

CATEGORIES OF GRAMMATICAL SINO-VIETNAMESE VOCABULARY

Mark J. Alves, Montgomery College

0. INTRODUCTION

This paper reviews grammatical vocabulary in Vietnamese that is of Chinese origins. This section briefly introduces general historical linguistic categories of borrowing and issues of the timing of grammaticalization of Chinese loanwords in Vietnamese, while subsequent sections look at several grammatical categories of vocabulary and specific examples of them.

1. SINO-VIETNAMESE AND DEGREE OF GRAMMATICALITY

Most generally and safely, Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary can be classified into two categories based on their means of entry into the language. There is, first of all, ‘literary Sino-Vietnamese,’ which was borrowed in its entirety through the spread of literacy in Chinese during the Tang Dynasty, the era of Middle Chinese, the phonological categories of which Sino-Vietnamese has maintained. Such words can be readily identified in Sino-Vietnamese dictionaries with their corresponding Chinese characters. Next, there is a class of what I will call ‘colloquial Sino-Vietnamese’,¹ which can be considered phonological doublets for existing literary Sino-Vietnamese. This latter is vocabulary that may have been borrowed through spoken contact with Chinese or other languages that borrowed Chinese, such as Tai or Mon-Khmer languages, or such vocabulary may be borrowed literary forms that have been nativized in pronunciation, but in general, such vocabulary is generally seen as a part of colloquial Vietnamese. Some of the vocabulary may have origins in the Tang dynasty era, while certain words were likely borrowed in previous dynasties, even as early as the Han dynasty. More precise studies differentiating the timing of phonological developments could shed light on the approximate dates of borrowing of colloquial Sino-Vietnamese, a subject which is not in the scope of this brief paper.

As for stages of grammaticality, the vocabulary considered consists of three types: (1) words which entered Vietnamese as grammatical vocabulary but which did not change,² (2) words which entered Vietnamese grammaticalized (i.e., having developed specialized semantico-syntactic functions) but which developed different and/or additional grammatical features, and (3) words which entered Vietnamese ungrammaticalized but have come to have specialized grammatical functions. Words in the first category are literary Sino-Vietnamese. Words in the second two categories are considered uncontroversially to be Sino-Vietnamese in origin when the semantic overlap is significant and the phonetic shape is either exactly the same as the likely

¹ While the category of literary Sino-Vietnamese is non-controversial, the proposed colloquial vocabulary mentioned here has been referred to with different terms in various studies. Many Vietnamese simply consider these *Nôm* readings as opposed to Chinese characters, without explicit reference to their etymological origins. Benedict (1947) used the terms ‘literary’ and ‘vulgar’ forms to distinguish the two categories, essentially the same distinction made here, but with the choice of the term ‘colloquial’. Haudricourt (1954) and Pulleyblank (1981) called it ‘pre-Sino-Vietnamese’. Mei (1970) and Alves (2001) discussed ‘Old Sino-Vietnamese’. Wang Li (1948), Tryon (1979), and numerous Vietnamese linguists (Nguyễn Văn Tu (1968), Đào Duy Anh 1979, Nguyễn Tài Căn (1979), and Nguyễn Thiện Giáp (1985)) generally recognize a distinction between some kind of ‘pre-Tang Sino-Vietnamese’ and ‘nativized Sino-Vietnamese’, essentially a subset of literary Sino-Vietnamese that has been changed somewhat phonetically. Đào Duy Anh (Ibid.) in particular takes Wang Li’s work and adds, excludes or reclassifies certain Sino-Vietnamese words.

² It should be noted that semantic and syntactic similarity does not preclude the possibility that the changes occurred after borrowing, but then, the matter becomes whether certain Sino-Vietnamese words developed new functions in Vietnamese independently or under continued contact with Chinese, a question not dealt with in this paper.

source literary form or can be shown to belong to a class of colloquial Sino-Vietnamese based on regular phonological correspondences (largely following work by Tryon (1979) on phonological patterns of nativized Sino-Vietnamese). Words which have significant semantic and/or phonological differences that cannot be accounted for with regular phonological changes have been excluded from the study.³

2. GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

The semantico-syntactic areas in which Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary can be seen include (1) comparative and intensifying words, (2) clause connecting words, (3) quantity words, measure words, and classifiers, (4) preverbal elements, (5) pronouns and referential terms, and (6) time and location words. Within each section, the vocabulary is identified, and each word's status in the above-mentioned categories is considered. Also, where relevant, grammatical clines are indicated and discussed.⁴

2.1. Comparative and Intensifying Words

The system of comparison and intensification in Vietnamese contains several words of Chinese origin, but most of them were not originally grammatical forms in Chinese but became grammatical after entering Vietnamese.

