



Undergraduate assignment feedback form (to be completed by marker)

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SICH6018
ORAL PRESENTATION
EXEGESIS

The Introduction of Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字), Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說) and Cognate Word (同源詞)

Module code: SICH6018

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**Why would I introduce these three theories
(Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字), Theory of the Right-Side
Graphic Element (右文說) and Cognate Word (同源詞))
at once in this presentation?**



- These is a kind of gradual phenomenon on finding the meanings of the Chinese characters in the Ancient China.
- These three theories are the most noticeable periods throughout the timeline of the history of China.

Timeline of Ancient China History

1. First Stage

Before Han Dynasty

Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)
was occurred

3. Third Stage

From Qing Dynasty to The Period of
Republic of China

Cognate Word (同源詞) was occurred

2. Second Stage

From Jin to Song Dynasty

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說) was occurred



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4. Conclusion





The Introduction of Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)



1. The Introduction of Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)

Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)

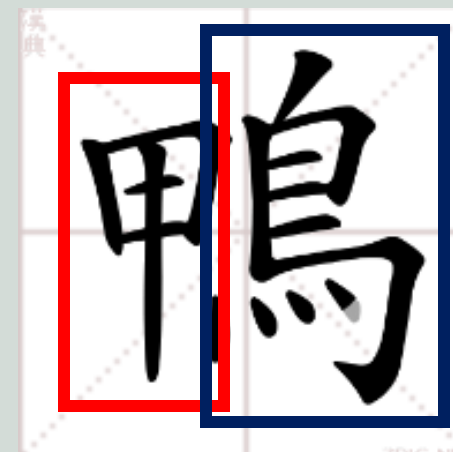
- Phono-semantic compounds composed of at least one semantic component and one phonetic component.

「形聲者，以事為名，取譬相成，江河是也。」

——《說文解字序》

- 80% of picto-phonetic character comparing to other forming method of Chinese characters
- Have been seen and applied the most from the past (Before Han Dynasty) until nowadays

semantic component



phonetic component

1. The Introduction of Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)

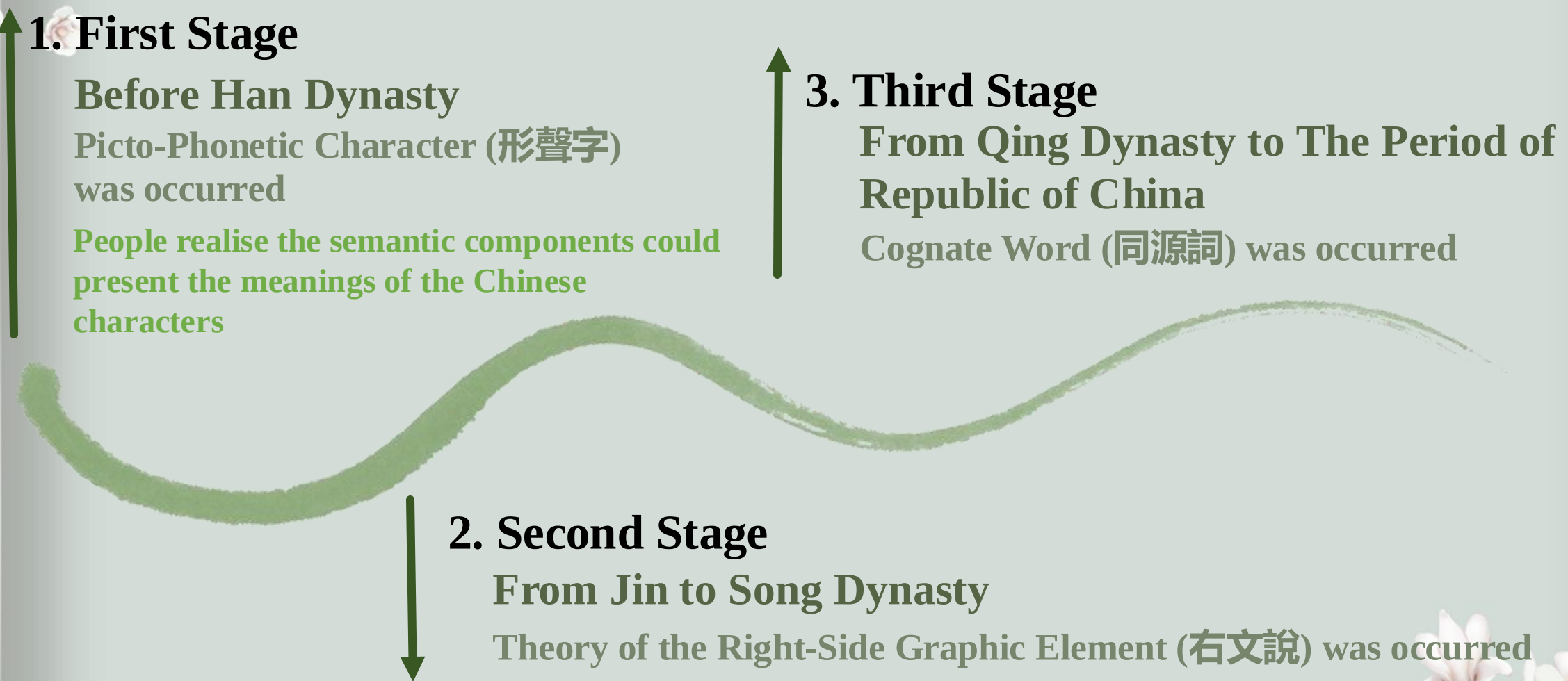
Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)

