



University of Edinburgh
Theoretical and Applied Linguistics
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A Sociolinguistic Study of Chinese Lexical Change

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Dissertation Presented for the Degree of MSc in
Applied Linguistics
The University of Edinburgh
August, 2005

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation could not have been completed without the support and assistance of my supervisor and some of my friends.

I would like to send my complements firstly to my supervisor Aaliya Rajah-Carrim, for providing me with sustained guidance and invaluable advice I needed to finish the dissertation. I also wish to thank some friends who have read parts of this dissertation in its first draft and made valuable comments, especially Liu Mo, Gramme Bell and Chen Yuan. I am grateful too, to all the respondents who participated in the survey, including the students in Beijing Wenxuan English Training Center, the students in the Central University for Nationalities and the staffs in Deloitte Beijing Office.

I Introduction

Everything in this universe is perpetually in a state of change, a fact commented on by philosophers and poets through the ages..... Language, like everything else, joins in this general flux.

(Aitchison, 1981:15)

Language varies in three major ways which are interestingly inter-related--over time, in physical space and socially (Holmes, 1992). Language change, in other words, is the variation over time. To study language change involves some of the hottest topics in linguistics, and it has important contributions to make to linguistics theory and to the understanding of nature (Campbell, 2004:1). Therefore, a number of scholars, past and present, are applying themselves to study and interpret different types of language change.

Throughout linguistic history, research in the area of studying language change has coursed several phases. In the early years of modern linguistics, some researchers have maintained that linguistic change cannot be observed while it is actually occurring. Such narrative is generally considered as the traditional view of language change. The only changes, according to the traditional view, are those that can be demonstrated to have structural consequences. Most linguists following this principle therefore stated that all we can possibly observe are the consequences of change, rather than change itself (Wardhaugh, 2002: 189). Nonetheless, in recent decades, more and more linguists have become conscious of the ways of observing language change.

Indisputably, apparent-time construct can be considered as the most important innovation developed by William Labov (1963)(Bailey, 2002). It can be identified as ‘comparing the speech of people from different age groups’ to reveal language change (Deumert & Mesthrie, 2000). However, some potential problems of apparent-time study have been noticed by some observers (Bailey, 2002; Holmes, 1992).

Considering these problems, real-time construct may be regarded as an ideal mechanism for exploring language change (Bailey, 2002). When linguists undertake comparative studies over time to show the progress of language change, it is called real-time study. Actually, real-time method has some practical disadvantages. It may take decades for researchers to do such long term studies. Therefore, it is more reasonable to take apparent-time approach, and use real-time evidence to supplement it. Another significant fact should be noted is the two options of using real-time construct. Bailey (2002) has cited two ways of using real-time evidence for studying language change (See section II). According to Bailey, a comparison between the existing data and the recent observations can produce real-time evidence.

In sociolinguistics history, a vast majority of works deals with studying and explaining sound change. Perhaps it is the most thoroughly studied area of language change (Campbell, 2004:16). In reality, however, the most conspicuous type of change is the appearance of new words in a language (Trask, 1996). The study here focuses on lexical change in Chinese rather than any other types of language change. A study with quality in linguistics should build on abundant works of earlier scholars. Since Chinese language is one of the old-line languages in the world, many researchers have attempted to study Chinese language change in the past and present. After the review of these studies (Wu, 1993; He, 2001; Xu, 2000), it can be easily found that the consequences of Chinese lexical change are mostly discussed. Other essential aspects, such as the evidence of change, motivation of change, and speakers' attitudes towards change have not been particularly studied. It could be considered as the different approaches of studying language change between western linguists and linguists in China.

Therefore, the main objective of the study is to investigate some issues central to Chinese lexical change by applying the western linguistic approach. Of course, some crucial observations offered by Chinese linguists are taken into account in addition to the western linguistic studies. Moreover, in order to introduce the central concepts (apparent-time evidence, real-time evidence, and speakers' attitudes) in Chinese lexical change, a written questionnaire was used as the main research method

involved in the study.

The principal part of the study consists of five sections which are *introduction*, *literature review*, *methodology*, *discussion* and *conclusion*. In the study, we shall first take a look at some general principles and traditional views related to language change. Some observations and evidence of Chinese lexical change from the survey will be thoroughly discussed. Both the apparent-time and real-time evidence will be provided from the observation. Different speech features of speakers from different age groups will be analyzed and interpreted as the apparent-time evidence of Chinese lexical change. The comparison between the existing data and the results of the survey could reveal the real-time evidence of the types of Chinese lexical change.

Another issue which is looked at is the general classification of Chinese lexical change. In the second part of section IV, we will look at some aspects in Chinese lexical change, such as *language borrowing*, *loss of words* and *creation of words*, as well as changes in meaning. Ultimately, at least, a comprehensive classification for Chinese lexical change will be provided.

Language change should not be investigated in isolation from speakers' attitudes. In principle, people from different age groups may take different views towards language change. Some speakers may be against the new elements occurring in a language, while other speakers may be more innovative. The last part of discussion is concerned with Chinese speakers' attitudes towards lexical change in Chinese. Once again, age differentiation to the change is illustrated. Finally, it is argued that other social factors can also affect attitudes towards language change. In brief, the objections to language change rarely have any strong effect on language change in respect that language change is natural, inevitable and continuous (Aitchison, 1981: 234).

It is very important to note, however, it is the business for both sociolinguists and historical linguists to study language change. Evidently, the approach applied here is mainly following sociolinguistic theory, rather than historical linguistics. Indeed, some critical findings and generalizations of historical linguistics studies have been merely touched upon. Moreover, it is necessary to state here that the study simply

deals with lexical change of Mandarin Chinese, and other Chinese dialects are excluded.

II Literature Review

The study is based on previous works produced by numerous scholars on language change. We shall first take a look at some traditional views on language change and some views on language and age. Then some discussion about apparent-time and real-time method in sociolinguistics will be introduced. Lastly, we shall cover some descriptions of various types of lexical change, as well as discuss previous studies on attitudes towards language change.

2.1 Internal and external Change

In terms of some traditional views on language change, there are two common types of change in a language, *internal change* and *external change*. In what some researchers (Wardhaugh, 2002: 189) call the traditional view of language change, the changes that are important in a language are those that can be demonstrated to have structural consequences. It is not difficult to find some instances or situations in which a contrast existed at one time but later was lost, and instances in which there was no contrast at one time but a contrast developed (Wardhaugh, 2002: 189). According to Wardhaugh (2002), that is all we can really say because it is structural considerations alone that are all-important. It is called internal change of a language. Internal change in a language can be observed through its consequences (Wardhaugh, 2002: 189). In terms of the history of English, over a period of time a distinction between two sounds may be lost as occurred historically in most varieties of English in the vowels of *meet* and *meat* or *horse* and *hoarse*. Alternatively, a distinction may be gained where there was none before, as in a *house* with an /s/ but to *hous* with a /z/, or finally in *thin* and *thing*, the /n/ and /ŋ/. It therefore could be generalized that these two kinds of change are common types of internal changes in English. In fact, such change, of course, is

not restricted to phonology (Wardhaugh, 2002:190). He also pointed out that the morphology and syntax of a language change in the same way. As mentioned above, this study will focus on Chinese lexical change. We will examine internal and external change in Chinese lexicon, since both are important aspects of language change according to Wardhaugh.

According to the traditional views of language change, a second kind of change in a language is external change, and this is change brought about through borrowing (Wardhaugh, 2002: 190). Wardhaugh(2002) has stated that changes that occur through borrowing from other dialects or languages are often quite clearly distinguishable, for a while at least, from changes that come about internally. Previous studies of language borrowing will be discussed later in this section.

2.2 Apparent time and real time method

There is a long standing question in sociolinguistics: can linguistic change be observed while it is actually occurring? In modern linguistics the answer to that question has usually been a resounding negative (Bailey, 2002). Most linguists have maintained that change itself cannot be observed; all that we can possibly hope to observe are the consequences of change. The important consequences are those that make some kind of difference to the structure of a language (Wardhaugh, 2002:189). Interestingly, Bailey (2002) has also illustrated that until the mid-1960s, most linguists believed that the actual process of language change is unobservable-it can only be detected through its results. Historical linguists, the primary students of language change, simply relied upon the examination of data from different points in history to infer that linguistic changes had occurred and to describe the outcomes of those changes (Bailey, 2002:312). However, sociolinguists like Labov (1972) argue that it is possible to observe change in progress. Labov has contended, contrary to previous theory and practice in linguistics, that sound change in progress can be observed (Fasold, 1990:227).

The first kind of study, whereby linguists make a series of observations of similar populations over many years is a real-time study (Bailey, 2002). In other words, it is

sometimes possible for researchers to undertake comparative studies over time to show the progress of some features of language change. Chambers (2003) suggests that in order to carry out a real-time study that would yield information comparable to that in, researchers would have to begin making observations on 10-year-old subjects and continue making observations at intervals until those subjects were about 40. According to a number of linguists (Holmes, 1992; Bailey, 2002), there are two options for them to studying language change with the real-time evidence. Sometimes, however, it is possible to build on the work of earlier linguists when studying change. Or they can re-survey either a community or a group of informants after a period of time has elapsed, which is just as Chambers (2003) has suggested.

However, that is usually far too long to wait for the results when we use the real-time method. Not surprisingly, Bailey (2002) also emphasized that real-time evidence would seem to be the ideal mechanism for exploring language change at first glance, but real-time evidence actually poses a number of practical problems for researchers. More often, it is not possible for reasons of finances and resources to do such long-term studies, especially since those changes may take decades, and even centuries, to reach their conclusion (Deumert & Mesthrie, 2000:120). To overcome problems like these, it is quite common for linguists to undertake apparent-time studies as an alternative.

Holmes (1992) has made clear that comparing the speech of people from different age groups can be a useful clue then to language change and this has been called the apparent-time method of studying change.

To canvass the issue of language change, it is impossible to avoid referring to the famous American linguist William Labov who developed a set of methodological innovations that allowed linguists to track the progress of linguistic changes as they were taking place and thus established the basis for a synchronic approach to language change (Bailey, 2002). In the words of Bailey (2002), perhaps the most important innovation on establishing the approaches to language change was the apparent-time construct. Largely as a result of Labov's success in using apparent time to explore the mechanism of language change, over the last 30 years linguists have used the

apparent-time construct in a wide range of situations to make inferences about ongoing changes (Bailey, 2002:314).

In discussing Glasgow age-graded change of the glottal stop variant, for instance, Chambers (2003) explained that apparent-time studies have the inestimable advantage of making information about temporal developments available in a shorter time than the developments themselves take (Chambers, 2003: 212).

Indisputably, the apparent-time construct has been useful for exploring a wide range of features of language change according to a number of researchers (Bailey, 2002; Chambers, 2003; Deumert & Mesthrie, 2000). Nevertheless, the apparent-time data cannot uncritically be assumed to represent diachronic linguistic developments (Bailey, 2002:315). According to Bailey, at least three situations pose potential problems for the apparent-time construct. These include the generality of apparent time, the stability of individual vernaculars, and the occurrence of age-graded features.

