漢語「心」字的認知語用分析

謝菁玉* 王靜怡**

《中文摘要》

本文討論漢語「心」這個字與其相關辭彙在語用和語義方面的表現。根據Sweetser的心智——身體假設，心的辭彙主要可分為身體功能以及心智活動兩類。從語用場合來看，心的辭彙可分成四種不同的使用情景：個人行為或特質，人與人間的互動，人與事件，以及人與社會。進一步，我們檢視漢籍語料庫，從歷時的角度分析心的辭彙歷代以來的發展。結果顯示，與個人行為特質相關的辭彙使用頻率增高，人與人互動行為的辭彙中不少現代漢語中才出現的新詞，人與事件的辭彙則隨著時代的不同而產生不同的意義和用法，至於人與社會，則是隨著社會價值觀的轉變而衍生新辭彙。這些是走向全球化潮流的巧妙變化。另外，本研究過程使我們更堅定語言學各學門間互動的事實。

關鍵詞：思想、心智活動、心智模式、心智——身體假設、生命體固定語式
Introduction

How do we use the Chinese lexeme *xin* 心? *Xin* originally refers to the organ of the body "heart". People misunderstood that the heart was the organ that was engaged in thinking. Therefore there are many expressions about thinking with the lexeme *xin*. In this study, we will be concerned both with how *xin* is used synchronically, and, how its semantic and pragmatic structure developed diachronically. The theoretical basis of our study is Sweetser's (1990) mind-as-body hypothesis.

Most of our raw data are collected from *Guoyu Cidian* (Mandarin Chinese Dictionary, 1996), *Academia Sinica Ancient Chinese Corpus* and *Academia Sinica Balanced Corpus of Mandarin Chinese*. This paper first presents the semantic and pragmatic distributions of the expressions that contain *xin*, and then the related diagrams sketching the synchronic perspective of *xin*’s domains. To complete this investigation of *xin* in Chinese history, the diachronic development will be examined.

Literature Review

The common approach to lexical meaning was to define each word as a bundle of formal semantic features (Katz & Fodor, 1963). But when applied to lexical semantics at large, feature semantics showed obvious limitations (Bolinger, 1965). Fillmore (1976; 1977) and Coleman and Kay (1981) have argued for changes in our understanding of the internal structure of word meaning; in particular, the internal structure of word meaning is not autonomous but exists against a background of our general assumptions about the world. Gordon and Lakoff (1971) have proposed that not only lexical items but also syntactic structures achieve pragmatic goals; the syntactic structure partakes in pragmatic mission. Volterra and Antinucci (1979) worked on language acquisition and indicated that even so-called logical concepts, such as causation or negation, are acquired through the child’s social and physical experience. The influential works in the late twentieth century, Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987), state that a concept is a mental faculty that is constituted by concrete (bodily) experiences.

There are treatises that study the Chinese "heart". Huang (1982) indicated that *jing shen* 精神 “mind” and *xin* 心 (heart/mind) can be interchanged in many contexts, as exemplified
by, xin zhi bu qing 心智不清 = shen zhi bu qing 神智不清 “insane”, liu xin 留心 = liu shen 留神 “to be careful/to mind”, and xin li xiang wang 心裡嚮往 = shen wang 神往 “to yearn for”. He identifies the double role of xin in “cerebration” and “sensation”; xin is mostly translated as “mind-heart” in English.

According to Liu (1992), the ideal conceptual model of xin is a complete three-dimensional object. Tsai (1994) found that xin, from its compound and radical, involves three abstract meanings: cognition, emotion, and temperament. Tsao and Liu (1998) discussed xin from a semantic standpoint and concluded that xin involves cognition (1998: 97) based on its conceptual metaphors heart is a solid body, heart is a container and heart is a life form, etc.

The Synchronic Perspective of Xin-Expressions

Sweetser’s mind-as-body hypothesis (1990) is adopted in this paper. We first apply it to Chinese lexemes with the radical xin and then to xin-expressions in order to reveal the synchronic semantic and pragmatic developments.

