Translation in the dialect dynamics of a multistandard indigenous language

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Abstract

Dialect has been studied as a challenge for translators and machine translation systems, as well as for language standardizers and revitalizers. What do scholars in minority translation studies have to say about dialect translation? Michael Cronin has discussed the translation of English texts into rural dialects of Irish in the Irish Republic, which adopted An Caighdeán Oifigiúil as a single standard. I will discuss the translation of Mandarin texts into rural dialects of Seediq in contemporary Taiwan, which has adopted a multistandard approach to the revitalization of its officially recognized indigenous languages. The case language, Seediq, is one of those officially recognized languages. Like Taiwan's other indigenous languages, Seediq is endangered, spoken by well under ten thousand people, most of them being well over the age of fifty. Instead of a single standard for revitalization, three standards have been chosen, one for each dialect. There is, however, an undercurrent of partisanship in translation publication. I examine two sub-cases, first a translation of the screenplay of the film *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (directed by Wei Desheng, 2011) into one of the three dialects, Toda, and second a translation of a selection of texts into all three dialects. On the basis of these two sub-cases, I describe two roles translators can play in dialect dynamics in a multistandard system, competitive and cooperative, and conclude that both kinds of translators – the competitors and the cooperators – can contribute to revitalization.

Keywords: dialect translation, language endangerment, language standardization, Seediq, Taiwan

1. Introduction

A shockingly high percentage of people seem to think that the "confusion" of tongues in the world is a problem, and that we would all be better off speaking the same language (Debate n.d.). There are two arguments in defense of multilingualism. First, that as in biology, so in language, diversity is an advantage. Different languages explore different ways to direct human attention or human potentiality (Evans 2010: 159-181). To the extent that languages do allow us to see the world in slightly different ways, they should help us increase knowledge and find solutions

to problems. Second, that language is an important part of identity, of our emotional connectedness to people and places, a matter of "the ordinary, informal, spontaneous and affectionate heart" (Fishman 1991: 341). People's attachment to their linguistic identity was a part of the incredible linguistic diversity that once prevailed, where people in the next village spoke in a slightly different way (Evans 2010: 6-20). There would not be such a drive to be linguistically different, it stands to reason, if it were not somehow adaptive.

But it does seem that there can be too much diversity. If you cannot make yourself understood more than fifty kilometers from where you live, you are just never going to reach a wider audience if you do not have a common tongue to address it in. Before the 19th century, elites solved the problem of diversity with a common language like Latin in the West or written Chinese in East Asia, which you could understand if you were educated anywhere from Vietnam to Japan. In the 19th century, nationalists decided everyone in the nation-state should be speaking the same language. And for the first time in history it was possible to disseminate a linguistic standard through a national education system (Weber 1976: 68-94). More recently, audiovisual recording technologies have spread the standard throughout the nation: BBC English has become a synonym for Received Pronunciation (Robinson 2019). If the standard sounds prestigious, and now the state can try to shape what seems prestigious through education and broadcasting, then a lot of people will vote with their tongues. Many will get swept along. Some will switch on principle: there is surely some benefit in being able to reach a wider audience or spread a solution to some widespread problem to a wider, national audience. Whatever your national language is, translators can do the rest for you.

There is always going to be resistance to standardization, whether because locals are defending their own interests or because they are attached to the way they speak for emotional or intellectual reasons. For why would you give up your mother tongue, especially when there are good reasons to think that diversity is a virtue? A lot of national governments now think that diversity in unity is a virtue, because they have implemented multilingual national language policies, where everyone speaks (one of) a few national languages, but where local multilingualism is actively fostered. In Canada, for instance, the Official Languages Act was passed in 1969, as a founding document in official bilingualism. A lot of lip service gets paid to multilingualism, but quite phenomenal amounts of money get invested in translation and education, more or less cost-effectively (Grin and Vaillancourt 1997).