While the apparent-time construct has been useful for exploring a wide range of features, how generally apparent-time differences represent ongoing linguistic changes is not entirely clear..... Just as the apparent-time construct relies on the assumption of generality, it also relies on the assumption that in most cases individual vernaculars remain stable throughout the course of an adult lifetime..... Changes that are age-graded, that is, correlated with a particular phase in life and repeated in successive generations, have long been recognized as potential problem for the apparent-time construct.

(Bailey, 2002: 325)

In terms of the relationship of apparent-time and real-time approach, Holmes (1992) has insisted that the apparent-time method of studying language change is a useful short-cut for sociolinguists who generally cannot afford to wait around for twenty years to see what happens in real time. On the other hand, Bailey (2002) points out that the apparent-time data are a surrogate for real-time evidence.

Both the apparent-time and real-time evidence will be explored in the survey to investigate Chinese lexical change. In addition, this study combines these two

methods in order to get a comprehensive view of Chinese lexical change.

2.3 Age and language change

Age has been found to be a salient social variable in the study of language variation and language change (Swann et al., 2004: 7). When the language variation marks language change, rather than stable class differences or stable sex differences in communities, the primary social correlate is age (Chambers, 2003: 355). Chambers believes that change reveals itself prototypically in a pattern whereby some minor variant in the speech of the oldest generation occurs with greater frequency in the middle generation and with still greater frequency in the youngest generation. Downes (1984) has presented that if a linguistic change is taking place, this is reflected in the average score by age. In general, younger speakers will be more advanced, and older speakers less advanced with respect to the change. Normally, youngest speakers are most advanced in the change, although this is not always so (Downes, 1984:192). At the same time, Romaine (1994) has noted that certain linguistic forms are more frequently used by younger than older speakers, and that younger speakers change their linguistic practices as they grow older. It is a significant fact that some patterns of age-grading may reflect a passing fad, or simply be repeated anew in each generation; other cases may represent change in progress (Romaine, 1994: 143). In order to explain the point, Romaine (1994) and Holmes (1992) provide a study done in the Swiss village of Charmey (Gauchat, 1905) which shows that the middle-aged generation of speakers fluctuated with respect to the use of both old and new norms as exemplified in the speech of the older and younger generations respectively (Romaine, 1994: 143).

In brief, age is one of the crucial social factors in studying linguistic variation and change. Speech differences of different age groups will be explored to reveal the apparent-time evidence, and besides, we will also look at Chinese speakers' attitudes of different age groups towards lexical change.

2.4 Change in meaning and other types of lexical change

Change in meaning

It is reasonable to state that every living language is constantly changing, in vocabulary, in pronunciation and in grammar. Trask (1994) has discussed some issues of change in meaning of the words in *Language Change*. Like other aspects of language, the meanings of words can change over time (Trask, 1994: 41). One of the significant statements Trask made is that there are two common types of change in meaning: broadening and narrowing of meaning. It is necessary to note that many other types of change can also occur (Trask, 1994: 41). Trask uses data from English and other languages to introduce the common types of change in meaning. Here are some examples from Trask (1994):

The English word *girl* formerly meant ‘young person (of either sex)’; *meat* formerly meant ‘food (of any kind)’; *dog* was formerly the name of a particular breed of dog.

(Trask, 1994: 42)

Needless to say, the meaning of these English words has changed quite surprisingly. The examples of *girl* and *meat* illustrate what Trask calls *specialization*: the meaning of a word becomes less general than formerly. The example of *dog* illustrate what Trask calls *generalization*: the meaning of a word has been broadened throughout the history of the language.

Nevertheless, all the examples above deal with change in meaning which is merely one type of lexical change. Other kinds of lexical changes in Chinese language will be offered with examples in this study, together with change in meaning.

Language borrowing

Section 2.1 above shows that external change is change brought about through borrowing (Wardhaugh, 2002: 190). Since the majority of the world’s speakers are probably at least bilingual, it necessarily means linguistics contact occurs (McMahon, 1994:201). McMahon explains that in contact situation, elements can be transferred from one language to another; the transfer mainly includes lexical borrowing. It is

worth pointing out that the term *borrowing* is not exactly an equal form for ‘mixing of languages’. We shall follow Haugen (1950) here in using the term *borrowing* for the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another, restricting ourselves at present to the lexicon (McMahon, 1994). In addition, as some researchers note, the donor here need not be aware of the loan and does not consent to it, while the recipient need not repay it. Winter (1973) indicates that the unifying factor underlying all borrowing is probably that of projected gain; the borrower must stand to benefit in some way from the transfer of linguistic material (McMahon, 1994). In the view of Winter (1973), this gain may be social or more centrally linguistic. However, the most common and obvious motive for borrowing is sheer necessity: speakers may have to refer to some unfamiliar object or concept for which they have no word in their own language. After all, using ready-made designations is more economical than describing things afresh (McMahon, 1994:201). It is called cultural borrowing—one group of speakers borrows an object or concept from another, and its name tends to come along too. If borrowings are particularly numerous, speakers of the recipient language may argue that it is being contaminated or overwhelmed. Some words also seem to be more borrowable than others: specifically, basic vocabulary (including words for body parts, weather, natural phenomena like rivers and mountains) is only infrequently affected (McMahon, 1994:201). Besides these valuable points, Singleton (2000) indicates that apart from borrowing born of the esteem in which a given language and culture are held, borrowing may also occur as a convenient way of covering lexical gaps in a language.

Additionally, Trask (1994) has pointed out that one of the most obvious kind of change in language is the appearance of new words, and one very obvious source of new words is foreign languages. We can infer from this assertion that addition of loanwords in a language is a kind of lexical change. In fact, language borrowing has been studied by a number of researchers. It will be brought up again here when we attempt to classify Chinese lexical change in section 4.2.

The addition of new words

Clearly, a language sometimes cannot resort to borrowing, but must create the

term from its own resources which is called coinage (Hock & Joseph, 1996:296). Trask (1994) states that English, like other languages, has wide variety of devices for creating new words from its existing resources. The creation of new words in Chinese language will be further discussed in section 4.2.

2.5 Attitudes to language change

The study of attitude in general begins with a decision between two competing theories about the nature of attitudes. Most language-attitude work is based on a mentalist view of attitude as a state of readiness; an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person's response (Fasold, 1984; Cooper & Fishman, 1974: 7). A typical mentalist definition of attitude is given by Williams (1974): 'Attitude is considered as an internal state aroused by stimulation of some type and which may mediate the organism's subsequent response.' The other view of attitudes is the behaviorist view. On this theory, attitudes are to be found simply in the responses people make to social situations (Fasold, 1984:147). It is obvious that this viewpoint makes research easier to undertake, since it is only necessary to observe, tabulate, and analyze overt behavior. In terms of the language attitude, rather than attitudes in general, language attitudes are distinguished from other attitudes by the fact that they are precisely about language. Fasold (1984) argues that language-attitude studies are not limited to attitudes towards language itself, most often, the definition of language attitude is broadened to allow all sorts of behavior concerning language to be treated.

There is a variety of experimental methods for studying language attitudes, some rather direct, others more indirect. In Fasold's view, a totally direct method would require subjects to respond to a questionnaire or interview questions that simply ask their opinions about the language.

Trask (1994: 75) has made some explanations of different speakers' attitude on language change:

Throughout history, older and more conservative speakers have objected to changes in the language whenever they have noticed them. Even they may

regard the new forms as ‘sloppy’, ‘illogical’ or ‘illiterate’. On the other hand, some speakers, in contrast, may object to long-established forms and usages and campaign for changes which have not yet occurred.

Trask has observed some speakers’ attitudes towards some changes in English. He has noticed that the vast majority of English speakers, especially younger speakers, undoubtedly regard some new patterns and usages as perfectly normal and would not hesitate to use them in spontaneous conversation. However, it is obvious that some other speakers in the community take a very different view. Or in other words, some new patterns or changes have not been well received by everyone (Trask, 1994:72). Indeed, some speakers describe some new patterns as ‘objectionable’, ‘ambiguous’, ‘obscure’, ‘ugly’, ‘aberrant’, ‘pretentious’ and ‘illiterate’. It cannot be ignored that a usage which seems so natural and unremarkable to most of the population can attract hostility from the rest.

Significantly, Trask (1994) points out that in most cases, this hostility to language change, however vigorous and articulate has no lasting effect. In other words, we may feel about that fact, resistance to language change is nearly always futile (Trask, 1994:73). On the other hand, a certain amount of inertia in resisting language change is no bad thing. Trask views that language changes quite fast enough as it is. After all, we do not want the language change so fast that children cannot talk to their grandparents, or so fast that no one can read anything written a hundred years earlier.

Attitudes towards Chinese lexical change will be examined in section 4.3. The investigation of Chinese speakers’ attitudes will be based on the above theories.

2.6 A review of previous studies in Chinese linguistics

In China, there are numerous published works on investigating different language levels of Chinese language change. According to some Chinese linguists (Wu, 1993; Xu, 2000), the term ‘language change’ mainly refers to both the addition of the new language elements, and the loss of some existing language elements. Apparently, this perspective on language change produces an effect of allowing us to

see numerous consequences of Chinese language change. It should be pointed out, however, that in many respects contemporary scholarship is not aware of at least three crucial points on studying language change. Above all, most Chinese linguists have not provided information on the ways of observing Chinese language change; instead, they merely focus on the consequences of change. Secondly, there is no comprehensive classification for Chinese lexical change. However, the classification of change in meaning is discussed in quite a few studies (Wu, 1993; Xu, 2000; He, 2001) (See section 4.2). At last, clearly too, few researchers in China have looked at speakers' attitudes when they study Chinese language change which should not be neglected according to western linguists (Holmes, 1992).

III Methodology

The main objective of the study is to gain some evidence of Chinese lexical change from both the previous studies and the observations. Additionally, some other aspects closely related to the issue will be explored as well. In the concrete, general classifications of Chinese lexical change and speakers' attitudes towards Chinese language change will be taken into account, as well as the observations of Chinese lexical change in progress. In order to achieve the objectives, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to 66 Chinese speakers.

3.1 General principles

The questionnaire is probably the single most common research tool in the social sciences. For most research topics, questionnaires provide data which are of a good enough quality for policy suggestions (Fife-Schaw, 1995: 175). As Chambers (1994) notes that one major advantage of using written surveys is their efficiency. They allow researchers to gather data from a large number of speakers in a relatively brief amount of time (Milroy & Gordon, 2003: 52). It should be noted, on the other hand, numerous

researchers (Milroy & Cordon, 2003; Coolican, 1994) have cited that despite the strengths, questionnaire used as a research instrument has its limitations. For example, we may not get enough information from the written survey and can not have any follow-up. Nevertheless, in view of the clear benefit of using written surveys and the time and financial constraints, questionnaires are used for this study.

In fact, questionnaires can be used to gather a variety of information, such as people's background information, people's behaviours, and their attitudes. In terms of designing questionnaires, Coolican (1994) has presented some general principles which should be taken into account. According to Coolican, researchers should ask for minimum of information required for the research purpose, since the respondent's time is precious. Too much information may not be useful (Coolican, 1994). Researchers should make sure questions can be answered truthfully. Some difficult or wide-ranging questions, according to Coolican, are likely to receive an answer based more on well-known public opinion than on the individual's real beliefs. The results will not be helpful for the study. In addition, some sensitive topics should be avoided in the questionnaires. This type of questions will obviously produce more refusals (Coolican, 1994: 137).

