French and Tây Bồi in Vietnam:
A study of language policy, practice and perceptions

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Abstract

The field of this thesis is the policy and practice of French language use in Vietnam, with particular reference to Tây Bồi, a pidgin French spoken during the colonial era. The work will examine the varieties of French, the circumstances of their origins and development, how they are used and how they could contribute to the study of the meeting of different languages and cultures, especially with regard to the interaction of French with other languages. The example of Tây Bồi will illustrate some of the overlooked results of language planning policies and how practical usage differs from the ideals.

Research was conducted using material from various sources, including the limited number of linguistic studies on Tây Bồi, literature on colonial French policy and accounts of that era, and later works on *Francophonie* specifically on Vietnam and throughout the French-speaking world. Methodological approaches include aspects of sociolinguistic investigation, analysis of communicative necessity, the power, identity and prestige associated with language, and pidgin and creole theory. A study trip to Vietnam was necessary for researching archival records not available in Australia, as well as gathering linguistic data from French speakers and examining attitudes towards French across people of different generations and backgrounds.

Conclusions are drawn from this wide-ranging study on the continuing efforts of France to promote its language and culture overseas and the changes in emphasis and policy which have occurred since the colonial era. The study of contact between languages and cultures and of its results, including Tây Bồi, can prove valuable for understanding and developing an improved linguistic policy as well as international relations.

Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

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Figure 1: Vietnam before 1860, showing the unification of the country under the Vietnamese emperors (DeFrancis 1977 p. 39).

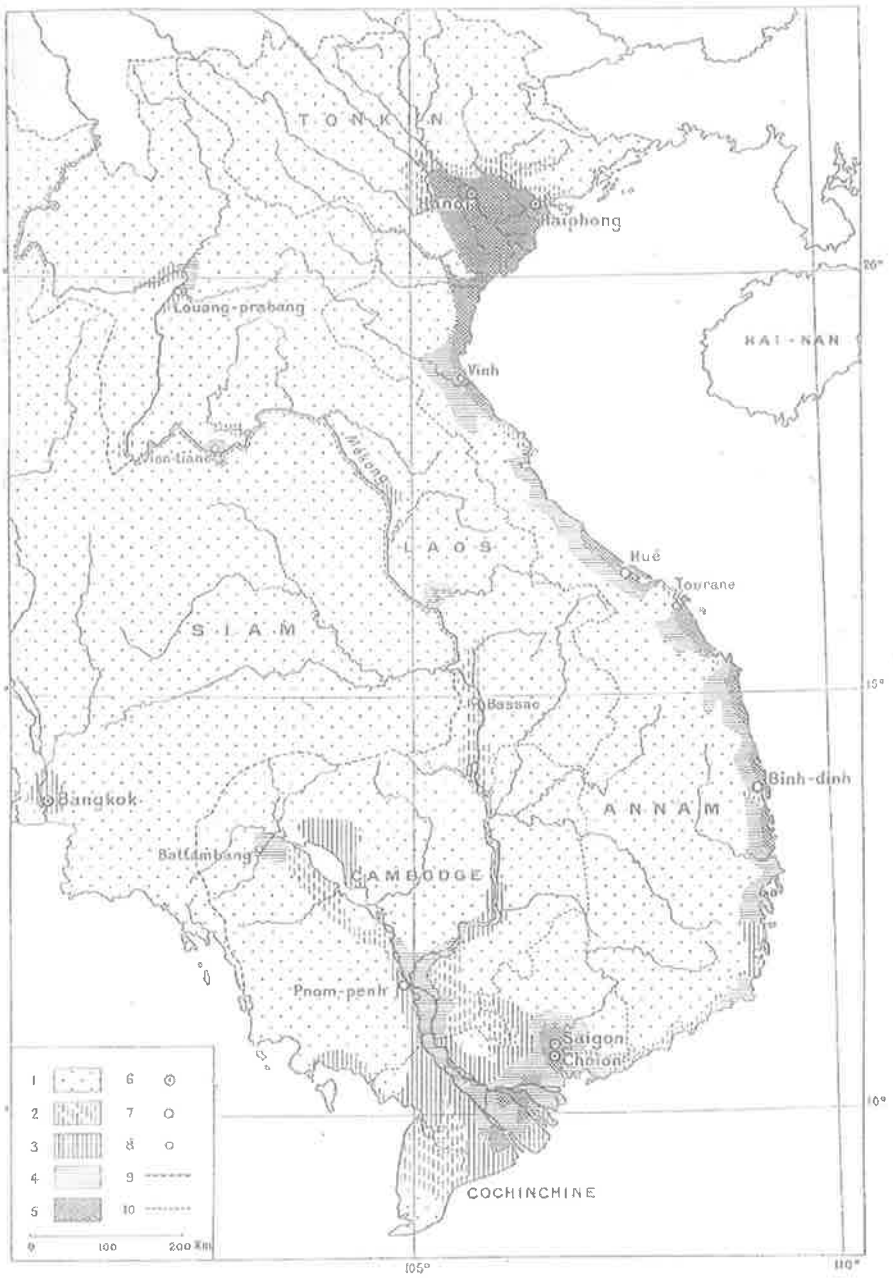

Figure 2: Vietnam during the colonial era: French Indochina c. 1920s, showing population density, major cities, administrative divisions (small dashes) and the borders of French Indochina (large dashes) (Vidal de la Blache and Gallois 1929 p. 467).

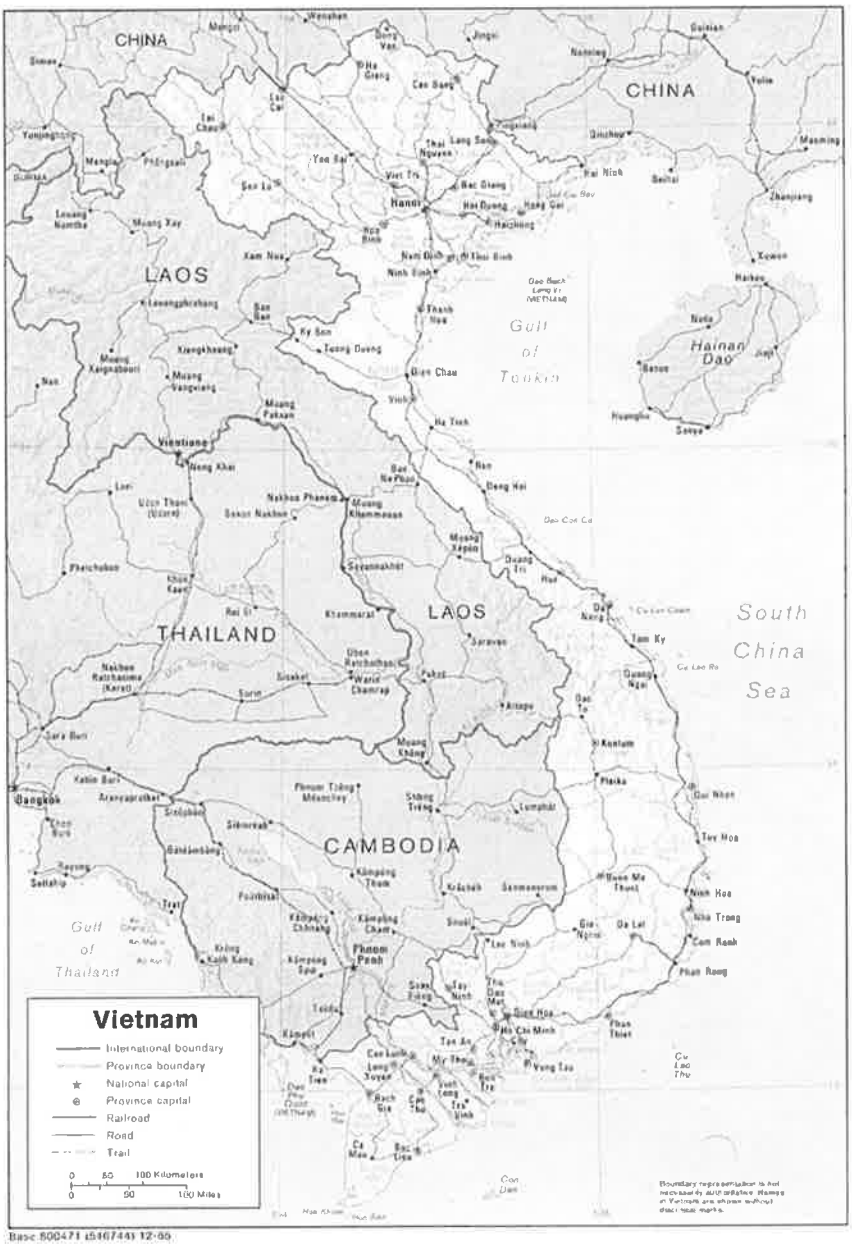

Figure 3: Vietnam today (http://www.medteams.com/)

Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis looks at different aspects of the French language and its varieties in Vietnam with the aim of linking the studies of linguistics, language policy and popular use. The history of linguistic contact between France and Vietnam is studied in order to present an analysis of change and evolution in these factors. Tây Bồi, Vietnam's pidgin French, is taken as an example of the contact between languages and cultures and how pidgin languages tend to arise in spite of, and sometimes as an unexpected result of, the plans of colonial powers. This research is complemented with fieldwork conducted in Hanoi to assess first hand the current linguistic situation.

1.1 Tây Bồi

Tây Bồi is the French-based pidgin language which existed in Vietnam during the period of French colonisation (around 1860–1954). It is a little-studied language which served a fairly restricted purpose as means of communication between coloniser and colonised, lacking the social conditions to develop into a creole. It was spoken by those Vietnamese who were in regular contact with the French and needed to make themselves understood, but had no education in French. These tended to be domestics, low-ranked public servants and

soldiers — those who did receive a French education and spoke the standard variety were able to obtain higher administrative positions. French colonists would also use it in speaking with this class of Vietnamese. Because of its usage in this manner, once the French left Vietnam and the immediate communication need was no longer there, Tây Bồi fell into decline.

As well as a study of previous works, linguistic and otherwise, a research trip was conducted to Hanoi in January 2000. One of the aims of fieldwork for this paper was to establish if and under what circumstances Tây Bồi still exists, and if so, by whom it is used and what purposes it serves. Other aspects were to examine the varieties of French, the circumstances of their origins and development, how they are used and how they could contribute to the study of meeting of different languages and cultures and of low-status types of language. Also compared are the attitudes towards French of the generation which lived under French rule and those which followed, with consideration as to the effect of the Vietnam War and American occupation on the country, and to the present globalisation of English. The focus is mainly on the speech of Vietnamese people with French as a second language, who use their French to communicate with native French speakers or others who do not share a common native language. This brings in a study of 'foreigner talk' — the type of language (in this case French) spoken by non-native speakers and the way it is stereotyped in popular culture or in literature (Ferguson 1975). In this respect, any French expatriates or native speakers who used, or were aware of, this sort of language are also involved.

1.2 Methodology

The different elements of this research require the adaptation of a number of methodologies. A look at sociolinguistics forms a starting point for the approach to this study, the social context being especially important in the case of pidgin and creole languages. The more relevant aspects to be studied include necessity of communication, power structure before, during and after

the colonial period and the status and prestige associated with varieties of language.

This thesis also looks at pidgin and creole theory, with respect to the conditions which led to the development of Tây Bồi. Descriptions of Tây Bồi already exist (e. g. Reinecke 1971, Nguyễn Đăng Liêm 1979); any further research into its grammatical structure would serve to determine whether it has changed, and if so how. The purpose of this research is more oriented to why Tây Bồi originated, the social and linguistic circumstances of its usage during its lifespan, its decline and its present state, especially with regard to French language policy. The types of materials for this study include works on colonial French policy, both primary materials and analyses, and later works on Francophonie specifically on Vietnam and throughout the French-speaking world.

A major component of the fieldwork consists of interviews with French-speaking Vietnamese, especially those that speak Tây Bồi or any other form of non-standard French, but also those who learn or use it professionally. This shows what forms French takes in Vietnam and what uses it still holds, and whether attitudes towards French, standard or non-standard, have changed in recent years. No attempt has been made to determine the exact extent of French usage; rather, the sample of speakers interviewed form a qualitative representation of the status of French in Vietnam.

Historical and archival research was required for the first sections of the thesis, dealing with the history of the French and the French language in Vietnam. An examination of previous works helps to trace the developments in perception and attitude towards French from initial contact to the present day. One of the interesting points of this research is examining the factors against the existence of material on this subject, such as why little was written on Tây Bồi during its peak. Such reasons include a lack of willingness on the part of the French or the Vietnamese to admit a pidgin existed, or a general lack of interest in the subject as worthy of attention. This thesis intends to show that languages like Tây Bồi are worth studying for a number

of different reasons. Such reasons include the creation of languages and the way they are spread through the meeting of cultures, the place of low-status languages and what they reveal about society, and how language policy affects linguistic practice.

1.3 Language policy

Most pidgin and creole languages have not received academic attention until recently, and in the case of many, this means the critical periods of their history, this is, their origins and the times of most widespread use have already passed before any serious study has begun. This is to a degree the situation with Tây Bồi. One early study was done by Schuchardt (1888), but no further linguistic work was published until after the colonial era. Even so, very little has been published at all. There are a number of explanations for this. The first set of reasons has to do with the lack of acknowledgement of the existence of pidgin languages, let alone their consideration as an object of academic study. French colonial theory held that the French had the right and duty to bring civilisation to less developed countries, and that the French language was the best medium for instruction due to its philosophical tradition and clarity of expression. Thus any 'corruption' or deviation from the standard form was unacceptable. The goal of the French as colonisers was to convert the Vietnamese population to subjects of the mother country, a condition of which was that they speak proper French. The existence of sub-standard forms was an indication to the French that their policy was not working as they desired, so they preferred to ignore them. References to pidgin French in Vietnam are therefore generally not found in academic or official documents, but in travel narratives or personal accounts of French colonists and officials. As a result, they are usually only passing mentions, not dealt with in terms of serious study. Even so, these are valuable sources because they are often the only material available, and they do show the attitudes of the French at the time towards pidgin language and colonial policy.

From the Vietnamese point of view, after the defeat of the French, the new nationalistic government wished to 'Vietnamise' all aspects of the colonial past, including replacing French with Vietnamese as the language of government and education. Vietnam looked to communist China and the USSR for guidance, and discouraged the use of French except as one of a number of second languages to be studied at university level.[1] Under these conditions, any study of French or Tây Bồi or the colonial era in general was likely to be viewed in a very negative fashion. Vietnam felt a need to prove to itself that it could stand alone without intervention from China, France, or indeed any other power. The communist government also made it very difficult for any interested outsiders to get into the country, even expatriate Vietnamese, and the Vietnam War made entry for study purposes even more hazardous. Western sources from the Cold War era therefore tend to be accounts, often retrospective, of time served by soldiers and reporters. These usually fall into the travel narrative or journalistic genre, and sometimes contain references to French and pidgin usage at the time.

1.4 The current situation

In the last decade or so the French have begun to take a greater interest in their former colony of Vietnam. Asia has become an area of economic focus with resources and markets yet not fully developed, and Vietnam, as a country with a history of French contact and still with a proportion of French speakers, is seen as France's best chance of establishing firm links with the region. Aside from trade agreements, France also wishes to renew the cultural ties it implanted from the beginning of colonisation, largely by means of promoting teaching and use of the French language, but also through the support of cultural organisations and the media. With the more open 'doi moi' policy of the Vietnamese communist government since the breakup of the Eastern Bloc, it has become much more feasible to establish

[1] See e. g. Pomonti and Tertrais (1994) for a study of Vietnam's foreign relations post-1975.

such links. Of course, France is not the only Western country looking for such opportunities. English is making inroads as the most useful language to know on the international scene and, for the first time since American forces left South Vietnam, American culture is accessible through the media, advertising and the tourist trade.

The *doi moi* ('renewal') policy of 1986 has meant that in the past ten to fifteen years, Vietnam has begun to relax its hard-line stance on foreign relations. This has resulted in allowing visitors in as well as providing more investment and co-operation opportunities for Western nations, something which France has been keen to take up. While a good deal of the French emphasis has been on renewing and developing the connections of the past, little work has been done on examining France's past colonial language policy through to present-day francophonie issues. This thesis seeks to examine the changes in policy in language planning and in linguistic practice, with particular consideration to non-standard French varieties such as Tây Bồi. It is hoped that this will provide context for postcolonial relations between Vietnam and France, as well as contributing to the study of different varieties of the French language around the world.

1.5 The Vietnamese language

The Vietnamese language is thought to have evolved from a mixture of Mon-Khmer, Thai and Austroasiatic languages. Minority languages from these families are still in existence in the country today.[2] There are fifty-four officially recognised minority languages accounting for 12.9% of the population (Lo Bianco 1994). Vietnamese is the majority language of Vietnam and the one national language, although minority languages receive some support in terms of the development of writing systems — based on the Romanised orthography of Vietnamese — and literacy and education programmes. The

[2]See Moseley and Asler's *Atlas of the world's languages* (1994) for further information on languages and their distributions in Vietnam.

literacy rate in Vietnam is around 95% although many, especially in poorer areas, cannot afford to remain in school beyond the compulsory age of eleven. There is a small amount of variation within the Vietnamese language, mostly between the north and south of the country, but also it is suggested that city varieties may be forming with the increasing urbanisation of the population. However, these differences seem to be mostly those of accent and choice of vocabulary and do not prevent mutual intelligibility.

Over the past two millennia the language has been considerably influenced by Chinese. With the powerful and advanced civilisation of China just next door, Vietnam has had a relationship of rejection of its colonial domination while at the same time emulating much of its social, political and cultural structures. Unsurprisingly, the Vietnamese language shares many traits with Chinese: it is tonal, but has six tones (five in the south) as opposed to the four of Chinese, it is largely monosyllabic, it has a subject-verb-object word order with modifiers following the modified element and it has a system of classifiers. The original writing system for Vietnamese was based on Chinese characters, gradually modified to differentiate it from the dominating culture. It is thought that the majority of Vietnamese abstract and philosophical terms were incorporated from Chinese at an early stage when the language lacked such complexity. More recent influences due to contact with other cultures, colonialism, invasion, trade and the need for modernisation include Japanese, Russian, English and, of course, French.

1.6 Some definitions and terminology

While certain concepts will be explained as they are raised in the thesis, it may be useful to clarify beforehand some of the terminology used. Linguistic terms are certainly used, though excessive jargon is avoided. Some general definitions and explanations are provided for those less familiar with Vietnamese history, as are some terms taken from French.

1.6.1 Language, pidgins and creoles

This thesis does not seek a definition of language, though it may be helpful to point out some of the ways language is referred to in this work. 'Language' is used it its broadest sense as a human activity without referring to specific varieties. When speaking of 'a language,' for example French, the term is again used as it is commonly understood, simply as a useful label or general classification, although as will be seen later, these labels as popularly conceived may differ from linguistic reality. Ducrot and Toderov for example investigate terminology:

> To speak of *the* French language, *the* German language, and so on, is to produce a considerable (and often unconscious) abstraction and generalization, for there are as many different ways of speaking as there are different collectivities using a language, as many even, if we are to be rigorous, as there are individuals using it (nor do we rule out the possibility that there may be several individuals in each person, linguistically speaking) (1979 p. 57).

More on this subject can be found in Chapter 2. An effort has been made to distinguish between the 'standard' language and 'varieties' where appropriate (again, see Chapter 2 for more details).

The term 'variety' is used in a broad sense to cover not just the standard language but any non-standard forms, from familiar language to regional differences and dialects to simplified registers, pidgins and creoles. Sometimes a variety is actually a separate language in its own right, such as a creole. Some of these terms require a little further explanation.

'Dialect' and 'patois' are both terms used to describe local varieties which exist within the domain of a larger standard language. There is usually a geographical dimension involved, for example, they are associated with particular regions in France, as well as historical links. However, the distinction between the terms is difficult to define. 'Dialect' seems to cover a wider se-

mantic area while 'patois,' a French term, has some pejorative connotations of inferiority and roughness and is often associated with a 'degenerate' rural variety lacking a written form. Some writers draw a distinction based on whether the variety is of Romance origin (patois) or Germanic or other origin (dialect), a view backed up by a secondary definition in *Le Grand Robert* dictionary: "patois gallo-romains parlés en France (dialectes d'oil, dialectes occitans)" (Robert 1985 p. 177); see also Grillet (1974) for an overview. Although recently French dialects and patois have been regaining some measure of prestige due to regional pride and identity, the term 'patois' is still used in its broadest sense and also in familiar language to mean both 'jargon' or 'gibberish, incomprehensible language.'

'Jargon' is used today to refer to the terminology of a specific group within the society of standard speakers, especially professional or technical domains such as law, psychology, etc. A more common usage from the beginning of the century and earlier was to describe a trade jargon, often a pidgin. A pidgin can be this sort of language, i. e. a simplified register with specific terms related to trade and contact between trading communities, in which case they can be quite long-lasting and stable. A pidgin can also be a very unstable contact language arising from an immediate need to communicate where no common language is available. A pidgin is therefore not the first language of anyone. In certain circumstances the pidgin becomes the dominant language of interaction in a mixed community, in which case the children of these pidgin speakers will acquire the pidgin as a first language, but through a process of elaboration expand it into a creole. Creoles have emerged in communities where a number of speakers of different languages have been displaced and then left in comparative isolation, such as former slave, plantation or mission populations. Pidgin and creole theory will be further examined as we investigate Tây Bồi.

1.6.2 Colonial and French terminology

Present-day Vietnam has been officially known as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam since reunification in 1975 (Figure 3). Prior to that, the country had been, supposedly provisionally, divided at the seventeenth parallel into South and North following the Geneva agreement of 1954. The shifts in borders and changes of names before this era is a more complicated issue and may deserve some brief explanation. The Chinese name for the area was Annam, meaning the 'pacified South.' Naturally, many Vietnamese disliked this term, with its implications of Chinese conquest. However, the country became known as 'Annam' to the Europeans as well, and its inhabitants as 'Annamites,' although the geographical boundaries were often indeterminate and varied over time (see Figure 1).

By the time of French interest in the area, the central region under the closest influence of the monarchy at Hué was called Annam, while the southern region was known as Cochinchina and the northern as Tonkin. The origins of these latter two names are unclear although there are a number of theories, and in early sources the orthography varies, but it seems they were imposed by European traders. In 1859 Cochinchina became a colony of France, but Annam, Tonkin, Cambodia and Laos were later added as protectorates. The five regions made up French Indochina until 1954 (Figure 2). These terms are used in this thesis where necessary for historical accuracy, though 'Vietnamese' is used to describe the people and their language rather than 'Annamite.'

The Vietnamese who chose to join the French and work in their administration following the conquest were known as *collaborateurs*. Because of the additional particular connotations this term has attracted from World War II, it is necessary to point out that in colonial times the label was significantly more neutral. In fact to the French, *collaborateur* was probably a relatively favourable term, distinguishing co-operative Vietnamese from dissenters (this is putting aside the issue of Vietnamese views on the matter).

Another French term still in use to some extent is *montagnard*, 'highlander,' to collectively describe Vietnam's ethnic minorities, specifically those which live in the mountainous border regions. It does not seem to contain any implied disparagement, though the individual minority names are no doubt preferred.

'Boy' is another term that has more significance than might initially be apparent. As might be guessed, it was the word used in colonial times for a domestic servant, and gives Tây Bồi its name (the 'Westerners' language [i. e. French] of the boys'). It is usually assumed that it is taken from the English, and indeed the term was used in English colonies as well, but there is good evidence to suggest that the word is actually from a Hindi term for manservant and entered the colonial vocabulary in India. From there it is believed to have spread via Portuguese trade pidgins to other colonies of different colonial powers. In this case, there are two possible ways the word could have arrived in Vietnam, reinforced by the fact that English had very little influence in the area. Portuguese pidgin was present in the area long before either French or English, so it could have been transported on Portuguese trading ships. Another possibility is the fact that a number of immigrants came to Saigon from the French Indian colonies, and it could have been carried in this fashion. Further research may be able to determine whether either of these scenarios is likely, and help explain the general spread of pidgins in the Indian-Asia-Pacific regions. Chapters 3 and 4 develop some further theories on early language contact and the origins of Tây Bồi.

A central concept to this thesis is that of *Francophonie*. While the subject has a chapter devoted to it (Chapter 5), it is worthwhile to introduce it here. At its simplest, the word indicates the quality of being francophone — French-speaking. It is however a term that has been difficult to define as over the years of its use it has gathered many associated meanings. It can be used in a geographical sense to describe people and nations which use French. However, the ideology of a French linguistic unity has grown such that now it has a great deal of supporting networks, communications and

official organisations, internationally as well as based in France, the chief of which is the *Organisation internationale de la francophonie.* It is difficult to separate the official side from the ideology, and the term as used in this thesis often applies to both.

1.6.3 Orthography

Vietnamese words and names in this thesis are written with the Vietnamese orthography, i. e. including the tone and diacritical marks, where possible. They may be lacking in some cases where diacritics were not printed in the source material, a common problem in older publications when it was difficult to typeset them. An exception is the use of the English form of widely recognised place names, such as Hanoi (Hà Nội), Saigon (Sài Gòn), Ho Chi Minh City (Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh) and Vietnam (Việt Nam). An older convention has hyphenation linking the elements of a single name, as in 'Ho-Chi-Minh.' These have generally been omitted, except when directly quoted. It should also be noted that there are some inconsistencies in spelling in early documents; again, this has been standardised unless directly quoted.

Vietnamese personal names are written in the Chinese style: surname first followed by a middle name and given name. However, the set of surnames in Vietnamese is quite limited: only twenty or so are common out of a total of about one hundred possibilities (Huynh Dinh Te 1994). For this reason a Vietnamese is usually addressed by his or her given name, which is open to a much wider choice, or else the full name is used. Thus, using the author of the article referred to above as an example, a man is addressed as 'Mr. Te' or 'Mr. Huynh Dinh Te' but not as 'Mr. Huynh.' The Vietnamese do have their own system of terms of address, which are dependent on the relationship between addressees.

1.7 Overview of the thesis

Some theoretical approaches are reviewed in Chapter 2, where the main areas of focus for the thesis are more fully outlined. This begins with the introduction to sociolinguistic theory and fieldwork methodology and the analysis of written materials. Also considered are pidgin and creole studies and theories of identity and power relations with regard to language, which are useful in the examination of the situation between Tây Bồi and French and their speakers. A section studying the history of the ideology of the French language is also included in order to comprehend past and present attitudes towards the language.

Chapter 3 is a history of language policy and reality in Vietnam, beginning with the time before European contact and the arrival of the first missionaries, through the colonial era and communism to the present day. Areas of concentration include possible origins of pidgin language and references to it, the policy of the French colonial government towards language and how it compared to the practice, and the renewal of interest in Vietnam by the French today.

Chapter 4 is a review of works specifically on or containing references to Tây Bồi. This includes the small number of linguistic studies of early colonial times and the post-colonial era and a few secondary linguistic articles on the topic. The second section examines non-linguistic works, some dating from before the colonial period, including personal accounts, journalistic writings and some fiction. While not exhaustive, this comprehensive survey demonstrates the extent of scholarly interest in Tây Bồi and provides information as to the attitudes of colonial and postcolonial writers towards it. The early works in particular hold clues to the origin and development of the language.

The concept of Francophonie is examined in Chapter 5, both on an international level in order to best understand the movement, and specifically in Vietnam. Francophonie is in many ways a continuation of French over-

seas policy, yet it is a relatively new concept still undergoing definition and refinement of purpose. As an organisation that has language at its core, it is interesting to evaluate its ideals and achievements in a country which is in the vast majority non-francophone, yet has a history of French influence. The evolution of French policy and its results, what has changed and what has not, is the central point of inquiry. Both concrete projects and involvement as well as the social attitudes are covered, drawing on sources of French, Vietnamese and English origin and incorporating some of the findings of the fieldwork.

Chapter 6 presents the fieldwork, which is best explained after the context of the previous chapters has been introduced. It deals mainly with personal observations and interviews from the field trip to Hanoi, incorporating vital first-hand evidence. The language of the informants is studied, as well as what they have to say on their experiences of French in Hanoi. Examples of where and in what situations French is used are outlined and samples of language are analysed.

The concluding Chapter 7 presents the overall findings and brings together the different aspects of this study into an overall picture of the history, current situation and possible further directions for the French language and its varieties in Vietnam and other parts of the world. Supplementary data, including transcripts of interviews and material collected on the field trip, is given in the Appendices.

Chapter 2

Theory and methodology

This area of study draws together a number of different theoretical approaches. Central to the investigation of Tây Bồi is pidgin and creole theory, but even within this domain there are numerous ways of dealing with the available evidence. Nor is pidgin and creole theory sufficient to cover the scope of the thesis alone — links to other theories such as sociolinguistics and historical linguistics are useful for explaining the background to the work and the ongoing interactions and changes from a community point of view. Overlapping also occurs with areas such as simplification and universals of language, language planning and speaker perceptions of their language. This chapter will examine these different theories, selecting those elements most relevant to the study of Tây Bồi and the past and present state of French in Vietnam. This will permit the relation of the study to the wider application and relevance of this type of work for further contribution to the theory of non-standard language, language contact and international language study and policy.

2.1 Practical data-gathering

In addressing a topic, it is valuable to take more than one viewpoint both in terms of theory and methodology. A number of theoretical approaches are therefore considered, but also a number of different methods of data collection. While this section concentrates on the process of constructing interviews and gathering recordings, other sources are necessary to balance out the research and ensure that the overall result of the study is as accurate as possible. Thus primary data collected by the researcher can be supplemented by similar work from previous studies, providing a comparison of language spoken in different places at different times. Other kinds of resources are also used, such as statistics and other official documentation, and historical sources, whether scholarly or narrative. The historical approach and a knowledge of context is essential for proper interpretation of primary data.

This section will give a brief outline of the selection of written materials studied in this thesis. Also considered are some of the issues concerned with interviewing and recording informants, for the purposes of eliciting linguistic data, i. e. examples of Tây Bồi or other varieties of French, and of investigating attitudes towards French and Tây Bồi. More details, as well as analysis of the findings, are given in Chapter 6.

2.1.1 Reviewing literature

Chapters 3 and 4 are concerned with examining the literature relating to the language history of Vietnam and of Tây Bồi respectively. Primary sources such as early travel narratives, colonial records and reports and so on, form an essential basis for both these topics. A number of these have been published, but others required archival research. A search was made for linguistic analyses of Tây Bồi, and while not every known item was obtained, the section does present a fairly comprehensive account of previous work on the language. In addition to linguistic studies, some less academic works

are examined in order to better understand social aspects and perceptions of language contact. Secondary sources from a wide range of domains make up a large proportion of references, ranging from historical studies to examinations of current French policies. As a basis for this study, theoretical and methodological texts have also been used. This thesis naturally required research of works written in French. Where these are quoted, translation is provided. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

Primary documents and archival material

Most written material was gathered in Australia, but a valuable collection of colonial documents is kept in the National Archives in Hanoi. In the short time available on the field trip, a number of useful sources were discovered, but no doubt more could be found given a more extensive search of the collection. Another source of primary documents would be the French colonial collection of the Archives d'Outre-mer held in Aix-en-Provence; unfortunately time and resources did not permit a visit to this institution. However, other resources are available, such as published collections of materials from these sources (e. g. Taboulet 1955–56; Nguyen Van Phong 1971). A number of complete works have been published as well, such as travel journals and colonials' personal accounts (Luro 1897; Diguet 1975).

The nature of these primary documents varies considerably. They include official documents from colonial records, unpublished private letters, but also travel accounts written with publishing in mind. Some were also written or published retrospectively, and vary as to how thorough an account they give. Factors such as duration of the stay in Vietnam if at all, the extent of contact with the Vietnamese and personal understanding and views of the situation result in works which range from stereotyped visions of the 'superior European culture' to honest appraisals of the progress and faults of the modernisation process. Noting such factors which may affect the accuracy of observations may help explain conflicting evidence or the different amounts of importance which different authors place on certain as-

pects. When examining this sort of material it is important to keep in mind the attitudes of the time, in particular with regard to ideas of colonialism and European versus Eastern civilisation. For this reason, a section is included below on the ideology of French, which is closely tied with the French idea of colonialism and planning language policy.

Secondary sources

There are numerous works on the history of Vietnam, the vast majority of which concentrate on aspects of the various conflicts in the region, especially the period of American involvement between the end of the Second World War and 1975. The colonisation process and French occupation is nevertheless relatively well documented, and there is a smaller number of works specifically on language policy and linguistic issues. Finding pre-colonial material is more difficult, but some work has been done on early language contact in the South-East Asian region (e. g. Baxter 1984, Toussaint 1974).

From the beginning of French colonialism, there have been publications on the topic, including the French language overseas. Surveys of where French was spoken exist from the turn of the century, but significant and increasing volumes of material have been published since the beginning of the modern Francophonie movement in the 1960s. Progressively more papers have been published concerning French-based creoles as their communities begin to establish their own identities and the area becomes of more fashionable academic interest. Francophonie itself attracts many writers; this topic is dealt with in Chapter 5. The history of French in other areas, especially former regions of influence such as India, and the language contact situations in Asia and the South Pacific, is however neglected (the work of the late Chris Corne (e. g. 1996, 1999) is one exception).

For the language contact situation in Vietnam, the study of works on pidgin and creole theory and other linguistic thought is necessary; again, this is examined in more detail below. Firstly, other methods of data-gathering

are considered.

2.1.2 Interviewing

Methods and goals

Exact methods for interviewing will naturally depend on what information the researcher is looking for. For the field trip, interviews were conducted in a number of areas with different aims. One group was the staff at the various Francophonie institutions, of both French and Vietnamese backgrounds, whose language was expected to be standard French or close to it. The aim here was to find information on the workings of the institutions and the speakers' thoughts on their work, and also to establish what their French was like. As they were official representatives of their respective organisations, it was to be expected that they would generally be sticking to an official line of response as the situation was less personal and more formal.

The other main group was those of the generation that spoke Tây Bồi and those that might have encountered it. This project does not aim to establish a quantitative survey of numbers of speakers, nor will it focus principally on the structure or grammar of Tây Bồi, as some of this work has already been done. Instead, interviews and questionnaires will seek to establish a qualitative representation of the usage and perceptions of Tây Bồi and of French, both from Vietnamese and French points of view. With these goals in mind, it is possible to have a clear idea of the target groups of informants, namely Vietnamese of the colonial generation, both those who speak 'standard' French and those who also or exclusively speak Tây Bồi or 'just a little' French; any Vietnamese who have learned French subsequently; and any other French speakers, including French expatriates or those from other former colonies. Interviews also have to be slightly different depending on to which of these backgrounds the informants belong and what standard of French they speak.

A third group of subjects consisted of Vietnamese students, but this was not so much of an interview process as conversations with curious and friendly youth wanting to try out their English- or French-speaking skills. It was generally they who approached of their own accord and did most of the questioning, but this completely unstructured form of 'interview' allowed for observation of candid opinions of young Vietnamese on language learning and the place of foreign languages in their country.

Recording — Ethics and practical concerns

When gathering examples of speech, it may be desirable to have the setting as 'natural' as possible, so that the subject is not influenced by anything that might alter his or her speech. This is not practical and indeed not possible in the context of an extended interview, as the presence of the researcher is already an outside influence. An ethical approach demands that informants be notified that they and their speech are the subjects of research and that they are being recorded, and the presence of a tape recorder is often off-putting. It is helpful therefore if the recorder is small, unobtrusive and requiring of little attention after it has been set running. Also for the benefit of recording quality, it is best if background noise and interruptions are minimal, another factor that may influence speech as it may require a somewhat artificial setting, when otherwise a café or communal main room of a home might be a comfortable place to hold a conversation. To obtain the most 'natural' speech in an interview situation it is best to adopt a conversational style and encourage the informant to do as much of the talking as possible. This should help reduce the distance between researcher and subject and allowing them to talk about their experiences instead of answering a formal questionnaire.

Attention must be paid to the different cultural backgrounds and beliefs of the people to be studied in case what counts as ethical behaviour differs from the researcher's own culture. In Vietnam it is essential to be polite, especially when speaking to the older generations. This works both ways,

as it is important not to offend, and therefore the researcher must be aware that some responses may be 'what the interviewer wants to hear' rather than the subject's actual thoughts. The Vietnamese are fortunately of a culture which enjoys conversation, and almost everyone was willing to talk. However, especially in formal dealings, it is very important to be properly introduced, which requires forming a string of contacts, making a series of appointments, exchanges of business cards, offering of tea and presentation of gifts. This can prove frustrating to the researcher with limited time, but it shows the importance of consideration towards the guest, which the Vietnamese take seriously and usually means they are attentive and obliging to questions and requests.

Another major concern in this project was that the subjects were of the older generation, and therefore quite possibly suffering from hearing difficulties and memory loss, especially concerning a language that they may have used rarely if at all in the past fifty years. Care must therefore be taken when phrasing and asking questions so as to be intelligible and audible. It must be noted also that the quality of language may be due to decay of French through disuse and loss of memory as much as the original standard of learning. Questions about how much they used the language then and to what extent they still use it can be of some help in this regard.

Having made the recordings, the researcher must maintain responsibility for them and the rights of the informants. Pseudonyms (or in the case of this paper, numbers; see Appendix B) are usually used to preserve anonymity. Informants should be reassured that this will be the case and that the recordings will not be used for any purposes other than the intended research.

Structure of interviews

A questionnaire or interview must be structured in order to obtain the information the researcher needs in the best possible manner. Following on from ethical concerns, it is also desirable to keep in mind that there are cer-

tain issues that the speaker may not wish to talk about, such as traumatic wartime experiences or colonial oppression. In this case, such subjects can be successfully avoided without reducing the value of the data. As previously shown, speakers may not report as accurately on their own form of speech as they believe, or would like to believe. The existence of a low-status variety such as Tây Bồi may be denied by the interviewee who insists that he or she speaks French while in reality the variety could be quite distant from the standard. Fortunately, this in itself is a part of the project, and therefore the interviews include questions about what the informant believes concerning his or her own speech or the speech of others.

Also worth considering is the fact that what the researcher wishes to investigate and which aspects are of importance to the informant could well be quite different. On the one hand, this could be very useful, as the researcher is in fact attempting to discover precisely what the views of the speaker are with regard to his or her own language and may draw the researcher's attention to matters previously overlooked. On the other hand, this could prove distracting from the point of the research, or the interviewee may simply not be able or willing to provide what the researcher needs.

2.2 Variation studies

This thesis is concerned with language variation in a number of ways. Tây Bồi can be seen as a variety of French, and is itself highly variable in nature. The notion of a 'standard' language, in this case French, and its varieties is another aspect of the study. Extending the scope of variation, it is also possible to examine not just variation in the language but variation of language policy and attitudes to language, which can both have effects on the language itself and its usage.

I wish to look briefly at the discipline of sociolinguistics, partly for practical methodology and partly for the theoretical basis of considering language as a social construction. Sociolinguistics allows for the analysis of change

and variation in language with the consideration of social factors, in fact that language cannot be studied as an isolated system, but only within the context of its speakers. I will also extend this to look at speaker perceptions of their language, something I will consider further later in the thesis.

2.2.1 Sociolinguistics

Labov has rejected the structuralist brand of linguistics as proposed by Bloomfield and Chomsky which argues that language must be studied without reference to external factors and that somehow all native speakers of a language speak one homogeneous standard or correct form. He argues that variation within a linguistic community is the norm rather than a situation of homogeneity:

> Each investigator feels that his own community has been corrupted from this normal model in some way — by contact with other languages, by the effects of education and pressure of the standard language, or by taboos and the admixture of specialized dialects or jargons. But we have come to the realization in recent years that this is the normal situation — that heterogeneity is not only common, it is the natural result of basic linguistic factors, (Labov 1972 p. 203).

Labov's sociolinguistic work focuses on dialects in areas of the United States, usually those with pronounced dialect variations such as more isolated communities, urban subclasses and black communities (e. g. Labov 1972). He still accepts that his informants all speak English and that the variation encountered in his studies fall within its boundaries. However, the recognition of variation in language is an important step towards the acknowledgement and acceptance of minority and non-standard languages, including pidgin and creole languages. There is also acknowledgement that language contact and cross-influence is a normal and ongoing process, something supporters of standard national languages such as French often refuse

to admit (see section 2.4 below). The contrast between the perceived purity of a language and its actual manifestations is a central theme of this thesis.

Labov is credited with developing methods of analysis for language variation which particularly examine the social context as an explanation for change. These factors include social class, race and sex of or within a particular community. He is convinced that sound changes can be examined empirically in order to reveal regularity, and does this by a process of data collection and analysis involving careful choosing of interview subjects and elimination of data at the extremes of the selection:

> The mere multiplication of data only confounds analysis and perpetuates the bias of selection. It is rigor in the analysis of a population and in the selection of informants which is required (Labov 1972 pp. 164–165).

His methodology as such is specifically tailored to the circumstances and goals of his work. He designs interviews and passages for interviewees to read aloud which concentrate on the sound variations of the speech he wishes to analyse, perhaps reinforcing the stereotypes of race and class in the community. The methodological approach is detailed and precise, because Labov already knows the variations he is going to study and defines the groups beforehand. He also prefers to choose his informants carefully and discount any data that do not fall into a "regular and reproducible" pattern (1972 p. 204).

This method of interviewing and selection of data is not suitable for the analysis of highly variable languages like Tây Bồi. Although certain patterns can indeed be observed, the amount of "regular and reproducible" language in a pidgin is much less than a full language. Excluding the extremities, and even just deciding at what point the data is too irregular to include, would be to reduce the available material to a ridiculous level. Another concern is that the total amount of data available in the case of Tây Bồi is limited by factors affecting small, low-status and disappearing languages. These include

small numbers of often ageing speakers, the lapse of time and the lack of any previous dialogue on the topic even amongst its speakers. Finding subjects at all can often be the most difficult part of the research, let alone picking the 'most suitable' ones. As explained in the sections below, Labov's social criteria of sex, race, economic status and such like are not the only factors explaining language variation, but socio-historical phenomena, power and identity — often factors less readily examined with empirical survey — are more crucial in the cases of pidgins and creoles.

