, improvement of the curriculum and pedagogy of Islamic education, and the creation of a proper system of assessment and evaluation. In return, the Pondok had to align their operation according to the instructions of the Ministry of Education (MoE) (Liow, 2009, 25–27). From 1961-1964, 199 Pondoks requested to register with the government service (Sachakul, 1984, p.228). From 1965-1970, under the Private Schools Act of 1954, the government developed and promoted Pondoks on a stricter private school status (Sachakul, p.229). In 1970, the MoE appointed the Committee of Islam Private School Development to consider matters regarding development of private schools teaching Islam (Sachakul, pp.229-230).

There are four types of schools: Government schools, Tadikas (ตาดีกา or supplementary religious schools), Pondok (traditional religious schools), and Islamic private schools. Government schools, serving less than 30 percent of Muslim children, are managed by the MOE. Tadika schools operate in the evenings and over the weekends in mosques and provide an integrated education combining religious and secular subjects with financial assistance from the government and/or private charities (Liow, 2009). In Pondoks, Babo places emphasis on religious education. Liow (2009) posits that to qualify for entry into tertiary institutions, these students have to take additional classes in the national curriculum, available in some government-registered Pondoks.

Despite the institutionalization of the Thai language in the Malay areas, there has been only mixed success in the government's hope for integration of the Malay Muslim population. Yamirudeng (2017) concludes that there is still a widespread feeling of not properly belonging to the Thai nation and its dominant culture, and there is also a resentment at the attempts of the government to control the use of Malay in schools. Malay language is perceived by the Malay Muslims as an important component of their identity, alongside Islam (Yamirudeng, p.58). She adds that the younger generation began to develop less negative attitudes towards the Thai language and culture, however, the Malay Muslims still feel that they are still discriminated against on the basis of their language, culture and religion (Yamirudeng, p.59).

Unlike the Sino-Thais, the Malay Muslims do not need a new shared language. In the educational sphere where the retention of mother tongue was fought for, Thai has not completely replaced their native language. However, the Thai language has seeped into the production of art form that deploys language as the ethnic Chinese and Malay Muslim experiences are expressed through the Thai language, not their ancestor's language of origin.

6. Thai literary scene

Rafael (2019) provides a comparative history of the spread of English, a language associated with colonialism and capitalism, in the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The Singaporean government sought to maintain social cohesion by constructing a national culture made up of a composite 'Asian' identity and each bounded ethnicity – Chinese, Malay and Indian – was assigned its own mother's tongue (Rafael, 2019, p.7). English was treated as a special language, seen as belonging to no one and could not be claimed as a mother tongue by any ethnic group. The government provides education of English and their assigned mother tongues to preserve a sense of 'Asian-ness'. The teaching of assigned mother tongues is tenuously connected to one's actual ethnic origins but this policy could fix racial differences into clearly bounded ethnic and linguistic categories (Rafael, p.7). He claims that though positioned below English, the mother's tongues ensure that English will remain an other tongue. For the Sino-Thai, the member of separate speech groups did not speak Mandarin as a lingua franca and had to use the Thai language to converse which indirectly forged new common grounds based on a newly shared language (Chaloemtiarana, 2014). In other words, Standard Thai managed to fix linguistic differences into one clearly bounded linguistic category; the Sino-Thai have been assigned a new mother tongue.

When Singapore's literary scene is examined, it can be seen that literary awards and prizes honouring the works in all four official languages. The National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) launched the Singapore Literature Prize (SLP), giving the largest cash prize in 1991 to the best unpublished English-language work (Ramli, 2017). As an other tongue, English was given priority in the city-state's literary landscape. This precedent supports Rafael's argument that English had been positioned over and above the other three official languages (or assigned mother's tongues). Rafael (2019, p.7) adds that when English is positioned above the mother tongues, it could traverse and overcome their differences. When the official recognition of literary achievements started with the first unpublished English-language work, in all likelihood it could placate all ethnic groups.

