The Current Social Recognition and Use of Macao Local Words

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Abstract: Macao local words mainly consist of loan words from Portuguese and some special words with regional characteristics. This study selected 87 Macao local words and conducted a semi-structured interview with 6 individuals in a higher institution in Macao where multilingualism is typical of its working environment. The result shows that the participants showed different perceptions and attitudes towards the local words. Their recognition of these words was generally poor. With the new development of Macau society, the trend of integration of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the increasingly diversified population of Macau, most of the Portuguese foreign words and Macau special words are continuing to withdraw from people's language life. It is particularly evident in the multilingual working contexts. All language users in such an environment take a naturally accepted language attitude. Among the 87 Macao local words selected, only 12.6% of them currently have a high degree of recognition and are still widely circulated and used. These words have the linguistic "landmark" significance in the Macao local words.

Keywords: Macao Local Words, Multilingualism, Interview, Language Life

1. Introduction

Tian proposes the conception of "community word" to refer to the specific words that circulate in a certain social area and reflect the politics, economy, and culture of the community [1]. There are some community words shared by Hong Kong and Macao. Meanwhile, some distinctive words which are used only in Macau or originated from Macau are more influenced by the Portuguese language, Macau social institution, culture, and even unique gaming industry. Different from neighboring Hong Kong, Macao local words are one of the important manifestations of Macau community words. With the new development of Macau society, these local words gradually show the characteristics of focus groups. In a realistic context today, do people from different communities still know and use these words? Currently, the sources of permanent inhabitants and temporary residents for work in Macau are very diverse, and their language backgrounds are also different. As a result, the professional environment in Macau is often multilingual and multicultural. People gradually pick up hierarchical cognitive performance and adoption attitude towards Macau local words in the multiple working contexts which reflect the diverse and hierarchical characteristics of the Macau population. The individuals in these contexts are the samples of current Macau language users at present. This leads to our research questions: In a randomly selected Macau multiple working contexts, how do typical individuals understand and use Macau local words? What language attitude will be reflected in it?

2. Selection of Case Respondents

According to the detailed results of the 2016 mid-term census conducted by the Government of Macao Special Administrative Region Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) [2], the proportion of people who immigrated to Macau due to immigration, employment, and education has risen to 59.3%. As regard nationality and ethnicity, Chinese which accounts for 88.4% of the population combined with other diverse population sources such as Portuguese, Filipino, and Vietnamese make the source structure of Macao residents highly complicated. As to language proficiency, about 80% are proficient in Chinese and Cantonese and due to the

integration of new immigrants in recent years, people who are able to use Mandarin or English fluently have increased year by year, while people who speak Portuguese fluently have declined slightly. Su & Piao conduct a sample survey on the language use of students in elementary and secondary schools and universities and public places in Macau, they notice that Mandarin is second only to Cantonese in social communication in Macao, more than 70% of the respondents believe that Mandarin is the most important or second most important, yet Portuguese has its historical origins and a relatively stable official status in Macau and English shows strong competitiveness and development space in the actual pragmatic environment [3].

The working contexts in Macau have become more obviously diversified, with the development of regional integration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in recent years. The dominant language of multiple working contexts is different as a result of various staff composition:

(a) Chinese and Portuguese are the official required written language of legal institutions and government departments;

(b) in the education environment, different schools (e.g., Chinese school, Portuguese school, church school, international school) vary in the written materials and dominant spoken language according to the purpose of the school;

(c) news media, city slogans, public service announcements, and warnings are mainly in Chinese, English, and Portuguese.

Overall, Portuguese is mostly employed in written presentations, while Cantonese, Mandarin, and English are mostly used for oral communication in multiple working contexts of Macau. The selection of oral language (s) which involve Cantonese, Mandarin, English, and Portuguese is related to the nature of the work in this field and the background of the staff. Some staffs who master multiple languages need to switch frequently between different languages.

