

What we can Learn from Dr. Ông's Works on Taiwanese Language, and what we should Do: through Comparison with Other Languages and with Today

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Abstract:

In this presentation I first compare historical situation of Taiwanese language with other languages in Sinosphere, and based on that, I compare Dr. Ông Iok-tek's researches and activities on Taiwanese language with other notable Asian people in similar situations in order to clarify Dr. Ông's importance in a broader view of history. After that, I refer to the change in political and social situation around Taiwanese language from Dr. Ông's time through now and consider how our attitudes, especially of Japanese people, should be towards Taiwan and Taiwanese language.

Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese languages seem to be similar in the way they borrowed Classical Chinese vocabulary systematically, but in contrast to Korean and Vietnamese, Japanese developed its own methods of using Chinese characters, which are kun'yomi and kundoku (訓讀), probably because of the absence of tradition of national court examinations (科擧) in Japan. Taiwan did not have an independent dynasty in pre-modern era, but Hoklo people, partly because of Qing dynasty's Imperial Examination, have had tradition of educating Chinese Classics, as Dr. Ông recalls about "su-oh-á 書學仔" (or su-pâng 書房) in his works, resulting in a systematic layer of bûn-giân-im (文言音) in Taiwanese. As every language that is used in official fields today, even including Japanese or Mandarin, has gone through the process of becoming modern writing language, such as Genbun-itchi (言文一致) or Baihua yundong (白話運動), we should learn their history for better developing Taiwanese, just as Dr. Ông desired.

Dr. Ông can be compared to Ju Si-gyeong (周時經, 1876-1914) in Korea or Truong Vinh Ký (張永記, 1837-1898) in Vietnam in three points: they aimed to expand use of phonograms from churches into official fields; they struggled with traditional writing system, mainly Chinese characters; and they were not completely against Japanese or French colonial systems but rather made use of them in their activities. But Dr. Ông's case is different in that his actions were taken after Japanese colonial period and were against the new ruler, the Republic of China, and Mandarin Chinese.

We should also note on Dr. Ông's contributions that although he had the ambition of Taiwan's independence, he studied Taiwanese purely linguistically with the unbiased view of relationship between Taiwanese and mainland or diasporic Min dialects, succeeding in identifying characteristics unique in Taiwanese Min, convincing us that it deserves the status as the representative national language of

Taiwan.

The situation has greatly changed since Dr. Ông's time until now. First, the political democratization and media liberalization has greatly progressed, making publications in Taiwanese much freer. Second, at the same time, Mandarin Chinese has spread so widely with a unique identity of Taiwanese Mandarin (臺灣華語), that the actual use of Taiwanese Min has rapidly diminished. Bopomofo (注音符號) has also been spread alongside and became Taiwan's unique phonogram as result. Third, children and grandchildren of those who came to Taiwan from Mainland China after WWII (外省人) have acquired Taiwanese identity, making Taiwanese society more diverse (together with immigration from Southeast Asia). Symbolically, the New President Lai regarded the name "Republic of China" almost identical as "Taiwan" in his inaugural speech. The contemporary situation of Taiwanese in Taiwan would be made clearer by comparing and contrasting with Irish (vs English), Norwegian (Nynorsk vs Bokmål \approx Danish), and Javanese (vs Indonesian, a variation of Malay) and we can also learn many lessons from them. Not just being pessimistic about the situation of Taiwanese, we need to seek a new relationship with Mandarin, as well as with Bopomofo, for a better way of developing Taiwanese.

We, especially Japanese, should be aware that at the end of War Japan retreated from Taiwan and also gave up even its responsibility for helping establishing Taiwan's legal position in the international society afterwards. That probably led Taiwan into the painful time under Kuomintang and the contradicting status today. The awareness of our responsibility on Taiwan will undoubtedly help us find out what we can do for Taiwan (such as learning Taiwanese, spreading it, or suggesting applying some part of Japanese writing system into it) realizing Dr. Ông's desire in the way that suits best for today's Taiwan.

1. Introduction

In this presentation I first compare historical situation of Taiwanese language with other languages in Sinosphere, and based on that, I compare Dr. Ông Iòk-tek's researches and activities on Taiwanese language with other notable Asian people in similar situations in order to clarify Dr. Ông's importance in a broader view of history. After that, I refer to the change in political and social situation around Taiwanese language from Dr. Ông's time through now and consider how our attitudes, especially of Japanese people, should be towards Taiwan and Taiwanese language.

