Language or Dialect—or Topolect?
A Comparison of the Attitudes of Hong Kongers and Mainland Chinese towards the Status of Cantonese

by

Julie M. Groves
Hong Kong Baptist University

Language or Dialect—or Topolect?

A Comparison of the Attitudes of Hong Kongers and Mainland Chinese towards the Status of Cantonese

Julie M. Groves

Hong Kong Baptist University[1]

ABSTRACT

Is Cantonese a language or a dialect? If linguistic factors were the sole criterion, it would most likely be thought a language, while political and cultural considerations would determine it to be a dialect, and Bell's (1976) sociolinguistic typology would place it somewhere in between. The attitude of the speakers themselves is usually said to be the deciding factor, but no direct surveys of Cantonese speakers have ever been undertaken.

This study reports on a comparative survey of three groups of Chinese: 53 Hong Kong Cantonese speakers, 18 Mainland Chinese Cantonese speakers, and 72 Mainland Chinese Putonghua speakers. It was found that the Putonghua speakers held more 'classic' views, the majority seeing Cantonese as a dialect. In contrast, only just over half the Hong Kongers and two-fifths the Mainland Cantonese speakers considered it clearly a dialect, while one-third of all respondents favoured a mid-point classification. The differing perspectives held by the groups can be traced to their different political and linguistic situations, which touch issues of identity.

The uncertainties in classification also reflect a problem with terminology. The Chinese word usually translated *dialect*, *fangyan* (方言), does not accurately match the English word *dialect*. Victor Mair (1991) has proposed adoption of the more neutral, mid-point term *topolect* as a literal English translation of the word *fangyan*. This study recommends adoption of *topolect* to classify both the major groupings and the representative varieties of each of the major groupings of the Chinese dialects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'A language is not simply a tool of communication or national unification; it is also a very powerful symbol of the cultural and social identity of the man or woman who speaks it.'
(Bauer 2000:55)

'Language-making involves much more than merely the construction of systems of signs. It is also the essential process by which men construct a cultural identity for themselves, and for the communities to which they see themselves as belonging.'
(Harris 1980:Preface)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   THE 'DIALECT MYTH'

'C.-J. N. Bailey once observed how remarkable it is that in linguistics the term *dialect* "can go on being used in a certain sense after investigation has shown that the term reflects to nothing that can be found in the real world" (1981:52)' (quoted in Harris 1990:3[2]).

It could be argued that the same can be said for the notion of *language*. Social dialectology has shown that both terms are relative and dependent on extra-linguistic considerations; neither stands up to close objective scrutiny from a structural viewpoint alone (Haugen 1966, Milroy and Milroy 1997). Wolfram (1998:119) gives an exaggerated analogy: 'The popular understanding of dialect is probably akin to a modern geophysicist maintaining that the earth is flat.' As Trudgill (1974:16) puts it, they are 'merely a convenient fiction.'

Although this represents an extreme theoretical perspective, it is true that the notions of language and dialect are difficult to define and clearly demarcate; and distinguishing criteria are not always applied consistently across language systems. However, the concepts of language and dialect are both a psychological and a social reality to the general public (Hudson 1996) and therefore it is necessary to study and define them[3]. Furthermore, the distinction between them has wide-ranging socio-political implications.

This is especially true in the case of China, where it has been a bone of contention. The particular connotations that the language versus dialect debate has for Chinese involve 'the national identity of China, regional identities within China, and the very nature of the (Han) Chinese 'nation' or 'race'' (Wikipedia 2007a).

1.2   BACKGROUND

The Sinitic language varieties (of the Sino-Tibetan language family), spoken by 95% of the population of China, can be broadly divided into two groups, north and south. Dominant in

---

[2] The 'dialect myth' is Harris's (1990) terminology.

[3] In view of the difficulties involved in determining the descent from *language* down to *dialect* and even down to *idiolect* (Bailey 1973), several linguists have proposed other terminology be adopted in place of *dialect*. Haugen (1966) suggests using *vernacular*. Hudson (1996) favours the terms *language*, *dialect* and *registers*/*styles* all being replaced by the neutral term *variety*. Bailey (1973:11) employs the contracted form *lect* 'as a completely non-committal term for any bundling together of linguistic phenomena,' and *isolect* as a more precise replacement for *dialect*. However satisfactory or useful these solutions are from the pure linguists' point of view, they don't deal with the main issue in the public arena, where the language/dialect distinction is well-entrenched and will probably continue to be used as the yardstick for years to come.

the north, Mandarin is the most widely used, spoken by approximately 70% of the Han people. Concentrated in the south, Cantonese is among the largest of the remaining varieties, accounting for around 5% of Chinese Han speakers (Encyclopedia Britannica 2007, Wikipedia 2007f). It is also one of the largest language varieties in the world, ranked 18th in terms of number of native speakers (Wikipedia 2007c) [4].

The name 'Cantonese' itself stands for two language entities. In its broader sense it means the group of Yue, or Cantonese, dialects spoken in Guangdong and Guangxi provinces along the South China coastline, and by the vast majority of the approximately 7 million people of Hong Kong[5]. Cantonese is also the name used to describe any one of those Yue dialects. It will be used in its narrower sense in this paper, where the focus will be specifically on the Hong Kong variety that has developed from the historically 'standard' and most prestigious dialect of the Yue group, the speech centred around Canton (Guangzhou) city.

Hong Kong itself is in transition; after approximately 150 years of British colonial rule, it became a Special Administrative Region of China in 1997. The 'one nation, two systems' agreement 'enables Hong Kong to keep a separate economic and social system for 50 years' after that date (Erbaugh 1995:87). Complete reunification with the mainland is now little more than one generation away, and the issue of the status and functions of Cantonese has gained renewed importance.

There is a reciprocal relationship between language attitudes and the status and functions of a language in a society (Cheung 1985). Language attitudes can also change during social and political upheaval or transition (Pennington and Yue 1993, Hyland 1997). Harrison and So (1996:114) point to 'how fast and how much Hong Kong has [already] changed and is changing demographically, economically, politically, socially and technologically.' All this is having an impact on both language attitude and use in Hong Kong (Hyland 1997), and consequently there has been much debate over language planning, especially as it relates to the education system.

Bruche-Schulz (1997:309) comments that 'it is clear … that it is mainly the language-dialect opposition which defines [Cantonese] speakers' attitudes towards their language,' and Ansaldo (1995) states that much of the deliberation has taken as a starting point the assumption

---

[4] The Cantonese figure is based on an SIL Ethnologue estimate of 66 million native speakers in 1996. Wikipedia (2007b) updates this to 71 million speakers worldwide as of 2004.
[5] Figures from the 2001 census show that 89.2% of the Hong Kong population speak Cantonese as their usual language (Census and Statistics Department 2005).

that Cantonese is a dialect. Consequently, the discussions have tended to centre around the future roles of English versus Putonghua in the official arenas, rather than consideration of Cantonese. As Bauer (2000:37) asks, for example: 'When the community's choice of language of instruction is between the official, national language and a regional dialect with no official status, can there be any doubt about the outcome?'

Language issues also touch on issues of identity (Trudgill 1974, Gumperz and Gumperz 1982, McGroarty 1996, Tabouret-Keller 1997), which are particularly important to Hong Kong at this pivotal stage in its history (Hyland 1997). Saville-Troike (2006:12) reports that 'recognition of [different language varieties] as full-fledged languages goes beyond linguistic consideration because such recognition strengthens the social identity and status of the people who speak them.' On the other hand, language attrition or loss, which usually begins with an attitude shift, can affect the identity of a community (Ansaldo 1995).

Some linguists have gone so far as to express concern over the long-term survival or autonomy of Cantonese (Benson 1997, Bolton 2000), some quoting the example of neighbouring Guangdong, where traditional Cantonese resistance to Putonghua is waning (Boyle 1998, Pan 1998, Bauer 2000, Blum 2004), and where the linguistic balance seems to be slowly but steadily shifting from Cantonese to the new spoken standard. This trend is also being noticed in the international Chinese communities (Wikipedia 2007d). The fear of language shift is understandable, given that it seems to be the Central Government's goal that Putonghua should replace the 'dialects,' at least in all public and official realms (Crystal 1997, Bauer 2000, Zhou and Ross 2004).

Saville-Troike (2006:12) goes even further when she warns that unfortunately there is an attitude among the public that is not uncommon, 'that socially "inferior" or "uneducated" varieties of a language are a moral threat and should be completely eradicated.'

Thus the classification of Cantonese as a dialect as opposed to a language has potential wide-ranging implications for both Cantonese and its speakers (Wiley 1996).

In spite of this, no objective studies appear to have been carried out yet on this topic by other researchers. Although there have been a number of language attitude studies undertaken in Hong Kong, especially since the 1997 Handover, the majority of these studies have involved two- or three-way comparisons between Cantonese, English and Putonghua, to ascertain the impact of attitudes and use of each language variety on the other(s) (e.g. Bolton and Luke 1999,

Evans and Green 2001, Evans et al. 1998, Hyland 1997, Lai 2001, 2005, Pennington and Yue 1993, Pierson 1998, So 1998, Whelpton 1999b, Yan 2005). No studies have specifically focussed on the language status of Cantonese; on the contrary, the widespread belief that the speakers themselves believe it to be 'merely' a dialect is usually taken for granted in the literature.

There is one relevant study reported by Pierson (1991), who conducted some research into the language attitudes of final-year high school students in Hong Kong. He summarizes the students' attitudes towards Cantonese as quite negative, including the perception that Cantonese was 'only a dialect'. However, in this study the students' attitudes were only ascertained indirectly, and other researchers have cast serious doubt on both his methodology and conclusions.[6]

Anecdotal evidence from two other researchers (Evans et al. 1998, Bauer 2000) also indicates some citizens believe strongly that Cantonese is 'merely a dialect'—but once again, the attitude was only revealed inadvertently, and the views of a vocal few cannot be assumed to represent the majority[7].

In contrast, a preliminary study conducted by the researcher (Groves 2006) of 54 local university students suggests that Hong Kongers' views are not as conclusive on the topic as the literature states, with only around 60% of Hong Kong respondents believing Cantonese to be a dialect. Furthermore, the few Mainland Chinese included in the sample almost unanimously agreed that it was a dialect, indicating there may be significant attitude differences between the two groups.

---

[6] Students were asked to write an essay as part of a school examination question. One of the four topics given was the proposal that Putonghua should be made a compulsory subject in the secondary school curriculum. Over half the students chose this topic, and 100 of the nearly 800 essays were randomly chosen for content analysis. Pierson himself (1991:193) writes, 'It was assumed that the spontaneous English prose of the subjects would reveal insights into their present attitudes toward language and by extension toward ethnolinguistic values and identity.' Yau (1992) questions both Pierson's method and his assumptions. She conducted her own research which strongly indicated that in an examination setting, an answer cannot be assumed to represent the true views of the writer (and it seems that the way the exam question was worded drew out this particular viewpoint from the students). Other studies have also contradicted Pierson's conclusions (e.g. Hyland 1997).

[7] It is important to realize that, within a culture, attitudes can vary a great deal from person to person (Scollon and Scollon 1995). Under the circumstances reported in these studies, those who felt neutral or positive towards Cantonese would have had no reason to mention its status, whereas those who were most negative in their beliefs would have been the most likely to have been outspoken about it.

1.3   PURPOSE

The current study was undertaken in order to validate the findings of the 2006 study, as well as to widen the comparison to include three groups of Chinese: Hong Kong Cantonese speakers, Mainland Chinese Cantonese speakers, and Mainland Chinese Putonghua speakers. The purpose was to discover to what extent and for what reasons each group believes Cantonese to be a language or a dialect.

It was expected that the Hong Kong subjects would ascribe to Cantonese a higher status than their Mainland counterparts. It was also hypothesized that the data would support re-classification of Cantonese as a *topolect*, a more neutral category intermediate to both *language* and *dialect*.

1.4   IMPLICATIONS

This research has relevance to language planning in Hong Kong (and in other Cantonese-speaking communities), to language versus dialect theory, especially in the Chinese context, and to English classification schemes of the Sinitic branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   DEFINITION OF DIALECT

<u>Origin of the term 'Dialect'</u>

The Greek word *dialektos* was first applied in ancient Greece to each member of a group of languages, all originally derived from a common Greek language. Each represented the speech of a major city, and had a specialized literary function. In other words, 'the language called *Greek* was therefore a group of distinct, but related written norms known as *dialects* … [which] were ultimately based on spoken dialects of the regions whose names they bore' (Haugen 1966:98).

Much of the confusion over the language/dialect distinction today derives from the ambiguities inherent in that original situation (Haugen 1966, Hudson 1996). For instance, mutual intelligibility was not considered, and neither was there a consistent divide between the two concepts of *dialect* and *language* (Harris 1990)—interestingly, two of the main difficulties we still have with the way the word 'dialect' is used with reference to Chinese today.

Over time and in translation between languages[8] the meaning has changed further. In addition, it has acquired multiple meanings in English, being used in different senses by different groups of people; it is therefore necessary to start by defining what we mean by *dialect*.

<u>'Dialect' versus 'Language'</u>

Linguists are unanimously agreed on one point: no one language is intrinsically better than any other language. Focussing only on structural features leads the linguist to have a technical, neutral definition of *dialect*. His paramount consideration is genetic, or historic relationship (Haugen 1966); in this sense, the word can be used to describe all speech forms originating from a common language ancestor (Wang 1997).

Most commonly in academic literature, *dialects* are therefore simply different but related forms of the same *language*. They are usually mutually intelligible regional or social varieties, differing in lexical, phonological, syntactic, and/or semantic ways (Wolfram 1997, Burton 2007).

---

[8] The French *dialecte* is similar to the original Greek meaning, in that it refers to a local variety of speech that also has a written tradition; however, the functions of the different written *dialecte* are not differentiated as in ancient Greece. Only a *patois* does not have a written form. This strongly contrasts with English, in which a *dialect* is usually a language that does not have a written form, or at least not a strong literary history (Haugen 1966, Hudson 1996), and where *patois* has a more pejorative connotation, of a smaller, oral variety of rural lower class speech (Wardhaugh 2000).

The *language* name (e.g. Chinese) is the superordinate term, while the *dialect* name (e.g. Cantonese) is always the subordinate term (where there is more than one variety), i.e., a language can be larger than a single variety. In other words, the word language can have two meanings: a collection of dialects (a group of related norms), or a single variety (Haugen 1966, Harris 1990). In this sense, using a language means using one of its dialects. 'Hence every dialect is a language, but not every language is a dialect' (Haugen 1966:99).

However, as pointed out in the introduction, 'the notions of *language* and *dialect* are fundamentally social and not linguistic constructs' (Romaine 2000:1). As such, it has been proved almost impossible to objectively determine language or dialect boundaries on linguistic evidence alone (Milroy and Milroy 1997).

Therefore, in order to accurately define the status of a language variety, we also need to look to its social and political functions (Holmes 1992, Wiley 1996). These lead to value judgments on language varieties that reflect, not any inherent linguistic inferiority or superiority, but rather their social uses in communication based on the social structure of that particular society (Trudgill 1974, Lo 1988).

Haugen (1966:110, 100) elaborates:

> The kind of significance attributed to language in this context has little to do with its value as an instrument of thought or persuasion. It is primarily symbolic, a matter of the prestige (or lack of it) that attaches to specific forms or varieties of language by virtue of identifying the social status of their users.... This results from the de facto development of a standard language, with all the segregation of an elite and the pyramidal power structure that it has usually implied.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2006) summarizes this by simply defining a dialect as 'a language promoted by elites.'

Accordingly, different varieties are granted 'different degrees of social status' (Stewart 1962:17). In everyday, non-technical usage, the label *language* is usually reserved for more prestigious varieties (usually with a written standard), while the term *dialect* is applied to various types of informal, lower-class or rural speech. A *dialect* is therefore considered an inferior form of communication, being equivalent to *non-standard* or even *substandard* (Wardhaugh 2000), a 'depravation of what a language ought to be' (Hock and Joseph 1996:322).

Consequently, many different social, political and cultural in addition to linguistic factors need to be considered when trying to differentiate a *language* from a *dialect*. Based on these, various means for distinguishing between *languages* and *dialects* have been proposed, which will be discussed in the next sections. [9]

2.2   MUTUAL INTELLIGIBILITY

The rule-of-thumb that is most commonly applied to differentiate a *language* from a *dialect* is that of mutual intelligibility. When varieties of languages become mutually unintelligible, then they are classed as different languages. If they are mutually intelligible, they can be classed as dialects of the same language.

This works well for a majority of cases, but not for a significant minority, including Chinese. The main Chinese varieties are widely acknowledged to be mutually unintelligible to the same degree and in a manner similar to those of the Europe Romance language family. In fact, there are striking similarities between the two language groups.

> Both have their roots in a large-scale imperial expansion that took place in the centuries just preceding and just following the birth of Christ … in both instances the imperial language was carried by armies and settlers to areas previously occupied by speakers of different languages; in the course of their development both were affected by these 'substratum languages'; in both cases, the newly developing vernaculars existed alongside an antiquated written language and were profoundly influenced by it … we find about the same degree of diversity among the Chinese dialects as we do among the Romance languages. (Norman 1988:187)

Chinese linguist Y. R. Chao (1976) takes the comparison further, likening written Chinese to Latin, with different European speech communities pronouncing it according to their own pronunciation systems, unintelligibly to one another.

But whereas English, French, German, etc., are considered separate language systems, the Chinese varieties are generally held to be dialects [10]. Some of the reasons for the inconsistency in application are as follows.

---

[9] Throughout most of this paper I have tried to avoid using the term *dialect* by using other neutral terms such as *variety*, but where I do use *dialect* the context should make it obvious in which sense it is being used.

[10] Due to mutual unintelligibility and based on linguistic features, Western linguists tend to regard the *fangyan* as separate languages united under a cover term 'Chinese' (e.g. Barnes 1982, DeFrancis 1984, who also quotes Leonard Bloomfield). However, they usually defer to the views of Chinese linguists who consider them as dialects

Problem #1: Political and cultural history

   In some cases the mutual intelligibility criterion cannot be applied consistently due to the political and cultural history of those particular speech communities. For instance, Danes, Norwegians and Swedes can all understand one another, yet their varieties are considered separate languages because they are spoken in different countries. Similarly, Hindi and Urdu, and Serbo-Croatian and Bosnian are listed as separate languages for political or religious reasons, yet are mutually intelligible (in their spoken forms) (Crystal 2000, Wardhaugh 2000). In other words, *dialects* can become *languages* (or vice versa) simply because of political decisions (Milroy and Milroy 1997).

   Crystal (1997) lists five types of relationships between *dialect* and *language*, based on the various combinations of the two aspects of cultural history and mutual intelligibility (see Appendix B). In only two of the types is the distinction between dialect and language clear-cut. Cantonese is one of the varieties of language that falls into a type that has conflicting criteria (with mutually unintelligible language varieties that share a cultural history).

   In fact, the Chinese situation is unique in that it represents a different kind of exception to the mutual intelligibility principle. Rather than 'overspecification by language', as in the above examples, for political and cultural reasons the Chinese varieties are a case of 'underspecification by dialect' (Mair 1991:16).

   Mair (1991:16) points out that, 'There is no comparable situation elsewhere in the world where so many hundreds of millions of speakers of mutually intelligible languages are exceptionally said to be speakers of dialects of a single language.'

   DeFrancis (1984:56) further elaborates:

> History has no precedent for a situation in which a single if occasionally disrupted political entity has so long held together huge solid blocs of people with mutually unintelligible forms of speech in which a linguistic difference has not been compounded by profound extralinguistic differences. The 50 million or so Cantonese comprise one such bloc … not exacerbated by religious differences … by economic differences [or] by a political boundary … [Consequently] their linguistic differences have never possessed the disruptive power they have had in many other areas of the world.

---

of the one language, Chinese. Nonetheless there are some notable Chinese exceptions: Y. R. Chao refers to them as 'practically different languages' (1976:97, 105), and Mair (1991) refers to a 1990 article in Chinese by Li Jingzhong from Kwangtung Nationalities Institute, on 'Cantonese is an independent Language within the Sinitic Group'.

Problem #2: The sliding scale of mutual intelligibility

How different do two speech systems have to be linguistically before they become separate languages—or even separate dialects? In some places, for example from Northern France to Southern Italy, there exists a dialect continuum. The speakers in one place can understand the dialect of those nearby. However, the languages of the speakers at extreme ends of the continuum are so different that they have become mutually unintelligible to each other. In between are various degrees of mutual (un)intelligibility, and at some point it must be decided where each language or dialect starts and finishes. Based on linguistic factors alone, it is impossible to decide where these boundaries should be; political boundaries have to suffice (Trudgill 1974, Petyt 1980, Francis 1983, Hudson 1996, Chambers and Trudgill 1998).

Such dialect continuums exist inside China also, leading to very diverse counts by linguists as to the actual number of *fangyan* inside China, where, of course, the same linguistically-defining political boundaries are not found. Wang (1997:56) has translated another linguist, Lü's, comments on this:

> Everyone knows that Chinese has many dialects, but how many are there? If slight differences in pronunciation are the basis for distinguishing dialects, then the dialects are indeed numerous.... If we require differences in the sound system, then perhaps there are many hundreds of dialects, perhaps one or two thousand. But if the requirement is agreement on several key features, not considering other differences, then possibly there are some eight or ten dialects.... The fact we come up with seven groups is in large part an artifact of our expectations, based on linguistic as well as extralinguistic factors.

Problem #3: How to measure mutual intelligibility?

Most judgments about mutual intelligibility have been done quite crudely, simply by asking the subjects whether they could communicate with another group or not. This is in spite of the fact that it has played a vital role in determining language and dialect relationships (Cheng 1996), and raises a second question: How does one go about quantifying mutual intelligibility?

Firstly, should we measure *systemic intelligibility*—how close/different the languages are structurally—or *participant intelligibility*—how much the speakers of different varieties understand each other—(Cheng's 1992 terms)—or both?

The earliest serious measurements of mutual intelligibility focussed on participant intelligibility. Two speakers talked together (or one speaker listened to another), and the percentage of understood content was taken as the degree of mutual intelligibility (Cheng 1992). If more than 50% of the content was understood, their speech varieties were considered dialects rather than separate languages (Mair 1991). However, there are some problems with this method:

- Where should the cut-off point be? Ideally for fluent intercourse it should be much higher than 50%.

- Unidirectional intelligibility has to be allowed for. Mutual intelligibility is not always reciprocal, sometimes for language reasons[11], but more often for 'people reasons.'

- The two speakers are hypothetically monolingual, or at least drawing on no other resources outside their respective language systems being tested—in reality this would be almost impossible in a multilingual Chinese situation.

- Different pairs of conversationalists may yield diverse results, because of different characteristics of the speakers/hearers (Cheng 1992).