In settler states with indigenous minorities, there are now revitalization programs (Fishman 1991: 122-336) to help support languages that are pushing levels 5, 6, or 7 on Joshua Fishman's 8-level GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale). The scale is not a count of the number of speakers. The number of speakers is never the problem. The issue is rather, as Fishman puts it, intergenerational disruption: a language can be spoken by 50 people and be perfectly fine, if it is spoken by young and old alike, or it can be spoken by 50,000 people and be in dire straits, if almost nobody under the age of 50 can speak it. Revitalization programs can, however, only deal with so much difference. If according to some analysis there were seven different dialects of a given indigenous language, that would seem to be too many dialects to revitalize; surely it would be more cost-effective to select just one of the dialects for dictionary and teaching material compilation (Friedman 2018: 91). When the time comes to decide which dialect is chosen, "synecdochally" (Joseph 1987), to represent the whole, you can bet there will be a fight, the same kind of fight that tends to be fought in any process of language standardization (Haugen 1966).

All of the above is well charted territory in scholarship. Language standardization studies is over half a century old (Ray 1963; Kloss 1967). Not surprisingly this field has focused on elites who compete to have their variety of the language chosen as the standard. Minority language standardization studies is much younger (Lane, Costa, and De Korne 2018). Not surprisingly this subfield pays more attention to what individual local agents, not just elites but also ordinary folks, are thinking and doing. The old language standardization studies is broadly speaking governmental, while the new minority language standardization studies is concerned with language vulnerability and revitalization. But except for occasional mentions of the Bible, scholarship in language standardization studies, whether old or new, does not pay that much attention to translation, nor do scholars who focus on language endangerment or revitalization. "[T]ranslation has remained largely invisible" in these fields of study (Kuusi, Kolehmainen, and Riionheimo 2017: 138).

Dialect – a.k.a. topolect, indicating all the local language varieties that might complicate or confound a standardization project – has, of course, become an issue in translation studies. It had to sooner or later, as it comes up sooner or later for every translator. Most of the scholarship on dialect in translation studies is just about how to deal with it (Sánchez 1999; Määttä 2004; Ranzato 2010, etc.). I think we all understand what the challenges and the issues would be for a practicing subtitler or literary translator. You might not know if people in the Appalachians really say

"airish damp" to complain about the humidity on a cool day, and, if that is really how they would express the complaint, do you really want your Taiwanese-speaking protagonist, who is speaking Taiwanese out of resistance to the Mandarin imposed on him through the national language policy, to sound like he is from West Virginia? More recently, we have studied how machine translation systems might be trained to handle dialectal differences (Sawaf 2010), where the goal is simply to produce output speakers of different varieties of Arabic or Malay can understand. There does not seem to be a study in our field of the role translators play in the dialect dynamics of a vulnerable minority language during standardization, besides the slides from an English-language academic presentation (Andrade 2016: 12). Luis Andrade does not focus on this issue in particular in his presentation and does not seem to have written about it in Spanish.

Dialect has not figured that prominently in minority language translation studies, which is understandable. When one is primarily concerned with the influence Castilian might have on Catalan, or English on Gaelic, the issue of the fates of all the different varieties of Catalan and Gaelic tends to fade into the background. Michael Cronin has nevertheless touched upon dialect dynamics in his coverage of the activities of the An Gúm, the agency in charge of translation in the Department of Education in the Irish Republic (Cronin 1996: 153-161). He notes that translators were encouraged to translate texts into various different dialects, creating what he terms "storehouses of dialectal difference" (ibid.: 160), against a backdrop of standardization of Irish for the sake of its revitalization (ibid.: 154-156). What could be described as an interplay between rural dialects and urban standard would make it possible to translate the similar tensions in works of literature from around the world (Cronin 1996: 160-161). This may not be a story of what J. E. Joseph termed synecdochalization (1987), where a single dialect is chosen as a standard, in that the Irish standard appears to have been something new, not just the choice of one dialect as the standard, but the result is the same: a single urban standard that coexists with regional dialects.

What I hope to do in this article is to try to get inside the heads of the translators of an endangered indigenous minority language who have chosen another approach, multiple standardization, where each dialect has become a standard, without any urban/rural distinction, but with an undercurrent of partisanship. The case is from Taiwan. It is composed of two sub-cases of translation that suggest two ways in which dialect dynamics in revitalization-related standardization might play out in a

multistandard system: competitively and cooperatively. I will argue that cooperation and competition are to be expected given human nature and local contingencies that might favor one group over another, and that neither is counterproductive to language revitalization.