Labov himself notes that his method does not work when applied to pidgins and creoles (1980, 1990), explaining that this means that pidgins and creoles are therefore very different from other languages and need different methodology in order to analyse them. This is more likely a result of Labov having previously dealt with one language, English, and a few of its variations with which he was particularly familiar. In investigating a linguistic situation further removed from the researcher's background, one discovers that what works for one language may not for another. It is doubtful that a single method exists which can be applied equally to any linguistic investigation. Having acknowledged that variation is a normal part of language development, however, should suggest that a flexible, variable approach is necessary to its study. Pidgins provide some of the most variable language of all, which therefore may help explain language variation in other situations.

Other sociolinguistic studies have modified Labov's practices for less intimately known (to the researcher) linguistic situations with more success. Lesley Milroy follows in the tradition of Labovian sociolinguistics, but has a number of criticisms on some of his assumptions and methods. Milroy's studies in working-class Belfast proved that what worked in North American urban communities would not necessarily give the same results in other societies. Labov's single continuum of rating speech styles from casual to formal and structuring interviews through reading different styles of texts is not applicable to other cultures which treat reading differently, particularly — and this may seem an obvious point but one that needs to be made —

those with minimal or non-existent literacy.

Milroy also calls into question Labov's assumption that speaker style and variation is to do with the speakers' self-monitoring, or how consciously 'careful' he or she is when speaking in a certain context or reading a particular style of text. Milroy suggests that it is the context itself and the intended addressee which determine which style the speaker will consciously or unconsciously use; thus external rather than internal factors determine choice (1987 pp. 179–180). This is certainly a major point to consider with pidgins as they are usually very much context-driven. They arise out of a particular set of circumstances and are used only in limited domains and for limited purposes. The Tây Bồi of domestic staff, for example, was only used between staff and employer, and only for the business of the household.

She also equates this contextual styleshifting with codeswitching (p. 171), saying there is no reason these should be considered as separate phenomena since often the designation of speech as a 'dialect' or 'language' or 'register' is arbitrary. She seems to suggest that styleshifting in monolingual communities performs the same function as codeswitching in multilingual communities, and certainly both involve issues of audience, context and intended effect, but it can still be useful to retain both concepts. Styleshifting can still occur within one language or dialect of a multilingual speaker who uses codeswitching, and functions and usage can still be somewhat different. Codeswitching can happen many times even within one sentence, but each change does not mean a change in audience or context; rather, the amount of switching may be indicative of these, whereas each change in style is more likely to indicate a corresponding change in desired address or effect.

The equation of styleshifting and codeswitching is still useful for this thesis, as it is true that the borders between varieties of a language or different languages are indistinct, especially in the case of pidgins and their formation. A Frenchman might speak to his Vietnamese servant in what he might consider to be 'simple French' and receive a reply in something that the Vietnamese might consider proper French, but the Frenchman thinks is 'bad'

or 'broken' French. Both Vietnamese and French might use vocabulary from each other's language in cases where their native lexicon does not carry the appropriate concept, but still consider themselves to be speaking their own language. Thus the formation of a pidgin could involve both styleshifting and codeswitching, but this is not often acknowledged by the speakers, as Milroy notes:

> As Labov has always emphasized, speakers do not always report accurately on their own language behaviour. There are several reasons for this. First, reports are usually mediated through stereotypical views of language which reflect stereotypical attitudes to groups, including the speaker's own group [...] The expected pattern of response is that where a language or variety has high prestige speakers will often claim to use it, and where it is of low prestige they will deny knowledge of it [...] Mixed codes are particularly stigmatized, probably as a consequence of some underlying ideologies of linguistic 'purity' (pp. 185–186).

Labov has given among his explanations for sound change the search for identity, either through aiming higher on the social scale and therefore imitating some features of the speech of the upper classes, or through forming a distinct group within society and adopting modes of speech which locate the speaker within that particular group while distinguishing him or her from other groups. One of the groups he has studied is the black community of New York, which highlighted the fact that Black English is just as elaborate and usable for communication and argument as is standard English. These studies have gone some way towards the acknowledgement of non-standard varieties of language as functional and adequate for the needs of their speakers rather than an indicator of poor education or intelligence. The recognition of this fact and the issue of identity are important to understanding pidgin and creole cultures, as shown in section 2.2.4. It is however necessary to bear in mind the reduced structure and more limited role of a pidgin such as Tây Bồi.

Other 'myths' about language that Labov addresses include that speech is ungrammatical. From his own and other studies, he confirms that everyday conversation is in fact mostly 'correct' speech. This is an interesting point for looking at the criteria for judging standard language. Speech here is not a poor second to the authority of the written word but the primary form of communication, and for a pidgin, where there is no written form, it is the only method (possibly excluding extralinguistic aids such as gesture, etc.).

2.2.2 'Natural' and 'standard' language

Milroy notes that especially in the West, the popular conception is that there is "one and only one 'correct' way of using the language" (1987 p. 199). This is linked to a belief that linguistic structure implies linguistic homogeneity, and therefore that heterogeneity is abnormal:

> one might say that the standard language is *legitimized* and structures different from it which are characteristic of other varieties are thought of as corruptions of the standard and as illegitimate. These widely held and deeply entrenched views appear to be highly resistant to conscious reflection (p. 200).

The French language has been particularly subject to notions of a 'standard' form. Writing and the standardisation of orthography and widespread literacy in the expansion of a nation are factors which tend to contribute to the development of such notions. Influential authors, literary or philosophical, can have a large impact on how a language evolves. Language planning in the form of dictionaries and grammars provide authorities on language which are then taken as irrefutable dictates on how it should be used. If a language or variety is chosen as the standard, it has implications of being the nationwide, preferred choice, taking precedence over others. However, language as represented in dictionaries is inadequate for explaining all usages and variations in written and spoken language, even within what may be

considered a community of 'standard' language speakers. It is in fact often suggested that the 'standard language' is not actually a form used by any of its supposed speakers, but is only an idealised concept which may be useful to varying degrees in the domains of education and public communication.

One attribute often assigned to a standard language is 'naturalness.' It is supposedly the variety which most speakers of the language use, it is learnt as a child and it is assumed that language in general is a natural part of humanity. Especially in large Western nations, another 'natural' assumption is that monolingualism is the norm, and multilingualism, codeswitching and the like are ignored. The French language had many early supporters who advocated that their language reflected the natural order of thought and was therefore superior; however, linguistic investigation and argument was lacking in these theories (see section 2.4 below).

Whatever the standard variety of a language is, there are many others which may differ from it to varying degrees, from stylistic differences to colloquial or slang forms, to regional or dialectal variations through to pidgins and creoles. The degree to which these varieties are recognised as legitimate forms of language also varies, with technical jargon, for instance, often carrying an amount of implied expertise and prestige, while the status of working class and pidgin speech is very low. This phenomenon of lack of recognition and prestige goes some way to explaining why these varieties have been ignored and little studied until relatively recently. A comparatively early discussion of pidgins, creoles and standard language can be found in Hall (1972):

> [A]ny non-standard language has to combat prejudice with regard to its use, as opposed to that of a more firmly established variety, whether on the local, the regional, or the national level. A pidgin or creole, in addition to questions of simple social standing, has to confront the widespread opinion that it is a 'debased' or 'corrupted' variety of some other language, whether that language be the dominant prestige-tongue of the region or not. [...]

> The only factor, apparently, which can bring about a change in the status of a pidgin or creole is political, i. e., pressure effectively exerted by or on behalf of the population which uses it, for its recognition (p. 151).

The issue of language and power is examined in section 2.2.3.

What is actually natural about language is also a debated issue. Humans may be naturally adapted to use language, but the question of to what extent the language itself is natural and how much is determined by social conditions and other circumstances continues to be controversial. Mühlhäusler states, "In the vast majority of instances the biological foundations of human communication are supplemented, altered or even replaced by culture-specific processes" (1988 p. 50). One reason why pidgin languages have attracted academic attention is that they may approach the most easily produced, reduced forms of language. Pidgins share numerous similarities in their simplification of the languages on which they are based, which may point to features of language which are 'naturally' simple. (See Mühlhäusler 1988 for further discussion on this.) This is in contrast to earlier views which held that pidgins were unnatural, corrupt forms of the natural, standard language. It can be seen that popular conceptions of language and what makes it normal or natural can be firmly held beliefs without necessarily having grounds in fact or standing up to serious academic investigation.

2.2.3 Language and power

Another consideration on the role of language within a community and the perceptions of it is the use of language as a means of obtaining and reinforcing power structures. It has been demonstrated above that different languages or varieties of language have different amounts of prestige. Focussing on language as a medium of power is a way of determining what makes a certain variety prestigious and how the speakers of this variety use language and language policy as a tool to maintain dominance over speakers of less

prestigious varieties. This type of theory is useful whether one is studying varieties within a basically monolingual society, a bi- or multilingual society and also in the case of societies with pidgin or creole languages.

Pierre Bourdieu (1991) has developed a theory of linguistics which places power at the centre of understanding language. He rejects the notion that language is an autonomous entity capable of being studied in exclusion of other domains of human society. However, he takes his argument further than the Labovian sociolinguists and states that context and the relation of power between speakers will determine their speech. This sort of argument implies a number of conclusions on the nature of linguistics. One is that language use is always socially determined, so that an individual speaker's language choices are always a result of demands of the social context, the other speakers and the speaker's relationship to them. This seems to leave no room for individual choice in language use at all. Another consequence is that the language will reflect how the society operates. It might thus be possible to study the entire social structure and power relations in terms of the different language interactions — this bears similarities to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of language reflecting a society's worldview (e. g. Whorf 1956). Also, therefore, no language is without ideological implications:

> The way a society constructs its social, economic and political realities cannot be divorced from their cosmological outlook and the theological estimate of mankind in such societies. Since language gives a symbolic representation of that ideology, to advance a language is, in a sense, to advance that ideology (Goke-Pariola 1993 p. 231).

Bourdieu uses a terminology drawing heavily from the economic domain to explain his theory, for example, a speaker has a certain amount of 'linguistic capital,' or relative prestige, which he or she can employ in a 'linguistic market,' or situational context, to gain symbolic 'profit.' This model has its benefits and drawbacks. In a way, Bourdieu is simply replacing the ter-

minology of one social domain — linguistics — with that of another — economics. While this may be seen as serving to reinforce his argument that language cannot be considered apart from other social interaction, it is possibly misleading to equate these two systems. It serves Bourdieu's purpose to take a very political, socialist approach to theory, but if all social systems are codependent, it is just one of many viewpoints — any other social metaphor could be used. Bourdieu's model allows a perspective on similarities between the two systems of economics and language, such as: the negotiation of meaning; the extension of the systems across community and national boundaries; the 'value' of certain modes of speech or commodities over other's perceptions; aspirations of where one is or would like to be within the system, and the fact that both are social constructions with less connection to the 'natural' world than is often assumed. It is also, however, a theory which looks at competition, control and dominance of languages. It goes some way towards explaining the relations, but one must be careful of treating every linguistic act as a competitive exchange aimed at making a profit. It is also important to consider what makes a healthy, working system in both cases and therefore what measures and planning should be undertaken to further these aims. Viewing language with a free market economic model could be very different from using a socialistic or protectionist or other model. Solutions which may be applicable to the economic domain may not work for a linguistic situation.

A follower of Bourdieu, Abiodun Goke-Pariola, has applied his theory to the colonial situation in Nigeria (1993). The economic metaphors also serve his examination of the linguistic relationship between coloniser and colonised. Goke-Pariola argues that the colonial nation has a large amount of symbolic power associated with the fact that it is their language which is used for the 'important' task such as administration, justice, education, trade, and so on. Especially in the case of a country such as Nigeria, which was formerly a multitude of small nations with their own languages, the colonial language dominated all others. This power was also held by a relative few colonials forming an élite to which the local population would aspire. Those that

learnt the prestige language would then be more powerful than those that didn't and more useful to the colonists. Interpreters could therefore hold a considerable degree of power. Those that wanted to have any success in the new system had to learn the language.

Another issue in using the economic model for explaining the linguistic is that it makes linguistic acts seem very deliberate. This has the advantage of exposing what the situation of power relations is, but may be misleading, as often linguistic acts are not made with an intention of deliberately altering or enforcing power. Goke-Pariola notes this as one of the strengths of linguistic symbolic power:

> [It] is a most effective power because both those who benefit from its exercise as well as those who are dominated by it are largely unaware of what the real issues are. We are busy arguing about 'national' and 'official' languages, when the real issue has always been who will accumulate and maintain the most power in society? (1993 p. 232)

This theory can also be applied to Indochina, as a small number of French, who did not speak Vietnamese, had great political power and had to speak through a class of interpreters who gained prestige through speaking the language of the coloniser. However, those holding the symbolic power seek to maintain and increase it, and this can be done by making language policy to support it. Those who make the policy and have the most facility with the policy-preferred language, such as politicians and intellectuals, therefore have the most power. One difference is that Vietnamese, being a majority language for the population, retained some prestige, as did the classical prestige language, Chinese. Nevertheless, French was the dominant language of government and administration and an indication of greater status. Using Tây Bồi, a lower form of the standard language, was an indication of the low status of its speakers.

Mühlhäusler's version of 'ecolinguistic' theory (e. g. Mühlhäusler 1997)

provides a contrasting example of how another social metaphor can be used to describe the relationships between languages. A 'healthy' linguistic system is equated to a healthy environment, where many different languages or organisms fill different 'niches' and function and interact together. This approach is one that values linguistic diversity and puts a positive view on the interaction of different languages and speakers, unlike 'social Darwinist' views of competition. It also includes the assumption that languages change and evolve as do the components of the natural world. (One must be careful, however, not to put too much weight into the 'natural' parallels and ignore the social aspects.)

This theory can be used to explain the emergence of pidgin languages, such as Tây Bồi, as filling an 'ecological niche' between two language communities when they come into contact. Mühlhäusler argues that language contact does not automatically mean conflict, but that conflict is more likely to occur in situations where the power relationship between the languages involved is too great. Powerful international languages such as French or English tend to dominate the language ecologies of smaller nations and assume greater prestige and 'usefulness.' Vietnamese is certainly in no danger of extinction, and never was despite the desires of some nineteenth century French colonial theorists (see Chapter 3). During the colonial era, however, French upset the traditional relationship between Vietnamese and Chinese and became the dominant prestige language, while also inadvertantly creating a low-status variety spoken by some of the least powerful in the community — Tây Bồi.

2.2.4 Language and identity

Linguistic power can be reflected in other ways. When a minority group adopts a distinctive language or variety, it can often be a statement of identity. Sharing a language can mean belonging to one group while being distinct from other groups. This phenomenon often occurs with creolisation, as a community begins to feel the need to differentiate itself from any one or

more of the linguistic groups which contributed to the language and locate themselves within their new physical and cultural environment.

Identity can often involve choice of the speaker or community, or of a nation. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) establish a theory of identity drawing on the individual's wish to belong to one group or another which modifies his or her linguistic behaviour:

> The importance of motivation, of the desire for group solidarity or personal individuality, has been shown over and over again in the work of, for example, Labov, Trudgill, Lesley Milroy, and in our own results [including data from some West Indies creoles and immigrants to London] (p. 184).

Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh chose Vietnamese as the national language, embarking on literacy campaigns and attempting to remove Chinese and French influences on the language.[1] Choice of linguistic identity can have more to do with politics and prestige than actual linguistic differences or background, and the more dogmatic the politics,the more that choice is dictated. For certain Vietnamese under colonial rule, however, it was very profitable to be able to speak French well, as it ensured a job in the administration earning good wages. Some Vietnamese families considered themselves francophile to the point of being French, while others remained opposed to the colonial presence. Even so, opponents would use the language of the oppressor in order to work against it, writing in French so that they might better reach their audience and their goals. Chapter 3 details these phenomena more fully.

In the case of pidgin languages, however, it is a lack of identity which is often encountered. Pidgins are by nature functional languages with specific

[1] Of the many Vietnamese who fled or were forced from Vietnam as emigrants of refugees following reunification, many who identified more with the French moved to France instead. Between 1975 and 1995, 3.44% of Vietnamese emigrants went to France, approximately 1 347 000 people. The three major destinations are, however, the United States, Canada and Australia (Merli 1997 p. 33).

purposes. They have little or no prestige associated with them, are not usually officially recognised, and speakers would prefer to identify with a more powerful group associated with a stable, full language. Tây Bồi was not recognised by the French except as bad grammar; prestige was associated with correct standard French. However, as will be studied in Chapter 4, there may be evidence to suggest that speaking Tây Bồi was better than speaking no French at all, and possibly that *boys* used some Tây Bồi as a sort of identifying jargon amongst themselves.

2.3 Pidgin and creole theory

Some pidgins and creoles have a very long history, such as Lingua Franca, or are spoken by the vast majority of a population, such as Haitian Creole, but rarely have these languages been accorded the status of or been considered equally worthy of study as standard national languages until quite recently — especially in the case of French pidgins and creoles. The age of a pidgin is relatively easy to estimate, since we can say that before the populations had made contact, the language did not exist, but after a certain date, the language had begun to develop. However, early records are generally limited to the work of missionaries, accounts of traders, the military or eminent colonists who commented on the 'corrupted' language as used by their slaves or subjects, rather than any linguistic description. Both these kinds of accounts and linguistic descriptions are analysed in Chapter 4.

The study of pidgins and creoles has become a viable interest with the recognition that their development may assist the understanding of how all languages are created and how they change. It also has importance in the field of language simplification and language universals with applications in language planning and language acquisition, as well as providing insights into contact between cultures.

2.3.1 Pidginisation

A traditional view of pidginisation and creolisation theory is Hall's 'life cycle' analogy (1962). The argument is that a pidgin will arise to fill a specific niche in the interaction between communities. While the need remains, so the language remains, whether it be over a brief period of initial contact between different language communities or a long period of occasional interaction such as trading links. However, as soon as the situation changes and the need is no longer there, the pidgin will usually disappear rapidly. Hall attributes this to pidgins

> being "inherently weak" in that, not their linguistic structure, but their social standing is normally not hardy enough to enable them to be used outside of their original context (Hall 1962 p. 151).

Only if the conditions allow for the creolisation of the pidgin can the language gain its own speech community and thus the prestige and attachment of identity necessary for it to survive, even though this standing is usually less than for a 'standard' language.

It is accepted that pidgins arise through contact between two or more different language communities. They are created from the urgent need to communicate rather than a genuine attempt to learn the language of the other. As long as the need remains and the method remains useful, the language will continue to exist and to some extent stabilise, becoming a pidgin. The cultural aspects seem especially important to the development or extinction of pidgins — whether or not the pidgin will creolise and become a fully expressive language. The study of socio-historical factors is therefore essential to the understanding of the community and its language or languages, as many creolists argue:

> des études ultérieures consacrées à divers "systèmes culturels" (magie, littérature orale) ont achevé de me persuader de l'absolue

> nécessité, pour l'étude génétique de toute forme de créolisation, d'une approche rigoureuse et minutieuse de l'histoire des sociétés concernées[2] (Chaudenson 1992 p. 53)

If the people remain in their own country among their own people and language environment, they are likely to retain their own customs and culture, including language, especially if there is already a majority language as opposed to many different regional languages or dialects, such as in Africa or Indochina. In these cases, the people will speak their mother tongue amongst themselves, but a pidgin will develop for use with the French-speaking colonists. Factors such as formal teaching of French and the proportion of the population that comes into contact with the French may determine the nature and scope of the pidgin.

The process of pidginisation can be generalised, as has been done in many studies. Pidgins of whatever origin tend to exhibit similar features, aiming towards simplicity. These include an invariable verb form, lack of tense, reduced and task-specific vocabulary, and elimination of grammatical categories such as gender. As soon as the need for a more expressive language is felt, through the stabilisation of the community or the search for an identity, speakers will incorporate more complex forms into the language, beginning the process of creolisation. In this way, sometimes within the space of a generation or two, a very limited form of need-based communication can develop into a fully functional language capable of fulfilling all the needs of human communication and interaction. Tây Bồi however did not creolise, so this thesis will concentrate on looking at how and why it developed and then why, contrary to some earlier predictions, it did not stabilise.

[2] subsequent studies devoted to various "cultural systems" (magic, oral literature) have convinced me of the absolute necessity, for the genetic study of any form of creolisation, of a rigourous and detailed approach to the history of the societies concerned.

2.3.2 Relexification

There are a number of other theories on the origins of pidgin languages which may be useful to varying degrees. One of these is the relexification theory, where a new pidgin can form from the basis of an older one, retaining grammatical structures but replacing most or all lexical items. This process occurs through the spread of pidgins, often trade varieties, as they encounter new communities where basic communication is necessary. When a new power gains influence in the area, such as with some colonial situations, elements of the original pidgin may influence the new.

The most extreme form of this theory holds that all pidgins and creoles have one origin. This is variously Portuguese trade pidgin or the Lingua Franca of the Mediterranean, which was spread via shipping and exploration routes to all parts of the world where pidgins and creoles are spoken, being modified each time the European nation in control changed. While it attempts to explain the similarities in structure found in pidgins and creoles, this theory ignores pidgins of non-European origin, and there is otherwise not enough evidence to sustain the argument for continuous, complete influence of a single origin. Another implication is that the original pidgin was uniform and stable, whereas it is more likely to have been quite variable across place and time. It also denies the spontaneity of the necessity for communication and the means that people can use when no common language is available.

However, it is certain that many pidgins and creoles have had cross-influence, especially in locations such as the Caribbean or Indian Ocean where exchange between islands occurred and a number of colonial powers were involved. It is also documented that the pidgin Portuguese did have an influence on later pidgins in some areas, though in a less cohesive manner than strong relexificationists may suggest. Such a case may be envisaged in the South-East Asian region, where the Portuguese were actively trading from the early sixteenth century. The pidgin spread around the coasts

and islands, quite possibly carrying influences from previous ports of call on the Portuguese trade routes such as African and Indian colonies, and, as will be shown in Chapter 4, came to the Indochinese coast. As Portuguese interest and power in the area declined, other European nations filled the gaps. French trade and religious missions were sent beginning in the seventeenth century, and it is not inconceivable that Portuguese pidgin was still in use at that time and influenced the beginnings of Franco-Vietnamese communication. Again, this possibility will be examined in Chapter 4.

2.3.3 Communication to creolisation

Pidgins can be seen as solutions to the problem of communication in cases where there is no common language, often where the language groups concerned are quite different and there is a significant difference in culture as well. The meeting of cultures can be a delicate issue, and pidgins can be an informal means of contact, whether temporary solutions on the way to establishment of new communities or a more permanent communication for trade purposes. The study of contact languages is therefore the study of contact between cultures, an issue vital for understanding between peoples.

Another theory for pidginisation involves a 'model' and 'imitation' scenario. Here, the dominant linguistic community, usually colonists or traders, provides a model for the dominated or colonised. However, this model is not necessarily their own standard language. Preconceived ideas about 'less civilised' populations ability to learn a 'civilised' language may lead the dominant group to engage in 'foreigner talk,' as first outlined by Ferguson (1975). This condescending view taken by colonists and traders and their resultant use of language towards the indigenous or plantation populations was possibly a factor in the development of pidgins: if the learners are only exposed to an already reduced version of the language, then such will be their model, so that they may be unaware that they are speaking a pidgin version.

Chaudenson's target language theory for creolisation incorporates this —

it is assumed that the first generation at least will have some contact with the standard form and that this will be the target — although the colonists' French might not be what is now assumed as 'standard,' but a regional, archaic or colloquial form:

> La représentation le plus simple de cette situation est donc une organisation centripète dont le centre est formé par le français (populaire, régionale, etc.) dont usent les Français eux-mêmes mais aussi des esclaves, sans doute généralement "créoles" (c'est-à-dire nés dans le pays) ou "francisés" et dont la périphérie extrême est constituée par le "jargon des commençans"[3] (Chaudenson 1992 p. 131).

Subsequent generations and new arrivals will have as their target language the speech of the first, and so on. Creolisation then begins

> au moment où la langue-cible des nouveaux apprennants n'est plus le français, mais consiste dans des variétés, elles-mêmes approximatives, dont usent les esclaves qui sont désormais les seuls "modèles linguistiques" des masses de "bossales" qu'amène aux Isles le développement des cultures coloniales[4] (ibid p. 132).

Baker on the other hand objects to the general use of the term 'target language,' arguing that it implies failure of the community to reach the perceived goal of acquiring the standard language and therefore that pidgins and creoles are the substandard results of this failure. He prefers a more

[3] The most simple representation of this situation is thus a centripetal model, at the centre of which is French (popular, regional, etc), used by the French themselves but also the slaves, no doubt generally "Creoles" (that is, born in that country) or "Frenchified" and at the extreme periphery of which is "beginners' talk."

[4] at the point when the target language of the new learners is no longer French, but consists of varieties, themselves approximative, used by the slaves who are henceforth the only "linguistic models" of the mass of labourers who brought the development of colonial culture to the Isles.

positive view in which pidgins and creoles are successful solutions to the problem of communication:

> What I am suggesting is that participants created a new language, suited to their immediate interethnic needs, and that they subsequently expanded and adapted this as their growing or changing needs demanded, drawing at all times on the resources available (Baker 1990 p. 111)

Universalist theories of pidginisation and creolisation have been proposed, such as Bickerton's 'bioprogram' theory (1981) which proposes an inbuilt mechanism in humans which recognises basic forms of language and recovers them in constructing a pidgin. Any biological basis for a specific 'language learning centre' has largely been discounted, and while a number of general similarities can be proposed for pidgin and creole features, it is difficult to find one set which fits all. Standard languages can also share a number of the same features, so it is extremely difficult to distinguish a creole from a 'natural' language on the basis of linguistic evidence alone — sociocultural and historical context is necessary.

No single theory amongst these can be taken on its own to explain the origins and existence of Tây Bồi, but elements of each may be useful in studying developments. As will be seen in Chapter 4, evidence from a variety of sources must be used for a more complete view of its history and usage. Firstly, it is useful to look at the French and their language to see how this affected the origins and perceptions of contact between languages and cultures.

2.4 The Ideology of French

2.4.1 Historical ideas

French interest in their own language has a long history. Like other major European languages, the conception of the language became associated with the state during the rise of the nation. François I declared French the only official language in 1539, although at this stage it was hardly the majority language. Institutions such as the Academie française, founded in 1635, and the dictionaries and grammars it produced established the language as a property of the nation, defining its people. French policy was directed towards teaching the population the chosen standard variety, as we have seen above, to the detriment of other languages or dialects that were spoken in other regions outside Paris.

The French literary and philosophical tradition contributed to a certain idea of the French language. French styled itself as the language best suited to reasoning and logic. This was in part due to the fact that eminent philosophers of the time chose to write in their native French rather than Latin, which by then was considered antiquated. The ideal of reason demanded the introduction of direct control upon the language which Latin lacked, never having its own contemporary dictionary or grammar. The *Treatise of French Grammar*, the first comparative grammar of Latin and French was written in 1550 by Louis Meigret, proposing that the natural word order, i. e. that most conforming to thought, was the SVO order found in French. This idea recurred through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (for a history of the debates see Swiggers 1990), with supporters such as Descartes and Diderot, expanding justification of the superiority of French by appealing to its supposed clarity and purity of expression. This was reinforced following the nationalistic ideals of the French Revolution. The argument was not uncontroversial, but its proponents rarely included linguists and analysis included only the most superficial linguistic reasoning. Swiggers takes a critical view:

> [T]he clarity of French is basically justified by the brilliant representatives of French culture and thought — philosophers and writers of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The 'pillars' of this clarity are the classical ones: word order, lexical precision, and stylistic transparency. But there is no linguistic analysis to support these claims. [...] In spite of its high degree of homonymy, of its morpho-syntactic anomalies, of its liability to ambiguity and vagueness — which are also fully exploited by French authors — French is still praised for its clarity (1990, p. 125).

It is, however, a very persistent ideology which has its supporters even in the twentieth century. One theme developed in this thesis is the continuation of certain elements of French ideas on language from these early conceptions to present-day language policy.

2.4.2 Colonial ideas

The consequence of this ideology of language was that in setting off on their overseas ventures, the French insisted on the maintenance of the purity of their language. They upheld a colonial ideal of teaching their new subjects the most advanced, civilised language in order to enlighten them and make them French. This effort was reflected by early missionaries and Bible translations and the ideal was always present, in some form if not in official policy, even when colonial practice extended to exploitation of resources, slavery, political influence or trade benefits. The *mission civilisatrice* became the concept of colonialism, whether the French involved were really out to improve the lot of the 'uncivilised native,' contribute to the greater glory of France, or simply to make a fortune and return home. More details on the policies and practices of the French in Indochina are given in the following chapter, but it is interesting to look at some of the views on French language and language contact of the time.

Research into pidgins and creoles began in the late nineteenth century with the likes of Bassiac and Schuchardt among the first to consider them seriously. Others refused to acknowledge any value in such languages other than as proof of the inferiority of non-European races, such as Léopold de Saussure (brother to Ferdinand) who drew on the arguments of Gustave le Bon (more on Gustave le Bon can be found in the next chapter). He offers this explanation for the pidginisation of French:

> Seule la race aryenne s'est élevée, dès son aurore, à la forme complète de la flexion qui constitue le véhicule par excellence, indéfiniment perfectible, de la pensée [...] Cette forme linguistique de la flexion, particulière aux autres races aryennes, est naturellement inconcevable aux autres races; et le français transporté chez elles est ramené aussitôt [...] à la forme monosyllabique[5] (quoted in Joseph 1999).

This view is characteristic of those who believe non-Europeans incapable of learning European languages or of advanced thought.

A popular belief was that creoles are rough, emotional languages, ideal for expressing the vibrant culture of their speakers, but that they are not suitable for logical reasoning or high literary endeavours. Jourdain (1956) asks:

> Langue enfantine, dit-on souvent, sans doute, par sa simplicité, mais aussi langue crue de marins ou de soldats, langue railleuse que ne retient aucune politesse, mais que la tendresse ou la simple amabilité émaille de mots caressants, langue concise et qui suffit, comme on l'a dit, à l'échange des idées simples, le créole

[5] Only the Aryan race has arisen, from its dawn, to the complete form of inflection which constitutes the indefinitely perfectible vehicle *par excellence* of thought [...] This linguistic form of inflection, peculiar to the Aryan races, is naturally inconceivable to other races; and the French transposed to them is immediately brought back [...] to the monosyllabic form (trans. Joseph).

peut-il être envisagé comme support possible d'une littérature?[6] (p. 230).

Her answer is that the efforts of creole writers "demeurent ce qu'elles sont en réalité, d'agréables passe-temps, rien de plus"[7] (p. 236). She has, however, been disproved, with the postcolonial movement and creole identity leading to the development of creoles in literature.

In terms of historical investigation, however, contact French remains little studied, especially in the cases where a pidgin arose but the influence subsequently declined, such as in Vietnam. This thesis will look at the types of documents mentioned above in order to form a more complete historical picture of French policies and their implementation or otherwise during the colonial era and afterwards (Chapter 3).

2.4.3 Post-colonial ideas

The collapse of colonial empires following World War II led to a change in overseas policies of European powers. Having been defeated by Ho Chi Minh's forces at Dien Bien Phu, French influence in Vietnam waned, blocked by the subsequent Vietnamese war with America and decades of insular Communist government. During this time, however, France still had influence in other former colonies, such as the African nations, from which arose the idea of *Francophonie*. The topic of Francophonie is examined in Chapter 5, using the numerous texts published on French outside of France. The concept of spreading the French language and culture became a much more international idea, building on co-operation rather than domination.

[6] Often described as a childish language, doubtless because of its simplicity, but also a raw language of sailors or soldiers, a mocking language which retains no trace of politeness, but which tenderness or simple amiability sprinkles with tender words, a concise language and which is sufficient, as we have said, for the exchange of simple ideas, can Creole be envisaged as a possible base for a literature?

[7] Remain as they are in reality, amusing pass-times, nothing more.

Both French and English-language authors have written on this phenomenon, which has grown out of the colonial ideals into a more global concept. However, these authors differ as to the effects and successes of the movement, and the organisation has indeed been difficult to define as it constantly evolves. Both French and English ideas on Francophonie will be examined, including official documents from Francophonie organisations. This will build a history of the patterns and changes in French ideology of language.

English-language authors tend to view the attempted expansion of French teaching and culture in Vietnam as something of a lost cause, arguing that the country is and has never been truly francophone and that French will never compete for number of speakers with English, the most useful world language. French authors on the other hand deny that this is or was ever the aim, and that the recent projects are to further co-operation and an alternative international system of relations, i. e. an alternative but not a competitor to the English-speaking world.

The new French ideology has tended much more to an international viewpoint and acknowledges that overseas French-speaking communities have developed their own idiosyncrasies, whether this means particularities of vocabulary or creoles which have become quite distinct from French. Linguistic studies have been made of many of the French-based creoles (see for example the work of Calvet, Chaudenson, Corne, Valdman) and many communities have established a strong identity in terms of language, culture and a literary tradition. Creole communities now attract funding for cultural events and linguistic planning, often through the official Francophonie organisations. Again, this is dealt with in Chapter 5, but first, Chapter 3 looks back at the beginnings of language policies and practice in Vietnam, for it is not only the French who have influenced the language.

Chapter 3

A History of language policy and usage in Vietnam

This chapter presents historical evidence of the use, policy and interaction of languages in Vietnam, beginning with an overview of the pre-French era. This is in order to examine the development of previous influences on language in Vietnam, such as from Chinese, but also from less overt forces such as from trading Portuguese. This sort of influence could throw light on language contact and the emergence of Tây Bồi. The sections dealing with French contact concentrate on the circumstances of the origins of Tây Bồi and the colonial policies to do with language planning, as well as Vietnamese responses to this (further analysis of Tây Bồi is given in the following chapter).

The main body of this chapter traces the evolution of the colonial ideals with which France justified its occupation of Vietnam and contrasts these with the official policies which were implemented with regard to language. The results of policy are discussed as whether they were the desired successes or unintended reactions, and assessed in terms of the effects on future policymaking. Post-colonial Vietnamese language policy is also briefly studied.

3.1 Vietnam before European contact

The Chinese colonised Vietnam in 111 BC, its empire reaching its peak in the Han dynasty when it extended to about the seventeenth parallel. At that time, Vietnamese was a spoken language only, so Chinese began to be used as the language for writing and official business. Vietnamese became a low-prestige vernacular while Chinese was used by an élite of administrators. The Chinese trained Vietnamese as local administrators, but this upset the whole system of the traditional aristocracy, and there were rebellions, notably the Trung Sisters (39–43 AD), which were put down. However in 939 the Vietnamese finally threw off their colonial status. Vietnam was still a vassal to China, but now they could set up their own government, with a monarch based at Hué (see Figure 1). The administration was, however, heavily modelled on the Chinese mandarinat. A similar education and examination system was established, but it maintained the traditional Vietnamese autonomy of the individual village.

Under the Chinese, the Vietnamese had also begun to develop a writing system for their own language — nôm. *Chữ' nôm* is from the Chinese meaning 'southern characters,' although the term is possibly from the Chinese designation for spoken Vietnamese, similarly pronounced but meaning 'babbling.' It was begun by using written Chinese characters but pronouncing them in Vietnamese, but as a desire grew for a writing system that would be truly Vietnamese, scholars began to modify the characters until a Chinese person could no longer recognise them. Chinese still retained a great deal of prestige and was used for important official business, philosophy and religion, but nôm became a language of the people, largely used for expressing thought through poetry and literature, stemming from the rich tradition of oral history, song and poetry. Having said this, most of the population still remained illiterate and to become a mandarin ensured great prestige in one's home village for having passed the rigorous training and to be able to read out important documents to the people. Support for nôm varied through the centuries (see DeFrancis 1977 for further details). Some supported it as a

writing system freed of Chinese influence, a language by the Vietnamese for the Vietnamese; others stressed that for a proper education, one needed to learn Chinese anyway. Early Western researchers on the language pointed to the fact that it was neither fully ideographic, like Chinese, nor alphabetic, and in addition was inconsistent, and thus it could not develop into a proper national writing system. There is no good reason, however, why standardisation, as in the case of Chinese, could not have helped make nôm a writing system that could be used by the whole population. As it happened, another system eventually replaced both nôm and Chinese: the Romanised system used today known as quốc ngũ'.

3.2 The first Europeans in Vietnam

The first Western missionaries and traders, sometimes working together, arrived in Vietnam in the early seventeenth century. The Portuguese established themselves in the area early, in fact making their first contact with the Vietnamese coast in 1516, although an official discovery mission was only sent in 1523. However, they first founded outposts at Malacca and then Macao in the 1550s, and further exploration of Vietnam did not follow until somewhat later.

There were also Italian, Spanish, Dutch, English and French efforts. The French decided to concentrate on the area, and in 1665 sent their first trade mission. With the Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes — possibly the first French visitor to the country — arriving in 1624, and others following soon after, France became the dominant Western power in Indochina. However, both traders and missionaries were often met with sometimes violent hostility. The ruling Vietnamese élite resented the intrusion of Catholicism into their Confucianist doctrine and felt that teaching and trading outside their control undermined their influence.

Nevertheless, the missionaries attracted a number of the largely illiterate Vietnamese peasantry and began to teach them French and Latin to

be able to recite religious works. Most of the effort went into oral teaching — the missionaries made little effort either to learn spoken or written Vietnamese or to teach the Vietnamese to write, although some did learn and use nôm (DeFrancis p. 51). Taboulet (1955–1956) asserts that François Piña, a Portuguese Jesuit in the country when De Rhodes arrived, "est le premier Européen qui se soit adonné sérieusement à l'étude de la langue vietnamienne"[1] (p. 12), something which De Rhodes suggests himself in his 1653 account of his travels: "il n'y auoit que le P. François Pina qui entendoit, & parloit fort bien la langue"[2] (De Rhodes 1994, p. 72). De Rhodes was convinced, through watching Piña, that preaching through interpreters was much less effective than speaking directly to the people in their own language. Apart from already knowing a number of languages including Chinese, he set about learning Vietnamese as quickly as possible,

> & Dieu voulut que dans quatre mois i'en sceus assez pour entendre les Confessions, & dans six mois ie preschay en la langue de la Cochinchine, ce que i'ay continué depuis pendant beaucoup d'années[3] (p. 73).

De Rhodes is also famous for his *Dictionarium Annamaticum, Lusitanum et Latinum*, published in 1651, which used a Romanised writing system for Vietnamese. It is unclear how much of this transcription was his own work, but it seems he drew largely on the work of his Portuguese predecessors: Taboulet names the Portuguese fathers De Piña, Borri, Gaspar de Amaral and Barbosa as the principle originators of this collective effort (pp. 12–13). It was not particularly reflective of French phonetics (DeFrancis p. 56) which may be further indication of De Rhodes' lesser involvement, but on the other hand, as he knew Portuguese and many other languages, this may signify little.

[1] The first European to devote himself seriously to the study of the Vietnamese language.

[2] Only Father François Piña understood and spoke the language well.

[3] And as God would have it, in four months I knew enough to take Confession, and in six months I was preaching in the language of Cochinchina, as I have since continued for many years.

It is likely that De Rhodes' major contribution was in refining and standardising the system, including the tonal and diacritical marks, and in publishing his work. In fact, it has changed little to the present day, in spite of difficulties with printing the diacritics. However, the system was not used outside the missions for the next two centuries, being intended only for the use of the missionaries themselves. While a few missionaries used or taught in written Vietnamese, some also using nôm, most concentrated on the spoken form (DeFrancis p. 51). Even when the French began to dominate missionary activity from the later part of the seventeenth century, spoken language remained the principal teaching method, yet it was not French that was taught. Missionaries continued to learn Vietnamese and instructed their converts in catechisms and Bible teachings, often in Latin. It seems that early influence from Portuguese or French was not of a large scale. However, see section 4.3.2 for more indications of early language contact.

3.3 The colonial era

3.3.1 The colonisation process

Many traders and missionaries were killed by groups of Vietnamese who wanted no such contact with European powers, and in 1858, frustrated by their lack of success in establishing profitable ventures in Indochina, France sent in the troops. The pretext was enforcing French and Church justice in the face of Vietnamese persecution of missionaries, however, political and imperial interests lay behind the front.

The first zone of occupation was the rich agricultural area of the Mekong Delta, the territory known as Cochinchina. The intention was for the French to begin with an indirect rule, overseeing the Vietnamese who would retain their traditional administration structure and positions. However, the Vietnamese refused to co-operate. Many mandarins fled the areas of French occupation and the whole system of administration and education was thrown

into disarray. The French were forced to take a direct role at setting up their own administrative structure and finding a new class of Vietnamese to help them. These *collaborateurs* were mostly those who had no reason to support the mandarins or the Confucianist governing system — the uneducated peasant class and the Catholic converts, some of whom already knew a little French and were therefore more useful to the colonisers. This saw something of a reversal of the class system, as those among the peasantry who spoke French and supported the new French government gained favour with them, but the formerly high-status mandarin class was distrusted by the French. Already the plans of the French to settle in and begin the process of making the country their own had been disrupted.

During this early period, the missionaries proved a valuable aid in establishing communications. Both the missionaries and their converts acted as interpreters and intelligence gatherers. Things were still not particularly easy, as some soldiers had to rely on their schoolboy Latin to communicate with those converts who had been taught Latin but no or very little French on the missions (DeFrancis 1977 p. 75[4]). Taboulet (1955–56) reproduces a short letter written in 1869 by a low-ranked mandarin to his French superiors (pp. 590–591). Although the mandarin had been in the service of the French for nine years, the letter is in Latin, learnt while in the seminary at Penang. This suggests that among such classes of Vietnamese, Latin was better known than French, at least for formal, written purposes. One could speculate that their spoken French was therefore a reduced form or pidgin, but material evidence is lacking.

There is also evidence of quite a mix of nationalities in the larger ports. Chinese had of course been a more or less permanent presence, if not as administrators then as traders. They had formed their own enclave in Cholon (now part of Ho Chi Minh City but formerly a separate 'Chinatown'). There were also numerous traders and functionaries of Indian origin from the French colonies there, both in Saigon: "Des Annamites, des Chinois,

[4]See also White 1972 as detailed in 4.3.2.

des Hindous, quelques soldats français ou tagales vont et vient"[5] (Léopold Pallu quoted in Triaire 1997 pp. 10–11), and in Hanoi: "Des Hindous, sujets français de Pondichéry ou de quelque autre ville française d'Inde..."[6] (Herbert Wilde quoted in Triaire 1997 p. 76). These French Indians probably gained entry as French citizens, but may well have brought pidgin or creole influences with them.

