Classifier variation and change in Toronto Heritage Cantonese

Naomi Nagy, Josephine Tong & Tiffany Chung
University of Toronto

WICL 2012 — Funding from SSHRC, SIG and ROP

Looking for contact-induced change in Heritage Languages

《 2 》

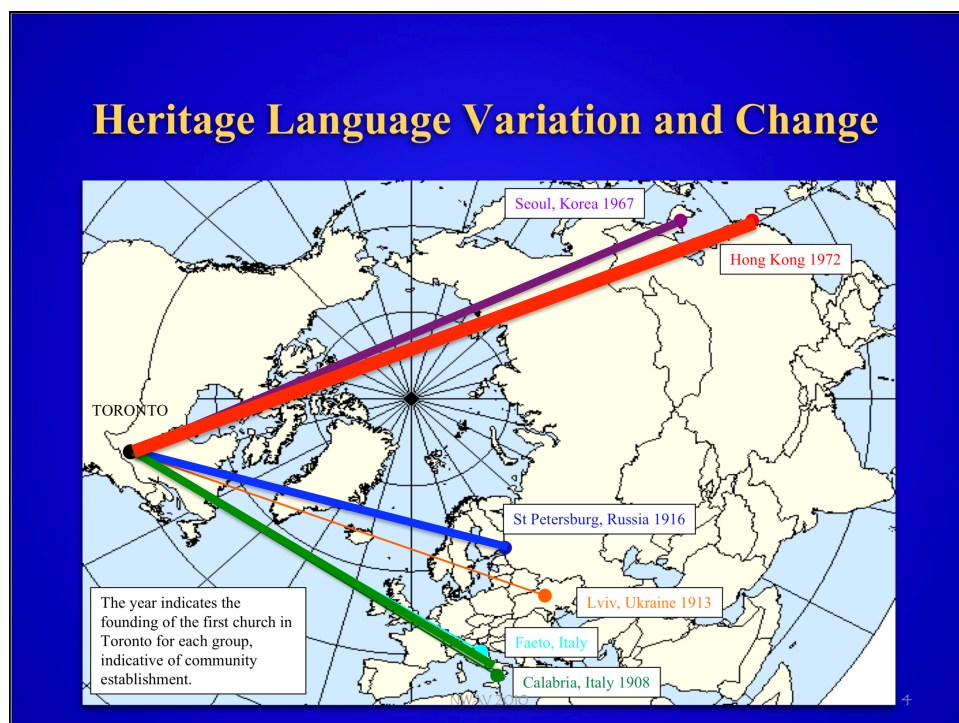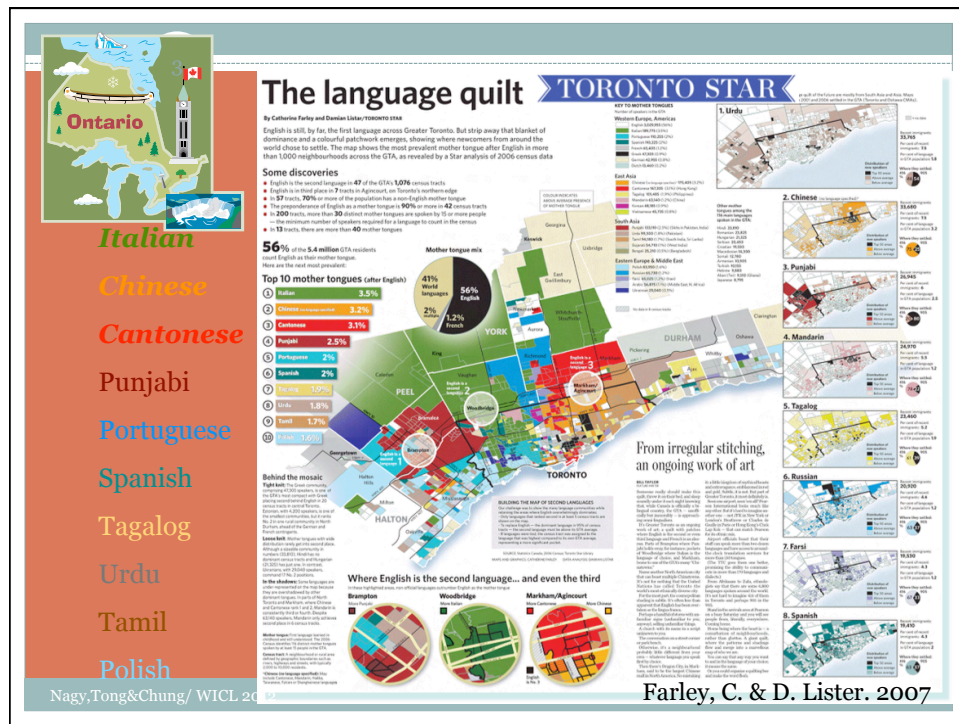HERITAGE LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE IN TORONTO