The rest of the paper consists of an introduction to the case language, the two sub-cases, one a case of competition, another a case of cooperation, followed by a brief commentary.

2. Dialect dynamics in Seediq

Seediq is a Formosan Austronesian vulnerable indigenous minority language. Let me unpack that. Formosa is Taiwan, the putatively "beautiful" island. The category of Formosan languages sounds like it would include all the languages spoken in Taiwan, but it actually excludes Hakka, Taiwanese (Southern Hokkien), and Mandarin, the languages of the Sinophone majority. Formosan languages are spoken by Taiwan's indigenous peoples. Taiwan's indigenous peoples are Austronesian; Austronesian is literally "south island" and refers to islands in the south Pacific. The appellation "Austronesian" characterizes a language like Fijian and has been applied retroactively to languages in Taiwan, whence languages like Fijian originated. According to the "out of Taiwan" hypothesis (Diamond 2000), the precursor of south Pacific island languages like Fijian came from Taiwan.

Seediq is a minority language because it is spoken by a thin demographic slice of the approximately twenty-three million citizens of Taiwan. There are just over forty thousand people from a Seediq background (Council of Indigenous Peoples 2019), but if one selects the demographic that can speak the language, people aged fifty and over, there are well under ten thousand speakers. This demographic status is why Seediq is vulnerable. A study of the closely related language Atayal found communities at 6 to 7 on the GIDS scale (Chen 2010).

As to why Seediq is indigenous, the Kuomintang recognized indigenous peoples as such in the 1990s as part of a pivot to multiculturalism and multilingualism after the lifting of martial law in 1987 (Friedman 2018). In 1994, indigenous people were recognized, in 1996, indigenous peoples (Shih 1999).[1] The peoples who were

[1] According to the People's Republic of China, Taiwan's official indigenous peoples have been a single national minority, the Gaoshanzu, since 1954. Obviously, states cannot define "indigenous" or its application by fiat. Just as obviously, scholars have to define their terms clearly and use them transparently. I use the term "indigenous" for Taiwan for two reasons. First, because the ancestors of the Seediq have been living in Taiwan for six thousand years, while the ancestors of the dominant

recognized had been recognized as peoples by Japanese ethnographers, particularly according to an influential study published in 1917 (Song 2016: 2). According to this study, the Seediq were Atayal, and Atayal they remained according to the government until 2004, when the Democratic Progressive Party administration recognized the east coast Truku, probably to court their vote (Simon 2012a: 192). On grounds of intelligibility, Truku is not distinct enough to be considered separate linguistically, but the foundations of belonging and the criteria for recognition are obviously not simply linguistic. The Seediq of central Taiwan would have preferred for a Seediq nation that included the east coast Truku to be recognized (Guo 2008). Since the Truku had been recognized, all they could do is apply separately for recognition, which they received in 2008 under the name Sediq (Guo 2008).

Note the two spellings, Sediq and Seediq. *Sediq* is the pronunciation of the word for person in Toda, a member of one of the two main dialect groups Japanese linguists identified (Ogawa and Asai 1935; Holmer 1996: 10). The two (not three) main dialect groups are Toda-Truku and Tgdaya. But while a lot of words in Toda and Truku are similar (see below for examples), not all are. Crucially, the word for person is different, *sediq* in Toda and *seejiq* in Truku. Hence, there is some linguistic basis for a Toda/Truku distinction. But that is not the only basis for the Toda/Truku distinction. An ethnographer who passed through Seediq territory in 1916 noted that Toda, Truku, and Tgdaya were the names for three village alliances (Zuoshan 2011: v. 1 13-14). Politically there were three units. The fact of three political units has contributed to the consensus today that there are three dialects. This consensus has in turn motivated the decision to produce teaching materials in all three dialects. There are as a result three different standards within central Taiwan Sediq: Tgdaya, Toda, and Truku. And if you asked Watan Diro, to whom I will introduce you below, he would tell you about 3S3T, S for Seediq, Sediq, and Seejiq, and T for Tgdaya, Toda, and Truku. 3S3T is an expression of Watan Diro's commitment to linguistic diversity. 3S3T is in the spirit of all for one, one for all, or three for one, one for three. The three are supposed to be equal. But what if there were a *primus inter pares*?