The measuring of systemic intelligibility raises even more questions. It is well known that the regional varieties of Chinese differ most from each other in phonology, with the dialect groupings mainly having been differentiated on the basis of phonological features (Cheng 1987)[12]. However, they also differ in vocabulary, and to a lesser degree, grammar (DeFrancis 1984, Erbaugh 1995, Bruche–Schulz 1997)[13]. Which of these (combinations of) areas should be the basis for objective analysis? And how is similarity determined? For instance, for vocabulary, should it be by whole-word correspondence, or phonological similarity within words? And if the latter, then what weighting should be applied to each feature? And which words should be selected for analysis?[14]

---

[11] For instance, it is often said that Danes understand Norwegians better than Norwegians understand Danes. Hudson (1996:35) explains that this 'may be because, as Scandinavians sometimes say, "Norwegian is pronounced like Danish is spelt", while Danish pronunciation bears a rather more complex relationship to its own orthography.'

[12] Cantonese has 9 tones, 20 initial and 53 final sound segments. Putonghua has 4 tones, 22 initial and 38 final sound segments (Pierson 1994:58).

[13] Based on another Chinese linguist's estimate, DeFrancis (1984) states the differences between varieties amount to 80% between phonological systems, 40% in vocabulary use, and 20% in grammar structures.

[14] This is one of the criticisms that have been levelled at lexico-statistical analysis popular in the last century, and which is still relied on in some places such as Papua New Guinea. Sharing basic cognates of 81% or more classifies two varieties as dialects of the same language; between 28% and 81% determines them to be separate languages (Romaine 2000:5). Cheng (1987) notes that this method was not applied in-depth to Chinese.

Cheng's rigorous attempts to measure systemic intelligibility (1987, 1992[15]) show very different degrees of correspondence between dialect grouping pairs, with the Southern varieties generally more divergent than the Northern[16]. However, even studies focusing on the same item (vocabulary) between similar dialect groupings (Guangzhou/Yue and Beijing/Putonghua) have yielded vastly different results, with percentages ranging from only 10% of shared basic cognates up to 74%.[17]

It seems there is no agreed-upon, objective way to accurately measure mutual intelligibility.

Problem #4: Willingness to understand

The next few problems highlight Cheng's *participant* factor—the fact that 'mutual intelligibility is not really a relation between varieties, but between people, since it is they, and not the varieties, that understand one another' (Hudson 1996:35–36).

Differing motivation levels between two speech communities could lead to a situation where speech community A claims that they understand the language of speech community B, while speech community B states that they do not understand A—or, possibily, refuses to try to understand them due to social and/or political reasons (Hudson 1996, Chambers and Trudgill 1998).

This can happen particularly where community A is a minority group within a larger community B, or where B's language is standard and A's is not. Group A has a greater willingness and/or more opportunities to speak group B's language than group B has to learn group A's language, such as is the case with Faroese-speakers within the larger Danish-speaking community (Crystal 1992, Wardhaugh 2000). Wardhaugh (2000:38) quotes another interesting case: 'Speakers of Isoko in Nigeria say they cannot understand those who speak other Urhobo

---

[15] Cheng's 1987 study judges lexical correspondence in 18 dialects. Correlation co-efficients for pairs of dialects (which he points out do not equate exactly to percentages) range from .10 to .55. At level .65 only three of the Northern dialects are related (Beijing, Jinan, Shenyang); down to level .25 all groups are related to one another in some way. His 1992 study investigated phonological forms in syllables in 17 dialects; the percentages of mutual systemic intelligibility ranged from 35.3% up to 79.5%.

[16] He comments that his findings support the selection of the Beijing variety as the base for the new national language, Putonghua (Cheng 1992).

[17] Wang (1997:60) reports that the Beijing and Guangzhou language varieties share 74% basic vocabulary, whereas a study by Zhan and Cheung (1989, quoted in Bauer and Benedict 1997:xxxiv) found just 10% of basic words were the same between Beijing-based Putonghua and 25 Yue dialects. As to lexical differences, Wong concluded there was 44% non-cognate vocabulary between Cantonese and Putonghua, while Li Jing-zhong's figure was 76.9% (both quoted in Bruche-Schulz 1997:300).

languages/dialects: but these others apparently understand them.' He hints that national identity seems to be the root cause, in that 'this situation seems to have developed concurrently with demands for greater political autonomy and ethnic self-sufficiency.'

The potential for such a situation also exists inside Mainland China with speakers of regional and local non-standard dialects who have to deal with (possibly monolingual) nationalist Putonghua speakers, or conversely, with other Chinese dialect speakers immigrating to Cantonese-dominated and identified Hong Kong.

Problem #5: The educational level of the speakers

The degree of mutual intelligibility between speakers of different dialect groups can also depend upon the educational level of the speakers (and upon the subject being discussed, Cheng 1992). Those who are illiterate tend to have a limited basic vocabulary, and not to be mobile, leaving them little chance for exposure to other dialects beyond their own group. By contrast, most educated persons would be able to speak some Putonghua simply through their experience with Putonghua-speakers (Chao 1976). These speakers will obviously find the Northern Mandarin–based varieties more intelligible than will the less educated.

Kratochvil (1968) and Mair (1991) further explain that mutual intelligibility is related to knowledge of the standard language, which little-educated or uneducated masses have little contact with. Therefore their own speech diverges more widely from the standard than is often acknowledged, making it more difficult for them both to later learn a standard language, or to communicate with a speaker of another dialect.

Problem #6: The time factor

The previous point illustrates the importance of 'experience'—a higher exposure to another variety facilitates understanding over time (Cheng 1992, Hudson 1996). Because understanding of Cantonese eventually occurs, for instance, among Mainland Chinese who have settled in Hong Kong, does that mean that the two different varieties are mutually intelligible?

This is an important question in the Chinese context, because, according to Ramsay (1987), the Chinese have never thought of their country as being multilingual, due to this factor. Local Chinese often learned another Chinese variety of language simply through regular contact with its speakers, considering it merely to be picking up the different pronunciation of another

dialect, rather than learning another language. This method of learning was never perfect, but it was possible through constant exposure to learn to speak another variety of Chinese without formally studying it, because of the common base of vocabulary and grammar. Saillard (2004) also confirms that, in China, 'standard' is perceived mainly as a standard *pronunciation*.

This is a salient point, because it is generally accepted that differences in pronunciation alone do not constitute different languages. Linguistic differences need to be present on a deeper level. Therefore if the Chinese people perceive their different varieties to be only a matter of differences in phonology, then logically they will think of them as mutually intelligible, and not as separate languages.

Problem #7: The influence of the standard written language

The diglossic situation that exists in Hong Kong helps reinforce the perception that differences in varieties are rooted only in pronunciation. Normally the diglossia is thought of in terms of Cantonese and English, with Cantonese being the low (L) variety, and English being the high (H) variety (Lai, 2001). However, within the Chinese language family there is also a diglossic situation (Bai 1994, Bruche-Schulz 1997, Bolton 2003), with written standard Chinese (along with a formal variety of spoken Cantonese) as H, being used for most official purposes, and spoken Cantonese as L, being used for everyday life. There is a sharp divide between the functions of the two types, and this can lead to the speakers considering the differences as simply applying to different registers or styles (Snow 2004, refer also Stewart 1962), rather than intrinsic language differences.

This leads to a unique problem when defining 'mutually intelligible' in relation to the Sinitic language family—is it the written or the spoken language that is being considered? Linguistically speaking, the mutual intelligibility criterion depends on phonology. The spoken language should always be the primary consideration, with writing only secondary, as it is merely a codification of speech. Yet in the Chinese context especially, writing appears to function as much more than this. Their written characters are said be a central part of their definition of 'language' (Wardhaugh 2000), and, repeatedly in the literature, the point is pressed that China looks to her written script as unifying the Chinese language(s).

Bruche-Schulz (1997:310) explains: "'diglossia" … takes the Chinese writing system and its perception as the standardizer of language use as the starting point.' This echoes Haugen's

belief that when it comes to language planning, the traditional order of the primacy of oral speech over writing should be reversed, because it is the written standard which provides the basis for the linguistic norms (Wiley 1996). Consequently, Chinese are influenced to perceive their different language varieties to be intricately related and therefore ultimately mutually intelligible, regardless of difficulties with oral communication.

Conclusion

Mair (1991:17) writes:

> Mutual intelligibility is normally accepted by linguists as the only plausible criterion for making the distinction between language and dialect in the vast majority of cases.… If there are to be exceptions to the useful principle of mutual intelligibility, there should be compelling reasons for them.[18]

It seems that the Chinese situation, unique in the world, gives its speakers these compelling reasons, not only for denying unintelligible varieties the status of languages, but also bringing to light even more of the inherent difficulties in determining exactly what constitutes mutual intelligibility. These difficulties have a direct bearing on discerning the number of languages/dialects in an area, and ultimately the compilation of language family trees. As Romaine (2000:10) sums it up, 'Any attempt to count distinct languages [or dialects or language families] will be an artifact of classificatory procedures rather than a reflection of communicative practices.'

2.3   BELL'S SOCIOLINGUISTIC TYPOLOGY

Where the application of the mutual intelligibility criterion breaks down, are there any other methods that can be applied for categorization of *languages* versus *dialects*? Bell (1976) reports on attempts to compile a sociolinguistic typology for this purpose.[19] He lists seven criteria that are useful in distinguishing a fully-fledged language from other types of languages (*standardization*, *vitality*, *historicity*, *autonomy*, *reduction*, *mixture*, and *de facto norms*—these

---

[18] This represents more a pure linguistic perspective; sociolinguists would also emphasize sociolinguistic aspects such as those reported in Bell (1976) and discussed in the next section.

[19] A simplified version of this model was first proposed by Stewart (1962), later refined by him (1968), then further extended by Hymes in 1971, reported in Bell (1976) and explained further in Wardhaugh (2000). It does not appear to have been added to or altered since Bell's publication.

are not presented in any particular order of importance). These criteria highlight differences, not between their formal characteristics, but in the 'sociolinguistic attributes which influence social attitudes to them and [therefore] the social functions which each is likely to be permitted to perform' (Bell 1976:152).

Although these criteria are not always clear-cut[20] and do not seem to have been widely adopted or applied, Wardhaugh (2000) comments that they are useful in that they enable us to speak of language varieties as being more or less 'developed' than each other, thus dealing with the crucial issue of the apparent functional inferiority of dialects. These attributes can then be ranked to produce an 'order of potential social prestige' (Stewart 1962:18). Based on these, Bell distinguishes ten language types, as shown in Table 1 below. A *standard language* has the highest status while a *dialect* ranks fourth overall, with the main attributes differentiating the former from the latter being *standardization*, *historicity* and *autonomy*.

ATTRIBUTES							LANGUAGE TYPE	EXAMPLE
1-Standardization	2-Vitality	3-Historicity	4-Autonomy	5-Reduction	6-Mixture	7-De Facto Norms		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓/✗	✓	Standard	Standard English
✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	Classical	K.James' Bible English
✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	Vernacular	'Black English'
✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	Dialect	Cockney
✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	Creole	Krio
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	Pidgin	Neomelanesian
✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	Artificial	'Basic English'
✗	✗	✗	✓/✗	✗	✓	?	Xized Y	'Indian English'
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	Interlanguage	'A's English'
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓/✗	✗	Foreigner Talk	'B's simplified English'

Table 1: Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology (Bell 1976:151)

---

[20] Bell (1976) comments that disputes as to the status of some of the different varieties of English result from disagreement over the extent to which these attributes apply. He also makes the point that both the formal characteristics and the functional status of a variety can change relatively quickly through language planning efforts. Both these points would apply equally to other languages, including Chinese.

In the next section, Bell's typology will be borrowed as a framework on which to discuss the status of Cantonese. Each feature will firstly be defined; then the statements in the literature regarding different aspects of Cantonese will be placed into the relevant categories in order to attempt an objective sociolinguistic evaluation of its status.

Criterion #1: Standardization

The first, and arguably most important, attribute in the language versus dialect distinction, is standardization (Hudson 1996, Milroy and Milroy 1997).

> Standardization refers to the process by which a language has been codified in some way. That process usually involves the development of such things as grammars, spelling books, and dictionaries, and possibly a literature. Standardization also requires that a measure of agreement be achieved about what is in the language and what is not. Once a language is standardized it becomes possible to teach it in a deliberate manner.' (Wardhaugh 2000:29–30)

Standardization is usually undertaken for political purposes, and it transforms a 'mere' dialect into a language by adding power and prestige to it. Bauer (2000) compares knowledge of a (standard) language to a key to advantageous social and economic opportunities. Those who cannot speak the language are effectively denied certain benefits and involvement in that community, e.g. citizenship rights, higher education and career pathways. As Johnson (1997:25) explains, 'it is not surprising that native-speakers see their standard variety as powerful and prestigious. For them it is.'

An interesting linguistic consequence of the process of standardization is that the new standard becomes regarded as the language itself (as in the case of Putonghua), while all the other varieties of that same language (such as Cantonese) become related to that standard and come to be regarded as dialects of that standard, subordinate to it and deviant from it (Wardhaugh 2000, Trudgill 1974, Bai 1994). In the case of Chinese, this is quite ironic, as Putonghua was only a recent 'invention', having itself been derived from Mandarin, another 'dialect' of Chinese, only last century.

In order for a variety to be standardized, it must pass through four steps, which Haugen (1966:107) summarizes as 'minimal variation in form [and] maximal variation in function.'

Form:

   a) Selection of norm

   b) Codification of norm: choice of script, publication of grammars and dictionaries, etc.

Function:

   c) Elaboration/Implementation: promotion and use of the standard in literature, and various departments such as education, law, commerce, etc.

   d) Acceptance by the community (Haugen 1966, Hudson 1996, Wiley 1996, Wardhaugh 2000)

      These apply to Cantonese in Hong Kong as follows (see also Mau 2005):

   a) 'Chinese' was selected as an official language in 1974, although which spoken variety that term refers to has never been stipulated. The common understanding is that 'Chinese' refers to written standard Chinese and spoken Cantonese; however, the lack of clarification of the term would allow for the later development and use of Putonghua as well as, or instead of, Cantonese.

   b) There are no widely accepted dictionaries or grammars of Cantonese used by the local people. However, this is not because there is no (spoken) norm; it is mainly because the local population do not need them. There are dictionaries and grammars, but these are mostly used by foreigners learning Cantonese. As Bell points out, the codification needs to have been accepted by its users before standardization is complete.

   c) Spoken Cantonese can be used at all levels of society, but the uses of written Cantonese are limited (though steadily increasing).

   d) Cantonese is widely accepted as the spoken variety of language in Hong Kong.

      It is generally agreed that Cantonese has not been fully codified (see also Lord 1987, Evans et al. 1998, Johnson 1998, Pennington 1998a). In Mainland China, Blum (2004) found that, in the view of many people, the word *standard* could apply only to Putonghua; any other major variety could be *dianxing* (typical/classical) but not *standard*. In Hong Kong, three studies (Evans et al. 1998, Bauer 2000, Groves 2007) revealed ambivalence towards the idea of standardizing Cantonese, with some respondents expressing strong opposition.

Criterion #2: Vitality

Simply stated, the criterion of vitality asks whether there is a living community of native speakers (Bell 1976, Wardhaugh 2000). There is no doubt that this criterion affirms Cantonese (Lai 2001, 2005, Snow 2004). Not only is it vigorous in Hong Kong and South China, but it is well established in many overseas communities.

In fact, among the Chinese varieties, Cantonese is considered to have an unusually high level of prestige and status, taking into consideration factors such as degree of standardization, influence on and by neighbouring dialects, range of uses, and also development of literature in the vernacular (Snow 1993; see also Ramsey 1987, Matthews and Yip 1994, Ansaldo 1995, Johnson 1998, Bauer 2000).

This is especially true in Hong Kong, where Cantonese now dominates to varying degrees in all domains.[21] Bauer (2000:37) points out that Hong Kong is the only Chinese community where a non-standard variety of Chinese has been given what he terms 'quasi-official status.' He suggests that more Cantonese is being spoken now in Hong Kong than at any previous time, saying that it 'is now enjoying its Golden Age in Hong Kong' (see also Ansaldo 1995). Harrison and So (1996:118) describe Hong Kong as 'the greatest Cantonese city that the world has ever seen.'

Another perspective is given by Erbaugh (1995:89), who asserts that 'the power of a language depends less on the number of investors who speak it than on the percentage who are monolingual.' In Hong Kong the process of development from a multilingual area to a largely monolingual community with Cantonese as its mother tongue, illustrates both the vigour and the power of Cantonese.

Despite expectations that political change would trigger corresponding linguistic change in Hong Kong after the Handover, to date there are few signs of Putonghua dominating. On the contrary, Cantonese seems only to have gained a stronger hold, having taken back some ground from English in 'high' domains such as the Legislative Council, and in schools as a medium of instruction. In this regard it distinguishes itself from Asia's other three major Chinese speech communities (mainland China, Taiwan and Singapore) in that, in formal as well as informal domains, it is largely Cantonese–speaking (Cheung and Bauer 2002). This current vitality of

---

[21] Pierson (1991:185-186) attributes its continued dominance to the fact that Cantonese is well established in the friendship and family domains, Hong Kong's close proximity to the South China area, and the colonial government's lack of institutional support for Putonghua instruction.

Cantonese in Hong Kong can be seen also in the speed of development of colloquialisms and the problems that causes for Cantonese speakers from other areas (Harrison and So 1996).

In the mainland, the status of Cantonese has risen even in recent years (Erbaugh 1995), resulting in a 'craze' for studying Cantonese (Harrison and So 1996, Bauer and Benedict 1997, Boyle 1998, Bauer 2000). Cantonese-based culture is being 'exported' into other parts of China, mainly through 'Cantopop' (Bruche-Schulz 1997, Yan 2005) and even throughout Asia and into other parts of the world, according to Harrison and So (1996). Cantonese is said to be 'heading north,' at least in terms of lexical influence.

Snow (2004:210) informs us that:

> The rise or decline of a language is determined to a large degree by the ethnolinguistic vitality (population size, wealth, power, and so forth) of the community … ultimately the rise and fall of languages is mainly a consequence of the rise and fall of the communities that use those languages.

Thus the robustness of Cantonese is due to the 'ethnolinguistic vitality' of the Cantonese community, whose speakers are said to be historically the best-defined and most strongly self-identified cultural sub-group of Chinese Han (Ramsey 1987, Friedman 1994, Pierson 1994, 1998, Ansaldo 1995, Hyland 1997, Blum 2004, Snow 2004). Scholars also cite the commercial success and wealth of Hong Kong and of the Guangzhou area (also see Ramsay 1987, Ansaldo 1995, Erbaugh 1995, Bauer and Benedict 1997, Blum 2000), combined with Hong Kong's unique socio-political situation and relative isolation under recent colonial rule (Pierson 1994, 1998).

Criterion #3: Historicity

'Historicity refers to the fact that a particular group of people finds a sense of identity through using a particular language: it belongs to them' (Wardhaugh 2000:34); 'whether or not the language has grown up or grew up through use by some ethnic or social group' (Bell 1976:148).

Much research has established the link between language and identity, although the strength of that link varies from culture to culture (Fishman 1997, Tabouret-Keller 1997, Tong et al. 1999). In Chinese Hong Kong, the link seems to be very strong and becoming stronger. As with the criteria of vitality, there is no debate regarding the historicity of Cantonese, due partly to

the fact that it is the closest variety of Chinese to ancient Chinese (Pierson 1991, Bauer 2000), and to the long history and association of Cantonese with Chinese culture in Southern China.

Cantonese—a particular Hong Kong variety that includes many loans from English and some mixed-code with English—is part of the Hong Konger's unique dual identity—a local Hong Konger identity nested inside a broader 'Chinese' identity. Over time, more and more residents are considering themselves simply 'Hong Kongers' as opposed to 'Chinese' or 'Hong Kong Chinese'. Cantonese is even said to be 'the root of Hong Kong local culture' (Zhang and Yang 2004:155), and the noteworthy growth of a colloquial Cantonese dialect literature is also said to be developing out of this particularly strong sense of local identity (Snow 1993, Chin 1997).

At first, the emphasis in the Hong Kong identity formation was separation from Western culture and values, and attitudes towards English were ambivalent. Now, as Hong Kong has entered a period of 'decolonization without independence' (Pierson 1994:45), English is seen in a much more positive or neutral light, and Cantonese is the language that distinguishes Hong Kongers from the rest of China (Bolton and Luke 1999, Brewer 1999, Hong et al. 1999, Bray and Koo 2004)[22].

Another fact that is not so well known is that it was a Southern variety of Chinese that very nearly became the language of identity not only for Southern Chinese, but for all of China. When the Chinese Ministry of Education held a conference[23] early last century to create national standards of language use, the delegates were divided between choosing a variety from the North or one from the South as a base for the new spoken standard. Although Mandarin was commonly used as the lingua franca, the Southern delegation pointed out that their variety was purer,

---

[22] Bauer and Benedict (1997:xi) observe that 'sociopolitical differences between Hong Kong and China are mirrored in their linguistic differences as well.' Lai (2005:380) elaborates, 'Cantonese is the most politically correct language variety, which symbolizes decolonization without arousing sentiments of recolonization,' and more than one writer has asserted that the enforcement of the Cantonese educational medium-of-instruction policy at the Handover was a political ploy, rather than for educational reasons as was widely alleged (e.g. Pennington 1998b, Lai 1999, Bray and Koo 2004). Johnson (1998:275) takes this line of thinking further, hypothesizing a possible identity crisis-point in the future:

> 'The question of the future of Hong Kong's identity after 1997 may well be indicated most clearly in the status accorded to Putonghua. The more Putonghua takes over from Cantonese as the dominant language of Hong Kong, in education as in other formal domains, the less autonomous the HKSAR is likely to be. By contrast, the more Cantonese retains its current status and function, the more likely it is that Hong Kong's separate identity can be maintained. Whether maintaining Cantonese as the dominant language necessarily would involve "standardizing" the language, and greater acceptance of written Cantonese will be yet another interesting question for the future.'

[23] The 'Conference on Unification of Pronunciation' in Peking in 1913 (Ramsey 1987).

preserving more of the traditional classical phonetic distinctions from the Tang and Song dynasties. For instance, classical poetry read using a Southern dialect such as Cantonese rhymes much better than when read in Putonghua. For this reason, the Southern delegates believed that a Southern form of Chinese should be adopted as the national standard (Ramsey 1987).

In the end, numbers won out, but it is interesting to consider what might be the situation now that if the Southern speakers had succeeded in their quest. Instead of discussing the status of Cantonese in this paper, I may instead be discussing attitudes of Mandarin-speakers to their variety of Chinese—whether they consider Mandarin (on which Putonghua, the national language, is now based) a dialect or a language, when compared to the new (Southern) national standard.

Criterion #4: Autonomy

This is a very subjective criterion, referring to whether or not the users of the language believe it is distinct from other languages or varieties (Bell 1976, Wardhaugh 2000); whether it functions as a unique and independent language system (Stewart 1968).

