

JCL – 35 YEARS AND BEYOND ...

1973 was an exceptional year for me. With the kind help of Professor Lü Shuxiang of the Institute of Linguistics of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and of Professor Zhu Dexi of Peking University, I was able to return to China at last, after an absence of twenty-five years. Meeting all the famous linguists at Beida, and a tour arranged for me afterwards that took me all over China, these were truly incredible experiences. 1973 was the middle of the Cultural Revolution, and to land in the middle of a gigantic country in the throes of kaleidoscopic transitions set my head reeling for many months, even after I returned to Berkeley.

The *Journal of Chinese Linguistics (JCL)* was also launched in 1973. Professor Y.R.Chao was an inspiration from the beginning; to him we dedicated the very first issue of the journal, which I hand delivered to him at his home on Cragmont Avenue. Professor F.K.Li also gave us constant encouragement. In addition to revising his classic paper on the languages of China for publication as the first article in *JCL*, he also served as a *JCL* editor for many years. These founders of our field were pleased to see my effort at bridging traditional Chinese linguistics with linguistics-at-large in international scholarship.

Then, as now, both sides have much to gain from dialog - the interflow of data and of ideas.¹ Western scholarship has played a historic role in broadening the Chinese perspective in language study. Starting in the 1580s, with the dictionaries and romanizations of Matteo Ricci and Nicolas Trigault, to the extensive studies in Chinese dialectology and philology by Bernhard Karlgren in the early 20th century, European contributions have often been an important stimulus for Chinese linguistics. Indeed, the importance of some early studies is being appreciated only now, e.g., Conrady's study of Sino-Tibetan morphology².

On the flip side, many insights on language from traditional Chinese scholarship are surfacing only recently for general consumption. One example is an early statement on grammatization made a thousand years ago – that the function words of today were content words in earlier times³. Indeed one can easily extend this insight that many words of today were phrases in earlier times, and the millennia of Chinese texts provide fertile ground for such studies. Another insight has to do with the hierarchical structure of the syllable.⁴ But these insights aside, the more basic issue is that the languages of China, with their remarkable aspects of lexical tone, simple morphology, and their extraordinary time depth of textual evidence, are

¹ Lee, Thomas H.T. 2000. The bridging of linguistic research traditions. *JCL* 28.1, 116-162.

² Mei 2009. 梅祖麟. 康拉迪 (1864-1925) 及汉藏语系的建立。Ms.

³ 周伯琦: 今之虚字皆古之实字. Discussed on p.11 in Sun, Chaofen. 1996. *Word-Order Change and Grammaticalization in the History of Chinese*. Stanford University Press.

⁴ Tung, T.H. 1961. Recent studies in phonetics and phonology on China. *Phonetica*. 6, 216-228.

indispensable data for any general theory that aims to shed light on human language. How can it be otherwise?

Returning to *JCL*, after a little coaxing, the dean's office at Berkeley, and the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C., both helped out with some seed money. This made it possible for me to get some student assistance. When funds ran low, we printed the journal with a crude dot-matrix printer, and wrote Chinese characters in by hand. The original plan of three issues per year turned out to be too ambitious for a fledgling journal, and we soon cut back to two issues. *JCL* started in a small corner of the old POLA⁵ house (Project on Linguistic Analysis), 2222 Piedmont Avenue, where there were often visitors from afar as well as stimulating workshops in Chinese linguistics. And there it managed for 35 years.

The worth of a journal depends critically on editorial judgments. In this respect, *JCL* has always been graced by the unstinting support of members of its editorial board and other reviewers, contributing generously simply as a labor of love. I mentioned Professor F.K.Li above; as one of the first Associate Editors, he helped set the high standard which we all followed. Among the others in the first panel, there were Lü Shuxiang from Beijing, Ted Pulleyblank from Vancouver, and C.C.Cheng from Urbana. There was also the late Mantaro Hashimoto, who did a PhD with me at the Ohio State University, and who actually taught me more than I did him.

