

Doctoral Dissertation

Minority Language Endangerment and Ethnic Identity:

A Case Study of Pumi in Yunnan, China

少数民族の消滅危機言語と民族意識に関する研究

—中国雲南省プミ族を例として—

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

With the acceleration of globalization, human society has become more and more international, and the communication across the world has become increasingly important and frequent. In particular, with the development of science and technology, and the improvement of transportation and communication conditions, the distance between different regions and countries is gradually shortening, resulting in violent collisions of different cultures. Language, as a carrier of culture, also changed dramatically. Under such circumstances, the different cultures and languages face different living spaces. The culture and language of some stronger ethnic groups are rapidly expanding with their advantages of political economy, education, science, technology, and military, and they occupy the living space of many weaker ethnic groups. As the balance of the world is broken, many weak languages have disappeared or become endangered, and cultural diversity of the world has also been jeopardized, all of which have also threatened our human survival and development.

As a large united multi-national state, China is composed of 56 ethnic groups. Among them, Han Chinese account for 89.9% and the other 55 minorities make up the remaining 10.1% (Yang, Peterson, & Cai, 2003). The various minorities in China are distributed all around the country, whose identities represent arts and other manifestations of intellectual achievements.

Chinese culture also has a rich heritage and it plays a vital role in ethnic and cultural diversity. Unfortunately, in last decade, China also faces a series of new problems caused

by social change and economic development. In particular, because of the cultural reorganization, many of China's ethnic minorities face two serious issues-- ethnic identity and language endangerment.

As we all know, language is not only the informational tool of human communication but it is also the carrier of cultural transmission. Since the formation of ethnic groups, the ethnic minority language has become a sign of maintaining the unity and identity of the ethnicity. In the context of inter-ethnic communication, the recognition of language naturally shows more common ethnic culture and universal psychological qualities (Mei, 2006). This indicates that language and ethnic identity are closely related. However, because the relationship is very complicated, the relationship between ethnic identity and language endangerment can help us to understand the problems of language endangerment, which are important for solving the ethnic problems.

As a sizeable multi-national state, China is composed of 56 ethnic groups, and the total population is 1.37 billion. Currently, about 60 million people out of China's minority use the minority languages (Upholding, 2010). According to the report of UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, 144 minority languages are accelerating towards becoming endangered and extinct. Minority languages are an important cultural heritage, the multiculturalism derived from minorities plays an indispensable role in promoting cultural diversity, and language is the central element of expression of identity and it is the key to keeping a group's identity. The intensification of an endangered language threatens the inherent balance of the language system, which is a serious challenge to the pattern of language and culture, and thus it triggers a language crisis locally and all over the world. Therefore, it is imperative to take action to protect the endangered languages.

A quantitative assessment of the vitality index of minority languages provides an intuitive and effective way to monitor trends of language status and shift trends, cognitive and psychological analysis in terms of endangered language use can effectively help us understand the inductive factors behind language endangerment. These two aspects of research can provide a basis for us to formulate language protection countermeasures. Many kinds of research have been carried out regarding language vitality assessment, as well as cognitive and psychological analysis of language based on fieldwork data. However, previous research has problems in terms of accuracy, comprehensiveness, and versatility of analysis, and has not reached the level applicable to China's unique conditions.

There are two reasons:

First, the language situation in China is very complicated. China has more than 100 languages. These languages respectively belong to the world's five language families. Moreover, there are many language groups in each language family and many language branches in each language group. In fact, so far, the investigations of languages have not been completed, because some languages have not been discovered or identified. Besides, these languages also have their characteristics in the speaker population, historical culture, internal language differences, language vitality, and having characters or not (Qingxia, 2015). For example, in mixed ethnic areas of Yunnan, many ethnic people can speak three or four languages, including the major languages and the secondary languages.

In addition, there are many cross-border languages¹ in China. For example, Jingpo language is distributed in some countries such as Myanmar and India, and Korean is also distributed in North Korea and South Korea. These are the unique situations in the Chinese languages. Therefore, in 2011, based on China's ethnic condition, the Chinese Academy for Social Sciences (CASS) proposed three additional factors to UNESCO (UNESCO Model) for China assessing linguistic vitality. It includes Distribution of the language community, Degree of internal variation of the language, and Distribution of languages transnationally (UNESCO, 2011).

Second, China's language endangerment research has been developing for more than 20 years, but language vitality assessment still is a very weak part. There are few related systematic studies--more are simple investigation reports. In the limited previous research, the majority usually copies some factors of the UNESCO Method, which leads to single evaluated methods and very incomprehensive results. The Pumi language, so far, has very little related literature available. Almost all the relevant studies have a certain degree of one-sidedness to them. They generally paid attention to one or two factors as their criteria for assessing the language vitality of the Pumi language. For example, some researchers focus on speaker population and proportion (Wenming, Jiangmei, & Yilan, 2007), some prefer language use situation (Yan, 2011), and others only explore language attitude (Qingxia & Weidong, 1993). In this case, it is particularly important to put forward a

¹ Cross-border language is a different variant of the same language distributed in different countries. Its variation is caused by social, historical, cultural, geographical, institutional and other factors of different countries. It is a language model formed by national border factors. See Qingxia, D. (2016). Cross-border Languages in China. *Contemporary Linguistics*, 18(2), 233.

comprehensive vitality assessment criterion for the Pumi language that suits China's ethnic conditions.

1.2 Research Objective

The objective of this thesis is as follows: 1) developing an accurate and comprehensive language vitality evaluative method that is in accordance with China's conditions, 2) investigating the endangered language use from the perspective of ethnic identity, and 3) proposing the reasons of language endangerment and strategies for responding to the language endangerment.

1.3 Research Significance

This research has great significance. First, language is the representation of culture; this will help protect endangered languages and further promote cultural heritage and cultural diversity. Second, language is the central element of expression of identity and a key to keeping a group's identity. Especially in multi-ethnic countries, the protection of linguistic minority rights and ethnic identity are an essential component of good governance, which will prevent tensions and conflict, and promote ethnic harmony, and the construction of an equal and stable society. Third, it helps provide a reference for the minority studies and ethnic identity theoretical studies as well as provide reference and enlightenment for the Yunnan minority language and policy.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

This thesis is organized into 6 chapters. The structure of this thesis is as shown in Fig.1.1.

Chapter 1 provides the description of the background for this research and proposes the objective of this research, specifically, the structure of this thesis is introduced.

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of the minority languages in China with a focus on the Sino-Tibetan language family.

Chapter 3 presents the representative research of language endangerment as well as the state-of-the-art research in ethnic identity. In terms of language endangerment, the study introduces and analyzes in detail the current international mainstream language assessment methods, UNESCO (Sebastian. et al. 2003), EGIDS (Lewis & Simons, 2010), and LEI (Lee & Van Way, 2016). In addition to this, the conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: current status and future directions are also summarized, specifically, we introduced the Phinney & Ong MEIM-R scale framework.

Chapter 4 presents a new language vitality evaluated method that is in accordance with China's conditions. The new language vitality evaluated method was derived from a series of sociological factors and sociolinguistic factors related to language endangerment based on latest fieldwork data in a Pumi community of Yunnan province, China. The vitality assessment result is obtained through the new language vitality assessment method through which it was compared and analyzed with that of EGIDS (Lewis & Simons, 2010), and LEI (Lee & Van Way, 2016).

Chapter 5 investigates the relationship between the ethnic identity, language use and language attitude based on the case of Pumi language in Yunnan province, China. In particular, we used Spearman correlation coefficients to quantify correlation coefficients between different factors; the most relevant factors are analyzed in detail regarding

language endangerment causes from the perspective of language cognition and language psychology.

Chapter 6 presents a literature review of the protection of endangered languages in China with a focus on 1) Achievements of Endangered Language Protection in China, 2) Dilemmas of Endangered Language Protection, and 3) Suggestions for Endangered Language Protection.

Chapter 7 gives a summary of achievements as well as the recommendations for the future work.

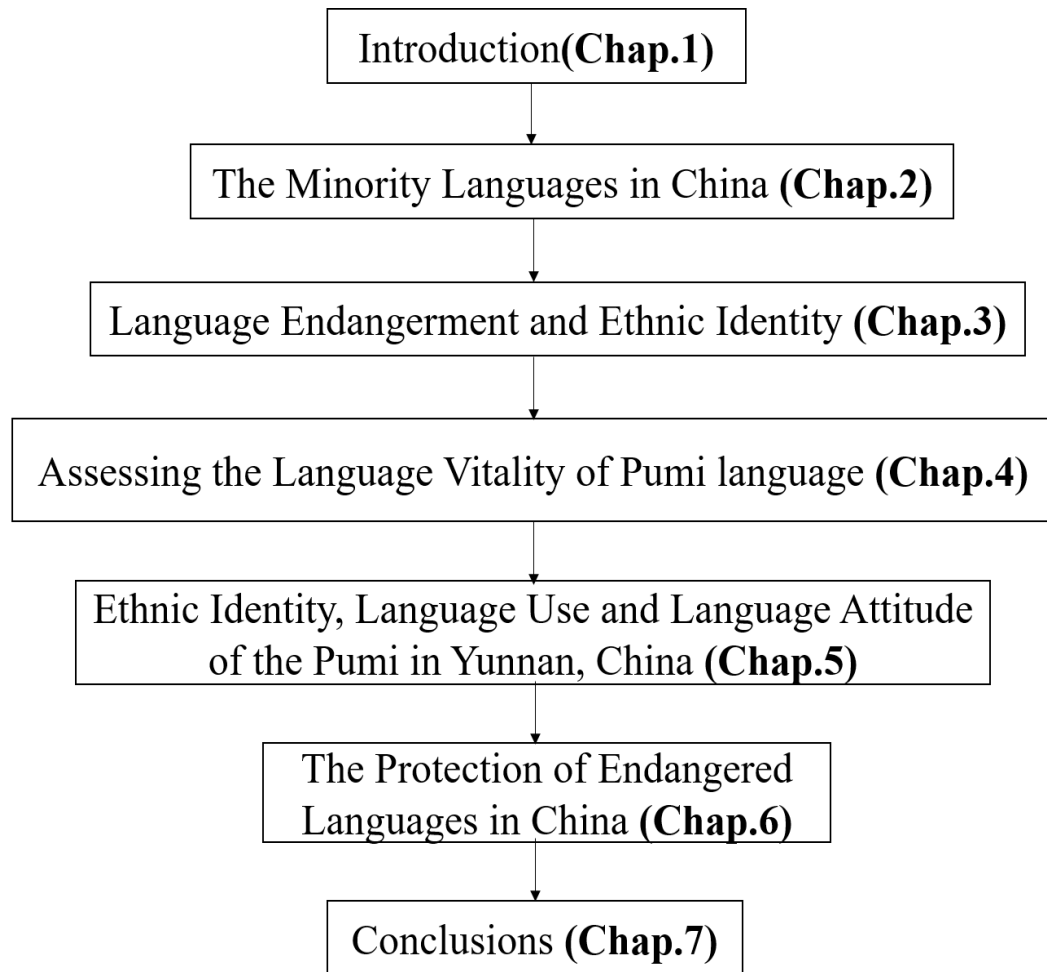


Figure 1.1 Structure of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2. THE MINORITY LANGUAGES IN CHINA

As a multi-ethnic country, China has 56 ethnic groups with a total population of 1,370,536,875. Among them, the Han population is 1,225,932,641, accounting for 91.51%; the population of ethnic minorities is 113,792,211, accounting for 8.49% (NBS, 2011). Large-scale scattered living and small settlements characterize the distribution of ethnic minorities in China. Therefore, although the total population of ethnic minorities is small, the total area of distribution accounts for about 64% of the country's total area. Most ethnic people are located in the border areas of China, and many of them are cross-border ethnic groups. Generally, these areas are relatively remote and economically backward, but they often have abundant natural resources. The diverse ethnic environment has made China rich in language resources. According to the "Language Atlas of China "(Baker & Hugh, 1993), China has more than 130 languages. Most of these are languages used by ethnic minorities, and a few are minority languages used by Han people.

2.1 The Minority Languages in China

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese government has begun vigorously conducting investigations into the social history and language of ethnic minorities and carrying out ethnic identification work. There are currently 56 ethnic groups that have been formally identified. Among the 56 ethnic groups, the Han ethnic group use Chinese, while the other 55 ethnic minorities have their ethnic languages except for the Hui and Manchu ethnic, whose primary language has been shifted into Chinese. Also, some ethnic groups use different languages within their different branches. For example, different branches of the Gaoshan ethnic group use a total of 13

languages, which are Taiyal language, Saydy language, Zou language, Shah Rua language, Kanakanab language, Paiwan language, Amis language, Bunun language, Rukai language, Puyam language, Shao language, Sastre language, and Yimei language, respectively (Xinghua, 2005).

In the long history of thousands of years for China, with the changes and migration between Chinese and foreign nationalities, the five major language systems of Chinese minority languages have slowly formed, which are the Sino-Tibetan language family, South Asian language family, Austronesian family, Altai language family, and Indo-European language family. These are according to "The languages of China" (Sun, Hu, & Huang, 2007), the major languages that consist of these five language families.

There are 31 ethnic groups in the Sino-Tibetan language family, which are divided into the following: 1) Zhuang and Dong language family, including Zhung-Dai branch, Dong-Shui branch, and Li branch, mainly has Zhuang language, Dong language, Dai language, Buyi language, Shui language, Mulam language, Maonan language, Lakkia language, Gelao language, and Li language; 2) Tibetan-Burmese language family, including Tibetan branch, Yi branch, Jingpo branch, and Qiang branch, mainly has Tibetan language, Jiarong language, Monba language, Lhoba language, Tujia language, Qiang language, Pumi language, Dulong language, Nu language, Yi language, Susu language, Naxi language, Hani language, Lahu language, Bai language, Jino language, Jingpo language, Zaiwa language, and Achang language; 3) Miao language family, including Miao language branch and Yao language branch, mainly has Miao language, Bunu language, Mian language, and She language; and 4) Chinese.

There are altogether 19 ethnic groups in the Altai language family, which is divided into the following: 1) Turkic language family, mainly includes Uighur language, Kazakh language, Kyrgyz language, Uzbek language, Tatar language, Salar language, Tuvan language, and Western Yugur language; 2) Mongolian language family, mainly includes Mongolian language, Daur language, Dongxiang language, Eastern Yugur language, Tu language, and Baoan language; and 3) Manchu -Tungusic language family, including the Manchu language branch, Tungusic language branch, which mainly includes Manchu language, Xibo language, Hezhe language, Evenk language, and Oroqen language.

There are three ethnic groups in the South Asian language family, including the Wa ethnic, Deang ethnic and Bulang ethnic in Yunnan. They all belong to the Mon–Khmer languages, including Wa language, Deang language, and Brown language.

The Austronesian family only consists of the Gaoshan ethnic group, belonging to the Indonesian language branch such as the Paiwan Language, Bunun language, and Ameis language.

The Indo-European language family consists of two nationalities—Tajik Nationality has spoken the Tajik language of Iranian Group and Russian Nationality who speak the Russian language of Slavic Group (East Slavic branch). In addition, some other languages whose affiliations have not yet to obtain a unified opinion, exist such as the Korean language, and Jing language.

2.2 The Minority Characters in China.

The ethnic minority characters, which are a writing symbol that record and convey language, play an essential role in the social and cultural life of ethnic minorities.

Actually, before the founding of the People's Republic of China, some ethnic groups had their own ethnic characters, such as Tibetan ethnic, Mongolian ethnic, Uighur ethnic, Kazakh ethnic, Kirgiz ethnic, Korea ethnic, Tai ethnic, Yi ethnic, Russia ethnic, Miao ethnic, Naxi ethnic, Shui ethnic, Lahu ethnic, Jingpo ethnic and Xibo ethnic. Later, the established government of the People's Republic of China further promoted the development of cultural and educational undertakings for ethnic minorities and helped some ethnic minorities improve or create their own scripts. For instance, it reformed the writings of the Tai ethnic, Yi ethnic, Jingpo ethnic and Lahu ethnic, and used the Latin alphabet to help the Zhuang ethnic, Buyi ethnic, Miao ethnic and other ethnicities more than a dozen ethnic groups designed 14 kinds of characters. At present, 19 ethnic minority languages have been formally used and approved. They are respectively the writings of Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur, Korean, Zhuang, Kazakh, Xibo, Tai, Yi, Uzbek, Kirgiz, Tatar, Russian, Naxi, Miao, Jingpo, Lisu, Lazhao, and Wa. However, these ethnic groups, such as Ewenki ethnic, Blang ethnic, Deang ethnic, Pumi ethnic, Baoan ethnic, Yugu ethnic, Nu ethnic, Mengba ethnic, Loba ethnic, and She ethnic still have no characters (Xinghua, 2005).

To be specific, at present, there are roughly three types of minority languages and character usage: the first type, such as the Mongolian, Tibetan, Uighur, Kazakh, and North Korean ethnic groups, which have a large area of concentration, with a population of more

than one million have a long history of writing. Their languages are not only used in the family, neighbors, and friends, but also used in the political, economic, cultural, and educational fields in their ethnic areas—even sometimes used in some other neighboring or mixed ethnic groups. The second type, are languages such as the Dai and Yi ethnic. Although they also have a large concentration of settlements and traditional characters, there is no uniform norm for the characters, and the differences between dialects are immensely greater. In social effect, the use of these ethnic languages is not as broad as the groups of the Mongolia ethnic, Uygur ethnic, Kazakh ethnic, and Korea ethnic. The vast differences of internal languages have prevented the formation of the universal language of the entire nation, making the scope of some languages tiny, such as the Zhuang language, Lisu language, Lahu language, Jingpo language, and Zaiwa language. These internal ethnic languages form the third type and they are often only used in their ethnic internal daily life, and other languages (such as Chinese or other minority languages) are used in the context of political life and school education. In this case, there are no characters consistent with the ethnic language, so the ethnic people generally use Chinese to replace the writings of the language of their ethnic groups. The ethnic minority languages that belong to this type are quite numerous, accounting for about three-quarters or more of the total number of languages, and the population of speakers' accounts to more than half of the total population of ethnic minority people (Daobu, 1998).

2.3 Summary of This Chapter

The situation in China provides indications that the conditions of China's ethnic groups and ethnic languages are very complicated. Since each ethnic group has different cultural backgrounds and different populations, it is also influenced by external factors

such as various customs and national policies. The development of different ethnic languages in China is very different and relatively unbalanced. What is particularly noteworthy is that for those ethnic languages which have no characters, a small number of speakers, and a very few use domains, they often become weaker languages in language competition, and are more likely to experience language endangerment, especially in the current social environment where economic integration and migration are strengthened. Moreover, the number of languages is also quite huge, accounting for about three-quarters or more of the total languages. Therefore, under such circumstances, the study of such languages will be of great significance to the protection and development of Chinese minority languages.

CHAPTER 3. LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

3.1 Introduction

Language and ethnicity accompany each other. Language is an important part of the ethnic culture, and it is an inherent feature of the nation. The common language connects ethnic members closer together to form cultural ownership and ethnic identity, which in turn forms ethnic states. Language is an essential factor for self-identification of ethnic members. It is a way of transmitting ethnic culture and one of the foundations for maintaining ethnic identity. Since the formation of an ethnic group in human society, the ethnic language has become a symbol of maintaining the sense of ethnic unity and ethnic identity (Xinren, 2008). The relationship between language and ethnic identity is complicated. In the modern era of accelerated globalization, with the invasion of a strong culture and the large-scale immigration, the problems of endangered languages and ethnic identity have become severe global issues. In view of this, this section will focus on the literature review of endangered languages, especially Chinese minority languages and the ethnic identity, and on this basis, further, explore the research results of the relationship between them.

3.2 The Overview of Language Endangerment

3.2.1 The background and international research of language endangerment.

With the development of globalization, an increasing number of the weak languages are replaced by the strong languages. This severe phenomenon has received much attention

by linguists. In the 1970s, the concept of Endangered Languages was put forward. Up until the 1990s, the discussion of language endangerment quickly extended to the worldwide scale and became a global hot topic. The research of linguists mainly focuses on two aspects: the analysis of the specific language cases and the theoretical exploration of the universal law.

From the 1990s to now, the language endangerment studies in international linguistic circles mainly included two aspects: one is the investigation of endangered language and the record keeping of data; the other is related with theoretical discussions and research. These two aspects have deepened people's understanding of this issue from practical and theoretical perspectives and have promoted the application and theoretical development of this field.

First, the linguists from all over the world have done a lot of work on long-term field visits and follow-up surveys, and have accumulated rich and systematic information of the languages that are in danger. At the 1995 International Endangered Language Symposium, participating linguists provided reports of the world's endangered languages (Matsumura, 1998). They included the language conditions of South America (Willem Adelaar), Africa (Matthias Brenzinger), Southeast Asia (David Bradley), India (E. Annamalai), Russia (VY Mikhailchenko), Thailand (Suwilai Premsrirat), Japan's Ainu languages (Osami Okuda, Harumi Sawai) and European Aleutian and Sami language (Knut Bergsland). Later, linguists also purposefully studied the languages that are experiencing sharp declines, such as Australia's Dyirbal (Dixon, 1997) and Syria's Aramaic (Daniszewski, 2007), and the extinct language, such as Warrungu language in North Queensland, Australia (Matsumura, 1998), Western Caucasian Ubykh language (Anderson, 1998), Kasabe language in the

Mambila area, Adamawa Province, Cameroon (Connell, 1997), and the Bo language in Andaman Islands, India.

