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孝 /XIÀO/ — THE CULTURAL LINGUISTICS PERSPECTIVE

The subject of this paper is the concept of 孝 /xiào/ (“filial piety” [CED, 1373]), which was, as many state (see for example Chan, 2004), one of the most important concepts that has governed interpersonal and family relations in China during its several millennia long history.

This paper will give a brief introduction of existing research on its origin, philosophical interpretation, and cultural significance, and try to answer the following questions: how productive is the word 孝 /xiào/? What culturally significant categories pertaining to concrete real-life behaviour can be extracted just considering the meaning and usage of these lexical items? What lexemes can serve as antonyms of 孝 /xiào/ in certain contexts and what are its closely related concepts?

Key words: 孝 /xiào/, filial piety, cultural concept, productiveness, categories, antonyms, similar concepts

O. INTRODUCTION

The concept 孝 /xiào/ has been widely researched and the literature examining it from different perspectives abounds both in China and abroad. However, as Xu and Fang (2021: 66) state: “There remains a gap in the research of this notion in linguistic and cultural studies”¹.

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¹ Xu and Fang’s purpose is, as they say, to use “the analytical tools of ‘cultural conceptualisations’ (...) to deconstruct the notion of *xiao* in terms of its re-schematisation process across time and space from ancient China to contemporary

This paper is just another humble attempt to investigate it from the linguistic and Cultural Linguistics point of view and is primarily driven by my interest in this notion.

As already said, this paper will investigate culturally very strongly coloured concept 孝 /xiào/, that is by itself a so-called ‘cultural category’. Although I shall not give an overview of the Cultural Linguistics research on this topic², the definition of cultural category that I adopted is given by other authors and goes as follows: “Cultural categories are those culturally constructed conceptual categories that are primarily reflected in the lexicon of human languages.’ (Sharifian, 2017b, pp. 3–4)” (Xu, Fang 2021: 72). For this reason, I decided to use dictionaries in my research, as they represent the lexical depository of a language.

Lexical corpus used in the present research consists of two monolingual and two Chinese–English dictionaries. The reasons why I have chosen those dictionaries and the total amount of lexemes listed, will be given for each of them separately:

(1.) Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan yuyan yanjiusuo cidian bianjishi bian [中国社会科学院语言研究所词典编辑室编]. (2016/2018). *Xiandai Hanyu cidian* (di 7 ban) [现代汉语词典(第7版)/Dictionary of Modern Chinese (7th edition)]. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan [北京: 商务印书馆] (in further text referred to as DMC7). Starting from its earliest editions in 1960 and 1965, and its first formal edition in 1978 (DMC7 2016/2018: 3) all the way to the 7th edition which was used in this research, its compilation and all subsequent revisions have been guided by the team of the most notable Chinese linguists working under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), making it one of the most, if not the most important monolingual dictionary of Standard Chinese language. Although the “凡例/Guide to the dictionary usage” (DMC7 2016/2018: 2–5) do not mention the exact

Chinese diasporas” (Xu, Fang 2021: 66, 67) among others. Cultural and linguistic research on filial piety has also been conducted, for example, by Yuan (2014).

² For further reading on Cultural Linguistics see, for example, the works of Farzad Sharifian and the volumes he edited.

number of lexemes listed in it, given the explanation that only minor changes had been made to the previous 6th edition printed in 2012 (only 400 new words added, some old ones deleted and the like) (DMC7, 第7版说明/ Introduction to the 7th edition 2016/2018: 5), we can conclude that the number of listed lexemes is more or less similar to that of the 6th edition, and amounts to more than 69,000 (DMC7, 2012年第6版说明/ 2012 Introduction to the 6th edition 2016/2018: 12).

(2.) Wang, T. *et al.* [王涛等编著/ed.]. (1987/2006). *Zhongguo chengyu da cidian*. [中国成语大辞典/Dictionary of Chinese Idioms]. Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe [上海: 上海辞书出版社] (in further text referred to as DCI). The number of idioms listed in it is more than 18,000 (DCI, 序言/Preface; 凡例/ Guide to the dictionary usage 2006:1). This is just but one of the many specialized dictionaries of idioms that exist nowadays. However, I chose this one as part of my corpus because the famous Chinese linguist Wang Li, in its Preface, gave it a positive review.

(3.) Beijing waiguoyu daxue yingyu xi cidianzu bian [北京外国语学院英语系词典组编]. (1997/2006). *Han-ying cidian (xiuding ban suoyin ben)* [汉英词典(修订版缩印本)/A Chinese-English Dictionary (Revised edition)]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press [北京: 外语教学与研究出版社] (in further text referred to as CED). The number of listed lexemes is approximately 80,000 (CED, 前言/Preface: no page). This dictionary has been reprinted seventeen times, which is, in my opinion, proof enough of its wide acceptance and use, and the reason why I chose to enlist it in my research corpus.

(4.) Chen, X. [陈欣望] (ed./编著). (1991). *Hanying yulin* [汉英语林: 成语、典故、谚语、褒贬语、隐语、委婉语、古语、俗语、警句、诗辞熟句/A Dictionary of Chinese idioms and phrases, proverbs and allusions, eulogistic and derogatory terms, enigmas and euphemisms, famous and popular sayings, sparkling sentences and well-known lines in ancient poems, lyrics and literary compositions with English translation]. Shanghai: Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press [上海: 上海交通大学出版社] (in further text referred to as CEYL). In my opinion, the number of 34,643 entries (CEYL 1991: 1) and a wide range of language material gathered from various sources,

spanning from the philosophical and historical texts, famous poems, traditional and modern novels and even contemporary newspapers and magazines (CEYL 1991: 1, 2) makes it a unique reference book that offers much broader view of the language used by the Chinese of different educational level and fields of interest. Therefore, I chose to incorporate it in the language corpus.

In order to find out how many lexemes in the chosen corpus are actually formed by the word 孝/xiào/, I went through the total amount of at least 201,640 dictionary entries³. The results of my study will be presented below.