2. Comparison with other languages in Sinosphere, focusing on Japanese

It is widely known that Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese languages borrowed Classical Chinese vocabulary systematically, and the region which includes these

countries is regarded as “Sinosphere”. However, there are differences in the method of importing Classical Chinese into their languages and cultures among the them.

In Japan, people tried not only to understand and use Classical Chinese but also largely transformed its use in their unique way. For each character, they adopted Japanese word or words that well matches the meaning of the character. This is called “kun’yomi (訓讀み)”, along with “on’yomi (音讀み)”, which is reading the character in Chinese sound fit into Japanese phonological system.

Furthermore, Japan developed a system to read Classical Chinese sentences using Japanese vocabulary and grammar, by changing the order of reading characters in addition to using kun’yomi. This is called kundoku (訓讀). Through these two methods, Japanese have changed originally logographic Chinese characters into nearly pure ideograms, and dissolved them deeply into Japanese language culture. Contriving phonograms called “kana (假名)” followed these customs. One factor for not being so strict to the original language compared to Korea or Vietnam is known to be that Japan did not widely adopt national court examination system (科擧), where examinees should have to memorize precisely every character in Chinese classics, resulting into the generous attitude towards use of Chinese in Japanese language.

As for Taiwan, it did not have an independent dynasty in pre-modern era, so its relation with court examination is quite complicated. Until the early 19th Century, Taiwanese society was consisted of aboriginal tribes and migrated Han people, or Hoklo people, with only loose rule of Qing dynasty through alternately sent officers. Gradually, the culture of literal education spread in Taiwan, along with the custom to cherish papers with characters (惜字) (李季權 2010). Qing dynasty gave Taiwanese right to apply for court examination in the 18th century, but the interest in passing the court examination was less compared to the opposite shore, and literacy rate was only 10% even in the last years of Qing (Ông 2012: 80). Just like in many regions in China, literal education was provided by private schools in Taiwan, called “su-òh-á 書學仔” in southern dialect, or su-pâng 書房 in Northern dialect, which contributed in standardizing a layer of bûn-giân-im (文言音) in Taiwanese, and also resulted in developing sophisticated Taiwanese, as Dr. Ông recalls (Ông 2012: 44-48).

Here, let us briefly overview the process of formation of modern written languages in the world in general. Haugen (1966: 930-934) presented four stages of standardization, or development from “dialect” to “language”, from vernacular to standard: 1) selection of norm; 2) codification of form; 3) elaboration of function; and 4) acceptance by the community. Leith (2005: 26-49) explained each stage in the history of English language as an example. The stages can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Selection of norm: choosing one vernacular among the available varieties as

representing the desired norms. In case of English, East Midland dialect was selected as the dominant variety.

2) Codification of form: establishing the form of a language, i.e., its linguistic structure, including phonology, grammar, and lexicon. In other words, it is minimalizing variation in form. In case of English, it was achieved through the dictionaries of Samuel Johnson, Merriam Webster, etc., and several grammar books.

3) Elaboration of function: supplementing its resources (vocabulary and expressions) to make it into a language that answers to the needs of a variety of communities, classes, occupations, and interest groups. In other words, it is maximizing variation in function. In case of English, when it was newly used in domains of law, religion (especially in Bible translation motivated by Protestantism), literature, and education, it not only imported many “literary”, “legal”, and “technical” words and expressions from Latin and French, but also developed expressions based on traditional usage of English.

4) Acceptance by the community: being accepted as a socially prestigious and desirable variety, making people think that the standard norm contributes to the well-being of the learners despite expenditure of time and effort. In case of English, standardized norm of East Midland variation was accepted in tacit process, seeing the fact that other varieties gradually disappeared from written text.

It is widely argued that codification and elaboration can be either authority-led (as in French and Spanish), initiated by literature (as in Italian, Russian), or religiously led by the Bible translation (as in English, German).

