The Status of Austronesian Languages in Taiwan

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Austronesian languages today
Austronesian homeland and expansion
Blust 1999: 11 Primary AN Subgroups

- Proto-Austronesian (PAn)
- Puyuma
- Rukai
- Tsouic: Tsou, Kanakanavu, Saaroa
- Northwest Formosan: Saisiyat, Kulon-Pazih
- Atayalic: Atayal, Seediq
- Western Plains: Thao, Taokas, Favorlang-Babuza, Papora, Hoanya
- Bunun
- Paiwan
- East Formosan: Basay-Trobiawan, Kavalan, Amis, Siraya
- Malayo-Polynesian: all extra-Formosan languages and Yami
Nuclear Austronesian subgroup

• Rukai  Tsou  Puyuma  Nuclear An

• Ross (2009): Embedded nominalizations were reanalyzed as finite root clauses in Proto-NucAn.
Verbal/Nominal Asymmetry (Extra-Nuclear Austronesian)

- **Puyuma**
  - a. tu=trakaw-*aw* na paisu kan *isaw*
  - 3.PSR=steal-TR1 DEF.NOM money SG.OBL *Isaw*
  - ‘*Isaw* stole the money.’ (Teng 2008:147)

- b. [[tu=tr<in>eke*l-r-an]] na asi]
  - 3.PSR=<PRV>drink-NMLZ DEF.NOM milk
  - ‘the milk he drank’ (Teng 2008:105)
Nuclear AN: Erstwhile nominalizers on finite verbs

- **Northern Paiwan**
- a. t<in>alem ni kama a velevel
- <TR.PRV>plant GEN father NOM banana
- ‘Dad planted the bananas.’

- b. c<in>akaw a zidusiya nua kakediyan
- <TR.PRV>steal LK car GEN child
- ‘the car that the child stole’
Ergative Austronesian subgroup

- PAn
  - Rukai
  - Ergative An
    - Tsou
    - Puyuma
    - Nuclear An

- Aldridge (in press): Ergative alignment was innovated in irrealis clauses in Proto-ErgAn.
Rukai as Accusative

- **TananRukai**
  a. uduri=**aku** sa bli bli
  - plant=1SG.NOM INDEF banana
  - ‘I plant bananas.’
  b. labuwal=**aku** ki la
  - walk=1SG.NOM come
  - ‘I come walking.’
Ergative Alignment in EAn

• Tagalog

• a. D<um>ating ang babae.
  <INTR.PRV>arrive NOM woman
  ‘The woman arrived.’

• b. B<in>ili ng babae ang isda.
  <TR.PRV>buy GEN woman NOM fish
  ‘The woman bought the fish.’
Subgrouping Summary

• Reconstructing Proto-Austronesian depends on languages spoken in Taiwan
• Formosan languages preserve features lost in Malayo-Polynesian languages
  – /k/ & /q/ contrast
  – Nominalizing morphology
  – Realis vs. irrealis mood morphology
  – Inherited accusative alignment
Distribution of Formosan Languages (prior to Chinese colonization, 17th C)
Dutch Period (1624-1662)

• Communities near Tainan:
  – Ceded ownership of their land to the Dutch authorities
  – Required to report tribal affairs to Dutch administrators
  – Baptized and forced to attend missionary schools
  – Converted to Christianity and learned to read/write their language
Cheng 鄭 Period (1662 –1683)

• Appropriated land for Chinese use:
  – Government (官田), private (私田), military (營盤田) ownership

• Dutch owned land becomes government land
  – Aborigines provide revenue from agriculture as well as corvee labor.
Qing 清 Period (1683-1895)

• Loss of land, including deer hunting grounds, to encroaching settlers
• Poverty due to taxation loss of livelihood
• Intermarriage with Chinese
• 47 native schools (土番社學) established in 1734; curriculum entirely in Chinese
• Aborigines assume Chinese names and dress
• Dichotomy between ‘familiar’ 熟番 plains and ‘unfamiliar’ 生番 highland aborigines
Japanese Period (1895 – 1945)

• Relocation of highland communities to lower altitude farming villages
• Establishment of primary schools in rural areas; curriculum in Japanese
• Japanese loanwords into Seediq:
Surprising appearance of loanwords

• Sohari hana (花) qutaan.
• like flower appear
• ‘(They) looked just like flowers.’

• Wada kudurjak daisanban (第三番)
• PAST flee #3
• muqedin ki de.
• woman that ASP
• ‘That woman (his wife) ran out on (my) third (son).’
ROC Period (1945 – )

• Mandarin made official and national language in 1946
• Mandarin as sole medium of instruction in schools from 1956
• Other languages restricted to one hour per day in the media (1975-1993)
Post-Martial Law (1987 – present)

- Martial Law lifted in 1987
- Cabinet-level Council of Indigenous Peoples (原住民委員會) inaugurated
- Ethnic language instruction (1-2 hours per week) in schools from 2001
- Taiwan Indigenous Television (原住民電視台) begins broadcasting in 2005.
Population Ethnic Breakdown

- Total Population: 23.37 million
- Hoklo Taiwanese and Taiwanese: 75%
- Hakka and Mainlander-Hakka: 14.1%
- Mainlanders: 7.1%
- Indigenous Peoples: 1.8%
- Other: 0.5%
- Unknown: 1.4%

(Source: P. 172 of 2010-2011 National Survey of Hakka Population; from Yedda 2015)
Relative Populations of Aboriginies (Yedda 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Recognition by Govt.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Amis</td>
<td>201,679</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Atayal</td>
<td>86,293</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Paiwan</td>
<td>96,839</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bunun</td>
<td>56,300</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rukai</td>
<td>12,885</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pinuyumayan</td>
<td>13,487</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tsou</td>
<td>6,708</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Saisiyat</td>
<td>6,448</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Yami (Tao)</td>
<td>4,441</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Thao</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>0.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Kavalan</td>
<td>1,386</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Truku</td>
<td>29,889</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Sakizaya</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Seediq</td>
<td>9,190</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Hla’alu</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Kanakanavu</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>542,460</td>
<td>2.3% (in Taiwan)</td>
<td>Since 1948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Geographic Distribution of Aboriginal Tribes (Yedda 2015)
## Numbers of Speakers (Li 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thao</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa’aroa</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>(inc. with Tsou)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanakanavu</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>(inc. with Tsou)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saisyat</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>6,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puyuma</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsou</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>7,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavalan</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rukai</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seediq</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>8,447 (not inc. Truku)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ages 26-35

• Thao 0
• Sa’aroa < 20%
• Kanakanavu < 20%
• Kavalan < 20%
• Puyuma < 20%
• Saisyat 50%
• Tsou 50%
• Rukai 50%
• Seediq 60%
Summary

• Mandarin dominance due to earlier government policies
• Mandarin as home language resulting from mixed marriage
• 1-2 hours per week school instruction as foreign language
• Rare for critical age population to acquire aboriginal languages
References


• **Li**, Paul Jen-Kuei. 2015. Investigation of Language Endangerment in Formosan Languages [in Chinese]. Academia Sinica
References

• Pan, Ying. 1996. *Taiwan Pingpuzu Shi* [History of the Taiwanese plains tribes]. Taipei: Nantian.

