

# A Culture Appears in Its Dialect

## -- Research about Eastern Fujian Dialect Cultural Linguistics

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### Abstract

The Eastern Fujian dialect is an old dialect. Historic and cultural information that has been stored in the dialect is vanishing with age and population movement. Language is a special cultural phenomenon, for we can rebuild the essentials in the culture in revision and link theoretical approach to witness a tendency in the development of that language.

**Key worlds:** FujianEast dialect; area; Institutional cultura; language

### 1. Eastern Fujian dialect and its cultural layer

The area where dialect is spoken Eastern Fujian dialect, including the MinjiangRiver area, Ningde area, Zhejiang Min language area and Taiwan's Mazu islands, Indonesian, Brunei, Malaysian partial areas in Southeast Asia as well. Narrow sense, Eastern Fujian dialect refers to Fuzhou dialect. Besides, the area where people speak Eastern Fujian dialect is divided into the north and south region, Fuzhou speech represents local dialect in the north part while Ninde speech represents the south area.

Eastern Fujian Dialect is a symbol of language as well as a functional sign which people can express thoughts, views, communication and aesthetic, it promotes the development of Local culture, too. Many years ago, East Fujian has its special cultural and dialect phenomenon, for the area is inaccessible and its inconvenient traffic where surrounded by sea and mountains. Besides, it keeps a lot of tradition with local color. Dialect is an external sign for local culture, however, cultural implication gradually swell with the modern economy. In other words, anything can be classified cultural if it has a relationship with people. Cultural comprises three aspects which are special material, system and psychological, all of them have

reflection in the region dialect.

### 2. A reflection of institutional culture in Eastern Fujian Dialect

The institutional culture refers to social system, the organization behavior and the behavior standards which form in the physical production process, such as habit and customs, education and health, political regulations. There is a long history in the Fujian East culture so we can read its load bearing culture by the historical level. According to the character of culture, we learn that regional element will integrate into physical culture, as a result of the district atmosphere is a determining factor to the form and characteristic of substance. However, system culture is different from physical culture, it rolled up all historical level factor, what the key precipitation depends on its receptivity of physical culture, the Chinese culture leads the Eastern Fujian culture, therefore has the legitimate cultural inside story." On the other hand, local people are more conservatism than others, because high mountains encircles east Fujian." this cause this system culture relative seal independence, the localization, the regional characteristic to be strong.

#### 2.1 Eastern Fujian dialect expresses ethics idea

Although the history has past for a long time, Eastern Fujian has experienced a long feudal society time and formed the more complete feudal ethics idea because the Chinese culture has a strong influence on the area. What is more, those consciousnesses coagulate actually in the dialect vocabulary and affect us until now.

##### 2.1.1 The concept of hierarchy

The traditional concept thought that social behavior has a standard rule which was called the three cardinal guides and five constant virtues order; as a result, the dialect has an obvious special color. There are polite name words and expressions, for example, common people called the highest ruler is emperor or Bixia(陛下

[pɔ44a41]), they called others' parents or brothers are Lingzun, Lingtang and Lingdi, the elder to the younger call the virtuous nephew, the virtuous son-in-civil service, to the person of the same generation called the polite form of address among same-year graduates in the imperial civil service examination system, the kind younger brother, polite name upper class like prime minister, county magistrate, the foremost person in the field, the Hangzhou government office, the wealthy person, rich person(富侬[hou34n æŋ21]); however, for themselves, using the inferior name words and expressions, for example: they will call themselves the little brother to the friends, the wife's father called himself as the simpleminded mountain, the clumsy mountain, the family friendship of many generations calls them the simpleminded uncle; it also produces to certain person's derogatory name words and expressions, for example: human who (beggar) (乞食[k'y34sia?2]), Opium addict (鸦片鬼[a34pin35gui51]), who is disappointed destitutely(残鳞[zaŋ21leŋ21]), the goods(货色[hu44læ2]), in some kind of person's individual(骰数[k'a44lou34]), makes a general reference fisherman(曲蹄团[k'uk44lɛ21kian21]), also refers in particular to (female who 盍 people), the commoner person (cultural person), has not been poor I(穷侬). Therefore the proverb called "the official three, the people four, begs for food five", so we know the fact that offers sacrifice to the kitchen god in the twelfth lunar month, people should differentiate the time according to the status, all must divide the rank including some folk customs, so that we can make a conclusion that obvious high and low rank distinctive.

