

A Diachronic Study of the Phenomena of Degree Adverbs Modifying Nouns in Southeast Asia *Huayu*

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Abstract: China has a long history of overseas migration, and Southeast Asia has been the traditional main destination of our overseas migration because of its geographical advantage. In the context of the global spread of the *Huayu*, it is of great significance to explore the evolutionary process of *Huayu* development in Southeast Asia as a relay station for the spread and radiation of the *Huayu* to the world. The overall situation of *Huayu* studies is that there are more lexical studies and less grammatical studies, and less attention has been paid to the development of *Huayu* in its historical plane, including its formation process and the facts of its development and evolution since then. It can be seen that the overall research is not balanced, and grammar itself is very important. Due to the lack of grammar research, the overall understanding of *Huayu* has been affected. The study of *Huayu* has developed rapidly, and various studies are being carried out. Relatively speaking, grammar is lagging behind and needs to catch up quickly. The article takes the phenomenon of degree adverb modifying nouns as an entry point to investigate the development and evolution of grammar in Southeast Asia *Huayu*. It is found that degree adverbs modifying nouns have shown an upward trend in the centuries-old *Huayu*, as evidenced by the fact that degree adverbs can be combined with more abstract nouns and the range of nouns modified has also been expanded. In addition, investigating the use of this linguistic phenomenon in *Huayu*, Putonghua, and Mandarin in a global perspective, it can be found that the three maintain a greater consistency.

Keywords: In Southeast Asia *Huayu*, The Phenomena of Degree Adverbs modifying Nouns, Diachronic Study

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of degree adverbs modifying nouns has been discussed a lot in the academic circles, such as the researches by Xing Fuyi [1, 2], Hu Yushu [3], Gui Shichun [4], Zhang Yisheng [5], Yu Genyuan [6], Zhou Xiaobing [7], Shao Jingmin [8], etc. Among them, Xing Fuyi [1] indicated that degree adverbs modifying nouns are ungrammatical freak; Hu Yushu [3] indicated that the main grammatical function of adverbs is to modify verbs or adjectives, but not nouns that are the subject and object. It can be seen that degree adverbs cannot modify nouns in the traditional grammatical norms. However, this phenomenon is so frequently used in real life that it has become “habitual”. Shi Dingxu, Su Jinzhi and Zhu Zhiyu [9] indicated that a significant proportion of nouns in Hong Kong written language are often modified by adverbs. Little research has been done on the use and development of degree adverbs modifying nouns in Southeast Asia *Huayu*.

This paper takes Singaporean and Malaysian *Huayu* as its subjects¹. We investigate the development of degree adverbs modifying nouns in Southeast Asia *Huayu* with reference to early Mandarin and Putonghua. We divide the history of *Huayu* grammar into three phases based on linguistic facts and existing studies: the first phase (1919-1945), the second phase (1945-1980), and the third phase (1980-present). The corpus we use includes *The Great Series of New Malaysian Literature*, *Selected Malaysian Literary Works*, and *The Great Series of Malaysian Literature*, *Lat Pau*, *Sin Chew Daily*, and *Kwong Wah Yit Poh*, etc., covering representative literary works and newspapers as far as possible, with about 3 million words in each stage. The examples of early Mandarin are mainly from <https://www.neohytung.com/>, and the investigation of

¹ Singapore and Malaysia are the countries with the largest concentration of Chinese, the largest number of Chinese, and the first *Huayu* to be formed among the 11 countries in Southeast Asia.

Putonghua is mainly with the help of the *BCC corpus* of Beijing Language and Culture University and the *CCL corpus* of Peking University. Then, we draw on the spot to understand the evolutionary process and path of the development of *Huayu* grammar in Southeast Asia.

2. Diachronic Changes of Degree Adverbs Modifying Nouns

2.1. The Consistency of Early *Huayu* and Early Mandarin

Diao Yanbin [10] investigated the situation of degree adverbs modifying nouns in early Mandarin², and there are not only many use cases, but also different functions in sentences, which can be subdivided into predicates, adverbials and attributives, etc. By searching <https://www.neohytung.com/>, we can also see some use cases of degree adverbs modifying nouns, see examples:

(1) 如因经费困难, 不能特聘专人, 可择教员中对于图书馆事务最兴趣最有研究者使之兼任主任, 馆员则非用专人不可, 以免各种事务之废弛。(《晨报副刊》, 1925)

