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'One Stamp' and 'One Stamp' are not the same: A comparative analysis on Mandarin, Japanese and Korean classifiers
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'One Stamp' and 'One Stamp' are not the Same

— A comparative analysis on Mandarin, Japanese and Korean classifiers

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Chapter 1.
Introduction

Learners and/or native speakers of Chinese, Japanese and Korean may already find numerous similarities among these three languages - just as people probably will do in studying some European languages. One thing in common among these East Asian languages is that, they all have the classifier system that is necessary to formulate a 'numeral-noun' expression. For example, how to express 'one stamp' in Mandarin, Japanese and Korean become a topic worth discussing due to the existence of classifiers in these three languages. Indeed, it is no wonder to find differences since they are not the same language anyway. However, this thesis aims at answering the questions of how and why they are different or similar, taking classifiers in three languages to classify the word 'stamp' as sample study objects. How similar categorizations develop through different space (and time)?

This thesis begins with introducing the research background in Chapter 2. By presenting existing literature and concrete examples, this section will briefly talk about various pieces of research that have been done so far on classifiers in East Asian languages. As one of the representative common linguistic features shared by these languages, classifiers have been studied through the aspects of both grammar and semantic. In terms of grammatical comparison among classifiers, many scholars have been working on analyzing their position in certain grammatical structure, their flexibility and word choice. Meanwhile, it is also significant to study the semantic range of classifiers, as some other academic articles suggesting its effect on language education and human cognition.

Chapter 3 is the comparative research about the four chosen classifier: *méi* 枚 (Mandarin), *zhāng* 张 (Mandarin), *mai* 枚 (Japanese) and *jang* 장 (Korean). After stating the research motivation, I explained the methodology that is multi-level research through corpora, literature (dictionary) and surveys. These classifiers are 'similar' because the original words were borrowed from ancient Chinese, but they develop over time under diverse circumstances. How do these classifiers perform differently even in the combination with the same objects and what else have caused their differences in function and semantic ranges? In order to avoid confusion in the comparative study, these classifiers are compared separately several times, which also allows the processing of the research to a deeper level. A side note is attached to the end of this chapter since

analyzing some other classifiers can also contribute to this topic, even if they are not frequently used in contemporary languages.

A case study showing the change in the semantic range of Mandarin classifier *méi* 枚 is given in Chapter 4. Classifier *méi* 枚 have been used on a larger scale recently, especially in the Internet language, but why and how? Different from the parallel comparison in Chapter 3, this case study is more like a longitudinal comparison that looks into the historical perspective, the current situation and the future development together.

At the end of the thesis, chapter 5 provides with conclusion and reflection on this research, as well as some discussions on future studies towards the analysis and education on classifiers in East Asian languages.

Chapter 2.

Research background

2.1. Classifiers in East Asian languages

Due to long historical interaction among East Asian countries, these different cultures and languages have been gradually but constantly influencing each other and thus share similarities. One of them is the characteristics of so-called classifier language, which refers to the fact that most nouns in Chinese, Japanese and Korean have to be quantified by a numeral-classifier structure. The examples shown in (1) are the phrases in each of these languages (in the order of Chinese, Japanese, Korean) that equals to the expression of 'one car'. Classifiers '*liàng*', '*dai*' and '*dae*' that are used to sort the noun 'car' is needed to formulate a numeral-noun structure. This is different from some other languages such as English that measure phrases are formed by numerals quantifying directly nouns (Allan, 1977). There are also measure expressions that are also called 'classifiers' existing in these classifier languages, of which corresponded expressions could be found in English as in (2). The sortal classifiers in (1) point out the unit that is already shown in the semantic properties of the noun, and measure classifiers in (2) added extra units by which people measure or count (Croft, 1994). To avoid confusion, the 'classifier' in the following text will refer to mainly sortal classifiers. Meanwhile, classifiers that are used together with a verb in Mandarin Chinese will not be discussed in details either.[1]

(1) a. *yí   liàng   qìchē*   b. *jidōsha ichi dai*   c. *jadongcha han dae*
       one   CL   car   car   one CL   car   one CL

(2) a. *sān   xiāng   shū*   b. *ocha ip-pai*   c. *upyo du   jang*
       three   CL(box) book   tea one-CL(cup)   stamp two   CL(sheet)
       "three boxes of books"   "one cup of tea"   "two sheets of stamps"

As a distinctive characteristic for these languages, classifiers have been widely studied in each language separately (e.g. Downing, 1996; Hwang et. al, 2006; Li, 2013). These previous studies have provided rather comprehensive insights into classifiers in each language, including the aspects such as the grammatical function (syntax) and the semantic role of classifiers. For example, about

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[1] About the 'verb classifier', see Lin (2006).

the previous distinction on sortals and measures, Li (2013) argues against this classification of classifiers in Mandarin and proposed a new focus on duel explanation ('count/measure reading') of each classifier instead of categorizing classifiers themselves. There are also articles written on the syntax of classifiers comparing to non-classifier languages (Krifka, 2008; Borer, 2015; Sudo 2016). Even though the grammatical properties of classifiers is significant and has been regarded as a debatable topic, the lexical meanings of these classifiers are also worth studying, which will be the main focus of this research. The comparability of grammatical properties is lower because the standard and academic terminology vary in the study of each language. For instance, the study of Chinese classifiers initially put these words that function as classifiers under the category of nouns, which was later on regarded as a separate type of words. The correspondent terminology for 'classifier' in Korean grammar still do not (yet) exist, which is rather named 'dependent noun' as they are nouns that cannot be used without other linguistic elements (Hwang et al., 2006; Han, 2002). In Japanese, the definition of 'classifier' is also debatable - in some cases, it is still difficult to draw a line clearly between nouns and classifiers in present-day Japanese (Downing 1996, 43). However, it is still necessary to take a glance at some similarities and differences among the classifiers in these languages.

2.2 A rough grammatical comparison: position, structure, flexibility and word choice

The example in (1) and (2) suggests an obvious difference in the word order between Mandarin and Japanese, Korean. When modern Chinese places the word in the order of 'numeral-CL-noun', modern Japanese and Korean put the noun in the first place. Even though it is no longer natural to use the order of 'noun-numeral-CL' in Mandarin, this sequence has been found mostly before 220 (Han dynasty) and kept existing in many documents from ancient China (Lin, 2006). But in some written documents and oral conversations, the sequence of 'noun-numeral-CL' is applied to create a special linguistic context. For instance, the sentence in (3) could be found in documents that require people to provide certain material. This structure of 'noun-numeral-CL' puts zhàopiàn 'photo' before the number and the classifier, which makes the noun become the information that firstly conveys to the reader/listener. Such word order is also used in recipes and shopping lists. Some scholars suggested that this structure is special in Chinese grammar and thus also have special meanings that are only used in special contexts (Lu and Zhu 2014).[2]

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[2] This is a quite discussable topic in Mandarin/Chinese linguistics and more discussions about the special sequence of 'noun-numeral-CL' can be found in literature by Guo (1979), Lu and Zhu (2014), etc.

(3) *qǐng   fù   zhàopiàn yī   zhāng*
    please attach photo   one CL
    "Please attach a photo (to sth.)"

There is also another way to insert classifiers in Japanese and Korean that is almost interchangeable in meaning compared to the previously mentioned 'noun-numeral-CL' structure - as shown in (4b) and (4c) that refer to the meaning of "one sheet of paper".