Sweetser’s Mind-as-Body Hypothesis

Sweetser (1990) suggests that physical-domain verbs frequently come to have speech-act and/or mental-state meanings, and mental-state verbs come to have speech-act meanings, while the opposite directions of change do not occur. These inter-domain connections are cognitively based. Sweetser illustrated the hypothesis with the sense-perception verbs of Indo-European languages. How about Chinese sense-perception verbs? The Chinese word coinages often consist of a radical that represents part of the meaning. For example, in the verb kan 看 “see”, the use of the radical mu 目 “eye” implied that kan is an activity done with eyes. This Chinese character pictures the gesture of someone who raises his hand above his eyes in order to see something. The Chinese character of the verb ren 忍 “tolerate” shows a knife being put on a heart. It seems that Chinese echoes Sweetser’s assumption that the objective and intellectual side of our mental life (such as “tolerate”) is regularly linked with the physical sense-perception (i.e. the radical “heart”) (1990: 38). In the following sections, we examine our collected data to see if the Chinese radicals mu “eye” and xin “heart” support her finding. An introductory
discussion about *kan* “see” is presented before we focus on *xin*.

Chinese “eye”

As mentioned above, *kan* 看 “see” combines the physical sense of *mu* “eyes” and physical action of raising hands, as in the common usage *wo kan dao yuanchu de hua le* 我看到遠處的花了 “I saw flowers afar (with my hand above my eyes)”. On the other hand, *kan* may refer to one’s acquired knowledge as in the context *wo kan, ta bu hui lai le* 我看，他不會來了 “I think he will not come,” where *kan* means “think”. In another example: *kan bu chu lai ta kao de shang daxue* 看不出來他考得上大學 “I doubt that he can get the admission to a university.” the *kan* denotes “(mentally) realize”. The usage of *kan* has shifted to mental vision (see Fig. 1) and therefore the sense-perception verb *kan* coincides with Sweetser’s observation. In other words, vision is connected with intellection because it is our primary source of perceiving the world.

![Fig 1: The semantic structure of Chinese “see”](image)

In fact, *kan* gives far more senses in regard to mental vision than “to think” and “to realize”. *Kan* also denotes “to observe”, “to appreciate”, “to evaluate”, “to interview”, “to treat”, “to take care”, “to diagnose” and so on. All these denotations developed from the core meaning “to see”. *Academia Sinica Ancient Chinese Corpus* and *Academia Sinica Balanced Corpus of Mandarin Chinese* offer rich data about their usages and frequencies in ancient literature and in modern one. We will not look into the detail of *kan* here, but will give a detailed analysis of *xin* now.

Semantic Structure of “Xin”

We take *shu* 忿 “forgive” and *dong* 懂 “understand” as examples. They both have the radical “heart”. The *shu* 忿, with a coinage of a *ru* 如 “similar to, the same as” and a *xin*
"heart", denotes "to think as the other person is thinking". The physical sense of xin "heart" features the verb shu "forgive" as forgiveness is a physical activity of mind-heart. Also having a heart as the radical, the dong 懂 "understand" is used when one wants to say that he/she has acquired certain knowledge, as in wo dong 我懂 "I see". The semantic domain of "xin" has expanded to mental knowledge as shown in Fig. 2.

\[
\text{心 (physical sense) \rightarrow mental activity}
\]

\[
\downarrow
\]

Knowledge, mental vision (e.g. 懂)

\[
\downarrow
\]

understood

Fig 2: The semantic structure of "heart"

It is not by chance that the etymological sources of mental-state verbs overlap in certain areas and are distinct in others. As stated above, the lexeme xin originally refers to the body part "heart", not "brain" where one really thinks. Nevertheless, language has a function to express the inherent culture. According to Goddard (1998: 5), Kövecses (2000) and many other linguists, language mostly represents laymen's understanding of the world rather than one being based on scientific knowledge. For the most part, xin still refers to "intellect" pragmatically, as in xin suan 心算 "mental arithmetic" and xin xiang 心想 "think". Xin is also used in various contexts to express physical actions and mental activities. Table 1 shows the classification of the expressions that contain xin.