There were not so many official members in the Eastern Fujian during the feudal period, it was far away the political power center, therefore the local people got known that facts about those person in power's vivid were from the neighbor lane, the southern opera, the ballad. Then, like this had the authority supreme applying opera makeup image, these glossary mostly table reveres righteousness, with positive factor, like "emperor" is often taken the supreme pronoun:

Someone dares to spend the money that belongs to emperor.

(皇帝买马钱也敢使。

[xuŋ21t'ɛ34mæ41ma41tɕin21ia31kan31sai41]

It means presumptuous.);

Emperors ate the inch goldfish only once for one thousand years.

(皇帝皇帝食寸金鱼—千年那蜀轮。

[xuŋ21t'ɛ34sia?2ts'ɿŋ34kiŋ44ŋ0y21—ts'ey44niŋ21na41sɔ?44loŋ21]It means that such good matter may only once.)

But those people whose economic status is lower than the common, they will then become the object of ridicule, it means the inferior righteousness and the negative survival condition, those words, such as "beggar(乞食[k'y34sia?2])", often to explain the behavior criterion agent:

Beggars disliked the burnt food when they asked food.

(乞食讨饭嫌饭焦。

[k'y34sia?2t'ɔ41buŋ41xin21buŋ41ts'au34niŋ21]Beggars unexpectedly also selects three sorts four);

Beggars did not want to walk on the rotten spoiled bridge.

(乞食有过烂腐桥。

[k'y34sia?2mo21ku34lan21bou41ky21]Beggars unwilling to take life to crack a joke, though their lives are inexpensive);

Beggars scold the monkey, but the monkey scolds the otter.

(乞食骂猴猴骂獭。

[k'y34sia?2ma34kau21kau21ma34lai41]People do not think mediates well when something comes up but complains mutually).

It has formed two-pole semantics with rank bright. Therefore the saying in Eastern Fujian dialect also appeared the semantic two-pole together, this is the order structure which has been affected by ethics rank idea, its sequence is the table reveres justice the glossary in front, the inferior righteousness in after; Table positive glossary in front, negative in after. For example:

There is a hanger-on non-commoner person in the house of prime minister.

(宰相门下无白丁人。

[tsai41sly0ŋ44muŋ21ŋa21mɔ21pak2t-liŋ44nœŋ21]);

Emperors were scold by thousands of people, beggar scold thousands of people.(皇帝千侬骂, 乞食骂千侬[xuŋ21t'-nɛ34tshen44nœŋ21ma34k'y34sia?2ma34tshen44nœŋ21]It means that the person who stays in a high status is scolded by people, most who do not have status

human is good at scolding others).

### 2.1.2 The appellation of relatives

The eastern Fujian was strongly influenced by the traditional concept and inaccessible environment rather than the non-native population and the thought in the long history, therefore there is still a more complete family ethics idea in local area, we can find those words and expressions in the dialect which has differentiates strictly the ties of relationship ,as follows:

#### 2.1.2.1 Ancestor and relative (same surname)

Lineal: paternal great-grandfather (大翁[t'uo41œŋ44]), great grandmother(大婆[t'uo41bɔ21]), grandfather (翁[œŋ44]), grandmother(婆[bɔ21]), father([nuŋ21ma332]), mother ([nuŋ22nɛ42 ]), son(囡[kiaŋ41]), daughter(诸嫚[tso21 maŋ42 ]), grandson(孙[sɔŋ44]), granddaughter (诸母孙[tso21mu41s-lɔŋ44]);

Collateral series: grandfather's sisters (姑 僂[ku44ma41]), uncle (叔伯[ts055pa?2]father's younger brother), father's sisters( 姑 姐[ku44tsa42]),uncle's son(叔哥哥[ts055pa?2kɔ44]), uncle's old sisters(叔伯姐[ts055pa?2tsi41]),nephew ( 孙 囡[sɔŋ44 kiaŋ41]), niece (诸母孙[tso21mu41s-lɔŋ44]);

#### 2.1.2.2 (Of a different surname)

grandfather( 外 公[ŋie44œŋ44]), grandmother( 外 婆[ŋie44bɔ21]),grand aunt, uncle (舅[kou332]), aunt (妗,[kœŋ332]),sister's son( 外 甥[ŋuoi44sɛŋ44]),niece( 外 甥女[ŋuoi44sɛŋ44ny41]sisters' daughter), grandson(外孙[ŋuoi44sɛŋ44]),granddaughter( 外 孙 女[ŋuoi44sɛŋ44ny41]).

