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**An acoustic study on voiceless retroflex and dental sibilants of
young native Min speakers in Taiwan**

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The Mandarin spoken in Taiwan is influenced by Min, a Southern Chinese dialect, in many perspectives. Due to the absence of retroflex sibilants in Min, previous studies claimed that retroflex sibilants are replaced by their dental counterparts. Recent studies, however, showed that retroflex and dental sibilants are actually distinguished. Such contradictory result was due to the fact that different speaker groups were targeted at - one on older generation, acquiring Min as L1, whereas the other on younger generation, acquiring Min as L2. Since age and the acquisition order of Min were involved, it was unknown which factor affected the realization of retroflex and dental sibilants more. To clarify this point, we targeted at the younger generation that acquired Min as L1. Acoustic measurements were taken on all sibilants. Results showed that retroflex and dental sibilants had distinctive realization, suggesting age factor to be more determinant. Gender effect was found significant, in which females showed a greater distinction than males. Moreover, retroflex sibilants pronounced in syllables were significantly different from those in sentences. Future studies could be done on the other group - older generation, acquiring Min as L2. Also, whether the frequency of using Min plays a role awaits further exploration.