Naomi.Nagy@utoronto.ca

individual.utoronto.ca/ngn/research/heritage_lgs.htm

The language quilt — TORONTO STAR

By Catherine Farley and Damian Lister/TORONTO STAR

Ontario

Italian
Chinese
Cantonese
Punjabi
Portuguese
Spanish
Tagalog
Urdu
Tamil
Polish

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 20

Farley, C. & D. Lister. 2007

Heritage Language Variation and Change

TORONTO

Seoul, Korea 1967

Hong Kong 1972

St Petersburg, Russia 1916

Lviv, Ukraine 1913

Faeto, Italy

Calabria, Italy 1908

The year indicates the founding of the first church in Toronto for each group, indicative of community establishment.

3/26/12

Community demographics

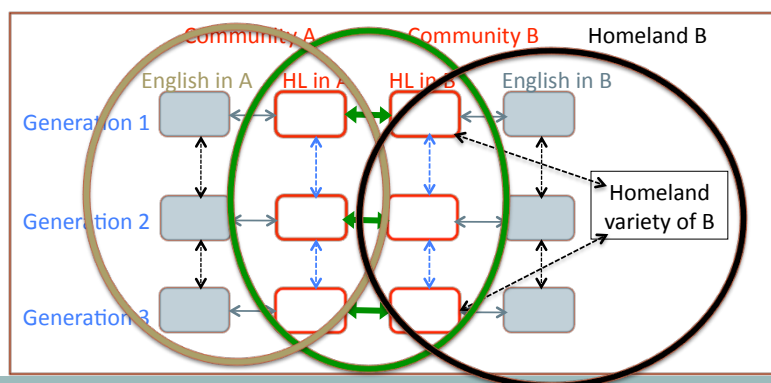|	MT speakers (2006 Census)	Ethnic Origin (2006 Census)	Est. in TO	Targeted city/ region of origin
Italian	194,000	466,000	1908	Calabria
Ukrainian	27,000	122,000	1913	Lviv
Russian	66,000	58,505	1916	St. Petersburg, Moscow
Faetar	<100?	<500?	1950	Faeto, Celle St. Vito
Cantonese	170,000	537,000	1951	Hong Kong
Korean	49,000	55,000	1967	Seoul

Mother tongue: http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo12c-eng.htm

Ethnic origin: http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo27g-eng.htm