Including the Introduction and the Conclusion, this paper consists of five parts: in the first part titled “The origin and philosophical interpretations of 孝 /xiào/”, I give a short overview of the meaning, cultural significance, and importance of this concept in China as it was explained and thoroughly studied by many scholars both in China and abroad. As I do not intend to go deeper into all the possible interpretations, its ethical, sociological, and historical meanings, and importance of 孝 /xiào/, the paper will present only a small portion of works considered relevant to the present study. The second part of the paper titled “Corpus analysis findings” presents the results of my research. The third part “Antonymic and the concepts closely related to 孝 /xiào/” brings forth the question of the antonyms of 孝 /xiào/ as well as the relationship between 孝 /xiào/ and other culturally significant concepts in China, such as 忠 /zhōng/, 悌 /tì/ and others. In that part I shall also present some preliminary ideas waiting to be thoroughly studied in the future.

³ Worth noting is that except for the DMC7, for which I was able to obtain a digital version, which significantly eased the search and increased its accuracy, all other dictionaries were checked manually, page by page, entry by entry, which was not only time consuming, but also prone to possibly higher error degree. Therefore, it must be noted that the real number of lexical items might be slightly different than that presented in this study, although not substantially so that can significantly change the results regarding the productivity of this word.

1. THE ORIGIN AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF 孝 /XIÀO/

The concept 孝 /xiào/ is culturally constructed concept (Xu, Fang 2021: 65–66) which appears in the classical text “*Xiao Jing*, translated as the *Classic of Filial Piety*” from “around 4th century BC”, and is composed of “18 short chapters documenting what Confucius said about the notion of *xiao*”, in the conversation with one of his disciples (Xu, Fang 2021: 66).

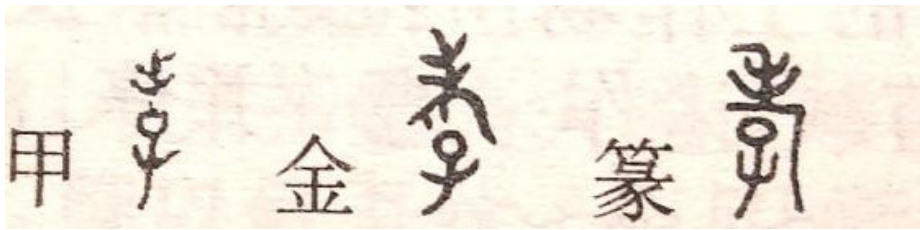
The character 孝 /xiào/, however, is much older, and is found even “in the oracle bones inscriptions (甲骨文) from the Shang dynasty” (Zhang 2020: 80) that ruled China from appr. 17th to 11th century BC (ACHC 1986: 6)⁴. Researchers generally agree about this (see for example Wang 2020). Detailed account on the socio-economic conditions that enabled the rise and development of this concept, and its numerous entailments is given by Tu (2010: 157) who states that its rise was closely related to the creation of the family, i.e., “a patriarchal clan society”⁵ in which everyone’s lineage was known (as opposed to the situation in the previous matriarchal society). Its ascension towards the sphere of moral virtue is linked to the establishment of the feudal society which happened during the Western Zhou dynasty (approx. 11th century – 771 B.C.) (ACHC 1986: 10), for which nowadays evidence in the form of inscriptions in bronze is abundant (Tu 2010: 157). Although already used as a tool for regulating the society in the period of Western Zhou, 孝 /xiào/ formally entered the sphere of politics during the Han dynasty (206 B.C – 220 A.D.) (ACHC 1986: 22, 28), due to the Neo-Confucianist Dong Zhongshu, and the fact that through the works of Confucius, Zengzi, Mencius and other Ruists, it was already so developed that could be used by the rulers of the Han

⁴ The time span for each dynasty or historical period mentioned in this paper is given according to Jian, B., X. Shao and H. Hu. (1986). *A Concise History of China*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, in further text referred to as ACHC. This source will be stated in the body of the text, immediately after the information that comes from it.

⁵ Throughout the text, translation of citations from the papers originally written in Chinese is given by the author of this paper.

“to pacify and rule over all under the Heavens” (Tu 2010: 158). In her research of the *Analects* and *Mencius*, as two of the most important Ruist classics, Chan (2004: 180) listed eleven specific “duties” that a filial son must perform including, but not limited to caring, esteem, obedience, proper treatment, performing sacrificial offerings upon parents’ death and having children so that they can continue the practice of ritual sacrifice. All of those must in their essence have the feeling of “affection for one’s parents” (Ibid).

As for the development of the character 孝 /xiào/, in his *Dictionary of the Origin and the Development of Chinese Characters*, Gu Yankui (2003: 246) gives the following pictures depicting the change of character’s form from the earliest oracle bones script, via inscriptions on bronze to the small seal script:



Oracle bones script Inscriptions on bronze Small seal script

According to Zhang (2020: 80), in its earliest form, it was composed of “the upper part – a long streak of hair representing an old man, and the lower part – his son who serves as a support, thus representing the respect and care” one shows towards his or her elders. Xu and Fang (2021: 66) state that looking from the morpho-semantic point of view “xiao (孝) is originally about sons supporting their aging parents”, but “it is also about humbleness, courtesy, righteousness, morality, law-abiding, loyalty, prosperity, nobleness, and the worship of the Lord or the Son of Heaven [... and] ultimately about achieving a harmonious relationship between the Heaven and the Earth” (ibid, 83).

So, what exactly is the social and ethical meaning of 孝 /xiào/? Zhang (2020: 80) states that “at the very beginning it was just a

consciousness one had about his/her need to respect the elders and the ancestors”, but that it “grew into a specific culture with the rise of Ruism”. According to Wang (2020: 28), as a concept that “embodies the Ruist culture”, it is not only related to the “respect and taking care for one’s living parents” and ancestors, which no doubt is its basic connotation reflected also in the fact that one must visit ancestors’ graves in order to pay them respect during “the four major traditional holidays”, i.e. “the Lunar New Year’s Eve, the Tomb Sweeping Day, the Double Ninth Festival and the Festival of the Dead Spits”, but is also extended towards all the elders in the society and the society as a whole, to which one must be loyal and devout. As Xu and Fang (2021: 66), among numerous other researchers throughout the history highlight, it is “one of the top virtues” in China, same as “仁 (*ren*, benevolence), 义 (*yi*, righteousness), 礼 (*li*, propriety), 智 (*zhi*, wisdom), 信 (*xin*, faith) and 忠 (*zhong*, loyalty)”, which is, as the 孝经 (*Xiaojing*, *The Classic of Filial Piety*) puts it “considered to be moral norms prescribed by the Heaven” (ibid, 67). It can also be understood (see Wang’s argument 2020: 28 about the form of character 孝 /xiào/ in the small seal script) as a “respect and gratefulness of offspring towards their parents for the loving care they were given” (Wang 2020: 28) and is often “re-schematised” in modern societies as “reciprocal support and mutual assistance financially and emotionally across generations” (Xu and Fang 2021: 83).

