The Impact of Tibetan Language Policy on Traditional Cultural Preservation: A Review of Research

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Abstract: This paper investigates and analyzes the impact of Tibetan language policy on traditional culture protection. It is found that the national tourism industry and local government policies have protected Tibetan language significantly; the bilingual teaching mode has benefited the students in minority areas; the mode of culture+tourism" has promoted recognition and pride of Tibetan culture; and the mature dissemination of digital technology is expected to enable the Tibetan language to break through the geographic boundaries. This study, based on the existing literature and policy practices, reveals the multidimensional paths and existing problems of language preservation. In the future, it is necessary to strengthen empirical research, build an accurate evaluation system, optimize the grassroots implementation mechanism, and motivate youth participation, as well as learn from international language preservation technology experiences, and establish a dynamic balance between the promotion of Putonghua and the survival of national languages.

1 INTRODUCTION

The endangerment of a language is caused by many factors, there is no doubt that the language policy of the Tibetans is according to the actual situation formulated of the Tibetan, but it does not exist in isolationarea (Zhou, 2002). The Tibetans are mainly distributed in Tibet, Qinghai, western Sichuan and other regions of China. Tibetans have a different social system from that of the Han Chinese, from the Tubo period to the Republic of China period. The Tibetan area has the characteristics of a single ethnic group and a single language, since the full liberation of the new China in 1951, the main towns and cities in the Tibetan area have gradually transitioned to bilingualism, but many of the agricultural and pastoral areas still retain the old traditional language. In recent years, with the remarkable effect of the promotion of Putonghua and the rapid economic development of the Tibetan area since China's reform and opening-up, the Tibetan language and culture are also facing certain impacts and challenges, and the usage rate of the Tibetan language in the Tibetan area has declined linearly. The language policy in the Tibetan area is a policy with a special imprint of the times, and the language policy can be either explicit or implicit. The paper analyzes the language policy

for the Tibetan area in recent years and the related literatures, as well as finds out how to effectively realize the dynamic inheritance of national language and culture and to ensure a certain degree of protection of national language and cultural heritage under the premise of guaranteeing the right to education and national identity.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

A total of 12 documents were selected for analysis based on the principles of Tibetan language policy, minority language policy, impact of language policy, minority language, impact of minorities on traditional culture, protection of traditional culture of minorities as keywords and accurate to specific issues and specific analysis, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of 12 Documents.

Title	Author	Year of publication
The Current Situation and Preservation of the Tibetan Language and Culture in Ganzi Prefecture	Lai Chang-yau	2011-08-19
Analysis of the Causes of the Endangerment of the Sino-Tibetan Language and Countermeasures for its Protection	Wang Wenling (1944-), PRC film director	2016-09-15
Introduction to the Inheritance and Protection of Tibetan Language in Tianzhu Tibetan Area	Su Xiaohong	2018-08-15
The Significance and Ways of Developing the Economic Value of Ethnic Minority Languages--Taking the Tourism Industry in Ethnic Areas as an Example	Li Xianle (1946-), PRC politician and diplomat	2013-11-01
Changes in Tibetan Language Policy	Zhou Wei	2002-09-30
The Current Situation and Reflection on the Language Use of Adolescents in Ethnic Language Decline Areas-The Case of Tibetan Student Groups in Tianzhu County	Wang Haoyu	2015-09-15
Language Technology and Language Preservation in the Digital Age: The Case of Europe	Dai Man-chun	2022-07-10
Sichuan Shantou Group	Working brief	
The History and Status of Aboriginal Language Policy in Australia	Yao Chunlin	2018-09-15
Language Technology and Language Preservation in the Digital Age: The Case of Europe	Dai Man-chun	2022-07-12
A case study of the European Minority Languages Protection Scheme - focusing on Scottish Gaelic	Michelle Marceli McLeod.	2022-10-15
UNESCO's initiatives and effectiveness in safeguarding linguistic diversity	Sibelle Chang (1958-), Taiwanese actress	2020-08-15
A Comparative Study of Language Policies for Minorities in Italy	Macedonia	2019-11-2

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Supportive Guarantee of National Laws and Active Role of Local Governments in Cultural Heritage Protection