- Six Categories of Chinese Character Construction (六書):
 - Pictograph Method (象形)
 - Indicative Method (指示)
 - Associative Method (會意)
 - Picto-Phonetic Method (形聲)
 - Notative Method (轉注)
 - Borrowing Method (假借)
- Why this method had been applied in the past:
 - Need to express more abstract meanings
 - Have indicated a part of the pronunciation of the Chinese character on the structure of the character
 - Have indicated a part of the meaning of the Chinese character on the structure of the character





Timeline of Ancient China History



1. First Stage

Before Han Dynasty

Picto-Phonetic Character (形聲字)
was occurred

People realise the semantic components could
present the meanings of the Chinese
characters

3. Third Stage

From Qing Dynasty to The Period of
Republic of China

Cognate Word (同源詞) was occurred

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From Jin to Song Dynasty

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說) was occurred



The Introduction of Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說)



2. The Introduction of Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說)

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說)

- Background of the Ancient China History:
 - During Han Dynasty, Buddhism was spread into China.
 - People noticed the exist of phoneme of a Chinese character when exposing to the language of Sanskrit.

- During Jin Dynasty, there is a statement saying that:

「在金曰堅，在草木曰緊，在人曰賢。」——楊泉《物理論》

- 𠂔：堅也。从又。臣聲。
- 堅：土剛也。从𠂔土。
- 緊：纏絲急也。从𠂔。絲省。
- 賢：多財也。从貝。𠂔聲。

——《說文解字》



2. The Introduction of Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說)

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說)

➤ During Song Dynasty, there is a statement saying that:

「王聖美治字學，演其義以為右文。古之字書，皆從左文。凡字，其類在左，其義在右。如木類，其左皆從木。所謂右文者，如『𣎵』，小也；水之小者曰『淺』，金之小者曰『錢』，歹之小者曰『殘』，貝之小者曰『賤』。如此之類，皆以『𣎵』為義也。」

——沈括《夢溪筆談》

- 𣎵：淺小之義（引《周易》：「束帛𣎵𣎵」）——《周易本義》
- 淺：不深也。从水。𣎵聲。——《說文解字》
- 錢：古代貨幣價值：黃金、白銀、銅錢
- 殘：賊也。从歹。𣎵聲。——《說文解字》
- 賤：賈（價）少也。从貝。𣎵聲。——《說文解字》





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Cognate Word (同源詞) was occurred



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From Jin to Song Dynasty

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說) was occurred

People realise the phonetic components may also present the
meanings of the Chinese characters





The Introduction of Cognate Word (同源詞)



3. The Introduction of Cognate Word (同源詞)

Cognate Word (同源詞)

- During Qin Dynasty, Duan Yucai 段玉裁 claimed that “The pronunciation of a Chinese character mostly owned the meanings of the Chinese character.”

段玉裁：「凡從某聲，多有某義」

- There are two situations need to be noticed:
 - Not all Chinese characters with the same phonetic components have the same meanings.
 - The meanings of the Chinese characters which we found from the phonetic components are not based on the structure of the phonetic components, but according to the pronunciation of the phonetic components.

1. 聲符相同，意義只是有相通的可能，不是所有聲符相同的字，意義都相通。
2. 形聲字聲符兼義的癥結在語言，不在字形。並不在於聲符之形如何，而在於語音的相同或相近。



3. The Introduction of Cognate Word (同源詞)

Cognate Word (同源詞)

- To identify Cognate Word (同源詞):
 - The pronunciation of the Chinese characters should be the same.
義同或相關
 - The meanings of the Chinese characters should also be the same.
音同或相近
 - Both meanings of the Chinese characters could be explained by one another, which we called as 互訓 mutual explanation.
可相訓

Way to Identify Cognate Word 同源詞



Find the Root Word of the Chinese characters 求語根



Conclusion



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Cognate Word (同源詞) was occurred

People could based on the semantic and phonic
components to find the same meaning group of
the Chinese characters

2. Second Stage

From Jin to Song Dynasty

Theory of the Right-Side Graphic Element (右文說) was occurred

People realise the phonetic components may also present the
meanings of the Chinese characters



THANKS
FOR
LISTENING