In case of Japanese, Nomura (2013) explains in detail the process of a spoken variety developed to what people consider the standard form until Meiji Restoration in 1868, and how a written “colloquial” (contrasted to “literary” or classical) style was established after that based on the “standard” spoken variety formed until then. In non-Western languages, with Japanese and Mandarin Chinese as typical examples, the modern standard written forms are often influenced by translations from Western text. Both Japanese and Chinese underwent the processes of elaboration on grammatical aspects, which were parts of Genbun-itchi (言文一致) in Japanese and Baihua yundong (白話運動) in Chinese, such as: 1) More frequent use of pronouns, especially third person (Japanese *kare* 彼 “he”/ *kanojo* 彼女 “she”/ *sore* それ “it”; Chinese *tā* 他 “he” / 她 “she” / 它 “it”); use of inanimate subjects; passive voice without meaning of suffering or undesirability (“verb + *-(r)are* れる/られる” in Japanese; “*bèi* 被 + verb” in Chinese) (Yanabu 2004; Okochi 1962; Seki 2016)

These historical backgrounds could be taken into consideration when thinking about the relationship between local languages and Chinese characters in Sinosphere,

such as in Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan, as I will mention later, and developing Taiwanese language as a literal language, following Dr. Ông's will.

3. Comparison with other activists in Korea and Vietnam

In the early modern period of Korea and Vietnam, there is a notable activist for each of them who devoted to develop local language, just as Dr. Ông did for Taiwanese: Ju Si-gyeong (周時經, 1876-1914) in Korea; Trương Vĩnh Ký (張永記, 1837-1898) in Vietnam. There are three main points in which they can be compared to : 1) they aimed to expand use of phonograms that were mainly used in churches into official fields; 2) they struggled in their activities in relation with existing traditional writing system, mainly Chinese characters; and 3) they were not completely against colonial systems (Japanese and French respectively) but rather made use of them in their activities. On the other hand, Dr. Ông's case is different in that his actions were taken after the Japanese colonial rule ended and were against the new ruler, the Republic of China, and Mandarin Chinese. Here, I overview the two activists mentioned above.

2.1. Ju Si-gyeong (周時經, 1876-1914)

In Korea, King Sejeong announced to use new writing system for Korean called "Hoon-min Jeong-um (訓民正音)" in 1446, when Classical Chinese was the only formal written language with an overwhelming authority. This system was the origin of Hangeul which is the main writing system for Korean today, but had been regarded a vulgar writing, called "eon-mun (諺文)" or "am-kul (female writing)", until the beginning of modern period, limitedly used in documents such as translations and notes on Classical Chinese or dictionaries. Other fields where it was used were Bible translations and Christian documents, especially after the treaties were signed in 1880s and missionaries began to be sent to Korea. The literacy rate in Korea was still only about 10% in 1920s, and the spread of Hangeul is widely known as the result of developing official education by Japanese colonial rule and private activities of literal education (Lee 2012: 502-503), but the existence of churches and the spread of Christianity are also not neglectable.

Ju Si-gyeong learned Classical Chinese in private schools as in other places in Sinosphere, but rather he realized the importance of his own native language, and in 1894 entered Baejae Hakdang (培材學堂) which was founded by an American missionary Henry Appenzeller only seven years before. Appenzeller was also known for his contributions on Bible translation to Korean. Under the influence of the Hakdang, as well as being baptized, Ju Si-gyeong received western style of education, and did pioneering linguistic research on Korean language with a purpose of

establishing a standard norm for spelling in eon-mun (later renamed it hangul), and published the *Independent*, the first newspaper in eon-mun. He was a member of an official institute for language policy, Kuk-mun Yeonguso (國文研究所) in 1907, and established a private society, Joseon-eo Hakhwe (朝鮮語學會) in 1908. He worked as a lecturer at numerous schools in Korea to improve the literacy rate by teaching Hangul. Joseon-eo Hakhwe once stopped its activity, but in 1921 restarted as Joseon-eo Yeongu-hwe (朝鮮語研究會) when the policy of Japanese colonial rule was promoting Hangul education in addition to Japanese. Ju Si-kyeong himself, however, died in 1914, and this new institute was actually founded by his pupils. (Lee 2012: 149, 157-158, Kroehler 2012: 25-26, Lee 1987: 89)

In the process of forming the modern written language, Korean was under strong influence of Japanese, and the formation clearly proceeded along with standardizing spelling of Hangul (Lee 1987), but the change in language is not researched in detail yet.

2.2 Trương Vĩnh Ký (張永記, 1837-1898)

In Vietnam, Classical Chinese was traditionally the only official language and original characters called chữ Nôm which were made by borrowing or transforming Chinese characters, were used to write Vietnamese in translated documents from Chinese or original verses in Vietnamese.

Romanized writing of Vietnamese was contrived by missionaries especially Alexandre de Rhodes in the 16th century, but until the late 19th century, it was only used in fields related to Christianity (Đỗ Quang Chính 2008, Đoàn Thiện Thuật 2008).