Problems arise where two varieties are structurally similar, e.g. as with the Chinese varieties, or with reduced varieties such as creoles and pidgins (Bell 1976, Wardhaugh 2000). Helpful here is the concept of *heteronomy* (Stewart 1968, Trudgill 1974, Romaine 2000). A *heteronomous* language depends on another standard or dominant language for its norms, and would normally be classified as a *dialect*, whereas an *autonomous* variety is regarded as a *language*. Any varieties that take the same standard as a reference point would be considered dialects of the same language (Stewart 1968, Hudson 1996).

In this case the literature is unanimous that, because of the common historical origin of the Chinese *fangyan*, and the influence of the standard shared written language, Cantonese is not considered by its users to be an autonomous language.

However, Romaine (2000) points out that because heteronomy and autonomy are determined by political and cultural factors rather than linguistic, they can change. For example, a previously heteronomous 'dialect' can become a 'language.' Conversely, autonomy can be challenged. For instance, as explained later, the growth and possible eventual acceptance of a Cantonese 'dialect literature' could challenge its classification as a non-autonomous language variety.

Criterion #5: Reduction

If there is any reduction in a language variety, it may be considered to be a sub-variety of another language, or as a dialect, rather than as a full language (Bell 1976, Wardhaugh 2000).

The reduction may exist in different spheres, e.g., lacking a writing system, restrictions as to its functions, a smaller grammar, phonology or lexicon, etc. In these cases, the speakers would be aware that they are not speaking a 'full' language.

The adoption of spoken Cantonese as the mother tongue in Hong Kong has meant an expansion to a full range of uses, especially since the Handover (Fu and Kataoka 1997, Bolton and Luke 1999, Cheung and Bauer 2002), unlike Cantonese in Guangdong.

On the other hand, as written Cantonese has limitations, it could be stated that there is some reduction in the Cantonese variety. This lack of a 'proper' writing system is very significant. Lo (1988:212–213) explains:

> The term Chinese is … simply defined on the basis of a 'common belief' which implicitly contains two points. First, the existence of a written script is seen as a criterion for distinguishing a language from a dialect. Second, a language is one when its written form is accepted as 'proper'.

As there is no officially recognised form of written Cantonese, it fails on both points.

The growth of a 'dialect literature' is significant, however. Taking advantage of the relative freedom afforded during their colonial period, Hong Kongers did what was natural to them—and what no other Chinese dialect has been able to do. They started developing a colloquial written form of their own language variety (Mair 2004). This is increasingly being used in newspapers, advertisements and some forms of magazines and books. Now Hong Kong is the only place where a Chinese 'dialect' is regularly written that is non-intelligible to other Chinese speakers (Chin 1997, Snow 2004).

Public opinion is divided. Educationalists and writers of formal genres are generally against it and do not want it recognized or standardized, while the younger generation and those who write for them are favourable towards it, and driving the changes (Lo 1988, Bolton 2003, Groves 2007). The fact that it is a youth phenomenon favours its continued development (Snow 2004).

This is significant in that if this trend continues, it may lead to pressure for more formal recognition of the colloquial written standard, with the (remote) possibility of official standardization and Cantonese becoming recognised as a full language rather than a 'mere' dialect (Lo 1988, Bruche-Schulz 1997).

Criterion #6: Mixture

'Mixture' refers to the feelings speakers have about the 'purity' of their language. Bell (1976) explains that this involves knowing whether the language makes use mostly of its own items and structures, rather than having extensive borrowing or adaptation. Purity is more important to some language speakers (e.g. French, German) than others (e.g. English); it may be a symbol of uniqueness (Romaine 2000).

One obvious example of mixture is creoles and pidgins, whose speakers often feel that the varieties are 'neither one thing nor another, but rather are debased, deficient, degenerate, or marginal varieties of some other standard language' (Wardhaugh 2000:35).

Cantonese has many borrowings from English and other languages; however these have been largely 'Cantonised' to the degree that many non-English speakers do not even realise the words have a non-Chinese derivation (Bauer 2000). It should also be noted that English, among other standard languages, as well as Mandarin, utilises many borrowings and adaptations in the same way that Cantonese does. This reflects the fact that any normal language borrows and that a completely 'pure' language probably does not exist (Bell 1976, Bauer 2000); consequently, this criterion is not an essential one in the dialect-language delineation.

Criterion #7: De Facto Norms

Having *de facto norms* refers to the feeling that many speakers have that there are both 'good' speakers and 'poor' speakers and that the good speakers represent the norms of proper usage. Sometimes this means focusing on one particular sub-variety as representing the 'best' usage. (Wardhaugh 2000:35)

This factor is an attempt to account for the 'informal' or 'partial' standardization found in some language varieties that have not achieved full language status. In these cases, there are norms which may not be codified, but which are accepted by the community at large (or vice versa). This leads to 'increased uniformity of usage through dialect levelling' (Stewart 1968:534).

This is certainly true of Cantonese. The process of 'dialect levelling' in Hong Kong has been occurring for around half a century and ensures that immigrant families speaking other varieties of Chinese, including other Yue dialects, are eventually acculturated into speaking Hong Kong Cantonese.

So (1998) traces the reasons for this widespread language shift, which was consolidated between 1949 and the early 1980s. He attributes it to the size of the Cantonese-speaking population in 1949, primary education in the vernacular, the closing of the border to the mainland in 1949 and access to Cantonese radio broadcasting.

Wolfram's (1997) concept of overt and covert prestige is also relevant here. Overt prestige is granted through official standardization, whereas covert prestige is maintained through these de facto social norms. The notion of a non-standardized variety such as Cantonese having covert prestige in certain contexts helps explain why the lack of overt prestige does not negatively affect its vitality (also see Blum 2004).

Therefore Ramsey (1987:99) describes Cantonese as a 'genuine regional standard' in a way that no other Southern dialect is. The form of Cantonese spoken in Guangzhou used to be the prestigious form, but this role has been taken over by Hong Kong Cantonese (Lord 1987, Bruche-Schulz 1997, Snow 2004).

Conclusion

According to the literature, Cantonese possesses at least four of these seven attributes (*vitality*, *historicity*, *mixture*, *de facto norms*). Although this includes only three of the five required by a *standard language* (excluding *standardization* and *autonomy)*, it is more than the mere two that would classify it as a *dialect* (*vitality* and *de facto norms*). Falling midway between these two classifications and not fitting neatly into any of the other eight categories either (see Table 1), its sociolinguistic status is once again unclear.

2.4   OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS

Four more aspects remain to be examined. Two of these factors deserve special attention because they are the extra-linguistic factors that most strongly mitigate against recognition of the Chinese varieties as independent languages in their own right: The unifying history of the standard written script, and nationalism. Wardhaugh (2000) states that these two aspects are not only very

important to the Chinese, but also play a central role in their understanding of what a language is. A third factor, the education system, plays a special role in perpetuating this unique understanding in Hong Kong. The fourth factor relates to the development of written colloquial Cantonese, which, at the other end of the scale, is possibly the aspect providing the strongest argument for awarding Cantonese language status.

Although these factors have already been touched on, their relative importance in the Chinese context makes them worthy of further explanation. It is the first three of these that have provided compelling reasons, at least for the Chinese people as a whole, for not classifying Cantonese and other Chinese varieties as languages. The fourth aspect, written Cantonese, is a relatively recent development, and it remains to be seen how this will impact on the status and perceptions of Cantonese in the future.

The importance of the writing system

Most, if not all, linguists, cite the importance of the standardized written script to the Chinese, both in defining the status of their dialects as heteronymous varieties of the one language system, and as standing as a strong symbol of Chinese culture.

Ramsay (1987:17–18) explains the influence of the shared writing standard:

> The speakers of all dialects look toward a common model.… [China] has linguistic standards that are accepted throughout the country by all the Chinese people…. In the sense that many of the uses of language are guided and focused by the same norms, it is impossible to ignore the essential unity of China. The power of unification exerted within Chinese culture by Chinese writing should not be underestimated.… For these reasons, we usually do not speak of Chinese in the plural, even though in other, less cohesive contexts, the dialects would unquestionably be considered different languages.

Although other varieties of Chinese always have been allowed to be spoken, when it came to writing, only one variety has ever been recognized nationally. 'It had overcome the limitations of speech and hearing and had united peoples who could not have understood each other otherwise' (Wang 1991:3)' (quoted in Bruche-Schulz 1997:310). This gives the Chinese a feeling of belonging to a common national speech community, causing them to consider the different varieties of Chinese as dialects rather than as separate languages (Ramsey 1987).

Not only has the traditional written script served unceasingly as a language unifier for many centuries (Barnes 1982, Bauer and Benedict 1997), but it has also been 'a symbol of China's cultural unity and an important agent for the preservation of that unity' (Mau 2005:36)—an identity marker (Barnes 1982, Zhou and Ross 2004). The very idea of what it means to be Chinese is rooted in the Chinese characters—they are described as the essence of 'Chinese-ness', and as part of the foundation of their culture.

Conversely, for Chinese to be written in anything other than the traditional characters, or for different areas within China to develop their own writing systems, would be considered 'traitorous' by some, as in the past the 'dialect Romanization' movement had been seen (DeFrancis 1984, Erbaugh 1995). This seems to be a peculiarity of how Chinese culture perceives the functions of language (Scollon and Scollon 1995).

The link between nation and language

The previous point leads on to political considerations. The idea of one language for one nation has been a central unifying concept throughout Chinese history.

As early as 221 BC, the Chinese script was officially standardized under the Qin emperor, and this was seen as an essential part of consolidating national power and unifying the nation. As a result, the different Chinese varieties were beginning to be considered one Chinese 'language' in the eyes of the Chinese, as there was now a direct link between language and nation (Zhou and Ross 2004). As with other nations, language became both 'a vehicle and a symbol of their unity' (Haugen 1966:106).

In the relatively recent efforts to modernize China, a further influence has been the Western example of each powerful nation state having one common language. Finally, an article by Stalin published in 1950 seems to have had a decisive effect. This stated that a nation needed one national language, under which all the other varieties, termed dialects, were subordinate (DeFrancis 1984, Mair 1991). China already had its one written language; as for a spoken form, language planning sought to raise the status of Putonghua to be the national 'high' variety (Fu and Kataoka 1997:106), with all other spoken varieties remaining relegated to dialectal status.

The idea of recognizing more than one language (either written or spoken) within the one nation is tantamount to destroying China's cultural and political unity, and has dangerous political implications for the Chinese: it is the same as denying that they constitute one nation

(DeFrancis 1984, Erbaugh 1995, Wikipedia 2007e). Haugen (1966:104) explains: 'The dialects, at least if they threaten to become languages, are potentially disruptive forces in a unified nation: they appeal to local loyalties, which could conceivably come into conflict with national loyalty'. Hence the government of the PRC is opposed to the recognition or use of 'dialects' in any official domains of use, for example, government and education (Bolton 2000).

The Wikipedia (2007e) site elucidates this dilemma particularly well:

> The idea of single language has major overtones in politics and self-identity, and explains the amount of emotion over this issue. The idea of Chinese as a language family may suggest that China consists of several different nations, challenge the notion of a single Han Chinese nationality, and legitimize secessionist movements. This is why some Chinese are uncomfortable with it.… Furthermore, for some, suggesting that Chinese is more correctly described as multiple languages implies that the notion of a single Chinese language and a single Chinese state or nationality is artificial.

The Hong Kong education system

Hock and Joseph (1996:325) quipped, 'A language … is, as one linguist put it jokingly, "a dialect with an army and a navy". One might add, "And with schools".' This is a perceptive analogy, reflecting that 'language in education systems has long been recognized not only as a very significant indicator of power relations in societies but also as a very important instrument for continuity and/or change' (Bray and Koo 2004:215). Thus the education system in Hong Kong plays an important role in the formation and maintenance of locals' attitudes towards language, including the continuing dialectal status of Cantonese.

On the one hand, it has helped Cantonese to survive and even thrive, through the link between characters and regional speech, whereby Hong Kong schoolchildren learn to read Chinese characters with Cantonese pronunciation[24]. However, at the same time it reinforces Chinese diglossia, thereby perpetuating a low image of Cantonese in its speakers' eyes.

Another negative influence is the circumstance that, in spite of of the fact that Cantonese is both the mother tongue and the medium of instruction for most students, it is not taught in schools; Chinese language education always focuses around standard written Chinese. Hong Kong schoolchildren get a subtle but continuing message that the standard written language

---

[24] Ironically, in this way the traditional script, though for 3,000 years a symbol of linguistic unity for China, has been responsible for promoting and maintaining spoken linguistic disunity at the same time (Kratochvil 1968, Barnes 1982, Chan 1993, Halliday 2006). However, with the promulgation of Putonghua as the spoken standard, this practice has come to an end in all Chinese communities except in Hong Kong.

(along with spoken Putonghua) is superior to their own localized form of Chinese (Lord 1976, Schaefer Fu 1987, Bruche-Schulz 1997, Bolton 2003).

In addition, many educators hold negative attitudes towards Cantonese, which are passed on to the next generation. Students are told that Cantonese cannot be written, especially not for formal purposes, and that it is 'merely a dialect' (So 1987, Lin 1997, Bauer 2000). All this helps reinforce the idea that Cantonese is really just an inferior, incomplete branch of a larger, more powerful 'Chinese language'.

The development of written Cantonese

Snow (2008) states that the 'emergence of a widely used written form serves as a significant indicator of the growing social role of a language—as progress toward increasing standard status.' In contrast to the considerations just discussed, the development of a written variety of colloquial Cantonese, unintelligible to non-Cantonese speakers, is perhaps one of the strongest arguments for considering Cantonese worthy of language status.

Cantonese has had a small literary history for nearly two centuries, but in the past two decades written Cantonese 'has developed into a dynamic linguistic phenomenon with its own lively and distinctive features that are evolving before our eyes' (Cheung and Bauer 2002:39). Cantonese writing has recently become pervasive throughout Hong Kong with an increasing output of material in many different domains, such as newspapers, magazines, comic books, novels, advertising and computer chatrooms.[25] Both Snow (2008), and Cheung and Bauer (2002), believe that it is this high level of everyday use and tacit acceptance of the written form that marks Cantonese out as holding an especially unique place among all the Chinese varieties.

According to Snow (2008), written Cantonese has already developed a number of the attributes associated with a standard language to a significant degree. The most noteworthy of these has been the dramatic increase in its autonomy (in that where written Cantonese varies

---

[25] Cheung and Bauer (2002) report that twenty years ago written Cantonese was closely restricted to certain occasions and types of writing, and on those occasions, was mainly used to achieve intimacy, authenticity, and humour. Nowadays, writing in Cantonese is more popular, and the reasons for writing it more numerous; in addition to the above, it is also used to achieve informality, casualness, directness, friendliness, and freedom. They personally believe its most important characteristic is its authenticity. For instance, 'written Cantonese has acquired a legal basis in Hong Kong's law courts and among the police force out of practical necessity because it is used to transcribe verbatim the testimony of a witness.' (2002:4) They claim that the development of writing in Cantonese is partly related to the practice in Hong Kong of reading from Chinese characters in their own vernacular; the natural desire to write how one speaks.

from Standard Written Chinese, it tends to follow the norms of spoken Cantonese). There is also a high degree of functional elaboration in the sense that where vocabulary is lacking, there are widely accepted principles for writing any spoken Cantonese word[26]. Furthermore, because these principles exist, norms are slowly crystallizing through popular consensus, even though there is no official organisation determining or promoting these. In this regard, both Snow and Cheung and Bauer comment on the significance of the increase in both volume and popularity of reference works such as Cantonese dictionaries.

Where the evidence does not match language status, according to Snow's analysis, is in the two factors of the prestige of written Cantonese, and its role and use in society. Written Cantonese has a low prestige due to its tie to speech; Chinese generally rate literary languages higher than oral varieties. There is also the concern that it is undermining students' ability to write Standard Written Chinese (Cheung and Bauer 2002). Snow (2008) observes, 'For virtually any kind of formal writing … Cantonese is rarely used … Many people tend to feel writing in Cantonese is 'wrong' or at least substandard, and there is a strong and widespread feeling that Cantonese should not be used for anything serious.' In short, Hong Kong society as a whole seems to hold ambivalent attitudes towards this development.

However, these attitudes are slowly changing. Snow points out that whereas written Cantonese publications used to target only the lower classes, nowadays they are targeted to the masses, particularly student readers. It has also become a badge of identity; it 'is developing symbolic value … as a language of identity or group solidarity,' (Snow 2008) particularly among the young people. He concludes that 'the long-term trend appears to be toward the consolidation and even expansion of [the social role of written Cantonese]'. Nevertheless, he adds the caution that, 'it is not likely that the status and role of written Cantonese in Hong Kong society will grow dramatically without more active promotion of the language within the education system, a possibility that seems unlikely.' [27]

---

[26] Sometimes standard characters are adapted to new meanings; sometimes new characters have been coined for Cantonese words; in some cases English letters are inserted because of similar pronunciation. The generally accepted guiding principle is that of phoneticity—to attempt to borrow a character that has a similar sound.

[27] Bauer (2000) also points out that if Putonghua ever became the medium of instruction, literacy in Cantonese would be much harder to maintain, as students might not know how to pronounce the Chinese characters in Cantonese.

Conclusion

In the face of such strong cultural and political considerations, and the changing linguistic situation, most linguists have been content to settle (or rather, avoid) the question of whether Cantonese is a *language* or a *dialect* simply by stating that, because its speakers think it is a dialect, therefore it is one. They point out that speakers' beliefs play a central role in the determination of language versus dialect. However, as has already been mentioned, it appears that no objective surveys of Cantonese speakers have been carried out.

2.5   PROBLEMS WITH TERMINOLOGY

The standing of Cantonese

Is Cantonese a language or a dialect? Solely looking at linguistic factors (including mutual intelligibility) favours the contention that Cantonese is a language, while political and cultural factors determine it to be a dialect, and Bell's seven sociolinguistic criteria place it somewhere in between.

What makes the evidence so inconclusive? Why is Cantonese so different? As Mair (1991:3) asks: 'Is "Chinese" so utterly unique that it … requires a separate system of classification?'

The truth is, every cultural setting is unique, and this reflects on language perceptions and use, and therefore classification. Both Kalmar et al. (1987) and Coulmas (2005) comment that sociolinguistics is rooted in the Western tradition. Coulmas remarks (2005:24),

> Terms such as *language*, *dialect*, *variety*, among others, require for a useful definition a view of language as a social fact. Models of standard-and-dialects configurations known from certain Western speech communities cannot be assumed to do justice to other language areas.

He points out that, even within the West, there are significant differences between the English word *dialect*, the French *patois*, and the German *mundart*. He explains, 'The apparent need to employ emic[28] terms shows that the relationship between standard language and dialects can take on various forms which defy universal definition because both linguistic and extralinguistic factors are involved' (Coulmas 2005:24).

---

[28] In Coulmas' words (2005:24), 'emic' means 'not universally applicable but dependant in their interpretation on a particular linguistic or cultural) system'.

Therefore, instead of starting with our English words *language* and *dialect*, and trying to fit the Chinese data into that scheme, some linguists have suggested that we should start instead with the Chinese terminology for *dialect* and try to find a more suitable equivalent to match the data for the Sinitic language varieties.

<u>'Fangyan' versus 'Dialect'</u>

Mair (1991) explains that there are many modern definitions of *fangyan* (where *fang* means region, or area, and *yan* means speech, or language), none exact equivalents of the Western *dialect*, and some inaccurately coloured by it. He cautions that it is a key term and therefore has a direct bearing on the typology of Chinese languages.

Compounding the matter is the fact that Chinese has the concept *dialect*[29] in two senses, with two different terms (DeFrancis 1984): *(diqu) fangyan* (literally 'regional speech'), for the mutually unintelligible larger groups such as Mandarin, Cantonese/Yue, etc., and *difanghua* (or *didian fangyan)* (literally 'local speech') for the smaller, more intelligible varieties, e.g. varieties of Mandarin or Cantonese. This distinction is lost when simply translated *dialect*.

Furthermore, in the past, as with the ancient Greek concept of *dialektos*, *fangyan* was also used in an overlapping sense to describe other languages, including foreign languages (Ramsey 1987, Mair 1991).

Obviously, then, *fangyan* is a larger and looser term than *dialect*, and it is not restricted to mutually intelligible varieties as is the English usage of *dialect*; the stress is mainly on the fact that it covers regional varieties.

<u>'Dialect' versus 'Topolect'</u>

At least two linguists have proposed other translations of *fangyan*, literally 'regional speech', as an alternative solution to the mismatch.

DeFrancis (1984) has suggested *regionalect* for the larger, mutually unintelligible varieties, leaving *dialect* to mean the mutually intelligible subvarieties, as is the conventional usage in English.

---

[29] Conversely, Mair (2007b) has also proposed what he believes to be a better modern Chinese translation of the English word *dialect*: *tongyan* (通言), which implies mutual intelligibility.

Mair (1991) went further when he proposed *topolect* as a functional equivalent to *fangyan*. Like *regionalect*, *topolect* also means 'area speech' or 'place language', but uses Greek roots to match the Greek origins of *dialect*. Mair's idea was to completely delink *fangyan* and *dialect* altogether; to sidestep the whole *language* versus *dialect* issue by inventing a word which meant 'the language or speech pattern of a given place (locality), whether large or small' (Mair 2007a), i.e., all the 'dialects' of Chinese, including both DeFrancis' *regionalects* and *dialects*.

Of these two terms, *topolect* is the only one gaining currency, although unfortunately the few linguists that are using it are not all agreed on its application.[30] Although Mair (1991) states he prefers *topolect* because 'region' implies a large size whereas the prefix *topo-* is neutral regarding size; in fact, usage is now restricting the word *topolect* to the larger-sized varieties anyway.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* (2000) defines a *topolect* as:

> A set of similar dialects constituting any of the larger distinct regional varieties of a language. For example, Mandarin Chinese is a topolect that includes the dialects of Beijing and Nanjing, and is distinct from Hakka, another topolect of Chinese. Etymology: '*topo– + (dia)lect*—translation of Chinese (Mandarin) *fangyán*, regional speech (*fang*, place + *yán*, language).'

This meaning parallels the classification label of *fangyanqu* in China and incorporates Cantonese used in its wider sense, as the group of Yue dialects.

Using a term like *topolect* would avoid any pejorative connotations of the English word *dialect*, which implies that the variety plays a low social role and is not fully autonomous. Moreover it matches the linguistic evidence while not conflicting with political considerations. Other possible advantages are that the population size is not specified, and there is no implication of the existence of a standard (Burton 2007) or relationship with a written form.

Mair contends that adopting this new terminology would be a much better solution than trying to add to the already over-debated but inconclusive language-versus-dialect issue. However, as there are potential political ramifications, he stresses that his recommendation is

---

[30] Another sense in which some linguists are now using topolect, unfortunately, is in a similar way to the Western *dialect*, which seems to have circumvented the original purpose for introducing a new term (Mair 1991). For example, Saillard (2004:footnote 2) practically reverses DeFrancis' terminology altogether by using the term *topolect* 'to refer to a non-standard, non-official, locally restricted language variety,' and the term *dialect* when she wants to emphasize that a language variety belongs to a larger family of mutually unintelligible varieties.

only for a change in the English usage, in order to achieve consistency with linguistic classification in other parts of the world.