Local governments in ethnic minority areas should adopt active and reasonable policies and measures to deal with the current situation in which ethnic languages in their areas are on the verge of extinction. China's Constitution and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy and other relevant laws provide a strong legal foundation for the protection and development of minority languages. Local governments should actively fulfill their responsibilities and take effective measures to protect and develop minority languages,

preserve the uniqueness of ethnic cultures, highlight regional characteristics, and make positive contributions to the economic and cultural development of their regions. Concerning the protection of Tibetan language and Tibetan culture in Ganzi Prefecture, language planners and sociolinguists agree that fostering the use of ethnic minority languages by a larger number of adults is a necessary way to reverse language replacement (Marcelli & Qui, 2022). Lai (2011) states Ganzi Prefecture requires state public officials to take the lead in learning and using Mandarin, while at the same time training some civil servants in Tibetan, depending on the region in which their organization is located. Wang (2016) articulates in Ganzi Prefecture, the first two-year Tibetan language training course for in-service cadres was launched in

2006, and since then, in-service cadres have been deployed every year to receive training in basic Tibetan language and Tibetan culture, in order to improve government staff's ability to speak the Tibetan language, and their ability to recognize and protect Tibetan culture, and to promote the development and dissemination of the Tibetan language and Tibetan culture.

3.2 Greatly Develop Ethnic Tourism and Promote Mother Tongue Identity

The development of ethnic tourism can attract more tourists to Tibetan areas to experience the unique natural scenery and ethnic culture of the region. In the process, the Tibetan language, as a key element of Tibetan culture, will be displayed and spread more. Local aborigines and tourists will be inspired to protect and pass on the Tibetan language. Meanwhile, as ethnic tourism develops continuously, the economic level of Tibetan areas will be improved, which also provides a better material basis and objective economic conditions for the protection and inheritance of the Tibetan language (Su & Zhu, 2018).

Li & Liu (2018) argue tourism in the region has a positive effect on the protection of ethnic languages, and the economic and cultural prosperity brought about by tourism promotes the positive evaluation and recognition of the mother tongue of the Tibetans, which in turn promotes intergenerational inheritance. Aba Prefecture utilizes its own climate to create a "snow culture" in the prefecture, creating snow parks such as Taiziling and Jiuding Mountain, and creating an economy and increasing the local GDP.

3.3 Implementing Bilingual Teaching Models in Ethnic Minority Areas

The implementation of bilingualism in Tibetan schools deserves thoughtful consideration. Schools should set up specialized Tibetan language courses. The value of the national language, as a valuable non-renewable intangible cultural heritage, should not be ignored. In the bilingual teaching system, through well-designed curriculum structure and teaching strategies, students can not only master the Chinese language, but also explore and understand the Tibetan language in depth, thus enhancing their identification with and pride in Tibetan culture (Wang, 2015). In addition, the local government should further increase the financial support for Tibetan language education, improve teaching facilities, enhance the professional

level of teachers, and ensure the quality and effectiveness of Tibetan language education through the policies of teaching support from universities in Sichuan Province and peer-to-peer support.

3.4 Promoting Digital Inclusive Media to Disseminate the Tibetan Language Using Digital Technology

Dyman (2022) states language technology and language preservation are tools and goals. There are successful precedents of digital language preservation technology. Promoting digital fusion media in order to disseminate the Tibetan language and using digital technology can break through geographical boundaries and widely disseminate Tibetan language educational resources to a wider audience (Yao, 2018). Zhang, Shao & Yu (2020) argue digitization facilitates the storage and updating of endangered languages and their research documents, while the formation of databases and interactive communities increases the opportunities for language exchanges, which can facilitate international cooperation and promote the sustainable development of linguistic diversity preservation. For example, by constructing an online Tibetan language learning platform and providing rich video tutorials, audio materials and interactive exercises, more people can access and learn the Tibetan language. At the same time, with the help of new media channels such as social media and short video platforms, interesting content about Tibetan culture, history and language is produced and disseminated to stimulate the public's interest in and love for the Tibetan language. Such digital communication means are not only efficient and convenient, but also bring Tibetan language education closer to modern life. Examples include the digital Dunhuang and the digital Forbidden City.