Table 1 gives two major meanings of xin—physical action and mental activities. There are words and phrases about "the heart" and medical terms referring to the heart, such as xin zang bing 心臟病 "a heart disease". People believe that the heart is the most important organ of a human body; xin is therefore used to refer to central part of other objects, such as hu xin 湖心 "center of lake" and di xin 池心 "center of earth". The zhong xin 中心 "central part of an object" has developed from part of a whole to the holistic units "center", as in shi mao zhong xin 世界中心 "World Trade Center". It has undergone pars pro toto mechanism over time.
Tsao and Liu (1998) indicated that in the Western culture the notions of “heart” and “mind” are related to each other, and “mind” rules cerebration. Chinese people also consider “the heart” to be the organ with which we think and feel as shown in Table 1 under the category “the mind, intelligence”, such as *lao xin* "do mental work". When we say *kai xin* 開心, we mean “to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Physical action</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the heart</td>
<td><em>xin zang</em> 心臟 “the heart organ”; <em>xin tiao</em> 心跳 “palpitation of the heart”; <em>xin LV hu zheng</em> 心律不整 “arrhythmia of cordis”; <em>xin dian tu</em> 心電圖 “cardiogram”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>central part of object</td>
<td><em>he xin</em> 核心 “core, nucleus”; <em>di xin</em> 地心 “center of earth”; <em>hu xin</em> 湖心 “the center of a lake”; <em>juan xin cao</em> 掐心菜 “cabbage”; <em>zhu xin</em> 蜥心 “wrick”</td>
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<tr>
<td>center (organization)</td>
<td><em>shi mao zhong xin</em> 世貿中心 “World Trade Center”; <em>shi ting zhong xin</em> 視聽中心 “Audio Visual Center”; <em>zi xun zhong xin</em> 軟訊中心 “Information Center”; <em>zhì xun zhong xin</em> 職訓中心 “vocational training center”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td><em>dian xin</em> 點心 “snack; dessert”; <em>su xin lan</em> 素心蘭 “a kind of orchid with undotted petals”; <em>bei xin</em> 背心 “vest”</td>
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<tr>
<th>B. Mental activity</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>the mind, intelligence</td>
<td><em>lao xin</em> 勞心 “do mental work”; <em>zhuan xin</em> 專心 “concentrate one's mind”; <em>jue xin</em> 決心 “set one's mind to”; <em>xia xin</em> 小心 “careful, take care”; <em>xi xin</em> 細心 “careful, attentive”; <em>dang xin</em> 當心 “careful, take care”; <em>liu xin</em> 留心 “careful, take care”; <em>tie xin</em> 貼心 “to be thoughtful for”; <em>guan xin</em> 關心 “to be concerned with”; <em>xin suan</em> 心算 “mental arithmetic”; <em>xin zhi</em> 心智 “intelligence, wisdom”; <em>xin xiang</em> 心想 “think”</td>
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<td>mood, thinking</td>
<td><em>fang xin</em> 放心 “to feel free, not to worry”; <em>kai xin</em> 開心 “feel happy”; <em>xin xin</em> 信心 “confidence”; <em>liang xin</em> 良心 “conscience”; <em>xin gan</em> 心肝 “conscience”; <em>zhong xin</em> 忠心 “loyal”; <em>gong de xin</em> 公德心 “social conscience”; <em>xu chi xin</em> 虚心 “shame”; <em>ye xin</em> 野心 “ambition”; <em>xiong xin</em> 雄心 “ambition”; <em>hui xin</em> 灰心 “disappointed, give up hope”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>states of mind</td>
<td><em>xin fan yi luan</em> 心煩意亂 “confused and worried”; <em>xin huang</em> 心慌 “dismayed”; <em>xin ji</em> 心急 “tense, nervous with worry”; <em>xin huang shen yi</em> 心曖神怡 “completely relaxed and happy”; <em>xin xu</em> 心虛 “guilty, afraid of being found out”; <em>xin qing</em> 心情 “state of mind, how one feels”; <em>xin shen bu ding</em> 心神不定 “distracted, the mind wanders”</td>
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<td>affection, love</td>
<td><em>xin ai de ren</em> 心愛的人 “beloved, sweetheart”; <em>xin xin xiang yin</em> 心心相印 “wholehearted response, reciprocal love”; <em>xin tou rou</em> 心頭肉 “beloved”, <em>xin gan</em> 心肝 “sweetheart”; <em>jiao xin</em> 交心 “to be frank with others”</td>
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</table>

Table 1. The classification of the expressions containing *xin*
feel happy”, and when we say *shang xin* 傷心, we mean “to feel sad”. The mental activity that *xin* represents can be categorized into four types as shown in the Table. The fourth category “affection, love”, such as *xin ai de ren* 心愛的人 “beloved, sweetheart” concerning interpersonal relationship and social activity, will be discussed below.