Only in 2004, the SLP started awarding published works with separate categories for each of the four languages. There are several Chinese-language awards. In 1981, the Golden Lion Literary Awards became the first Chinese-language awards to be given in Singapore. The Singapore Tertiary Literature Awards was set up in 1999. The Singapore Literature Society has given various literary awards, including Singapore Chinese Literature Award and Lien Shih Sheng Award. There is also Nanyang Technological University's Nanyang Chinese Literature Award. To promote Chinese literature and reading among the youth, the Hokkien Huay Kuan, a locality-based clan association for the Hokkien community, also organises or sponsors literary awards. It should be noted that the Golden Lion Literary Awards, the writing competition for Chinese-language writers, the biggest of its kind, became open to citizens of other ASEAN countries in 1993. Open or closed, Thai authors could not compete since Thai literary scene has space for works predominantly written in Thai and translated works from English into Standard Thai. The prestigious literary awards in Thailand are mostly given to works written in Standard Thai, not any other varieties.

Veeraporn Nitiprapha became the first female author to be awarded S.E.A. Write Award twice. Her debut novel, *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth*[7] (2015), is a melodrama of shipwrecked romance that provides a haunting dissection of contemporary Thai life and its inescapable repetitions (Miller, 2019). Her second novel, *MEMORIES of the MEMORIES of the Black Rose Cat*[8], won the S.E.A. Write Award in 2018. In the author's own words, the novel is: "a magical-realism tale of a Chinese family that migrated to Thailand 200 years ago. The book is about temporal history, unwritten histories, the history of feelings, the history of people scattered and lost all over Asia, and how we are all longing for an unknown place, how we aren’t defined by any nationality at all. The story spans the Sino-Japanese War, World War II, the Civil War in China, and the Chinese diaspora across Southeast Asia" (Forman, 2019).

It can be said that the award is an affirmation that Veeraporn has the right to speak about Chineseness, not within China itself, but within the non-Chinese nation, that she can claim as her own. She addresses the readers, some are most like herself, while simultaneously reaches out to a wider audience in Thailand and a global audience as her work is recently published in the English version. Veeraporn's latest work may be viewed as her attempt to exploit her Chineseness in pursuit of high-profile career as some Southeast Asian female authors have profited from commodified 'Chineseness'.

Hau (2016, p.468) claims that the authors whom she calls 'ethnopreneurs' or cultural entrepreneurs: "capitalise on cultural differences within the given national in which they speak and work, between their 'nation' and 'China'[9] of their ancestors, and within 'China' in its multiple

territorial and cultural senses". Hau's two case studies are Chitra Konuntakiet (จิตรา ก่อนันทเกียรติ) and Malaysia's Lillian Too. These two authors have turned 'Chineseness' into profitable, career-making ventures as New Age gurus by mediating the production of Chinese culture for consumption by national and international publics, notably Too who writes only English-language books about feng shui (geomancy) (Hau, 2016, p.483). Chitra has achieved recognition as a 'Chinese' expert in Thailand because she markets her own books on 'Chinese' culture as filtered through her Teochew upbringing (Hau, pp.483-484). She propounds a notion of 'Chineseness' through access to familial memories and ideas about 'Chinese' customs and practices that were rooted primarily in her father's immigrant experience (Hau, p.484). Hau (2016, pp.486-487) notes that through her critique of the history of discrimination against the *lukchin* (ลูกจีน) in her country, Chitra actively promotes her hybrid 'Sino-Thai' identity for she sees herself as a crusader for greater pluralism and tolerance in Thai culture and society. Hau (2016, p.484, 487) concludes that the notion propounded by Chitra falls beyond the purview of state-sanctioned and mainland-originating discourses and in claiming access to 'Chinese' culture, both Chitra and Too operate within a historically contested field where 'Chineseness' can be produced and lived in multiple sites, not just on the Chinese mainland.

Chaloemtiarana (2014) who examines the production of texts on the local Chinese in Siam/Thailand from 1900 to 2005 does not focus on Chitra's status as an ethnopreneur. Her works are guidebooks about how to become culturally Chinese again and Chaloemtiarana (2014, p.513) points out the paradox that her books are written in Thai to explain Chinese culture to Sino-Thai, who now read about their ancestral culture in an adopted mother tongue and it is as if the Sino-Thai now speak and think with a Thai accent, unlike their ancestors who did the opposite.

