LANGUAGE CHOICE AND LANGUAGE SHIFT IN THE TRI-GENERATIONAL HUBEI FAMILIES IN MALAYSIA

LOW MAI YEN

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

2019

LANGUAGE CHOICE AND LANGUAGE SHIFT IN THE TRI-GENERATIONAL HUBEI FAMILIES IN MALAYSIA

LOW MAI YEN

DESSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LINGUISTICS

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

2019

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate: Low Mai Yen

Registration/Matric No: TGC 130030

Name of Degree: Masters of Linguistics

Title of Dissertation: Language Choice and Language Shift in the Tri-Generational

Hubei Families in Malaysia

Field of Study: Sociolinguistics

 I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

(1)   I am the sole author/writer of this Work;
(2)   This Work is original;
(3)   Any use of any work in which copyright exists was done by way of fair dealing and for permitted purposes and any excerpt or extract from, or reference to or reproduction of any copyright work has been disclosed expressly and sufficiently and the title of the Work and its authorship have been acknowledged in this Work;
(4)   I do not have any actual knowledge nor do I ought reasonably to know that the making of this work constitutes an infringement of any copyright work;
(5)   I hereby assign all and every rights in the copyright to this Work to the University of Malaya ("UM"), who henceforth shall be owner of the copyright in this Work and that any reproduction or use in any form or by any means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of UM having been first had and obtained;
(6)   I am fully aware that if in the course of making this Work I have infringed any copyright whether intentionally or otherwise, I may be subject to legal action or any other action as may be determined by UM.

Candidate's Signature   Date: 28 February 2019

Subscribed and solemnly declared before,

Witness's Signature   Date:

Name:

Designation:

ABSTRACT

Different Chinese varieties were used among the different linguistic groups for cultural identity and kinship ties (Sim, 2012) during the Chinese diaspora in South East Asia in the early 1900's. Thus, the initial Hubei migrants to Malaya spoke the Tianmen/Hubei dialect for cultural identity. However, multilingualism in the society has impacted the language choice and language maintenance of the heritage language in the Hubei families in Malaysia. Data obtained from forty-five respondents based on a questionnaire adapted from Coluzzi, Riget & Wang (2013) and an interview indicated a shift in the use of the mother tongue to other languages in the home, social and socio-cultural domains. Lamentably, there is a loss of inter-generational transmission of the language as the Hubei community in Malaysia is progressively losing members of the older generation who are the authentic native speakers of the heritage language.

ABSTRAK

Sim (2012) menyatakan bahawa kumpulan bangsa Cina yang berlainan mengguna dialek Cina yang berbeza untuk identiti budaya dan hubungan etnik pada masa diaspora Cina di rantau Asia Tenggara di awal 1900-an. Oleh yang demikian, semua orang Hubei yang datang ke Malaya pada masa itu bertutur dalam dialek Tianmen/Hubei untuk mengukuhkan identiti budaya mereka semasa di negara asing. Namun demikian, penggunaan pelbagai bahasa oleh masyarakat kini telah mempengaruhi pilihan bahasa dan penyelenggaran bahasa warisan di antara ahli-ahli keluarga Hubei di Malaysia. Data untuk penyelidikan ini diperolehi daripada 45 orang responden berdasarkan soal selidik yang disesuaikan daripada Coluzzi, Riget dan Wang (2013) serta temuduga dengan responden masing masing. Data menunjukkan bahawa transisi berlaku dalam penggunaan bahasa ibunda di domain keluarga, socio dan sosio-budaya. Malahan, warga emas di kalangan komuniti Hubei di Malaysia yang merupakan penutur asli bahasa warisan semakin berkurangan. Ini telah mengakibatkan kehilangan pemindahan bahasa warisan ke generasi muda dan kemerosotan bahasa warisan di kalangan komuniti Hubei di Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank all from the bottom of my heart who have helped in contributing to the completion of this dissertation. First, I give thanks to God for His protection and love in opening windows of opportunities for me to meet all the wonderful people who have given me courage and confidence to accomplish this task.

My heartfelt thanks to my supervisor at University Malaya, Associate Professor Dr Paolo Coluzzi, for his valuable advice and absolute patience, Professor Dr Eileen Lee, who initiated this academic journey of mine, my devoted family members for their ceaseless moral support, and all my sincere friends and colleagues for their infinite encouragement.

Finally, this work is dedicated to my parents (deceased) who sowed in me the seed of pride of being a Hubei.

"In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage - to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness." **— Alex Haley, Roots**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

L1   Heritage language

L2   Second language

G1   Generation 1 (Ages 75>)

G2   Generation 2 (Ages 45-74

G3   Generation 3 (Ages 16-44)

I   Interviewer

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF EXTRACTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This research entitled, 'Language choice and language shift in the tri-generational Hubei families in Malaysia' constitutes a rare study on the Hubei community in Malaysia. This study investigates the reasons for the choice of languages used by the members of the Hubei community in the home, social and sociocultural domains by analysing three generations of Hubei families in Malaysia. The terms 'language choice' and 'language shift' are described in order to clarify the title of the research. Language choice is defined as a conscious use of a word, phrase, clause or sentence of another language within the speaker's environment (Dumanig, 2010). Next, language shift refers to "the gradual displacement of one language by another in the lives of the community members" manifested as loss in the number of speakers, level of proficiency, or range of functional use of the language (Hornberger, 2012, p. 412).

1.1.1 History: migration of the Hubei ancestors

Hubei (Chinese: 湖北; pinyin: *Húběi*) is a province of the People's Republic of China, located in the easternmost part of Central China. The name of the province, Hubei, literally means "north of the lake", which refers to its position north of Lake Dongting. Amrith (2011) states in his book, *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia,* that the recent history of human movement in Asia began 150 years ago. China was struck by a series of natural calamities between the 1840's and the 1850's. The major ones were the severe draught in Henan Province in 1847, the flooding of the Yangtze River in the four provinces of Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang, and the famine in Guangxi in 1849.

The flood and famine in Guangdong was followed by the catastrophic Taiping Revolution (1850-1864), which devastated the land, uprooted the peasantry, and dislocated the economy and politics. In addition, the first migratory phase, from 1850 to about 1930, saw the increase and peak in mass migration in Asia, which led to the formation of wholly new societies and the redistribution of populations across the region. This intense period of "mobility revolution" was due to "political upheaval, uneven economic development, colonial expansion, and environmental insecurity". This phenomenon is further elaborated by Wang (1991) who identified four patterns in the Chinese migratory waves. One of these patterns, the "*huagong* [华工] / coolie" pattern, was characterised by the flood of peasants, landless labourers and urban poor who left China between the 1850s and 1920s. Chinese migrants arrived in Southeast Asia at a lower cost as Southeast Asia is a neighbouring region. Zhuang and Wang (2010) state that Chinese migrants from the western and central provinces of China like Hunan, Sichuan and Hubei were involved in the wave of migration to Southeast Asia during the nineteenth century.

The researcher's ancestors originally came from the town of Mawan (simplified Chinese: 马湾; pinyin: *Mǎwān*). Mawan has a population of about 41,000 in the east-central part of Hubei province, People's Republic of China. It is under the administration of the sub-prefecture-level city of Tianmen, 19 kilometres to the west-northwest.

**Figure 1.1: The migration route of the ancestors of the Hubei
tri-generational families in Malaysia**

Zhang (2015) mentions that the dialect spoken in Wuhan, Tianmen and surrounding areas in Hubei is the Wuhan or Hankou dialect, which is a branch of Southwestern Mandarin. The Hubei community in Malaysia speaks the Tianmen dialect; it may be assumed that due to geographical proximity to the more prominent location, Hubei was adopted for reasons of cultural identity, instead of Tianmen. Linguistically, Hubei has a good degree of mutual intelligibility with Mandarin.

Below is a table of some lexical similarities and differences between Hubei and Mandarin:

Table 1.1: Lexical similarities and differences between Mandarin and Hubei

English	Mandarin	Hubei	English	Mandarin	Hubei
Similarities			**Differences**		
Verbs					
to sleep	*shuì*	*suì*	to fall down	*shuāi dǎo*	*dá dao*
to run	*pǎo*	*pāo*	to drink	*hē*	*hɔ*
to look	*kàn*	*kān*	to dream	*zuò mèng*	*fā mūng*
Body Parts					
hair	*tóufǎ*	*tōufā*	ears	*ēr duo*	*gē dūng*
face	*liǎn*	*liān*	nose	*bízi*	*pí gūng*
eyes	*yǎn jing*	*yān jing*	thighs	*tuǐ*	*dā kwā zē*

The researcher's ancestors left Hubei, in the early 1900's and sailed to Indonesia first before settling down in Malaya (older name of Peninsular Malaysia prior to the formation of Malaysia in 1963). Zhang (2013) mentions that the Chinese migrants to South East Asia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries found their occupational niches in South East Asia over time as skilled and unskilled labourers. These niches were basically linked to the various sub-ethnic groups of the Chinese migrants: the Hubei community worked as dentists or 'teeth-setters', the Cantonese were carpenters, the Hakkas were shoemakers and those from Shandong were silk traders. He adds that in eastern Pakistan (now Bangladesh), the Chinese were engaged in shoemaking, dentistry and restaurant business.

1.1.2 The Malaysian context

Malaysia is a multiethnic and multilingual country with a population of 28.3 million. Of the total population of Malaysia, Bumiputeras (Malays and other indigenous groups) comprise 69.1%, Chinese 23% and Indians 6.9% (Population census, 2018). Malaysia is regarded as a plural society due to its racial, religious and linguistic diversity. The Bumiputeras are categorised as the indigenous group in the country whereas the non-Malays, which comprise of the Chinese and Indians, are considered as immigrant communities since their ancestors migrated from their homelands in China and India.

Therefore, it is inevitable that there is an array of languages and language varieties (Low, 2015) used by each ethnic group to facilitate intra and interethnic communication in Malaysia. Bahasa Melayu (Malay), which is the language of the indigenous majority, is the national language and the main medium of education, while English is the official second language and is a compulsory language in the schools. However, Mandarin and Tamil National-type schools are found at primary level, and Mandarin at secondary level as well. Thus, there are very limited opportunities for minority Chinese varieties like Hubei to be used outside the home environment.

1.1.3 The Chinese community landscape in Malaysia

The majority of the Chinese settlers in Malaya (now Malaysia) during the early fifteenth to twentieth century originated from southern China, particularly the provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan (Yen, 2000). Along with this Chinese mass migration, various Chinese dialects such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew, Hainanese, to name a few, were imported into the country. Kinship ties, cultural identity, migration patterns, and occupational preferences on top of communication were some of the reasons that contributed to the usage of Chinese dialects among the different Chinese linguistic groups

(Sim, 2012). Based on information from the Department of Statistics, Malaysia, as shown in Table 4.1, Hokkien is the largest group in the country comprising 37.66% of the total Chinese population among the various Chinese varieties in Malaysia. Hakka and Cantonese are almost at par in terms of population size, at 20.36% and 19.90% respectively. The other Chinese variety communities are relatively small in terms of population (Wang & Chong, 2011).

Table 1.2: Composition of different Chinese communities in Malaysia

(Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2003 as cited in
Ember, Ember, Skoggard, 2004)

Chinese variety groups	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Hokkien	2,020,914	37.66%
Hakka	1,092,835	20.36%
Cantonese	1,068,008	19.90%
Teochew	497,280	9.27%
Foochow	251,553	4.69%
Hainanese	141,045	2.63%
Others	294,716	5.49%
Total	5,366,211	100%

According to a survey conducted by the Hubei Association of Malaysia, there are currently about 3000 Hubei Chinese living in Malaysia. The Hubei migrants to Malaya in the early 1900s spoke the Tianmen/Hubei dialect as a source of cultural identity. However, with increased social and economic independence among the third generation (G3) and beyond, and with the present generations assimilating and inter-marrying with other Chinese communities, the heritage language of the Hubei community is facing endangerment/extinction in Malaysia.

1.1.4 The language dilemma in Malaysia

In a multilingual setting such as Malaysia, the population is equipped with a varied linguistic repertoire; therefore, there is a tendency for speakers to shift from one language to another. The local official language in Malaysia is Bahasa Melayu (Malay). However, other languages were introduced in the country during colonisation. The Chinese and Indian communities had already formed a significant part of the Malaysian population in 1957 when Malaysia obtained its independence. According to Asmah (2003), the influx of Chinese, Indian and other foreign inhabitants in Malaysia began in the 14th century and then accelerated especially at the end of 19th century. In general, Indians were brought to Malaysia by the British to fill job vacancies while many Chinese worked in the tin mines as well and chose the country for entrepreneurial purposes (Omar, 2007). The indigenous population, also called *Bumiputera* (i.e. the sons and daughters of the soil) is further differentiated into Malays and *Other Bumiputera*. The Malay population comprises people who are Muslims, lead a Malay way of life and speak the Malay language. The *Other Bumiputera* population refers mostly to aboriginal ethnic groups in the country who are not Muslims, but are "closely related to the Malays in terms of language and primordial culture" (Omar, 2007, p.337). According to Ethnologue, there are 140 different historical languages spoken by the population in Malaysia which consists of mainly Malays (54%), Other *Bumiputera* (12.8%), Chinese (24.6%) and Indians (7.3%). As the Malaysian Chinese community is not a homogenous unit but one of a heterogeneous nature, Malaysian Chinese communicate among each other in various Chinese varieties, mostly in Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka, Teochew, Foochow, Hainanese or Mandarin which have become the lingua francas of the Chinese community as a whole.

The Malaysian education system has experienced several transformations in language policies spanning from pre-independence to current times. During the British colonial era,

English and Malay-medium schools were set up by the British administration and Christian missionaries. The Chinese established community schools where major Chinese dialects were used as the medium of instruction until 1920 when the dialects were replaced by Mandarin. At the time of independence of Malaya in 1957, Malaya had 2,198 primary schools teaching in Malay, 1,342 Mandarin, 908 Tamil and 486 English medium primary schools. At the secondary level, there were 86 Mandarin-medium schools in 1958 and many English-medium schools distributed in most of the towns (Ting, 2013, p 92). Subsequently, in the early 1960s Chinese-medium secondary schools which became known as "national-type secondary schools" or Sekolah Menengah Jenis Kebangsaan (SMJK), changed their medium of instruction to either Malay or English. In the 1970s, in accordance to the national language policy, the government began to change English-medium primary and secondary national-type schools into Malay-medium national schools. The language change was made gradually starting from the first year in primary school, then the second year in the following year and so on. The change was completed by the end of 1982 (Raman & Tan, 2015). By the twenty-first century, a large number of Chinese in Malaysia, having received vernacular education in Chinese, began using Mandarin as their lingua franca. Accordingly, with the rise of Mandarin as a strong unifying language among the Chinese community in the country, the smaller Chinese communities, that is, the communities with a small number of heritage speakers came under the threat of language loss and extinction.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The pioneers of the Hubei community who migrated to Malaya in the early 1900s were mostly monolinguals and used their language only within their ethnic community as a source of cultural identity. Therefore, the Hubei language was spoken only in the home domain of the Hubei community and was not used in other domains. However, over the course of about a century since the time of the initial migration of Hubei-speaking settlers

from China to Malaya, the Hubei descendants in Malaysia today are multilingual and have become increasingly more alienated from the Hubei language. The grandparents (G1) in the present Hubei community are still fluent in the mother tongue and the language is used for daily communication in the home among family members. However, the situation differs for the following generations: the parents (G2) are not as fluent in the Hubei language as the older generation, while the majority of their children (G3) seldom speak the mother tongue. Although members of the (G2) generation use the mother tongue to communicate with the (G1) or the elders in the community, the Hubei language is not used for communication with their children (G3). Instead, other languages are employed in the home, such as English, Mandarin, Hokkien or Cantonese (L2) which are commonly used in the school, work place and shops. Increasingly over the years, L2 has replaced the mother tongue in the home. The Hubei community is a very small minority group in the country, the language does not have any social or economic function.

Therefore, parents find it more beneficial to use (L2) in the home in order to provide opportunities for their children to improve their oral skills in other languages used outside the home in preparation for social and economic interactions in the society. Furthermore, as few grandparents (G1) live with their children (G2) and grandchildren (G3), the majority of the members of the young generation do not speak the mother tongue as they have limited domains of use for the language. This has resulted in the Hubei language weakening its language vitality in the home. Added to this factor, there is a steady ongoing language shift towards Mandarin emerging in the younger generation thus, the mother tongue is gradually abandoned.

1.3 Aim of the study

This study attempts to assess the vitality of the Hubei language and the process of language shift in the tri-generational Hubei families. The possible factors which affect

9

the language vitality and Hubei speakers' choice of language in the domains of language use is also analysed.

1.4 Research objectives

In order to investigate the level of the vitality of the Hubei language and the extent of language shift in the tri-generational families, the aims of this study are:

1. To examine the language choices of the tri-generational families in the home, social and sociocultural domains.
2. To study the language attitudes of the Hubei speakers towards their heritage language.
3. To determine the reasons for the language shift and language maintenance of the Hubei community in Malaysia.

1.5 Research questions

Therefore, the research questions are:

1. What languages are used by the three generations in the home, social, and sociocultural domains?
2. What kind of attitudes do the tri-generational Hubei speakers have towards their heritage language?
3. What are the reasons for the language shift by the Hubei speakers across the three generations?

1.6 Significance of the study

Although there has been abundant research on language choice and language shift of the heritage language in minority communities, this study attempts to provide an overview of

the process of language shift from L1 to other languages in the Hubei community in Malaysia, with evidence obtained from participants across three generations. The study analyses the choice of languages used in the home, social and sociocultural domains which have impacted the vitality of Hubei among the younger generations in the community.

Studies by Fishman (1991), Romaine (1995) & Clyne (1999) as cited in Yu (2014) have shown that language shift among immigrant minorities is typically completed within three generations. While the majority of studies on language shift and maintenance have focused on the general trend and end results of this phenomenon diachronically across generations, this study investigates the reasons for the language shift and how language shift happens in relation to the choice of languages used in the daily routine of the Hubei community in a multicultural and multilingual environment such as Malaysia.

1.7 Limitations of the study

While the study provides a rare documentation of the Hubei community in Malaysia, there are limitations that are worth noting.

1.7.1 Limited number of G1 participants

The Hubei community is gradually losing its elderly members due to old age. The grandparent generation (G1) in this study is limited to only three members for they are the researcher's close relatives and therefore made data collection easier. The researcher attempted to investigate the location of other surviving (G1) members in the course of the dissertation to obtain more data to support this study but has been unfortunate as the few surviving (G1) members are residing in the northern and eastern states of Peninsular Malaysia and therefore the researcher was hampered by accessibility constraint.

On a similar note, this study is limited to data obtained from only one female from the (G1) category as the other females in this category within the researcher's circle of contacts have already passed away.

1.7.2 Audio recording

The interviews were audio recorded only as the participants expressed hesitation and reluctance to be video recorded. The participants were uncomfortable with a video camera in their presence and felt that they would not be able to express their opinions and thoughts as freely as they wanted. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews for this study were only audio recorded and later transcribed for data analysis.