5 Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

Types of (linguistic and sociolinguistic) comparisons

KEY
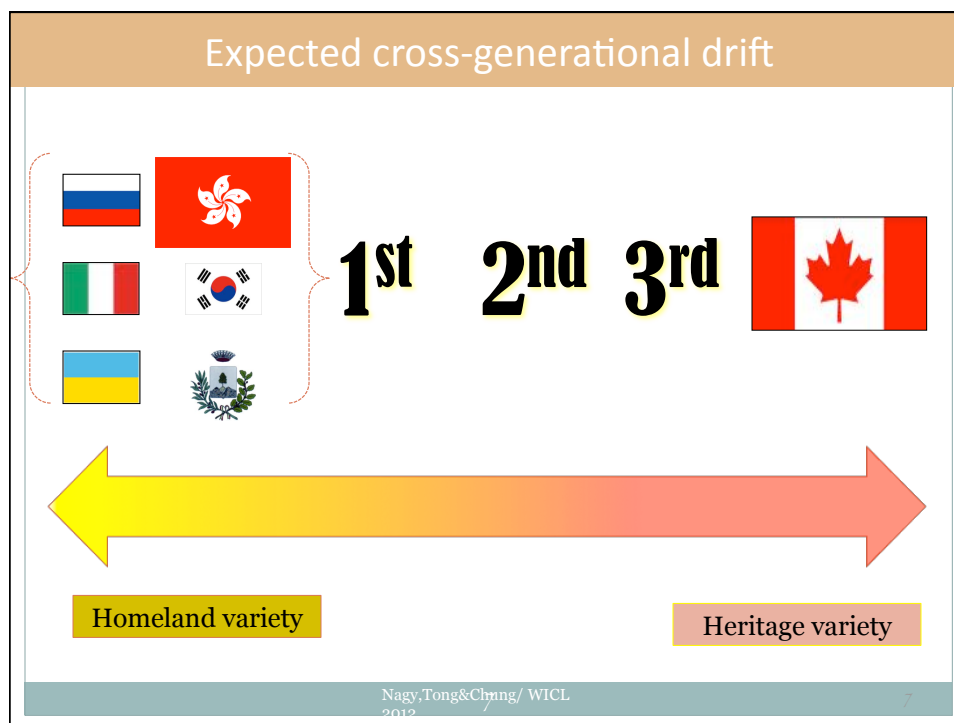HLVC data
English data

Stage 1: inter-generational comparison
Stage 2: cross-community comparison
Stage 3: diatopic comparison
Stage 4: comparison between HL and English

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   6

3

Expected cross-generational drift

1ˢᵗ **2ⁿᵈ** **3ʳᵈ**

Homeland variety

Heritage variety

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

7

What are classifiers?

8

In (homeland) Cantonese, classifiers are required in certain NPs (Yip & Matthews: 39-40)

A	school of	fish	
yat1	kwan3	yu2	
一	群	魚	(Wei & Lee 2001)

They are used much more often than English partitives:

Bei2	go3	sin1saang1	laau4
比	個	先生	鬧
got	CLAS	teacher	yell

I got yelled at by a teacher.

sin1 saang1	fong3	go3	paj2
先生	放	個	屁
teacher	release	CLAS	fart

The teacher farts.

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

This study focuses on variation in classifier use.

⑨

- Is there change going on in Cantonese in Toronto?

  ✓ Speakers think so, and they are right.

- Specifically, is the classifier system changing?

  ✓ Yes.

- How?

  ✓ Classifiers are being used less.

  ✓ And classifiers are being used in new contexts.

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

PARTICIPANT CRITERIA: LANGUAGE

(Self-defined) fluent speaker of…

Cantonese
Faetar
Korean
Italian
Russian
Ukrainian
Polish
Hungarian

Everyone agreed that they could participate in a recorded conversation for about an hour, in the heritage language.