In *MEMORIES of the MEMORIES of the Black Rose Cat*, some characters speak Thai with a heavy Chinese accent; in other words, they think in Chinese but express themselves in the adopted tongue. Other characters, the offspring of overseas Chinese, who have both Thai and Chinese names, who do not dwell on the fact that they are half or a quarter Chinese, speak and think in Thai, with no trace of Chinese accent. The demonstration of Chineseness through the use of Chinese idiom is detected in this award-winning Thai-language novel. In the Thai version, the idiom (แป่ซ่งเค่ายิบ หัวซ่งเค่าฉุก) is transliterated using Thai script while in the English translation, the South Seas color, which depicts ways that Chinese settlers had adapted, acclimated and localized in Southeast Asia (Bernards, 2016, p.73), cannot be recreated.[10]

Cronin (2000, p.95) states that it is resistance to translation, not acceptance that generates translation. In Siam/Thailand, the overseas Chinese agreed to translate themselves into another language, over time the need for translation disappeared. Based on Cronin's thesis, if they would have refused to translate themselves and insisted on speaking and writing in their own language, be it Mandarin or other Chinese dialect, the need for translation would have become imperative for any kind of communication to be established. On account of the acceptance of translation, Thai speakers expect others to speak their language, not other languages which have now become minority languages. The ethnic Chinese were once the Other Within or the External Chinese Other who spoke their mother tongue and Thai with a heavy Chinese accent. Speaking Thai without accent has become a pre-eminent determinant and qualification in claiming a Thai national identity. The ethnic Chinese today are no longer the subaltern Chinese as their Thai is not tinged with Chinese accent and the texts they consume, even when these texts relate to Chineseness, they gain entry through Thai language. In essence, the memories of one's Chineseness can only be relaid via the adopted tongue.

Veeraporn's novel *MEMORIES of the MEMORIES of the Black Rose Cat* does not commodify Chineseness to the same extent that Chitra's or Too's works do, even though it employs ethnic identity in the marketing of cultural products, beliefs and practices coded as 'Chinese'. This second novel that won her the S.E.A. Write Award does not intend to necessarily further the inclusiveness of the nation, neither does her selective narrative of traditions, beliefs, rituals, selves, and lifestyles intend to cultivate the historical identification of Chineseness in Siam/Thailand. It cannot be denied that her works are commercially more successful than those of other Sino-Thai writers. S.E.A Write Award-winning books sell; it is just a plain and simple fact. Besides, her works won the award twice. *MEMORIES of the MEMORIES of the Black Rose Cat* touches on the politics of 'Chinese' ethnicity and representation but it is presumptive and unwarranted at this point in her career to conclude that she capitalizes on Chineseness and Chinese culture to further her already successful career.

S.E.A. Write Awards represent a spectrum of celebrated authors who have imagined, interpreted and expressed life, living and what it means to be human. It seems that the human and literary imagination is dependent and limited by the country's monolingualism. Writing her works in Thai, Veeraporn is an ethic Chinese looking at the world through 'Thai-tinted' glasses. One can also say that another acclaimed writer looking at the world through 'Thai-tinted' glasses is Zakariya Amataya.

Zakariya Amataya is a S.E.A. Write Award-winning poet from Narathiwat, one of the three southernmost provinces. He is the first Muslim from the deep south to win the award.

Addressing the conflict in the deep south, the collection of his poems titled *No Women in Poetry* (ไม่มีหญิงสาวในบทกวี) was awarded S.E.A. Write in 2010. His award-winning work was written in Thai, not Patani Malay. It means that definitive translation out of Patani Malay became inevitable for him and any Thai writers whose mother tongues are not Thai if their works were to be widely read. When asked if he adopted the term 'Patani' (ปาตานี) in his works at all, he responded that he has used 'P'tani' (ปตานี) to refer to farmers, orchard workers and field workers but he has never used it in terms of territory. He usually uses the term 'Fatoni' (ฟาฏอนี) since he does not feel connected to “Patani” (ปาตานี) enough to use it in his works. He explains that he has many questions about the term. Not that he does not want others to use it, he is just not completely comfortable using it. A part of that might be because he was not part of the process in creating this term; he was not involved when the term was made (Khummetha, 2015).

