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Southern Hokkien: An Introduction: What We Did and Why We Did What We Did¹

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Background

When the Department of the Languages and Cultures of China and Inner Asia at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London started to offer an elementary spoken Southern Hokkien (Minnanhua, Taiwanese) language course in 2005, the identification of suitable teaching material was one of our main concerns. Given the limited number of potentially suitable textbooks for classroom use, we first decided to use the introductory volume of *Taiwanese*, compiled by the Maryknoll missionaries in Taizhong, as a starting point for this new and, as far as the United Kingdom was concerned, unique language course.² Although the detailed grammar explanations, and the quantity and quality of example sentences and drills in this textbook seemed suitable for our purpose, our students found it difficult to deal with the dialogues and the vocabulary in this teaching material.³ The Maryknoll textbook is an *ab initio* textbook that requires no knowledge of Mandarin and, most importantly, does not provide Chinese characters for Southern Hokkien vocabulary. This approach may of course accelerate the learning progress where the focus is on the spoken

¹ See Bernhard Fuehrer and Yang Hsiu-fang; with Wen Zhihao and Cheng Mei-chuan: *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* (3 vols.; Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2014). This textbook comes with three CDs of audio material. Please note that, as a general introduction to our teaching material, this paper freely borrows and paraphrases from our textbook.

² See *Taiwanese* (2 vols.; Taichung: Maryknoll Language Service Centre, 1984). This is part of a textbook series which consists of two volumes and a supplementary newspaper reader for the more advanced learner. It dates back to the 1960s and comes with extensive audio material (on cassettes).

³ This textbook caters for the language acquisition needs of missionaries and thus introduces a good deal of vocabulary that our students found of little relevance for their language learning.

language, but our students – being familiar with Mandarin and its basic grammar – found it counter-productive and constantly tried to relate Southern Hokkien vocabulary, grammar and sentence patterns to what they knew about Mandarin.⁴ The Maryknoll textbook was therefore only used for one academic session and replaced in 2007 by a radically different textbook, titled *Seng¹-oah⁸ Tai⁵-gi² 生活台語*.⁵ Using mixed script transcriptions, the authors provide Chinese characters for most Southern Hokkien words, and they supply dialogues of a livelier nature.⁶ But whereas the Maryknoll textbook works with English translations of Southern Hokkien and includes extensive lexical and grammatical explanations together with ample exercise sections, translations in *Seng¹-oah⁸ Tai⁵-gi²* are into Mandarin and hardly any detailed vocabulary explanations are given, a deficiency that needed to be addressed. During the years when we used *Seng¹-oah⁸ Tai⁵-gi²* at SOAS, Bernhard Fuehrer thus compiled basic lexical explanations and introductory grammar notes in English so as to complement this teaching material and to answer questions frequently encountered in class.⁷

Over time it became increasingly evident that the teaching of Southern Hokkien as part of a SOAS degree programme – in which students are expected not only to learn a language but also acquire some appreciation of its development and context – required a different kind of teaching material.⁸ After a first attempt to compile a suitable textbook failed to deliver the

⁴ See the introduction to the Maryknoll fathers' *Taiwanese*, vol. 1. Throughout the years the student cohort of the Southern Hokkien course at SOAS was highly diverse including typical students of Chinese departments in Western universities, i.e. native speakers of various European languages with a certain degree of proficiency in Mandarin and classical or literary Chinese, native speakers of Mandarin, Cantonese and other Chinese regional languages, as well as native speakers of a variety of other Asian languages such as Japanese, Korean, or Thai.

⁵ See Zheng Liangwei 鄭良偉, Fang Nanqiang 方南強 and Zhao Shunwen 趙順文: *Shenghuo Taiyu / Seng¹-oah⁸ Tai⁵-gi² 生活台語* (Taipei: Zili wanbao, 1980). This textbook also comes with audio material (4 cassettes) and takes the dialect variant of the Tainan area as its standard classroom language.

⁶ Where graphic representations of Southern Hokkien words in Chinese characters are unknown (or disputed), *Seng¹-oah⁸ Tai⁵-gi²* often uses Romanized transcription.

⁷ Over the course of the textbook project these notes changed beyond recognition and soon became obsolete. However, many of these notes were inspired by the excellent linguistic analysis of Southern Hokkien in Nicholas Cleaveland Bodman: *Spoken Amoy Hokkien* (2 vols.; Kuala Lumpur: Charles Grenier & Co., 1955-1958), an excellent primer produced by the Government Officers' Language School in Kuala Lumpur for the teaching of the Amoy dialect to officers of the Malayan Civil Services and Police in the early 1950s. Bodman's material contains a wealth of explanatory material that is both scholarly and practical. As some aspects of the language described in this teaching material are now out of fashion and some do not appear to be attested in Taiwanese Southern Hokkien, Bodman's *Spoken Amoy Hokkien* was subsequently adapted and supplemented by Wu Su-chu in her *Spoken Taiwanese* (New York: Spoken Language Services, 1983). None of this material deals with writing Southern Hokkien in Chinese script. Other than the parts that have become outdated, Bodman's *Spoken Amoy Hokkien* still remains a fine analysis of the language.

⁸ At SOAS, Southern Hokkien is offered as a language acquisition course that may be taken by undergraduates, MA students and PhD candidates.

envisaged teaching material and instead produced a short transcription-based primer,⁹ a joint project (2008-2013) between the Graduate Institute for Taiwan Literature (台灣文學研究所; GITL) at National Taiwan University (國立臺灣大學; NTU) and the Department of the Languages and Cultures of China and Inner Asia at SOAS was set up.¹⁰ This project constituted a portion of the International Collaboration Program for Courses on Southern Hokkien (台灣語言課程國際合作計畫) instituted by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan which subsidized the majority of funds necessary for the compilation of this teaching material. Between autumn 2008 and winter 2014, the project team produced a series of drafts, tested them in the classroom at SOAS, and worked towards a textbook that would be based on the most up-to-date linguistic research and that moreover would guide students not only to speak the language but also to understand its underlying linguistic principles, the complex issues of representing the language in Chinese script and other idiosyncrasies of Southern Hokkien.