The two words with somewhat similar functions in Chinese are the colloquial Sino-Vietnamese *thật* 'very/truly' (cf. literary SV⁵ *thiệt, thực*, Ch. 實) and *như* (Ch. 如) meaning 'as/similar to'. The origin of the former word is complicated by its doublet counterparts, but it is nevertheless most likely a nativized form. The second word, *như*, which indicates similarity, has a more literary flavor in Chinese and somewhat restricted usage. Though similar to Chinese in having an equative function, in Vietnamese, *như* has also developed the function of indicating examples, meaning 'such as', similar to English 'like', which also has this function.

Two other words are of slightly less certain status since they have developed grammatical functions entirely lacking in Chinese, though they are completely homophonous and overlap in semantic domains. First of all, Sino-Vietnamese *quá* (Ch. 過), originally having the meaning 'to pass', has developed an intensifying function, meaning 'extremely', and is generally used after

³ Some tentative words can be excluded from the category of Sino-Vietnamese based primarily on three reasons. Some have problems in expected phonological changes from earlier stages of Chinese, words such as *đừng* 'don't' (SV *đình* 'stop', Ch. 停 (Mand. *tíng*)), *khi* 'when' (SV *kì* 'period of time', Ch. 欺 (Mand. *qí*)), and *ở* 'be at' (SV *vu* 'be at', Ch. 于 (Mand. *yú*)). Some either come from other etymological sources or generally have competing etymological sources and cannot be safely included, words such as *trong* 'inside' (SV *trung* 'center', Ch. 中 (Mand. *zhōng*)), *đánh* 'to hit/manipulate' (SV *đả* 'to hit', Ch. 打 (Mand. *dǎ*)), and *mọi* 'every' (SV *mỗi* 'each', Ch. 每 (Mand. *měi*)), all of which are possible Mon-Khmer etymologies. Finally, some are most likely grammaticalized native Vietnamese vocabulary with no need for an external source for borrowing as an explanation, including the words *để* 'in order to' (SV *để* 'the bottom', Ch. 底 (Mand. *dǐ*)), which most likely is a development from the homophonous word meaning 'to put', and *đã* 'already' (SV *đã* 'already', Ch. 已 (Mand. *yǐ*)), which is likely derived from the homophonous word meaning 'satisfied', a feasible path of grammaticalization.

⁴ The formal notation and general categories of grammaticalization clines follow that which is used in Heine and Kuteva 2002. The starting and end points of the clines are in capital letters, and direction of change is indicated with a greater-than sign (e.g., TRUE > INTENSIFIER).

⁵ Some abbreviations are as follows: 'SV' for literary Sino-Vietnamese, 'Ch.' for Chinese, and 'Mand.' for Mandarin. Literary Sino-Vietnamese counterparts are listed colloquial Sino-Vietnamese words.

stative verbs, but sometimes before. Still, such a development is a common grammaticalization path as noted in Heine and Kuteva (hereafter referred to as H&K), roughly matching the grammatical cline EXCEED > ELATIVE (2002: 126-127), seen in various languages. Next, Sino-Vietnamese *nhất* (Ch. 一), originally meaning ‘one’, indicates the superlative in Vietnamese. While H&K have not posited such a cline, considering that ‘one’ is the source of many grammatical forms in languages (Ibid.: 323), we can here suggest a cline of ONE > SUPERLATIVE (cf. Sino-Japanese *ichiban*).

Finally, there are two words with both phonetic and semantic distance from their literary counterparts, but they are nevertheless considered based on typological tendencies of grammaticalization and observable phonetic correspondences. First, *bằng* (cf. SV *bình* ‘level’, Ch. 平), which means ‘equal to’, is possibly a nativized form. The complication is the Sino-Vietnamese word *bình* (Ch. 憑), meaning ‘based on’, which could also be the source of the form and which has also been borrowed into other Southeast Asian languages, such as Thai and Khmer (Pou and Jenner (1973:9)). In either case, the semantic and distributional overlap could show either to be the source form. Second, the word *giống* ‘same’ (cf. SV *chúng*, Ch. 種) is possibly an older colloquial borrowing. If so, we can posit a cline of TYPE > SAME.