Zakariya's response reflects his need to dominate speech, especially his own mother tongue. It seems he does not feel deprived of the true knowledge of his people's past and he is aware of how language shapes thinking to the extent that he wanted to be a part of its production. Based on Vicente's thesis (2016), Zakariya subscribes to the ideology that 'translation was a means for the speaker to assert his or her will to dominate speech'. Zakariya's poems in Thai allow his Patani Malay will to flourish in the Thai literary scene. It also means that writing his poems in Thai required the labour of translation out of his mother tongue.

In another interview, he adds that he would advise the Malay youth to practice writing literature and poetry in Thai, as it is Thai that will give them a future platform in the world of Thai publications (Khummetha, 2016). He points out that: “If you write in Jawi (ยาวี, the script of Patani Malay), you will almost have no platform from which to establish yourself." This statement clearly reflects the pressure he has been under to translate himself into the dominant language of the country. It can be said that he feels obliged to repress his first language in favour of a second to reach such a stage of literary achievement in Thailand.

Veeraporn is not the Other Within, similarly to Zakariya who does not want to be the Malay Other. The difference lies in the fact that Zakariya can speak Patani Malay, the mother tongue of his ancestors whereas Veeraporn masters Thai but none of her Chinese ancestors'. Zakariya deliberately accepts the inferior status of Patani Malay enforced by the Thai state while Veeraporn has to inherently accept the inferior status of Mandarin and its dialects to Standard Thai bequeathed to her and other Sino-Thai. With Zakariya's acceptance, translation from Patani Malay into Thai is not generated. However, one can argue that in his creative pursuits, translation remains his process. Based on his responses, he recognised that translation

out of Patani Malay became inevitable for him if his works would reach larger audience. Both authors self-consciously position themselves, more so in Zakariya's case, and speak within specific national space.

7. Conclusion

Literary production in Thailand does not allow for a multi-lingual presence. Thai readers engage with works about their Chinese and Malay ancestry in Thai, not Chinese dialects or Patani Malay, since standard Thai and its varieties have assumed a clearly dominant position over Chinese languages and Patani Malay in modern times. The ethnic Chinese and Malay experiences are expressed through the mother tongue of the new generation. It can be said that there is the not-there connection between language and the cultural expression in literature. Whereas the ethnic Chinese culture is undeniably invigorated through literary works, it will take tremendous efforts to do the same for the Chinese linguistic identity lost many generations ago. Literature written by the Sino-Thai and the Malay Muslim has been couched in Standard Thai since the beginning of the twentieth century. To be Sino-Thai is to speak Thai but none of the ancestors' mother tongue. The language issue was not considered a political one and the Sino-Thai identity was not constructed around language issues. The language issue is political as the Malay Muslim identity has been constructed around it. The Sino-Thai are not economically and politically alienated and the unbound manifestations of Chineseness of the Sino-Thai in present-day Thailand are possible after the spectre of communism withered away from the international scene after the Cold War ended and Chinessness appeared much less threatening. In contrast, the Thai government's aspirations to build the nation characterized by Thai language and Buddhist values clash with the Malay Muslim identity, language, and culture. The locals in the deep south are concerned about the administration's promotion of national homogenisation at the expense of their religious and cultural identity. For several decades, the Malay Muslims have been both economically and politically alienated. Ongoing violence is the culmination of contesting political forces. The language issue has become a battlefield of assimilative and separatist agendas. Unless the Malay Muslims' grievances are redressed, they will continue to feel as the Other Within.

Notes

[1] Premsrirat (2007, pp.81-82) pinpoints fourteen most endangered languages in Thailand, which are Lua, Bisu, Mpi, Lawa, Moklen, Urak Lawoi, Mlabri, So, Nyahkur, Chong, Kasong, Samre, Chung, and Kensiw.

[2] The Sino-Tibetan languages include seven Chinese dialects found mainly in Thai urban areas and fourteen Tibeto-Burman languages whose speakers live in the north and northeast of Thailand (Premsrirat, 2007, p.77).

[3] The speakers of Austroasiatic languages, such as Kasong and Wa, constitute 4.3% of the Thai population, and the speakers of Hmong-Mien languages, namely Hmong and Mien, make up 0.3% and the same 0.3% for the speakers of Austronesian languages, which are Malay, Mokelen and Urak Lawoi (Premsrirat, 2007, pp.76-77).