Trương Vĩnh Ký, after learning several languages and visited foreign countries (as well as converting to Catholicism) in addition to traditional Classical Chinese and chữ Nôm, realized the importance of phonograms, in this case alphabet, and contributed largely in spreading Romanized Vietnamese writing, which was called chữ Quốc ngữ by this time, by publishing numerous works on traditional literature or sciences in chữ Quốc ngữ, and notably the first newspaper in chữ Quốc ngữ, *Gia định báo* (嘉定報). Although there are criticism against him that he helped French with colonizing Vietnam, but his eventual contribution to make much more Vietnamese have access to written Vietnamese is undeniable (Nguyễn Huệ Chi 2004: 1866, Huỳnh Minh 2001: 145).

Speaking about the process of formation of modern written Vietnamese, it is not clearly proved yet. Nguyễn Thị Thanh Xuân (2015) studied on expressions in the 19th century literatures that are different from modern Vietnamese, but this research regarded them as proofs of immaturity of Vietnamese literature in this period rather than treating them as historical changes. Đinh Văn Đức (2018: 515-530) mentioned to

grammatical characteristics of Vietnamese in Christian documents in the 17th through the 18th century written in Vietnamese in Latin alphabet (not in chữ Nôm), and usage of grammatical words in these documents that are different from modern Vietnamese.

2.3 Comparison with Dr. Ông's activity

There are three main points Dr. Ông's, Ju Si-kyeong and Trương Vĩnh Ký have in common. First, Pêh-ōe-jī, Hangul, and chữ Quốc ngữ are all phonograms, and its spread was essential for improving literacy rate. The circumstances were similar, that is, there were a few elites who can read and write in Classical Chinese and the majority who speak completely different language, illiterate. It seems natural that churches used phonograms which are easier for the majority of people to read and write, quite spread in the nation although the statuses were lower than Chinese, and that those who tried to improve literacy rate used the same phonograms as what churches used. The three people are also notable for their linguistic researches before attempting to contrive the standard form of the language, making it able to be used in official fields. These situations are different from Japan, where the original writing system using phonograms (kana 假名) was already spread with a relatively high literacy rate, and the status of Classical Chinese was not so absolute, with the absence of court examination, as mentioned above. China also kept using Chinese characters after the modern era began but accompanied by Baihua yundong (白話運動) and simplification of characters afterwards by the Communist Party.

Second, their struggle was in the circumstance where Classical Chinese had privilege in written field, and other forms of writing were not regarded as authentic. Also, cultures that derives from Chinese characters and loanwords have soaked into the local cultures in an extent, making it unrealistic to completely get rid of Chinese element in the culture. All the activists made efforts in these situations to find the best relationship between Chinese and their native language. This struggle continues even today, as I will discuss below.

Third, as relationships with the emerging colonial powers, which were French and Japanese, they did not directly fight against them, but rather accepted the situations and tried to educate people in those circumstances. This is especially apparent in Trương Vĩnh Ký's case, but also in Ju Si-kyeong's case, he worked at an official institute for language policy. (This attitude of Ju may be because this period was in the process of Japan extending its rule, starting from excluding Qing's influence in 1895 until when it completely annexed Korea in 1910. Independence from Qing might also have been a great issue in Korea, in addition to against Japan. His pupils' activity in 1920s after his death also shows the attitude of going along with the spread of official educations system under Japanese colonial rule.) Compared

to them, Dr. Ông's activity was actually after the Japanese rule ended, although he was educated in a Japanese university. When Taiwan became newly ruled by Kuomintang, he learned again in Japan, which means he made use of the existing relationship between Taiwan and Japan for his activity on Taiwanese development, struggling against Mandarin.

I do not go deeper into achievements of linguistic researches by Ju Si-kyeong and Truong Vĩnh Ký, the former provided a pioneering view on morphology, the latter wrote a valued work on Vietnamese grammar in French, *Grammaire de la langue annamite* (1883). As for Dr. Ông's linguistic research, I will explain in the following section.

4. Dr. Ông's contribution in linguistic aspect¹

Dr. Ông studied in the University of Tokyo after Kuomintang started dominating Taiwan, and learned a scientific method of linguistic approach from a leading linguist Shiroh Hattori (服部四郎) to apply it to Taiwanese study. Even in the scarcity of documents on Taiwanese, he carefully observed the language(s) and described it precisely according to the method. He also attempted a historical interpretation using theory of glottochronology. His aim was to find out characteristics of Taiwanese language and Taiwanese people objectively in search of "Taiwanese identity".

