

**Hokkien**

## 福建話

**Spoken in:** Taiwan

**Region:** Asia

**Total speakers:** about 15 million in Taiwan and 49 million (Min-nan as a group)

**Genetic Classification:** Sino-Tibetan Chinese Min Min-nan Taiwanese

**Official language of:** None (legislative bills have been proposed to be a “national language” in the Republic of China.)

The Hokkien (dialect) is the major tongue of people living south of the Min River in Fujian Province, China. It is also closely related to the TeoChiu and Taiwanese dialect. It is a Chinese dialect, often called Minnan or Minnanhua, a member of the Min dialect branch.

Hokkien is also the mother tongue of most overseas Chinese from the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. Hokkien uses the unified Chinese writing system to ideographs. However, the pronunciations of the words are different from Mandarin. Moreover, some characters that are used in Hokkien are not used in Mandarin. Some are even non-existent in Mandarin.

Hokkien uses the Latin alphabet to pronounce the Chinese characters.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 1 FTE Hokkien interpreter and 5 sessional interpreters.