Main Characteristics of *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction*

Structure and Aims

A few general remarks on the structure and aims of our textbook may serve as our point of departure for this outline. To start with, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* consists of three volumes, containing twelve lessons all together and is complemented by three CDs of audio material.¹¹ It was originally designed for non-heritage learners who have achieved reasonable

⁹ This first project was initially set up by Bernhard Fuehrer and Fang Meili 方美麗 under the “Languages of the Wider World” (LWW) scheme of the “SOAS and University College London Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning” (CETL) in 2006. It was executed by Fang Meili who put together a small textbook (with audio material) for Southern Hokkien based on the dialect variant associated with the Tainan area. Fang Meili: *Spoken Hokkien: A Textbook and CD for Basic Hokkien* (London: LWW-CETL/SOAS-UCL, 2010) exhibits some interesting pedagogical features as well as substantial linguistic shortcomings, and was never used in the teaching of Southern Hokkien in the China and Inner Asia Department at SOAS.

¹⁰ Project leaders: Bernhard Fuehrer 傅熊 (SOAS) and Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳 (NTU). Collaborators: Wen Zhihao 溫志豪 (former part-time teaching fellow at SOAS) and Cheng Mei-chuan 鄭美娟 (SOAS). Professor Yeh Kuo-liang 葉國良, the then Dean of the School of Liberal Arts (文學院) at NTU, had a crucial input in setting up this project. Professor Mei Chia-ling 梅家玲, director of the GITL (2008-2011) and head supervisor for the International Collaboration Program for Courses on Southern Hokkien, and her team provided the logistics for the production of a series of draft versions. Professor Ko Ching-ming 柯慶明, former director of the GITL (2005-2008), supported our project from beginning to end and facilitated the production of the audio material as well as the publication of this textbook.

¹¹ The first volume (282 pages) contains lessons one to six; lessons seven to twelve are in the second volume (346 pages). In the third volume (142 pages) we provide additional material including transcripts of the

proficiency in Mandarin and wish to learn Southern Hokkien outside its natural linguistic environment. It has however also served us well in the teaching of native speakers of Mandarin and various Chinese regional languages in an environment where the classroom language was English. All lessons include at least one dialogue scene, with the exception of lessons one, two and twelve which have a different structure.¹²

Southern Hokkien: An Introduction uses a situation-based approach in which dialogues are designed to reflect scenes in real life rather than classroom situations. These dialogues give snapshots of moments in the life of a foreign student, Fred Lee or Li² Hok⁴-tek⁴ 李福德, in Taiwan and of his encounters with local friends and with an exchange student from Amoy.¹³ The topics of these scenes are as follows:¹⁴

Lesson 3:	Chho ¹ chhu ³ ki ⁿ³ bin ⁷	初次見面
Lesson 4:	Chin ¹ tu ² ho ² Seh ⁸ ia ⁷ -chhi ⁷ -a ² chiah ⁸ mih ⁸ -kia ⁿ⁷	真拄好 躉夜市[仔][食]物件
Lesson 5:	Tian ⁷ -oe ⁷ ho ⁷ -be ² Khi ³ peng ⁵ -iu ² in ¹ tau ¹ chhit ⁴ -tho ⁵	電話號碼 去朋友[佢][兜][坦迺]
Lesson 6:	Kui ² tiam ² kui ² hun ¹ Se ⁿ¹ -jit ⁸	幾點幾分 生日
Lesson 7:	Li ² chit ⁴ -ma ² leh ⁴ chhong ³ sia ⁿ² -mih ⁴ Li ² kio ³ -si ⁷ sia ⁿ² — Li ² go ⁷ -hoe ⁷ a ⁰	汝[即]ma ² 着創[啥]物 汝叫是[啥] — 汝誤會[矣]
Lesson 8:	Li ² bat ⁴ khi ³ -koe ³ to ² -ui ⁷ I ¹ i ² -keng ¹ loa ⁷ -ku ² bo ⁵ to ³ -khi ³ lo ⁰	汝別去過底位 伊已經[佢]久無倒去[矣]
Lesson 9:	Phoa ³ -pe ⁿ⁷ Ti ⁷ Te ⁿ⁷ i ¹ -su ¹ e ⁵ chin ² -so ²	被病 佇鄭醫師[的]診所
Lesson 10:	Chun ² -pi ⁷ cho ³ boe ² -ge ⁵ Ti ⁷ chhi ⁷ -tiu ⁿ⁵	準備做尾牙 佇市場

dialogue sessions and song lyrics, and an index to our vocabulary explanations. The transcripts of dialogues and lyrics in mixed script are for reference purposes only but may be found useful by native speaker teachers. The audio material was recorded by Lim Ka-i 林佳怡, Lim Kim-siann 林金城, Lim Siok-ki 林淑期, Ong Siu-iong 王秀容, Ko Tong-Shan 柯棟山 and Koo Ka-iong 許嘉勇. Lim Ka-i also coordinated the production of the audio material.

¹² The first two lessons focus on introductory material including guidance on sound structure and pronunciation, Romanization systems, phonology (tones and tone change, tone sandhi rules, colloquial vs. literary, multiple pronunciations), names and surnames, place names and so forth. In the last lesson dialogues are substituted by song lyrics.