#### 2.1.2.3 Pro-marriage

The grandfather's brother's wife (primary old man's wife), the husband's aunt (granduncle wife), uncle's wife ( 伯 奶[pa?2nɛ41]), the female Aunt ( 母 婶[mu34liŋ41]father's younger brother's wife), the uncle (伯[pa?2]husband's elder brother), the court attendant (郎[lɔŋ21]husband's younger brother),sister (大依姐[t'uo41nœŋ21tsa42]husband's elder sister), husband's younger sister ( 姑[ku44]), the bride ( 新 妇[ɕiŋ21mou21]son' wife) , son-in-law( 侂 婿[niŋ22t-nai33]), the husband's father ( 爹 信[t'ie44kuaŋ44]daughter-in-law calls husband greatly father),the husband's mother( 爹 僂[t'ie44ma41]the daughter-in-law calls the husband' mother), the wife's father (丈依[tyŋ41nœŋ21]son-in-law calls wife father), the wife's mother (丈奶[tyŋ41nɛ41]son-in-law calls wife old mother), husband (老翁[lau44œŋ44]), wife (老

僂[lau21ma41]).

There is very deep social culture root in the dialect relative name system takes ,people pay close attention the division among kiss, sparsely, old and young .In modern times, although the local people still draw great attention to the family ethics idea, these name which is tedious difficult to read simplified gradually, including some has already became the history. However, it has concealed region marriage system in the tedious name, the marriage system is a important aspect of institutional culture. First, the marriage system has followed the Chinese legitimate blood relationship relations system, people take the relatives on father's side as “father's sisters(姑姐[ku44tsa42])”, there are many name categories, they are complex. Between male and female in paternal line, take male as heavy, for instance father's brother and the younger brother have the name separately, but father's sisters are called as “the aunt”. Comparing with parentage, the maternal relative's name is more gentle , mother's brothers are called “the maternal uncle”, her sisters general designation “maternal aunt”, however, like uncle and father's younger brother's children all crown by “uncle(叔伯[ts055pa?2]”, compares in the standard spoken Chinese “tang(堂)”,the direction to be more explicit, but the paternal aunt, the maternal uncle, maternal aunt's children are called the cousin, this all has manifested the local marriage system in Eastern Fujian take the male as the center, the family rank is distinct, the tradition passes on male does not pass on the female ;Second, the young couple have a new family role and name after they marry, but the status is different,. What the related family life content mostly in the proverb is to “the bride(新妇[ɕiŋ21mou21]son' wife)” or “wife (老僂[lau21ma41])” which the behavior carries on the appraisal, rarely find the behavior appraisal about “son-in-law(侂婿[niŋ22t-nai33])”, “the husband's father ( 爹 信[t'ie44kuaŋ44]daughter-in-law calls husband greatly father)”, people use different manner to treats these young bloods: “The wife's mother sees the son-in-law, the pig mother to see the three-color amaranth”, analogies the wife's mother by the pig to three-color amaranth's affection to son-in-law's affection; “daughter( 诸 嫚[tso21maŋ42])daughters lives on bed while the bride's live on kitchen. It means that the daughter gets married

cannot accompany the parents again, the wife cares for the parents of husband, the implication is that usually old person only likes their daughter not the wife. With family member who produces for the marriage ties, elder to their sentiment actually entirely different, obviously, people take the male in the tradition attachment to family to despise the feminine thought. Third, the Eastern Fujian dialect is out of the ordinary to the boy and girl's name, for instance the daughter is called daughter(诸嫚[tso21 maŋ42]), the granddaughter, the niece become granddaughter-son(诸母孙[tso21 mu41s-lɔŋ44]), sometimes calls the son young Tang husband(唐夫国[tɔŋ21 mu44 kɪaŋ41]). According to historical research,, area in coast Fujian, the leader of Minyue nation is a follow generation of Goujian, the name was called wuzhu(无诸), his descendant generation becomes "the not various races", in Tang Dynasty area, people who lived in the south of Yellow River enter Fujian province, after that the Chinese is related through marriage the fusion with wuzhu, the man was called the Tang husband, the woman was called the zhu mother(诸母[tso21 mu41]), it was used continuously until now. ("Annals of Fujian dialect Blog", Yu Dafu "Food and sex in Fuzhou") these names has nearly represented ancestry's origin, only used them to call the children, the granddaughter, the niece, suggesting one kind of blood vessels followed the system, it shows tradition family to the ancestor and relative blood relationship value; Fourth, as a result of the dialect pronunciation, "the sister's son" and "the grandson" have the same pronunciation. therefore "granddaughter" and "sister's son", "granddaughter" With "the niece", the syllable is same, the pronunciation make us confused, but in Ningde dialect "grandson" and "nephew" symmetrical "grandson", "granddaughter" and "granddaughter" were called "[tso21 mu41s-lɔŋ44]", the morpheme is all same, although lacks the textual research, brothers sisters' children will confuse with own grandson generation name, perhaps not pure, it will be same pronunciation, but also an expectation children full house.