In fact, there is a *primus*, Tgdaya. Tgdaya was the dialect selected as the basis of the romanization system (Holmer 1996: 14). It was also the dialect selected for the

settler majority arrived from the 17th century on, with a massive migration after the Kuomintang's loss of the civil war against the Chinese Communist Party. Second, because there are still Seediq speakers; the language and the culture it inscribes remains distinct, partly because it is important to the people who speak it.

big online dictionary that represents Seediq, one of the sixteen such dictionaries that represent Taiwanese officially recognized indigenous peoples. Both of the news anchors who deliver the Seediq news once a week in an hour-long program are Tgdaya speakers. There are Truku analogues – a Truku dictionary and weekly news broadcast – but they are for east coast Truku. A central Taiwan Truku person might feel left out. A Toda speaker especially might feel his or her dialect had been treated unfairly, with less than full parity. The fact that the pronunciation of person in your dialect – Sediq – is the official spelling would be scant consolation, because, in practice, scholars like myself continue to refer to the language as Seediq, not Sediq. There are two things you could do with your sense of unfairness: to try to advance the interests of your own dialect or by insisting on referring to all three dialects as equal standards every time any of the three got mentioned. The first response is competitive, the second cooperative. Each response is illustrated by a translation publication in the following two sub-cases. Both publications were done by Toda translators, Iwan Nawi and Watan Diro. I begin with Iwan Nawi.

3. The competitor: Proud Iwan Nawi

Ms. Iwan Nawi translated the screenplay of *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (directed by Wei Desheng, 2011) into Toda for a book published in 2014. Wei Desheng's film *Seediq Bale* is about a rebellion against Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan (1895-1945), the Musha Incident in 1930. In the rebellion, an ad hoc coalition of headhunters from six Tgdaya villages attacked a gathering of Japanese officials at the hill station of Musha on October 27. The reprisal was brutal and included collaboration by Toda headhunters, who were paid by the Japanese colonizer per Tgdaya head. Eighty years later, grandchildren of the rebels and the collaborators nevertheless managed to work together on the translation of Wei's Mandarin-language screenplay (Wei 2000) into Seediq, so that Wei could shoot his film in the original languages, including Seediq. Yet Iwan Nawi was not on the screenplay translation team.

Iwan Nawi was never going to be able to translate the lines for the Tgdaya characters from Mandarin into Tgdaya, because she is Toda. But she did not even translate the lines for the Toda characters into Toda. This is surprising given that she had translated the comic book version of the Musha Incident on which *Seediq Bale* was based (Qiu 2011[1990]) into Toda. In the introduction to her translation, she wrote that she felt proud to be Seediq when she saw her Mandarin-Toda

translation in print (Huang 2003: introduction). Surely she was the right person to do the Mandarin-Toda translation for Wei Desheng's film in 2009. In fact she expected that she would do so (Yiwan Nawei 2014: 13, cf. Lin 2014: 5). As it turned out, Pastor Watan Diro, whom I will discuss below in the second sub-case study, was chosen instead to do the Mandarin-Toda translation for the film in 2009. Iwan Nawi's translation of the screenplay came later; it was published in 2014.

Her translation of the screenplay is unreadable if you have not seen the film. Watching the film, the audience can put what the actors say or what the Mandarin subtitles say into audiovisual context. Not so for the reader of Iwan Nawi's translation. For instance, the following three consecutive lines in scene 113 during the attack on the Japanese on October 27, 1930 (Yiwan Nawei 2014: 188):

Iya…	*iya…*
NEG.IMP	NEG.IMP[2]
Don't	Don't

Ini	*=su*	*qta-i*	*Obing*	*=mu?*
NEG	=2S.GEN	see-PF.IMP	Obing	=1S.GEN

Have you seen my Obing? (Has my Obing been seen by you?)