From the very beginning, the concept 孝 /xiào/ was more than just a virtue everyone should strive to achieve. Very early on, it has been properly “standardized” and even institutionalized firstly through the “norms of propriety 礼 [lǐ/]” and then, with the development of the legal society during the Qin dynasty, through the legal system (Zhang 2020: 80). Even though it has to be admitted that it was overwhelmingly used by the aristocracy and the emperor in order to “subdue their people”, the fact that “not being filial” was throughout the ages considered to be if not the biggest of all crimes, then one of the major ones, and that it even nowadays still is in some form extant in the current laws of the country (Zhang 2020: 81), is proof

enough of its significance in shaping the Chinese civilization and culture as a whole. As it is already mentioned above, Han dynasty was the first one to “use 孝 /xiào/ to pacify and rule over all under the Heavens”, and the importance of this concept in the institutional and political sense is clear enough from the fact that during that same Han dynasty it became the inseparable part of the exams for recruiting civil servants (Tu 2010: 158). All the later dynasties up to the last one, the Qing dynasty, “paid special attention to the transmission of *xiao*” (Zhang 2020: 80). After the fall of dynastic feudal system in 1911, according to Tu (2010: 159), famous reformers from the May 4th Movement, such as “Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, Lu Xun and others, strongly criticized the feudal ethical code of 孝 /xiào/”, which was therefore forced to reform and accommodate to the newly established social circumstances.

As for the modern understanding of the notion 孝 /xiào/, Xu and Fang (2021: 82) state that some of its multiple meanings that developed during the course of time, such as, for example “worshiping the Lord or the Son of Heaven”, disappeared, primarily “due to the Cultural Revolution”, as those meanings were considered to be “acts or thoughts of feudal superstition”, and only the meaning related “with parent – child relationship within the family domain” has survived until today. As mentioned above, even in some state laws and regulations nowadays, there can be found articles regarding “the obligation of sons and daughters to take care of one’s parents” (Zhang 2020: 81). What is also very interesting is to see in what degree this culturally important concept survives when confronted with the Western cultural and behavioural matrices in second generation of Chinese diaspora in the USA, Australia, and other countries. If we are to judge according to some reports (see for example Yang 2011: no page), this concept has a tendency of disappearing from the minds of younger generation Chinese living in the societies predominantly governed by the Western culture and codes of behaviour, due to their exposure to the Western understanding that children must “respect” their parents, but not necessarily have “the moral obligations” towards

them (Yang 2011: n.p.).⁶ Even in China, as Poškaitė (2014: 111) states, there is “the confusion or disagreement over the understanding of the duty of filial piety between older and younger generations.” She says that, according to the sociological studies conducted by Wu Fei (2011), the young believe “material support” is expression enough of their “filiality”, while the parents are often not satisfied with just that (ibid. 112).

Given the plentiful articles on philosophical, ethical, behavioural, sociological, and other meanings of 孝 /xiào/, and due to the limitations of space, I will not go further on presenting and reviewing the existing literature, with hope that what has been said above will be enough for the reader to understand my motif to investigate this concept from the Cultural Linguistics’ point of view.

2. CORPUS ANALYSIS FINDINGS

As it has already been said in the Introduction, for the purpose of this research I checked more than 201,640 dictionary entries listed in the abovementioned four dictionaries and found out that the number of entries (compounds, idioms, proverbs etc.) formed from the word⁷ 孝 /xiào/ in them is only 64 (entry that appears in several dictionaries is counted only once). In other words, it makes up only 0.0317% of the entries listed in those dictionaries⁸. If we look at each of them

⁶ For the generational gap and differences in understanding this concept in Australia, see excellent study conducted by Xu and Fang (2021).

⁷ Many monosyllabic words in Modern Chinese language are at the same time root morphemes too. For the purpose of this paper, it is not relevant whether we consider 孝 /xiào/ to be the root morpheme, monosyllabic word, or we talk about it as the “character”, which is the reason why the explanation of the difference between them will not be given. In this paper the author will be mostly using the term “word” when referring to 孝 /xiào/.

⁸ It is interesting to note that Yuan (2014) did a similar research, limited though to one dictionary only, namely *The Big Dictionary of Chinese language* (汉语大词典). She found out that there are 150 items formed by the word 孝 /xiào/, which is

separately, the situation is as follows: DMC7 with more than 69,000 entries (DMC7, 2012年第6版说明/2012 Introduction to the 6th edition 2016/2018: 12) lists only 21 lexemes (approximately 0,03% of all) formed by the word 孝 /xiào/. DCI with more than 18,000 entries (DCI, 序言/Preface; 凡例 /Guide to the dictionary usage 2006: 1), lists only 12 lexemes that have the word 孝 /xiào/ as their component, which makes no more than 0,067% of the total number of entries. In the CED, with approximately 80,000 (CED, 前言 /Preface: no page) dictionary entries, only 27 (that is approximately 0,034%) contain the word 孝 /xiào/, while in the CEYL that number is 36 out of 34,643 (CEYL 1991: 1) entries it stores (which makes no more than 0,10 % of the collected lexical material). Although still a very small number, the last one of four gives proportionally the largest number of compounds, idioms, sayings etc., which is probably related to its wide range of language material and different types of collected linguistic data.

Contrary to what is expected from such a culturally important concept, 孝 /xiào/ has a very low productivity rate, which Liu (2009: 97) relates to it not being a basic–vocabulary word. Let us compare it to the body part word 心 /xīn/ (“1. the heart; 2. heart; mind; feeling; intention;” (...) [CED, 1381]) as an example of a very productive word that forms 399 lexemes in the 5th edition of DMC and the CED (Jovanović 2014: 4). Such a great number is no doubt a result of it belonging to the basic vocabulary and its usage in everyday life not only to denote abstract, but also concrete concepts. That is all quite different from the concept 孝 /xiào/, which is limited to the traditional, feudal ethics.

more than double the amount of those found in the four dictionaries I examined. In my opinion, the reason for such a big number is because, as she explained, she counted “every separate meaning of polysemic word as a separate lexeme” (Yuan 2014: 15). I do not agree with her counting methodology, since separate senses of polysemic lexemes cannot be considered separate words. Therefore, I think that the number she states in her paper must not be taken at face value.