(4) a. *yì   zhāng zhǐ*   b. *ichi mai no   kami*   c. *han jang ui   jongni*
       one CL   paper   one CL GEN paper   one CL   GEN paper

A genitive case marker ('*no*' and '*ui*') is added to formulate the numeral-noun structure. A similar phenomenon is found in documents like (5) during the period of the Han dynasty and still kept in some dialects of contemporary Chinese, but it is unusual to add the genitive marker in Mandarin now for the sortal classifier. Comparing to Japanese and Korean, the rule in the place of the classifier in Mandarin is more strict. The flexible structure of Japanese and Korean classifiers is also concluded in the concept of 'floating quantifier', which explained in the name about the changeable position of classifiers (see Kang, 2002; Iwata, 2006; Ito, 2015).

(5) 披   三   条   之   广   路   (*Xī Jīng Fù*)
    pī   sān   tiáo zhī   guǎng lù
    open three CL GEN broad way
    "Cut three broad ways"

How every word has been selected as a classifier is a case-by-case issue, but it is common to see that similar classifiers are used in these three languages. Studies have shown that part of the classifies in Japanese and Korean received influences from Chinese, with a merge of domestic classifiers (Yule and Burnell, 1903; Ikegami, 1940; Downing, 1996). To make it more comparable, here we only talk about classifiers in these three languages that have or have borrowed Chinese words. For instance, the classifier *dai* in (1b) and *dae* in (1c) is both the loanword of *tái* 台. While the classifier used in the similar situation is another word in Mandarin (1a), '*tái* 台' can still be found to be attached with the 'car' in some southern Chinese dialect. It is easy to find other

common classifiers in these three languages, with differences in the scale and specific meaning of each word.

2.3. The semantic range of classifiers, on education and human cognition

This section will introduce some related studies in other areas, as part of the background information, but may not be the core focus of the research in this thesis. The number of nouns that can be classified by one classifier is limited, even if there are some 'master-key' classifiers that are much more frequently used than others, such as *gè* 个 in Chinese. Classifiers in these languages have been studied about their grammatical function and lexical meanings, and the latter one will become the main focus in the following text. Why certain nouns can be combined with one classifier but others cannot? The study of the semantic range of a classifier is a way to understand the 'meaning' of classifiers. Despite the fact that Chinese, Japanese and Korean have many words in common, the development of language results in variations of word meanings - so is the case for classifiers. Similar classifiers in these three languages can cover a very different scale of nouns that they can categorize. Han (2002) has listed four types of results in her previous comparative studies about the semantic scale of Chinese and Korean classifiers. In most cases, Korean classifiers that originally borrowed from Chinese either cover the same or a smaller scale of nouns. The frequency of the rest two results added together - 'Korean classifiers have a larger semantic range' and 'different classifier but cover the same range' - is less than 2% (Han, 2002). Iida and Choi (2009) have also provided a list of Japanese and Korean corresponded classifiers, of which the overlapping in the semantic range is very common.

'Transfer' in multilingualism and second language (L2) learning has been widely studied (Schwartz and Sprouse 1996; Peukert 2015; etc.). Language transfer could affect both the education process and the development of language. How this is made to happen and influence language learning, in particular, is a topic worth studying, but I will not go further in this thesis. Studying these similar but different classifiers is quite a topic in East Asian language education, since it is important to understand and be able to use them correctly. Especially to those learners who have already gotten the hang of one of these languages and wish to learn the others, the similarities among them may influence the study about their differences. In the study of Zhang and Jin (2020), native Mandarin speakers who are L2 learners of Korean perform distinctively towards the usage of Korean classifier *jang* 장, which was originally borrowed from the Chinese classifier *zhāng* 张. The

semantic range of *jang* 장 and *zhāng* 张 in two languages have overlapped with each other, but it is much more difficult for these L2 learners to tell the nouns that only can be collocated with Korean *jang* 장. L2 learners may transfer their L1 knowledge to the process of learning L2, but this could also influence their absorption in L2 learning in a negative way.

Meanwhile, the topic of the relationship between language and the human brain is involved in the study of classifiers as well. Classifies in these three languages have been proved to have a semantic role. Since classifiers have the function to help people categorize objects, they actually reflect how humans interact with these objects, which is different from the noun that shows a very specific description of the word (Denny, 1976). Some scholars hold the opinion that the influence between classifier and human cognition is bilateral. On the one hand, classifiers sort objects into different types in people's mind. On the other hand, the feature of certain nouns (objects) could also influence the choice of classifiers. This interaction between classifiers and human cognition may lead to the change of the classifier's semantic range. There are quite a lot pieces of academic work about classifier and human cognition. Previous research has been done around topics such as classifiers on second language learning, how classifiers contribute to people's prediction of the coming words and how the shape of an object affects classifier choices (see Mitsugi, 2020; Huang and Schiller, 2021; Kuo and Sera, 2009; etc.).

Chapter 3.

Comparing the 'same' classifiers in Mandarin, Japanese and Korean

3.1. Motivation and methdology

The unequal number between classifiers and nouns in East Asian languages always create a situation that most classifiers can group together many nouns while a noun is usually combined with one certain classifier. There are cases that one noun is collocated with two or more classifiers, but comparatively fewer.[3] Nouns are categorized based on their meanings, then what about in the case that one classifier can replace the other for the same noun? This could be explained by the that the classifiers themselves are similar. Some classifiers can almost be used interchangeably, such as *zhū* 株 and *kē* 棵 in Mandarin (Dosedlová and Lu 2020). As a result, a group of nouns that can be collocated with one classifier are also suitable for the other. Besides, using different classifiers for the same noun could be a way to emphasize different features of the noun as well as to express the emotion of the user, which is much appreciated as the nuance of language. This allows speakers to choose some rare combinations of classifiers and nouns - these combinations are acceptable as long as they create an artistic and reasonable context, even if they 'sound' strange and infrequent. For instance:

(1) 一 片 荒凉 暮色 中 单调地 只 剩下 两 粒 人影 (BCC Corpus)
 yī piàn huāngliáng mùsè zhōng dāndiàode zhǐ shèngxià liǎng lì rényǐng
 one CL desolated twilight in solitarily only remain two **CL** figure
 'In the desolated twilight, there are only two figures remained solitarily'.

The word *rényǐng* 人影 'figure' refers to the human shadow, which is usually collocated with classifiers like *tiáo* 条 'bar-like', *gè* 个 (the commonly used classifier that is collocated with people; measure word) or *dào* 道 'road' (also used for counting long and narrow objects). These classifiers match with the human shadow's features - 'long, thin and narrow', but the classifier *lì* 粒 'grain' is

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[3] Diffrenciate it with measure classifier: measure classifiers provide extra information about the collocated nouns, such as *duī* 堆 in *yī duī shū* 一堆书 'a **pile** of books'; while sortal classifiers like *běn* 本 in *yī běn shū* 一本书 'a book' are simply necessary to quantifier the noun 'book'. The measure classifiers can be used with (almost) any noun if the way of measuerment is applicable to the object that the noun refer to.

usually used with tiny and round-shaped objects. This special usage here emphasizes the smallness of figures compared to the sky (twilight), which stress the emptiness and loneliness in this context.

East Asian languages borrow words from each other, and classifiers are not excepted. The meaning of a word can vary or stay the same after travelling to other places. Comparative studies of the original words and the loan words in other languages could help to illustrate linguistic and cultural differences among these countries. In the case of the classifier, which is more like the function word without a specific 'meaning', it is more reasonable to compare the scale of words that the classifier can collocate with.