Sediq	*=su*	*Toda?*
person	=2S.NOM	Toda

Are you a Toda person?

In the first line, Tado Nokan, chief of one of the six villages that attacked the Japanese, tells a young Tgdaya warrior not to kill a Taiwanese woman, whom Tado Nokan has mistaken for his daughter Obing Tado. Then, in the second line, after he realizes the Taiwanese woman is not his daughter, he asks the young warrior if he has seen his daughter, whom he calls "my Obing." The third line is from the same scene about ten seconds later, but from another conversation in a different place. In this other conversation, Mona Rudo, the leader of the rebellion, asks a young Toda warrior to confirm that he is in fact Toda. The first two lines make no sense together unless you have the audiovisual context, and they have nothing to do with the third line. To the reader who has not seen the film, there are three lines and two non-sequiturs.

[2] NEG.IMP means negative imperative. Please see the appendix for the other analytical abbreviations.

Even if you know the film well, the translation is so poorly edited it is hard to read even if you know Seediq well. For instance, in the first scene (21), Mona Rudo, the future leader of the rebellion, learns the art of hunting at his father's knee:

Asi	*ka*	*m-luh*	*hari*	*q<m>burang*.
AUX	NOM	AF-know	more	<AF>hunting

Knowing how to hunt better is necessary.

Mluh is a typo for *mkla* in the wordlist at the back of the book (306). *Qmburang* is listed as *qnburang* in the wordlist at the back, meaning "to surround and block" (308). It is apparently a way of talking about hunting. *Qnburang* is a preterite, which makes no sense in the line above. *Qmburang* is right, because in addition to being agent focus – a verb form that is used when the subject is an agent or "doer" – it is also the "infinitive" form of the verb, hence "to hunt" in my Seediq-English translation. In addition to the appended wordlist (302-311), Iwan Nawi included a grammar sketch (297-300), suggesting that she hoped people could treat the text as learning material, but actually nobody would be able to learn from it.

Iwan Nawi's translation of the screenplay into Toda is a coffee table book, though in Taiwan people would put such a book on their tea tables. In other words, it is significant as a publishing event, and nice to look at but not to read. So why was it published? From the publisher Yushan's point of view, a translation of a screenplay about the Musha Incident fit the Yushan brand of Taiwaniana. Given that the film the screenplay was made into was the biggest in Taiwan history, a publication of its translation probably seemed lucrative. It also served the noble aim of language revitalization, as director Wei Desheng emphasizes in his introduction (Wei 2014: 3-4). As for Iwan Nawi's own motivations, she seems to have wanted to polish her language skills and reconnect with her heritage through her parents, whom she has described as her "living dictionary" (Huang 2003: introduction). In 2003, she was still going by her Chinese name Huang Linghua, but since then she has switched to Iwan Nawi in person and in print, demonstrating her dedication to roots-seeking. In 2014, the year Yushan published her translation of the screenplay, she was teaching the Toda dialect at National Chengchi University. Her Yushan publication gave her the opportunity to represent her variety of the language to a wider public.

What really distinguishes the publisher Yushan from the translator Iwan Nawi is in fact the issue of dialect, as is evident from a comparison of the two titles. The

Chinese title is literally *Seediq Screenplay of Seediq Bale* (my Chinese-English translation). The Toda title is:

Kari	*Toda*	*Patas*	*Eyga*	*Sediq*	*Balay*
language	Toda	book	film	person	true

Toda Language Screenplay of *True People*

Eyga is a Japanese loanword, and *patas eyga* might be analyzable as a compound word meaning screenplay, as in my English translation. *Sediq Balay* is Iwan Nawi's reromanization, or intralingual translation, of the official title of the film, *Seediq Bale*, which means "true people." From the Chinese title, a potential book buyer would assume he or she was buying the screenplay used in the film. What Iwan Nawi gives the reader is her own Toda translation. Chinese readers who watched the film with Iwan Nawi's translation in hand would soon pick up on the bait and switch: her translation is *not* the one used in the film. And no Seediq reader would be fooled. In fact, any Tgdaya reader might have been offended by Iwan Nawi's translation, in which Mona Rudo, the Tgdaya leader of the rebellion, speaks Toda, the language of one of his enemies.