**The Pragmatic Discourse of Xīn-Expressions**

Let us now turn to observe *xin*-expressions from a different standpoint—the pragmatic discourses, i.e., how we use these expressions in our daily conversation. We may use the same expression in different contexts for different referents and senses. For example, *xin gan* 心肝 stands for different referents in various contexts. When *xin gan* is used in a discourse between a doctor and a patient, the *xin gan* means heart and liver. On the other hand, a mother may say, “*ta shi wo de xin gan bao bei* 她是我的心肝寶貝 She is my sweetheart” to her daughter. Here the *xin gan* expresses affection and refers to the beloved one.

People use *xin*-expressions in at least the following four pragmatic discourses: (1) Expressions like *zhuan xin* 專心 “concentrate one’s mind” and *xi xin* 細心 “careful, take care” describe individual behavior and character (see Table 2): The syntactic structure provides a clue. Most [SUBJ + hen/you (yi-ge) + xin-expression] structure or [SUBJ + xin-expression + predicate] fall into this category. For example, *wo you yi-ge xin yuan* 我有一個心願 “I have a wish” or *ta xin qing hen hao* 她心情很好 “She has a good mood”. (2) *Guan xin* 關心 “to be concerned with” and *xin xin xiang yin* 心心相印 “wholehearted response” are used in interpersonal behavior. Most of the expressions categorized here realized in the syntactic structure [SUBJ + xin-expression + (OBJ)], and the OBJ is usually somebody. For example, *ta hen guan xin ta* 他很關心她 “He concerns himself about her”. (3) *Ye xin* 野心 “ambition” and *cun xin* 存心 “with the intention to” express people’s attitude toward events. In this case the syntactic structure is the same as the second category, [SUBJ + OBJ + xin-expression], but the OBJ is something instead of somebody. For instance, *ta dui nei ge zhi wei hen you ye xin* 他對那個職位很有野心 “He has ambition to that position”. (4) *Gong de xin* 公德心 “social conscience” and *rong yu xin* 榮譽心 “honor” are bound to social circumstance. That is to say, the adjuncts or complements involved should be related to the society or community. Table 2 lists *xin*-expressions distinguished by the pragmatic discourses:
individual (personal behavior or character), interpersonal behavior, people and event, and people and the community. Please note that some expressions can be included in two or more pragmatic discourses depends on maxims of conversation (Grice, 1989), i.e., the role and relationships of the participants and settings, etc. just as the above example *xin bing* “heart disease or mental disorder” illustrated. Some, however, are used only in certain pragmatic discourse, e.g., *gong de xin* 公德心 “social conscience” falls in the category “people and the community” for only when one’s behavior is judged by the norms of a community and an society can *gong de xin* be valued.

