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Abstract

This study provides a statistical account and a contrastive study on the use of classifiers in historical Cantonese and contemporary Cantonese documents. We have conducted a statistical analysis of classifiers present in the Cantonese translations of the 1880s edition and the 2010 edition of the four canonical gospels in the *Christian New Testament*. 94 classifiers are observed in the 2010 edition, but only 80 are found in the 1880s edition. Our results show that while some classifiers have been used most regularly since the nineteenth century, for example, $k\textomega^{33}$ 個 (a general classifier), kin^{22} 件 'piece', t^hiu^{11} 條 'strip', $ts\varepsilon k^{33}$ 隻 (mostly for counting animals and dolls), and ti^{55} 的/啲, the frequency of some classifiers in the 2010 edition drops drastically as a result of lexical replacement; for example, tat^{33} 笪 (for counting fields) in place of fai^{33} 塊. We have also found that the reduction in frequency of reduplicated classifiers is a result of changes in translation strategy rather than a real reduction in usage in contemporary Cantonese.

Keywords: four Gospels, historical Cantonese, classifier, corpus-based analysis, Christian document

15

On a Historical Approach to Cantonese Studies

A Corpus-Based Contrastive Analysis of the Use of Classifiers in Historical and Recent Translations of the Four Gospels

Tak-Sum Wong and Wai-Mun Leung

15.1 Introduction

Supported by the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust, the "Database of the 19th Century (1865–1894) Cantonese Christian Writings" provides a public data repository through the digitization of 15 Cantonese Christian classics published in mid- to late nineteenth century (Tóngguāng 同光 period of Qing Dynasty), with a total of approximately 466,000 characters. The database is accessible by those who are interested in the history of Christianity in Hong Kong and provides valuable and reliable documents for scholars in the fields of linguistics, theology, religion, translation, and other academic disciplines.[1]

Since Robert Morrison (1782–1834) arrived in Guangzhou at the beginning of the nineteenth century, marking the beginning of Protestant missions in China, many missionaries have followed his footsteps coming to the East. To facilitate the dissemination of Christian teachings, missionaries who came to Guangdong learned the local language, Cantonese, in the Guangdong region (including Hong Kong) and began to translate, write, and publish Christian books in Cantonese dialects, such as prayers, evangelistic books, and hymns. In addition to the various books of the *Bible*, many influential Christian books were gradually translated to or written in Cantonese during the mid- to late nineteenth century, such as *Coming Close to Jesus* (1865), *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1871), and *Questions and Answers on the Gospel of John* (1888).

The historical value of the works available in this database is enormous for the study of Christian missionary activities in the Guangdong area and the history of early Cantonese translations. For example, it provides not only materials for the study of the progress of scholars' interpretation of ancient biblical manuscripts but also documents for the study of the historical development of Cantonese, textual analysis and interpretation of Cantonese, comparison of expressions and styles in English-Cantonese translations, and historical formation of written Cantonese.

The four key features of this database are as follows:

1   High diversity of literature. Full texts of the 15 Cantonese Christian classics during the mid- to late nineteenth century were digitalized, covering the following four categories:

- Books of the Bible:

The Old Testament: *Genesis* (1873), *Exodus* (1888), *Deuteronomy* (1888)

The New Testament: *Acts* (1872), *Matthew* (1882), *Mark* (1882), *Luke* (1883), *John* (1883), *Selected Readings of the Gospel of Luke* (circa the 1880s, Chinese-English-Romanization edition)

- Allegorical novels: *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1871), *The Pilgrim's Progress II* (1870)

- Spiritual missions: *Coming Close to Jesus* (1865), *That Sweet Story of Old* (1874)

- Teaching materials: *Questions and Answers on the Gospel of John* (1888), *Readings in Cantonese Colloquial* (1894)

2   Easy searching and exporting. Our database provides retrieval and advanced query functions such that users can set the number of results per page from 10 to 100 entries. The

preceding and ensuing three sentences of each search result are displayed on the result page to help users understand its context. Results can be easily copied or exported to a spreadsheet for further processing.

3   Displaying images of original materials. Scanned images of original texts of all the 15 documents are provided to facilitate close reading of primary sources by users.

4   Facilitating the comparison of different translations.

The Old Testament. The following translation is provided for users to compare different translations of verses in *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and *Deuteronomy*:

- The Mandarin version published in Shanghai in 1919 ("The Old and New Testaments," Chinese Union Version Bible, published by the American Bible Society)

The New Testament. The following two editions are provided for users to access selected readings from *Matthew*, *Mark*, *John*, *Acts*, and *Luke* for text comparison:

- The Mandarin version published in Shanghai in 1919 ("The Old and New Testaments," Chinese Union Version Bible, published by the American Bible Society)

- The contemporary Cantonese translation published in Hong Kong in 2010 (*Cantonese Bible: New Cantonese Version*, published by the Hong Kong Bible Society, first edition published in 2006)

In the first stage of development of our database, 15 historical Christian writings were digitalized and made publicly accessible. In the second stage, we planned to provide linguistic tagging for all texts. At present the tagging of the 1880s (Noyes, Piercy & Masters 1882a, 1882b, 1883a, 1883b) and 2010 editions of the four canonical gospels in the *Christian New Testament*

("four Gospels," *hereinafter*) was finished. In this chapter, we will focus on these eight texts and provide a statistical account and a contrastive study on the use of classifiers therein. For the linguistic value of studying the translations of the four Gospels, please refer to Leung (2011, 2021). On the study of digitalizing the early Cantonese Bible, the reader may refer to Kataoka (2021).

15.2 Classifiers in Cantonese

In most European languages, the use of measure words is marked. They are only employed when actualizing the semantic boundary of nouns (Bisang 1999, 121) is desired. In some cases, the natural boundary is absent (e.g., *a cup of coffee*, and *a drop of water*), while in other cases, the use of natural boundaries is not intended (e.g., *a basket of fruit*, and *a gang of people*). In the context when the natural boundary is adopted when counting, measure words are always absent (e.g., *an apple*, *a man*, and *a bean*). On the other hand, in another part of the world, the use of measure words is mandatory for a number of languages, even when the natural boundary is adopted when counting. The *measure words* in these languages are often referred to as *classifiers*. For example, in contemporary Cantonese:

(1)　　一個哥哥
　　　　jɐt⁵　　　　***kɔ³³***　　　　*kɔ¹¹kɔ⁵⁵*
　　　　one　　　　**CL**　　　　elder.brother
　　　　"an elder brother"

(2)　　兩隻眼
　　　　lœŋ¹³　　　　***tsɛk³***　　　　*ŋan¹³*
　　　　two　　　　**CL**　　　　eye
　　　　"two eyes"