What does 孝 /xiào/ mean? Let's look at the following explanation:

1. *filial*; 2. *filial piety*; *filial obedience*; 3. *the conventional mourning rites for a deceased elder member of one's family*; 4. *mourning apparel* [CED, 1373].⁹

In all of the 64 lexical items found in the corpus, character 孝 /xiào/ carries one (or more if the lexeme is polysemous) of the above cited meanings. In order to structure this not so big set of lexemes, I've tried to offer a possible classification¹⁰ of the set of words formed by 孝 /xiào/, with a purpose of highlighting the whole scope of its usage

⁹ Meanings of the lexical items are cited from the dictionaries that served as a corpus for my research. The source will be stated in the brackets, after the meaning, using the shortened name of the dictionary and the page on which it can be found (for example: [CED, 1373]). To make it clearer to the non-speaking Chinese reader, longer items, like idioms and proverbs, will firstly be given word by word literal translation of each component (CED will be used for that purpose), and after that the meaning given in the dictionary. If certain lexical item appears only in monolingual dictionaries, translation into English will be given by the author of this paper, according to the Chinese explanations and English translation of the words used in them.

¹⁰ Another possible classification of lexemes with 孝 /xiào/ is given by Yuan (2014: 15) and goes as follows: First three categories “are based on real-life practices, behaviors, understanding and feelings related to 孝 /xiào/”. The first category consists of nouns that serve to “denominate person who is filial”; second category consists of verbs that name activities and “practices related to filial behavior”; the third category is, again, comprised from nouns that relate to the “disposition, moral character and temperament”. Adjectives make the fourth category that is related to the “ways others evaluate someone's behavior” (ibid.: 15) and are mostly positive in their connotations (ibid.: 16); the fifth category is the most numerous one and consists of lexemes and expressions related to “mourning and funeral ceremonies” (ibid.: 15), in which the purpose of using 孝 /xiào/ is to “avoid the usage of words 死 (/sǐ/, to die, death), 歿 /mò/ (to die)” and the like, which are tabooed in Chinese culture (ibid.: 16). Yuan (ibid.: 15) divides this category into two subgroups, i.e., words expressing abstract, and words expressing more concrete meanings. The sixth category, which is related to “ideology and its restraining effects” (ibid.: 16), “can be further sub-categorized into the names or titles ruling class bestows upon those who are filial (...), abstract nouns pertaining to some things related to 孝 /xiào/ inside the [feudal] system [...], and words whose origin is related to some famous stories regarding filiality” (ibid.: 17).

in Chinese language and culture. Similarly to other researchers (see for example Yuan, 2014), who also tried to classify the set of lexemes formed by this culturally important concept, I hold that classifying lexemes into categories has twofold importance: firstly, it makes it easier for foreign students to form a holistic picture of the usage and importance of this concept, which is rarely achieved solely by learning individual items separately when we come across them; and secondly, as any other classification, it can help us better understand the areas in which they influence the thought and behaviour of the ordinary language users. For this paper, I extracted the following categories¹¹:

I. The status of 孝/xiào/ inside the system of moral values:

- 1) 百善孝为先 *bǎi shàn xiào wéi xiān* [hundred – virtuous – filial piety – be – before, first] “Filial piety is the root of all goodness” [CEYL, 523/524]
- 2) 万恶淫为首，百善孝为先 *wàn è yín wéi shǒu, bǎi shàn xiào wéi xiān* [ten thousand – evil – licentious – be – the head/first, hundred – virtuous – filial piety – be – first], “Of all crimes, lewdness is the worst; of all virtues filial piety is the best” [CEYL, 110]

In the analyzed corpus, only two proverbs are identified as belonging to this category, which place the concept of 孝 /xiào/ high above all other virtues, as we have seen was the case during the long history of the development of this concept that was introduced in the part 1. of this paper.

II. Person’s moral character:

- 3) 不孝 *bùxiào* “be an unfilial son or daughter; act contrary to filial piety” [CED, 101]
- 4) 不孝（肖）子孙 *bù xiào (xiào) zǐ sūn* [not – filial – children and grandchildren] i.e., “unworthy descendants” [CEYL, 236]

¹¹ As is the case with any other classification, the above is just my attempt to classify seemingly disparate words. When naming the categories, I had in mind the easiest and most understandable way of representing the meanings of the whole group of lexical items.

- 5) 不忠不孝 *bù zhōng bù xiào* [not – loyal – not – filial] i.e., “to be neither loyal to one’s country nor filial to one’s parents” [CEYL, 241]
- 6) 全忠全孝 *quán zhōng quán xiào* [completely – loyal – completely – filial] i.e., “to be complete both in fidelity and filial piety” [CEYL, 627]
- 7) 孝道 *xiàodao* “(inf.) be a good son or daughter” [CED, 1373]
- 8) 孝顺 *xiào shun* “show filial obedience” [CED, 1373]
- 9) 忠信孝悌 *zhōng xìn xiào tì* [loyal – confidence, trust, faith – filial piety – love and respect for one’s elder brother] i.e., “loyalty, sincerity, filial piety and fraternal love” [CEYL, 991]
- 10) 孝心 *xiàoxīn* “filial sentiments; filial devotion” [CED, 1373]
- 11) 忠臣孝子 *zhōng chén xiào zǐ* [loyal – minister – a filial son] i.e., “loyal statesmen and filial sons” [CEYL, 990]

This category has 22 items (variants of the same lexical entry excluded), of which only nine are listed as examples. All of the lexical items in this category either serve to characterize whether someone is having or lacking the moral character of 孝 /xiào/ (examples 3, 4, 5, 6, 11), describe someone’s behavior (example 7, 8) or just name the virtue of filiality or other closely related to it (9, 10).