[4] The activist, Islamic scholar and key figure in the history of southern conflict, Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir Al-Fatani or Haji Sulong, demanded administrative autonomy, recognition of Islamic law and language rights. Haji Sulong disappeared in 1954 after his arrest and detention on sedition charges (Bianco, 2019, p.302).

[5] In Malaya, in 1933, the Chinese community supported over 370 Chinese schools with an enrolment of almost 25,000 students; one out of 68 Chinese in Malaya were in Chinese schools but only 1 out of about 200 in Siam (Skinner, 1957, p.227).

[6] For instance, the Signboard Act (1939) taxed signs according to its areas but at rates ten times higher for boards more than half of which were devoted to non-Thai letterings. Overnight most of the large and handsome Chinese signboards were replaced by tiny plagues lettered in Thai as well as Chinese (Skinner, 1957, p.262).

[7] Its Thai name is *ไส้เดือนตาบอดในเขาวงกต* (*Sai duean ta bot nai khao wongkot*). It was translated into English by Kong Rithdee in 2018.

[8] Its Thai name is *พุทธศักราชอัสดงกับความทรงจำของทรงจำของแมวกุหลาบดำ* (*Phutthasakkarat atsadong kap kham song cham khong song cham khong maeo kulap dam*).

[9] Hau (2016, p.489) explains that she places 'Chinese', 'Chineseness' and 'Chinese culture' in quotation marks to highlight the complexity and problematic nature of the terms and the heterogeneity, multi-sitedness and social constructedness of 'Chinese identities.

[10] The English translation is "Disease enters through the mouth, the Chinese used to say" (Rithdee, 2022, p.151).

References

Abuza, Z. (2011). *The Ongoing Insurgency in Southern Thailand: Trends in Violence, Counterinsurgency Operations, and the Impact of National Politics.* Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University.

Ang, I. (2001). *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West.* London: Routledge.

Barth, F. (1998). Introduction. In F. Barth, *thnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference.* Long Grove: Waveland Press.

Bernards, B. (2016). *Writing the South Seas.* Singapore: NUS Press.

Bianco, J. L. (2019). Uncompromising Talk, Linguistic Grievance, and Language Policy: Thailand's Deep South Conflict Zone. In M. Kelly, H. Footitt, & M. Salama-Carr, *The Palgrave Handbook of Languages and Conflicts* (pp.295-330). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burusrattanaphand, W. (2001). Chinese Identity in Thailand. In C. K. Tong, & K. B. Chan, *Alternate Identities: The Chinese of Contemporary Thailand* (pp.67-84). Singapore: Times Academic Press and Brill.

Chaloemtiarana, T. (2014, December). Are we them? Textual and literary representations of the Chinese in twentieth-century Thailand. *Southeast Asian Studies, 3*, 473-526.

Chansiri, D. (2008). *The Chinese Emigres of Thailand in the Twentieth Century.* New York: Cambria Press.

Chantavanich, S. (1991). The Origin of the Chaozhou Chinese in Thailand. *Asian Review, 11*(2), 20-31.

Coughlin, R. J. (1960). *Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand.* Hong Kong: Hongkong University Press.

Cronin, M. (2000). *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation.* Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press.

Cronin, M., & Simon, S. (2014). Introduction: The city as translation zone. *Translation Studies, 7*(2), 119-132.

Fishman, J. A. (1989). *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective.* Avon: Multilingual Matters.

Forman, S. (2019, March 6). *That'smags*. Retrieved from Veeraporn Nitiprapha on Crafting Characters That Transcend Borders: https://www.thatsmags.com/shanghai/post/27118/veeraporn-nitiprapha-on-crafting-characters-that-transcend-borders

Hau, C. S. (2016). Chinese Women Ethnopreneurs in Southeast Asia: Two Case Studies. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia, 31*(2), 463-496.

Klein, J. (2010). *Democracy and Conflict in Southern Thailand: A Survey of the Thai Electorate in Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani.* Bangkok: The Asia Foundation.