Second, linguists not only investigated these language situations, but also collected, recorded, and preserved them, such as using a digital recording and video recording to describe language systems and then compile dictionaries or electronic files to make these precious materials well preserved. For example, David Harrison and Gregory Anderson of the Institute of Salem Endangered Languages, Oregon, U.S, established an online dictionary that contains eight languages that are on the verge of disappearing, collecting more than 32,000 words and more than 24,000 audio recordings.

Finally, linguists have conducted extensive and in-depth theoretical discussions on the phenomenon of language endangerment. These mainly include areas such as: the concept and defining criteria of an endangered language (Bauman, 1980; Fishman, 1991, 2000); The importance of linguistic diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas & Philipson, 1994; Thieberger , 1990; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), the type and hierarchy of endangered languages (Bauman, 1980; Kincade, 1991; Stephen, 1998; UNESCO, 2003), the reasons for the endangerment and their order of priority (Fishman et al., 1985; Kibrik & Eulenberg, 1991; Edwards, 1992; Grenoble & Whaley, 1998); the relationship between language and ecological environment (Harmon, 1996; Krauss, 1996; Maffi et al., 1999; Mühlhäusler, 2002), the protection and Revival of Endangered Languages (Fishman , 2001; Crystal, 2000).

3.2.2 The important international conferences on language endangerment research.

In 1992, the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) put forward a proposal to publish a red book of problems in endangered languages. In August of the same year, the international linguistic circle held the 15th International Congress of Linguists (ICL15) in Quebec, Canada, which first emphasized the issue of endangered languages as the main topic of the conference.

In 1993, the UNESCO General Conference Plenary Session in Paris adopted a resolution accepting the "Endangered Languages Project" as UNESCO directly managed projects to collect information and research situation of the endangered languages in the world. In the same year, UNESCO has identified the year as the "Endangered Languages Year".

In 1994, Tokyo established the "International Clearing House for The Endangered Languages". The following year, in Japan, Tokyo University held an International Symposium on Endangered Languages.

In 1996, the "Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights" was adopted in Barcelona. In 2000, the International Conference on Endangered Languages was held in the University of Cologne, Germany. The experts and scholars assembled together and engaged in endangered languages from various countries and regions of the world. The conference ranked the sequence of studies and records of endangered languages.

In October 2001, at the 31st Session of UNESCO General Conference, the “Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity” was adopted, confirming the interrelationship between cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, and biodiversity. Based on these specific areas of diversity, the “Main Lines of An Action Plan for The Implementation of The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity” was developed that requires cooperation between member states and linguistic groups.

In March 2003, UNESCO held an international expert meeting in Paris. More than 60 official representatives from more than 40 countries, as well as representatives of the endangered languages fund and major linguistic institutions, attended this meeting. They discussed the mechanisms for maintaining endangered languages and the possibility of international cooperation and exchanged the methods and countermeasures of protecting endangered languages.

The United Nations and related agencies decided to expand the social impact of the endangered languages problem, hence the topic of endangered languages has become a new popular topic in the linguistics academy. The linguistic academy sparked a research boom that has never been seen before.

3.2.3 The international organizations and foundations of language endangerment research.

- 1995.1.27, Bristol University’s Foundation for Endangered Language (FEL)
- 1994 Tokyo University’s International Clearing House for Endangered Languages (ICHEL)

- 1996 US. The Terralingual: Partnerships for Linguistic and Biological Diversity
- Yale University, the Endangered Language Fund (ELF)
- University of California, the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas (SSILA)
- University of Cologne, Society for Endangered Languages

3.2.4 *The representative research of language endangerment in China*

Since the 1990s, the Chinese linguists have paid close attention and done major in-depth research on issues related to language endangerment compared to other countries. The first stage is the discovery and investigation of China's minority languages from the early 1970s to the late 1980s. Chinese linguists discovered some new minority languages, most of which are endangered. They began to carry out a preliminary survey of endangered languages description and provided an analysis as well. The second stage, 1990's till now, is further development of professional study and discussion on China's Endangered Languages. During this period, the large-scale field investigation and theoretical analysis of some of the endangered minority languages in China began. The theoretical discussions mainly include the definition of an endangered language (Qingxia & Youling, 2001), research on the causes of endangered languages (Jinfang, 2005; Shixuan, 2002; Qingxia, 2004), the evolution and trends of endangered language (Qingxia, 2006; Li Jinfang, 2005), and the protection of endangered languages (Jinfang, 2005; Qinghua, 2008). In addition, there are many case studies of endangered languages, mainly including the Tujia language, Xiandao language, Gelao language, Hezhe language, Man language, Buyiang language,

Chadong language, Bagan language, Hu language, Laji language, Rouruo language, Kangjia language, Lai language and Anung Language (Guoyan, 2005; Hongkai, 1999; Jinfang, 2006; Qingxia, 2004; Xuejuan, 2005; Yuanxin, 2004). In addition, in recent years, many researchers have started to pay attention to the topic of language filing (Suqing & Bingjun, 2012; Xin, 2014). However, many studies are still in their infancy. Coupled with China's complicated national conditions, there is still considerable room for development in China's endangered language research and practice.

3.3 The Overview of Ethnic Identity

The concept of ethnic identity initially appeared in the 18th century Enlightenment. Malinowski (1944) argues that the idea of "ethnic identity" derives from the meaning of "identity" in the field of ethnic studies. In addition, many other scholars have also given a variety of definitions (Carla, 1998; Miville, 2000). Among them, the concept of ethnic identity proposed by Phinney (1990) is widely recognized by the academic community. Phinney insists that ethnic identity is a complex structure that constitutes ethnic self-identity, a sense of belonging, ethnic attitudes, and ethnic involvement. He proposed four elements for assessing ethnic identity, ethnic self-identification, a sense of belonging, ethnic attitudes, and ethnic involvement. Furthermore, he developed a Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) scale. Other studies also commonly refer to Phinney's MEIM scale (Umaña, 2003; Lee & Yoo, 2004; Sneed, 2006). The study of ethnic identity mainly focuses on three fields: "Social Identity from the Perspective of Social Psychologists," "Cultural adaptation from the perspective of social psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists" and "Identity formation from the perspective of psychologists". The

Chinese scholars paid more attention to studying the ethnic identity of ethnic minorities in China (Huiying, 2007; Zhilong, 2010; Suping, 2012).

3.4 The Relationship between Language Endangerment and Ethnic Identity

Generally speaking, language is an important symbol of ethnic identity and an essential basis for ethnic identity. The native language recognition is strongly characterized in various ethnic groups, and thus often becomes the primary symbol of different minorities (Mei, 2006). Based on the analysis of the language identity and ethnic identity of the Tu ethnic people of Tong Ren in Qinghai, Wang Yuanxin (2009) concludes that the language identity and ethnic identity of the Tu ethnic in Tongren, Guizhou are inseparable; behind the ethnic identity, mainly language and its cultural identity are at work. Chengfeng (2011) found that the degree of ethnic identity has the relationship of the linguistic and cultural differences, the frequency and the scope of communication. If the language and cultural differences are large, and external community is widespread, the contrast of each of them will be stronger, the perception of their ethnicity is clearer, and will more likely produce a strong dependence on their ethnic feelings.

3.5 Summary of This Chapter

From the discussion in this chapter we can deduce that the relationship between ethnic identity and language endangerment can help us to understand the problems of language endangerment, which are of great importance for solving the ethnic problems (Ashmore, 2004; Cokley, 2007). However, most of the previous studies focus on investigating the ethnic identity or the relationship between language and ethnic identity generally. There is still an area of research exploring the relationship between endangered

language and ethnic identity. Therefore, the objective is to combine the areas of study for language endangerment, such as exploring the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude, and the language proficiency aiming to provide a useful reference for China's language protection and policy.

CHAPTER 4. ASSESSING THE LINGUISTIC VITALITY OF PUMI: AN ENDANGERED SINO-TIBETAN LANGUAGE OF YUNNAN, CHINA

4.1 Introduction

The Pumi language, mainly spoken in Yunnan Providence, China, is one of the minority languages, which is currently in danger of coming extinct (Hong-kai, 2006). Although so far, the research on language ontology and sociolinguistics of Pumi language has an increasing trend (Ying, 2013). The Pumi language is still one of the Chinese minority languages with very few studies on. Its Language vitality research is very fragmented and lacks a very comprehensive evaluation. The purpose of this paper is to assess the language vitality of the Pumi language in a Pumi-inhabited area of China-- the Lanping Bai and Pumi Autonomous County of Yunnan Province. This research will try to construct the framework of Pumi Language endangerment and further refine the Pumi Language vitality evaluation methods. This research will explore the particular factors, such as sociolinguistic and sociological factors, relevant to Pumi language's endangerment.

4.2 The Pumi Ethnic and Pumi Language

This research is a case study of the Pumi language. The Pumi ethnicity is (普米族) recognized as an official minority ethnicity and has a very long history. The ancient Pumi ethnicity is called "Xifan"(西番) and "Baju" (巴苴) (Shaozun, 2001), which is one of the branches of the ancient Qiang people. Its ancestors mainly lived in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. They were the nomadic people of Qinghai, Gansu, Northern Sichuan areas, and

later gradually migrated to Southern China. In the 7th century AD, they lived in West Sichuan Province, such as the Hanyuan, Mianning, Shimian, and Jiulong area. In the middle of the 13th century, the Pumi ethnicity migrated to Yunnan Province with the Mongolian army. Therefore, at present, the Pumi people in the Yunnan Province are concentrated in counties of Lanping, Lijiang, Weixi, and Yongsheng, as well as in the Yi Autonomous County of Ninglang. Others live in Muliand Yanyuan County of the Sichuan Province and Tibetan Autonomous County. The Pumi live on the hillside and in wood houses. They believe in several gods. The Pumi people of Ninglang County practice cremation and the Pumi people of Lan Ping, Lijiang and Yongsheng area implement both cremation and the burial ceremony. According to China's sixth census in 2010, the number of Pumi people in the country was 42,861, accounting for 0.0032% of the proportion of China's total population, which still is one of China's less populous minority ethnic groups (Ying, 2010).

The Pumi language belonging to the Tibetan-Myanmese language family of the Chinese-Tibetan system has no characters. Only a few Pumi people in the Muli and Ninglang areas once used an engraved symbol for the wizard to record religious ceremonies, called Han Gui or Ding Ba characters. The Pumi language is divided into two dialects in the North and South, and each dialect is divided into several languages. There are also some differences in speech and vocabulary between the two dialects. The southern dialect is located in Lanping, Weixi, Lijiang, Yongsheng, Yunxian and Ninglang County of Yunnan Province. The number of the users was about 22,000 people. The northern dialect is located in Ninglang county of Yunnan Province and the Muli Tibetan Autonomous County, Yanyuan County and Jiulong County of Sichuan Province. The number of users

was about 55,000 people, 7,000 people for the Pumi ethnic, the rest of the Tibetan (Shaozun, 1983). In fact, because the core language part of the two Pumi dialects is still relatively close, in addition to Pumi language variation it has a reasonably regular correspondence; it is easy for the speakers from the South and the North to communicate with each other through their native language. Sizhi Ding, a scholar of the Hong Kong University, has said that Pumi languages are excellent examples of preservation because their characteristic efficiently prevents it from changing too much, causing it to not break down into various dialects (Ding,2007).

From the 1990s onward, large-scale field investigations and analysis of some of the endangered minority languages in China began. Some other larger minority languages, such as Tujia language, Xiandao language, Gelao language, Hezhe language, and the Man language, have many in-depth language case studies (Shixuan, 2001; Hongkai, 2001; Qingxia, 2004). However, the Pumi language with a tiny population and belonging to the Qiang languages has few studies (most of the research pays attention to the Yi or Mian languages) that rarely are related to literature on language case.



Figure 4.1 Photos of Pumi architecture and mural which were taken by the author



Figure 4.2 Photo of the gate of Xiagaoping Village which was taken by the author

4.3 Language Vitality Assessment

4.3.1 The previous assessing language vitality method

Assessing the vitality of endangered language is a prerequisite for the protection of endangered languages (Dorian, 1992). At the international level, there are many evaluating language vitality models, such as the eight-level Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale or GIDS (Fishman,1991), the UNESCO's nine factors assessing language vitality (Brenzinger, et al.,2003), the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale or EGIDS (Lewis, & Simons, 2010), and the Language Endangerment Index or LEI (Lee,& Van, 2016) . Table 4-1 shows the main assessment models of language vitality, which include both quantitative measures and qualitative analysis of various factors of language vitality.

GIDS is one of the very first language vitality methods which is still not very sound, for instance, GIDS has been criticized for failing to describe all possible states of a language adequately. It is a single-table language assessment tools with eight levels. The EGIDS Model improved correcting some of its problems and increased to 13 levels. The most advantages of EGIDS is helping to fast evaluate the language vitality, but because of including only 5 factors, actually, its assessment is still not very comprehensive. In 2003, the UNESCO put forward to the UNESCO's Nine Factors. They are the qualitative analysis and they emphasizes the importance of different situations of speech communities. The sociological factors and internal factors also were considered, hence making the language evaluation more comprehensive. In 2006, based on UNESCO's factors, a new model— LEI, was proposed by Lee and Van. They found the UNESCO Model had some

shortcomings, for instance, they thought someone cannot be sure if the type and quality of documentation directly affect the vitality of a language, and the result of UNESCO's method can't give an overall vitality score, making it difficult to compare accurately across different languages. This is because only the first factor in UNESCO's list of nine factors appears to be utilized when comparing levels of endangerment across different languages in the online atlas. Therefore, based on the four most important factors and a calculation formula they considered, they put forward their own method, which quantifies the results of the language assessment thereby to achieve a comparison between different languages. However, the four factors of LEI purely relate to the current condition of language use of linguistics, so the assessment of language vitality is relatively single and does not give enough reference information.

Among all the models above, the UNESCO Model is considered the broadest method (Janhunen & Salminen, 1993; Moseley, 2010). Most of the vital research of China's minority languages has adopted the UNESCO model. Actually, Due to China's particularity, some of the evaluation criteria are not very suitable for China's national conditions. Chinese scholar Sun Hongkai once clearly pointed out that UNESCO's vitality indicators "are generally applicable, but some do not exactly match with China's situation" (Hongkai, 2006).

Table 4-1 Summary of the main language vitality assessment models (1) Fishman’s (1991) GIDS; (2) the UNESCO’s nine factors (Brenzinger et al., 2003); (3) Lewis and Simons’ (2010) Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS); (4) Lee and Van Way’s (2016) Language Endangerment Index (LEI).

Model	Main Factors	Degree	Characteristics
GIDS Fishman (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intergenerational transmission Domains of language use ○ Literacy ○ Political status 	8 levels	Fast
UNESCO Sebastian. et al.(2003)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Intergenerational transmission Speaker proportion</i> 2. <i>Domains of language use</i> 3. <i>Language attitude</i> 4. <i>Response to new domains and media</i> 5. <i>Literacy</i> 	6 levels	Qualitative
EGIDS Lewis& Simons (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identity function ● Intergenerational transmission ● Youngest Speakers with Some Fluent Speakers ● Level of Official Status ● Literacy 	13 levels	Fast
LEI Lee & Van Way (2016)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Intergenerational Transmission</i> 2) <i>Absolute Number of Speakers</i> 3) <i>Speaker Number Trends</i> 4) <i>Domains of Use</i> 	6 levels	Quantitative

4.3.2 The previous Pumi language vitality assessment

With regard to the linguistic vitality assessment of Pumi language in the field of sociolinguistics, so far, there is very little related literature available. Almost all the relevant studies have a certain degree of one-sidedness to them. They generally paid attention to one or two factors as their criteria for assessing the language vitality of the Pumi language (Qingxia & Weidong, 1993; Weidong, 1996; Yan & Jialin, 2008; Yan,

2011). In this case, it is particularly important to put forward a comprehensive vitality assessment criterion for the Pumi language that suits China's ethnicity conditions.

4.3.3 The factors of proposed Pumi language vitality assessment method

In this article, we conducted a comprehensive vitality assessment of the Pumi language in terms of the following criteria:

- 1) Sociological factors and sociolinguistic factors considered equally important. The sociological factors, such as language attitudes, geographic environment, and education expectation, affect language state and reveal the language future trend. Whereas the sociolinguistic factors, such as Intergenerational language transmission, Speaker Proportion, Language Proficiency and Domains of Language Use are merely the descriptions of the language current condition, which does not provide more information.
- 2) Community members' attitudes towards their language and Education are expectation considered as two essential factors, which show the self-assessment and the mass foundation of language protection.
- 3) Ethnic distribution and Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions are two linguistic influence factors that are significantly constrained by the local Chinese conditions.
- 4) The speaker-related variables, such as age, are expected to show significant differences in language dynamism and therefore will be analyzed.

Consequently, we identify three factors to evaluate a language use condition, two factors to assess language attitudes, two factors for education expectation and two factors related to the particular location.

Therefore, after determining the most important impact factors of Pumi language vitality, this study compiled the following nine assessed factors for investigation and analysis: 1) Intergenerational language transmission. 2) Speaker Proportion & Language Proficiency. 3) Domains of language use. 4) Governmental language attitudes and policies. 5) Community members' attitudes towards their own language. 6) Educational expectations. 7) Availability of materials for language education and literacy. 8) Ethnic distribution. 9) Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions.

4.4 Methodology

This study administered a questionnaire and conducted interviews (See details in Appendix A and B) to obtain the updated indicator information that is related to language vitality assessment. Then the statistical information of each indicator was analyzed. Moreover, finally, the endangerment degree of each indicator were evaluated for how they quantify according to the criterion of UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment framework for the Language Vitality of the Pumi language. Thus, this paper mainly includes three different research methods: first, the Literature Research Method where the researcher collects and analyzes literature to identify the terms, and clarifies a series of indicators that can be used to evaluate the vitality of the Pumi Language. Second, the Field Investigation and Statistical Analysis Method involves the researcher visiting the minority regions in China to collect data through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires and

then evaluate the Pumi language situation based on the statistical analysis of the field investigation datasets. Third, the Comparative Analysis Method involves comparing the situations in the different study areas (Xiagaoping Village and Luoguqing Village) to conclude the language vitality results and further get the reasons for the endangered language.

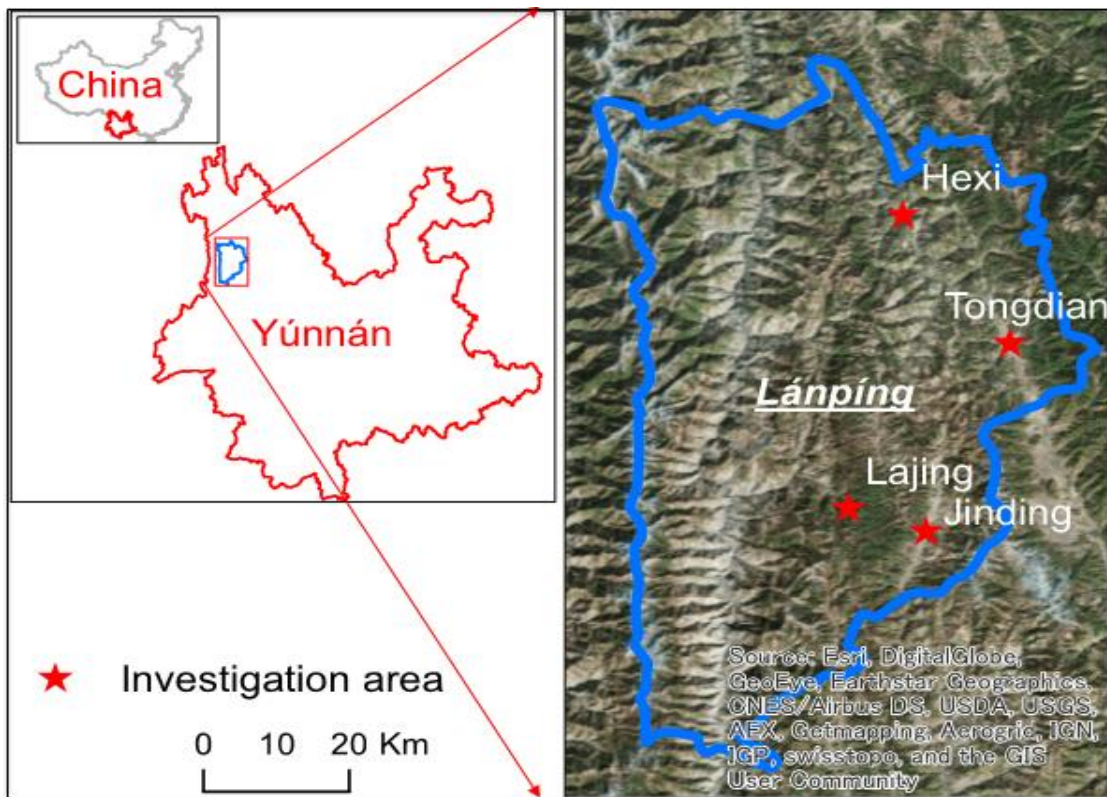


Figure 4.3 Location of Lanping County and four counties of identified Pumi villages.