(3)　　三個姑娘
　　　　sam⁵⁵　　　　***kɔ³³***　　　　*ku⁵⁵nœŋ¹¹*
　　　　three　　　　**CL**　　　　young.lady
　　　　"three young ladies"

(4)　　六隻貓
　　　　lok²　　　***tsɛk³***　　　*mau⁵⁵*
　　　　six　　　　**CL**　　　　cat
　　　　"six cats"

The absence of classifiers is ungrammatical when counting (with rare exceptions), for example:

(1)'　　*一哥哥
　　　　jɐt⁵　　　*kɔ¹¹kɔ⁵⁵*
　　　　one　　　　elder.brother
　　　　"an elder brother"

(2)'　　*兩眼
　　　　lœŋ¹³　　　*ŋan¹³*
　　　　two　　　　eye
　　　　"two eyes"

(3)'　　*三姑娘
　　　　sam⁵⁵　　　*ku⁵⁵nœŋ¹¹*
　　　　three　　　　young.lady
　　　　"three young ladies"

(4)'　　*六貓
　　　　lok²　　　*mau⁵⁵*
　　　　six　　　　cat
　　　　"six cats"

Classifiers can be used to count not only nouns but also actions, *exempli gratia*:

(5)　　賭一鋪
　　　　tou³⁵　　　*jɐt⁵*　　　***pʰou⁵⁵***
　　　　bet　　　　one　　　　**CL**
　　　　"to take a gamble"

(6)　　打十下
　　　　ta³⁵　　　*sɐp²*　　　***ha¹³***
　　　　hit　　　　ten　　　　**CL**
　　　　"hit ten times"

Classifiers for counting objects, as shown in examples 1 to 4, are commonly known as *numerical classifiers*, while those for counting actions, as shown in examples 5 and 6, are commonly called *verbal classifiers*.

When nouns are premodified with demonstrative and interrogative pronouns, the use of classifiers is also mandatory, such as:

(7)   呢個姑娘
ni^{55} $\textbf{\textit{k\textipa{O}}}^{\textbf{\textit{33}}}$ $ku^{55}n\textipa{œ}\eta^{11}$
this   **CL**   young.lady
"this young lady"

(8)   嗰隻貓
$k\textipa{O}^{35}$ $\textbf{\textit{ts\textipa{E}k}}^{\textbf{\textit{3}}}$ mau^{55}
that   **CL**   cat
"that cat"

(9)   邊隻眼？
pin^{55} $\textbf{\textit{ts\textipa{E}k}}^{\textbf{\textit{3}}}$ ηan^{13} ?
 which   **CL**   eye
"Which eye?"

Being commonly used for counting and referential purposes in Cantonese (and the majority of Sinitic languages), noun classifiers can also undergo reduplication to form *reduplicated classifiers* denoting *each individual* (Wu 2017), for example:

(10)   個個姑娘都好靚
$\textbf{\textit{k\textipa{O}}}^{\textbf{\textit{33}}}\textbf{\textit{k\textipa{O}}}^{\textbf{\textit{33}}}$ $ku^{55}n\textipa{œ}\eta^{11}$ tou^{55} hou^{35} $l\textipa{E}\eta^{33}$
CL-CL   young.lady   also   very   pretty
"Every young lady is pretty."

In example 10, the general classifier **k\textipa{O}^{33}** 個 is reduplicated to form the construction **k\textipa{O}^{33}k\textipa{O}^{33}** 個個, "everyone," referring to *every young lady*.

For a comprehensive usage of classifiers in contemporary Cantonese, readers can refer to Cheung (2007, 344–6) as well as Matthews and Yip (2011, 39, 109–26).

15.3 A Contrastive Analysis of the Use of Classifiers in Historical and Recent Translations of the Four Gospels

In this section, we will compare the use of classifiers as observed in the Cantonese translations of the 2010 edition and the 1880s edition of the four canonical gospels in the *Christian New Testament*. In Section 15.3.1, classifiers for counting and referential purposes will be analyzed, while reduplicated classifiers will be discussed in section 15.3.2.

15.3.1 Classifiers for Counting and Referential Purposes

The ten most frequently used classifiers for counting and referential purposes as observed in the 2010 edition of the contemporary Cantonese translation of the four Gospels are listed in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1 List of Top 10 Classifiers Present in the Contemporary Cantonese Translation of the *Four Gospels*

Matthew (N = 684)		Mark (N = 432)		Luke (N = 720)		John (N = 465)	
Classifier (63)	**#**	**Classifier (50)**	**#**	**Classifier (72)**	**#**	**Classifier (47)**	**#**
個 ko^{33}	247	個 ko^{33}	152	個 ko^{33}	296	個 ko^{33}	167
啲 ti^{55}	144	啲 ti^{55}	89	啲 ti^{55}	110	啲 ti^{55}	103
日 $jɐt^2$	42	日 $jɐt^2$	22	日 $jɐt^2$	51	位 $wɐi^{35}$	43
隻 $tsɛk^3$	25	隻 $tsɛk^3$	15	隻 $tsɛk^3$	20	日 $jɐt^2$	36
班 pan^{55}	19	次 ts^hi^{33}	15	件 kin^{22}	20	件 kin^{22}	16
件 kin^{22}	17	條 t^hiu^{11}	13	人 $jɐn^{11}$	19	次 ts^hi^{33}	11
條 t^hiu^{11}	17	件 kin^{22}	11	次 ts^hi^{33}	16	條 t^hiu^{11}	9
位 $wɐi^{35}$	15	班 pan^{55}	11	位 $wɐi^{35}$	15	年 nin^{11}	6
次 ts^hi^{33}	15	座 $tsɔ^{22}$	9	年 nin^{11}	13	班 pan^{55}	6
句 $kɵy^{33}$	11	位 $wɐi^{35}$	7	條 t^hiu^{11}	11	羣 $k^{wh}ɐn^{11}$	6

In Table 15.1, *N* denotes the total number of classifier tokens in each gospel, while the total number of classifier types is shown in row 2. For instance, 63 different classifiers are found in the *Gospel of Matthew*, while 684 tokens are present. It can be observed that 7 classifiers are overlapping in the *top 10 classifier list* across these four Gospels (highlighted). Note that in contemporary Cantonese, **kɔ³³** 個 is a general classifier used in a countable context in which the number or amount to be expressed is exact, while **ti⁵⁵** 啲 is a general classifier used in an uncountable context or when the number/amount to be expressed is unspecified. One example for each classifier is presented in the following for illustration:

(11)   個 **kɔ³³**

五個餅 (Luke 9:13, 2010)
ŋ¹³   *kɔ³³*   *pɛŋ³⁵*
five   **CL**   loaf
"five loaves"

(12)   啲 **ti⁵⁵**

呢啲工作 (Luke 4:43, 2010)
ni⁵⁵   *ti⁵⁵*   *kɔŋ⁵⁵tsɔk³*
DEM   **CL**   work
"these tasks"

(13)   日 **jɐt²**

三日 (Mark 8:2, 2010)
sam⁵⁵   *jɐt²*
three   **day**
"three days"

(14)   件 **kin²²**

呢件事 (Luke 1:18, 2010)
ni⁵⁵   *kin²²*   *si²²*
DEM   **CL**   matter
"this issue"

(15)　條 **tʰiu¹¹**

両<u>條</u>魚 (Luke 9:13, 2010)
lœŋ¹³　　　　***tʰiu¹¹***　　　*jy³⁵*
two　　　　　**CL**　　　fish
"two fishes"

(16) 位 **wɐi³⁵**

嗰<u>位</u>天使 (Luke 2:13, 2010)
kɔ³⁵　***wɐi³⁵***　*tʰin⁵⁵si³³*
that　**CL**　angel
"that angel"

(17)　次 **tsʰi³³**

得罪你七<u>次</u> (Luke 17:4, 2010)
tɐk⁵tsɵy²²　　　　*nei¹³*　*tsʰɐt⁵*　***tsʰi³³***　　　　　　　　,
trespass.against　2SG　seven　**CL**
"to trespass against thee seven times"

It should be noted that the absence of some frequently observed classifiers in the top 10 list of a gospel does not imply its absence in the original text. In most cases, those classifiers merely occupy a lower position in the frequency list. For example, the sortal classifier commonly used for counting animals, **tsɛk³** 隻, appears in all the four Gospels: the *Gospels of Matthew* (25 tokens), the *Gospel of Mark* (15 tokens), the *Gospel of Luke* (20 tokens), and the *Gospel of John* (3 tokens). Its absence in the top 10 list of the *Gospel of John* is just a result of its low frequency, even lower than the tenth most frequently observed classifier, namely, **kʷʰɐn¹¹** 羣, "crowd" (6 tokens), which is a collective classifier and can also be used to count animals.

Having introduced the distribution of classifiers in the contemporary Cantonese translation of the four Gospels of the 2010 edition, we travel back to the 1880s! The distribution of classifiers for counting and referential purposes in the historical Cantonese translation of the 1880s edition of the four Gospels is shown in Table 15.2.

Table 15.2 List of Top 10 Classifiers Present in the Historical Cantonese Translation of the *Four Gospels*							
Matthew (N = 678)		**Mark (N = 398)**		**Luke (N = 798)**		**John (N = 476)**	
Classifier	**#**	**Classifier**	**#**	**Classifier**	**#**	**Classifier**	**#**
個 kɔ³³	266	個 kɔ³³	184	個 kɔ³³	392	個 kɔ³³	200
的 ti⁵³	210	的 ti⁵³	107	的 ti⁵³	202	的 ti⁵⁵	174
陣 tʃɐn²²	64	隻 tʃɛk³	19	日 jɐt²	59	日 jɐt²	36
日 jɐt²	43	日 jɐt²	17	隻 tʃɛk³	33	陣 tʃɐn²²	15
隻 tʃɛk³	27	條 tʰiu¹¹	16	陣 tʃɐn²²	28	條 tʰiu¹¹	15
條 tʰiu¹¹	22	樣 jœng²²	16	件 kin²²	21	件 kin²²	10
樣 jœng²²	20	間 kan⁵³	11	條 tʰiu¹¹	21	樣 jœng²²	10
間 kan⁵³	9	件 kin²²	10	樣 jœng²²	16	次 tsʰๅ³³	6
次 tsʰๅ³³	9	句 ky³³	10	間 kan⁵³	15	處 ʃy³³	5
人 jɐn¹¹	8	隊 tui²²	8	年 nin¹¹	11	位 wɐi²²	5

Similarly, the overlapping classifiers are highlighted. One example for each of these commonly observed classifiers in historical Cantonese will be given in the following for illustration purposes:

(18)   個 **kɔ³³**

十個城 (Luke 19:17, 1883)
ʃɐp²   kɔ³³   ʃeŋ¹¹
ten   **CL**   city
"ten cities"[2]

(19)   的 **ti⁵³**

呢的衆人 (Mark 8:2, 1882)
ni⁵³   ti⁵³   tʃoŋ³³jɐn¹¹
dem   **CL**   multitude
"these people"

(20)   日 **jɐt²**

三旦 (Mark 8:2, 1882)

sam^{53}   ***jɐt^2***

three   **day**

"three days"

(21)   條 **t^{h}iu^{11}**

呢條標 (John 19:20, 1883)

ni^{53}   ***t^{h}iu^{11}***   *piu^{53}*

DEM   **CL**   title

"this title"

(22)   樣 **jœŋ^{22}**

各樣嘅私慾 (Mark 4:19, 1882)

kɔk^3   ***jœŋ^{22}***   *kɛ^{33}*   *sʔ^{53}jok^2*

every   **CL**   ADN   lust

"the lusts of other things"

Likewise, the absence of some commonly observed classifiers in the top 10 list of a gospel in Table 15.2 does not imply its absence in that gospel. For instance, as shown in Table 15.2, the sortal classifier **kan^{53}** 間, which is commonly used for counting buildings, appearing in all four Gospels except the *Gospel of John*, is merely a consequence of its low frequency in the *Gospel of John* – only one instance is found.

Apparently, three classifiers are shared among both top 10 lists of the 1880s and 2010 editions, namely, **kɔ^{33}** 個 [(11), (18)], **jɐt^2** 日 [(13), (20)], and **t^{h}iu^{11}** 條 [(15), (21)]. Readers who have a basic mastery of the Chinese language should be able to notice the graphical similarity between classifiers 12 and 19, namely, "啲" and "的." In fact, the two allographs are semantically and phonologically identical; the former one is used predominantly in contemporary Cantonese but already appeared as early as 1877 in other Cantonese historical documents, while the frequent appearance of the latter one in the historical documents published in the nineteenth century is observed. However, in the 1880s edition of the four Gospels, only the preserved graph "的" is present, possibly a result of direct transference from earlier translations. The insertion of the mouth radical "口" to the left of the graph "的" is probably related to a historical sound change of this

classifier. On the etymology and historical development of "啲" and "的, " readers can refer to Wong (2010) for details. It is also worth noting that four instances of the graph "的" are also observed in the 2010 edition, albeit its rare presence, if not absence, in contemporary Cantonese vernacular writing. This suggests that in the course of preparing the 2010 edition, the translator(s) might have referred to the 1880s edition rather than translated from scratch. Thus, four classifiers are in fact shared among the top 10 lists of the four Gospels in both editions, namely:

$\mathbf{k\mathfrak{o}^{33}}$ 個, $\mathbf{j\mathrm{e}t^{22}}$ 日, $\mathbf{t^{h}iu^{11}}$ 條, and $\mathbf{ti^{53}/ti^{55}}$ 的/啲

Tables 15.3 and 15.4 list the top 95% most frequently observed classifiers, based on cumulative frequency, in the 2010 and 1880s editions of the four Gospels, respectively.