Kummetha, T. (2015, September 20). *Pattani with two t's or one? The politics of naming*. Retrieved from Prachatai English: https://prachatai.com/english/node/5482

Kummetha, T. (2016, July 14). *Understanding Thailand's Deep South conflict through the struggle to preserve Malay language*. Retrieved from Prachatai English: https://prachatai.com/english/node/6361

Landon, K. P. (1939). *Siam in Transition.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Liow, J. C. (2009). *Islam, Education and Reform in Southern Thailand: Tradition and Transformation.* Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

McCargo, D. J. (2008). *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Miller, T. (2019, July 24). *Electric Lit*. Retrieved from A Political Love Story Teeming with the Sewage of a Soap Opera: https://electricliterature.com/veeraporn-nitiprapha-thailand-blind-earthworm/

Morita, L. (2003). Language shift in the Thai Chinese community. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 24*(6), 485-495.

Morita, L. (2007). Discussing assimilation and language shift among the Chinese in Thailand. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*(186), 43-58.

Murray, D. P. (1964). Chinese Education in South-East Asia. *The China Quarterly, 20*, 67-95.

Pherali, T. (2021). Social justice, education and peacebuilding: conflict transformation in Southern Thailand. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 1-17.

Pongsapich, A. (2001). Chinese Settlers and their Roles in Modern Thailand. In C. K. Tong, & K. B. Chan, *Alternate Identities: The Chinese of Contemporary Thailand* (pp.85-106). Singapore: Times Academic Press and Brill.

Premsrirat, S. (2007). Endangered languages of Thailand. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*(186), 75-93.

Premsrirat, S. (2011). Redefining Thainess: Embracing Diversity, Preserving Unity. *The Journal of the Royal Institute of Thailand, 3*, 54-75.

Rafael, V. L. (2016). *Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language amid Wars of Translation.* North Carolina, USA: Duke University Press.

Rafael, V. L. (2019). Linguistic currencies: the translative power of English in Southeast Asia and the United States. *The Translator, 25*(2), 142-158.

Ramli, N. (2017, December 5). *Literary awards and prizes in Singapore*. Retrieved from Singapore Infopedia: https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_2017-12-06_090918.html

Ramsay, A. (2001). The Chinese in Thailand: ethnicity, power and cultural opportunity structures. In G. H. Cornwell, & E. W. Stoddard, *Global Multiculturalism: Comparative Perspectives on Ethnicity, Race and Nation* (pp.51-72). Lanham, New York, Boulder and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.

Sachakul, K. (1984). Education as a Means for National Integration: Historical and Comparative Study of Chinese and Muslim Assimilation in Thailand. University of Michigan.

Skinner, G. W. (1957). *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History.* Itaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Sng, J., & Bisalputra, P. (2015). *A History of the Thai-Chinese.* Singapore: Editions Didier Millet.

Tarkulwaranont, P., Chan, K. B., & Tong, C. K. (2001). Wang Thong: civic identity and ethnicity in a Thai market town. In C. K. Tong, & K. B. Chan, *Alternate Identities: the Chinese of Contemporary Thailand* (pp.227-270). Singapore: Times Academic Press and Brill.

Thai PBS. (2016, July 27). *Apart from regular schools, there are 'Pondok, Tadika, and Religious school' too in Thai educational system*. (Thai PBS, Producer, & Society for Online News Providers Association) Retrieved 2022 2022, from Thai PBS News: https://www.thaipbs.or.th/news/content/254371

Tungkeunkunt, K. (2010). Report on major English and Thai language scholarships on Thailand's ethnic Chinese in the post 1945 era: themes, approaches and shortcomings. *International Journal of East Asian Studies, 14*(2), 73-96.

Wang, L.-J. (2018, March). Toward transnational identity? The reconstruction of Hakka identity in Thailand. *Asian Ethnicity, 19*(2), 211-234.

Watson, J. P. (1976). A Conflict of Nationalism: the Chinese and Education in Thailand, 1900-1960. *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education, 16*(2), 429-451.

Wongsurawat, W. (2019). *The Crown and the Capitalists: The Ethnic Chinese and the Founding of the Thai Nation.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Yamirudeng, M. (2017, January - June). What it means to be Malay Muslims: The Role of Language in Ethnic Identity Construction and Ethnic Maintenance of Thai-Malay Muslims. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13*(1), 38-68.