(1) if it is not possible to hire a special person due to financial difficulties, the one who is most interested in library affairs and has the most research among the faculty members can be chosen to be the director, while the librarian must be a special person to avoid the waste of various affairs. (*Morning Post Supplement*, 1925)

(2) 我看了这部书, 很难于下何等判语。似乎这位非常诗人的绝顶天才, 已见中和。(《晨报副刊》, 1923)

(2) I have read this book, and it is difficult for me to make any judgment. It seems that the supreme genius of this extraordinary poet has been neutralized. (*Morning Post Supplement*, 1923)

(3) 等时髦调头, 如果像这样的谈法, 不就太“直觉”了吧。(《独立漫画》, 1935)

(3) When the fashion turns around, if we talk like this, it would be too “intuitive”, right? (*Independent Comics*, 1935)

The above are examples of the use of nouns modified by degree adverbs in the newspaper corpus. Many such examples can also be found in the works of Bing Xin, Lao She, Ba Jin, Lu Xun, Qu Qiubai, Zhou Zuoren, Ding Ling, Xiao Jun, etc., see examples:

(4) 那一次一位旧朋友来, 她笑说我近来更孩子气, 更爱脸红了。(《山中杂记》, 1924)

(4) When an old friend came over, she laughed and said that I had become more childish and blushing recently. (*Miscellaneous Notes in the Mountain*, 1924)

(5) 这个时候穿棉袍子! 太笑话了! 我姐姐恐怕会疑心我有神经病。(《家》, 1933)

(5) Wearing a cotton robe at this time of year! What a joke! I'm afraid my sister will suspect me of being insane. (*Home*, 1933)

(6) 我自己的办法据我看是最逻辑的, 可是我知道这

是每一作家自决的问题。(《老牛破车》, 1937)

(6) In my opinion, my own approach seems to be the most logical, but I know that it is a question of self-determination for every writer. (*The Old Cow and the Broken Cart*, 1937)

(7) 枚表弟妹脾气改了不少, 对人也很谦和, 就是脸上非常愁容, 据说她一天大半闷在屋里看书, 倒是芸表妹常常去陪她谈谈。(《秋》, 1940)

(7) Cousin Mei's temper has changed a lot, and she is very modest to others, but her face is very sad, and it is said that she spends most of the day reading in the house, but cousin Yun often goes to talk with her. (*Autumn*, 1940)

(8) 认得我的人, 且多称誉我是很女性的。(《关于女人》, 1943)

(8) Those who know me, and many say I am very female. (*About Women*, 1943)

Consistent with the early Mandarin, there are many such usages in the early *Huayu*³, see examples:

(9) 他本来说得很长篇, 不过初时没有注意他, 不能完全的领略, 真正抱憾得很。(《新国民杂志》, 1922)

(9) He originally spoke at great length, but at first I did not pay attention to him and could not fully grasp it. He really regretted it. (*New National Magazine*, 1922)

(10) 兄弟十分愿望南洋的华侨对于祖家, 任他怎样的天崩地裂, 我们也要慈母疼爱儿女那样爱他。(《荒岛》, 1927)

(10) My brother very much hopes that the overseas Chinese in Nanyang will love their ancestral family as a loving mother loves her children, no matter how much the sky and the earth may fall apart. (*Deserted Island*, 1927)

(11) 我们日常在报章上看到的马来亚各地通讯, 大都颇为简单呆板枯燥, 而且很少能够把各地最本质的特征事件报道出来。(《世纪风》, 1939)

(11) The communications from various parts of Malaya that we see in the newspapers are mostly simple, dull and boring, and it is rare to report the most essential characteristic events in each region. (*Century Wind*, 1939)

(12) 上面只是很原则地举了马来亚戏剧要走的道路的一点点。(《今日剧影》, 1937)

(12) The above is just a very principled list of the path to be taken by Malayan drama. (*Drama Shadows Today*, 1937)

According to the above examples, the degree adverb modifying nouns can be used as complements, predicates, attributives, and adverbials in sentences.

2.2. The Diachronic Changes of *Huayu* in Three Stages

Through the investigation of the three stages of *Huayu*, it can be seen that the centuries-old *Huayu* has not only inherited this form, but also has shown an upward trend in terms of the number of uses from less to more, the frequency from low to high, and the range of uses from narrow to wide. Specifically, it is reflected in the following two aspects:

First, from the perspective of quantity, degree adverbs can be combined with more abstract nouns, such as “the most capable, the most accustomed, the most economical, the most

2 Early Mandarin refers to modern Chinese from the May 4th period to the early founding of the People's Republic of China, which is the starting point and “blueprint” of global *Huayu* (Diao Yanbin [11]).