¹³ For self-introductions of our *personae dramatis* see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 18-20. Fred Lee's introduction runs like this: I studied Chinese at my university back home and came to Taiwan to improve my Mandarin but later decided to also learn Southern Hokkien. To meet my living expenses I took on a few private language students. My Taiwanese friends call me A¹-Tek⁴ 阿德.

¹⁴ Based on a set of persons and scenes developed by Bernhard Fuehrer, Wen Zhihao drafted first versions of these dialogues. Over the years and with a number of adjustments to the internal structure (lexicon and grammar progression, dialect variant preference and allocation to individual personae etc.) these early drafts went through significant revisions and amendments.

In addition to the dialogue scenes, lessons include “Notes on Vocabulary” and “Additional Vocabulary”, “Sentence Patterns”, “Listening/Reading Comprehension”, “Cloze Practice”, “Translation Exercise” and “Pearls of Wisdom”.

Our “Notes on Vocabulary” introduce the vocabulary used in the dialogue sections. They follow the sequence of occurrence of words in the dialogues with words and expressions used in the dialogues printed in larger print. Lexical explorations and example sentences are in smaller print. In this section we indicate dialect variants where appropriate, differentiate between the so-called “literary” and “colloquial” readings, identify word categories, elaborate on syntax and morphology, and explore multiple pronunciations and other conventions or noteworthy matters that we consider beneficial for a solid grasp of the lexicon and its application in Southern Hokkien. Different functions of words are explained and illustrated in example sentences. Our “Notes on Vocabulary” are complemented by lists of “Additional Vocabulary” as used in the example sentences and elsewhere in a lesson.

In the “Sentence Patterns” section the learner is required to identify suitable combinations of given options. And in the “Cloze Practice” learners select a suitable option and fill in the blanks left in the sentences:

The “Listening/Reading Comprehension” exercises also serve as Southern Hokkien-English translation practice. The aim of the English-Southern Hokkien translation exercises is to apply the vocabulary introduced so far and to express in Southern Hokkien the main idea behind a given sentence rather than to provide literal translations.

In the “Pearls of Wisdom” (Siok⁸-gi² 俗語) section we introduce a selection of set phrases and popular sayings. As these are highly context-sensitive, our translations are best perceived as approximations that should be explored in class with the teacher.¹⁵ By and large *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* seeks to offer corresponding proverbs and set phrases, though sometimes we add more literal translations or even explanations (in small print). Consider the following examples:

¹⁵ Given that dynamic equivalents rarely cover the entire semantic range of the original, the discussion of these proverbs and set phrases in class is essential. In class the teacher is encouraged to set situations in which the Southern Hokkien proverbs can be applied. Some guidance on this can be found in Albert F. Chang: *Collection of Equivalent Proverbs in Five Languages* (Lanham: Hamilton, 2012).

Cho³⁻² gu⁵ tloh⁸⁻³ thoa¹, cho³⁻² lang⁵ tloh⁸⁻³ boa⁵. (ZZ) 做牛著拖,做儂著磨.
Choe³⁻² gu⁵ tloh⁸⁻³ thoa¹, choe³⁻² lang⁵ tloh⁸⁻³ boa⁵. (A QZ)

Men labour, oxen pull.¹⁶

Bo⁵ hi⁵, he⁵ ma⁷ ho².¹⁷ 無魚, 蝦 ma⁷ 好.

If you have no bacon, you must be content with cabbage. Hunger is the best sauce.

When there is no fish, shell fish will do.

Si² be² cho³ oah⁸ be² i¹. 死馬做活馬醫.

To flog a dead horse.¹⁸

A number of lessons include short excursions on a variety of topics, revisions and summaries. These include simplified guidelines on tones in Mandarin and Southern Hokkien, remarks on negations and dialect interaction, an introduction to kinship terms and appellations, the twelve zodiac signs and their pronunciations in Southern Hokkien as reference to someone's year of birth, a revision exercise on directions and a summary of the most commonly used measure words.

As set out in the preface to our textbook, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* aims at a dual purpose. Where it is used as an introduction to elementary spoken Southern Hokkien, the learner should focus on the vocabulary featured in the dialogues and applied in our exercise sections. Most of the elementary vocabulary is marked in a slightly larger font in the "Notes on Vocabulary". This primary lexicon will enable the learner to function adequately in simple standard situations. The more ambitious learner will want to study not only the elementary vocabulary but also the lexical explorations provided in the "Notes on Vocabulary" in a slightly smaller font. These lexical explorations should enhance the students' ability to see the connections between Southern Hokkien and Mandarin and hence help to absorb the new language more quickly.

Descriptive Approach and Linguistic Choices in a Dialect Continuum

¹⁶ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 229 (05.37).

¹⁷ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 61 (07.52).

¹⁸ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 222 (10.58).

The compilation of any language teaching material requires linguistic choices which, as in the case of Southern Hokkien and its dialect variants, require particular consideration.

