



The Impact of War on the Development of Minor Languages - An Example of the Development of Chinese Dialects by War in Modern Chinese History

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Abstract. Many researchers in linguistics focus on the topic of politics and language, exploring the impact of globalization, colonization, and other political actions on less-speaking languages. However, few scholars have conducted in-depth research on the languages of various regions of China. The differences between modern Chinese dialects are manifested in various aspects of phonology, vocabulary and grammar, among which the phonological aspects are particularly prominent depending on regions. Numerous languages have changed through time no matter in detail or in general. In Chinese history, there have been many wars for political reasons in the modern history of China. In these wars, to adapt to people's life and culture, local dialects have undergone many transformations. This article, this research will explore the extent to which the war in modern Chinese history has affected Chinese dialects by using the way of literature review. From a micro-level vocabulary, the appearance of foreign words and words with specific meanings has led to an increase in vocabulary size. Increase or iterate; from the perspective of the macro language system, some languages disappear or appear, or the pronunciation changes greatly.

Keywords: Language, war, colonization, dialect, culture, politics

1 Introduction

In the past, many researchers in the field of linguistics have focused on the topic of politics and language, exploring the impact of globalization, colonization, and other political actions on languages with few people to use. However, few scholars have had a deep look at the languages of the various regions of China, which is also the blank section of the study. In fact, the changes in the languages of China's various regions during the wars of recent history serve as perfect examples of the impact of wars on local languages. From the Liberation War to World War II, China's modern history has seen many wars for political reasons, during which local dialects underwent many transformations to adapt to the lives and culture of the people [1]. The semantic element of Chinese is the Chinese character, and each character is a trinity of form, sound, and meaning. When a Chinese character has a form, it is called a

morpheme. When a Chinese character is phonetic, it is called a lexeme. When a Chinese character has a meaning, it is called a word. During the development of Han Chinese society, there have been varying degrees of differentiation and unification, thus leading to the gradual emergence of dialects of Chinese. Since people in each dialect area cannot talk to each other because of the accent and even the syntax and wording of local official languages can vary greatly, they are relatively independent languages.

Language is an open and dynamic system, and in the case of language, words and language systems have been particularly affected by war, more specifically by the cultural integration that led by war. Modern Chinese history refers to the period from the Opium War of 1840 in the late Qing Dynasty to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, about 110 years. After the Opium War, China was forced to open its doors to a large number of cultural influences, and the dialects were then changed. Therefore, this paper will adopt the method of literature review to explore this topic. Hopefully this research will attract more scholars to have interest in China's regional languages, because they are interesting and have a lot to think about. This study will discuss this topic from lexical changes at the micro level and the whole language system at the macro level.

2 Vocabulary expansion

Under the influence of the war, it can be seen that in the modern era, the vocabulary as a whole expanded. Even though this is a trend of the times, the existence of war has undoubtedly accelerated this effect. Words are the smallest linguistic units that can be used independently and are spare units for organizing phrases and sentences. The expansion can be divided into two ways.

2.1 Words that express a specific attitude

First, this phenomenon is manifested in the increase of specific meaning of words to show attitude and new thoughts. Words are cultural products that reflect the particular nature of an era. And at this particular stage of modern times, change, integration and innovation are more evident in vocabulary. This can be shown obviously in the newspaper. Influenced by the modern wars, the vocabulary that appeared in that period was markedly emotional [2]. For example, the number of insulting, emotionally charged and anti-Japanese words increased significantly, expressing national hatred; the appearance of words with the meaning of "creation" and "change" expressed Chinese people's lament about being forced to open the country's doors and see the new world. Initially, people used the term "yi" to refer to foreigners, and "yi" had the meaning of rude and barbaric outsiders. In the late Qing dynasty, people use "yi people (foreigners)," "yi ships (Foreign Ships)," and "yi things (Foreign things)." to express their disdain for things foreign, echoing the more conservative foreign policy of the time. However, with the further opening of the country, foreign policy changes because of warfare, the terms with neutral meaning in dialect [3], like "Yang- oversea

(to express foreigners)", "Xi-west (to express westerners)" and so on, appears. New words expanded the vocabulary and some of them covered the original vocabulary to a certain extent, and then exceed the previous range of vocabulary.