III. The correlative nature of the relationship between the family members:

- 12) 母慈子孝 *mǔ cí zǐ xiào* [mother – kind – son – filial] i.e., “A kind mother brings up children dutiful to their family” [CEYL, 502]
- 13) 父慈子孝 *fù cí zǐ xiào* [father – kind – son – filial] i.e., “A kind father makes a filial son” [CEYL, 354]
- 14) 若要子女孝，自己孝父母 *ruò yào zǐ nǚ xiào, zì jǐ xiào fù mǔ* [if – want to – sons and daughters – filial, oneself – filial – parents] i.e., “The way in which you treat your parents has the greatest formative effect on your children’s behaviour” [CEYL, 972]

- 15) 贤父孝子 *xián fù xiào zǐ* [worthy – father – a filial son] i.e., “the affectionate father and filial sons” [CEYL, 1007]

These four idioms and proverbs state what seems to be the popular wisdom regarding achieving the virtue of 孝 /xiào/, drawn from the experience, and are clearly the echo of understanding that one should live by their own example and not expect their children to have virtues they themselves do not possess.

IV. Instructions derived from experience:

- 16) 棒头上出孝子 *bàng tóu shàng chū xiào zǐ* [stick – on – produce – a filial son] i.e., “Severe whipping was the most effective means of bringing up filial sons” [CEYL, 1583]
- 17) 父严子孝 *fù yán zǐ xiào* [father – strict – son – filial] i.e., “when father sternly disciplines his children, the children should be filial and respect him” [DCI, 391]
- 18) 孝心须费力，忠臣得赔命 *xiào xīn xū fèi lì, zhōng chén děi péi mìng* [filial – heart – must – exert great effort, loyal – minister – must – stand a loss – life] i.e., „Filial service demands every effort; loyalty to the prince demands life itself” [CEYL, 785]
- 19) 移孝作忠 *yí xiào zuò zhōng* [change – filial piety – regard as – loyal] i.e., “to substitute filial piety with loyalty to the country” [CEYL, 1516]
- 20) 久病床前无孝子 *jiǔ bìng chuáng qián wú xiào zǐ* [long – sickness – bed – front – not have – a filial son] i.e., “in cases of chronic sickness, there are no dutiful children at the bedside” [CED, 642]

Example 16) is clearly based on the experience and has the purpose of giving parents an advice of how to bring up filial offspring. I will not comment the correctness of the method, but only state that what we deal with here is feudal ethics and the whole phenomena should be regarded in the light of that understanding. Similar to it is example 17). Examples 18) and 19) correlate the virtue of 孝 /xiào/, which is more basic, to the higher level, that is the loyalty to the sovereign, as

a natural extension of it. Example 20) brings forth the situation that could be true everywhere, regardless of the cultural matrix.

V. Obligations, customs, and various behavioral models

I divided this category into the following sub-categories:

V/1. Obligations towards ancestors:

21) 不孝有三，无后为大 *bù xiào yǒu sān, wú hòu wéi dà* [not – filial – have – three, not have – offspring – be – big] i.e., “There are three forms of unfilial conduct, of which the worst is to have no descendants” [CEYL, 236]

V/2. Mourning apparel and customs related to mourning:

22) 穿孝 *chuānxiào* “be in mourning; wear mourning” [CED, 188]

23) 带孝 *dàixiào* “wear mourning for a parent, relative, etc.; be in mourning” [CED, 234]

24) 吊孝 *diàoxiào* “(inf.) visit the bereaved to offer one’s condolences; pay a condolence call” [CED, 275]

25) 满孝 *mǎn//xiào* “to finish the period of mourning for the deceased elder member of the family” [DMC7, 875]

26) 披麻带孝 *pīmá – dàixiào* [wrap around – hemp – wear mourning for a parent, relative, etc.] i.e., “wear the hemp garments of mourning” [CED, 914]

27) 热孝 *rèxiào* “(usu. used in) ~在身 [zài shēn] wear mourning for one’s grandparents, parents, or husband” [CED, 1021]

28) 身穿重孝 *shēn chuān zhòng xiào* [body – wear – heavy – mourning apparel] i.e., “to be in sackcloth” [CEYL, 865]

29) 守孝 *shǒuxiào* “observe a period of mourning for one’s deceased parent” [CED, 1137]

30) 孝服 *xiàofú* “1. mourning apparel 2. a conventional period of mourning (for a deceased elder member of one’s family)” [CED, 1373]

31) 谢孝 *xièxiào* “after the period of mourning for a parent, visit and thank those friends and relatives who have offered condolences” [CED, 1380]

32) 重孝 *zhòngxiào* “in deep mourning (usu. after the death of one’s parent)” [CED, 1643]

V/3. Expected behaviour (in the family and beyond):

33) 尽孝 *jìnxiào* “fulfill one’s duty to one’s parents; display filial piety towards one’s parents” [CED, 624]

34) 居家孝友 *jūjiā xiào yǒu* [reside – home – filial – friendly] i.e., “to be filial and fraternal in one’s domestic life” [CEYL, 976]

35) 为臣死忠, 为子死孝 *wéi chén sǐ zhōng, wéi zǐ sǐ xiào* [be – minister – die – loyal, be – son – die – filial] i.e., “in feudal society, ministers should be loyal to their sovereign up to the point that they should not spare their life, while sons/children should be ready to give up their life in order to be filial to their parents” [CDI, 1323/1324]

36) 孝道 *xiàodào* “filial duty” [CED, 1373]

37) 孝敬 *xiàojìng* “1. show filial respect to (one’s elders) 2. give presents to (one’s elders or superiors) to show one’s respect; pay a tribute of respect to” [CED, 1373]

38) 孝幔 *xiàomàn* “the curtain or screen before a bier” [CED, 1373]

39) 孝行 *xiàoxíng* “filial behaviour” [CED, 1373]

V/4. The way the bereaved persons address themselves (in the old society):

40) 孝女 *xiàonǚ* “1. (old) bereaved daughter (a term used in an obituary or on a tombstone; (...))” [CED, 1373]

41) 孝男 *xiàonán* “(old) bereaved son (a term used in an obituary or on a tombstone)” [CED, 1373]

Example 21) from the sub-category V/1 is a well-known saying of Mencius (Ivanhoe 2004: 191) that has determined the most important task of every human being in the Ruist ethics, i.e., the continuation of one’s family name, and is typical, in that sense for the patriarchal society. All of the examples belonging to the sub-category V/2 are related to mourning rituals, either in the sense of just stating the fact that one is in mourning, describing what kind of clothes one is

wearing (which in itself is very interesting, as we can see that it is considered proper if one is wearing very plain clothing), name the requisites (such as curtain) used by the coffin or visiting those who came to offer their condolences during the mourning period. In that sense, all these lexical examples are very informative, especially to those not belonging to Chinese cultural matrix, as we can learn a lot about specific customs and behavioural codes related to this important life event. In these examples, as is already mentioned earlier in this paper, 孝 /xiào/ is used as a sort of “substitute” to culturally tabooed words (see Yuan 2014:16). Similarly, lexical examples belonging to the sub-category V/3 prescribe proper behaviour inside the family and beyond, while items in V/4 are old expressions used by grieving children in obituaries or tombstones, as it is already clear from the dictionary explanations.