Macau society has always been open and extremely tolerant of diverse languages and cultures. Several issues are difficult to be observed in quantitative statistics, but by approaching typical individuals in Macao's multilingual language users, acquainting their background, and investigating their recognition and acceptance of Macao local words, it is possible to obtain more information. Issues involve: (a) do Macau local words that emerged and used in Macau's history still have a wide range of recognition and circulation among today's diverse population in the process of continuous integration of residents of Macau and new immigrants from mainland China and other countries? (b) while tolerating multiple languages and cultures, are Macau local words also known and understood by more foreign population? (c) how is the attitude of local and foreign people towards these words? Therefore, in this study, we collected data by case interview. 6 participants who are faculty members in the diverse working context of a Macau university were randomly selected as typical cases. The age

of them ranges from 23-51. The gender distribution is presented according to the gender ratio that naturally exists in this work department. The types of community identities represented by the participants include generational residents (世代澳门居民), immigrant from mainland China, employee with Mainland China identity and Non-Resident Domestic Worker Identification Card of Macau (Blue Card), employees from Taiwan and Portugal. All have lived or worked in Macau for more than 2 years, and one of the typical individuals of Macau residents have lived in Macau for more than 50 years. The current residence of them is in Macau or Zhuhai. The preferred common languages or community variants of languages are Cantonese, Mandarin in Mainland of China, Chinese in Taiwan area, Portuguese, and English. Details of participants see Table 1.

3. Selection of Words and Interview Process

Macau is the first city where the West meets the East and finally get integrated. The contact between foreign languages and local languages is so frequent that it left a deep mark on the local vocabulary. Macau local words mainly come from two sources:

a. many of them are loan words from Portuguese. Early in languages contact, transliteration was the most common way to directly translate Portuguese words according to the pronunciation of Cantonese, e.g. 加沙—casa. Also, there are several words freely translated from Portuguese, e.g. 前地—largo, Since the early development of Macau was deeply impacted by Portuguese culture, institution, and customs, some loan words are still used today.

b. there are many industry and customs words that are unfamiliar to outlanders, like many jargons and terms in the gaming industry are only understood by locals or people familiar with the local culture.

Thus, the words used in this interview include two groups:

(1) Group A contains 27 loan words, which are transliterated on the basis of the pronunciation of Portuguese and Cantonese mostly. Some appeared in *Aomen Jilüe (*澳门纪略*)* that written during the Qianlong reign of the Qing Dynasty, and some appeared with the deeper Chinese-Portuguese bilingual contacts.

(2) Group B contains 60 words that once had a certain circulation in Macau.

The selected objects defined in this study include Portuguese-origin loan words that once had been used or still in use and industry-specific words of Macao society, all belong to the Macau local words[1]. The explanations of some Macao local Cantonese words in the vocabulary partly refer to Tang [4].

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[1] For the further explanation of some Macao local Cantonese words in the vocabulary of this research, please refer to Tang (2008: 24-29).

Table 1. Basic Information of participants in Multiple working Context in Macau[2].

Name	Age	Gender	Identity	Residence	Period staying in Macau	Language used
Tina	51	Female	generational residents	Macau	51 years	Cantonese, English, Mandarin
Alice	26	Female	generational residents	Macau	26 years	Cantonese/ Mandarin
Mary	23	Female	Immigrant from Guangdong	Macau	3 years	Cantonese/ Mandarin
Wendy	30	Female	Employee from Jiangxi	Zhuhai	9 years	Mandarin/ Cantonese
Elena	37	Female	Employee from Taiwan	Macau	4 years	Taiwan's Chinese/ Spanish / English
João	26	Male	Portuguese	Macau	2 years	Portuguese/Mandarin/English/Cantonese

Table 2. 27 loan words from Portuguese used for the recognition of Macao local words (Group A).