Table 2. The pragmatic discourses of *xin*-expressions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>The pragmatic discourses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>(1) individual (personal behavior or character)</td>
<td><em>zhuan xin</em> 專心 “concentrate one’s mind”; <em>xi xin</em> 細心 “careful, take care”; <em>xin yuan</em> 心願 “wish”; <em>xin qing</em> 心情 “state of mind, how one feels”; <em>xin xin</em> 信心 “confidence”; <em>xin zhi</em> 心智 “intelligence, wisdom”; <em>xin shen bu ding</em> 心神不定 “distracted, the mind wanders”; <em>xin bing</em> 心病 “heart disease, mental disorder”; <em>xin di</em> 心地 “one’s mind”; <em>xin ling</em> 心靈 “spirit”; <em>xin si</em> 心思 “thoughts”; <em>xin sheng</em> 心聲 “aspiration”; <em>xin yan</em> 心眼 “one’s intention”; <em>xiao xin</em> 小心 “careful, take care”; <em>kai xin</em> 開心 “feel happy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) interpersonal behavior</td>
<td><em>guan xin</em> 關心 “to be concerned with”; <em>xin xin xiang yin</em> 心心相印 “wholehearted response, their love is reciprocal”; <em>xin teng</em> 心疼 “to love dearly”; <em>tie xin</em> 貼心 “to be thoughtful for”; <em>xin ai de</em> 心愛 “darling, sweetheart”; <em>xin gan</em> 心肝 “sweetheart”; <em>xin yi</em> 心儀 “to admire in the heart”; <em>xin zhaoyu xuan</em> 心照不宣 “no need to say, how grateful I am”; <em>nai xin</em> 耐心 “persistent”; <em>re xin</em> 熱心 “enthusiasm”</td>
</tr>
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<td>(3) people and event</td>
<td><em>ye xin</em> 野心 “ambition”; <em>xiong xin</em> 雄心 “ambition”; <em>cun xin</em> 存心 “with the intention to”; <em>jue xin</em> 決心 “set one’s mind to”; <em>zhuan xin</em> 專心 “concentrate one’s mind”; <em>lao xin</em> 勞心 “do mental work”; <em>fang xin</em> 放心 “to feel free, not to worry”; <em>hui xin</em> 灰心 “disappointed, give up hope”; <em>xin fan yi luan</em> 心煩意亂 “confused and worried”; <em>tong xin</em> 痛心 “regret, deplor greatly”; <em>xin kuang shen yi</em> 心曖神怡 “completely relaxed and happy”; <em>xin yi</em> 心意 “intention, purpose”; <em>cheng xin</em> 誠心 “sincere”; <em>xin suan</em> 心算 “mental arithmetic”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) people and the community</td>
<td><em>gong de xin</em> 公德心 “social conscience”; <em>zi zun xin</em> 自尊心 “pride”; <em>liang xin</em> 良心 “conscience”; <em>rong yu xin</em> 誠信心 “honor”; <em>xiu chi xin</em> 羞恥心 “shame”; <em>zhong xin</em> 忠心 “loyal”</td>
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</table>
As a consequence, Table 1 and Table 2 offer us the clues for the semantic expansion of xin. Xin, a lexeme for a body part, has developed from physical (heart or brain) domain to mental (personality or feeling) activity. Stated differently, vocabulary of abstract domains tends to be derived from concrete domains. The extension goes from individual behavior to interpersonal behavior, eventually, the extension reaches the interaction between people and their communities. This supports Sweetser’s mind-as-body hypothesis that physical-domain verbs come to have speech-act or mental-state meanings, and mental-state verbs come to have speech-act meanings. These inter-domain connections are cognitively based. We depict a radial diagram as in Fig. 3.

Fig. 3: The radial diagram of the semantic change of xin

Fig. 3 shows two major extensions of the original xin—physical actions and mental activities, some subsequent units being under each group (cf. Tsao & Liu 1998)\(^1\). There are connections between the two main groups, and they all link to “person” and “personality”. For example, xin gan 心肝 can mean “heart and liver” or “beloved one”. The organs link to a person’s affection. People consider the heart and the liver to be important organs of human being that should be cherished. In addition, xin bing 心病 in the group of physical action means heart disease. When one says “xin bing hai yao xin yao yi 心病還要心藥醫 mental treatment is needed for mental disorder,” the xin bing means mental disorder and refers to
someone's severe anxiety. Hence, *xin* in *xin bing hai yao xin yao yi* is not the heart but the state of mind that is generalized and linked to the “personality”.

Likewise, there are some expressions which originally referred to the heart of animals are now also used in the group of mental activities to describe people who have similar qualities. *Lang xin* 獵心, for instance, signified only the heart of a wolf. People believe that a wolf is evil and greedy, *lang xin* then finds itself marked with pejoration. It refers to a person who shares the same character of a wolf. In this case, *Lang xin* is a physical object but also has mental activities meaning: personality.

From the above discussion, we see that the pragmatic discourses of *xin*-expressions are used to describe the discourse “individual”, or to explain the attitude one has toward another person or events. The interaction within people and events creates a sense of community, as presented in Fig. 4. Next section focuses on these discourses by examining the *Academia Sinica Ancient Chinese Corpus* and the *Academia Sinica Balanced Corpus of Mandarin Chinese* in order to explore the historical developments of *xin*-expressions.

![diagram.png](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Fig. 4: The pragmatic discourses of *xin* expressions in diagram

**The diachronic perspective of the *xin* discourse**

The corpora provide detailed information about the development of *xin* over time. According to the prominent annotations, we divide the long Chinese history into five periods: (a) from Chou Dynasty (1122 B.C.) to the end of Han Dynasty (A.D. 220), (b) from the beginning of Three Kingdoms (A.D. 220) to the end of Northern Dynasty (A.D. 618), (c) from Sui Dynasty (A.D. 618) to Sung Dynasty (A.D. 1368), (d) from Yuan Dynasty (A.D. 1368) to
Ching Dynasty (A.D. 1911), and (e) the Modern Chinese period (A.D. 1911 till now).