2.2 Localization of foreign vocabulary

The introduction of foreign words also led to the expansion of vocabulary to describe a certain new object. With the opening of the country's doors, foreign vocabulary was introduced continuously, but the degree of introduction was still distinctly phased, regional, in-depth, and closely related to economic development. Initially, the translator chose to translate the words directly according to their pronunciation, using similar pronunciation words in Chinese to correspond to the words. Shanghai, as part of the early exposure to Western civilization at that time, introduced many new foreign words such as "borscht", "microphone", "bus", etc. during the colonization period. Later, there were also translators who made the translated Chinese vocabulary innovative in order to popularize the concepts corresponding to the words. For example, the new words "Mr. Sai (to express Science)" and "Mr. De (to express democracy)" were introduced in politics, which are similar in meaning to the traditional Chinese words "people-oriented" and "materialistic", but with completely different expressions. Even words like "party" and "revolution" have a modern political meaning. Some people translate the violin as "van shang ling" (with a similar pronunciation of violin) and use it in literature, which is a blend of foreign emerging instruments and culture, and the translation has a sense of beauty. Moreover, the terms "Gu piao (stock)", "Mai Fang(buyer)" and "Guan Li (manager)", which have obvious modern economic characteristics, gradually appeared in economically active ports of commerce like Shanghai. For the introduction of most foreign words, translators choose to localize them by incorporating the original local Chinese vocabulary in the translation. In daily life, people use "zhe xue- zhe originally has the meaning of thinking (philosophy)," "fu wu- wu has the meaning of physical labor (service)," "zu zhi- zhi means net (organization)," "luo ji- ji means an etiquette (logistic)", "jian kang- jian means strong (health)"etc. Many words that were commonly used were introduced at that time, and these new words were added to various dialects. Many Chinese scholars were also happy to use new terms in their novels, such as Lin Shu, a late representative of the Tongcheng school of ancient literature. The words "Jiao yu (education)," "Si xiang (thought)," "Jin bu (progress)," "Ge xin (revolution)," and "Zi you (freedom)," were clearly used in her novels and with obvious positive and progressive meanings. These words are still used very often today, which is enough to reflect the great impact. All these examples mentioned can show the huge expansion of vocabularies in languages.

3 Changes in the language system

The change in Chinese dialects is simultaneously reflected in the change in language systems when the composition of most vocabs changes. This can be shown in two parts.

3.1 Language Iteration

For the first thing, there can be the iteration of the language. This manifests itself in the fact that fewer people speak certain dialects or they simply disappear. War is inevitable for the death of the population, and there are parts of the Chinese dialect that are spoken by fewer people, and the population that does speak it dies as a result of war, leading to the disappearance of the language. This situation is relatively extreme. In most cases, there is a gradual and slow development of the overall language use system compared to words, but it can also be seen through a large number of lexical analyses. For example, Shanghai, which is part of the "Wu dialect", was greatly affected. The "Old Shanghainese", which had been developed in Shanghai for a long time, gradually decreased and the use of "New Shanghainese" increased. The old Shanghai dialect had six tones, while the new mainstream now has only five tones with no sharp or clusters that used to have a lot in the old one, and the pronunciation is much different from the old Shanghai dialect [4]. Since people who use old Shanghainese cannot communicate with people who use new Shanghainese, it can be seen as two different languages. The Sichuan dialect is a more obvious example. During the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties and the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, Sichuan went through wars that led to a drastic decrease in population. Therefore, from the central to local levels of government took a series of measures to attract foreign immigrants. It is said that there are residents of Hubei, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangxi and a dozen other provinces are among the immigrants. The Sichuan dialect, a southwestern official language, was also influenced by the immigrant dialects of Hubei, Guangdong, and Jiangxi, and gradually evolved, developed, and fused to form the current Sichuan dialect. The previous Sichuan dialect could not be replicated and disappeared completely.

3.2 Change in phonology

In addition, the changes in the language system are reflected in the changes in phonology. This is the change and development of intonation and pronunciation. The change starts with the vocabulary, as old words are replaced by new words, the pronunciation characteristic of the old vocabulary becomes less and less until this pronunciation is no longer needed. The tone in the dialect undergoes a general change in order to adapt. Therefore, there are some pronunciation patterns that disappear or are created. For example, the pronunciation of Shanghainese has evolved towards English [5]. Since Shanghai dialect has many English words with English pronunciation in it till nowadays. The basic rule of construction and pronunciation of Yangjingbang English is the Chinese translation of the English pronunciation, plus a Chinese root word.