2.2. Clause Connecting Words

Of the several Sino-Vietnamese clause-connecting words, most are literary Sino-Vietnamese, though not all have the original meaning. One other word is of less certain Chinese origins.

Words borrowed grammaticalized and preserving original meanings include *nhưng* ‘but’ (Ch. 仍), which maintains the older, literary meaning, *tuy* ‘although’ (Ch. 雖), and *tuy nhiên* ‘however’ (Ch. 雖然). Sino-Vietnamese *thậm chí* ‘even’ (Ch. 甚至) is similar in meaning to the original Chinese form. The Vietnamese word *sở dĩ* (Ch. 所以) means ‘the reason why...’, which is rather different from the Chinese meaning ‘therefore’. Finally, *vì* ‘because’ (cf. SV *vi* and *vị*, Ch. 為) appears to be a genuine colloquial Sino-Vietnamese form, being close enough phonetically and semantically to the literary word. The locational word *tại* (Ch. 在) has grammaticalized since entering Vietnamese, developing the meaning ‘because’, in accordance with H&K’s cline LOCATIVE > CAUSE (Ibid.: 200).

The other word of somewhat less certain etymological status is *thì* (cf. SV *thời*, Ch. 時 ‘time’). This word is sometimes translated as ‘then’, as in ‘if...then...’ constructions in English, but it has a more general function in Vietnamese as a connector between topics and comments in such constructions. If this word was borrowed and then grammaticalized, the semantic shift went from a general time location (i.e., ‘when X, then Y’) with two clauses to a situation in which a wide range of clauses, phrases, and words with clauses topic functions could precede *thì*, with predicational comments following in theme-rheme constructions. However, due to the lack of the function of *thì* as a strict time word, and the existence of other words to accomplish this (e.g., *khi* ‘when’), its status is more tentative.

2.3. Quantity Words, Measure Words, and Classifiers

This section is separated into three parts, first dealing with numerals and other quantity words, secondly, with various directly countable measure words, and thirdly, classifiers. To compare meanings of these words, especially the measure words and classifiers, several works were referred to, including Nguyễn Đình Hoà 1957 and 1966, Wang and Wu 1989, and Từ Điển Tiếng Việt 1996.

A brief note on the grammaticalization of measure words and classifiers. For the most part, these two classes of grammatical words are historically derived from non-count common nouns, which do not require complements. In Vietnamese, they have come to serve as links between numerals and common nouns, which are basically noun complements. Classifiers are even more grammaticalized as they have various semantic cooccurrence restrictions. The semantico-syntactic changes are shown diagrammatically in rough semantico-syntactic properties as follows.

<i>COMMON NOUNS</i>	→	<i>MEASURE WORDS</i>	→	<i>CLASSIFIERS</i>
non-count		countable		countable
no complements		complements		complements
(not applicable)		no semantic restrictions		semantic restrictions

2.3.1. Quantity Words

While Vietnamese has maintained its overall native numeral system (unlike many neighboring Tai languages which use numeral systems largely originating in Chinese), Chinese numbers are used in specialized circumstances in Vietnamese, for example, grade levels in school. Other commonly used Sino-Vietnamese quantity terms include *các* ‘the various’ (Ch. 各), *mỗi* ‘each’ (Ch. 每), *muôn* ‘ten thousand’ (SV *vạn*, Ch. 萬), and *tá* ‘a dozen’ (Ch. 打). Only one of these, *muôn*, is in the class of colloquial Sino-Vietnamese and of somewhat less etymological certainty. Two forms, *mỗi* and *tá*, are completely homophonous and roughly the same in meaning as in Chinese. Finally, the form *các*, while different from the Chinese meaning ‘all’, fits the grammaticalization cline noted in H&K, ALL > PLURAL (Ibid.: 36).

2.3.2. Measure Words

Words in this category can be immediately preceded by numbers but have few semantic restrictions on nouns following them, as opposed to classifiers which take only special semantic classes of nouns after them. The words in this category tend to be semantically transparent (e.g., easily translated), but their grammatical status is significant as they are distinguished from the numerous non-count common nouns in Vietnamese and are in position to develop semantico-syntactic features that place them in the even more grammaticalized category of classifiers.