The word *yóupiào* 邮票 'stamp' in Mandarin can normally be collocated with either the classifier *méi* 枚 or *zhāng* 张. This is not because *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 can replace each other in general or they create very different artistic expressions. Either expression is widely used in Mandarin. While it is difficult to tell explicit differences between *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 in the case of describing the stamp, other nouns except 'stamp' that classified by the two words hardly overlap. This is because in general, *méi* 枚 is used for small items and *zhāng* 张 is used for flat objects. Interestingly, to classify the word 'stamp' in each language, the Japanese borrowed the word *méi* 枚 whereas Korean borrowed the word *zhāng* 张. What else do these languages group together with stamps by these classifiers and how much do the semantic range of the same classifier overlap/ distinguish in different languages? Studying the semantic range of these classifiers will help us to compare and understand the subtle differences between languages. The comparative study of classifiers in these three languages together is rather limited. Therefore, this research aims at providing some new data on the similarities and differences regarding the semantic range of certain classifiers in East Asian languages and contributing a more complete understanding of this topic.

I selected 20 different nouns that are classified with the same classifier to pair with the stamps (*méi* 枚, *zhāng* 张, *mai* 枚 and *jang* 장) in each of the three languages (for Mandarin, the number is 40 in total since there are two classifiers can be used to count stamps). The nouns are selected from the texts provided by the BCC Corpus (http://bcc.blcu.edu.cn/zh/cid/1), Aozora Bunko (https://www.aozora.gr.jp) and Yonsei Corpus(https://ilis.yonsei.ac.kr/corpus/#/search). The type of texts is limited to literature and novel, which is trying to reach the maximum comparability by limiting the data to the similar type of texts in three languages. The research will begin with a comparison between Mandarin classifiers *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 through their historical development. Then the

focus will turn to compare the semantic range by analysing nouns that are collocated with these classifiers in three languages. Since the research of classifiers is closely related to the denotation of the noun, 'noun' in the following text will be seen as short for 'the object that the noun refers to' if not particularly stated. In addition to the corpora study, this thesis includes necessary literature studies and surveys to help to provide more complete research on these classifiers. The data from corpora of three languages can provide with massive original sources, and the literature study is to give academic support as a supplement to this thesis. Besides, the surveys include responses from native speakers of three languages, which are first-hand data that can lead us to have a clearer understanding of contemporary people's perceptions towards the targeted classifiers. The combination of these different research methods aims at studying contemporary language usage from reality as well as academic research.

3.2. Comparing Mandarin classifiers *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张

Classifiers in Mandarin are defined by either the list of what is in the categories or the characteristics that these categories have. For example, in *Xinhua Dictionary*, *méi* 枚 is explained as 'equal to *gè* 个 (the commonly used classifier, measure word), mainly used to classify objects that are small in shape and form'. In the *Standard Dictionary of Contemporary Chinese*, *zhāng* 张 is a classifier used for ①things can open (expand) and close, such as bow, mouth; ②things with a flat plane, such as paper, pancake, table. From these contents in dictionaries, it is difficult to understand why these two classifiers are worth comparing. Dictionaries only provide us with the most basic information about classifiers, a further study that includes the study of historical background and corpus is necessary for this comparative analysis.

Both *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 have a long history of being used as the classifier. The transformation of these two words into classifiers is similar to the formation of many other classifiers. They derive from their original nouns or verbs, retaining the physical or material properties of those words and using those properties to categorize other nouns. *Méi* 枚 was originally a noun that means the small branch from a tree, as explained in *Shuō wén jiě zì* edited by Xu Shen in AD 100 - AD 121.[4] It gradually became a classifier to categorize thin and slender or

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[4] *Shuō wén jiě zì* 说文解字 is a book that explains the composition and meaning of Chinese characters, and sometimes the title is translated as *Origin of Chinese Characters.*

small objects. According to the data I found from BCC Corpus, *méi* 枚 is mostly collocated with small metal objects (coin, medal, finger ring, thimble, brooch, etc.), and some weapons in a long shape (missile, artillery shell, torpedo, etc.). On the other hand, *zhāng* 张 means 'to draw a bow' in the very beginning as mentioned in *Shuō wén jiě zì*, which then became the verb to describe the action of open up or spread out in a more general sense. When *zhāng* 张 was widely used as a classifier, it suggests the characteristic of 'flatness' or '(horizontal) plane-like' of the object. Search results from the BCC Corpus show that, in modern Mandarin, *zhāng* 张 as a classifier always appear together with extremely flat objects (paper, cash, postcard, card, leaf, painting, etc.) and objects with plane surfaces (table, stool, pelt, etc.). One thing that needs to be mentioned is that there are always 'irregular' combinations between classifiers and nouns that cannot be easily sorted into a specific group even though such combinations can be explained in some way, especially for commonly used classifiers like *zhāng* 张. For example, the word 'face' is also combined with *zhāng* 张 even though the face is not 'flat' at all - but it is somehow reasonable to recognize the face with a kind of (plane) surface. This also indicates that in the context of Chinese language, the 'face' is recognized as 'flat' to a certain degree.

3.2.1. Research

Classifiers classify nouns based on the characteristics of the object that the noun refers to. The fact that both *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 can be paired with the word 'stamp' indicates that the object 'stamp' has characteristics that can be described within the limits delineated by *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张, which are the 'smallness' and the 'flatness'. The reason why they can both describe the same word is rather short and clear, but the comparison of these two classifiers can go further even only in the case of the 'stamp'. How do people differentiate them in the daily usage of Mandarin?

To find out how Mandarin native speakers use the classifiers in question, a small survey was conducted (See appendix for the questionnaire). This survey aims for gathering the native speaker's perception towards two similar expressions for 'one stamp' in Mandarin. The participants are expected to give their choices on classifiers based on intuition, and also express their understandings towards the subtle differences between similar classifiers. Out of the 24 samples, 14 have *zhāng* 张 as the classifier collocated with 'stamp', and nine participants fill out *méi* 枚 in the

same question. One result had been excluded from the study because the answer that means 'a pile of stamps' is an example of using the measurement classifier. Participants were asked to score the level of similarity between the two ways of expressing 'one stamp'. The average point is 2.13, with a scoring system that 1 point refers to 'no difference at all', and 5 points for 'totally different'. There are 37.5% of participants hold the opinion that *yī méi yóupiào* 一枚邮票 'one *méi* stamp' and *yī zhāng yóupiào* 一张邮票 'one *zhāng* stamp' are exactly the same expressions, and none of them votes for the choice of 'totally different'.

Among the participants who think the two expressions at least have some differences, 46.67% of the respondents agree that there was a difference in whether or not the expression was colloquial, and most people think *méi* 枚 is more like the written language. 60% of the participants say the difference was reflected by the rhetoric and the emotion the user was trying to convey. 33.33% of them believe that the two expressions emphasized the different characteristics of stamps. For those people who have chosen the latter two options, they were also asked to provide their perceptions and understandings in open questions, as the results demonstrated in Table 1.

Participants	yī méi yóupiào 一枚邮票 'one *méi* stamp'	yī zhāng yóupiào 一张邮票 'one *zhāng* stamp'
Q: What features or status of the stamp do you think these two expessions emphasize respectively?		
01	small, delicate and exquisite	paper-made
05	stable	to be passed on
18	relatively small and delicate	could be a small one or many stamps that are not cut yet
20	small	number of stamps
25	not-used	used
Q: What kind of emotion do you think the users express through these two expessions respectively?		
07	the sense of literature and arts	no sense of literature and arts
10	more emotional and touching, made me think of the article about homesickness	normal expression
11	collectible stamps	stamps for sending letters
16	treasure the stamp	normal expression without special emotions
17	emotional, subjective	objective, restrained
18	treasure	casual
20	sensitive	rough
23	the stamp may have special meanings	just casual
24	missing, longing for	daily use

Table 1. Participants' anwsers to open questions in *the questionnaire of classifier usage in Mandarin*

3.2.2. Result and Analysis

Although the dissimilarity between the two expressions is rather small, some participants managed to describe the subtle differences between *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 in the situation. The emphasis on the feature of 'smallness' matches the background research of *méi* 枚 mentioned above, but more participants separate these two classifiers according to the emotion that they think the user try to convey. Most of them associate *méi* 枚 with the sense of being valuable. This may relate to the impression of stamps being 'small and delicate', as it suggests that more effort shall be put in during the making process. In the main time, this perception of having value could also be seen as the result of getting influences from other nouns that are also classified by *méi* 枚. Objects such as coins and many metal-made items are 'valuable' literally; whereas things like finger rings and medals are even more 'valuable' because they are precious and contain people's memories.