In this paper, *topolect* will be used to stand for the representative variety of each of the 'sets of similar dialects constituting any of the larger distinct regional varieties of a language;' in other words, Cantonese in its narrower sense, in this case, the Hong Kong variety of Cantonese. This would build on and add to the *American Heritage Dictionary* definition, and it parallels the common usage of terms such as Cantonese which are already used in two ways: as the group name, and as the name of the representative norm of that group.

2.6   CONCLUSION

It is extremely difficult to define a *dialect*, let alone decide whether a variety such as Cantonese should be classified as one. There are multiple problems with the mutual intelligibility criterion, which is the one most consistently applied according to the Western understanding of the English term *dialect*, and other factors such as size and prestige are contradictory.

The problems are rooted in the fact that languages and dialects are basically social, not linguistic, phenomena. As social and political systems vary, so do language usage and functions. Therefore a sociolinguistic typology is an aid in understanding these relationships between linguistic and extra-linguistic factors; yet even in this case the evidence regarding Cantonese is inconclusive.

As it seems that English has no word to parallel the Chinese concept *fangyan* usually translated *dialect*, some linguists have suggested that the solution be found in a change of terminology instead.

Subsequently, the newly coined word *topolect* is slowly being adopted by Chinese linguists as a more neutral and closer alternative to *dialect*. However, successful implementation of a redefinition depends on the views of the speakers. Although it is commonly believed that Cantonese is considered some form of *dialect* by its speakers, no surveys of the speakers have been carried out to find out exactly what their attitudes are towards their variety. Neither has there been any comparative research between speakers of different language varieties or socio-political situations, such as is the case with Cantonese-speakers in Hong Kong.

It remains to be seen what differences there are between groups, and whether reclassification of Cantonese as a *topolect* would indeed be more fitting than the traditional two-

way choice of *language* versus *dialect*, with all the cultural and political connotations that they carry.

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The specific research questions investigated in this study are:

1)   What differences in attitude towards Cantonese as a language or a dialect are held by Cantonese-speaking Hong Kongers, Cantonese-speaking Mainlanders, and Putonghua-speaking Mainlanders, and on what basis?

2)   Would re-classification of Cantonese as a *topolect* fit Chinese perceptions better than the traditional *language/dialect* choice?

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

An approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative methodology seemed the most appropriate. As there do not seem to have been any similar studies to base comparison on, an open-ended questionnaire was specially designed and piloted, then implemented for Groves (2006). Based on feedback from subjects in that study, questions were adapted and/or amplified again. (The whole questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix A[31].) The questionnaire was written entirely in English, as this was the researcher's main language, and all subjects were studying at an English medium-of-instruction university.

The questionnaire was conceived in three parts. The first two relate to the first research question on the status of Cantonese. Part 1 contained opinions on how Bell's seven sociolinguistic criteria relate to Cantonese. This was an indirect, objective means of ascertaining the subjects' perceptions. Part 2 consisted of direct questions on the subjects' opinions on the status of Cantonese as a *language* or a *dialect*. This was a more subjective measurement; together it was hoped to gain an overall picture of how the respondents view the status of Cantonese. Cantonese could then be placed on Bell's sociolinguistic typology according to their answers. The answers to these two sets of questions were also compared via chi-square tests to see what correlations existed between them.

In part 3 the subjects' concepts of *dialect* were obtained to compare them with the Western idea of *dialect*. It was assumed that this would draw out the Chinese meaning of

---

[31] Additional questions were added for the purpose of another study (Groves 2007), regarding attitudes towards Putonghua (Q11, 18, 19b), identity of the respondents (Q6), and their understanding of 'mother tongue' (Q2); however, these will not be discussed in this study.

fangyan, and could clarify whether the English translation *topolect* would be a better match for the subjects' perceptions of *fangyan* than *dialect*. Then, by extension, this conclusion could be compared with the answers to the first research question in order to answer the second research question, whether Cantonese could justifiably be reclassified as a *topolect*.

The questions are explained next.

Part 1: Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology

Criterion #1: Standardization (Q8)

As it is acknowledged that Cantonese has not been officially standardized, the respondents were questioned instead about their attitudes toward possible standardization, specifically of colloquial written Cantonese. This also included the idea of teaching it as a school subject, as standardization and teaching of a language usually go hand-in-hand[32].

Criterion #2: Vitality (Q9 & 10)

Two questions were asked to reveal the respondents' attitudes towards the vitality of Cantonese: Whether they believed Putonghua would eventually be used alongside Cantonese as the everyday language of Hong Kong citizens (Q9), and whether it would eventually replace Cantonese as the main, everyday language of Hong Kongers (Q10).

Four options were given. The last option in each case was that this would never happen. The first three (*Yes, within one generation*; *Yes, within 60 years*; *Yes, within 100 years*), correspond approximately with one, two and three generations. This is because it is a well-known fact that language loss can occur within as little as three generations, with the second generation becoming bilingual (hence Q9) and the third generation largely speaking the new variety (hence Q10). [33] The second choice (*Yes, within 60 years*) also correlates with the completed education of one generation of schoolchildren after Hong Kong's complete reunification with China (i.e. twenty years after the end of its period as a Special Administrative Region in 2047).

---

[32] This relates to 'implementation', which is part three in the four-part outline of the steps involved in standardizing a language (Wiley 1996)—see section 2.4.1 on 'Standardization'.

[33] As Ansaldo (1995:22) reports, in Hong Kong 'the highly flexible linguistic situation favours shift from Cantonese.'

Criterion #3: Historicity (Q12)

The historicity of Cantonese is already well attested; instead, the focus of this question was narrowed down to the respondents' perceptions of the relationship between Cantonese and Hong Kong culture and identity. These were probed indirectly through asking whether it was possible for someone to consider him- or herself to be a Hong Konger without being able to speak Cantonese.

Criterion #4: Autonomy (Q7)

Respondents were asked whether they thought Cantonese was a variety of another language, or a separate, independent language in its own right.

Criterion #5: Reduction (Q13)

The respondents were asked if they considered Cantonese to be a complete language system in itself. Both speaking and writing were specified, which elicited some detailed answers.

Criterion #6: Mixture (Q14)

A question was asked about how pure or mixed Cantonese is. Three options were given: Pure, somewhat mixed, or very mixed.

Criterion #7: De Facto Norms (Q4 & 5)

Two questions were asked to uncover the respondents' attitudes towards the existence of de facto norms. Firstly they were asked if they spoke Cantonese with an accent and, if so, which accent, and secondly, to identify where they thought the best Cantonese was spoken.

Part 2: The status of Cantonese (Q17 & 19a)

In part 2, the subjects were asked directly whether they believed Cantonese to be a *language* or a *dialect*, and the reasons why (Q17). Then they were asked to place Cantonese on an unmarked *language/dialect* scale (Q19a). The theory was that many respondents would prefer to put it somewhere between the two ends of the scale. This was to test the hypothesis (also dependent on their answers to part 1) that the concept *topolect* would fit their understanding better than forcing them to choose one of the two traditional designations.

Part 3: Language versus Dialect (Q15 & 16)

Finally, subjects were asked to detail their understanding of a *dialect* (Q15), and the differences between a *dialect* and a *language* (Q16). The Chinese characters for the usual translation for *dialect*, *fangyan* (方言) were also given[34].

3.3   RESPONDENTS

Tertiary students were chosen for this study, totalling 53 Cantonese-speaking Hong Kongers, 18 Cantonese-speaking Mainland Chinese[35], and 72 Putonghua-speaking Mainland Chinese. Most were aged 19–24 and were first year undergraduate or pre-university students in Hong Kong[36]. A wide variety of majors was represented, from the Faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences, and the Schools of Business, Chinese Medicine and Communication at Hong Kong Baptist University. The group of Putonghua-speaking mainlanders had studied Cantonese for at least one semester previously.

University students were chosen, in part because they were available to the researcher and had sufficient language skills to be able to complete the questionnaire adequately in English. It has also been a precedent set by previous language attitude studies (Pierson 1998), since 'earlier studies have shown academic achievement to correlate positively with a sensitivity to ethnolinguistic phenomena' Hyland (1997:196). One question that could be asked about this practice was raised by Lai (2001), who commented that as a result, past research had tended to concentrate upon the middle to upper classes. In order to address this issue, she included people from both Hong Kong lower and middle classes in a study. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the social classes. It can be assumed, therefore, that

---

[34] On the actual questionnaire, questions were deliberately ordered in such a way that the English term *dialect* had not been introduced until this point. For this question, both the English word *dialect* and Chinese characters for *fangyan* were provided. As noted before, the purpose of this question was to draw out the subjects' understanding of *fangyan*. In hindsight, it would have been better only to have provided the Chinese term, to avoid possible confusion of the two terms; this is a weakness of the task design, and also possibly of the whole survey having been undertaken in English. However, during the survey many of the Mainland students in particular were found to be unfamiliar with the English word *dialect*.

[35] It was difficult finding enough genuine native Cantonese-speaking mainland students in Hong Kong, as many of those students from Cantonese-speaking areas of mainland China had only moved to that area during their childhood, and had grown up speaking another Chinese 'dialect' in their home as their first language.

[36] The entire group of 72 Putonghua-speaking mainlanders were enrolled in a Foundation program. This is a one-year pre-university bridging course aimed at preparing them to commence tertiary study the following year. Of the 18 native Cantonese-speaking Mainland students, nearly half (7) were post-graduate students, because of the difficulty of finding enough genuine native speakers.

the groups to be surveyed in the present study are representative of this generation of Hong Kong/mainland Chinese citizens generally.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE AND ANALYSIS

Most of the questionnaires were completed in class, with the researcher present[37]. Students were requested not to consult one another. After collection, any questionnaires found to have been completed by native speakers of Chinese varieties other than Cantonese or Putonghua/Mandarin were excluded from analysis.

For question 19a), the scale was divided into 5 points, 1 meaning *language*, 5 meaning *dialect*, and 2–4 denoting points in between. Each questionnaire was then assigned a number according to where Cantonese had been placed on the scale.[38] Data for all questions was then collated or coded and tabulated, and results of each question compared between groups.

Finally, ANOVA tests were conducted (see Appendix D for details) to reveal whether results were statistically significant between groups, and between groupings according to language (Cantonese versus Putonghua speakers) and place (Hong Kongers versus Mainlanders), at the $p < .05$ level. Chi-square tests (see Appendix E) were also run to ascertain what correlations existed between the respondents' classification of Cantonese on question 17 (the two-way distinction), and their application of Bell's seven sociolinguistic attributes to Cantonese.

---

[37] The exception, again, was a few members of the mainland-speaking Cantonese group, who completed the questionnaire in their own time ,then returned them directly to the researcher.
[38] In retrospect, it would have been both easier and perhaps more accurate to have given the respondents 5 boxes to tick, e.g. 1 = clearly a language; 2 = more like a language than a dialect; 3 = midway between a language and a dialect, etc.

4   FINDINGS

First, both indirect (objective) and direct (subjective) measures of the respondents' ideas on the status of Cantonese will be discussed. This should obtain a more balanced picture of the true status of Cantonese in the eyes of its speakers, and will answer the first research question.

Then the respondents' concepts of a *dialect* will be analyzed to see if they match the Western concept of a *dialect* or the newly-coined *topolect* better. This will provide a basis for discussion of the second research question in the next section of the paper (Section 5—Discussion).

4.1   THE STATUS OF CANTONESE—BELL'S SOCIOLINGUISTIC TYPOLOGY

Each of Bell's seven attributes will be discussed separately. The respondents' answers will then be summarized and compared to the statements of the existing literature, and Cantonese can subsequently be placed on Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology according to the respondents' beliefs.[39]

Criterion #1: Standardization (Q8)

Overall, respondents tend to be negative towards the idea of standardizing and teaching written Cantonese. The Mainland Chinese Putonghua-speakers' opinions were slightly stronger, with nearly three-quarters (72.2%) against it as opposed to three-fifths (60.4% and 61.1%) of all Cantonese speakers (see Graph 1). ANOVA tests judged these differences not to be significant at all[40]. However, it was noted that the Hong Kongers' reasons for opposition varied somewhat from the mainlanders. Approximately one-fifth of Hong Konger respondents opposed to standardization and teaching written Cantonese gave the 'positive' reason that it was simply unnecessary as it was already happening anyway—today's youth are already picking it up informally.

---

[39] See Appendix C for supplementary graphs. Only those aspects directly relevant to the purpose of this paper will be included in the analysis.

[40] See Appendix D for a detailed breakdown of all ANOVA tests.

Should written Cantonese be standardized and taught?
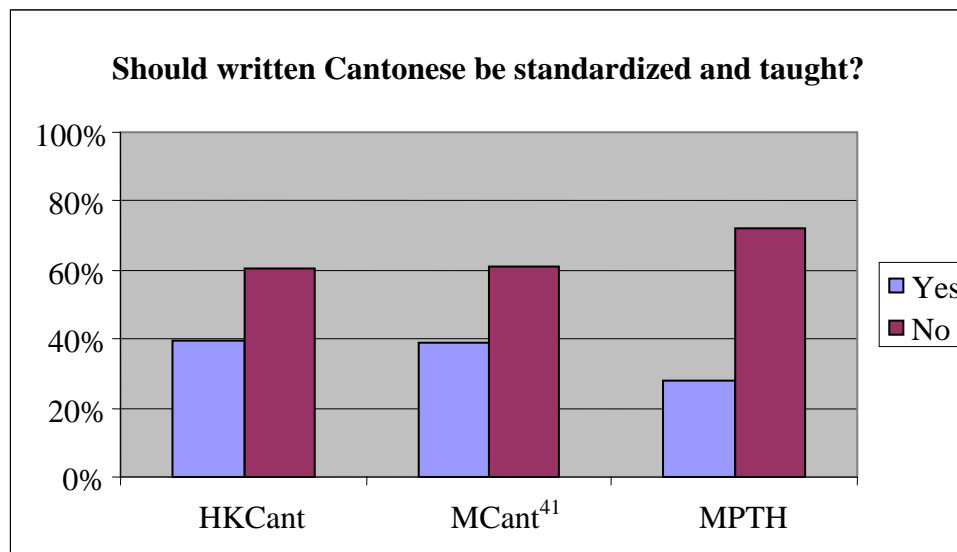
Graph 1: Percentage of subjects who believe Cantonese should be standardized and taught[41]

Criterion #2: Vitality (Q9 & 10)

The vitality of Cantonese was overwhelmingly confirmed and predicted to continue, with very few subjects believing that Putonghua would replace Cantonese in the long-term future. Most, however, believe that it will ultimately come to be used alongside Cantonese as an everyday language.[42]

Between the groups, the most obvious disparity was with the Mainland Cantonese speakers (MCants)[41], who were very positive about the future position of Cantonese in Hong Kong society. Nearly two-fifths (38.9%) believed Putonghua would never become an everyday language (refer to Graph 2), and not a single respondent considered that it would ever replace Cantonese[43] (see Graph 3).

---

[41] Throughout the data analysis, these abbreviations will be used:
       HKCant: Hong Kong Cantonese speakers,
       MCant: Mainland Cantonese speakers, and
       MPTH: Mainland Putonghua speakers.
[42] This question (Q9) is a more indirect measure of the vitality of Cantonese. As explained in section 3 (Research Methodology), this question was included because bilingualism in a society may represent an intermediate stage in language shift. However, by itself it does not necessarily mean that language loss (of Cantonese) will follow; both languages may remain vital, and this belief is also reflected in the respondents' answers to Q10.
[43] One respondent gave an 'unsure' answer, hence the corresponding graph does not show 100% agreement.

Will Putonghua be used alongside Cantonese as a daily language?
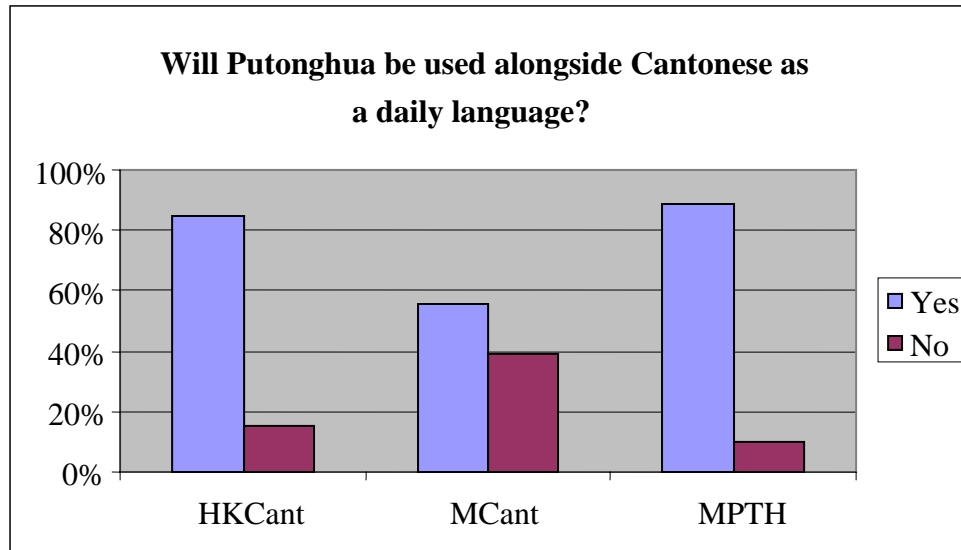
Graph 2: Percentage of respondents who believe Putonghua will eventually be used alongside Cantonese as a daily language in Hong Kong

Will Putonghua replace Cantonese as the main language of Hong Kongers?
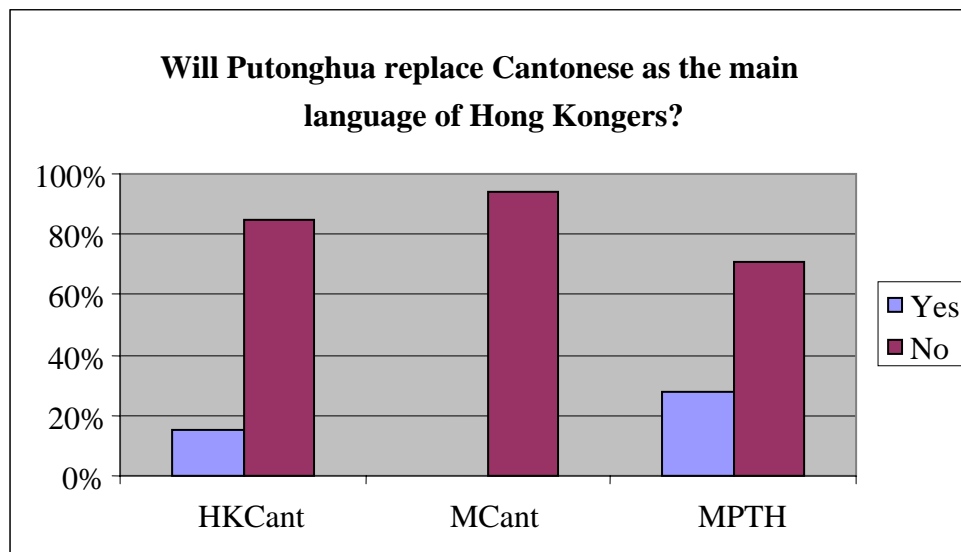
Graph 3: Percentage of respondents who believe Putonghua will eventually replace Cantonese in Hong Kong

In contrast, only a small minority (15.1% and 9.7% respectively) of the Hong Kong Cantonese speakers (HKCants) and Mainland Putonghua speakers (MPTHs) thought Putonghua would never become Hong Kongers' main language, with around two-thirds (64.2% and 68%) believing it would happen soon, within one to two generations (Table 2). The MPTHs were the most pessimistic when it came to believing that Putonghua would eventually oust Cantonese, with over a quarter (27.8%) agreeing. The HKCants were in the middle with 15% (see Table 3).

The most-oft cited reason (average 55.3% of all groups) for its ongoing vitality was the link between Cantonese and Hong Kong culture.

ANOVA tests revealed significant differences between MCants and MPTHS (p=.013) and near-significance between HKCants and MCants (p=.068) on question 9, but not question 10.

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
One generation	30.2%	11.1%	31.9%
60 years	34.0%	33.3%	36.1%
100 years	20.8%	16.7%	20.8%
Total 60 years or less	*68.2%*	*44.4%*	*68%*
Total 100 years or less	*84.9%*	*55.5%*	*89.9%*
Never	15.1%	38.9%	9.7%
Unsure	0.0%	5.6%	1.4%

Table 2: When respondents believe Putonghua will become a daily language in Hong Kong

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
One generation	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
60 years	7.5%	0.0%	5.6%
100 years	7.5%	0.0%	19.4%
Total 100 years or less	*15.0%*	*0.0%*	*27.8%*
Never	84.9%	94.4%	70.8%
Unsure	0%	5.6%	1.4%

Table 3: When respondents believe Putonghua will replace Cantonese in Hong Kong

Criterion #3: Historicity (Q12)

The *historicity* question confirmed the link between Cantonese and Hong Kong culture, finding that the Hong Kong respondents, not unexpectedly, are strongest on the identification of Hong Kong with Cantonese. Nearly two-thirds (64.2%) of Hong Kongers felt it was not possible to consider oneself a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese. The two mainland groups were more evenly divided on this issue, with a small majority in each group judging it not possible (see Graph 4).

Can a person be a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese?
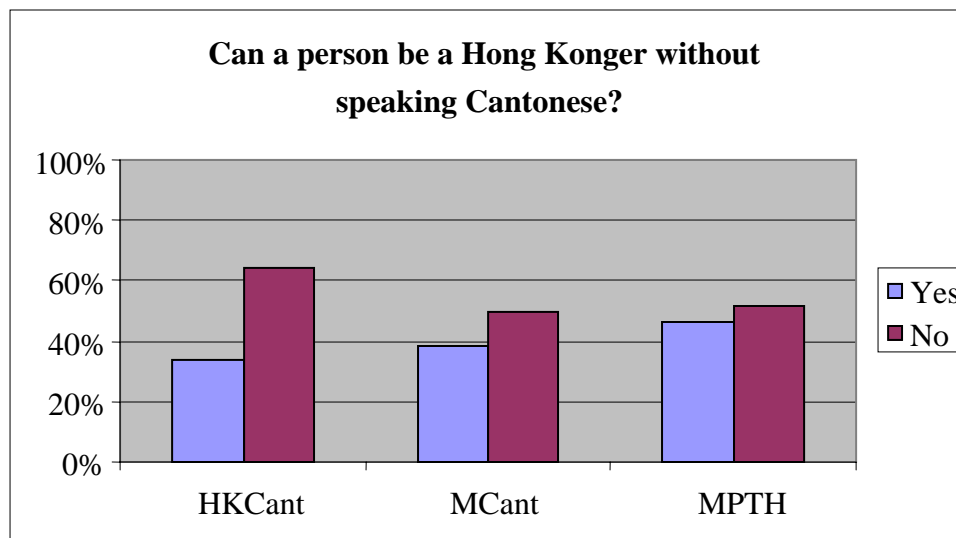
Graph 4: Percentage of respondents who believe it is possible to be a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese

No statistically significant differences were found between the groups, and comments were fairly similar between them. Of those who believed it was not possible, the reason given by well over half (average 58.8%) was the link between Cantonese and Hong Kong culture and identity. Practical reasons were a distant second (averaging 26.9%—see Table 24 in Appendix C).