Table 15.3 The Most Frequently Observed Classifiers Present in the Recent Cantonese Translation of the *Four Gospels*

Rank	Classifier	Frequency	Rel. Freq.	Cul. Freq.	Cul. Rel. Freq.
1	個 $\mathbf{k\mathfrak{o}^{33}}$	862	37.8%	862	37.8%
2	啲/的 $\mathbf{ti^{55}}$	450	19.7%	1312	57.5%
3	日 $\mathbf{j\mathrm{e}t^{2}}$	151	6.6%	1463	64.2%
4	位 $\mathbf{w\mathrm{e}i^{35}}$	80	3.5%	1543	67.7%
5	件 $\mathbf{kin^{22}}$	64	2.8%	1607	70.5%
6	隻 $\mathbf{ts\varepsilon k^{3}}$	63	2.8%	1670	73.2%
7	次 $\mathbf{ts^{h}i^{33}}$	57	2.5%	1727	75.7%
8	條 $\mathbf{t^{h}iu^{11}}$	50	2.2%	1777	77.9%
9	班 $\mathbf{pan^{55}}$	40	1.8%	1817	79.7%
10	座 $\mathbf{ts\mathfrak{o}^{22}}$	28	1.2%	1845	80.9%
11	羣 $\mathbf{k^{wh}\mathrm{e}n^{11}}$	27	1.2%	1872	82.1%
12	句 $\mathbf{k\mathrm{e}y^{33}}$	25	1.1%	1897	83.2%
13	年 $\mathbf{nin^{11}}$	21	0.9%	1918	84.1%
14	人 $\mathbf{j\mathrm{e}n^{11}}$	19	0.8%	1937	85.0%
15	家 $\mathbf{ka^{55}}$	18	0.8%	1955	85.7%
16	倍 $\mathbf{p^{h}ui^{13}}$	16	0.7%	1971	86.4%
17	嚿 $\mathbf{k\mathrm{e}u^{22}}$	15	0.7%	1986	87.1%

18	喬 pʰɔ⁵⁵	14	0.6%	2000	87.7%
19	塊 fɐi³³	14	0.6%	2014	88.3%
20	間 kan⁵³	13	0.6%	2027	88.9%
21	籃 lam¹¹	12	0.5%	2039	89.4%
22	<mark>種 tsong³⁵</mark>	12	0.5%	2051	90.0%
23	粒 nɐp⁵	12	0.5%	2063	90.5%
24	張 tsœŋ⁵⁵	12	0.5%	2075	91.0%
25	代 tɔi²²	12	0.5%	2087	91.5%
26	樣 jœng²²	11	0.5%	2098	92.0%
27	晚 man¹³	11	0.5%	2109	92.5%
28	<mark>組 tsou³⁵</mark>	8	0.4%	2117	92.9%
29	兩 lœŋ³⁵	8	0.4%	2125	93.2%
30	身 sɐn⁵⁵	8	0.4%	2133	93.6%
31	歲 søy³³	6	0.3%	2139	93.8%
32	隊 tøy²²	6	0.3%	2145	94.1%
33	段 tyn²²	6	0.3%	2151	94.3%
34	邊 pin⁵⁵	5	0.2%	2156	94.6%
35	雙 sœŋ⁵⁵	5	0.2%	2161	94.8%
	(Other 61)	119	5%	2280	100%

Table 15.4 The Most Frequently Observed Classifiers Present in the Historical Cantonese Translation of the *Four Gospels*

Rank	Classifier	Frequency	Rel. Freq.	Cul. Req.	Cul. Rel. Freq.
1	個 kɔ³³	1042	38.8%	1042	38.8%
2	的 ti⁵³	693	25.8%	1735	64.5%
3	日 jɐt²	155	5.8%	1890	70.3%
4	陣 tʃɐn²²	114	4.2%	2004	74.6%
5	隻 tʃɛk³	83	3.1%	2087	77.6%
6	條 tʰiu¹¹	74	2.8%	2161	80.4%
7	樣 jœng²²	62	2.3%	2223	82.7%
8	件 kin²²	49	1.8%	2272	84.5%
9	間 kan⁵³	36	1.3%	2308	85.9%
10	句 ky³³	26	1.0%	2334	86.8%
11	嚿 kɐu²²	25	0.9%	2359	787.8%
12	次 tsʰ|³³	24	0.9%	2383	88.7%
13	人 jɐn¹¹	18	0.7%	2401	89.3%
14	年 nin¹¹	18	0.7%	2419	90.0%

15	倍 p^hui^{13}	18	0.7%	2437	90.7%
16	隊 tui^{22}	18	0.7%	2455	91.3%
17	位 $wɐi^{22}$	14	0.5%	2469	91.9%
18	斤 $kɐn^{53}$	11	0.4%	2480	92.3%
19	處 $ʃy^{33}$	11	0.4%	2491	92.7%
20	籃 lam^{11}	11	0.4%	2502	93.1%
21	粒 $nɐp^{5}$	10	0.4%	2512	93.5%
22	笪 tat^{3}	10	0.4%	2522	93.8%
23	世 $ʃɐi^{33}$	9	0.3%	2531	94.2%
24	代 $tɔi^{22}$	9	0.3%	2540	94.5%
25	張 $tʃœŋ^{53}$	8	0.3%	2548	94.8%
	(Other 56)	140	5.2%	2688	100%

In the 2010 edition, 96 classifiers are used, but in the 1880s edition, only 81 are present. Among the top 10 classifiers, 6 are found in both editions, namely, $kɔ^{33}$ 個, ti^{55}/ti^{53} 啲/的, $jɐt^{2}$ 日, kin^{22} 件, 隻 $tsɛk^{3}/tʃɛk^{3}$ 隻, t^hiu^{11} 條, which suggests the prevalent usage of these classifiers in Cantonese since the nineteenth century. It is interesting to see that the cumulative frequency of the tenth most frequently used classifier in the 1880s edition, ky^{33} 句, "sentence," has reached 86.8% already, but its rank counterpart in the 2010 edition, $tsɔ^{22}$ 座, is 80.9% only, with a difference of almost 6%. In Table 15.3, among the 95% most frequently used classifiers in modern Cantonese, three are not found in the entire four Gospels of the 1880s edition, namely, pan^{55} 班, $tsong^{35}$ 種, $tsou^{35}$ 組. All these suggest that the diversity of classifiers used in the 2010 edition is higher than that in the 1880s edition.