4.5 Questionnaires and Interviews

Table 4-2 The introduction of Pumi population (proportion) of four towns and their main investigated villages.

Towns of Lanping county	Pumi Population (Proportion)	Investigated Village committee	Investigated villages
Tongdian	5072 (14.4%)	Longtang	Shangshuifeng
Hexi	7337 (44%)	Desheng	Luoguqing
		Dayang	Dagumei
		Lianhe	Ahuoji
Lajing	986 (4.1%)	Jinghua	Yushichang
		Guadeng	Guadeng
Jinding	1223 (6.0%)	Gaoping	Xiagaoping

The investigation was carried out among Pumi people of Lanping town in Yunnan Province, China respectively in December of 2016 and in December of 2017 (Table 4-2). In the case of the lack of investigation partners, harsh objective conditions and limited time, the survey finally received a total of 130 questionnaires and 12 interviews from 7 representative villages, which respectively are Shangshuifeng Village, Luoguqing Village, Dagumei Village, Ahuoji Village, Yushichang Village, Guadeng Village, and Xiagaoping Village. Among these seven villages, Luoguqing Village and Xiagaoping Village are our first investigated region, and the other five villages are the second. Figure 4.4 shows the diversity of gender, age, and educational background. The sample contains enough variety to judge it as a representative sample of the populations of the two villages. In the interview, the author emphatically visited 12 Pumi people, including village heads, civil servants, schoolteachers, reporters and Pumi culture heritage workers. They gave the comprehensive

introductions regarding the Pumi language situation and their opinion of the reasons for Pumi language endangerment and possible future countermeasures.

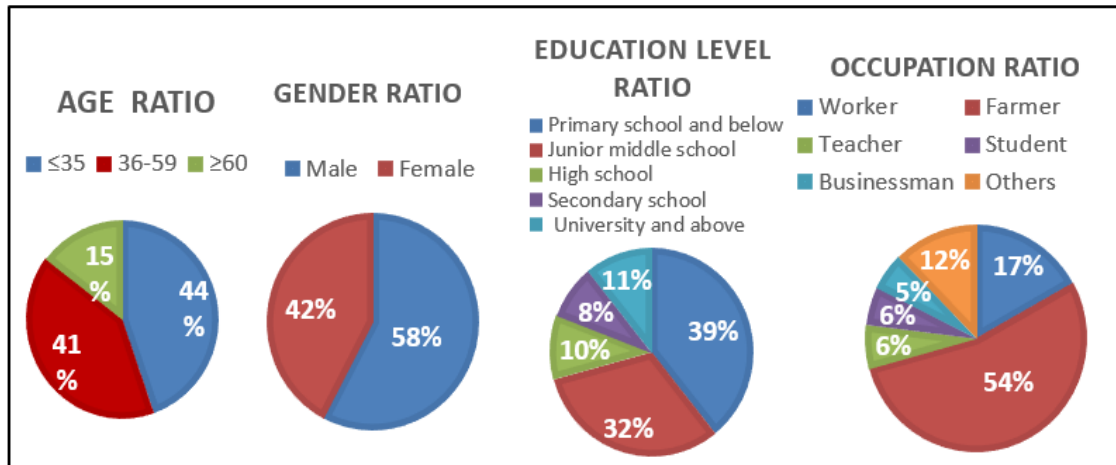


Figure 4.4 The background information of Pumi investigated respondents

4.6 Results and Discussion Using EGIDS and LEI Method

4.6.1 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale

For a horizontal comparison of different methods, this paper also conducted fieldwork based on the EGIDS Method. The EGIDS addressed some critical problems, therefore, it is the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale of Fishman. As shown in the Table 4-3 below, there are 13 levels in it and the lower the level, the safer the language, and vice versa.

Table 4-3 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale Model

(Lewis & Simons 2010)

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of functions.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the nationwide level.
2	Regional	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education.
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in the written form in parts of the community.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations, but only some of the childbearing generation are transmitting it to their children.
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves, but none are transmitting it to their children.
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.
8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency.
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.

This article draws an EGIDS Diagnostic Decision Tree to make it easier to understand the EGIDS model and present its findings (Figure 4.4). Figure 4.5 shows the field survey results. In the question "What is the identity function", most people chose "Home", which means that family communication is the main function of the Pumi

language. Then, in the family, the dominant choice of "Are all parents transmitting the language to their children?" is "Yes". In this case, when they are answering the next question "What is the literacy status?" the vast majority of the remaining respondents selected "Incipient" from the three choices of "Institutional", "Incipient", and "None", which points to the level of "Written" . Based on the description of EGIDS Model, the "Written" refers to "the language that is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in the written form in parts of the community". It is obvious that this assessment is very inconsistent with the Pumi language without characters.

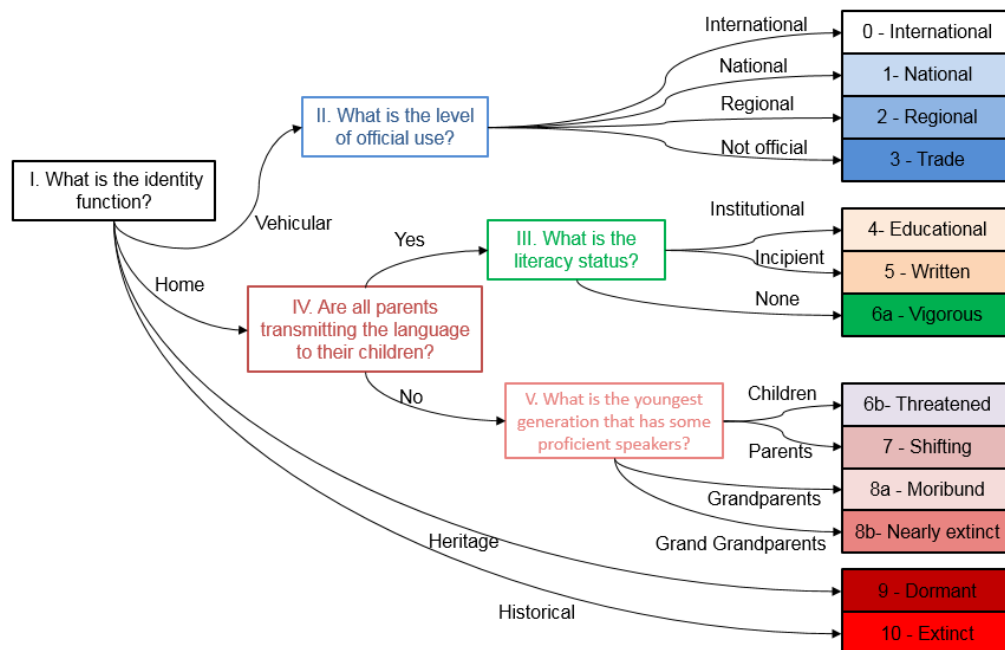


Figure 4.5 EGIDS Diagnostic Decision Tree (Lewis & Simons 2010)

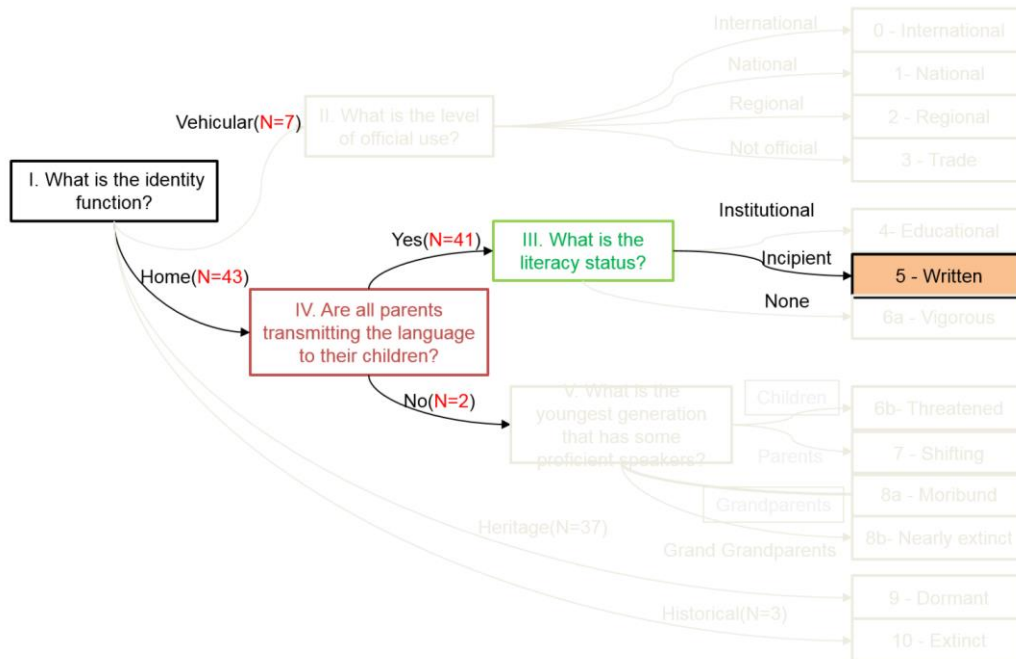


Figure 4.6 Investigated results of Pumi language in EGIDS Diagnostic Decision Tree (Lewis & Simons 2010)

4.6.2 The Language Endangerment Index (LEI)

The Language Endangerment Index (LEI) is a model based on the UNESCO Nine Factors and it can be used to complete the quantity assessments of language vitality to compare different language situations. To ensure the certainty of the assessment results, it chose four factors that have universal significance. Among them, the intergenerational transmission was considered the most crucial factor. The LEI Model represents four factors on a scale of 0-5, where 0 is "safe," and 5 is "extremely endangered." Then the total score of the assessment is calculated based on an LEI calculation formula. Table 4-4 shows the degree and description of different factors of Language Endangerment Index and Table 4-5 is its formula for the final score and level of certainty based on the available evidence.

The following section will use the LEI model to assess the endangered level of the Pumi language based on the new data which was provided in the survey.

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show that both factors of intergenerational transmission and speaker number trends show that the proportion of people who chose 0-degree (safe) is the highest, which exceeds 50 percent. Of course, the phenomenon of polarization also appeared -- the ratio of the 5 degrees (extremely endangered) are still highest in the remaining grades. Regarding the proportion of different degrees of domains of use in LEI (Figure 4.8), degree 2(Threatened), which is a little higher than the degree 5(extremely endangered), is the degree with the largest proportion of people. Therefore, Table 4-6 shows that regarding the level of certainty based on the available evidence, it is not possible to get an absolute number of Pumi language speakers from all Pumi language communities, which means only three of these factors can be determined, with 20 points possible (80% certain). Therefore, the calculated result is 45%. Correspondingly the LEI score interpretation (Table 4-7), the final assessment of the Pumi language is "endangered".

This final result reflects the conditional use of the Pumi language better than the EGIDS. However, due to limited evaluation factors selected, the results have a certain one-sidedness, and only show some aspects of the Pumi language in its linguistic scope.

Table 4-4 The Language Endangerment Index (Lee & Van Way 2014)

Degree	5 Critically Endangered	4 Severely Endangered	3 Endangere- d	2 Threaten- ed	1 Vulnerabl e	0 Safe
Factor 1: Intergenerational Transmission	There are only a few elderly speakers	Many of the grandparent generations speak the language, but the younger People do not generally.	Some adults in the community are speakers, but the language is not spoken by children	Most adults in the Community are speakers, but children generally are not.	Most adults and some children are speakers.	All members of the community , Including children, speak the language.
Factor 2: Absolute Number of Speakers	1–9 speakers	10–99 speakers	100–999 speakers	1000–99999 speakers	10,000–99,000 speakers	>100,000 speakers
Factor 3: Speaker Number Trends	A small percentage of the community speaks the language, and speaker numbers are decreasing very rapidly.	Less than half of the community speaks the language, and speaker numbers are decreasing at an accelerated pace.	Only about half of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are decreasing steadily, but not at an accelerated pace.	A majority of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are gradually decreasing	A majority of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are gradually decreasing.	Almost all community members speak the language, and speaker numbers are stable or increasing.
Factor 4: Domains of Use	Used only in a few very specific domains, such as in ceremonies, songs, prayer, proverbs, or certain limited domestic activities.	Used mainly just in the home and/or with family, and may not be the primary language even in these domains for many community members	Used mainly just in the home and/or with family, but remains the primary language of these domains for many community members.	Used in some non-official domains along with other languages, and remains the primary language used in the home for many community members.	Used in most domains except for official ones such as government, mass media, education, etc.	Used in most domains, including official ones such as government, mass media, education, etc.

Table 4-5 LEI Formula and Level of Certainty based on available evidence

Level of endangerment = [(intergenerational transmission score x 2) + absolute number of speakers score + speaker number trends score + domains of use score] / total possible score based on number of factors used x 100

Level of Certainty based on available evidence

25 points possible (100% certain)

20 points possible (80% certain)

15 points possible (60% certain)

10 points possible (40% certain)

5 points possible (20% certain)

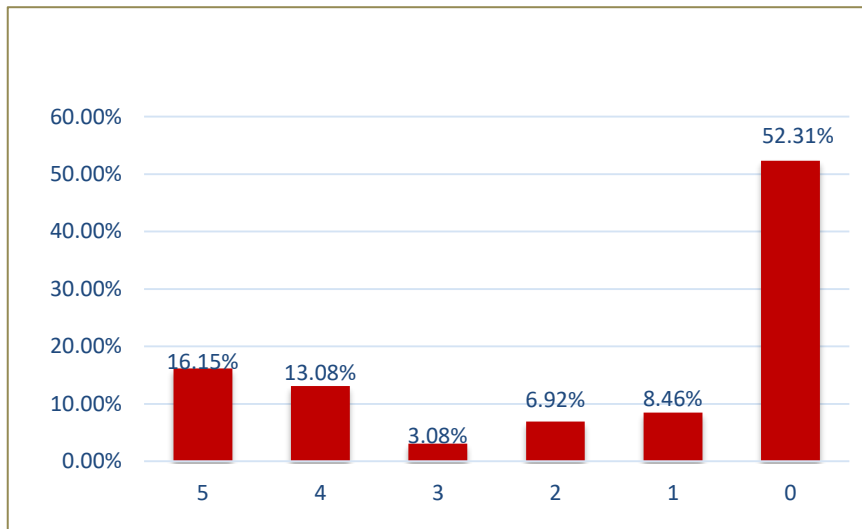


Figure 4.7 The proportion of different degree of Intergenerational Transmission in LEI

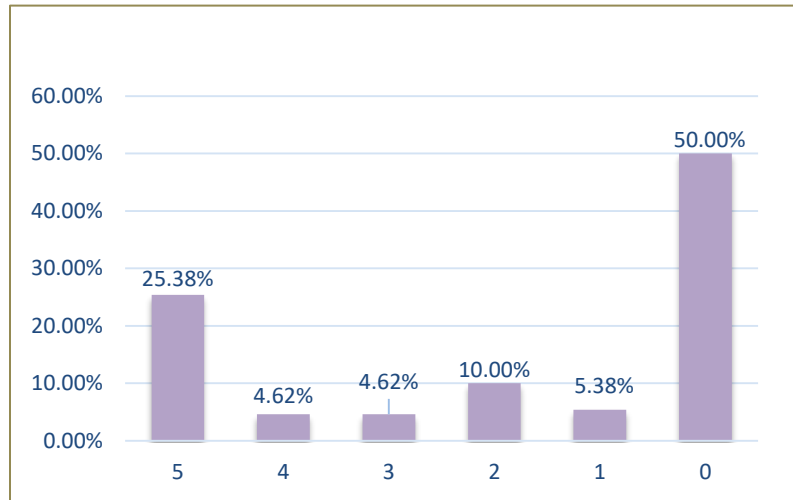


Figure 4.8 The proportion of different degrees of Speaker Number Trends in LEI

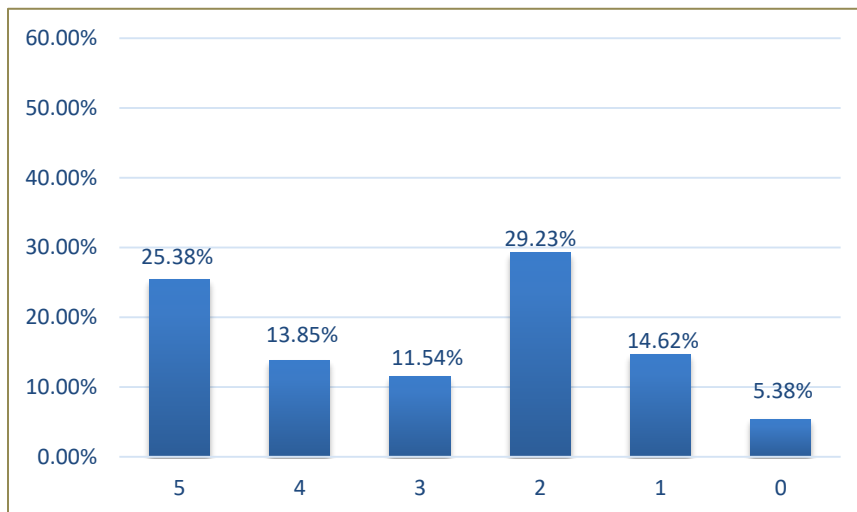


Figure 4.9 The proportion of different degrees of Domains of Use in LEI

Table 4-6 The Pumi language evaluated results using the Language Endangerment Index

Factors of endangerment					Level of endangerment	Level of certainty
Pumi language in Lanping County	Inter-generational transmission (weight x 2)	Absolute number of speakers	Speaker number trends	Domains of use	(Language Endangerment Index)	
	2 Threatened Most adults in the community are speakers, but children generally are not.		2 Thread A majority of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are gradually decreasing.	3 Endangered Used mainly just in the home and/or with family, but remains the primary language of these domains for many community members.	$9/20 \times 100 = 45\%$ <u>Endangered</u>	80% (20/25 possible points, based on three factors)

Table 4-7 LEI score interpretation (Lee & Van Way 2014)

Language Endangerment Index
81–100% Critically Endangered
61–80% Severely Endangered
<u>41–60% Endangered</u>
21–40% Threatened
1–20% Vulnerable
0% Safe

4.7 Analyzing the Proposed Factors for Pumi Language Vitality Assessment

Different from the analysis of the Pumi language of EGIDS Model and LEI Model situation, this research proposed a new language vitality assessment method for the Pumi language. Combining the age variables, this study conducted a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained. In this case, a comparison between EGIDS, LEI, and the proposed method was attained, thereby more clearly exploring the advantages and disadvantages of them in the Pumi language vitality assessment.

4.7.1 Intergenerational Transmission

Figure 4.10 shows the proportion of different Choices of Intergenerational Transmission. More than 52% of the respondents selected "All the members of the community, including children, speak the language". It means the intergenerational transmission of Pumi language is overall very good.



Figure 4.10 The oldest Pumi villager of Guadeng Village, and she also can't speak Pumi language (the photo was taken by the author).

However, the choice "There are only a few elderly speakers" in their villages was admitted by 16% of respondents, which is the highest in the remaining three choices. This reveals that the intergenerational transmission of Pumi language presents a state of

polarization. Although it seems that most of the villages have very good intergenerational transmission of Pumi language, the phenomenon of intergenerational faults of Pumi language is also severe. The results of the interview are the same. In some villages, such as Luoguqing Village, where Pumi language is their primary language, all the children can speak Pumi language proficiently. In other villages, such as Xiagaoping Village and Guadeng Village, even their grandparents have not spoken the language of their ethnic group, and their descendants cannot speak it naturally.

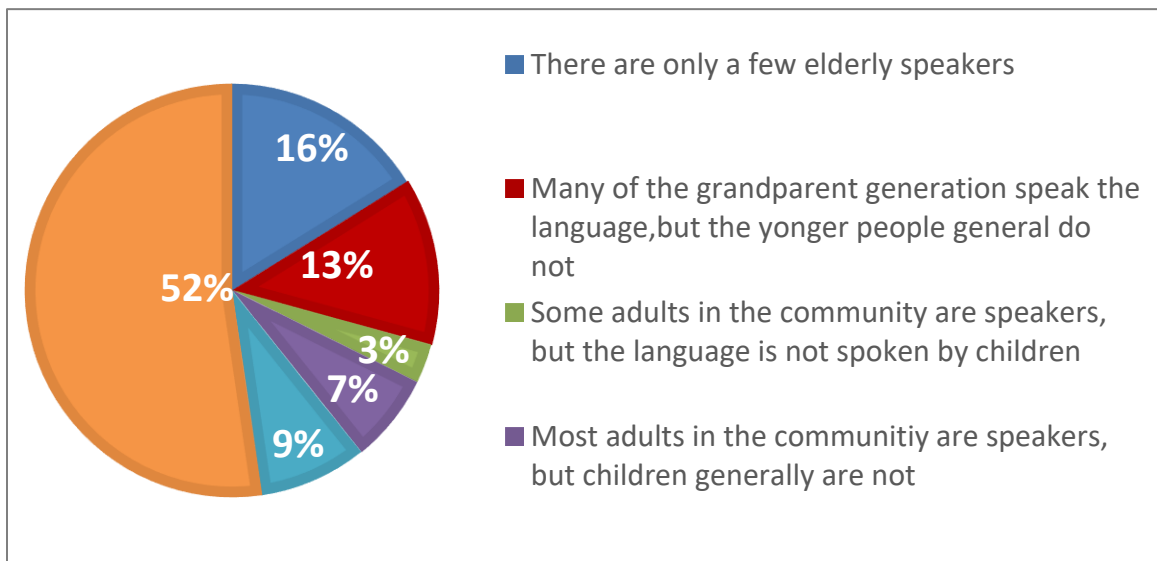


Figure 4.11 The proportion of population of different Choices of Intergenerational Transmission

We further explored the proportion of the population in the age variables. Figure 4.11 shows that the degree of intergenerational transmission which is chosen by the respondents is gradually decreasing with age range. Because the situation in each village is relatively consistent, this result is more manifested in the evaluation trend to the intergenerational transmission of Pumi language of the respondents in different ages. It is obvious that the

older generation is more pessimistic and worried about the Pumi language inheritance than the younger generation.