It seems that Iwan Nawi's pride led her to partisanship. In this section, which dealt with the first of two sub-cases discussed in this article, I exemplified how a speaker of a particular dialect might try to promote that dialect through translation publication. This seems like a competitive approach to the problem of inequality in a multistandard language standardization program. Watan Diro has taken a more cooperative approach, as I will demonstrate in the next section.

4. The cooperator: Lonely Watan Diro

Watan Diro did the translation from Mandarin to Toda for *Seediq Bale* in 2009. Watan Diro is well known in the language community as a Presbyterian pastor. He was part of the team that applied to the central government for recognition of the Sediq "Tribe" as an indigenous people. He speaks Toda more fluently than almost anyone else his age – he was born in 1971. He is reported to speak Toda quite a bit better than Iwan Nawi, who is older than he is. And he also speaks Tgdaya. In fact, he is now preaching every week in the church in the Tgdaya village of Nakahara. He preaches in a combination of Mandarin and Tgdaya, speaking Mandarin first and then translating into Tgdaya. In addition to Toda he is more than capable of

translating into Tgdaya. In the publication I will discuss in this section, he translated from Mandarin into both Toda Sediq and Tgdaya Seediq.

The publication has an English title: *The Illustrated Dictionary of SEDIQ/SEEDIQ/SEEJIQ Nation*. Whereas the Taiwan government uses the pseudo-scientific word "tribe" to refer to groups like the Seediq, Watan prefers "nation," following the Canadian example of First Nations. In doing so, he puts his own people on an equal footing with the other "nations" in Taiwan. This is a "multinational" understanding of Taiwan, not just multicultural. Otherwise, it is a very odd title when only 7 of some 250 pages list words in the three dialects, and when there are illustrations, but not of the words. It is simply not an "illustrated dictionary." I imagine he just copied the name of other illustrated dictionaries he helped publish in 2009 and 2017. The Chinese title is 賽德克 KARI 豐盛的語言, meaning *Seediq KARI: A Bounteous Language*. There is no Seediq title except for KARI. *Kari* means words, language, or speech in Tgdaya, but according to Watan Diro it also means "bounteous" in Toda. Hence, "bounteous language" is a translation of the word *kari*.

The contents of *KARI* can be charitably described as diverse. In fact, the contents give one the impression that Pastor Watan has scrounged around to find enough material to fill 250 pages. There are sections on faith, language, "name rectification," "transitional justice," songs, ethnic history, and thirty pages of appendices – Watan's photos of his family and his activities over the years.

Just as the publication is diverse in content, so it is diverse dialectically. Because Watan included all three dialects of Seediq – Tgdaya Seediq, Toda Sediq, and Truku Seejiq – in the translations in *KARI*, it is useful for a comparison of the differences between the dialects. Here, for instance, is the beginning of the story about the origin of hunting (88-89):

To:	*Rudan*	*cbiyaw*	*pa,*	*ana*	*ini*	*usa*	*u<m>aduk*	*u,*	*qulung*	*k<m>kan*	*wawa*	*lmiqu.*
Tg:	*Rudan*	*cbeyo*	*ge,*	*ani*	*ini*	*osa*	*phuling*	*de,*	*qulung*	*k<m>eekan*	*wawa*	*lmiqu.*
Tr:	*Rudan*	*sbiyaw*	*o,*	*ana*	*ini*	*usa*	*g<m>aduk*	*o,*	*qulung*	*k<m>kan*	*wawa*	*lmiqu.*
	elder	past	TOP	even	NEG	go	<AF>hunt	if	keep	<AF>eat	meat	forest

As for elders of the past, even if they didn't go hunting, (they) kept eating wild game.