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   10

Generation

Speaker of...	Generation
Cantonese	**1st:** •born in/near **Hong Kong**; •moved to Toronto after age 18; in Toronto 20+ years
	2nd: born in Toronto (or came from homeland before age 6); parents qualify as 1st generation
	3rd: born in Toronto; parents qualify as 2nd generation

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   11

Age group

Generation	Age
1st: born in homeland; moved to Toronto after age 18; in Toronto 20+ years	60+
	39-59
2nd: born in Toronto (or came from homeland < age 6); parents qualify as 1st generation	60+
	40-59
	21-39
	<21
3rd: born in Toronto; parents qualify as 2nd generation	60+
	40-59
	21-39
	<21

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   12

SEX

| Languages	Generation	Age	Sex
Cantonese	**1st**: born in homeland; moved to Toronto after age 18	60+	2 females
			2 males
		39-59	2 females
			2 males

= 4 speakers per generation

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012 13

Speakers in this study (N = 12)

Gen.	Age	Male	Female
1st	> 60	C1M61A, C1M62A, C1M87A	C1F74A, C1F78A, C1F82A
	39-60	C1M46A, C1M52A, C1M52B, C1M58A, C1M59A	C1F50A, C1F50B, C1F54A, C1F54B, C1F58A
	NO 1ST Gen speakers < 38, by definition		
2nd	> 60		
	39-60	C2M44A, C2M51C	C2F41A
	19-38	C2M21B, C2M21C, C2M21D, C2M22A, C2M27A	C2F20A, C2F20B, C2F21B, C2F21C, C2F22A, C2F24A, C2F27A
	12-18	C2M13A, C2M14A, C2M14B, C2M16A, C2M17A, C2M17B	C2F16B, C2F16C
3rd	> 60		
	39-60	C3M44A, C3M53A	
	19-38		
	12-18		C3F12A, C3F18A

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

Data collection methods
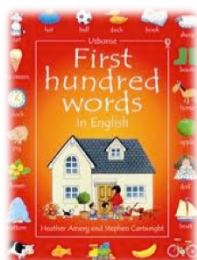
1. Sociolinguistic Interview
2. Ethnic Orientation Questionnaire
3. Picture Description Task

All conducted and recorded by
a native speaker in the heritage language

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

15

ELAN Transcription

16

2) Tokens automatically found, then checked by hand

1) Classifier tier created in ELAN file of sociolinguistic interview

3) 25 tokens for each speaker were marked: C or N

4) Each token was coded for 2 independent linguistic variables

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

Data and Analysis

(17)

- 12 speakers

- 369 tokens (~25 tokens/speaker) taken from conversational speech

o Dependent variable: presence or absence of classifier

o Independent linguistic variables:

  o Noun types

  o Countability of noun (context-dependent)

Classifier Present

(18)

Sap6 ji6	lin4	zung6 jau5
Twelve	CLAS	high school

Twelve years of high school (Speaker C1M46A)

Missing Classifier

Without Classifier

Gei2	do1	Ø	gai1		tung4	tou3
How	many		chicken		and	rabbit

With classifier

Gei2	do1	zak3	gai1		tung4	tou3
How	many	CLAS	chicken		and	rabbit

How many chickens and rabbits? (Speaker C1F50B)

Optional Classifiers

Without Classifier

yam5	dak1	taai3	do1	Ø	cha6
drink	partitive	too	much		tea

Sometimes I drink too much tea. (Speaker C2F27A)

With classifier

yam5	dak1	taai3	do1	bui2	cha6
drink	partitive	too	many	CLAS	tea

Sometimes I drink too many cups of tea.

All 369 NP tokens

Percent of nouns with classifiers

Percent of nouns with classifiers

(non-significant effects)

