

# Project report: documentation of Wucun Pinghua folk tales, fables, and legends

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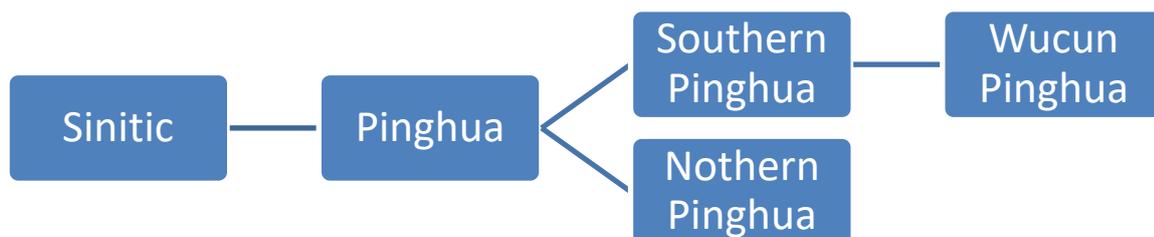
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## Language context

Wucun Pinghua, the subject language of this documentation project, is a variety of Pinghua, which is, in turn, a first branch of Sinitic. The linguistic affiliation of Wucun Pinghua is represented in Figure 1 below.

*Figure 1 linguistic affiliation of Wucun Pinghua*



Pinghua is a hitherto under-documented and under-described language, and Wucun Pinghua, as a minority dialect of Pinghua, had never been documented before this project. Wucun Pinghua is spoken in five villages located in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, the geographical location of which is highlighted in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 geographical location of Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China



The total population of these five villages are approximately 6,000. However, not every villager can speak the language, and most of those who can are village elders. Due to pressures from language shift to Mandarin and Cantonese, the two dominant languages in the region, many young villagers cannot speak their native community language. What worsens the language situation of Wucun Pinghua even more is that children of the five villagers are not being taught the language.

Without a thorough survey on the language-use patterns and transgenerational language loss, the degree of endangerment of Wucun Pinghua cannot be assessed rigorously. Nevertheless,

based on the general observations described earlier, it suffices to say that Wucun Pinghua is potentially critically endangered.

## **Fieldwork conditions, documentation methods, and project implementation**

This project was conducted in Gema Village, one of the five Wucun Pinghua villages. The research plan was reviewed and approved by the village committee. The project was welcomed by the villagers and hence received in-depth cooperation from the villagers. Five language consultants and two project assistants were engaged as planned.

The five language consultants were audio-recorded while they spontaneously narrated folk tales, fables, and legends in Wucun Pinghua. The sample rate of the recordings collected is 24 bits with the frequency of 96 Hz. On the other hand, the two project assistants were engaged in transcribing and translating the collected recordings.

The recording phase of this project ran from January 2018 to April 2018, with a duration of four months, which is one month more than the original plan. Accordingly, the recording-processing stage was postponed one month later than the plan and run from May 2018 to July 2018.

## **Project finance acquittal**

The project fund was spent mostly as planned with only minor variances. As shown in Table 1 below, equipment is underspent by 75 EUR, which was instead spent on more consultant time than the original plan. Overall, the project was completed within the budget proposed.

The recorder and the microphone under this project kept by the grantee for a planned larger-scale documentation project, which is expected to start in early 2019 and will involve twenty language consultants from all five villages of Wucun Pinghua.

*Table 1*

Budget items	Budget	Actual	Variance	Currency
Zoom H6 recorder and accessories	400	365	25	EUR
Rode NTG-2 directional microphone	210	180	30	EUR
headphones, batteries, and cables	30	30	0	EUR
1 TB hard drive	100	80	20	EUR
Compensations to language consultants EUR10/hour *5 hours/person*5	250	325	-75	EUR
Compensations to assistants for data preparation and translation EUR10/hour*25 hours/person*2 persons	500	500	0	EUR
<b>Total</b>	<b>1490</b>	<b>1490</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>EUR</b>

## Research outcome and further researches

This project collected 13 hours of audio recordings as planned. As this report being written, the recordings are being uploaded to PARADISEC, a digital archive for endangered languages and cultures. The repository of Wucun Pinghua on PARADISEC can be accessed at <http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC3>, and the files collected with the support of this grant are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2

<b>PARADISEC file names</b>	<b>Consultants</b>
StoryCollections1	XCR
StoryCollections2	XCR
StoryCollections3	XCR
StoryCollections4	XCR
StoryCollections5	XCR
StoryCollections6	XY
StoryCollections7	XY
StoryCollections8	XY
StoryCollections9	XY
Discussion1	XCR and XY
Discussion2	XCR and XY
Discussion3	XCR and XY
Discussion4	XCR and XY
Discussion5	XCR and XY
Discussion6	XCR and XY
Discussion7	XCR and XY
Discussion8	XCR and XY
Discussion9	XCR and XY
Discussion10	XCR and XY
Discussion11	XCR and XY

As for further studies, the grantee will be transcribing, annotating, and translating the recordings collected by this project soon. Further, the grantee is planning on a larger-scale documentation projects involving language consultants from all five villages to thoroughly document the WCPH.