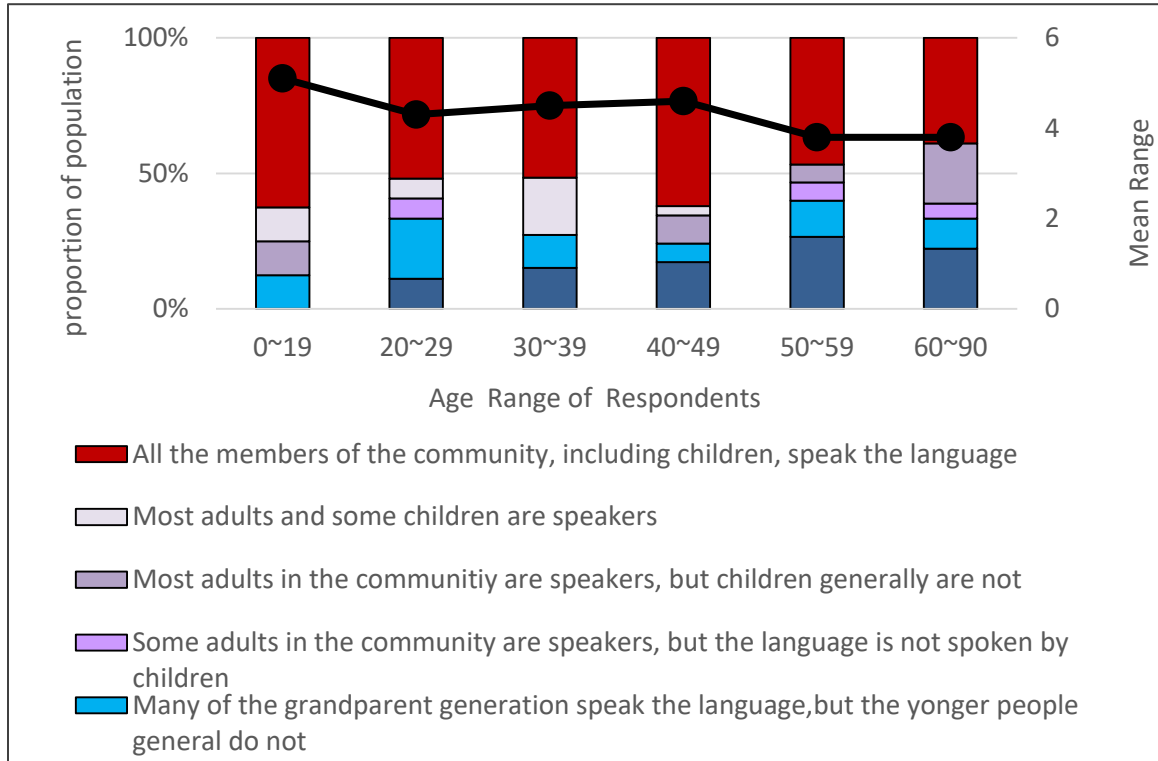


Figure 4.12 The proportion of population of Intergenerational Transmission in different age groups

4.7.2 Speaker Proportion and Language Proficiency

Figure 4.12 shows the proportion of different language proficiency of the respondents. The Pumi people who can speak Pumi language (including slightly understanding) account for 70%. Among them, the proportion of people who can speak Pumi language proficiently is 54%, which is higher than the others. However, the proportion of people who cannot speak Pumi language at all account for 30%, which is the highest in the remaining situations. Thus, even though the proficient speakers account for more than half of the Pumi Population, Pumi language proficiency overall presents a state

of polarization. In some villages, the Pumi people have not been able to speak the language of their ethnic group. The interviews also confirmed the results. One villager from Xiagaoping Village admitted that almost no people speak the Pumi language there. Because of mixing with a large number of Bai people², their major language has shifted into Bai language for the convenience of communication. However, the Luoguqing respondents said all of their villagers always speak the language of their ethnic group, which they learned while they were kids and only when they went out for studying or working at a job, they began to learn other languages to communicate with other ethnic people.

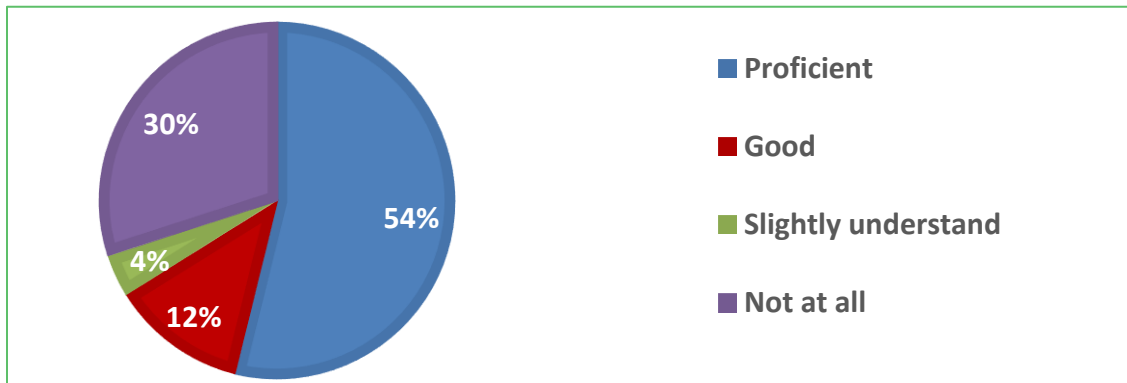


Figure 4.13 The proportion of different language proficiency of the respondents

Considering the age variables, there is a large difference of the language proficiency in different age groups (Figure 4.13). The degree of the children's generation and middle-aged generation are significantly higher than the young generation and grandparent

² Bai minority has 1,858,063 Bai people, 80 percent live in concentrated communities in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province, Southwest China. The rest are scattered in neighboring Sichuan and Guizhou provinces, respectively. The Bai speak the Bai language related to the Yi branch of the Tibetan-Myanmese group that comes from the Chinese-Tibetan language family that is very different from the Pumi language (<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-bai.htm>). Due to the difficulties in the education of the Bai language, the Bai language is also in danger. (See Ding (2015) the case of Bai in Northwestern Yunnan. In Anderson and Volker (Eds.), *Education in Languages of Lesser Power: Asia-Pacific Perspectives*. John Benjamins).

generation. Based on the interview content, this study concludes that the young people have the lowest language proficiency because of the studying and working outside. The children's and middle-aged generation have skilled language level because most of them stay in their villages with the Pumi language environment for a long time.

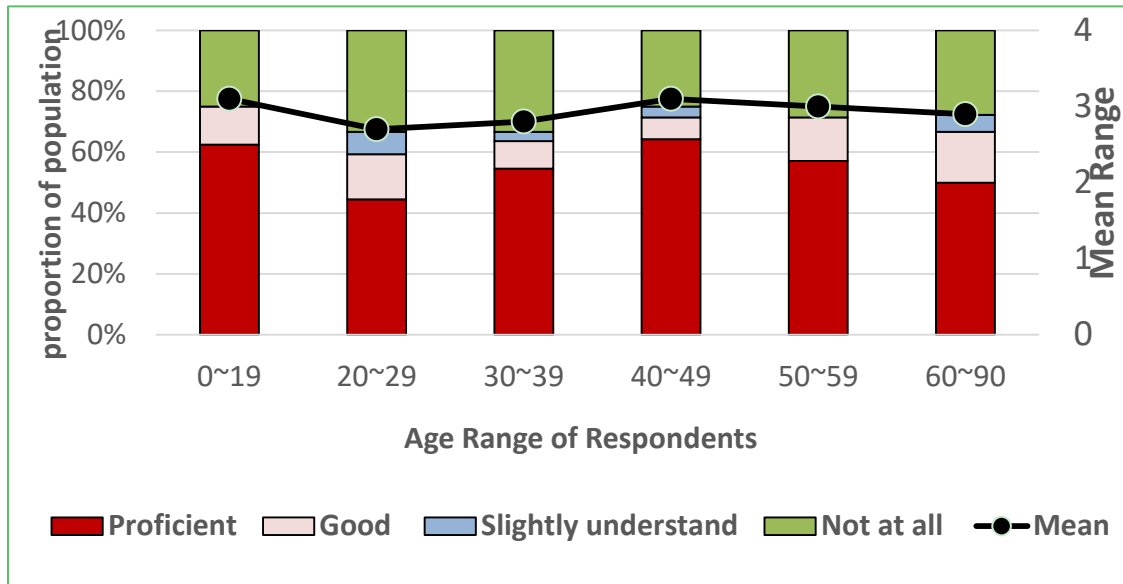


Figure 4.14 The proportion of different language proficiency of the respondents in different age groups

4.7.3 Domains of Language Use

Domains of language use are significant for the language vitality assessment. To a certain extent, it reflects the speaker's attitude and value tendencies. Figure 4.14 below shows that a proportion of 35% of the respondents said they used Pumi language in all domains except formal occasions, which account for the highest percentage of all. However, 27% of the respondents admitted they rarely use Pumi language, which is much higher than the remaining situations. This means that the Pumi language domains of language use also present a state of polarization.

Regarding the proportion of respondents in different age groups, Figure 4.15 shows the people aged 30 to 39 years old have the highest degree, which speaks the Pumi language in all the domains except formal occasions and the people aged 60 to 90 years old have the lowest degree of all. Overall, the young generation and middle-aged generation have broader domains of Pumi language use than the children's generation and grandparent generation. Besides, the interview also reflected this phenomenon as follows:

1) In some Pumi villages, such as Guadeng Village and Xiagaoping Village, the Pumi language has not been spoken in all domains.

2) In the other villages, Pumi language is only used in informal areas. Outside the family, Pumi language is spoken within their ethnic group members, and rarely in the presence of non-ethnic speakers. All interviewees agreed that the Pumi language is not spoken in official public places. When interacting with non-natives, Pumi people usually choose other languages such as Mandarin, Chinese dialect or other minority languages. In other words, the limitation of Pumi language domains and the small population of the language speaker, make the use of Pumi language extremely restricted.

3) However, in some villages, such as Luoguqing Village, the Pumi language has freedom of speaking because almost all the community people are the Pumi language speakers and out-group contact is limited. Therefore, Pumi language can be spoken in every place where the local people meet with each other.

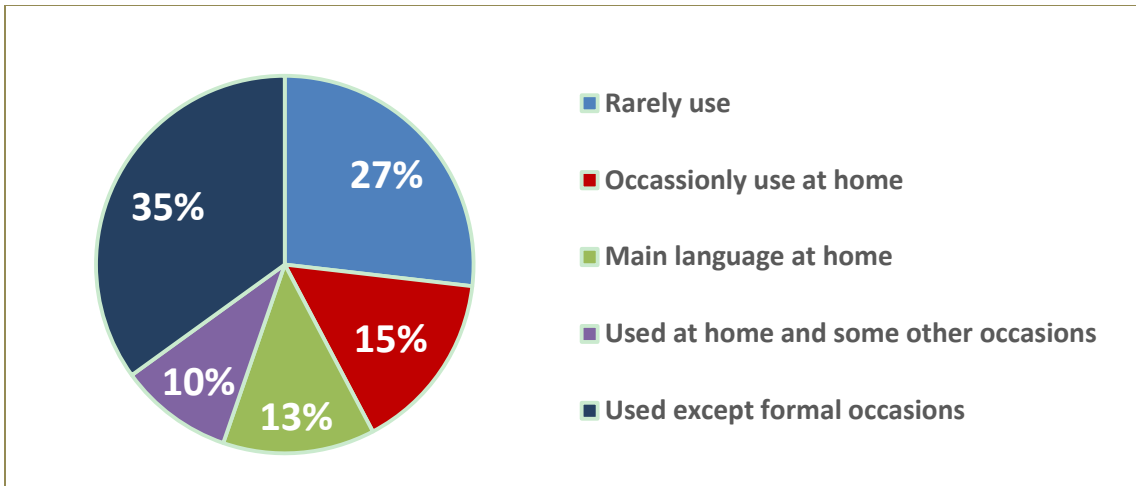


Figure 4.15 The proportion of domains of language use of the respondents

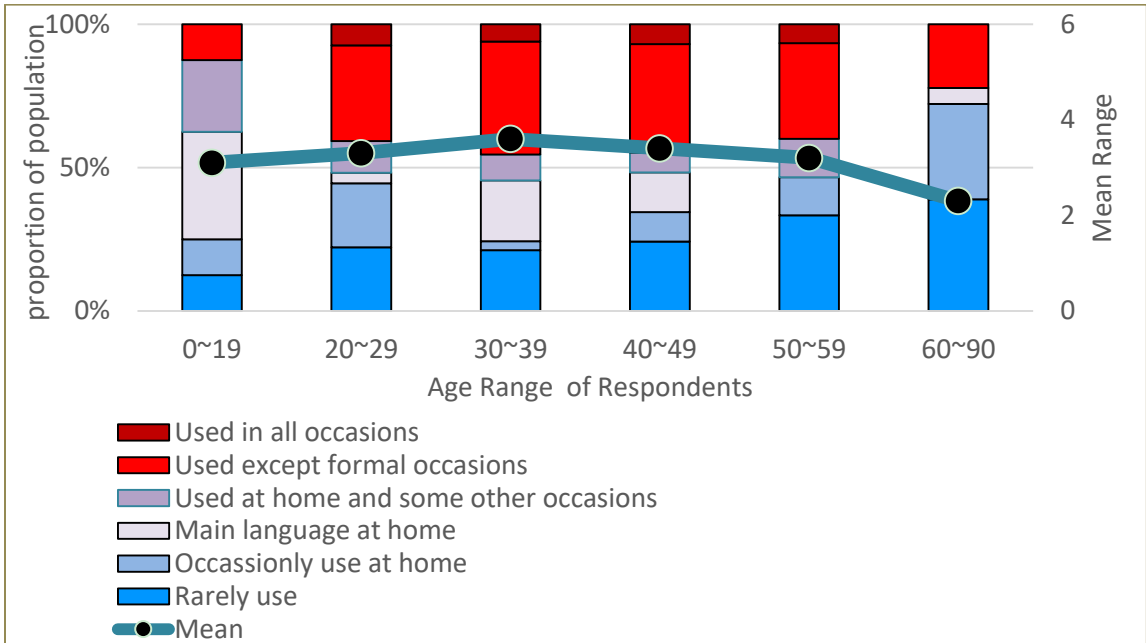


Figure 4.16 The proportion of domains of language use of respondents in different age groups

4.7.4 Community members' attitudes towards their own language

The language attitudes of community members are the most important factor in the self-assessment of language vitality assessment. The language community's own attitudes

are crucial to the language's future. If the user community lacks enthusiasm and confidence in their own language, it is useless to rely solely on outside efforts (Grenoble & Whaley, 1998). In 2007, Sizhi Ding, a scholar of the University of Hong Kong, tried to promote his material of literacy in a Pumi village. In his paper, he concluded the reason why Ding's final failure was that the local people don't want to study the language of their ethnic group (Ding, 2007). Figure 4.16 shows the result of Pumi villagers' language attitudes in different age groups. It is obvious that Pumi people of all ages have a very positive attitude towards the learning and heritage of the language of their ethnic group. They want to learn it, not only themselves but also their relatives as well as all the Pumi ethnic people.

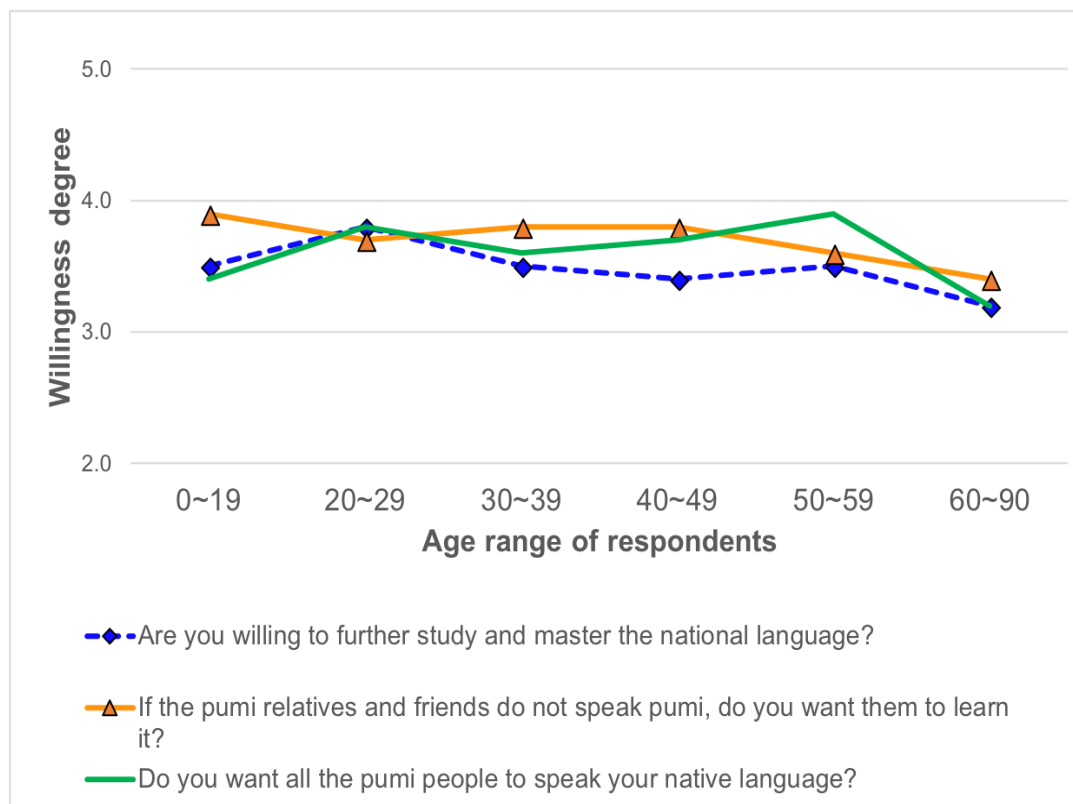


Figure 4.17 Language attitudes towards Pumi language of the respondents in different age groups

In order to further study the Pumi people's language attitudes and language condition clearly, this research also investigated the four aspects of language attitude— language euphonious, language cordial, language practical and social influence of Pumi language. Moreover, based on these attitudes, it compared the Pumi language and the other common three languages of the Pumi people— Mandarin, Chinese dialect, and other minority languages as follows:

- 1) Language euphonious overall in relation to the Pumi language is relatively high (Figure 4.17). There are slight differences between different age groups. In the degree of Pumi children's language euphonious, Mandarin is higher than Pumi language due to the influence of Chinese education. Pumi people aged 20- 40 had a lower degree than the people aged 40-60 because the latter stays in the Pumi community with a Pumi language environment for a long time.
- 2) Language cordial (Figure 4.18) relationship shows that all the respondents believe that the Pumi language is the most cordial of all. In addition, the children and young people's feeling of language cordial is stronger than the older generations.
- 3) Language practical (Figure 4.19) relationship shows the practical degree of different languages. The Pumi people under 45 years agree that the Mandarin is more useful than their mother tongue: most young people and children go out to work or study, the mandarin become their primary language. The highest degree happened in the Pumi people age 50-59, because most of them are staying in Pumi language villages, and their primary language is the Pumi language.

4) Language social influence (Figure 4.20) shows that Mandarin has the most significant social influence. Pumi language that is only used in Pumi community has the lowest social influence. The young generation has a higher evaluation of the Pumi language social influence than the older generations.

