

汉语国际传播：

新加坡视角

吴英成◎著



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序 一

汉字具有表意性，其特点与数字信息系统非常相似。尽管汉字的读音随时间和地域的不同而改变，但字形却一直是老样子。汉字的意义与读音脱节，对汉语有利有弊。

有利之处在于意义的表达不再依赖口语，所以完全不会讲汉语的日本游客在中国可以借助汉字认路。也因其表意性质，汉语语法较松散。

相较于字母文字，这种脱节也有不利之处，那就是成人很难学会汉字，好在儿童没有这个问题。事实上，新加坡的小孩在学会读英文单词之前，就可以把图像化的汉字认读出来。但对大多数成人来说，掌握汉语的读写技能非常困难，这是汉语实现全球化的一大障碍。

汉字的数字特征使得中华文化得以传承和延续，但是，这一特征也使得汉语不易全球化。举例而言，日本、韩国和越南长期以来深受中华文化的影响，但是，日语、韩语和越南语仍然需要一套语音系统来辅助汉字，以适应这些语言中更复杂的语法体系。

新加坡社会语言环境特殊，很多新加坡人的头脑里混合着两种非常不同的语言体系。四分之三的新加坡人是华人，大多数人的祖籍在中国南方。由于他们从父母和祖父母那里继承了闽南话、潮州话、广东话、海南话或客家话的句法，使得新加坡社会语言

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环境显得愈加复杂。再者,新加坡推行四大官方语言政策,即英语、华语、马来语和淡米尔语。其结果便是,在一个不大的城市里,日常生活中混杂使用着不同的语言体系。

新加坡复杂的语言景观是建国以来国家、社会发展的自然产物,而在全球化的浪潮中,全球各地也面对类似的冲击。由于交通和通讯日益便捷,不同的语言正以前所未有的方式在世界范围内混用。正因如此,新加坡的语言教学经验引起了越来越多人的兴趣。吴英成的新书《汉语国际传播:新加坡视角》的出版,可以说是恰逢其时。

自1988年起,除了到伦敦大学亚非学院攻读语言学博士学位的那段时间外,吴老师一直是我的汉语导师,近年来他还担任了李光耀资政和李显龙总理的汉语导师。

吴老师潜心于语言学习领域的研究,对以汉语作为第二语言的不同家庭背景学习者尤其感兴趣。很多新加坡华人家庭同时使用英语(或者本土英语)、华语和少量汉语方言。这种情况造成了句法上的混淆,也为在同一班里教导不同家庭背景学生的老师带来很大的问题。

吴老师是这方面的专家,他协助新加坡教育部研发了更适合本地儿童学习的华语教学法。吴老师思维活跃,能够将理论应用于实践,无论教成人还是小孩,他都乐在其中。他毕业于新加坡早期的华校,荣获公共服务委员会海外奖学金赴台湾大学攻读中国语言文学学士学位,并在那里找到了终生伴侣。有了几年的教学经验,加上我的一些鼓励,吴老师远赴英伦,在伦大亚非学院修读博士学位,同时也磨炼英语。

学成回国后,吴老师执教于南洋理工大学国立教育学院,2005

年担任哈佛大学费正清东亚研究中心访问学者，2006年擢升为国立教育学院亚洲语言文化学部主任。他过去同中国大陆、台湾和香港等地的国际汉语教学单位关系密切，而他目前的学术网络更遍及亚太、北美、欧洲与南非等地。他在汉语本体与教学研究方面的成果值得世界各地国际汉语专家学者借鉴和参考。

杨荣文谨识

2009年9月9日

Foreword I

Being ideographic, the Chinese language as written can be said to be digital. Although pronunciations change over time and space, the characters remain as they have always been. The meaning is de-linked from pronunciation. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage.

It is an advantage because the transmission of meaning doesn't depend on the spoken word. Hence it is not uncommon for Japanese tourists in China who can't speak Chinese to use *hanzi* (kanji) to find their way around. For the same reason, the Chinese language has looser grammar.

However, it is also a disadvantage compared to alphabetic languages. Learning the characters is a huge effort for adults. For children, it is not a problem. In fact, young children in Singapore can read Chinese characters (as pictures) earlier than they can pronounce English words. But for most adults, mastering reading and writing in Chinese is very difficult. This is a serious obstacle to the globalization of the Chinese language.

Thus, on one hand, the digital nature of the written Chinese language is an important reason for the tenacity of the civilization

and its sense of continuity. On the other, it is precisely this characteristic that makes the Chinese language less amenable to globalization. For example, despite profound influence by Chinese civilization over the centuries, the Japanese, Koreans and Vietnamese still needed phonetic systems in addition to *hanzi* to accommodate their more complex grammars.