The words that fall in the category of literary Sino-Vietnamese and that have essentially the same meaning as in Chinese include *bao* ‘a package of’ (Ch. 包), *cân* ‘a unit of weight’ (Ch. 斤), *chương* ‘a chapter (of a book)’ (Ch. 章), *hàng* ‘a row of’ (Ch. 行), *khẩu* ‘a mouthful of’ (Ch. 口), *loài* ‘a type of’ (SV *loại*, Ch. 類), *mẫu* ‘a hectare’ (Ch. 畝), *phần* ‘a part, section’ (Ch. 分), and *phong* ‘a letter, envelope’ (Ch. 封). Several others are also unquestionably Chinese in origin but have somewhat different meanings from their modern Chinese counterparts. These include

bộ ‘a set’ (Ch. 部, a classifier for artistic creations or machinery), *đầu* ‘a peck (of corn)’ (Ch. 斗, ‘10 liters of’), *đội* ‘a company (of soldiers)’ (Ch. 隊, ‘a group of’), *kì* ‘a session’ (Ch. 期, ‘a phase of’), *phân* ‘a unit of length (1/10th of a tac)’ (Ch. 分, ‘1/3 of a centimeter’) (also in Khmer, Pou and Jenner, *Ibid.*: 16), and *số* ‘a number of’ (Ch. 數, ‘number’ but not a measure word).

The remainder of these measure words are either homophonous with literary Sino-Vietnamese forms but have somewhat different meanings or belong to the colloquial Sino-Vietnamese layer and have existing literary Sino-Vietnamese counterparts. Those in the first category include just the two words *đồng* ‘a coin’ (Ch. 銅, ‘bronze’) and *thiên* ‘a chapter (of a novel)’ (Ch. 篇, ‘report/composition’), both of which apparently developed measure word functions after being borrowed. The other words are all colloquial Sino-Vietnamese, but in fact, most have maintained their original Chinese meaning. These include *chén* ‘a cupful (of tea)’ (SV *trần*, Ch. 盞, ‘small cup’ and a measure word for a lamp), *hộp* ‘a boxful of’ (SV *hộp*, Ch. 合), *lần* ‘a turn (as in a game)’ (SV *luân*, Ch. 輪), *tầng* ‘a level/floor’ (SV *tầng*, Ch. 層), *thìa* ‘a spoonful of’ (SV *chúy*, Ch. 匙), *vườn* ‘a garden of’ (SV *viên*, Ch. 園), and *vuông* ‘a square of’ (SV *phương*, Ch. 方). The last word considered here is *lượng/lượng* ‘a tael’ (Ch. 量 ‘quantity’ but not a measure word), which is of less certain status, but it has phonetic consistency and some semantic overlap.

2.3.3. Classifiers

In addition to providing countability to the nouns that follow them, various special co-occurrence restrictions obtain between classifiers and those nouns. In addition to their status as countable nouns, a less marked and more grammatical feature of nouns in Vietnamese, classifiers tend to have less transparent semantic features than do general measure words.

The first group of words considered consists of literary Sino-Vietnamese forms, most of which have changed little or not at all from the original Chinese meaning. The first group are those with essentially the same meaning as in Chinese, including *đạo*, a unit for laws, orders, and decrees (Ch. 道), *đoạn*, a unit for sections, paragraphs, and passages (Ch. 段), *gian*, a unit for rooms (Ch. 間), *môn*, a unit for a subject/field of study (Ch. 門), *phát*, a unit for a shot of a firearm (Ch. 發), and *vị*, a unit for people of high status (Ch. 位). Words that have slight semantic differences include *bản*, a unit for scripts, reports, and compositions (Ch. 本, a unit for books), *đỉnh*, a unit for mountains (Ch. 頂, a unit for things with a pointed top (e.g., tents or caps)), and *viên*, a unit for officials (Ch. 員, a unit used in the past for military officers). The third group consists of words that are not classifiers or measure words in Chinese but which have become grammaticalized in Vietnamese. These include *vụ*, a unit for disasters (Ch. 务, ‘affair’) and *bức*, a unit for upright flat things (Ch. 壁 ‘wall’).