3. ANTONYMIC AND THE CONCEPTS CLOSELY RELATED TO 孝 /XIÀO/

The obvious antonymic concept to 孝 /xiào/ is its direct negation, that is example no. 3) which will be, for the sake of convenience, repeated here:

- 3)¹² 不孝 *bùxiào* “be an unfilial son or daughter; act contrary to filial piety” [CED, 101]

However, corpus analysis shows that there are also two other words, namely 逆 /nì/ (“1. contrary; counter; inverse; converse; 2. go against; disobey; defy; 3. traitorous; rebellious; (...)” [CED, 876-877]) and 孽 /niè/ (“evil; sin” [CED, 883]; “1. evil, evil person; 2. sin; 3. (lit.) not loyal or not filial” [DMC7, 957]), which are used as its antonyms in certain fixed phrases and expressions. Although DMC7 as the 3rd meaning of 孽 /niè/ gives the meaning that can be considered directly antonymic to 孝 /xiào/, no such meaning is given for the word 逆 /nì/, and yet, we find both in the following lexical entries:

¹² All lexical items that appear earlier in the text are repeated by their original numbers.

- 42) 逆子 *nìzǐ* “unfilial son” [CED, 877]
43) 孽子 *nièzǐ* “1. (old.) son of a concubine; 2. an unfilial son; an unworthy descendant” [CED, 883]
44) 臣不反君，子不逆父 *chén bù fǎn jūn, zǐ bù nì fù* [minister – not – counter – monarch, son – not – counter – father], i.e. “A minister can’t go against his king, a son can’t go against his father” [CEYL, 535]
45) 奸臣逆子 *jiān chén nì zǐ* [treacherous – minister – traitorous – son] i.e., “disloyal ministers and unfilial sons” [CEYL, 694]
46) 逆子馋臣 *nì zǐ chán chén* [traitorous – son – greedy – minister] i.e., “unfilial sons and disloyal and traitorous statesmen” [CEYL, 1291/1292]
47) 叛臣逆子 *pàn chén nì zǐ* [rebel against – minister – traitorous – son] i.e., “traitorous officials and unfilial sons” [CEYL, 1289]
48) 忤逆不孝 *wǔ nì bù xiào* [disobedient – traitorous – not – filial] i.e., “obstinate and undutiful” [CEYL, 910]; “not obedient to parents and not filial” [DCI, 1376]

It seems that words 逆 /nì/ and 孽 /niè/ when paired with other morphemes are much stronger in meaning than plain 不孝 /bù xiào/ and are used to highlight how bad, or even evil it is if someone lacks the quality of being filial.

Another thing to be discussed in this part is that the findings of the corpus analysis I conducted prove once again what researchers (see for e.g., Ivanhoe 2004: 196, Zhang 2020: 80; Wang 2020: 29) have claimed about the connections between the concept of 孝 /xiào/ and other related and culturally important concepts, especially that of 忠 /zhōng/ (“loyal, devoted, honest” [CED, 1638]). Lexical items from our corpus in which they co-occur are the following:

- 49) 忠孝 *zhōngxiào* “loyalty and filial piety” [CED, 1638]
5) 不忠不孝 *bù zhōng bù xiào* [not – loyal – not – filial] i.e., “to be neither loyal to one’s country nor filial to one’s parents” [CEYL, 241]

- 6) 全忠全孝 *quán zhōng quán xiào* [completely – loyal – completely – filial] i.e., “to be complete both in fidelity and filial piety” [CEYL, 627]
- 35) 为臣死忠，为子死孝 *wéi chén sǐ zhōng, wéi zǐ sǐ xiào* [be – minister – die – loyal, be – son – die – filial] i.e., “in feudal society, ministers should be loyal to their sovereign up to the point that they should not spare their life, while sons/children should be ready to give up their life in order to be filial to their parents” [CDI, 1323/1324]
- 18) 孝心须费力，忠臣得赔命 *xiào xīn xū fèi lì, zhōng chén děi péi mìng* [filial – heart – must – exert great effort, loyal – minister – must – stand a loss – life] i.e., “Filial service demands every effort; loyalty to the prince demands life itself” [CEYL, 785]
- 19) 移孝作忠 *yí xiào zuò zhōng* [change – filial piety – regards as – loyal] i.e., “to substitute filial piety with loyalty to the country” [CEYL, 1516]
- 11) 忠臣孝子 *zhōng chén xiào zǐ* [loyal – minister – a filial son] i.e., “loyal statemen and filial sons” [CEYL, 990]
- 50) 忠君孝亲 *zhōng jūn xiào qīn* [loyal – monarch – filial – parent] i.e., “loyalty to one’s ruler and filiality to one’s parents – the feudal concept in old China” [CEYL, 990]
- 51) 忠孝两全 *zhōng xiào liǎng quán* [loyal – filial – both – complete] i.e., “have both, the loyalty to one’s country and the filiality to one’s parents” [CDI, 1758]
- 52) 忠孝难两全 *zhōng xiào nán liǎng quán* [loyal – filial – hard – both – complete] i.e., “One can hardly be complete both in fidelity and filial piety” [CEYL, 990]