Criterion #4: Autonomy (Q7)

Most respondents, especially the Putonghua speakers (80.6%) see Cantonese as a heteronomous variety of Chinese. However, a not insignificant number of the Cantonese speakers (43.4% of HKCants and 38.9% of MCants) see it as an independent language, with the HKCants almost being evenly split on this issue (see Graph 5 and Table 4).

Statistically significant differences were found between HKCants and MPTHs (p=0.18), and between groupings according to language (Cantonese versus Putonghua speakers; p=0.006) and location (Hong Kongers versus Mainlanders; p=.016).

Is Cantonese a variety of another language, or an independent language?
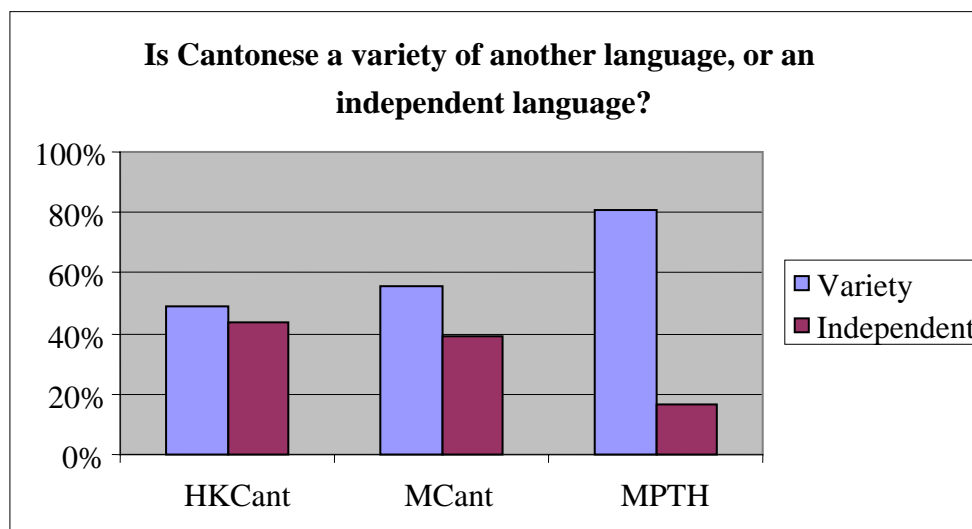
Graph 5: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as heteronomous/autonomous

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
Variety	49.1%	55.6%	80.6%
Independent Language	45.3%	38.9%	16.7%
Unsure	5.7%	5.6	2.8%

Table 4: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as heteronomous/autonomous

For those who decided Cantonese was an independent language system, comments given focused predominantly on linguistic features, especially differences in pronunciation (average 23.6% of all groups—see Table 5 below).

Reasons for Judgment of Autonomy	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pronunciation/speaking differences	4	16.7%	2	28.6%	4	33.3%
Writing			1	14.3%	1	8.3%
Mutual unintelligibility			2	28.6%	2	16.7%
Other linguistic factors	2	8.4%	2	28.6%	3	24.9%
Non-linguistic factors	5	20.9%			3	25%
No clear answer	14	58.3%	2	28.6%	7	58.3%
TOTAL # subjects	24		7		12	

Table 5: Reasons for judgment of autonomy

In contrast, a more even mix of linguistic and non-linguistic factors were given for the judgment of heteronomy (see Table 6 below). The most oft-mentioned linguistic considerations listed by the mainland speakers were the shared writing system (confirming the central position

this holds in the Chinese concept of 'language'), and similarities in pronunciation with other Chinese varieties. For HKCants, the largest factor noted (about one-fifth of relevant respondents) was similarities in vocabulary.

Non-linguistic aspects included political or cultural or other related aspects (21 of 94 respondents) and small geographic size (10 subjects). Not a few (20 of 94) also simply stated that it was a dialect, therefore was not an independent language. As to which language it was a part of, nearly all specified Chinese in their answer, as expected.[44]

Reasons for Judgment of Heteronomy	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Writing	3	11.5%	5	50%	9	15.6%
Pronunciation/speaking similarities	3	11.5%	2	20%	10	17.2%
Grammar	1	3.8%	1	10%	7	12.1%
Vocabulary	5	19.2%			7	12.1%
Mutual Intelligibility					2	3.4%
It's a dialect	4	15.4%	3	30%	13	22.4%
Geographical Size	3	11.5%	1	10%	6	10.3%
Political/Cultural & other related factors	5	19.1%	3	30%	13	22.3%
No clear answer	10	38.5%	2	20%	18	30.5%
TOTAL # subjects	26		10		58	

Table 6: Reasons for judgment of heteronomy

Criterion #5: Reduction (Q13)

The majority of subjects do not consider Cantonese to be a full language. However, the MCants are the least decisive on this issue, with only half (50%) considering it a reduced language system, while the MPTHs are the most sure (70.8% discounting it as a complete language system). The HKCants are in the middle with 62.3% (see Graph 6). However, ANOVA tests did not find these differences to be statistically significant.

---

[44] Five stated that Cantonese was a variety of Putonghua, and six said it was a variety of Mandarin.

Is Cantonese a full language?
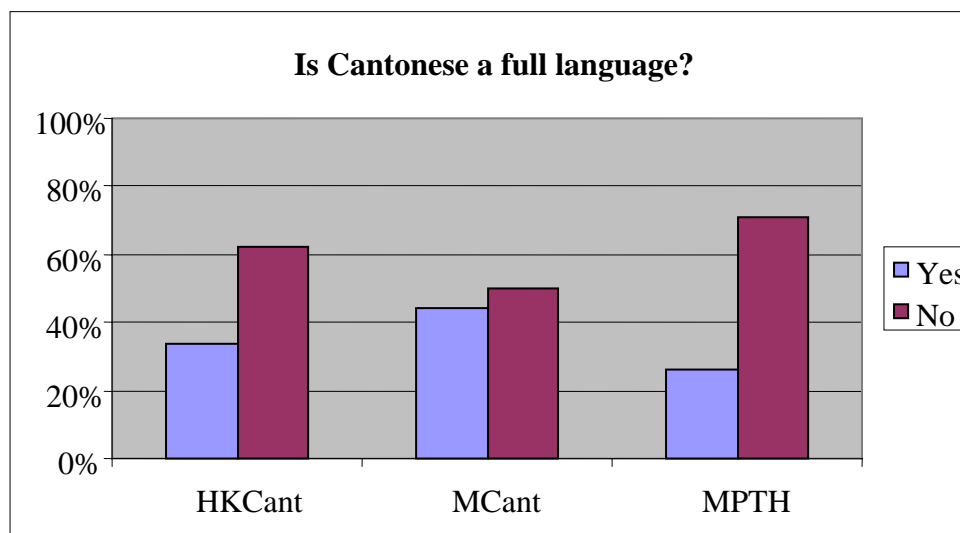
Graph 6: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as a full language system

As expected, the reason most commonly quoted by all groups for the judgment of reduction was the lack of a formal or standardized writing system (36.5% average for Cantonese speakers, 25% for the Putonghua group). In addition, both groups of mainland subjects were more apt than the Hong Kongers to give the reason of heteronomy (average 16%) (refer to Table 7).

Reasons why Cantonese is not a full language system		Writing	Variety of Chinese	Lack of purity	Informal / not official language	It's a Dialect	Other	TOTAL # subjects
HKCant	#	21	1	0		4	8	
	%	39.6%	1.9%	0.0%		7.5%	15.1%	
MCant	#	6	3	1	0	1	0	
	%	33.3%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	
MPTH	#	18	11	8	3	6	8	
	%	25.0%	15.3%	11.1%	4.2%	8.4%	11.1%	

Table 7: Reasons why Cantonese is not a full language system

Criterion #6: Mixture (Q14)

Almost all respondents classified Cantonese as a mixed language, with the majority (roughly three-quarters) of all groups judging it to be 'somewhat mixed', due primarily to the influence of English, and also Chinese/Putonghua/Mandarin.

The main difference between the groups lay with the Putonghua speakers, over a quarter (27.8%) of whom judged it to be not pure at all, with only a tiny proportion (2 of 72 subjects) believing it to be pure. The two Cantonese-speaking groups were more evenly distributed at both ends, with slightly more HKCants (15.1%) than MCants (11.1%) judging it pure (see Graph 7). These differences were found to be statistically significant—between HKCants and MPTHs (p=.001), between languages (p=.000) and according to place (p=.002).
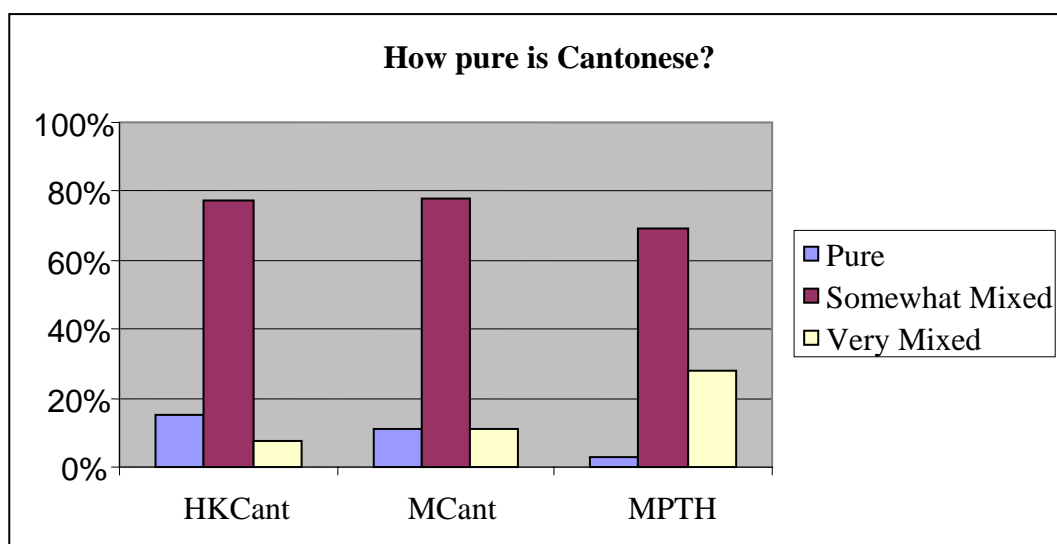
Graph 7: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as pure/mixed

Criterion #7: De Facto Norms (Q4 & 5)

The very definite answers given to questions 4 and 5 confirm the strong de facto norms existing for Cantonese. Most Hong Kongers decided that they either spoke without an accent (i.e. recognizing that they spoke a variety recognized as a standard—43 respondents) or with a Hong Kong accent (recognizing their variety is but one and (an)other(s) exists—8 respondents). Similarly, most MCants stated they either spoke without an accent (12 out of 18 respondents) or with a Guangzhou or other Chinese accent (see Table 8).

Do you speak Cantonese with an accent?		HKCant	MCant	MPTH
No		43	12	0
Yes	Hong Kong	8	0	1
	Guangzhou	0	1	1
	Putongua/Beijing	0	1	41
	Other Chinese	0	2	3
	Don't know/Not specified	0	0	6
Unsure / no answer given / can't speak Cantonese		2	2	21

Table 8: Which accent the respondents speak Cantonese with

This same phenomenon was reflected in their answers to the question asking where the best Cantonese is spoken. All but 8 of the 53 Hong Kongers believed it to be Hong Kong, while the MCants were divided between the Guangzhou area and recognizing both Guangzhou and Hong Kong as standards. The MPTHs were divided between Guangzhou, Hong Kong, or a combination of both places, but nearly half favoured Hong Kong as the unofficial standard (see Table 9 below). These results were all statistically significant or near significance level[45].

This acknowledges the two major competing varieties of Cantonese and reinforces the statements in the literature that the Hong Kong variety has recently taken over from Guangzhou ('Canton') Cantonese as the more prestigious variety.

Where is the best Cantonese spoken?	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Hong Kong	45	84.9%	1	5.6%	33	45.8%
Guangzhou area	3	5.7%	9	50%	17	23.6%
Both Hong Kong and Guangzhou	0	0%	7	38.9%	15	20.8%
Not specified/Other answers	5	9.4%	1	5.6%	7	9.7%

Table 9: Where is the best Cantonese spoken?

Summary

The analysis confirms the findings of both the pilot study (Groves 2006) and the literature that Cantonese fulfils four of Bell's seven criteria (*vitality*, *historicity*, *mixture*, *de facto norms*). Regarding the other three criteria, on the whole respondents were negative towards possible *standardization* (of the written form), and judged Cantonese to be a *reduced*, *heteronomous* variety of Chinese. As pointed out earlier, this is not enough to categorize it a *language*, but is

---

[45] See Appendix E for details.

more than the minimum required to classify it as a *dialect.* Neither does it fit into any of the other pre-established categories.

In addition, the Cantonese speakers' attitudes towards some of the categories are not as conclusive as the literature suggests, in particular *autonomy* and *reduction*[46]. These are two of the three key points in differentiating a *language* from a *dialect*; therefore, according to sociolinguistic attributes, it is mainly the lack of official *standardization* that strongly differentiates Cantonese from a *standard language*.

According to our respondents' beliefs, we can now confidently place Cantonese on the scale of social prestige according to Bell's typology, half-way between *standard language* and *dialect*, just below *classical* and above *vernacular* (see Table 10) in an as yet unnamed category.

ATTRIBUTES							LANGUAGE TYPE	EXAMPLE
1-Standardization	2-Vitality	3-Historicity	4-Autonomy	5-Reduction	6-Mixture	7-De Facto Norms		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓/✗	✓	Standard	Standard English
✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	Classical	K.James' Bible English
✗	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	?	*Cantonese*
✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	Vernacular	'Black English'
✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	Dialect	Cockney
							… etc.	… etc.

Table 10: Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology (Bell 1976:151) expanded to include Cantonese

4.2   THE STATUS OF CANTONESE—LANGUAGE OR DIALECT?

The two direct questions regarding the status of Cantonese yielded some unexpected results, particularly in regard to the attitude of the Mainland Cantonese speakers.

---

[46] The judgment on *Historicity* was also not so conclusive. However as the historicity of Cantonese is already well-established, this question was only testing one aspect of historicity—its association specifically with Hong Kong culture.

Two-way distinction (Q17)

As can be seen in Graph 8 and Table 11, the majority of respondents see Cantonese as a *dialect* when opposed to a *language* (an average of 73.5%) when faced with a two-way choice; but there are significant differences between the groups. Whereas only 3 out of 72 MPTHs (4.2%) considered it a *language*, 22.6% of HKCants and 38.9% of the MCants judged it a *language*. Conversely, it was deemed a *dialect* by only half (50%) of the MCants and three-quarters (77.4%) of HKCants, but the vast majority (93.1%) of MPTHs. In this case, differences in language and location groupings (p=.001 and p=.023 respectively) were statistically significant, as were one-way differences between MPTHs and both HKCants (p=.010) and MCants (p=.033).
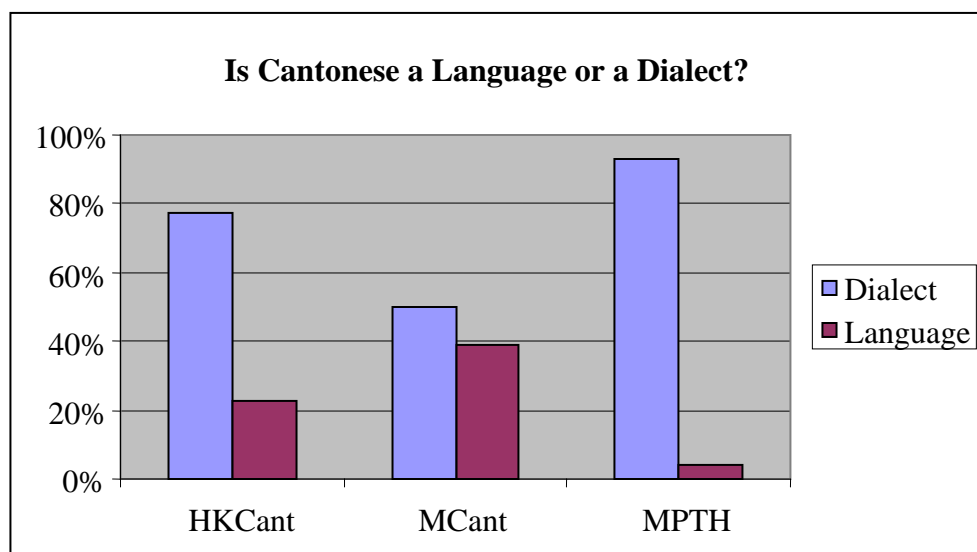
Graph 8: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as a language/dialect

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
Dialect	77.4%	50%	93.1%
Language	22.6%	38.9%	4.2%
In between/not sure	0%	11.1%	2.7%

Table 11: Percentages of respondents who see Cantonese as a language versus dialect

In explaining their choices, the same variety of factors as provided in 4.2 above was recorded; however for those choosing *dialect* the major factors in the distinction were more clearly defined. Geographical size was the overriding feature and was the most important aspect to both Cantonese-speaking groups (48.8% of HKCants, 55.6% of MCants). To the MPTHs,

geographical size was secondary to the fact that they saw Cantonese as a variety of another language (heteronomy—20.9% as opposed to 32.9% for size) (see Table 12).

For those who considered Cantonese a *language*, no clear pattern emerged. Whereas 4 out of 22 respondents quoted the number of speakers, more (8 respondents) gave this as a reason for considering it a dialect!

		Size (Geographic)	Autonomy/Heteronomy	(Non-)existence of Writing System	Size (Number of speakers)	Full Language / Reduction	Standardization	(Lack of) Official status	Political-Cultural Reasons	Oral / Non-written variety	HK's International Identity	Historicity	Mutual Intelligibility	(Lack of) Purity	Other
HKCant	**L**				2	1	2				2				5
	%				16.7	8.3	16.7				16.7				41.7
	D	20	8	4	4	1	3	1	2	1					2
	%	48.8	19.5	9.8	9.8	2.4	7.3	2.4	4.9	2.4					4.9
MCant	**L**		1	1	2							2			1
	%		14.3	14.3	28.6							28.6			14.3
	D	5	1	2	1	1									
	%	55.6	11.1	22.2	11.1	11.1									
MPTH	**L**											1			2
	%											33.3			66.7
	D	14	22	8	3	4	1	2	1			1	1	1	19
	%	20.9	32.9	11.9	4.5	6.0	1.5	3.0	1.5			1.5	1.5	1.5	28.4
Ave % (D)		41.7	21.2	14.6											

Table 12: Reasons given why Cantonese is a language or a dialect

Five-point scale (Q19a)

Respondents were also asked to place Cantonese on a language-versus-dialect scale (Graph 9 and Table 13). The group trends here are not so easy to see using the 5-point scale, other than that the three lines follow a similar shape, and are obviously weighted more at the *dialect* end than the *language* end.

Cantonese on Language-vs-Dialect scale (5-point)
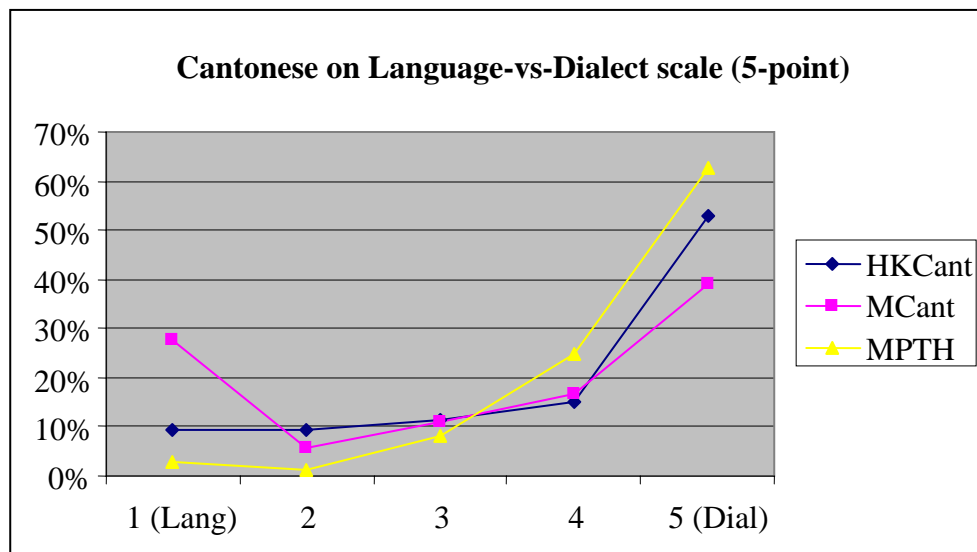
Graph 9: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as a language, dialect or in between

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
1 (Lang)	9.40%	27.80%	2.80%
2	9.40%	5.60%	1.40%
3	11.30%	11.10%	8.30%
4	15.10%	16.70%	25.00%
5 (Dial)	52.80%	38.90%	62.50%

Table 13: Cantonese on the Language-vs-dialect 5-point scale

The patterns become clearer when all midpoints (2–4) on the scale are collapsed into one group (Graph and Table 14). Two main trends can clearly be seen. Firstly, approximately one-third (average 34.9%) of all groups chose to place Cantonese somewhere in between a language and a dialect. Secondly, as in the previous question, the MCants (27.8%) were more likely to permit Cantonese language status than the MPTHs (only 2.8%), with the HKCants in between (9.4%).

At the *dialect* end of the scale, around two-fifths of the MCants (38.9%) and just over half the Hong Kongers (52.8%) chose the *dialect* label. Adding the nearly two-thirds (62.5%) of the MPTHs, on average only 51.4% of respondents in total deemed it plainly a dialect, considerably lower than the overall average for the two-way choice of 73.5%.

ANOVA tests found significant differences between MCants and MPTHs (p=.003) and according to language (p=.004) but not according to location (p=.300), which is not surprising considering the wide differences between the Mainland groups.