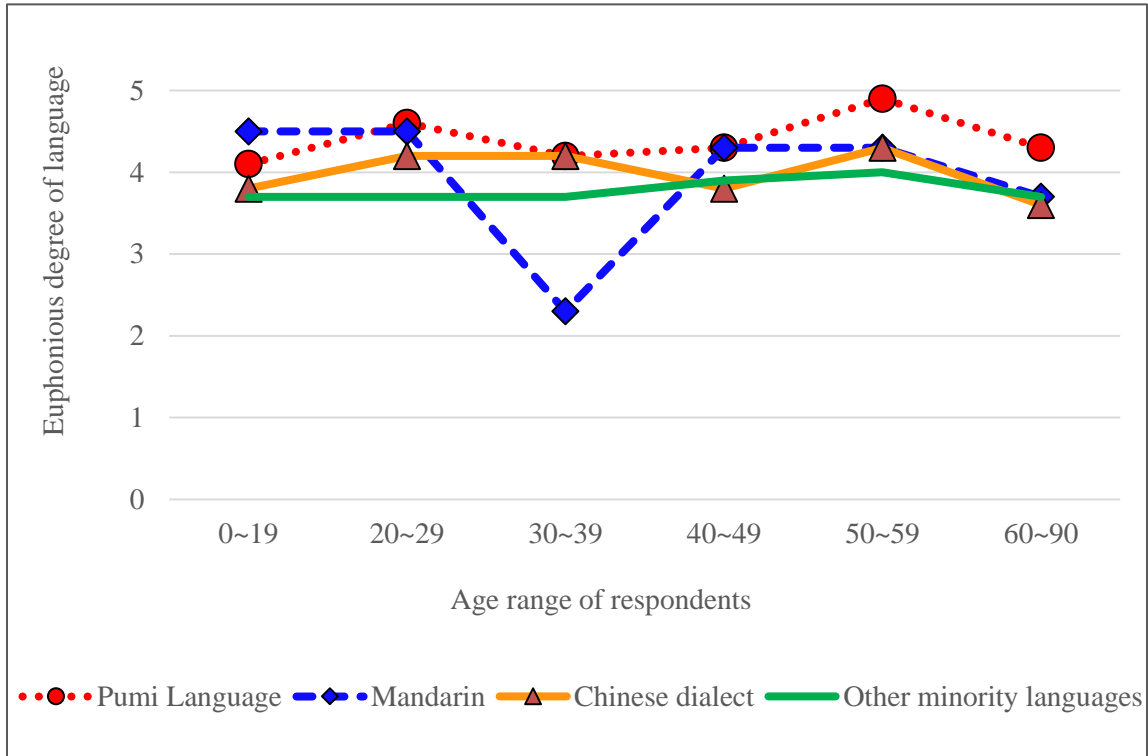


Figure 4.18 Language euphonious of different languages in different age groups

In short, the Pumi people language attitudes in relation to the language of their ethnic group are very active and objective. On the one hand, they love and recognize their own ethnic languages. However, they also clearly know the deficiencies in the social influence and practical of Pumi language. We also obtained information from the interview that although the local people admit Pumi language’s poor social function, they strongly expect that the government to take measures to protect and inherit the Pumi language.

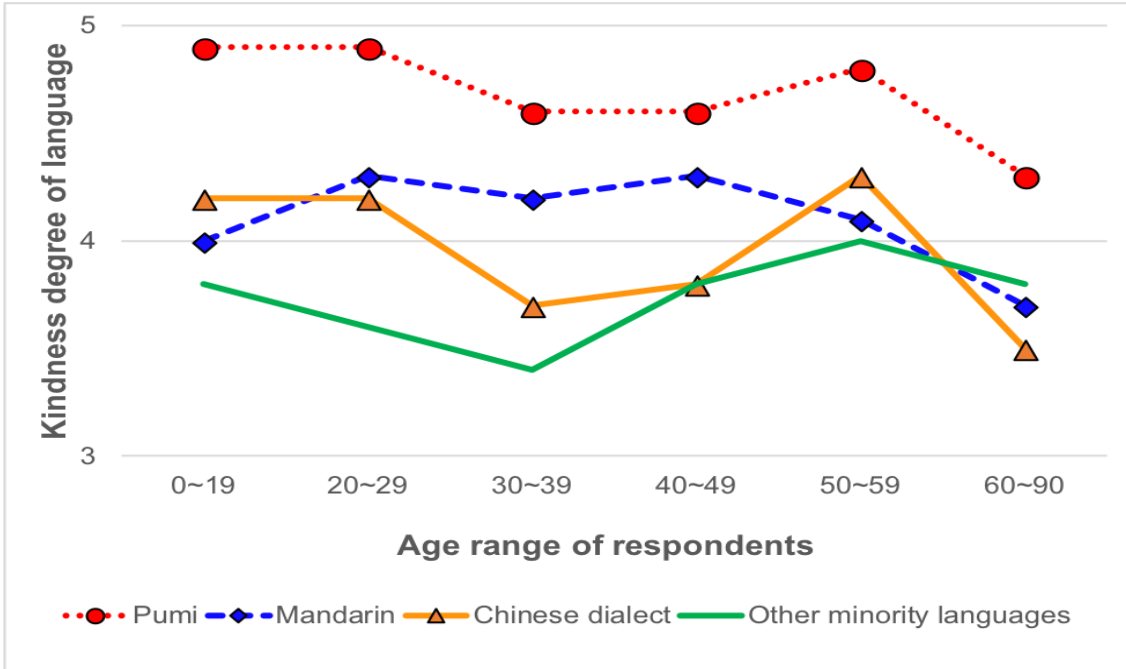


Figure 4.19 Language cordial of the respondents in different age groups

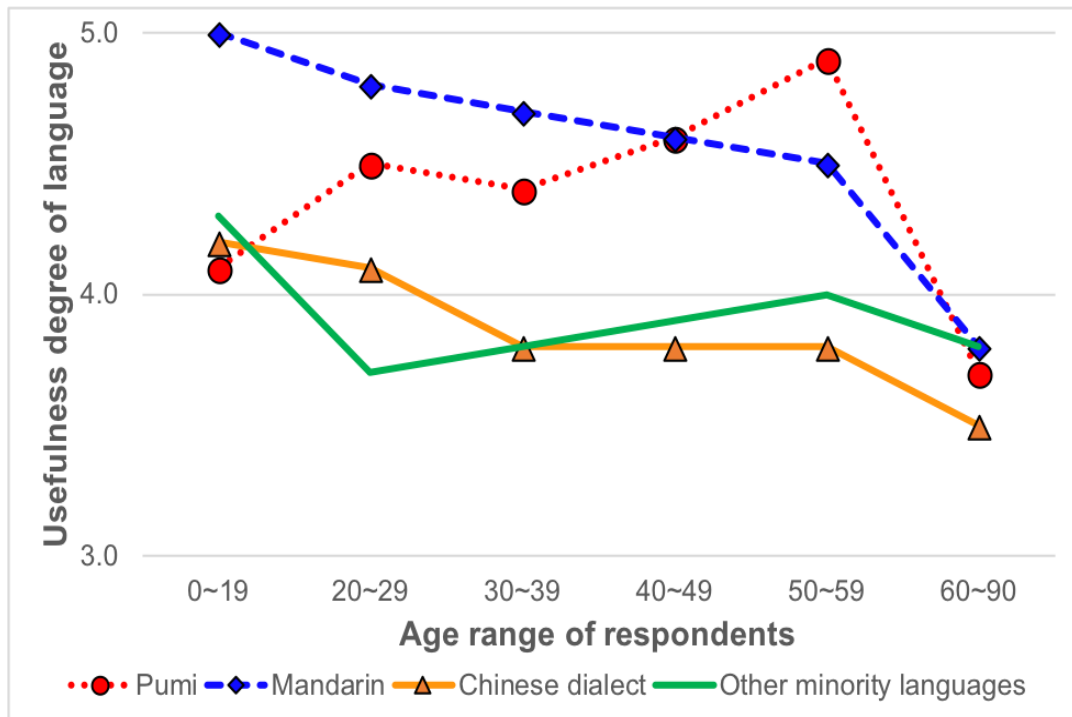


Figure 4.20 Language practical of the respondents in different age groups

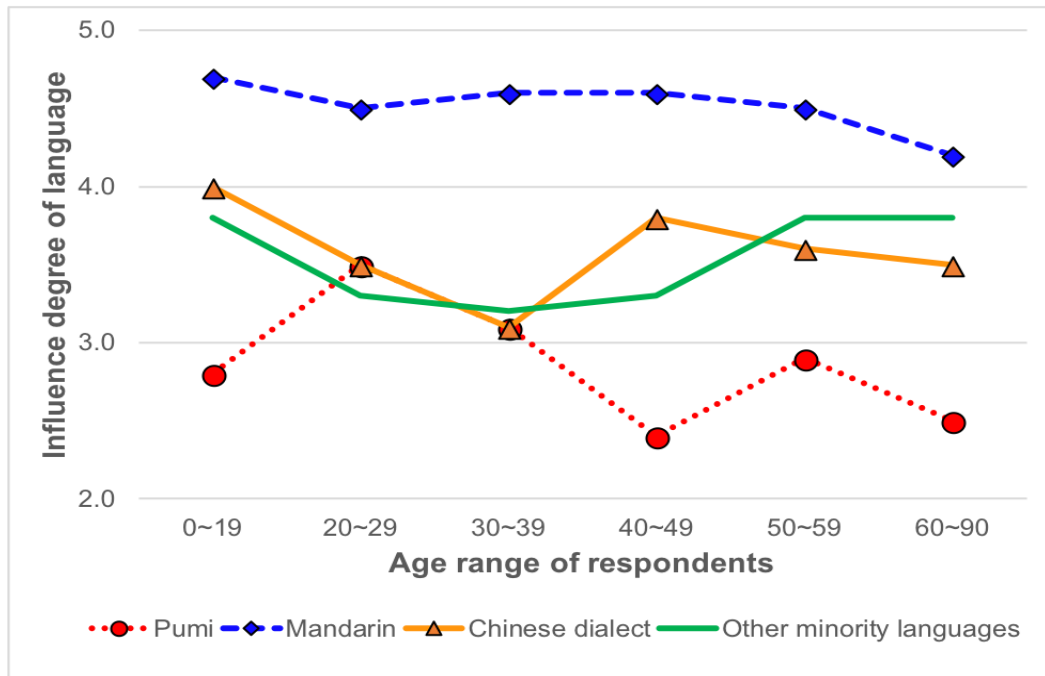


Figure 4.21 Language social influence of the respondents in different age groups

4.7.5 Governmental Language Attitudes and Policies

One very noteworthy finding in the study is the low degree of the grandparent generation in language proficiency; language use domains and language attitude towards the Pumi language (see Figure 4.11, Figure 4.13, Figure 4.15, Figure 4.17, Figure 4.18, Figure 4.19, and Figure 4.20). The historical and political factors play a major role in the phenomenon. Under such circumstances, it is particularly important to explore the modern and contemporary Chinese languages policies related to the Pumi language. From 1912 to now, China's ethnic minority policies have undergone a series of corresponding changes under the influence of politics. We can divide them into the following stages.

The era of the Republic of China (1912-1949) was divided into three periods: the period of Nanjing Provisional Government, the period of the Northern Warlords

Government, and the period of the Nanjing National Government. Among them, the minority language policies of the Northern Warlords Government and the Nanjing National Government had the most influence. The Northern Warlords issued some ethnic language policies that looked equal and had a tendency of local autonomy. However, in actual practice, they still used the means of suppressing the development of ethnic minorities and did not really invest in language education of ethnic groups. After 1931, the National Government publicly acknowledged the status of the ethnic minorities except for Han, Mongolian, Manchu, Tibetan, and Hui ethnic, and allowed the legitimate existence and development of minority languages. For example, a certain amount of funds were paid to support the education of minority languages in the frontier areas, which has created a bilingual co-existence phenomenon between the Chinese and the minority languages. However, because of the political and economic causes, most ethnic language education become a mere formality and had not actually been implemented.

In the early days of the People's Republic of China, from 1949 to 1957, the government implemented policies that all ethnic minority languages are equal and protected and all ethnic groups have the freedom to use and develop their mother tongue. A series of policies and measures have been formulated for this purpose. For example, ethnic minority students are taught to use the languages of their ethnic groups. From 1957 to 1966, the major contribution of the government was the creation of written characters for those unwritten ethnicities. But meanwhile, the bilingual learning was adversely affected by the "Great Leap Forward" and "people's communes". During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), minorities and their language policies were subject to major changes that have caused ethnic minority languages to suffer serious harm. The

government denied the existence of minorities, banned minority people from using the languages of their ethnic groups, and revoked the implementation of the minority language work and organization. Some minority cadres have also been persecuted. This catastrophe profoundly affected the grandparent generation of 60 to 90 years old, making their psychology have a different degree of shadowing, which seriously affected the use and attitude towards the languages of their ethnic groups. From 1979 to now, the government restored and developed the equal policy of minority languages. The main policies and practices include the following three contents: confirming the law guarantees the equal legal status of all languages, developing bilingual education in the autonomous regions, and helping some ethnic groups to organize their languages (Dianchun & Junchang, 2010).

Specifically, in July 2012, the Chinese State Council General Office issued "The twelfth five-year plan for minority career". It included the Construction Project of the Minority Language Standardization of Information, the Rescue and Protection Project of Minority Endangered Languages, Minorities' Cultural Relics Protection Project and the Minority Ancient Books Protection Project aimed at strengthening the protection of minority's cultural heritage. Meanwhile, the reform and development of the minority language business has also been included in the Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Language and Culture Reform and Development Plan (2012-2020) issued by the Chinese National Language Committee of the Chinese Ministry of Education in December 2012. Its content is as follows: (1) to speed up the promotion and popularization of Chinese in ethnic minority areas; (2) to scientifically protect the ethnic minority languages; (3) to promote the construction of minority language standardization; (4) to take the minority

languages survey; and (5) to strengthen the scientific records and preservation of minority languages (Xing, 2014).

On March 28, 2013, the 2nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th Yunnan Provincial People's Congress adopted the "Regulations on the work of the languages of ethnic minorities in Yunnan Province" and they formally implemented it on May 1, 2013. It promotes the protection and development of ethnic minority languages and cultures in terms of law, education, funding, academic arts, and language construction. Its main content is as follows:

- 1) Encourages all ethnic groups to learn each other's language. All ethnic minority people have the freedom to use and develop the languages of their ethnic groups.
- 2) Provides financial support for the protection work of ethnic minority languages and traditional cultures.
- 3) Strengthens the Construction of Databases for Minority Language documentation.
- 4) Supports universities and scientific research institutes so they can carry out research on ethnic minority languages; encourages and support the creation and performance of minority literature and art.
- 5) Supports schools in ethnic minority areas to carry out bilingual education of ethnic minority languages and mandarin in the pre-primary and primary education³.

³ See http://www.ynethnic.gov.cn/fgzc/zcjd/201803/t20180302_57582.htm(Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee)

4.7.6 Expectation of Bilingual Education

Regarding bilingual education, most of the respondents (83%) strongly hope their next generation receives bilingual education in Mandarin and the Pumi language (Figure 4.21). The results of the interview are the same for most interviewees who agreed that bilingual education is needed because they cannot lose the language of their groups. One of the Pumi villagers of Luoguqing Village said, "Now, the policy of protecting minority language has been issued, so I hope the government can further realize it." He also told the author, he has even tried to have bilingual education in his private kindergarten, but his kindergarten went bankrupt at last because of a lack of funds (Jing, 2018).

Taking into account the age distribution, Figure 4.22 clearly shows that adults are willing to value bilingual education as a higher priority for children. The reason for this phenomenon is that the children expect the Chinese education to be more emphasized. Thus, under the current Chinese education environment, they admire Chinese education more and don't realize the endangerment and importance of the Pumi language.

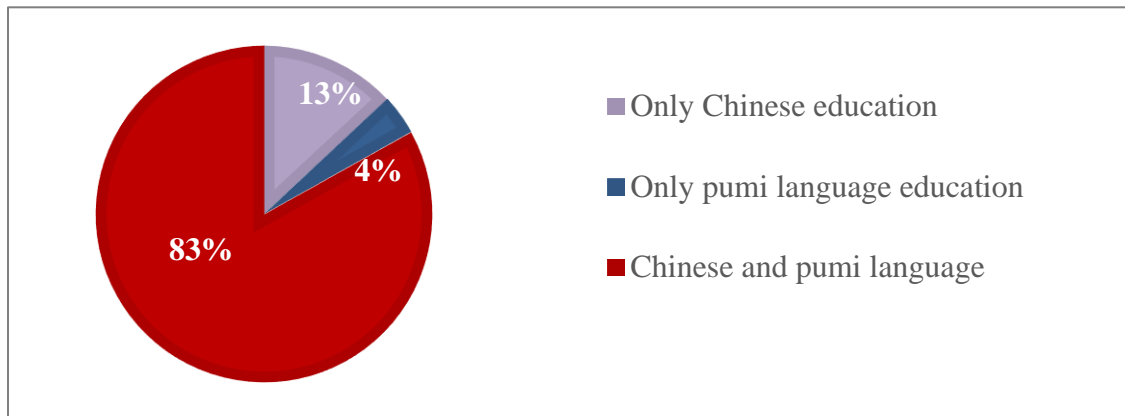


Figure 4.22 The proportion of different education mode of respondents' choices

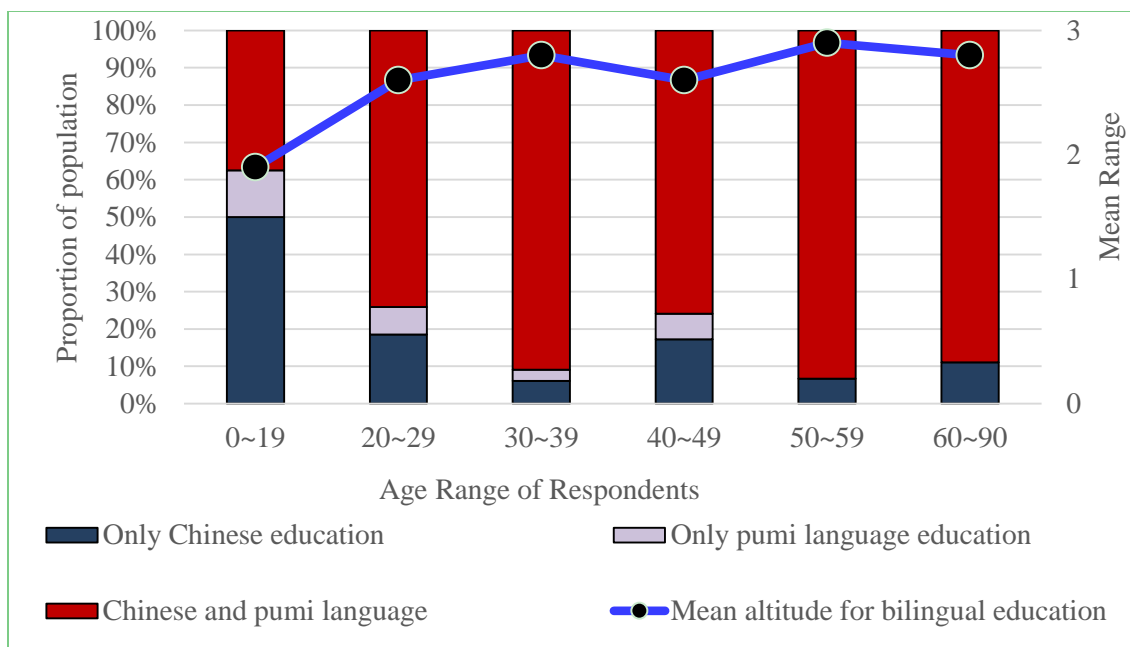


Figure 4.23 The proportion of different education mode of respondents' choices in different age groups

4.7.7 Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy

The Pumi language has no characters. It can be found in the interview that 1) Pumi language has no character and no literacy materials, 2) Pumi people use Chinese characters or the Chinese characters which are phonetically similar to the Pumi language to replace the written word, and, 3) Pumi language is difficult to study and mainly learned through word of mouth.

Actually, there are some studies on the ontology of Pumi language in China (Ying, 2013). Some practitioners also have implemented their own experiments. For example, Sizhi Ding, in 1995, devised a Pan-dialectal Orthography as the material of literacy and bilingual education to expand the Pumi language use in Dayang Village (Ding, 2007). In 2010, the Ninglang County Traditional Culture Association once set up a Pumi bilingual

teaching class in their national primary school. They used Tibetan to spell the Pumi language and wrote three different teaching materials (Ane, 2014). However, these attempts were unsuccessful at last, they could not be accepted universally and hence not really implemented. Therefore, so far, no orthography is available to the community.

4.7.8 *The Ethnic Distribution*

Mixed ethnic is an important reason for the weak language becoming endangered (Jinfang, 2016). Hongkai Sun (2006) pointed out, according to China's reality, the distribution of minority people also should be one of the indicators of language vitality.

There are 14 ethnic minorities living in Lanping County, such as Bai, Pumi, Lisu, Nu and Yi⁴. As said in the interview, in the most investigated villages, Pumi people mix with other ethnic people. When the proportion of the population is small, their primary language always shifts into other languages. But when they account for the vast majority, Pumi language always preserves well. Taking Luoguqing Village and Xiagaoping Village as an example, in Luoguqing village, the Pumi people account for the vast majority of the population, and their mother tongue preserves well. The Pumi ethnic population is relatively small in Xiagaoping village; they are mixed with a large number of Bai people. Their primary language has shifted into Bai language.

⁴ See <http://www.ynszxc.gov.cn/S1/S1506/> (Nujiang Party Committee of Yunnan Province and Nujiang People's Government of Yunnan Province)

4.7.9 *Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions*

The famous scholars Grenoble and Whaley emphasized the importance of location. They said the remote degree of group location is an important factor influencing the language use and development trend (1998). Especially in China's special ethnicity condition that most ethnic minorities in China are located in China's remote border areas, this factor is even more worthy of attention. Actually, the remote and inaccessible geographical environment protects the mother tongue, reduces the frequency of language contact with other languages, and weakens the language competition (Qingxia &Jing, 2003). Therefore, this research also takes into account the Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions factor.