Comparatively speaking, *zhāng* 张 is seen as a rather 'normal' classifier. Besides the fact that stamps share the characteristics of being made by the same material (paper) as other nouns paired with *zhāng* 张, many people regard *zhāng* 张 as an ordinary classifier without much emotion and objectivity. Similarly to the previous explanation about *méi* 枚, this kind of understanding may be affected by other nouns within the semantic range of classifier *zhāng* 张. Whether they are paper and cards or tables and chairs, they are all common items people can see in the everyday life. Additionally, the fact that *zhāng* 张 is widely used in oral languages and multiple cases may create a sense of 'normal' when it is used to classify the stamp.

The reason the word 'stamp' can be collocated with either *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 is basically from the duality in characteristics of the stamp itself. On the one hand, the property of being small and flat at the same time makes it grammatically and logically correct to combine with either classifier. On the other hand, stamps can be 'valuable' or 'normal' according to the context. When people casually stick it to the envelope as necessary permission to send a letter, the stamp is normal, common and everywhere in daily life. When stamps are selected and put into collections, they obtain special meanings thus become valuable. The comparative study of the special case of the word 'stamp' with the semantic range of two classifiers is trying to make it more clear and explain the subtle differences in Mandarin expressions.

3.3. Comparing the sementic scale of Japanese classifier *mai* and Mandarin classifier *méi*

Due to the import of Chinese scripts in Japanese, classifiers *méi* 枚 (Mandarin) and *mai* 枚 (Japanese) share identical 'looks'. The pronunciation and grammatical function in a phrase structure are also similar, but then what about the scale of nouns that they can classify respectively? In order to separate these two words in a clearer way, *méi* 枚 (Mandarin) and *mai* 枚 (Japanese) will be sometimes referred to 枚M and 枚J in the following text.

3.3.1. Research

Combined with the previous study of Mandarin classifier *méi* 枚, this research includes three parts: literature (dictionary) study, survey and corpus study. The complete survey is attached in the

appendix, which mainly asked native Japanese speakers about the usage of classifier *mai* 枚 and their impression towards nouns that are grouped by it.

The basic explanation about *méi* 枚 can be referred to chapter 3.2, which could be summarized as 'it is used to classify objects that are small in shape and form'. The explanation of *mai* 枚 as a classifier in *Super Daijirin Japanese Dictionary* is more specific, as *mai* 枚 can be used to count ①flat and thin objects like paper, board, plate; ②manuscript paper; ③to count sumo player, geisha; ④to count districts of the field or garden; ⑤the smallest unit of trading; ⑥to count money in the modern era.

To have a better and more concrete understanding of these explanations, I looked up examples from the corpus of these two languages. I searched for the two classifiers to see what nouns they are combined with. The sequence of results is random and the same 'CL and noun' combination from different texts are regarded as the repeated results. In some texts, the classifier is not directly followed by/put after the noun, but they are still counted as valid results because the word order and the structure of sentences/phrases do not affect the study of the semantic range. For example in (2), the noun *jièzhǐ* 戒指 'ring' is still seen as collocated with classifier *méi* 枚:

(2) 他 当 真 捡 到 金   戒指，而且 不 止 一 次，不 止 一 枚   (BCC Corpus)
   *tā dāng zhēn jiǎn dào jīn   jiè zhǐ ér qiě bú zhǐ yī cì   bú zhǐ yī **méi***
   he for real pick up golden <u>ring</u>   and not only one time not only one **CL**
   'He did pick up golden rings, and not only once, not only one ring'.

By comparing the results from BCC Corpus and Aozora Bunko, I summarized 15 words for each classifier that only pair with one of them and found only 5 words that were used in both situations.

As shown in Table 2., the results have been translated into English. Notice that due to the progress of translation and summarization, the meaning of words is not absolutely equivalent. Some of the nouns in the table represent the essence of the word shown in the research engine instead of the exact word. For example, the word 'coin' actually include words such as *yìngbì* 硬币 'coin (in general)', *jīnbì* 金币 'golden coin'and *kinka* 金貨 'golden coin', *tóngqián* 铜钱 'copper coin' and *bunsen* 文錢 'coin (made by bronze)'.

Nouns only collocate with 枚M	*jièzhǐ* 戒指 'finger ring', *dǐngzhēn* 顶针 'thimble', *xiōngzhēn* 胸针 'brooch', *dīngzi* 钉子 'nail', *niǔkòu* 纽扣 'button', *dǎodàn* 导弹 'missile', *pàodàn* 炮弹 'artillery shell', *yúléi* 鱼雷 'torpedo', *zhēn* 针 'needle', *jīdàn* 鸡蛋 'egg', *júzi* 橘子 'orange', *sānmíngzhì* 三明治 'sandwich', *dùjīnbiǎo* 镀金表 '(gilding) watch', *tóuzi* 骰子 'dice'; …
Nouns only collocate with 枚J	*kami* 紙 'paper', *shashin* 写真 'photo', *shosetsu* 小説 'novel', *e* 'painting', *zafuton* 座ふとん 'cushion', *niku* 肉 'meat', *sakana* 魚 'fish', *senbei* 煎餅 'rice cracker', *bifuteki* ビフテキ 'beef steak', *kimono* 着物 'kimono', *rekodo* レコード 'record', *shaken* 車券 'ticket', *hakushureki* 剥取暦 'calendar', *tobira* 扉 'door', *hankachifu* ハンカチーフ 'handkerchief'; …
Nouns collocate with both	stamp, coin, tooth, mirror, golden medal

Table 2. Searching results of collocated noun of *méi* 枚 and *mai* 枚 from the corpuses

3.3.2. Result and Analysis

From this table, it is found that the overlapping of nouns that these two '枚' can be grouped with is rather limited. What is more, even in only these 5 words, it is difficult to pick up a common feature for all of them. Let us recall the previous analysis on Mandarin classifiers *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张. One of the reasons they can both combine with the 'stamp' is that they emphasize different aspects of its characteristics, despite their semantic ranges as the classifier hardly overlap. The case of méi 枚 and *mai* 枚 looks quite the same, but these 2 words are not from the same language. Do these 2 classifiers also put focuses on different features of the same object when they are used? I will try to apply a similar method in this case as previously studying Mandarin *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张.

As summarized in the earlier chapter, *méi* 枚 are used to pair with nouns that refer to either small or thin and slender objects in modern Mandarin. In addition to these minimum physical requirements, these items may have special meaning with them. They may be described as 'delicate', for example, ring, (gilding) watch, brooch, button, golden medal… The effort of making delicate objects give these items value. Coincidentally, the materials that get engaged here are always metals that could naturally be called a 'treasure'. People also tend to add meanings to these valuable items to settle a piece of memory, which enhances the worth of them. *Méi* 枚 is also found in structure with nouns refer to food, such as for egg, orange and sandwich. These expressions are observed in literature instead of oral conversations. Besides the factor that these foods are

comparatively small in shape, this usage probably received influence from traditional Chinese medicine. The classifier *méi* 枚 has been frequently used in traditional Chinese medical prescription, which refers to the counting unit for lump-shaped medical materials. These materials are relatively (but not necessarily) small. Examples from BCC Corpus includes *hóngzǎo wǔ méi* 红枣五枚 'red dates for five'; *wūméi shí méi* 乌梅十枚 'black plums for ten'; *dōngguā shíbā méi* 冬瓜十八枚 'white gourds for 18'. Notice that in these prescriptions, the number and the classifier are put after the noun, which is the frequent word order in recipes.