Generally speaking, there are two common types of questions which usually occur in a questionnaire, *closed-ended* questions and *open-ended* questions. Closed-ended questions require the researcher to have a reasonable idea of the likely responses to the items in advance (Fife-Schaw, 1995: 175). In this case, respondents are asked to select an answer from two or more alternatives (Coolican, 1994). In Fife-Schaw's words, the obvious advantage is that the researchers reduce the number of vague or ambiguous answers that might be given. With open-ended formats the respondents is asked to write down the response to a question in any terms that he or she sees fit (Fife-Schaw, 1995:177). Evidently, open-ended questions have several advantages. Some researchers (Coolican, 1994) have pointed out these advantages in their studies. For example, they can deliver richer information. As for the respondents, they do not feel frustrated by the constraint imposed with fixed choice answer. Less chance of ambiguity is another advantage for the open-ended questions. The

respondent says he or she thinks, rather than simply to say agree or disagree.

In fact, different methods have their own advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages of closed-ended questions are of many sorts but perhaps the most important is that they can create artificial forced choices and rule out unexpected responses (Fife-Schaw, 1995). Compared to the open-ended questions, it cannot produce rich information for the study. However, open-ended questions are difficult to code or quantify, whereas closed-ended questions make numerical comparison relatively easy (Coolican, 1994).

3.2 The description of the questionnaire

Considering the above principles and views on designing survey questionnaires, the questionnaire used in this study contains 10 questions that investigate the apparent-time evidence of Chinese lexical change (See Appendix). Some other questions which are not closely related to the research purpose have not been included. The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part in the questionnaire asks about the respondent's personal information. Respondents are asked for the information of their *age*, *gender* and *homeplace* respectively. These are the important social factors to investigate people's speech features in sociolinguists. Other information, such as nationality, occupation and marital status which may be sensitive and not correlative to the main objective are not included.

From question 4 to question 7 is the second part of the questionnaire. They are placed to explore the apparent-time evidence for Chinese lexical change. As presented in Appendix, it is noticeable that question 4 is a table which includes five- group words. Each group includes both the old pattern and new pattern of a Chinese word. It should be noted that we use the word 'pattern' here to mean the 'word form' in Chinese. Respondents are expected to provide their understandings of these words and the frequency of using them. They should answer whether they know the meaning of those words by choosing *yes* or *no*. Then they have to say how often they use these words by selecting one from three scales: *often*, *seldom* and *never*. The table can be considered as a closed-ended question which is obviously easy to analyze.

The following three questions in the questionnaire are dealing with three common types of lexical change in Chinese (See Appendix, Question 5—Question 7). According to most Chinese researchers (Wu, 1993; Dai & He, 2002; He, 2001), there are three common types in terms of change in meaning: *narrowing of meaning*, *widening of meaning* and *meaning shift*. In their previous studies on Chinese language change, numerous examples are offered for interpreting the features of change. Three examples from their published works are selected to investigate the real-time evidence of lexical change in Chinese (See Question 5—Question 7 in Appendix). Bailey (2002) has stated that comparing evidence from a new study to some pre-existing data is one way of gaining real-time evidence in sociolinguistics. Question 5 and Question 6 are examples about widening and narrowing of meaning.

5. *What does the Chinese word ‘zi’ mean according to you?*

A. *both daughter and son can be called ‘zi’* B. *only indicates son*

6. *What do you think is the meaning for the common word ‘cai’ in Chinese?*

A. *It means the vegetables and the dishes which are made of vegetables*

B. *Dishes made of both meat and vegetables can be called ‘cai’*

Question 7 is an example of meaning shift. In the survey, respondents were asked what they understood by these words.

7. *Is the Chinese idiom “biao xin li yi” a commendatory idiom or a derogative idiom according to you?*

A. *Commendatory* B. *Derogative* C. *Other*

In order to study language change thoroughly, speakers’ attitudes towards the change cannot be neglected. The last part of the questionnaire particularly aims to investigate people’s attitude towards Chinese lexical change. As presented in the Appendix, there are three open-ended questions in this part. Question 8 asks for speakers’ attitudes towards the loanwords in Chinese lexicon. The following question is about respondents’ opinions about the existence of language change. Moreover, their attitudes towards the old elements in Chinese are investigated in the last question of the questionnaire. These open-ended questions are not difficult for the respondents to answer. They are just encouraged to present their own opinion in a few sentences. It

is expected that the respondents will not feel any pressure to answer the third part of questionnaire. With the intention of gaining much richer information from the survey, respondents are not only asked to express their simple attitudes, but also are asked to provide their reasons to explain it. Undeniably, more convincing and helpful data may be explored with such attempts.

As we can notice, there is no any ideal question type in the questionnaire. The disadvantages of closed-ended and open-ended questions are not easy to wipe out. Therefore, both the closed-ended and open-ended questions are included in this written survey. In some cases, use of different types of question may yield better results than using only one.

3.3 Conducting the survey

The questionnaire was distributed among 66 Chinese speakers in Beijing. It was conducted among three age groups of informants: (A) a group of informants aged under 18, (B) a group aged 18---35, and (C) another group aged older than 35. Each group included 22 informants. In other words, the three groups are teenagers, young speakers, and middle-aged or older speakers. Differences across generation are interpreted as evidence of language change in accordance with the apparent-time hypothesis (Milroy & Gordon, 2003:35). This principle maintains that people of different ages can be taken as representative of different times. Thus, these three age groups were selected as speakers representing speech of three different periods. The first group was chosen in an English training center in Beijing. All the students there are middle school students aged from 12 to 16. The questionnaire was then distributed in a department of Central University for Nationalities in Beijing and Deloitte Beijing Office. Therefore, the second age group (aged from 18 to 35) was selected there. Additionally, they were also asked to take another copy of questionnaire back home for their parents. Finally, we have got the third age group respondents. In the survey, the results show that there are 31 males and 35 females engaged in the survey. All the respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire we described above.

As we have explained, the questionnaire consists of three parts. In the beginning

of the questionnaire, there is a short introduction of the survey. It is placed to give the informants an idea of what the questionnaire deals with. Additionally, informants are also told that there is no right or wrong answers here and they are just expected to answer them according to their own views. It is hoped that a comparison between different age groups of results would reveal the apparent-time evidence for Chinese lexical change.

As mentioned in section 3.1, questionnaire used as a research instrument has its limitations. In fact, all data collection methods undoubtedly have their potential problems. The best way to make the data more reliable is to use other methods to supplement the questionnaire. Therefore, besides the observations from the questionnaire, the study is based on plenty of previous work on the topic of language change as well. The analysis of the questionnaires and the in-depth discussion on Chinese lexical change will be presented in the following sections.

IV Discussion

4.1 Chinese lexical change in progress

Views on observing language change

There is the element of habit, custom, tradition, the element of the past, and the element of innovation, of the moment, in which the future is being born. When you speak you fuse these elements in verbal creation, the outcome of your language and your personality.

(Firth, 1950: 184)

Needless to say, the language and its elements are always in the process of change. Language change is just a fact of life; it cannot be prevented or avoided (Campbell, 2004:3). All languages change all the time. Chinese language, of course, cannot be exceptional. In addition, there are many kinds of linguistic change, such as

sound change, grammatical change, lexical change and so on. In effect, any aspect of a language's structure can change (Campbell, 2004). Perhaps the most fascinated change is lexical change, because change in meaning and vocabulary excite people (Campbell, 2004: 253).

As mentioned in section II, according to the traditional view of language change, the language change itself cannot be observed. This assertion has strongly influenced numerous linguists. It can be noticed that historical linguists inferred that linguistic change had taken place mainly by comparing the data at two widely separately historical moments. By using this method, the process of linguistic change cannot be observed directly. It occurs in respect that the observation of language change in progress required a variationist view of language (Chambers, 2003: 204).

As for the sociolinguists, on the other hand, where change is involved, a certain variant will occur in the speech of children though it is absent in the speech of their parents, or, more typically, a variant in the parents' speech will occur in the speech of their children with great frequency, and in the speech of their grandchildren with greater frequency (Chambers, 2003:203). It is beyond question the advent of sociolinguistics offers some new advantages on studying language change. Some researchers (Deumert & Mesthrie, 2000; Chambers, 2003) have demonstrated that the study of language has become the business of sociolinguistics. Sociolinguists have shown that variation and change in language go hand in hand. Changes with a speech community are preceded by linguistic variation. As discussed in section 2.2, there are two kinds of methods on studying the language change for sociolinguists, real-time study and apparent-time study.

Apparent-time evidence from the survey

Rational

Apparent-time studies have the inestimable advantages of making information about temporal developments available in a shorter time (Chambers, 2003). Therefore, many linguists have used the apparent-time construct in a wide range of situations to make inferences about ongoing language changes.

The observation from the survey

If we look up a good etymological dictionary we will find that the Chinese word *tou* originally means ‘head’, and after that it can mean ‘hair’ or ‘hair-do’, and later it can be used to mean the ‘starting’ and ‘ending point’. Reading some ancient Chinese novels many words turn up, such as *lv* (‘shoes’), *you chai* (‘postman’) and *dian xiao er* (‘waiter’), which have almost disappeared in modern Chinese language. On the other hand, it is no doubt that people who lived in Qing dynasty definitely did not know what *wang luo* (‘internet’) is and had no idea about *dian nao* (‘computer’).

Talk of language change often treats language as an entity independent of its speakers and writers. In reality it is not so much that language itself changes, as that speakers and writers change the way they use the language (Holmes, 1992). As discussed in section II, the language use of different age groups may reveal the direction of linguistic change in a community. Undoubtedly, as Holmes (1992) notes, a steady increase or steady decline in the frequency of a word or pattern by age group suggests to sociolinguists that a change may be taking place in the speech community.

In order to study the lexical changes of Chinese language, some examples should be presented here to encapsulate the generational progress of change. In Chinese language, there are both new patterns and old patterns for some words. Here are some examples which are generalized from some Chinese linguistic works (Wu, 1993; He, 2001):

Old	<i>shou zu</i>	<i>xi zi</i>	<i>yi zi</i>	<i>dui xiang</i>	<i>lv</i>
New	<i>xiong di</i>	<i>yan yuan</i>	<i>fei zao</i>	<i>nan/nv peng you</i>	<i>xie</i>
Meaning	brother	actor/actress	soap	boyfriend/girlfriend	shoes

Table 1: Five groups of words including old patterns and new patterns

Table 1 illustrates some old patterns and new patterns for some Chinese words. For example, in Chinese, *shou zu* is the old pattern for the word ‘brother’, while the new pattern for ‘brother’ is *xiong di*.

It seems likely that the new patterns are used more frequently by younger people than older people. To test this hypothesis, it is very important to compare the different

patterns of use of the various age groups.