It did not take a decade after the restart of studying in Tokyo when he writes in his master thesis in 1954 about Taiwanese phonological system and a draft for elementary Taiwanese textbook with a new Romanized writing system he contrived. In 1957 he published 『台湾語常用語彙 [*Taiwanese Everyday Vocabulary*]』, and from 1960 through 1964 he wrote serial materials titled 「台湾語講座 [*Lectures on Taiwanese*]」 on 『台湾青年 [*Taiwan Youth*]』. His doctoral dissertation was also about phonological and glottochronological studies of Taiwanese or Min dialects.

His works were on the thoughts against preceding studies and dictionaries which: mingled syllables, words, phrases, and clauses, without any clear concept of a word, making dictionaries insignificant;² did not link synonyms and antonyms systematically; did not show abundant example sentences; regarded Taiwanese same as Xiamenese (廈門話); used alphabets not appropriate for Taiwanese phonology.

He made efforts to locate Taiwanese genealogically in relation with other Min dialects. Overall, Sinitic languages consist of Mandarin (官話, including Beijing dialect), Wu (吳, including Suzhou and Shanghai dialect), Min (閩, including Xiamen, Swatow, and Teochew dialects, also known as "Hokkien"), Yue (粵, also known as Cantonese), Hakka (客家, including Maixian 梅縣 dialect), etc. Majority of

¹ The whole section is on reference to Ông (2012), especially its afterword by Hitoshi Nakagawa (pp. 129-132).

² Also note that these concepts are important when discussing about tone sandhi in Min dialects.

Taiwanese people are said to be descendants of those from Zhangzhou (漳州) or Quanzhou (泉州), both are now neighboring cities of Xiamen, and their language is similar to dialects spoken in both of them, or in other words not equal to either of them. Xiamenese has similar characteristics as Xiamen is relatively a new port city, developed especially after Qing opened it to Westerners in the 19th century, and many people came in from neighboring Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, which Dr. Ông suspects to be the reason why Xiamenese and Taiwanese languages have been regarded as the direct relatives to each other (Ông 2012: 3, 41).

A uniqueness in Dr. Ông's research on Taiwanese is that he separated bûn-giân-im (文言音), pêh-ōe-im (白話音), and kundoku (訓讀), criticizing preceding researches mingling the last two. According to him, there is a Chinese word corresponding to each pêh-ōe-im word, while we cannot find any for kundoku word, probably remnants of a language spoken in nowadays Hokkien before Han people came (Ông 2012: 57, 59). Clearly the concept of kundoku was possible because he was familiar with Japanese writing system.

As a conclusion in the *Lecture*, he argues five points on future of Taiwanese: 1) use alphabet for writing loanwords just like Japanese uses kana; 2) rather than writing entirely in alphabet, using both Chinese characters and alphabet is more efficient in grasping the meaning quicker, learning from use of Chinese characters and kana in Japanese; 3) improving alphabet, not using special marks as possible, such as vowel mark *o* or nasal vowel mark *aⁿ*; 4) sophisticating Taiwanese, which corresponds to "elaboration" in section 2. of this presentation; 5) making Taiwanese as a national language, but not prohibiting other languages, while establishing an institute for language policy.

Seeing Dr. Ông's overall activities including political ones and his arguments, it is clear that he had a strong desire for Taiwan's independence and developed Taiwanese language. However, his works of linguistic research on Taiwanese shows that he conducted pure and objective researches on Taiwanese with an unbiased view of relationship between Taiwanese and other Min dialects, succeeding in identifying characteristics unique in Taiwanese Min, proving eventually it is appropriate to be the national language of Taiwan.

5. Change in situation since Dr. Ông's time until now

Considering what Aya Kondo writes in foreword of the *Lecture* in reference, I think about the great change in situation since Dr. Ông's time until now. First, after the martial law was lifted and Kuomintang's dictatorship ended, political democratization and media liberalization has greatly progressed. This led to more and more people publish, broadcast, express in Taiwanese much freer, and there are much

more opportunities to learn and study Taiwanese.

Second, at the same time, Mandarin Chinese has spread so widely, earning the status of Taiwanese Mandarin (臺灣華語), that the actual use of Taiwanese Min has rapidly diminished. The status of Taiwanese (Min) as Taiwan's national language, as Dr. Ông argued, is no longer without question. Also, Bopomofo (注音符號) has also been spread and became Taiwan's unique phonogram as result.