It is also interesting to see that the relative frequency of some classifiers underwent a drastic change. For example, there was a reduction in the relative frequency of $tui^{22}/tɵy^{22}$ 隊 from 0.7% in the 1880s edition to 0.3% in the 2010 edition, while the relative frequency of $jœŋ^{22}$ 樣 increased from 0.5% to 2.3%. Do the absence of the three classifiers in the 1880s edition and the drastic change in the relative frequency of some classifiers also suggest that there existed a process of lexical replacement in the history of Cantonese? A comparison of identical verses containing these three classifiers in the two editions was conducted to investigate this conjecture. Our analysis

found that while in most cases, the reduction in the use of classifiers is a result of the employment of other strategies in the course of translation, in other cases, lexical replacement took place.

Example 23 shows a case which employed **tui²²** 隊 as a collective classifier of **jɐn¹¹** 人, "human being," in historical Cantonese, while **tsou³⁵** 組 was employed in contemporary Cantonese translation.

(23)　Luke 9:14

[. . .] 耶穌又對門生話、叫大衆排開坐倒處、每隊五十人。 (1883)

jɛ¹¹s	jɐu	tui	mun¹¹ʃ	wa	, kiu tai²²tʃoŋ³³		pʰai¹	hɔi	tsʰɔ	tou	ʃy³	mui	**tui**	ŋ¹³ʃɐ	jɐn¹¹ .
[. . u⁵³	22	33	ɐŋ⁵³	22	33		1	53	13	35	3	13	22		p²
.]															
Jesus	also	to	disciple	say	ask masses		line. up	PRT	sit	at	place	each	CL	fifty	human

[. . .] 耶穌對佢哋話：「叫羣衆一組一組坐落，每組約五十人。」 (2010)

jɛ¹¹sou⁵⁵	tɐy³³	kʰɵy¹³tɛi²²	wa²²	:
[. . .]				
Jesus	to	3PL	say	

"kiu³	kʷʰɐn¹¹tsoŋ³³	jɐt	**tsou**	jɐt	**tsou**	tsʰɔ lɔk ,	mui¹ **tsou** jœk³	ŋ¹³sɐp² jɐn¹¹ . "
3		5	35	5	35	13 2	3 35	
ask	throng	on	CL	on	CL	sit PRT	each CL approximately	fifty human

"[. . .] And he [Jesus] said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company."

In contemporary Cantonese, **tɵy²²** 隊 is often used to count teams, while the collective classifier for counting groups (of people) is **tsou³⁵** 組; but in historical Cantonese, apparently, **tui²²** 隊 can also be used to count *groups*, while **tsou³⁵/tsu³⁵** 組 is absent in the four Gospels of the 1880s edition. Example 24 shows a similar example which employed **tui²²** 隊 as the collective classifier of pigs in historical Cantonese, while **kʷʰɐn¹¹** 羣 was employed in contemporary Cantonese translation.

(24)　Luke 8:32

[. . .]個的鬼求耶穌准佢入個隊猪處 [. . .] (1883)

[. . .] *kɔ³³ ti⁵³ kʷɐi³⁵ kʰɐu¹¹ jɛ¹¹su⁵³ tʃun³⁵ kʰy¹³ jɐp² kɔ³³* **tui²²** *tʃy⁵⁵ ʃy³³* [. . .]

DEM CL ghost beseech Jesus allow 3SG enter DEM **CL** swine place

[. . .] 鬼就央求耶穌，准佢哋去羣豬處 [. . .] (2010)

[. . .]*kʷɐi³⁵ tsɐu²² jœŋ⁵⁵kʰɐu¹¹ jɛ¹¹sou⁵⁵ , tsɵn³⁵ kʰɵy¹³tei²² hɵy³³* **kʷʰɐn¹¹** *tsy⁵⁵ sy³³* [. . .]

ghost then implore Jesus allow 3PL go **CL** swine place

"[. . .] and they [devils] besought him [Jesus] that he would suffer them to enter into them [. . .]"

In this example, the classifier for counting pigs is **kʷʰɐn¹¹** 羣, depicting *a crowd of pigs*. In contemporary Cantonese, it is also grammatical to say **jat⁵tɵy²²tsy⁵⁵** 一隊豬, but only in the case when pigs are "lining up."

Example 25 shows an instance which employed **jœŋ²²** 樣, "kind," as the generic classifier of an abstract concept, namely, **sɿ⁵³jok²** 私欲, "lust," in historical Cantonese, while **tsong³⁵** 種, "kind," was employed in contemporary Cantonese translation.

(25)　　Mark 4:19

[. . .] 與及各樣嘅私慾、都嚟偪死道理 [. . .] (1882)

[. . .]*jy¹³kʰɐp² kɔk³* **jœŋ²²** *kɛ³³ sɿ⁵³jok² , tou⁵³ lɐi¹¹ pek⁵ sɿ³⁵ tou²²li¹³* [. . .]

and every **CL** ADN lust also come choke die argument

[. . .] 同其他各種慾望入嚟窒息信息嘅生機 [. . .] (2010)

[. . .]*tʰoŋ¹¹ kʰei¹¹tʰa⁵⁵ kɔk³* **tsoŋ³⁵** *jok²mɔŋ² jɐp²lai¹¹ tsɐt²sek⁵ sɵn³³sek⁵ kɛ³³ sɐŋ⁵⁵kei⁵⁵* [. . .]

with other every **CL** desire go.into choke message ADN vitality

"[. . .] and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word [. . .]"

In contemporary Cantonese, the use of **jœŋ²²** 樣 is more restricted, such that it can only be used to count a finite set of nouns (e.g., **jɛ¹³** 嘢, "thing; issue"), but **tsong³⁵** 種 can be used in combination of any nouns. As reflected in the four Gospels, in historical Cantonese, **jœŋ²²** 樣 seems to have been used in combination of any nouns, abstract or concrete, for example, **tou²²li¹³** 道理, "argument" (John 4:25), **tʃɐn⁵³li¹³** 真理, "truth" (John 16:13), **sɿ²²** 事, "issue" (Marco 1:38), **tʃeng³³** 症, "disease" (Marco 1:34), **pʰi³³jy²²** 譬喻, "parable" (Marco 4:13), **ʃin²²ji²²** 善義, "righteousness" (Matthew 3:15), and **pɛng²²tʰong³³** 病痛, "sickness" (Matthew 4:23).