In all the above examples, the concepts 忠 /zhōng/ and 孝 /xiào/ are closely related, with the former being conceived as the expected continuation or expansion of the latter beyond one’s family to the country and the sovereign as its representative. It is worth mentioning that for an individual, 忠 /zhōng/ meant that it was more important “to obey the feudal ruler and not the country and people” (Zhang 2020: 81). Ivanhoe (2004: 196) states that “Confucian thinkers regularly

assert that filial piety is the proper paradigm for the subject – ruler relationship as well as the child – parent relationship”. As for the establishment of the connection between the two concepts, according to Zhang (2020: 80) it “is even more [strongly] established by the Ruist classic *Xiaojing*”. Tu (2010: 158) explains that this connection was even more deepened after the Neo-Confucianist Zhang Cai wrote about them, i.e., “[on that basis] established the unity between them”. Indeed, over the long history of the Chinese feudal society 孝 /xiào/ became a powerful weapon for reigning over the people, and the loyalty towards the ruling class and the emperor was established through the connection with the concept of 忠 /zhōng/ (Zhang 2020: 84). Possible reason for the connection, it is believed, is the instalment of 孝 /xiào/ as one of the most important subjects in the exams for civil service (Tu 2010: 158). Although it has lost its original meaning and power, this idea of the close connection between the “filial piety” and the “loyalty” exists even nowadays in some fixed expressions of historical origin, as can be seen from the examples above.

Apart from 忠 /zhōng/, 孝 /xiào/ is combined, albeit in much lesser degree, with the concept of 悌 /tì/ (“love and respect one’s elder brother.” [CED, 1216]). The fact that 孝 /xiào/ is closely related to 悌 /tì/ is proven by the fact that “in the *Analects* [...]” both of them “have been described as the root of the virtue of *ren*” (Chan 2004: 176). And 仁 /rén/, (“1. benevolence; kindheartedness; humanity(...)” [CED, 1028]) is by far one of the most important concepts in Confucian (or Ruist) ethics. Love towards brothers and mutual respect is, as Tu (2010: 157, 158) states established during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods¹³ and was “the basic obligation between blood relations in the family”(ibid.: 158). Considering abovementioned Chan’s (2004) comment, it should not surprise us that no combination of 孝 /xiào/ and 仁 /rén/ is found in our corpus, although we might have expected it, and even though, as Tu (2010: 158) states, “the relationship between 仁 [/rén/] and 孝 [/xiào/] was thoroughly explained anew by Er Cheng”,

¹³ Spring and Autumn period: (772 BC – 481 BC); Warring States period: 403 BC – 221 BC (ACHC 1986: 14).

who was the Neo-Confucian that lived in the Northern Song dynasty (960–1126) (ACHC 1986: 55). The lexical items with both 孝/xiào/ and 悌/tì/ are the following:

- 53) 孝悌 *xiàotì* “show filial piety to one’s parents and love and respect to one’s elder brothers” [CED, 1373]
- 54) 孝悌恭亲 *xiào tì gōng qīn* [filial – love and respect one’s elder brother – respectful – parent] i.e., “to be filial toward one’s parents and fraternal towards brother” [CEYL, 786]
- 9) 忠信孝悌 *zhōng xìn xiào tì* [loyal – confidence, trust, faith – filial piety – love and respect for one’s elder brother] i.e., “loyalty, sincerity, filial piety and fraternal love” [CEYL, 991]

In example 54) apart from “filiality” and “love and respect for one’s elder brother”, two other concepts appear, namely 恭/gōng/ (“respectful; reverent” [CED, 416]) and 亲/qīn/ (which, among others have the following meanings: “1. parent; 2. blood relation; next of kin; 3. relative; (...) 6. close; intimate; dear; (...)” [CED, 982]; while in Classical Chinese its meanings were, among others: “1. close, intimate; 2. relative, especially parent; (...)” [Wang 2000/2007:1248, 1249]). In example 9) apart from 孝/xiào/, 悌/tì/, and 忠/zhōng/, there is also a concept 信/xìn/ (with the meaning “confidence; trust; faith” [CED, 1389]). *Wang Li Guhanyu Zidian* [Wang Li’s *Dictionary of Classical Chinese*] (2000/2007: 28) gives it the following explanation: “1. to speak the truth, not lie (...) [which is] extended to mean ‘honest, one who does not deceive’ and ‘to believe, to have confidence in, to be trustworthy’, and as an adjective ‘real’. (...)”. Wang (2020: 29) states that the relationship between 孝/xiào/ and 信/xìn/ was explained by Confucius in his *Analects* where “信 [xìn/] appears 38 times”, and was one of the four major subjects that Confucius taught, specifically related to the reliability of spoken and written words (Wang 2020: 29).

Another concept that is usually closely linked to 孝/xiào/ is 慈/cí/ (“1. kind; loving; (...)” [CED, 200], or in Classical Chinese: “1. to love; 2. be filial to parents and wait upon them” [Wang 2000/2007: 324]). According to the analyzed corpus the following notions are also paired with 孝/xiào/: 友/yǒu/ (“1. friend; 2. friendly” [CED, 1522]) and

in Classical Chinese “friend”, which later “extended its meaning to verbal: ‘1. make friends with’; 2. love between brothers”; and “[again] extended its meaning to ‘dear, beloved” [Wang 2000/2007: 99].]; 义 /yì/ (“1. justice; righteousness; 2. righteous; equitable; just; 3. human ties; relationship (...)” [CED, 1485]), for which Wang (2000/2007: 962/963), among others gives the following meanings: “1. what the society considers as appropriate ways and conduct; 2. meaning, sense; 3. outward appearance, etiquette, moral standard; (...)”; 贤 /xián/ (“1. virtuous and able; worthy; 2. a worthy person; an able and virtuous person; (...)” [CED, 1343]; while its meaning in Classical Chinese was: “1. to show ability and morals, virtue; 2. one who shows ability and virtue; (...)” [Wang 2000/2007: 1332]); 节 /jié/ (“(...) 8. moral integrity, chastity (...)” [CED, 608]); 廉洁 /liánjié/ (“honest and clean; incorruptible” [CED, 748]), out of which 廉 lián in Classical Chinese had the meaning “proper, correct, careful, conscientious” [Wang 2000/2007: 278]. Lexical items in which there is a combination of these concepts with the concept of 孝 /xiào/ are the following:

- 12) 母慈子孝 *mǔ cí zǐ xiào* [mother – kind – son – filial] i.e., “A kind mother brings up children dutiful to their family” [CEYL, 502]
- 13) 父慈子孝 *fù cí zǐ xiào* [father – kind – son – filial] i.e., “A kind father makes a filial son” [CEYL, 354]
- 55) 孝子慈孙 *xiào zǐ cí sūn* [a filial son – kind – grandson] i.e., “refer to filial children and grandchildren” [CDI, 1421]
- 34) 居家孝友 *jū jiā xiào yǒu* [reside – home – filial – friendly] i.e., “to be filial and fraternal in one’s domestic life” [CEYL, 976]
- 56) 孝义廉洁 *xiào yì lián jié* [filial – righteous – honest] i.e., “filiality and righteousness, incorruptibility and integrity” [CEYL, 785]
- 57) 孝子贤孙 *xiào zǐ xián sūn* [filial – son – worthy – grandson] i.e., “(to be) sons reverent to parents and grandsons dutiful to ancestors” [CEYL, 785]
- 15) 贤父孝子 *xián fù xiào zǐ* [worthy – father – a filial son] i.e., “the affectionate father and filial sons” [CEYL, 1007]

- 58) 贤妻孝女 *xián qī xiào nǚ* [worthy – wife – filial – daughter] i.e., “faithful wife and filial daughters” [CEYL, 1007]
59) 孝子节妇 *xiào zǐ jié fù* [a filial son – chastity – wife] i.e., “filial sons and virtuous widows (or wives)” [CEYL, 785]
60) 孝义廉洁 *xiào yì lián jié* [filial – righteous – honest] i.e., “filiality and righteousness, incorruptibility and integrity” [CEYL, 785]
61) 忠孝廉节 *zhōng xiào lián jié* [loyal – filial – honest – chastity] i.e., “loyalty, filial piety, integrity and chastity” [CEYL, 990]

Examples 12) and 13) show the relation between the kindness of parents and filiality of children. According to Tu (2010: 157, 158) the obligation of “father being kind and son filial” was established as early as in the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods. As can be seen from the above listed examples dutifulness, righteousness, faithfulness, respect, chastity, honesty and the like, are highly regarded virtues expected from an individual, and as certain ethical and cultural norms entered the lexicon of Chinese language in the form of idioms.

In the text above some findings of my corpus analysis were presented. It must be said though that an interesting topic for further research would be the ways 孝 /xiào/ and the lexical items it forms are translated into Serbian language. I believe that it would also be informative to see whether such or similar concepts exist in Serbia and if they do what are the differences and similarities between the two cultures in their conceptualization.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the study of more than 201,640 dictionary entries listed in four dictionaries of Chinese language (two monolingual and two bilingual) presented in this paper can be summed up as follows: 1. word 孝 /xiào/ as a culturally very important concept has extremely low productivity, as it appears in 64 items, occupying only

0.0317% of the examined lexicon. Normally, such a low productivity is not expected from culturally important concepts, but on the other hand, given that the concept 孝 /xiào/ belongs to the feudal ethics, it is neither surprising nor strange that it does not participate in the formation of new words in the modern Chinese language and society. The reason why just the small number of words containing 孝 /xiào/ is used in Modern Chinese is given by Yuan (2014:17) and is “the result of de-construction of traditional feudal ethics under the pressure of modernization”.

For the sake of convenience to all of those who would like to better understand or learn them, the paper classified the lexemes formed by the word 孝 /xiào/ into different categories that pertain to the position of the concept in the system of moral values, person’s moral character, correlative ties with the conduct of other family members, instructions for behaviour gained from the experience, customs, rituals, obligations, and behavioral models. I also investigated the words containing lexemes 逆 /nì/ and 孽 /niè/, that very often serve as antonyms to those containing 孝 /xiào/, with the purpose of highlighting how “evil” and “sinful” it is not to “be filial”, which the lexeme that contains only the negation of 孝 /xiào/, i.e., 不孝 /bùxiào/ does not strengthen enough. Apart from already known relations with other culturally important concepts, such as 忠 /zhōng/, 悌 /tì/, 信 /xìn/ and 慈 /cí/, this paper lists other concepts that seem important, given that they co-appear with 孝 /xiào/, such as: 友 /yǒu/, 义 /yì/, 贤 /xián/, 节 /jié/ and the bi-syllabic word 廉洁 /liánjié/. Finally, I should stress that the ways word 孝 /xiào/ itself and the lexical items it builds is translated into Serbian could not be, due to the limitation of space, the topic of this paper. That and the question of differences between the ways relationship toward parents (especially in their old age) is conceptualized and consequently lexicalized in Serbian and Chinese language and culture will be the topic of some other research in the future.

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孝 /XIÀO/ — POSMATRAN IZ PERSPEKTIVE KULTUROLOŠKE
LINGVISTIKE

Sažetak

Koncept 孝 /xiào/, koji se na srpski prevodi prema njegovom engleskom parnjaku kao „sinovljeva poslušnost“, jedan je od najvažnijih pojmova tradicionalne kineske kulture. U ovom radu dat je najpre kratak pregled filozofskih i socioloških tumačenja ovog pojma, a potom su predstavljeni rezultati našeg istraživanja leksičkog korpusa, koji čine četiri rečnika kineskog jezika, od kojih su dva monolingvalna, a dva bi-lingvalna (kinesko–engleska rečnika). U radu smo pokušali da damo odgovore na sledeća pitanja: kakva je produktivnost reči 孝 /xiào/, tj. koliko je leksičkih jedinica (složenica, idioma, izreka itd.) u našem korpusu izgrađeno od nje? Koje lingvo-kulturološke kategorije možemo izdvojiti i prema njima razvrstati leksičke jedinice koje u sebi kao gradivnu morfemu sadrže 孝 /xiào/? Da li se, pored očiglednog antonima, tj. reči 不孝 /bùxiào/, dobijene negacijom ovog pojma i neke druge lekseme mogu smatrati njegovim antonimima? Poslednje pitanje kojim se bavimo jesu veze koncepta 孝 /xiào/ i drugih konceptata koji su smatrani vrlinama u okviru žuističke etike, kao što su 忠 /zhōng/, 悌 /tì/, 信 /xìn/, 慈 /cí/ i drugi.

Ključne reči: 孝 /xiào/, sinovljeva poslušnost, kulturološki koncept, produktivnost, kategorije, antonimi, srodni koncepti