A survey has been carried out to investigate language use of different age group (See section III). As presented in section III, there are 66 respondents involved in the survey and they are divided into 3 groups by their age:

Group 1: younger than 18 years- old

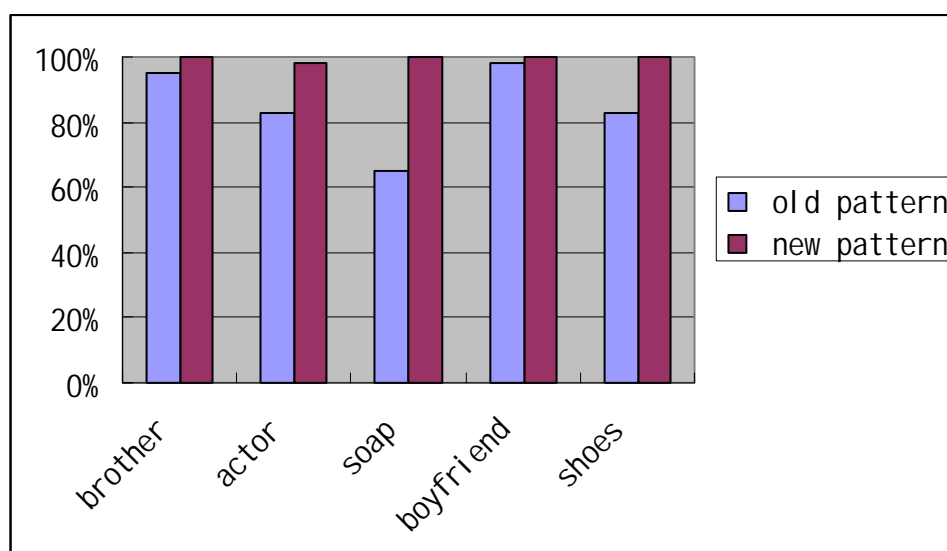
Group 2: 19---35 years-old

Group 3: older than 35 years-old

In the survey, they were expected to answer the following questions by filling a form (See Appendix, Question 4):

1. *Do you know the meaning of these words (brother, actor, soap, boyfriend, shoes)?*
2. *If yes, how often do you use these words (brother, actor, soap, boyfriend, shoes)?*

The first question asks for information about respondents' understanding of the words in Table 1, and the aim of the second question was to assess frequency of use of the various words. Consequently, a comparison of speakers' understanding between old patterns and new patterns is revealed.



The survey of the five group Chinese words

Figure 1: A percentage of 66 people's understanding about five-group words

Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents who know the old and new

patterns for the words *brother*, *actor*, *soap*, *boyfriend* and *shoes*. It is noticeable that almost all the 66 respondents know the meanings of all the new patterns. To view the old patterns, on the other hand, it signals that no old pattern is known by all the 66 speakers. For instance, only 65 per cent informants know the old Chinese pattern of word ‘soap’. Similarly, for the Chinese words actor and shoes, there are about 80 per cent can understand the meaning of the old patterns. On the contrary, almost 100 per cent informants know the new patterns of the two words. But only one people answers *no* when he is asked whether he knows the new pattern for ‘actor’. These differences between the old patterns and new patterns suggest that speakers obviously understand the new patterns better than the old patterns. Even it can be inferred that some old patterns are disappearing from speakers’ daily use. Clearly, there are about 40 per cent respondents have no idea about the meaning of the old pattern *yi zi* (‘soap’). It signals that the word has been lost from the speech of these speakers. As mentioned in section II, the information on the language use of different age group is a useful clue to real language change in progress. Thus, it is essential to compare respondents’ understandings of these words from different age groups.

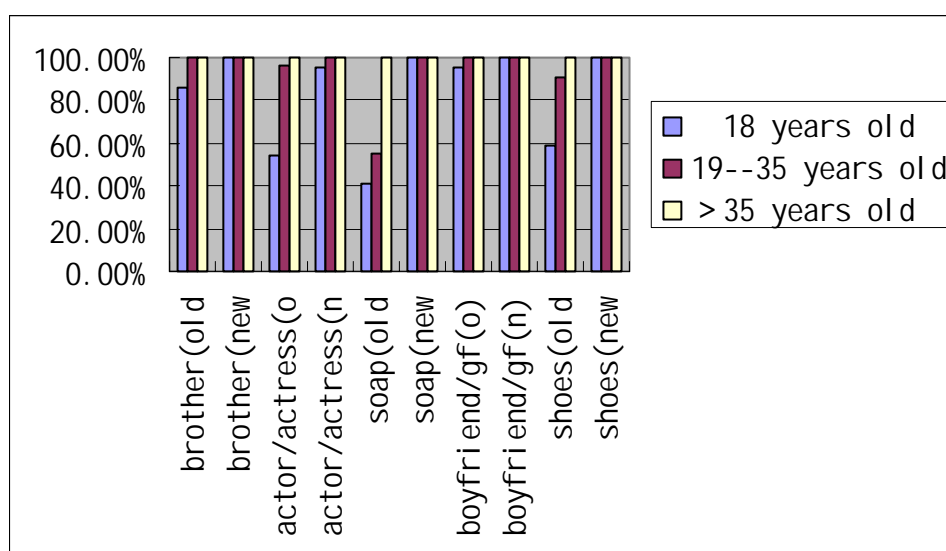


Figure 2: The percentage of three age groups’ understanding of five-group words.

Figure 2 presents the differences of speakers’ understandings about the words in Table 1 among three age groups. It is evident that speakers in the group *older than 35* know all the old and new patterns. Speakers *between 19 and 35 years old* know all the

new patterns and most of the old patterns. However, some of speakers in this group are not familiar with some old patterns. For example, there are about 55 per cent speakers who know the old pattern for the word ‘soap’. It suggests that about half speakers in this group cannot tell what the old pattern for ‘soap’ means. It is also observable that the speakers in the youngest group know only some of the old words. As Figure 2 shows, there are only about 40 per cent speakers in this group who know the old pattern for ‘soap’ and about 54 per cent speakers know the old pattern for ‘actor’ or ‘actress’. In short, speakers in the oldest age group know the old patterns best and speakers in the other younger groups cannot compare with them in respect of the knowledge of old patterns.

As mentioned in section III, speakers were not only asked for the information about their understandings of these words in Table 1. They also provided information about the frequency of using these words. There are three levels which they can choose: *often use*, *rarely use* and *never use*. All the informants had been told to choose one answer according to their personal habits of speaking before the survey.

With respect of the frequency of using these words, the differences between the old and new patterns are also evident: The results are showed as follows:

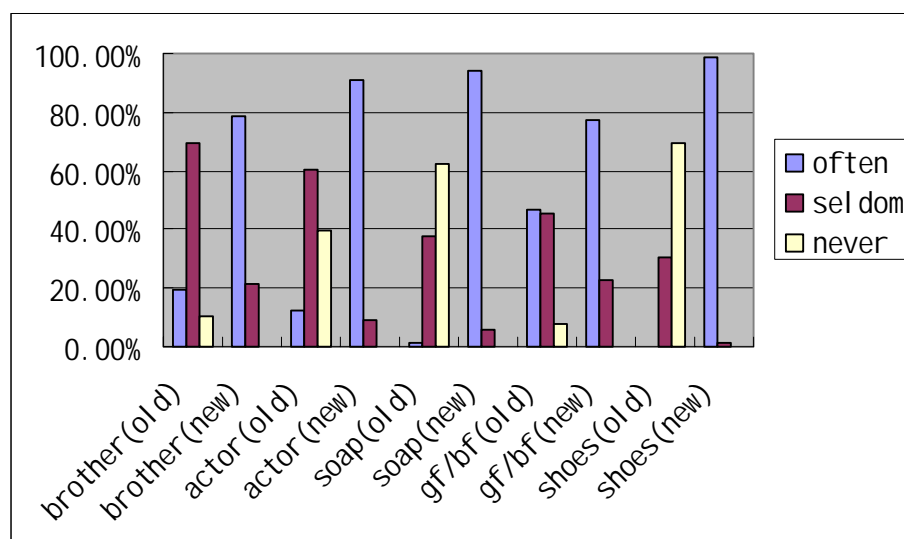


Figure 3: The percentage of the frequency of using the five-group words

Clearly, Figure 3 shows old patterns are rarely used by all the age groups. It can suggest that most speakers are tending to use the new patterns instead. Moreover,

some old patterns, such as the old patterns for ‘soap’ and ‘shoes’ are seldom or never used by speakers. It seems that there are about 70 per cent people who never use the old pattern for ‘shoes’ and about 30 per cent speakers who seldom use it, no one uses this word often today. Appropriately, the figure implies that the Chinese word *lv* could be considered as an example of the loss in progress in Chinese spoken language.

In addition, it has been noticed that the frequency of using the words is quite dissimilar among different age groups. Let us take the old pattern for the Chinese word ‘boyfriend’ or ‘girlfriend’ as an example:

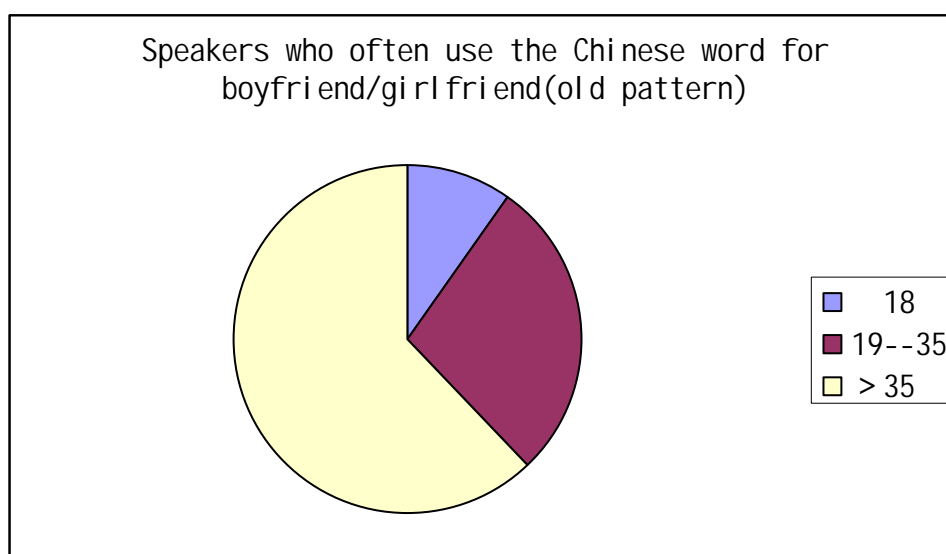


Figure 4: The percentage of speakers of three age groups who often use the old pattern for ‘boyfriend’ or ‘girlfriend’

In Chinese, people used to use the word *dui xiang* to refer boyfriend or girlfriend twenty years ago. As the Chinese language changes, another new pattern *nan peng you* or *nv peng you* is used more frequently today than *dui xiang*. It is observable that the Chinese word *dui xiang* is more and more rarely heard, most speakers tend to use the new pattern instead, especially the young Chinese speakers. Figure 4 clearly exemplifies the differences of using the old pattern *dui xiang* among three different age groups. About 65 per cent people in the group of *older than 35 years old* often use *dui xiang*, while there are only 29 per cent speakers between 19 and 35 years old often use the old pattern. Obviously, few speakers in the youngest age group use the old pattern often in the survey. It is logical to state that the old Chinese speakers use more

old patterns than the young speakers. In other words, the results suggest that most young Chinese speakers use the old patterns less frequently than the old speakers.