Macau local words	Portuguese	Meaning	Macau local words	Portuguese	Meaning
阿囡薯	arroz	米饭	煲沙	bolsa	奖学金
碧架	bica	浓咖啡	马介休	bacalhau	鳕鱼
大孖地	tomate	西红柿	亚冬鱼	atum	金枪鱼
骨度	quatro	四	加沙	casa	家
科假	folga	轮班制之休息	啦打	lata	厚脸皮
妈啦	mala	手提包	妹路檬	muito bom	非常好
欧拿	aula	课	司打	Senado	议事会
沙巴度	sapato	皮鞋	梳把	sopa	浓汤
司沙	sisa	物业转移税	问打	mandar	命令
些菲	chefe	上司	阿丢	tio	伯父
割头发	cortar cabelo	剪发	甲必单	capitão	船长
前地	largo	大型建筑物前的空地	文案	letrado	公务员中的文书 (职位)
职阶	escalão	职程制度中的级别	综合体	complexo	建筑合成物，即高层建筑
嘟嘟	tudo	全部, 所有			

Table 3. 60 Macao regional special words used for the recognition of Macao local words (Group B).

YP 仔 (juvenile offender), 博彩 (gaming industry), 白鸽票 (gaming in the Qing dynasty), 百家乐 (baccarat), 泵波拿 (bingo gaming), 牌官 (dealer), 迭码仔 (gaming intermediary), 揲码仔 (gaming intermediary), 荷官 (dealer), 黑庄 (unethical dealer or banker), 跟风客 (follow suit player), 鬼牌 (metaphor to "squeezed card"), 马交 (Macao), 葡国鸡 (curried chicken), 行为纸 (certificate of criminal record), 人情纸 (leave form), 医生纸 (doctor's note), 特警 (tactical police), 司警 (judiciary police), 堂区 (parish), 红毛坟场 (cemetery of westerners), 红毛装 (a hairstyle for man), 买关 (departure by illegal means), 打老虎 (to win the JACKPOT with slot machine), 大眼鸡 (snapper), 地牌 (a term of pai gow poker which indicates the four directions), 地翁 (grandmother), 断缆 (to be interrupted), 天牌 (a term of pai gow poker which indicate twenty fours solar terms), 天翁 (grandfather), 泥码 (non-negotiable chips), 牛仔 (misbehaving man), 老笠 (robbery), 蓝禀 (the blue paper used by citizens to deliver letters to government agencies), 电兔 (electric white rabbit for training greyhound racing), 狗师 (the person in charge of training greyhound), 狗房 (dog raising and training department), 新狗赛 (greyhound racing of the dogs that attend racing for the first time), 蛊惑狗 (shrewd and cunning man), 揩天 (to sniff thinner), 开目 (to fight), 开花 (dealer), 冧价 (big price cut), 起步笼 (a row of boxes for greyhound racing), 潜水货 (early term for smuggled goods), 中宝 (to win a lottery), 沙子 (refers to "rice"), 收马 (recruit new members), 手放 (the trainer puts on the leash to let the dogs run during morning exercise), 日牌 (refers to "elder brother"), 踩线 (to case the site), 司沙 (property transfer tax), 细方 (Mahjong), 细花 (refers to "younger sisiter"), 揸骡仔 (to put up with a very difficult job), 摇脚丸 (ecstasy), 咬灰 (refers to "drug"), 饮可乐 (police officers are punished for violations), 揾烂脚 (begging for money without dignity form the gamblers who won money), 文雀 (refers to "thief")

Table 4. Word recognition situation of the respondents from multiple working contexts in Macau.

Participant	Often used	Occasionally used	Know but do not use	Try to guess the meaning	No idea
Tina	17	3	3	7	57
Alice	11	2	5	6	63
Mary	10	3	3	6	65
Wendy	2	4	2	0	79
Elena	1	2	1	2	81
João	6	5	5	6	65

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[2] The researcher obtained the participants' consent to use this basic information in this research, and I would like to thank them. Their names in the text are aliased.

This research applies a semi-structured interview, which contains:

(1) The first part is word recognition. All interviewees had to browse through all the above terms, express and mark the following situations: often used, occasionally used, know but do not use, try to guess the meaning, and no idea.