Example 26 employed **wui¹¹** 回, "time," as a verbal classifier of the actions **tɐk⁵tsui²²** 得罪, "trespass against," and **fan⁵³tʃyn³³** 番轉, "turn round," in historical Cantonese, while **tsʰᴎ³³** 次, "time," was employed in contemporary Cantonese translation.

(26)　　Luke 17:4

倘若佢一日七回得罪你、亦七回番轉嚟話 [. . .] (1883)

tʰɔŋ³⁵	*jœk*	*kʰy¹*	*jɐt*	*jɐt*	*tsʰɐt⁵*	***wui¹***	*tɐk⁵tsui²²*		*ni¹³*	*,jek²*	*tsʰɐt⁵*	***wui¹***	*fan⁵³tʃyn³*	*lɐi¹*	*wa²*	*. .*
2	*3*	*5*	*2*		*1*				*13*			*1*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*.*
if	3SG	on da e y	seve n	CL	trespass.agains t	2S G	als o	seve n	CL	turn.roun d	PRT	say

若佢喺一日內得罪你七次，每一次都回頭對你話 [. . .] (2010)

jœk²	*kʰɵy*	*hɐi*	*jɐt*	*jɐt*	*nɔi²*	*tɐk⁵tsɵy²²*	*nei¹³*	*tsʰɐt⁵*	*tsʰᴎ³³*	*,mui¹³*	*jɐt⁵*	*tsʰᴎ³³*	*tou⁵⁵*	*wui¹¹tʰɐu¹¹*	*tɵy³³*	*nei¹³*	*wa²²*	*. .*
	13	*35*	*5*	*2*	*2*		*13*	*5*	*33*	*13*	*5*	*33*	*55*	*u¹¹*	*33*	*13*	*22*	*.*
if	3SG	LOC	on da y	da de	insi de	trespass.aga inst	2S G	seve n	CL	eac h	on e	CL	als o	turn.rou nd	to	2S G	say

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying . . ."

In contemporary Cantonese, **tsʰi³³** 次 is an unmarked classifier for counting the number of times of an action. Although there exists a difference in the word order between historical and contemporary Cantonese translation, in this context, the use of **tsʰi³³** is still an unmarked choice in colloquial contemporary Cantonese even if the classifier is in a preverbal position. The use of **wui¹¹** 回 as a classifier is no longer common in contemporary Cantonese; it is usually used idiomatically in some particular context, like **m¹¹ hɐi²² jɐt⁵ wui¹¹ si²²** 唔係一回事, "not the same thing/issue."

Example 27 shows a verse which employs **tat³** 笪 as a classifier of **tʰin¹¹** 田, "field," in historical Cantonese, while **fɐi³³** 塊 is used in contemporary Cantonese translation:

(27)　　Matthew 13:44

[. . .] 好歡喜去賣嘵所有嘅、嚟買個笪田。 (1882)

18

[. . .] *hou³⁵ fun⁵³hi³⁵ hy³³ mai²² hiu⁵³ ʃɔ³⁵jɐu¹³ kɛ³³* , *lɐi¹¹ mai¹³ kɔ³³* **tat³** *tʰin¹¹* .

very joyous go sell PFV all NOM PRT buy DEM **CL** field

[. . .] 然後好高興將自己所有嘅都變賣，去買嗰塊田。 (2010)
[. . . *jin¹¹hɐu²* *hou³* *kou⁵⁵heŋ* *tsœŋ* *tsi²²kei* *sɔ³⁵jɐu* *kɛ³* *tou⁵* *pin³³mai* , *hɵy³* *mai¹* *kɔ³* **fai³** *tʰin¹* .]
₂ ⁵ ₃₃ ₅₅ ₃₅ ₁₃ ₃ ⁵ ₂₂ ₃ ₃ ⁵ ³ ₁

afterwards very Joyous PRT self all NOM also sell.off go buy that **CL** field

"[. . .] and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

The previous example shows a typical case of lexical replacement. The classifier **tat³³** survives in contemporary Cantonese but is only used to count places or land parcels (e.g., **jɐt⁵ tat³ tei²²fɔŋ⁵⁵** 一笪地方, "a place"), as seen in example 28, while the canonical classifier for **tʰin¹¹**, "field," is **fɐi³³**.

(28) Marco 14:32

佢哋到一笪地方，名客西馬尼 [. . .] (2010)
*kʰɵy¹³tei²² tou³³ jɐt⁵ **tat³** tei²²fɔŋ⁵⁵ , meŋ¹¹ hak³sɐi⁵⁵ma¹³nei¹¹* . . .
3PL arrive one **CL** place name GN
"And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane . . ."

It should be noted that, among the classifiers with a drastic change of the relative frequency in Tables 15.3 and 15.4, only a number of cases reflect the process of lexical replacement, while many other cases demonstrate a result of the application of different translation strategies. As shown in example 29, the lexical item **kʷʰɐn¹¹tsong³³** 羣衆, "throng," was used in the 1880s edition, when **jɐt⁵ tai²² pan⁵⁵ jɐn¹¹** 一大班人, "a huge group of people," is used in the 2010 edition. In contemporary Cantonese, **jɐt⁵ tai²² pan⁵⁵ jɐn¹¹** sounds more colloquial, while **kʷʰɐn¹¹tsong³³** is usually used in higher register.

(29)   John 6:5

耶穌舉眼、見羣衆嚟到佢處 [. . .] (1883)
*jɛ¹¹su⁵³ ky³⁵ ŋan¹³ , kin³³ **kʷʰɐn¹¹tsoŋ³³** lɐi¹¹ tou³³ kʰy¹³ ʃy³³* [. . .]

Jesus	lift	eye	see	**throng**	come to	3SG	place

耶穌抬頭，睇見一大班人嚟到佢面前 [. . .] (2010)

*jɛ¹¹sou⁵⁵ tʰɔi¹¹tʰɐu¹¹ , tʰɐi³⁵ kin³³ jɐt⁵ tai²² **pan⁵⁵** jɐn¹¹ lɐi¹¹ tou³³ kʰɵy¹³ min²²tsʰin¹¹* · · ·

Jesus	gain.ground	see	see	one big	**CL**	human	come to	3SG	in.front.of

"When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him [. . .]"

