

Language Problems and Correct Understanding of the Macao Basic Law

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Since the *Joint Declaration of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Portugal on the question of Macao* (the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration) was signed in 1987 and the date of the handover was determined, Macao entered the transitional period and several projects were conducted step by step, such as the “legalization of the Chinese language”, “localization of civil servants” and “localization of laws”. Then the language issues focusing on the status of the Chinese language and the Portuguese language started to be a major concern and discussions about the status of these two languages and the practical contradictions in these two languages continued till today. Therefore, it is necessary to have a systematic discussion about it.

I. Legal Positioning of Chinese and Portuguese: the definition of “official language”

In the Chinese context, it is not difficult to find the expression “the official languages (of Macao are Chinese and Portuguese)” from anecdotal stories, newspapers reports or the relevant academic literature, and here the term “official language” is expressed as “官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)” in Chinese. This argument is not rigorous. If we look at the translated Portuguese version of the *Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China* (hereinafter as “the Macao Basic Law”), the term used in Article 9 is “*língua oficial*” (that is “official language” in English). However, in the original Chinese version, the term used is not “官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)”, which is a normal equivalent of “*língua oficial*”; instead, the legislator of the Macao Basic Law used the term “正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)”, which is a term rarely used in this context. We have to understand the differences between “正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)” and “官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)”, if we are to consider the language matter seriously.

1.1 What is “官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)”?

“官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)” is directly translated as “official languages” (including written and oral forms), which “refer to the statutory languages for official use in a country”,¹ “that is, the languages used in government, courts and public affairs”.² In a multi-language country or region, there exists more than one official language sometimes. For example, Canada has two official

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languages: English and French. Singapore's official languages are English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. It has to be pointed out that the primary foundation for a language to become an official language is that the language is granted an official status by law just as the Constitutions of Canada and Singapore have both explicitly provided their official languages.³ In fact, not every country or region will establish one or more languages as its official language through legislation. Take the United Kingdom and the United States for examples. English is the national language of these two countries, that is, the main and native language that is commonly used by the people of the country.⁴ So to a certain extent, English can be deemed as "the official language de facto" of Britain and the United States because people can use English in public departments and the use of English encounters little obstacle. However, these two countries have not established the official status of the English language at all via any legislation. Other languages have not been excluded for use in public departments. Therefore, English is not the "official language de jure". It can be seen from this point that the purpose of a country or region to push forward a language policy or establish an official language, is to solve a language issue or to solve some social or political issues arising from the language impact.⁵

1.2 What is "正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)"?

The term of "正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)" is not often seen in such relevant fields as language policy and language planning. Generally speaking, the corresponding foreign equivalent of the term "正式(zhengshi)" is "formal", which mainly refers to "meeting commonly accepted criteria; meeting a certain formalities".⁶ From the linguistic point of view, the "formality" of a language "refers to formal degree of different language style", and "to a standard for distinguishing between different language styles".⁷ However, if you look it up from the general Linguistics English dictionaries and monographs, you can hardly find the explanation of the term of "formal language". You may find a similar term: "formal speech".⁸ The reason for the absence of the term of "formal language" is that this term does not fall in the field of general linguistics. "Formal language" is "a form of a language", referring to a formula definition language that can be processed in mathematics, logic and computer science.⁹ It falls under the field of computer science and has nothing to do with what is being discussed here in this article. It is not the meaning of the "正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)" mentioned in Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law. The entry of "正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)" cannot be found in many general linguistics dictionaries except the Chinese *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistic* compiled by Qi Yucun and et al in 1993. In accordance with the explanation of Qi Yucun and et al, "正式語文(zhengshi yuwen) refers to the language used by a certain international organization or conference for issuing notices, documents or conference presentations."¹⁰ The Chinese version of Article 51 of *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the United Nations* has explicitly provides that "阿拉伯文、中文、英文、法文、俄文和西班牙文為大會及其各委員會和小組委員會的正式語文和工作語文".¹¹ But it must be pointed out that the English version of this article is "Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be both the official and the working languages of the General Assembly, its committees and its subcommittees."¹² It can be seen that "formal language" corresponds with "official languages". In other words, it is consistent with the English saying of the aforementioned "official language".