## 2.2 The culture of custom in the Fujian East dialect

### 2.2.1 Homonymic culture

It is a rhetoric way that we get the means from the homonymic in Chinese, as well a significant feature in Han nation's custom. It reflects the culture mentality

that local people ask for lucky.

Ask for the auspicious: people wish everything goes well in their daily life, so they will endow their wishes with words which mean the auspicious. Such as 米时 (line, takes the fortune to go well meaning, "Xiapu county annals. Springtime vulgar: 'New Year's Day, people get up early in the morning, regardless of rich and poor person, having a soup which is a food made from Polished glutinous rice is their custom(米时([sei332]it is a food made from Polished glutinous rice), is named 'line of time'. 米时[sei332]and 时([sei332] good fortune)have the same unison, so it was taken the mean of auspicious".) Lunar new year's cake ("cake[kɔ44]" and "high [kɔ44]"harmonics, people eat lunar new year's cake to celebrate the new year, takes year aged meaning), the meat [nyʔ2](with "禄([nyʔ2]officer luck)" harmonics), the meat circle (rolled meat, takes "officer luck" and "reunion"), the bean curd (bean[tau332ou41]with captures get(兜[tau44]harmonics, lodges pocket to have, explains easily to obtain belongings), the orange (桔[kek2])with lucky(吉[kek2]takes auspicious sense) are harmonics, the noodles (面[miŋ332]with the life([命 miɛŋ332]) are harmonics, this tall and slender, calls "the long noodles" With "the longevity" the harmonics, takes longevity meaning), the nail (钉[diŋ44]sounds like "丁[diŋ44]", people nail on wall on lunar New Year's Eve, takes has a baby, flourishing population meaning).

Taboo: The taboo belongs to Chinese rhetoric refined language standard, when speech offends the taboo thing, carries on the tactful indication with other words and expressions. It has offended the situation as a result of the harmonics which the life taboo needs to evade that often produces in the specific life background, it also must be established by usage, 厝 people (the southeast coastal area in our country aquatic community's name in the old times. Distributes in Ningde, Fu-an, Xiapu in the coastal of eastern Fujian) the life taboo words and expressions are quite typical taboo harmonics words and expressions in Eastern Fujian dialect. Because 厝 the people drift life-long in aquatic, therefore had many correlation harmonics to abstain from, like the chopsticks (箸[tɕy42], with "坠[tɕy42]fell" harmonics, changed say"chou 筹[t'ieu22]"), the egg ([lɔŋ332]with "浪[lɔŋ332]wave" harmonics, changed said "peaceful"), the deck board(板[bɛŋ42]turned with expression "扳

[bɛŋ42]overtured” unison, deck with the boat to turn over, “board” changed says “the broussonetia papyrifera(楮[tu42])”.

### 2.2.2 Solar and calendar

The weather belongs to subtropics marine monsoon climate, so it makes us feel warm and wet. In order to meet the demand of agriculture, local people grasped the season rule which was based on the lunar 24 solar terms. The main solar terms include: The spring beginning ( it starts to enter spring on the 3rd to 4th of the second lunar month ); In the second day of February (the next day in the beginning of spring , the day can create the shade to the entire spring) ;The Rain Water (the beginning of rainfall , rainfall starts to increase, it is on the 18th to20th in the second lunar month); The Lantern Festival(on the 15th of the first lunar month , this day-long weather may indicate the future climate of the area, proverb said “wind blows first full moon lamp, rain pats the cold food festival grave”, “the day of the Lantern Festival does not have rain may be result of spring drought”); Grain Rain(Rainfall increases obviously and impels cereal crops to grow, the temperature is quite low during this period, proverb said “Pure Brightness sixth solar term, cold dead mouse”, solar calendar on 19th to 21st in April); The ripe plum (it is plum rains, after lunar calendar in March, enter continuous rain spell every year, multi-rain easy mildew); Beginning of Autumn (weather starts to transfer coolly, solar calendar from 7th to 9th of August); Heat’s End (summer into termination, solar calendar from 22nd to 24th of August); White Dew (temperature starts to reduce, sooner or later vegetation obvious dew, proverb said “White Dew vast whiteness, do not can go to bed”, if has typhoon today farmers do not have crop this year, so the weather in this day plays a key role to agricultural production, solar calendar on the 7th to 9th of September); Double Ninth Festival (lunar calendar in September on the ninth of September, proverb said “if it does not rain on the day of the Double Ninth Festival , it will be sunny all the time in winter); Autumnal equinox (enters autumn, crops carries on fall harvest, fall plowing, fall plants, solar calendar on the 22nd to 24th of August); Cold Dew (temperature reduces, fall crops growth is exuberant, busy farming season, solar calendar on the 8th to 9th of October); The small spring (Eastern Fujian coastal lunar calendar in October has