(2) The second part is a dialogue. Questions are: (a) among these words, which are you most familiar with and will use? (b) if there are words rarely or not used, what are the reasons? (c) if these words gradually disappear, will you feel pity? It will start naturally based on the answers, and whether to follow up or extend will be decided according to the specific answers of interviewees.

4. Results

4.1. Recognition of Group A and B

In the first part, recognition of 27 loan words from Portuguese (mostly transliteration) in Group A, 6 respondents identified 6 words totally, which involve:

(1) 前地, refers to the open space in front of large buildings, comes from the Portuguese *largo*. Macau has preserved many 前地 from the the old era and still used today, such as *Largo do Senado* (议事亭前地), *Largo de Lila*u (亚婆井前地), and *Largo da Sé* (大堂前地), *etc*.

(2) 文案, correspond *letrado* in Portuguese, used in Macau to specifically refer to clerical positions in government and those who hold this position.

(3) 职阶, correspond *escalão* in Portuguese, refers to the grade in occupational system.

(4) 综合体, correspond *complexo* in Portuguese, refers to large high-rise buildings。

(5) 马介休, correspond *bacalhau* in Portuguese, refers to cod. In Portuguese cuisine, there are dishes made with cod using different cooking techniques. This name and its dishes are still in use in Macau to this day.

(6) 亚冬鱼, correspond *atum* in Portuguese, refers to tuna. It is still used in Macau, which is different from the equivalents in Hong Kong coming from English.

For the 60 social words in Group B that had a certain circulation in Macau, 6 respondents totally identified 23 words, as follows:

马交, 葡国鸡, 特警, 司警, 堂区, 行为纸, 人情纸, 医生纸, 踩线, 博彩, 白鸽票, 百家乐, 泵波拿, 牌官, 荷官, 泥码, 黑庄, 迭码仔, 揽码仔, 老笠, 文雀, 撠烂脚, 揸骡仔。

Among these 23 words, some are commonly used words until now, such as 堂区, which correspond to 社区—*community*. 行为纸 is the certificate of no criminal record of residents. 人情纸 refers to the leave application submitted by the employee to the employer. 医生纸 refers to a medical certificate issued by a doctor. Others are mostly terms used in the gaming industry, which are not well recognized by the public who are not familiar with this industry. But some have already gained some familiarity, e.g. 荷官 means the practitioners who are responsible for dealing cards and processing chips; 白鸽票 is a gambling game popular in Guangdong since the Qing Dynasty. Different from the words used in the gaming industry, terms like 电兔, 新狗赛, 狗房 related to the dog racing industry have become Macau local words since the opening of the *Macau Yet Yuen Canidrome* (澳门逸园赛狗场) in 1931. However, with the end of the Macau Dog Racing in July 2018, these words will gradually withdraw from the language life and become historical words.

Among the total number of identified above, the respondent with the most identified words was the Macau resident Tina, who identified 23 from the two sets and proposed another expression related to 职阶 is 职级, which appears more often in spoken language.[3]

The main difficulty of older generational resident in recognizing Portuguese loanwords lies in that she has never studied Portuguese and does not understand transliterated loanwords derived from Portuguese. Young residents believe that with the development of society, some Macao local words have been less circulated in the public context or only belong to a relatively narrow industry. The only interviewee who currently lives in Zhuhai did not recognize many and even said she could not guess. This interviewee was the only individual who gave up the guessing strategy. Her resident place is not in Macau makes her feel unnecessary to understand and study the local words. It is difficult to recognize words for the Portuguese interviewee with the unfamiliarity with Cantonese, he can only speculate the transliterated loan words. The interviewee from Taiwan deliberately stated that she paid less attention to these words and could only recognize or guess very few words, because her work and life in Macau hardly involved the communication of Cantonese. The local words are more frequently used by older generational resident than the younger ones. Compared with interviewees live in Zhuhai and from Taiwan, the number of words used and guessed by Portuguese respondent is slightly higher, for he used bold guessing and associative strategies towards the loan words. During the word recognition, he specifically explained that if he can obtain more Cantonese, he will speculate more loan words base on the pronunciation of Cantonese.