1.3 The choice of the term “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” used in Article 9 of Macao Basic Law

It can be seen from the above analysis that the meaning of the term of “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” used in Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law is not different from “official language”. It has not only established the official status of Chinese and Portuguese via legislation but also pointed out that the use of Chinese and Portuguese by the executive authorities, legislature and judiciary of the Macao SAR fully complies with the definition of “official language”. Some scholars in Macao pointed out that what Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law says is nothing but the “official languages” of Macao. However, if “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” and “official language” are the same, why did the legislators not use the commonly and generally used term of “官方語言(guanfang yuwen)” at that time? Why did they choose the relatively uncommon “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” in the field?

In all formal documents, besides the Hong Kong Basic Law and the Macao Basic Law, only the documents such as *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the United Nations* and *Multi Languages Adopted in the System of the United Nations* of the United Nations adopt the term “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” as the Chinese translation of “official language” (in English) and “langue officielle” (in French). The United Nations is an international organization, not a sovereign state. It is slightly improper to use the Chinese term “官方(guanfang)”, which has certain relation to the sovereignty of a nation, and can literally mean “authorized by the government of a country or region” or “possesses a legal status”. Although “official” in English has both the meanings of “官方(guanfang)” and “正式(zhengshi)”¹³, the Chinese meanings “官方(guanfang)” and “正式(zhengshi)” are not exactly the same. Perhaps because of this, the Chinese translators made such choices in the documents of the United Nations. The author interpreted Article 9 of Macao Basic Law using Systemic Functional Grammar Theory and pointed out that it is marked to use “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” instead of “官方語言(guanfang yuwen)”. The language potential should not be neglected in analyzing this legal article. The use of “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” is perhaps deliberately to avoid the use of “官方(guanfang)” lest it should be linked with state sovereignty.”¹⁴

1.4 Correctly understanding the original intention of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law through clarifying the differences of “官方語言(guanfang yuwen)” and “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)”

Viewed from the linguistic prospective, Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law is obviously a language policy and explicitly specifies the status of Chinese and Portuguese in the executive authorities, legislature and judiciary of the Macao SAR. However, the expressions of the text in this article are very indirect or very roundabout. They have neither frankly tell the status of the Chinese language nor used the term of “官方語言(guanfang yuwen)”.

Since Macao is an unalienable part of China, the Chinese language as the official language of the Macao SAR after the handover is said to be self-evident. Even if Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law has granted the “正式語文(zhengshi yuwen)” status to the Portuguese language without clearly specifying the status of the Chinese language, the proposition of “mainly based on Chinese, supplemented by Portuguese” has always been a prevailing view among the legal scholars in Macao.¹⁵ In fact, in the 1980s, China and Portugal consulted over the Macao Question, and signed the Sino-Portugal Joint Declaration. In the second point of the Sino-Portugal Joint Declaration, twelve basic policies of China after China has resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Macao

have been listed. These basic policies have been completely adopted in the Macao Basic Law. Among them, as for the status of Chinese and Portuguese in Macao, it is mentioned in the later part of Clause 5, Article 2 of the Sino-Portugal Joint Declaration that: "In addition to the Chinese language, Portuguese may also be used by the government authorities, legislature and courts of the Macao Special Administrative Region." Compared with Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law, the expressions are not exactly the same. The expression in the Sino-Portugal Joint Declaration is basically the same as the first clause of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law. But the second clause of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law that "葡文也是正式語文(Portuguese is also an official language)" does not exist in the Sino-Portugal Joint Declaration, and is added when drafting the Macao Basic Law. This is a kind of consensus reached on the two languages after the signing of the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration. As the country to exercise the sovereign power over the Macao SAR, China gives a position on the Portuguese to respect the history. Therefore, Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law should not be understood as a bilingual policy adopted in the Macao SAR. The relationship between the Chinese language and the Portuguese language in the public departments of the Macao SAR is different from the bilingual system in the traditional sense.