"shi mao"-come from smart (to express fashionable), "na mo wen"- come from number one (to express first),"luo song tang -come from Russian (to express the old Shanghainese term for Russia)". The influence of the Japanese on the dialect of northeastern China after the Sino-Japanese War is also evident. Japan had occupied the entire northeastern region of China and forced the people of northeast China to learn Japanese [6]. These words were banned by the government after the founding of New China, but some Japanese words are still preserved in the northeastern dialect and influence the northeastern dialect system, such as "Benshu, Manchu, Shizuku, and Tatami."

4 Discussion

The disappearance of language systems is a relatively rare example in the recent history of Chinese dialects, most of which still make changes based on the original language system. It is worth mentioning the famous changes in the writing system and standardization in modern Chinese history, again based on the language system, more precisely on the writing system, which was changed. The script is the written symbol of the language. The Chinese language is the only logogram that is still widely used today, and this feature is basically preserved. Throughout modern history, due to the invasion of China by Western countries, Chinese intellectuals began to reflect on traditional culture, considering the traditional writing system as a symbol of backwardness and ignorance. Led by the intellectuals, by 1955, the Chinese government began to promote a simplified Chinese writing system in order to improve the literacy of the entire population. At the same time, the popularization of Mandarin started. The Chinese people have a history of being invaded and are eager to become stronger, and education is an important way to make the country strong, and language access is fundamental to education. The war created a desire for China to become stronger, and the popularity of Mandarin was beneficial on both an economic and educational level, so the Chinese government promoted it vigorously. Mandarin, with Beijing dialect as the standard pronunciation, Northern dialect as the base dialect, and simplified Chinese script as the language standard, facilitated communication and learning among people in different regions, eliminating the language barrier caused by dialects. At the same time, the popularity of Mandarin has greatly reduced the space for the survival of regional dialects, and the number of speakers of each regional dialect has decreased significantly. In 2022, China's Mandarin penetration rate will be 80.72%, the percentage of literate population using standard Chinese characters will be over 95%, and the illiteracy rate will drop to 2.67%, having a significant increase compared to 1935 when Mandarin was just created.

In recent years, many dialects have gradually become associated with Mandarin. This is because many dialect speakers tend to mix dialects together in Mandarin. Some of the words of the dialect are then incorporated into the Mandarin language. For example, dialect words from the northern official dialect are retained in Mandarin, such as "beng" (no need), "nao" (bad), "an" (me), "sha zi" (how), and "zan" (each other). Most of the spoken words in Northern Official Chinese can be easily written as

written words, but Southern Official Chinese (such as the Sichuan dialect characters used in Sichuan dialect) still possesses more unique dialect characters due to the large number of unique words that are not found in modern standard Chinese. This helps to keep and popularize some of the dialects to a certain extent.

5 Conclusion

In summary, the impact of modern Chinese warfare on dialects can be reflected in the lexical and linguistic system, which is a dynamic and changing influence, containing deliberate changes by the government for political purposes and unconscious changes. However, war generally does not affect dialect change directly, but mainly through economic, political, and cultural means, in a subtle way, while the dialect changes slowly and with the characteristics of the times. However, the impact of modern warfare on dialects is not only limited to the lexical and linguistic system, but also involved in other aspects of the language system such as phonology, intonation, and semantics. This paper only selects a small part of them for discussion and analysis. Future research would explore the impact of modern Chinese warfare on dialects, and therefore analyze in more depth the direct impact of modern Chinese warfare on dialect evolution, as well as the indirect impact of modern Chinese warfare on the political, economic, and cultural development of China. In this way, people need to draw on more dialectal and historical sources to combine dialectal development with history in order to better explore the changes in dialects. There is an objective and difficult research situation today, where many dialects have fallen into an embarrassing situation of decreasing numbers of speakers or even outright loss over time. This is very detrimental to the study of dialects. Therefore, many dialect researchers are using advanced science and technology to preserve some of the dialects, by establishing a complete phonetic preservation library, writing books on the language, and even visiting the speakers in the dialect areas to ensure that more information that can be found and traces that can look deeper in the dialect research. The study of the eight dialects in China has been conducted. The eight major dialect areas [7] in China are distinctive, but they are constantly intermingling and developing, and dialects, as one of the distinctive traditional cultures of China, are receiving more and more attention as an important object of language research.

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