Southern Hokkien: An Introduction is not designed as a textbook for one specific Taiwanese variant of the language. In order to reflect the dialect continuum observed in Taiwan (and elsewhere), we apply a descriptive approach, reflect linguistic realities, and give priority to the fused dialect variant most frequently encountered in Taiwan. This dialect variant primarily derives from the Zhangzhou 漳州 (hereafter: ZZ) dialect but blends in characteristics of the dialects associated with Xiamen or Amoy 廈門 (hereafter: A) and Quanzhou 泉州 (hereafter: QZ).¹⁹

In the main body of the textbook we thus transcribe mainly according to the Taiwanese derivative of the Zhangzhou dialect. In sentences that are clearly marked as representing a certain dialect variant, we adhere more closely to the phonetic specifics of dialect variants. Though the dialogues reflect our linguistic choice, a few individual speakers in our dialogues exhibit dialectal idiosyncrasies that echo the variety of linguistic preferences observed in the speech of native speakers around Taiwan. This is to say that, with the exception of the lines spoken by a small number of speakers in our textbook, the lines in the dialogue sections assigned to all other speakers follow our linguistic standard.²⁰

As a general rule our lexical explanations list pronunciations in the following order: ZZ, A and QZ. But since linguistic reality in Taiwan demonstrates that most speakers do not strictly adhere to any variant of dialect derivatives but instead tend to fuse dialect characteristics, we change the order of pronunciations listed in the lexical explanations where the majority of Taiwanese Southern Hokkien speakers does not adhere to the ZZ sounds.

In dealing with dialect variants and other phonetic issues we have taken a few short-cuts. These include the following:

¹⁹ Note that in our textbook ZZ refers to the Taiwanese derivative of the dialect associated with Zhangzhou rather than the dialect associated with Zhangzhou on the mainland. And QZ refers to the Taiwanese derivative of the dialect associated with Quanzhou rather than the Quanzhou dialect as encountered on the mainland.

²⁰ Lines in the dialogue sections spoken by these two speakers lean towards pronunciations of the Taiwanese derivative of the Quanzhou dialect, but they do not strictly adhere to the phonetic system of this dialect variant. And given that one speaker represents the Amoy dialect, her lines in the dialogue sections include a limited number of examples that reflect the lexical preferences of contemporary speakers from Amoy. For details see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 17.

Although the initials j- and l- are clearly differentiated in the Zhangzhou dialect and its Taiwanese derivative, we follow the widely established practice in Taiwan of not always strictly differentiating these two initials (unless the sentence is clearly specified as representing ZZ).²¹

We simplify QZ pronunciations, do not transcribe the final -u, and shall, with one notable exception, also not transcribe the final -ə.²²

The nasal initials m-, n- and ng- tend to lead to a nasalization of the final. Syllables like me⁵ (“night”) are thus sometimes transcribed as meⁿ⁵. We adhere to the established transcription of these syllables as me⁵.²³

Though primarily based on dialect variants encountered in Taiwan, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* also includes references to dialect variants spoken in other Southern Hokkien speaking areas. In view of our student cohort, this approach seemed particularly meaningful in the teaching environment at SOAS.²⁴ Consider the following two simple examples:

Further to the pronunciation ka¹-pi¹ 咖啡 (“coffee”) as the most commonly used variant in Taiwan, we list the variants ko¹-pi³ or kha¹-hui¹ as preferred pronunciations among Southern Hokkien speakers on the mainland. And as we tend to have a considerable number of students with South East Asian connections we also introduce kho¹-pi³ which is described as being associated with Malaysian Hokkien.²⁵ In our own textbook sentences we restrict ourselves to the variant most frequently encountered in Taiwan (i.e. ka¹-pi¹). The references to other variants aim at helping students to quickly adjust to regional variants and, on a more conceptual level, to engage with the flexibility of the language in its various (linguistic) environments.

As mentioned above, one of our *personae dramatis* is a contemporary speaker from Amoy. Although we simplified regional diversities for the sake of the language learning process, we also decided to reflect selected regional characteristics of her speech. One such example is the use of the expression so⁵ koe¹ 趿街 (“to stroll down the streets”, “go out [window shopping]”). Together with this lexical option we introduce kho⁵ koe¹ 遛街, a lexical alternative used in Amoy, and the phrase seh⁸ ke¹/seh⁸ koe¹ 蹓街 which is the most commonly used synonym in Taiwan and a number of other Southern Hokkien speaking areas.²⁶ Again, with the notable exception of this sentence attributed to this specific speaker, our textbook sentences only use the expression most frequently encountered in the speech of Taiwan native speakers (i.e. seh⁸ ke¹ / seh⁸ koe¹ 蹓街).

Like any other language, Southern Hokkien is very much a living phenomenon and undergoes constant changes.²⁷ The approach taken by *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* reflects the non-static nature of the language in the sense that the textbook describes how the

²¹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 16.

²² See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 16.

²³ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 16.

²⁴ Our course caters also for heritage learners and students who take this language option as preparation for fieldwork in Southern Hokkien speaking areas on the mainland or in South East Asia.

²⁵ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 116 (03.14).

²⁶ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 151 (04.08).

²⁷ For some discussion of lexical changes of Taiwanese Southern Hokkien published in English see Li Chin-An (Li Khin Hoaⁿ) 李勤岸: *Taiwanese Lexical Change and Variation* (Tainan: Kailang zazhi shiye youxian gongsi, [2003] 2005), a computer-assisted corpus analysis that also provides interesting pointers regarding the linguistic development of Taiwanese Southern Hokkien in its historical and social context. See also Jean DeBernardi: “Linguistic Nationalism: The Case of Southern Min”. *Sino-Platonic Papers* 25 (1991) and Deborah Beaser: “The Outlook of Taiwanese Language Preservation”. *Sino-Platonic Papers* 172 (2006) as well as the bibliographies in these two articles.

language is actually spoken and does not impose a specific variant as classroom standard. Because the language as currently spoken preserves some of the layers of its history, we thus occasionally also list words and expressions that are more likely to be used by an elderly generation.