1.7.3 Monolingual questionnaire

The questionnaire was presented in the English language only; Malay was not used as majority of the participants were more comfortable with the English language than Malay. The questions were translated from English into L1 for the participants in the (G1) category only. The rest of the other participants in the (G2) and (G3) categories are literate in the English language.

1.8 Summary

This chapter describes the history of the initial Hubei migration from China to Southeast Asia. Upon settling in Malaya, which received an influx of Chinese migrants speaking other more dominant Chinese varieties, the minority Hubei migrants practised endogamous marriages which helped them to maintain their cultural identity.

However, with the practice of exogamy by the second and third generations, and the influence of multilingualism, there has been attrition of L1 in the Hubei community over time. As a large body of research has shown that pressures for language shift are evident

in many language minority families and communities (e.g., DeKlerk, 2000; McCarty, Romero-Little, & Zepeda, 2006; Sandel, Chao, & Liang, 2006; Shin, 2005; Vail, 2006; Young & Tran, 1999) as cited in Shin (2010), the Hubei community is no exception. Data for analysis were collected through observation of the Hubei speakers within the family circle, during social interactions and in religious ceremonies; semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire were used.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a discussion on the theoretical frameworks related to language choice and language shift among the three generations of Hubei families in Malaysia. The areas that will be discussed are Communication Accommodation Theory, domains of language use, language choice, language shift and language attitudes. Romaine (1995) stated that some of the factors that affect the maintenance, shift or death of a language are the size of the group in relation to the other speech communities, the extent of exogamous marriages, the attitudes of the majority and minority speech communities and patterns of language use. Therefore, the following discussions will provide a better understanding of the process of language shift and of the reasons for language choice in the tri-generational

2.2 Communication Accommodation Theory

The theoretical framework employed in this study is the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). This theory explains how inter-personal adjustments are influenced by "broader social group memberships" as well as "group identifications and intergroup dynamics" (Harwood, Soliz and Lin, 2006). These conditions influence the degree of accommodation among the speakers. Consequently, CAT illustrates how speakers diverge or converge in communication (Giles, 1973). Divergence occurs when another language that is completely alien to the individual and interlocutor is adopted, whereas convergence takes place when a preferred or dominant language used by one of the speakers is adopted. When speakers diverge, they accentuate their linguistic differences

so as to emphasize differences in group membership as well as create distance between themselves (Giles and Ogay, 2007). For example, in exogamous marriages, a completely different language may be adopted in the family language policy that is alien to the heritage language of the husband and wife. This divergence ultimately leads to a loss of both the heritage languages in the family.

However, convergence is reflective of the speakers' needs for social integration and approval from the other interlocutor so as to forge a better relationship between them (ibid). Similarly, in some exogamous marriages, convergence occurs when the language of either the husband or the wife is adopted as the lingua franca in the family.

Harwood, Soliz, and Lin (2006) explain the various strategies in family communication: approximation strategies, interpretability strategies, discourse management strategies and interpersonal control. These strategies affect the way in which accommodation takes place. Approximation strategy demonstrates the speaker's productive performance and focuses on the speech styles the speaker is exposed to. Interpretability strategies involve accommodating to the other members' perceived interpretive abilities, which refer to the ability to understand. Discourse management strategies focus on the speaker's conversational needs and are often discussed in terms of topic selection and face management. Interpersonal control strategies attempt to guide the course of a particular conversation or more generally a relationship through strategies such as interruption or even assertion of direct power. These accommodation strategies contribute to the language choice of speakers, while the crucial factor is that the speakers share at least one common language in selecting the most appropriate strategies.

In this study, the Communication Accommodation Theory will be applied to demonstrate the extent of convergence or divergence that has occurred in the Hubei families over the three generations. The strategies – approximation, interpretability, discourse management

and interpersonal control – have been applied to analyse the accommodation strategies used by the Hubei family members in their domains of language use.

2.3 Domains of language use

Domain refers to the environment where the general activities related to that particular environment affect the choice of languages used. According to Fishman (1972), specifically, domains are defined in terms of institutional contexts or socio-ecological co-occurrences. These domains aim to categorise the major areas of interaction that occur in multilingual settings, for example, education, family, employment, religion and friendship. They enable us to understand that language choice is related to widespread socio-cultural norms and expectations. In this study, three domains of language use – home, social and socio-cultural activities – are analysed to determine the language preference. These three domains of language use are specifically chosen because the probability of using the heritage language would be higher in these environments.

2.3.1 Home Domain

Spolsky (2007) states that the language beliefs and practices of the participants in the home and their attempts to influence the practices and beliefs of other members of the home speech community are critical. The home language ecology is susceptible to influences from other domains if a language shift away from the home language is permitted. Once the children are exposed to the language practices and beliefs of their peers in the neighbourhood or in school, a new conflict is established. Thus, even the family, the presumably simplest and most basic domain for its effects on natural intergenerational language transmission, is open to the influence of other domains.

Family language policy can be defined as the explicit (Shohamy, 2006) and overt (Schiffman, 1996) planning in terms of language use in the home among family members.

Hence, the family plays a vital role in the maintenance and preservation of languages. In multilingual families, especially where the parents are of exogamous marriage, language choice becomes a complex process because of the availability of other languages within the speakers' linguistic repertoire. Firstly, if the parents come from different linguistic backgrounds, there is a need to decide on a common language or languages to be used for communication within the home domain. Therefore, a form of family language policy is necessary to determine which language or languages would be the lingua francas in a family, especially in situations where the parents come from different linguistic backgrounds. The choice of the family lingua franca is based on practice and ideology Hence, the choice of the most appropriate language or languages as the lingua francas within the family domain depends on the following factors: (1) the level of parents' proficiency in the language, (2) the degree of accessibility to the language, (3) the frequency of use of the language as L1 and (4) the prestige of the language in the society (Spolsky, 2004). So, the family needs to agree upon a common language or languages that members in the family are proficient in to be the lingua francas; this common language or languages may not be the mother tongues of either parents. Therefore, in the home domain, family language policy plays a vital role in choosing the language or languages to be used at home.

Fishman (1991), Spolsky (2004) and Schwartz (2008) also affirmed that the frequent use of the mother tongue in the home domain is crucial in maintaining the language. The family language policy in the home domain determines which language or languages would be the lingua francas especially in a family of exogamous marriage. In addition, if there is a lack of intergenerational transmission of the first language (L1) by the older generations to the younger generations, the proficiency of L1 will inevitably diminish. Ultimately, language loss occurs when the later generation of speakers are neither able to understand nor speak the heritage language due to the use of another language, often the

dominant local language, in the home which has become the L1. In other words, there is a shift from L1 to the use of other languages in the home domain.

Similarly, Spolsky (2012) pointed out that the home domain is one of the key factors in language maintenance policy. The parents are the key participants (with differences occurring between the mother and father), children (with differences based on gender, birth order and age) and others (grandparents and helpers). As these participants have different language practice and different beliefs about the value of the other languages in the linguistic repertoire, they may attempt to influence or control the language practice and beliefs of others. In the family language policy, family members hold different roles at different times in different situations, with parents being the decision makers, but not always in absolute control. As children grow and interact with their surroundings, eventually, the family language policy has to be adapted to varying degrees and in different ways.

2.3.2 Social Domain

From the social perspective, the choice of languages used is dependent on the potential advantages of these languages in terms of acquiring employment, career advancement and education. Siguan and Mackey (1986) wrote that decisions made by parents on the choice of language for their children's social skills influence the linguistic behaviour of the family. Thus, often the language used in high domains (education, employment and government) is adopted by the speakers in the community for use even in the low domains (home, friendship and neighbourhood). For example, in Ting and Sussex's (2002) study of the Foochow dialect in Sarawak, it was found that the Foochow Chinese have gradually shifted to the use of Mandarin and English in their social domain. These languages have extended their domains of language use and have invaded the home domain, too.

2.3.3 Socio-cultural Domain

Fishman (1965) emphasises that it is necessary to understand *who* speaks *what* language to *whom* and *when* in a multilingual setting. He states that in within-group (intragroup) multilingualism, members of a speech community may use two (or more) separate codes for internal communicative purposes as compared with between-group (intergroup) multilingualism where the dominant language may be preferred. For example, in intergroup multilingualism, members of the Hubei community may use Mandarin or other Chinese varieties to communicate with one another at social gatherings. As a result, members of the same speech community end up disregarding the general knowledge of the mother tongue as a crucial operative variable since the members are able to communicate with each other in the available languages. Thus, in the domain of socio-cultural activities, or intragroup multilingualism, the language choice is dependent on the members in the speech community. Here, accommodation in terms of discourse management strategies is applied to determine the language choice that is best suited to the speakers, but what is evident in this multilingual environment is that there is at least one common language shared by the speakers.

2.4 Language choice and language shift

According to Fishman (1985), ethnicity consists of 'the sensing and expressing of links to one's own kind, to collectivities that not only purportedly have historical depth but, more crucially, share putative ancestral origins and, therefore, the gifts and responsibilities, rights and obligations deriving therefrom' (p.88). It consists of three components – being, knowing and doing; language is the selected tool to reflect each of these dimensions. In other words, language serves as an indicator of a culture and becomes symbolic of that culture in which it dwells. Since ethnicity is an indicator of the culture, it is obvious that language is used as an indicator of ethnicity. Monolingualism

was the practice for the early Hubei migrants and speaking only Hubei helped them to preserve their identity in the host society.

Bradley (2002) stated that with rapidly increasing mobility of population, there is fragmentation of speech communities through more and more intermarriage between speakers of different languages. This has resulted in the diminishing value and importance of minor languages and consequently has increased the reliance on the use of dominant languages that have become the lingua franca in the home domain.

Subsequently, there is a decline in inter-generational transmission of the minor languages. This is accompanied by the deliberate decision of parents to use the major language(s) in the home in order to help their children to 'get ahead' in society as those languages hold economic and social value to them. For the newly-born (G3 and G4) whose first language has not yet been established, the home environment sets the stage for the first language to be nurtured. If there is incomplete acquisition of the minority language in a bi/multilingual environment, there is a possibility of the younger generation moving from the minority language acquired as the first language to another.

Language choices in multilingual families are determined by various factors (Dumanig, Khemlani David and Shanmuganathan, 2013). Those factors that are relevant to this study are the speakers' proficiency in the heritage language, age, education, role-relationships, dominant language and social status of the language. The multilingual family members, particularly the parents who come from different speech communities who accommodate and use different languages, influence the choice of language at home.

Pauwels (2016) states that if the speakers in a language contact situation abandon a language, the consequences may likely be language shift, language loss and language death. She defines language shift as the gradual disappearance of a language, which is

replaced by other language(s) in the speech community, without the necessary total disappearance or death of the former language.

Likewise, Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (2001) define language shift as 'the replacement of one language by another as the primary means of communication and socialisation within a community'. In other words, L1 is substituted by L2, a preferred dominant language, for communicating and socialising purposes within the speech community. In addition, Fasold (1987) sees language shift as the surrender of one language in favour of another, while Fishman (1991) explains that the phenomenon of language shift is a threat to native languages due to the reduced number of users. As the numerical strength of the speakers of the native language begins to reduce due to language shift, the likelihood of language death becomes greater.

2.5 Language attitudes

Language attitudes is defined as the feelings speakers have towards their own language and the language of others in the community. Bradley (2002) asserts that attitudes of the speech community towards their language is a crucial factor in language maintenance. He adds that attitudinal factors that disfavour language maintenance inevitably lead to language endangerment. Furthermore, the cultural value of a language is also important. In other words, it is equally crucial that the members of a speech community regard their language and their maintenance as a key aspect of their group identity (Smolicz, 2010). Bradley (2002) mentions numerous factors that influence language attitudes. Those factors that are pertinent to this study are: how public use of the minority language in the presence of the dominant speakers is viewed, whether the minority group members regard it difficult to maintain the language and the attitudes of the minority language speakers towards their relative utility, importance and beauty of the language.

Appel and Muysken (1987) state that social or ethnic groups of different social status within a society have certain attitudes towards each other which affect attitudes towards cultural institutions such as language. For example, the Foochow and Hokkien communities in Kuching, Malaysia, showed positive attitudes towards Mandarin (Puah & Ting, 2015). Gender, age and social interactions of the Foochow and Hokkien speakers influenced their ratings in favour of Mandarin as they perceived the speakers of the language to be easy-going and rich and convey strength and solidarity.

According to Fasold (1987), there are two theoretical approaches to the study of language attitudes: the behaviourist approach and the mentalist approach. In the behaviourist perspective, language attitudes are evidences from the responses that speakers provide in social situations, whereas under the mentalist perspective, language attitudes are viewed as internal, mental states , which may give rise to certain forms of behaviour. It is believed that the behaviourist approach is straightforward as the responses are simpler to tabulate and analyse based on overt behaviour, but the results are predictable and uninteresting.

Under the mentalist view, attitudes consist of three components. These are: cognitive, which involves the speakers' belief systems, knowledge and perceptions about the language; affective, which deals with the speakers' emotional reactions and feelings towards the language, and conative which examines the speakers' actions and interest in the language (Fasold, 1987 p 229). However, it has been affirmed that even though the mentalist approach is more difficult to analyse as internal mental states cannot be directly observed, more interesting results are produced which can be used to predict other behaviours. Therefore, in this study, the behaviourist and mentalist approaches are adopted to analyse the participants' attitudes towards the Hubei language in order to determine their beliefs, perceptions and emotions about their first language.

2.6 Multilingualism

Malaysia is a country whose population is capable of speaking more than one language. This is evident from its educational policy whereby two compulsory languages, Bahasa Melayu and English, are taught in all schools, with the additional Mandarin or Tamil taught in national type schools. Thus, an average family in Malaysia may be capable of speaking two or more languages. Hence, in such multilingual families, language choice becomes a complex phenomenon because of the availability of other languages in the speakers' linguistic repertoire (Dumanig, Khemlani David and Shanmuganathan, 2013). Ellis (2002) affirms that multilingualism occurs when three or more languages are used within a family, and this phenomenon is common in Malaysian families whereby many family members, particularly non-Malay families, communicate with each other in more than two languages. Therefore, such an environment whereby there is a multiple choice of languages within the home domain provides a greater possibility for code-switching to take place between and across languages. Gradually, this may lead to a complete language shift as the status of the first language declines and it is replaced by other major languages.

Bradley (2002) declares that there is a hierarchy of languages with a domain-specific use of different languages for specific purposes if there are two first languages in the home domain, which he calls 'language exogamy'.

2.7 Other studies

The following pieces of research also analyse language choice, language shift and maintenance of the minority languages in Malaysia and Singapore. These research studies have been selected as they are cases with similar characteristics as the minority Hubei language in Malaysia.

Coluzzi (2017) mentions several factors which have been crucial for Malaysian minority languages to enjoy strong ethnolinguistic vitality. They are: (1) intergenerational transmission, (2) endogamy, (3) language used in the home and (4) language attitudes. Based on the Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) by Lewis and Simons (2010), Bidayuh is categorised as Level 6 (Vigorous) because of its vitality, however, only within the Bidayuh belt. As those factors mentioned earlier are present in the community within the Bidayuh belt in Sarawak, the vitality of the language is maintained. However, outside the Bidayuh belt, Bidayuh is experiencing fast language shift (Level 7) to Bahasa Melayu and English which are commonly used for inter-ethnic communication. Thus, the younger people residing outside the Bidayuh belt are less fluent in their heritage language than the older generation as Bahasa Melayu is spoken more fluently. Similarly, Malaysian Chinese's heritage languages are experiencing a fast language shift (Level 7) to Mandarin as it is expanding at a rapid rate in Malaysia. Mandarin has taken over other Chinese varieties in Malaysia due to its high vitality, its prestige and its presence in the Chinese National-type schools and the media. In addition, based on the Communication Accommodation Theory, Mandarin is adopted as the language used in divergent situations between two different speakers, for instance in exogamous marriages, which is increasingly common today. Naturally, as less of the younger people are able to speak their heritage language, some Chinese varieties are becoming moribund (Level 8).

Ting & Sussex (2002) in their study 'Language choice among the Foochows in Sarawak, Malaysia', show that the Foochow community demonstrate multi-directional accommodation of the language. The Foochow dialect showed accommodation to the internal norm, i.e. the use of the heritage language within the community, as it maintains its ethnolinguistic vitality in mainly Foochow-dominant areas through the use of the native language within the community. In other words, the Foochow speech community

shows attempts at maintaining the vitality of their heritage language by using it conscientiously in their peer group relationships.

However, this vitality is being eroded by accommodation to the external norm, i.e the use of other languages outside the Foochow community. Other more dominant languages in the society are preferred over Foochow in order to facilitate communicative efficiency and gain acceptance from the other groups speaking Chinese language varieties, English and Bahasa Melayu. This accommodation to the other dominant languages in the society has affected the vitality of the heritage language. Thus, when the effects of the external norm outweigh the internal norm, accommodation takes place inevitably.

Lee (2016), in her research 'Grandmother's tongue. Decline of Teochew language in Singapore', stresses the imminent disappearance of the Teochew dialect within the next decade. The younger generation are accustomed to the use of Mandarin and English as the languages of communication in Singapore between spouses and between parents and children. Consequently, very few children in Teochew families are able to speak the language due to the severe language shift. Although the interviewees expressed their concern that cultural values are best retained through the heritage language, they are driven by pragmatism towards the use of English and Mandarin as these languages provide economic and social benefits. Thus, there is little incentive to preserve the language and the interviewees predicted that they would likely be the last generation to use Teochew in Singapore.

Pillai, Soh & Kajita (2014), in their study 'Family Language policy and heritage language maintenance of Malacca Portuguese Creole', show that Kristang, the heritage language of the Malacca Portuguese community, is gradually losing its vitality as other languages are used in the community and the home domain as well. Even though the surviving older generation is fluent in the language, there is a lack of transmission of the language to the

younger generation. English is the preferred language choice for communication for utilitarian purposes and it is difficult for members of the older generation to insist only on using the heritage language in the home domain with the younger generation. Furthermore, code-switching naturally occurs in a multilingual environment, and so the learning of the Malacca Portuguese Creole by the younger generation is further hampered by this phenomenon.

Noriah Mohamed & Nor Hashimah Hashim (2012), in their research 'Language vitality of the Sihan community in Sarawak', explain that the language vitality of the Sihan language has deteriorated and has not fulfilled the nine vitality factors proposed by UNESCO. The vitality of the language is low because it does not provide any functional purpose in the public domain. Furthermore, the number of Sihan speakers in the Sihan community is declining, it does not have an orthography and documentation is scarce. Finally, multilingualism in the Sihan community has jeopardised the use of the heritage language.

Khemlani-David (1998), in her research 'Language shift, cultural maintenance and ethnic identity; a study of the minority community: the Sindhis of Malaysia', points out that language is only one aspect of cultural and ethnic identity. The study demonstrates that despite the Sindhis in Malaysia transmitting their values and beliefs in their new first language – English – there is no fear of losing their identity. This is due to the steadfast views and attitudes of the community towards maintaining their daily lifestyles, cultural norms, religion and strong kinship ties.