The first governors of Cochinchina — all military men, the first appointed in 1861 — were quick to set up a college for interpreters and schools to replace the abandoned Chinese-style education system. The French were wary of any Chinese influence and discouraged the use of the language, as they discouraged the traditional value systems based around Confucianism and the former ruling class. Chinese characters were considered inferior, being difficult to learn and representing a monosyllabic language. Vietnamese, also being more or less monosyllabic, was also considered inferior, but at least there was a Romanised form of it — De Rhodes' writing system. This system was taught in the schools, but the goal was to teach the Vietnamese the Roman alphabet so that they could then learn French more rapidly. There were French language schools, journals and newspapers, and in 1865, the first periodical in Romanised Vietnamese was published — the *Gia Dinh Bao* — under French control.

It was not until a couple of years later, in 1867, that the first instance of this Romanised script being named quốc ngũ' was recorded (DeFrancis 1977 pp. 83–87). The term means 'national language,' and probably derives from a term used to mean Vietnamese language, spoken or written, as opposed to Chinese. It was not a term used by the missionaries and wasn't overly popular with the French because of its nationalistic overtones, but at least in their view it separated the Vietnamese from Chinese influence. The script itself was generally encouraged by the French, and also by a few Vietnamese

[5] Annamites, Chinese, Hindus, a few French or Tagal soldiers come and go.

[6] A number of Hindus, French subjects from Pondicherry or some other French town in India... ("Herbert Wilde" is apparently the pseudonym of a Vietnamese public servant who later took to writing (Triaire 1997 p. 75).)

who viewed the French as providing the route to higher civilisation. Perhaps the most well-known of these was Tru'o'ng Vĩnh Ký, a highly educated scholar, teacher, interpreter and prolific writer who worked with the French, but maintained a high degree of national identity, and saw quốc ngũ' as a way of serving both ends.[7] However, most Vietnamese resented French rule and rejected the use of quốc ngũ' as a sign of collaboration, and it was not widely used. The opposition, encouraged by the court at Hué, distributed their communications in nôm, and serious matters were still dealt with in Chinese.

The first civilian governor of the colony of Cochinchina was appointed in 1879, ending the period known as the 'Rule of the Admirals.' The military was instead concentrating on acquiring more territory. Taking advantage of the death of the Hué emperor, they progressively conquered Annam and Tonkin from 1883–1885. At this time, China relinquished its right to tribute from Vietnam, although there were numerous border skirmishes beforehand and afterwards. By 1887 Cambodia had also been added, and in 1893, Laos completed the extent of French Indochina (see Figure 2). These new territories were 'protectorates,' as opposed to Cochinchina which was a full colony of France. Cochinchinese loyal to the French aided them in the roles of missionaries, interpreters and troops. Those loyal to the throne at Hué rallied around the twelve year old heir, but he was exiled in 1888, and by 1896, most of the guerilla leaders had been hunted down and the resistance was effectively suppressed.

3.3.2 French colonial and language policy in the nineteenth century

The French, at least when compared to powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Spanish, were relatively late starters in the grab for colonies and overseas influence. Any interest in exterior affairs at the end of the

[7] See P. J. Honey's commentary in Tru'o'ng Vĩnh Ký 1982 for bibliographical and publication details.

eighteenth century was overwhelmed by the French Revolution, and during much of the nineteenth century, France was occupied with European wars, revolutions and incidents. Public interest in colonial thought was quite low. However, towards the end of the nineteenth century, it began to rise. Voyages abroad became a popular genre in literature, there were numerous publications on colonial theory, societies were formed with a view to creating business ventures in the colonies and a number of colonial congresses were held in 1889–1900 which stimulated public debate (see e. g. Betts 1961). In 1893, the Ministry of Colonies was formed, after many years of responsibility for colonies being shifted back and forth between the Ministries of Marine and Commerce. France at this stage had most of Indochina under its control, but had found it necessary to make significant military commitments in the face of Vietnamese resistance. Therefore a need was felt to gain popular support at home in France, however, the move also shows a that France wanted to place colonial theory and practice in a more prominent position and give them the rational, administrative power of a government office.

The two main concepts in French colonial theory were *assimilation*, followed and replaced by *association*. Simply put, assimilation was the policy of running the colony as a smaller version of France and integrating the natives into a European style society, where they would become equal citizens with the French. Association policy was to allow the native populations to maintain their own traditions and institutions while the French would oversee their administration and provide guidance where necessary. Both theories were closely linked with French national ideals stemming from a philosophic tradition and the Revolution, and both reflected the underlying belief in the *mission civilisatrice*. The French prided themselves on their high ideals and genuinely believed in the 'white man's burden' of bringing civilisation and Christianity to the more 'primitive' races. As Osborne puts it, "At this time men of the West had few doubts concerning their right and duty to lead the world" (1969 p. 36). A perceived French 'spirit' — a philosophic tradition of rationality and law and the clarity of the French language for argument combined with the egalitarian ideals of the Revolution — was in many cases

the justification for the superiority of the French people and their suitability as colonisers.

Assimilation

Assimilation was the dominant policy in the nineteenth century. The popular image was of Rousseau's 'noble savage' willing and eager to learn the ways of the white man, and the universal 'rightness' and applicability of French law was used as a rational argument, such as in Condorcet's statement "a good law is good for all men, just as a sound logical proposition is sound everywhere" (Ennis 1936). The National Colonial Congress in 1889–1890 was the height of favour for assimilation. Language was a principal instrument of assimilation as shown by the Congress's resolution:

> That the efforts of colonization in all countries under French authority be directed in the sense of propagation among the natives of the national language, the mores and the processes of the work of the *métropole* (quoted in Betts 1961 p. 31, trans. Betts).

The theory and its intended application for Indochina was to set up French administration and education structures, teach the Vietnamese to speak, live, work and govern themselves like the French with the goal of making Cochinchina and then all of Indochina *departements* of France, with the Vietnamese gaining the right to full French citizenship. In practice, however, this was very difficult. Osborne states:

> The very assumption of a moral superiority that licensed individuals of one nation to enlighten those of another paved the way for the use of force and coercion to ensure that the advocate of civilization had his way (1969 p. 36).

The French found the Vietnamese less willing to become 'civilised' than they might have thought, and the assimilation did not proceed as the theory

would have it.

As previously mentioned, the traditional ruling class had mostly fled or refused to join the French administration, so a whole new class of functionaries had to be trained. Those who were in fact keen to collaborate were not necessarily the best suited for the job. The mandarins took their administrative experience and training with them when they abruptly left, leaving those who had joined the French with none of the traditional support systems. The collaborators were usually of peasant background and had none of the education of the mandarins, and only a limited education from the French missionaries. As a result, instead of being able to draw on the experience of the indigenous system, the French had to begin their education and administrative training almost from scratch, on the limited foundation of missionary education.

The French were not able to restore the level of education that had previously provided the country with its administrators. Teachers were hard to come by, and the French were simply not able to establish schools in all areas. Éliacin Luro, of the Bureau de la Justice Indigène, and later director of the Collège des Stagiaires for the instruction of public servants in indigenous affairs, writes in a 1873 report to Admiral Dupré of this decline. He notes that prior to French occupation, each province had its official in charge of education, overseeing the district officials, and "dans chaque village, des lettrés, honorés du peuple et du gouvernement, apprenaient aux enfants à écrire la langue mandarine annamite [nôm]"[8] (Taboulet 1955–56 p. 592). His figures for schooling in the early 1870s give 113 French government schools with around 5000 students learning quốc ngũ', but only a few, central schools, i. e. those in Saigon, taught French (Luro 1897 p. 59). This is certainly an increase from the twenty schools in 1865 (Osborne 1969 p. 99), but the enthusiastic reports of many French officials as to the numbers of students learning quốc ngũ' were often exaggerated. Osborne also points out that

[8] In each village, the educated men, honoured by both the people and the government, taught the children to write the Annamite mandarin language.

attendance was rather irregular, especially in rural areas where children were required to help with agricultural duties.

Quốc ngũ' was not popular at this stage, French even less so and learning either was a sign of collaboration: the resistance initially rejected them in favour of nôm. At first, teaching quốc ngũ' failed to attract the support of most Vietnamese. Parents might send their children to school hoping for a good future for them in the administration, but although the children learnt to read and write in quốc ngũ', there was nothing for them to read. Luro singles this out as the reason for the lack of success in teaching: "Nous avons fait des écoles, nous n'avons pas imprimé un seul livre de lecture. Là est la cause de notre peu de succès"[9] (Taboulet 1955–56 p. 595). He compares the government schools with the greater success of the missions, which made available the Bible and religious stories in quốc ngũ' and thus encouraged both literacy and Catholicism.

Some governors tried to reconcile with the scholar and élite classes, for example Paul Bert, through the support of Chinese characters, holding public relations activities with scholars and offering incentives for teachers and students, but these incentives had little impact. The goal was still to have the whole of Indochina learn French and become French citizens. French citizenship was indeed granted to those Vietnamese who could learn French, and also to those who served in the military, but these were few. By 1906, only 254 people had been naturalised, and this figure included some ethnic Chinese and some non-French Europeans (Osborne 1969). Osborne also notes that Indian immigrants from the French colonies gained citizenship considerably more easily than Vietnamese (1973 p. 172).

Paul Bert was also instrumental in the establishment of the Alliance Française, created in 1883. This still-active worldwide organisation proved especially popular in Tonkin.[10] The minutes of the 1897 Annual General

[9] We have built schools, but we have not printed a single reader. There is the cause of our lack of success.

[10] and has recently been re-established in Hanoi, 1992

Meeting of the Hanoi section (RST 73 476) give 203 members — lists suggest that all of those in attendance were Frenchmen with prestigious occupations in the public and private sectors, although it is stated that there are twenty-seven Chinese members. The Alliance described itself as the "Association nationale pour la propagation de la langue française dans les colonies et à l'étranger,"[11] obviously very much linked to France and primarily concerned with the spread of the language. Then as now they ran classes (four levels with 193 students) but were also concerned with policy of the day. Projects they supported included the creation of French schools in southern China and orthography reform, although neither of these was successful.

The French administrators in the north especially were concerned with the influence of their more powerful Asian neighbours, China and Japan. There was a good deal of support for the establishment of schools in Yunnan, from the Alliance Française as seen above, but also from Hanoi's French residents. Governor-general Paul Beau had decided around 1904 to undertake this project, and letters of support were written to the Résidence supérieure au Tonkin, such as that by M. Soupillère of the École Pavie (RST 36 682). The political aim was to attract Chinese students to Hanoi to receive a French education instead of allowing them to go to Japan to study. Extending French influence in the area was acknowledged as being of great importance, and assimilation through the teaching of French was to be the means. The stereotypes of the power of the French language were as strong as ever:

> les theories mises en avant sur l'importance de la langue comme facteur de civilisation [...] sont tellement justes et reconnues telles qu'y toucher serait les diminuer[12] (RST 36 682).

[11] National Association for the propagation of the French language in the colonies and overseas

[12] The theories put forward on the importance of the language as a factor of civilisation [...] are just and recognised to the point that to mention them would be to diminish them.

Also persistent was the perceived necessity of replacing Chinese and Japanese thought with French ideas. The general goals as stated by Soupière were:

> 1o. Apprendre à ces jeunes gens le plus possible de notre langue.
> 2o. Leur faire perdre lentement leurs habitudes et leurs besoins qu'il faudra, au fur et à mesure remplacer par les nôtres[13] (ibid).

However, the French administration was having enough difficulty providing resources for the schools in Indochina, and costs were too great to allow further expansion.

Practice in the colonies fell short of the high ideals in France and progress was slow. French administration was very centralised and allowed little autonomy for the governors. Ennis (1936) cites the basic difference of culture as an impediment to co-operation: the French were trying to impose their industrial society on the Vietnamese agricultural one, and the French "fratriarchal-individualistic" set of ideals clashed with the traditional Vietnamese "patriarchal-collectivistic" society (p. 2). Part of the failure of assimilation is due to the fact that the French assumed that the Vietnamese, or other indigenous populations of the colonies, would welcome the enlightenment that the superior European civilisation offered. They assumed that the beliefs and customs of other nations were naturally backward, as demonstrated by the quotation in the previous paragraph, and did not think that the people might have their own detailed and sophisticated sets of values which they wished to retain.

While practical language teaching moved slowly, debate on the issue was quite lively and varied. Most colonial theorists agreed that French should be the language taught, but there were some vocal dissenters. One was Étienne Aymonier, director of the École Coloniale in Paris. In the debate over "sabirized versus standard French" (DeFrancis 1977, p. 135[14]) he proposed

[13] 1st. Teach these young people as much as possible of our language. 2nd. Make them slowly lose their customs and habits which must gradually be replaced by our own.

[14] Unfortunately I was not able to obtain a copy of the original 1890 pamphlet.

a kind of simplified French, with a selected list of basic, concrete words with little or no conjugation and standardised spelling, following similar proposals for Tunisia and Senegal. This would be taught to all Vietnamese at an elementary level, and those who went on to more advanced studies would then learn standard French. In this way, the Vietnamese language would die out and Vietnam would become entirely French-speaking. Some, such as Luro (1897; see also Taboulet 1955-1956), even suggested that if a small number of French were to live among the Vietnamese population, then it was only sensible that the French learn Vietnamese and not force French language and Romanised alphabet on the Vietnamese. Both of these extremes were rejected — most French refused to demote their language or have it transformed in any way.

Anti-assimilation

One of the most controversial figures in colonial theory was Gustave Le Bon. He published widely in a number of fields, especially psychology, and was one of the leading proponents of what these days might be called social Darwinism and scientific racism. Instead of arguing that native populations should be educated and raised to the standard of French civilisation, he rejected entirely the notion of assimilation. In his book *Les Lois psychologiques de l'évolution des Peuples* first published in 1894, he outlined his theories on race and character. Character, he argued, is the most important factor in determining and evaluating race. Character is determined only by the long history of evolution of the specific race and takes centuries to change — the influence of one's ancestors is significant and inescapable. Thus it would be of no use to educate a person of inferior race in the ways of a superior (i. e. Indoeuropean) race, because under the superficial education, the person remains of inferior character. Superior character apparently consists of a greater intellectual capacity, a spirit of logic and reason, and a superior moral quality. Le Bon attempted to back this up with unsubstantiated references to alleged biological proof of racial difference.

He proposes three strict conditions under which it is possible for races to merge to form a new race:

> La première est que les races soumises aux croisements ne soient pas trop inégales par leur nombre; la seconde est qu'elles ne diffèrent pas trop par leurs caractères; la troisième, qu'elles restent soumises pendant longtemps à des milieux identiques.[15] (Le Bon 1927 p. 58).

His argument extends to language — a language will reflect the character of a race, and cannot be properly transferred to another race:

> ... même fixée par l'écriture, une langue se transforme nécessairement en passant d'un peuple à un autre ... Les hasards des conquêtes, les intérêts de son commerce pourront sans doute amener un peuple à adopter une autre langue que sa langue maternelle mais, en peu de générations, la langue nouvelle sera entièrement transformée[16] (p. 87).

Even leaving aside the issue of naturally bilingual or multilingual communities, Le Bon's arguments are contradicted by the cases of pidgin and creole languages. Creole communities and their languages can evolve in a generation or two, forming a new people without the centuries of evolution Le Bon requires. The only time Le Bon mentions a creole community is to take Haiti as an example of a mixed-race colony in decay, comparing it to the success of the mixing of superior European races in the colonisation of the United States (p. 59). He does not seem to take into account the

[15] The first is that the races subjected to crossbreeding not be too unequal in number; the second is that they not differ too much in character; the third, that they remain subject to identical conditions for a long period.

[16] Even if fixed in writing, a language is necessarily transformed when passing from one people to another ... the chance happenings of conquest and trade interests can no doubt lead a people to adopt a language other than their mother tongue but, in a few generations, the new language will be entirely transformed.

different social and political situations involved in each case, nor does he mention the American slave trade or the creoles of America. A creole is not formed from learning a European language (for example) and then adapting it: adaptation commences from the very beginning of language contact.

Debate still goes on as to whether and to what extent culture and environment reflect language and to what extent language reflects a culture's outlook on the world, but it is now generally accepted that, there is no genetic foundation for racism, and that languages are not inherently placed on a scale of inferiority-superiority. Nevertheless, in his time, he was popular within and outside France and drew a number of followers, including Léopold de Saussure (a brother of Ferdinand), who in 1899 published *La Psychologie de la colonisation française dans ses rapports avec les sociétés indigènes*, which was also very popular. Léopold was also opposed to the assimilationists on the grounds of 'scientific' reasons of difference of race, and saw France's efforts at assimilation as doomed to failure. As Le Bon had proclaimed before him, Léopold warned that the inferior races could only learn superior European language in a superficial manner, and would be incapable of understanding the European mind, let alone becoming equal in thought. Thus it was to be expected that French would become altered in the colonies. Joseph (2000) examines Léopold de Saussure's theories in more detail; it is worthwhile to include a quotation:

> The thought of the French language undergoing deformation in the mouths of Southeast Asians is enough to fill cultural conservatives in France with horror even today. In portraying such deformation as only natural, Léopold is countering the idea that strong interventionism will make Indochina into a nation of perfect French speakers, with French hearts and minds. He warns anyone who may encounter colonial subject who appears to speak good French:
>
> > La langue d'une nation civilisée implantée chez les indigènes des colonies devient bientôt méconnaissable.

> Elle peut, sans doute, être parlée correctement par un certain nombre d'individus instruits, mais c'est là un fait dont on aurait tort de tirer une conclusion générale... [L]'indigéne qui parle une langue européenne ne reflète pas la mentalité de sa race, mais bien celle du milieu civilisé auquel il est obligé de se confromer par un effort d'attention et de mémoire. C'est là un phénomène d'imitation forcément très limité...[17] (L. de Saussure, 1899, 165–166).

(Joseph 2000 p. 35)

There were also a few anti-assimilation voices taking the opposite view, warning against the notion of the superiority of the white races and taking the rising power and sophistication of Asian nations, particularly Japan, as an example. Charles Régismanset (see Betts 1961 pp. 97–100) denounced imperialism, religion, 'natural progress' and the 'social Darwinism' style of justification of the superior peoples' right to dominate the inferior as poor excuses for conquering and exploiting new lands and resources. These ideas did not, however, gain nearly as much support as the views they attacked.

Association

It was becoming evident in the last decade of the nineteenth century that assimilation was not working as a practical policy. Resources were too limited to allow mass education in French, and resistance, active and passive, on the part of the majority of Vietnamese had prevented the French from settling in and getting on with the business of teaching them to be French citizens.

[17] The language of a civilised nation implanted in the colonies soon becomes unrecognisable. It can, no doubt, be spoken correctly by a certain number of educated individuals, but it would be a mistake to draw a general conclusion from this fact... The aboriginal who speaks a European language reflects, not the mentality of his race, but that of the civilised milieu to which he must conform by an effort of attention and memory. It is by necessity a very limited phenomenon of imitation... (trans. Joseph)

The French had not been able to assimilate the entire population, but they had started with the creation of a new élite, assimilating *collaborateurs* who replaced the old mandarin administration. This became the practical policy, while the ideal remained in the background. In theory everyone should be able to learn French in line with the ideal of equality of humanity and the superiority of the French language, but in practice French was accessible only to a privileged few. The contradiction of Revolutionary ideals with cultural superiority and élitism of language did not seem to concern the policy makers, though it contributed to the vagueness of the concepts and their implementation.

During this period of re-evaluation, the French had begun comparing themselves with the big powers of imperialism, particularly the Dutch and the British, and found their own policies wanting. The Spanish, while possessing a large empire, were not known for their good handling of the indigenous populations. However, the Dutch had left native administrative structures in place and settled in on top, managing to gain control of commercial interests with the least amount of input on their part and generally preserving order. The Dutch East Indies were the example of colonial economic success while French Indochina struggled. The British were more laissez-faire in policy and seen as vigourous and practical colonialists, and the French looked especially at India as an example of their individualistic style of conquering and governing while maintaining a certain distance from their subjects. By the International Congress of Colonial Sociology in 1900, assimilation was definitely out of favour.

The failure of assimilation, the more successful colonial powers and even the influence of the European supremists such as Le Bon led to the French taking up a new colonial policy — association. The term lacked precision, but it was agreed it would be more flexible and more practical than assimilation, which was now deemed harmful to the native populations. The *mission civilisatrice* was not abandoned — it was simply redefined in the light of current thought. Instead of the centralised governing from France and the

application of the same policies in all colonies, association would mean more autonomy, giving more power to the governors and colonial administrators and catering overall policy to individual populations and cases. This policy would be introduced slowly, allowing the natives to retain their traditions to some extent and progress towards civilisation at a more controlled pace, with help and guidance from the French. Another idea of the time was that of the colonial protectorate, a similar concept often taken as part of or instead of association, but again, the details of how it would work were ill-defined or non-existent. At the French Colonial Congresses of 1905–1907, association had become the accepted policy. However, anyone who suggested that Indochina would, even in the distant future, become self-sufficient and independent of France was severely criticised by their peers.

Association still rested upon the ideals of bringing French civilisation to less developed nations, and was not so much a new theory as a reworking of the *mission civilisatrice* in an attempt to make it more practicable. Practical concerns such as economics played an important role as well. Part of the imperial drive was based on a push for commodities and export markets, and under association, this would bring benefits to the native populations, both economic and civilising. However, it was also used as justification for plantations and slave labour. The tendency remained in practical application for the French to continue as they has done under assimilation anyway — it seemed perhaps easier to maintain current structures and French ways rather than learn Vietnamese ways or improve efficiency as the new 'simple, flexible' association promised.

3.3.3 Colonial policy in the early twentieth century

Any good intentions on the part of the French for the implementation of association were put to one side when a new rise in Vietnamese nationalism confronted them. The cause of this new interest in self-determination was Japan's success in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. The Vietnamese nationalists took hope from the demonstration that an Asian nation could

defeat a supposedly superior European power and began new campaign to free themselves from the French. Many Vietnamese went to Japan to study rather than to France[18]. However, at the same time as many Vietnamese were wanting to reclaim their national identity, the French language policies were having an effect. The new French education system

> disseminated a new writing system, so that what had once been the sole preserve of the small Catholic enclaves became quite genuinely the national writing of Viet Nam; and it instilled a limited, but surprisingly widespread knowledge of French" (Osborne 1969 p. 161).

Quốc ngũ' was made compulsory teaching in 1906 (Hoàng Ngọc Thành 1973).

However, the statistics for how many people were attending school, and how many were learning quốc ngũ' or French, are hard to calculate. A study by Abel Lahille (DeFrancis 1977) shows 30 000 students in public schools in Indochina for the period 1885–1890. Osborne's figures for 1904, taken from an official report (1969 p. 326), show an attendance of just under 30 000, including about 9 500 in Catholic schools. These figures are for just Cochinchina, not the whole of Indochina, but as Cochinchina was the area of most widespread French education, if both sets of statistics are accurate or comparable, they show little progress for the fifteen year period. Yet another set of statistics, from Hoàng Ngọc Thành (1973, taken from Chesneaux 1955), gives a figure of just 10 000 for public schools in Vietnam in 1909, 46 000 in 1913 and 72 000 by 1924. Again, it seems that the numbers are either inaccurate or measuring different quantities and are not comparable.

In the absence of sufficient resources to teach French widely, the administration also supported and redesigned the indigenous education system for the provinces. This involved setting a curriculum and holding exams, concentrating on the teaching of quốc ngũ', seen as vital to improving the rate and diffusion of learning and to the introduction of Western thought. A

[18] see Vũ Đú'c Bằng 1973 for more on Japan's influence

report on the reform of the education system in Tonkin between 1906 and 1910 (RST 73 568) is very positive about the beginnings made, although it acknowledges some early setbacks such as at first overextending the limited resources, lack of textbooks and lack of classes past primary level. The reforms, it says, are dealing with these issues, with textbooks in development and the positive attitude of the students showing promise. It demonstrates a more associationist attitude, teaching in Vietnamese, desiring minimal interference on the village level and preferring local teachers, though French-trained. In 1910 there were 8864 primary students in eighteen provinces, 4407 of whom passed the exam. This was deemed encouraging for the new reforms, showing a willingness on the part of the population to learn. The French influence on Vietnamese culture and language was viewed as having visible desirable effects:

> En effet, cette langue dont le developpement semblait depuis longtemps arrêté par suite de l'indifférence qui lui temoignaient les lettrés, paraît entrer actuellement dans une période de rénovation et est sans doute appelée à se développer rapidement[19] (RST 73 568 p. 9).

Nevertheless, with the gradual increase in French education, by 1910 a class of French-speaking Vietnamese was emerging as the new élite. Nationalist leaders also recognised the importance of knowing the language of the colonial power, so many learnt the French language and the patterns of French argument. For putting their case to their people via journals and pamphlets, they chose quốc ngũ' because it had the potential to reach a wider audience. Quốc ngũ' was becoming more accepted in publishing and translation and transcription. In 1907, a group of scholars set up the Tonkin Free School to teach quốc ngũ', Chinese and French along modern lines and to publish materials for teaching and general distribution. The

[19] In effect, this language, whose development has for some time seemed stalled by the indifference of the intellectuals, now appears to be entering a period of renewal and is no doubt about to undergo rapid development.

schools established by the French were not as successful, and worried that a climate of nationalist intellectualism would weaken their influence, the government shut down the Free School and France again began a crackdown on anti-colonialism. However, although it only operated for about a year, the Tonkin Free School inspired a collective intellectual movement against the colonial regime which became more influential than the school itself (see e. g. DeFrancis 1977 pp. 164–171; Vũ Đú'c Bằng 1973).

These initiatives demonstrated the choice of Vietnamese to take up the written language which the French encouraged, but this did not necessarily reinforce the power of the French. To dissenters, quốc ngũ' became a new tool of language identity, and eventually it enabled the Vietnamese to empower their own language over that of France. However, learning French was also a means of empowerment and identification. Anti-colonial intellectuals could use it to meet the French in their own medium and on an equal level of linguistic power, while *collaborateurs* identified with the French and used their language to gain more prestige within the French society.

Association might have been the colonial ideal, but in practice ideals were mostly overshadowed by colonial greed. France had little need for space to settle colonists as it had sufficient area within its borders for its static population, which in any case demonstrated no inclination to leave the native soil. Nor was there a need for deportation and penal colonies on the scale of the British, so the only other practical concern it had for its overseas possessions was trade. Traders were less interested in the well-being of the natives and more concerned with profit, so numbers of Vietnamese were drawn into the plantation society, and even taken to other French colonies as a labour force, notably New Caledonia, where they maintain a presence in the community today.[20] Sometimes this was described as the betterment

[20] From 1891–1939 thousands of Vietnamese left the overcrowded northern provinces Tonkin and were taken to New Caledonia as contract workers (Chân Dang), where they may have had some influence on the local varieties of French. In the 1950s more Vietnamese arrived as immigrants, though a wave of repatriation to Vietnam occurred in the early 1960s (Vanmai 1991).

of the natives combined with useful economic production; sometimes it was simply forced labour.

The other main method of harnessing this abundant cheap labour and keeping the natives out of trouble was to put them in the army, based on the model of the *tirailleurs sénégalais*. The ideal was that the doctrine of association would reinforce co-operation and the native role in administration such that "the natives would soon be convinced of the value of the French occupation" (Betts 1961 p. 162). A resolution was passed at the Colonial congress of 1906 to the effect that the indigenous populations be used as much as possible in the constitution of the colonial military (ibid p. 156). Including the natives in the military and making them responsible for their own defence would make them willing fighters. Political reality was that the French felt that a native military force guaranteed more security under a perceived threat of a war between colonial powers — perhaps a foreshadowing World War I — and the influence of China and Japan — further aftereffects of the Russo-Japanese war.

Even though French language policies were at last having a noticeable effect, there was still debate on the issue. Some, such as Abel Lahille were still looking to Aymonier, advocating a return to assimilation and the teaching of a reduced form of French. On the opposite side of the argument was Albert Schreiner, who was Alsatian and therefore knew about language oppression (DeFrancis pp. 172–173). He believed in the colonial ideal and the *mission civilisatrice*, and was in favour of the Vietnamese retaining their own language. He did consider the monosyllabic Vietnamese language to be inferior, but was confident that it could be improved and modernised with language planning.

Another consequence of the rise of French was the decline of Chinese. Chinese was not encouraged by the French, and despite the fact that some traditionalists and nationalists preferred to use it as a symbol of their anti-French campaign, without the traditional education system to support it either (France ended the examination system in Tonkin in 1915 and Annam

in 1919), it was falling into general disuse. No new teachers were being trained, very few of the younger generations were being taught, and the older generations who had learned it were becoming too old to teach and were dying out. It was still respected by the majority of Vietnamese, but most could not understand it. The decline in Chinese was unsurprisingly accompanied by a decline in nôm. This was recognised as a problem by a few, including Governor Paul Beau (1902–1908), because many important documents, not to mention great quantities of literature, would be lost if no-one could understand the script. Running against the general trend of the French to allow or even foster the decline of characters, Beau established the University of Hanoi in an attempt to halt or at least cope with the process but it was closed by his less liberal successor, Antoni Klobukowski, in 1908. Characters, both Chinese and Vietnamese, were abolished in 1918.

Association continued to fail to be employed, as France felt it had to keep control over its colony in the face of Vietnamese nationalism, a perceived Chinese influence and then the advent of World War I. French repression tactics were stepped up to counteract Germany, which was aiding the anti-French cause in Vietnam through supply of materials to the Vietnamese nationalists in an attempt to gain influence beyond the trenches of Europe. Immediately after the War, Vietnamese protest was relatively low, but gradually built up again. Indochinese recruits returned from the War with a new perspective on European ways, the French freed a number of imprisoned intellectuals as a concession of the current socialist government and the petit-bourgeoisie was growing as a class, with generally anti-colonial leanings. Also at this time, Hồ Chí Minh was becoming active in nationalist causes.

The French were still supported by a small but loyal class of collaborators who, out of genuine belief in the benefits for their country or out of personal gain, counteracted the nationalist forces and promoted the use of French and of quốc ngũ'. The resistance also took up quốc ngũ' as the most efficient way of reaching the largest possible audience. The issues of its inconsistencies and of printing diacritics continued to pose some difficulty, but became

less problematic as authors established their own convention and specialised typeface became available. Both ways, the Romanised script was making progress in its acceptance. This is reflected in the quantity of published material, as illustrated by DeFrancis (1977 p. 217). The number of quốc ngũ' journals published up to the end of World War I amounted to a total of less than twenty-five. In 1925 there were around thirty-five; in 1930 around seventy-five. The total number of journals published in Indochina under the French was 490. DeFrancis points out, however, that the readership was not necessarily widespread, and the figure must still be compared with the 780 French-language journals published in the colonial era. The comparison shows the obvious concentration of the French on spreading their own language at the expense of the language of the vast majority of the population. Nevertheless, the number of quốc ngũ' publications proves that the writing system was the medium of choice for Vietnamese writers (there were very few publications in nôm or Chinese) and that the public was beginning to take it up, as a pro-colonialist innovation provided by the French, but largely as a way of expressing Vietnamese nationalism in a modern way, reducing both Chinese and French influence.

The development of the novel in quốc ngũ' also signalled its acceptance. Hoàng Ngọc Thành (1973) gives an overview of the growth of literature in quốc ngũ'. Translations of Chinese and French literature into quốc ngũ' had proved popular, also demonstrating the suitability of the medium for literary purposes, so Vietnamese writers were encouraged to provide their own work, filling a need for literature by and for the Vietnamese. Short stories were published in journals or in collections, at first retaining much of the traditional Confucianist morality, but gradually taking in some western influences, and reflecting more of the contemporary issues in Vietnam. The first novels were published from 1925, and from the 1930s production rose significantly so that by 1945, four to five hundred works had been published (DeFrancis 1977 p. 217). Some authors were very enthusiastic about the significance of this rise in quốc ngũ', for example Hoàng Ngọc Thành:

> By the 1920s quốc ngũ' had indeed superseded Chinese characters and chu nôm. Even French was taught in schools through the medium of quốc ngũ'... All literary works were produced in quốc ngũ'; writers no longer produced in two languages, one for the educated and one for the common people, as in the past. The unity of language and literary production for the whole country and the whole population was realized (1973 p. 231).

While quốc ngũ' had made significant progress towards becoming the national orthography, education and particularly literacy levels, while on the increase from the levels at the time of colonisation, did not yet account for a majority of the population. It was really only the new Vietnamese élite which received any comprehensive education. Most Vietnamese left school early, and French was only taught from the fourth grade onwards. DeFrancis' figures (1977 p. 218) are that only 1–2% of the population went to school, and that of those, only 1% made it to secondary school. Estimates for literacy rates vary from 5% to 20%. On the eve of World War II, there were only 500 French teachers of French in schools in Indochina, compared with 12 000 local teachers. In the urban French schools, 30% of students were from the local upper class, studying to become the next élite. According to the same source, there were an estimated 50 000 French in Indochina and 930 000 bilingual Indochinese (Picoche and Marchello-Nizia 1991 pp. 97–98).

French was still the preferred language of the government, and was also gaining strength as the prestige language of *collaborateur* intellectuals and administrators. In Cochinchina especially, some pro-French Vietnamese spoke only French. The French had not succeeded in assimilating the population, but they had created an élite of supporters who were also convinced that the French language was the route to higher civilisation, or at least a secure and well-paid job. The underlying *mission civilisatrice* was very much present as an ideology, even though colonial practice evolved little. Despite a shift in policy from assimilation to association, French colonialism did not become more flexible or considerate of indigenous ways. French

governors or administrators who initiated more enlightened reforms faced an uphill battle against the centralised colonial ministry in France. Language remained an important part of the colonial effort, both at the ideological level and in practical teaching. However, the practice of propagating French only among the élites led to interesting language choices and relationships. Nationalists as well as *collaborateurs* used it, both gaining prestige from it — it was the domain of power an intellectualism. On the other hand, Tây Bồi, used out of immediate necessity by the lower classes, had virtually no status at all, while Vietnamese remained the language of the majority, used by pro- and anti-French, intellectuals and the peasantry, for everyday and literary purposes. The anti-colonial forces made use of their education, and as World War II progressed, more nationalist literature (mostly in quốc ngũ') was distributed and the Communist movement grew.

3.4 The end of the colonial era and the beginning of the Cold War

Hồ Chí Minh began the guerilla war in 1940, taking advantage of France's troubles in Europe, and helped found the Viet Minh in 1941. At the same time, Japan was conquering South East Asia, and the French in Vietnam became cut off from their home country. Japan was vastly superior in military power to the French forces in Asia, but very little warfare took place in Vietnam as such, the Japanese preferring to leave the French administration in charge and therefore reduce the necessity of installing their own troops and government. In effect, the French were in the same situation of collaboration in Vietnam with Japan as in Europe with Germany. The situation was favourable for Japan until it tried to install a puppet Vietnamese government in place of the French in March 1945, whereupon the system collapsed due to the inexperience of the new administration (Tru'o'ng Bủ'u Lâm 1973). Japan's policy did mean that the French were only out of administration for a few months, in which time Japan's campaign fell apart with

the end of the war, and Hồ Chí Minh then declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Now trying to pull itself together after the defeat of Hitler's Germany, France tried to reclaim its colonial territory by force, culminating in resounding defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and the division of Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel. With the Cold War well underway, America stepped in to replace France.

Hồ Chí Minh and his forces were able to repel the French and eventually the Americans because of the implementation of nationwide reforms of communications and infrastructure. The refusal of the Vietnamese to believe in the 'inferiority complex' about their own 'static' culture and 'backward, monosyllabic' language which some elements of French colonial thought projected onto them aided them to establish firm notions of nationalism and identity on which to construct the new Vietnam. Hồ Chí Minh began literacy campaigns almost immediately after his declaration of independence in 1945. It was done in quốc ngũ', which, although an invention imposed on them by Europeans, was indeed becoming the 'national language' preferred over the rapidly declining nôm, and it was comparatively quick and easy to teach and publish. These campaigns were highly successful, and by 1968, illiteracy was proclaimed to have been 'eradicated,' and probably nearly was (DeFrancis 1977 p. 240). Along with the rise in literacy came a rise in education levels, a rise in publication and hence more discussion on language matters.

By this stage, Chinese was used only for ceremonial purposes, such as Buddhist religious literature, festivals and funerals and was largely decorative. The new government was sensitive to the fact that the loss of Chinese and nôm meant the loss of a large proportion of written heritage and enlisted the help of scholars to transcribe the old works which had not already made the transition. With the rise in literacy, this literature was now available to a great proportion of the population.

The French language was still influential, especially amongst southern academics who still viewed it as the language of science and culture, but

the Party declared Vietnamese to be the only language of education, in spite of the as yet unresolved difficulties with necessary technical terms. There were in fact a number of issues to be dealt with if Vietnamese was to become a national language which could be used in all cultural, educational and scientific fields. Literacy was a big step, and the campaigns raised the question of the suitability of the orthography of quốc ngũ'. Further proposals were made to resolve inconsistencies within the phonological representation and spelling, and to simplify or eliminate the diacritics so as to simplify the printing and publication processes, but again these reforms failed to take hold and the system remains largely the same as it was originally developed. The drive to instill literacy with efficiency took priority over a lengthy redesigning process.

One consequence of having a national written form of the language was that there was also seen to be a necessity for a single national dialect. Regional differences in Vietnamese dialect were not great, and not nearly to the point of unintelligibility, but the divisions created by French and then American occupation had contributed somewhat to their maintenance. The nationalist element felt that any dialectal divergences from the standard orthography were now wrong and should be corrected. On the other hand, minority languages such as those of the mountain tribes were given some status and writing systems based on quốc ngũ' were devised for them (Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1979).

So that Vietnamese could be used for all purposes, it needed to incorporate new terms for modern scientific practices. There were a number of possibilities for modernising the language. Historically, most borrowing had been from Chinese. These borrowings were generally for political, religious or philosophical abstract terms, for such institutions and concepts as the Chinese had brought with them. They had largely been Vietnamised without unduly changing the language. Chinese was succeeding in modernising itself, so it seemed only logical to look to their example when considering options for Vietnamese. It would be possible to borrow Western scientific

terms from Chinese, but that might result in a borrowing of a borrowing, as Chinese based a lot of its new words on English. In other words, they could end up with a phonetic translation[21] of a Chinese word that was itself a phonetic translation from English, which would seem ridiculous. It would be better to borrow the English word directly, or considering the Vietnamese situation, a French one. There had already been some French borrowing in scientific terms, especially medicine, and other aspects of culture that the French brought, such as their form of government and also cuisine. The difficulty with phonetic translation is that the resulting term produces unfamiliar, perhaps meaningless, speech sounds and is not easily incorporated into everyday language. While this may be acceptable for highly specialised technical terms, it is not really desirable for words which are going to be used regularly by most of the population. However, the Chinese also constructed their own words from existing characters, linking them together to create new terms which could be easily understood by most speakers. This was the favoured option of the Vietnamese too — to make their own new words from their own language. This might result in longish terms of multiple syllables, but well-known ones would be contracted through high public usage. Some Chinese terms could still be borrowed if the Vietnamese was not precise enough, but phonetic translation was to be avoided.

A German article by Harald Haarmann (1986) looks at the influence that French and other languages have had on Vietnamese in recent times. Haarmann concentrates on the issue of loanwords from French, which have been absorbed into Vietnamese in spite of the preferred policy of creating new terms from existing Vietnamese elements. He notes that this process has occurred in other Asian languages, using the comparisons of English loanwords in Japanese and Spanish in Tagalog. He gives examples according to specific domain, which indicates which areas of the language needed modernisation or adaptation to aspects of Western culture. From the French, these include technology — *phim*, 'film;' *bê tông*, 'concrete' (French *béton*);

[21] Phonetic translation: loanwords; a representation of a foreign word in (in this case) Vietnamese speech sounds and orthography; examples are given in the following paragraph.

transport — *ga*, 'train station' (Fr. *gare*); *ô tô buýt*, 'bus' (Fr. *autobus*); finance — *bang*, 'bank' (Fr. *banque*); *séc*, 'cheque;' units of measurement — *lít*, 'litre,' *ki lô mét* 'kilometre;' cuisine — *bo'*, 'butter' (Fr. *beurre*); *cà phê*, 'coffee' (Fr. *café*); *giam bong*,'ham' (Fr. *jambon*), and so on.

Not just the vocabulary of Vietnamese but also the style of using it came under discussion. In the past, written forms of Vietnamese had emulated the language of the culture which had imposed the writing system, so that writing Chinese or nôm characters was done in a long, flowing but complicated Chinese style, while the French had encouraged the concise sentence-based style used in quốc ngũ'. Neither of these was thought to truly reflect the Vietnamese language, and a need was felt to develop a proper Vietnamese style closer to spoken Vietnamese. Hồ Chí Minh practised what he preached in this respect, combining the best aspects of traditional Chinese harmony of language with the clear, direct speech favoured by Europeans. His style formed the basis of modern Vietnamese style, as he was and remains a much respected and emulated figure (Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1979).

With France no longer the dominant exterior force in Vietnam, new power relations took its place. As a communist nation, North Vietnam now willingly looked to the Soviet Union as a trading partner and ally against the American-supported South. Those who were able went to the USSR to study and Russian was taught so that revolutionary literature could be read in the original, and so that they could learn from Soviet technical expertise. The Americans also brought their English with them to some extent. French was no longer being learnt by the younger generations to nearly its former extent, and it was excluded from the technical domain in exclusive favour of Vietnamese. This was generally accepted as the right and necessary thing to do, but was not without its problems and difficulties. The élite of the South was reluctant to abandon the prestige of speaking French, and keeping French for Western concepts seemed more practical to some, including many Western observers, for example:

To me, it had seemed a clumsy and (though I did not say so)

> chauvinistic proceeding to create a medical terminology in a minority language that did not have the words for it, especially when a majority language — French — was already implanted in the country (McCarthy 1968, pp. 106–107).

In the field of medicine, where the French had indeed had an effect and had greatly improved services and education, Vietnamese doctors had been trained in French terminology and they were now forced to re-learn it. Once the terminology had been developed, however, it was faster to train more new doctors, as they did not have to learn French first, and it was far easier to communicate with non-French-speaking Vietnamese about treatments and general health.