One example of our textbook including older linguistic layers is the introduction of the word *sio²-moe⁷* 小妹, (“youngest sister”, “younger sister”). In addition to listing the standard pronunciation in the Taiwanese derivative of the Zhangzhou dialect, the textbook also introduces the variants *sio²-be⁷* (A) and *sio²-moai⁷*, the latter belonging to an older layer of the ZZ variant.²⁸

Variants encountered in contemporary Taiwan may differ substantially according to speakers’ age groups, and a majority of younger native speakers shows a tendency towards a Mandarinized Southern Hokkien, a variant that our textbook describes as Neo-Taiwanese (NT). Yet, it is worth noting that some of the Southern Hokkien words often described as Neo-Taiwanese are actually found in documents that date back to the Southern Hokkien spoken in Amoy over a century ago, and thus attest to the normative power of Mandarin (*guānhuà* 官話) as an important factor in the lexical development of Southern Hokkien over a considerable period of time.²⁹

Contrastive Approach: From the Known to the Unknown

By focussing on lexical, semantic and grammatical similarities, parallels and differences between Southern Hokkien and Mandarin, vocabulary and grammar explanations in *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* follow a primarily contrastive approach. Contrastive references to the two languages are provided where appropriate and kept as concise as possible. Consider for example the short note in our explanation of the auxiliary verb *mai³* [莫] (“do not”) or of the sentence pattern *si⁷* 是 ... *e⁵* [的], neither of which would require further explanation for a student familiar with Mandarin and basic classical or literary Chinese:

“As a negative imperative *mai³* functions like *wù* 勿 or *mò* 莫 in pre-modern Chinese or *bié* 別 in Mandarin.”³⁰

“This is the equivalent of the *shì* 是 ... *de* [的] construction in Mandarin.”³¹

²⁸ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 113 (03.10).

²⁹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 26.

³⁰ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 91 (02.91).

³¹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 153 (04.12).

In a few cases lexical explanations in *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* venture into comparative dialectology and make reference to other regional languages such as Cantonese and Hakka. However, these excursions are given on a strictly occasional basis, kept to a minimum, and aim at discussing Southern Hokkien within a wider linguistic framework.³²

With regard to comparative lexical aspects, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* pays particular attention to so-called “false friends” (*faux amis*) in Mandarin and Southern Hokkien:

Whereas the noun *shǒuzhǐ* 手指 means “finger” in Mandarin, Southern Hokkien *chhiu²-chi²* 手指 denotes “finger-ring”.³³

Written Southern Hokkien

The writing of Southern Hokkien has been a subject of discussion for a considerable period of time.³⁴ *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* applies the so-called Missionary Romanization System (MRS), a variety of the Peh⁸-oe⁷-ji⁷ 白話字 (“vernacular writing”; POJ) Romanization system which is widely used to transcribe Southern Hokkien dialects.³⁵ The main body of the textbook is transcribed in MRS and in mixed script.³⁶ In order to assist learners to get the pronunciations (including tones and tone changes) right, we encourage them to focus on Romanized Southern Hokkien. Mixed script versions of our dialogue sections can be found in the appendix.³⁷ In order to facilitate a swift learning process we do however print Romanized and mixed script versions side-by-side in our discussions of vocabulary.

³² See for example the notes in Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 134 (09.14).

³³ See the note in Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 119 (03.17).

³⁴ For a comprehensive study and summary of these discussions see Henning Klöter: *Written Taiwanese* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005).

³⁵ Mandarin is transcribed in Hanyu Pinyin with the conventional exceptions; the revised Hepburn system is used for Japanese; Cantonese is transcribed according to the Yale system. To ensure compatibility and to enable the learner to switch between Romanization systems as required by other reference material, comparative transcription tables (including IPA) are provided in the “Introduction”; see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 28-32.

³⁶ We do not provide mixed script versions of the exercise sections, i.e. the “Sentence Patterns”, “Listening/Comprehension” and “Cloze Practice”, which are only transcribed in Romanization.

³⁷ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 3, pp. 5-17. Although we include these mixed script versions, the learner is advised to focus on the Romanized version of dialogues in which clear indication regarding the application of tone sandhi rules is provided so as to ensure correct pronunciation and realization of tones.

Though loan words from Japanese are written in Japanese, their transcriptions in MRS follow the Southern Hokkien pronunciations.³⁸ Consider the following two examples:

The word beh⁸-a²-chiu² 麥[仔]酒 is introduced as the standard Southern Hokkien term for “beer”. As both terms are frequently encountered in Taiwan, we note that the Japanese loan word bi²-lu³ ビール is only used in Taiwanese Southern Hokkien.³⁹

The Southern Hokkien words for “necktie” are nia²-toa³ 領帶 and ne⁷-khu¹-tai² ネクタイ. However, we note that the Japanese loan is only used in Taiwan where it seems to fade out of fashion slowly. Nowadays some speakers tend to switch language and apply the Mandarin pronunciation *lǐngdài* 領帶 even in Southern Hokkien sentences.⁴⁰

Where Hokkien is transcribed in Chinese script, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* aims at philologically reasonably accurate representations of words in characters (*běnzì* 本字).⁴¹ Whereas current trends simplify the writing of Southern Hokkien in Chinese script predominantly by using popular or popularised loans, our approach requires learners to reconsider their understanding of Chinese graphs and of historical lexicography.⁴² However, in order to facilitate the learners’ daily dealings with written Southern Hokkien, we include reference to more commonly encountered transcriptions of disputed words in Chinese script. The following two examples may illustrate our point:

The transcription of the adverb koh⁴ (“again”, “yet”, “still”, “furthermore”, “moreover”) in Chinese script is disputed; it is most commonly represented by phonetic loans such as 閣 or 攔. However, in view of the frequent occurrences of 故 in the sense of “again”, “yet”, “still” in pre-modern literature, and considering the circumstances that led to its change in tonal nature, we understand 故 as the proper graphic representation of this word.⁴³

³⁸ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 22f. and passim.