the warm current, some spring flower opens again.); Beginning of winter (winter starts, fall harvest winter plants, solar calendar on 7th to 8th of November); Flurry (solar calendar from 22nd to 23rd of November); Heavy snow (solar calendar from 6th to 8th of December); Winter (locality has manufacture glutinous rice dumpling custom in this day, divides into sweet taste and salty taste two kinds, solar calendar from 21st to 23rd of December); In December three (lunar calendar in December third day, this day if crescent moon, will welcome long-term sleet weather).

## 2.3The names culture in the Eastern Fujian dialect

### 2.3.1The historic cultural is reflected in the dialect

Mr. Ruo Changpei believes that people can search national indicator by place name, for it will complement and prove history when we research about place name .Fujian dialect is an old and complex language, it consists of the old Vietnamese, the ancient Chu dialect and the ancient Wu dialect. Although those nations have been migrated or merged with others’, and disappeared in the history, their trace still keeps in the dialect. According to study, some geographic name consist of 氵---the water radical to show”, like Ningde Jiaocheng zone“氵---south the water radical shows”, Badu zone 氵---the water radical shows the head”, we may discover the ingredient the ancient Vietnamese race language from *The essence of ancient and modern notes recorded(next)* ,like 氵 refers to the waterfall .It is said that the word long(垅) is one of place names from the national minority in the southern China before many years, those words hands down in Fujian now, perhaps they were left over by the ancient Yue nation. We can find them anywhere, like Lilong road in Xiapu country, Houlong in Zherong country. Some harbors or islands were named ao(澳),such as Chenao, Youao, Sanduao and so on in Ningde. In fact, the sharp area with water was named ao in the pronunciation of Guwu dialect, it only seen in Fujian province. In short, they are the vestige of Eastern Fujian dialect’s pronouncing. Some geographic name include “the pillar(墩)”, like Zhouning County’s Li pillar, zhouning in the dialect is the week pillar, the Si River bridge township week pillar village, the Ningde nine all yellow pillars and so on, according to the literature material, these possibly all was ancient times the sound of Wu Chu language.

### 2.3.2 It reflects the relationship among national environment , water and mountains

We will learn the geography name feature on map of the old city, it is seen commonly a lot of names embody words like Tang, Jing, Yang which is very special in Chinese geography name. We can not ignore that fact that the special way for naming is interrelated with its geographical environment. The topography is more complex, the height mountains and water circle together, some area was named with Tang, like Xiatang and Hetang , filed with broad was named Yang, such as Shangyang, Yangzhon, Xiayang and Zhuoyang in Ningde, Bozhuyang in Fu'an city, Zhuoyang in Fuzhou. In ancient times, the folk lives together according to the surname and the multi-surnames mixes occupies, divides the region to be called the boundary.” Ningde city ,inside and outside Jiaocheng district, where called boundary unexpectedly more than 30 places, some is base in position naming: In Fushan boundary, Shoushan boundary, Peak boundary, some basis terrain naming: Crane peak boundary, crane ocean boundary, crane Jiang Jing, phoenix pond boundary and so on. From this, we may sneak a piece of information about the local complex geography.

#### Notes

① The dialect words from *Ningde dialect Sayings ballad eastern* and *Jiaocheng dialect mete* Fujian Province .

② This dialect pronunciation of the word case Ningde city, Fujian Province as standard, but we have filled dialect pronunciation of words and IPA for the first occurrence of uncommon words special pronunciation.

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