3.5 From reunification to the end of the Cold War

Even after American troops withdrew in 1975, it took some time for Hồ Chí Minh's successors to achieve reunification (Figure 3). The enforced division of the country had created a tightly controlled North and a more Westernised South which had to be brought under Communist Party government, and both had to recover from long years of war. The Communist Party began its program by removing as much Western influence as possible, renaming Saigon as Ho Chi Minh City in honour of their leader who had not lived to see the end of the war, and replacing the French street names with Vietnamese ones (see Appendix C). France had in fact launched a new effort to re-establish at least cultural ties with Vietnam in 1973, but little was achieved before reunification, after which the teaching of French was no longer a priority, or indeed discouraged (Daniel 1992).

There were fears, in the Cold War mentality, that in losing their knowledge of French and not learning English either, the Vietnamese would fall out of communication with the Western world, its science and literature. Vietnam did, however, have contact with China and the Soviet Union. While

it practised its own version of Communism to a large extent, the two great Communist superpowers provided models and a trading bloc for the newly reunified country, which was important considering the American trade and relations embargo and lack of support and influence in the United Nations. Vietnam's relationship with China continued along its historic pattern of, as Pomonti and Tertrais (1994) put it, 'menace et modèle:' attempting to balance the emulation of the finer points of Chinese civilisation and politics with the desire for independence and a separate Vietnamese identity. Relations sometimes became strained, as in 1978 when, accusing Vietnam of persecuting the Chinese minority, China withdrew aid to its southern neighbour. China also supported the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, to which Vietnam responded by signing a treaty with Moscow. Through the 1980s, Vietnam tried to rid itself of Chinese contact. Russian was favoured over the Chinese language and the use of characters was eliminated. Nevertheless, some policies, such as economic plans, were still based on Chinese models (Pomonti and Tertrais 1994). An unlikely rapprochement was achieved in 1989, at the time when China was being almost universally condemned for the Tian An Men massacre, and relations were normalised in 1991. It is not, however, a perfectly friendly relationship — territorial disputes over the islands of the South China Sea are ongoing.

The return to closer ties with China was perhaps a result of the fading power of Communism in Europe. Vietnam had its own version of Gorbatchev's glastnost and perestroika. Around 1986, it introduced a policy of *doi moi* — renewal. However, as the former Communist bloc of Eastern Europe split up and reformed to try capitalism and democracy, Vietnam remained communist. China showed no signs of relaxing its regime, so the rapprochement of the two neighbours was a search for and a showing of communist solidarity. Doi moi was however having an effect on Vietnam. The aim of the policy was to re-invent Communism for the modern post-Cold War era. This meant reforms of the economic system and the Communist Party itself, more freedom of the press, and an opening up of relations with the West. This made it considerably easier for emigrants — Viêt Kiêu, or

overseas Vietnamese — to return to the country to visit relatives or stay permanently, and reciprocally for Vietnamese with family overseas. It also allowed for more business and educational or cultural links with Western nations. The United States did not lift their trade and diplomatic embargo until 1994, discouraging some of its allies from establishing links, but France, which in fact never cut its official ties with Vietnam, took the opportunity as soon as it could.

3.6 Summary

It can be seen that French as well as Chinese has had a material and lasting effect on the Vietnamese language in terms of vocabulary. France was dominant in the early stages of the modernisation of the language and although Vietnam has taken a nationalistic approach to continuing this process, it has not discarded the useful features provided by outside influences. Since the French established much of the infrastructure still used today such as in the domains of law, medicine and engineering, it should not be unexpected that the French language has influenced Vietnamese conceptions of these institutions.

France did succeed in making its language that of power and prestige in Vietnam during the time of its occupation. Contrary to ideals of bringing civilisation and equality to its colonies via the *mission civilisatrice* and the French language, it was in practice a Vietnamese élite which had access to French and its power. The practical concerns of running a colony did not fit with the ideals, but the ideals were never discarded as outdated or naïve — they were not seen to have failed. The French still believed it was beneficial to spread French and many Vietnamese saw the applications as well, from modernisation of the Vietnamese language to access to literature and the international community. However, there were unintended effects of French policies, including the adoption of the French language and its 'Revolutionary traditions' by nationalists to use in their own cause, and

the formation of Tây Bồi, the sort of French of which advocates of French language purity and superiority particularly disapproved.

Having the concrete evidence outlined above, subsequent chapters will present analysis of the attitudes towards French influence on the Vietnamese language ecology and the perceived or actual links between the two. Firstly, in the following chapter the particular case of Tây Bồi will be studied, both as an academic topic and in terms of more popular accounts.

Chapter 4

Tây Bồi

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at existing material on Tây Bồi, beginning with a survey of the linguistic studies of the language and then considering some other sources, such as travel writing and literature, in which the language is mentioned. Some early accounts of language contact will also be studied in order to find any clues to the origins of Tây Bồi. This is intended as a comprehensive account of published works specifically on Tây Bồi demonstrating the extent of scholarly investigation on the topic, complemented with other kinds of non-linguistic sources. A proportion of the material presented is unpublished, as a sample of other such sources which might yet be found.

The pidgin itself began in the 1860s around Saigon, as the French were establishing their colony. Because Tây Bồi was used almost exclusively between high-status French and low-status Vietnamese, that is, it did not become useful to the larger Indochinese population, it ceased to be useful when the French left the region, giving it an approximate lifespan of a hundred years. It is generally considered to be extinct, although traces of it have been found by researchers since 1975, and evidence presented in Chapter 6 suggests that its speakers still exist and may use it under certain circum-

stances.

There are very few linguistic sources of any kind, something which is interesting in itself. It shows that the language was not acknowledged or held in any sort of regard, and in particular that the French did not see it as worth remarking upon — none of the authors is French (only Schuchardt's 'research assistant,' Bos, was French; see section 4.2.1). Only in travel narratives and colonial accounts do French writers even mention it (see section 4.3). The reasons for this go back to the underlying ideology of the French language and the *mission civilisatrice* as outlined in section 2.4. The colonial ideal was to bring the French language to less advanced cultures and enlighten them with its clarity, logic and beauty. All Vietnamese would speak French so as to become full French citizens. As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, colonial practice fell far short of this and while it remained a distant ideal to strive for, policy was more directed towards educating the small numbers within the reach of resources. They were, however, educated as if they were French, creating a small class of 'quality' French speakers. It was inadmissible that anyone should speak a 'corrupted' version of French — the only possible French was the 'pure' standard variety. Those Vietnamese outside the élite but who worked with the French had no access to the French education system, so they were obliged to use Tây Bồi. The development of such a pidgin was evidence of a failure in the colonial education policy, so the French preferred to consciously or unconsciously ignore or dismiss it. Pride in the French language and the maintenance of its linguistic 'purity' is something which is still very much an issue for the French today, and alternative views of French outside France is perhaps only now being addressed with the growth and expansion of the concept of Francophonie (see Chapter 5).

The only significant work written during the French colonial period, i. e. while the pidgin was at its most active, was Schuchardt's (see 4.2.1). This article is something of an exception, written as early as 1888 and addressing a topic which was largely overlooked and not considered seriously in linguistics

at that time. By the time others began taking an interest in pidgins and creoles, and the language situation in Vietnam, Tây Bồi had already served its period of greatest utility and most widespread use. It was also difficult to gain access to the country once the colonial era ended, as the Vietnam War with America began, followed from 1975 by the implementation of strict entry policies under the communist government. A number of the western sources are therefore based on information gathered while the authors were on duty as military personnel, journalists and the like.

Once in the country and having commenced investigation, the researcher would encounter many other difficulties. As French was officially discouraged under communism, it was difficult to get subjects to speak the standard language, let alone non-standard varieties. Those who were French collaborators, or French themselves, were often unaware of or would not admit to the existence of a low-prestige pidgin. It was therefore awkward to simply ask anyone for examples of Tây Bồi. Those that did speak it often thought they were speaking standard French, as the pidgin had been their only exposure to French of any kind. Later studies also had to contend with the gradual decline of the language, as there were fewer occasions for its use and no new learners. The researcher had to rely on the memories of the older generation, especially as there are almost no written records of the language.

4.2 Linguistic studies

4.2.1 Schuchardt and Bos

The first study of Tây Bồi was published by Austrian creolist Hugo Schuchardt in 1888. Schuchardt described the language as a 'jargon' spoken between the French colonials and the Vietnamese with whom they had regular contact, such as soldiers, police, those in low ranked administrative positions with no formal education in French, and household servants. He points to other pidgin languages, such as Mauritian French, Chinese Pid-

gin English and Portuguese pidgin as influences and comparisons, and trade and missionary work through the region as reasons for language contact and distribution. Schuchardt gives twenty-five lines of Tây Bồi, short sentences only, followed by some analysis, including noting that the word order follows the Vietnamese, the simplification of some terms and the wider range of meanings they carry, such as *il y en a* ('there is/are (some)') to *yona*, and the absence of the copula. The examples mostly give vocabulary of French origin, with a few words of Vietnamese and some that might be of Chinese Pidgin English or other pidgin origin, for example *boy*, *soum-soum* (rice-spirits). There are other examples of reduplication as well, such as *petit petit* (a little) and *tout tout* (all, everything).

Schuchardt's is one of very few early linguistic studies of a pidgin or creole language which does not dismiss it as a badly-learned inferior version of a major European language. His information is unfortunately not extensive. The small quantity of data were collected from four Frenchmen in administrative or educational positions, and "P. J. B. Triön-Vin-Ky" — Tru'o'ng Vĩnh Ký, the Vietnamese scholar, who also spoke and wrote excellent standard French. It is unclear whether these informants were regular users of Tây Bồi or whether they just heard it used. Schuchardt's sample therefore does not seem to include any non-French speaking Vietnamese of the sort who formed a large body of the speakers of Tây Bồi.

Schuchardt also speculates of the future of Tây Bồi, examining whether it could become a creole. His main doubts centre around whether French education would come to dominate:

> If the process of Gallicization should advance steadily (there were in 1884 twenty-five French and 527 Annamite public schools), a patois might not be able to consolidate. But its consolidation might well happen if the Gallicization once came to a standstill, and if at the same time there were a livelier intercourse between the French and the truly Gallicized Annamites on the one hand and the rest of the native population on the other (Schuchardt

1888 p. 230, trans. Reinecke 1937).

Tây Bồi did not creolise, but this probably had little to do with the expansion of French teaching. It may indeed have done so if, as Schuchardt suggests, a wider proportion of the Vietnamese population were in contact with French speakers, but the points of contact remained fairly limited. However, Schuchardt envisaged the French holding their colony indefinitely, with standard French possibly being so widespread as to remove the need for a pidgin. By the time the colonial era ended, French had by no means reached this stage, but neither had the pidgin expanded its role enough to develop further. The language of most utility for the Vietnamese continued to be Vietnamese.

Schuchardt was continually on the lookout for pidgins to study, and was aided by, among others, Alphonse Bos, who made a number of voyages to Asia and the Pacific and wrote to Schuchardt of his observations of any pidgins which he came across. He outlines a voyage through the Middle East and India to China, which he calls his "exploration baragouino-philologique"[1] (August 18 1882), noting the varieties of language spoken at each of his brief stops. Pidgins are, he implies, plentiful and springing up "comme des champignons" ('like mushrooms') (May 15 1882) wherever European contact is made. He indicates that Lingua Franca was still spoken in parts of the Middle East, that "indo-Portuguese" was still spoken in India although becoming more anglicised, that a Dutch creole was spoken in Batavia (although he didn't stop there), and that in China, the Portuguese influence in pidgin languages was being replaced by English, although it still held out in Macao. He also visited the colonies of the Indian Ocean, but found research very difficult as the creoles were held in such low esteem (January 5 1883).

[1] "baragouin:" from the Bréton words *bara*, 'bread' and *gwin*, 'wine,' used by travelling Brétons when stopping at an inn. Defined in *Le Nouveau Petit Robert* as: "Langage incorrect et inintelligible, et par extension, langue que l'on ne comprend pas et qui paraît barbare" (incorrect and unintelligible language, and by extension, an incomprehensible language which appears barbarous) (Dictionnaires Le Robert, Paris, 1993, p. 193), i. e. another indication of the low status and inferiority attributed to minority and contact languages.

Sources such as this could prove valuable in further research on the spread of pidgins, especially French ones, though Asia and the Pacific.

Bos himself is not very complimentary towards the "annamite" language, saying it lacks inflection or conjugation, like creoles, which he also deems primitive (ibid). Despite his intentions, he was unable to stop for long in Saigon, and gives no information regarding any possible relexification of pidgin Portuguese in Vietnam of the sort he was discovering in India and China. Bos mentions trying to contact a number of potential sources for Schuchardt, including some of the Frenchmen Schuchardt later spoke with and Tru'o'ng Vĩnh Ký, who is described as "un Annamite fort instruit, qui parle 8 langues, entre autres le Français mieux qu'un Français [...] il est directeur du Collège à Saïgon"[2] (August 18 1882). Bos apparently left a questionnaire for Ky to fill, but says that he evidently failed to understand what was being asked of him, using familiar (as opposed to literary) Vietnamese rather than a pidgin. A Frenchman, M. Boussion, councillor on the court of appeal, also told Bos that there was no pidgin French in Saigon, although Bos then records an example:

> un petit batelier annamite est venu nous offrir sa barque, en disant: *moa primié*, ce qui ne me semble pas de l'annamite, quelque familier qu'on le suppose, mais bien de ce baragouin franco-annamite qui sert de moyen de communication entre les Annamites et les Français[3] (January 5 1883).

Bos assures himself that the pidgin does exist although he encounters little of it himself, leaving Schuchardt to draw his own conclusions based on the materials he received by correspondence. Nevertheless, he writes of the pidgin French there as an interesting case.

[2] A well-educated Annamite, who speaks eight languages, among others French better than a Frenchman ... he is director of the College at Saigon.

[3] A little Annamite boatman came and offered us his craft, saying: *me first*, which does not seem to be Annamite, however familiar it might be, but indeed this Franco-Annamite jargon which serves as a means of communication between the Annamites and the French.

> Je crois en effet qu'un pidgin Français se forme à Saïgon; il ressemble beaucoup pour le moment au Créole des colonies, parce que les Soldats, venant ordinairement des Colonies, croient mieux se faire comprendre en disant par ex: *toi donné moi piti moçeau dileau* que: *donne-moi un peu d'eau.* Cette tendance de baragouiner est générale; on se contente d'énoncer le mot principal, en élaguant tous les accessoires[4] (August 18 1882).

This very brief example does suggest that Tây Bồi had some influence from other French creoles, or perhaps the sort of 'foreigner talk' of French soldiers applying the same reduced forms in Saigon as they had in the Indian Ocean colonies or elsewhere. Bos's work, although limited, also stands out as an exception to the general tendency of the time to ignore or deny the existence of pidgins, as he notes himself.

4.2.2 Stageberg

Few references can be found to Tây Bồi, and especially in the era when it was still widely spoken, the references are very brief. Norman C. Stageberg, an American academic, published a short article in 1956, based on data collected during World War II. He uses two European informants, but also some Vietnamese who spoke the pidgin but not standard French. He gives an overview of the language as follows:

> At the colorful seaport of Haiphong, French Indo-China, Pidgin French is the lingua franca between the French colonials and the native population, which consists of Annamese, Tonkinese, and other members of the Sino-Tibetan language family. This way-

[4] I believe in effect that a French pidgin is forming in Saigon; it mostly resembles for the moment the Creole of the colonies, because soldiers, usually from the colonies, think to make themselves better understood by saying for example *you give me little bit water* rather than *give me some water.* This tendency to bastardise is widespread; they are satisfied to give the principal word, trimming anything inessential.

> ward offspring of French is extremely tantalizing to the French-speaking visitor who hears it for the first time. The words are familiar; yet if he tries to converse in French he meets with a blank look of incomprehension. [...] The chief reason for his difficulty in communication is this: Pidgin French, in its simplified syntax and morphology, has enough differences from French to block immediate understanding.
>
> A second source of difficulty is that the slender work [*sic*] stock, which is largely French, does contain Annamese words which are required in unpredictable places (Stageberg 1956 p. 167).

This quotation suggests that Tây Bồi is definately has the indications of a pidgin, i. e. it is more than poor French. Stageberg indicates its limited role as an intermediary language and its impoverished vocabulary and structure.

The remainder of the article is a brief look at the basic grammar and construction of "Pidgin French" including some examples. He lists the few pronouns: *moi, nous, toi/vous, ils* and *lui*, and the possessive (*livre à moi*, etc). Verbs are used in the infinitive, with a few exceptions, and tense is indicated by context or a completed action marker. The negative is otherwise expressed simply by *pas*. He lists some examples of interrogatives, numbers from one to ten and comments that relative pronouns and articles are almost always omitted. A few typical structures and expressions he notes are the use of *il y en a*, 'there is/are (some)' and its negative *il n'y en a pas*, and *moyen, moyen pas moyen* ('can you...') or verb *pas* verb (e. g. *connais pas connais* — 'do you know') as an interrogative structure taken from Vietnamese and Chinese. The paper is only a summary of some of the grammatical points of Tây Bồi with a few examples, but in spite of its almost travel story tone, it is the first linguistic study published since Schuchardt nearly seventy years previously.

4.2.3 Reinecke

One who has written more on the topic is John E. Reinecke. He began with his doctoral thesis "Marginal Languages" (Reinecke 1937), in which he included a brief section on "Annamite French," with Schuchardt's article as his only source. He does attempt to fill in the fifty-year gap between Schuchardt's writing and his:

> From scattered references in books of travel the present writer concludes that a broken French is still the usual medium of communication between the French colonists and soldiers and that part of the Indo-Chinese population which is in contact with them. But there has not been the opportunity for a Pidgin French to consolidate its position as Pidgin English did at Canton. This is to be attributed to the large concentration of French people in a few Indo-Chinese cities, and to the policy of maintaining schools in the French language. Although these reach but a very small part of the population, their influence must be against the pidginizing of the official language (p. 818).

One notes that, while he is convinced the language exists, he borrows Schuchardt's term "Annamite French," implying that it is no more than a regional variety with slight differences from the standard. He does not, at this stage, consider it to be a pidgin (at least not in the sense of a stabilised, widespread language like Chinese Pidgin English), and uses only the labels "jargonized" or "broken" French. He does observe correctly the 'anti-pidgin' influence of French education policy despite its relatively limited extent. These factors would have had an effect in preventing the pidgin from expanding into wider contexts of usage or a creole, though they did not threaten its continuing existence — Tây Bồi remained useful as long as the class of uneducated Vietnamese needed to communicate with the French.

He again takes Schuchardt's work as a starting point in his 1971 article " Tây Bồi: Notes on the Pidgin French of Vietnam" — having evidently 'upgraded' the language's status to a pidgin with its own name. He has gathered the body of the information for his article from two Vietnamese informants who recall the pidgin as it was spoken by servants in the cities of Saigon and Hué. As he states himself, the elapsed time and the influence of the informants' own French and Vietnamese may well have produced inaccuracies in their reporting of the language. He also notes that the language was quite variable in pronunciation, structure and choice of vocabulary, depending on region and contact with standard French. The informants suggested that the military variety was closer to standard French, because of the closer contact of French, Vietnamese and ethnic minority soldiers. In a footnote, Reinecke addresses Stageberg's article, noting that his two informants described the language sketched by Stageberg (the Haiphong variety) as a more sophisticated form,

> the sort used by persons who perhaps have a smattering of formal instruction in French: for example, *livre à moi* instead of *mon livre* or *moi livre*; *il a* instead of *déjà*; *Moi il n'y a pas ami* instead of *Moi pas ami* 'I have no friend' (Reinecke 1971 p. 55).

Here Reinecke gives a more comprehensive view of the language than the previous studies. He gives a list of some of the phonological changes of French words imported into Tây Bồi when spoken by the Vietnamese (the French-speakers' version of Tây Bồi differed little from standard French pronunciation). General tendencies include reducing consonant clusters or splitting them into two syllables (*bi át*, 'piastre'), omission of liaison except in fixed phrases (such as *fait-il*) and the separation of a nasalised vowel into a vowel followed by a nasal. In the section on vocabulary, Reinecke notes especially the inadequacy of the lexicon and the methods of circumlocution for overcoming difficulties of expression. These include the use of gestures and onomatopœia and reliance on a small number of expressions such as *beaucoup* (many, lots, very) and *pas bon* ('no good') for a wide range of

situations. He found only a few Vietnamese words in the pidgin, mostly plants, animals and other culturally specific terms, but also in some cases the Vietnamese classifiers were used with French nouns, such as *cái*, the general classifier, and *con* for animals. He sees only a few foreign words, such as *stop*, and *yotonai* from the Japanese *yokunai* — 'no good', any other traces mentioned in Schuchardt having disappeared. Tây Bồi's parts of speech follow the French to some extent, but the inflections are lost and very few conjunctions, prepositions or adverbs have been transferred. The copula, articles and gender are generally dropped as well. The personal pronouns of French are used, but often omitted and determined by context. The verb is invariable, and usually derived from the French infinitive, with exceptions in the cases of irregular verbs, so *boire* ('to drink') becomes *bouver*. Tense and aspect are indicated only by context or adverbs of time such as *demain* ('tomorrow') or *avant* ('before').

Reinecke later published, in conjunction with other creolists, *A Bibliography of Pidgin and Creole Languages* (Reinecke et. al. 1975) in which the references to pidgin French in Vietnam amounted to one page. Five references are given: the works by Schuchardt, Stageberg and Reinecke, as well as a geographic dictionary by Vivien de Saint-Martin, which briefly mentions the pidgin and is cited by Schuchardt,[5] and Aymonier's 1890 piece advocating the teaching of pidgin in Indochina instead of French. Mention is also made of John Seward Phillips and Nguyễn Đăng Liêm, who at that stage had not completed or published their work. Reinecke notes that "Since the pidgin was sometimes used in the Vietnamese press for comic effect, some examples might be gleaned there," and that "French scholars have ignored it completely" (p. 313), both of which remain unaddressed today.

[5] "Depuis l'occupation française, il s'est créé une sorte de *sabir* ou langue franque, mélange informe d'annamite, de français, d'anglais, de javanais, de portugais, etc., qui sert aux relations habituelles des Européens avec les indigènes" (p. 229).

4.2.4 Nguyễn Đăng Liêm

The article by Nguyễn Đăng Liêm gives a more detailed study of the phonology and some aspects of grammar including verb, clause and case classing. His data are from his own encounters with the language in Saigon in the 1940s and 50s, but his only attempt at placing the language in its historical and social context is to begin with some quotations from Reinecke's 1971 article. He does note that there was considerable variation between speakers, but states that "there is a common core of grammatical structures that can be described for all PF [pidgin French] speakers. This paper aims at presenting that common core" (p. 218).

The initial section on phonology focuses on rules for the change of standard French sounds to the sounds in Tây Bồi and rules for the application of tones, which can be summed up by saying that Tây Bồi phonology follows the Vietnamese, but acquires more French sounds with more sophisticated speakers.

Liêm uses a tagmemic approach to analysing the features of Tây Bồi, i. e. sampling raw linguistic data and applying set procedures to construct a grammar, categorising the grammar into discreet cases. This allows him to compare Tây Bồi categories with French and Vietnamese ones, to see which ones are not present in Tây Bồi. He notes that these categories are closer to the Vietnamese than the French. He also divides the verbs into classes representing the cases, and identifies clause classes, mostly interrogatives. For each of his categories, he gives an example sentence.

Liêm notes briefly that the vocabulary of Tây Bồi is derived from French, but concentrates entirely on the grammar, which, he seems to conclude, comes from Vietnamese structures — a substrate theory.

4.2.5 Phillips

These references were available to John Seward Phillips when he wrote his doctoral thesis (unpublished, 1975). Phillips attempted to trace the origins and context of Tây Bồi, which he labels Vietnamese Contact French (VNCF), in order to determine its position in relation to other pidgin and creole languages. In examining the history of the language, he considers the possibilities of influence from other, non-French sources which might have determined the domains and purposes of its use. The first possibility was that Tây Bồi derived from a Portuguese pidgin brought by missionaries based in Macao in the early seventeenth century. However, Phillips finds that there is no evidence that the missionaries used a pidgin, and that Portuguese influence in the area declined with the transferal of responsibility for missionary activity to the Church rather than the State (1636) and the establishment of the Paris-based Société des Missions Etrangères (1664).

The other avenue of pre-colonial contact — trade — he claims was not strong enough to require a contact language. As for military contact, the French used Senegalese and Algerian troops in their first invasions of Indochina in 1858, other groups which may have brought a pidgin language with them. Phillips again finds no such evidence, especially as indigenous troops were also used in Indochina from 1861. Immigrants from other French colonies arrived as well, from Reunion, the Antilles and the Indian outposts such as Pondicherry, but most of these were already standard French speakers looking for new opportunities. The exchange of populations across the French territories of India and Asia is, however, not well understood, and further investigation may reveal more on the history and effects of such contacts.

In the colonial era, the French preferred to surround themselves with those of the indigenous population who had been formally trained to speak standard French, keeping themselves largely isolated from the non-French-speaking majority. They maintained isolation on an international level too,

discouraging trade with non-French countries, and therefore rendering the use of languages other than French unnecessary. Phillips therefore comes down firmly on the anti-relexification side of the argument.

The only remaining area where a pidgin could and did develop was between the lower ranked urban Vietnamese, those with no French language instruction, and the French who employed them as servants or for basic administrative tasks which were 'below' the French-educated Vietnamese élite. It was thus used only in a master-servant relationship, across Vietnamese-French groups but not between Vietnamese or with other language groups. The target language was always French, says Phillips (but the French would often respond to the pidgin speakers in pidgin, or a kind of reduced foreigner talk). He considers VNCF to be an atypical pidgin, for these reasons and because it was unstable and never developed into a creole. He questions whether VNCF should therefore come under the classification of a pidgin, or whether the definition of a pidgin language should be redefined to accommodate it. He does not satisfactorily answer this, but in any case spends the majority of the thesis describing and analysing the grammatical structures of the language, also making some attempt to compare it with child language acquisition, finding many similarities.

He includes an extensive appendix containing the transcripts of interviews with his six pidgin speakers, and stereotype surveys similar to Ferguson's 'foreigner talk' questionnaires.[6] He mentions briefly the social attitude towards the language:

> Most of the assimilated Vietnamese with whom I talked about my interest in VNCF felt that it did not merit attention, and stereotypic informant Ba made sure that it was understood that he himself did not use VNCF. Most of the French residents in

[6] Ferguson (1975) gave an informal questionnaire to a group of his students to determine how they would change a list of standard English sentences into 'simplified' speech for non-English-speakers. The results show some of the same features as actual pidgins, but are mostly shaped by popular stereotypes; see also section 2.3.3.

> Việt Nam with whom I spoke about it denied the existence of *tây bồy*, declaring that all the Vietnamese who speak French speak it well, and some seemed offended at my broaching the subject (p. 271).

He found exceptions in two French educators who found some of his informants.

In his study of the grammar and parts of speech in Tây Bồi, Phillips finds much the same features as his predecessors. These include the reduced set of pronouns, agglutination of articles to nouns, the absence of gender or agreement except in fixed phrase cases, the absence of the copula, or any grammatical indicator of tense or mood, this function being fulfilled by adverbs of time such as *avant* ('before') or *bientôt* ('soon') or other indicators such as *fini* ('finished, no more'); the absence or overgeneralisation of prepositions and the increased dependency on modals such as *content* (for *vouloir*, 'to want/wish to'), *fo* (*falloir*, 'to be necessary to') and *moyẽ* (*moyen*, for *pouvoir*, 'to be able to'). He notes the lack of reduplication, attributing this to the fact that in Vietnamese it has the effect of weakening rather than emphasising, and this lack or common construction prevented its adoption in the pidgin.

He is able to give many more examples than those provided in previous articles, and addresses the problem of variability of the language more fully. He notes that speakers of varieties closer to standard French will have, for example, more knowledge of gender and definite articles (instead of fusing them to the noun, as is the case in many creoles). More sophisticated forms of the negative progress from just *non* and *pas* adding roughly in order of complexity *que* ('only'), *pas tout* ('not all'), *ne...pas* ('no, not'), *rien* ('nothing'), *jamais* ('never'), and *personne* ('no-one'). More modal auxiliaries (*aimer* ('to like') and *vouloir* — *vule* or *vudre* — instead of *content*), and more prepositions are used. In constructing sentences, more advanced speakers will include conjunctions (*quand, lorsque*, 'when') and relative pronouns (*qui*, 'that, which, who') which are lacking in the less sophisticated

varieties. They may also have some recognition of inversion for interrogative constructions.

The six respondents show different levels of sophistication of language. Some form only short phrases in answer to questions, but others are able to form more complete sentences and speak continuously in Tây Bồi without returning to Vietnamese. A couple use *je* instead of or as well as *moi*. Phillips asks some informants to translate sentences from Vietnamese into Tây Bồi, which illustrate the variation. The sentence "I've gone to market already" gets the responses "mwa bak5-ti mak5-se fi4-ni4 tu2" (*moi parti marché fini tout*) (p. 318, numbers represent tones) and "jeo ale mase deja" (*je allé marché déjà*) (p. 337). Typical features seem to stay the same, such as the lack of copula and the invariable verb.

Phillips' thesis provides perhaps the largest body of data available on Tây Bồi, giving a wide range of different proficiencies from the most basic vocabulary and structure to more sophisticated forms nearing standard French. It does not contribute greatly to pidgin theory, although it highlights some of the stigma to which Tây Bồi was subjected.

4.2.6 Some later, secondary articles

Albert Valdman (1977a, b) has used the work of Phillips (a student of his) in his own work on pidgin and creole studies. He is, as far as I am aware, the exception to the lack of French language authors on the subject but in any case is based in the United States. He uses only Phillips' research, his aim not being to continue the study of Tây Bồi but to illustrate his theories on creolisation and simplified registers. The articles above are however unique in employing research on Tây Bồi in this way. Valdman possibly chooses it as there is very little other remaining French pidgin — it is perhaps almost a missing link in the process of French creolisation, but an example of a pidgin which did not creolise. (There are more recent examples of pidgin French still requiring further study, such as Tayo in New Caledonia (Corne

1995) and Burundi Pidgin French (Niedzielski 1989), which may provide more answers in this area.)

A short article by Fred West (1973) deals with what happened to the pidgin after the French had left and the Americans moved in. American soldiers developed their own stereotyped pidgin for communicating, wherever in the world they were. The French had reinforced the Vietnamese errors by replying in pidgin, thus creating the impression to the Vietnamese that they were speaking standard French. The Americans now experienced the same phenomenon, thinking they were speaking Vietnamese when in fact their words were corruptions of Vietnamese and French vocabulary. Some items of French lexicon which survived into this new pidgin were *beaucoup* ('a lot, very') and *ti-ti* (*petit*, 'a little'). West also offers "another term derived from French, but believed by many GIs to be Vietnamese, [...] *finny*, from *fini*. It is used to describe the last of anything: *finny flight, finny drink, finny piasters.*" (F. West 1973 p. 291). West also seems to imply that the French pidgin in Vietnam was similar to this "GI-ese" in that the French spread it around the world from their other colonies: "Before the GIs came to Vietnam, the French had already transferred their own Petit-Nègre, or French-African pidgin, to the Vietnamese" (ibid p. 292). Although undoubtedly the French colonists had stereotyped ideas of pidgin French, Tây Bồi was developed by the Vietnamese, with the French doing the reinforcing.

West's final reference to the pidgin French is to indicate that examples could be found in Graham Greene's novel *The Quiet American*. It was written in the early 1950s based on Greene's own time spent in Saigon, but in fact, there is very little in the book which could be an example of Tây Bồi. The central character, an English journalist, speaks standard French, as does his female companion, a Vietnamese. The only possible Tây Bồi speaker is a Vietnamese policeman. Greene's character reports, "He explained in almost unintelligible Vietnamese French that I was needed immediately — at once — rapidly — at the Sureté... In his mouth the word ['French'] sounded like 'Françung'." (Greene 1973 p. 6). The policeman also says the phrase *sur le*

chung, for *sur le champ* ('right away').

Another American who served during the Vietnam War, Alan Farrell, wrote of his experiences. Farrell was chosen for his position among the *montagnard* tribes of the highlands because he spoke French, but he discovered that these minority groups spoke not standard French but "a bruised version of French known as tâ'i bôy, a pidgin of French" (Farrell 1991 p. 140). He lists some of the principal features: exclusive use of disjunctive pronouns, use of the infinitive or a regularised form, lack of prepositions and "They pronounced after their own perception and fantasy since they could nor read and took in everything by hearing alone" (ibid p. 140). Twenty years after his first tour, he returned to Vietnam to find that "Sure enough, the French pidgin was still alive, among those of a certain age at least" (ibid p. 141). He gives some examples: "Toi envoyer nous elle" ('You send us her') and "Toi metter colle tim'poste" ('You put glue stamp') (ibid). He also mentions that the academic community is very proficient in standard French, that French culture is experiencing a revival, with the return of tourists and former inhabitants and an increased economic drive. At the same time, the Soviet influence is fading and American culture and capitalism is becoming popular.

Chris Corne and Jim Hollyman's article in the *Atlas of Pacific Languages* (1996) gives an overview of the situation of French in the South Pacific as a whole. It makes mention of Tây Bồi as described by previous authors, but is useful for placing the Vietnamese situation in a wider context. Vietnamese, for example, feature prominently in the history of immigration and contract work in New Caledonia and Vanuatu and the formation of local varieties of French, and continue to form part of the communities in the South Pacific today. Corne also has a section on pidginised French in his 1999 work on French creoles (pp. 197–213), which includes another brief summary of Tây Bồi, mostly based on Reinecke's work. Again, this is useful in the context of other French pidgins, such as *français tirailleur* and *français populaire ivoirien*.

4.3 Travel narratives

4.3.1 Introduction

Looking at non-linguistic sources provides valuable evidence in this case. Authors of travel stories often like to point out unusual and exotic features of the places and people they encounter, and communication is often a major issue. These people have experienced the early instances of language contact and can thus give primary evidence. One must be cautious in examining it, however, as it is usually not undertaken in an objective manner and could be subject to poetic license for a more entertaining read, and the inferences or conclusions made could be highly personal or ill-founded. Nevertheless, these are the same precautions taken with any sources, and although one could often hope for more detailed accounts of the language contact, the information that these narratives have passed on now gives insights into the perceptions of the travellers and the process itself.

4.3.2 Early accounts of Vietnam and communication with the Vietnamese

By the time the French Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes arrived in Cochinchina in 1624 the Portuguese had been sending their missionaries and trade explorations to the area for over a century — their first contact with the Vietnamese was in 1516. This had given plenty of time for a knowledge of Portuguese or Portuguese pidgin to spread around the South China Sea, and indeed there is some evidence to suggest this. Whether or not Portuguese contributed to the development of Tây Bồi is more difficult to determine. At the time when De Rhodes arrived, it seems only one of the missionaries, Father François Piña, spoke the local language. De Rhodes quickly set about learning Vietnamese, and within six months, as he recounts in his *Divers Voyages et Missions* (De Rhodes 1994, see section 3.2), he was preaching in it. His aim in learning the language was solely to convert

and preach more effectively, which was mostly done though 'interpreters,' probably Vietnamese who had picked up some Portuguese from traders or the missionaries themselves. De Rhodes being one of the first French visitors to the area, French was not yet used. De Rhodes also spoke Portuguese, and would presumably have used this with his missionary colleagues. His Vietnamese dictionary was not in French, but in Portuguese and Latin.

The Portuguese, with their colonies at Macao and Malacca, continued their hold on trade in the area until the nineteenth century. Taboulet writes: "Les Portugais ayant été les premiers Européens à pénétrer en Extrême-Orient, leur langue demeura au XVIIe siècle la langue des relations commerciales dans les ports ouverts aux étrangers"[7] (1955–56 p. 76). The early travellers and traders to Vietnam were obliged to rely for communication on having someone in the crew speaking Portuguese and then finding a local Vietnamese who spoke some Portuguese or Portuguese pidgin. One early English mission, Bowyear's of 1695–1696, dealt entirely in Portuguese as a matter of course. Bowyear uses some Portuguese terminology himself in his writing, such as "dispatchadore" for a Vietnamese foreign trade official, and "lingua" for 'linguist,' interpreter (Lamb 1970 p. 46). At this time, Portuguese, or a variety of it, was the dominant trade language in the area, as Bowyear's ready acceptance and usage of it attests. Later, on his 1778 mission, Englishman Chapman also writes of meeting Portuguese traders and using Portuguese speakers as interpreters (ibid p. 128), and Roberts in 1804 also uses Portuguese, but has a French interpreter as well.

The French traders also largely relied on Portuguese. Their interpreters were usually missionaries or their students. Père Langlois writing in 1673 tells of the seminary established in 'Siam' where Thai and Vietnamese converts were taught to become priests, learning Latin and Vietnamese, and some knew Portuguese as well (Taboulet 1955–56 pp. 39–40). Vietnamese Catholics also studied in India and Penang, allowing for a range of language

[7]The Portuguese having been the first Europeans to penetrate the Far East, their language remained in the seventeenth century the language of commercial relations in the ports open to foreigners.

contact situations, certainly including pidgin or creole Portuguese. An Irish-French trader in the mid-eighteenth century, Jacques O'Friell, had a German Jesuit interpreter who spoke Portuguese, and the well-known French trader Pierre Poivre took on a Vietnamese Christian who had been studying in India and also knew Portuguese (ibid pp. 118–120; 131–132). French trader Auguste Borel was accompanied in 1817 by "un Cochinchinois parlant portugais"[8] (ibid p. 283). Rocquemaurel in 1850–1851 found that French was not understood, and having only a Cantonese interpreter,

> dont le dialecte était complètement ignoré des Cochinchinois, nous ne pouvions employer que des signes pour nous faire comprendre. Ce manque d'un langage commun a peut-être aussi contribué à la bonne harmonie qui n'a pas cessé de régner entre nous[9] (ibid p. 380).

By the nineteenth century, Portuguese was perhaps less prevalent than it had been, but French was not yet widespread either. However, as the quotation from Rocquemaurel shows, if there was a willingness to communicate on both sides, a means would be found.

Sir John Barrow found this as well. In his account of his voyage with the Macartney mission of 1792–1793, he makes no mention of any Portuguese but did have some Chinese with him (Barrow 1975 p. 322). The Chinese of Vietnam or Canton often offered their services as servants or guides, and were more willing to communicate with Europeans than the majority of Chinese (ibid p. 327), some being Christian converts. Through the means of these guides, Barrow and his party were able to communicate with the Vietnamese through the use of Chinese characters. The Vietnamese were also willing to use gestures and signs, as opposed to the Chinese, with whom Barrow had more difficulty communicating in his subsequent voyage through

[8] A Cochinchinese who spoke Portuguese.

[9] Whose dialect was completely unknown to the Cochinchinese, we had to resort to using signs to make ourselves understood. This lack of a common language also perhaps contributed to the harmony which never ceased to exist between us.

China. Barrow evidently learned a little Vietnamese, as he includes a word list in Vietnamese, Chinese and English, with the intention of showing how much spoken Vietnamese had 'diverged' from the Chinese (ibid pp. 323–326). Barrow mentions that Chinese servants use a jargon "usually taught by their masters" (ibid p. 327) — probably Chinese Pidgin English, but apparently finds no pidginisation of Vietnamese: "though it has been altered [from Chinese], it does not appear to have received any improvement, neither from additions of their own, nor from the introduction of foreign words" (ibid p. 322).

One of the first Americans to attempt trade in Vietnam, John White, spent some time visiting and negotiating to take cargo at Saigon in 1819–1820. At his first encounter with the Vietnamese, he discovered that some of them spoke "a few words of the barbarous dialect of the descendants of the adventurers who were transported to the east by [...Portuguese] navigators and conquerors" (White 1972 p. 33) — obviously a Portuguese pidgin. Although White had at least one officer aboard who spoke Portuguese, the potential interpreters' limited items of vocabulary were "spoken with such an uncouth accent, that they were totally useless as a medium of oral communication" (ibid p. 35). The party had to rely mostly on signs and gestures, of which they developed "a sort of system" (ibid p. 69).

Having failed to gain passage to Saigon, the ship called at Tourane (Da Nang), where one of the mandarins initiated communication in Latin, which the crew tried to follow up with the remnants of their Latin learnt in school. White explains that the French missionaries who were accepted into the country gathered converts, whom they taught in Latin, and therefore there could be found Vietnamese who spoke it (ibid pp. 79–81). This method of communication was however rather unsatisfactory, so White headed for Manila in the hope of finding an interpreter. In this he was unsuccessful, but in the meantime, the governor of Saigon had sent a "native linguist," i. e. interpreter, who spoke some Portuguese to the coast. White's vessel there joined forces with another American ship captained by Oliver Blanchard. In

addition to the Vietnamese interpreter, they were also aided by a Portuguese man then living in Thailand, who could speak Vietnamese and French quite well (ibid p. 183). They met with others along the way who had had contact with Europeans, either through trade or missionary efforts, or had remained after the cessation of Portuguese trade, including a Filipino, two Italian missionaries, Padres Antonio and Joseph and their converts, one of whom had been a servant to the Bishop of Adran, and could speak a little French, Portuguese and Latin (ibid pp. 273–274).

Even later in 1827, Englishman John Crawfurd had a Portuguese interpreter with him (Crawfurd 1967 p. 226) although he also had a Chinese. Crawfurd also has some awareness of the "Annam" language. He compares it to a Chinese dialect and characterises it as "meagre and destitute of inflexions" and easy to learn except for the tones. He also claims the Vietnamese have "no literature and no written character of their own, and receive all their books from the Chinese, to whom they look up as their instructors" (ibid p. 484). This is a simplified view of the situation, but he does acknowledge that the characters have been altered from the Chinese, and he is aware of De Rhodes' dictionary and that of Pigneau de Béhaine.

By the nineteenth century, the Portuguese had given up on their trade with Vietnam. The English and Dutch had made various attempts, but none very successful. The high port fees, the necessity of presenting gifts to every official and the difficulty of dealing with them, coupled with an undersupply of goods at uncompetitive prices also rendered most trade missions unprofitable. The only Europeans deemed to have any chance in the area were the French, and they had their own problems. Negotiation with the Emperor Gia Long, favourable to the French after they provided military aid against the Tay Son Movement, was proceeding satisfactorily, when the French Revolution occurred. The death in 1799 of the Bishop of Adran, who was instrumental in pushing French interests in Indochina, caused a loss of momentum, and in 1819 there were, White says, "but two Frenchmen at court, (and I believe the only ones in the country excepting a few

missionaries)" (White 1972 p. 267). These were Jean Baptiste Chaigneau and Philippe Vannier. Following the death of Gia Long and the succession of Minh Mang, who pursued a more isolationist policy, these last representatives left in 1824.