2.8 Summary

This chapter has presented the theoretical frameworks that have been employed to analyse the language choice and language shift among the three generations of family members

in a sample of Hubei families. Firstly, the Communication Accommodation Theory has been used to determine the level of convergence the language has developed as the Hubei speakers accommodate their language choices and attitudes to keep pace with the changes in ethnic identity, family environment and social practices.

Next, Fishman's concept of domain of language use has been used with specific reference to the home domain, social domain and lastly, the socio-cultural domain. These relevant domains of language use will demonstrate the flow of language traffic that takes place in the presence of rising exogamous marriages, declining inter-generational transmission of the mother tongue and increasing use of other languages in the second and third generation of the Hubei community.

Furthermore, the decline in inter-generational transmission of the heritage language as well as the deliberate family language policies adopted by parents to aid the younger generation to adapt themselves better in society may affect the use of the heritage language in a speech community. These factors arise from negative language attitudes towards the heritage language due to the low economic and social status of the language in the society.

In addition, a short review of literature on language choice and language shift has been provided that show the mechanics of language used in the home, social and socio-cultural domains. Family language policy plays a crucial role in the maintenance of the mother tongue. Finally, the attitude of the speakers towards their mother tongue in a multilingual environment based on economic and social advantages affects the choice of the language used resulting in a language shift to the other preferred languages.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

John Fishman (1991, 2001) had argued that successful maintenance of a minority language is dependent on whether it remains as the everyday language of informal communication among three generations of speakers consecutively. Therefore, this research analyses the languages used by three generations of a Hubei family in Malaysia, a multilingual society, mainly in the home, with friends and relatives in their social circles and at sociocultural events. A multilingual setting is defined by Fishman (1972) as a situation where two (or more) 'languages' are used by a single population for communicative purposes within its community. Consequently, Ellis (2002) reiterates that multilingualism is a phenomenon whereby three or more languages are used in an environment. Therefore, families in multilingual environments are faced with the choice of considering which languages to be used in different domains. In addition, Ellis (2002) states that the preference for a specific language or language variety to be used in different situations for potential purposes is decided by internal family dynamics.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts the mixed-method research design (quantitative and qualitative methods) to explore the choice of languages used in the Hubei families, determine the attitude of the speakers towards their mother tongue and examine the reasons for the language shift from Hubei to other languages, namely Mandarin and other Chinese varieties, and English.

Miles & Huberman mentions that when quantitative and qualitative data are combined, "we have a very powerful mix" (as cited in Creswell, 2012.) When in-depth responses obtained from a qualitative approach are combined with the numerical information from a quantitative approach, "a complex" picture of social phenomenon is developed (Greene & Caracelli, 1997, p. 256). Therefore, a combination of research tools using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, which include a system of triangulation to show "validity, including authenticity, goodness, verisimilitude, adequacy, trustworthiness, plausibility, validity, validation, and credibility" Creswell & Miller (2000, p. 148) will be used to collect the data for analysis.

3.3 Theoretical Framework: Domains of language use

This study looks at three domains of language use: home, social and socio-cultural activities. These three domains may be illustrated as three concentric circles to represent the degree of familiarity among the participants. The inner circle represents the family unit or home domain whereby the participants interact with immediate family members; the middle circle represents the social domain where the participants communicate with close relatives but outside the home, and the outermost circle represents the communication with other Hubei community members who are outside the family environment in socio-cultural activities.
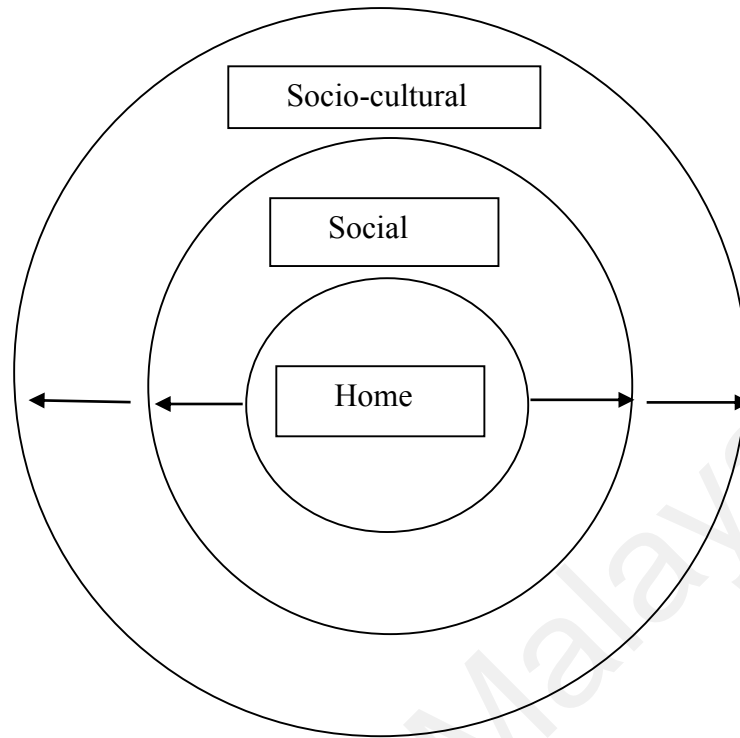
Figure 3.1: Domains of language use

Spolsky (2007) describes domain, as introduced by Fishman (1972), as a social space, and that each domain has its own language policy which has internal control of some features while other domains are under the control of external influences. He adds that the family is regarded as an important domain for analysing language policy as the family unit or home domain is crucial in the development of a child's linguistic environment. Therefore, the questions on the home domain aim to obtain details about the type of language used by participants with their family members, particularly in the home, for communication and interaction purposes.

Schwartz (2008) points out in her study of family policy factors affecting the heritage language development among second generation immigrants that children born in the host country have an unstable and incomplete acquisition of the native language. Thus, the social domain will be analysed to determine the extent to which Hubei is used among the

participants during social interactions with relatives and other Hubei community members outside the immediate family circle.

Finally, the domain of socio-cultural activities aims to investigate the language used by the participants at gatherings and activities where relatives and other Hubei community members meet to celebrate an occasion or event, for example, weddings, wake services, funerals, birthdays and reunion dinners. This domain will provide information on the preferred language(s) used by the participants with other Hubei speakers in the community.

3.4 Demographic profile of participants

The total number of participants in this study comprised of 45 individuals (20 males and 25 females) who have been categorised into three generations according to their age range. They are the researcher's relatives from close and extended families. Therefore, no bureaucracy was necessary in the ethical consideration for data collection. They are Generation 1 (G1) aged 75 and above, Generation 2 (G2) aged 45 − 74 and Generation 3 (G3) aged 16 − 44. Members of G2 are the children of G1; the oldest G2 participant is almost the same age as the youngest G1 member. Similarly, members of G3 are children of G2 participants whereby the oldest G3 member is very close in age to the youngest G2 member. These participants are of Hubei origin, born and residing in Malaysia, who come from both endogamous and exogamous marriages. They reside in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Perak. According to a survey conducted by the Hubei Association of Malaysia, there are currently at least 3000 Hubei Chinese living in Malaysia who can be found in Penang, Perak, Selangor and even in Kelantan and Terengganu on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia.

The demographic profile of the participants is categorised based on generation and age, gender, medium of instruction received at school, practice of endogamy or exogamy marriages and their Hubei proficiency. The data will aim to provide a better understanding of the reasons for the choice of language(s) used in the selected domains. In addition, the reasons for the language shift from L1 to other languages in the three domains selected can also be analysed using the information from the demographic profiling.

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of participant samples based on three generations and their age ranges. Tabulation of all figures for the tables is in absolute numbers and percentages

Table 3.1: Distribution of participants according to generations

Generation	1		2		3		Total	
Age	75 >		45-74		16-44		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	4	20	7	35	9	45	20	100
Female	1	4	13	52	11	44	25	100
Total	5	11	20	44.5	20	44.5	45	100

N: Numbers
% : Percentages

Table 3.1 shows the number of participants for each generation and their age ranges. The participants are categorised according to generations to demonstrate the process of language shift across the three generations. The classic three-generation model of language shift proposed by Fishman (1966, 1991) has been referred to in several

researches on language shift. Therefore, this study will investigate the language shift in Hubei families across three generations, too.

The table shows that the number of participants from the Hubei families comprises of 45 individuals (20 male and 25 female). G1 consists of five participants (four male, one female), G2 and G3 both comprise of 20 respondents (seven male, 13 female and nine male, 11 female respectively.)

3.5 Questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix A) used in this study is adapted from Coluzzi, P., Riget, P.N., Wang X. (2013) and is written in English. It consists of three sections: Section 1 provides questions on personal information, Section 2 provides questions that analyse the use of the language in selected domains and Section 3 deals with the language attitudes of the participants. The questionnaire is written only in English; it was translated to Hubei for G1 members and other Chinese varieties for G2 as well as G3 members who are not proficient in English.

Section 1 comprises of 6 questions which aim to obtain the participants' personal details. Questions 1 – 6 request participants' personal information, i.e., name, age, gender, marital status, medium of instruction used at schools and their proficiency level in the mother tongue. The information obtained will provide the background for the language choice in the home, social and socio-cultural domains.

Subsequently, questions 7 – 15 in Section 2 analyse the languages used in the home and social domains to show the trend in language shift. Finally, the questions in Section 3 is designed to elicit the participants' attitudes towards their mother tongue and its maintenance in Malaysia in the next 20 years.

Table 3.2 to Table 3.4 show the medium of instruction used by the participants. The ministry of education in Malaysia determines the medium of instruction in the schools.

The type of medium of instruction used helps to explain the language preferences in the home, social and socio-cultural domains.

Table 3.2: Medium of instruction (G1)

Languages	Mandarin		Mandarin and English		English		Malay		Malay and English		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	%	N	%	N	%
Primary	5	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	100
Secondary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tertiary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

N: Numbers
%: Percentages

Based on the table above, all five (100%) of the G1 participants attended the Mandarin medium primary school. However, they only barely managed to complete their primary education and were unable to pursue their secondary and tertiary education due to family constraints at the time of the Japanese Occupation in Malaysia in the 1940s.

Table 3.3: Medium of instruction (G2)

Languages	Mandarin		English		Malay		Total	
Education	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary	18	90	2	10	-	-	20	100
Secondary	-	-	-	-	20	100	20	100

N: Numbers
%: Percentages

Table 3.3 shows the number of G2 participants who attended Mandarin, English and Malay medium schools. When Malaysia (then Malaya) obtained her independence in 1957 until the 1970, some parents in Malaysia began to enrol their children in English medium schools, yet many still insisted on sending their children to Mandarin National-type schools. Schwartz, et al. (2010) mentions that the parents' decisions about the choice and form of bilingual education are important factors that affect the integration of second-generation immigrants within their host community and the maintenance of their heritage language and culture.

Therefore, 18 (90%) of the G2 participants attended Mandarin medium primary schools while two (10%) attended the English medium primary schools. However, with the implementation of the new National Education Policy in 1970, the English language was replaced by Malay as the medium of instruction in both primary and secondary schools. Therefore, upon completion of the primary school education, all 20 (100%) of the G2 participants continued their secondary education in the Malay medium schools.

Table 3.4: Medium of instruction (G3)

Languages	Mandarin		English		Malay		Total	
Education	N	%	N	N	%	%	N	%
Primary	19	95	-	-	1	5	20	100
Secondary			-	-	20	100	20	100

N: Numbers
% : Percentages

Table 3.4 shows the type of schools attended by the G3 participants. 19 (95%) of them were enrolled in the Mandarin medium primary schools while only one (5%) was sent to a non-Mandarin medium school. Subsequently, all 20 (100%) G3 participants completed their secondary school education in the Malay medium as the National Education Policy

in 1970 replaced English with Malay as the medium of instruction in all 'national' or government schools.

Table 3.5: Practice of endogamy and exogamy

Marriages	Endogamy		Exogamy		Single		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
G1	3	60	2	40	-	-	5	100
G2	-	-	18	90	2	10	20	100
G3	-	-	10	50	10	50	20	100
Total	3	6.7	30	66.6	12	26.7	45	100

N: Numbers
% : Percentages

Table 3.5 shows the type of marriage customs adopted by the participants. Three (60%) G1 participants practised endogamy, two (40%) adopted exogamy. The endogamous marriages were arranged by the older generation, i.e. parents and relatives of the G1 participants. As explained by Stevens and Swicegood (1987), ethnic endogamy fosters the inter-generational transmission of an ethnic group's cultural attributes and perpetuates its ethnicity. This tradition was the basis for the prevalent practice of endogamous marriages among the G1 as intended by their parents, the pioneers of the Hubei community in Malaysia.

However, with more opportunities for education, the G2 experienced improved economic changes in the family environment. Demographically and socially, the G2 have become more independent. There were 18 (90%) exogamous marriages and two (10%) have remained single. Similarly, there are 10 (50%) G3 participants who have adopted exogamy while the other 10 (50%) are still single.

Table 3.6: Level of Hubei proficiency

Generation	1		2		3		Total	
Age	75> (total 5)		45-74 (total 20)		16-44 (total 20)		Total	
Proficiency Level	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fluent	5	100	15	75	5	25	25	100
Limited	-	-	5	25	3	15	8	100
Zero	-	-	-	-	12	60	12	100
Total	5	11.2	20	44.4	20	44.4	45	100

N: Numbers
% : Percentages

Table 3.6 shows the level of command of the Hubei language by the participants. In terms of fluent proficiency, five (100%) of the G1 participants are able to speak fluently in the mother tongue while 15 (75%) of the G2 participants and five (25%) of the G3 can speak the mother tongue fluently.

Among those with limited proficiency, five (25%) of the G2 and three (15%) of the G3 have some difficulties conversing in Hubei. Finally, 12 (60%) of the G3 participants have zero knowledge of the Hubei language.

3.6 Interview

The other research instrument used in this study was interviews conducted with eight selected participants. The choice of participants was based on the following factors: diversity (gender), experience (different generations) and perspective (willingness to share opinions). The interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured, and were used 'as a source of insight to obtain insiders' perspectives' (Leech, 2002). The relaxed

interaction between the researcher and the interviewees provided opportunities to explore their personal thoughts and feelings in an authentic environment. Ryan et al (2009) and Holloway and Wheeler (2010) state that this enables the participant's thoughts and interests to be explored in depth, which, in turn, generates rich data.

The interviews were carried out between February and November 2015 as follows: two participants from G1, three from G2 and three from G3. The data obtained from the different age groups provided supportive evidence of the language choices and language shift among the three generations.

3.6.1 Interview questions

The interview questions (Appendix B) comprised of four focal questions followed by added questions for clarification. The four interview questions aimed to elicit the participants' experiences and opinions regarding the use of the Hubei language in Malaysia. Additional supportive questions were also provided to encourage relevant elaborations from the participants.

1. What are your reactions/opinions about using the Hubei language?
2. Which languages do you use more frequently at home and on social occasions? Why?
3. Will/Did you educate your children to use the Hubei language? Why/Why not?
4. What do you think is the future of the Hubei language in Malaysia?

3.7 Data collection

This study uses both a quantitative and qualitative approach. The quantitative approach was adopted to analyse the questionnaires and the qualitative approach was adopted to investigate the respondents' language attitudes and the reasons for the language shift.

As the Hubei community in Malaysia is small, the researcher was compelled to exploit her family members as participants in this study. The questionnaires were distributed to 45 selected participants, who reside in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Perak, between February and November 2015, due to work and family constraints. The distribution was conducted by the researcher personally as the researcher travelled to the participants' homes in the various states in order to ensure reliability of the data. The questionnaire was translated from English to Hubei for the G1 participants who are illiterate in English and explanations were provided by the researcher to minimise the level of misinterpretation of the questions. When all the questionnaires were completed and collected, the data were compiled and analysed quantitatively, and the statistics were categorised based on the three different generations.

The interviews were conducted concurrently with the questionnaires. The researcher explained the objectives of the study to the participants and requested their cooperation to be open to share their thoughts, feelings and opinions. The researcher then assured them of the anonymity of their identity and the interviews were carried out in the informal environment of their homes to encourage authentic responses. The interviews lasted 15 to 20 minutes on average after which the questionnaires were distributed for completion. The data were transcribed, categorised thematically and analysed using a qualitative approach.

3.8 Data Analysis

The Excel summary sheet was used to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaires. The data obtained from the questionnaires are presented in terms of numbers and percentages which are illustrated in tables followed by descriptions and explanations. The data presented in the survey illustrate the factors affecting language choices and language

shift in this tri-generational Hubei family in Malaysia, responding to research question 1: What languages are used by the three generations in the home, social, and sociocultural activities domains?

The interviews were transcribed and analysed to determine the participants' attitudes towards the maintenance of the language and the reasons for the language shift from Hubei to other languages. The information correlates to research questions 2 and 3, which are: What kind of attitudes do the tri-generational Hubei speakers have towards their heritage language? What are the reasons for the language shift by the Hubei speakers across the three generations?

3.9 Summary

This chapter has described the methodology used to obtain and analyse the data in order to achieve the research objectives proposed in Chapter One. The two research instruments used in this study to obtain data were a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire was used to elicit information on the demographic profile of the G1 – G3 participants: age group, gender, the medium of instruction used at school and the type of marriage practices adopted. In addition to a number of questions on language use, interviews were conducted to determine the language shift and language attitudes that inevitably occurred over time across the three generations.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the findings of the questionnaires and interviews obtained from respondents across the three generations of the Hubei community. This chapter is divided into three main sections: language choice, language attitudes and reasons for the language shift. As the aim of this study is to examine if there has been a language shift away from the heritage language in the Hubei families, the data analysis will focus on providing responses to the three research questions stated in this study. Through the responses from Section 1 and 2 of the questionnaires, as well as part of the interviews, language choice will be analysed in the three domains, specifically home, social and sociocultural activities domain. The analyses will attempt to answer Research Question 1: What languages are used by the three generations in the home, social, and sociocultural activities domains? Next, the responses from Section 3 of the questionnaires, in addition to the interviews, will provide answers to Research Questions 2 and 3 respectively: What kind of attitudes do the tri-generational Hubei speakers have towards their mother tongue? What are the reasons for the language shift by the Hubei speakers across the three generations?