3 Early *Huayu* is the first phase of *Huayu*, dated from 1919 - 1945, which is basically consistent with the time of early Mandarin.

emotional, very hopeful, very secret, very regular, very stressful, very loving, very divisive, very conceptual, too pedantic, too ladylike", etc. The ratio of use cases in the three stages is 69:77:122, and one example for each is as follows:

(13) 我这么横语纵言必然开罪了多么蚬儿, 实是不然, 除非他们太自尊, 恐怕没有气力像我祖宗为着饭的奋斗。(《荒岛》, 1927)

(13) I am inevitably offended many aphids by speaking so freely, but it is not, unless they are so self-respect that they do not have the strength to fight for food as my ancestors did. (*Deserted Island*, 1927)

(14) 若我不固执, 早已改念能赚大钱的学系去, 又何必困于“形而上”的圈子里呢? 何况我本就不是很哲学的。(《马华文学大系》, 1968)

(14) If I hadn't been so stubborn, I would have switched to a department where I could make a lot of money, so why be stuck in a "metaphysical" circle? Besides, I am not very philosophical by nature. (*The Great Series of Malaysian Literature*, 1968)

(15) 讲歪理你最本事。这可是你决定的, 以后阿义问起, 我都推给你好了。(《两代亲酬》, 1995)

(15) You're the best at talking nonsense. This is your decision, from now on, when A-yi asks, I'll pass it all on to you. (*Two Generations of Family Rewards*, 1995)

Secondly, the range of nouns modified by degree adverbs has been expanded in terms of the presence or absence of categories. While the first stage was basically for object nouns and abstract nouns, the second stage saw the emergence of new nouns referring to persons, see examples:

(16) 我缺少一只猎狗的鼻子; 狗终究是更猎人的。(《纯文学》, 1970)

(16) I lack the nose of a hunting dog; dogs are more hunters after all. (*Pure Literature*, 1970)

The third stage refers to an increase in the use of personal nouns, with a ratio of 3:7 between the two preceding and following stages, see examples:

(17) 反观拜登形象虽比特朗普更“君子”, 无奈始终摆脱不了奥巴马的影子。(《星洲日报》, 2020)

(17) On the contrary, even though Biden's image is more "gentleman" than Trump, he still can't get rid of Obama's shadow. (*Sin Chew Daily*, 2020)

(18) 你看行动党, 当他们在 1965 年成立时, 其实是新加坡人民行动党的支部, 他们“非常华人”, 但之后行动党觉悟到在马来西亚你不可以表现得像新加坡行动党。(同上)

(18) Look at the Action Party, when they were formed in 1965, they were actually a branch of the Singapore People's Action Party, they were "very Chinese", but then the Action Party realized that you can't behave like the Singapore Action Party in Malaysia. (*Ibid*)

There are other similar use cases, see examples:

(19) 是呀, 刚才我确是太笨蛋了, 如果稍微用一点力, 不是, 不是博到么? (《马华文学大系》, 1981)

(19) Yes, I was indeed too stupid just now, if I use a little bit of force, no, didn't I get it? (*The Great Series of Malaysian Literature*, 1981)

(20) 学生小时候顽皮捣蛋, 到了高年级就更坏蛋了,

不但打架闹事, 还敢与教师作对。(《文道》, 1984)

(20) When students are naughty and mischievous as children, they become even more badass in their senior years, not only fighting and causing trouble, but also daring to oppose teachers. (*Wen Dao*, 1984)

In addition, the use case of "degree adverb + person's name" also appears, see examples:

(21) 有一位杨子江院长对《演讲纵横》的评论如下: “此书很‘王一平’: 故事多而趣, 功课浅白易上手, 实在是每一个上台的人必读之物。”(《百合文集》, 2011)

(21) President Yang Zijiang's review of *Speech Vertical* is as follows: "This book is very 'Wang Yiping': the stories are many and interesting, the homework is shallow and easy to follow, and it is really a must-read for everyone who goes on stage." (*Lily Anthology*, 2011)

There are many similar forms in Putonghua, of which the most common and most noticeable is "very Lei Feng", see examples:

(22) 调查显示, 近九成受访者认为奉献社会是当今最需要的雷锋精神, 但实践雷锋精神有了创新的方式, 如微博转发、网络投票等也被认为“很雷锋”。(《羊城晚报》, 2012)