In general, *méi* 枚 emphasizes the smallness and delicateness of the noun, but it can be replaced by other classifiers (Cao 2019, 128). Besides the example of Mandarin *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 can be used almost interchangeably with *yóupiào* 邮票 'stamp', classifiers such as *gè* 个 (a very general classifier for counting), *kē* 颗 (a classifier can be used with small objects) and *kuài* 块 (a classifier for lump-like or piece-like objects) can take the place of *méi* 枚 in certain structure as well. Therefore, if the user selects *méi* 枚 instead of other classifiers when there is an alternative, it could be explained that this choice hides the attitude or emotion of the user.

On the other hand, it is rather indirect to understand why *méi* 枚 are frequently collocated with weapons. Since the original meaning of *méi* 枚 was a small branch from the tree, it corresponds with the image that these weapons are slender in shape. Even if they are not 'small' compared to rings and nails, they are full of techniques that still make them delicate.

Comparatively, it is more difficult to summarize common characteristics of nouns that are together with *mai* 枚. Firstly, many of the flat and thin objects, especially relate to paper, can be classified by *mai* 枚. This is partly similar to the function of *zhāng* 张 in Mandarin, since paper, photo, painting, ticket, record and so on can all be counted by it. Secondly, nouns related to food appeared several times. Rice cracker and sliced food like fish (sashimi) and beef steak are certainly flat in shape. According to *Shogakukan Unabridged Dictionary* of the Japanese Language, *mai* 枚 is also used especially for counting fish.

Besides, there are also nouns found in specific sentences but can not fit in any category mentioned in *Super Daijirin Japanese Dictionary* or *Shogakukan Dictionary*, such as cushion (to sit on), kimono (clothing) and tooth. According to the research by Wang (2019), it is not rare to see these words combined with *mai* 枚 in the early modern Japanese language, as the semantic range

of *mai* 枚 has changed. It is no doubt that the scope of *mai* 枚 can cover started by describing 'flat and thin'. But then its meaning spread out on a massive scale based on people's association with these characteristics (Wang 2019, 37).

To sum up, *mai* 枚 is more generally used for a wider range of nouns in Japanese, whereas *méi* 枚 is used in certain cases and can be always replaced by other classifiers. Therefore, they can be regarded to have their focuses on different aspects when they are collocated with the same/similar nouns. A list of what aspects these two classifiers emphasize is presented in Table 3, which is based on the previous comparative analysis of their semantic range.

Noun	枚M is more focus on	枚J is more focus on
Stamp	small; memorable	flat and thin; paper-made
Coin	small; valuable; metal-made	a type of money
Tooth	small	flat (especially the front tooth)*
Mirror	small; delicate	flat and thin
Golden medal	small and delicate; valuable; metal-made	metal-made (relates to metallic currency)

Table 3. Hypothesis on different characteristics stressed by *méi* 枚 and *mai* 枚

* Explanation from https://www.sanabo.com/kazoekata/

Notice that the statuses of two classifiers in their languages are different - *méi* 枚 in Mandarin is a classifier that can be replaced by other classifiers (especially replaced by *gè* 个), but *mai* 枚 in modern Japanese is rather significant and is frequently the first choice for many nouns. This phenomenon allows *méi* 枚 to carry more special or specific meanings and even the user's emotion, while there is less to explain why *mai* 枚 is used for a certain noun - because it is (most) natural to do so. This table suggests that two '枚's could have developed different levels of connotation in these two different cultural contexts, which received the influences of characteristics of other nouns in the same classified group.

3.4. Comparing the sementic scale of Korean classifier *jang* and Mandarin classifier *zhāng*

As mentioned before, there are massive Chinese words borrowed into Korean including the classifiers. Korean once borrowed a large number of Chinese classifiers directly. But after the Korean alphabet was put into use, the scope of Korean inherent classifiers gradually expanded in order to avoid the variety and complexity of Chinese classifiers (Kim 1998, 7).[5] The result of this development is a change in the meaning and semantic range of these Chinese classifiers in Korean. After these classifiers have absorbed the characteristics of Korean language and culture, they developed specific meanings for Korean context. *Jang* 장(張), is one of the examples for this.

3.4.1. Research

Combined with the previous study of Mandarin classifier *zhāng* 张, this research includes three parts: literature (dictionary) study, survey and corpora study. The complete survey is attached in the appendix, which mainly asked native Korean speakers about the usage of classifier *jang* 장 and their impression towards nouns that are grouped by it.

The basic explanation about *zhāng* 张 can be found in chapter 3.2. In *New Ace Korean Language Dictionary*, *jang* 장 is explained as ①a unit for counting thin and wide objects; ②a unit for counting bow, crossbow, the Korean harp and a lute. Since the result from dictionaries is rather limited and abstract, it is also important to bring in the reasearch that has been done with the BCC Corpus (Mandarin) and Yonsei Corpus (Korean). The process of selecting data is similar as the method mentioned in 3.3.1. Different from the previous study of *méi* 枚 (Mandarin) and *mai* 枚 (Japanese), there are more common nouns that can be paired up with both *jang* 장 and *zhāng* 张 as shown in table 4.

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[5] This is because the creation of Korean alphabets have been run together with the simplification of Korean language itself. The usage of some complicated Chinese characters and Chinese words have been gradually removed from Korean languages, which also included some classifiers.

Nouns only collocate with *jang*	*kkot* 꽃 'flower', *pyonji* 편지 'letter', *yuso* 유서 'will', *bongtu* 봉투 'envelope', *dapjjang* 답장 '(written) reply'…
Nouns only collocate with *zhāng*	*zhuōzǐ* 桌子 'table', *gōng* 弓 'bow', *zuǐ* 嘴 'mouth', *tǎnzi* 毯子 'blanket', *lítóu* 犁头 'plowshare'…
Nouns collocate with both	paper, money, cash, photo, ticket, painting, bill, newspaper, postcard, mat, note, card, advertisement (paper), agreement, film; …

Table 4. Searching results of collocated noun of *jang* 장(張) and *zhāng* 张 from the corpora

3.4.2. Result and Analysis

From this table, it is obvious that the overlapping in semantic range of these two classifiers has a focus on thin and flat objects, especially items that are related to paper. As Zhang (2018, 37) argued in her article, the semantic range of *jang* 장(張) experienced a process of expansion, which starts with its 'original' collocated noun - paper. Things that are made of paper share the same characteristics of 'thin and flat' as paper, such as postcard, newspaper and note. Nouns such as photo, painting, money, cash, ticket, bill, agreement and advertisement stress more on the content of the objects. They regard paper or paper-ish item as a carrier of the content, which associates the physical objects together with abstract content on it. This explanation can also be applied to Mandarin *zhāng* 张. They share a similar route of development in terms of describing paper-related, thin and flat nouns.

Through the observation of nouns that collocate with only one of them, it is noticed that their meanings get expanded in various ways other than 'paper-related items'. In the previous section that introduced the historical development of the word *zhāng* 张, we know that the original meaning of it is a verb refers to the action of opening and expanding (the bow, especially). Mandarin has kept this meaning for classifier *zhāng* 张. When *zhāng* 张 is paired with words like bow and mouth, it is because these nouns involve such action of opening and expanding. In ancient Chinese, instruments like *qín* 琴 (or *gǔqín* 古琴, seven-stringed plucked instrument) are classified by *zhāng* 张 because they have strings just like the bow (Fan and Li 2010, 469). These expressions are still used in Mandarin. In *New Ace Korean Language Dictionary*, *jang* 장 could be a unit for counting bow, crossbow, the Korean harp and a lute (which the original Chinese character word also contains *qín* 琴), which presents the Chinese influences remained in Korean. But they are not common in

contemporary Korean since classifiers such as *gae* 개 are more often mentioned with these nouns according to the data from Yonsei Corpus.