4.2 Background

Therefore, this study will analyse among other things, the influence that the participants' education had on the vitality of their mother tongue. The medium of instruction used in the schools also impacted the language proficiency of the participants and eventually

affected the use of their mother tongue. In addition, the social factors based on the type of marriage practices which have been gradually abandoned over time have added to the decline in the use of the heritage language. The findings for this section are drawn from Section 1 of the questionnaire.
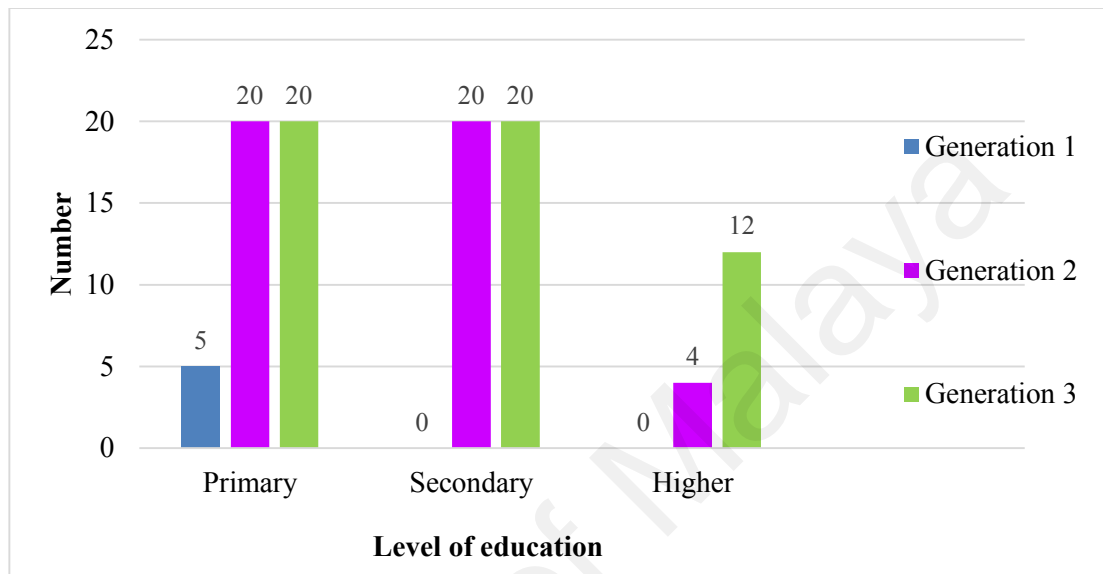
Figure 4.1: Level of education attained

Figure 4.1 shows the level of education pursued by the participants in this study. All Generation 1 (G1) members (100%) enjoyed some form of primary school education, though not complete. Their schooling had been affected by the economic and political situation in the country before independence and thus not all G1 members managed to complete their primary school education. Two G1 members managed to complete primary school education whereas the other three senior G1 members had to abandon their primary school education due to financial constraints within the family and the occurrence of the Japanese occupation in the country during the mid-1940's.

Consequently, these senior G1 members did not pursue any education thereafter as all of them married and set up families of their own.

Remarkably, after the country gained independence in 1957, the education system in the country experienced positive developments. The 1956 Razak Report prescribed that children received compulsory primary school education, followed by the Rahman Talib Report in 1960 which resulted in free secondary education. In general, as a result of these educational reforms in the country based on these reports, the G2 and G3 participants obtained increased opportunities to education as compared to the G1 members. Thus, Figure 4.1 shows that all the G2 and G3 participants successfully completed six years of primary school education. It is noted that not all the G2 participants completed the 5-6 years of secondary school education; however, 80 % of them attended up to at least three years of secondary school education and the remaining 20% left the school system and went in search of work, got married and did not pursue further education. None of the G1 participants obtained any form of secondary school education.

Lastly, Figure 4.1 shows that the number of participants who attended higher education is significantly lower in comparison with primary and secondary school education. Only four G2 participants (20%) and twelve G3 participants (60%) attended tertiary education. The reason for the lower number of participants attending tertiary education is due to the fact that tertiary education is not free and so the majority of the G2 and G3 participants settled for work and marriage after their secondary school education was completed.
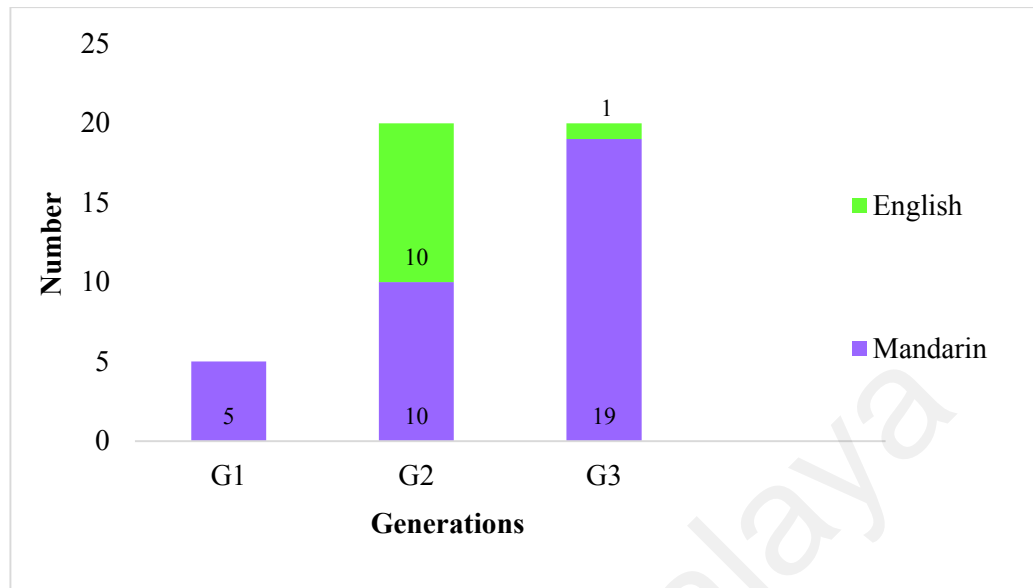
Figure 4.2: Medium of instruction at primary school level

Figure 4.2 shows the forms of medium of instruction received at schools by the members who participated in the study. As shown in the table, all (100%) of the G1 participants had received Mandarin as the medium of instruction; during the pre-independent days of the country, the G1 participants attended Chinese vernacular primary schools. The need for heritage and cultural identity among the newly arrived migrant community in the host country was a crucial reason for G1 participants to attend Chinese vernacular schools at that time.

Following that, when the national education system introduced English and Malay-mediums of instruction in the post-independence days in the 1960's in a bid to fulfil the aim of nation building, a significant number of G2 participants, 10 (50%), were enrolled in Chinese and English medium primary schools respectively. Thus, the Hubei families at that time were open to both media of instructions: Mandarin in order to ensure that the Chinese cultural identity was maintained in a plural society and English as a language for economic progress.

Lastly, Figure 4.2 shows an outstanding increase in the number of G3 participants who had Mandarin as a medium of instruction. The number doubled from 10 (50%) among the G2 participants to 19 (95%) among the G3s. This surge in the enrolment at Chinese vernacular schools of the G3 participants was due to the implementation of the monolingual policy in the 1970s advocating the Malay language, the national language, as the main thrust for the national building process. The Chinese primary schools received overwhelming support from the Chinese community at that time, when English-medium primary schools were converted to Malay-medium primary schools, leading to an outflow of Chinese students to the Chinese primary schools and hence, a surge in enrolment in these schools (Chai, 1977). By the early 1980s, about 90 per cent of Chinese parents, including the Hubei families in the country, enrolled their children in the Chinese primary schools (The Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1980). In conclusion, about 75% of the total Hubei participants, inclusive of G1 to G3, had attended Chinese medium primary schools in comparison with only 25% who had attended English medium primary schools. This trend shows the impact of Mandarin on the family language policy practised in the Hubei families.
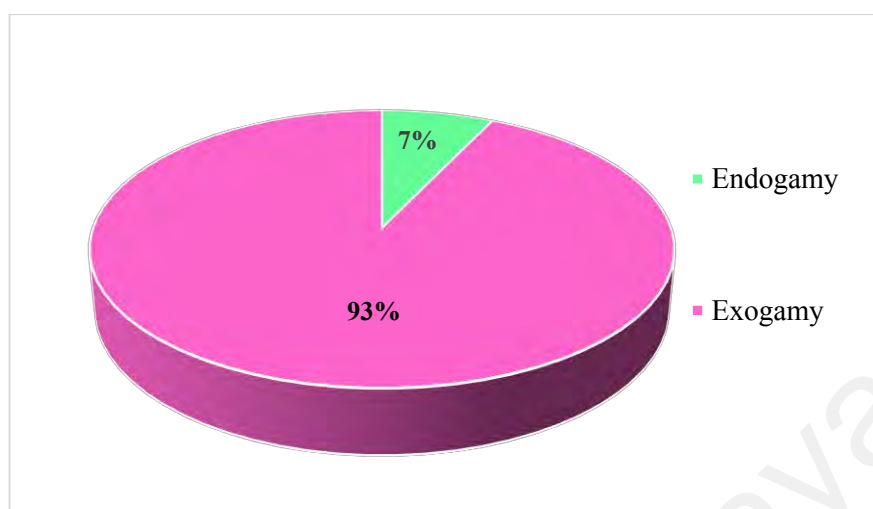
Figure 4.3: Marriage practices within the Hubei tri-generational families

Figure 4.3 illustrates the marriage practices of the Hubei participants spanning three generations. As is clearly indicated in the pie chart, exogamy is practised by 93% of the Hubei participants while only 7% observe endogamy. For clarification purposes, the 7% endogamy was observed by all members of G1 except for two G1 participants who did not marry a Hubei. The endogamous marriages in the Hubei families were arranged marriages; both the male and female members of marriageable ages at that time, in the 1950s, had only limited say in their parents' decisions. They married young, in their early 20s, and began to establish families of their own almost immediately.

On the contrary, all G2 and G3 participants practise exogamy. 93% of the total Hubei participants married spouses of another Chinese group or of another nationality. As the practice of arranged marriages in the Hubei families by then, in the 1980s, was abandoned, the G2 and G3 participants usually met their spouses at the place of work or through social contacts. The G2 and G3 members had obtained a higher level of education in comparison to the G1 members and so were more at liberty to make personal choices and decisions. Furthermore, due to dwindling numbers of ethnic Hubei population in the

country, the G2 and G3 members had little or no contact with other Hubei families. Thus, the younger generation, beginning from G2 and G3, married spouses of other Chinese groups. In conclusion, exogamy has become the norm practised by the Hubei community today.

Table 4.1: Marriage practices in G1 – Gender distribution

	Endogamy		Exogamy		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	2	50%	2	50%	4	100%
Female	1	100%	-	-	1	100%
Total	3	60%	2	40%	5	100

Table 4.1 shows the marriage practices of G1 Hubei participants according to the gender distribution. Two (50%) G1 male participants married their spouse of the same Hubei community whereas the other two (50%) G1 male respondents adopted exogamy and married spouses from other Chinese communities. The only one (100%) G1 female participant had an endogamous marriage. As a matter of interest, all endogamous marriages in the Hubei community were arranged marriages organised by parents or elder members in the community, while exogamous marriages were autonomous marriages.
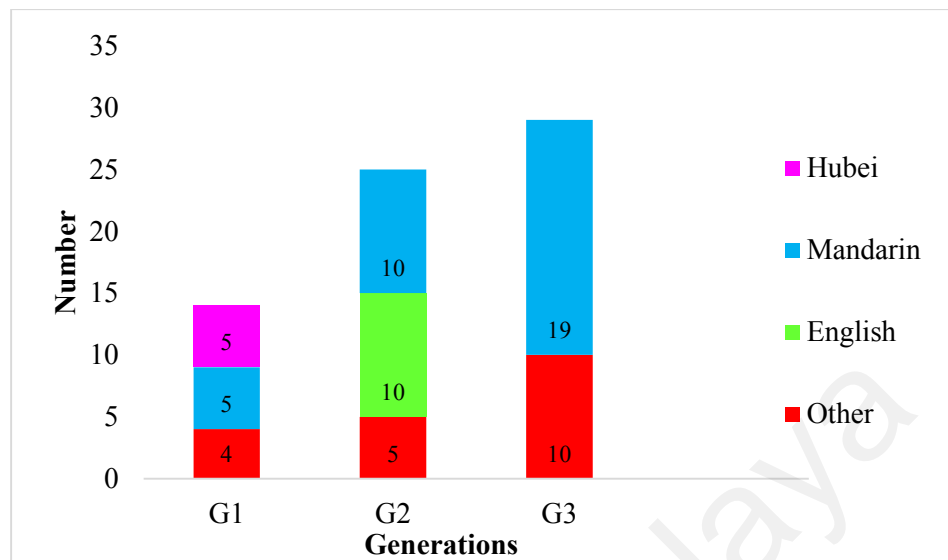
Figure 4.4: Language fluency within the Hubei tri-generational families

As required in item 5 of the questionnaire, the respondents had to state their proficiency in four languages, i.e Hubei, Mandarin, English and Other, which refers mainly to Cantonese and Hokkien. Malaysia being a multi-ethnic and multilingual country, the population is exposed to a variety of languages from a young age. In addition, the Malaysian education system promotes bilingualism and multilingualism through the establishment of primary schools with three different mediums of instruction: Bahasa Malaysia, the national language, is used as the medium of instruction in both primary and secondary national schools, while Mandarin and Tamil serve as the mediums of instruction in national-type (vernacular) primary Chinese and Tamil schools. At the same time, English is learnt as another language subject that has economic significance in addition to Malay which is compulsory for everybody. Furthermore, the Chinese communities in the country have their own mother tongues to be learnt in the homes. Therefore, it is not uncommon for a Malaysian Chinese to speak four languages: Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mandarin and their mother tongue. In this study, the respondents had to circle one or more responses according to the level of confidence in the language. The

number of respondents does not correspond to the total number of respondents as respondents were entitled to provide more than one response. All responses which indicate the languages circled by the respondents as shown in the questionnaire were taken into consideration in this graph analysis.

The graph analysis in Figure 4.4 shows the comparison of language fluency levels among the three generations of Hubei families. G1 members showed most competence in Hubei and Mandarin (five respondents respectively) and other Chinese varieties (four respondents), namely, Cantonese and Hokkien. However, with G2 respondents, the level of language fluency showed a gradual and apparent change. The G2 members declared they were most competent in Mandarin and English at 10 respondents respectively, with no mention of Hubei. Similarly, the G2 members agreed that they were equally competent in other Chinese varieties (five respondents). Subsequently, G3 members showed high competence in Mandarin (19 respondents) and other Chinese varieties (10 respondents) only.

The findings show that over a span of three generations, the Hubei family members have eventually lost the fluency of their heritage language and consequently have developed proficiency in other languages due to economic and social factors. The apparent trend that is observed in this graph is the significant disparity in proficiency of the heritage language between the older generation (G1) and the younger generations (G2 and G3).
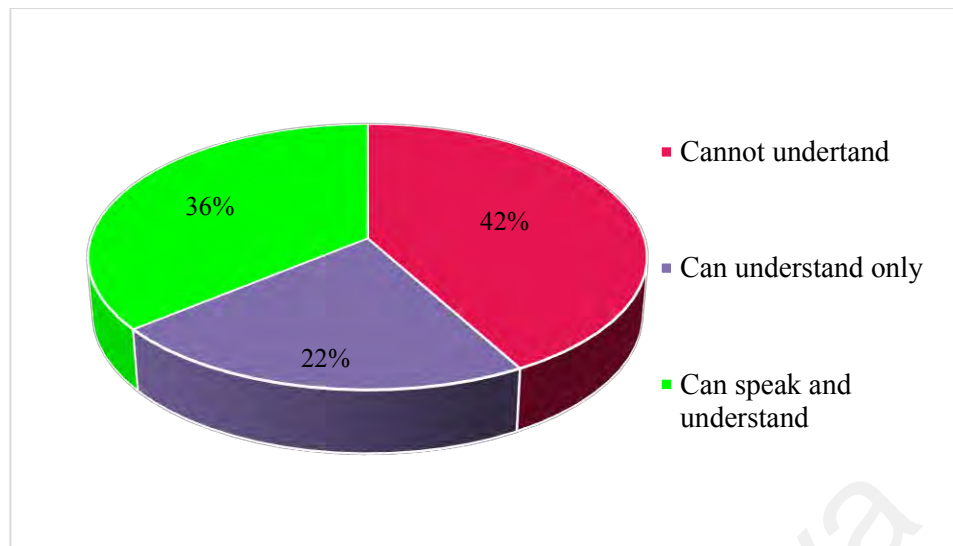
Figure 4.5: Proficiency of the heritage language in the Hubei tri-generational families

According to item 6 of the questionnaire, the respondents were required to state their ability to communicate in their heritage language by classifying their fluency based on three categories: ability to speak and understand, ability to understand only and inability to understand. Hence, Figure 4.5 shows the range of proficiency level of the Hubei respondents with regards to the use of the heritage language.

From the questionnaire analysis, 36% of the respondents declared that they are able to speak and understand the language. They stated that their proficiency level is sufficient to conduct a conversation in the language. These respondents consist of all the G1 members and some G2 members. The G2 members stated that they had been taught the language by conversing with G1, the older generation. Next, 22 % of the respondents stated that they have some knowledge of their heritage language. Upon further enquiry at the interview sessions, they explained that they could cope with the gist of what is spoken in Hubei but confessed that they are hesitant to reply in the language as they lack confidence due to their poor vocabulary level and inaccurate pronunciation. They acknowledged that they had not been taught the language from young and were not motivated to learn the language. These respondents comprise of some G2 members but

mostly G3 members. Finally, the highest percentage of the respondents (42%) claimed that they are unable to understand the heritage language. From the interview, they explained that they had not been taught the heritage language from young and they rarely heard the language used in their homes or within their social circle. Thus, even though they had been told they are of Hubei origin, they have little or no knowledge of the language. When Hubei is spoken to them or when the language is used in their company, the respondents confessed that the language is completely alien to them. These respondents come from the G3 group.

In conclusion, the pie chart shows that the percentage of non-Hubei speakers exceeds the percentage of Hubei speakers.

4.3 Language choice

The choice of language used in any communication depends on the domains where the interaction takes place. Accordingly, a domain is defined in terms of the social context where the interaction occurs. Domains of language use contribute a vital factor in determining language choice as the potential choice of the languages made is dependent on the role of the speakers vis-à-vis each other in different spheres of communication and the context where interaction takes place. Thus, in the context of multilingual Malaysia, multifaceted factors determine the language choice of the various speech communities in the country.