Besides, Portuguese is not the official language in the Macao SAR. Therefore, it is not appropriate to infer the development direction of Portuguese in Macao with the theory that other places have established their official languages. Some scholar once pointed out that several factors are involved in selecting an official language, including: (1) political factors, (2) ethnic factors, (3) historical factors, (4) development factors, and (5) international factors. Having taken those factors into account, he proposed to revise the Macao Basic Law and change the official languages into Chinese and English.¹⁶ This proposal is indeed completely contrary to the original intention of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law. Just as the afore-analysis, the legislative purpose of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law is that China has given a formal status to the Portuguese language in order to respect the history and deliberately avoided the term of "官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)". Instead, it has used a comparatively vague term: "正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)". If you deliberately regard Portuguese as a "官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)" but at the same time you say that the development factor and the international factor of the Portuguese language are not as adequate as those of the English language and proposed in the end to revise the Macao Basic Law to give official status to English instead of Portuguese, this proposition is very ridiculous. Is it possible for the Mainland China to use English as a "官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)" in order to develop and get in line with the international practice?

It can thus be seen that clarifying the differences of a "官方語言(*guanfang yuwen*)" and a "正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)" is absolutely conducive to our correct understanding of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law – an important article on the language policy of the Macao SAR. It should be reiterated that Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law has provided the formal status of Chinese and Portuguese to the executive authorities, legislature and judiciary of the Macao SAR. In addition, it shows the concept of "mainly based on Chinese, supplemented by Portuguese" through its wording and representation. Besides, granting formal status to the Portuguese language indicates that China respects the history.

II. The Practical Language Contradiction in the Macao SAR

The discussion on these two “正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)” in the society is not merely limited to the representation of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law. In many cases, the language issues that truly cause the social concern is the contradiction of these two languages in the practical use in the SAR. Here I would like to sort out the language issues in reality and then analyze the in-depth reasons behind them.

2.1 Sorting out the existing issues of two formal languages

Those scholars who are concerned with the Macao languages are very clear in mind that there indeed exists an invisible reciprocal struggle between Chinese and Portuguese in the society of Macao, with the Chinese language force hoping that the Portuguese language force would quit from the historical stage while the Portuguese force has been trying to maintain and consolidate its sphere of power. The practical existing language issues are as follows:

2.1.1 The issue of Portuguese-Chinese in laws

Decree No. 11/89/M *Estabelece o Uso da Língua Chinesa nos Diplomas do Governo* (*Establishing the Use of the Chinese language in Government Documents*) that the Macao Portuguese Government promulgated in 1989 “has provided the use of the Chinese language in the government documents”. This is the first time that the Chinese language was given a formal status. However, the true completion of “the legalization of the Chinese language” did not come until 1991 when Mário Alberto, President of Portugal, represented the Portuguese Government to sign and announce Decree No. 455/99 of the Republic of Portugal *Atribui à Língua Chinesa Estatuto Oficial, Idêntico ao da Língua Portuguesa* (*Giving the Chinese Language an Official Status, Identical to the Portuguese Language*). The act stipulated that “the Chinese language has an equal official status and legal force as the Portuguese language in Macao.” Although “the legalization of the Chinese language” means the proceeding of the “localization of the laws”, what the “localization” did was to translate into Chinese the laws in Portuguese transplanted from Portugal. It did not make a thorough reform in accordance with the local situation of Macao. What is worse, since there has been a long-term shortage of bilingual legal talents, “legal language and official language are still attached with the ghost of ‘Portuguese-Chinese’ which is totally unacceptable by the public.”¹⁷ Even if every Chinese word in the sentence can be understood, the meaning of the entire sentence is still not understandable to many Chinese people. Such legal articles are numerous. In fact, there still exist the phenomena that the SAR laws are drafted in Portuguese first and then translated into Chinese later even after the handover. In regard to this problem, Chinese legal scholars and experts have long been urging everyone to pay attention to the provisions of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law and strictly implement the concept of “mainly based on Chinese, supplemented by Portuguese”. They demand legislation in Chinese, law enforcement in Chinese and all judicial procedures in Chinese. But Portuguese legal scholars and experts have always emphasized the original relationship between Macao laws and the Portuguese laws and that Macao itself has had a complete set of legal system. Many of the original laws, regulations and decrees before the handover of Macao that do not contravene the Macao Basic Law have been retained and they were enacted all in Portuguese. It is impossible to discard them all at once. The Chinese language and the Portuguese language have become a stalemate, which cannot be solved easily as far as laws are concerned.