In Mandarin, words like table, chair and sofa are classified by *zhāng* 张 because they have one or more planes with them. Together with the previous category of 'paper-related' nouns, this way of using *zhāng* 张 refers to a result of something getting opened or expanded, which is to form a flat surface. Things like table and chair are quite stereoscopic, but their 'flatness' on the certain surface seems to be the most important characteristic. Korean is probably more strict on whether the object is 'really' flat if it needs to be classified by *jang* 장. Instead, the general (most commonly used) classifier *gae* 개 is used together with *teibeul* 테이블 'table', *uija* 의자 'chair', etc.

On the other hand, Korean intend to include more nouns that indicate what is on the paper with *jang* 장. These nouns do not denote the physical flat substance but the abstract content. They can always be classified by *jang* 장, such as letter, will, written reply, etc. This kind of association is developed even deeper. Some conceptual words such as *chuok* 추억 'recollection', *giok* 기억 'memory' are put into the same classified category as a result of people's drifting thinking from paper or photos. In Mandarin, these nouns refer to the content that are usually collocated with other classifiers. Even for the word *guǎnggào* 广告 'advertisement' that appear in Table 4, the focus of *zhāng* 张 is on the material, which means the form of this advertisement is based on paper, but not the content. Classifiers like *zé* 则 will be introduced if the description of the 'advertisement' is focused more on the content.

The word 'ploughshare' is a special case under the semantic range of *zhāng* 张 in Mandarin. Historically speaking, *zhāng* 张 once was used to categorize weapons and many general implements including other agricultural tools, because they share a similar level of functionality with the bow (Fan and Li 2010, 475). But this way of using *zhāng* 张 have been gradually replaced by other more classifiers such as *gè* 个 and *bǎ* 把. 'Plowshare' is the only farm implement that can still be collocated with *zhāng* 张 in Mandarin (Fan and Li 2010, 475). There is no such usage found in Korean.

However, using *jang* 장 to quantify 'flower' is unique to Korean. According to the survey and corpora study, similar usage of it is found in words like *yangbaechu* 양배추 'cabbage', *kim* 김

'seaweed', *sugon* 수건 'towel' etc. What these items have in common with 'paper' is their softness or the feasibility to be folded (Zhang 2018, 37). In this case, 'flatness' is not the characteristic that needed to be classified by *jang* 장 in priority. Additionally, 'flower' and 'cabbage' are soft only if we separate them piece by piece, which means many of these objects are referred to by their components rather than the complete item.

3.5. Side note: Japanese *chou* 張 and Korean *mei* 매(枚)?

Although I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that Japanese borrowed the word *méi* 枚 whereas Korean borrowed the word *zhāng* 张 from Chinese, this does not mean the other classifier is not introduced to Japanese or Korean. In *Super Daijirin Japanese Dictionary*, *chou* 張 has three meanings if it functions as a classifier: ① used to count bow, koto ('a long Japanese musical instrument having 13 strings resembling a horizontal harp') etc. that have strings attached with; ② used to count things can surround others such as curtains, mosquito nets; ③ used to count paper and the skin. In *New Ace Korean Language Dictionary*, *mei* 매(枚) is explained as ① the unit to count paper, such as manuscript paper and vellum paper; ② the unit to count fruits in oriental medicine.

However, these two classifiers are rarely used in contemporary Japanese and Korean according to the searching results from Aozora Bunko and Yonsei Corpus. The development of their semantic range is also limited, which makes their meanings become closer to the original words in ancient Chinese. Even though c*hou* 張 and *mei* 매 are allowed to classify 'paper' as well, they are now almost fully replaced by *mai* 枚 and *jang* 장. It is not clear yet why these two languages made different choices. What is more, it is interesting to see how these classifiers have been 'localized' through the detail that *zhāng* 张, c*hou* 張 and *jang* 장 can all be used to quantify the instruments. This combination is allowed because the instruments have strings attached to them, which corresponds to the original meaning of *zhāng* 张 and the association from the bow. But 'this instrument' refers to different items in three languages due to their cultural differences.

3.6. Conclusion and discussion: a two-way selection

Chapter 3 focuses on comparing same Chinese-charactered classifiers in Mandarin, Japanese and Korean. The motivation for this study comes from my experience in language learning. There are some classifiers that can not be substituted for each other in most cases, but they can be used to modify the same noun (and what it refers to) according to the context and the meaning the user wants to express. By comparing the nouns that fall on each classifier's semantic range, we can have a better understanding of how they perform similarly or differently in linguistic and literary expression. The examples cited in this chapter are classifier *méi* 枚, *zhāng* 张, *mai* 枚 and *jang* 장. By comparing two of them every time, the similarities and differences in their usage are analyzed.

Generally speaking, the semantic ranges of Mandarin classifiers *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张 hardly overlap with each other, because *méi* 枚 is used for small items and *zhāng* 张 is used for flat objects. Based on this fact, I inferred that they give different impressions of the object when they are used with the same words. According to the result from a survey for native Mandarin speakers, it is found that people's perception towards certain classifier usage is influenced by the features of other nouns in the semantic scale of the same classifier. It is possible for the word *yóupiào* 邮票 'stamp' to be collocated with either *méi* 枚 or *zhāng* 张. Most participants feel little difference in these two kinds of usage, but they are still able to tell the subtle differences between them. When combined with *méi* 枚, the 'value' of the stamp is highlighted; while *zhāng* 张 is regarded to be used in a more casual and daily situation. This result matches with the features of other nouns in the semantic scale of *méi* 枚 or *zhāng* 张, because *méi* 枚 is always paired with small and precious items and *zhāng* 张 is commonly used together with objects people can find in everyday life.

This result made me wonder if the similar way of research can be applied to classifiers in different languages. Despite the fact that classifiers in different languages are naturally 'different', it is still possible to explain why and in what aspects they are different through the comparison between their semantic scales. Since *méi* 枚 and *mai* 枚, *zhāng* 张 and *jang* 장 are originally the same word respectively, and they can all collocate with 'stamp' in each language, they have been chosen as the study objects. Through the analysis of data that were collected from corpora of three languages, dictionaries and surveys, it has been observed that:

① Mandarin *méi* 枚 has a focus on the smallness and the value of the objects, but Japanese *mai* 枚 emphasizes more on the flatness, thinness and the materials (paper) of the objects;

② Mandarin *méi* 枚 can easily be replaced by other classifiers in Mandarin, but Japanese *mai* 枚 is commonly used and more 'important'; this also suggests that the choice of *mai* 枚 is more natural, while choosing to use *méi* 枚 in specific contents indicates the user's emotion and attitude;

③ Mandarin *zhāng* 张 and Korean *jang* 장 are both frequently used for flat and thin objects as well as objects that share characteristics in the 'extension line' of 'flat and thin', but in different aspects of 'extension';

④ Mandarin *zhāng* 张 extends the meaning of 'flat and thin' by linking them to surface and plane, and the semantic range of *zhāng* 张 also received influences largely from ancient Chinese, which allow it to pair with things that 'can be opened/closed' and 'have functionality'; Korean *jang* 장 enlarges its semantic range by associating with objects that regard paper as a carrier, which includes many nouns refer to abstract contents. It can also be collocated with thin and soft objects that can be folded just like paper;

⑤ Classifiers like *zhāng* 张 and *méi* 枚 do exist in both Japanese and Korean, but c*hou* 張 (Japanese) and *mei* 매 (Korean) are not often used in modern languages, which also keeps a (more) similar semantic range as in ancient Chinese.