In spite of the few European visitors in the early nineteenth century, it is evident that some of the Vietnamese spoke a Portuguese pidgin. The pidgin was on a scale of unintelligible to 'indifferent' to Portuguese speakers, but it was still useful at this time. The French had not yet gained the influence or numbers to spread either French or French pidgin very widely in Indochina, but a few Vietnamese, those close to the missionaries or at court, learnt a little French. At this stage there seems to be no evidence that Tây Bồi was spoken this early, but that a Portuguese pidgin was still known at this time may indicate a crossover period of influence on a future pidgin. White seems to indicate that the pidgin speakers he did come across knew it only from when the Portuguese were active in the area, and the Portuguese having left, the continuing usefulness of the pidgin would be restricted to such expeditions as White's, and there would be no new learners. This period was not favourable for European trade in Vietnam and language contact was minimal until the arrival of French forces in 1858, but attempts at trade were persistent and it is conceivable that enough Portuguese influence remained in the area to affect the origins of Tây Bồi.

4.3.3 Colonial accounts

Once the French had begun their colonisation, more travellers and colonists arrived and began writing of their experiences. Some works were overviews of the country and its people, the standard travel story, directed at the curious reader back in France. Others were more studious accounts of the colonial experience and policy in Indochina, often written by former governors or others in the French administration. Many of these include short sections dealing with language, often as part of an amateur anthropological description of the Vietnamese people. They tend to mention the monosyl-

labic nature of Vietnamese and the supposed disadvantages that this carries, the extreme difficulty of learning the tones and the connection with Chinese. In most cases, the writer does not question the right of the French to colonise and bring superior civilisation to Indochina, but some of them do show a respectable understanding of the language situation and do not always agree with the official French policy of the time.

Colonel E. Diguet published *Les Annamites* in 1906, his description of the Vietnamese people. His section on language includes a description of how Chinese characters work and the difference between the Chinese and Vietnamese characters. He had some knowledge of Vietnamese, and is not alone among his European colleagues in finding the monosyllabic language awkward and difficult, inferior even to Chinese, explaining the tones as a compensation for the lack of multi-syllable constructions and inflection. However, he does see problems with the enforcement of quốc ngũ' over characters. While he approves of the breaking of links with China in some respects, he sees the greatest problem in depriving the Vietnamese of the literature and moral guidance of works in Chinese without being able to replace them with translations, a process he thinks would take too long and that in any case, quốc ngũ' was unsuited to the task.

Rarely is any mention made of Tây Bồi or anything that might be a pidgin. In the few references found, never is it considered interesting enough for more than a passing reference and examples are rare. Often the statement is very negative about the existence of such a language:

> Dans les villes fréquentées par les Européens [in Cochinchina], il s'est formé un 'sabir' monstrueux, composé de mots chinois et annamites, français et provençaux, espagnols et portugais, anglais, latins, malais, juxtaposés sans aucune flexion[10] (Bouinais and Paulus 1885, p. 262).

[10] In the towns frequented by Europeans, a monstrous 'sabir' is forming, composed of words from Chinese and Annamite, French and Provençal, Spanish and Portuguese, English, Latin, Malay, all juxtaposed without any kind of inflection.

This is all that Bouinais has to say on the subject in what is quite an extensive work on the country and its people from the point of view of the colonial. The number of languages he quotes as contributing to the pidgin is more than there would appear to be evidence for; indeed it sounds more like the 'sabir' of the Mediterranean combined with a variety of Asian languages; perhaps a combination of all of the different pidgins of the region taken as one. On the other hand, it is similar to the reference in Vivien de Saint-Martin (section 4.2.3). Another colonist, P. D'Enjoy, writing in 1898 specifically for other French colonists in a work entitled *La Colonisation de la Cochin-Chine: Manuel de colon*, has a more positive view, concentrating on the benefits of being able to communicate:

> The colonist will not, then, feel he is an expatriate. He will be able, almost everywhere, to make himself understood in his mother tongue, provided he speaks very slowly. And he will himself understand those Annamites who speak to him when they reply in pidgin (Quoted in Osborne 1969, p. 326).

A rather atypical viewpoint in presented by Léon Werth in his book *Cochinchine* on his travels there in 1925 (Werth 1997). Werth was an anti-colonialist and wished to meet Vietnamese intellectuals and communists. He devotes more time to talking with and writing about the "boys," whom he says form a separate class. If there were indeed such a subculture of low-status, often mistreated domestic servants, it is possible that their pidgin would act as an identity marker and means of communication between them. Werth notes that the boys would, among themselves, use the Vietnamese term for 'to feed (animals)' rather than 'to serve' when talking about their masters (Werth 1997 pp. 115–116). This is not evidence of them using Tây Bồi among themselves, but it does indicate some solidarity and shared vocabulary among the class that spoke it.

On the other hand, he points out the distinctions between the majority of the Vietnamese people and those with a French education who like to

consider themselves 'French:' "On sépare volontiers de la masse ceux qui ont fréquenté nos universités et qui se sont rendus dignes de nos diplômes"[11] (ibid p. 24). Another group of French speakers were those that had come from other French colonies, mostly from India or the Indian Ocean islands.[12] They were usually French citizens, and hence able to travel between colonies easily, and most spoke good French as well as a creole. However, Werth says, those that joined the colonial infantry (possibly those whose French was not as good) were looked down upon by both the French and the Vietnamese (ibid p. 59).

Werth does not mention Tây Bồi by name but does make more mention of "sabir colonial" than his contemporaries, and gives a few examples. He himself does not speak any Vietnamese, and has to try to understand the boys' Tây Bồi, which he finds difficult: "Je ne comprends pas son atroce français encombré de «moyen» et de «content». Je m'irrite"[13] (ibid p. 248). However, he quickly realises that becoming irritated won't help, and that a willingness to communicate will. Werth also notes that not just Vietnamese spoke Tây Bồi. He talks with a Chinese butcher who knows "une vingtaine de mots français et les joint en heurtant et embrouillant les syllables sans prononcer les *r*... 'quoi monsieur travailler?'"[14] (ibid p. 35). He also offers

[11] We willingly separate from the mass those who have attended our universities and rendered themselves worthy of our diplomas.

[12] French India included Pondicherry, Chandernagor, Karikal, Yanaon and Mahé. Pondicherry was in 1677 the first claimed, and became the seat of the French church and missionary work through Asia, remaining an outpost of French colonialism until Indian independence, with some influence remaining to today. The islands of the Indian Ocean were colonised by the French from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, beginning with Madagascar. African slaves were brought to the islands, followed by Indian labourers after slavery was abolished in the nineteenth century. This indicates some movement and interaction of French and French-creole speaking populations. Réunion is now a Département d'outre-mer of France; Mauritius, the Seychelles and Rodrigues became British after 1810, achieving independence after World War II.

[13] I don't understand his atrocious French full of "[way]" and "[pleased/happy]." I get annoyed.

[14] Twenty or so words of French and puts them together, clashing and tangling up the syllables without pronouncing the *r*'s ... 'what sir work?'

evidence that the French spoke it to their boys, although he implies it is rather patronising and inspired by some sort of colonial ideal of the exotic: "S'il est cordial et s'il a le goût de «s'approcher du peuple», il échangera quelques mots en sabir colonial avec son boy d'hôtel. Quand il aura dit: «toi moyen... », il sera pris d'une ivresse linguistique,"[15] (ibid pp. 52–53).

In the tradition of travel writing, Werth writes of his encounters with the people and their language in order to add some local colour to his work — he is not immune to the desire to take part in the exotic. He does however have his own political agenda and while he uses many of the stylistics of the travel narrative and aims to give a picture of life in the colonies, the picture of French colonialism he presents is less flattering than most contemporary accounts. He talks a great deal more with (French-speaking) Vietnamese anti-colonial intellectuals and with the boys than other writers and presents their viewpoint.

Nguyen Van Phong writes in 1971 about the period 1882–1902 based on the accounts of French writers of the colonial era. In the small sections on language, he mentions the distinction between the use of élitist Chinese and popular Vietnamese. However, he also points out the new classes of mandarins, soldiers, interpreters and boys created by the French system, and that many of them turned the new colonial ways to their advantage. For example, because most French knew no Vietnamese and had to rely on interpreters, the latter could quickly and dishonestly amass a fortune even if their French was inadequate (Nguyen Van Phong 1971 p. 229). In this way, interpreters could become wealthy and prestigious with regard to non-French-speaking Vietnamese and also gain an amount of power over their politically more powerful French employers.

Phong also cites a number of cases indicating a class system among the boys, supporting Werth's assertion of a servant subculture: a boy of

[15] If he is a hearty fellow with a taste for "getting to know the people," he will exchange a few words in colonial sabir with his hotel boy. Having said, "you way..." he will be seized with linguistic intoxication.

a higher-ranked officer or official outranks a boy of a subordinate. These higher-class boys in fact often employed their own boys "qui se chargera des travaux pénibles et vulgaires à leur place"[16] (ibid p. 230). While giving a few exceptions, Phong gives an overall picture of the new classes of Vietnamese as being corrupt opportunists whose collaboration and knowledge of French was the only thing which allowed them to take over the positions previously held by the mandarins. Most of the French learnt very little Vietnamese:

> c'était surtout chez les orientalistes et les missionaires qu'on trouvait le plus d'auteurs qui réussissaient à acquérir une connaissance suffisante de la langue vietnamienne. Pour la plupart des colons, un répertoire variant de quelques mots à quelques dizaines de mots, qui, mélangés avec le français risquaient de former une sorte de volapük...[17] (ibid p. 47).

This is as close as he comes to mentioning Tây Bồi as a distinct language, but he does give it a favourable review, noting that at least it was the beginning of establishing communication and understanding: for the colonists, having this language available to them

> les rendaient sympathiques aux indigènes et inversement:
> «Quand on sut un mot, on voulut le répéter; on prit en considération un peuple à qui l'on pouvait parler et dont la langue était si difficile»[18] (ibid p. 47).

One notes that this Vietnamese author writes in French and is published

[16] Who took the difficult and mundane tasks in their place.

[17] It was above all amongst the orientalists and missionaries where one finds the most authors who managed to acquire a decent knowledge of the Vietnamese language. For the majority of colonists, a repertoire varying from a few words to a few dozen words, which, mixed with French, threatened to form a sort of Volapük...

[18] Made them more sympathetic towards the natives, and inversely: "Once they knew a word, they wanted to repeat it; we took into consideration a people who we could speak to and whose language was so difficult." (quote from L. Pallu de la Barrière, *Histoire de l'expédition de Cochinchine en 1861*, Paris, Berger-Levrault, 1888, p. 164.)

in France, yet makes more mention of language interaction than any French author.

4.3.4 Post-colonial accounts

There is a small amount of work which examines the remaining French influence in Vietnam after 1954. However, there is very little, apart from what has already been mentioned above, which deals with Tây Bồi. As explained above, the closure of Vietnam to the West during the Cold War made access very difficult. A couple of examples are given to indicate what does exist, but most writing falls into other categories. The approaches here are American and English perspectives. French writings, which have not been significant until recently, are dealt with under the chapter on Francophonie. More literary angles have been taken such as postcolonialist writings from French and overseas Vietnamese authors, but this is a topic best left to further study.

Richard West, an English author of an account of his visits to Vietnam during American occupation in 1966–67 devotes part of his work to the Vietnamese relationship with the French (1968, pp. 120–128). On the one hand the former colonists were persecuted as scapegoats for the lack of reform progress in the South, and their cultural and educational institutions were in decline. West reports a sense of nostalgia for the colonial era among the three thousand remaining French in Vietnam. On the other hand, he perceives a similarity in the cultures of the two countries, and foresees that the French influence will outlast the American. He believes the Vietnamese were much more sympathetic towards the French once the colonial era had ended and the Americans had moved in, and reports an amount of mutual dislike between the French and the American soldiers. His figures for the period, ten years after the French had left, still include French government sponsored French teachers and thirty thousand children in the South learning French, "with Vietnamese as a second language" (ibid p. 123). Most of West's observations are purely anecdotal and subjective, being written in a travel story format. However, he does provide a few examples of Vietnamese

French:

> The big fish eats the small fish and the small fish eats the smaller fish still. *Grong poissong monge p'tit poissong. Petit poissong monge poissong plus p'tit!* (ibid p. 15).

This example was from an older barman who quite possibly knew little English, or at least preferred to speak French. It is difficult to judge from the small sample, but the lack of articles and simple structure could be indications of Tây Bồi, or at least a simplified French. Being a barman on a hotel staff is the sort of job that suggests the social position and circumstances of a large amount of contact with French speakers but no formal education in French.

4.4 Summary

The sources presented in this chapter provide the data with which Tây Bồi's emergence, description and place in Vietnamese colonial society can be traced. Early language contact before French occupation, such as via traders and missionaries of Portuguese, English or French origin may well have influenced Tây Bồi's development. Although there is little evidence of this in later works, further investigation of early sources and the history of European movement in the region may provide more backing for relexificationist arguments.

Tây Bồi was certainly in existence by the 1880s and attracted the passing attention of some writers of the time. These few that did remark upon it treat it as an exotic curiosity, an odd phenomenon of colonial life. If they give more that a sentence or so, they note its functional, limited purpose and sometimes acknowledge its benefit of allowing communication where there would otherwise be none. Linguistic analyses and detailed examples are rare, with Reinecke, Liêm and Phillips providing the only significant bodies

of data. The combined evidence suggests an unstable pidgin which varied considerably from speaker to speaker, yet had distinct characteristics, but which was restricted in use. Its limited function between the French colonists and their lower class employees meant that it virtually disappeared once the colonial era ended.

The documents also demonstrate the low status of the language; indeed, the lack of material on it is an indication of the dismissive attitude towards it on the part of the French. French contact languages are a little-studied area in general, with the influence of the traditions of the Revolution, the *mission civilisatrice* and the ideology of the French language persisting to the effect that practice contrary to those ideals, such as the failure of the colonial system and the emergence of a pidgin French, were often not acknowledged.

There are undoubtedly other interesting sources for language interaction in Vietnam to be found, in further works by French colonials but also the non-academic and literary writing by Vietnamese, including those now living in France or elsewhere outside Vietnam. A better method of examination of French in Vietnam in the post-war period is to look at Francophonie as it affects the country and the perceptions of the current generations towards the renewed efforts of contact on the part of the French. These aspects are analysed in the following chapters.

Chapter 5

La Francophonie

5.1 The beginnings

In the post-colonial era, France's overseas policy took a new turn. *La francophonie* is in some ways a continuation of the *mission civilisatrice* which sought to spread the benefits of French language and culture. Like the previous policies, it evades precise definition, but there are many practical aspects to its various manifestations. As the word suggests, the central concept is about being *francophone* — French speaking, but it has come to stand for a much wider range of ideals and practices. The term seems to have been invented by one Onésime Reclus, a nineteenth century geographer who used it in a purely linguistic and geographic sense (Deniau 1983), but it did not resurface again until the beginning of the modern movement in the 1960s. The idea of an international community of co-operation based on a shared history of language and culture was championed by Presidents Senghor of Senegal and Bourguiba of Tunisia, who valued French as the means through which their countries had achieved modernisation, unity and finally independence. These leaders deemed it beneficial to maintain links with France and the aid and international standing it could provide while at the same time establishing an African identity within the nation.

What began with not a French but an African initiative with the Union Africaine et Malagache in 1961 and progressed to the Organisation Commune Africaine et Malagache in 1966 slowly captured the French imagination. *La francophonie* became a buzzword of the media and politicians, gradually finding its way into the dictionaries.[1] Fears of another wave of colonialism and cultural imperialism were still present, but perhaps because much of the enthusiasm began outside France itself, other nations with francophone connections felt more inclined to be a part of a movement that promised to be not so centralised as past French policies. South Vietnam joined the OCAM in 1966. In 1970 The OCAM was replaced by the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT), which was renamed the Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie (AIF) in 1997.

5.2 Francophonie internationally

Francophonie has been equated with the British Commonwealthalthough usually the differences rather than the similarities are highlighted (Wardhaugh 1987, Tétu 1988). There are more sides to it than a political alliance. In the same way as the Commonwealth, the nations associated with Francophonie have links with the former Empire through shared history, colonisation or settlement, but some have no wish to maintain political ties as such, and can opt for membership of economic or cultural organisations only. There is such a large number of general and specialised organisations and as-

[1]The words 'francophone' and 'francophonie' do not appear in Émile Littré's 1958 *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Éditions Universitaires, Paris). The *Encyclopédie du bon français dans l'usage contemporain* of 1973 (Éditions de trévise, Paris) lists the terms as " very recent" additions to the language, with entries in only the most recent dictionaries (p. 1058). Definitions tend to be limited to only the most literal sense and still retained a strongly geographic character, along the lines of: '(descriptive of) French-speaking; the collective French-speaking populations of the world.' The *Grand Robert de la langue française* (Le Robert, Paris, 1985) adds only the following remark: "Le mot [francophonie], lorsqu'il prétend conférer une cohésion à l'ensemble humain mal défini qu'il désigne, est parfois très critiqué" (p. 694).

sociations, allied with governments, learning institutions, business ventures and social clubs that each nation or group has considerable flexibility in the way it chooses to become part of the world of Francophonie. This flexibility is of course one of its major strengths, but it has also resulted in an amount of confusion over global goals and organisation. The first francophone summit for heads of government was not held until 1986, and while this actually assembled the representatives together at the same time in the same place (i. e. Paris), little real decision making was done. Subsequent summits, formally known as "conférences des chefs d'État et de gouvernement des pays ayant le français en partage," held every two years since 1987 in a different host nation, have progressed towards a more unified political structure and clearer policy making.

Unlike the Commonwealth, Francophonie is based primarily on a language. Certainly, the English language is something that Commonwealth nations share, but it is not the criterion for being a member. Other international movements, such as pan-Arabism or major world religions, use language as a unifying factor to some degree, but it is not a founding principle. The French place special importance on their language as an element of their cultural identity and feel it is essential that it must remain under their control. The issue of French language as a pure ideal, a force for unity in a controlled, centralised system is reflected in such historical institutions as the Académie Française established in 1637 and laws throughout the nineteenth century requiring the use of correct, standard French in law and education, right up to the 1994 Toubon laws preventing the use of foreign words in public addresses, broadcasts and publications.[2]

What is not so readily admitted is that this unity of language and identity came at the expense of the many regional languages of France. The Île-de-France variety, the language of the ruling upper-class, became dominant, while distinct languages such as Breton, Occitan and Basque were relegated to the status of *patois* (see Chapter 1). A similar phenomenon occurred in the

[2]see http://www.culture.fr/culture/dglf/

overseas colonies, where creole languages were dismissed as bad, corrupted French. For the French, the language which Francophonie promotes has been the one true French, whereas in fact, many of the former colonies have developed their own varieties. Nevertheless, the focus on a world language which has a high level of standardisation, associations with a history of great literature and philosophy and ideals of freedom and equality has great appeal to many nations, especially those where ethnic and linguistic unity has been difficult. As Bourhis (1982) states: "To this day, the Ile de France dialect remains the prestige norm against which francophone speakers across the world are most likely to be judged" (p. 41).

5.2.1 Structure

The international structure of Francophonie, known since 1998 as the Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF), has fifty-two member countries, three of which are observers only, accounting for a quarter of the member states of the United Nations and populations adding up to 500 million people. The actual number of French-speakers is difficult to determine, with estimates varying from 100 million and 300 million or even more, and is complicated by the issue of whether French is a first language, regularly used second language or occasionally used or non-fluent, and also how far overseas varieties and creoles are included (see for example Walter 1988, Tétu 1988). The realistic figure appears to be in the range of 100–120 million. A survey carried out in 1997 by the HCF (Haut Conseil de la francophonie) gives the number of full francophones at 112.5 million, with an additional 60.5 million occasional users and 100–110 million second language learners, an increase on the 1990 figures for a similar survey (Le Marchand 1999 pp. 20–21).

The OIF is an overall term for the three policy-making bodies: the Francophonie summits held every two years, the Conférence ministérielle de la francophonie (CMF) comprising of the heads of state or ministers responsible for Francophonie of the member states, and the Conseil permanent de la francophonie (CPF) charged with organising the summits.

The 1997 summit in Hanoi was a significant moment in the evolution of Francophonie. The conference resolved to reinforce the political nature of Francophonie, creating a more concrete structure. It was at this time that the OIF was declared an international organisation not attached to any one government, the AIF was given the status as 'principal operator' and political branch of Francophonie, and a Charter of Francophonie adopted.[3] The post of secretary-general was also created, and the first incumbent is Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former secretary-general of the United Nations. These measures are quite evidently an effort to give Francophonie more status and recognition as a structured international movement, equivalent to the Commonwealth or a United French Nations. Francophonie draws on many of the structures and roles of the UN, such as multilateral political gatherings and numerous different sub-organisations fulfilling different functions. Francophonie does not have any defensive or military aspect, which is unsurprising considering the less centralised origins of the movement and the focus on language, although peacekeeping and conflict resolution are listed among its aims (Le Marchand 1999, pp. 30–31). Also, it would doubtless be a contentious issue considering the colonial past in many cases. The preference is for directing resources to infrastructure and development, but a more cohesive economic system is the next goal. Contributions from each member state allow for budgeting each year, and the amount is not insignificant: the AIF's budget for 2000–2001 is 536 million FF,[4] including 210.9 million FF for promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity (AIF 1999, pp. 206–207).

Apart from the AIF, Francophonie has four other 'operators.' TV5 is the international French language television station. L'Université Léopold Sédar Senghor is based in Alexandria for the training of those working in Francophonie. The Agence universitaire de la francophonie (AUF; also still known under its previous acronym of AUPELF-UREF, Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française — Universités des réseaux d'expression française) runs higher education and training and development

[3] see http://www.francophonie.org/oif/francophonie/charte.htm

[4] One Australian dollar is equivalent to approximately four French francs.

projects. The Association internationale des maires et responsables des capitales et métropoles partiellement ou entièrement francophones (AIMF) is concerned with co-operative ventures on a more local government level. The AIF and the AUF have regional branches and there are many other organisations, institutions, networks and centres on international, regional or national levels which are co-ordinated by these bodies. In an attempt to move away from a centralised organisation in France, some of these international institutions are based elsewhere. For example, the AUF is based in Montreal, but also has European Union support.

5.2.2 Aims and areas of focus

At each of the Francophonie summits, the role and aims of Francophonie have been clarified and developed. The later summits have also focussed on specific areas of debate and themes, for example the 1997 Hanoi theme was co-operation for economic and social development and the 1999 Moncton summit focussed on youth issues. The AIF, as principal operator of Francophonie programmes, released a policy document, *Programmation 2000–2001*, outlining general strategies in the areas of priority. The Charter adopted at the Hanoi summit in 1997 and the final Declaration of the 1999 Moncton summit are also sources for the official goals of Francophonie.[5]

Economics, development and modernisation still form a major aspect of relations, but the emphasis is not so much foreign aid from the rich countries of the North to the poorer South, but ideally a francophone trade bloc. A great deal of importance is placed on information technology, but maintenance of traditional cultures within this domain is mentioned, including reference to oral cultures. In terms of drawing links with France's past overseas policies, the direction of resources has reversed from colonial exploitation of raw materials to the direction of capital back into developing economies. The methods are also less direct, with funds from an international base used to

[5] see http://www.francophonie.org/oif/francophonie/charte.htm; http://www.sommet99.org/francais/page.cfm?id=122

provide support mechanisms rather than direct investment. Education, especially in developing countries, is considered a priority and one of the areas where it is admitted that much work remains to be done (AIF 1999, p. 109). It is felt that there is a lack of overall cohesion to education projects which range from literacy and basic schooling to publishing to university level and professional and technical training. Once again, the emphasis is on providing infrastructure, materials and teacher training while considering the needs of different nations and cultures. For development, technical and educational domains, a strategy of particular importance is providing access to information, through establishing documentation centres but especially the use of electronic media. Francophonie has a strong presence on the internet (see the Bibliography for a few starting points), with the international organisations having well-established official sites with connections to national ones. Cultural sites are also well represented.

France still sees itself as a champion of justice and human rights and Francophonie continues French traditions of the legal system established in former colonies and ideas of France as a symbol of liberty and democracy. Francophonie, as an international organisation, aims at replicating a number of United Nations roles such as mediation and observation missions, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation, and aiding democratisation (Le Marchand 1999 pp. 30–35; (AIF 1999 chapter 4).

Promotion of French culture and language remains the basis of Francophonie. As of late, however, the shift has been towards valuing diversity, in recognition of the fact that nations where French is spoken vary widely in their own cultures and even in the ways they speak French (the AIF *Programmation 2000–2001* reinforces the centrality of the French language at every stage but devotes chapter 6 to language and culture, emphasising diversity). While standard French and French culture and literature are still the prestige varieties, there is now considerably more recognition of and support for creole languages and arts. It is also recognised that there are regional differences in the French that is spoken in, for example, Quebec, New

Caledonia and the French-speaking nations of Africa. Diversity is also recognised in the different status accorded to French in different countries, from sole official language to one of two or more official languages to unofficial status or second language only. Multilingualism and linguistic co-operation is the promotional line, as opposed to the linguistic dominance of colonial times. This is reflected to some extent even in the standard French works describing Francophonie, such as Le Marchand's *La francophonie* (1999):

> Lorsque plusiers langues sont quotidiennement en contact, elles se métissent [...] Ce métissage peut se manifester par la création de néologismes de nécessité ou par de véritables glissements de sens [...] De ce métissage peut naître une nouvelle langue[6] (p. 23).

Language policies and support networks have been established for working out the role of French in different countries and regions, especially in the domains of education, multilateral relations, technology and culture. However, the French language is still first among others in Francophonie, seen as the unifying factor of the diverse nations, for example, the *Programmation 2000–2001* speaks of "une véritable politique francophone de relance de la langue française[7] (p. 5)" and the Moncton[8] declaration states:

> La pluralité des langues et la diversité des cultures constituent des réalités qu'il faut valoriser. Dans cet esprit, nous devons continuer à soutenir la promotion et la diffusion de la langue française qui nous rassemble, comme celles des cultures et des langues partenaires qui font nos identités et la richesse de notre communauté.[9]

[6] When a number of languages are in daily contact, they interbreed ... This crossbreeding can be indicated by the creation of necessary neologisms or actual shift in meaning ... From this crossbreeding, a new language can arise.

[7] A real francophone policy of revival of the French language.

[8] http://www.sommet99.org/francais/page.cfm?id=122

[9] The multiplicity of languages and the diversity of cultures constitute realities which must be more highly valued. With this in mind, we must continue to support the promotion

Use of a common language is also promoted as having practical benefits:

> La Francophonie est un pont entre les peuples, entre le Nord et le Sud. L'usage d'une langue commune facilite les échanges économiques, les transferts d'expériences, les coopérations et l'aide au développement.[10]

Policy is heavily geared towards the promotion of the French language in international organisations including the UN, education including French as a second language in non-francophone countries, and cultural activities including cinema and literature.

5.3 Francophonie in Vietnam

Vietnam receives a large proportion of the international Francophonie funds, the fourth largest in the world after the North African countries. It is also a significant beneficiary of direct French financial aid, amounting to 410 million francs in 1995, one of the top three supporters of the country (France, Sénat 1997–1998 pp. 4–5). This is a huge effort, especially considering that Vietnam is far from a francophone nation, with the estimated figure of French-speakers at 0.1% in 1990 (ibid p. 7) though this is a conservative figure not including learner-speakers. Daniel's figures estimate the francophone population at about one percent (1990).

There are eighteen million students in the Vietnamese education system, which amounts to one in four of the population, a large percentage especially considering that schooling is not compulsory after the age of eleven (Sénat 1997–1998, p. 16). A second language has been compulsory in secondary

and diffusion of the French language which unites us, as we must those of partner cultures and languages which make up our identities and enrich our community.

[10] Francophonie is a bridge between peoples, between North and South. The use of a common language facilitates economic relations, the exchange of experience, co-operation and development aid.

school since 1981, but in reality, not all schools can provide the necessary services and only about half of all students study a second language. French is the second most widely taught second language, ahead of Chinese, German and Japanese, but well behind English. Out of about four million secondary students, somewhere between three and five percent learn French (Daniel 1992). However, Daniel, Clévy and others point out the growing enthusiasm, particularly amongst the young, for studying French, and the educational programs already in place. There are 690 bilingual classes at primary and secondary level, including science classes taught in French.[11]

The Vietnamese government produces some French language programs, mostly language learning materials. French music and other popular culture has also made it into the country since the opening up. Vietnam's French connection has been the topic of a number of films which have gained worldwide distribution, most notably Régis Wargnier's *Indochine* (1992), the adaption of Margurite Duras' *L'Amant* by Jean-Jacques Annaud (1991), and Pierre Schoendoerffer's *Diên Biên Phu* (1992). In publishing and literature, the story is mixed. There is a significant movement of Vietnamese writers writing in French, but many are expatriates living and publishing in France. It was extremely difficult to publish anything in French in Vietnam in the hardline communist era, although there has now been some translation of French works into Vietnamese for non-francophone francophiles.

5.3.1 Francophonie organisations and institutions

Vietnam is a member of many of the institutions that make up the official and administrative side of Francophonie, and is the site for a number of regional offices and branches. These include the Asia-Pacific office of the AIF and the South-East Asia office of the AUF, the Hanoi Alliance Française, as well as a number of Vietnam-specific institutions in the domains of education, technology, economy and others. France also provides media and arts programs, through television and radio (TV5, Radio France Internationale).

[11] see http://www.refer.edu.vn/vietn_ct/base/accueil.htm

Some of these institutions are outlined below.

Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie

As the chief body of Francophonie, the AIF in Hanoi has a role of overviewing the projects running, co-ordinating programmes and budgets in Cambodia, Laos and Vanuatu as well as Vietnam. These projects include running conferences, aid in establishing new centres for research, education, development and technology, ongoing provision of resources, and publication. Some of their education projects for 1999 covered schooling for ethnic minorities, provision of textbooks, and a focus on training in areas such as radiojournalism, customs, tourism and related industries, teachers, foreign affairs and medicine. The AIF is however a top-level body, distributing resources to institutions with more direct and practical roles, such as those described below.

Agence universitaire de la francophonie

The AUF has sixty-one affiliates in Asia, as opposed to eighteen in Europe, three in the Caribbean, one in Africa, and three in the Arab states. The Asian network includes the South-East Asian office in Hanoi and branches in Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City, Vientiane and Phnom Penh. The remainder of links are with universities and other institutions of higher learning of various disciplines, of which Vietnam has forty-eight, with 5000 students. This once again shows a remarkable concentration of effort on Vietnam. Information for this section has been sourced from the interview conducted with M. Villemer and the brochures he provided (Figure D.4); see also the following chapter.

The programme was begun in 1994, with 5200 students enrolled in the year 1999–2000, producing 315 graduates. It is co-ordinated by a team of nine French and nine Vietnamese, with a budget of 15.5 million francs in

1999. The objectives are to create an education system for internationally qualified multilingual professionals and to further co-operation with local institutions. Difficulties include a lack of francophone teachers and students. Teachers must train in their speciality and in French, and students must have a certain level of French to enter the courses to begin with. Steps have been taken to improve this situation, such as establishing scholarships, *espaces francophones*, and so on. The programme is growing in numbers and is deemed successful, with graduates capable of taking places in Francophonie or their desired speciality. These graduates are awarded a *certification francophone* which is internationally recognised by other AUF affiliates.

Great emphasis is placed on collaboration with industry and student-professional links. The two aspects of the objectives are illustrated by this extract from their brochure:

> une francophonie au quotidien, destinée à rendre le français visuel dans les villes et à favoriser son rayonnement dans la vie courante; une francophonie d'entreprises qui a pour objectif de rapprocher les entreprises des universités afin de favoriser l'intégration professionnelle des étudiantes francophones et de professionnaliser les formations.[12]

The AUF also runs around 700 primary and secondary bilingual classes with 20 000 students in Vietnam, and the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Informatique (IFI), principally an institute for engineering studies. Another sub-network of the AUF are the Centres IST (Information scientifique et technique, previously known as Centres SYFED-REFER), an international network with bases in the principle cities of the region, concentrating on research and documentation in science and technology.

[12] Everyday Francophonie, aimed at making French visible on the streets and favouring its spread in daily life; professional Francophonie which has as its goal closer ties between businesses and universities in order to promote the integration of students into the professional world and to professionalise training.

Local institutions

There are a number of different centres in the major cities linked to Francophonie which have a national or local role. These are mostly in the domains of education or science and technology, but there are more specialised institutions as well. Two that may serve as examples are the Centre de formation continue en français de spécialité (CFC) and the Centre national de l'information et de la documentation scientifique et technologique (CNIDST), both in Hanoi. Again, information was gathered via interviews and brochures (Figures D.1, D.2).

The CFC is attached to the Polytechnic University in Hanoi, and receives a large amount of support from the French Embassy, which has included money for construction of their building. It was established in 1990 in conjunction with the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Formation. The CFC runs courses in six streams: business, tourism and hospitality, science and technology, secretarial work, law and medicine, with the additions of translation courses and teacher training. The courses are tertiary level, aimed at producing graduates who can work in their desired profession equally well in French as in Vietnamese. Small classes, well-resourced facilities and strict entry requirements aim at keeping the standard high. The courses last eight months to a year, at the end of which the student is awarded a certificate recognised by the Chambre de Commerce de Paris. The CFC attracts both students and graduates of other university courses as well as professionals seeking to improve their French.

The CNIDST is under the direction of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment and was created in 1990 from two existing bodies, the Institut Central de l'Information Scientifique et Technique (1972) and the Bibliothèque Centrale des Sciences et Techniques (1960). Nationwide, it is the head body of forty-four state centres, fifty-three provincial ones and over 260 units in universities, hospitals, research institutes and businesses. It also maintains international links, within the region and with Francophonie.

Its major roles and goals are co-ordination of activities and policy in science and technology; organisation and diffusion of resources to management, economy, research and development and production; information technology; distribution of new technology information; and international relations. The library has an extensive collection, including 350 000 books and 5000 journal titles of which 1800 are current, plus primary documents, video, microform, and CD-ROM collections, computing resources and others. Less than half of the collection is in French; there is a small amount in Vietnamese but the remainder is in English, German, Russian or other languages. It is not an exclusively francophone institution, nor does it keep strictly to science and technology, but has resources and programmes in other areas as well. The Centre has a publications list of twelve titles per year, and offers further services such as printing and reproduction, translation and hosting conferences.

Summary

This section is intended to show that a great deal of money, infrastructure and planning has gone into the promotion of Francophonie in Vietnam. Nor is it necessarily just in terms of numbers learning French, but in a wide variety of domains, such that much of the developmental, technological, economic and administrative structure is held together by Francophonie-sponsored projects and institutions. This takes place through the international agencies of Francophonie, such as the AIF and the AUF, and direct involvement of the French Embassy, and down through the national and local organisations. Another key to their success is the diversity of roles. The CNIDST has other roles than just collecting material on science and technology, and the Alliance Française hold social and cultural events as well as teaching French. 'Co-operation' is the word often used to describe how relations and projects must proceed, and the partnership of the French and Vietnamese languages is one of the means.

5.3.2 Judging the success and future of Francophonie

It has been difficult to counteract the years of discouragement of French, and between the generation taught under the colonial era and the present generation under the new more open system, there has been a gap where French was meant to be just another foreign language. Many writers therefore dismiss the influence of French in Vietnam. However, promoters of Francophonie such as Daniel (1992) devote more space to the positive factors. In spite of the anti-French policy of the post-war Vietnamese government, French was nevertheless used as a language of international communication, especially with the communist nations of Eastern Europe and the other Indochinese countries. Internally, French works on agriculture and medicine written specifically on the Vietnamese situation were still used.

Clubs and culture

On the opposite side, French was also used by dissenters, continuing, says Daniel, a tradition of French as a language of revolution and freedom. It is the tradition of French, on political and literary levels, which is attracting the current generation of Vietnamese students of foreign languages. This status of French is also what causes an apparently unique phenomenon — the formation of francophone and francophile clubs. These clubs form around interest — from native or non-native speakers and from non-francophones — in French language and culture, whereas other languages seem to not hold such an attraction — there are apparently no such English or Russian clubs in Vietnam. (Such clubs are perhaps not unique to French on a worldwide level: comparisons could be drawn in expatriate communities and multicultural societies such as Australia.) Daniel tries to explain:

> Associer avec force, langue et culture, apparaît comme le maître-mot des francophiles, comme si l'on ne pouvait pas s'exprimer en français sans véhiculer une certaine façon de voir le monde[13]

[13] Uniting with strength, language and culture appears to be the rallying-point of fran-

(1992 p. 125).

Many of these clubs, culture or language oriented, workplace or privately based, educational or social, have been founded since the relaxation of policy, especially since doi moi in 1986. One would expect such clubs to promote the teaching and usage of French, and indeed many are more enthusiastic in their writing than the official Francophonie institutions, for example from the "Lettre du CAEF," newsletter of the Club des Anciens Élèves Francophones (No. 6, 13 1999; Figure D.5), on the opening of the French faculty in the École Normale Supérieure:

> [les étudiants] se lançaient dans la maîtrise et l'utilisation de la plus belle et de la plus difficile langue du monde, ce qui permet de faire la connaissance avec une civilisation des plus prestigieuses et pittoresques et de travailler avec la langue du pays d'origine des droits de l'Homme de l'égalité, de la liberté et de la fraternité.[14]

But they are patriotic too:

> A cette occasion, nous pensons aux premiers professeurs et étudiants de français qui méritent toujours la respectabilté et la reconnaissance, ce qui constitue un message aux générations plus jeunes afin qu'elles n'oublient pas les premiers pas pénibles mais courageux du processus perpétuel du regain d'intérêt pour le français du Vietnam, de préserver et embellir les belles traditions de la première faculté de français au profit de la défense et de l'édification de notre patrie bien aimée[15] (p. 3 (editorial)).

cophiles, as if it were impossible to express oneself in French without conveying a certain way of seeing the world.

[14] [the students] embark upon the mastery and usage of the most beautiful and most difficult language in the world, allowing them to acquaint themselves with a most prestigious and picturesque civilisation and to work with the language of the country of the origin of the Rights of Man, of equality, liberty and fraternity.

[15] Upon this occasion, we think of those first teachers and students of French who still

The Vietnamese government still has relatively tight control over the press and distribution of information. According to some, such as Daniel (1992), communism thus provides an impediment to the growth of French. Among the factors involved are the continued priority given to the national language, the party system which can be slow or self-interested and a lack of qualified teachers and appropriate teaching materials. Other negative influences on the prospects for French, according to Daniel, are the views of some of the older generation especially, who still equate anything to do with France with colonialism, and see the current push for French-Vietnamese links as a new imperialism. The fieldwork failed to find any indication of this, in fact suggesting the opposite (see Chapter 6), although such negative sentiment may indeed exist.

French and English views on the place of French

As we have seen, Vietnam has found its own unity of language. French, while it became the language of the élite and knowledge of it spread among the general population to some degree, did not threaten the existence of Vietnamese. Because the Vietnamese language was relatively homogenous and the issue of balancing the needs of ethnic minorities was not so pronounced as in, for example, the sub-Saharan nations of Africa, French was not needed as an intermediary or unifying factor. The forces of Vietnamese nationalism chose Vietnamese as the national language, also of course in a reaction to colonialism and war. Many linguistic investigators therefore dismiss French as a viable language in the former Indochina:

> The richness of the cultures embodied by these ancestral languages, the geographical and ideological distance separating France from these three countries, as well as the substantial tur-

deserve respect and recognition, which constitutes a message to the younger generations that they not forget the first difficult but courageous steps in the ongoing process of the revival of interest in French in Vietnam, to preserve and develop the fine traditions of the first school of French for the benefit of the defense and edification of our beloved homeland.

> moil generated by the ferocious national liberation wars waged in each of these countries contributed to the end of French language influence in Southeast Asia. Relative to their national languages today, standard French probably rates only as one of the prestige foreign languages useful for international communication. For all intents and purposes, Southeast Asia is one place where the French language has ceased to exist as a vital language of communication for its elites and the vast majority of the population. (Bourhis 1982 p. 47)

and almost identically,

> French has virtually disappeared from Southeast Asia. The various national struggles have meant that French is regarded as a language of oppression rather than of culture. (...) If any French remains it does so either as a decaying relic of the past or as no more than one of a number of foreign languages that one might learn which may be useful for a limited set of external activities. (Wardhaugh 1987 p. 148).

Note, however, that these two works were written in the Cold War period, before doi moi and the expanded international relations that the policy brought after 1986. It was really only after this time that France could begin the revival of its language and influence in Vietnam, a possibility which in the isolationist Cold War conditions did indeed look unlikely.

Many French surveys of Francophonie fail to give Vietnam more than a passing mention, even those from the past ten years or so. There is still a gap between those works which welcome some degree of diversity, including regional and overseas varieties and creoles (e. g. Pichoche and Marchello-Nizia 1991), and those which stick to a more traditional approach (e. g. Guillou 1993). However, French writers are generally more eager to point out the positive associations with Francophonie and the various ties between France and Vietnam:

> Depuis la décolonisation la francophonie reçoit un hommage en quelque sorte posthume puisque beaucoup de réfugiés s'installent en France, ce qui témoigne des liens et des devoirs que crée l'usage d'une même langue. Ils ont d'ailleurs du fait de leur connaissance de la langue une priorité d'immigration officiellement reconnue.
>
> Viêt-nam, Cambodge, Laos continuent, sous des formes diverses, à affirmer leur tradition francophone[16] (Deniau 1983 p. 43).

and also referring to the colonial past,

> Cette caractéristique historique, longtemps invoquée pour justifier la répudation du français s'est transformée aujourd'hui en un atout précieux (...) Langue des humanistes et des révolutionnaires, le français apparaît aussi bien comme une espace de connaissance, que comme un espace de liberté [17] (Daniel 1992 p. 116).