4.2. Interview Dialogue Feedback Analysis

In the dialogue part, main feedback in the process of recognizing is as follows:

(1) Feedback on Group A (loan words from Portuguese)

As an older generational resident, Tina's first feedback was: "These are all from Portuguese, how would we know?" Both Alice and Mary, as the younger, said that they had never learned Portuguese, so it was difficult to understand the meaning. Wendy, who lives in Zhuhai, said as soon as she saw the words: "I may not be able to help anything. I don't know these words at first glance." After careful identification,

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[3] 职阶 and 职级 are two related terms, which are applied to the occupational system of the Macau public functionary.

she said: "While taking buses I often hear the word 前地— *open space* in the name of some stations, but I have no idea about the meaning." Elena from Taiwan bluntly said: "These are all words from Portuguese, and I rarely use them in my life and work. I only know some about food, such as 马介休 —*cod*." João, a Portuguese who is proficient in Mandarin, said: "Many of these words are spoken by Portuguese or Macanese in the past, using the pronunciation of Cantonese to imitate Portuguese. In fact, few Portuguese who now lives in Macau can say these words. Because most of them can only speak the simplest Cantonese. They only speak Portuguese with each other. Most of the Macanese I know speak European style Portuguese." João started learning Cantonese just two months before the interview, so he cannot rely on the pronunciation of Cantonese to make more guesses.

For this set of Portuguese loan words, the generational residents, interviewee from and living in Mainland China, and the interviewee from Taiwan all showed a clear sense of distance and a tendency to be incomprehensible and a general willingness to learn，understand and explore the origin of Portuguese. The Portuguese interviewee identified and guessed these words very carefully, and further explained the historical and current use conditions of Portuguese and Macanese. It is precisely because of (a) the Chinese community's sense of distance to these words and (b) the usage of Portuguese to communicate within their ethnic group (including Portuguese and Macanese), many Portuguese loan words created based on the pronunciation of Cantonese, so only who grasps Portuguese and Cantonese simultaneously can recognize more words. Moreover, (c) the English proficiency of the Chinese community has improved, (d) the Portuguese community has begun to learn Mandarin, and the communication can also choose English or Mandarin. The historical practice that creates large numbers of loan words by Cantonese pronunciation to facilitate communication between two ethnic groups is no longer practical. Therefore, most of these words gradually withdraw from the language life of the Macau community in line with the current pragmatic psychology and pragmatic reality.

(2) Feedback on Group B (local special words in Macau)

When Tina recognized these words, she repeated: "These were used a long time ago, we don't say that now. No one uses it anymore." "What is this? I don't know." For some words that Tina has recognized, Alice and Mary read, think, and guessed many times, and some rely on guessing to complete the identification. They explained that they would not use these words, but the elder may use them. Especially concerning the terms 马交 and 人情纸, as the generational resident and new immigrant, they could not determine the meaning the first time. Their hesitant attitude made the older generational resident Tina showed a very surprised look. Recognition of Wendy is lower than that of Alice and Mary, and she did not try the guessing strategy. Elena explained in the dialogue that after coming to work in Macau, she had not learned Cantonese, and Taiwan Chinese does not have these words, so it is difficult for her. João stated that he only knew 马交--*Macau*, 葡国鸡— *curried chicken* and 博彩— *gambling*. As he had experience in learning Mandarin, he believed that when his Cantonese level is close to that of Mandarin, he should be able to recognize more local words. In the interview, he proactively added a word 牛佬, and specifically explained that it is how the locals used to call the Portuguese, and people will not say it in person, but generally used behind with a joking implication.