(22) According to the survey, nearly 90% of the respondents believe that contributing to the society is the most needed spirit of Lei Feng today, but there are innovative ways to practice the spirit of Lei Feng, such as microblog forwarding and online voting, which are also considered "very Lei Feng". (*Yangcheng Evening News*, 2012)

(23) 三月春风十里, 这里的兵哥很雷锋。(《国防时报》, 2021)

(23) The spring breeze in March is ten miles, and the soldier here is very Lei Feng. (*National Defense Times*, 2021)

Diao Yanbin (1994) also mentioned similar use cases, see examples:

(24) 老何觉得这个地方倒真是很陶渊明的。(《湖南文学》, 1993)

(24) Lao He thinks that this place is really very Tao Yuanming. (*Hunan Literature*, 1993)

(25) 这孩子有点李承晚, 不过没那么漂亮。(《王朔侃大山·侃社会》, 1993)

(25) This child is a little bit Li Chengwan, but not so pretty. (*Wang Shuo Kan Da Shan-Kan Society*, 1993)

There are two possible sources of this form in *Huayu*: first, the analogy of the old usage, in the second stage of the corpus, the adverb of degree plus a noun referring to a person, such as "more hunter", which is further expanded in this stage; second, the influence of the works of Hong Kong and Taiwan and Putonghua, etc. Diao Yanbin [12] listed some similar usages in the works of Hong Kong and Taiwan, such as "how Venus" and so on. In addition, Wang Huidi [13] indicated that "China's Taiwan, China's Hong Kong, China's Macau, Singapore and Malaysia are geographically close to each other, and all share the same capitalist system and values, thus forming a *Huayu* usage circle. Due to advanced technology, convenient information transmission, and frequent folk contacts, the languages have been in a state of active interaction and complementarity for a long time, and

the exchange of words is extensive, fast, and frequent. New words and phrases produced in any of the five regions, which immediately spread to the remaining four regions through media or film and television works, etc., usually settle locally, are accepted by local language users, and become words shared by the five regions.” Chew Chenghai [14] also indicated that before China’s reform and opening up, all ethnic Chinese communities (including Europe, America, Southeast Asia, China’s Hong Kong and Macao, etc.) had close ties with China’s Taiwan, and most intellectuals in the *Huayu* regions had received their tertiary education in China’s Taiwan, and many scholars in Taiwan also went to the *Huayu* regions to work in education, and the influence of Taiwan Mandarin on the global *Huayu* was great.

At this stage, you can also see some use cases of time nouns, see examples:

(26) 当然，诗人与诗的关系应该是在更早期的年月开始的。(《蕉风》，1996)

(26) Of course, the relationship between poets and poetry should have begun in earlier years. (*Jiao Feng*, 1996)

(27) 但是现在仍是非常初期，还未制定执行的日期。(《星洲日报》，2020)

(27) However, it is still very early in the process and no date has been set for implementation. (*Sin Chew Daily*, 2020)

Accordingly, the composition of temporal nouns at this stage is “adjective + period”. Such a use case appeared in the previous stage, and the increase of use cases in this stage is the expansion of the analogy of “adjective + period”, another example is:

(28) 游击队知道斗争已经开始，今后必然会展开更长期，更惨烈的苦斗。(《小城之夜》，1954)

(28) The guerrillas know that the struggle has already begun, and they will inevitably start a longer and more fierce struggle in the future. (*Night in a Small Town*, 1954)

In addition, some new use cases of location nouns appeared at this stage, see examples:

(29) 可是当李永平极力否定时，他当然不会如此承认，更不愿承认他“骗”过了所有批评家的耳目，以一个非中国的世界捏造非常中国的世界。(《中外文学》，1993)

(29) However, when Li Yongping strenuously denies it, he certainly does not admit so, let alone admit that he has “fooled” all the critics, fabricating a very Chinese world with a non-Chinese world. (*Chinese and Foreign Literature*, 1993)

(30) “关仔角的古堡很西方”也使人联想到余光中的“星空很希腊”。(《马华文学》，2012)

(30) “The ancient castle at Guanzaijiao is very Western” is also reminiscent of Yu Guangzhong’s “The starry sky is very Greek”. (*Malaysian Huayu literature*, 2012)

(31) 锦忠老师说的是，况且村上也很日本啊。(《马华文学》，2013)

(31) What Mr. Jinzhong said is true. Besides, Murakami is also very Japanese. (*Malaysian Huayu literature*, 2013)