The question had to be confronted at the outset – which characters and which romanization should *JCL* use? In line with Mainland usage, I chose Simplified Characters and Hanyu Pinyin as the default case. This was not acceptable to the political bureaucracy in Taiwan, and *JCL* was banned there for a while. During those years, friends told me that *JCL* was only accessible at government reading rooms. I was also told that this choice has placed me on certain black lists, even though I taught at National Taiwan University in 1965. But history has moved on, and such misunderstandings are laughable now.

Gratifying recognition of *JCL*'s international influence came when it made the ranks of both SSCI and AHCI. In 1982, *JCL* published its first monograph, based on the Berkeley PhD thesis of N.G.Chang. It was a study of 15th century Korean, of great importance to the study of Early Mandarin. It finds a distant echo 21 years later, in Monograph #20, on lexical diffusion in Korean and Sino-Korean. Some of the monographs were early forays into interdisciplinary research, such as #9 on natural language processing, and #13 on biolinguistics. Two monographs have been published in Chinese translation, such as #6, which is F.Masini's study of the modern Chinese lexicon⁶, and #8, which is my anthology of the ancestry of the Chinese language⁷.

⁵ Tzeng, Ovid J.L. 2005. Remember those good old POLA days. Pp.i-iv in Ho, Dah-an and Ovid J.L.Tzeng, eds. POLA FOREVER. Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica (Taiwan)

⁶ 黄河清 译。1997。现代汉语词汇的形成。上海：汉语大词典出版社。

⁷ 李葆佳 主译。2005。汉语的祖先。北京：中华书局。

Over these 35 years, *JCL* pages accumulated. Well over four hundred articles have appeared, and even as I write this foreword, Monograph #23 is being prepared for publication, and Monograph #24 is undergoing review. We owe readers of *JCL* a systematic way of retrieving information easily and accurately from this massive wealth of scholarship in Chinese linguistics. An ideal way to provide this is the design of a user-friendly webpage. Such a project is underway, though various technical issues, such as the variety of font types, require more time. So an interim measure to serve this need is to compile a volume of Cumulative Indexes.

Several attempts to make such an Index were made earlier by various people in Berkeley. But such a massive project needs a period of concentrated and dedicated effort that was not possible then. A major change took place in 2007, when many of *JCL*'s operations moved to the Chinese University of Hong Kong, housed at the Center for East Asian Studies. The move was an extremely complex one. It had the valuable support, both moral and fiscal, from Professor K.L.So, Director of the Center.

But it was the painstaking planning and execution on the part of Ms.Yifeng Wu that made the complex move across the Pacific, and from one university to another, smooth and successful. Yifeng also set up collaboration with the Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, which now does the printing and distribution. In *JCL*'s new home, she finally had the resources to bring to successful fruition these long awaited Cumulative Indexes, which you now hold in your hand.

Yifeng has been managing *JCL* since the 1990s. She received her B.A. in 1992 from Berkeley with a double major, in Chinese literature and in English literature. In addition, she holds a master's degree (Library and Information Science) from San Jose State University, and is a professional librarian. She is also a translator of L.L.Cavalli-Sforza's very successful book on human evolution⁸. She brings to everything she does a sense of total commitment as well as a strong desire for perfection.

In compiling this hefty volume of Cumulative Indexes, Yifeng has been extremely conscientious in consulting a variety of colleagues, as detailed in her Acknowledgements. To maximize its usefulness, this volume has benefited from the advice sought from many viewpoints. I expect that for anyone working in Chinese linguistics, these Cumulative Indexes will surely earn a convenient place on his desk, ever ready as an indispensable reference tool. We are all indebted to her for rendering this valuable service to our field. This volume is a fitting landmark for 35 years of contributions from all its editors, reviewers, as well as numerous authors. And it will surely facilitate studies in our field for many years beyond.

William S-Y. Wang, March 2009
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⁸ 追踪亚当夏娃。2003。台北：远流出版社。