In the feedback of Group B, there has been a significant age differentiation among generational residents: (a) elder interviewee could recognize the most terms, but also repeatedly stated that people rarely use them now; (b) the young interviewee met difficulties in recognizing most. During the recognition process, she continually expressed that she had not seen or heard of these words and many were used in certain industries in the past and no longer used now; (c) like 马交、人情纸, which belongs to the basic local vocabulary of Macau, the elder was surprised at the reaction of the young, and the generational differences in recognition ability are obvious. The young generational resident have not shown the advantages of local growth in word recognition，their performance was similar to the young immigrants who did not grow in Macau. The Portuguese interviewee shows a strong willingness to learn and understand these words, although he just recognized a few of them. It contrasts with the attitude of different Chinese respondents in Group A word recognition，which generally shows an unwillingness to understand or learn these Portuguese loan words. Since Macau Chinese usually have a strong sense of mother tongue while proficient Portuguese speakers are not common in Chinese community even in the old Portuguese era. Meanwhile, some Portuguese loan words appeared in history have gradually withdrawn from real language life. It has become more evident after the return of Macao. In today's Macau, except for people who specialize in Portuguese and Chinese-Portuguese bilinguals, the Portuguese language only exists in written official documents. Besides, native Portuguese speakers constantly hope to learn more about Chinese language and culture of Macau where they currently live for better integrating into the local society.

The feedback of two groups showed that in the 27 words of group A, the interviewees identified 6 in total, with an overall rate of 22%; in the 60 words of group B, the interviewees identified 23 in total, with an overall rate of 38%. For different word origins, the recognition of transliterated Portuguese loan words is inferior to local special words. Individuals showed diverse outcomes and strategies due to their age and different comprehension of Cantonese and Macau society.

4.3. Analysis of the Commonality of Macao Local Words and the Language Attitude of Interviewees

After asking interviewees the affirmed most commonly used words, the author summarized the results:

Respondents believed that there are 11 Macao local words most commonly used in work and life, accounting for approximately 12.6%., which are 马介休 *(codfish)*, 葡国鸡 *(curried chicken)*, 前地 *(square)*, 堂区 *(parish)*, 博彩

(gaming industry), 司警 *(judiciary police),* 特警 *(tactical police),* 人情纸 *(leave form),* 行为纸 *(certificate of criminal record),* 医生纸 *(doctor's note),* 综合体 *(commercial complex).*

Terms that come from Portuguese or inherited traditional expressions in Macau society are still familiar and used by the public, all interviewees confirmed that these terms have distinct Macau characteristics and will continue to be passed down and used.

For other words that are rarely or no longer used, the interviewees believed that the main reasons leading to their withdrawal are: (a) the social phenomena and objects represented by these words are uncommon today; (b) certain industry-specific words are beyond the scope of public knowledge; (c) interviewees have never concerned or deemed the necessary to understand them personally (such as some old terms in the gaming industry).

As for language attitude, interviewees said that they have no particular feelings about the fact that local words which are difficult to recognize are gradually flowing away from the language life, and they agreed that this is a natural phenomenon of vocabulary development, so people will not feel pity about the increasing disappearance of certain words. The linguistic attitude conveyed in the interview is that it is dispensable to learn and understand the disappearing words if people don't use, just let nature take its course. Moreover, the Portuguese interviewee also specifically mentioned: speakers always tend to use the simplest form. Many young people in Portugal like to use simpler English words to replace the equivalent in Portuguese with complicated pronunciation, and consequently, people use these words less naturally.

Some researchers have noticed the phenomenon of Portuguese loan words gradually disappearing from the Macau language life. Through analysis, Tang found that the disappearance among young people with higher education levels is more obvious, and an increasing number of Portuguese loan words are replaced by corresponding expressions in Chinese or English [5]. However, in this study, we can also see that dietetic loan words such as 马介休，葡国鸡，亚冬鱼 have a better cognition among locals and immigrants of all ages. Thus, extinction and inheritance co-exist. While most Portuguese loan words lose their pragmatic value, a few words have been passed down, which include: (a) the most distinctive Portuguese transliteration words with Macau's identity, e.g. 马介休; (b) free translation words created using Chinese morphemes which are the majority, such as 前地,综合体; (c) words created on the basis of Chinese lexicon like 行为纸, 人情纸, 医生纸.