Another large group of classifiers consists of words either semantically or phonologically somewhat different from their literary counterparts. The first group discussed contains mostly

colloquial Sino-Vietnamese and, despite slightly different semantics, are unit nouns as well in Chinese. These words consist of *bàn*, a unit for flat surfaces (e.g., table, hand, or foot) (Chinese 壁, ‘a plate of’ or ‘a coil of’), *chiếc*, either a unit for vehicles (cars, boats, or planes) or ‘a pair (of chopsticks)’ (SV *chích*, Ch. 隻, a unit for animals), *cuốn*, a unit for books (SV *quyển*, Ch. 卷, a unit used for coils or rolls of various things), *đôi*, ‘a couple (of shoes, chopsticks, husband/wife)’ (SV *đôi*, Ch. 對, also ‘a pair’ but lacking specific semantic requirements of following nouns), *tòa*, a unit for buildings (SV *toa*, Ch. 座, a unit for large objects ‘mountains’, ‘cities’, ‘parks’, etc.), and *viên*, a unit for small, round things (pills, tablets, bullets, etc.) (SV *hoàn*, Ch. 丸, a unit for pills). Two other words are both literary Sino-Vietnamese forms that have become grammaticalized in Vietnamese, including *bài*, a unit for lessons, songs, or speeches (Ch. 牌, ‘a plate (generally with words on it)’ and *quả*, a unit for fruit (Ch. 果, ‘fruit’).

The last category is more tentative due to their phonological oddities. First of all, *hãng* is a unit for businesses (SV *hàng*, Ch. 行, ‘a business’). The Chinese form is not a classifier, and the tone does not pattern with other colloquial loanwords. Still, this particular Chinese word has been borrowed in Southeast Asia into Cambodian, Thai, and Laotian (Pou and Jenner, *Ibid.*: 85), and it is thus still rather likely to be a colloquial Sino-Vietnamese form.

Finally, it is here posited that *cái*, a generic unit for various objects (SV *cá*, Ch. 個, also a universal classifier) is a colloquial Sino-Vietnamese form. Linking this with the homophonous form in native Vietnamese meaning ‘mother’ or ‘female’ is not only semantically difficult to support but also problematic on historical phonetic grounds. The highly conservative Vietic language Rục has two phonetic forms (*ki*³ for ‘female’ but *ke*⁴ for the classifier (Nguyễn Văn Lợi (1993)), indicating two distinct etymological sources. The phonetic addition of final /-i/ is slightly problematic, but still, numerous Old Sino-Vietnamese forms have developed off-glides (e.g., *mùi* ‘taste’, SV *vị*, Ch. 味), and overall, the semantics of the form is consistent with that seen in some Yue dialects (e.g., Toisanese) in Southern China.

2.4. Preverbal Elements

The words in this category have a variety of modal and auxiliary verb-like functions. Only one is of definite, verifiable origins as Chinese, while the rest show varying lesser degrees of certainty.

Two words of high grammatical significance in Vietnamese are the passive-like markers, *bị* (Ch. 被) and *được* (SV *đắc*, Ch. 得). The Chinese origin of *bị* is unquestionable, while the etymological source of *được* is somewhat less certain. Still, finding another source of *được* that takes into account both phonological reasoning and the significant semantic similarity is harder, and so it is best to consider it a colloquial Sino-Vietnamese etymology. While *bị* was borrowed with its original Chinese semantico-syntactic properties in passive-like constructions, *được* appears to have developed in Vietnamese somewhat separately (see Matisoff 1991 for general discussion on grammaticalization and *được*).

Two other words with widely different functions each require some justification for their inclusion. First, the progressive marker *đang* (cf. SV *đương*, Ch. 當 ‘at a certain time’) may be a

colloquial form, though the vowel is somewhat unexpected (though, consider Proto-Vietic **a* with modern Vietnamese *uo* (Nguyễn, Tài Cẩn, 1995: 301-303)). If so, it matches the cline IN (SPATIAL) > CONTINUOUS listed in H&K (Ibid.: 178-179). Finally, Nguyễn Phú Phong (1996) has posited that the word *không* ‘no/not’ is derived from the homophonous literary Sino-Vietnamese form meaning ‘void’ (Ch. 空). This is quite possible considering the cline NEGATION, EXIST > NEGATION (Ibid.: 217-218), in which the original semantics of non-existence initially allowed negation of nouns and later verbs and predicates in general.