Figure 4.24 Terrain and landscape of the investigated area (the photo was taken by the author).

The Interview shows that the terrain of Lanping County in Nujiang Prefecture is steep and deep in the mountains. The majority of Pumi people are scattered inhabited by the

hillside, where the climate is cold and the traffic is very inconvenient—even some villages do not have Highways. Usually, due to their great distance from each other, the villagers have limited interactions and few outsiders to go into their areas. Only during festivals, they will come together. For example, in Luoguqing village, the Pumi people are scattered all over in the remote mountains, which reduce the outside language threats and therefore it is conducive to the preservation of their mother tongue. However, there are also some villages that are located near the county town with a flat terrain and they have convenient transportation. For example, Xiagaoping villagers concentrated in the residential area live in flat terrain and next to the road. The convenient transportation results in the spread of the dominant Bai language and endangerment of the weaker Pumi language.

4.8 Language Vitality Assessment

4.8.1 The proposed language vitality assessment method.

Based on the detailed analysis of each of the above nine factors and six degrees, Table 4-8 shows various results: The degree of these factors— Intergenerational Transmission, Speakers Proportion and Language Proficiency, Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language, Educational Expectation, and the Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions are vulnerable. Meanwhile, the other factors have different results. The Shifts in Domains of Language Use is definitely endangered, the Ethnic Distribution is critically endangered, the Governmental Language Attitudes and Policies are safe, and the Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy is extinct. Overall, the vulnerable degree accounts for the vast majority of these nine factors. Therefore, we can think that the Pumi language is vulnerable.

Among them, it is worth noting the degree of governmental policies are safe, which provide a good external political environment for language protection. And regarding the community members' Attitudes towards the language of ethnic group and the educational expectation, all the Pumi people have a strong will to inherit Pumi language. In other words, there is strong support for the protection and maintenance of the heritage of the Pumi language.

Table 4-8 Pumi villages included in the survey evaluated using the proposed method

Factors	Description & Degree
Intergenerational Transmission	The language is used by some children in all domains. Vulnerable
Speakers Proportion and Language proficiency	Nearly all speak the language. Vulnerable
Shifts in Domains of Language Use	The language is in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains. Definitely endangered
Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language	Most members support language maintenance Vulnerable
Governmental Language Attitudes and Policies	All languages are protected. Equal support Safe
Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy	No orthography is available to the community. Extinct
The Educational Expectation	Most members expect the bilingual education Vulnerable
The Ethnic Distribution	Most of the Pumi people mixed with a large number of Bai people Critically endangered
Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions	Most of the investigated villages are scattered inhabited by the hillside, the traffic is very inconvenient. Vulnerable

4.8.2 *Comparison of Language vitality Assessment*

The results of the language vitality assessment are as follows:

First, the two models, the EGIDS Model and LEI Model, get very different results. The EGIDS Model's conclusion is based on "Written" language, and hence it is not a good fit for the Pumi language in reality. Meanwhile, the LEI Model's result is "Endangered",

which shows the current language proficiency condition only. The LEI Model, has the primary goal of providing a comparison between different languages, thus, it is not suitable for giving a detailed vitality assessment and protection measures guide line of specific languages.

Second, the proposed model shows Pumi language vitality as mainly vulnerable--not so endangered. This helps explain the Pumi language's complicated situation more comprehensively and helps predict a future trend, which is useful for the government countermeasures.

In the proposed model analysis, it is worth noting the following points: 1) all of the factors related the Pumi language usage presents a state of polarization and the overall level is not optimistic. The Intergenerational transmission and language proficiency is a little bit better, but use domains and functions of language that are very limited. In addition, geographic seclusion and occlusion have, to a certain extent, protected the Pumi language. But with the development of society and the further flow of population, this external protection will become more and more vulnerable, which will exacerbate the endangerment of the Pumi language.2) There is a significant relationship between age and language vitality, and the speakers' language environment greatly influences this difference. Due to long-term good language environment, The Pumi language proficiency and language attitude of middle-aged people is obviously higher than other age groups. Also because of this, they are more pessimistic about the Pumi language intergenerational transmission. The non-native language environment for studying or working outside has affected the younger generation. And the children generally lack awareness of the importance and endangerment of Pumi language.3) The current local people have the strong will to protect

and inherit their native language, which is quite different from the previous research and means that the government will have strong support if it adopts relevant inheritance protection measures, such as the bilingual education.⁴) Language policy is a very important factor that influences speaker's language use and language attitude. The Cultural Revolution had a serious negative impact on the language attitude and use of Pumi language in the generation of grandparents. However, currently, the local government has promoted the publicity of language preservation, and this action played an important role in awakening the passion of the Pumi people to learn their language.

4.9 Summary of This Chapter

All in all, the Pumi language vitality is not as serious as the previous literature indicates and there is the potential for recovery, but it also faces many difficult problems that urgently need to be solved. Therefore, in the current condition of Pumi language, we believe that the protection and revitalization of the Pumi language is a long and arduous task that requires the efforts of all the Pumi people and the government.

CHAPTER 5. ETHNIC IDENTITY, LANGUAGE USE AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF THE PUMI IN YUNNAN, CHINA

5.1 Background

Language is not only the tool of human communication but also the carrier of cultural transmission. The ethnic language is a medium for maintaining ethnic identity, heritage culture, and an exchange of information. It can keep the behavior, emotion, and cognition of the ethnic members in line, and through the ethnic language, minorities can enhance their ethnic identity (Yang, 2013). Language attitude refers to an individual or some group's evaluation of language or language varieties. From the sociolinguistic perspective, language use and language attitude are two crucial indicators that represent the endangerment level of language. Ethnic identity is a multi-dimensional concept. It mainly includes a group's sense of belonging, the ethnic status identity, the knowledge and attitudes of the ethnicity as well as the ethnic, cultural traditions and pride (Ashmore, 2004; Cokley, 2007). Thus, exploring the relationship between ethnic identity and language endangerment can help us to understand the language endangerment, and, moreover, it is of great significance for the solution of endangered language problems.

While at this time, China, a multi-national state, with the development of globalization resulting in culture reorganization, two serious issues have also occurred-- ethnic identity and language endangerment. Therefore, the related research is very meaningful and has attracted many linguists. However, most of the previous studies focus on investigating the ethnic identity, or the relationship between language and ethnic

identity generally (Chengfeng, 2011; Huiying, 2007; Mei, 2006). There is still an area of research exploring the relationship between endangered language and ethnic identity.

5.2 The Objective of This Study

Yunnan Province of China, the main settlement of China's ethnic minorities with a bilingual or multilingual environment, is a typical representative. The objective of this chapter is selecting Pumi of Yunnan as a case, to explore the ethnic identity situation and the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude, and the language proficiency aiming to improve the theory regarding ethnic identity and language sustainability, as well as providing some reference for Chinese language planning and policy.

5.3 Questionnaires and Interviews

The investigations were conducted in December 2016 and December 2017 in Lanping Town, Yunnan Province, China. In the case of the lack of investigation partners, harsh objective conditions and limited time, the survey finally received a total of 130 questionnaires from seven investigated villages. The varieties in the gender, age, educational background and occupation in the questionnaires demonstrate that the samples are representative and thereby valid. Besides, the author respectively interviewed 12 Pumi people and will give the introduction the content of three representative interviews of them in this section, including the village head, a civil servant, a secondary school teacher, a reporter, and a cultural heritage worker. They gave the comprehensive introductions regarding ethnic identity, language attitudes, and language proficiency of the Pumi language.

5.3.1 *Ethnic Identity Questionnaire*

Regarding the Ethnic Identity Questionnaire, this article mainly refers to the Phinney & Ong MEIM-R scale (2007). The scale score divided into –“Strongly disagree”, “Disagree”, “Not clear”, “Agree” and “Strongly agree” these five levels, which respectively marked as “1”, “2”, “3”, “4” and “5” points. These 12 questions include two dimensions--- the ethnic exploration and ethnic commitment. The ethnic exploration mainly refers to the current or past efforts to understand their ethnic history, practice and belief, and the meaning of their ethnic identity. The ethnic commitment is a clear sense of belonging to their groups and a positive attitude and pride in the group.

5.3.2 *Language Attitude Questionnaire*

The Language Attitude Questionnaire mainly includes these seven questions: 1) Is Pumi language euphonic? 2) Is Pumi language cordial? 3) Does Pumi language have the important social impact? 4) Is Pumi language practical? 5) Whether I have great willingness to learn Pumi language? 6) Whether I hope for my relatives to learn Pumi language? 7) Whether I hope for the local Pumi people to learn Pumi language? The scale score is divided into “Strongly disagree”, “Disagree”, “Agree” and “Strongly agree” these four levels, which respectively marked as “1”, “2”, “3”, “4”, and “5” points.

In addition, it should be noted that since in this article, the content of language attitudes is complicated, therefore, in order to understand the results clearly, we have chosen the most important factor “Whether I have great willingness to learn Pumi language”

as a representative of Pumi language attitude to carry out the correlation analysis with the ethnic identity and of language proficiency.

5.3.3 *Language Proficiency Questionnaire*

With regard to the Language Proficiency Questionnaire, this article mainly investigates the Pumi people's language proficiency level of Pumi language and Chinese dialect. The language level options are in turn “Not at all”, “Poor”, “Medium” and “Skilled” respectively, which are respectively marked as “1”, “2”, “3”, and “4” points. These values are finally scaled to the range of 1 to 5 for better comparison.

5.4 Methodology

First, the questionnaires and interviews were conducted in the field to construct the database of this study, and then the description of the datasets regarding the ethnic identity, language attitude and language proficiency level were presented, respectively. Second, the Spearman correlation analysis method was employed to study the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude and language proficiency level to further get the solution of dealing with the problem of endangered language. Finally, this study analyses semi-structured recording interviews for getting more comprehensive understanding regarding the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude, and language proficiency level (Jing, 2018).

5.5 Results and Discussions

5.5.1 *The Ethnic Identity of Pumi People*

According to the results of Table 5-1, overall, both of the mean values of the two dimensions of ethnic identity are higher than 3 points. It shows that in the multicultural

environment, the Pumi people still have a rational and positive cognize to their own ethnic identity. Among them, the mean value of the exploration dimension is 4.1, slightly greater than that of the committed dimension (mean is 3.8). The low degree of affirmation and sense of belonging indicates that the Pumi people's attitude to the ethnic affirmation and sense of belonging is still not quite sure, but this phenomenon also demonstrates that Pumi people still have enough exploration willingness to develop it. Meanwhile, in the aspects of the understanding of ethnic beliefs, practice, history, and culture, they are willing to devote enough energy and time to understand the significance of their own ethnic identity

Table 5-1 Mean Scores of the ethnic identity dimension of the Pumi people

Category	Item	Mean
	I spent some time learning my ethnicities, such as historical traditions and customs.	4.1
	I took the initiative to participate in the group activities of our national citizenship.	4.3
Ethnic identity exploration	In order to know more about my own ethnic history, I often talk about my people with others.	4
(4.1)	I have done a lot of things, such as reading books, newspapers and magazines, etc., to understand my ethnicity.	3.7
	I always participate in various activities of my ethnicity, such as diet, music, customs, and religious activities.	4.6
	I know my national identity and what it means to me.	4.4
Ethnic identity Commitment	I feel that my minority status will affect my future.	2.5
(3.8)	I have a strong sense of belonging to my people.	4.5
	I wish I belonged to another nationality.	1.65
	I am proud of my ethnic people and the achievements we have made.	4.6

*() enclosed parenthesis represent the average of scores on the right for each category.

This research also explores the age distribution of ethnic identity of Pumi to achieve a more in-depth understanding. As shown in Figure 5.1, the value of the first four items is higher than 3. Among them, the trends of these two “I took the initiative to participate in the group activities of our national citizenship”, and “I know my national identity and what it means to me” are very similar that the value dimension of 20-50 age group is significantly higher than other age groups. Facing the question “I spent some time learning my

ethnicities, such as historical traditions and customs”, the young generation is the highest, which shows the young people began to show greater interest in their ethnic identity and traditional culture.

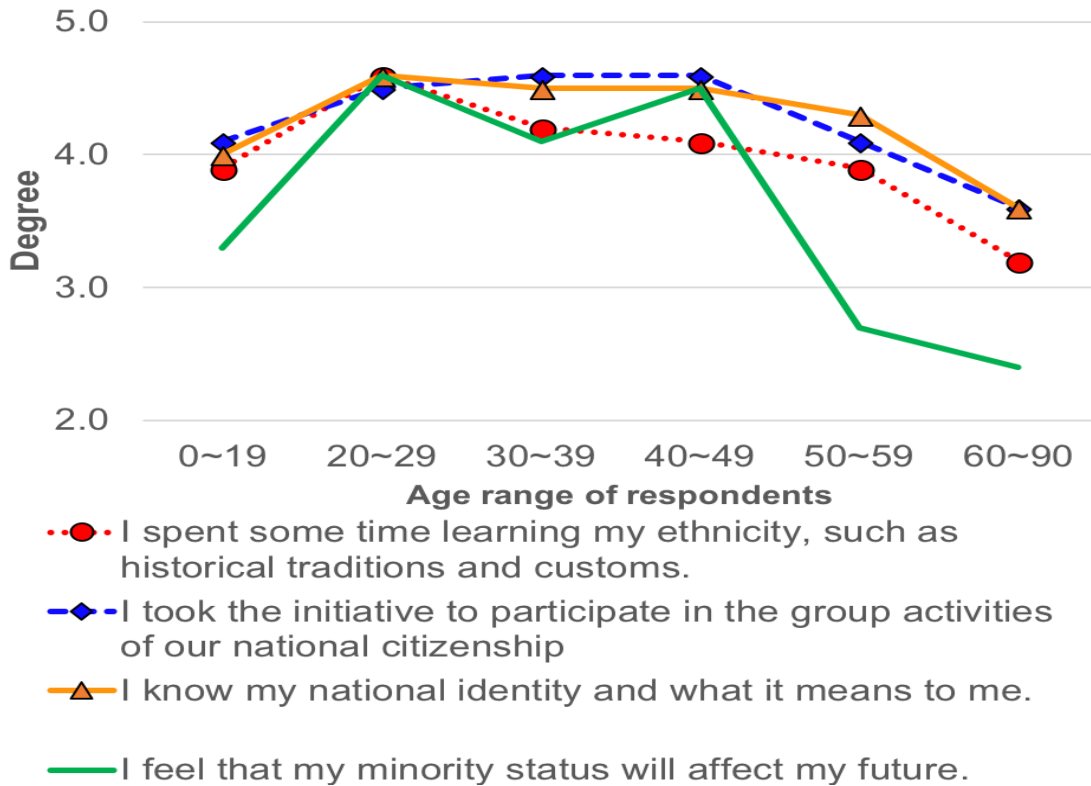


Figure 5.1 Age Distribution of Pumi Ethnic Identity

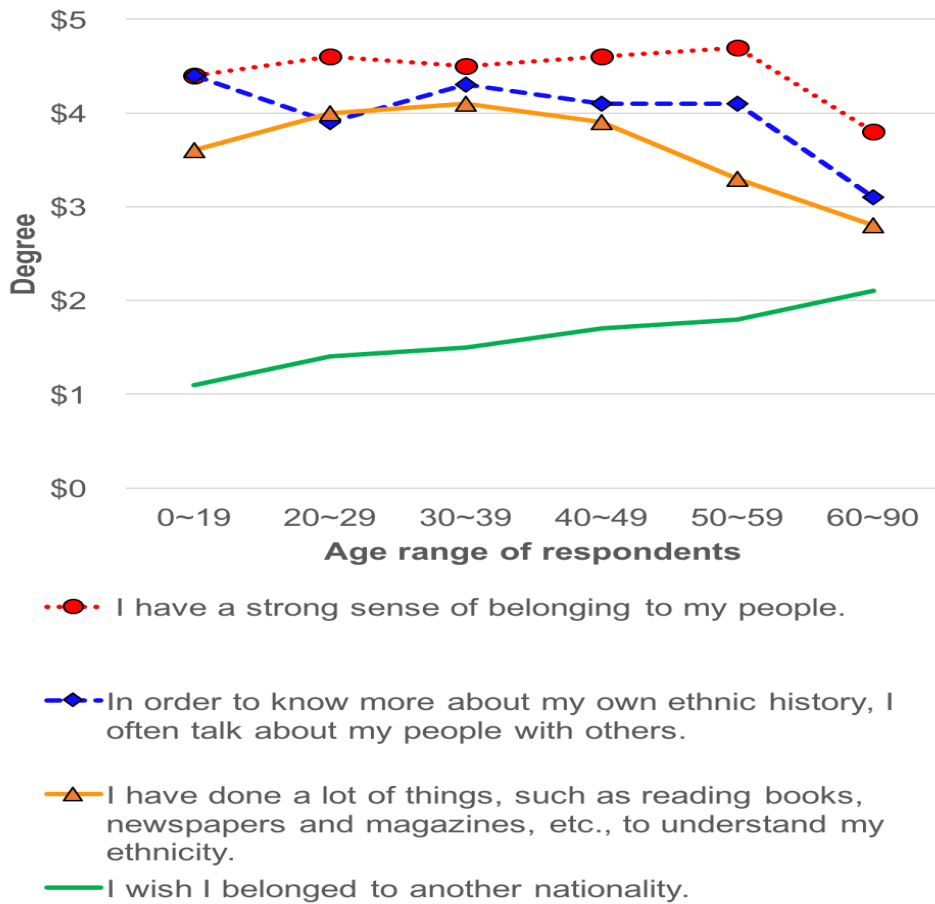


Figure 5.2 Age Distribution of Pumi Ethnic Identity

The trend of “I feel that my minority status will affect my future” shows the "M" shape with a pronounced disparity in different age groups. The Pumi people in the age groups of 20 to 29 and 40 to 49, have more certainty about their future and believe that they will not be affected by the ethnic identity.

In Figure 5.2, the situations of the four questions “I have a strong sense of belonging to my people”, “In order to know more about my own ethnic history”, “I often talk about my people with others. I know my national identity and what it means to me”, and “I wish I belonged to another nationality” in different age groups are very similar. The Childhood

generation, youth generation, and middle-aged generation have higher value dimension than the grandparent generation. At the same time, compared with the grandparents' generations, the other three generations are more reluctant to be subordinated to another ethnicity.

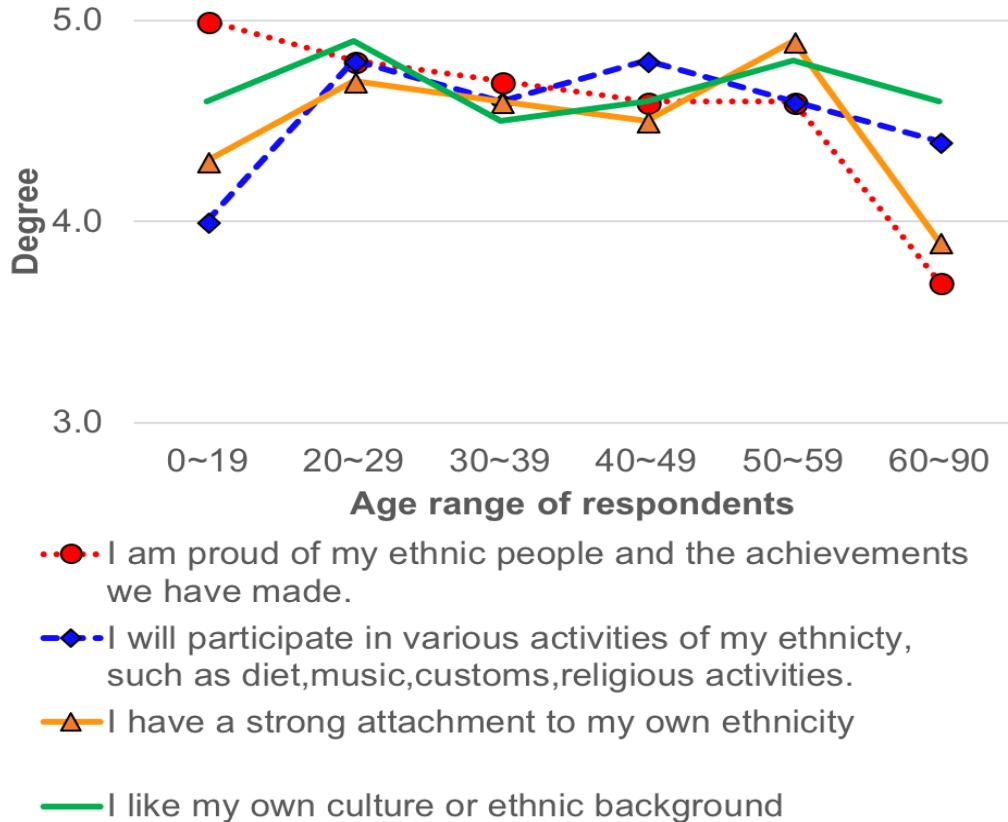


Figure 5.3 Age Distribution of Pumi Ethnic Identity.