In conclusion, even though these four classifiers coincidentally all used to classify the word 'stamp', Mandarin *zhāng* 张, Japanese *méi* 枚 and Korean *jang* 장 have similar function as a classifier whereas *méi* 枚 in Mandarin is rather special. But even for the rest three of them, they convey different expressions. The result of the combination between nouns and classifiers could be regarded as a 'two-way selection'. The classifier functions as a grammatical element, nevertheless, they also have a sense of 'meaning' to a certain degree that displayed by their semantic scale. The semantic scale of classifiers have to match the meaning of nouns, so is the other way around. The fact that there are always multiple properties owned by one noun - or classifier, which makes the possibility of combination to increase and to vary. Due to this selection, it is also more interesting to see the hidden information (emotions, attitudes, etc.) from the choice. This theory applies to all three languages, but how this 'two-way selection' has been processed is depends on the specific linguistic context under diverse (cultural) influences.

Chapter 4.

The changing semantic range of classifiers

The historical study of classifiers indicates the change in the classifier's semantic range. Their scales have gotten expanded or narrowed along with time passing by, and this process continues until today and even in future. In the previous chapter, it is mentioned that the combination of classifiers and nouns is based on a 'two-way selection' between them. Because the expression only makes sense when classifiers and nouns match with each other. Meanwhile, the process of selection is also largely dependent on human perception and the message they want to convey through a certain expression. In this chapter, I am going to give a brief analysis of the expanded semantic range of Mandarin classifier *méi* 枚 in contemporary China, especially through the observation of language on the Internet. Together with the previous research on similar classifiers in Japanese and Korean, I aim at providing a hypothetical explanation of the changing semantic range in East Asian languages.

As shown in Chapter 3, *méi* 枚 is a classifier that mostly used for small objects, and sometimes for long-shaped items because the original meaning of the word *méi* 枚 is 'small branch from the tree'. But different usage of *méi* 枚 is found in BCC Corpus as follows:

(1) 感觉　这种　　地方　更　适合 <u>你这 枚　吃货</u>
　　 *gǎnjué zhèzhǒng dìfāng gèng shìhé <u>nǐ zhè **méi** chīhuò</u>*
　　 '(I) feel that place like this suits <u>you who is a foodie</u> better'

(2) 我 是 普通　<u>学生　　一 枚</u>
　　 *wǒ shì pǔtōng <u>xuéshēng yī **méi**</u>*
　　 '<u>I am a normal student</u>'

(3) <u>初学者　　一 枚</u>，做工　　粗糙 需 见谅
　　 <u>*chūxuézhě yī **méi***</u>*, zuògōng cūcāo xū jiànliàng*
　　 '(I am) <u>a green hand</u>, please forgive me for poor workmanship'

(4) 吃 下 <u>这　 枚 安利</u> 吧
　　 *chī xià <u>zhè **méi** ānlì</u> ba*
　　 'Please accept my sincere <u>recommendation</u>'

(5) 这　是　近期 仅有的　几　枚　让人　嗨森的 消息　了

　　　*zhè shì jìnqī jǐnyǒude jǐ　**méi**　ràngrén hāisēnde xiāoxī le*

　　　'These are the only <u>messages</u> that make people happy recently'

(6) 两　　枚　香吻　　　送　给　姐姐

　　　*liǎng **méi** xiāngwěn　sòng gěi jiějie*

　　　'Two kisses for you, miss'

　　　All of the examples mentioned above coming from oral conversations and social media on the Internet in recent years. It is found that *méi* 枚 is used together with *chīhuò* 吃货 'foodie', *xuéshēng* 学生 'student', *chūxuézhě* 初学者 'green hand', *ānlì* 安利 'recommendation'[6], *xiāoxī* 消息 'message' and *xiāngwěn* 香吻 '(fragrant) kiss'. The first three words all refer to people with a certain identity. There are also many other examples for *méi* 枚 to collocate with nouns refer to people, such as *xiǎobiān* 小编 '(little) editor', *měinǚ* 美女 'beautiful girl', *shuàigē* 帅哥 'handsome guy', etc. Historically speaking, *méi* 枚 did once function as the classifier to classify people, but not very often (Wu 2012, 44). This usage has not been retained in large numbers in later ages, and has almost disappeared in modern times. Then why is it back in use now? Firstly, *Méi* 枚 can collocate with long-shaped objects, and at least, the shape of human beings could be regarded as 'long-shaped' as well. From this perspective, the word 'human' is not too strange to fall in the semantic range of *méi* 枚. But what is more important is that, the classifier *méi* 枚 have a focus on the smallness of the items. On the one hand, this usage shows a modest attitude of the user since it is widely used when talking about the user him/herself. In sentence (2), the user adds the adjective *pǔtōng* 普通 'normal' to describe him/herself as a student. In sentence (3), the user asks other's understanding because of him/her status as a green hand. The word *xiǎobiān* 小编 '(little) editor' is also an online language term with a sense of humility, which is different in nuance from other words for 'editor' such as *biānjí* 编辑 and *biānzhě* 编者. On the other hand, small items are frequently

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[6] The word *ānlì* 安利 'recommendation' is interesting enough to be written a whole essay about. Originally, *ānlì* 安利 is the transliteration of American health products company *Amway*, which is also their registered company name in Chinese. But in recent years, this word is used as noun or verb meaning 'sincerely recommend(ation)' because the direct sale mode of *Amway* is well-known by people. These actions share the same features such as recommend something repeatly/non-stop and 'never get tired of it'. The creation of this word do not reflect people's positive attitude towards *Amway* company and their selling method, but the word *ānlì* 安利 'recommendation' can be used in a neuter or positive way.

associated with cuteness. Using *méi* 枚 instead of other common classifiers for people is a way to create an adorable and kind image, which may let the others feel close to the expression and people. Additionally, as mentioned in the previous chapter, *mai* 枚 in Japanese is sometimes used to count people. Unlike the online language in Mandarin, Japanese *mai* 枚 classify people with rather lower social status, such as geisha (Japanese hostess who are trained to entertain men with conversation, song and dance), palanquin carriers. This usage is more often seen in the literature from modern times. It is not clear if these two languages influence each other in this case, but one thing in common is that they both create a sense of humility and amplify the 'smallness' (in different levels, though) of objects.

In (4), (5) and (6), it seems that *méi* 枚 is used to stress the importance of the object that these nouns refer to. The word *ānlì* 安利 'recommendation' has an emotion of sincerity. Things like *xiāoxī* 消息 'message' and *xiāngwěn* 香吻 '(fragrant) kiss' can also be very precious. This usage matches another characteristic that nouns in *méi* 枚's semantic range share - to have a certain value. It is easy to find alternatives in these cases to replace *méi* 枚, but only *méi* 枚 can express the sense of value that the users want to convey.

What is more, words like *chīhuò* 吃货 'foodie', *ānlì* 安利 'recommendation' and *xiǎobiān* 小编 '(little) editor' are recent words generated in the Internet age. The new creation of words has a need to be put together with certain classifiers, which can also explain why there is an expansion of the semantic range for *méi* 枚. Surely, the prerequisite is that they have to 'match' with each other, which goes back to the theory of 'two-way selection'. Besides, the development of the Internet allows new usages of language to get popular among people faster and to further areas, including what to pair with a classifier. Wu (2012) also found examples of new usage of *méi* 枚 in newspaper and television, which demonstrates the spread not only in online language but to other media platforms.