Cantonese on Language-vs-Dialect scale
(summary)
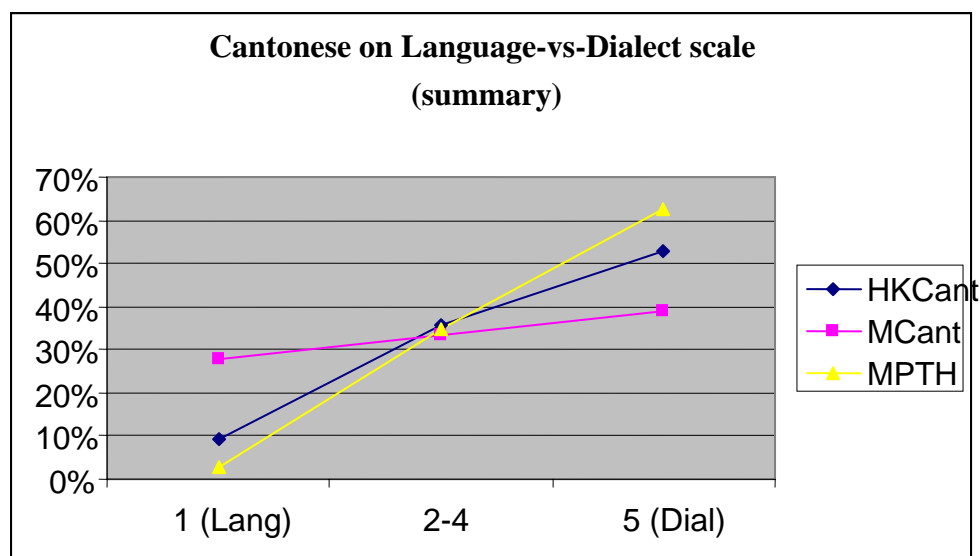
Graph 10: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as a language, dialect or in between

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
1 (Lang)	9.40%	27.80%	2.80%
2–4	35.80%	33.30%	34.70%
5 (Dial)	52.80%	38.90%	62.50%

Table 14: Cantonese on the language-vs-dialect 5-point scale merged into 3 points

Conclusion

The data seems to indicate that, while most respondents do not see Cantonese as a *language*, neither does a significant majority see it as 'only' a *dialect*, especially among the Cantonese speakers. In sum, there does not seem to be a clear consensus on the standing of Cantonese relative to these two terms. This confirms the findings with regard to Bell's sociolinguistic typology—that Cantonese falls somewhere in between a *language* and a *dialect*.

4.3   LANGUAGE VERSUS DIALECT/FANGYAN

The questions on the definition of a dialect, and the differences between languages and dialects, drew out some definite groupings of answers, as well as some significant attitude differences between groups and between Western and Chinese concepts of *dialect*.

Definition of a Dialect

On the definition of a *dialect*, geographical coverage is clearly the most important factor (mentioned by 53.8% of all subjects). One-third of Putonghua speakers also stressed differences in pronunciation, which seems to confirm Ramsey's point that (Mainland) Chinese see the Sinitic varieties as simply different pronunciations of the same language. Other factors were clearly secondary to these two points (refer to Table 15).

Definition of a dialect	Size (Geographical)	Different Pronunciation	Variety of another language	Size (Number of speakers)	Historicity	Oral	Not official	Specific People-Group	Different Vocabulary/ Expressions	Political-Cultural reasons	Standardized	Reduced	Lack of Writing System
HKCant	30	3	3	5	3	5	2	2		4	2		
%	56.6	5.7	5.7	9.4	5.7	9.4	3.8	3.8		7.5	3.8		
MCant	12	2	1	2	1	1	1		2				1
%	67	11.1	5.6	11.1	5.6	5.6	5.6		11.1				5.6
MPTH	35	24	9	4	5	2	5	4	4			2	
%	48.6	33.3	12.5	5.6	6.9	2.8	6.9	5.6	5.6			2.8	
Total	77	29	13	11	9	8	8	6	6	4	2	2	1
(%)	53.8	20.3	9.1	7.7	6.3	5.6	5.6	4.2	4.2	2.8	1.4	1.4	0.7

Table 15: Respondents' definitions of a Dialect

Differences between languages and dialects

For differences between a *language* and a *dialect*, different factors were emphasized by different groups. Just under one-third (30.2%) of HKCants mentioned geographical spread, while one-third (34.7%) of MPTHs listed autonomy. The MCants stressed existence of a writing system (27.8%) but were also evenly split on three other factors: reduction, relative numbers of speakers, and autonomy (see Table 16).

Combining the groups, overall the strongest considerations in distinguishing the two language types are that a *dialect* is a variety of another language (25.2%), has reduction (18.9%), lacks a writing system (18.9%), is smaller in size both geographically (16.1%) and in terms of numbers of speakers (13.3%), and involves differences in pronunciation (10.5%).

Differences between languages and dialects	Variety of another language / Independent	Size (Geographical)	Size (Number of speakers)	Writing System	Full / Reduced	Pronunciation	Formality	Political-Cultural determination	Official/non-official	Standardization	Mutual Intelligibility
HKCant	7	16	10	8	10	1	3	3	3	3	1
%	13.2	30.2	18.9	15.1	18.9	1.9	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	1.9
MCant	4	2	4	5	4	1		2		1	1
%	22.2	11.1	22.2	27.8	22.2	5.6		11.1		5.6	5.6
MPTH	25	5	5	14	13	13	6	6	3	3	2
%	34.7	6.9	6.9	19.5	18.1	18.1	8.3	8.3	4.2	4.2	2.8
Total	36	23	19	27	27	15	9	11	6	7	4
(%)	25.2	16.1	13.3	18.9	18.9	10.5	6.3	7.7	4.2	4.9	2.8

Table 16: Differences between dialects and languages

Summary of answers

In answering both questions, many aspects were listed by respondents, including some attributes from Bell's sociolinguistic typology (*standardization*, *historicity*, *lack of autonomy*, *reduction*), and all of the other factors already discussed in earlier sections of this paper. However, the relative importance of each determination varied greatly.

The factors naturally fall into three main groups according to frequency of mention (see shading in Table 17). By far the most important factor (average one-third of all answers) is relative geographical size. The next most important group of factors (listed by one-tenth to one-sixth of respondents) is *autonomy*, differences in pronunciation, lack of a (recognized or formal) writing system (an oral language only), small population size of speakers, and *reduction*. Some other factors listed infrequently included usage by a specific group, lack of *standardization* or official selection, differences in vocabulary, and *political/cultural factors*. *Mutual intelligibility* was only cited by 4 of the total of 143 respondents in one of the two questions.

Dialects are:	Number of respondents (total = 143)					
	Definition of dialect		Dialect vs Language		Combined totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Only used in a small area	77	53.8%	23	16.1%	100	35%
Not autonomous	13	9.1%	36	25.2%	49	17.3%
Different in pronunciation	29	20.3%	15	10.5%	44	15.4%
Oral or non-written	9	6.3%	27	18.9%	36	12.6%
Used by a relatively small group of people	11	7.7%	19	13.3%	30	10.5%
Reduced	2	1.4%	27	18.9%	29	10.2%
(Historically) used by a specific people-group	15	10.5%	0	0%	15	5.3%
Unofficial	8	5.6%	6	4.2%	14	4.9%
Politically/culturally determined	4	2.8%	7	4.9%	11	3.9%
Non-standardized	2	1.4%	7	4.9%	9	3.2%
Informal	0	0%	9	6.3%	9	3.2%
Differing in vocabulary/expressions	6	4.2%	0	0%	6	2.1%
Mutually intelligible	0	0%	4	2.8%	4	1.4%

Table 17: Answers to Q15 & 16 combined, ranked in descending order of frequency

Summary

These questions on the definition of a dialect, and the differences between languages and dialects, drew out some definite similarities with the Western concept of *dialect* but also one noticeable difference.

The primary distinguishing feature of a *dialect* was judged to be relative geographical size. While a Western *dialect* is also a regional or social variety of speech, mutual intelligibility is a defining feature, but this was almost completely lacking in the respondents' answers.

Secondary factors were similar, however: dialects involve differences in pronunciation of varieties of the same language system, with reduction, usually in the form of the lack of a writing system.

To sum up, the subjects' understanding of a *dialect* seems to be more in line with the literal meaning of *fangyan*, with the emphasis simply being on a regional form of speech, than on the Western understanding, which also implies mutual intelligibility. On the surface, this would seem to indicate that the word *topolect* is a better choice for translation of the Chinese term

fangyan as it also carries the main idea of a geographical variety with no implication of mutual intelligibility.

5   DISCUSSION

Thus far, it has been discovered that there are significant differences in the attitudes of the three groups towards the status of Cantonese, with the Mainland Cantonese speakers being the most likely to classify it as a language and the Mainland Putonghua speakers the least likely. The term *topolect* has also been seen potentially to be a better match than the English *dialect* for the Chinese *fangyan.* The next section connects these two findings by discussing the possible application of this term *topolect* to Cantonese, with specific reference to the beliefs of the respondents revealed in the survey.

Two more issues also remain to be explored: the correlations between sociolinguistic attitude and language status in the respondents' answers, and the specific attitude differences discovered among the three groups of respondents.

5.1   THE CLASSIFICATION OF CANTONESE

It has been seen that respondents had difficulty clearly classifying Cantonese as either a language or a dialect. On Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology, Cantonese fell into an unmarked intermediate category. On the 5-point scale, while some respondents chose *language* and more chose *dialect*, around one-third of all respondents opted for a mid-point classification. The only difficulty with this is that in real life there exists no such intermediate classification—except for Mair's *topolect*, which the evidence seems to indicate would be the most suitable (and logical) terminology to use, at least for the representative varieties of the major, mutually unintelligible groupings of Chinese such as Cantonese and Mandarin.[47]

As a more faithful translation of the somewhat loose and ambiguous Chinese term *fangyan*, it seems a preferable option to *dialect.* The two terms represent 'two different, and partially incompatible, systems of classification' (Mair 1991:8).

Firstly, the meaning of *topolect* matches the respondents' understanding of the term *fangyan*, with the meaning and emphasis being on geographically-defined but related varieties of language while not implying mutual intelligibility.

---

[47] As mentioned previously, the term *topolect* as used in this study would be restricted in use compared to Mair's original proposal, referring only to the larger, recognised 'standard' *fangyan* of each of the major Sinitic groups. This adds to the American Heritage Dictionary definition, which also labels each group by the title *topolect.*

Secondly, it matches the subjects' perceptions of how the sociolinguistic attributes apply to Cantonese. There is no implication of official *standardization* (which as noted previously, is the main attribute keeping Cantonese from full language status), or specific relationship (or otherwise) with a written form. This allows for a greater variety of degrees of *reduction* and *autonomy*.

These latter points are crucial ones in the Chinese context. The centrality of the standard writing system can be kept, while on the other hand, the development (and possibly also recognition) of colloquial written styles is permitted, without a necessary change of status. The two problem areas of *reduction* and *autonomy* are also addressed. These were somewhat undefined in the subjects' answers, with no clear agreement (at least, among the Cantonese speakers). Utilising the term *topolect* removes the need to resolve these disparities.

Status-wise, it occupies an intermediate position, avoiding the negative connotations of *dialect* yet not having the prestige of a fully recognized *language* either. It also avoids the sore point of any political implications that recognizing more than one language may have.

A further advantage is that it keeps classification uniform throughout China, regardless of the degree of linguistic differences (i.e. systemic intelligibility) found among varieties, thereby avoiding the need to quantify differences in order to achieve a consensus on language type.

Finally, as already discussed, the language-versus-dialect data also fits. The idea of *topolect* could encompass the wide range of the subjects' classifications by straddling the *language-dialect* spectrum. In this way it could also incorporate the attitude differences uncovered in this study between the various groups, and harmonizes with Mair's observation that *fangyan* is a broader and more inclusive term than *dialect*.

While it has been coined specifically for the Chinese situation, there is no reason for it not to be able to apply in other language situations either—if the need exists and the attributes match. Therefore, another language type, *topolect*, can be added to Bell's 'Sociolinguistic Typology', between *classical* and *vernacular*. This would include *vitality*, *historicity* and *de facto norms*, exclude *standardization*, with degrees of *reduction* and *autonomy* allowed. As with the *standard language* category, *mixture* would be optional (refer Table 18).

ATTRIBUTES							LANGUAGE TYPE	EXAMPLE
1-Standardization	2-Vitality	3-Historicity	4-Autonomy	5-Reduction	6-Mixture	7-De Facto Norms		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓/✗	✓	Standard	Standard English
✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	Classical	K.James' Bible English
✗	✓	✓	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓	*Topolect*	*Cantonese*
✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	Vernacular	'Black English'
✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	Dialect	Cockney
✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	Creole	Krio
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	Pidgin	Neomelanesian
✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	Artificial	'Basic English'
✗	✗	✗	✓/✗	✗	✓	?	Xized Y	'Indian English'
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	Interlanguage	'A's English'
✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓/✗	✗	Foreigner Talk	'B's simplified English'

Table 18: Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology (Bell 1976:151) expanded to include Topoloect

5.2　RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOLINGUISTIC ATTRIBUTES AND LANGUAGE STATUS

This leads on to the next point, of the relationship between the respondents' perceptions of sociolinguistic attributes and language status. At first glance, this relationship seems very straightforward—both measures caused Cantonese to fall into an intermediate class. However, in order to test whether there was any correlation between the subjects' classification of Cantonese and their application of each of Bell's 7 sociolinguistic attributes, chi-square tests were run. Groupings were not taken into account for this test.

The tests revealed significant correlations between their *language/dialect* determination and attributes #1 *standardization*, #4 *autonomy* and #5 *reduction*. Regarding attribute #2 *vitality*, one of the two questions showed significance (question 9, regarding the usage of Putonghua in Hong Kong), but not the other one (question 10, which was the one more directly concerned with the long-term existence of Cantonese). The judgments on attributes #3 *historicity* and #6 *mixture* showed no significant correlations[48]. (See Appendix E for details of these tests.)

---

[48] The test was not run for attribute #7 (*de facto norms*). Details of these tests can be found in Appendix E.

This confirms the consistency of the subjects' answers on both measures. It does not seem surprising that the three factors that have been key in preventing Cantonese from being accorded full language status (*standardization*, *autonomy* and *reduction*) are the only attributes that consistently showed significant correlation with subjects' choice of classification of Cantonese. The other four attributes (*vitality*, *historicity*, *mixture*, *de facto norms)* are not disputed. However it raises an interesting question as to which way the cause-and-effect relationship lies. Did the subjects choose *dialect* or *language* because of their assessment of the sociolinguistic attributes? Or did the belief that Cantonese is a *dialect* or *language* determine how they viewed these sociolinguistic attributes to apply?

In light of the differences discovered between the groups, it is suspected that the latter is true. There are also some clues in the data. For instance, more than one-quarter of Mainland Putonghua speakers who rejected the idea of standardization, gave their basis by stating that it was a dialect. The idea that Cantonese was a dialect, or politically or culturally determined factors, were listed 41 times as a reason for its lack of autonomy and 11 times for its reduction.

However, conversely, nearly one-third of Mainland Putonghua speakers and one-fifth of the Hong Kongers classifying Cantonese as a dialect gave the reason of lack of autonomy. Unfortunately, the nature of the data cannot clarify the significance of these answers, or demonstrate the directionality of this relationship. Interviews with respondents would probably shed more light on the nature of this relationship.

5.3   INTER-GROUP DIFFERENCES

The final consideration in this study is the specific attitude differences between groups. The most significant finding in this regard was, of course, the divergence of opinions on the overall categorization of Cantonese as *language* or *dialect*. Apart from this, statistical tests and respondents' answers also revealed some more subtle differences between groupings.

Cantonese as language or dialect

There were significant and unexpected differences between all three groups in their categorization of Cantonese. The majority of Mainland Putonghua speakers judged it to be a *dialect*, on both the two-way distinction (93.1%) and the five-point scale (62.5%). The Hong Kong Cantonese speakers were less sure. Around three-quarters (77.4%) chose *dialect* on the

two-way distinction and only just over half (52.8%) chose *dialect* on the five-point scale. The Mainland Cantonese speakers' attitudes diverged even more, with the relative proportions dropping to half (50%) and just over two-fifths (38.9%). It is significant that on the five-point scale question, this left the Mainland Cantonese speakers fairly evenly distributed over the *language-dialect* spectrum, ranging from 27.8% (language), to 33.3% (in between a language and a dialect) and 38.9% (dialect).

The results from the Mainland Putonghua and Hong Kong Cantonese speakers confirm those of Groves (2006), being similar in kind, though not in degree. In the previous study, it was roughly 40% of the Hong Kong Cantonese speakers who judged Cantonese to be clearly a language (as opposed to only 22.6% in this study). However, Mainland Cantonese speakers were not included in that study, and their difference in attitude in this regard was unexpected.

Differences according to language

The Putonghua speakers were more likely than the Cantonese speakers (including both Mainland and Hong Kong Cantonese) to judge Cantonese as a *dialect* due to a lack of *autonomy*. In contrast, geographical size, a more neutral factor, was the primary consideration for the Cantonese speakers. The Putonghua speakers were also more likely to see Cantonese as very mixed.

Regarding the *language* versus *dialect* concept, the Putonghua speakers were once again more likely to stress *autonomy* versus *heteronomy*, as well as pronunciation differences.

Differences according to place

The same difference was observed with place (Hong Kongers versus Mainlanders): the Hong Kongers were more evenly split on their judgment of *autonomy* versus *heteronomy*, with the Mainlanders more likely to see it as heteronomous. *Heteronomy* was also more likely to be mentioned by the Mainlanders as a reason for the judgment of *reduction*.

The other obvious difference according to place was in *de facto norms*. The Hong Kongers strongly favoured the Hong Kong variety as the standard, whereas the mainland groups were more evenly distributed between both Hong Kong and the Guangzhou area.

Other differences

There were some significant differences between the Mainland Cantonese speakers and the other groups, but the main one highlighted here relates to *vitality*. All respondents were agreed on the long-term vitality of Cantonese. However, whereas most Putonghua and many Hong Kong speakers believed that Putonghua would eventually be used alongside Cantonese in Hong Kong, two-fifths of Mainland Cantonese speakers disagreed—they believed that Hong Kongers will remain largely monolingual when it comes to a choice of Chinese variety.

Summary of inter-group differences

To summarize the differences found between groups, it can be said that the Mainland Putonghua speakers were the most likely to see Cantonese as a heteronomous, reduced and mixed variety of Chinese, involving differences in pronunciation more than being a separate language system in its own right. They are the least likely to think that Cantonese will retain its vitality and its position in Hong Kong into the long-term future. This possibly reflects the status of Putonghua and the success of language planning in the Mainland rather than objective judgments of a variety that is already pre-determined to be a 'dialect'.

The Mainland Cantonese speakers were opposite in some ways. They were more likely, comparatively speaking, to see Cantonese as an autonomous and full language system, and were the most optimistic about the future of Cantonese. As 'dialect' speakers in a bilingual zone, they are probably more aware of the historicity of Cantonese and the ongoing vitality of Cantonese since the introduction of Putonghua in the 1950's, along with the fact that different language varieties have traditionally successfully survived alongside each other. They strongly believe Putonghua will never oust Cantonese, and will possibly not even come to be used regularly by Hong Kongers alongside Cantonese.

The Hong Kong Cantonese speakers were very strong on identification of Hong Kong with Cantonese. They are also more likely than the Putonghua speakers to see it as autonomous and believe their variety to be the representative standard. However, surprisingly, they are not as likely as the Mainland Cantonese speakers to see Cantonese as a language.

This seems something of a mismatch of both their attitudes and the linguistic reality, where the Guangzhou variety of Cantonese has not had the opportunity to develop as full a range

of functions as has Hong Kong Cantonese.[49] Nonetheless it is possibly due to the ongoing diglossic situation in Hong Kong where Cantonese has been stable as a 'low' language for many years. It is the language of solidarity and group identification, but not of power. In this sense, its (covert) prestige (and therefore its low status) has been protected, and its position as the first language of the majority has never been challenged. Hong Kong citizens appear to perceive no real threat to the survival of Cantonese, and therefore there is no need for them to elevate the status of Cantonese to a language.

However, the situation is quite different across the border in Guangdong and Guangxi provinces. There has been jostling between the two competing varieties of Putonghua and Cantonese for status and functional use, and it seems that Cantonese is slowly retreating, at least in the official arena. As language is related to the important issue of both individual and social identity, this may create the need for the local Cantonese speakers to 'protect' their variety by raising its status in their minds, a phenomenon already noted by Tabouret-Keller (1997).

---

[49] Another consideration is that, although the respondents were living in Hong Kong at the time of the study, and the survey focussed on Cantonese in Hong Kong, it is possible that the MCants' knowledge of their own variety of Cantonese coloured their answers.

6   CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the attitudes of three groups of Chinese (Hong Kong Cantonese speakers, Mainland Chinese Cantonese speakers, and Mainland Chinese Putonghua speakers) towards the status of Cantonese as a language or dialect. The two most significant findings relate to the research question of this study: The attitude differences between the three groups towards Cantonese as a *language* or *dialect*, and whether reclassification of Cantonese as a *topolect* would match the respondents' concepts of Cantonese better than the traditional *language-dialect* choice.

6.1   ATTITUDES TOWARDS CANTONESE

The mainland Putonghua speakers' opinions conformed much more to the common view that Cantonese is a dialect. However, the Cantonese speakers challenged the pervasiveness of this traditional belief, with only two-fifths to half the Cantonese mainlanders[50] and from half to three-quarters of Hong Kongers clearly preferring the dialect label.

While some differences in attitude between groups had been anticipated, the high status given to Cantonese by the Mainland Cantonese speakers in particular was unexpected. In sum, attitudes vary much more widely than has previously been acknowledged in the literature. The Putonghua speakers' attitudes are relatively 'classic' and more conservative than the Cantonese speakers, especially the Mainlanders, who hold much more divergent views.

Apart from this obvious difference between the groups, there were more subtle differences in the reasons behind their choice of classification, and their perceptions of sociolinguistic features. The varied perspectives held by each group can be traced to their different political and linguistic situations, which touch issues of identity.

6.2   THE STATUS OF CANTONESE

The second main conclusion of this study results from the attitude differences found between the groups. The subjects' uncertainty in classifying Cantonese on a *language-dialect* continuum scale seems to reflect a problem with applying Western terms and concepts to a Chinese cultural context, and is rooted in the fact that the concepts of *language* and *dialect* (and

---

[50] These statistics are from both questions, where speakers had to rate Cantonese (17 and 19a respectively): on the 2-way language/dialect distinction and the 5-point scale.

fangyan) are socially, not linguistically determined. Consequently, the Chinese term *fangyan* defies exact translation into English; Mair (1991:15) contends that '*fangyan* and *dialect* represent radically different concepts'.

Therefore the term *topolect* is recommended instead. It can be incorporated into Bell's Sociolinguistic Typology between *classical* and *vernacular*, exactly halfway between *language* and *dialect* on the 'scale of social prestige'. It fits the evidence more faithfully with respect to both linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, including crucial Chinese political and cultural considerations. Most importantly for this study, it matches the research data, including both the respondents' concepts of *fangyan* and the fact that a considerable number of respondents chose a neutral, mid-point classification of Cantonese.