In this study, language choice in a Hubei tri-generational family is aptly described by Fishman (1965) as 'who speaks what language to whom and when'. The reason for this fitting description is because factors such as proficiency, attitudes, role relationships between members and participants' educational background influence the choice of

languages used by the Hubei family members. The findings for this section are derived from Section 2 of the questionnaire.
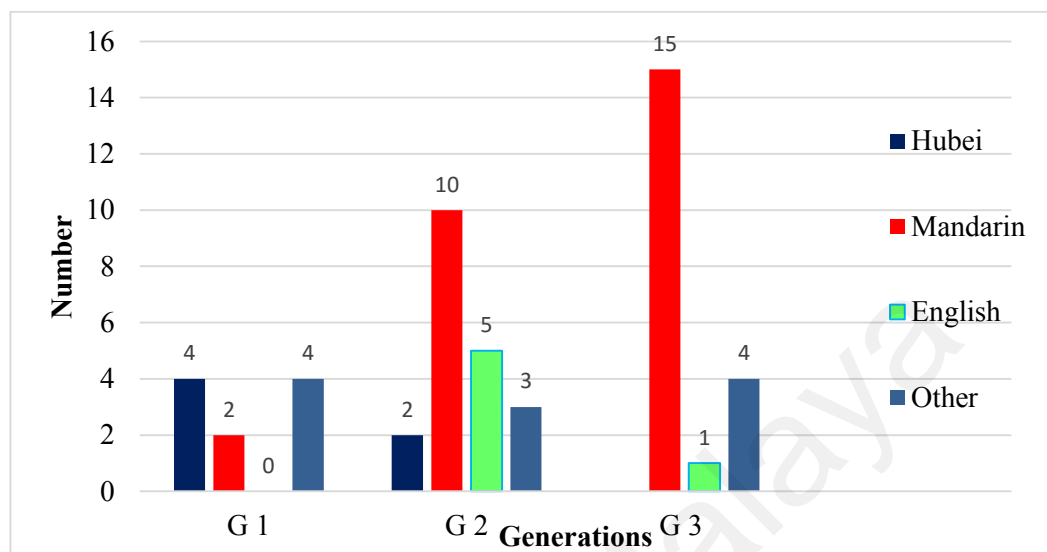
Figure 4.6: Language preference and language choice

Figure 4.6 shows the variety of languages frequently used by the Hubei participants in their daily routine. The respondents were required to identify their preferred choice of language in the questionnaire. In this study Malay is not featured in any of the graphs that illustrate language preferences and choices. The reason for this is that none of the participants mentioned the use of Malay in the questionnaire even though the language is taught in schools and is most likely used in communicating with non-Chinese, particularly Malays, in formal or informal environments. In addition, the number of respondents does not correspond to the total number of respondents as they were entitled to provide more than one response. Thus, all responses provided by the respondents were taken into consideration in this graph analysis.

Hence, the graph shows that G1 members prefer to use three main languages: Hubei, Mandarin and other Chinese varieties. Hubei and other Chinese varieties like Cantonese and Hokkien remain the most frequently used languages, whereas Mandarin is less preferred and English is not used at all. On the contrary, the G2 members have a wider

command of language competencies. The graph shows that English and Mandarin are most frequently used (10 and five respondents respectively) compared to other Chinese varieties (three respondents); Hubei is the least preferred language (two respondents). Finally, among the G3 members, the use of Mandarin dominates over the use of other languages. Mandarin is predominantly used (15 respondents) followed by other Chinese varieties (four respondents) and English (one respondent). It is clearly observed that Hubei is not a preferred language choice among the G3 members.

In conclusion, the graph illustrates clearly that there are differences in language preference and language choice across the three generations. In other words, Hubei, which is preferred by the elderly generation, is absent among the G3 members.

4.3.1 Language choice in the home domain

Table 4.2 shows the range of languages used by the Hubei participants in the home domain. The table shows that apart from Hubei, other languages are used in the home domain, namely Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties which are usually either Cantonese or Hokkien.

Table 4.2: Languages used in the home

Languages	Generation 1 (G1) Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 (G2) Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 (G3) Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei	4	80%	2	10%	0	0%
Mandarin	0	0%	8	40%	17	85%
English	0	0%	5	25%	1	5%

Other Chinese varieties	1	20%	5	25%	2	10%

It is observed that 80% (4 respondents) of G1 participants use Hubei in the home and 20% (one respondent) uses another Chinese variety. The G1 members who use Hubei in the home do so mainly because their spouses are also of Hubei origin; they use Hubei in the home to communicate with their children. In the interview with Speaker 1 (S1) from G1, he stated, "My first wife is a Hubei; so my 2 children spoke Hubei with the mother." This scenario was common among the majority of G1 members who had endogamous marriages which were arranged by their parents and elderly relatives of the older generation. In such marriages, at least one parent, if not both, would use Hubei to communicate with the children. Interestingly, Hubei is even more rigorously used in the home domain if members of the older generation, for example parents or elderly relatives of G1, are staying under the same roof as G1 and their children. The other 20% (1 respondent) who did not use Hubei in the home, in fact, married a non-Hubei spouse. In his interview, Speaker 2 (S2) stated that his spouse was a Hokkien and so he and his wife "… spoke Hokkien all the while and my children all speak Hokkien." The impact of the exogamous marriage resulted in the abandonment of the use of Hubei in the home due to the fact that the spouse, as the mother in the family, did not speak Hubei and so she was not capable of teaching the children to communicate in Hubei.

Next, based on evidence collected from the G2 participants, beginning with the most frequently to the least frequently used language(s) within the family domain, 40% (eight respondents) use Mandarin in the home followed by English and other Chinese varieties at 25% respectively (five respondents), while only 10% (two respondents) persist in using Hubei in the homes. Similarly, in the G3 category, the use of Mandarin in the home

domain increased to 85% (17 respondents), followed by the use of other Chinese varieties at 10% (two respondents) and English at 5% (one respondent); Hubei is absent among the G3 group of participants. The decline in the use of Hubei in the home domain from 80% by G1 to just 10% by G2 and 0% in G3 is reflective of the increase in the level of education of the G2 and G3 members and the practice of exogamy in the Hubei families after G1. As most of the G2 and G3 members attended Chinese medium schools, Mandarin became the lingua franca in the home domain; in addition, as most of them worked outside the home, arranged marriages were no longer practised and thus, exogamy was practised by all the G2 and G3 members.

Therefore, with the availability of other languages in the G2 and G3 speakers' linguistic repertoire, the family language policy in the home domain became an arduous task. The family in the G2 and G3 categories abandoned Hubei as it is considered a low language in the wider society; Mandarin is a prestigious language which can be used for personal, social, cultural and economic reasons and provides a sense of wider Chinese identity. Thus, the family over the three generations from G1 to G3 shifted from the use of Hubei to Mandarin as the lingua franca.

In conclusion, the mothers in the family hold a vital position in maintaining and preserving the heritage language as they are the primary informants in shaping the language learning context of their children. The language shift in the family from Hubei to Mandarin is a culmination of various factors: social, cultural and economic adaptation, within the three Hubei generations.
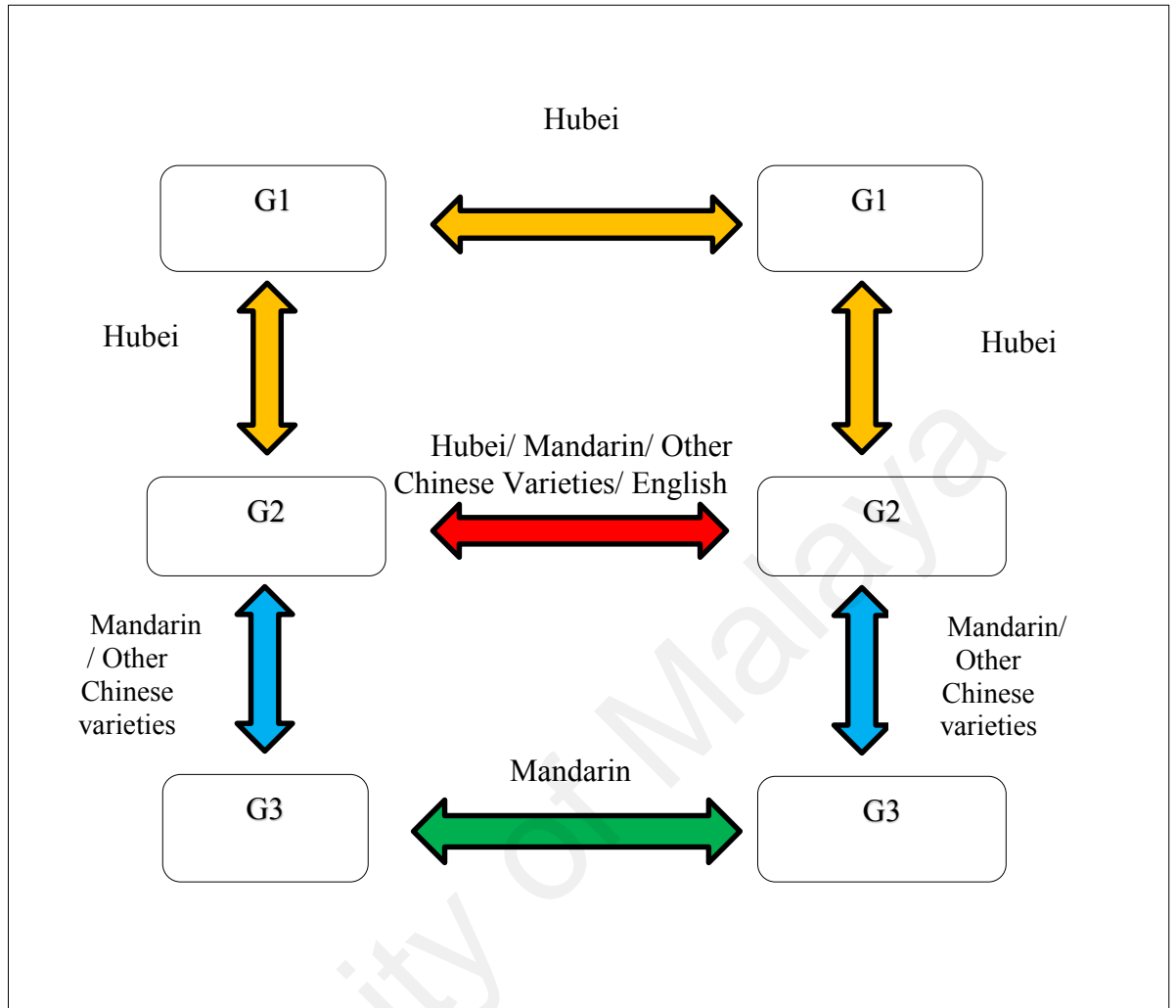
Figure 4.7: Languages used in the home domain

Figure 4.7 is a flow chart that summarises the navigation of languages used in the home domain by G1 to G3 members of the Hubei family. As illustrated in the chart, Hubei is used only between G1-G1 and G1-G2 members. Subsequently, some Hubei, Mandarin, other Chinese varieties and English are used between G2-G2. Finally, Mandarin and other Chinese varieties are used between G2-G3 while Mandarin remains the only language used between G3-G3; Hubei is completely abandoned by G3.

Table 4.3: Languages used with family members
(G1: Ages 75>)

Languages	Grandparents		Parents		Siblings		Spouse		Children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei			5	100%			1	20%	2	40%
Mandarin										
Other Chinese varieties							3	60%		
Hubei & Mandarin										
Hubei & other Chinese varieties					5	100%	1	20%	3	60%
TOTAL			5	100%	5	100%	5	100%	5	100%

Table 4.3 refers to items 7 to 11 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages used by the G1 members with their family members: parents, siblings, spouses and children. The languages that are analysed here are Hubei, Mandarin and other Chinese varieties. English and Malay are not considered in this analysis as the G1 members are not proficient enough in these two languages for communicating with family members and thus, do not identify themselves with these languages. Thus, English and Malay do not feature in the G1 analysis of languages used with family members.

All the G1 members (100%) stated that they used Hubei with their parents, when the members of the older generation were still alive, who were linguistically less flexible. However, when it came to communicating with their siblings, all of them (100%) declared that they used a combination of Hubei and other Chinese varieties, mainly Hokkien and Foochow. Furthermore, when communicating with their spouses, 60% (three respondents) stated that they use other Chinese varieties while the rest of the G1

respondents stated that they use both Hubei and other Chinese varieties. Despite the fact that four G1 respondents' marriages were arranged and endogamous, except for one, the G1 members preferred to use other Chinese varieties instead of Hubei as lingua francas. Finally, 60% (three respondents) of G1 members use both Hubei and other Chinese varieties to communicate with their children, while 40% (two respondents) were adamant in maintaining Hubei in their family language policy.

In conclusion, the table demonstrates the decline in the use of Hubei with the family members apart from communicating with the parents in the G1 category. The frequent use of other Chinese varieties with the other family members exceeds the use of Hubei among the G1 members.

Table 4.4: Languages used with family members
(G2: Ages 45 – 74)

Languages	Grandparents		Parents		Siblings		Spouse		Children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei										
Mandarin									5	25%
English					2	10%			1	5%
Other Chinese varieties			15	75%	18	90%	18	90%	10	50%
Hubei & Mandarin										
Hubei & English										
Hubei & Other Chinese varieties	20	100%	5	25%					1	5%
Mandarin & English									1	5%
Mandarin & other Chinese varieties									1	5%
English & other Chinese varieties							2	10%	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.4 refers to items 7 to 11 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages used

by the G2 members with their family members: grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses

and children. The repertoire of languages used by the G2 members is more varied as

compared to the range used by G1. Here, the languages which are analysed are Hubei, Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties.

It is noticeable that the heritage language, Hubei, is no longer used solely by G2 with any category of family members; neither with the older nor with the younger generations. However, 100% (20 respondents) confessed that they resorted to using other Chinese varieties as well apart from Hubei when communicating with their grandparents. Meanwhile, to communicate with their parents, 75% of G2 members (15 respondents) claimed to use other Chinese varieties, while only 25% of G2 members (five respondents) stated that they do use some Hubei as well as other Chinese varieties. In addition, when communicating with their siblings, 90% of the G2 members (18 respondents) stated that they are accustomed to using other Chinese varieties and 10 % of the G2 members (two respondents) affirmed that they only use English among their siblings. Next, when communicating with their spouses, 90% of the G2 members (18 respondents) declared that they use other Chinese varieties and 10% (two respondents) use English as well as other Chinese varieties. Finally, in the communication with their children, the G2 members displayed a distinctively broad range of languages used. 50% of the G2 members (10 respondents) claimed to use other Chinese varieties and 25% (five respondents) said that they use Mandarin to converse with their children. Then, 5% (one respondent) each claimed that their communication with their children consisted of the following: Hubei and another Chinese variety, Mandarin and English, Mandarin and other Chinese varieties and English and other Chinese varieties.

 To conclude, the language repertoire used by the G2 with the family members is complex and elaborated. The linguistic creativity and freedom available to the G2s were employed at the expense of the heritage language.

Table 4.5: Languages used with family members
(G3: Ages 16 – 44)

Languages	Grandparents		Parents		Siblings		Spouse		Children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei										
Mandarin									10	50%
English			1	5%						
Other Chinese varieties	14	70%	15	75%						
Hubei & Mandarin			2	10%						
Hubei & English										
Hubei & Other Chinese varieties	3	15%								
Mandarin & English			2	10%	5	25%				
Mandarin & other Chinese varieties	3	15%			15	75%	10	50%		
English & other Chinese varieties										
TOTAL	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%	10	50%	10	50%

Table 4.5 refers to items 7 to 11 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages used by the G3 members with their family members: grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses and children. The repertoire of languages used by the G3 members is similar to the range used by G2. Here, the languages which are analysed are Hubei, Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties.

Similarly, it is noted that Hubei is absent in the repertoire of languages used by the G3 participants. However, 15% of G3 members (three respondents) claimed that they do use some Hubei as well as Cantonese and Hokkien with their grandparents. On the other hand, the majority of the G3, 70% (14 respondents), mentioned that they use only Hokkien or

Cantonese with their grandparents and another 15% (three respondents) claimed that they use Mandarin, Cantonese and Hokkien with their grandparents. Next, 75% of the G3 participants (15 respondents) declared that Cantonese and Hokkien are mainly used in communicating with their parents, while 10% (two respondents) maintained a certain level of engagement in Hubei together with Mandarin, and Mandarin together with English respectively; 5% (one respondent) stated that English is the lingua franca used in communicating with his parents. Among the siblings, 75% of the G3 members (15 respondents) claimed that they use Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese, while 25% (five respondents) stated that they use Mandarin and English. Only 50% (10 respondents) are married and they use Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese with their spouses. These married G3 participants stated that they only used Mandarin with their children.

In conclusion, it is noted that the use of Mandarin and other Chinese varieties is predominantly a prerogative of the G3 participants in communicating with all categories of the family members. Only in a few cases, Hubei, the heritage language, is reserved significantly for use only with the older generations: grandparents and parents, as a sign of ethnic loyalty.

4.3.2 Language choice in the social domain

Table 4.6 refers to item 12 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages which are used by members of the three Hubei generations when socialising with friends and acquaintances. The social circle in this analysis includes colleagues, neighbours and family friends. The social environments which are considered in this study encompass the workplace, restaurants, shopping malls and in the neighbourhood.

Table 4.6: Languages used with friends

Languages	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei						
Mandarin						
English					1	5%
Other Chinese varieties						
Hubei & Mandarin						
Hubei & English						
Hubei & Other Chinese varieties						
Mandarin & English			4	20%	3	15%
Mandarin & other Chinese varieties	5	100%	10	50%	13	65%
English & other Chinese varieties			6	30%	3	15%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.6 shows that 100% G1 participants (five respondents) use Mandarin, Cantonese and Hokkien in their social interactions. The G1 participants are more confident with the use of Mandarin, the standard Chinese language, and a few Chinese varieties when socialising outside the family domain. Next, the G2 and G3 members display a more flexible linguistic repertoire: 50% of G2 (10 respondents) and 65% of G3 (13 respondents) said that they prefer to use Mandarin and other Chinese varieties in their social circle. In addition, 30% of G2s (six respondents) and 15% of G3s (three respondents) stated that they use English as well as other Chinese varieties to communicate with their friends. Finally, 20% of G2s (four respondents) and 15% of G3's (three respondents) expressed their preference for Mandarin and English for their

communications in the social domain, and just 5% of G3s (one respondent) uses only English in his social interactions.

In brief, Hubei has no presence in the social domain. Mandarin, other Chinese varieties and English are favoured highly in the friendship domain as these languages are more viable than Hubei, which is used only in a limited domain.

Table 4.7: Languages used with other Chinese Malaysians you don't know

Languages	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
Hubei						
Mandarin						
English					1	5%
Other Chinese varieties						
Hubei & Mandarin						
Hubei & English						
Hubei & Other Chinese varieties						
Mandarin & English						
Mandarin & other Chinese varieties	5	100%	5	25%	15	75%
English & other Chinese varieties			15	75%	4	20%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.7 refers to item 13 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages which are used by members of the three Hubei generations when interacting with strangers or passers-by of Malaysian Chinese ethnicity. The locations in which the interactions may occur are supermarkets, grocery shops, restaurants, markets, and even on the streets. It is

clearly observed that 100% of G1s (five respondents) would readily use Mandarin, Cantonese or Hokkien to communicate with another Malaysian Chinese whom they are not familiar with. Similarly, the G2s and G3s are comfortable with Mandarin,

English and other Chinese varieties to interact with other Malaysian Chinese. However, there is a significant difference between the G2s and G3s. 75% of the G2s (15 respondents) prefer to use English together with Chinese varieties, whereas the same percentage applies to the G3s when they use Mandarin and other Chinese varieties. 25% of the G2s (five respondents) tend to use Mandarin and other Chinese varieties while 20% of the G3s (four respondents) would use English and other Chinese varieties for interactions with strangers. Only one G3 respondent stated that his linguistic repertoire is limited and he can only use English in all his daily communications.