4.4. Analysis of the Development Trend of Macau Local Words

Some traditional Macau local words are gradually replaced by new Mandarin synonyms, such as 澳门 instead of 马交, and 请假申请单 (or 请假单) instead of 人情纸. During similar word substitutions, two or more forms coexist and use in synchronic. Compared to the standard language，this

linguistic phenomenon is called "alienation of the Macao language" by Wong [6]. In this research, Macau local words do not refer to the part of "alienation" nor are widely used in other Cantonese areas, but the community words that form in the history of Macau society development and rich in Macau characteristics. Although these words originate from Macau and apply in Macau, other language community members may also acquaint them. Whether these words pass on or pass away gradually is not man-made contrivance, but the outcome of continuous adaptation, integration, and natural selection under the new development of Macao society in the local true multilingual and multicultural context.

It can be found that even from the words currently in the process of replacement, the associative meaning and expressive effect caused by two words representing the same conceptual meaning are also different. Therefore, some previous local words can pass down to this day for their stabilized cognitive and acceptable psychological basis. Such as 人情纸*(leave form)* and 请假申请书 or 请假单*(leave form)*, it seems that it can be used interchangeably in the same context, but in fact, the associative meaning of the "human care for approving the employee's leave application" caused by the 人情纸 is what the 请假申请书 (or 请假单) does not have. 人情纸 is connected to an oriental cultural characteristic and nostalgic color of Macao society for the elder. This is also the psychological cause for the surprise and regret of the older resident when she heard that young interviewees did not know about 人情纸.

Some Portuguese loan words retained in Macao local words also have irreplaceable cognitive factors in speech comprehension. For example, the most typical one--马介休, refers to an ingredient made from cod with salt, is still active in the dishes of Macau restaurants. It is directly transliterated from Portuguese pronunciation, and the selection of Chinese characters is based on Cantonese pronunciation. It implies dual information of Portuguese catering culture and the reference of Macao to western catering culture, so native Chinese speakers may not be able to understand its meaning immediately. It is the heterogeneous sense conveyed by this kind of words that makes them emerge a special survival ability and can be passed down for a long time in the region with a multi-cultural background.

As the the compound system hypothesis" proposed in the researches of bilingual users in semantic storage [7], some Portuguese loan words hold compound semantic content (including conceptual meaning or associative meaning), one comes from the Portuguese language and Portuguese culture itself, and the other comes from the local culture of Macau and the absorption of western cultures, which precisely constitutes characteristics of Macau together. It is foreseeable that in the future integration of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, more and more Macau local words will gradually fade away in the increasingly diversified working context, while a few "landmark" words will be inherited and continue to play its linguistic function and cultural marker role in the pluralistic society, and gain more recognition among the cumulatively diverse population of

Macao.