Furthermore, all the speakers in the oldest age group know the meaning of the old pattern for 'soap', while there are about only half speakers in the second group and less than half speakers of the youngest age group who know this word. It can be also noticed from the survey that older speakers use the old pattern for 'soap' much more frequently than younger groups. Undoubtedly, language use coincides with language knowledge up to a certain extent.

The data from the survey can be generalized as some apparent-time evidence of the Chinese language change study. The frequency of the old forms of some Chinese words is high in old age. When the new patterns occur more often in the speech of younger people than older people, this suggests that the new pattern which is being introduced and adopted by young people (Holmes, 1992). As argued in section II, comparing the speech of people from different age groups can be a useful clue then to language change (Holmes, 1992; Chambers, 2003; Bailey, 2002). In other words, speech differences among age groups are interpreted as indications of changes in progress (Holmes, 1992). As noted above, older Chinese speakers are familiar with all the old patterns in survey; whereas younger speakers do not know some of the old patterns. We have also noted that younger Chinese speakers tend to use more of the newer or innovative patterns, and the older Chinese speakers use more of the older, conservative patterns. According to sociolinguistics theory (Holmes, 1992), a steady increase in the frequency of new Chinese patterns and a steady decline of old patterns by younger age group suggests that some lexical changes may be in progress in Chinese speech community. To some extent, the significant observation from the survey can be taken as an evidence of Chinese lexical change.

4.2 A classification of Chinese lexical change

Real-time evidence from the survey

Undeniably, the apparent-time evidence has proven a highly productive tenet in sociolinguistics (Chambers, 2003: 213). The other side of the coin is that the inferences are just generally reliable, as some potential problems of apparent-time method cannot be neglected. An obvious problem for the apparent-time hypothesis is age-grading, in which the frequency of some linguistic variable at one age does not stay the same but is instead altered or corrected. Another problem is discussed by many researchers as well. Holmes (1992) points out that it is much more difficult to identify a change when it involves the introduction and spread of a less prestigious form.

In order to prevent the problems or at least, to make the apparent-time evidence more convincing, we need some further evidence. In the best circumstances, of course, researchers will be able to combine apparent-time data with real-time evidence, with the relative strengths of one approach offsetting the weakness of the other (Bailey, 2002: 330). Therefore, it seems crucial for us to collect some real-time data to supplement what we have examined through apparent-time method.

Rational

Trudgill (2003) offers the conventional definition of real-time: Studies of linguistic change which attempt to investigate languages as they happen by investigating the speech of a particular community and then returning a number of years later to investigate how speech in this community has changed (Trudgill, 2003:109). Superficially, one would hold an extreme view that real-time method will always be a long-term study. Nevertheless, carrying out a real-time study is not so restricted. Until relatively recently, this was an issue respected by a group of investigators, who did realize that some things needed explaining. As noted in section II, Bailey (2002) has suggested that researchers who want to use real-time evidence for studying language change have two options and one of the options is using the

existing data. Additionally, Holmes (1992) has pointed out when she is introducing real-time study that it is possible to build on the work of earlier linguists when studying language change. So far, it is more acceptable to define *real-time* as comparing linguistic data gathered at a certain point in time (T1) with data gathered at a later point in time (T2)(Swann ed al, 2004:258). Instead of carrying on a long-term study, it is logical to compare evidence from the survey (T1) to some previous data (T2) on Chinese lexical change.

Pre-existing data on different types of lexical change

In China, a number of researchers are applying themselves to studying Chinese language change (Wu, 1993; He, 2001; Chen, 2000). Their published works have covered many themes, such as sound change, lexical change and grammatical change. If we review the Chinese lexical change studies, it is easy to notice that most of the works talking about the Chinese lexical change focus on changes in meaning. As noted in section II, there are three common types of change in meaning according to the Chinese linguists: *widening of meaning*, *narrowing of meaning* and *meaning shift*. Below we will discuss these three types of change and apply the discussion to our findings from the survey.

(a) Widening of meaning

In general, when a meaning of a word becomes broader, that word meanings everything it used to mean, and then more (Dai & He, 2002:102).He (2001) has claimed that widening of meaning is when the range of meanings increases. Some western linguists also believe that in lexical changes involving widening, the word can be used in more contexts than were appropriate for it before the change (Campbell, 2004). An interesting example is the Chinese word *bu*, which originally meant the ‘cloth made of flax’. Today this word signifies any kind of cloth. Another example is *cai* which first appeared with the more specific meaning of ‘dishes made of vegetable’, which then generalized to include all kinds of dishes.

It is a creditable generalization that widening of meaning results in a word acquiring additional meanings to those that it originally had. Nevertheless, the original meanings do not really disappear, but becoming a part of the new meaning (He, 2001:

187).

(b) Narrowing of meaning

In the course of several generations, language change can narrow the meaning of a word to what it is today (Dai & He, 2002:103). Undoubtedly, the narrowing of meaning is the exact opposite of the previous kind of change (Crowley, 1992). Similarly, western linguists define the narrowing as the range of meanings is decreased so that a word can be used appropriately only in fewer contexts than it could before the change (Campbell, 2004: 255). The Chinese word *zhang ren* meant ‘the old male’ in old Chinese time. Then it narrowed to mean ‘father -in -law’. It shifted from any old man to only ‘father-in-law’. A few more examples can be found:

Chinese word	Narrowing of meaning
<i>zi</i>	Daughter or son son
<i>qin</i>	Birds and animal birds
<i>shi gu</i>	All kinds of affair accident

Table 2: Examples for narrowing of meaning in Chinese language

(Wu, 1993; He, 2001; Hu, 2004)

(c) Meaning shift

It is undeniable that a lexical item may undergo a shift in meaning (Dai & He, 2002).

In English, the word *inn* refers to ‘a small hotel’ or ‘pub’, usually an old one. But now a well-known nice hotel may use *inn* as its name, such as *Holiday Inn*. This is an example of meaning shift in English (Dai & He, 2002)

Interestingly, meaning shift in Chinese language is also common. A Chinese word, *zou*, for example, originally meant ‘run’ in old Chinese time, but it shifted its meaning to ‘walk’ today. In some Chinese linguists’ words, meaning shift is the shift of the referent. With the form of words kept stable, the new referent replaces the old one. This is the main feature of meaning shift in Chinese (He, 2001: 193).

The three types of change are common types in change in meaning according to

some Chinese scholars (Wu, 1993; He, 2001). Pre-existing data will be used as a basis for comparison between the previous observations and the findings from the survey. Here, the three processes for change in meaning can be illustrated as follows:

Types of change	Word	Change in meaning
Widening	<i>cai</i>	Dishes made of vegetables all kind of dishes
Narrowing	<i>zi</i>	Daughter or son son
Meaning shift	<i>zou</i>	Run walk

Table 3: Three common types of change in meaning of Chinese language

The observation from the survey

Such general classification of change in meaning seems to be useful for showing what sorts of changes might occur. These data from earlier works could be identified as the evidence for Chinese lexical change. What is more, it is necessary to gather some linguistic data in the actual time and compare to the existing evidence noted above.

In the second part of the questionnaire used for this study, there are three multiple-choice questions (See Appendix: Question 5—Question 7). These three questions focus on three common types of change in meaning respectively. Speakers of the three age groups were expected to choose the meanings for the three words. The first question is about the meaning of the Chinese word *zi*:

5. *What does the Chinese word zi mean according to you?*

A. *both daughter and son can be called zi* B. *only indicates son*

As noted above, *zi* originally meant both daughter and son in old Chinese time. About 88 per cent of the 66 speakers choose B, they think when they use the word *zi*, it only indicates the “son”. They do not believe that it can also indicate ‘daughter’ any more in modern Chinese language. Very few respondents still hold the view that it can refer to both daughter and son.

Similarly, the second question and the third question are dealing with the meanings of the Chinese word *cai* and the Chinese idiom *biao xin li yi*.

6. *What do you think is the meaning for the common word cai in Chinese?*

C. *It means the vegetables and the dishes which are made of vegetables*

D. *Dishes made of both meat and vegetables can be called cai*

Originally, the word *cai* in Chinese meant ‘the vegetables or the dishes which are made of vegetables’. The analysis of the questionnaires shows that most speakers refer to ‘dishes made of both meat and vegetables’ when they use the word *cai*. Only about 7 percent people in the survey think that A is the meaning for *cai* today.

Question 7 differs a bit from the above two questions. It is about a Chinese idiom, but not a general word. Speakers were not only asked for the general meaning of the idiom, but also their deeper understandings of it.

7. *Is the Chinese idiom “biao xin li yi” a commendatory idiom or a derogative idiom according to you?*

A. *Commendatory*

B. *Derogative*

C. *Other*

As mentioned above, the meaning shift is one of the common types of change in meaning. Wu (1993) has explained that the Chinese idiom *biao xin li yi* originally meant ‘creative’ or ‘larruping’. It was a commendatory word which was used to praise someone at that time. Then it came to mean ‘totally or offensively conspicuous or obtrusive’. At a later time, it obviously became a derogative idiom which had a negative meaning. Nowadays, it has shifted its meaning to ‘creative’ or ‘innovative’ which has become a commendatory word again (Wu, 1993: 235).

It is a very interesting example to show how a Chinese word shifted its meaning. The survey shows that most speakers use the idiom as a commendatory idiom rather than a derogative one. There are only 16 per cent speakers who still believe that it has negative meaning.

Trying to find out some real-time data, we have looked at speakers’ understandings of some Chinese words in present time. After comparing their understandings to the original meaning noted in some previous works, it can be concluded that the meanings of some Chinese words have changed. Up to now, we have begun with the existing data and generalization of changes in meaning, then investigated some evidence from the questionnaire. Ultimately, the real-time

observations has not only offered evidence for Chinese lexical change in progress, but also confirmed the general classification of Chinese lexical change.

A closer examination reveals that some other types of lexical change can also occur in Chinese lexicon in addition to the changes in meaning. For the sake of making a comprehensive description of Chinese lexical change, some other types of change should not be neglected.

Other types of lexical change

Language borrowing

Apparently, the traditional general classifications made by the Chinese linguists offer a lot in exploring the Chinese lexical change, especially such kind of changes in meaning (widening, narrowing and shift in meaning). Nevertheless, as has been discussed by most linguists (Wu, 1993), these changes occur internally in Chinese. As Wardhaugh (2002) has mentioned, the second of kind of change is called external change which refers to the language borrowing (See section 2.1).

Trask (1996) views that speakers of every language are in contact with neighbours who speak different languages:

Consequently, everybody is in a position to learn some of the words used by their neighbours, and very frequently people take a like to some of their neighbours' words and take those over into their own language...This process is somewhat curiously called borrowing-'curiously', because, of course, the lending language does not lose the use of the word, nor does the borrowing language intend to give it back.