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   21
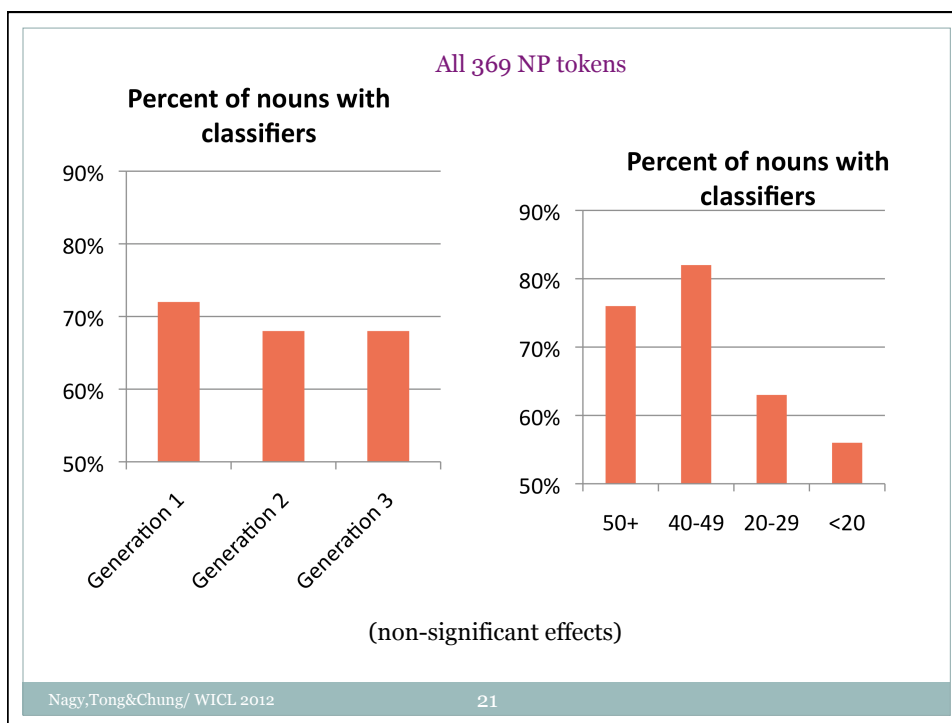
Noun Type: Non-bare nouns

22

Possessive + noun	ngo3	tiu4	yu2
	我	條	魚
	my	CLAS	fish
	my fish		
Number + noun	yat1	tiu4	yu2
	一	條	魚
	one	CLAS	fish
	one fish		
Demonstrative + noun	ni1	tiu4	yu2
	呢	條	魚
	this	CLAS	fish
	this fish		

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

Noun Type: Bare nouns

(23)

Indefinite				
	ngo3	geen6 dou2	tiu4	yu2
	I	saw	CLAS	fish
	我	見到	條	魚
	I saw a fish.			
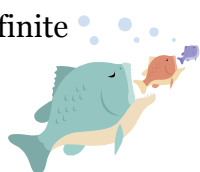
Definite				
	tiu4	yu2	ho2	daai6
	CLAS	fish	very	big
	條	魚	好	大
	The fish was very big.			

Non-specific (generic)				
	tiu4	yu2	ho2	waat6
	CLAS	fish	very	slimy
	條	魚	好	滑
	Fish are slimy.			

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

All 369 NP tokens

Percent of NPs with classifier

Non bare nouns
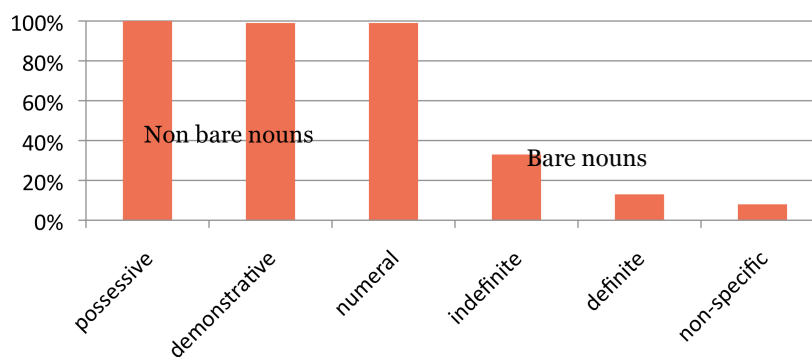
Bare nouns

Significant effect: non-bare vs. bare

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   24

Countable vs. Non-countable nouns

(25)

Countable

di1	deng3	hai2	dei3 haa2
CLAS	chair	on	floor

D   凳   係   地下
The chairs are on the floor.