5. Conclusion

The interviewees in this study represent generational Macau residents, stuff from Mainland China who currently live in Zhuhai, stuff from Taiwan, and from Portugal. The overall recognition rate of 87 Macau local words in Group A and B is 33%, the generational residents have the highest, but obviously age is the key factor affecting the recognition. Young respondents between the ages of 20 and 30 were utterly ignorant of the words confirmed by older respondent over 50. In the spontaneous dialogue and communication between the two groups of respondents of different ages, the older respondent intended to voluntarily narrate the old things and phenomena of Macao society related to these words, and expressed surprise and regret at the ignorance of the young people. Whereas, among the young residents, there is no significant difference in the identification and use of Macao local words between generational resident and new immigrant from the mainland, which shows that the language distance between the young people growing up in Macau and the young immigrants is narrowing, showing a trend of integration. The respondent who lives in Zhuhai always kept a sidelined attitude towards the local words and did not actively use the guessing strategy in the whole interview process. Since she does not live in Macao, she shows the strongest sense of distance to these words. The respondent from Taiwan uses Chinese and English in the work and life context in Macao, which is enough to complete daily matters and work communication, so she also believes that there is no need to further understand these words. The Portuguese interviewee with experience in learning Mandarin did not show an obvious advantage in recognizing Group A words, because he cannot match the pronunciation of Portuguese and the transliteration form of Cantonese. It was difficult for him to relate to the pronunciation of Portuguese words when he tried to read these words in Mandarin. His Mandarin level is significantly higher than Cantonese, which is related to his personal Chinese learning experience. It also reveals that Portuguese living in Macau nowadays not only intends to master Cantonese but also gets very strong motivation to learn Mandarin. Concerning language attitudes, the above Chinese and Portuguese interviewees believed that the gradual withdrawal of some local words from Macau language life is a natural vocabulary development trend. However, the Portuguese interviewee expressed a stronger will to further understanding and learning the meaning of these words. In the interview, he also stated the hope of realizing the correspondence of pronunciation and semantics of related words in Portuguese, Cantonese, and Mandarin.

Respondents believe that the most commonly used words in work and life are a total of 11: 马介休 *(codfish)*, 葡国鸡 *(curried chicken)*, 前地 *(square)*, 堂区 *(parish)*, 博彩 *(gaming industry)*, 司警 *(judiciary police)*, 特警 *(tactical police)*, 人情纸 *(leave form)*, 行为纸 *(certificate of criminal record)*, 医生纸 *(doctor's note)*, 综合体 *(commercial complex)*. These are inherited words as the outcome of continuous interplay, integration, and natural selection in the multilingual and multicultural environment instead of man-made contrivances. The most commonly used words by interviewees have the characteristics of compound storage of Chinese and Portuguese bilingual semantics, which are heterogeneous to other Chinese-speaking communities in expression, and implicate nostalgia and identity for the Macau community. Finally, they have become landmark words after the selection and precipitation with local language and society development.

Others that are considered less commonly used or unrecognizable words cover two situations: (a) some original words were replaced by prominent ones, especially early Portuguese loanwords created by the transliteration method. These words in Chinese literal are difficult to understand, and in unconformity with the Chinese psychological demand of literal ideography, consequently, many are replaced by other forms, such as "浓咖啡" instead of "碧架", "奖学金" instead of "煲沙", "上司" replaces "些菲" and so on; (b) many local words that appeared in history, especially the old terms in certain industries, have gradually dropped out of the general vocabulary under the current development, used within a narrow trade or field, or known only to a few elders.

In summary, some historically formed local words are gradually withdrawing from the current language life of Macao people. With the constant integration and development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the residents and working population of Macao will be further diversified. The advantage of Mandarin in the working context will be further highlighted, and more Chinese dialects will enter into this context as well. Macao community vocabulary will take on a new look in the new historical period. In the current multiple working contexts of Macau, individuals from different focus groups tend to naturally accept the process of language progressing with society. Meanwhile, their intention to understand and master Macau local words is clearly affected by the factor of whether their resident place is in Macau or not.

This study selects a sample of natural and typical individuals in multiple working contexts in Macau. The respondents represent the most typical type in the current demographic composition of Macau but do not cover the Southeast Asian migrant workers, the Macanese ethnic group, and the new immigrants from countries other than Portugal currently residing in Macau.

Some of the Macau "landmark" words shown in this research have an obvious "overflow" phenomenon in the current integration and development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area, which means these words have gradually become common words in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area from local words of Macau. For example, the term "综合体" has been frequently used in the Greater Bay Area now. Its meaning has also evolved from a large-scale building to the compound of cooperation platforms, corporate brands, cultural education or entertainment institutions, etc. It shows that such "landmark"

words that have been formed and survived in the long history have gained new vitality in the new process of integration and development in the Great Bay Area.

Appendix

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