(Trask, 1996: 18)

Chinese language has borrowed a large number of words from other languages, and is still doing so today. Some Chinese linguists think that words are often 'borrowed' from one language to another, and the loan word may label a new concept, or it may replace or become a synonym of a native word (Dai & He, 2002:101). The examples below are some of the loan words in Chinese:

Lending language	Words	Meaning
English	<i>kao bei</i>	copy
Russian	<i>tuo la ji</i>	tractor
French	<i>sha long</i>	salon

Table 4: Some of the loanwords in Chinese language

(Chen, 2000:31; Xu, 2001:300)

Table 4 illustrates some loanwords in modern Chinese language. The word *kao bei* was taken into Chinese from English word ‘copy’. Wu (1993) explains that Chinese language does not borrow all the meanings of *copy*. It only took the meaning ‘an imitation or reproduction of an original’.

All languages borrow words, but it is notable that some types of words are borrowed more readily than others (Trask, 1996). It is apparent that nouns are borrowed more often than verbs or adjectives. As mentioned in section II, there are also good social or cultural reasons for borrowing (Wardhaugh, 2002: 190). Likewise there are several reasons why Chinese speakers might want to take over a foreign word according to some linguists. The simplest and basic one is the name for something new (Wu, 1993: 237). As the knowledge of some new objects or concepts has spread to China, their names have been taken with them. For example, the word *qiao ke li* which is borrowed from the English word ‘chocolate’ and *sha fa* which is borrowed from the English word ‘sofa’.

Therefore, languages are more likely to copy words from other languages in the area of cultural vocabulary, rather than core vocabulary (Crowley, 1992). Cultural vocabulary refers to meanings that are cultural-specific, or which people learn through the experience of their own culture (Crowley, 1992: 153). Most of the loanwords in Chinese are this sort of words (Chen, 2000; Xu, 2001).

The creation of words and the loss of words in Chinese

While borrowing words from other languages are a very obvious source of new words, it is very far from being the only one (Trask, 1994:19). There are some other ways in which the speakers of a language can coin new words by using only the

existing resources of their language. The creation of new words in English has been studied by various researchers (Trask, 1996; Crowley, 1992; Campbell, 2004). Compounding, clipping, acronym and other ways of forming new words are particularly described in numerous studies. Correspondingly, speakers of Chinese language also have made use of their own linguistic resources in creating new words.

As it has been stated, language is in process with other social factors. Lexicon is considered to be the most sensitive part in the process (He, 2001: 218). Some Chinese linguists view that there are many causes for the addition of new words in Chinese language. More or less traditional views of creating new words will be presented with examples.

There are some new words created attributed to the occurrence of some new objects or new concepts (He, 2001). This reason for some changes is relatively obvious. The rapid development of science and technology has led to the creation of many new words (Dai & He, 2002:106). For instance, the word *shang wang* which means 'get on line', *dian nao* means 'computer', *ruan jian* means 'software'.

Another possible type of addition of new words results from the changes in old patterns (He, 2001; Wu, 1993). In Chinese, speakers used to use *xin shui* to indicate 'salary', which has been replaced by a new pattern *gong zi* in modern Chinese. Similarly, in old Chinese time, *xi zi* in Table1 meant 'actor' or 'actress', but now speakers use *yan yuan* instead. As it has been analyzed earlier, some of the new patterns, such as *lv* ('shoes') and *yi zi* ('soap') are not often used by most Chinese speakers. Therefore, the replacement of the old patterns is another source of new words in Chinese.

Change in meaning in Chinese words has been discussed in the previous section. *Widening*, *narrowing* and *shift in meaning* are three common types of change in meaning according to the traditional view of Chinese lexical change. It will not be brought up again here, but will be considered as another source of new words in Chinese. For instance, the Chinese word *zou* originally meant 'run', then shifted its meaning to 'walk'. There was a need for creating a new word which indicates 'run'. The new word *pao* consequently occurred in the Chinese lexicon (He, 2001). Thus,

some new words are created in this way; He (2001) claimed that changes in meaning in Chinese vocabulary have also brought forth the addition of new words.

Meanwhile, it is equally true that words can be lost from a language (Dai & He, 2002). It is no denying that a reading of any Shakespeare's works will quickly reveal that English has lost many words (Holmes, 1992). The loss of words occurs in Chinese language as well. The following words have faded out of the Chinese language (He, 2001; Wu, 1993; Xu, 2001).

The lost words	Meaning of the words
<i>ya huan</i>	the servant girl
<i>xun bu</i>	the policeman in old China
<i>lv</i>	shoes
<i>xi zi</i>	actor or actress

Table 5: Some lost words in Chinese language

Certainly, the cause of the loss of words in Chinese is varied. The disappearance of some old objects and concepts causes the loss of some words in Chinese (He, 2001). In Table 5, the Chinese word *ya huan* meant 'the servant girl' in old Chinese. But this word is rarely used today, because there is no servant anymore in modern China. Another interesting example is the word *xun bu* which was used to describe the policeman in old China. Note, the concept of *xun bu* is not totally equal to the word *policeman*. In old China, *xun bu* served for the old feudal government, and against the people. They were rude to other members in the society. Obviously, there is no *xun bu* in China now; the word is therefore already obsolete in modern Chinese.

Another common cause for the loss of lexical items is the discontinuation of the object they name (Dai & He, 2002:102). In other words, the change of name for the object can also cause the loss of words. The word *lv* in Table 5 has been replaced by the new pattern *xie*, so the old item *lv* is seldom used by younger Chinese speakers in this study (also, Wu, 1993:237; He, 2001: 223). The first section has predominantly discussed this issue. Another word *xi zi* in Table 5 is seldom used by speakers today;

instead, speakers use its new pattern *yan yuan* to indicate actor or actress. Thus, it can be stated that *lv* and *xi zi* are on the way out.

In the sorts of Chinese lexical changes considered so far, focus is on changes in the meaning of words. Incidentally, most Chinese linguists, past and present, have looked at the consequences of Chinese lexical change. But closer analysis shows that the traditional classification of Chinese lexical change has excluded some indispensable types (e.g. language borrowing, loss of words, created words), other than change in meaning. If we look briefly at previous studies (He, 2001; Wu, 1993; Xu, 2001), it can be noticed that most researchers have only classified changes in meaning, and lost sight of considering other types of lexical change. Nonetheless, to make a classification of Chinese lexical change may offer something new in the way of explaining language change. Until relative recently, a few linguists (Dai & He, 2002) have attempted to offer a comprehensive classification for Chinese lexical change. Combining their general classifications with the above discussion, we get Figure 5. This Figure illustrates the common types of Chinese lexical change.

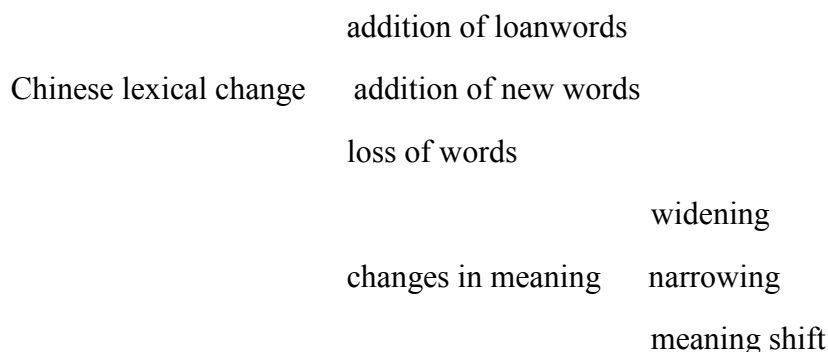


Figure 5 A general classification of Chinese lexical change

So far, then, the real-time evidence of Chinese lexical change has been investigated. In the process, we have also examined different types of Chinese lexical change, as well as changes in meaning. Eventually, a comprehensive classification of Chinese lexical change which is built upon previous observations (Dai & He, 2002) has been explored.

4.3 Attitudes towards Chinese lexical change

Attitudes to language change

Language change is always with us, but some people take exception to this fact, and even complain that something should be done about it (Trask, 1996: 7). Sometimes, it has been argued that members of a particular society can observe changes that have taken place. In sociolinguistics, as we have noted, real-time and apparent-time study are considered as two kinds of effective method on observing language change. In real-time evidence, people can see the language as it was written a number of generations ago, or even a number of centuries ago which vary to the language used today. In apparent time evidence, we obviously cannot detect how the language was spoken that far back in time, but very often people are able to recognize differences between the way the older people speak and the way the younger people speak (Crowley, 1992: 28).

With the intention of studying the Chinese lexical change thoroughly, it is inevitable to look at the common attitudes that people have towards the change in Chinese speech community. It seems that in almost all societies, the attitudes that people have to language change are basically the same (Crowley, 1992:28). In most cases, people everywhere tend to say that the older form of a language is in some sense 'better' than the form that is being used today, it also turns out that they feel that the younger generation does not use some of the words that the older generation uses. But people still like to insist the earlier form of a language is 'better' than the later form (Crowley, 1992). This applies for English. Crowley (1992) emphasizes that attitude like those are probably common to all cultures. Even among serious scholars of language, such attitudes could be found. It was a common belief among specialist scholars in the nineteenth century that the languages of today were degenerating, and were not 'pure' in structure as their ancestor languages (Trask, 1994; Crowley, 1992). Crowley (1992) presents his own view towards such attitude:

The common fault in this line of thinking is that such people regard language

change as unnatural, and wish that it would never happen. But all human societies are always changing, and language is just another aspect of human social behaviour. Language change is natural, and it is inevitable.

(Crowley, 1992: 31)

Throughout history, younger and older speakers take a very different view towards language change. Trask (1996) has noticed that the people who object to some new use are, almost without exception, middle aged or older. They are considered as conservative speakers. Moreover, they are also mostly people who are especially well educated, and who take a particular interest in the use of language (Trask, 1996; Crowley, 1992). Nevertheless, the vast majority of speakers, especially young speakers, undoubtedly regards some change as perfectly normal and would not hesitate to use them. Some speakers may even object to long-established forms and usages and campaign for changes which have not yet occurred (Trask, 1994: 75). Towards speakers' varied attitudes, Trask (1994) maintains that although the negative attitudes are still with us today, they rarely have much effect on the development of the language.

In most cases, this hostility to language change, however vigorous and articulate, has no lasting effect. The older speakers who object to the new forms simply die, leaving the field to the younger speakers who have grown up with them and who regard them as normal. As these younger speakers grow older, they will no doubt object in turn to the innovations favoured by the next generation, with the same result. However we may feel about the fact, resistance to language change is nearly always futile.

(Trask, 1994: 73)

The observations from the survey

As both Crowley (1992) and Trask (1994) state, speakers' attitudes is obviously essential to the study of language change. Nevertheless, most studies on Chinese language change have not provided speakers' attitudes towards language change. Until relatively recently, this is an issue ignored by quite a few investigators in China who have tended to focus on the change itself. Therefore, three questions are involved

in the third part of the questionnaire (See Appendix, Question 8—Question 10) for investigating Chinese speakers' attitudes towards Chinese lexical change.