2.3. Convergence of *Huayu* and Putonghua

The number and frequency of the use of “degree adverb + noun” in Putonghua can be seen from the frequency graph automatically generated by searching the BCC corpus over

time. In addition, a multi-domain search of the BCC corpus for “most/very/more/extremely/too+N” and manual filtering also showed that the use of “degree adverb + noun” is very common in Putonghua, see examples:

最+N: 最狗血、最专业、最喜剧、最男人、最奇迹、最天使、最情侣、最英雄、最早期

The most + N: the most bloody, the most professional, the most comedy, the most manly, the most miraculous, the most angelic, the most couple, the most heroic, the earliest

很+N: 很天才、很垃圾、很内涵、很精神、很戏剧、很悲剧、很个性、很淑女、很男人、很老鼠、很白菜、很中国、很官场、很小市民

Very +N: very genius, very trash, very connotation, very spiritual, very drama, very tragedy, very personality, very lady, very man, very mouse, very cabbage, very Chinese, very official, very small citizen

更+N: 更魅力、更人性、更专业、更悲剧、更戏剧、更美貌、更大地、更桃花、更金属、更男人、更女人、更口号、更天才、更人情味、更优势

More + N: more charming, more human, more professional, more tragic, more dramatic, more beautiful, more earthy, more peachy, more metal, more manly, more womanly, more slogan, more genius, more humane, more advantageous

极+N: 极市场、极爱心、极主义、极特点、极个性、极生命力、极诱惑力、极低温、极内涵

Extremely +N: extremely market, extremely love, extremeism, extremely characteristics, extremely personality, extremely vitality, extremely temptation, extremely low temperature, extremely connotation

太+N: 太悲剧、太真相、太心声、太内涵、太黑色、太Gaga、太狗屎、太悲剧、太喜剧、太油菜、太好人、太精英、太细节、太噩梦

Too +N: Too tragic, too truthful, too heartfelt, too connotative, too dark, too Gaga, too shit, too tragic, too comedy, too rapeseed, too human, too elite, too detailed, too nightmare

Such usage is also very common in the CCL Modern Chinese Corpus, such as “very divergent, very principled, very realistic, very contradictory, the most essential, the most core, the most idealistic, the most realistic, the most inner, the most economical, very childish, very ideal, very faithful, very habitual, very artistic, very poetic, too habitual, too realistic, too pedantic, too garbage, more female, more dominant, more heroic, very short-term”, etc.

As can be seen, *Huayu* and Putonghua share the same performance: on the one hand, degree adverbs can be combined with a large number of abstract nouns; on the other hand, degree adverbs can be paired with nouns referring to persons, time, and premises, etc.

From the above investigation of degree adverbs modifying nouns, it can be seen that this grammatical phenomenon already existed in early *Huayu*, in line with early Mandarin, and has undergone a process of development and evolution from small to large in number and from narrow to wide in scope. Over the past century, and they have become a relatively common way of expression in contemporary *Huayu* and Putonghua.

3. Development Characteristics of Degree Adverbs Modifying Nouns from the Perspective of Global *Huayu*

Huayu is distributed all over the world, but the development process is different. Lee, Y. M. [15] indicated that "Greater *Huayu* has several *Huayu* variants, the most important being Putonghua in the mainland, Mandarin in Taiwan, Mandarin in Hong Kong and Macau, *Huayu* in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, etc., *Huayu* in North America is taking shape, and *Huayu* in Europe is taking shape." Diao Yanbin [11] clarified the pattern of the "three divisions" of global *Huayu*, under the top-level concept of "global *Huayu*" is the conceptual system of Putonghua-Mandarin-*Huayu*.

According to the previous investigation, the phenomenon of degree adverbs modifying nouns shows an upward trend in the three stages of *Huayu*, that is, "more - more - very much". Diao Yanbin [16] investigated the usage and changes of nouns modified by degree adverbs in different stages of modern Chinese from a diachronic perspective, and finds that it presents an evolutionary trend of "more-less-more". This shows that the form of degree adverbs modifying nouns is very common in contemporary Putonghua, and *Huayu* in Southeast Asia is consistent with Putonghua, see examples:

(32)最近,一位朋友在刊物上发议论:“排几出短命的新戏,倒没什么,少一些‘很内涵的演员’,则‘有伤大雅’了。”(人民日报 2002)

(32) Recently, a friend commented in a magazine: "it's nothing to arrange a few short-lived new plays. If there are fewer 'very connotative actors', it will 'hurt the elegance'." (*People's Daily*, 2002)