Here we only present three figures among others sketched during our research as they are sufficient for illustrating the evolution of *xin*-expressions for our purpose. There are interesting changes during Sui Dynasty to Sung Dynasty (Fig. 5). Modern Chinese period is also a landmark of language evolution, therefore we present Fig. 6. At the end, Fig. 7 provides a combination of all dynasties to show the evolution through times of some expressions.

Fig. 5 Some *xin*-expressions in Sui to Sung Dynasties (581 A.D.-1279 A.D.)

*Xin*-expressions are used more and more often after Yuan Dynasty, probably because of the increasing genre of plays and novels. We can see from ancient literature that the written language in plays and novels at this stage is close to people’s daily spoken language and this language tends to be freer syntactically than the classical language in poetry or historical records. And as the time goes closer to modern era, the landmark of Modern Chinese—the so-called *Wusiyundong* (May Fourth Movement, A.D. 1919) encouraged the written language to become closer and closer to spoken language. For this reason, more expressions are found at the last stage.

Fig. 5 shows a high frequency of *liu xin* 小心 “careful, take care”. It was used twice as often as its synonym *xiao xin* 小心 from Sui to Sung Dynasty (A.D. 618-A.D. 1368). But then as Fig. 6 indicates, *liu xin* drops in Modern Chinese (19 lemmas in the *Academia Sinica*...
Balanced Corpus of Mandarin Chinese), while xiao xin “careful” demonstrates high frequency (435 lemmas in the same corpus). Xiao xin gradually replaces liu xin.

Fig. 6. Some xin-expressions in Modern Chinese (1911 A.D. till now)

The number of expressions used in interpersonal discourse also increased. For example, now people often use guan xin “to be concerned with” to show their concern about someone or something. However, before 1900s, there are only few usages found (compare Fig. 6 and Fig. 7). Furthermore, tie xin “to be thoughtful for”, which means very considerate or thoughtful, is found only in Modern Chinese. That might indicate that interpersonal expressions consisting of xin develop mostly in modern times.

The meaning change of some expressions is worth mentioning. Ye xin has different meanings in classical and in modern Chinese. Before Yuan Dynasties (A.D. 1271), ye xin often denoted “a beast’s heart.” For example, langzi ye xin shi nai lang ye “He is as greedy as a wolf” (Chunqiu Zuozhuan, 476 B.C.). The meaning of langzi ye xin was “someone who is as greedy as a wolf”. However, when one uses ye xin in Modern Chinese, such as zheng zhi ye xin “ambition in politics”, someone's ambition is meant. Nowadays, people barely use ye xin to mean a beast's heart. The pragmatic discourse of ye xin has shifted from “individual (of an animal)” to “people and event” or “people and
Kai xin and e xin have similar developments. Before Yuan, kai xin meant "open-mindedness," as in "cai ming yong lue, fei ren di ye, qie kai xin jian cheng, wu suo yin fu" "(someone is) intelligent, courageous, of matchless and open-minded, nothing is concealed" (Vol. 24, Li-chuan, Book of Later Han, A.D. 445). Kai xin meant "open-minded". However, when people use kai xin right now, they always mean "to feel happy". Kai xin acquires a new acceptation. Another example is e xin. Originally, e meant "bad", and e xin referred to "wicked-minded", as in "zhong gong ru ci, ben wu e xin" "so faithful and feat-shining, (someone is) not wicked-minded" (Vol. 86, Li-chuan, Book of Later Han, A.D. 445). Yet, e xin received another meaning later. E xin was used to mean "being sick" around the time of Rulin Waishi (The Scholars Satiric Novel, author: Wu Jing-zi, 1701-1754): kou li zuo e xin, yue chu xu duo ching tan lai "sick in month, threw up some sputa" (Chap. 6). The Chinese character of e had not survived in this expression. In Chap. 4, Section 2, Laochan Youji (Tramp Doctor’s Travelogue, 1903) already stated: chi de na yi shen de yang shan qi, wu liu chi wai, jiu jiao ren zuo e xin 吃的那一身的羊膻氣，五六尺外，就教人作噁心 "The stinking smell after eating mutton makes people feel nauseated afar." E xin 嚏心 replaced e xin 惡心 with a radical "mouth" added.