6.3   IMPLICATIONS

Summing up, the research in all three areas (linguistic, sociolinguistic and societal attitudes) reveals that in Hong Kong Cantonese plays a social role closer to the *language* side of the scale than most *dialects* generally do. While it may conflict with cultural and political considerations to label Cantonese a full *language*, the neutral, more mid-point term *topolect* reflects its status much more closely and may be more acceptable both in society and to linguists.

One may ask, what relevance is there in the terminology? Isn't it simply a matter of semantics? However, there are several important ramifications, both theoretical and practical.

Firstly, according to Mair (1991:4), 'If we do not establish clearly the meaning of this key term *fangyan*, it is quite possible that our entire analysis of Sino-Tibetan languages will be flawed.'

Secondly, a change of label is also significant in that terminology affects attitudes. Attitudes determine status, and status strongly affects the functions a language variety is allowed to perform. This, in turn, affects corporate language planning efforts, especially regarding code-choice (Bell 1976, Baker 1992).

Bell (1976:162–163) explains, 'There are strong indications that sociolinguistic type has a powerful influence on social function (and no doubt the converse) and hence, on the crucial macrosociolinguistic issue of language planning—code choice … at the intra-national and international level'.

Nowhere in Hong Kong is this principle illustrated more clearly than in the education system, especially regarding medium of instruction issues. The unprecedented furore over the recent imposition of mother-tongue medium of instruction in Hong Kong secondary schools seems to be related to its reputation as a dialect.

On the one hand, Cantonese has helped Hong Kong develop its own unique identity within the broader Chinese setting, and is a central part of their understanding of what it means to be a Hong Konger. As 'language in education planning is [considered to be] the primary form of language acquisition planning' (Wiley 1996:130), some linguists (e.g. Benson 1997) believe that mother-tongue medium of instruction is necessary for cultural continuity to be maintained in the long-term.

On the other hand, judgment of the dialectal status of Cantonese can result in opposition to mother-tongue medium of instruction. A prominent educationalist[51] recently said, 'Cantonese is a dead end, it has no future.... No other place in the world uses a dialect as the medium of instruction. It is killing [the students]' (Tacey 2000).

Another influential leader,[52] comparing Cantonese with other known Western dialects, echoes the same view—that it is not acceptable for a 'mere dialect' to be the medium of instruction:

> One of the problems [in Hong Kong] is the insistence, since 1997, of teaching in the mother tongue, which is Cantonese. It's the equivalent of teaching Sicilian instead of Italian or Provencal instead of French. You're basically condemning the next generation to second-class citizenship.… (Time Asia 2007:49)

The status of a variety also determines whether it can be taught in schools or not. Although Cantonese is the official medium of instruction in most local schools, it is not officially taught in the schools—because it is a dialect. Hence when it comes to language planning and code choice, branding as a dialect can lead to a certain circularity in thinking, which Hock and Joseph (1996:334–335) illustrate:

---

[51] Cheng Kai-ming, the then-vice-chancellor of the University of Hong Kong and an Education Commission member of Hong Kong.
[52] Daniel Fung, former Hong Kong Solicitor General.

Those opposed to special recognition argue that the 'dialect' is not officially recognized as national language, may not be taught in the schools—because it is not officially recognized, and so on.

Additionally, recognition of the relative autonomy of language varieties has important ramifications for teaching methodology. This is a very pertinent point in Hong Kong with the inevitability of Putonghua becoming more central in the education system.

When teachers recognize that native speakers of Haitian Creole [Cantonese] are really learning a second language in acquiring French [Putonghua], they are likely to use different instructional methods. Thus teachers no longer view their task as 'correcting' or 'cleaning up' their students' 'bad French [Chinese],' and are more likely to feel that the second language can simply added to the first rather than having to replace it. (Saville-Troike 2006:12)

I have inserted the Chinese language labels into this quote, because it exemplifies exactly what is happening in Hong Kong, where Cantonese tends to be seen as a lower-class version of Putonghua rather than a variety in its own right, and one which could even be harmful to the students' future Chinese language development.

Thus from practical, cultural and theoretical perspectives correct classification is vital. However, it takes time for people's perceptions to change. The first step is for linguists to adopt the new terminology. It would then be possible that in the long term the stage could be set for the attitudes of the general public, including the relevant language practitioners and planners, to become more favourable towards a better-defined role for Cantonese, for example in the above aspects of the education system. Cantonese could then be recognised as not just a spoken *dialect*, an incomplete version of the more powerful Chinese language, but as a semi-autonomous regional *topolect* worthy in its own right of conscious preservation and continuation.

6.4   LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The most obvious limitation of this study is sample size, especially of the Mainland Cantonese speakers. There are also other sampling limitations in that the subjects are all of a similar background and age. In order to validate the data, larger numbers of speakers should be tested. Ideally, the group sizes should be equal and respondents from diverse walks of life and different ages should be selected.

The study could also be expanded to include interviews with individual respondents, in order to shed more light on the relationship between sociolinguistic attributes and assessment of Chinese language type.

The other 'limitation' was an intentional one—that it is only Cantonese in Hong Kong (and South China) that was investigated. Overseas Cantonese-speaking communities may hold different perspectives. This study chose to focus on Hong Kong partly because of its international standing, and because of the changing political and linguistic situation. This has made Hong Kong the centre of global attention and undoubtedly will continue to be the source of much debate over language planning, ultimately affecting the identity of both the society and the individuals within it.

QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT CANTONESE

Thank you very much for being willing to participate in this research. Your answers will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

Personal Info: Year/Program _____ **Major** _____

Short answer questions *(please specify the type of Chinese language in your answers, e.g. instead of just writing 'Chinese' write 'Putonghua' / 'Mandarin' / 'Cantonese' etc.)*

1. What is your native language? (i.e. When you were growing up, which language did you speak with your family?)

2. Which language do you consider to be your mother tongue?

3. What other language(s) do you speak?

4. Do you speak Cantonese with an accent? If so, what accent?

5. Where do you think the best Cantonese is spoken?

6. Do you consider yourself to be:
   - ☐ A Hong Konger
   - ☐ Hong Kong Chinese
   - ☐ A Chinese Hong Konger
   - ☐ Chinese
   - ☐ Other _____

Please comment on the following, giving as much detail as possible:

7. Do you think Cantonese is:
   - ☐ a variety (a part) of another language, or
   - ☐ a separate, independent language?

   Why? If it is part of another language, which language?

8. Standard Written Chinese and spoken Putonghua have been standardized (that means the government has decided which vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc., is correct). Do you think written Cantonese should also be standardized and taught as a school subject? Why or why not?

9. Do you think Putonghua will eventually be used alongside Cantonese as the everyday language of Hong Kong citizens? (In other words, people will use both Cantonese and Putonghua in their daily lives.)

☐ Yes, within one generation

☐ Yes, within 60 years

☐ Yes, within 100 years

☐ No, never

Why or why not?

10. Do you think Putonghua will eventually replace Cantonese as the main, everyday language of Hong Kongers?

☐ Yes, within one generation

☐ Yes, within 60 years

☐ Yes, within 100 years

☐ No, never

Why or why not?

11. It is possible that sometime in the future, the Hong Kong Government may recommend Putonghua become the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools. Do you think that it is a good idea for Putonghua to become the medium of instruction? Why or why not?

12. Do you think it is possible for someone to consider themselves to be a Hong Konger (or Hong Kong Chinese/Chinese Hong Konger) without being able to speak Cantonese? Why or why not?

13. Do you consider Cantonese to be a full language? (In other words, it is a complete language system by itself; everything you need to use a language for in both speaking and writing can be done using Cantonese.) Why or why not?

14. How 'pure' do you think the Cantonese language is? (e.g. Does it use purely Cantonese pronunciation, words, expressions, etc., or is it mixed with features from other languages?) Explain.

    ☐ Pure

    ☐ Somewhat mixed

    ☐ Very mixed

15. What do you think the definition of a dialect (方言) is?

16. What, if any, are the differences between a dialect and a language?

17. Do you think Cantonese is a language or a dialect? Why?

18. Do you think Putonghua is a language or a dialect? Why?

19. Please place both Cantonese (C) and Putonghua (P) on this scale, according to where you think they should go (L = Language; D = Dialect),

        L   D

APPENDIX B: FIVE TYPES OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIALECT AND LANGUAGE

According to Crystal (1997:289), there are five types of relationship between dialect and language, involving different combinations of mutual (un)intelligibility and shared/different cultural history. These compound the difficulties in trying to classify a variety in one or other of these two categories.

Type 1

| Community A | ← Mutually intelligible → Common cultural history | Community B |
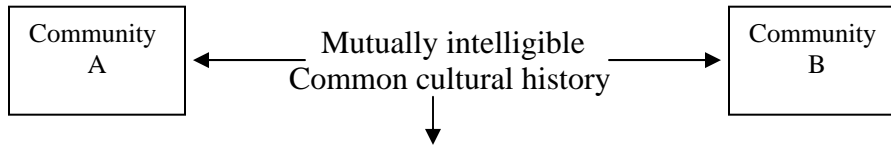
e.g. British English ← **Same language** → American English

Type 2

| Community A | ← Mutually unintelligible → Different cultural history | Community B |
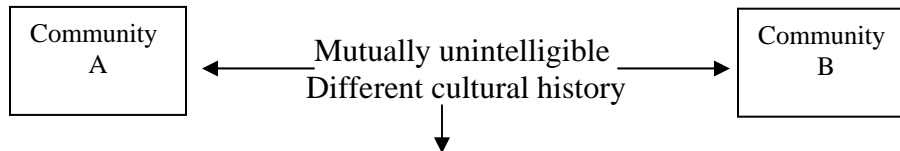
e.g. English ← **Different languages** → Hindi

Type 3

| Community A | ← Mutually intelligible → Different cultural history | Community B |
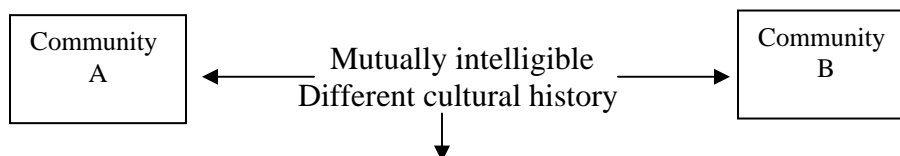
e.g. Norwegian ← **?** → Danish

Type 4

| Community A | ← Mutually unintelligible → Same cultural history | Community B |

e.g. Cantonese ← **?** → Hakka
(Chinese)   (Chinese)

Type 5

| Community A | ← Partially (un)intelligible → Overlapping cultural history | Community B |
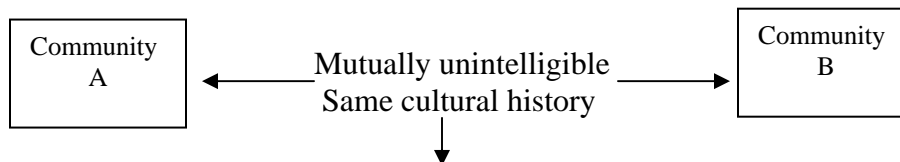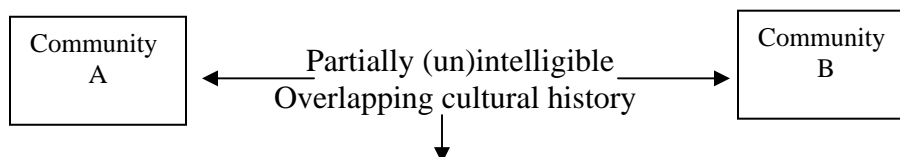
e.g. Turkish ← **?** → Uzbek

APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES/GRAPHS

Bell's Criterion #1: Standardization (Q8)

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
Yes	39.6%	38.9%	27.8%
No	60.4%	61.1%	72.2%

Table 19: Percentage of respondents who believe written Cantonese should be standardized and taught

Reasons for opposing standardization:	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Spoken/informal language	12	37.5%	3	27.3%	10	19.2%
Unnecessary/already happening	7	21.9%	0	0%	1	1.9%
Already have official language	5	15.6%	5	45.5%	5	9.6%
Only small area of China	5	15.6%	1	9.1%	10	19.2%
Dialect/not real language	1	3.1%	1	9.1%	15	28.8%
Other	5	15.6%	5	45.5%	13	25%
TOTAL # subjects	32		11		52	

Table 20: Reasons for opposing standardization[53]

Reasons for supporting standardization:	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ease of communication	9	42.9%	1	14.3%	7	35%
Culture preservation / learning	3	14.3%	2	28.6%	4	20%
Other	3	14.3%	1	14.3%	4	20%
No (clear) answer	7	33.3%	3	42.9%	12	60%
TOTAL # subjects	21		7		20	

Table 21: Reasons for supporting standardization

---

[53] For some questions, percentages will not add up to 100%, as some respondents gave more than one answer, while a few gave no (or no understandable) explanation. Throughout the analysis, significant figures in tables are highlighted.

Bell's Criterion #2: Vitality (Q9 & 10)
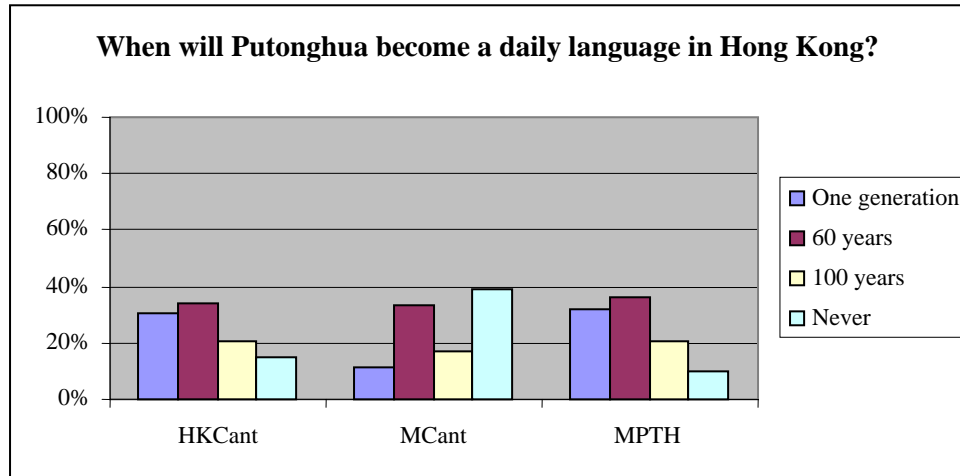
Graph 11: When respondents believe Putonghua will become a daily language in Hong Kong
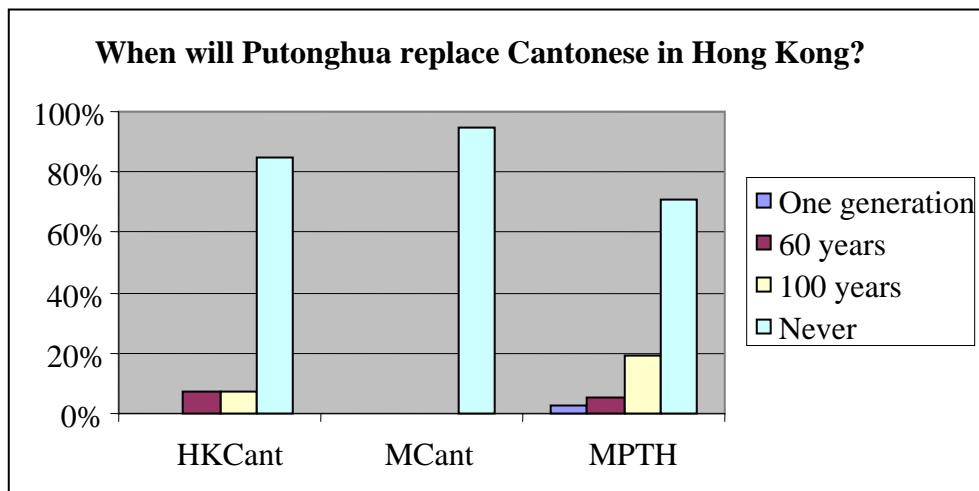
Graph 12: When respondents believe Putonghua will replace Cantonese in Hong Kong

	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
(Part of HK) culture	19	55.9%	6	66.7%	16	43.2%
China	5	14.7%	3	33.3%	13	35.1%
Historicity	8	23.5%	3	33.3%	5	13.5%
(It's the) Mother-tongue	10	29.4%	3	33.3%	5	13.5%
Other	8	23.5%	5	33.3%	12	32.4%
TOTAL # of Subjects	34		9		37	

Table 22: Reasons why Putonghua will not replace Cantonese in Hong Kong (from Q10)

Bell's Criterion #3: Historicity (Q12)

	HKCant	MCant	MPTH
Yes	34.0%	50.0%	43.1%
No	64.2%	38.9%	51.4%
Unsure	1.9%	11.1%	5.6%

Table 23: Percentage of respondents who believe it is possible to be a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese

NO	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Cultural identity	19	55.9%	5	55.6%	24	64.9%
Practical reasons	10	29.4%	2	22.2%	11	29.7%
Other	4	11.8%	2	22.2%	6	16.2%
TOTAL # Subjects	34		9		37	

Table 24: Reasons why it is not possible to be a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese

Cantonese is:	# of respondents
- Hong Kongers (cultural/national) identity/identification	7
- a symbol/mark/representation of Hong Kongers	7
- a culture of Hong Kong	6
- the (main) characteristic/feature of Hong Kongers	5
- necessary for a sense of belonging	4
- a kind of connection	1
- other similar comments	8

Table 25: Comments relating to the link between Cantonese and Hong Kong culture and identity

YES	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Legal definition	10	55.6%	2	28.6%	9	29.0%
Depends on person's definition	3	16.7%	3	42.9%	8	25.8%
Not important	1	5.6%	2	28.6%	5	16.1%
International city	4	22.2%	1	14.3%	5	16.1%
Other	0	0	2	28.6%	5	16.1%
TOTAL # Subjects	18		7		31	

Table 26: Reasons why it is possible to be a Hong Konger without speaking Cantonese

Bell's Criterion #4: Autonomy (Q7)

Autonomy - Ratio (Linguistic:Non linguistic)

HKCant 20:5	4:1	MCant 9:0	1:0	MPTH 17:3	~6:1

Overall Ratio = 46:4 or ~12:1

Heteronomy–Ratio (Linguistic:Other)

HKCant 22:12	~2:1	MCant 10:7	~3:2	MPTH 53: 32	5:3

Overall Ratio = 85:51 or 5:3

Bell's Criterion #5: Reduction (Q13)

	HKCant	**MCant**	**MPTH**
Yes	34.00%	44.40%	26.40%
No	62.30%	50.00%	69.40%
Unsure	3.8%	5.6%	4.2%

Table 27: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as a full language system

Reasons why Cantonese is a full language system		Writing	Other linguistic factors	No clear answer	TOTAL # subjects
HKCant	#	8	3	7	18
	%	44.4%	16.8%	38.9%	
MCant	#	3	3	3	8
	%	37.5%	37.5%	37.5%	
MPTH	#	4	1	10	19
	%	21.1%	5.3%	52.5%	

Table 28: Reasons why Cantonese is a full language system

The answers of many of those who judged Cantonese to be a full language (34.3%) mentioned the existence of a written form, as the question prompt encouraged. However, it is not clear in their answers whether these were references to the standard characters, or include the colloquial developments.

Bell's Criterion #6: Mixture (Q14)

	Pure		Somewhat Mixed		Very Mixed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
HKCant	8	15.1	41	77.4	4	7.5
MCant	2	11.1	14	77.8	2	11.1
MPTH	2	2.8	50	69.4	20	27.8

Table 29: Percentage of respondents seeing Cantonese as pure/mixed

	HKCant		MCant		MPTH	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Chinese/Putonghua/Mandarin	3		2		7	
English	5		3		20	
English & Chinese/Putonghua	3		3		5	
English & Japanese	1		1		2	
English, Chinese & Japanese	1		0		0	
Other answers	3		2		9	
TOTALS:	16	35.6%	11	68.8%	43	61.4%
English (total occurrences)	10	22.2%	7	43.8%	27	38.6%
Chinese (some form)	7	15.5%	5	31.3%	12	17.1%
Japanese	2	4.4%	1	6.3%	2	2.9%
TOTAL # subjects	45		16		70	

Table 30: What language respondents believe Cantonese to be mixed with

Bell's Criterion #7: De Facto Norms (Q5)

Where is the best Cantonese spoken?
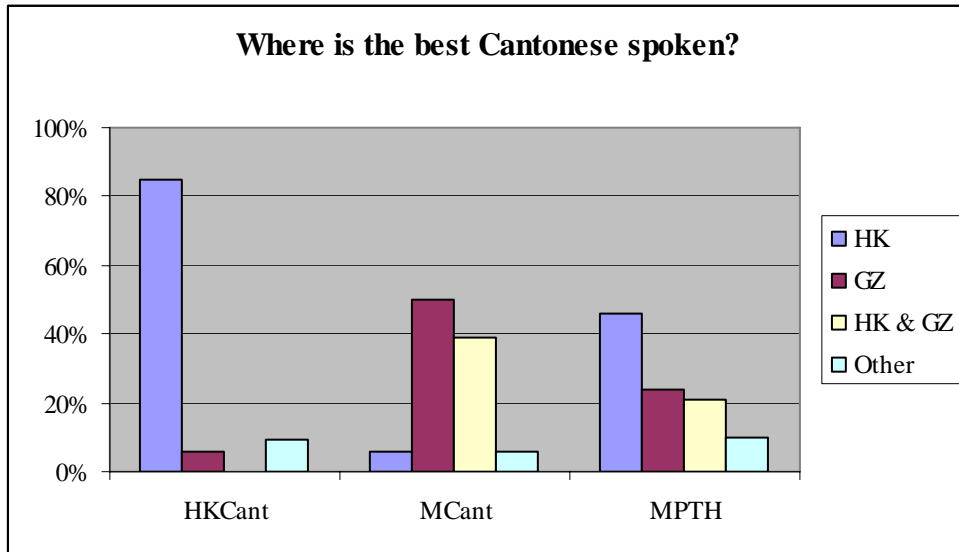
Graph 13: Respondents opinions on where the best Cantonese is spoken

APPENDIX D: RESULTS OF ANOVA TESTS

NB: Significant results are highlighted (p < .05)
Group number 1 = Hong Kong Cantonese speakers
Group number 2 = Mainland Cantonese speakers
Group number 3 = Mainland Putonghua speakers

	One-way			Between individual groups	Between languages (Cantonese vs Putonghua)	Between places (Mainland vs Hong Kong)
	Group number		Significance	Significance	Significance	Significance
Bell #1 (Q8): Standardization	1	2	.998	.341	.142	.242
		3	.353			
	2	1	.998			
		3	.647			
	3	1	.353			
		2	.647			
Bell #2 (Q9): Vitality (Maintenance)	1	2	.068	.018	.076	.984
		3	.692			
	2	1	.068			
		3	.013			
	3	1	.692			
		2	.013			
Bell #2 (Q10): Vitality (Survival)	1	2	1.000	.235	.088	.193
		3	.261			
	2	1	1.000			
		3	.515			
	3	1	.261			
		2	.515			
Bell #3 (Q12): Historicity	1	2	.316	.201	.290	.082
		3	.275			
	2	1	.316			
		3	.896			
	3	1	.275			
		2	.896			
Bell #4 (Q7): Autonomy	1	2	.896	.020	.006	.016
		3	.018			
	2	1	.896			
		3	.328			
	3	1	.018			
		2	.328			

	One-way			Between individual groups	Between languages (Cantonese vs Putonghua)	Between places (Mainland vs Hong Kong)
	Group number		Significance	Significance	Significance	Significance
Bell #5 (Q13): Reduction	1	2 3	.822 .688	.439	.255	.617
	2	1 3	.822 .464			
	3	1 2	.688 .464			
Bell #6 (Q14): Mixture	1	2 3	.837 .001	.001	.000	.002
	2	1 3	.837 .129			
	3	1 2	.001 .129			
Bell #7 (Q5): De Facto Norms	1	2 3	.000 .002	.000	.055	.000
	2	1 3	.000 .116			
	3	1 2	.002 .116			
Q17: Status of Cantonese (2-way)	1	2 3	.883 .010	.003	.001	.023
	2	1 3	.883 .033			
	3	1 2	.010 .033			
Q19a: Status of Cantonese (5-point)	1	2 3	.135 .112	.002	.004	.300
	2	1 3	.135 .003			
	3	1 2	.112 .003			

APPENDIX E: RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE TESTS

The purpose of the investigation was to see whether there is a relationship between the answers to the question 17 and other questions. In general, the hypotheses we test in the analysis are

H$_0$:   There is no association between the answers to question 17 and a question.
H$_A$:   There is an association between the answers to question 17 and a question.