In summary, this study reveals that Hubei is not used in the social domain no matter how familiar the participants are with their non-Hubei acquaintances. As Hubei has no functional load in the public domain as compared to Mandarin, other Chinese varieties and English, this language has deteriorated in vitality. Hubei functions only as a vernacular tool in the home domain and has limited functions and so it has an insignificant status in the society.

4.3.3 Language choice in the sociocultural domain

Table 4.8 refers to items 14 and 15 of the questionnaire. The table shows the languages which are used by members of the three Hubei generations for socio-cultural activities celebrated by the Hubei community. These activities may be categorised into formal and informal events. The informal socio-cultural events may include casual gatherings over a meal without any form of celebratory ambience. In contrast, formal events may encompass gatherings of a grander scale such as weddings, birthday celebrations,

funerals, Lunar New Year reunion dinners. In general, the analysis in this study regards socio-cultural activities to incorporate both formal and informal events within the Hubei community.

Table 4.8: Languages used in sociocultural activities

Languages	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hubei						
Mandarin						
English					1	5%
Other Chinese varieties						
Hubei & Mandarin						
Hubei & English						
Hubei & Other Chinese varieties	5	100%	10	50%		
Mandarin & English						
Mandarin & other Chinese varieties			5	25%	19	95%
English & other Chinese varieties			5	25%		
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

The table shows that 100% of G1s (5 respondents) engage in Hubei and other Chinese varieties during gatherings to celebrate an occasion. There is some engagement in the use of Hubei to communicate with other Hubei speakers; however, other Chinese varieties are also randomly used at such occasions. On the same note, 50% of G2s (10 respondents) declared that they would use Hubei as well as another Chinese variety at events where other Hubei speakers are present. However, the remaining G2 respondents claimed that they feel more comfortable to interact with other members of the Hubei community in

Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties. Finally, the table shows that there is no engagement with the Hubei language at all between the G3 respondents and other members of the Hubei community at gatherings of a socio-cultural nature. 95% of them (19 respondents) stated that they can only converse at best in Mandarin and other Chinese varieties at such gatherings with the Hubei community; 5% (one respondent) said he is only proficient in English.

To conclude, it appears that as a sign of maintaining one's ethnic identity, the G1 and G2 members do show attempts at engaging in the use of Hubei at gatherings where there are other Hubei speakers. However, that is the limit at which the language is practised at such occasions because the younger generations, beginning with G3 and beyond, do not have knowledge and proficiency of the Hubei language at all.

4.4. Language attitudes

Language attitudes form an integral part of this study in order to investigate the identity function and prestige of the Hubei language in Malaysia. Baker (1992) stated that attitudes are better predictors of future behaviour than observation of current behaviour. In addition, Garrett (2013) states, 'language attitudes permeate our daily lives' (p.1) which – consciously or sub-consciously – impact our language use in the communications with people around us. In addition, language attitudes are expressed in the production and reception of language(s), and influence our reactions to other speakers around us which result in specific language choices for communication (Garrett, 2013, p 21). In other words, the language choice of the Hubei speakers in a multilingual environment is influenced by their perception towards their heritage language.

This section presents findings related to the participants' opinions and attitudes towards their heritage language in Malaysia. The findings have been obtained from the responses to Section 3 of the questionnaire.

Table 4.9: Do you feel proud of speaking Hubei?

Do you feel proud of speaking Hubei?	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	4	80%	2	10%	1	5%
No	1	20%	15	75%	18	90%
It depends	0	0%	3	15%	1	5%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.9 refers to item 16 of the questionnaire. Based on responses obtained from 45 participants' questionnaires, the percentage of responses that demonstrate pride as speakers of the heritage language is in reverse proportion to their ages; the younger the generation, the less affiliation they have towards their heritage language.

As indicated in Table 4.9 80% of the G1 participants (four respondents) declared they are proud of being able to speak the heritage language. They expressed a sense of privilege at being considered some of the few speakers of a rare language in this country. However, this opinion is not unanimously expressed by every member in the G1 category. Notably, one G1 respondent declared that there is no necessity to maintain the Hubei heritage language in the country. Speaker (G1 – S2) mentioned in the interview:

"We all live in Malaysia … we call ourselves Malaysians. So, there is no necessity to maintain the Hubei identity. How many people out there speak Hubei? So, what for… we are fine with other languages."

Similarly, 75% of the G2 participants (15 respondents) lacked sentiments of cultural identity and did not feel any pride at being a Hubei. When asked if it was important for the children to know Hubei, Speaker (G2 – S3) replied that it was unnecessary:

"I believe education is more important, the roots are not so important. So, even though they know (Hubei) they cannot 'cari makan' with that also."

'Cari makan' in Malay literally means "to look for food"; it is an expression that conveys the meaning of earning a living. On the contrary, 10% (two respondents) affirmed they were proud of their cultural heritage and 15% (three respondents) showed indifference. Speaker (G2 – S5) commented positively when asked if he was proud of being Hubei:

"Definitely, we feel proud, we feel the connection with our ancestry when we hear the language."

Likewise, 90% of G3 participants (18 respondents) demonstrated similar sentiments as the rest of the G2 generation. They possess an indifferent attitude towards their heritage language. This apathetic attitude towards the heritage language becomes more entrenched with the younger generations as the language becomes more alienated. When Speaker (G3 – S6) was asked at the interview if there were any 'special feelings about belonging to Hubei ancestry' the speaker expressed indifference:

"No feelings actually … I don't know how to speak the language so I don't see myself as belonging to any clan. I am a Malaysian and I speak Mandarin, English and Malay. At home, we never call ourselves any group."

However, only one G3 respondent, Speaker (G3 – S7) demonstrated positive sentiments towards being a Hubei:

"I tell people I am a Hubei … many people have never heard of this language." The speaker commented proudly when asked about her feelings at being a Hubei-nese: "Unique … I am proud to tell people that I know a special language which nobody has heard of; I feel … kinda special."

Speaker (G3 – S8) is indifferent towards her identity as a Hubei:

"I don't have any special feelings. I can speak Hubei, yes … but it is not used anywhere else. And now, less and less people are speaking the language."

In total, the percentage of negative responses far outnumber the percentage of positive ones. This evidence clearly shows the increasing negative attitudes towards the heritage language among the three generations of these Hubei families.

Table 4.10: Would you like to learn/improve your Hubei?

Would you like to learn/improve your Hubei?	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	NA		2	10%	2	10%
No	NA		15	75%	16	80%
It depends	NA		3	15%	2	10%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.10 refers to item 17 of the questionnaire. Based on responses obtained from 40 participants' questionnaires, excluding the G1 respondents due to their seniority and

mastery of the language, there is a lack of motivation to learn the heritage language among the younger G2 and G3 participants.

Even though the G1 did not need to learn the language, they provided their opinions and comments about the younger generations. Speaker (G1 – S2) pointed out clearly:

"You see … we are Malaysians; see… my grandchildren … they don't need to learn Hubei; they can speak Hokkien, Mandarin. All of them speak Mandarin … they know nothing about the Hubei language. My children have never been taught to speak the Hubei language; they use Hokkien with us. My wife is of Hokkien origin; so my children and grandchildren all speak Hokkien. They learn Mandarin from school; my children also speak Foochow. So, we don't need to use the Hubei language."

Speaker (G1 – S1) accepts the reality that the youngest generation, the G3's, are not motivated to learn the heritage language; he describes the situation as "it is the course of nature."

75 % of G2 participants (15 respondents) expressed reluctance to learning the heritage language. When enquired about the willingness to extend the learning of Hubei to the children, Speaker (G2 – S4) stated clearly that it would be a futile task:

"I'm telling you, as far as my family is concerned the language is going to end with me because we never speak Hubei. We speak Mandarin and English with our daughters; I speak Hokkien with my wife. So, there are three languages used in the family."

The same respondent added:

"So, Hubei … looks as if it is going to end here with me."

In addition, when Speaker (G2 – S3) was asked if it was important for his children to know the Hubei language, the reply was an outright, "No". Of the 10% G2 participants (2 respondents) who intended to maintain the heritage language, they do so for the sake

of maintaining cultural identity. Speaker (G2 – S5) mentioned that the interest in the heritage language could have been increased if the demographic factors were in their favour:

"We would have learned more Hubei if there were opportunities to learn, but our family is the only Hubei family here in Sitiawan,"

The situation does not improve with the youngest generation. 80% of G3 participants (16 respondents) do not feel any interest in learning the language. When Speaker (G3 – S6) was asked if she would be willing to learn Hubei, the reply was:

"I don't really need to learn the language because we can all use English and Mandarin."

The realisation that the heritage language is not functional in the society is obvious as Speaker (G3 – S7) said:

"… the language is not used outside our family … only among us and seldom at family gatherings."

This evidence is sufficient to show that there is a lack of motivation for the youngest members to learn the language. Speaker (G3 – S7) added:

"Even at family functions with other relatives … which are so rare … I hear the young people speak more Mandarin and Cantonese, only some of the older generation speak Hubei."

However, Speaker (G3 – S7) pointed out:

"It is very similar to Mandarin, so it is not difficult to remember the vocabulary."

This open-mindedness would promote the learning of the heritage language.

Thus, the motivation to learn the language is indeed minimal because other dominant host languages have fulfilled the Hubei family members' communication needs. As explained by G1 respondents, Speaker (G1 – S2) mentioned:

"How many people out there speak Hubei? So, what for (language maintenance) … we are fine with other languages."

Speaker (G1 – S1) lamented:

"…the older generations are no longer around and their children in the following generations all communicate in other Chinese varieties and languages."

Table 4.11: Should Hubei be officially protected as one of the languages /dialects of Malaysia?

Should Hubei be officially protected as one of the languages /dialects of Malaysia?	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes			1	5%		
No	4	80%	18	90%	19	95%
It depends	1	20%	1	5%	1	5%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.11 refers to item 18 of the questionnaire. Based on responses obtained from 45 participants' questionnaires, there is a distinct sense of apathy among the respondents towards the maintenance of the heritage language. 80% of G1 participants (4 respondents) have a sense of foreboding about the future of the heritage language believing that Hubei should not be protected. Speaker (G1 – S1) affirmed that "I think it is very difficult ….

Impossible" when proposed the question if Hubei should be maintained and transmitted to future generations. Speaker (G1 – S2) had already stated clearly early in the interview:

"I don't think the language needs to be maintained."

Similar sentiments are expressed by Speaker (G1 – S1), who declared:

"… the Hubei language will disappear, no more of its existence."

This speaker is convinced:

"… the situation (language loss) cannot be avoided. This is because with each generation that follows, it is their choice; for the sake of their livelihood, their future, whatever they may decide to do, it is their choice. It will be beyond our reach."

90% of the G2 participants (18 respondents) also were against official protection for Hubei. In the interview, Speaker (G1 – S2) asserted:

"… I don't think the language needs to be maintained. We all live in Malaysia … we call ourselves Malaysians. So, there is no necessity to maintain the Hubei identity."

The disinterest in maintaining the heritage language and detachment with it is apparent when Speaker (G2 – S4) declared:

"Hubei … the mother tongue … can be successfully preserved if the elders play a role. When the elders are no longer here already, all of us have our own lives to lead, so that language in itself is no longer an important matter to me."

5% (one respondent) from G2, Speaker (G2 – S5), however, acknowledged a need for Hubei to be protected:

" …yes, I would say it'd be good if the language can be preserved."

Out of the 20 G3 participants, 95% (19 respondents) believe that the heritage language is too insignificant in society to merit any actions to be taken by any authorities. Speaker (G3 – S6) stated clearly her alienation with the heritage language:

"I don't know how to speak the language so I don't see myself as belonging to any clan."

Therefore, the speaker feels there is no sense of commitment nor motivation to preserve the language. Speaker (G3 – S7) echoed the same viewpoint:

"It will not last long because nobody else speaks the language … only some of us. So, I think the language will eventually disappear when no one else in the future uses it."

In brief, the future preservation of the Hubei language is pessimistic; the percentage of unfavourable responses with regards to concerted efforts to protect the language outweighs the percentage of optimistic responses.

**Table 4.12: Should CDs, DVDs or VCDs in Hubei be available
to the Hubei community?**

Should CDs, DVDs or VCDs in Hubei be available to the Hubei community?	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	0	0%	3	15%	5	25%
No	4	80%	12	60%	10	50%
It depends	1	20%	5	25%	5	25%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.12 refers to item 19 of the questionnaire. Based on responses obtained from 45 participants' questionnaires, the percentage of responses that encourage language preservation through the production of audio and visual materials is less than the number of responses that are hesitant about the project. Coincidentally, in the interview, the question regarding visiting the ancestral village in Hubei province, China, was proposed to the G2 and G3 participants. The response will be treated in this study as alternative efforts at maintaining the cultural identity.

80% of G1 participants (four respondents) are convinced that the language is unworthy of any preservation through CDs, DVDs or VCDs as they believe the younger generations do not regard the language to have any functional qualities in a multicultural society in which they live in. Speaker (G1 – S1) strongly asserted:

"… there is no possibility that the language can be transmitted in the future to the next generations. Unless they visit the ancestral village in China … but I doubt if any of the younger generations would take that initiative."

Here, the speaker regards visiting the ancestral village in China as a gesture of maintaining one's identity as a member of the Hubei community. Speaker (G1 – S2) is adamant that nothing can be done to preserve the language:

"I don't think anything can be done. Who wants to learn our language? We don't have any songs or stories anymore; Grandma used to know them but now nobody knows any of these songs or stories."

Next, 60% of the G2's (12 respondents) have similar opinions as the members of the older generation about the lack of confidence in maintaining the heritage language through CDs, DVDs or VCDs. Here, Speaker (G2 – S3) commented:

"… I don't think so, not that I know of anybody there. Maybe go on a tour but to go and look for the ancestral home and look for the grassroots, I don't think so. Because

the early generation left China so long ago, the ancestral home and the name might not even appear."

Speaker (G2 – S4) pointed out:

"Hubei … the mother tongue … can be successfully preserved if the elders play a role."

The role that is referred to by the speaker is the responsibility of the older generation to teach the heritage language to the younger generation. However, this role of transmitting the heritage language to the future generation is disappearing as the family language policy in the Hubei families has changed over time. The mother tongue used in the family domain has been consistently substituted by other languages in the G2 and G3 generations. Speaker (G2 – S4) affirmed the conviction that loss of the heritage language is progressively taking place within the Hubei families:

"Sad to say, for my family here, when my parents are no longer here, all of us have our own lives to lead, so that culture just ended."

On the other hand, 15% (three respondents) from G2 proposed alternative ways of preserving the Hubei identity. Speaker (G2 – S5) added:

"A way to do this is via the association, the Hubei association, San Jiang Association. It is at these associations that we have the opportunity to meet the rest of the Hubei community."

Speaker (G2 – S5) further added:

"I want the younger generation to remember their roots that they are of Hubei origin. They should make efforts in the future to visit the ancestral village in China."

Half of the G3 participants, 50% of them, conveyed interest in protecting the language. Ten of the respondents responded that the language may probably be preserved depending

on certain criteria. When they were asked to provide suggestions, Speaker (G3 – S6) affirmed:

" I don't know how … maybe speak more … those who can speak the language should continue to use the language. Then teach more young people about the language."

However, examples of such pipe dreams are ineffective and impractical due to the increasing decline in transmission rates of the mother tongue. In contrast, 25% of the G3s (5 respondents) showed support for maintenance of the mother tongue through CDs, DVDs or VCDs. Speaker (G3 – S7) suggested:

"Maybe a recording of the Hubei words … some basic vocabulary, some songs or children's rhymes. I don't know if people will still listen to CDs but I think if the Hubei sounds … the pronunciation … is recorded then this will be interesting for those who are curious to know about the language."

In general, the Hubei families demonstrate more passive reactions than passion towards the concept of maintaining the heritage language. Such ambiguous attitudes of the Hubei families portray a steady process of language shift to Mandarin and other Chinese varieties.

Table 4.13: In about 20 years' time, do you think Hubei will be spoken less than now?

In about 20 years' time, do you think Hubei will be spoken less than now?	Generation 1 Ages 75 > (total 5)		Generation 2 Ages 45-74 (total 20)		Generation 3 Ages 16-44 (total 20)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%
No	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
More or less the same	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	5	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table 4.13 refers to item 20 of the questionnaire. 100% of the responses obtained from 45 participants' questionnaires converge that the heritage language will indeed be spoken even less in the future.

Every single participant in this study agreed unanimously that the frequency at which the language would be spoken would undoubtedly decline rapidly in the next two decades. When interviewed about the future status of the mother tongue, Speaker (G1 – S2) claimed:

"Since the grandmother has passed away, they have no access to the Hubei language anymore. This situation (… hesitant to speak the language …) is inevitable; it is natural."

More drastically, Speaker (G1 – S1) declared:

"Extinct… the Hubei language will disappear, no more of its existence. This is because the elders from the older generations are no longer around and their children in the following generations all communicate in other Chinese varieties and languages."

In other words, the speaker sums up the dire situation as "death in transmission."

Similarly, Speaker (G2 – S4) stated:

"Honestly … I'm telling you, as far as my family is concerned the language is going to end with me because we never speak Hubei."

This harsh proclamation is significant of the Hubei families where the older generations have passed away. The same speaker declared:

"I strongly believe that if my mother was still around, maybe that language may still continue. So, my Hubei language ended when my mum passed away when I was 18. That was when the clock stopped."

Speaker (G3 – S6) mentioned:

"I don't know … maybe the language will disappear because when no one is using the language, then the language cannot continue. Nobody in my family, except my father, can speak Hubei."

In addition, Speaker (G3 – S8) lamented:

"All the elder generation have passed away and my mother is not staying with us. So, I don't know if the language will continue …"

It is evident that the language shift that is taking place in the homes of the Hubei families is detrimental to the maintenance of the heritage language. The gradual shift results in the displacement of the mother tongue by other predominant languages used in the society, particularly Mandarin and English in this study. Language loss of the heritage language in the Hubei families is imminent and may eventually lead to language death unless language maintenance projects are carried out.

4.5 Reasons for the language shift among the Hubei speakers

This section identifies the reasons and provides evidence for the language shift among the tri-generational Hubei families. As discussed in Chapter 2, Literature Review, some of the pertinent factors which contribute to the language shift that have been mentioned by the respondents in the interviews are the wide linguistic repertoires among the family members, exogamous marriage practices among the younger generations, diverging family language policy and the low language status of the Hubei language in Malaysia.

4.5.1 Family multilingualism

Extract 4.5 (a) – Extract 4.5 (d) show the impact of multilingual repertoires on the vitality of the heritage language in the Hubei homes. In the extracts, the participants unanimously mentioned the constant use of other languages among the Hubei family members.

Extract 4.5 (a)

I:	Then your two children are good at Hubei.
G1 – S1:	Yes, when my first wife was alive, even though she spoke Hubei with the children, she insisted that the **brother and sister used English at home between them. She wanted them to improve their English proficiency.**
I:	Now, I would like to ask, Uncle, what do you think will happen to the Hubei language in Malaysia?
G1 – S1:	Extinct… the Hubei language will disappear, no more of its existence. This is because the elders from the older generations are no longer around and their children in **the following generations all communicate in other Chinese varieties and languages. Here in Malaysia, the younger generations all speak Malay and Mandarin. This is the reality. They are at liberty to speak English and whatever languages they wish.**

Extract 4.5 (b)

I:	Is it important to you that your children know Hubei?
G2 – S3:	No.
I:	Not important, why?