Non-countable

di1	tsa3	hai2	dei3 haa2
CLAS	tea	on	floor

D   茶   係   地下
The tea is on the floor.

Countability Effect

(26)

N= 369

Percent NPs with classifiers

Countable nouns   Non-countable nouns
Non-significant effect
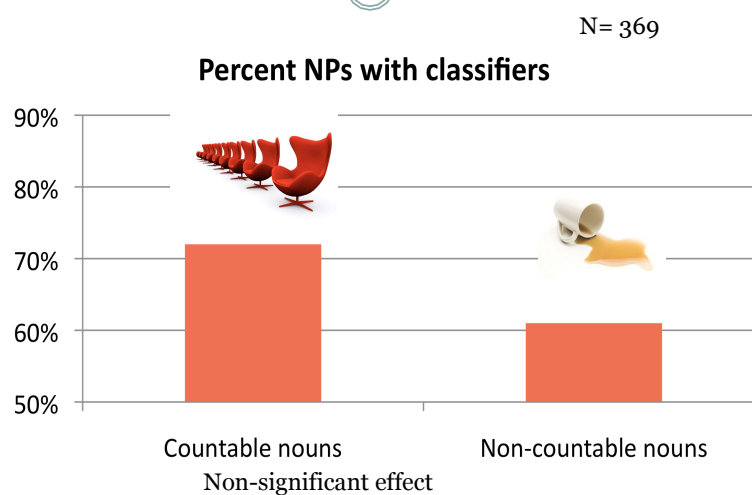
Example of bare countable noun

(27)

Without classifier

Bei2	Ø	lai2 mat4	yan6 dei6.
Give		gifts	others

With classifier

Bei2	di1	lai2 mat4	yan6 dei6.
Give	CLAS	presents	others

Giving others some gifts. (Speaker C3F12A)

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

An emergent pattern:
Use of classifiers to mark bare countable contexts

(28)

Significant effects, by one-tailed Fischer's Exact Test:

√ 1st vs. 2nd generation
  p = .026
√ 1st vs. 2nd & 3rd gens.
  p = .029
(2nd vs. 3rd gen.
  p = .40)
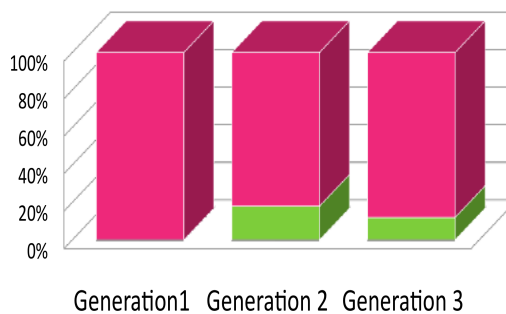
Bare countable nouns, by generation

Generation1   Generation 2   Generation 3

N= 84

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

An emergent pattern:
Use of classifiers to mark bare countable contexts

(29)

Bare countable nouns, by age

N= 84   N= 84
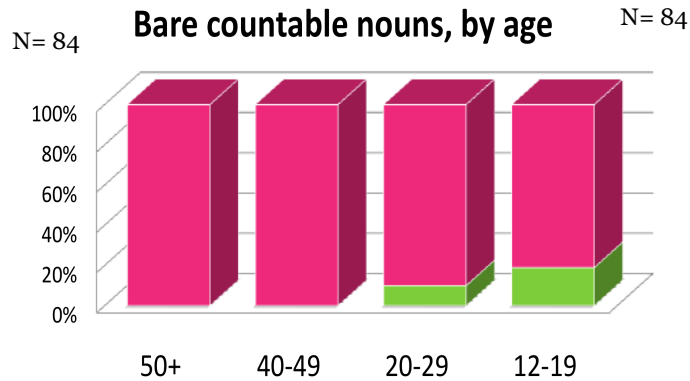
Significant effects, by one-tailed Fischer's Exact Test:
√ >40 vs. <40: p = .024