The elders of the past kept eating meat because the animals would give them a tuft of their fur, which would magically turn into meat, until some greedy man took

meat from the animal. Thereafter people had to hunt as punishment. As you can tell, the only lexical difference between the To(da), Tg(daya), and Tr(uku) versions is the Tgdaya word for hunting, *phuling*, literally to take (*p-*) the dogs (*huling*). Otherwise the same analysis serves for all three versions. This is an example of intralingual translation, because the three versions are obviously based on one another. It is also an example of interlingual translation, because the three Seediq versions are followed by the same story in Mandarin, from which they were translated. The details[3] of the translation process are obscure and do not concern me here. The important thing here is that Watan chose to include Tgdaya, Toda, and Truku translations of the myth even though the differences between the versions are slight.

Another example is the three-dialect translation from Mandarin to Seediq of Chief Seattle's famous speech:

To:	*Kla-un*	*nami*	*uxay*	*n-sediq*	*ka*	*kana*	*n-babaw-dxral,*	*n-dxral*	*ka*	*sediq.*
Tg:	*Kla-un*	*miyan*	*uxe*	*n-seediq*	*ka*	*kana*	*bobo-dheran,*	*n-dheran*	*ka*	*seediq.*
Tr:	*Kla-un*	*nami*	*uxay*	*n-sejiq*	*ka*	*kana*	*babaw-dxgal,*	*en-dxgal*	*ka*	*sejiq.*
	know-PF	1P.GEN	NEG	GEN-person	NOM	all	GEN-on-earth	GEN-earth	NOM	person

What's known by us is: everything on the earth doesn't belong to people, people belong to the earth.

The "original"[4] English is well-known: "This we know: The Earth does not belong to man; man belongs to Earth." It is an ABCCBA chiasmus, where A=the Earth, B=belong, and C=man. This English line was translated into Chinese anonymously; Watan translated from Chinese into the three dialects of Seediq. Even so, as you can see, the Seediq translations have managed to preserve elements A and C of the chiasmus. In Seediq, A=*seediq*, *sediq*, *sejiq*, and C=*dheran*, *dxral*, *dxgal*. Element B of the original chiasmus, "belongs," was lost in Mandarin translation, and couldn't have been translated into Seediq. At any rate, the main point here is again that Watan insisted on including all three versions out of his commitment to the spirit of 3S3T, three for one and one for three.

[3] The Seediq tale of plucked fur turning into meat was first recorded around ninety years ago in the Tgdaya dialect, which is of course distinct from standardized Tgdaya today, with a Japanese translation (Ogawa and Asai 1935: 579). Watan's 2019 Tgdaya version is different from the 1935 Tgdaya version, not just because it is circa 2019 Tgdaya, but also because it has been filtered through a Mandarin translation, which may be from the Japanese.

[4] For the textual history of Chief Seattle's speech, which was not written by Chief Seattle, see Abruzzi 2000.

I described Watan as a cooperator, and my impression of his vision of the relationship between the three dialects is basically cooperative. However, there may be an undercurrent of partisanship in his ordering of the three dialects. His decision was certainly not based on linguistic criteria, which would argue for Tgdaya on the one hand and Toda and Truku on the other hand. In fact, I think he put Toda first because he is Toda. Tgdaya and Toda translators are the same: Tgdaya translators tend to put the Tgdaya spelling Seediq first, and Truku translators the Truku spelling of Seejiq (see examples in Guo (ed.) 2008).

This variety in order is all for the best. Why *not* vary the order, so that nobody feels like his or her dialect is neglected? But it remains the case that there are fewer resources available in Toda than in Tgdaya or Truku. Watan Diro feels the lack. He told me once that Toda is the "loneliest" Seediq dialect. He compiled *KARI* so that Toda speakers would feel a little less lonely. And the Council of Indigenous Peoples supported the publication with a grant of about 7,000 USD.[5] Unlike Iwan Nawi's translation of the screenplay for *Seediq Bale*, *KARI* is free of charge. That does not mean that anyone is actually reading it. If they have it in their house, they likely treat it the same way as they treat Iwan Nawi's translation: as a tea table book.