4 DISCUSSION

Existing literature has made notable contributions to the policy and practice of Tibetan language protection: first, it has systematically explained the linkage mechanism between legal safeguards (e.g., the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law) and local policies (e.g., Tibetan language training for civil servants in Ganzi Prefecture), which provides institutional support for language protection; second, it has demonstrated the feasibility of synergistic

economic and cultural cooperation through ethnic tourism (e.g., development of the Aba Prefecture's Snow Culture); third, it has argued the core value of bilingual education in balancing Chinese pragmatics and Tibetan cultural inheritance, and proposed the role of teachers in strengthening mother tongue identity. Secondly, through ethnic tourism (e.g., the development of "Snow Culture" in Aba Prefecture), the feasibility of synergy between economy and culture is demonstrated, revealing the reinforcing effect of tourism on mother tongue identity; thirdly, the core value of bilingual education in balancing the practicality of the Chinese language with the inheritance of the Tibetan language and culture is demonstrated, and specific paths are proposed, such as optimization of teaching staff; and fourthly, the introduction of digital technology (e.g., online platforms, social media) broadens the channels of communication of the Tibetan language, injecting a modern and innovative perspective into language protection.

However, there are still limitations in the study: first, it is dominated by local perspectives and lacks comparisons with international experiences (e.g., European language protection technologies), thus lacking theoretical depth; second, it relies on qualitative descriptions, and lacks quantitative data (e.g., language usage rates, generational differences), thus weakening the rigor of the argumentation; and third, it is superficial in analyzing the barriers to implementation at the grassroots level (e.g., unequal distribution of resources, lack of incentives), and fails to propose an operational framework for improvement. Future research needs to strengthen empirical analysis and broaden cross-cultural comparative perspectives. Fourth, language status is not obtained. It is the basis for language ontology planning and language teaching planning. If a language does not acquire the appropriate social status, it is unlikely that the language administration will be able to dedicate sufficient social resources to standardize the phonological vocabulary and grammar of the language, teaching activities will unlikely introduce language.

5 CONCLUSION

As the core carrier of Tibetan culture, the preservation and inheritance of the Tibetan language faces multiple challenges in the process of modernization. This study reveals the multidimensional paths and existing problems of language protection by systematically combining existing literature and policy practices. First, the synergy between the national legal framework (e.g., the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy) and local policies (e.g., Tibetan language training for civil servants in Ganzi Prefecture) lays the institutional foundation for Tibetan language preservation. Second, ethnic tourism (e.g., the development of "snow culture" in Aba Prefecture) has enhanced the use of the Tibetan language and mother-tongue identity through economic and cultural interactions, proving the compatibility between language preservation and economic development. Third, the practice of bilingual education system in Tibetan schools has effectively balanced the practicality of Chinese language and the cultural inheritance function of Tibetan language, while the introduction of digital technology (e.g., online learning platforms) breaks through the geographic limitations and injects modern vitality into the dissemination of the Tibetan language.

However, the structural challenges occur during the implementation of the existing policy. For one thing, implementation at the grass-roots level has resulted in varying degrees of effectiveness of protection measures due to differences in policy interpretation, uneven distribution of resources and ageing. For example, in some agricultural and pastoral areas, the use of the Tibetan language has shrunk due to the exodus of young people, while the collaboration mechanism between village cadres and local governments needs to be improved. Secondly, existing studies mostly rely on qualitative analysis, lacking quantitative data support such as Tibetan language usage rate and intergenerational inheritance differences, which weakens the scientific validity of policy adjustments. Third, the research perspective focuses on local experience and Southwest China's experience, with to insufficient reference international language protection techniques (e.g., European multiculturalism policy), which limits the theoretical depth and innovation of solutions.

In the future, the protection of the Tibetan language will need to deepen its exploration in the following directions: first, strengthening empirical research, and accurately assessing the effectiveness of policies through field surveys and data modeling; second, promoting reform of grassroots-level implementation mechanisms, optimizing the allocation of resources, establishing incentives, and attracting young people's participation in the cultural inheritance based on the revitalization of the countryside; and third, broadening the international perspective, and drawing on the global experience of digital preservation, community participation, and so

on. Ultimately, a dynamic balance needs to be struck between the promotion of Putonghua and the protection of the national language, in order to safeguard national identity and educational equity while preserving cultural diversity, so that the Tibetan language will have a lasting vitality in the modernization process.

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