In the question “I am proud of my ethnic people and the achievements we have made” (Figure 5.3), the value dimensions of the other three generations, especially the children’s, are much greater than that of grandparents. This shows that the ethnic pride of the younger Pumi is quite strong. The remaining three questions--"I always participate in various activities of my ethnicity, such as diet, music, customs, religious activities", "I have a strong attachment to my ethnicity", and "I like my own culture, or Ethnic background"

(Figure 5.3), have high-value dimension and similar trend that the middle two generations are slightly higher than others.

5.5.2 *The Language Proficiency of Pumi People*

According to Table 5-2, the language proficiency investigation indicated that 54% respondents can speak Pumi language skillfully. Thirty percent of the respondents do not speak Pumi language at all. In terms of the heritage language, it is not a small proportion. Most of the respondents can also speak Chinese dialects, and the proficiency of their Chinese dialects proficiency is slightly worse than that of the Pumi language. Nearly thirty percent of the respondents were able to use Chinese dialects skillfully, 26.9% respondents said they couldn't speak Chinese dialects. This phenomenon shows that Pumi and Chinese dialects are widely used in the daily life of the Pumi people. A proportion of 51.6% respondents can use other minority languages. It may indicate that, in the context of globalization, in order to better adapt to society, the Pumi people have a high enthusiasm to learn other languages.

Table 5-2 Percentage of the language proficiency of the Pumi people (%)

Category	Percentage of the language proficiency of the Pumi people			
	Skilled	Medium	Poor	Not at all
Pumi Language	54	12	4	30
Chinese Dialects	31.5	36.9	3.8	26.9
Other Minority Languages	30.8	20.8	6.2	42.3

5.5.3 *The Language Attitude of Pumi People*

Language attitude is an important topic related to endangered language. Many scholars carried out a series of pioneer studies and in-depth interpretation regarding the concept of language attitude (Osgood, 1957; Cacioppo, 1982). In China, the investigation and research of minority language attitudes are one of the most particular aspects of Chinese language attitude research. Our study in this research is mainly based on Wang Yuanxin's research that defines the language attitude in bilingual or multilingual society, because of ethnic identity, emotional cognition, language motivation, behavioural tendencies and other factors such as people's understanding or evaluation of the social values of their native language (Wang, 1999). Measure most of language attitudes has been difficult mainly because different scholars have different assessment criteria. But, most scholars use three elements to assess language attitude: "social status", "attraction", and "power", (Ladegaard, 1998; Ray & Zahn, 1999; Liu & Mizerski, 2002). In this research, according to the analysis results, respondents expressed positive views regarding the euphonic degree, cordial degree and the practical degree. As shown in Table 5-3, Pumi language gets a higher score in the aspects of "Euphonic degree", "Cordial degree" "Practical degree", and "the willingness to learn Pumi language", but gets a lowest score in social influence. Pumi language, as the heritage language of Pumi people, is regarded as the most cordial and euphonic language, but because of Pumi language is only used in some narrow domains and has limited function, so Pumi people think the social effect of Pumi language is relatively small. Also, we found that the respondents not only had a strong willingness to study the Pumi language but also expect their relatives or local Pumi people to learn Pumi language. It indicates that they have a strong identity to the language of their

ethnic group and hope it can be inherited. Table 5-3 Mean Scores of the Language Attitude Dimension of the Pumi People.

Table 5-3 Mean scores of the language attitude dimension of the Pumi people

Category	Items	Mean
	The euphonic degree of Pumi language	4.4
	The cordial degree of Pumi language	4.7
	The social impact of Pumi language	3.0
Language attitude	The practical degree of Pumi language	4.4
	The degree of personal willingness to learn Pumi language	3.6
	The personal willingness of your relatives to learn Pumi language	3.5
	The personal willingness of Pumi people to learn Pumi language	3.7

5.5.4 Correlation Analysis of Pumi Ethnic Identity, Language Level, and Language Attitudes

In this study, a Spearman correlation analysis was conducted in SPSS software to analyze the relationship between language attitude and ethnic identity and language proficiency. As shown in Table 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6, concerning the correlation between language attitude, language proficiency level and ethnic identity of Pumi minority, we found that both ethnic identity exploration and ethnic identity commitment have a strong correlation with language attitude (.594** and .655**). The Pumi language proficiency has a positive correlation (.253**) with the Ethnic identity exploration, but no correlation with

Ethnic identity commitment (.090). Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the language attitude and language proficiency of Pumi language (.286**).

Table 5-4 Spearman's Correlation Coefficient of Ethnic Identity and Language Attitude

Language Attitude Index	Parameters	Ethnic identity exploration	Ethnic identity commitment
The personal willingness of your relatives to learn Pumi language	Correlation Coefficient	.594**	.655**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000

*. Correlation (r) is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5-5 Spearman's Correlation Coefficient of Ethnic Identity and Language Use

Language Proficiency	Parameters	Ethnic identity exploration	Ethnic identity commitment
Pumi language	Correlation Coefficient	.253**	.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.308

*. Correlation (r) is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5-6 Spearman's Correlation Coefficient of language attitude and language proficiency.

Language Attitude	Parameters	Pumi language proficiency
The degree of personal willingness to learn Pumi language	Correlation Coefficient	.286**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

*. Correlation (r) is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.5.5 Interviewer Analysis of Pumi Ethnic Identity, Language Level, and Language Attitudes

5.5.5.1 The first Pumi interviewer: a secondary school teacher, 46 years old, male.

Language use: Because of environmental restrictions, our village people do not speak Pumi language--they use Lisu language, and our Pumi children are also mainly used in Lisu language.

Language attitude: I think the Han Chinese is more practical because we cannot use the Pumi language when we communicate with the non-local people. I believe this is the most critical limit. I like the Pumi language, and I hope that the Pumi language can be inherited. But the reality is that the Pumi language will slowly die. So to protect the Pumi language, I think the most important thing is the government to encourage the people to retain their language vigorously. Besides, the Pumi language has no bilingual teaching; I believe it is necessary to develop the bilingual education. In fact, we Pumi people faced

with the contradiction between entering the mainstream society and the preservation of our native language and culture.

Ethnic identity: our village also retains most of our traditional native activities, such as rallies and funerals, but the other part replaced. The Pumi people who cannot speak our native language, like me, feel like missing something—everything is not perfect. When talking with the people who can talk to Pumi language, I am not only a sense of loss, but also more aware of my own ethnic identity.

5.5.5.2 The second Pumi interviewer: A village head, 64 years old, Male.

Language use: This village has no other minorities, all of us can speak the Pumi language, and we mainly use it in our daily life, but when we go outside, we often talk Chinese with other minorities. Our children also used the Pumi language, but they use Chinese in their school. A lot of Pumi children receive the university education now. The Young people who go out to work or study will learn other languages, but they will not lose their native language.

Language attitude: Pumi language is the most euphonically and the most cordial, but I also like Chinese, which is the most practical language. Pumi language has no social influence outside. At present, our country government advocates the small ethnic minorities to retain their native language and culture. I support it. If the language maintained well, we could keep a lot of traditional cultures. I think, in the future, Pumi language will be retained. I believe that as the Pumi people, we should speak our native language.

For those people who can't say Pumi language, we can't blame them; because they need to adapt to the changing environment. But now the government pays more attention to the language inheritance; I hope they start to learn their native language. I also hope our children can receive the bilingual education. I think the Pumi language and culture revival mainly need the government policy support.

Ethnic identity: The Pumi customs preservation of our village is relatively complete. We all participate in these usual traditional activities. I have more knowledge of our culture. I have a strong sense of belonging to our ethnic and always very proud of its achievements. Chatting with other ethnic groups, I like to talk about my ethnic issues.

5.5.5.3 The third Pumi interviewer: a civil servant, 33 years old, female.

Language use: Our villagers live with the Bai ethnic people, so, in this case, with the evolution of language, the primary language has shifted into Bai language. Indeed the vast majority of Pumi people cannot speak the native language. Usually, I only use the Pumi language when talking to people who can talk to Pumi language.

Language attitude: I like the Pumi language, and I am sad that so many Pumi people can't speak the Pumi language. I hope to improve Pumi language level of all the Pumi people. I think that it is necessary to raise the self-esteem of the Ethnic first, and then the Government should be more involved. The relevant units should pay much attention to the countermeasures, especially in the implementation of bilingual education. The protection and development of Pumi language and culture require the efforts of both the ethnic and government.

Ethnic identity: Most of our Pumi villagers here are still following the traditional Pumi customs, such as weddings, funerals, and festivals, etc. In these activities, we use our own Pumi music, Pumi clothing, and Pumi dance. For myself, I am very proud of being one of the Pumi people.

5.6 Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter, we have focused on investigating the relationship between language attitude, language proficiency level and ethnic identity of Pumi minority in Yunnan province, China. Our findings suggest that the Pumi people have an objective and positive attitude towards Pumi language and ethnic identity. There is a positive correlation between the ethnic identity, language attitude, and language proficiency. This finding suggests that language attitudes have a significant influence on ethnic identity and language proficiency level. The recording interview analysis indicated that the local government of Pumi minorities increased the propaganda of endangered language protection and this action played a decisive role in awakening the passion of Pumi people to learn Pumi language. Therefore, to protect minority languages, we should devote more energy to improving the language attitude of minority people. Regarding the measures to enhance language attitudes, government advocacy is essential. In addition, bilingual education in ethnic minority areas will be a meaningful practice.

CHAPTER 6. THE COURSES AND PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES IN CHINA

6.1 Introduction

Language, as a prominent feature of an ethnic group, is an important carrier of ethnic culture. Preserving the ethnic languages can effectively inherit ethnic culture. Taking China's Yunnan Province, a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-lingual frontier province, as an example, there are 21 ethnic minorities with more than 5,000 people in the province. Among them, 22 ethnic groups use 26 languages in their social life, and 14 ethnic groups have their own characters. Under the impact of economic integration, the minority languages of Yunnan are on the verge of extinction. At present, some minority languages only have fewer than 500 speakers, for example, the Anung language has 380 speakers, Xiandao language has 76 speakers, and Laiki language has 60 speakers. Especially, Zijun language, which spoken by a dozen old people, has become one of the “Critically Endangered” languages listed by UNESCO.

In this case, the protection of endangered languages is particularly urgent and important. Therefore, this chapter will take Pumi languages as an example, combining the previous literature and local investigation to explore the endangered causes and protection countermeasures of China's endangered languages. Of course, due to limited time, I can only do superficial analysis.

6.2 The Causes and Protection Countermeasures of Pumi Language

6.2.1 The previous literature on language endangered causes

In the international analysis of the causes of language endangerment, Edwards (1992) proposed a famous "Edwards Model." It combines 11 areas (population, sociology, linguistics, psychology, history, politics, geography, education, religion, economy, science, and technology) and the interaction of language users, language, environment to 33 variables related to language use degree and prospects. These variables include the direct causes, such as the number of languages, distribution, history, religion, etc.; also include the deep and extensive reasons, such as the immigration status of the language-using area, the language attitude of the majority ethnic members, and the regional economic development. Although the model is relatively comprehensive, too complex variables make it difficult actually to practice. Grenoble and Whaley (1998) conducted further discussions and supplements based on the "Edwards Model." They added a "literacy education" variable, divided variables into four levels— local, regional, national, and international, and make a distinction between 33 variables.

The Chinese linguistics also conducted a series of studies on the reason of the endangered language. Xing huang and Zhongliang Pu (2000) put forward to the language contact is one of the most important causes of many languages getting endangerment. Shixuan Xu (2002) supposed the disappearance of native language caused by active language transfer is the main reason for the contemporary language endangerment. Qingxia Dai (2004) pointed out it is necessary to distinguish an in-depth analysis of the inter-restricted relationship between the major and minor factors of language endangerment.

Jinfang Li (2005) explored the causes of the endangered Chinese language in terms of history and reality.

6.2.2 Causes of Pumi Language Endangerment

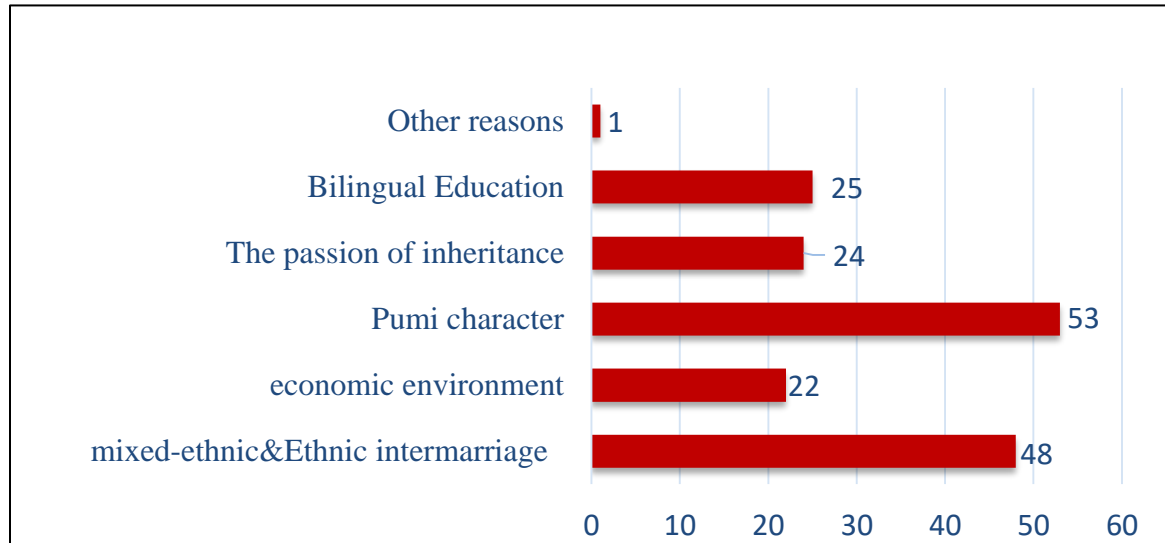


Figure 6.1 Percentage (%) of respondents who chose different factors in endangered causes of Pumi language.

To understand the endangered reason of Pumi language comprehensively, we also conducted related fieldwork. In the statistical results of the questionnaire (Figure 6.1), about half of the Pumi people believe that the lack of characters, and the ethnic intermarriage and ethnic mixed are the main endangered reasons. Other reasons, such as the lack of bilingual education, the lack of inherited enthusiasm of ethnic members, and economic reasons are also relatively high and uniform. This shows that all of these problems are very common. The interview results have some major points as follows: 1) we mix with other major ethnic groups and always communicate with their languages, and our primary language gradually turned into other minority languages; 2) many Pumi young people and children go out to work or study, leaving the learning environment of Pumi

language, and gradually cannot speak it; 3) I want to learn our Pumi language, but there is no teacher; and 4) there is no Pumi character to preserve this language.

Therefore, based the previous research and our investigation above, we conclude that the main endangered reasons for the Pumi language are below: 1) Ethnic psychology and language attitude. This factor mainly refers to the lack of awareness of inheritance and enthusiasm for learning of the Pumi ethnic people, especially the children's generation; 2) the social language environment, such as the population migration. In the survey, we found that to obtain better survival and development opportunities, most young people or children chose to go out to work or study, losing their native language environment; 3) political and historical Environment. For the grandparent generation, the psychological shadow caused by the relevant language policies in the political struggle period affected their language attitude and proficiency; 4) Pumi language itself. Because Pumi language has no character and only can inherit by word of mouth, it is tough to preserve; 5) geographical environment. Most of the Pumi people are living in the ethnically mixed areas. To communicate, their major language is easy to shift into the strong language; 6) family environment. Inter-ethnic marriage results in the Pumi language discontinuity of the family generation inheritance, and 7) educational and cultural environment. The promotion of education level promotes the popularization of Chinese. Meanwhile, the lack of bilingual education results in the endangerment of their mother tongue.

6.2.3 Proposed Protection Countermeasures of Pumi language

The choices of respondents in the questionnaire is worth considering (Figure 6.2). Education is still considered to be the most important measure. Because it is clear that the

most urgent needs at present are the training of teachers of Pumi language and the preparation of teaching materials. Respondents are not satisfied with the strength of related policy support. The financial support and the Pumi people's enthusiasm for learning also require the government's efforts.

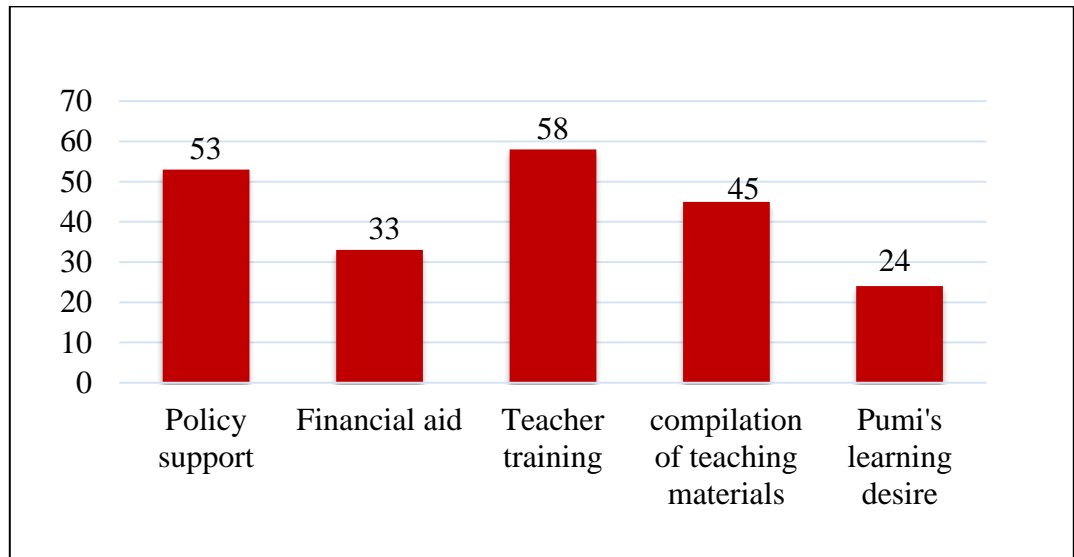


Figure 6.2 Percentage (%) of respondents who chose different factors in protection countermeasures of Pumi language

The main ideas of the interviewer also reflect these aspects: 1) I think that it is necessary to raise the self-esteem of the Ethnic first, and then the Government should be more involved. The relevant units should pay much attention to the countermeasures, especially in the implementation of bilingual education. The protection and development of Pumi language and culture require the efforts of both the ethnic and government; 2) the Pumi language has its own tone, so Pumi Phonology system is expected; and 3) I hope the aid support. I once set up a private bilingual kindergarten in our village, but it closed down at last because of the lack of fund.

Therefore, based on these, some of the major protection measures for Pumi language are proposed: 1. For the minority people: Enhance the learning enthusiasm and protection awareness of the Pumi people to the Pumi language; and 2. for the research institutions and scholars: 1) Work with the government to enhance the recording and inheritance of Pumi language; 2) Study the international outstanding research results and increase the depth and breadth of minority language studies; 3) For the government: i Strengthen media publicity and promote the spread of the Pumi language; and, ii Promote the bilingual education system especially in the teacher training, financial aid, and compilation of teaching materials.

Among them, it is worth noting that all previous teaching materials to implement the Pumi language have failed. The difficulty of these textbooks greatly influenced students' interest in learning Pumi language (Ane, 2014; Ding, 2007). For those who do not speak Pumi language, learning it is very difficult. However, complicated textbooks make this learning process more boring and monotonous. In this case, the teaching effect can be imagined. In the investigation, we found that the current Pumi people are generally accustomed to replacing their Pumi language writing with similar-pronounced Chinese characters. Therefore, in order to help the inheritance of Pumi language, I disagree to create new Pumi characters. Instead, I suggested combining the special phonetic system of Pumi language and the Chinese characters to formulate a set of simple and easy-to-use Pumi language teaching materials.

6.3 The Protection of China's Endangered Minority Languages

Rising to the higher national level, with the research scholars' promotion, international influence, and the Chinese government's support, China has made some

achievements in the protection of endangered language. For example, the promulgation of “National Common Language Characters Law” and “Law of Regional Autonomy of Minority Nationalities” has legally supported the use of minority languages; Bilingual education was pushed in ethnic minority areas. Especially in Inner Mongolia, Korean, Tibetan and other regions, a complete education system was established with heritage language was used as the standard language of instruction. Textbooks written in minority languages also achieved huge success (Tudaoduoji, 2006); financial support was provided to develop ethnic minority education, such as the Special Education Fund for Ethnic Minorities Education, Hope Project and the Border Area Assistance Fund (Yang, 1994). In addition, many linguists also work on the protection of endangered Chinese language.

However, due to the complex situation of China’s minority languages and the imbalance in language policy implementation, there are still many problems and challenges. In particular, the situation of small minority languages have received less attention and the legal funds for bilingual education are not in place. Moreover, the lack of special academic funds and research personnel result in the lack of coherence in scientific research, which has seriously hampered the comprehensive and in-depth development of language protection. At the same time, in some economically backward areas, language protection has become a mere formality or even commercialized, which also adversely affected the endangered language protection.

Therefore, from the national perspective, the protection of endangered languages, I think we should do the following.