Singapore's language situation is unusual because of the mixing of two very different language systems in the brains of many of its citizens, three quarters of whom are self-consciously ethnic Chinese. It is further complicated by the fact that Chinese Singaporeans are mostly of South China origins inheriting from their parents and grandparents the syntax of Minnan, Chaozhou, Cantonese, Hainanese and Kejia dialects. In addition, Singapore has four official languages—English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. The result is a daily mixing of different language systems within a relatively small urban area.

With globalization, what is taken as a matter of course in Singapore, is being experienced in many parts of the world. With much greater ease of travel and communication, language systems are being mixed worldwide in a manner not seen before. Because of this, Singapore's experience in teaching languages has become of interest to a much wider audience. Goh Yeng Seng's book on *The Globalization of Chinese: A Singapore Perspective* is therefore timely.

Yeng Seng has been my Mandarin tutor since 1988 except

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for the period when he went to London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) for his PhD in linguistics. In recent years, he has also become a Mandarin tutor to Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

He has a keen research interest in the learning of languages, particularly in the learning of Mandarin as a second language by students from different family backgrounds. Many Chinese families use a mixture of English (or a patois of English), Mandarin and a smattering of Chinese dialects at home. This creates confusion in syntax and huge problems in teaching students from a range of family backgrounds in the same classroom.

Yeng Seng has become a specialist in this area helping the Singapore Education Ministry develop new programmes for children learning Mandarin. He has a lively mind and enjoys working with children and adults alike. He combines theory with his own practice. Educated in a predominantly Chinese school in Singapore, he took a Singapore Public Service Commission scholarship to study Chinese Language and Literature at the Taiwan University where he met his wife. After teaching a few years, and with a certain encouragement from me, he went off to do his postgraduate work in the School of Asian and African Studies in London University where he was forced to master his English.

When he came back to Singapore, he taught at the National

Institute of Education of Nanyang Technological University. In 2005, he did a semester's sabbatical at Harvard's Fairbank Center for East Asian Research. He has been the Head of Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group since 2006. Over the years, he has developed strong links to higher education institutions of Chinese language teaching in Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and other places. His academic network now covers the Asia-Pacific region, North America, Europe and South Africa. His book on Chinese language teaching and research from Singapore perspective will become a useful reference work.

George Yeo

9 September 2009

序 二

五十岁是个颇为奇妙的年龄。年轻之时,觉得五十岁就老了,委婉点说,成熟了;而人真到了五十岁,其实仍然雄心勃发,毫不觉得老将至矣。读英成先生的著作,便能感到这种奇妙:成熟而又雄心勃发。他对新加坡华语的精妙分析,显示着东西兼通的学者的成熟;对汉语国际传播中新加坡地位的阐发,对新加坡华语教学策略的新思考,透露出一位华人语言学家勃勃的学术雄心。

我喜欢读英成先生的文章。因为我常怀着几分好奇,想了解新加坡的华语、华语政策和华语教学,想了解新加坡学者对华语的各种看法,这种学术欲望从英成先生的文章中能够得到不少满足。我更喜欢与英成先生谈天说地。他会以翩翩儒雅的风格,谈他1987年以来每一次登陆中国兴奋而新奇的感受,谈新加坡华语政策制定的始末原委,谈新加坡领导人刻苦学习华语的动人情景,谈汉语国际传播的宏伟方略。同英成先生聊天,可谓是“倾耳有得”。

汉语自古就不停地向四周扩散,还曾渡东洋,到西洋,下南洋。与去东洋、西洋不同的是,汉语下南洋是随着华人脚步走的,是实实在在用于华人社团的交际。在现实交际中,在与当地语言的接触中,南洋汉语逐渐发生变异,并在现代汉民族共同语和南洋汉语方言的多重影响下,逐渐形成了有特色的华语。

海内外华人的交往从未停止过,而且随着中国的快速发展,这

种交往越来越频繁,越来越密切,越来越有意味。海内外华人的交往,必然伴随着海内外华语的交流,在交流中相互吸收,取长补短,差异渐减,共性更强。普通话源源不断向各地华语输送语言营养,同时也从各地华语中汲取养料,丰富自己。这种交往的结果是,以普通话为基础的全世界华人的共同语正在新的世界背景中形成。

最近十几年,汉语走向世界的脚步空前加快。汉语的国际传播具有客观基础,行家已有分析;与之同时,也需制订科学的语言传播规划,学人亦早有论述。在制订汉语国际传播规划时,学界的慧眼又投注到南洋。南洋华语是汉语国际传播的历史先遣队,从这支先遣队身上,语言规划者会获得何种启迪?在当今汉语全球化的进程中,怎样定位南洋华语?南洋又可能扮演什么样的角色呢?

我带着这些问号拜读英成先生这部大著时,许多问号竟伸展为感叹号了!“开卷有益”,此之谓也!