Third, children and grandchildren of those who came to Taiwan from China after WWII (外省人) have acquired Taiwanese identity and are now essential constituents of Taiwanese society. As a result, Taiwanese society has become more and more diverse, together with immigration from Southeast Asian countries. Symbolically, the New President Lai, belonging to originally independent-oriented Democratic Progressive Party, laid the question of calling "Taiwan" or "the Republic of China" aside in his inaugural speech. By defining people belonging to "the Republic of China" are those who have nationality of ROC, the area of ROC (which conceptually has been including all China) eventually became identical as Taiwan. This shows the merging identity of Taiwan and ROC.

As for the relationship between Taiwanese language and Mandarin Chinese nowadays, we can consider it clearer by looking at similar examples. The first one is between Irish and English in Ireland. Originally, most people in Ireland spoke Irish until the 16th century. After the Revolutions in England, it was ruled by England with landlords immigrating mainly in northern part. Along with famines and many factors, less and less people spoke Irish and changed to speak English instead. Even when Ireland gained independence and made Irish its national language, Irish native speakers are still a minority.

Norway, as the second example, was a part of Danmark for a long period of time, and Danish language has a prestigious status. Even after the independence, the national language which is widely called Norwegian is almost identical as Danish. After that, a new form of national language was contrived based on local colloquial variation, called "Nynorsk" ("ny-": new), opposed to "Bokmål" ("bok": book). Even between friends in local community, they switch talking into Bokmål when talking about official matters at office. (Holmes 2022)

What is now Indonesia was under Dutch rule, and a variation of Malay language was used as common language (lingua franca) in the area. After the independence, they decided this variation its national language, calling it "Indonesian", although few people spoke that language as native language. The language with largest population of speakers is Javanese. Javanese is still predominant language in Java, but as it has complicated system of attitudinal expressions, together with many factors including moving among islands, more and more people speak Indonesian as native language

today.

All the three examples here are between local language with less speaker and a prestigious language with more speakers in wider area. Irish and Norwegian cases are concerning to independence of nations and their challenge of national languages against more powerful languages, very similar to Taiwan's case. Indonesian case is different, where more prestigious language is the newly made national language. Each case has its special factors and not so simple, but at least we can know problems Taiwanese is facing are already experience in the other areas in the world, and we can learn many lessons from their success and failures.

Based on these, not just being pessimistic about the situation of Taiwanese, we need to seek a new relationship with Mandarin for a better way of developing Taiwanese. As for its writing system, I agree with Dr. Ông's idea of using both Chinese characters and phonograms, because Taiwan is clearly under the culture of Chinese characters, more so than Korea and Vietnam, and even more now, with the spread of Mandarin. But opinions of those who opposes use of Chinese character should also be taken in consideration. Also, although Bopomofo was spread and became familiar for many Taiwanese, it is not widely used for Taiwanese, where Latin alphabet is predominantly used. In the period when Taiwanese identity has been changing, thinking about separation of these use of phonograms between Mandarin and Taiwanese may help us spread Taiwanese more deeply into hearts of Taiwanese people.

6. What we, especially Japanese, should do to inherit Dr. Ông's ambition

The history of Taiwan and its contemporary status is not much known to Japanese, which may cause several problems. First of all, Taiwan was under Japanese rule only a century ago. At the end of World War II, Japan retreated from Taiwan according to the Peace Treaty of San Francisco, but it does not determine the status of Taiwan, that is, belonging to what country or independent. ROC's occupation of Taiwan was formally just the same as American occupation of Japan and South Korea, but after its defeat in China, ROC prevented as it legally owned Taiwan from the first stage. Yalta or Potsdam Declaration which ROC may make basis of that cannot be a legal basis, and Taiwan's legal status has not been determined even today. Legally, the original owner, which is Japan, is responsible for taking care of releasing territory until the position is stable, either belonging to another state or independent, but Japan did not do that and just see ROC rule it. We Japanese have to learn the history at first and know Taiwan's situation is not someone else's but directly relating to ourselves. After that we should think what we can do for Taiwan. As one person who learned linguistics in some extent, I would like to contribute in helping Taiwanese people

more confident in their identity by improving the situation of Taiwanese, or by just learning Taiwanese even a little bit more everyday to become familiar. Another is suggesting some way to apply some part of Japanese writing system into Taiwanese.

Dr. Ông has made a great effort for Taiwanese while keeping deep connection with Japan. It is a great pleasure for me to take even a small part in his activity.

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