Evidently, there are more and more new words in Chinese which are borrowed from other languages, especially from English. The first question in this part is about respondents' attitudes towards the loanwords in modern Chinese language.

Question 8 There are more and more new words in Chinese language which are borrowed from English, such as “ka fei”, “ku”, “kao bei” and so on. Please answer: 1. Do you often use such kind of words in your daily life? 2. Do you think that it is necessary to popularize these words? Please provide your reason.

Eighty-nine per cent of speakers often use these loanwords in their daily lives. There are only 7 informants who rarely use the loanwords, and 71 per cent of them are speakers who are older than 35 years old. Besides the frequency of the use of loanwords, their attitude towards the loanwords in Chinese is also remarkable. The majority of the speakers believe that it is necessary to popularize these loanwords. The results of the survey could be shown as follows (See Question 8.2 above):

	YES	NO	OTHER
Under 18 years old	20	1	1
Between 19 and 35	19	2	1
Older than 35	12	10	0
Total	51	13	2

Table 6: Speakers' attitudes towards the loanwords in Chinese

In fact, as we can see from Table 6, most Chinese speakers, especially young speakers in the first and second group, undoubtedly regard the loanwords as an inseparable part of Chinese. There are 91 per cent respondents in the first age group (*under than 18*) and 86 per cent respondents in the second group (*between 18 and 35*) who take a positive attitude towards the loanwords. It is necessary to popularize these words according to them.

In their words, most of the loanwords are the names of something genuinely new

to the Chinese speakers, and we cannot find any words for them in Chinese instead. More and more new words borrowed from other languages can certainly enrich the elements of Chinese language. Some of the young speakers also regard the loanwords as fashionable and uncomplicated expressions and have a preference to use them. For example, a respondent in the age group *between 18 and 35* said, ‘the addition of loanwords in Chinese is the consequence of rapid development of our society and it is unreasonable to reject their appearance’ (汉语里外来语的增加是我们社会发展的结果, 我们没有理由反对它们的出现). The respondent argues that most of the loanwords closely concern our daily lives and they are easily to memorize. Another young speaker in the first age group said, ‘Chinese language cannot stop changing, and the elements from other languages can enrich our own language, so we should popularize them’ (汉语的演变不会停止, 外来语言要素的介入可以丰富我们自己的语言, 所以我们应该推广).

Noticeably, almost half of the speakers in the oldest age group object to the spread of the loanwords, and their reason is not complicated: it is related to the purity of Chinese language and culture. In Table 6, it can be also detected that there are 2 speakers who choose OTHER. In their opinion, these loanwords could be used in the spoken language, but it is not necessary to popularize these words purposively in the written language. They still persist we should keep Chinese language pure in terms of written language. ‘Some of the loanwords are quite useful; usually it is inevitable to use them. But I do not think it is necessary to popularize them, because they will make Chinese become impure’ (一些外来语很有用, 我们很难避免使用它们, 但我不认为有必要普及这些词, 因为会让汉语混杂, 不规范), one respondent in the second age group said.

Next question deals with informants’ stance towards the existence of lexical change in Chinese.

Question 9 Do you think that the Chinese spoken language today is different from the language spoken by your parents? If so, could you please provide us with some examples?

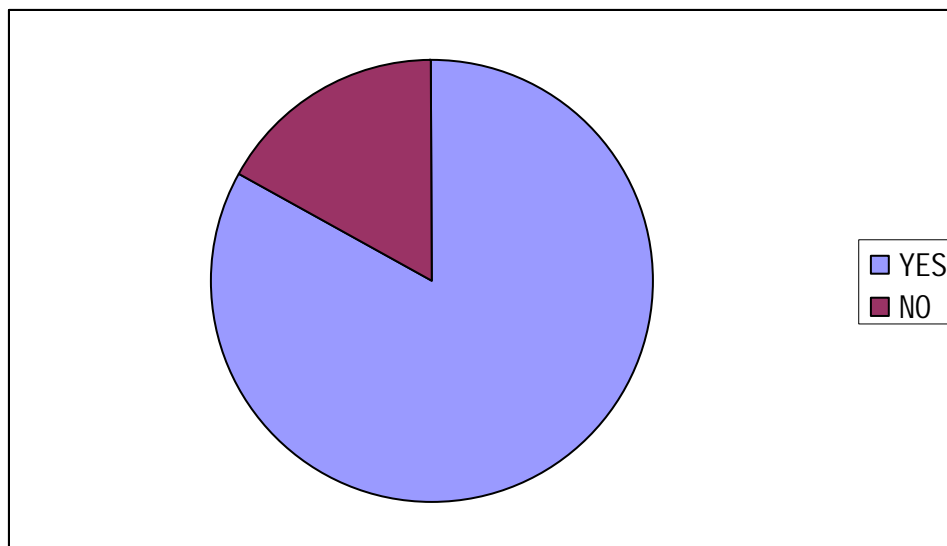


Figure 6: Speakers' views on the existence of lexical change

Figure 6 clearly illustrates speakers' views on the existence of lexical change in Chinese. There are more than 80 per cent informants who believe that the language they speak differs from the language spoken by their parents. Less than 20 per cent speakers think that there is no obvious difference between the two generations. Undisputedly, the vast majority of speakers have realized that there is a difference of spoken language between two generations. In other words, the fact that Chinese lexicon is changing seems acceptable for these speakers. Additionally, some speakers have provided us with a few good examples to interpret the differences. The younger generation thinks some old patterns or words still occur in the spoken language of the old generation. For instance; a girl in the youngest age group has noticed that she uses *shuai* or *ku* to describe a cute and handsome guy, while her parents often use *jing shen* to express the same. It obviously reveals the difference of the use of words between the different generations.

As noted earlier, it is a significant fact that the meanings of some Chinese words have already changed, even some old patterns have been lost in modern Chinese. Speakers' attitudes towards the changes of old patterns should be also taken into account.

Question 10 Should we keep using the old patterns or variety of some Chinese words of Mandarin? Please note the reason.

The above is the third question which aims to investigate people's attitudes towards old patterns in Chinese. The results have been illustrated in Table 7. It shows that more than half of the informants insist that the old patterns and functions of Chinese words should be kept. More than 30 per cent people do not think that it is necessary to keep them. 'The old elements are out of date; they are not accord with the modern society. We needn't keep using them' (汉语词旧的用法早已过时,不符合现在的需要,不应该再被使用了), said a speaker in the youngest group.

Table 7 shows that about 6 per cent of all the respondents choose OTHER. They think some of the patterns and functions can be kept, since they can occur in the written language. But it is not necessary to encourage people to use such old patterns in their spoken language.

Keep	Needn't keep	Other
56%	38%	6%

Table 7: Speakers' attitudes towards old patterns in Chinese

However, as it has been mentioned, speakers in different age groups may have different attitudes towards language change. Some may be willing to use the new patterns or innovations and reject the old ones gradually. Whereas other speakers might still consider the old patterns as the normal and perfect language elements, the new patterns and changes in a language would be unacceptable for those speakers. Thus, it is crucial to see the attitudes of different age groups respectively.

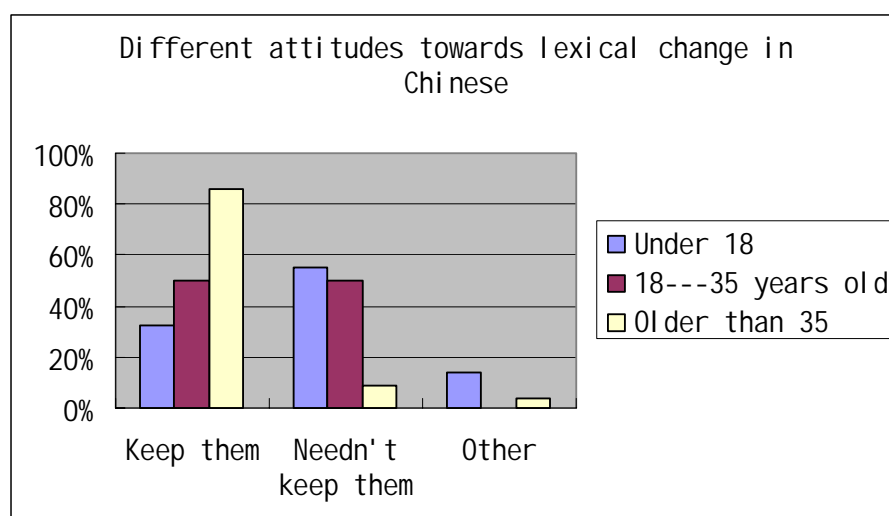


Figure 7: Three age groups' attitudes towards Chinese lexical change

The results are presented in Figure 7 which illustrates the different attitudes of different age group towards lexical change in Chinese. More than 80 per cent of speakers in the group *older than 35* believe that the old patterns and functions of some Chinese words should be kept. There are only 9 per cent speakers in this group opposed to the use of old elements in Chinese lexicon. The remaining speakers which are about 4 per cent choose OTHER. This issue needs further discussion according to them. The attitudes taken by the younger respondents are distinct. As Figure 7 illustrates, there are half speakers in the second age group (*between 18 and 35*) who agree to keep using the old patterns, while the other half object to the retainment of the old lexical elements in Chinese. Remarkably, speakers of the youngest group take quite different view on this issue. Figure 7 shows that there are about only 30 per cent speakers who concur in retaining the old patterns in Chinese, and more than half in this group reject to keep using them.

Furthermore, those speakers who agree to keep the old elements in Chinese provide some reasons in the survey. With the respect to their reasons, it can be concluded that the old elements are not only a part of Chinese language, but also a part of Chinese traditional culture. They described the old patterns in Chinese as 'clear', 'normal', 'beautiful', 'formal', 'logical' and 'literate'. According to some respondents, it is erroneous to reject the old words, since these elements is the essential part of Chinese language. Once we lose them, we will lose the purity of our mother tongue and the essential part of Chinese culture. As a respondent in the oldest age group said, 'Our language is one of the oldest languages in the world, and the old elements are crucial parts in Chinese. We should not lose them'. Additionally, these speakers have viewed that some new elements are not normal and logical. In short, they do not seem to like them much.

Of course, not all speakers are resisting the new elements and preferring old patterns in Chinese lexicon. As discussed above, there are nearly 40 per cent speakers who are rejecting the old elements and patterns of Chinese words. As Figure 7 shows, most speakers in the youngest group *under 18* do not agree to keep encouraging people use of the old elements in Chinese. Half of informants *between 18 and 35*

years old take the same view. In their point of view, language is always changing, and language change is unavoidable. They have argued that the language they speak is different from their parents' language. Chinese language as spoken continues to change generation by generation. They have also viewed that language change is natural. What is more, they argue that some old elements in Chinese lexicon are too complicated and already out of date. According to these speakers, there is no necessity to retain the old usages in Chinese language. The new patterns and innovations, on the other hand, are 'simple', 'fashionable', and 'natural' for those innovative speakers. It exactly coincides with the assertion by Trask (1996):

One of those reasons, undoubtedly, is mere fashion. People like to change their speech in much the same way, and for the same reason, as they change their hemlines or their neckties: they want to show that they are up to date and in the know about what going on.....