2.1.2 The social effect and contradiction brought about by the official views on the two languages

Since the signature of the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration in 1980s and with on the agenda the "legalization of the Chinese language", the "localization of public servants" and the localization of laws and regulations", the "legalization of the Chinese language" is the first problem to be solved. The society and academic circles have paid great attention to the status of the Chinese language. Macao's social attention to the Chinese language reached a climax all at once. After the Macao Portuguese Government recognized the legal status of the Chinese language, the attention to the importance to the Chinese language has become gradually lessened. The Macao Portuguese Government and people with Portuguese background began to realize their interest in Macao after the handover. Therefore, some social voices started to emphasize the original relationship between the Macao laws and the Portuguese laws as well as the importance of the Portuguese language. They made efforts to "create conditions to enable the Portuguese language to continue to exist after the handover of powers to China."¹⁸ The Macao Portuguese Government deliberately avoided the review of the original laws by the Macao SAR Preparatory Committee. Only one week before the handover did the Decree No. 101/99/M *Aprova o Estatuto das Linguas Oficiais (Approval of the Status of the Official Language)* was promulgated to "approve" the formal language status, providing "equal dignity" to both languages. After the handover, the status of the Chinese language was elevated to a certain level initially. In order to develop the economic and trade cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries in 2003, China launched the "Forum Macau". On 12th October 2003, the Forum was established in Macao and the first ministerial meeting was held in Macao. With the Standing Secretariat of the Forum established in Macao and the expectation for Macao to be a platform between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries, the Portuguese language became important all of a sudden in Macao society. However, a few years later, the Forum was cooled down. With the emergence of problems caused by the un-thorough reform of the legal system after the handover, the voices of upholding "mainly based on Chinese, supplemented by Portuguese" began to be emphasized once again. In May 2012, the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau of the Macao SAR issued a circular to all public administrations entitled "Atenção com a divulgação de informações ao público (Attention in Release of Information to the Public)", requiring all administrative authorities to release public information both in Chinese and in Portuguese. The number of Portuguese experts in the public authorities increased all at once and the importance attached to Portuguese became obvious once again. There has always existed the reciprocal relationship between Chinese and Portuguese. As a result, it is still difficult to solve the contradiction today 15 years after the handover.

2.2 Analysis on the in-depth reasons of the language issues

The reason why Chinese and Portuguese have long been in a state of stalemate is because the legal language in Macao and the language used in the society are completely separated. Chinese as the language used in the society is the language commonly used by 94% of the Macao population.¹⁹ However, although the Chinese language has long established its official status, it is still in a secondary status in the actual use in the legal circle. "Portuguese-Chinese" is frequently seen in legal articles and provisions. One of the important conditions to be a judicial candidate officer is efficient in Chinese and Portuguese.²⁰ Legal workers and scholars also believe that it is necessary to know some Portuguese in understanding Macao laws. On the other hands, Portuguese has long

been the legal language of Macao. To a greater extent, it has been dominating the Macao legal system. However, only 0.7% of the Macao population speaks Portuguese as their daily speech while 2.4% of the population can use Portuguese. The total of them is only 3.1% of the total Macao population.²¹ It can be said that Portuguese has never been the language used in Macao society. Even the first foreign language in local primary education is not Portuguese, but English. In a multi-lingual state of Macao society, Portuguese is barely established as a language of H variety. Yet, it exists only in the legal circle. Very few people in Macao use both Chinese and Portuguese. Most probably, even those who have received higher education cannot speak or use Portuguese, let alone the ordinary citizens at the bottom of the society.