These writers are in general very positive about Francophonie. While they recognise that English is becoming the dominant international language, they do not see the French language in competition with it but as another choice, forming another, different style of community. They point out all the benefits that the many organisations and associations offer, providing a more networked system of closer ties and identity as compared with English, which has none of this background (see for example Clévy 1996, Pecheur 1994 and

[16] Since decolonisation Francophonie has received a sort of posthumous homage as many refugees settle in France, demonstrating the links and duties created by the use of a common language. They also have due to their knowledge of the language officially recognised immigration priority.

Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos continue, in different ways, to affirm their francophone tradition.

[17] This historical characteristic, previously invoked to justify the rejection of French is today transformed into a valuable asset ... As the language of humanists and revolutionaries, French is seen equally as a domain for knowledge, as for freedom.

Quang Chien Nguyen 1993 as well as Daniel). From the French point of view, English has economic force, but not the cultural side to it or the same notions of belonging to a world wide linguistic family — English spreads through the world to be spoken by anyone but not claimed as the cultural possession of a cohesive international community. Writers of English language background would be quick to counter with the adaptability and usefulness of English, and its own associations with Western freedom, progress and democracy (see for example Crystal 1997 for a discussion of the international status of English). English writers are also more pessimistic about the long term survival of French as a world language, noting that its use has declined since its nineteenth century status as the language of diplomacy, and especially since the rise of the United States as a world power and the end of the colonial era.

The official views of Francophonie

The sole working language of Francophonie is French. It may seem absurd to point this out, as Francophonie is by definition a union of countries having the French language in common, but Article 19 of the Charter states in its entirety: "La langue de travail de toutes les institutions de la Francophonie, de l'Agence et de tous ses organes est le français."[18] This would seem to impose standard French, as the assumed definition of "français," on all workings within Francophonie, from international meetings to local projects. It is certainly sensible to have French as the designated language for communication between nations where indeed it may be the one common language. However, for communication on a regional or national level, there seems to be no provision for support of local varieties, creoles or national languages in official situations. The practical status and roles of the "langues partenaires," in terms of actual partnership with French, are not clear. There seems to be no policy of bi- or multilingual publication of official documents

[18]The working language of all the institutions of Francophonie, *l'Agence* and all of its organs is French.

and reports, for example. While Francophonie might officially acknowledge and support the existence of non-standard varieties now, and while this is a significant advance on colonial perceptions of diversity, it would seem that to work in any of the Francophonie institutions, on whatever level, a command of the standard variety is still a prerequisite.

While Francophonie occasionally appeals to its past, it steers clear of referring to its history as a colonial empire. In most works on Francophonie, where origin and definition of the movement are concerned, the beginning is seen to be with the post-war African unions, and the definition is that of countries having French in common. The Charter,[19] for example, really only refers to the history of Francophonie since the creation of the ACCT in 1970:

> Cette histoire grâce à laquelle le monde qui partage la langue française existe et se développe, on la doit à celles et à ceux, nombreux, militantes et militants infatigables de la cause francophone; on la doit à ces multiples organisations privées et publiques qui, depuis de très nombreuses décennies œuvrent pour le rayonnement de la langue française et le dialogue des cultures.[20]

The tone is however 'militant' and strongly oriented towards the promotion of French, even though co-operation and acknowledgement of 'partner' cultures and languages is associated with it. Heading the list of aims of the Agence de la francophonie are:

> a. favoriser le développement de la langue française et des cultures qui l'utilisent, en relation avec la promotion des langues et des cultures partenaires des États membres;

[19] see http://www.francophonie.org/oif/francophonie/charte.htm

[20] We owe this history, thanks to which the world sharing the French language exists and develops, to the many untiring militants of the francophone cause; we owe it to the numerous private and public organisations which, for many decades, have been striving for the spread of the French language and the dialogue between cultures.

> b. soutenir le statut de la langue française, dans les organisations internationales et dans les conférences mondiales.[21]

The Senate report does refer more than some other works to French colonial activities in Vietnam, but only in 'positive' roles such as the development of the Romanised writing system, the studies undertaken by the École française d'Extrême-Orient (France, Sénat 1997–1998 p. 9) and the French legal model (ibid pp. 31–32).

The 1997–1998 French Senate report provides a good example of the French perception of their language as that of philosophy and culture and the spreading of this image to their former colonies, where they expect to find this view reflected back to them:

> Grâce â cette élite francophone et érudite, qui à joué un rôle majeur dans la vie nationale après l'indépendance et qui a conservé l'usage de notre langue, le français est aujourd'hui encore considéré comme un instrument privilégié de formation intellectuelle, d'échanges, d'accès à l'information et à la connaissance[22] (France, Sénat 1997–1998 p. 7).

This positive image, they say, formed the basis for the re-establishment and growth of Francophonie relations in Vietnam, though work was and still is required to capitalise on this advantage in order to make the use of the language a practical reality. The following chapter on the findings of the fieldwork illustrates some of the perceptions of French among various sections of the Vietnamese community, many of which reinforce these views and indicate a

[21] a. promote the development of the French language and the cultures which use it, in connection with the promotion of partner languages and cultures of Member-States;

b. support the status of the French language in international organisations and world conferences.

[22] Thanks to this educated francophone élite, which played a major role on the national stage following independence and preserved the use of our language, French is still considered today as a privileged instrument of intellectual education, exchange, access to information and knowledge.

willingness to co-operate, both on behalf of the people, francophone or not, and the government.

While the colonial ideal was to make French the language of the wider Vietnamese population, in practice it has only ever been accessible to the privileged few. Colonial policy was quickly adapted to training a class of *collaborateurs*, and the official French statement now is that it was never the aim to entirely replace the Vietnamese language and that French should remain the domain of an élite. French writers in fact proudly refer to the tradition of Vietnamese intellectuals using the French language, for example in the Sénat report:

> [L]e français était devenu, pendant la première moitié de ce siècle, la langue des élites intellectuelles vietnamiennes, pour lesquelles il représentait une voie d'accès à ce que la société et la pensée occidentales pouvaient apporter à leur pays, bridé par des coutumes archaïques, en termes de progrès scientifiques et économique, d'édification d'une société et d'un État modernes et, finalement, d'émancipation nationale[23] (France, Sénat 1997–1998 p. 47).

The report openly acknowledges that Francophonie in Vietnam now is still for the élite:

> [L]a coopération franco-vietnamienne s'attache à favoriser, en même temps que la connaissance et la pratique du français, les échanges et la coopération dans certain domaines privilégiés, et à renforcer l'influence française parmi les élites vietnamiennes[24]

[23] French became, in the first half of this century, the language of the intellectual Vietnamese élite, for whom it represented a means of access to what Western society and thought could offer their country, bound as it was by archaic customs, in terms of scientific and economic progress, edification of a modern society and state and finally, national emancipation.

[24] Franco-Vietnamese co-operation endeavours to promote, at the same time as the knowledge and usage of French, exchange and co-operation in certain privileged domains, and to reinforce French influence among the Vietnamese élite.

(ibid p. 12).

This shows that the French view on the benefits that their language brings has changed very little from the colonial era, although they take some of the credit for providing the means, i. e. the revolutionary and intellectual traditions of the French language, through which Vietnam ended that era. Francophonie continues the tradition of promoting French as the *mission civilisatrice* saw it: as the superior means of transmitting scientific thought and human ideals. In most former colonies, French is still a minority language for the more privileged upper classes, but Francophonie is based more on co-operation and equality than previous doctrines of assimilation and association.

Policy has been a matter of changing the goals to suit reality, using as the basis such French organisation and influence as remains in Vietnam (support from francophone intellectuals, the legal system, medical training, etc; see below). Therefore, if French influence remains mostly among the élite, then that is an area that must be redeveloped. It is recognised that French could never be a majority language in Vietnam, therefore it is encouraged as a second language of international communication and co-operation. Nor is the goal to confront the evident dominance of English as a world language — the Senate report states that:

> Toute politique qui consisterait à opposer — ou paraître opposer — le français à l'anglais serait en effet vouée à l'échec et à terme préjudiciable à l'avenir du français au Vietnam[25] (p. 48).

Instead the aim is for the establishment of French as an alternative and to concentrate on particular domains such as information technology, law and culture. If anglophone writers argue that French never was and never will be the dominant language, or now not even the strongest second language in

[25] Any policy which opposed — or appeared to oppose — French to English would be in effect destined to failure and in the end detrimental to the future of French in Vietnam.

Vietnam, Francophonie supporters can simply respond by saying that this is not the point of Francophonie, just as spreading English is not the aim of the Commonwealth.

Summary

Further questions could be asked on how successful the Francophonie efforts are in Vietnam. Japan and Australia are also big contributors to Vietnam in the areas of trade and development aid, and trade and relations with other ASEAN members are significant (Vietnam joined ASEAN in 1995). The continuing American fascination with the country and the influence of American culture cannot be discounted. In comparison to these factors, Francophonie may be seen to be a smaller player among the numerous forces now affecting Vietnam. It is, however, a force that takes itself very seriously and focuses on particular goals. Francophonie institutions and programmes aim to fill gaps in the development of the country not covered by the Vietnamese government or with the co-operation of other foreign partners. They are building their own network, but catering to a limited section of the population. This does raise questions as to how beneficial the programmes are to the wider population, the majority of which still lives at a subsistence level and is less likely to benefit from city-based education systems aimed at forming a French-speaking élite. Improving schooling in regional areas and raising living standards may be considered a priority, but Francophonie contributes to a diversity of programmes across the domains and sections of the community.

This chapter has looked at what the Francophonie institutions do, in terms of practical projects and promotion of certain perceptions, to further their cause. No longer are the French trying to build a new piece of France in the Far East, and the programmes are now based on co-operation and multilateral relations. France and Francophonie put considerable resources each year into maintaining and developing their projects. There is doubtless a practical aim of eventually benefiting from Vietnam's economic develop-

ment. Although the returns from Vietnam are not yet significant, France is building the basis for a long-term francophone trade bloc. However, in many ways, the old ideals still remain, reinforcing traditional French perceptions of their language as that of higher thought, culture and the sciences, one that can bring civilisation to less developed societies. The next chapter takes a more personal look at Vietnamese views on and use of French, examining some of the results of the field trip.

Chapter 6

Analysis of the fieldwork

6.1 The research trip

The fieldwork took place over a period of just over three weeks in January 2000, just before the New Year festival of Tết. The majority of time was spent in Hanoi, with two days in Ho Chi Minh City at the end of the trip. In this short space of time, a number of different projects had been envisaged, though with few definite details programmed into a timetable. This allowed for a large degree of flexibility, though it meant most arrangements had to be made once in the country. The aspects of the fieldwork can be roughly divided into three categories. Firstly, library and archival research was planned to gather resources on the colonial era not available elsewhere. Secondly, to gain a first hand view of the official side of French activities in Vietnam, institutions concerned with Francophonie were visited. Thirdly, interviewing and observation of speakers formed an important part of fieldwork, both in terms of providing examples of French of various standards and the attitudes towards it. The latter category contains both recorded interviews of French speakers and notes taken from encounters where taping was undesired or impractical. Some of the methodology for this work has been introduced in Chapter 2, but more details will be given before the

findings themselves are presented.

6.1.1 Archival research

A major component of the research trip was to obtain material from the Colonial Archives in National Archives Centre One. This archive contains records from the era of French government, from the administration on an Indochina-wide level through that of Tonkin down to provincial level. Although the system had been recently (1995) updated, access is still somewhat awkward and there are long waiting periods for the retrieval or copying of documents. Given the short time available, a thorough search of the collection was not possible, but a selection of materials relating to the policy and teaching of language was obtained. More relevant materials may be discovered in a more detailed search of the Archives and in the second National Centre in Ho Chi Minh City, but also those records which were taken back to France. As in all cases where such records are concerned, one must not ignore the possibility of documents being destroyed, lost or misfiled, especially considering the periods of decolonisation and war in which conservation of these materials was not such a priority.

Some material was also gathered from the National Library and Alliance Française collections. The Alliance library is a small collection catering mainly for recreational and cultural use and as a complement to classes. It therefore contains little academic work, but the vast majority of items are in French and include a number of works, of a literary or general interest nature, specifically related to Vietnam and wider Francophonie. The National Library collection was more difficult to access because, while French language items exist, the computer catalogue system is entirely in Vietnamese. While the staff, especially the foreign relations officer whose English was excellent, were very helpful, unfortunately time did not allow an extended session of searching, and it was not possible to determine what, if any, historical works might exist.

6.1.2 Visiting institutions

The importance, especially in Asian cultures, of establishing contacts through a chain of introductions was proved with the kind assistance of Mme Pham Thi Lieu of the Hanoi Cultural University. Having exchanged correspondence during the previous year and through initial meetings arranged through her, it was possible to make visits to numerous other institutions mostly on the basis of further introductions.

These visits in themselves had a number of purposes. They permitted not only the gathering of current information on the strategies of Francophonie and the practical aspects of their implementation, but also the interviewing of French speakers from various backgrounds in order to gauge personal attitudes and their experiences in working with the Francophonie organisations. As it happened, the representatives were indeed from a range of generations and included both native French speakers and Vietnamese. Directors of the institutions have seniority in age as well as professional status, and were more likely to be French. Lower positions tend to be held by young Vietnamese graduates of the francophone education system, many of whom had also studied in France on French Embassy scholarships. All spoke excellent French, and some also spoke some English. There also seemed to be a reasonable mix of men and women. Inquiries were welcomed and someone was usually able to talk even when the head was unavailable.

6.1.3 Interviewing

Finding willing subjects to interview was surprisingly easy, as the Vietnamese were generally interested in what a lone female foreigner was doing in Vietnam, and would often approach and start a conversation of their own accord (many of these of course spoke English rather than French). These were naturally the more outgoing sorts of people; those distrustful of foreigners or tourists were therefore inaccessible. In these cases, the interview was of an extremely informal style, in fact simply a conversation. It would

have been somewhat inappropriate to suddenly produce a questionnaire, and although I sometimes asked whether I could use my recorder, this often embarrassed them.

Tape interviewing was mostly done in two sessions. The first was at the Alliance Française, where I was introduced to a number of the regular visitors to the reading lounge. These were old men educated under the French government and, as shown by their very presence at the Alliance, still using their French to some degree and favourable towards a French presence in Vietnam. I handed around some of the questionnaires (Appendix A), but mostly they preferred to talk by themselves, and seemed unconcerned by the presence of the tape recorder. This made few demands on me as an interviewer in some ways, but had its own problems. Having introduced myself and generally outlining my research in terms of finding out about what learning French was like when they were at school, they would begin a monologue on how the school system worked or their own life story. This was not necessarily the information I was after, but interrupting to ask more questions would most often result in confusing them and making them lose their train of thought. Due to the respect given to one's elders in Vietnam, it is possibly considered rude to interrupt much at all, so I kept this to a minimum. As a result some of the recordings are longwinded and not particularly relevant, but occasionally patience was rewarded when the interviewee of his own accord brought up a topic in which I was interested. Selected extracts from the recordings can be found in Appendix B.

The second session was much more on the spur of the moment, when a new (English-speaking) student acquaintance volunteered to introduce me to the old men who would gather by Hoan Kiem Lake. This involved him walking up to anyone of a certain age and asking straight up in Vietnamese whether the gentleman spoke French, while I stood holding my recorder and smiling encouragingly. Sometimes the answer was no, or that he had learnt in school but did not remember any. If the answer was yes, we would sit on one of the park benches and start talking. In this situation, the results varied

from a fluent conversation to rather awkward and unsatisfactory question and answer format, the speakers' levels of French differing quite widely. Being an even less formal situation than that at the Alliance, there was less tendency towards the monologue reply, and in fact in a couple of cases the subjects were more interested in asking me questions instead of replying to mine. It should be noted that all of the subjects recorded at the Alliance and at Hoan Kiem Lake were men, as it seems that, among the older generation at least, Vietnamese traditional society prevails in that the men gather in a public place (for example by the lake) in their leisure time, while women remain more at the home or form their own groups. I made a point of asking about whether the mens' wives spoke French, and indeed a number did, having learnt it in French schools like their husbands.

Recordings were obtained from four informants at the Alliance and from five by Hoan Kiem Lake. It is impossible to avoid noise in Hanoi, but in all cases the recordings were of acceptable quality. There was less a problem with background noise than with the interviewee not speaking clearly, due either to mumbling, turning away from the recorder or unclear French. Especially in the interviews by the lake, the subjects were not so confident with their French, having little occasion to use it. I made an effort to speak my clearest, most correct French, and was occasionally complimented on it as an expression of polite surprise that a non-French person of a younger generation knew the language. At other times, I got the feeling I was simply not being understood, when receiving answers that did not fit the question, or being answered with a 'oui' which was obviously just out of politeness. This could be due to a number of factors, including hearing loss associated with age, French language loss due to a long period of disuse or failure to understand what was being asked of them. Sometimes, this could be remedied by repeating or rephrasing the question, or trying a different line of questioning.

A number of interviews and observations were carried out without the tape recorder. Occasionally subjects would decline to be taped, and it was

impractical in some situations to pull out the recorder and set it running, interrupting whatever other activity was in progress, in the hope of catching a few words of French spoken amongst the English or Vietnamese. These cases, and other points of interest including non-verbal observations, were noted down as soon as possible after they occurred. This section also looks at the written French as found in tourist brochures, museums and other tourist sites, flyers and shops (see Appendix E).

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Archival and library material

The search concentrated on the sorts of documents containing information on the language policy of the French in Vietnam and the actions they took in promoting French and establishing a new education system for the Vietnamese. The most likely source was therefore the series 'instruction publique.' Many of the documents contained in this series, and no doubt the Archives in general, are of a strictly administrative nature, such as approvals for construction of schools, establishing a new course or requests for admittance to the institutions. The files are often incomplete and usually only cover a short period. Reports, presumably made on a yearly basis, on the success of programmes or students in a given year do not remain in a quantity to draw any conclusions over a sufficiently large timespan. A brief search was made for documents that might contain examples of Tây Bồi or non-standard French, e. g. soldiers' requests and other petitions, but such files only contained a French copy, usually a translation. Such documents may exist, however, particularly in the military or police records.

A number of reports and directives on indigenous education 1911 from the Résident Supérieur to provincial chiefs were found, but many of the more interesting records were of a one-off nature. These include employers' reports on their satisfaction with their interpreters as requested by the Résident

Supérieur; the Hanoi Alliance Française records 1897, consisting of a rough copy of the minutes of the AGM (unfortunately no other files on the Alliance were found); a report on indigenous education reform, 1906–1910; and a letter to the Résident Supérieur encouraging a project to establish schools for the sons of mandarins from Yunnan to study in Hanoi. These documents are all referred to where necessary in the relevant chapters; see the Bibliography for further details.

The overall picture gained from this selection is of the importance to the French government of providing a good Western-style education for as much of the population as possible (which in practice extended only to the next generation of teachers, intellectuals and public servants). Reducing Chinese influence and introducing logic and reason were the most important aims, and the use of quốc ngũ' was seen as vitally important for both of these goals. The promotion of French language and culture was essential, the language overtly being a vehicle for the culture and thought of France, but what was lacking was a body of well-trained teachers and teaching material.

Items of interest from the National Library include a few recent works on Francophonie (some of which were actually provided by the French Embassy), a section of textbooks and teaching aides and a small range of journals. The French language journal collection seems to begin in the early 1960s. There are a few Vietnamese publications, but it consists mainly of technical and medical titles, many of which come from Eastern European nations, particularly Romania. This is a possible indication of a non-France based connection with Francophonie through the years of minimal contact with the West, and also reflects Vietnam's ties with Soviet communism. More recent titles include cultural and popular French publications, though it should be noted that resources, including journals, provided by the French Embassy in Vietnam seem to be directed towards more specific institutions, as outlined in the following sections.

6.2.2 Francophonie institutions

Some of the details of these institutions have been given in the preceding chapter on Francophonie; this section will refer more specifically to what was gained by the visit to each and speaking with the representatives. It therefore contains a number of personal observations and opinions on behalf of the interviewees which may not reflect their area of expertise, or the official line of their organisation. This is one of the benefits of a personal interview, especially as in many cases the interviewee agreed to meet immediately, without any time to prepare a presentation. Most nevertheless gave an eloquent delivery on the function and aims of their institution, demonstrating good public relations skills.

Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie

I visited the Asia-Pacific regional office (BRAP, bureau regional Asie-Pacifique) of the AIF and spoke with M. Mai Phan Dũng, responsible for programmes. The director is a Frenchman, M. Stéphan Plumat. They were able to provide a number of general documents on the working of their organisation, as detailed in the preceding chapter.

M. Dũng was more pessimistic about the state of French in Vietnam than were others within Francophonie with whom I spoke. He declined to be recorded — he is possibly not generally required to take on public relations tasks and therefore was not entirely comfortable with the role. However, he was very eager to be of help and evidently did not feel obliged to stick to any official AIF promotion. He realistically pointed out that English is much more dominant than French in Vietnam. There is much less French teaching and only TV5 and one radio station in French compared to a wider choice of English language media, and fewer French language journals. Even Crédit Lyonnais and the Hotel Sofitel staff speak English rather than French. France is not investing much yet, and it is difficult for French language graduates to find a job in their area — M. Dũng is one of the few in his class from the

École Normale Supérieure who did. He is however encouraged by the fact that the system produces 'quality' French speakers, whereas many of those that learn English, either in school or on the street, do not speak it so well.

He also knew about Tây Bồi, and seemed rather amused that I had even heard about it and was studying it. He said he heard about it in school, though I assumed in the playground rather than in history class, and that people know about it. It is still, he said, spoken by some old men: "ils ne conjuguent même pas..." ("They don't even conjugate...") but also colonial-era French is not the same as today's. Unfortunately he did not offer any real explanation, though what he may be referring to is perhaps just a time shift and generation gap.

Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie

This was again the office for South-East Asia, and here I was met by M. Christophe Villemer, deputy head of projects for the francophone universities of Asia. M. Villemer, who also speaks English, was very energetic and enthusiastic about the role of the AUF in Vietnam, and was pleased that someone from 'outside' Francophonie was interested in the subject.

He began by stressing that the AUF was not about the promotion and diffusion of French, as this was the domain of the Alliance Française and the French Embassy. At the tertiary level, emphasis was not on the teaching of French as such, but rather on communication and development. The goal is to produce professionals who can work in their area of expertise in French as well as Vietnamese. This requires teachers who can apply French as well as teach the subject material, and therefore many Vietnamese teachers are sent to France to study, not only the French language but also their specialty with France's greater resources and technology. The best students were also able to study overseas. Nor does the AUF ignore the importance of English as a world language. English is often taught as well. The European Union supports the programmes because their focus is also on multilingualism. The

EU has discovered that if students in Asia learn English as a second language and wish to study or gain employment overseas, they are most likely to go to the United States or Australia, whereas if they learn French first but also study English, they are likely to be attracted to Europe. The AUF therefore takes the trilingual approach, with French as the priority.

M. Villemer was also eager to point out the co-operative nature of this Francophonie — the AUF was set up in Hanoi in 1993 at the instigation of the Vietnamese government, which, he says, is proof of their desire for closer ties with French-speaking nations and for co-operation in improving their economic development. French is used as the language of co-operation between the countries of the former Indochina, so that it is possible for a Vietnamese law (for example) lecturer to go and teach at a university in Laos. Mutual aid and economic ties with African nations are also high on the list of prospective benefits brought by contact through Francophonie. M. Villemer noted that this was part of the multilateral nature of Francophonie now — France does not issue directives, but is simply one of the members of an international body, and Vietnam is a partner in their projects. This is, he says, the reason why Francophonie is succeeding in Vietnam.

When asked about the influence of the colonial era, M. Villemer acknowledges that it is obviously a presence and links remain with the older generation who learnt French during that time. One comment was that the war with the French was very different from that with America, but this was not fully explained, though he also points out the French revolutionary tradition, with the connection of Vietnamese revolutionaries and Communist party members studying in France, and in fact continuing to speak French in meetings well into the 1980s. However, he was quick to stress that the goals and means of Francophonie are very different to colonialism, and once again that the AUF is there at the request of the Vietnamese government. There is certainly no question of infringing on the teaching of Vietnamese, and the goal has never been to spread French as the dominant language. He notes that a common criticism of Francophonie is that French is not a

widely spoken language, and it is not heard on the streets of Hanoi, but he says that this is a misinterpretation of the aims if the movement. He in fact admits that the goal is more directed towards forming an 'élite' of French-speaking professionals rather than a French-speaking Vietnam: "c'est une francophonie minoritaire, mais c'est une francophonie de qualité."[1] He also has a number of ideas on French and Vietnamese culture, such as the French language transmitting a strong cultural element that English does not, but that Vietnam and France both have strong cultures which is why there is seen to be an affinity between the two. He says that "un Vietnamien francophone restera vietnamien"[2] — there is no deculturation to alienate a French-speaking Vietnamese from his or her compatriots. Vietnamese students of French are attracted by things other than the colonial history, notably the cultural remnants of the colonial architecture, by the prestige still attached to disciplines such as law, medicine and mathematics, and by the new attraction of expertise in information technology.

Centre de Formation Continue en Français de Spécialité

I made two visits to this institution, one to talk with the co-director and one to visit and sit in on a class. The co-director (a Vietnamese; the other is French) was very informative and quite proud of the role that the CFC plays in higher education in French. She sees the CFC as fulfilling a unique function of teaching high-level professional skills and a practical usage of French as opposed to just the language. She says that students often arrive with a good grasp of the rules and grammar but are unable to use the language in practice or apply it appropriately in context, and that the courses run at the CFC are intended to bridge that gap between academic language teaching and the professional world. Students can do these courses while studying elsewhere, or return to further study afterwards, but the director notes that while each additional certificate is beneficial for one's employment

[1] It's a minority *francophonie* but one of quality.

[2] A francophone Vietnamese will remain Vietnamese.

prospects, these are not a guarantee of finding a job afterwards, and that indeed some graduates can still have difficulty.

The director acknowledges that this is one of the better resourced institutions, and receives a good deal of support from the Embassy. Also unusual are class sizes, which at twenty to twenty-five students, are small compared to the polytechnique classes of forty to fifty. Costs are also favourable compared to the classes at the Alliance Française. There are however improvements that could be made. The computing suite consists of only seven machines, inadequate for a whole class to use, and numbers of students are threatening to outgrow the facilities in other areas as well. The CFC can only take the best students, but other limitations on intake include those that can afford it, and those that can come to Hanoi — the CFC is a national body, but in practice most of the students are from Hanoi and nearby districts.

I was invited to sit in on a class by a new friend, Kien (whom I had met in completely unrelated circumstances — whilst visiting a temple). This was one of the classes in the Tourism and Hospitality course, consisting of seventeen students, all of university age, i. e. around twenty. Kien has finished his French studies at the National University, and unlike most of his class, already has experience working in the tourism sector as a guide in the Temple of Literature[3], and therefore speaks better French than many of his classmates. Their teacher for this particular class is a Frenchman, 'Alain.' He seems to not speak much Vietnamese, having trouble pronouncing the students' names, though the students all seem to understand his standard French, spoken at normal speed.

In this session they were correcting a test. Tasks were to inquire about making a booking for a seminar on behalf of an agency, and to promote Vietnam to a French group-tourism agency. Alain went through each paper pointing out typical errors or things well-handled. It was important to complete the task appropriately as well as using correct French. He mostly

[3] Vietnam's first university, dating from the eleventh century, now a cultural centre and temple to Confucius; see Figures E.7, E.8.

criticised lack of reading the question properly or failing to understand the task. Some students showed they had understood the question but needed to work on the necessary style of French, while others had difficulty. Alain seems to be a competent and encouraging teacher, and the standard of the course would appear to fulfill its aims. The textbook is photocopied, a sign of limited resources, but seems to be a fairly standard work, all in French, with information on tourism oriented subjects and numerous practical exercises.

The project for the following term was to plan a class trip to Halong Bay, including guests from the Embassy, which was sponsoring it. The work was to be done in groups of five or six to find appropriate accommodation, transport, tours and costing. Alain gave them some starting points, but this was to be a very practical exercise in tourism organisation — as he says, they are both agent and client. The research would of course be in Vietnamese, but the class presentations would be in French.

Centre National de l'Information et de la Documentation Scientifique et Technologique

I was able to speak with the director, Dr. Ta Ba Hung, who speaks very good French, and a number of his staff, who were able to provide more up-to-date information on the CNIDST than their 1994 brochure could give (a new brochure is currently being produced). Dr. Hung also speaks Russian and some English, but says French is "dans le cœur" ('in the heart') — he is very francophile. He sees the CNIDST as an integral part of Francophonie, and indeed they seem to undertake many joint projects and are more than a library and resource centre. Of their 200 employees, twenty speak French, which is not many, he says, but more than most other institutions. Most of those who speak French learnt it as French for teaching, and some have studied in France, including himself. Dr. Hung is very positive about the projects, especially bilingual education and combining the teaching of language with practical expertise. He sees the diversity and flexibility of the CNIDST's roles as one of its greatest advantages. It also has a social

function, holding francophile gatherings, and they make the most of any expertise they can find, especially the older speakers who learnt under the French regime.

Also very helpful was Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lan, foreign relations expert. She speaks excellent French with a near-perfect French accent, having studied in France under an Embassy scholarship. The Embassy also provides a great deal of support in terms of resources and materials for the Centre. The CNIDST, in association with other Francophonie organisations in Vietnam, is eager to form more and more links with other francophone countries, especially African nations and Canada. Ms. Lan says that links with Cambodia and Laos are more a case of Vietnam supporting its less developed neighbours rather than a strong Francophonie tie, although M. Villemer of the AUF (above) did cite French as an important link for educational, training and trade purposes. She also pointed out the growing demand for CNIDST services, currently at 5000 requests per month.

I was introduced to M. Nguyen Nhu Kim, ministerial advisor on francophone affairs in the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment. M. Kim is a former director of the CNIDST, and he now seems to hold a semi-retirement advisory role. Again, he speaks excellent French, and spent six years in France in various positions in foreign affairs and Francophonie capacities.

Alliance Française

I was unable to speak with the director here, but visited a number of times to interview, view the facilities and indeed use them myself. The reading lounge area was usually well-patronised by a mix of old men and young students, most of whom would use French to talk to each other. The library seemed to be used largely by the students, though I was informed that there is extensive borrowing among the wider francophone community. It had very much the feel of a school library, with its large collection of novels and resources for

class projects. The upstairs balcony café, being rather expensive for everyday patronage by students, attracted the older members, acting as a lunch and meeting spot. Overall, the Alliance provides a range of different facilities and attracts a wide cross-section of the francophone population, from Vietnamese students, to retirees wishing to maintain their French, to visitors wanting to see a French film, to the French expatriate community. Everything inside is done in French, which could be a little intimidating for the beginning student, but they have succeeded in creating a popular space with a real French feel to it. In fact, most of the activities such as films, presentations and exhibitions, are on topics entirely to do with France and are presented by French people, and in fact there is very little local content (see Figure D.3). Along with the not insignificant costs of becoming a member or doing a course, this is possible justification for labelling the Alliance as 'élitist.' However, I encountered no sense of antagonism towards the re-establishment of French institutions and This one in particular seems very popular with its target demographics, i. e. French speakers and learners.

6.2.3 Interviews and observations

Old men

All of the informants[4] had learnt French at school under the French government, though at least one had attended a Catholic school. A number also knew some English, though one said he had learnt it at school but forgotten it all. A few had also learnt Russian and Chinese, and one German. They were all local to Hanoi or the immediate surroundings. At least two classified themselves as being from a family of 'lettrés' (Nos. 4, 7) whose fathers or entire families also spoke French. Respondent 7 said that they in fact spoke French in the home (though to what extent was unclear). Their teachers

[4]More detailed transcripts of the interviews are presented in Appendix B. They are referred to simply in chronological order of recording; more precise references are given to the approximate location on the tape: (1B 248–259) therefore indicates the relevant passage appears on Tape 1, side B, in the interval between 248 and 259 on the tape counter.

were Vietnamese, and some seemed never to have had any real contact with native French speakers. However, it had seemed normal for them to have learnt French at school, and there seemed to be no resentment of it, indeed at least one said they were very eager to learn. Some went on to study at university level, while for others the wars interrupted their education and they had little occasion to use their French again. The more privileged ones had travelled, some living in France for a number of years. Those that had visited France said that they had had no trouble with the language, evidently finding their own French was not noticeably different from the standard variety — they in fact seemed a little puzzled at the question.

The standard of French varied quite significantly, from quite clear and fluent French of those from an educated background (No. 4 followed by No. 7 being most fluent) to a couple of words from those that had learnt at school and forgotten (of those recorded, No. 6 showed least proficiency). In between was a range of language which contained one or more deviations from the standard. These included varying degrees of an accent, indistinct speech, informal language, hesitancy, lack of vocabulary, a tendency to exclusive use of the present tense and omission or 'swallowing' of particles such as prepositions, agreement, conjunctions and some articles.

Most informants mentioned the fact that they had learnt French a long time ago and had therefore forgotten a great deal. Those less confident with the language demonstrated an amount of hesitancy, searching for the right words, and tended to use the present tense:

> Avant la guerre je ne parle pas avec les Français, seulement avec les Vietnamiens, parce que, seul dans la guerre je parle avec des, des Français comme des arrêtés (No. 2, 1A 087–140).[5]

Nos. 5 and 6 gave mostly short-answer responses in the most basic French, again using the present tense ("Je vais à l'école" — I go to school) and

[5] Before the war I don't speak with the French, only with Vietnamese, because, only in the war I speak with the French like the ones that were captured.

sometimes omitting particles ("Je travaille, infirmier" — I work, nurse). Both of these respondents also show interference from English: "I speak France a little! [...] Oui, anglais a little!" (No. 6).

Others indicated confusion over tense and mood: "Dans les années de mon collège, je peux, je peux suivre quatre ans en français..."[6] (No. 1, 1A 000–022) which shows a tendency to use the infinitive where possible (*suivre*). There are indications that the speech of some speakers tends towards use of invariant verb forms; No. 8 for example, while otherwise generally using correct forms, uses *j'avais* in all cases of the first person singular of *avoir* no matter the tense, thus: "Auparavant j'avais utilisé l'anglais aussi. Mais j'avais déjà oublié tout"[7] (2A 342–347) and "j'avais visité la France... J'avais passé par [...] j'avais une fille qui travaille en Allemagne"[8] (2A 367–378). However, there is not enough evidence from the less proficient speakers to judge whether this language decay leads generally to the invariant verb forms found in Tây Bồi.

Many of these features are found in pidginisation or Tây Bồi, though they are likely to be due to language loss caused by the lapse of time and memory of the respondents. The standard of the respondent's French usually fitted a background that suggested longer contact with it, that is, those that had studied French for longer at school or gone on to university, or had travelled abroad, or had an occupation which brought them into contact with French speakers, were more likely to speak better French. Maintaining it through reading or speaking practice was also significant.

The informants' occupations were quite varied, and unsurprisingly, many saw service in various roles during wartime. Some were soldiers or engineers (Nos. 1, 3, 7), while others were drivers (No. 5), including one who drove for the French but worked as a spy for the Vietnamese. The latter, unfortunately, claimed to have forgotten his French and only produced the words

[6] In the years of my school, I can, I can take four years of French...

[7] Before, I used to use English as well. But I had already forgotten it all.

[8] I had visited France... I had passed through [...] I had a daughter working in Germany.

"ça va," "merci" and "chauffeur." Other occupations were hospital worker (No. 6), doctor of traditional medicine, public servant (No. 8) and language teacher (Nos. 2, 3). Most, after the French had left, had no occasion to use French. Only those that had worked for the French, for example the drivers, seemed to have much contact at all, although one who served as a soldier (No. 2) said he spoke to the French prisoners of war.

Those I spoke to at the Alliance came regularly, some every day, in order to practice their French through reading. One also did some translation for Vietnamese journals (No. 2). One I met by the lake was also a member (No. 8), and others also tried to maintain their French by reading newspapers or novels "J'aime beaucoup les auteurs français. Par exemple Victor Hugo, Lamartine..."[9] (No. 8, 2A 342–347). Some also mentioned that they could not speak French as well as they read it, though one was happy to speak to French tourists, which was a mutually beneficial experience:

> La plupart de Français, oui, ne parlent pas bien anglais. Mais quand ils rencontrent les gens qui parlent français comme moi, ils sont très heureux, et moi aussi![10] (No. 7, 2A 180–195).

Most said however that there was little opportunity to speak French, although a few specifically mentioned that they enjoyed doing so. The ideology of French has been transferred to the extent that one said that he sought to maintain his French after the wars because "moi j'apprécions que le français, la francophonie c'est une langue claire et précise"[11] (No. 3, 1A 197–270).

They are aware of the French government's efforts to re-establish links with Vietnam, and are generally positive about the new initiatives to aid in the development of the country, some saying that it was not doing enough

[9] I like French authors very much. Such as Victor Hugo, Lamartine...

[10] Most French, yes, don't speak English well. But when they meet people who speak French, like me, they are very happy, and me too!

[11] Me, I appreciate [1st pers. pl.] that French, Francophonie, is a clear and precise language.

(No. 3). They also noted the increase in French activity in the last few years, with more exposure of the French language and that young people were learning many languages including French. As demonstrated above, they are aware of Francophonie as well, respondents 3, 7 and 9 mentioning the term, although No. 3 seems to use it interchangeably with 'français,' the French language.

All seemed eager to put the past behind them, at least in terms of relations with both France and the United States. The wars, they insisted, were over, and Vietnam has always been willing to make friends with all nations. Both countries are now helping with the reconstruction and development process, but, one respondent said, France and Vietnam "sont des frères. L'amitié entre les deux peuples. Et nous respecte, et nous respectons toujours la civilisation de la France"[12] (No. 7, 2A 208–236).

The respondent who spoke the best French (No. 4) and gave the longest interview had lived in France for quite some time. He was well educated, having studied law, and his French was particularly clear and well-constructed, though occasionally imperfect, with a tendency to speak of the past in the present tense. He also was able to give the most interesting details about the impact of the French as colonisers. Having visited Durban, he used the race relations situation there as a comparison with French colonialism, saying he was shocked at the treatment of the non-Europeans. English colonialism, he said, was very clear-cut: they were there to exploit the resources (1A 375–400). (I will assume he used Durban as an example of colonial extremism rather than of a typically 'English' colony, English influence having faded by the twentieth century.)

The French policy was more 'ingenious,' he said, with the five regions of Indochina administered separately as 'colony' or 'protectorate,' leaving the Hué monarchy in place for a time and using the mandarin system to administer via the Vietnamese élite, gradually introducing French ways. This

[12] are brothers. Friendship between the two peoples. And we still respect, respect the French civilisation.

view is in fact how the French aimed to pursue their colonialism, although as presented in Chapter 3, things did not progress quite so smoothly. As this respondent and others indicated, the teachers were Vietnamese, although at higher education levels the school directors, examiners and university lecturers were French. He said that it was difficult to learn because the teachers were not very good and materials and support were lacking — other respondents mentioned a lack of books — and also because of the difficulties of the language itself:

> Et même, on fait des compostions ensemble, et on ne connaît rien sur la syntaxe, on invente toute sorte de grammaire [...] on ne comprend rien... Le conjugasion des verbes, et le sexe des mots, parce que chez nous on n'a pas de trucs comme ça. Il y a, un jour il y a un jeune qui disait à son maître, "mais pourquoi on ne dit pas 'le table' au lieu de 'la table' — expliquez-nous!" ... alors il n'y a pas beaucoup de logique.[13] (1B 178–225)

This is probably familiar to learners of second languages everywhere. However, the French ideology was strong:

> puisque nous considérons que la littérature française était excellente et bonne, puisque le français est quelque chose de bon, donc, lire, ça, ça devra nous rapporter, ça c'est le principe [...] pour le français pur et surtout la littérature, la poésie, on avale...[14] (1B 178–225)

Learning French would assure a Vietnamese of a good job, and at the

[13] And we even did compositions together, and we don't know anything about syntax, we invent all sorts of grammar... we didn't understand a thing... Conjugation of verbs, gender, because with us, we don't have anything like that. There was, one day there's a student who said to his teacher, "but why don't we say 'the [masculine] table' instead of 'the [feminine] table' — tell us why!" ... so there's not much logic.

[14] because we considered French literature excellent and good, because French was something good, so reading, that was supposed to be rewarding, that was the principle [...] with pure French, and especially literature and poetry, we drank it in...

time, he said, he was eager to learn, and anything French was good, particularly the literature. However, he said the experience of learning another language was well worth it, as it encouraged imagination and gave entry into another tradition of culture and thought, though he discovered that the reality of France and its language was somewhat different when he actually visited. He now considers his grasp of French grammar better than that of his native Vietnamese, so that by studying French, he is more knowledgeable about the language than native French students now (1B 248–259).

In spite of his command of French, he of his own accord made an obvious mention of Tây Bồi, though not by name. He talked of it as a transition speech, "un transfert, de l'un à l'autre," at a basic level for everyday purposes. Vietnamese domestics

> emploient le vietnamien francisé, et d'autre part les patrons, un français vietnamisé. Alors là, ces échanges là forment une sorte de bricolage. Et ça peut permettre aussi de se comprendre, mais au niveau tout à fait pratique.[15] (1B 340–400)

He spoke of this as being in the past, but noted the influence of French on today's Vietnamese, such as technical terms. He went on to say that Chinese had largely influenced Vietnamese in the same way in the area of philosophy, as had other languages in lesser ways. In his opinion, this made Vietnamese a little more difficult to learn, but also very interesting for foreigners because they could each find something of their own language in it, again another trait which English colonies do not share. It is interesting to note this informant's recognition of the fact that his own language has multiple origins and influences, although one could certainly argue against his assertion that this does not happen in English colonies. His description of Tây Bồi is a very functional and quite objective one, apparently without being disparaging of it even though he was quite proud of his own standard of French. It indicates

[15] used a 'Frenchified' Vietnamese and on the other hand, the bosses, a Vietnamised French. So, these exchanges form a sort of makeshift job. And it can also allow communication, but at a purely practical level.

that Tây Bồi was indeed a part of colonial life and can be considered part of the contact and interaction between linguistic communities.