³⁹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 133 (03.35).

⁴⁰ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 42 (07.36).

⁴¹ For methodological considerations regarding the identification of so-called “original characters” (*běnzì*) in the transcription of Southern Hokkien in Chinese script see Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳: “Fangyan benzi yanjiu de tanyifa” 方言本字研究的探義法. Alain Peyraube and Chaofen Sun (eds.): *In honour of Mei Tsu-Lin: Studies on Chinese Historical Syntax and Morphology* (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Centre de Recherche Linguistique sur l’Asie Orientale, 1999), pp. 299-326; Yang Hsiu-fang: “Fangyan benzi yanjiu de guannian yu fangfa” 方言本字研究的觀念與方法. *Hanxue yanjiu/Chinese Studies* 漢學研究 18 (2000), pp. 111-146; Yang Hsiu-fang: “Cizu yanjiu zai fangyan benzi kaoqiu shang de yunyong” 詞族研究在方言本字考求上的運用. *Yuyanxue luncong* 語言學論叢 40 (2009), pp. 194-212.

⁴² References to the current standard for written Taiwanese as set by the Ministry of Education in Taipei are marked as CTS (Current Taiwan Standard), especially where we deviate from the written forms suggested by the standardisation committee in their online dictionary *Taiwan Minmanyu changyongci cidian* 臺灣閩南語常用詞辭典 at http://twblg.dict.edu.tw/holodict_new/index.html.

⁴³ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 197 (05.07).

The proper representation of the word adjective kui¹ (“whole”, “entire”) in characters is disputed; some transcribe it by phonetic loans such as 歸 or 規. We transcribe the adjective kui¹ as 幾 and relate it to kui² 幾 which may function as a question word or as a numeral: “The character 幾 has multiple readings: Where it is read as kui², it functions as a question word (‘how many’, ‘how much’) or numeral (‘a few’). Its Mandarin equivalent is *jǐ*. Where it is pronounced kui¹ (Mandarin equivalent: *jī*) in Southern Hokkien, it denotes completeness; e.g.: kui¹ liap⁸ 幾粒 (‘a whole grain or other round object’).”⁴⁴

In cases where the proper graphic representation for a Southern Hokkien word in Chinese script is unknown or where no *běnzì* candidate has been identified, our textbook uses phonetic or semantic loan graphs.⁴⁵ With transparency as our overriding principle, we mark loan graphs by square brackets [] in our transcriptions of Southern Hokkien in Chinese script:

Though the verb beh⁴/boeh⁴ (“to want”, “wish”; “would like to”; “will”) is often transcribed by the semantic loan graph 要, we opt for the loan [欲] with the square bracket indicating that we do not take 欲 as *běnzì* for the word beh⁴/boeh⁴.⁴⁶

The proper graphic representation of the verb lim¹ (“to drink”) in Chinese script appears to be unknown. Whereas the most commonly used graphs used for this word are 飲 and 唸, we take 飲 as a semantic loan and write [飲] in our transcriptions of Southern Hokkien via Chinese script.⁴⁷

It is well known that the transcription of quite a few Southern Hokkien words in Chinese script is problematic. Given the complex relation between language (Southern Hokkien) and script (Chinese graphs), and considering some of the popular assumptions about that relation, it is hardly surprising that we encounter a variety of different transcriptions in Chinese characters for many of these Southern Hokkien words.⁴⁸ *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* notes some of the most popular graphic representations of these words but adheres to a strictly linguistic framework.⁴⁹ One such example is the graph that would correspond to Southern Hokkien e⁷/oe⁷

⁴⁴ For this summary and the quote see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 145 (09.32).

⁴⁵ Where no meaningful loan graph is available, we opt for Romanization of words or syllables.

⁴⁶ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 121f. (03.20).

⁴⁷ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 89 (02.87).

⁴⁸ Needless to say that where the language learning process includes Chinese script, the lack of a widely accepted standard for transcribing Southern Hokkien in Chinese script creates considerable difficulties for learners. *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* is based on the view that attention to historical Chinese linguistics is not only beneficial for the learning of the language but also creates an intellectual environment in which historical developments can inform discussions of current language practices, and in which the academic discussion of relevant issues is encouraged. For some of the aspects applicable to consideration of Southern Hokkien within a wider historical framework see David Prager Branner: *Problems in Comparative Dialectology. The Classification of Hakka and Min* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000), esp. pp. 147-174.

⁴⁹ Other such cases in our lexical explorations include tacit references to publications such as Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳: “Cong fangyan bijiao lun Wu Min tongyuanci ‘Zhi’” 從方言比較論吳閩同源詞「摠」. *Yuyan ji yuyanxue* 語言暨語言學 4.1 (2003), pp. 167-196 or Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳: “Lun Minnanyu ‘ruo’ de

“to be able to”; “can”; marker of future tense). When dealing with such cases *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* takes recent research as its primary point of reference:

As Southern Hokkien e⁷/oe⁷ functions very much like Mandarin *hui* 會, this word is frequently transcribed by the semantic loan 會. However, historical phonology and historical semantics present convincing evidence for accepting 解 as the proper graphic representation of the word e⁷/oe⁷ in characters.⁵⁰

With the graph 解 being taken as the proper graphic representation of the word e⁷/oe⁷, how should the antonym be⁷/boe⁷ (“will not”, “shall not”, “can not”) be transcribed? The suggestion offered in *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* seems a logical consequence of understanding be⁷/boe⁷ as a fusion word:

The pronunciation be⁷/boe⁷ derives from a fusion (negation + e⁷/oe⁷) and there is no adequate graphic representation of the morpheme in a syllable-based transcription system via characters. In analogy to the graph 會 for its positive counterpart e⁷/oe⁷, the character 儻 is widely used as a graphic representation of be⁷/boe⁷. Others write 袂. In parallel to the graph 解 which we accept as proper representation of the word e⁷/oe⁷, and due to the lack of convenient and convincing alternatives, we tentatively transcribe be⁷/boe⁷ with 儻.⁵¹

Where Southern Hokkien is transcribed in Chinese script, we encounter a substantial number of interesting cases that relate to the identification of etymological roots. One such example is the treatment of bat⁴/pat⁴/piat⁴ 別 and pat⁸/piat⁸ 別 (“to part”, “distinguish”, “differ”; “to be different”; “other”). The entry on bat⁴/pat⁴ (“to know”, “recognise”, “understand”; “be acquainted with”, “have experienced”, “have ever”) / piat⁴ (“to distinguish”, “separate”) in *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* provides clarification:

Pat⁸ (CR)/piat⁸ (LR) and bat⁴/pat⁴/piat⁴ derive from the same etymological root.⁵² The lexical differentiation via 4th and 8th tone results from establishing phonetic contrast between cognate words by means of voiced/voiceless alternation (清濁別義).⁵³ In view of historical linguistics we take 別 as the proper graphic

yongfa jiqi laiyan” 論閩南語「若」的用法及其來源. *Hanxue yanjiu/Chinese Studies* 漢學研究 23.2 (2005), pp. 355-388 and so forth.

⁵⁰ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 146f. (04.04). On the graph 解 as adequate graphic representation of the word e⁷/oe⁷ in Chinese script see Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳: “Cong Hanyushi guandian kan ‘jie’ de yinyi he yufa xingzhi” 從漢語史觀點看「解」的音義和語法性質. *Yuyan ji yuyanxue* 語言暨語言學 2.2 (2001), pp. 261-297.

⁵¹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 148 (04.04).

⁵² On pat⁸/piat⁸ 別 see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 246 [06.13].

⁵³ On this question see Mei Tsu-lin 梅祖麟: “Neibu nigou Hanyu san li” 內部擬構漢語三例. *Mei Zulin yuyanxue lunwenji* 梅祖麟語言學論文集 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2000), pp. 352-376 (rpt. from *Zhongguo yuwen* 中國語文 1988.3); cf. also Gong Hwang-chen 龔煌城: “Shanggu Hanyu yu yanshi Hanzangyu dai r yu l fushengmu de gouni” 上古漢語與原始漢藏語帶 r 與 l 複聲母的構擬. *Gong Huangcheng Hanzangyu bijiao yanjiu lunwenji* 龔煌城漢藏語比較研究論文集 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyan, 2011), pp. 187-216 (rpt. from *Taida Wenshizhe xuebao* 臺大文史哲學報 54 (2001), pp. 1-36).

representation of these words in characters. Others transcribe bat⁴/pat⁴ as 捌 and pat⁸ as 別. With regard to the CR bat⁴ and pat⁴, the pronunciation with p- initial represents an older linguistic layer. The b- initial results from the lenition (softening or weakening) of the initial. The two pronunciations bat⁴ and pat⁴ are equally popular.⁵⁴

Where we encounter fusion words and fused syllables, the traditional syllable-based approach in the transcription of Southern Hokkien in Chinese script creates methodological problems. With the notable exception of transcribing be⁷/boe⁷ as 懈, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* does, as a general rule, transcribe contracted and fused words and syllables in Romanization only. We thus transcribe bin⁵-a²-chai³ (“tomorrow”) as 明 a²-chai³ and note the following:

Although most write 明[仔]載, the representation of this word in characters is problematic and open to discussion. With bin⁵-a²-chai³ being a high frequency word, the syllables a² and chai³ may well be the result of contractions and phonetic fusions. It thus seems questionable whether they can actually be traced to character equivalents on the basis of syllable-based phonetics.⁵⁵

Phonetics: Multiple Pronunciations, Tones and Tone Sandhi

Southern Hokkien: An Introduction deals with characters and their multiple pronunciations in considerable detail, providing students with lists of some of the most common multiple pronunciation characters.⁵⁶ A similar approach is used for the two registers that are commonly described as “literary” (wén 文; LR) and “colloquial” (bái 白; CR) readings of characters.⁵⁷ So-called “literary” and “colloquial” readings are identified throughout the textbook and, where applicable, their semantic and functional differences are indicated and illustrated.

Tones and tone changes tend to be taxing for most learners of Southern Hokkien. *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* therefore pays particular attention to tones and tone related issues.⁵⁸ Isolation tones are indicated in the transcription throughout our teaching material. Sandhi tones

⁵⁴ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 66 (08.01) and Yang Hsiu-fang 楊秀芳: “Lun ‘bie’ de xingtai bianhua ji yufahua” 論「別」的形態變化及語法化. *Qinghua Zhongwen xuebao* 清華中文學報 11 (2014), pp. 5-55.

⁵⁵ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 202 (05.14).

⁵⁶ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 67-70.

⁵⁷ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 63-66.

⁵⁸ For summaries see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 34 and p. 51 (on tone sandhi). For extensive and in part contrastive tone sandhi exercises see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 72-76.

are indicated in the first five lessons and where deemed necessary in later lessons.⁵⁹ Syllables that do not change tone in connected speech are underlined in the main parts of the textbook. Compare the following examples from the dialogues of Lessons Four and Seven:

Lesson 4: Goa²⁻¹ ka⁷⁻³ lin²⁻¹ kai³⁻²-siau⁷ chit⁸⁻⁰-e⁷⁻⁰, chit⁴⁻⁸ e⁵⁻⁷ so²⁻¹-chai⁷ tloh⁸⁻³-si⁷⁻³ Tai⁵⁻⁷-pak⁴ siong⁷⁻³ u⁷⁻³ mia⁵ e⁵⁻⁷ Su⁷⁻³-lim⁵⁻⁷ ia⁷⁻³-chhi⁷-a².⁶⁰

Let me introduce to you: This is Taipei's very famous Shilin night market.