In example 30, the general classifier **kɔ³³** 個 is used to count the noun **tʰin⁵³sɿ³³** 天使, "angel," in the 1880s edition, but the honorific classifier for counting people, **wɐi³⁵** 位, is utilized in contemporary Cantonese translation. In the 1880s edition, **wɐi²²** was also observed, for example, in verse 30, when it is employed to count **tʰin⁵³sɿ³³** 天使, "angel." In this case, the selection of classifiers seems to have been a matter of the choice of the translators, but no linguistic factor was involved.

(30)   Luke 2:13

忽然間、有大隊天軍、同埋個天使讚美上帝話。 (1883)

fɐt⁵jin¹¹kan⁵₃ , jɐu¹³ tai²₂ tui²₂ tʰin⁵³kʷɐn⁵³ , tʰoŋ¹¹mai¹₁ kɔ³₃ tʰin⁵³sɿ³₃ tsan³³mi¹₃ ʃɐŋ²²tɐi³₃ wa²₂ .

suddenly		EXIST	big	CL	heavenly.host	and		CL	angel	praise	God	say

忽然，有大隊天軍同嗰位天使，讚美上帝話： (2010)

fɐt⁵jin¹¹ , jɐu¹³ tai²₂ tɵy²₂ tʰin⁵⁵kʷɐn⁵⁵ tʰoŋ¹₁ kɔ³₅ wɐi³₅ tʰin⁵⁵si³₃ , tsan³³mei¹₃ sœŋ²²tɐi³₃ wa²₂ :

suddenly		EXIST	big	CL	heavenly.host	and	that	CL	angel	praise	God	say

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying."

15.3.2 Classifier Reduplication

Statistics of classifier reduplication are excluded from Tables 15.1 to 15.4. They are presented in Tables 15.5 and 15.6.

Table 15.5 Reduplicated Classifiers in the Cantonese Translation of the 2010 Edition of the *Four Gospels* (N = 11)

Matthew		Mark		Luke		John	
Type	**#**	**Type**	**#**	**Type**	**#**	**Type**	**#**
人人 jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹	1	種種 tsoŋ³⁵tsoŋ³⁵	1	人人 jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹	2	個個 kɔ³³kɔ³³	2
句句 kɵy³³kɵy³³	1			日日 jɐt²jɐt²	2		
日日 jɐt²jɐt²	1			樣樣 jœŋ²² jœŋ²²	1		

Table 15.6 Reduplicated Classifiers in the Cantonese Translation of the 1880s edition of the *Four Gospels* (N = 32)

Matthew		Mark		Luke		John	
Type	**#**	**Type**	**#**	**Type**	**#**	**Type**	**#**
個個 kɔ³³kɔ³³	4	個個 kɔ³³kɔ³³	3	個個 kɔ³³kɔ³³	4	個個 kɔ³³kɔ³³	3
世世 ʃɐi³³ʃɐi³³	1	人人 jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹	1	人人 jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹	3		
人人 jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹	1	件件 kin²²kin²²	1	日日 jɐt²jɐt²	3		
句句 ky³³ky³³	1	樣樣 jœŋ²² jœŋ²²	1	處處 ʃy³³ʃy³³	1		
日日 jɐt²jɐt²	1			世世 ʃɐi³³ʃɐi³³	1		
				對對 tui³³tui³³	1		
				年年 nin¹¹nin¹¹	1		
				樣樣 jœŋ²² jœŋ²²	1		

Table 15.5 shows the statistics of the reduplicated classifiers present in the 2010 edition. It can be observed that only **jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹** 人人, "everybody," and **jɐt²jɐt²** 日日, "every day," are observed more than once. Table 15.6 shows the statistics of the 1880s edition. It can be seen that **kɔ³³kɔ³³** 個個 exists in all four Gospels, while **jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹** 人人 is present in three Gospels but not in the *Gospel of John*.

Apparently, the number of reduplicated classifiers was reduced from 32 in the 1880s edition to 11 in the 2010 edition. Does it reflect a historical syntactic change in Cantonese?

By comparing the same verse in both editions, it is found that the reduction in usage of reduplicated classifiers is usually a result of a change of translating strategy when the idea of *each individual* is uttered. In some cases, a universal quantifier was used. For example:

(31)   Luke 1:65

topic comment
鄰里<u>個個</u>驚慌 [. . .] (1883)
$lun^{11}li^{13}$ **$kɔ^{33}kɔ^{33}$** $keŋ^{53}fɔŋ^{53}$ [. . .]
neighbour   **everybody**   panic

subject predicate
鄰居<u>都</u>好驚奇 [. . .] (2010)
$lɵn^{11}kɵy^{55}$ **tou^{55}** hou^{35} $keŋ^{55}k^hei^{11}$ [. . .]
neighbour   **also**   very   surprised
"And fear came on all that dwelt round about them [. . .]"

In the 1880s edition, the reduplicated classifier **$kɔ^{33}kɔ^{33}$** 個個 is used to express the idea of *every neighbour*. In the 2010 edition, the universal quantifier **tou^{55}** 都 is used to express the idea of *all neighbours*. In addition, there also exists a change in syntactic construction. In example 31, topic-comment construction is used in the 1883 edition such that **$lun^{11}li^{13}$** 鄰里, "neighbour," is the topic, while **$kɔ^{33}kɔ^{33}$ $keŋ^{53}fɔŋ^{53}$** 個個驚慌, "everybody is panicking," is the comment. In the 2010 edition, the subject-predicate construction is used, with **$lɵn^{11}kɵy^{55}$** 鄰居, "neighbour," being the subject, while **tou^{55} hou^{35} $keŋ^{55}k^hei^{11}$** 都好驚奇, "all being very surprised," is the predicate. The objective truth expressed by these two translations is identical even though different linguist constructions were used, which also leads to a shift in focus.

In other cases, other lexical items were used to express the identical objective truth. For instance:

(32)   Luke 4:20

        topic   comment

   . . . 在會堂嘅、人人都定眼睇住佢。 (1883)

. . . *tsɔi²²* *wui²²tʰɔŋ¹¹* *kɛ³³* , **jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹** *tou⁵³* *tɛŋ²²* *ŋan¹³* *tʰɐi³⁵* *tʃy²²* *kʰy¹³* .

LOC   synagogue   NOM   **human-human**   also fasten eye see   ASP 3SG

        subject   predicate

. . . 全會堂嘅人都定眼睇住佢。 (2010)

. . . **tsʰyn¹¹** *wui²²tʰɔŋ¹¹ kɛ³³* *jɐn¹¹*   *tou⁵⁵ tɛŋ²²* *ŋan¹³* *tʰɐi³⁵ tsy²²* *kʰɵy¹³* .

   entire synagogue ATTR human also fasten eye   see   ASP 3SG

". . . And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him."