The separation of the legal language from the language used in the society in Macao has caused social injustice arising from legal issues. Laws are formulated by languages, and those concepts used to constitute the laws can only be understood by the people through languages.²² However, legal languages are different from the languages used in everyday life. The grammar and terms and expressions used in written legal codes are all specialized. The grammar in legal register seems to follow the linguistic rules slightly different from those of the everyday language.²³ Law and power are closely related, while power and justice are also closely linked. Legal language itself is comparatively difficult to understand. If it is a foreign language strange to the great majority of the people of the society, the language obstacle makes people in an unfavorable position in the face of law. This is the fundamental reason why the Chinese language force and the Portuguese language force have had contradictions and been fully incompatible. The Chinese force hopes to turn this unfavorable situation. And it is taken for granted for the Chinese language to take the leading position after the handover. The Chinese force is unwilling to make concession. On the contrary, the Portuguese language force knows that legal language is their last position in the Macao SAR and their force in this position is quite strong. Therefore once there is an opportunity, they will not let it go easily.

III. The Key to the Solution of the Language Contradiction: The Government Takes the Lead

Since the contradiction between these two languages originates from the separation of the legal language from the language used in the Macao society, the key to the solution of the contradiction is to eliminate the separation or at least narrow the gap between the separation. It may be solved in two directions: One is to promote the Chinese language to become a true legal language. The other is to promote the Portuguese language to be a true language used in the Macao society. Training bilingual talents of Chinese and Portuguese is obviously the main solution. However, this proposal has been in the air for more than 20 years but witnessed no practical effect. It has been 15 years since the handover, however, the Macao SAR Government has taken no position obviously on this issue, nor had any complete set of plan. If the SAR Government wants to fundamentally solve the contradiction brought about by the two languages of Chinese and Portuguese, it must be actively involved in it and take the lead in the direction and method for the solution of the issue.

3.1 Strike at the root cause of the issue and put the Chinese language right in the legal status of a chief legal language

The first part of this article has clearly pointed out that Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law is a rigid language policy, which contains the idea of Chinese as the chief official language supplemented by Portuguese. However, the actual situation in the Macao SAR is just the opposite. In order to solve this problem, the Macao SAR Government must have a clear attitude, strike at the root cause of the issue and put the Chinese language right as the true legal language.

The Government attitude towards the “正式語文(*zhengshi yuwen*)” will affect the language’s position in the society. Take Ireland for an example. Since Ireland became independent of the British rule in 1922, it has established the Irish language as the first official language and the mother tongue of the majority of the people and English only as the second official language. The reason for this establishment is for the maintenance of national dignity. In order to develop the Irish language, the Irish Government took the language legislation as the language planning mechanism. While enacting the various laws and regulations, it gave a certain priority to the Irish language. In addition to the acts exclusively dealing with the language planning, many other acts fall under other fields. But all of them contain provisions and articles for protection and promotion of the Irish language. This language planning mechanism starting from legislation has effectively enhanced the status of the Irish language in Ireland.²⁴