To sum up, the change of Mandarin classifier *méi* 枚's semantic range has a basis on the original meaning of the classifiers. People started to create new expressions because of the generation of new nouns on the Internet Age or the emotion and attitude that they want to add to the nouns. In addition, these new expressions are quickly accepted and applied through the Internet due to this convenient media platform.

Chapter 5.

<u>Conclusion and Discussion</u>

This thesis tries to find out how similar linguistics categorizations done by the classifier system develop in different languages/places and through different time. To have a better understanding of the semantic range of classifiers in Mandarin, Japanese and Korean, this thesis has conducted brief research through 'parallel' and 'longitudinal' comparisons among four classifiers that are *méi* 枚, *zhāng* 张, *mai* 枚 and *jang* 장. The parallel comparison in Chapter 3 was divided into several sub-sections that specifically analyze two of them each time. By comparing *méi* 枚 and *zhāng* 张; *méi* 枚 and *mai* 枚; *zhāng* 张 and jang 장 separately, it is found that the characteristics of nouns and the common features in the classifier's semantic range have made a 'two-way selection' and influenced on each other. This result also gives hints on how to distinguish and recognize the purpose of choosing certain classifiers. This comparative study also shows that the semantic range of classifiers receives influences both from one's own culture and other languages. In Chapter 4, I did a small case study on the changing of the semantic range of Mandarin classifier méi 枚, which is more like a longitudinal study that focuses on the development over time. The classifier *méi* 枚 is rather special to have an obvious expansion on its semantic range during recent years. Due to the spread of the online language, *méi* 枚 can be used to count new words that were not in the scale of what it used to cover, especially used to classify people as a way to show humility and closeness. But after all, this change can be well-explained based on its original meaning and the common features of the classified group.

Due to limited time and resources, the analysis in this thesis is rather brief that only give a start on comparing similar classifiers in East Asian languages. The participants of each survey also only included a small group of people, which cannot represent the universal cognition of classifiers among native speakers. The surveys merely reflect certain results and parts of the tendency on people's perception towards sample classifiers. Future study could focus on research that includes a larger group of samples, as well as the mathematical or statistical analysis of a wider scale of data from the corpora and literature. Meanwhile, this thesis also wishes to contribute to language education by demonstrating the comparative study among classifiers. It could be more difficult to study similar expressions in other languages since the learner's existing knowledge may interfere with his or her judgment when coming across with a 'familiar' expression. Getting hang of them could be a crucial but tricky topic for advanced language learners. Besides, just like the subtle

differences among similar classifiers, the change in the semantic range of classifiers should also be an issue in language education, because it is important to put what we learn into practice in this rapidly evolving reality. We might be surprised at the effect of a small classifier on language expression. But it is these tiny details that make up diverse languages and the differences between them. At the same time, languages change in a variety of ways under the influence of different factors, which is probably also the beauty of learning them.

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Appendix

1. Survey on Mandarin classifiers

   1. 量词填空 Fill in the blank with a suitable classifier
   一 ＿＿＿ 邮票 one ＿＿＿ stamp
   一 ＿＿＿ 米   one ＿＿＿ rice (in grain)
   一 ＿＿＿ 樱花树   one ＿＿＿ cherry blossom tree

   2. 您觉得"一粒米"与"一颗米"在表达上有差别吗？请用1-5来评分，1代表毫无差别，5代表完全不同。
   Please score the level of similarity between the two ways of expressing 'one (grain of) rice'. 1 point refers to 'no difference at all', and 5 points for 'totally different'.

   3. 您觉得"一棵樱花"与"一株樱花"在表达上有差别吗？
   请用1-5来评分，1代表毫无差别，5代表完全不同。
   Please score the level of similarity between the two ways of expressing 'one cheery blossom tree'. 1 point refers to 'no difference at all', and 5 points for 'totally different'.

   4. 您觉得"一张邮票"与"一枚邮票"在表达上有差别吗？
   请用1-5来评分，1代表毫无差别，5代表完全不同。
   Please score the level of similarity between the two ways of expressing 'one stamp'. 1 point refers to 'no difference at all', and 5 points for 'totally different'.

   5. （如果选择了2-5的回答）您觉得"一张邮票"与"一枚邮票"的差别具体体现在：（可多选）
   (If the participant think two ways of expressing 'one stamp' are **not** with no difference) What in particular that do you think they are diffenrent?

   A. 口语和书面 B. 形容邮票的状态/特征上 C. 使用者的修辞、情感 D. 他们的意义完全不同
   A. Oral and written language B. Different status and characteristics of the stamp
   C. The attitude and emotion of the user D. They are just totally different

   6. - 9. : 逻辑条件选择题 (Based on the previous question, asking in details)
   选了A - 您觉得那个更口语，那个更书面？
   选了B - 您觉得他们分别强调了什么邮票的特征或状态？
   选了C - 您觉得他们分别表达了使用者的什么情感？
   选了D - 请问他们的意义分别是?

2. Survey on Japanese classifiers

1.
「助数詞」のことをご存知ですか? Do you know what 'classifier' is?

・はい　・あんまり　・聞いたことがない

· Yes · Not really · Never heard of it

2.
紙一枚の「枚」とか、ビール1本の「本」みたいなのは助数詞です。普段こういう「助数詞」の使用をお気をつけたことがありますか? Do you pay attention to the usage of classifiers?

・毎回どんな助数詞を使うのがはっきりわかる
・時々気をつける
・適当に使う
・あんまり助数詞とか使わない

· Yes, I am clear about what to use in almost every cases.
· Sometimes I pay attention to use it.
· I use them randomly.
· I always drop the classifier.

3.
もし良ければ、助数詞の「枚」と合わせられる名詞を五つ書いてください。例：紙（一枚）Please write five words that can collocate with '*mai* 枚', e.g. paper

4.
日常でよく使わないが見たこと（小説、歌詞とかの中で）があって、助数詞の「枚」と合わせられる単語を一つ書いてくれませんか? Can you give me an example of using '*mai* 枚', which is not often seen but you have seen it? e.g. in novel, in lyrics...

5.
一言に言えば、「枚」で数えできる単語（名詞）はどんな特徴を持っていると思いますか? What adjective will you use to describe these words that can be used together with '*mai* 枚'?

3. Survey on Korean classifiers

1.
'단위명사'가 뭔지 아세요? Do you know what 'classifier' is?

· 네 · 들어본 적 없는 것 같습니다. · 처음 들어보네요.
· Yes · Not really · Never heard of it

2.
당신은 단위명사를 사용할때 주의를 기울이십니까? Do you pay attention to the usage of classifiers?

· 네, 저는 거의 모든 경우에 어떻게 사용해야 할지 잘 알고 있습니다.
· 때때로 주의를 기울입니다.
· 나는 항상 단위명사를 쓰지 못합니다.
· Yes, I am clear about what to use in almost every cases.
· Sometimes I pay attention to use it.
· I always drop the classifier.

3.
'장'은 단위명사로서 사용될 수 있습니다. '장'와 함께 쓸 수 있는 단어 5개를 써주세요. (예: 종이) '장' can be used as a classifier. We can say 'paper one+jang', 'paper two+jang' etc. Please write five words that can collocate with '장', e.g. paper

4.
'장'과 함께 사용되는, 특이한 단어의 예가 있을까요? (자주 볼 수는 없지만 본 적이 있는) (예: 소설, 혹은 가사 속에서) Can you give me an example of using '장', which is not often seen but you have seen it? e.g. in novel, in lyrics...

5.
'장'와 함께 사용할 수 있는 이 단어들을 묘사하기 위해 어떤 형용사를 사용하실 건가요? What adjective will you use to describe these words that can be used together with '장'?