1. Learn from the international experience, formulate and implement relevant legislation. It mainly includes advanced research results, the construction of an endangered language corpus, and a perfect bilingual education system. First, strengthen the work functions of related departments such as culture, education, and ethnicity, and strengthen the cooperation between universities and scientific research institutions. Second, relevant departments should increase scientific research projects in the field of language protection and allocate special funds to support related research. Third, large-scale linguistic fieldwork should be carried out to record endangered languages, establish a written and spoken corpus, especially a multimodal corpus containing text, voice, images, and actions, to improve the effectiveness of the protection of endangered languages. Fourth, provide financial support and personnel training for bilingual education and set up a community learning group to learn inheritance language.

2. The relevant government departments should set up an “endangered language protection demonstration area” in areas where language resources are abundant, and take active measures to encourage ethnic minorities to use their own language in daily life and public communication.

6.4 Summary of This Chapter

In short, the key to the protection of endangered languages in China is still the government. Only the protection of endangered languages receives sufficient attention, sufficient financial support and meticulously defined laws and regulations, other measures are possible. Moreover, because the specificities of the Chinese language situation, the government should implement the appropriate effective protection mechanisms and

different strategies for coping with varying levels of endangered languages. All of these require time and continuous efforts.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary of Achievements

This thesis consists of three main contributions of minority language endangerment research: 1) Assessing the linguistic vitality of Pumi language; 2) investigating the relationship between Ethnic Identity, Language Use, and Language Attitude of the Pumi in Yunnan, China; and, 3) summarizing the Causes and Protection Countermeasures of Endangered Languages in China.

7.1.1 Assessing the Linguistic Vitality of Pumi language: An Endangered Sino-Tibetan Language of Yunnan, China

Research background & Purpose

Assessing the vitality of endangered language is a prerequisite for the protection of endangered languages (Dorian, 1992; Dixon, 1997), which defines the degree of language survival. To evaluate languages, many models for language vitality assessment with different standard have been proposed. Among them, some models focus on qualitative analysis (Brenzinger et al., 2003), and the others carry out the quantitative analysis (Lewis et al., 2010; Lee & Van Way 2014). The previous research for language vitality assessment is insufficient in terms of either data timeliness, the perspective of analysis, or methodological versatility, and in particular, these methods did not take into account some of China's special ethnicity conditions and thus they cannot conduct a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the minority languages in China. Therefore, the objective of

research in this part is to propose a more comprehensive and accurate model for assessing the vitality of China's minority languages.

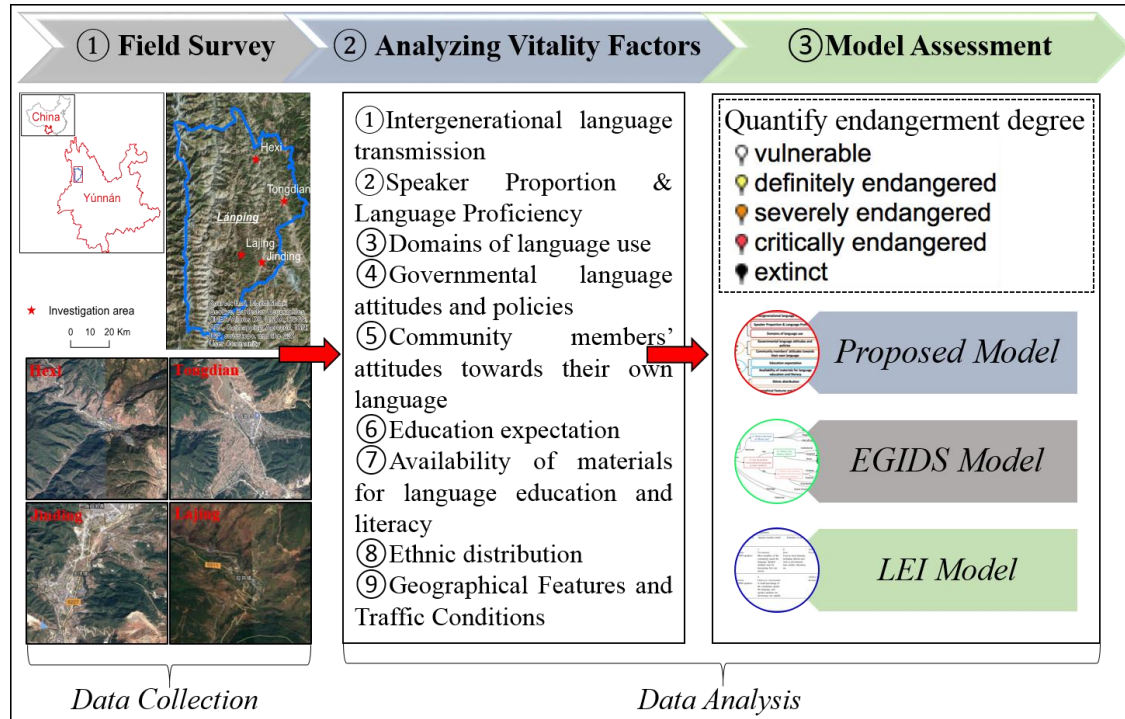


Figure 7.1 Flowchart of language vitality evaluation framework

Outline of research method

The Flowchart of language vitality evaluated framework shows in Fig 7.1.

The new method of language vitality assessment was derived from a series of sociological factors and sociolinguistic factors related to the language endangerment based on latest fieldwork data in Pumi community of Yunnan province, China. First, we carried out the field investigation in Pumi community of Yunnan province, China for gathering the questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on 9 factors that related to the endangerment of language, they are 1) Intergenerational language transmission. 2) Speaker Proportion &

Language Proficiency. 3) Domains of language use. 4) Governmental language attitudes and policies. 5) Community members' attitudes towards their own language. 6) Education expectation. 7) Availability of materials for language education and literacy. 8) Ethnic distribution. 9) Geographical Features and Traffic Conditions. Secondly, these nine factors were analyzed and were evaluated as quantitative level based on the proposed criteria, all the level of the nine factors were comprehensively considered to reach the final endangerment level of the language. Finally, the vitality assessment result obtained by the new language vitality assessment method was compared and analyzed with that of EGIDS (Lewis & Simons, 2010), and LEI (Lee & Van Way, 2016).

Main conclusions

The results of the language vitality assessment are as follows:

A. The vitality factor analysis indicates the following conclusions:

- 1) All of the factors related to the Pumi language usage presents a state of polarization and the overall level is not optimistic. In addition, the external protection from geographic seclusion and occlusion will become more and more vulnerable.
- 2) There is a significant relationship between age and language vitality, and the speakers' language environment greatly influences this difference.
- 3) The current local people have the strong will to protect and inherit their native language, which is quite different with the previous research and means that the government will have a good mass base.

4) Language policy is a very important factor that influences speaker's language use and language attitude.

B. The proposed method of Pumi language vitality assessment shows the vitality of Pumi language is mainly vulnerable. It helps develop an understanding of the complicated situation of the Pumi language more comprehensively and it helps predict a future trend, which is useful for the government countermeasures.

C. The EGIDS model concludes that the vitality of Pumi language is at the stage of the written level, which represents that the language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community. This conclusion is inconsistent with the fact that *there* is no character in the Pumi language. While the LEI model indicates that Pumi language is endangered, which seriously overestimates the endangerment degree of the Pumi language, because there is still a large proportion of Pumi people who can use Pumi language proficiently. The comparison results verify the superiority of our model in terms of accuracy and application.

7.1.2 *Ethnic Identity, Language Use and Language Attitude of the Pumi in Yunnan, China.*

Research background & Purpose

The language is a bridge to connect the relationship between ethnic identity and language endangerment. Investigating the relationship between ethnic identity and language endangerment can help us to understand the problems of language endangerment,

which are of great importance for solving the ethnic problems (Ashmore, 2004; Cokley, 2007). However, most of the previous studies focus on investigating the ethnic identity, or the relationship between language and ethnic identity generally (Chengfeng, 2011; Huiying, 2007; Mei, 2006). There is still an area of research exploring the relationship between endangered language and ethnic identity. Therefore, the objective is to explore the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude, and the language proficiency from the perspective of language endangerment, aiming to provide a useful reference for China's language protection and policy.

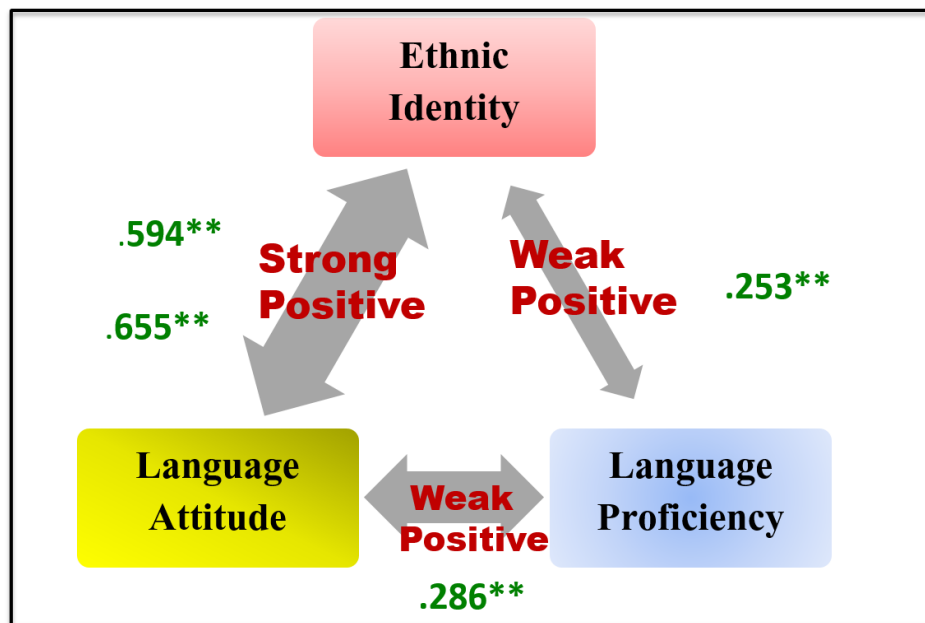


Figure 7.2 Flowchart of the correlation analysis between Ethnic Identity, Language Use and Language Attitude

Outline of research method

First, the questionnaires and interviews were conducted in the field to construct the database of this study, and then the description of the datasets regarding the ethnic identity,

language attitude and language proficiency level were presented, respectively. Second, the Spearman correlation analysis method was employed to study the correlation between ethnic identity, language attitude and language proficiency level to get the solution of how to deal with the problem of endangered language. Finally, this study analyzed semi-structured recording interviews for getting a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between ethnic identity, language attitude, and language proficiency level (Jing, 2017).

Main conclusions

The results show that the Pumi people have an objective and positive attitude towards their ethnic identity. Concerning the correlation research, in the case of Pumi language, our conclusions are as follows (Figure 7.2):

- 1) Both ethnic identity exploration and ethnic identity commitment have a powerful correlation with the language attitude.
- 2) The ethnic identity exploration has a positive correlation with the language proficiency, but ethnic identity commitment has no correlation with it.
- 3) There is a positive correlation between the language attitude and language proficiency. Overall, there is a positive correlation between the language use, language attitude, and ethnic identity. Therefore, the minority people should be encouraged to use their mother tongue, to establish a positive language attitude and enhance their ethnic identity.

7.1.3 The Causes and Protection Countermeasures of Endangered Languages in China.

Research background & Purpose

In linguistic circles, many scholars have conducted through in-depth studies on the causes of language endangerment. In 1992, Edwards proposed an Edwards Model that more fully reveals the influencing factors of an endangered language. Grenoble and Whaley (1998) further revised and added the Edwards Model, such as add a "literacy education" variable and divide macro variables into four levels. Based on Chinese reality, many Chinese scholars also have much-related research (Qingxia, 2004; Shixuan, 2002). However, because of a large number of factors involved and the actual situation in various languages is also different, the causes of language endangerment are incredibly complicated. China's minority languages in China, such as the Pumi language, also have their particularities. Therefore, the purpose of this topic is combining the previous literature and local investigation to explore the reasons that promoting the Pumi language become vulnerable and based on those reasons, further put forward some countermeasures.

Outline of research method

First, a literature method is used to summarize previous research and complete data collection; second, a field survey and some statistical analysis methods are adopted. Combined with the analysis of statistical results, the Pumi's local condition and the concepts of the Pumi people, the conclusion is evident and corresponding countermeasures are proposed.

Main conclusions

Exploring the causes of Pumi language endangerment, we conclude it is an integrated result that influenced by various aspects, such as ethnic psychology and language attitude, social language environment, political and historical environment, lack of characters, geographical environment, family environment, and the educational and cultural environment. Therefore, we can pay more attention to them to protect the Pumi language. Rising to the higher national endangered language problem, so far, China has achieved some achievements in language legislation, bilingual education, and financial support, but they are far from enough. In the future, The Chinese government should take a key role, especially in strengthening and improving relevant legal systems, expanding media publicity and financial support, and establishing a complete minority language documentation system and bilingual education system.

7.2 Originality of Thesis

The main originality of this thesis was:

A. This research refined the language vitality evaluated method by doing the following:

1) Emphasizing the role of sociological factors in the vitality assessment, while the previous method pays attention to the sociolinguistic factors.

2) adopting a more scientific and detailed survey data analysis methods, the survey data were analyzed by speaker-related variables (such as age, gender and Education level), we suppose that those speaker-related variables are expected to make a significant difference in language vitality because of how they influence language

shift, while the previous method only made rough analysis based on the absolute number of people.

B. This research initially investigated the ethnic identity of endangered minority languages, while the previous research only focuses on the ethnic identity of vigorous language. Therefore, the perspective of our focus is novel.

C. This research adopted the latest field survey questionnaires.

7.3 Final Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Work

The research of Pumi language is only one situation of endangered language studies in China. As one of the countries with the wealthiest linguistic resources in the world, China's endangered language protection is of great significance to the development of the world's cultural diversity. The complex and particular national conditions also determine that China's endangered language research cannot fully replicate international research results and should be integrated with local reality. In this study, the Pumi language is evaluated based on results that reflect not only its dangerous current status but also the existence and trend of its salvation. This puts forward higher and more urgent demands on the government and scholars. Now is the crucial period for the protection of the Pumi language, so it is hoped that the local government can pay more attention to promote relevant policies and measures of academic and educational stature, and strive to encourage the local people's ability and attitude in using their mother tongue to build a good language environment.

Of course, this research still has some deficiencies. First, the investigated data is insufficient, and the survey area is limited. Therefore, in the future, more far-reaching investigations will be carried out. Second, because the research only proposed some protection countermeasures of Pumi language, it lacks comprehensive and in-depth analysis, the language documentation based on the ontology analysis of the Pumi language will also become the main title of the future studies. Finally, the Pumi language is only a representative case; more other endangered languages will also be expected to be included in future studies.

In all, in the problematic current condition of the Pumi language, the author believes that the protection and revitalization of the Pumi language is a long and arduous task that requires the efforts of all the Pumi people and the government, and the author also aspires to protect the endangered language and to contribute to the development of cultural diversity!

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APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE

A

Age: Gender : Male / Female Occupation :

Education level: A Primary school and below B Junior middle school C High school D

Secondary school E University and above

Your father's nationality: Education level: Pumi language proficiency: Skilled / Good /
Slightly understand / None

Your mother's nationality: Education level: Pumi language proficiency: Skilled / Good
/ Slightly understand / None

A(Multiple choice)

1.Which language did you first learn as a child?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Minority Other language

What is the language level? A Skilled B Good C Slightly understand

2. What is your second language?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Minority Other Languages E None

What is the language level? A Skilled B Good C Slightly understand

3.What is your third language?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Minority Other Languages E

None

What is the language level? A Skilled B Good C Slightly understand

4.What language do you currently use to communicate with parents and elders at home? A

Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

5. What language do you currently use to communicate with siblings and peers at home?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

6. Which language do you currently use to communicate with your child or junior at home?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

7. What language do you use to communicate with the local ethnic people in the village?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

8. What language do you communicate with non-local ethnic people in the village?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

9. What kind of language do you use to communicate with your classmates after school?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

10. What language do you use in the market?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other Minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

11. What language do you use in your village meetings?

A Pumi language B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other Minority Languages ()

If more than one language, what percent of each language do you use to communicate with them ? The first language (), the second language (), the third language ()

A 0-24% B 25%-49% C 50%-74% D 75%-100%

B.

12. You think the best language to listen to is

A Pumi B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority languages E Other languages

13. Your favorite language is

A Pumi B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority languages E Other languages

14. You think the most useful language is

A Pumi B Mandarin C Chinese Dialect D Other minority languages E Other languages

15. Do you think Pumi language is cordial?

A Very cordial B Cordial C General D No feeling

16. Is the Pumi language social influence big?

A Very big B Big C Not so big D No influence

17. Do you think Pumi language is easier to learn than other languages?

A Very easy B Easy C Not so easy D Hard

18. Do you think it necessary to learn (speak) Pumi language?

A very necessary B necessary C not so necessary D not necessary

If you think it necessary, please answer why? (Multiple choice)

A Is conducive to the succession of our own culture B Will help work and make money

C Will have more friends D Convenient life E Other ()

19. If you speak Pumi language, please answer this, what is the reason that you learn (speak)

Pumi language? (Multiple choice)

A My parents' requirement B personal like C for future job, study and test.

D As the Pumi people, I should learn my native language E others ()

If you do not speak Pumi, please answer. What do you think is the most important problem

you encountered in Pumi language? (Multiple choice)

A So few people around me to speak it that the speaking opportunity is less B I afraid of others jokes and fear of communication C It is difficult speak and I do not want to learn D Useless, unnecessary to learn (say)

20.If the Pumi people who can speak Pumi language in your village went out to work or study for some time and then came back to the village, but they no longer speak Pumi language. What's your attitude?

A Should not B Does not matter D Support

21. Are you willing to further study and master the national language?

A Very willing to B willing to C Does not matter D Do not want

22. If the Pumi relatives and friends do not speak Pumi, do you want them to learn it?

A Very much hope B Hope C Does not matter D Does not want

23. Do you want all the Pumi people to speak your native Language?

A Urge B Take everything as it comes C does not matter D does not want

B Language Education

24. What kind of language mode would you expect your next generation to receive in their school?

A Chinese education B Pumi language education C Chinese and Pumi language balance education

25. Do you think your primary school in your hometown should teach both Chinese and Pumi language?

A Very willing to B Willing to C Does not matter D Against

26. Do you want to create a set of Pumi characters on the basis of Pumi language?

A very hope B hope C Does not matter D does not want to

27. What is the most needed now in Pumi language schooling: (Please sort by level of need?)

A Policy support B Capital investment C Teacher training

D Teaching materials compiled E Pumi people want to learn

C. National identity

Note: The following figures indicate –0 refers to Strongly disagree, 1 refers to Disagree, 2 refers to Not clear, 3 refers to Agree , and 4 Strongly agree.

28. I spent some time learning my ethnicities, such as historical traditions and customs. 0 1 2 3 4

29. I took the initiative to participate in the group activities of our national citizenship 0 1 2 3 4

30. I know my national identity and what it means to me. 0 1 2 3 4

31. I feel that my minority status will affect my future. 0 1 2 3 4

32. I have a strong sense of belonging to my people. 0 1 2 3 4

33. In order to know more about my own ethnic history, I often talk about my people with others. 0 1 2 3 4

34. I have done a lot of things, such as reading books, newspapers and magazines, etc., to understand my ethnicity. 0 1 2 3 4

35. I wish I belonged to another nationality. 0 1 2 3 4

36. I am proud of my ethnic people and the achievements we have made. 0 1 2 3 4

37. I will participate in various activities of my ethnicity, such as diet, music, customs, and religious activities. 0 1 2 3 4

38. I have a strong attachment to my own ethnicity. 0 1 2 3 4

39. I like my own culture or ethnic background. 0 1 2 3 4

40. I have seen our ethnic famous film and television or literary works. 0 1 2 3 4

41. I would like to participate if there is a future Pumi cultural and musical language and other related learning heritage activities. 0 1 2 3 4

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW

1. Your self-introduction
2. Can you speak your native language? When and how did you learn it?
3. Under what circumstances would you use your native language? What is the situation of your native language usage at home?
4. What is your reason for using your native language? (For communication, for customary, because the people around you speak it, or you have feeling about your native language?)
5. What is the current Pumi language use in your village? The Intermarriage situation?
6. What is the current Pumi language use of Pumi children? The current situation of children education?
7. What do you think about current Pumi's bilingual education? What do you think of the necessity and the possibility of implementation of bilingual education (Chinese and native language)?
8. What is the Pumi development prospect? (Do you think it will be extinct or will maintain, or elevate, etc.) How can we effectively maintain Pumi language?
9. How do you think the use of Pumi language, Mandarin, Chinese dialect and other minority languages? (Which is important? the role?).
10. Does the village have traditional Pumi ethnic activities, such as festivals, song, dance, religious and cultural activities?
11. How do you think of the Pumi people who do not speak Pumi language?
12. Do you often speak Pumi language with the local Pumi people?
13. What is your attitude towards your native language and the Pumi identity?

14. When will you become most aware of your Pumi identity?

15. Do you think it is necessary to improve the Pumi people's level of their native language and native culture?

16. What measures do you think we should take to protect your native language and your native culture?