The Macao SAR is different from Ireland. The Chinese language is not a minority language. There is no need to promote Chinese in the SAR community. The weakness of the Chinese language lies in the public sector and in the legislative and judicial authorities in particular. What the SAR Government should do is to affirm its attitude through various means that the executive, legislative and judicial authorities should use Chinese as the chief legal language. The first thing that the SAR Government should do among others is to re-examine in accordance with the provision of Article 11 of the Macao Basic Law whether the decree of 101/99/M, which was left over by the Macao Portuguese Government just before it left Macao, has contravened the Macao Basic Law and re-examine whether “the principle of the two official languages enjoys equal dignity” provided in the decree complies with the provision and spirit of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law. If the decree does contravene the Macao Basic Law, it should be corrected, revised and clarified immediately rather than it is still relied on as the basis of other legal documents or government documents. Besides, although the Legislative Assembly is the only legislative organ in Macao, the great majority of the legal drafts are prepared by the relevant government departments, submitted to the Legislative Council for review. The SAR Government may consider putting forward some internal guidelines, and require all major SAR Government departments to draft all new legal documents in the Chinese language first and translate them into Portuguese later even if it is technical difficult to do so at first so as to completely eradicate “Portuguese- Chinese”, and let Chinese truly enter into the Macao legal language circle. In addition, at proper time, the SAR Government may even consider revising Law No. 13/2001 and other relevant legal documents, to loosen up the requirements on the Portuguese language ability of the judicial candidate officials when they are to be employed for work, boldly let competent legal workers with adequate Chinese legal knowledge enter into the judicial authorities to deal with Chinese cases with the plaintiff and the defendant both being Chinese. Although the above mentioned policies are favorable to the Chinese language, they not only comply with the requirement of the Macao Basic Law, but also meet the demands of 90% of the Macao residents who do not speak or write Portuguese. Such an

attempt will definitely have some rebounds at the beginning. In order to fundamentally solve the weakness of the Chinese language in the legal field, it is absolutely necessary for the SAR Government to show its apparent attitude through legislation and revision of existing laws and regulations.

3.2 Investing resources to train high-end bilingual professionals with long-term vision

Another direction of solving the separation of the legal language from the language used in society is to promote Portuguese to be a language used by the society. However, this is much more difficult than promoting Chinese to become a true legal language. In accordance with the 2011 census, only 3.1% of the Macao population uses Portuguese as their mother tongue or can speak Portuguese. Portuguese descents and the population with Portuguese blood constitute only 1.4% of the Macao population.²⁵ Viewed from the population structure, it is very difficult for Portuguese to become a language used by the society in Macao. Besides, Portuguese is not a lingua franca that has influence in the world. If Macao residents select Portuguese as their first foreign language instead of English, they will have great opportunity cost. I am afraid that not many people are willing to learn Portuguese. Viewed from the integration into the global community, it goes against the reality to change the H variety of language from English to Portuguese in the fields of business, education, science and technology and academy. Since it is very difficult to promote Portuguese to be a language used in the Macao society and its consequence might be that the loss outweighs the gain, Macao can take a step back and don't put the Portuguese as a language used by the Macao society. Rather it can promote Portuguese to become an advantageous language and carry out oriented training of the bilingual talents of Chinese and Portuguese to solve the actual language barrier between Chinese and Portuguese existing in Macao itself. At the same time Macao may establish itself as the training base of the Portuguese language for China to train bilingual talents of Chinese and Portuguese for the development of the country.

Training the bilingual talents of Chinese and Portuguese is obviously the main method to solve the Chinese-Portuguese language contradiction and the legal reform problem. However, it has achieved little effect in Macao. Although the universities and colleges such as the language and translation school of Macao Polytechnic Institute, are devoted to training many Chinese and Portuguese bilingual bachelors since the handover, there is no way to cultivate high-level talents because of the existing rules and regulations. At the same time, some scholars pointed out that the monetary return is not high to be a translator. As a result, few people are willing to devote themselves to the translation business. What these scholars have put forward above can indeed be solved by the Macao SAR Government. Since everybody knows that the Macao needs to carry out a thorough legal reform and discard the "Portuguese-Chinese" in the past laws and regulations, the Chinese and Portuguese bilingual talents are the key. It is not appropriate to introduce them from the outside. For example, the imported Portuguese legal talents from Portugal do not know Chinese. While the imported Chinese and Portuguese bilingual talents from the mainland may not have adequate legal knowledge and are not familiar with the situation in Macao. Macao may carry out oriented training of such talents for itself. For example, it may commission a Macao higher learning institution to train this kind of talents by designing the relevant bachelor courses. In addition to Chinese and Portuguese, the students are required to study some legal knowledge. The students could have the benefits such as being exempted from tuition fees. However they must sign an