G2 – S3:	I believe **education is more important, the roots is not so important**. So, even though they know they cannot 'cari makan' with that also.

Extract 4.5 (c)

I:	What is your view or your take on maintaining the Hubei language in the community?
G2 – S4:	Honestly … I'm telling you, as far as my family is concerned the language is going to end with me because **we never speak Hubei. We speak Mandarin and English with the daughters; I speak Hokkien with my wife. So, there are three languages used in the family.**
I:	Why English and Mandarin with the daughters?
G2 – S4:	Mandarin mostly because **my daughters went to Chinese schools and the mother has picked up Mandarin from the girls.** So, Hubei … the way it looks is going to end here with me.

Extract 4.5 (d)

I:	Right … now, what language did you all use at home? With your parents? With your sister? Your mum and dad?
G3 – S6:	Okay … at home **we usually speak Mandarin and English; with my sister and with my parents. Ya … only English and Mandarin … but my**
	parents speak Hokkien between them. They never use Hokkien with us.

As Malaysia is a multilingual society, the population is exposed to a wide linguistic repertoire. Therefore, it is inevitable that members of the Hubei families use other more prestigious languages, for example, Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties, for daily communication resulting in language shift in the Hubei families. Extract 4.5 (b) shows that a formal education holds more value in the Hubei families than the education on their cultural heritage. The ability to speak other languages brings economic and social benefits which are not available in the heritage language. Thus, language shift is taking place in the Hubei families due to pragmatic reasons.

4.5.2 Exogamy

Extract 4.5 (e) – Extract 4.5 (g) show the impact of exogamous marriages that are practised in the Hubei families on the cultural linguistic vitality.

Extract 4.5 (e)

I:	All right then, Uncle, can you then tell me your childhood experiences … what languages were used when you were growing up?
G1 – S2:	All throughout my younger days, my family – my siblings and my parents – all used Hubei in the home. Grandpa & Grandma both left China … they were both of Hubei origin … and settled in Perak after having been to other parts of the country. But when we socialised with friends as we grew older we learnt Foochow, and Mandarin when we went to school. I got married in my early 20's and **my wife was of Hokkien origin. So my wife and I spoke Hokkien all the while and my children all speak Hokkien**. When I meet my siblings – the

	surviving members, sometimes we speak Hubei … sometimes we speak Hokkien, we also use Foochow.

Extract 4.5 (f)

I:	So, you only use your ancestral language with your elders. So, are you married? Are you married to a Hubei?
G2 – S3:	No … can't find. **My wife is a Hokkien but we speak Cantonese.** Her father is Hokkien and her mother is Hainanese but they speak Cantonese.

Extract 4.5 (g)

G2 – S5:	**Generally, we use Mandarin … err …Hokkien with my mum because she's Hokkien.** All along we had been using Hokkien in the home; my maternal grandma and my aunts all lived near us and so we mingled more with the maternal family members. We usually communicate in Hokkien, Foochow and Mandarin.
I:	Your father is a Hubei; didn't he speak Hubei with you?
G2 – S5:	Never, **he only used Hokkien with my mum and with us.** We only heard Hubei being spoken when my paternal grandma visited us. When she conversed with my father, we would be exposed to Hubei; we could understand and we learnt some basic vocabulary.
I:	Now that you all have families of your own, are your spouses of Hubei origin? And do you speak Hubei with your children?
G2 – S5:	Oh no, **my wife is not a Hubei; it is difficult to find a spouse of Hubei origin here in Malaysia.** And so we do not speak Hubei in the

	home with the children. But I do inform my children that we are of Hubei origin. So that when they are asked of their origin, they'd be able to say they are Hubei.

Endogamy was observed by most, not all, of the G1 whose ancestors enforced this practice by imposing arranged marriages for their children as a form of preserving the cultural identity along other reasons. Subsequently, the younger generations beginning with the G2 onwards abandoned the practice of endogamy with increased social and economic independence and married spouses of other Chinese or ethnic groups. Thus, as the mother tongue is no longer spoken in the Hubei homes, there is a lack of intergenerational transmission of the heritage language.

4.5.3 Family Language Policy

Extract 4.5 (h) – Extract 4.5 (n) illustrate the role of family language policy on language maintenance and language shift of Hubei in Malaysia.

Extract 4.5 (h)

I:	Then your two children are good at Hubei.
G1 – S1:	Yes, when my first wife was alive, **even though she spoke Hubei with the children, she insisted that the brother and sister used English at home between them. She wanted them to improve their English proficiency.**

Extract 4.5 (i)

I:	Now, let me ask you, Uncle, about your children. Did they show any interest to learn Hubei when they were growing up?
G1 – S2:	**I did not speak Hubei with them at all; my wife can't speak Hubei. But my mother, their grandmother, used Hubei and Hokkien when she spoke to my children.**
I:	Then, how did your children respond to Grandma? Which language did they use to communicate with Grandma?
G1 – S2:	**Sometimes they tried to use Hubei but mostly they used Hokkien when they were young. When the grandmother spoke in Hubei, my children understood what was spoken but they would usually reply in Hokkien. The grandmother also used Hokkien with my children occasionally.** Now, as adults, they understand Hubei when it is spoken, but they are hesitant to speak the language. Since the grandmother passed away, they have no access to the Hubei language anymore. This situation is inevitable; it is natural.

Extract 4.5 (j)

I:	So you speak Cantonese with your wife, then what about your children? What do you speak to them?
G2 – S3:	**My children … sometimes I use Cantonese and sometimes I speak English.**
I:	Why Cantonese and English?
G2 – S3:	Because they don't really know how to speak Hubei, nobody ever taught them since they were young.

Extract (k)

I:	Firstly, which language do you use from childhood until now to communicate with your family members?
G2 – S5:	**Generally, we use Mandarin … err …Hokkien with my mum because she's Hokkien. All along we had been using Hokkien in the home**; my maternal grandma and my aunts all lived near us and so we mingled more with the maternal family members. **We usually communicate in Hokkien, Foochow and Mandarin**.
I:	Your father is a Hubei; didn't he speak Hubei with you?
G2 – S5:	**Never, he only used Hokkien with my mum and with us. We only heard Hubei being spoken when my paternal grandma visited us**. When she conversed with my father, we would be exposed to Hubei; we could understand and we learnt some basic vocabulary

Extract 4.5 (l)

I:	Right … now, what language did you all use at home? With your parents? With your sister? Your mum and dad?
G3 – S6:	Okay … **at home we usually speak Mandarin and English; with my sister and with my parents. Ya … only English and Mandarin … but my parents speak Hokkien between them. They never use Hokkien with us.**

Extract 4.5 (m)

I:	Do you speak Hubei?
G3 – S7:	**At home I speak Hubei with my grandparents, my parents and my brother. Sometimes, I also use Mandarin and Cantonese.** I remember my great-grandmother used to live with us, too. But she passed away. She spoke only Hubei with my brother and I when we were growing up. **Mostly I speak Hubei with my grandparents, brother and dad; Mandarin with my mum,**

Extract 4.5 (n)

I:	Right … what languages did you use to communicate with your family members during your growing up days?
G3 – S8:	**When we, the children, were young, we spoke Hubei at home. My grandparents only spoke Hubei with us; my parents too. All of us, my brother and sisters, speak Hubei. When we were young we never used any other language at home. But now, as adults, we sometimes speak** **in Hokkien. We don't speak Hubei much now because our grandparents and my dad have passed away.** My mother is still around but we use Hokkien most of the time, sometimes Hubei.
I:	Your mother is Hokkien but she spoke Hubei …
G3 – S8:	Yes, she speaks the language well. **She had to learn the language when she married my father and she stayed with my grandparents. I remembered my grandmother only used Hubei with my mother.**

I:	Did you remember if other languages were used in the home at that time?
G3 – S8:	Yes, of course. **My parents used Hokkien between themselves; my grandparents used Hubei and Hokkien, too, between them and sometimes with my parents, but mostly Hubei with my parents. At home, the children only used Hubei; we used Mandarin outside the home with friends at school.**
I:	Didn't you all use other languages at all among your siblings?
G3 – S8:	**If my grandparents heard anyone of us speak in Mandarin, they would scold us and insisted we use Hubei at home. They said that we could use any language outside, but only Hubei to be used at home.**

Studies have been conducted that prove women are largely responsible for both language maintenance and language loss, mainly due to the fact women spend most time with their children and the family language policies adopted by the families. As women are expected to fulfil their responsibilities as nurturers and language-bearers, the language(s) used in the home determine the transmission or abandonment of the heritage language. All the interviewees pointed out that Hubei is not practised as the lingua franca in the family. The women folk in the Hubei families were not of Hubei origin and therefore they used other Chinese varieties for communication with the family members. This is instrumental in the attrition of the heritage language. Furthermore, with increased opportunities to education, the members of the Hubei families after the G1 resorted to using Mandarin and English more frequently in the homes. Therefore, language maintenance or language loss stems from the family language policy that is implemented in the homes. In this study, a

combination of factors, multicultural environment and exogamous marriages, resulted in a family language policy which was detrimental to the Hubei heritage language.

4.5.4 Language status

Extract 4.5 (o) – Extract 4.5 (r) demonstrate that the maintenance of a language is dependent on its function and status in the society.

Extract 4.5 (o)

I:	Then may I ask again, Uncle, why did you use Hubei to communicate with your children and not other languages?
G1 – S1:	They study Mandarin and Malay at school and **we use Hubei at home**, so between them they need to improve their English. **With a better command of English, it will be beneficial for them when they go out to work.**

Extract 4.5 (p)

I:	Uncle, even though you said there's no need to preserve the language, what can you suggest in order for the language to be preserved, say, for anybody who is interested to know about our heritage?
G1 – S2:	**I don't think anything can be done. Who wants to learn our language? We don't have any songs or stories anymore; Grandma used to know them but now nobody knows any of these songs or stories.**

Extract 4.5 (q)

I:	Would you like the language to be preserved?
G3 – S7:	Uhhh … yes and no. I know our mother tongue is rare in Malaysia and only very few of us can speak it. It will not last long because **nobody else speaks the language … only some of us.** So, I think the language will eventually disappear when no one else in the future uses it. **Anyway, the language is not used outside our family … only among us and seldom at family gatherings. Even at family functions with other relatives … which are so rare … I hear the young people speak more Mandarin and Cantonese, only some of the older generation speak Hubei.**

Extract 4.5 (r)

I:	All right now … would you say you are proud to be a Hubei? What is your opinion?
G3 – S8:	It's ok, I don't have any special feelings. I can speak Hubei, yes … **but it is not used anywhere else. And now, less and less people are speaking the language.** So, **we will not be able to use it for long**. Even though I try to teach my children to speak some Hubei, it is not successful. **My children only know limited vocabulary in Hubei; they do not have anyone to speak the language with. All the older generation have passed away** and my mother is not staying with us. So, **I don't know if the language will continue …**

It was mentioned by the interviewees that the Hubei heritage language has no economic function in the society as it is spoken only in the homes by the Hubei community. In addition, the changing family policy in the Hubei families has led to the adoption of other languages because the heritage language is gradually disappearing with the death of the older generations. All the interviewees expressed concern that the heritage language may die since other languages, Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties, have higher linguistic functions in the society than Hubei.

4.6 Summary

This chapter has provided evidences to explain the reasons for the language shift among the tri-generational Hubei family members. The main factors which have been identified are language choices and language attitudes. The Hubei speakers' proficiency in their mother tongue was affected by the medium of instruction used at school. With increasing levels of education, G2 and G3 members were less likely to use their heritage language in the home, social and sociocultural domains. Mandarin and English were used more frequently and fluently by the G2 and G3 members as these languages were taught in the school. In addition, due to the increasing practice of exogamy by the G2 and G3 members of the Hubei family, the family language policy in the Hubei home underwent transformation. Initially, Hubei was used in the G1 home domain as endogamy was practised; however, with exogamy in the G2 and G3 families, the heritage language was abandoned and Mandarin and other Chinese varieties were used instead as the lingua francas in the home, social and sociocultural domains. As a result, there is a decline in the inter-generational transmission of Hubei which consequently resulted in negative language attitudes towards the heritage language. Ultimately, language shift began in the Hubei families beginning with G2 and continuing with G3.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of the study on the language choice and language shift in the tri-generational Hubei families in Malaysia. Suggestions for further research and recommendations are included in this chapter.

5.2. Research Question 1: What languages are used by the three generations in the home, social, and sociocultural activities domains?

Based on findings obtained from the questionnaire and interviews, the intergenerational language shift – that is, of change in linguistic proficiency and language use patterns from G1 to their children and grandchildren – provide convergent evidence of the mother-tongue erosion from the adult generation to that of their grandchildren. This language shift across the three generations is evident in the home, social and sociocultural activities domain.

Most of the G1s are engaged in some Hubei in all the three domains, home, social and sociocultural activities. The G1 respondents still used some Hubei with the combination of Mandarin and other Chinese varieties to communicate with family members in the home, social and sociocultural activities domains. However, the preference for other languages increases gradually by the following generation, G2.

The G2s preferred to use Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties in their communication with friends and family members. Hubei is rarely used in the social or sociocultural activities domains, with the exception of some Hubei that is used by few members of the G2 Hubei families in the home domain.

Hubei is noticeably absent in all the domains of language use with the G3s. Language shift is realised here as the G3 members are practically illiterate in their original mother tongue. The G3s do not speak Hubei because of family multilingualism whereby Mandarin, English and other Chinese varieties have become the standard languages for communication at home, with friends and at family gatherings. Furthermore, their parents who practised exogamy had accommodated the family language policy to adopt a common language that every member could speak and understand. In addition, the loss of members of the aged G1generation contributed greatly to the loss of contact with the language. Hence, Mandarin became the lingua franca in all the domains of language use in the G3 Hubei families.

5.3 Research Question 2: What kind of attitudes do the tri-generational Hubei speakers have towards their mother tongue?

Following the data collected from the three age groups, the globalisation of Mandarin and English has impacted the language attitudes of the Hubei families across all the age groups.

As shown in the G1 category, the preference for other languages, Mandarin and English, has been strongly embraced due to pragmatic reasons of economic and social factors. Even though Hubei was spoken between the G1 parents, the children were encouraged to

use English and other languages in order to improve their social skills outside the home domain.

Similarly, the G2 and G3 families also regard the heritage language in a negative light. Like the G1 generation, the G2 parents encourage their children to adopt the use of Mandarin and English for the benefit of the children's education and socialisation beyond the home domain. Thus, it is not surprising that the young G3 members do not regard their heritage language highly as they have not been educated enough on preserving their cultural identity by the older generations; in addition, the heritage language has a low language status with zero economic and social functions.

All members from the three age groups demonstrated favourable attitudes towards Mandarin and English, followed by other Chinese varieties. The Hubei families, typical of Chinese communities in Malaysia, view education as a means for upward mobility and invest in their children's education so that they have better jobs and income, which in turn determines their socio-economic status. Thus, Mandarin and English are viewed highly at the expense of Hubei, the mother tongue, which has a low status in the society due to its small population in the country.

5.4 Research Question 3: What are the reasons for the language shift by the Hubei speakers across the three generations?

The social factors, which have been identified in Chapter four, are widening family multiculturalism, increasing exogamy marriages, accommodating family language

policy and low language status. These social factors have influenced language use, language choices and language attitudes of the Hubei families.

For a language to be maintained, there needs to be a sizeable speech community with institutional support. However, the Hubei community is one of the minority Chinese variety groups in the country and its language use has been diminishing because of its low linguistic vitality. Hubei cannot compete with other Chinese varieties in terms of language use in the society as the population of Hubei speakers is diminishing due to its low linguistic status.

As pointed out in the study, multiculturalism has permeated all the domains in the Hubei families. Due to the exposure to multilingual communities in the country, the Hubei families have adopted a variety of languages in their linguistic repertoires. Mandarin and English are the preferred languages used in all domains, ranging from home to social to sociocultural activities, apart from other Chinese varieties. The number of Hubei speakers is consistently diminishing with the adoption of other languages as lingua francas for communication in all the domains of language use. Furthermore, with a family policy that excludes the use of the heritage language stemming from exogamy practices, Mandarin and other Chinese varieties have dominated the language use and language choice in the Hubei families. Thus, the ethnic language has been abandoned inevitably due to socio-economic reasons.

Finally, the negative language attitudes of the Hubei families towards their ethnic language have deterred the inter-generational transmission and maintenance of the language. Basically, due to the small Hubei population, the ethnic language bears no significant status in the society; thus, the Hubei families have acculturated to the host

society so well that many Hubei respondents, particularly the younger G3s, identify themselves as Malaysian Chinese, rather than by the origin of their roots.