These interviews revealed that the ideology of French, spread by popular stereotype or promoted by the French and Francophonie, was taken up by the Vietnamese. Students during the colonial era accepted that French was, on a practical level, the means to a prestigious and secure career, but also that on an ideological level it was the superior language for clarity of thought and with a tradition of literature and philosophy. These gentlemen who still retain their French also retain the ideology, even if they acknowledge the difficulties of learning with limited resources and the ultimate failure of the colonial system. They also, however, keep practicalities in mind. Tây Bồi was a pragmatic development to cope with less than adequate communications, as was recognised by respondent 4 although most others were unaware of it. They are however aware of and support the revival of Francophonie and appreciate the development that it can bring to Vietnam, but also accept that English is more prevalent.

Tây Bồi?

A possible example of Tây Bồi was found as spoken by the Archives guardsman. This old man who wears a khaki uniform and a black beret spoke only a couple of words of French at a time. Unfortunately an extended conversation with him was not possible as he was on duty and I was there to research, and it was difficult to use the tape recorder as all bags had to be left in the lockers. The items of vocabulary he used were either basic words such as *oui, non, bonjour, au revoir, merci* and numbers, or related to his occupation such as *salle de lecture, sac* and *clef.* At one stage he kept repeating "lecture book" (from the cover of my notepad) — he understood the French 'lecture' ('reading' (noun)) but maybe not the 'book.' He asked "laisser-passer où?" ('pass where?') to see my reader's ticket, very much a reduced French or pidgin form, and also made more use of gesture than might be considered normal for Vietnamese (waving one's hands around Gallic-style

is not part of the Asian culture). When I asked if he had learnt French at school, and he said no, though it is unclear whether he understood what I was asking. He can read and write, at least enough to keep records of who goes in and out of the Archives. It is difficult to deduce from this small amount of evidence whether this informant was in fact speaking Tây Bồi as learned under French employers in the public service, or whether his French had suffered language decay through disuse. The limited data do seem to suggest that whatever his previous standard of French, it is now very like a pidgin, with a vocabulary restricted to the functional level of his work, incomplete sentences and ellipsis of items such as pronouns, articles and the copula.

Students and young people

The students with whom I spoke — a total of around fifteen over the period of the field trip (not including the CFC class) — were of high school or university age. Most were learning or spoke English as their second language. Perhaps five of them were learning French, and a couple were able to speak fairly well, in complete sentences. Kien speaks the best French of them, and better than any of the students spoke English, but with an accent that took a little getting used to. He told me that his friends studying French liked to practice on him because he has the most experience with it.

The students made a number of sometimes conflicting observations about the language. One or two remarked that it was easier to learn than English because many of the sounds are similar to Vietnamese, but others said that it was more difficult because the grammar is more complicated. Another said that French had very much influenced Vietnamese structure (this possibility is discussed in section 3.5). Of those who learnt English instead, many knew at least a few words of French and elements of culture. At least one said they would like to learn French because it is a beautiful language and because of the literature, and many mentioned having read French literature in translation at school. However, almost all mentioned that English is

more widespread and useful. A number of young people, and those of more middle age, say their fathers or others of that generation speak good French. These comments reflect an amount of stereotyping of the French language of the sort that is found in the Western English-speaking world, such as the beauty of the language and connections with French cultural elements such as cuisine, design, philosophy and literature. The perceived influences on Vietnamese language and culture are obviously more local. Those of younger generation — at least in the cities — still have some connection with French culture, whether they study it, know someone of the previous generation who speaks it or study its literature even in Vietnamese. This is another historical thread taken up by both the Vietnamese and French, as also demonstrated in the previous chapter and under the ideology of French in section 2.4.

Brochures, signs and other French for tourists

Almost all the tourists, even the numerous French or French Canadian ones, speak some English — the backpackers' lingua franca — whatever their origin. Although hawkers and shopkeepers will therefore try English first, some know a minimal amount of French (and other foreign languages such as Japanese and Chinese). Most will address female tourists as "madame" even if the speaker knows no French, although the other option of "hello" may be becoming more widespread. This use of 'madame' sometimes prompted me to respond with "non, merci," and this would often result in the hawker trying to sell me the French phrasebook instead of the English one, or say "voulez-vous chaussure" instead of "madame, shoeshine!" Otherwise numbers and "parlez-vous français" seemed to be about the extent of their French vocabulary.

French has some visibility on the street, mainly in areas where foreigners visit. Former French street names have all been renamed in Vietnamese except for a few in Ho Chi Minh City, such as *Pasteur*, *Calmette* and *Alexandre de Rhodes* (see Figures C.1, C.2). In Hanoi, trilingual signs for the city's

major historical sites and cultural institutions were erected for the 1997 Francophonie summit. "Hanoi — propre et belle" ('clean and beautiful') is marked on the rubbish bins along with the Vietnamese. A number of shops catering to the tourist market, especially silk and clothing boutiques, advertise in French and say on the door "ici on parle français" ('we speak French'). A number of hotels, restaurants and cafés will have at least a welcome message in French as well as English on their front door, and most of the menus are trilingual.

Brochures, flyers and museum signage provide the best examples of tourist French (see Appendix E). Most are bi- or multilingual, in combinations of English, French, Vietnamese and sometimes Chinese. The French is almost invariably better than the English, which varies between slightly clunky and straight out incorrect, misspelt or unclear. The French may occasionally be a little simplistic but always seems more correct and generally clear. The brochure from the Temple of Literature for example is all in good French (Figures E.7, E.8); presumably different brochures are available for other languages. The Army Museum brochure is in English, French and Chinese (Figures E.9, E.10). Both the French and English are quite good, although some of the English captions in the actual museum were not so good. The Ngọc So'n Temple brochure is also in French, Chinese and English (Figures E.5, E.6). The English is sometimes a little simple or awkward, but the French is quite exaggerated, for example: "Quelle joie intense éprouverez-vous en contemplant le beau site et en dégustant la saveur de ces deux sentences:"[16] (this is followed by some lines of poetry in translation). A comparison between the French and English is found in a flyer for Le Café des Arts (Figure E.2). The French side reads:

> Expositions permanentes sur l'art au Vietnam ... à 2 pas du Lac Hoan Kiem et au coeur du petit "Quartier Latin" de Hanoi. Voici le plan d'accès à partir du Petit Lac Hoan Kiem...

[16] What intense joy you experience in contemplating this beautiful location and in savouring the flavour of these two sentences.

while the English side reads:

> With a pleasant surrounding of arts in Vietnam looking like the "Latin Quarter" in Paris. The plan to go to.[17]

Some even more bizarre language can be found in the brochures to Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and surroundings, for example, the 'Relic Area' including Ho's stilthouse (Figures E.3, E.4):

> Ici, il n'y a que quelques pièces qui sont tous toujours pleines de vent, de lumière et de fragrance des fleurs dans le jardin quand son cœur était éventé par le vent d'une nouvelle ère.
>
> [...]
>
> There are only some rooms here, but all of them are full of wind, light and fragrance from the garden together with a heart trending to era.

The last example is evidently a case of a failed attempt at literal translation from Vietnamese. The French shows some errors, such as lack of feminine agreement for *tous* (although *pleines* is correct, and use of the imperfect tense *était* when the present might be more appropriate. However, the meaning of this last section of the sentence is in any case unclear, and even more obscured in the English version, the remainder of which is otherwise clear enough. English is markedly more widespread in the tourism sector, but, as shown above, usually (though not always) not as well phrased as French versions.

[17] The French might be more properly translated as: "Permanent exhibitions on art in Vietnam ... a short walk from Hoan Kiem Lake and in the heart of Hanoi's "Latin Quarter." Here is a map for how to get there from Hoan Kiem Lake..."

Other areas of French influence

A number of domains within Vietnamese society and culture have absorbed French elements. These are generally the areas previously discussed in the section looking at the influence of the French language on Vietnamese and the borrowing of French words. Many of these influences can be observed simply by walking around the city, beginning with the physical city itself. The layout of the central areas of Hanoi, and of Ho Chi Minh City, retains the wide boulevards and grid pattern which the French established by knocking down existing constructions. Examples of colonial architecture abound, from extravagant public buildings such as the Opera House in Hanoi and the Town Hall in Ho Chi Minh City, to more functional administrative offices and private residences, many of which are now used as institutional or Communist Party offices. Architecture remains one of the disciplines which is influenced by French design, and attracts students to the study of French. That said, the Vietnamese city is a mixture of other styles as well, including severe Soviet architecture, the Western office tower, the Chinese pagoda and the distinctively Vietnamese.

Cuisine is another very visible area of French influence. Most foreign-style restaurants draw mostly from French traditions, but some of the everyday food is also French-inspired, if not exactly what one would find in Paris. Common items include bottled water from Vittel, espresso coffee, French baguette-style bread and butter, patisserie, charcuterie, crème caramel and the French national dish of steak and chips. It is also possible to find French wine and spirits.

The Vietnamese also observe twenty-four hour time and the long lunch break. They have 'don't-walk-on-the-grass signs' in their sculptured European-style parks and gardens. Children have bright backpack satchels, old men wear berets and everyone likes soccer. They have a fascination for things, for example clothing logos, bar names, and so on, written in bad American English, as also appears in France. There is also the odd example

of French: "coudumonde 98" on the back of a jacket being an interesting case of typical Vietnamese product piracy attaching itself to a phenomenon which is international yet also distinctly French: the 'Coupe du monde' — the soccer World Cup hosted by France in 1998. 'Tintin' is also a very popular marketing ploy towards tourists — there is a 'Tintin café' and 'Tintin à Hanoï' T-shirts can be found at souvenir shops, even though the cartoon hero's adventures never led him to Vietnam.

6.3 Conclusions

The evidence gathered and presented in this chapter shows that French influence remains in a number of domains, not only as a recent initiative on the part of the French Embassy. Apart from the visible historical and cultural influences, such as architecture and cuisine, there is a certain popular knowledge and conception of the French and their language. French tourists are regular visitors, possibly attracted by a destination where French is still spoken but which is at the same time 'exotic,' and indeed they will find that many tourist-oriented ventures work in French as well as English.

English is, however, the dominant second language by far in schools and on the street. French cannot rival it in terms of numbers of speakers or importance in world business. Many people do know a few words of French, and a number of young people are studying it or would like to. The general perceptions of French, both among those who study or speak it and those who do not, are that it is a beautiful language with a tradition in literature and reasoning, that it has influenced Vietnamese to some degree and there are certain affinities between the two, and that although it is preferable in some domains such as law, medicine and some aspects of information technology, it is secondary in international importance to English in business relations. The French Embassy and Francophonie organisations and their projects are growing, and the staff are generally very positive about their effect. Their goals are co-operation, multilateral international relations and

training quality French-speaking professionals. Both Vietnamese and French sides wish to put the past behind them and steer clear of anything to do with colonialism.

Many of the older generation speak French, in varying degrees having often forgotten much of it. Many have never had much contact with native French speakers and therefore have a pronounced accent, but others have travelled to France and had no trouble communicating with the language. Some read to keep it up and are rather attached to the language and the perceived culture and civilisation elements. Their level of French varies from near-standard to rather minimal and degenerated, approaching the level of Tây Bồi. Some people know about Tây Bồi and will admit it even if French-educated. They seem to regard it as an amusing curiosity. Some of the older generation still speak it in some form — further research could confirm the extent of this.

The standard of French among younger generations is generally very good, with the emphasis on language learning being on quality rather than quantity of speakers. The Vietnamese staff in Francophonie organisations therefore speak good standard French, whereas the general standard of English in professional circles and the tourist industry is not so high.

The field trip, although limited in scope, provided essential material covering the different aspects of this thesis, both of a concrete nature, such as policies and their implementation, and of subjective personal perceptions on the French language. With more time, a more in-depth study of these aspects might be achieved, such as a thorough search of archival material and historical documents, examination of how effective the Francophonie organisations are and more interviewing of French speakers in the search for Tây Bồi. However, in terms of establishing a view of how French is used and perceived in Vietnam, the study has provided information from which it is possible to draw certain conclusions, as given in the following chapter.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

Language often forms an integral part of national or cultural identity. It is subject as much as any other social element to the stereotypes which form powerful static forces in people's perceptions of their own cultures. While languages themselves can change quite quickly, especially in the case of pidgins and creoles, the ideology surrounding them can be slow to accept new thought. Certain ideas can persist even when shown to be divergent from actual practice. Ideology determines policy on an official level, which can have a number of effects. If the policy and the practice of language differ too greatly then the policy is unlikely to have the desired results and may instead produce unforeseen side effects. However, the policy may well influence and change the practice to some degree. In this way, the perceptions, practice and policy of language are all linked and affect each other.

French is a large standardised national language which has developed a strong set of associated ideas over its history. These ideas have been mostly to do with either conserving the perceived purity of the language so that its superior features may be retained, or with spreading its cultural and technical benefits throughout the world. While much of the extremity of this ideology has been slowly altered, some of the themes remain. The Académie Française still regulates the rules and usage of French in France

and the Francophonie movement exists because the language is still regarded as being worthy of promotion outside France.

However, a good deal has changed as well. Once frowned-upon regional languages, patois, dialects and creoles are now recognised along with their respective cultures. Diversity has been given value, even though standard French remains the international prestige variety. The international administrative power of France has also become less centralised. The collapse of colonialism after World War II forced a reconsideration of international relations. This was slower to come in some regions than others, but the general tendency has been away from a dominating imperialism and towards international co-operation.

The case in Vietnam has been one of renewal of old ties but in a different manner. It is not just the French government but also the international organisations of Francophonie which are establishing their projects, and at the request of the Vietnamese government. The Vietnamese are willing to co-operate and create more links with Francophonie in spite of past history. There is a tendency on both sides to dismiss the colonial era and the Indochinese war as almost irrelevant to modern relations. There is acknowledgement of past connections, often in terms of the introduction of elements of French civilisation such as the legal system, architecture and literature, but little reference to exploitation, oppression or nearly ten years of war. The Vietnamese do still celebrate their victory at Dien Bien Phu, but almost in a pure military and nationalistic sense as opposed to the specific rejection of the French. The Vietnamese have taken a very pragmatic approach to their foreign relations, willing to put aside the past in order to rebuild their country. The American War and the years of isolationist communism certainly served to put some distance between the colonial era and current French policy, which has perhaps helped with the recent process of the renewal of relations. There has been enough time to put any ill-feeling aside, but not so much as to remove all traces of French influence. Vietnam is also willing to renew relations with the United States, and while American culture is sure

to have an ever-increasing influence on the country in the foreseeable future, the government has preferred to also maintain links outside its sphere of influence by looking towards the alternative of Francophonie.

The following sections will review the findings of the previous chapters and present some final conclusions as well as addressing some further issues.

7.1 On Tây Bồi

The Vietnamese see themselves as a people of strong national and cultural identity and point to their history of resistance against foreign powers, from the Chinese to the French to the Americans, as evidence. The figure of Hồ Chí Minh, the people's 'uncle,' still looms large in the national consciousness as a symbol of unity. This spirit of independence is something which the French admire, finding it similar to their own ideals of liberty (e. g. M. Villemer, section 6.2.3). Part of the Vietnamese identity is certainly language and the French could never realistically have hoped to replace it with their own language, that of a minority colonist population. French did become a prestige language, however, as the domain of the ruling class. Vietnamese who spoke French could become part of this class, associating with and gaining some of the power of the colonial rulers. However, speaking French was not necessarily a sign of collaboration: it was possible to maintain Vietnamese identity as a dissenter if they wished. The colonial linguistic situation consisted of a relationship between the forces imposing a power structure and dictating the language choice (section 2.2.3), and the choices of identity made by those under colonial rule (section 2.2.4). In some parts of society, French was a necessity for communication and prestige, but France's dominance was not complete enough to make it necessary everywhere. The encouragement of quốc ngũ' was a partial recognition that French linguistic dominance was not possible. The Vietnamese who spoke French still had a degree of choice as to whether to collaborate or resist — both quốc ngũ' and French were used in nationalist as well as collaborationist causes.

Choice was not a factor in the development of Tây Bồi. Communication was necessary and it was those with the least power, lower-class Vietnamese, who had to make the adaptation to the language of those in power, the French. The 'target language' theory (e. g. Chaudenson 1992) provides an explanation for the pidgin which resulted (section 2.3) — an attempt to learn the language with only limited contact in certain domains, and with the French perhaps consciously or unconsciously providing 'foreigner talk' models (Ferguson 1975).

Pidgin French remains a neglected area of study. Mostly, it has been the more established creoles which have gained recognition, as the communities develop their own identities and push for their rights. Pidgins that have not developed into creoles, such as Tây Bồi, have limited functionality and often more limited lifespans. Their speakers have much less motivation to identify with the language as they already belong to other linguistic communities, and the speakers of the superstrate language usually prefer to ignore the existence of the low-status varieties. It is, however, worth noting that there is evidence of class solidarity among some 'boys' (Werth 1997, Nguyen Van Phong 1971), though there is no indication they used Tây Bồi as an identity marker.

It seems that attitudes towards Tây Bồi have not much changed since its origin. There has been a certain amount of linguistic interest, but most accounts, whether pre-colonial, colonial or postwar, are short pieces or passing references which treat the language as a minor curiosity. The same impression was gained from those Vietnamese interviewed who mentioned it. Indeed, for the French and the Vietnamese themselves, the existence of such a language is of little interest or concern, a small blip in the process of establishing relations and learning standard French.

The existing linguistic studies of Tây Bồi have been presented. They remain few in number and for the most part limited in scope. Schuchardt provides a rare early article on a pidgin French, while the works of Reinecke (1971), Phillips (1975) and Liêm (1979) form the only extensive investiga-

tions of the language. Gathering additional material has proved extremely difficult as the language is very much in decline, if not functionally extinct. Remaining speakers of Tây Bồi or French learnt under the French colonial government are seventy years of age or more and suffering from memory and hearing loss. Snatches of pidgin may still be found, but it is difficult to determine whether it is remembered Tây Bồi or decayed French. It is however acknowledged to some extent that such a language existed and that those who spoke it are still alive (section 6.2.3). Further research may therefore be able to study the process of the decline of a pidgin.

Other non-standard French apart from the decayed type also exists in Vietnam, though mostly of the sort spoken by learners. While emphasis in the teaching of French is placed on quality and proficiency, those in the process of learning will go through the same stages as any second language learner. There also exists some 'street French.' Some of this is again decayed French of the older generation, but some is spoken by younger generations in the tourist trades who have not learnt it in an institution. It is much less widespread than the equivalent English, but would nevertheless form the object of a more detailed study into a potential, unofficial, 'world French.'

Tây Bồi was used as a 'compromise' speech between the French and their un-French-educated Vietnamese servants, personal or public. The speaker group was therefore quite restricted, as those Vietnamese that had no contact with the French did not need it, and those that had more contact with the French and access to a full French education used (more or less) standard French. Tây Bồi is shown to be highly variable, dependent on factors such as level of contact with native French speakers, geographical region and personal aptitude. Because of its basic functional purpose, after 1954 it declined with the departure of the French.

A number of other conditions which can lead to creolisation were also lacking (section 2.3.3). Vietnamese was and is the majority language — the mix of linguistic groups and the sense of displacement has never been significant enough to form a cohesive community of speakers lacking a common

tongue, in spite of arrivals from other French colonies. Nor did the plantation or mission societies in Vietnam reach a stage where a second generation of mixed parentage could grow up in isolation from any other common language. Tây Bồi is in these terms an illustration of Hall's 'life-cycle' theory (1962) but without progression to creolisation and de-creolisation.

It is, however, possible that other linguistic groups did influence Tây Bồi. Portuguese has a long history in the area and was also present in other regions of French occupation such as India and parts of Africa. The immigrants to Vietnam from other colonies such as Pondicherry and the Indian Ocean islands may well have contributed their varieties of French to the mixture, although they were more likely to have spoken something closer to standard French than a pidgin. Early references to Tây Bồi, such as Bouinais (1885) and Schuchardt (1888) mention a greater mix of contributing languages than is shown in later descriptions. This is a possible indication of a degree of relexification (section 2.3.2). It is shown in the pre-colonial narratives (Lamb 1970, Taboulet 1955–56, etc.) that a Portuguese pidgin was still in use at the same time as the French were conducting trade and missionary activities so it is conceivable that this did influence the formation of Tây Bồi. Though the case for strong relexification cannot be substantiated, some Portuguese lexical items have been transferred and gradually replaced by French-based terms as French became the more dominant language. The unofficial spread of French through Asia and the Pacific would make an intriguing topic.

Tây Bồi arose to fill a gap in communicative need and faded once the need disappeared. The period of its existence was nevertheless over a hundred years, a long time for a communication gap to remain open. This indicates a certain inadequacy of official French linguistic policy, but one which was ignored because of the mundanity of its use and the low status of its speakers. However, it also demonstrates the flexibility of linguistic systems. Where no other means exist, a contact language will spring up to fill the need, serving the function with the required adequacy for as long as necessary.

Contact between cultures and languages has interesting effects and re-

sults especially in its initial stages. The formation of intermediary languages is one of them, and Tây Bồi is an example. It illustrates the solutions arrived at when presented with the problem of communication across very different languages when the official line proves less than effective. This was both on the part of the Vietnamese, who were faced with the disruption of their old traditions and a new governing power, and of the French, who were grappling with a new and largely unknown physical and cultural environment, and trying to apply colonial theories brought from France. The process of reducing language and incorporating elements of both or all languages in contact into this simplified form is part of dealing with these issues. (It should be noted that this is not usually an equal process — the vast majority of Tây Bồi's lexicon, for example, is French.) However, this type of language is usually pushed to the fringes of social examination and neglected as aberrant. More widespread knowledge of this process could be helpful in the understanding of communication and relations between different cultures.

7.2 On Francophonie

The French taught not only their language but the ideals they attached to it, so that even though their own colonial practice often differed from their policies, the ideals were in part transmitted to the population. Those that knew French were practically guaranteed a secure job, so it was considered a quality of prestige. However, some of those given a French education added the French ideals of the revolutionary and philosophical tradition to their own sense of nationalism and began using the colonial power's own language and philosophy to campaign against it. Both France and Vietnam still celebrate their revolutionary heritage, and yet correct standard French remains, in many parts of the world including Vietnam, a sign of good education and prestige.

Francophonie can be seen as the continuation of the history of ideology of French (section 2.4). There is something of a continuum of thought from

national to imperial to postcolonial, beginning with the idea of the inherent clarity and superiority of French for reason and argument. This was tied together with nationalism and the rise of the concept of French identity, and was reinforced by the ideals of the French Revolution. The French looked outside of Europe to spread their influence, appealing with varying degrees of sincerity to the ideals of religion, trade and the enlightenment of the less advanced — the *mission civilisatrice*.

A major part of the *mission civilisatrice* was to bring the benefits of the French language to those of 'inferior' culture. During the colonial era great importance was placed on the teaching of proper French so that the indigenous population might become properly French. This belief demonstrated faith in the ability of all peoples to be or at least become equals, but also a failure to recognise different civilisations and traditions, and a naïvété when it came to their perceived ability to enact this ideal. When faced with the task of applying colonial assimilation in Vietnam, the ideal was quickly relegated to the status of a much more distant goal. The French began to realise that the Vietnamese were not uncivilised savages, but a people with strong and sophisticated traditions of their own, and would not willingly give them up unless it was proven that French was in fact superior. Lacking the resources to educate more than a small proportion of Vietnamese society, they concentrated on demonstrating to this élite the advantages of the French language and culture. Policy was thus adapted to what was within reach of resources (section 3.3). The French favoured quality education for a few rather than mass education, relying on this new class of French-speakers to promote their agenda further through the rest of the population. To this end, the French had more success, with many of those who came through their education system indeed believing that knowledge of French was a distinct benefit. However, it was not nearly enough to convert the entire colony, and the Vietnamese preferred to be Vietnamese rather than French. Still, the French granted themselves a measure of success when the Vietnamese called upon the Revolutionary ideals of freedom and equality to demand their own independence and drive the French out.

The end of the colonial era saw the end of the spread of French via imperial means, but the ideas had not disappeared. The change in focus came from the former empire, not from its seat in France, but from Africa. The spread of ideology and policy concerning the benefits of French had reached the perceptions of those at whom it was directed, but now it took on a different form. The ideas of the *mission civilisatrice* were transformed into *francophonie*. The value of French had additional new meanings: those of co-operation, uniting communities and countries both intra- and internationally, and providing an alternative to the globalisation of English. However, Francophonie is something which goes largely unnoticed in the English-speaking world. In many of Francophonie's member countries, including Vietnam, French is very much a minority language and is also ignored by a large proportion of the populations which have nothing to do with French. The value of promoting the language is therefore questioned by English-speaking investigators, but it remains unquestioned by France. Those involved in Francophonie tend to take it very seriously, whether they are official representatives or enthusiastic participants.

From some fairly vague origins, the principles of Francophonie have become more concrete in the past decade or so and resources have become more available and directed at practical projects (section 5.2). Vietnam has been a major recipient of these benefits, and the projects in the country have been welcomed both from an ideological point of view in terms of accepting French culture and friendship again. There are of course also pragmatic reasons: co-operation with France and French-speaking nations brings resources for development, trade and political ties. France has economic goals in mind as well, seeking the advantage of firm trade ties in South-East Asia, still potentially an area of rapid growth. Francophonie as a whole has recently been focussing on economic ties between its members, which would place a monetary and practical value on Francophone relations, perhaps gaining the movement credit within the international community as more than a vague cultural association.

7.3 On French in Vietnam

Francophonie has established a firm network of organisations and projects in Vietnam (section 5.3). It is in a growth phase at the moment, with numbers of students and classes increasing and information technology services on the rise. The stated goals of Francophonie in Vietnam include providing the resources for the creation of young professionals with practical expertise as well as equal proficiency in French and Vietnamese. This is a 'quality not quantity' approach, consistent with colonial practice. Then and now, resources and the reality of the language situation do not permit the diffusion of French to the entire population. It is acknowledged that Vietnamese is the national language, officially and practically, and that French is in no position to insert itself in either function. Also recognised is the fact that English is by far the dominant second language in Vietnam with most practical use in the business and tourism domains and that French cannot compete in terms of numbers of speakers. The Vietnamese government has chosen to be part of both the Anglophone and Francophone worlds. Francophonie policy has thus been altered to fit the practicalities, focussing on a number of specialised areas and setting achievable goals.

The organisations of Francophonie and France itself are investing a large amount of money in Vietnam which would not be the case if there were not something to be gained from it. It is evidently deemed worthwhile to foster the growth of French language, culture and technical expertise in the country. Present in the current policy are the old ideals of the *mission civilisatrice* in helping a less developed nation rebuild and reinforcing international relations, but also echoes of the imperial motives of economic and political benefits. As relations between the organisations of Francophonie and Vietnam progress, it will be interesting to see if the present rate of growth of interest continues into the near future and when it will level off. As long as both Vietnam and France find the relationship beneficial and worthwhile, there is no reason to suggest that Francophonie will not continue on its current course.

The stereotypes that French has attracted over the centuries still persist today, and as far away from France as Vietnam. The Vietnamese, young and old, have similar conceptions of the French language as English-speakers in Australia, Britain or America do: it is a beautiful-sounding language, the language of love, that of philosophy and literature, of a revolutionary tradition. The colonial era has added other perceptions as well, such as that Vietnamese is more alike to French than to other European languages and that the two peoples share a similar artistic and independent spirit of identity. These are the common reasons that the older generation provide for maintaining their French, and that the young people use when expressing a desire to learn it (section 6.2.3). The utility of French is sometimes raised with regard to those learning it with a practical application or career in mind, though English is acknowledged as generally more useful and profitable. Also mentioned is the spirit of co-operation — for those that still speak French, none seem to harbour any resentment over the past even if they were involved in the wars. Many welcome the French back, even saying that they would like more involvement from the French. Fifty years has perhaps been long enough to put aside memories of the conflict, yet not long enough to erase all traces of French influence.

Although many English-language writers are pessimistic about the potential for French in Vietnam, French writers take an amount of pride in the fact that Vietnam is continuing some French traditions and maintaining ties (section 5.3.2). While English-language writers tend to see French as just another second language in Vietnam, the French perceive a deeper connection based on the historical links and cultural affinity but without being too specific about colonialism. French popular conceptions about Vietnam are perhaps only beginning to be addressed. Vietnam is possibly not the first place the French think of when considering overseas areas of past or present influence. Nevertheless, they are already familiar with aspects of Vietnamese culture through the numbers of Vietnamese immigrants and through portrayals in cinema and literature. Postcolonial writing is gradually coming from all areas of the former empire, including Vietnam. Former

Indochina is a destination of choice for those French wanting an adventurous Asian holiday yet with the reassurance that their language is likely to be understood. Further investigation could determine what new perceptions are forming of French internationally, on the part of the French, the French-speaking and the non-French-speaking, and what relations they bear to the current policies and practice of the language and its varieties.

7.4 Summary

The ideology of a language can be a powerful thing. It has been demonstrated in this thesis that how a people views its language can significantly affect other nations, with often surprising results. The ideology and the actions can be in contradiction, yet the ideology is maintained and adapted to suit new circumstances. Unintended consequences may arise, but they are often ignored or absorbed.

The French *mission civilisatrice* in Indochina was at the same time opportunistic and unrealistic in its aims, the higher goal of aiding the development of a nation conflicting with colonial exploitation. Language policies originally intended to bring a higher culture and equality to all actually resulted in the formation of an élite of Vietnamese French-speakers at one end of the scale and a class of Tây Bồi speakers at the other. Tây Bồi is an example of the sort of language which can arise because, or in spite of, language policy — one which serves a specific purpose not covered by any other means and illustrative of the adaptability of languages and speakers. These sorts of intermediary languages are usually ignored or dismissed because they go against ideals of language, when in fact they can form essential points of contact for the interaction of different cultures.

Tây Bồi is part of the fascinating phenomenon of French in Vietnam which began with Alexandre de Rhodes and continues today with Francophonie. Cultural interaction is now a major part of Franco-Vietnamese relations, with the modern French ideology of language continuing to pro-

mote equality and the benefits of French language, civilisation and expertise. Perhaps the newer elements of multilateral co-operation and multilingualism will lead towards a true valuing of diversity.

Appendix A

Sample questionnaire

This questionnaire was passed around to informants at the Alliance Française and used as the basis for interview questions. Most informants preferred to talk of their own accord rather than read and answer the questions, and not every informant answered each question.

Madame / Monsieur,

Ci-dessous sont plusieurs questions que je voudrais poser pendant l'interview. Je préfère que cet interview prenne une forme assez informelle pour que nous puissions parler d'un ton conversationnel. Ce ne sera pas nécessaire de répondre à toutes les questions s'il y en a que vous préfèriez ne pas discuter. De même manière, s'il y a d'autres questions que vous croyez importantes, n'hésitez pas à m'en parler. Je vous donne l'assurance que tout information personnelle restera confidentielle.

Éducation — À quel âge avez-vous commencé l'école? Combien d'années êtes-vous resté(e) à l'école? Avez-vous reçu votre éducation sous le gouvernement français?

Est-ce que les cours étaient en langue française? Donnait-on des cours de français? D'autres langues (vietnamien, chinois, russe, anglais, langues minoritaires)?

Comment était le qualité des professeurs? Des matériaux d'enseignement (livres en français, quôc ngu, caractères)?

Quels sentiments aviez-vous envers le système d'éducation?

Votre emploi du français — qu'est-ce que vous avez fait comme travail à l'époque coloniale? Est-ce qu'il fallait parler français?

Est-ce qu'il y avait des occasions de parler français en dehors du travail? à la maison? avec des Français? chaque jour?

Français pidgin — Avez-vous entendu parler de Tây Bôi? Comment est-ce que vous le décririez? Qui parlait cette langue et dans quelles circonstances? Pourriez-vous en donner des exemples? Est-ce que vous l'avez jamais parlé vous-même? Quelle opinion y avait-il de cette langue?

Aujourd'hui — Aujourd'hui, avez-vous l'occasion d'employer votre français? Dans quelles circonstances (films, livres, conversation)? Voyez-vous d'autres vietnamiens francophones?

Avez-vous voyagé ailleurs (France, colonies françaises)?

Comment jugeriez-vous votre maîtrise du français à côté de votre langue maternelle? de l'anglais? Le français était-il utile pour vous pendant votre vie?

Merci de votre participation,

Susan Love

Appendix B

Transcripts

This section presents selected extracts from taped interviews, held at the Alliance Francçaise and by Hoan Kiem Lake. Informants are identified only by a number indicating chronological order of interview, and by their former profession (most are now retired). The length of each interview varied considerably, from a couple of minutes to over half an hour. A selection of speech from each is included, with the extracts chosen to best represent the speaker's style of French and the opinions and experiences most relevant to the topic of the thesis. Standard French orthography has been used for ease of transcription and reading. Although most respondents had a pronounced accent, for the purposes of this thesis the speech is adequately represented in the standard orthography.

... pause

, brief pause

[...] ellipsis, due to unclear speech, less relevant material, or interviewer posing questions

(?) unclear word

(085) tape counter

Alliance française (Tape 1, 11/01/2000)

No. 1: Former engineer. (A000–066)

(000)

Dans les collèges franco-vietnamiens, depuis longtemps, j'apprends, je, je m'apprends le russe, le chinois, le chinois. Maintenant en parlant français, je ne peux pas parler complètement...

Maintenant je veux, je veux bien venir à la bibliothèque de l'Alliance, pour voir les films, étudier sur les, les livres pour connaître mieux, les mots, surtout la France. Dans les années de mon collège, je peux, je peux suivre quatre ans en français et l'anglais, depuis plus de trente ans, dans les années cinquante, mais maintentant ma capacité en français diminue, des mots et des connaissances... diminuent. [...] Dans notre pays, on apprend l'anglais plus que le français. [...]

(030)

Après mes études à l'université polytechnique d'Hanoï, je suis ingénieur dans le commerce. Maintenant je suis retraité.

(032)

No. 2: Former Russian teacher. Translates French articles for Vietnamese newspapers. (066–160)

(072)

Ah, je travaille comme le professeur de langue russe. [...]

(087)

Avant la guerre je ne parle pas avec les Français, seulement avec les Vietnamiens, parce que, seul dans la guerre je parle avec des, des Français comme des arrêtés dans la guerre des, comment parler... prisonniers. Seulement, et

quand j'ai travaillé dans l'école comme professeur russe je parle avec des... students... oui?

(096)

(140)

Quand j'étais petit, six jours par semaine, et congé c'est le dimanche et jeudi. Et jeudi seulement, les caractères chinois [...] mais je ne vois pas étudier les caractères chinois parce qu'il y a des dessins!

(146)

No. 3: Former teacher of English, French and German. (160–336)

(197)

Et la langue française c'est-à-dire la francophonie ne vient seulement, quelques decennies, seulement, les années précédentes, la langue, la francophonie, a été assez élargie. Ça depend de la capacité du gouvernement français. S'ils ont fortement financé depuis les années [...] jusqu'à maintenant la langue, la francophonie ce n'est pas encore une somme convenante. Mais les années dernières pour des, du sommet quand la francophonie a des, a beaucoup appréciée et élargie, récemment... le Sommet Sept de la francophonie au Vietnam, que la francophonie a été differémment, a été beaucoup developpée. C'est les classes de l'enseignement primaire jusqu'à l'enseignement secondaire, maintenant quand j'ai connu, il y a quelques, quelques classes que le gouvernement français a financé depuis longtemps c'est... le cycle primaire jusqu'à la classe douzième, seulement la francophonie, mais le nombre c'est encore à compter sur les doigts, c'est pas beaucoup. On peut compter sur les doigts! Le gouvernement français a aussi financé quelques écoles supérieures — universités — pour developper le français, la francophonie [...] Les anciens élèves comme nous, nous avons très bien, l'appréciation, l'apprécions bien, la précision de la francophonie. J'ai appris le français depuis la classe primaire, jusqu'à secondaire et après

ça, bientôt énrôlé dans la résistance, les deux résistances patriotiques. De ma part j'avoue que j'ai pas, laissé tomber complètement la francophonie, j'ai étudié les journaux et les magazines quelques fois, mais pas beaucoup lire jusqu'a la fin de l'epoque(?). En ce temps là, moi je suis quarante ans dans(?)la zone occupée, livrée par les envahisseurs. Après ça la rétablissement de la fin(?) nous avons déjà de ma part je fais des possibilités pour que continue à réutilise la francophonie puisque moi j'apprécions que le français, la francophonie c'est une langue claire et précise.

(270)

No. 4: From an educated background, lived and worked in France for many years, only recently returning to Vietnam, now an advisor to the government. (A336–A400–B400)

(375)

À l'époque, le colonialisme français est aussi, très particulier par rapport au colonialisme anglais. Parce que, une fois j'ai visité Durban a l'époque, alors je suis surpris que toute la ville est reservée aux blancs, et que si il y a apparition des noirs alors c'est sous forme d'esclave. Ils portent des masques qui les transforment en buffles, en vrai buffles, pour tirer les charettes, ou bien on appelle ça les cyclopousses, les cyclopousses, ou bien c'est dans la cuisine pour servir les blancs. Alors là j'étais très très choqué. Mais cependant je trouve c'est quand-même que, très net... c'est l'impérialisme bien, bien defini, on est là pour exploiter!

(400)

(B178)

Dans les familles traditionnelles comme nous, on fait la résistance... la résistance pratique, autrement dit de non-relations avec le système français. On étudie le français, mais on n'engage pas de relations directes avec les Français. [...]

C'est très très difficile pour nous pour manipuler cette langue, parce que, d'abord initié par des professeurs vietnamiens qui ne pigent que dalle de la langue, parce que eux-mêmes aussi qui ont très peu de contact avec les Français donc ce sont plutôt des commentaires des lignes, textes et chacun traduit à sa façon. Et même, on fait des compostions ensemble, et on ne connaît rien sur la syntaxe, on invente toute sorte de grammaire [...] on ne comprend rien... Le conjugasion des verbes, et le sexe des mots, parce que chez nous on n'a pas de trucs comme ça. Il y a, un jour il y a un jeune qui disait à son maître, "mais pourquoi on ne dit pas 'le table' au lieu de 'la table' — expliquez-nous!" ... alors il n'y a pas beaucoup de logique. Mais là il y a une très bonne chose: c'est que, on étudie on enregistre, et tout dans l'imagination. Forcément on a une imagination très, très renforcée — on apprend a rêver. Alors, et là pour nous, à ce moment là, puisque nous considérons que la littérature française était excellente et bonne, puisque le français est quelque chose de bon, donc, lire, ça, ça devra nous rapporter, ça c'est le principe. Les mathématiques, les trucs comme ça, ça va, les sciences, il n'y a pas beaucoup de difficultés puisque il y a les textes et tout... mais pour le français pur et surtout la littérature, la poésie, on avale, comme ça, et puis... c'est l'ingestion, mais on digère mal. Et ça, ça nous donne, comment dirais-je, un support de, de culture non-authentique. Et je découvre ça lorsque la première fois que j'ai étudié en France [...] D'ailleurs tous les gens qui étudient les langues étrangères surtout la littérature, c'est de venir tâter les bases véritables de la langue.

(225)

(248)

Je suis revenu en France pour la deuxième fois, de façon definitive, et ce n'est que en France que je comprends ce que c'est, ce que c'est, que le français, parce que c'est une question de syntaxe, et maintenant... c'est malheureux, je manipule la langue française beaucoup mieux que la langue vietnamienne. Parce que je manipule automatiquement le subjonctif parfait, toutes sortes de choses, et ce qui est très difficile pour un jeune (?) français.

(259)

(340)

Il y a l'acculturation parce que les français emploient des domestiques vietnamiens. Et là donc on, il y a une langue, comment dirais-je, donc... qui est une transaction entre les deux systèmes pour se faire, pour se faire connaître, pour s'entendre, alors il y a un langage redigé pour les choses normales de la vie, il y a donc il y a un transfert — un transfert, de l'un à l'autre. Les petits enfants français sont confiés à les (?) à l'époque, et qui emploient le vietnamien francisé, et d'autre part les patrons, un français vietnamisé. Alors là, ces échanges là forment une sorte de bricolage. Et ça peut permettre aussi de se comprendre, mais au niveau tout à fait pratique. Et maintenant ce qui reste aussi, des mots, qui sont... par deux systèmes forciques(?)... un tas de mots qui sont de base, surtout de base français et ce sont surtout des mots techniques. Comme *l'ôto*, etcetera — techniques. Tandis que les mots... philosophiques sont toujours de base de caractères chinois. [...]

L'étude de la langue vietnamienne c'est pour autant difficile. Difficile dans ce sens que, la compostion de cette langue... on peut dire que c'est une salade. L'esprit vietnamien c'est l'esprit d'amalgame, l'esprit salade. C'est ça, qui enveloppe tout. Et c'est ça qui est très intéressant pour les étrangers parce que chacun peut trouver quelque chose de soi-même. C'est ça qui les intéresse beaucoup [...] ça fait quelque chose de très personnel.

(400)

Hoan Kiem Lake

(Tape 2, 14/01/2000)

No. 5: Studied six years in a French Catholic school. Eighty-four years old. Former driver. (000-053)

(000)

Je suis chauffeur. [...] Six ans. [...] My nephew... actuellement il étude à Melbourne. [...]

Maintentant ils parlent anglais. [...]

Oui, avant, á l'école... avec d'élèves [...] Avant qui, je travaille a l'école (?) et puis a l'école privée aussi...

(053)

No. 6: Former nurse (053–074)

(053)

Je vais á l'école (?) — l'école privée [...] Je travaille, infirmier. [...] I speak France a little! [...] Oui, anglais a little!

(074)

No. 7: Former engineer (074–270)

(089)

Depuis longtemps... Je appris depuis très longtemps [...] Dès mon enfance... depuis dix ans, parce que ma famille, mon père, autrefois est fonctionnaire, l'autorité du protectorat. Toute ma famille parle bien français. Et moi aussi [...]

Maintenant les jeunes sont très intelligents. Ils parlent bien beaucoup de langues [...] C'est rare, c'est rare, il n'y a pas beaucoup d'Australiens qui parlent français.

(120)

Maintenant quelque fois, moi, je revisionne, lire les romans et les journaux, mais quelque fois seulement, parce que maintenant je ne suis pas encore

jeune, la tête, pas comme les jeunes!

(123)

(163)

Mon profession? J'étais ingénieur de ponts et chaussées. Mais maintenant, déjà retraite... Pendant la guerre les ingénieurs ponts et chaussées ils, les ouvriers aussi, ils sont très fatigués, parce qu'il faut réparer les ponts et les routes par les bombardements. C'était très dangereux, Je ne crois, je ne crois pas que maintenant je suis encore vivant!