agreement with the Macao SAR Government before they enter for study that they will serve several years in such relevant departments as Law Reform and International Law Bureau upon completion of the courses. If such long-term training plan is pushed, a considerable number of Chinese and Portuguese bilingual talents will be cultivated in a decade to solve the language obstacles in the actual use of these two languages. Meanwhile, this measure will encourage the higher learning institutions to develop the Chinese-Portuguese translation profession, let Macao be a the training base of the Chinese and Portuguese bilingual talents with the relevant support facilities, which is not limited to Macao, but faces the whole country. This will let Macao truly play the role of becoming a Sino-Luso platform. Since Macao SAR Government is not short of fiscal revenue, the above-mentioned suggestions will not be a problem from the financial point of view. As long as the SAR Government has the determination and formulates a long-term plan, it is feasible to turn Portuguese into an advantage for the SAR.

IV. Conclusion

The aforementioned correct understanding of Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law should have formed a basic consensus at the beginning of the handover and even in the transitional period. However, our society is still debating about it today. The SAR Government cannot be said to have no responsibility. It seems necessary for the SAR Government officials to make remedial work on the relationship between Chinese and Portuguese. It seems that there is still much room for discussion on the relationship between the Chinese and Portuguese, the relationship between Article 9 of the Macao Basic Law and Decree 101/99/M, the relationship between the legal status differences established for the two languages of Chinese and Portuguese and strengthening the bilingual talents training in Macao, etc. We sincerely expect that the Macao SAR Government will make itself an example to enhance the understanding of the Macao Basic Law on the existing basis and push the practice of the "One Country, Two Systems" to a higher level in the Macao SAR.

Notes:

- ¹ Qi Yucun and et al. (1993). *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistic*. Shanghai. Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House. 352.
- ² Richards, J. C., J. Platt and H. Platt (Eds.) (1998). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*. Hong Kong: Longman. 302.
- ³ Article 16 of 1982 *Constitution Act of Canada* and Article 153A of *Constitution of the Republic of Singapore*.
- ⁴ Coulmas, F. (Ed.) 1997. *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Malden: Blackwell. 443.
- ⁵ *Ibid.* 439.
- ⁶ Institute of Linguistics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Ed.) (2008). *Modern Chinese Dictionary (Traditional Chinese Edition)*. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press. 1460.
- ⁷ Qi Yucun and et al. (1993). *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistic*. Shanghai. Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House. 113.
- ⁸ Formal speech "means" a class of speech that the speaker uses on occasions when he is very careful about the

- pronunciation, choice of words and the sentence structure. See Richards, J. C., J. Platt and H. Platt (Eds.) (1998). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*. Hong Kong: Longman. 181.
- ⁹ The entry of “formal language” in the website of Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formal_language.
- ¹⁰ Qi Yucun and et al. (1993). *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistic*. Shanghai. Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House. 114.
- ¹¹ United Nations General Assembly Official Chinese website: <http://www.un.org/zh/ga/about/ropga/rule8.shtml>.
- ¹² United Nations General Assembly Official English website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/ropga/lang.shtml>.
- ¹³ Rundell, M and et al. (Eds.) (2008). *Macmillan English-Chinese Dictionary*. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press. 1371.
- ¹⁴ Leong Sok Man (2013). On the Official Languages of the Macao SAR: from the SFG Discourse Analysis Perspective. *Academic Journal of “One Country, Two Systems” (English Version)*. Volume 3. 143-154.
- ¹⁵ Jeong Wan Chong (2011). *Interpretation to the Basic Law of Macao*. Macao: Associação de Divulgação da Lei Básica de Macau. 42-43.
- ¹⁶ Ji Chaoyuan (2012). On the Legitimacy of the Official Languages and Their Implications for Hong Kong and Macao. *Hong Kong and Macao Studies*, 2012 Winter. 123-136
- ¹⁷ Ching Cheung Fai (2009). Preface of the *Language and Translation Volume*. In Ching Cheung Fai (Ed.). *The Selection of Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences of Macao (Language and Translation)*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press. 001.
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