Therefore, the low Hubei language vitality is attributed to a combination of social factors, namely, the expanding linguistic abilities of the Hubei generations, the marriage of spouses from other Chinese groups, the adoption of other languages used by the Hubei families in the home domain and the insignificant status of the ethnic language in comparison with other Chinese varieties in the society.
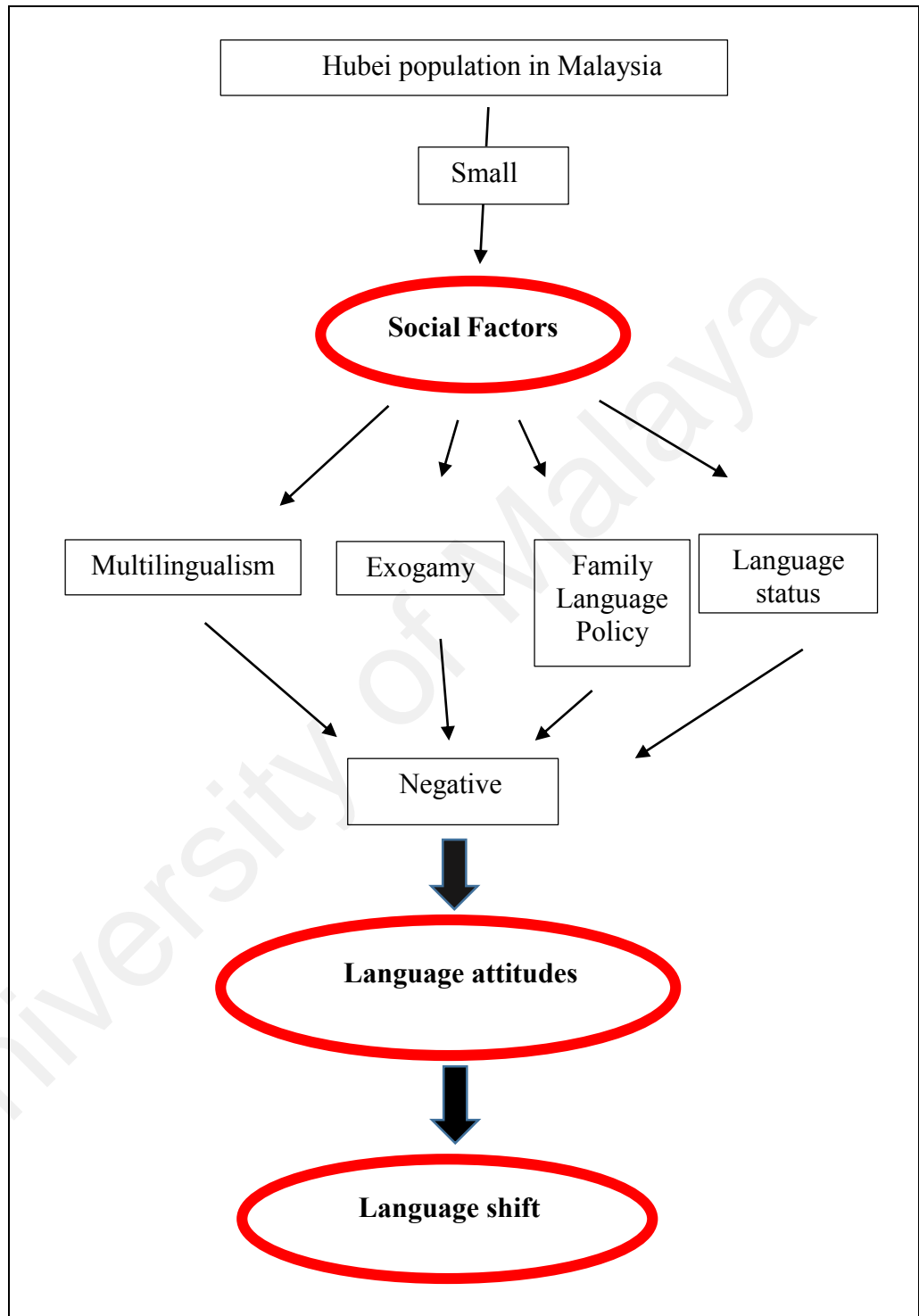
5.5 Conclusion

Figure 5.1: Impact of social factors on language shift in the Hubei tri-generational families

Figure 5.1 illustrates how language shift, from the heritage language to Mandarin and other Chinese varieties, occurred in the Hubei tri-generational families due to a combination of social factors. Firstly, the Hubei population in Malaysia is much smaller in comparison with other Chinese communities in the country. Thus, due to the small Hubei community, the impact of social factors is more keenly felt in the three generations of the Hubei family. Those factors that affect language shift and language choices of the Hubei community in this study are the practice of exogamy in the Hubei community, the diverging family language policy adopted by the Hubei families, the low language status of Hubei and the influence of multilingualism.

It can be said that the practice of exogamy is the main starting point for the lack of or non-usage of Hubei and the introduction of other Chinese varieties into the home domain. In addition to the use of other Chinese varieties due to the non-Hubei spouses, some family members (cf. Chapter 4, section 4.5.3, respondent G1 – S1), despite speaking Hubei in the home, made a conscious decision to encourage the use of standard languages such as English for communication between the children so as to prioritise proficiency in English for the young. Likewise, some Hubei parents (cf. Chapter 4, section 4.5.3, respondents G2 – S3, G2 – S5, G3 – S7) chose standard Mandarin alongside other Chinese varieties for communication with their children. Thus, besides exogamy, the family language policy plays an equally potent role in the non-maintenance of Hubei in the homes of these families.   With the choice of not using Hubei as a means of communication among family members and in the extended families, naturally the status of Hubei diminished into a low status language with limited functional value within the Hubei community itself (c.f. Chapter 4, section 4.5.4, respondents G1 – S2, G3 – S7, G3 – S8) and as a result, the Hubei speakers nurtured negative language attitudes towards their heritage language.

In Malaysia where there is top down and bottom up bilingualism, the effects of multilingualism on the non-maintenance of heritage languages such as Hubei cannot be underestimated. In her article on linguistic diversity and (language) endangerment, Lee (2016) reports on how the ecology of languages surrounding and influencing the use of Papia Kristang at the Portuguese Settlement, Malacca, contributes to the endangerment of the creole. It is a known fact that most Malaysians possess a wide linguistic repertoire, thus it is no surprise that throughout the study, there is evidence of a variety of languages being used by members of the tri-generational Hubei families: the use of other Chinese varieties (such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Foochow) and standard languages namely, English and Mandarin. This means that in terms of language shift, it is clear that the use of Hubei is not replaced by another language or another Chinese variety but by a few languages. In a similar vein, in Lee's (2004) doctoral study of Papia Kristang (PK), a heritage language in the Portuguese Settlement, Malaysia, she found that PK is not replaced by another language but by a number of languages spoken in Malaysia. Like the case of Kristang, in this study, Hubei is not replaced by another dominant language but by a variety of languages the community comes in contact with. Thus, the classic definition of language shift by Fasold (1987) and Mesthrie et al. (2001) does not apply to the language shift phenomena in multilingual countries such as Malaysia. In view of this, Lee (2012: 85-86) proposed a/an (intergenerational) model of language shift in minority communities in bilingual societies (as opposed to a unidimensional model of language shift) to depict the process of language shift in the minority communities in multilingual Malaysia.

Last but not least, how endangered is Hubei? Based on the Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) Lewis and Simons (2010), it may be concluded that the Hubei language is Moribund at Level 8 where the remaining active speakers are members of the grandparent generation. Crystal (2000) confirms that a

language is moribund when the youngest proficient speakers are over the age of fifty and when only a few, mostly quite old, speakers remain. Can Hubei be 'saved'? The onus is on the Hubei community to decide.

5.6 Recommendations

In this section, I would like to propose recommendations in two areas, namely, recommendations to 'save' or revitalise Hubei and recommendations for future research.

5.6.1 Revitalisation of Hubei

This study on the language shift of a tri-generational Hubei family in Malaysia demonstrates that language attitudes affect the intensity of the speakers' energy to maintain the traditional culture for the future generations. Primarily, there is a drastic decline in the intergenerational transmission of the language to the younger generations. This phenomenon stems from the negative language attitudes that the speakers have towards their own heritage language which have developed over time. In order for the Hubei language to be maintained, most importantly, a positive attitude towards the language is imperative. Positive language attitudes among the Hubei speakers will systematically develop a stronger sense of cultural identity which would inevitably result in consistent intergenerational transmission of the language and culture to the younger generations.

Mucherah (2008) mentions in her article, 'Immigrants' Perceptions of their Native Language: Challenges to Actual Use and Maintenance' that children of immigrants who have never visited their parents' country use their native language significantly less. Thus, trips to the ancestral village in Hubei province, China could be one of the strategies to

restore the fading identity of the Hubei community in Malaysia. Globalisation has provided access to easier and cheaper transportation as well as updated information about the most remote parts of the world. Furthermore, the present-day Malaysians are generally avid tourists who may be enticed to pay homage to the ancestral villages in China if attractive travel package agreements are offered. This form of cultural tourism is in keeping with the trend of today's lifestyle among many Malaysians, young and old. Mousavi et al. (2016) state that the close relationship between identity and cultural tourism is due to loosened social ties and decline in traditional family forms. Due to renewed interest in one's origin as a result of deterioration in family relationships, cultural tourism has found a niche in providing opportunities for customers who wish to learn more about their roots. Therefore, the Hubei Association in Malaysia should be more proactive in tapping into the lifestyle needs of the Hubei community by organising cultural and educational trips to the ancestral villages in Hubei, China. By visiting the land of one's roots and origin, it is hoped that the seed of curiosity and interest about one's cultural identity could be planted among the younger members of Hubei origin so that maintenance of the language can be nurtured over time by intergenerational transmissions of the heritage language.

Next, the publication of reading and listening materials is another strategy that could be implemented for language maintenance. Reading resources in the form of simple picture dictionary illustrating various parts of lexicon under different themes (food, clothes, furniture, occupations, kinship terms, etcetera) could be designed as a record of the vocabulary used in the Hubei language. Audio recordings of Hubei pronunciations with distinct enunciations and intonations may be produced in order to educate members of the future generations of Hubei origin, as well as members of other Chinese variety communities, about the Hubei language and community in Malaysia.

5.6.2 Recommendations for future research

A possible recommendation for future research would be to investigate the effect of cultural tourism visits to the villages of ancestral origin on the attitudes of the Hubei community towards their heritage language. As the number of Hubei speakers in the country is reducing rapidly due to the loss of interest in maintaining a language of low prestige and linguistic vitality, it would be worthwhile to know if such cultural trips could possibly develop improved perceptions of the heritage language which had constantly deteriorated due to assimilation of the Hubei community in a multicultural society like Malaysia.

Crystal (2000) affirms that the task of revitalising an endangered language is immense. It is vital that efforts in renewing the pride and interest of the native speakers in their own heritage language are recognised so that they would bear the responsibility of maintaining the language. He cites Grinevald (1998) that work on a language must be conducted not just for and with its speakers, but also "by its speakers" (p. 157). Therefore, concerted measures must be taken to maintain the vitality of the Hubei heritage language.

REFERENCES

Amrith, S.S. (2011). *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Asmah Hj. Omar. (2003). *Language and Language Situation in South East Asia: With a Focus on Malaysia.* Kuala Lumpur: Akademi Pengajian Melayu, Universiti Malaya.

Baker, C. (1992). *Attitudes and language*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Bradley, D., Bradley, M. (2002). L*anguage endangerment and language maintenance*. London: Routledge.

Chai, H.C. (1977). *Education and Nation-Building in Plural Societies: The West Malaysian Experience.* Development Studies Centre Monograph No. 6. Canberra: The Australia National University.

Coluzzi, P. (2017) The vitality of minority languages in Malaysia. *Oceanic Linguistics.* 56(1).

Coluzzi, P., Riget, P. and Wang, X. (2013). Language vitality among the Bidayuh of Sarawak. *Oceanic Linguistics,* 52 (2).

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* Boston: Pearson.

Creswell, J.W., Miller, D.L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39 (3).

Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death. Cambridge:* Cambridge University Press.

Current population estimates, Malaysia, 2017-2018. *Department of Statistics, Malaysia*. Retrieved from https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/ctwoByCat& parent_id=115&menu_id=L0pheU43NWJwRWVSZklWdzQ4TlhUUT09

Dumanig, F. (2010). *Language choice in inter-racial marriages: The case of Filipino-Malaysian couples.* Dissertation.com: Florida.

Dumanig, F., Khemlani David, M. and Shanmuganathan, T. (2013). Language choice and language policies in Filipino-Malaysian families in multilingual Malaysia. *Journal of Multilingual and m*ulti*cultural Development,* 34(6), 582-596.

Ellis, R. (2002). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ember, M., Ember, C. and Skoggard, I. (2004). *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures Around the World. Volume I: Overviews and Topics; Volume II: Diaspora Communities*. Springer Science & Business Media – via Google Books.

Ethnologue (https://www.ethnologue.com/)

Fasold, R. (1987). *Sociolinguistics of society*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Fishman, J. (1965). Who speaks what language to whom and when. *La Linguistique* 2, pp 7-88.

Fishman, J. (1972). Domains and the relationship between micro-and macro-sociolinguistics. In J.J.Gumperz and D. Hymes (eds) *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication*, 435-453. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Fishman, J. (1985). *The rise and fall of the ethnic revival: perspectives on language and ethnicity.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.

Fishman,J.(1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Multilingual Matters: Clevedon.

Garrett, P. (2013). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Giles, H. (1973). Communication effectiveness as a function of accented speech. *Speech Monographs*. 40. 330-331.

Giles, H., Bourhis, R. and Taylor, D. (1977). Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations. In *Language, Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations*, edited by H. Giles, 307-348. New York: Academic Press.

Giles, H., and Ogay, T. (2007). Communication accommodation theory. In B. B. Whaley and W. Samter (Eds). *Explaining communication: Contemporary theories and exemplars*. 325-344. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Greene, J. C., and Caracelli, V. J. (Eds). (1997). *Advances in mixed-method evaluation: The challenges and benefits of integrating diverse paradigms* (New Directions for Evaluation, No. 74). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Grinevald, C. (1998). *Language endangerment in South America: A programmatic approach.* In Lenore A. Grenoble and Lindsay J. Whaley (eds.), 124-159.

Harwood, J., Soliz, J., and Lin, M.C. (2006). Communication Accommodation Theory: An inter-group approach to family relationships. In D.O. Killian. K.D. (2001). Reconstituting racial histories and identities: The narratives of interracial couples. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*. 27, 27-42.

Holloway, I., Wheeler, S. (2010). *Qualitative research in nursing and healthcare*. Third edition. Wiley-Blackwell. Oxford.

Hornberger, N.H. (2012). Language shift and language revitalisation. *The Oxford handbook of Applied Linguistics.* DOI:10.1093/oxfordhb /9780195384253. 013.0028**.**

Khemlani-David, M. (1998). Language shift, cultural maintenance and ethnic identity; a study of the minority community: The Sindhis of Malaysia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language.* 130 (1).

Lee, C.L. (2016). *Grandmother's tongue. Decline of Teochew language in Singapore.* New York: Routledge.

Lee, E. (2012). Language shift in the Kristang community: Process and Product. In Shakila Abdul Manan & Hajar Abdul Rahim (eds.) *Linguistics, Literature and Culture: Millennium Realities and Innovative Practices in Asia*, 68 – 88. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Lee, E. (2016). Linguistic diversity and endangerment in Malaysia: The case of Papia Kristang. In Matin Pütz & Neele Mundt (eds.) *Vanishing Languages in Context: Ideological, attitudinal and social identity perspectives. International L.A.U.D. Symposium*. Duissburg Papers on research in language and culture. 114, 295 – 318. Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang.

Lee, Ei Leen (2004). *Language shift and revitalization in the Kristang community, Portuguese Settlement, Malacca.* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sheffield.) Retrieved from https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.412700

Leech, B.L. (2002). Asking questions: Techniques for semistructured interviews. *PS: Political Science and Politics,* 35 (4), 665-668.

Lewis, P. and Simons, G. (2010). Assessing endangerment: Expanding Fisherman's GIDS. *Revue Roumaine de Linguistique.* 55 (2).

Low, H.M., Nicholas, H. and Wales, R. (2015). A sociolinguistic profile of 100 mothers from middle to upper-middle socio-economic backgrounds in Penang-Chinese community: what languages do they speak at home with their children? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development. 31* (6), 569-584.

Mesthrie, R., Swann, J., Deumert, A., and Leap, W.L. (2001). *Introducing sociolinguistics*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Mousavi, S.S., Doratli, N., Mousavi, S.N. and Moradiahari, F., (2016). *Defining cultural tourism*. International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development (CASD-2016). London(UK).

Mucherah, W. (2008). Immigrants' perceptions of their native language: Challenges to actual use and maintenance. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education.* 7 (3-4).

Noriah Mohamed and Nor Hashimah Hashim (2012). Language vitality of the Sihan community in Sarawak, Malaysia. *Kemanusiaan*. 19 (1).

Omar, A. (2000). *Discourse, discussion debate and negotiation.* New York: Routledge.

Omar, A. (2007). Malaysia and Brunei. In Andrew Simpson (Ed.), *Language and National Identity in Asia.* 337-359. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pauwels, A. (2016). *Language maintenance and shift.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pillai, S., Soh, W. & Kajita, A. (2014). Family Language policy and heritage language maintenance of Malacca Portuguese Creole. *Language and Communication*. 37, 75-85.

Puah, Y. and Ting, S. (2015). Malaysian speakers' attitudes towards Foochow, Hokkien and Mandarin. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 36(5).

Raman, S. and Tan, Y. (2015). *The development of Chinese education in Malaysia: Problems and challenges*. The ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute.

Ren, L. and Hu, G. 2013. Prolepsis, syncretism and synergy in early language and literacy practices: A case study of family language policy in Singapore. *Language Policy.* 12(1), 63-82.

Romaine, S. (1995). *Bilingualism*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Ryan, F, Coughtan, M. Cronin, P. (2009). Interviewing in qualitative research: the one-to-one interview. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*. 16(6), 309-314.

Schwartz, M. (2008). Exploring the relationship between family language policy and heritage language knowledge among second-generation Russian-Jewish immigrants in Israel. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 29(5), 400-418.

Schwartz, M., Moin, V., Leikin, M. and Breitkopf, A. (2010). Immigrant parents' choice of a bilingual versus monolingual kindergarten for second-generation children: motives, attitudes, and factors. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 4, 107–124. DOI: 10.1080/19313152.2010.499038.

Schiffman, H. (1996). *Linguistic culture and language policy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Shin, S. (2010). "What About Me? I'm not like Chinese but I'm not like American": Heritage-Language Learning and Identity of Mixed-Heritage Adults. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education, 9*, 203–219.

Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language policy: hidden agendas and new approaches*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Siguán, M., and Mackey, W.F. (1986). *Education for bilingualism*. p 302. Madrid: Santillana.

Sim, T.W. (2012). Why are the native languages of the Chinese Malaysians in decline? *Journal of Taiwanese Vernacular,* 4(1), 62-94.

Smolicz. J. (2010). Core values and cultural identity. Ethnic and Racial Studies. 4:1, 75-90.

Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spolsky, B. (2007). Towards a theory of language policy. *Educational Linguistics.* 22(1).

Spolsky, B. (2012). Family language policy – the critical domain. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 33(1), 3-11.

Stevens, G. and Swicegood, G. (1987). The linguistic context of ethnic endogamy. *American Sociological Review.* 52 (1), 73-82.

Ting, H. (2013). Language, Identity and Mobility: Perspective of Malaysian Chinese Youth. *Malaysian Journal of Chinese Studies,* 2(1): 83-102.

Ting, S.and Sussex, R. (2002). Language choice among the Foochows in Sarawak, Malaysia. *Multilingua,* 21(1).

Wang, G. (1991). Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective. In *China and the Chinese Overseas.* Singapore: Times Academic Press, 3-21.

Wang, X. (2016). The Chinese language in the Asian diaspora: a Malaysian experience. *Communicating with Asia. The future of English as a global language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wang, X. and Chong, S.L. (2011). A hierarchical model for language maintenance and language shift: focus on the Malaysian Chinese community. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 32(6), 577-591.

Yen, C.H. (2000). Historical background. In *The Chinese in Malaysia.* Edited by: Lee, K.H. and Tan, C.B. 1-36. New York: Oxford University Press.

Yu, S. (2014). The immediate effect of parental language choice on that of their children's language in Chinese migrant families. *Taiwan Journal of Linguistics. 12* (1), 81-108.

Zhang, S. (2015). The Wuhan dialect: a hybrid Southwestern Mandarin variety of Sinitic (Thesis). The University of Hong Kong.

Zhang, X. (2013). The Chinese in South Asia. *Routledge handbook of the Chinese diaspora.* London and New York: Routledge.

Zhuang, G. and Wang, W. (2010). Migration and Trade: The Role of Overseas Chinese in Economic Relations between China and Southeast Asia. *International Journal of China Studies. 1* (1), 174-193.