2.5. Pronouns and Referential Terms

Genuine Vietnamese pronouns (e.g., *tao* ‘I’ and *mày* ‘you’) are used with severe restrictions in Vietnamese society, and instead, for the most part, kinship terms of Chinese origin, both literary and colloquial Sino-Vietnamese, are used with pronominal reference. While it is not uncommon among languages to have kinship terms develop grammaticalized discourse, sentence-external functions (i.e., not functioning as subject or object of a sentence), they have been highly grammaticalized in Vietnamese. These common nouns have evolved to fit into a pronominal system that indicates degree of age, gender, degree of familiarity, and various complicated discourse-related functions. In addition, these words, which were originally non-count, common noun, can be directly preceded by numerals. Indeed, many function as classifiers (Nguyễn Đình Hoà (1957)). Notably, the Sino-Vietnamese terms tend to refer to those older than the speaker, whereas a handful of the terms to refer to those younger or commanding less respect are of Mon-Khmer origin (e.g., *em* ‘younger sibling’, *con* ‘child’, and *cháu* ‘grandchild’).

In virtually every instance, the original meanings of the words, which provide the basic semantic properties of gender and age, have remained in the grammaticalized forms. The system is complex and cannot be given direct translations into English. Instead, the words are here described based on their gender and general age in relation to a speaker. The forms of uncontroversial status as Sino-Vietnamese include *bà*, a female of one’s grandmother’s age (Ch. 婆), *cô*, generally a female of equal age, equal to ‘miss’ in meaning (Ch. 姑), *dì*, a female of one’s mother’s younger sister’s age (SV *dì*, Ch. 姨), and *ông*, a male of one’s grandfather’s age (Ch. 翁). Next are those words with some phonetic changes, indicating their status as colloquial borrowings. These include *bác*, a male of one’s father’s older brother’s age (SV *bá*, Ch. 伯), *thím*, a female of one’s father’s younger brother’s wife’s age (SV *thâm*, Ch. 孀), *chị*, a female of one’s older sister’s age (SV *tí*, Ch. 姐), *chú*, a male of one’s father’s younger brother’s age (SV *thúc*, Ch. 叔), and *cậu*, a male of one’s mother’s younger brother’s age (SV *cữu*, Ch. 舅). The word *bạn* ‘friend’ (Ch. 伴 ‘companion’) can also be used with such pronominal function without gender restrictions but with less formality.

The glosses used here simplify the functions of these words, and in fact, they have developed further in ways that demonstrate additional semantic bleaching that accompanies and/or leads to further grammaticalization. For example, *cô* is used to address women of various ages with more formality, while *chị* tends to be used with women somewhat older than a speaker but with a more congenial feeling. *Bác*, in particular, can be used with either men or women to indicate more respect. These semantic shifts further demonstrate a connection between pragmatic needs and semantico-syntactic shifts of these words.

The next few pronouns mentioned each have peculiarities. First, *y* ‘he/she’ (Ch. 伊) is used in Vietnamese in formal, literary contexts. Next, *ta* (which used alone means ‘we’), when used as the second elements in compounds with referential pronouns, provides 3rd person reference (e.g. *cô ta*, miss-3rd pers., ‘she’). This parallels the semantics of the literary Sino-Vietnamese *tha* (Ch. 他), referring to 3rd person, although the phonetic discrepancy cannot be accounted for. Finally, the Sino-Vietnamese *chúng* (Ch. 眾) indicates 3rd person plural in compounds (e.g., *chúng nó*). In addition to being related to a literary Sino-Vietnamese form, this change fits H&K’s posited cline PEOPLE > PLURAL (Ibid.: 230-231).

2.6. Time and Location Words

Words in this category include adverbs and prepositions, but all function to indicate location or direction in space and time. Some of the words are considered unquestionably of Chinese in origin, either being identifiable literary Sino-Vietnamese or belonging to a regular pattern of phonological changes seen in colloquial Sino-Vietnamese.

The time adverbs *thường* ‘often’ (Ch. 常) and *hiện tại* ‘at the present’ (Ch. 現在) are roughly the same in meaning as in Chinese and are thus uncontroversial in origin. The locational *tại* (Ch. 在) is similarly uncontroversial, though it has developed the meaning ‘because’ in Vietnamese (see §2.2), a meaning beyond its Chinese counterpart, which can mean ‘depend on’. The preposition *cách* ‘from’ (Ch. 隔) is used in a way similar to that of Chinese.

Interestingly, two words in this category both have colloquial and literary counterparts in use in Vietnamese. The colloquial Sino-Vietnamese form *ngoài* ‘outside’ is related to literary Sino-Vietnamese *ngoại* (Ch. 外), and similarly, colloquial *từ* ‘from’ is related to literary *tự* (Ch. 自). The correspondence between the huyền tone in colloquial forms and the nặng tone in literary forms is seen in several other Sino-Vietnamese doublets, such as colloquial Sino-Vietnamese *dùng* ‘to use’ versus the literary *dụng* (Ch. 用). Consider as well the measure word *loài* ‘a type of’ in §2.3.1 and the classifier for buildings *tòa* in §2.3.2, both of which have literary counterparts with the nặng tone.