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

Innovation in younger speakers

N = 369

Age	Noun type	CLAS. present?	Bare nouns						Non-bare nouns					
			Definite		Generic		Indef.		Demon-strative		Number		Poss-essive	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
> 40	**Count-able nouns**	YES	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	0	27	96	79	100	14	100
		NO	15	100	10	100	2	100	1	4	0	0	0	0
		Total	15		10		2		28		79		14	0
< 40		YES	5	**11**	3	**33**	1	100	23	100	40	100	7	100
		NO	42	89	6	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	47		9		1		23		40		7	
> 40	**Non-count-able nouns**	YES	2	40	0	0	1	100	11	100	10	100	3	100
		NO	3	60	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Total	5		14		1		11		10		3	
< 40		YES	3	23	0	0	0	0	21	100	6	86	n.d.	
		NO	10	77	7	100	2	100	0	0	1	14		
		Total	13		7		2		21		7			

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012   30

Innovation in later generations

N = 369

Gen.	Noun type	Class-ifier?	Bare nouns						Non-bare nouns					
			Definite		Generic		Indef.		Demons.		Number		Pos-sessive	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1st	Count-able nouns	YES	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	0	17	94	61	100	13	100
		NO	15	100	10	100	1	100	1	6	0	0	0	0
		Total	15		10		1		18		61		13	0
2nd		YES	3	**12**	2	**29**	1	50	26	100	37	100	5	100
		NO	22	88	5	71	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	25		7		2		26		37		5	
3rd		YES	2	**9**	1	50	n.d.		7	100	21	100	3	100
		NO	20	91	1	50			0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	22		2				7		21		3	
1st	Non-count-able nouns	YES	2	50	0	0	1	100	8	100	6	100	n.d.	
		NO	2	50	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	0		
		Total	4		14		1		8		6			
2nd		YES	3	23	0	0	0	0	14	100	9	90	1	100
		NO	10	77	7	100	2	100	0	0	1	10	0	0
		Total	13		7		2		14		10		1	
3rd		YES	0	0	n.d.		n.d.		10	100	1	100	2	100
		NO	1	100					0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	1						10		1		2	

31

Conclusion or rather, suggestion...

32

- We propose that a change is taking place in a subset of the classifier system in Toronto Heritage Cantonese:

  - Later generation (and younger) speakers are using classifiers to mark countability in bare noun contexts.

  - First generation immigrants (and older speakers) never use classifiers in this context.

多謝

③③

The RAs who have worked to collect, transcribe and analyze the Cantonese data are:

Karen Chan	Joyce Fok
Grace Lui	Mario So Gao
Sarah Truong	Ka-man Wong
Olivia Yu	

All RAs and project collaborators are listed at: http://individual.utoronto.ca/ngn/research/HLVC_personnel.htm

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012

REFERENCES

③④

Farley, C. & D. Lister. 2007. *Greater Toronto's language quilt*. Toronto Star. Dec. 30, 2007.

Huang Chu-Ren, Chen Keh-Jiann and Gao Zhao-Ming. Noun Class Extraction from a Corpus-Based Collocation Dictionary: An Integration of Computational and Qualitative Approaches. 1998. *Quantitative and Computational Studies on the Chinese Language*. 339-351.

Nagy, N. 2009. *Heritage Language Variation and Cha*nge. individual.utoronto.ca/ngn/research/heritage_lgs.htm.

Nagy, N. 2010. HerLD Corpus. *Corpora in the Classroom*. corpora.chass.utoronto.ca.

Nagy, N. 2011. A multilingual corpus to explore geographic variation. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata 43.1-2:65-84.*

Wei, L. & S. Lee. 2001. L1 development in an L2 environment. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 4.6:359-82.

Yip, V. & S. Matthews. 2000. *Basic Cantonese: A Grammar and Workbook*. Routledge: London & NY.

Nagy,Tong&Chung/ WICL 2012