The reduplicated classifier **jɐn¹¹jɐn¹¹** 人人, *literally* "human-human," is used to express the idea of *everybody* in the 1880s edition, while the universal quantifier **tsʰyn¹¹** 全, "entire," is used with **wui²²tʰɔŋ¹¹ kɛ³³ jɐn¹¹** 會堂嘅人 to convey the idea of *people in the whole synagogue* in the 2010 edition. There also exists a difference in sentence construction such that a topic-comment is used in the former while a subject-predicate is used in the latter edition. Similarly, the objective truth expressed by these two constructions is identical, although there is a subtle difference in focus.

In a number of cases, the concept of *each individual* is expressed by other constructions, such as:

(33)   Luke 11:3

我哋需用嘅糧、日日俾我哋。 (1883)

ŋɔ¹³ti²² sy⁵³ joŋ²² kɛ³³ lœŋ¹¹ , **jɐt²jɐt²**   *pi³⁵* *ŋɔ¹³ti²²* .

1PL   need use ATTR grain   **day-day** give 1PL

賜俾我哋每日需要嘅飲食。 (2010)

tsʰi³³   *pei³⁵ ŋɔ¹³tei²²* **mui¹³ jɐt²** *sɵy⁵⁵jiu³³* *kɛ³³*   *jɐm³⁵sek²* .

bestow to   1PL   **each day** need   ATTR diet

"Give us day by day our daily bread."

The reduplicated classifier **jɐt²jɐt²** 日日, *literally* "day-day," is used to express the idea of *every day* in the 1880s edition, while in the 2010 edition, the determiner **mui¹³** 每, "every" + *classifier*, is used to express the same idea.

It is also worth noting that in some cases, other lexical items are used to convey the idea of *each individual*, like:

(34)   Luke 9:6

[. . .] 處處傳福音、醫人嘅病。
[. . .] *ʃy³³ʃy³³ tʃʰyn¹¹ fok⁵jɐm⁵⁵ , ji⁵³   jɐn¹¹   kɛ³³ pɛŋ²²*   .
   place- preach gospel   cure human POSS sickness
   place

[. . .]   傳福音，到處醫病。
[. . .]   *tsʰyn¹¹ fok⁵jɐm⁵⁵ , **tou³³tsʰy³³**   ji⁵⁵   pɛŋ²²*   .
   preach gospel   **everywhere** cure sickness
   "[. . .] preaching the gospel, and healing every where."

In example 34, the reduplicated classifier **ʃy³³ʃy³³** 處處, *literally*, "place-place," is used to express the idea of *everywhere* in the 1880s edition, while in the 2010 edition, the lexical item **tou³³tsʰy³³** 到處, "everywhere," is used instead. In terms of lexical choice, in contemporary Cantonese, **ʃy³³ʃy³³** is rarely used, while **tou³³tsʰy³³** is only used in a formal context (e.g., news reports). In this context, the word **tsɐu⁵⁵wɐi¹¹** 周圍 is most frequently used in colloquial Cantonese according to the authors' native intuition.

In examples 31 to 34, other strategies are employed to replace the reduplicated classifiers in the 1880s edition to express the idea of *each individual* in the 2010 edition. Readers may wonder whether other strategies were replaced by the reduplicated classifiers in the 2010 edition. Let us take a look at the following example:

(35)   Luke 4:15

喺各會堂教人、眾人歸榮佢。

$hɐi^{35}$	$kɔk^3$	$wui^{22}t^hɔŋ^{11}$	kau^{33}	$jɐn^{11}$	, $tʃoŋ^{33}jɐn^{11}$	$k^wɐi^{53}weŋ^{11}$	k^hy^{13} .
LOC	every	synagogue	teach	human	everybody	glorify	3SG

佢喺各會堂教導人，人人都稱讚佢。

$k^hɵy^{13}$	$hɐi^{35}$	$kɔk^3$	$wui^{22}t^hɔŋ^{11}$	$kau^{33}tou^{22}$	$jɐn^{11}$	, $jɐn^{11}jɐn^{11}$	tou^{55}	$ts^heŋ^{55}tsan^{33}$	$k^hɵy^{13}$.
3SG	LOC	every	synagogue	teach	human	**human-human**	also	glorify	3SG

"And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all."

In the 1880s edition, the pronoun **$tʃoŋ^{33}jɐn^{11}$** 眾人, "everybody," is used to refer to all the people in the synagogue, but in the 2010 edition, the reduplicated classifier **$jɐn^{11}jɐn^{11}$** 人人, literally "human-human," is used to convey the same objective truth, albeit a different focus. In terms of lexical choice, in contemporary Cantonese, **$tʃoŋ^{33}jɐn^{11}$** 眾人 is only used in a formal context, while **$jɐn^{11}jɐn^{11}$** 人人 is often used in a colloquial context. This seems to suggest that the construction employed for expressing a collective concept is likely a matter of the choice of the translators. Some readers may make a conjecture that reduplicated classifiers become less popular in contemporary Cantonese as observed from their reduced usage in the 2010 edition. As native speakers, the authors confirm that the use of reduplicated classifiers is still prevalent in contemporary Cantonese. For this reason, investigations into more Cantonese historical documents should be made before jumping to a rash conclusion.

15.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we first introduced the "Database of the 19th Century (1865–1894) Cantonese Christian Writings," which provides a public data repository by digitizing 15 Cantonese Christian classics published in mid- to late nineteenth century with approximately 466,000 characters. Then, we provided a statistical account and a contrastive study on the use of classifiers present in the Cantonese translations of the 1880s edition and the 2010 edition of the four canonical gospels in the *Christian New Testament*. Our results show that while some classifiers have been used most

regularly since the nineteenth century, such as **kɔ³³** 個 (a general classifier), **kin²²** 件 (piece), **tʰiu¹¹** 條 (strip), **tsɛk³³** 隻 (mostly for counting animals and dolls), and **ti⁵⁵** 的/啲, the frequency of some classifiers in the 2010 edition drops drastically as a result of lexical replacement. For example, **tat³³** 笪 (for counting fields) is replaced by **fai³³** 塊. We also found that the reduction in frequency of reduplicated classifiers is a result of changes in translation strategy rather than a reduction in usage in contemporary Cantonese.

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1 The database is accessible publicly through this link:

www.polyu.edu.hk/cbs/hkchristdb/?fbclid=IwAR1S5m5RB9WcrZO-

D0E9xrV4apNAb4KYoX-mtBoh0Nt4WWuscS7HuE3XpUM.

2 All the English translations of the verses in the *Bible* are adopted from the *King James Version*

unless otherwise specified. <www.o-bible.com/kjv.html>.