The other words are of less certain origin as they are phonologically different from their supposed literary counterparts, but most appear to have generally the same meanings and/or grammatical functions and are thus considered good prospects. These include *qua* ‘past’ (SV *quá*, Ch. 過 ‘to pass’), *bên* ‘side’ (SV *biên*, Ch. 邊), *gần* ‘close to’ (SV *cận*, Ch. 近), and *từng* ‘ever’ (SV *tằng*, Ch. 曾). The form *qua* has shifted from the concrete meaning as a verb ‘to pass’ to an adverbial direction, matching H&K’s cline GO > ALLATIVE (Ibid.: 160-161).

2.7. Miscellaneous

The remaining words that do not fit the previously discussed general grammatical categories but nonetheless have grammatical functions. The first group is literary Sino-Vietnamese words that have essentially the same meanings as in Chinese, while the latter few are of less certain origins. Those words which are clearly of Sino-Vietnamese origins include *chi*

‘only’ (Ch. 只), *chính* ‘just / precisely’ (Ch. 正), *do* ‘by/through’ (Ch. 由), and *thành* ‘(transform) into’ (Ch. 成).

The remaining forms should be considered but excluded if further data cannot fully support them or, indeed, goes against their inclusion. First, *bằng* ‘made of’ (Ch. 平) appears to be a development from ‘equal to’, discussed in §2.1. Next, *càng* ‘all the more’ could be related to literary Sino-Vietnamese *cánh* (Ch. 更 ‘even more’), though the phonetic support is admittedly weaker. Another possibility is *cùng* ‘together’, which may be related to literary Sino-Vietnamese *cộng* (Ch. 共 ‘total’). The form *lại* (SV *lai*, 来 ‘come’), which represents the basic verb ‘to come’, appears to have developed a few other meanings. First, it is most likely the source of the postverbal adverb meaning ‘to come back’ and ‘again’, matching H&K’s posited cline RETURN > ITERATIVE (Ibid.: 259-260). These general meanings may in turn be the source of the preverbal meaning that indicates an unexpected situation from the previous context. Finally, *mà* is a sentence-final emphatic particle, similar in function to Chinese 嘛, an emphatic particle suggesting that what is stated is obvious. However, it is not impossible that this is coincidence considering (a) the typological commonality of the phonetic material and (b) the fact that languages throughout the region have numerous sentence-final particles expressing varying degrees of assertion.

3. CONCLUSION

Clearly, Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary has a special status in Vietnamese, and apparently its grammar as well. However, the end result has largely been one of accommodation rather than influence; Chinese vocabulary has come to fit Vietnamese syntactic structure more than to influence or change it. However, as most of the colloquial Sino-Vietnamese words are not considered to be Chinese in origin, their development as grammatical vocabulary suggests that their social status aided in maintaining or developing such grammatical functions, even words not grammatical in nature in Chinese.

In the data, a noticeable phonological pattern was observed between colloquial Sino-Vietnamese with the huyền tone and literary forms with the nặng tone. Were such words taken from literary readings and changed, or were these words brought in through contact with Chinese speakers through trade, making these the result of second language acquisition perception of those tones? Understanding the nature of such borrowings could be helpful in understanding the nature of human relations among various groups in and around Vietnam, including speakers of Chinese as well as neighboring Southeast Asian languages. In fact, numerous Chinese words of trade (*bao* ‘package’), cuisine (*bánh* ‘pastry’ (SV *bính*, Ch. 餅) and *phấn* ‘powdery substance’), finance (*đồng* ‘copper’ and *công ty* ‘company’), and various other culturally specific categories (e.g., *bài* ‘playing cards’ and *ngan* ‘goose’ (SV *nhân*, Ch. 鵝)) have entered Southeast Asian languages (see Pou and Jenner 1973), such as Thai and Khmer, most of which, unlike Vietnamese, do not have a literary tradition connected with Chinese. Perhaps a comparative study of colloquial Sino-Vietnamese with those other languages could reveal other historical details of timing of phonological and grammatical changes and even the direction of borrowing.

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