(33)世界冠军德国的阵容称得上星光熠熠,而意大利则是史上“最平民”的一支。(人民日报海外版 2016)

(33) The world champion Germany's lineup can be called a shining star, while Italy is the "most civilian" in history. (*People's Daily Overseas Edition*, 2016)

(34)我们的祖先们一直期待生活能够更精彩、更诗意,更有物质和精神的质量、境界和高度。(人民日报海外版 2017)

(34) Our ancestors have always expected life to be more wonderful, more poetic, more material and spiritual quality, realm and height. (*People's Daily Overseas Edition*, 2017)

We can also see many use cases in Mandarin, other countries in Southeast Asia, and *Huayu* in Europe, the United States, Australia, etc., showing the consistency of *Huayu*, putonghua and Mandarin, see examples:

(35)这种精气神很中国! (《香港文汇报》, 2021)

(35) This spirit is very Chinese! (*Hong Kong wenhui.com*, 2021)

(36)住公寓开小车没西装……“最平民”新科立委是谁? (《台湾联合新闻网》, 2020)

(36) Living in an apartment, driving a car without a suit.....Who is the "most civilian" new member of the legislature? (*Taiwan United News Network*, 2020)

(37)习近平:中国共产党领导是中国特色社会主义最

本质的特征 (《柬华日报》, 2020)

(37) Xi Jinping: The leadership of the Communist Party of China is the most essential characteristic of socialism with Chinese characteristics (*Khmer China Daily*, 2020)

(38)美女财经记者峰会前忙碌的一天,很美很杭州 (《欧洲侨声报》, 2016)

(38) A busy day for beautiful financial journalists before the summit, very beautiful and Hangzhou (*European Diaspora Voice*, 2016)

(39)川普揭晓“空军一号”新形象 亲自设计颜色搭配“更美国” (《美国中文网》, 2019)

(39) Trump unveils the new image of "Air Force One" and personally designs color scheme to be "more American" (*Chinese-American website*, 2019)

(40)读书人的命运里,那些被外人看见的孤独寂寞,对于他自己来说,就是很哲学的窗子。(《新西兰中文先驱网》, 2017)

(40) In the fate of a scholar, the loneliness and solitude seen by outsiders are very philosophical windows for himself. (*New Zealand Chinese Pioneer Network*, 2017)

According to the above examples, it is clear that the grammatical phenomenon of degree adverbs modifying nouns is common in headings as well as in the text.

Through the above investigation, it can be seen that the phenomenon of degree adverbs modifying nouns is very common in global *Huayu*, and *Huayu*, Putonghua, and Mandarin maintain a greater consistency. Chew Chenghai [14] discussed the development trend of various elements of global *Huayu*, and indicated that "gradual integration is almost inevitable". The article provided concrete justifications for this assertion from five aspects: first, before China's reform and opening up, all ethnic Chinese communities had close ties with China's Taiwan, and Taiwan Mandarin had a great influence on the global *Huayu*; second, from the new perspective of *Huayu* going to the world, we should pay more attention to the communication between *Huayu* areas, so that *Huayu* can be integrated in the communication; third, the highly unified written language and formal standard spoken language, as well as the tradition of using Chinese characters to record the language, are the solid foundation for Chinese integration. In addition, the opening of China's door and the continuous development of national power have increased the opportunities for communication between *Huayu* areas; fourth, Singaporean *Huayu* has obviously gradually "moved closer to Putonghua"; fifth, we must follow the language standards of major countries, the best solution is to reduce the difference. Khoo Kiak Uei [17] also expressed the same view that "This rich diversity of features is dying out dramatically in favor of a gradual unification into a single standard form of 'Standard *Huayu*'." The use of degree adverbs modifying nouns in Putonghua, *Huayu* and Mandarin also verifies the above judgment from one perspective or aspect.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above investigation and analysis, three

conclusions can be drawn.

First, the phenomenon of degree adverbs modifying nouns has been inherited in Southeast Asia *Huayu*, which belongs to the development type of “full-scale”, that is, it is used in all three stages without a “break”.

Second, degree adverbs can be combined with more abstract nouns in the century-old *Huayu*, and the range of nouns modified by them has been expanded, showing an upward development trend.

Third, the use of degree adverbs modifying nouns in *Huayu*, Putonghua, and Mandarin has remained more consistent in a global *Huayu* perspective, indicating a trend of gradual integration.

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