Lesson 7: M⁷ si⁷ la⁰! Li² go⁷-hoe⁷ a⁰! Chin¹-chu¹ ni¹-te⁵ si⁷ Tai⁵-oan⁵ hian⁷-tai⁷ sin¹ hoat⁴-tian²-chhut⁴⁻⁰-lai⁵⁻⁰ e⁵ im²-liau⁷. Che¹ lai⁷-te² e⁵ hun²-iⁿ⁵ chhin¹-chhiuⁿ⁷ chin¹-chu¹, so²-i² ho⁷-cho³ chin¹-chu¹ ni¹-te⁵.⁶¹

No, you misunderstood. Pearl milk tea is a drink recently invented in Taiwan. It is called pearl milk tea because it contains small tapioca balls that look like pearls.

A considerable amount of academic work has been done on tone contours in Southern Hokkien. Nevertheless, textbooks hardly seem to take much notice of it. Clearly, the compilation of a textbook requires a great deal of simplification but when it comes to the three sets of neutral tones, the contours applied in different circumstances show such differences that some explanation – simplified as it may be – was felt necessary. Rather than leaving this issue aside (as a great deal of Southern Hokkien textbooks do), it is hoped the guidelines regarding the contours of the three sets of neutral tones established in *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* are beneficial for a swift learning process.⁶² The following extract may suffice to illustrate this point.⁶³

Where directional verbal complements are pronounced in neutral tone, the unstressed tone contour of the complements is 31. The same contour applies also to numerals and measure words that are not to be taken literally. Consider the following examples:

<u>poe</u> ¹ -chhut ⁴⁻⁰ -khi ³⁻⁰ (ZZ)	飛出去	to fly away, fly out
<u>pe</u> ¹ -chhut ⁴⁻⁰ -khi ³⁻⁰ (A)		
<u>kia</u> ⁿ⁵ -lip ⁸⁻⁰ -lai ⁵⁻⁰ (A QZ)	行人來	to walk in, come in
<u>kia</u> ⁿ⁵ -jip ⁸⁻⁰ -lai ⁵⁻⁰ (ZZ)		
<u>tan</u> ² chit ⁸⁻⁰ -e ⁷⁻⁰	等蜀下	to wait a bit; to wait a second
<u>lim</u> ¹ chit ⁸⁻⁰ -poe ¹⁻⁰	[飲]蜀杯	to have a drink
<u>be</u> ² nng ⁷⁻⁰ sa ⁿ¹⁻⁰ kin ¹⁻⁰ (ZZ)	買兩三斤	to buy a few (two or three) catty

⁵⁹ Throughout the textbook learners are expected to apply tone sandhi rules in the exercise sections (Sentence Patterns, Listening/Reading Comprehension and Cloze Practice) where we reduce the indication of sandhi tones to a minimum.

⁶⁰ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 144.

⁶¹ See Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 2, p. 8.

⁶² For details see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 34-38.

⁶³ The following extracts are taken from Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 34f. (01.05, 01.06).

boe² nng⁷⁻⁰ saⁿ¹⁻⁰ kun¹⁻⁰ (A QZ)

Although the tone sandhi tends to cause problems in the learning process, hardly any of the existing textbooks deal with tone changes in a way that would enable students not only to apply but also to grasp the basic rules behind this complex phenomenon. *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* therefore formulates a total of five basic tone sandhi rules for words in isolation and another set of seventeen basic tone change rules for words in connected speech.⁶⁴ The explanations of these rules are complemented by example sentences some of which are of a contrastive nature:⁶⁵

In terms of its function in speech, the realisation of tone changes also serves as a means to indicate emphasis or focus. Compare the following:

koh ⁴⁻²⁻¹ <u>thia</u> ⁿ¹ chit ⁸⁻⁰ -pai ²⁻⁰	故聽蜀擺	<u>listen</u> again
BUT		
koh ⁴⁻²⁻¹ thia ⁿ¹⁻⁷ chit ^{8-3*} - <u>pai</u> ²	故聽蜀擺	listen <u>once</u> more

Conclusion

Although *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* was originally aimed at the fairly straightforward task of supporting the teaching of Southern Hokkien in a given environment, it developed into a comprehensive introduction to the Southern Hokkien language, covering a range of issues that hardly any of the other textbooks cover in comparable detail.⁶⁶ At the same time, the primary vocabulary introduced in this material makes it a useful tool for language learning and teaching on the elementary level. For the intellectually more curious student, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* does, it is hoped, answer many of the questions that those familiar with Mandarin and keen to learn Southern Hokkien often struggle with. In that sense, *Southern Hokkien: An Introduction* offers not just a beginner's textbook. It engages the student to switch between languages in an informed and more competent manner.

⁶⁴ For details see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, pp. 52-55 (isolated words) and pp. 55-62 (connected speech).

⁶⁵ For the following extract see Fuehrer/Yang: *Southern Hokkien*, vol. 1, p. 61 (02.26).

⁶⁶ One of the few notable exceptions in this respect is Zhou Changji 周長楫 and Kang Qiming 康啟明: *Taiwan Minnanhua jiaocheng* 台灣閩南話教程 (2 vols.; Pindong: Anke chubanshe, 1999) which includes extensive elaborations on a wide variety of topics relevant for a better understanding of the specifics of Taiwanese Southern Hokkien.