(170)

(180)

Je crois que j'ai oublie, oublié beaucoup, oui. Mais on doit rencontre les Français, de gens qui parlent français souvent pour rappeler la memoire. [...]

Maintenant, mais, il n'y a pas beaucoup, les gens qui parlent français. Ah oui. Quelque fois seulement. Quelque fois. Quelque fois je rencontre les Français. [...] Beaucoup de Français qui ne servent pas, ou ne parlent pas bien, parlent pas bien, l'anglais, les Français. La plupart de Français, oui, ne parlent pas bien anglais. Mais quand ils rencontrent les gens qui parlent français comme moi, ils sont très heureux et moi aussi!

(195)

(208)

Maintenant, la France et le Vietnam, les Vietnamiens et les Français, sont, sont des frères. L'amitié entre les deux peuples. Et nous respecte, et nous respectons toujours la civilisation de la France. La civilisation de la France. Il y a beaucoup de, de, de talent. La France. Beaucoup de talent. Pour les écrivains, les professeurs, les docteurs. [...]

Maintenant l'amitié au Vietnam entre le Vietnam et la France, et c'est bien. Et même les Américains, oui, je crois que le passé a passé. Et nous

voulons qu'ils viennent ici pour aider, pour nous aider, de reconstruire le pays. [...] Ah, L'Alliance Française, je connais le lieu mais je n'ai pas encore participé.

(236)

Il y a aussi des jeunes qui parlent bien français? Ah oui. Parce que maintenant la langue français, parce que la France est dans le bloc de l'économie de l'Europe. La langue français, il y a plusieurs pays qui parlent français aussi. La francophonie.

(243)

No. 8: Former public servant (270–495)

(325)

Je peux lire les romans couramment, tandis que parler, c'est, un peu difficile, parce que j'avais oublié tout. Cinquante ans déjà, depuis quarante-cinq jusqu'ici, vous savez. C'est déjà l'an deux mille: cinquant-cinq ans! J'avais tout oublié! Mais pour lire c'est assez facile. Il n'y a pas de problème.

(332)

(342)

J'aime beaucoup les auteurs français. Par exemple Victor Hugo. Lamartine... Auparavant j'avais utilisé l'anglais aussi. Mais j'avais déjà oublié tout.

(347)

(367)

En mille neuf cent quatre-vingt, quatre-vingt dix-sept, en août, j'avais, visité la France... J'avais passé par la Fédérale Allemande, puis le Luxembourg, Bruxelles, la France et la Hollande. À peu près... deux mois et demi... J'avais une fille qui travaille en Allemagne.

(378)

(387)

Maintenant au Vietnam les, les gens qui ont appris le français, il y a encore, encore beaucoup. Mais ce sont des, des vieillards. Tandis que les jeunes maintenant il y a pour la formations des, des...

(390)

(431)

Ce sont des curés qui sont les professeurs. Ils sont très doués en français. Surtout en philosophie. Ce sont des agrégés en philosophie... Ces gens sont très cultivés, les curés.

(436)

(472)

Les gens d'ici de Vietnam par exemple les Saigonnais, parlent le français très bien. Ils sont doués plus que le, que le nord... parce que c'est une colonie, tandis que pour nous c'est le protectorat. [...]

Mais depuis que l'Alliance française s'est etablie au, à Hanoï, il n'y a pas mal de gens qui, qui avaient appris le français. Au moins deux mille, cinq mille gens peuvent parler couramment le français.

(495)

No. 9 University lecturer, sixty-nine years old. (A495–A575–B015)

Je vous présenter: maintenant je suis le professeur de l'université économique nationale d'Hanoï. Et maintenant je suis le professeur du centre culturel et organisé francophonie Hanoï.

(502)

(B004)

Dans toutes les facultés de Vietnam on étudie la langue vietnamienne. Et, en, une semaine a six heures de langue français... Les étudiants vietnamiens étudient en langue anglais et français, avec des cours de seize ans.

(009)

Appendix C

Hanoi then and now

Figure C.1: Hanoi in the 1920s, showing French street names (Vidal de la Blache and Gallois 1929 p. 432).

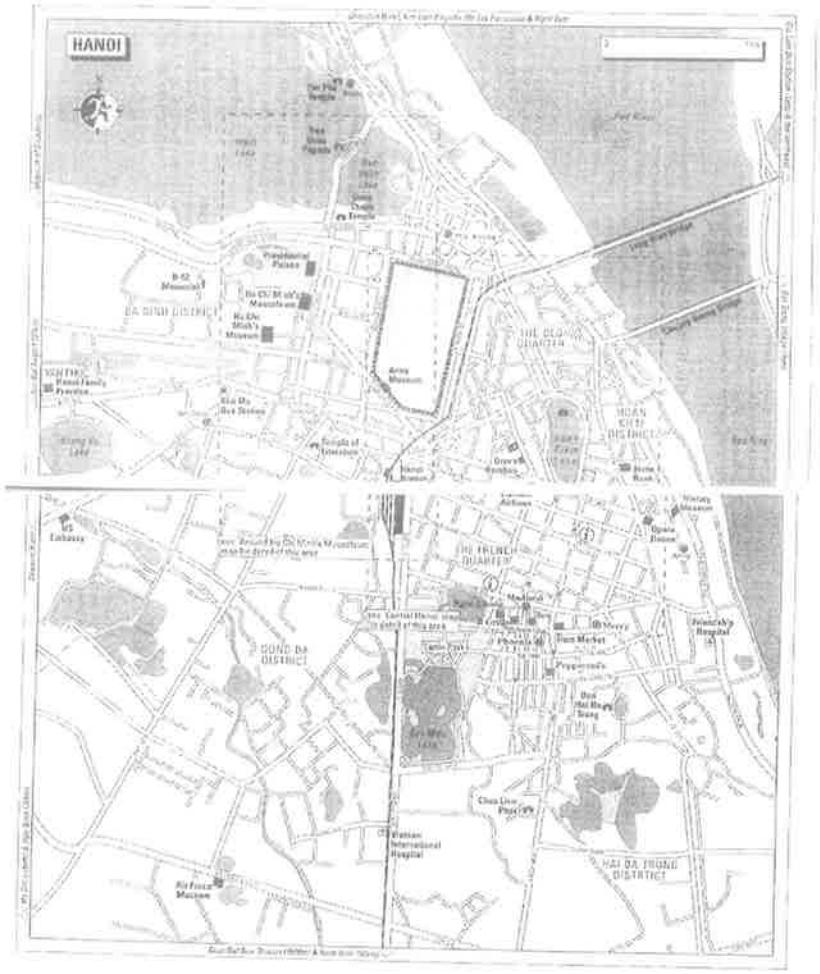

Figure C.2: Hanoi today, showing re-named streets and remaining French buildings, including the Opera house (théâtre), cathedral, history museum (museé archéologique) and presidential palace (gouvernément général). Other places shown which are relevant to the fieldwork include Hoan Kiem Lake and its Ngọc So'n Temple, the Temple of Literature, Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum and Museum and the Army Museum (Dodd, J. and Lewis, M. (1998) *Vietnam: The Rough Guide*. London: Rough Guides pp. 298–299).

Appendix D

Brochures from Francophonie institutions

Figure D.1: CFC brochure in French and Vietnamese (cover)

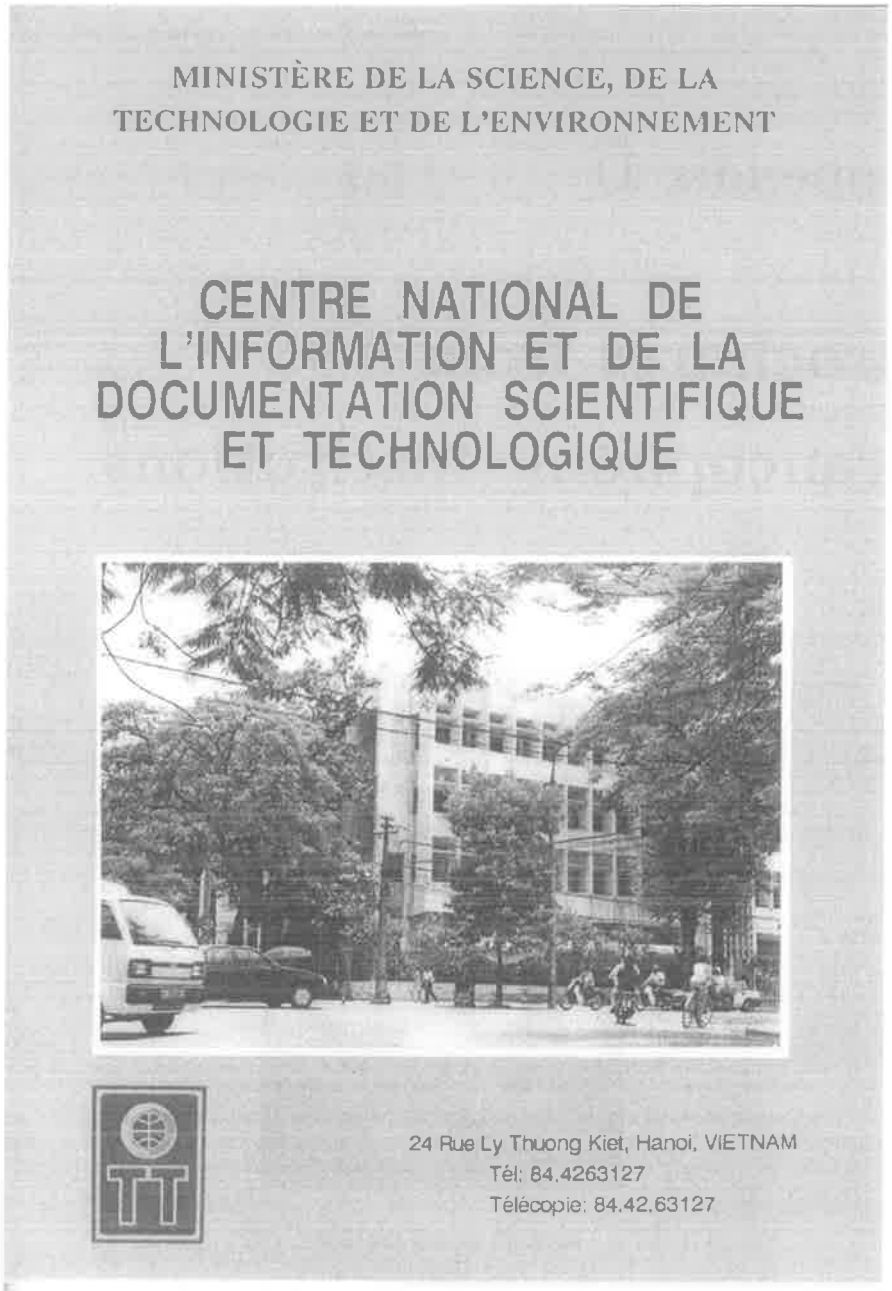

Figure D.2: CNIDST brochure in French (cover)

JANVIER 2000

PROGRAMME

Sommaire

Alliance Française
42 Yet Kieu Hanoi
Téléphone : 826 69 70
Télécopie : 826 69 77
mél : alli@hn.vnn.vn

Figure D.3: Alliance Française programme for January 2000 in French (cover)

Figure D.4: AUF brochure in French, South-East Asian Office (cover)

LETTRE DU CAEF

N°6 (13) - 1999

Association d'Amitié Vietnam-France

CLUB DES ANCIENS ÉLÈVES FRANCOPHONES

CÂU LẠC BỘ CỰU HỌC SINH PHÁP NGỮ

26, Lý Thường Kiệt, Hà Nội
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M Thiebauld, un ami français visite le bureau du CAEF (en Octobre 1999)

LƯU HÀNH NỘI BỘ

Trình bày : NGÔ CHI LINH

Informations

Le président Trần Đức Lương a visité le Comité exécutif de l'Association des personnes âgées du Vietnam à l'occasion de la Journée internationale du 3è âge, le 3 Octobre. Il a rendu hommage aux personnes âgées vietnamiennes qui ont joué un rôle important dans la défense et l'édification du pays. Il a lancé un appel à tout le peuple à mieux soigner les personnes âgées.

Hồ Chí Minh - ville comprend 418.983 personnes âgées de plus de 60 ans. Ce chiffre représente 8,3 % de la population de la ville. Parmi ces gens 115 personnes ont plus de 100 ans, trois personnes les plus âgées de cette ville sont Mme Nguyễn Thị Thà 110 ans, M. Đặng Văn Đài 110 ans, Mme Trần Thị Chuyên 109 ans.

À l'occasion du 54è anniversaire de la fondation de l'ONU, le 24 octobre, le Premier Ministre Phan Văn Khải a hautement apprécié l'aide efficace de l'ONU au Vietnam. Il a affirmé que durant ces dix années de renouveau le Vietnam a connu un développement important et la vie de la population a été améliorée tant matérielle que spirituelle. Ces réalisations ont été obtenues dans certains domaines avec l'aide des organisations onusiennes. Mais un problème se pose encore : Comment réduire le nombre des pauvres au Vietnam. La coopération étroite entre les organisations onusiennes et le Vietnam contribue aussi au développement de notre pays et les projets sont actuellement deployés dans le sens : élever la capacité de la douane vietnamienne, assistance technique à l'élaboration des stratégies de développement socio-economique jusqu'en l'an 2000.

À cette occasion le Secrétaire général de l'ONU Kofi Annan a appelé à une coopération à l'échelle internationale pour un avenir meilleur. Il a exprimé son inquiétude face au changement climatique, couche d'ozone, pollution et appelé à la coordination d'action entre les membres de l'ONU pour en finir avec la famine, la pauvreté, la maladie et la violence.

Selon lui, le prochain sommet de l'ONU à New-York sur le nouveau millénaire examinera aussi des mesures pour y faire face.

La Rédaction

Figure D.5: Newsletter of the Club des anciens élèves francophones No. 6(13) 1999, in French (cover)

Appendix E

Tourist brochures and flyers

Figure E.1: Cyclo Bar flyer in French and English

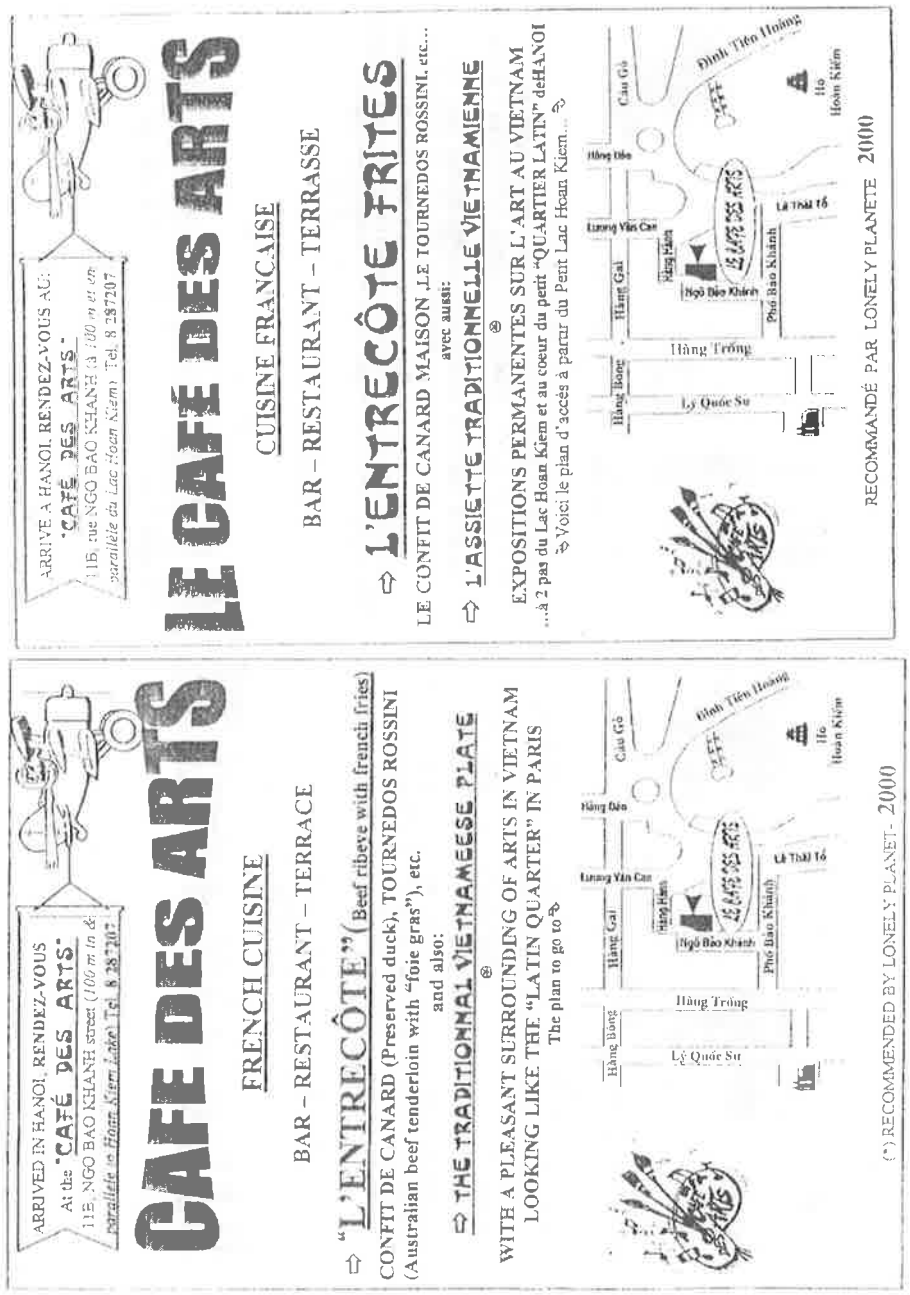


Figure E.2: Café des Arts flyer in French and English

Figure E.3: Ho Chi Minh's 'Relic Area' brochure in English, French and Chinese (outside)

4

Le Palais présidentiel où le Président HO CHI MINH vivait et travaillait à partir de la fin 1954 jusqu'à son dernier jour en 1969 est à l'heure actuelle le Mémorial où la vie et l'œuvre révolutionnaire d'un dirigeant immensément aimé de la classe ouvrière et du peuple vietnamien, un héros de la libération nationale, un homme célèbre de la culture mondiale.

Dans l'ensemble du Palais présidentiel, la Maison sur pilotis de l'Oncle Ho est un symbole de sa vie modeste et désintéressée. Ici, il n'y a que quelques pièces qui sont toujours pleines de vent, de lumière et de fragrance des fleurs dans le jardin quand son cœur était éveillé par le vent d'une nouvelle ère.

Le bâtiment appelé "Palais présidentiel" (ancien Palais du Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine) avec l'étang aux poissons, les allées bordées de manguiers, d'arbres... sont les sites mémoriaux liés à la vie quotidienne du Président HO CHI MINH pendant les années de 1954 à 1969.

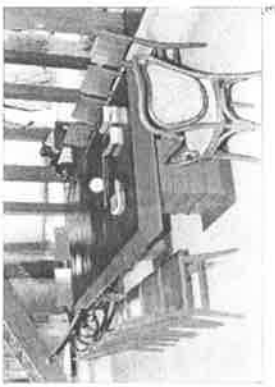
A la visite du Palais Présidentiel, nous arrivons à mieux comprendre la vie modeste de l'Oncle HO et nous sommes plus fiers et respectueux d'une grande intelligence, d'une grande idéologie, d'un esprit révolutionnaire stoïque, d'une vertu brillante, d'une grandiose personnalité, d'un altruisme de la personne qui se consacre pour toute sa vie au bonheur du peuple.

Le Palais Présidentiel a l'honneur de pouvoir recevoir les compatriotes, les visiteurs étrangers et remercie sincèrement de leurs sentiments chaleureux réservés à ce vénéré site historique.

Adresse: Ensemble des vestiges historiques du Palais Présidentiel
1 en Rue Hoch Thao - Ba Dinh
HANOI - VIETNAM
Tel: (84-4) 8 23 47 60/8 23 63 26

Covert House on stilts where President Ho Chi Minh lived and worked from 1958 to 1969.

1. The President Palace, where President Ho Chi Minh held Governmental Council and received guests.
2. The House, where President Ho Chi Minh lived and worked from December 1954 to May 1958.
3. The study in the lower part of bungalow.
4. The bedroom in the upper part of bungalow.
5. Uncle Ho Fishing pond in the President Palace.
6. Mango alley in the President Palace.



5

The President Palace where President Ho Chi Minh lived and worked from late 1954 to his last day September 1969, is now the Memorial site about the life and revolutionary work of the most beloved leader of the Vietnamese working class and people, a national liberation hero, a great man of culture.

Uncle Ho's "House on stilts" is a symbol of his simplicity and gentleness. There are only some rooms here, but all of them are full of wind, light and fragrance from the garden together with a heart treading to era.

The President Palace (formerly The Palace of the General Governor for Indochina), with the mango alley, trees, fishing pool... become the vivid memories connecting to Uncle Ho's life during the years from 1954 to 1969.

A visit here will teach us more about Uncle Ho's simplicity and modesty. And we shall be proud of him, be respectful for a great mind, a staunch revolutionary will, a great virtue and ideologist, and a man who has dedicated all his life to the cause of revolution and people.

The President Palace Memorial site is honoured to welcome all people, compatriots from all corner of the country and foreign visitors.

Thanks for the good heart of all who care for this sacred Memorial site.

Address: The President Palace Memorial site
1 Hoch Thao - Ba Dinh - Hanoi - Vietnam
Tel: 8 23 47 60, 8 23 63 26

Figure E.4: Ho Chi Minh's 'Relic Area' brochure (inside)

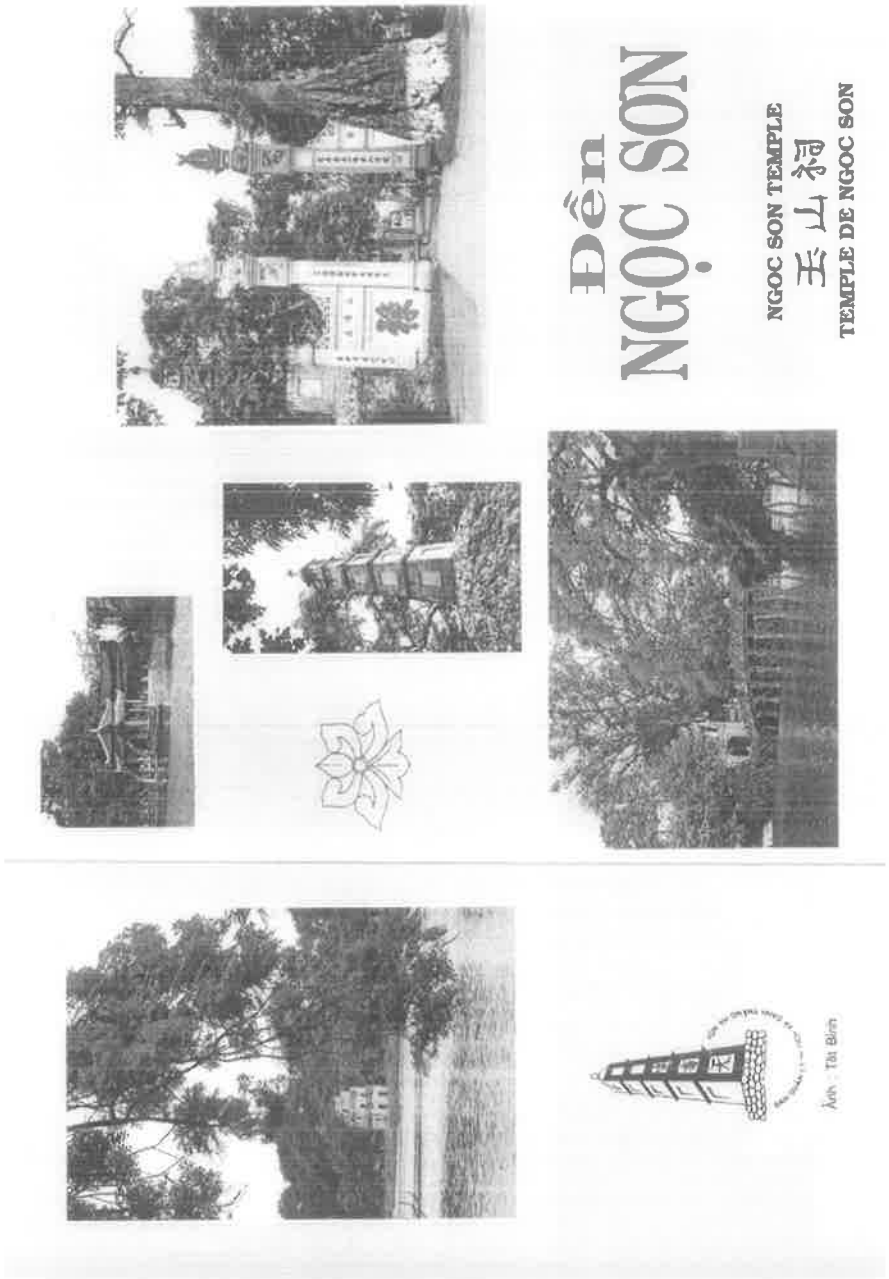


Figure E.5: Ngọc So'n Temple brochure in French, Chinese and English (outside)

LE TEMPLE DE NGOC SON

Le Temple du Mont de Jade (Den Ngoc Son) date de la dynastie des Tran (1225-1400), construit sur l'îlot du même nom aux abords du Lac de l'Épée Restituée (Ho Hoan Kiem), centre de l'ancienne capitale Thang Long. On y commémore le Héros national Tran Hung Dao et les génies - maîtres de la Littérature, afin de perpétuer le patriotisme, vénérer le savoir ainsi que l'immortalité de notre nation.

Depuis un petit bâtiment, au début, son domaine s'élargissait au fur et à mesure des âges et depuis 1865 il a pris son parfait aspect actuel.

Au nord-est du Lac s'élève une portique frontale avec ses côtés 2 gros caratères chinois "Phuc" (Bonheur) et "Loc" (Abondance) selon les modèles tracés par Nguyen Van Sieu, un illustre lettré du 19e siècle. Derrière la portique, on voit la Tour du Pinceau et tout près, le Socle de l'Encrier en l'honneur de la civilisation nationale. Le Pont Pourpre, au nom poétique : "Au devant des lueurs matinales" conduit les visiteurs au temple et a la "Terrasse pour la contemplation de la Lune " (Vung Nguyet Lau) avec son Belvédère "jugulant les ondes" (Tran Ba Dinh) L'antique architecture se dissimule sous l'ombrage des arbres séculaires se mirant dans l'eau du Lac. Le Lac de l'Épée, l'îlot de Jade ainsi que La Tour de la Tortue ont été sources d'inspirations poétiques, bien chéries pour bon nombre de gens de culture du pays. Ils nous ont légué un trésor littéraire chantant la nature et la beauté de cette Perle de notre capitale. Quelle joie intense éprouverez-vous en contemplant le beau site et en dégustant la saveur de ces deux sentences :

"Reflétent l'âme sacrée de la patrie, l'Épée miroite comme les ondes du rivage.

Communiant avec ciel et terre, les lettres persistent avec l'âge des montagnes"

L'îlot de Jade bénéficie de la bienveillance des restaurateurs bénévoles de Hanoi. Le typhon N°3 de 1977 avait déraciné nombre d'arbres séculaires et gravement endommagé ses diverses constructions. Beaucoup de Hanoïens ont donné leur concours pour la reconstitution et le renforcement de ce site renommé.

Si vous désirez visiter Ngoc Son ainsi que d'autres sites, prière de vous adresser à la commission de surveillance des sites et lieux historiques, 90 rue Tho Nhuom (rue des Teinturiers), Hanoi. Tél : 8252377

Photos en 1ère page: - Portique du Temple de Ngoc Son
en 4ème page: - Tour de la Tortue (gauche)
- Temple principal
- Tour du Pinceau (droite)
- Pont The Huc

玉山祠簡介

玉山祠是陳朝(1225-1400)建築物,座落在故都升龍市還劍湖的玉山島上.祠中奉祀陳興道王和文昌帝君,旨在宣揚愛國主義精神,推崇先哲先儒,新礪祖國的永存和欣欣向榮。

隨著時間的推移,祠的規模逐漸擴大,到 1865 年經過重修,它就有如今完美的光景.

祠前,在東北方是三關門,左右兩邊是"福""祿"兩個大字,是十九世紀名儒阮文超的親筆字樣.門後是筆塔和研臺,象徵著祖國的文化傳統。

一座紅漆木板橋名曰"樓旭橋"將遊客送到"得月樓""鎮波亭"和禮拜(祀神)正殿.古老的 建築物掩映在湖面照印倒影的古樹繁枝茂葉之中,風景優美雅觀的還劍湖和玉島,龜塔也是越南歷代騷人詩家樂意往來寄托心願之處.他們所寫下的名篇佳句集中稱贊山河英靈的秀氣,歌頌風光綺麗的京畿名勝.親愛的遊客!當您一邊欣賞這遺跡的壯觀景色,一邊揣磨著:

"劍有餘靈光若水
文從大塊壽如山"

這副意味深長的對聯時,您會感覺到何等的痛快啊!

玉島經常得到首都文化局的關心.1977年三號台風吹倒了許多古樹,摧毀了得月橋,鎮波亭和大拜堂.不久,後河內人便及時進行重修,加固,使各個建築物變得更加壯麗了.一切漢文對聯圖額都有了越語拉丁文的譯註.

您要想來遊覽河內的名 勝古跡,河內名 勝古跡管理處歡迎各位貴賓光臨指導!

地址 : 染匠街90號.
電話 : 8252377

封面照片: (第一頁) :玉山祠門口
封底照片: (第四頁) :龜塔(左)
正殿
筆塔(右)
樓旭橋

NGOC SON TEMPLE

The Ngoc Son temple, dating back to the Tran dynasty (1225-1400) was built on an islet of the same name in Hoan Kiem lake in the centre of Thang Long, the former capital of Vietnam. The temple is dedicated to Tran Hung Dao and some illustrious men of letters of his time.

Originally a small shrine, the temple was enlarged and embellished from one generation to another. Its latest repair and renovation took place in 1865.

In front of the temple on the northeastern shore of the lake, stands the "Tam Quan" (Three-Passage) gate flanked on either side by two big Chinese letters "Phuc" (Luck) and "Loc" (Wealth) patterned on the handwriting of Nguyen Van Sieu, an eminent Confucian scholar of the 19th century. Behind the Tam Quan gate stands the Thap But (Pen Tower) and the Dai Nghien (Writing Pad). A repainted wooden bridge named "The Huc" (Flood of Morning Sunlight) leads to the temple passing by "Vong Nguyet Lau" (Watching the Moon) pavilion and "Ba Dinh" (Wave Containing) fortress, a kind of embankment. The lake, the temple and the Tortoise Tower in the centre of the lake are the three most painted symbols of Hanoi, inexhaustible source of inspiration for successive generations of poets and painters. One of the poems reads :

"The hallowing sword still shines in the air and glitters in water.
The poems sung to Heaven and Earth live on with the mountains".

In 1977 a big storm knocked down a number of old trees and caused substantial damage to the tower, p-er and the main worshipping house. Subsequent repairs included expansion and strengthening of the embankment with a new type of cement. A Vietnamese translation has been added to the original parallel sentences in Chinese.

If you want to see Ngoc Son and other scenic and historical sites of Hanoi, please contact the Managerial Board of Relics and Landscapes of Hanoi.

Address : 90 Tho Nhuom Str.
Tel : 8252377

Front cover : - Entrance gate to Ngoc Son Temple
Back cover : - Tortoise Tower (L)
- Main temple
- Pen Tower (R)
- The Huc bridge

Figure E.6: Ngọc So'n Temple brochure (inside)

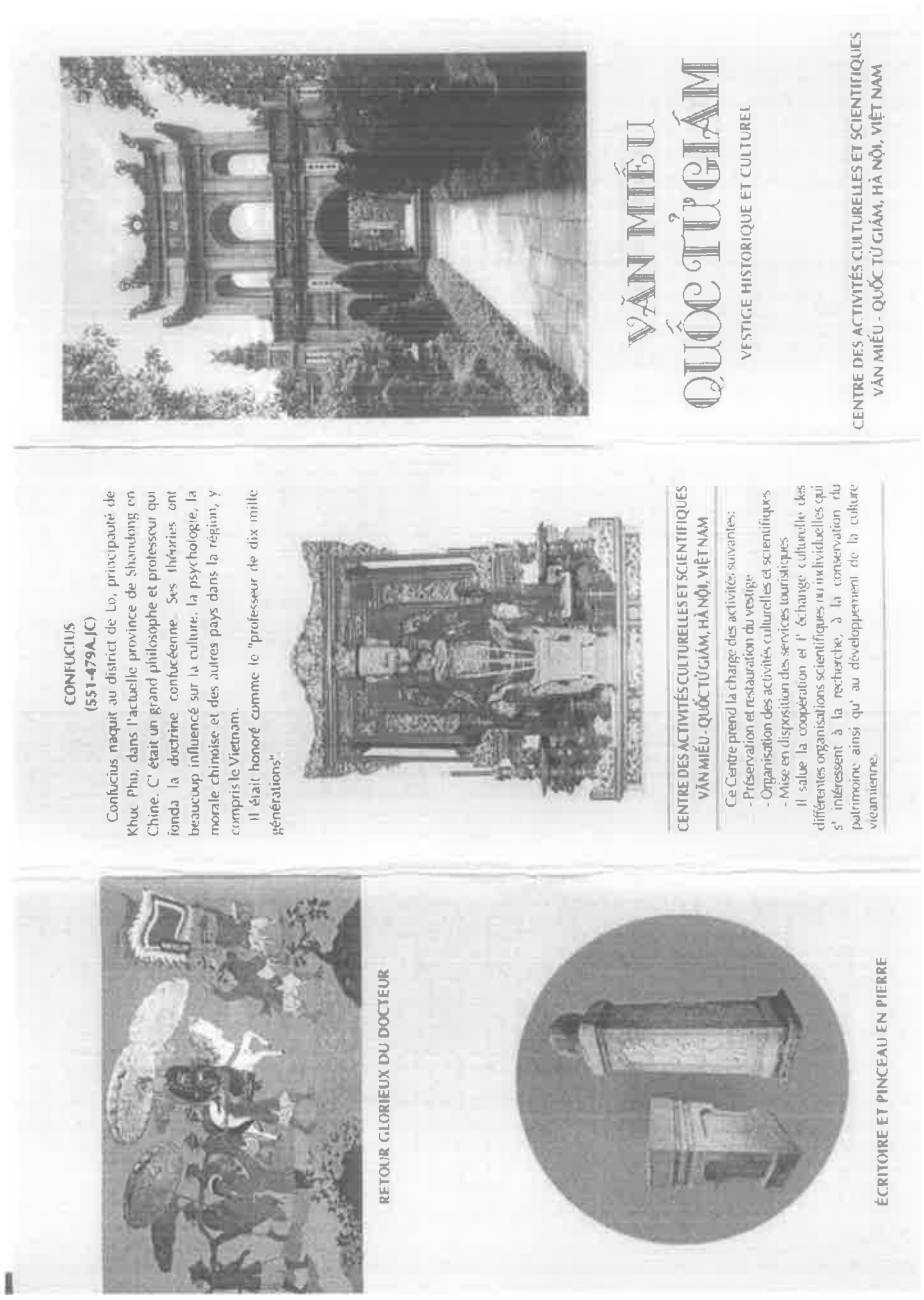


Figure E.7: Temple of Literature brochure in French (outside)

VĂN MIẾU - QUỐC TỬ GIÁM

Symbole du Confucianisme au Vietnam, VĂN MIẾU - QUỐC TỬ GIÁM de Hanoi est un monument historique et culturel de première importance pour la ville de HANOI et pour le pays.

L' histoire complète du ĐẠI VIỆT a noté: "En l'année CANH TUẤT, 1070, de notre ère chrétienne (baptisée 2e année THUẬN VŨ du règne de LÝ THÁNH TÔNG) les travaux ont commencé en automne, au 8e mois lunaire pour ériger le temple, modeler les statues de Confucius, de ses quatres disciples (TỬ PHỐI) et de CHU CÔNG, faire les portraits des 72 sages afin de célébrer leur culte durant quatre saisons. Ensuite, le Roi y envoya ses fils, y compris le prince héritier pour y faire leurs études."

En 1076, Le Roi LÝ NHÂN TÔNG fonda QUỐC TỬ GIÁM derrière le Temple de la Littérature pour recevoir les fils des mandarins, des nobles ainsi que les élèves brillants des milieux humbles de tout le pays.

Pendant plus de 700 ans de fonctionnement, QUỐC TỬ GIÁM - Première Université du VIỆT NAM a formé des milliers de lettré de talent dont l'historien NGÔ SĨ LIÊN, le mâthématicien LƯƠNG THẾ VINH, l'encyclopédiste LÊ QUÍ ĐÔN, l'homme de politique NGÔ THÌ NHẬM...

Durant plus de 900 ans, VĂN MIẾU - QUỐC TỬ GIÁM a bénéficié de nombreuses restaurations qui respectaient tout l'aspect antique, le style architectural de plusieurs dynasties.

Y sont toujours bien conservés de nombreux objets précieux qui sont autant de témoins d' une civilisation millénaire comme les stèles où sont inscrits les noms des docteurs, le pavillon KHUÊ VĂN CÁC (pléiade), le puits THIÊN QUANG (Clarté céleste), la maison des cérémonies, le temple intérieur, la statue de Confucius, les dragons, les écritoires en pierre, les vieilles murailles sans parler des banians, des frangipaniers, témoins oculaires des cultes, des grands concours sous les dynasties LÝ, TRẦN, LÊ...

Quatre vingt deux stèles de docteurs, taillées dans de grands blocs en pierre, installées de 1484-1780 sur le dos des tortues portent le nom de 1306 docteurs élus en 82 promotions ainsi que leur brève biographie.

L'érection des STÈLES de docteurs était appelée à encourager les études et à honorer les lettrés éminents.

Le monument VĂN MIẾU - QUỐC TỬ GIÁM, est maitenant une fois de plus en restauration pour préserver les valeurs historiques et culturelles de ce haut lieu qui abrite, à l'heure actuelle, les activités culturelles représentatives du cachet national.

賢材國家之元氣
元氣盛則國勢強以隆
元氣餘則國勢弱以汚
是以聖帝明王莫不以
育材取士培植元氣
為先務也

"L'homme de talent et de vertue est l'âme vitale d'un pays. La prospérité et la puissance du pays dépendent de cette forte vitalité, à l' inverse, elles seront en décadence si celle-ci est faible. C'est pourquoi, afin de renforcer cette vitalité, aucun Saint-Empéreur ou Roi éclairé n'a pas pris la tâche de former des hommes de talent et de sélectionner des lettrés d' élite comme sa tâche la plus importante."

Tiré du texte sur la stèle consacrée au concours Nhâm Tuất sous le règne de Đại Bảo en 3 année (1442)

PAVILLON DE KHUÊ VĂN

STÈLES DE DOCTEURS

Figure E.8: Temple of Literature brochure (inside)

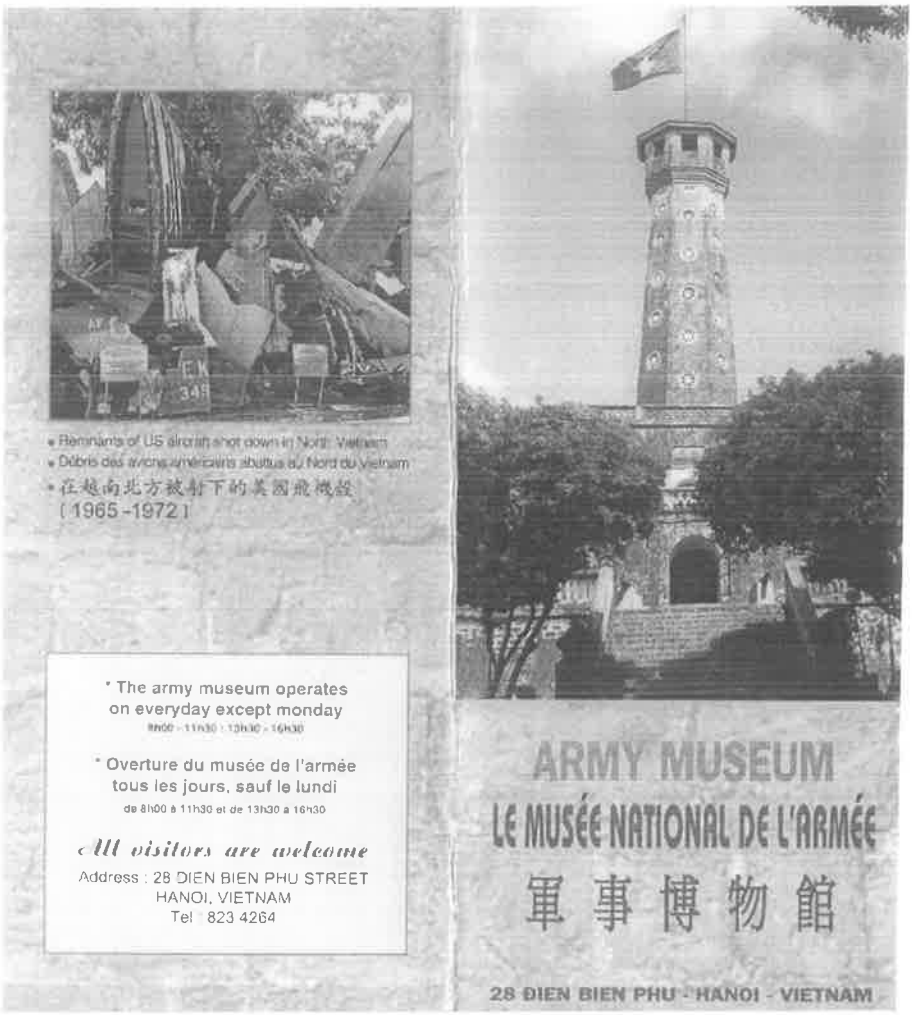


Figure E.9: Army Museum brochure in English, French and Chinese (outside)

Figure E.10: Army Museum brochure (inside)

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