5. Commentary

Competition among dialects is to be expected in the process of standardization in any *abstand* language situation, but the result of the standardization process in Seediqland—three distinct dialect-based standards—is surprising. Given that the situation is not hypercompetitive, and that there is equal acknowledgement for all three dialects, it seems to me that the competitive streak Iwan Nawi displays is not unhealthy. A Tgdaya friend of mine said that Iwan Nawi just had to be the first to publish a translation of the screenplay to *Seediq Bale*. Well, why should she not be the first? And even though she was the first, why could Watan Diro, who did the Mandarin-Toda translation for the film in 2009, not work with his colleagues on a publication of the translation that was actually used in the film in 2011? Watan Diro obviously has the know-how and connections to apply for funding, if the publication of his own translation of *Seediq Bale* is important to him. While there might have been better ways for Iwan Nawi to express her pride, competitiveness in itself is one

[5] Disclosure: I know the amount because Watan Diro told me. He had asked me to write an introduction for the book, and when he gave me a copy he told me my official role had been "reviewer." Though I did not do any reviewing, I was entitled to a modest reviewer's fee, which I was happy to donate, at Watan's suggestion, to language revitalization efforts.

way of addressing the loneliness to which Watan Diro refers. It takes an enormous amount of time and energy and money to produce a big online dictionary or a newscast in Toda. A competitive spirit might make it slightly more likely to happen.

But in the long term, nothing is going to happen for Seediq unless language revitalization is a popular movement. In Taiwan indigenous studies, the scholar Michael Rudolph is associated with what can be described as an elite capital capture hypothesis (2008). The hypothesis is that elites like Iwan Nawi and Watan Diro may say they are working to revitalize their language, but actually they are trying to capture capital, both financial and social. I am sure their hearts were in the right places, but Rudolph's theory applies to them to some extent, in that they have produced tea table books. If these tea table books contribute to language revitalization, it is only indirectly. These books remind me of Joshua Fishman's distinction between status-based language planning and corpus-based language planning (Fishman 1991: 81): Iwan Nawi and Watan Diro have been doing status-based translation publication while pretending to contribute to a corpus. Both Iwan Nawi and Watan Diro, and other Seediq translators, need to produce higher quality publications for which there might be a market, and to some extent they have to try to create the market, by getting young people and their parents "gung ho," meaning "enthusiastic," about learning Seediq. Some publications have appeared over the years; I wish I had the space here to review them – Iwan Nawi and her husband's versions of two stories are promising (Yiwan Nawi and Qiu 2012, 2013) – but that is a project for another day.

I would like to leave you with a thought and an encouraging word. The thought is that for the time being the Seediq have gone against the standard/dialects grain, where an urban standard is in creative tension with rural dialects. They have chosen multiple standards. Their choice might somehow relate to a tendency towards egalitarianism in traditional headhunting culture. According to the anthropologist Scott Simon (2012b), the purpose of headhunting traditionally was to prevent a leader from becoming too powerful. If someone ambitious reared his head, someone else might cut it off. In such a culture, cooperation must be just as important if not more so than competition.

The encouraging word is that there is a sense of enthusiasm these days among Seediq young people in their 20s, a few of whom have gotten quite fluent. The young people I know are interested in both translation into Seediq and, finally, in creative compositions to translate out of Seediq. One can be cautiously optimistic

that Seediq dialect dynamics, whether competitive or cooperative, will continue to play out in a positive way, that Toda speakers will continue to feel proud, and might even feel a little less lonely, and that translation publication will be part of the story moving forward.

Appendix: Analytical abbreviations

<> An infix
\- A boundary between a stem or root and a prefix or suffix
= A boundary between a word and a clitic pronoun
. A boundary in a gloss that does not correspond to a boundary in the original
1P: 1st person pronoun
2S: 2nd person pronoun
AF: Agent focus, where the verb "focuses" or selects an agent as the sentence-final subject
AUX: Auxiliary verb
COP: Copula
GEN: Genitive, where genitive pronouns in Seediq can indicate the agent in passive sentences
IMP: Imperative
NEG: Negative
NOM: Nominative, for pronouns co-indexed with the subject, which is often identified by the word *ka*
PF: Patient focus, where the verb "focuses" or selects a patient as the sentence-final subject
TOP: Topic marker, *ge* in Seediq

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