Fig. 7 gives the diachronic development of xin-expressions. The last expression shown in the figures is xin xin "confidence". Xin xin is used quite frequently in Modern Chinese. We found 419 lemmas in the Mandarin Chinese corpus, while only 23 lemmas are annotated in the other corpus from Sui to Song Dynasties (see Fig. 5). Meanwhile, the synonyms of xin xin, for instance, zi xin 自信 and ba wo 把握 also show similar expansion over time. Though xin xin is not an innovative expression in Modern Chinese, the noticeable rise of it and its synonyms imply that people care about being confident more than before. A Chinese society emphasize holism (see e.g., Mauss 1954, Hsieh to appear) where a group often represents individuals; each individual does not stand out. Confidence has not been stressed as it is in our time. The much higher frequency of xin qing 心情 "how one feels", also a xin-expression used in the “individual” discourse, points out the same trend. The next section concludes this point as well as this study.
Fig. 7. Some "xin"-expressions in all dynasties

**Closing Remarks**

The discussion of Chinese "xin" "heart" proved that meaning is rooted in human cognitive experience, that is to say, the experience of the physical actions link to mental world, and the pragmatic restructuring of meaning is highly structured with the development from concrete domains to abstract domains. On the other hand, although xin is an organ of the human body, it often refers to the whole person, such as xin gan 心肝 “heart and liver; beloved one”. This part for whole mechanism is operative in the historical development of some complex conceptual structures including those involved in Chinese xin.

Meanwhile, we can conclude that xin-expressions changed in their pragmatic discourses in the history. In order to accommodate different social values, some innovations came into being while some are fading out of the vogue. Some shift their domains, e.g., ye xin 野心. Ye xin has existed for thousands of years, meaning “a beast’s heart” before Yuan Dynasty (A.D. 1297), but it means “ambition” now and is included in the domain of “people and event”. Likewise, the xin-expressions in the pragmatic discourse “community”, such as gong de xin 公德心 “social conscience” and xiu chi xin 羞恥心 “shame”, reflect the values of a group of
people. These expressions came into being for a reason: People live in communities and communities form a Chinese society. People can hardly live out of a community now. Globalization strengthens the communities in a way that people learn more about the world, pay more attention to their living world, and at the same time know more to get themselves notable.

The *xin*-expressions in the pragmatic discourse "individual", like *xin xin* 信心 "confidence" and *xin qing* 心情 "mood", enjoys high frequency in the Modern Chinese corpus, though only a scant portion is found in the Ancient Chinese corpus. The growth of "individual" terms indicates that the egoism or individualism is permeating into the Chinese society where holism used to play a significant role. It is an effect of Western cultures and/or is a natural development of human society. The change of the social values prepares for joining the tide of globalization.

Chinese *xin* proves the statement of Rastier (1999: 134) that "fact actually confirmed by linguistic evolution." Some linguists of semantics have frequently been eager to separate linguistic meaning from general human cognition and experience, and to keep linguistic "levels" (syntax vs. semantics vs. pragmatics) distinct from one another. We hope to have shown the fact, from the analysis of Chinese *xin* "heart-mind" and its expressions, that the virtual interaction between linguistic levels, viz., semantics and pragmatics, is not to be neglected.
Notes:

(1) Taking the conceptual metaphors of Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Tsao & Liu (1998:96) presented a radial structure of *xin* in which central parts of object, emotion and thoughts are derived from *xin*.

Reference


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A Cognitive Pragmatic Analysis of Chinese “Heart”

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〈Abstract〉

This paper discusses the Chinese lexeme xin “heart” and its expressions based on Sweetser’s mind-as-body hypothesis (1990). The meaning of Chinese heart can be categorized into two groups: physical action and mental activity. According to pragmatic discourses, xin-expressions can be classified into four categories: (1) individual behavior or character, (2) interpersonal behavior, (3) people and event, and (4) people and community. Furthermore, we examined xin-expressions in two Chinese corpora of Academia Sinica to illustrate the pragmatic evolution of xin. The result shows that the use of xin-expressions in individual discourse becomes more frequent. There are innovations in the discourse of interpersonal behavior; those in the discourse of people and event change over time, and xin-expressions in the discourse of people and community are used for keeping up with the changing social values. All these are developing toward the tide of globalization. Linguistic subfields, e.g., Semantics and Pragmatics, are not distinct from one another, but have virtual interactions between each other which are confirmed in this study.

Key Words: thinking, mental activity, model of the mind, mind-as-body hypothesis, life-form expressions

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