李宇明

2009年9月9日

Foreword II

When you reach the age of fifty, it is a rather special time; but when you are young, you feel that fifty is old or, to put it more gracefully, mature. When one actually reaches the age of fifty, however, one does not feel old, and indeed, one still has ambitions. When you read Professor Goh Yeng Seng's book, *The Globalization of Chinese: A Singapore Perspective*, you are able to sense that wonderful combination of maturity and ambition. His elucidation of Chinese language issues in the Singapore context displays the scholarship of an established academic who comprehends both the East and the West. His discussion of Singapore's role in the ongoing globalization of the Chinese language and his innovative thinking on the teaching of Chinese in Singapore reflect the aspirations of a dedicated Chinese linguist.

I enjoy reading Prof. Yeng Seng's papers. I am fascinated by Singapore's Chinese language policy and Chinese language pedagogy; and I have a deep and abiding interest in the diverse views of Singaporean scholars on Chinese language issues. And I

have always been able to indulge this fascination and interest of mine via a perusal of Prof. Yeng Seng's papers. Even more, I have enjoyed talking to Prof. Yeng Seng about a whole range of subjects. In his elegant and scholarly style, he has told me about the excitement and curiosity that he has felt on his travels to China since 1987, about the formulation of Chinese language policy in Singapore, about the determination of Singapore's leaders to learn Chinese, and about the blueprint underlying the ongoing global spread of Chinese. One can say that there is always a lot to be gained from a discussion with Prof. Goh!

From time immemorial the Chinese language has been spreading to surrounding regions; it has crossed the Eastern sea, reached the Western sea and entered the Southern sea—the Nanyang, as Southeast Asia is called. But unlike the Eastern and Western seas, in the Nanyang, the language followed in the footsteps of the Chinese people, where it has come to play an important role in the social interactions of the Chinese communities of Southeast Asia. In the course of those interactions, Chinese came into contact with local languages, and gradually became “Nanyang Chinese”. In the midst of further interaction with the Chinese “common language”—Mandarin—and other local Chinese dialects, Nanyang Chinese has come to have its own distinctive features.

Contact among Chinese at home and abroad has never ceased

and along with the rapid development of China, this kind of interaction has become even more frequent, more profound, and of greater significance. Such contact is mediated by language which, of course, leads to linguistic convergence, with one language strengthening the other and gradually reducing differences and increasing similarities. *Putonghua* (Mandarin) provides a steady stream of nourishment to local Chinese languages, while it also absorbs nutrients from the local languages. The result of all these exchanges is the formation of a common language based on *Putonghua* for use by Chinese the world over.

Over the last few decades, Chinese has been spreading throughout the world at an unprecedented pace. Experts have already determined the underlying reasons for this globalization of Chinese; and scholars have also recognized the need to plan it. In formulating such plans, the eyes of the academic world have been drawn to Southeast Asia. Nanyang Chinese can be considered a pioneering stage in the globalization of Chinese. So what kind of inspiration can language planners draw from this fact? And what position does Nanyang Chinese have in this ongoing process of globalization? What kind of role can Nanyang Chinese play?

When I read Prof. Yeng Seng's book, I found that many of my interrogatives were changed into statements—that many of

my questions were answered. This is what is meant when the Chinese say: “There is much to be gained from opening a book.”

Li Yuming

9 September 2009

序 三

我和英成初识于2005年,之后不久就发现,虽然我们生活在世界上两个不同的地方,并且是在完全不同的教育环境下工作,双方对于汉语和汉语教学的观点却非常相似。当时,英成是哈佛大学费正清东亚研究中心的访问学者,计划用一个学期调查美国汉语教学并进行华裔研究,而我已在查尔斯河下游不远处的麻省理工学院负责汉语课程多年。英成提出要观摩我们的汉语课,我当然很高兴。一则学生可以借此展示他们的汉语水平,二来我也有机会和经验丰富的同行交流切磋。

麻省理工学院的汉语课程规模相对较小,不过,小也有小的好处。它可以更灵活,也更具实验性。和美国的许多大学一样,麻省理工学院为华裔源流和普通源流的学生分别设计不同的汉语课程。华裔源流课程针对那些已经在家学会听说但缺乏阅读能力的华裔学生;而普通源流课程则针对零起点初学者和那些没有能力修读华裔源流课程的学生。我们的大多数学生就读工程、科学或商务专业,他们希望到中国工作,或者至少从事同中国有关的工作。对他们来说,汉语只是选修科目。老师的责任是为这些非专业的学生提供两到三年的实用课程,以帮助他们更好地适应中国的环境,为日后进一步学习打下基础。为此,我们自行编写教材,希望结合前沿的教学理论和虽不再风行却依然有效的传统教学法