(Trask, 1996: 13)

Up to now, it can be generalized from the survey that most respondents do not oppose lexical change in Chinese. They have realized the inevitability of the phenomenon. In contrast with this attitude, some speakers obviously object to the spread of the new elements in Chinese lexicon, and persist in using the old Chinese elements. Further, we may also conclude that speakers in different age groups take quite distinct views towards the lexical change in Chinese. Even the attitudes of speakers in the same age group may differ as well. Some people might be considered as conservative speakers, as they often take an objection to the new elements in Chinese. A vast majority of the conservative speakers may be middle-aged or even older. It is a significant fact which could be claimed from both the previous studies and the above survey.

Other considerations

Exploring speakers' attitudes towards language change in a community is a fascinating exercise. As noted above, speakers in different age groups maintain obviously different attitudes towards the change. However, it is not clear-cut. There

should be still a great deal of research and discussion about speakers' attitudes towards language change. Like most of the explanations presented about other sociolinguistics topics, to study attitudes towards language change involves considering the influence of a wide range of social factors. Social status, sex, social network, for example, any of these factors may be relevant in accounting for speakers' different attitudes towards language change. There is an example from the survey which can be outlined here. As mentioned earlier, Figure 7 shows that about half of the speakers in the group *between 18 and 35* persist in keeping the old elements in Chinese language. A closer look reveals that most of them are university students who major in the subjects related to social science. It is possible to say that they are well-educated Chinese speakers. They are conservative in their view of Chinese language, since they are particularly interested in the old Chinese and have in-depth knowledge or understanding of the old elements. So far, it is logical to consider that their social status and education background might account for their attitudes better, rather than their age.

Briefly, speakers' attitudes towards language change can be influenced by other social factors in addition to age. Meanwhile, the linguistic behaviour and speech features can reflect speakers' attitudes towards language. Above all, anyone who attempts to study attitudes towards language change should be aware of the multiplicity of factors involved. It is essential to realize that language is both a social and mental phenomenon which is likely to be inextricably entwined with sociolinguistic factors (Aitchison, 1981:169).

V Conclusion

Overall, then, it is reasonable to state that every living language is constantly changing, in vocabulary, in pronunciation and in grammar (Trask, 1994: 3). Chinese language has been changing throughout its long history and it is still changing today. The role of the study here was not intended to discuss language change in all its complexity, but to examine some issues central to Chinese lexical change.

In traditional points of view of linguistics, language change cannot be directly observed. As a result, numerous linguists simply relied upon the examination of data from different points of history to infer that linguistic changes had occurred and to describe the outcomes of those changes (Bailey, 2002: 312). In nature, the approach of observing the consequences only offered little to the study and analysis of language change (Bailey, 2002; Wardhaugh, 2002). As discussed in section II, the apparent-time and real-time approach has had an enormous impact both on our knowledge of change and our understanding of its motivation (Bailey, 2002).

In this study, the questionnaire has been used as the main research instrument. Through the analysis of the written survey, it has been shown that the differences of using words occur among different age groups. The survey has confirmed that older Chinese speakers know more old patterns of Chinese words than younger speakers. Concerning the frequency of using the words, differences among different age groups can again be observed. Some old patterns have rarely occurred in young speakers' speech, while they still may be frequently used by some older speakers. Appropriately, the observations from the survey can be identified with the apparent-time evidence of Chinese lexical change. The steady increase in the frequency of new pattern and the steady decline in the frequency of old patterns by age groups, to some extent, indicate the change is in progress in Chinese speech community (Holmes, 1992).

The first part of the study has examined the apparent-time data of Chinese lexical change from the questionnaire survey. It is no denying that there are some disadvantages of apparent-time method. In point of fact, there is no an ideal method to

study language change. As it has been presented, researchers are able to combine apparent-time data with real-time evidence, with the relative strengths of one approach offsetting the weakness of the other (Bailey, 2002: 330).

In order to supplement the apparent-time data, some real-time evidence from the survey has been considered as well. Traditionally, there are three common types of lexical change which are mostly discussed by numerous Chinese linguists, which are *widening*, *narrowing* and *shift in meaning*. In the study, a comparison between the previous data and the results from the survey evidently reveals the real-time evidence for Chinese lexical change. In the process, we have also particularly discussed the traditional classification of lexical change in Chinese. Essentially, these three types of change all deal with changes in meaning. Moreover, it has been emphasized previously that some other changes, such as the addition of loanwords, creation of new words and loss of words may also occur in a language. It is clear that the study has focused on the apparent-time evidence for Chinese lexical change; however, we do consider some real-time data briefly to supplement the primary approach (apparent-time). In short, the study here has provided both the apparent-time and real-time evidence for Chinese lexical change. Moreover, it not only considers the common types of change in meaning, but also covers other different types of Chinese lexical change.

Conventionally, to study linguistic change is nothing else, but to study the consequences of the change in light of most Chinese linguistics work (Wu, 1993; He, 2001). Noticeably, little attention has been paid to speakers' attitudes towards the linguistic change throughout Chinese linguistic history. In contrast, this study has attempted to examine speakers' attitudes towards Chinese lexical change. Through the results of the survey, at least three points have been explored. Firstly, It has been figured out that younger speakers prefer to use loanwords and agree to popularize them in Chinese, whereas speakers of middle-age or older object to the spread of loanwords. Next, a vast majority of speakers do recognize that there are some obvious speech differences between different generations. In addition, some informants also have provided some examples which show that the younger generation use more new

patterns than the generation of their parents. Finally, there is great disparity among different age groups in terms of the attitudes towards the old elements in Chinese vocabulary. The study reveals that the old speakers persist in keeping the old elements in Chinese lexicon, as they regard the old patterns as the essential part of Chinese language. Otherwise from the older speakers' attitudes, younger speakers tend to object to retaining the old patterns in Chinese and suggest ruling them out.

To conclude, it is not surprising that older speakers seem more conservative and younger people are more innovative towards the language change. However, it is not always clear-cut. At last, it has been pointed out that some other social factors can also be responsible for the differentiation in attitudes towards language change.

Predicting the future depends on understanding the present (Aitchison, 1981:222). A closer look at Chinese lexical change has indicated that it is natural, inevitable and continuous. Once we have observed that more and more new elements occur in Chinese lexicon, it is logical to predict that more new words will occur in Chinese lexicon in the future, which may include loanwords and new created words. On the other hand, some old elements will be lost in Chinese language, because of the spread of new elements. It is understandable that some speakers may object to the language change when they notice them. This reaction is not new, and has been with us for many centuries (Trask, 1994). Still, Chinese lexicon will never stop changing.

In concluding this study, it should be noted that we have just come to an understanding of a few aspects in Chinese lexical change, rather than discuss language change in all its complexity. It is essential to realize that some further studies of Chinese lexical change, such as the causes of change and process of change need to be explored. In the future studies, additionally, we may consider some more social factors underlying language change. In the words of a linguist who is particularly interested in studying language change, Jean Aitchison (1981),

As the years go by, we hope gradually to increase this knowledge.

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Appendix

调查问卷(Questionnaire)

您将要填写的是一份关于汉语词汇演变与发展的调查问卷，以下题目的答案并无对错，请您根据您日常生活中的语言使用习惯填写即可。(The following questionnaire you are going to fill in is about some lexical change in Chinese language, there is no *true* or *false* of the following questions. Please answer these questions just according to your habit of language use in your daily life.)

谢谢您的合作和参与!(Thanks for your cooperation and participation!)

填写日期(Date):_____

一. 关于填写人的个人信息, 请您选择 (About your personal information, please make your choice):

1. 您的年纪(Your age): ()
A. 18岁以下(Under 18) B. 19岁-----35岁 (Between 19---35) C. 35岁以上 (Older than 35)
2. 您的性别(Your gender): ()
A. 男 (Male) B. 女(Female)
3. 您是否在北京长大 (Did you grow up in Beijing): ()
A. 是(Yes) B. 否(No)

如果您选择的是 B, 请您注明您曾经生活的省份(If you choose *No*, please note the name of the province where you grew up):_____

二. 关于一些汉语词汇的使用调查, 请您填写 (The survey of the use of some Chinese words):

4. 您了解以下汉语词的意思吗? 并请回答您的使用情况 (Do you know the meanings of the following words? How often do you use them?) .

	你是否了解下列词的含义 (Do you know the meanings of the words): 是/否(Yes/No)	您是:经常使用/很少使用/ 从不使用 (How often do you use them: Often/ Rarely/ Never).
手足 Brother (Old Pattern)		
兄弟 Brother (New Pattern)		
戏子 Actor/Actress(Old Pattern)		

演 员 Actor/Actress(New Pattern)		
胰 子 Soap (Old Pattern)		
肥 皂 Soap (New Pattern)		
对 象 Girlfriend/Boyfriend(Old Pattern)		
男 (女) 朋 友 Girlfriend/Boyfriend(Old Pattern)		
履 Shoes (Old Pattern)		
鞋 Shoes (New Pattern)		

5. 您认为现代汉语中,人们说的“子”的意思是(What does the Chinese word *zi* mean according to you): ()
- A. 包括儿子跟女儿(It means both son and daughter).
- B. 只指儿子一方(It only means son).
6. 您认为我们常说的“菜”是指 (What does the Chinese word *cai* mean according to you): ()
- A. 指可以吃的草本植物以及用这类植物所做的菜肴(即素菜) (It means the vegetables and the dishes which made of vegetables).
- B. 荤, 素菜肴均可成为“菜” (Dishes made of both meat and vegetables can be called *cai*).
7. 您认为汉语中常见的成语“标新立异”是 (Is the Chinese idiom *biao xin li yi* a commendatory idiom or a derogative idiom according to you):
- A. 褒义词 (Commendatory) B. 贬义词 (Derogative) C. 其他(Other)
- 如果您选择了 C, 请您注明其他的含义 (If you choose C, please note what *Other* means): _____.

三. 关于填写人的个人看法, 请您根据您的个人想法简单填写 (About your personal attitude, please answer the following questions according to your own opinion)

8. 在现代汉语中有越来越多的由外来语引入的新词汇, 例如: 咖啡, 酷, 拷贝等等. 请问: 您经常使用这类新词吗? 您认为汉语里面的外来语新词应该推广应用吗? (There are more and more new words in Chinese language which are borrowed from English, such as *ka fei*, *ku*, *kao bei* and so on. Please answer: 1. Do you often use such kind of words in your daily life? 2. Do you think that it is necessary to popularize these words? Please provide your reason.)

9. 您是否认为现在人们的日常用语(或者说词汇的使用)跟您父母那一代人的日常用语有差别呢? 如果有, 您能否举例说明是什么样的差别呢? (Do you think that the Chinese spoken language today is different from the language spoken by your parents? If so, could you please provide us with some examples?)

10. 您认为我们应该更多的保留汉语里面词汇旧的用法吗? 请说明您的理由 (Should we keep using the old patterns or variety of some Chinese words of Mandarin? Please note the reason).

您已成功完成了调查问卷的填写,

再次感谢您的支持跟参与!

(Now you have finished the questionnaire successfully. Many thanks for your support and participation)