To test the null hypothesis under which the expected cell frequencies were calculated, we compare them with the observed cell frequencies. Denoting the observed frequencies by letter o and the expected frequencies by letter e, we base this comparison on the following chi-square statistic:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(e-o)^2}{e}$$

Suppose the question compared with question 17 has r options. If the null hypothesis is true, this statistic is a value of a random variable having approximately the chi-square distribution with r degrees of freedom. Since we shall want to reject the null hypothesis when the discrepancies between the o's and e's are large, we reject the null hypothesis at level of significance 0.05 if $\chi^2 \geq \chi^2_{0.05}(r-1)$.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 8:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #1—Standardization)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Yes	No
L	14 (9.05)	16 (20.95)
D	40 (44.95)	109 (104.05)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 4.66$ is larger than $\chi^2_{0.05}(1) = 3.841$, thus the null hypothesis is rejected. We conclude that there is an association between the answers to question 17 and the question 8 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 9:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #2—Vitality/Maintenance)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Never	Within 100 years	Within 60 years	Within 1 generation
L	8 (4.92)	2 (5.93)	14 (10.17)	6 (8.98)
D	21 (24.08)	33 (29.07)	46 (49.83)	47 (44.02)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 8.40$ is larger than $\chi^2_{0.05}(3) = 7.815$, thus the null hypothesis is rejected. We conclude that there is an association between the answers to question 17 and the question 9 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 10:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #2—Vitality/Survival)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Never	Within 100 years	Within 60 years	Within 1 generation
L	27 (23.37)	2 (3.81)	0 (1.49)	0 (0.33)
D	114 (117.63)	21 (19.19)	9 (7.51)	2 (1.67)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 3.89$ is smaller than $\chi^2_{0.05}(3) = 7.815$, thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. We conclude that there is no association between the answers to question 17 and the question 10 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 12:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #3—Historicity)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Yes	No
L	13 (12.92)	15 (15.08)
D	65 (65.08)	76 (75.92)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 0.001$ is smaller than $\chi^2_{0.05}(1) = 3.841$, thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. We conclude that there is no association between the answers to question 17 and the question 12 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 7:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #4—Autonomy)

The table shows the observed cell frequencies and the expected cell frequencies ( ):

	Variety	Independent
L	9 (21.38)	21 (8.62)
D	115 (102.62)	29 (41.38)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 30.14$ is larger than $\chi^2_{0.05}(1) = 3.841$, thus the null hypothesis is rejected. We conclude that there is an association between the answers to question 17 and the question 7 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 13:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #5—Reduction)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Yes	No
L	16 (9.27)	13 (19.73)
D	39 (45.73)	104 (97.27)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 8.63$ is larger than $\chi^2_{0.05}(1) = 3.841$, thus the null hypothesis is rejected. We conclude that there is an association between the answers to question 17 and the question 13 at 0.05 significant level.

The relationship between the answers to question 17 and question 14:
(Language status vs sociolinguistic attribute #6—Mixture)

The table shows the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies ( ):

	Somewhat Mixed	Pure	Not Pure
L	21 (21.59)	5 (2.47)	3 (4.94)
D	110 (109.41)	10 (12.53)	27 (25.06)

The chi-square statistic $\chi^2 = 4.03$ is smaller than $\chi^2_{0.05}(2) = 5.991$, thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. We conclude that there is no association between the answers to question 17 and the question 14 at 0.05 significant level.

REFERENCES

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed. (2000). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Retrieved on 4 June 2007 from: http://www.bartleby.com/61/.

Ansaldo, Umberto (1995). Language Diversity at Sunset? Present and Future of Multilingualism in Hong Kong, in *The Hong Kong Linguist* **15**:20–28. Hong Kong: Institute of Linguists, Hong Kong Regional Society.

Bai, Jianhua (1994). Language Attitude and the Spread of Standard Chinese in China, in *Language Problems and Language Planning* **18(2)**:128–138. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub. Co., in cooperation with the Center for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems.

Bailey, Charles-James N. (1973). *Variation and Linguistic Theory.* Arlington, Va.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Bailey, Charles-James N. (1981). Theory, Description and Differences among Linguists, in *Language and Communication* **1**:52. Oxford: Pergamon Press (quoted in Harris 1990:3).

Baker, Colin (1992). *Attitudes and Language.* Clevedon [Eng.], Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Barnes, Dayle (1982). Nationalism and the Mandarin Movement: The First Half-Century, in Robert L. Cooper (ed.), *Language Spread: Studies in Diffusion and Social Change*, 260–290. Bloomington: Indiana University Press; Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Bauer, Robert S. (1984). The Hong Kong Cantonese Speech Community, in *Language Learning and Communication* **3(3)**:289–313. New York: J. Wiley.

Bauer, Robert S. (2000). Hong Kong Cantonese and the Road Ahead, in David C. S. Li, Angel Lin, Wai King Tsang (eds.), *Language and Education in Postcolonial Hong Kong*, 35–58. Hong Kong: Linguistic Society of Hong Kong.

Bauer, Robert S., and Paul K. Benedict (1997). *Modern Cantonese Phonology*. Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs, ed. Werner Winter, 102. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bell, Roger T. (1976). *Sociolinguistics: Goals, Approaches and Problems.* London: B. T. Batsford.

Benson, Phil (1997). Language Rights and the Medium-of-instruction Issue in Hong Kong, in *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* **2(2)**:1–21. Hong Kong: English Centre, University of Hong Kong. Retrieved on 22 Feb 2007 from: http://sunzi1.lib.hku.hk/hkjo/view/5/500025.pdf.

Blum, Susan D. (2004). Good to Hear: Using the Trope of Standard to Find One's Way in a Sea of Linguistic Diversity, in M. Zhou (ed.), 123–141.

Blum, Susan D. (2000), China's Many Faces: Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Pluralism, in Timothy B. Weston and Lionel M. Jensen (eds.), *China Beyond the Headlines.* Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Retrieved on 21 March 2007 from: http://www.worldaffairs.org/globalclassroom/curriculum/BeyondIslam/Unit3_China/F_Chinas_Many_Faces.doc.

Bolton, Kingsley, and Kang-kwong Luke (1999). *The Social Survey of Language in the 1980s.* Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, Social Sciences Research Centre.

Bolton, Kingsley (2000). The Sociolinguistics of Hong Kong and the Space for Hong Kong English, in *World Englishes* **19(3)**:265–285. Oxford; New York: Pergamon Press.

Bolton, Kingsley (2003). *Chinese Englishes: A Sociolinguistic History.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Boyle, Joseph (1998). What Hope for a Trilingual Hong Kong? in *English Today 56* **14(4)**:34–39. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bray, Mark, and Ramsey Koo (2004). Postcolonial Patterns and Paradoxes: Language and Education in Hong Kong and Macao, in *Comparative Education* **40(2)**:215–239. Oxford, Eng.: Carfax Pub. Co.

Brewer, Marilynn B. (1999). Multiple Identity and Identity Transition: Implications for Hong Kong, in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **23(2)**:187–197. New York: Pergamon Press.

Bruche-Schulz, Gisela (1997). 'Fuzzy' Chinese: The Status of Cantonese in Hong Kong, in *Journal of Pragmatics* **27**:295–314. Amsterdam: North-Holland Pub. Co.

Burton, Philip (2007). *Working with Dialect Translations.* Retrieved on 21 March 2007 from: http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/classics/coll04/Burton.pdf.

Census and Statistics Department (Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) (2005). *Population Aged 5 and over by Usual Language*, *1991, 1996 and 2001.* Retrieved on 6 June 2007 from: http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/major_projects/2001_population_census/main_tables/populat ion_aged_5_and_over_by_usual_language_1991/index.jsp.

Chambers, J. K., and Peter Trudgill (1998). *Dialectology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chan, C. S. (1993). The Use and Status of Cantonese in Hong Kong, in *Working Papers in Languages and Linguistics No. 5*, 111–117. Hong Kong: Department of Chinese, Translation, and Linguistics, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Chin, Wan-kan (1997). From Dialect to Grapholect: Written Cantonese from a Folkloristic Viewpoint, in *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, **2(2)**:77–91. Hong Kong: English Centre, University of Hong Kong.

Chao, Yuen Ren (1976). *Aspects of Chinese Sociolinguistics: Essays by Yuen Ren Chao*, Anwar S. Dil (ed.). Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Cheng, Chin-Chuan (1987). A Quantification of Chinese Dialect Affinity, in The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong (ed.), *Wang Li Memorial Volumes English Volume*, 73–100. Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co.

Cheng, Chin-Chuan (1996). Quantifying Dialect Mutual Intelligibility, in C.-T. James Huang and Y.-H. Audley Li (eds.), *New Horizons in Chinese Linguistics*, 269–292. Dordrecht, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Cheng, Chin-Chuan (1992). Syllable-Based Dialect Classification and Mutual Intelligibility, in 中國境內語言暨語言學 **1**:145–177.

Cheung, Yat-shing (1985). Power, Solidarity, and Luxury in Hong Kong, in *Anthropological Linguistics* **27(1)**:190–202. Bloomington, Ind.: Anthropology Department, Indiana University.

Cheung, Kwan-Hin, and Robert S. Bauer (2002). *The Representation of Cantonese with Chinese Characters*. Berkeley, Calif.: Project on Linguistic Analysis, University of California.

Coulmas, Florian (ed.) (1997). *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Oxford, Eng., Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.

Coulmas, Florian (2005). *Sociolinguistics*: *The Study of Speakers' Choices.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, David (1997). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, David (2000). *Language Death.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

DeFrancis, John (1984). *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Encyclopedia Brittanica (2007). Chinese Languages. Retrieved on 25 June 2007 from: http://concise.britannica.com/ebc/article-9360616/Chinese-languages.

Erbaugh, Mary S. (1995). Southern Chinese Dialects as a Medium for Reconciliation within Greater China, in *Language in Society* **24**:79–94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Evans, Stephen, Rodney Jones, Ruru S. Rusmin, and Cheung Oi Ling (1998). *Three Languages: One Future*, in Martha C Pennington (ed.), 391–418.

Fishman, Joshua A. (1997). Language and Ethnicity: The View from Within, in Florian Coulmas (ed.), 327–343.

Francis, W. N. (1983). *Dialectology*. New York: Longman Inc.

Friedman, Edward (1994). Reconstructing China's National Identity: A Southern Alternative to Mao-Era Anti-Imperialist Nationalism, in *The Journal of Asian Studies* **53(1)**:67–91. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Association for Asian Studies.

Fu, Kin-hung, and Shin Kataoka (1997*)*. Two Name Formation Systems in One Country: Cantonese People's Attachment to Names in Hong Kong, in *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* **2(2)**:93–107. Hong Kong: English Centre, University of Hong Kong.

Groves, Julie (2006). A Comparison of the Attitudes of Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Cantonese Speakers towards Cantonese as a Language or a Dialect. Unpublished study.

Groves, Julie (2007). Cantonese in Hong Kong: Language Attitudes and Educational Policy, presented at Language, Education and Diversity Conference, University of Waikato, New Zealand, November 2007.

Gumperz, John J., and Jenny Cook Gumperz (1982). Introduction: Language and the Communication of Social Identity, in John J. Gumperz (ed.) *Language and Social Identity*, 1–21. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2006). *Studies in Chinese Language*, Vol. 8 in *The Collected Works of M. A. K. Halliday*, ed. Jonathan Webster. London, New York: Continuum.

Harris, Roy (1980). *The Language-Makers.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Harris, Roy (1990). The Dialect Myth, in Jerold A. Edmondson, et al. (eds.) *Development and Diversity: Language Variation across Time and Space: A Festschrift for Charles-James N. Bailey*. Arlington: The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Publication 93.

Harrison, Godfrey, and Lydia K. H. So (1996). The Background to Language Change in Hong Kong, in *Current Issues in Language and Society* **3(2)**:114–127. Clevedon, Eng., Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Haugen, E. (1966). Dialect, Language, Nation. Repr. in J. B. Pride and Janet Holmes (eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings* 1972:97–111. Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books.

Hock, Hans Henrich, and Brian D. Joseph (1996). *Language History, Language Change, and Language Relationship: An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics.* Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Holmes, Janet (1992). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Harlow, Essex, Eng.: Longman.

Hong, Ying-Yi, Dominic Abrams and Sik Hung Ng (1999). Social Identification During Political Transition: The Hong Kong 1997 Experience, in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **23(2)**:177–185. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Periodicals Consortium.

Hudson, R. A. (1996). *Sociolinguistics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, Ken (1997). Language Attitudes at the Handover: Communication and Identity in 1997 Hong Kong, in *English World-Wide* **18(2)**:191–210. Heidelberg: Julius Groos Verlag.

Johnson, Robert Keith (1997). Political Transitions and the Internationalisation of English: Implications for Language Planning, Policy-making and Pedagogy, in W. O. Lee and Mark Bray (eds.), *Education and Political Transition: Perspectives and Dimensions in East Asia*, 17–34. Hong Kong, China: Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong.

Johnson, Robert Keith (1998). Language and Education in Hong Kong, in Martha C. Pennington (ed.), 265–276.

Kalmer, Ivan, Zhong Yong, and Hong Xiao (1987). Language Attitudes in Guangzhou, China, in *Language in Society* **16(4)**:499–508. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kratochvil, Paul (1968). *The Chinese Language Today.* London: Hutchinson University Library.

Kwong, Luke Kang (ed.), (1987). *Into the Twenty First Century: Issues of Language in Education in Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Linguistic Society of Hong Kong.

Lai, Mee-Ling (1999). Hong Kong: Language and Education in a Post-colonial Era, in *Language, Culture and Curriculum* **12(3)**:191–195. Clevedon, Eng.: Multilingual Matters.

Lai, Mee-Ling (2001). Hong Kong Students' Attitudes towards Cantonese, Putonghua and English after the Change of Sovereignty, in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* **22(2)**:112–133. Clevedon, Avon, Eng.: Tieto.

Lai, Mee-Ling (2005). Language Attitudes of the First Postcolonial Generation in Hong Kong Secondary Schools, in *Language in Society* **34**:363–388. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lam, Agnes Shun-Ling (1994). Language Education in Hong Kong and Singapore: A Comparative Study of the Role of English, in Thiru Kandiah and John Kwan-Terry (eds.) *English and Language Planning: A Southeast Asian Contribution* 182–196. Singapore: Centre for Advanced Studies, National University of Singapore; Times Academic Press.

Lau, Siu-Kai (1997). *Hongkongese or Chinese: The Problem of Identity on the Eve of Resumption of Chinese Sovereignty over Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Law, Eva (1994). *Recommendations for Improvement in Language Proficiency.* Report submitted to the Hong Kong Education Commission Working Group on Language Proficiency (quoted in Lin 1997:434).

Le Page, Robert B. (1992). Sociolinguistic Aspects of Literacy, in Kingsley Bolton and Helen Kwok (eds.), *Sociolinguistics Today.* London: Routledge (quoted in Bruche-Schulz 1997:310, footnote 13).

Le Page, R. B., and Andree Tabouret-Keller (1985). *Acts of Identity: Creole-based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Li, David C. S. (1999). The Functions and Status of English in Hong Kong: A Post-1997 Update, in *English World-Wide* **20(1)**:67–110. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: J. Benjamins, Publisher.

Lin, Angel Mei Yi (1997). Analyzing the 'Language Problem' Discourses in Hong Kong: How Official, Academic, and Media Discourses Construct and Perpetuate Dominant Models of Language, Learning, and Education, in *Journal of Pragmatics* **28**:427–440. Amsterdam: North-Holland Elsevier.

Lo, Terence (1988). Using the Mother Tongue as the Teaching Medium in Hong Kong: But Whose? in Verner Bickley (ed.), *Languages in Education in a Bi-lingual or Multi-lingual setting*, 210–219. Hong Kong: Institute of Language in Education, Education Dept.

Lord, Robert (1976). Bilingualism under Pressure, in Robert Lord and Benjamin K. T'sou (eds.) *Studies in Bilingual Education*, 21–23. Hong Kong: Language Centre, University of Hong Kong.

Lord, Robert (1987). Language Policy and Planning in Hong Kong: Past, Present and (Especially) Future, in Robert Lord and Helen N. L. Cheng (eds.), 3–24.

Lord, Robert, and Cheng Helen N .L. (eds.) (1987). *Language Education in Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Lü, Shuxiang (1980). *Yuwen changtan 語文常談* Beijing: Sanlian shudian (quoted in Wang 1997:56).

Luke, K. K., and O. T. Nancarrow (1991). On Being Literate in Hong Kong, in *Institute of Language in Education Journal* **8**:84–91. Hong Kong: Education Department.

McGroarty, Mary (1996). *Language Attitude, Motivation, and Standards*, in Sandra Lee McKay and Nancy H. Hornberger (eds.), 3–46.

McKay, Sandra Lee, and Nancy H. Hornberger (eds.) (1996). *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*, 3–46. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mair, Victor H. (1991). What Is a Chinese 'Dialect/Topolect'? Reflections on Some Key Sino-English Linguistic terms, in *Sino-Platonic Papers* **29**:1–31. Philadelphia: Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania.

Mair, Victor H. (1994). Review of 'The Representation of Cantonese with Chinese Characters' by Cheung and Bauer, in *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* **32(1)**:157–167. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California.

Mair, Victor H. (2007a). Personal communication with author on 9 April 2007.

Mair, Victor H. (2007b). Personal communication with author on 25 April 2007.

Matthews, Stephen, and Virginia Yip (1994). *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar.* London, New York: Routledge.

Mau Wing-Yan (2005). Cantonese: Language or Dialect? Unpublished MA thesis. Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.

Milroy, James and Milroy, Lesley (1997). Varieties and Variation, in Florian Coulmas (ed.), 47–64.

Norman, Jerry (1988). *Chinese.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pan, Yuling (1998). Code-switching and Social Changes in Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Retrieved 22 February 2007 from: http://sunzi1.lib.hku.hk/hkjo/view/10/1000133.pdf.

Pennington, Martha C. (1998a). Perspectives on Language in Hong Kong at Century's End, in Martha C. Pennington (ed.), 3–39.

Pennington, Martha C. (1998b). The Folly of Language Planning; Or, A Brief History of the English Language in Hong Kong, in *English Today 54* **14(2)**:25–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pennington, Martha C. (ed.) (1998c). *Language in Hong Kong at Century's End.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Pennington, Martha, and Francis Yue (1993). *Assessing Pre-1997 Language Attitudes in Hong Kong* (Department of English Research Report No. 28). Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Petyt, K. M. (1980). *The Study of Dialect: An Introduction to Dialectology.* London: Andre Deutsch Limited.

Pierson, Herbert (1991). Cantonese, English, or Putonghua: Unresolved Communicative Issue in Hong Kong's Future, in Gerard A. Postiglione (ed.), *Education and Society in Hong Kong: Toward One Country and Two Systems*, 183–202. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.

Pierson, Herbert D. (1994). Ethnolinguistic Vitality during a Period of Decolonization without Independence: Perceived Vitality in Hong Kong, in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* **108**:43–61. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Pierson, Herbert D. (1998). Societal Accommodation to English and Putonghua in Cantonese–Speaking Hong Kong, in Martha C. Pennington (ed.), 91–109.

Pierson, Herbert D., Howard Giles, and Louis Young (1987). Intergroup Vitality Perceptions During a Period of Political Uncertainty: The Case of Hong Kong, in *Journal of*

Multilingual and Multicultural Development **8(5)**:451–460. Clevedon, Avon, Eng.: Multilingual Matters.

Ramsey, S. Robert (1987). *The Languages of China.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Romaine, Suzanne (2000). *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (2nd ed.) Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Saillard, Claire (2004). On the Promotion of Putonghua in China: How a Standard Language Becomes a Vernacular, in Minglang Zhou (ed.), 163–176.

Saville-Troike, Muriel (2006). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schaefer Fu, Gail (1987). The Hong Kong Bilingual, in Robert Lord and Helen N. L. Cheng (eds.), 27–50.

Scollon, Ron, and Suzanne Wong Scollon (1995). *Intercultural Communication*: *A Discourse Approach*, 2nd ed. Oxford, Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove (2006). Language or Dialect? Retrieved on 9 October 2006 from http://www.terralingua.org/Definitions/DLangDialect.html.

Snow, Donald (1993). Chinese Dialect as Written Language: The Cases of Taiwanese and Cantonese, in *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* **4(1)**:15–30. Clevedon, Eng., Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Snow, Donald (2004). *Cantonese as Written Language: The Growth of a Written Chinese Vernacular.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Snow, Donald (2008). Cantonese as Written Standard? in *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* (forthcoming). Clevedon, Eng., Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

So, Daniel W. C. (1987). Language-based Bifurcation of Secondary Schools in Hong Kong: Past, Present and Future, in Luke Kang Kwong (ed.), 69–95.

So, Daniel W. C. (1998). One Country, Two Cultures and Three Languages: Sociolinguistic Conditions and Language Education in Hong Kong, in Barry Asker (ed.), *Teaching Language and Culture: Building Hong Kong on Education*, 152–175. Hong Kong: Addison Wesley Longman China.

Stewart, William A. (1962). An Outline of Linguistic Typology for Describing Multilingualism, in Frank A. Rice (ed.), *Study of the Role of Second Languages in Asia, Africa, and Latin America*, 15–25. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics of the Modern Language Association of America.

Stewart, William A. (1968). A Sociolinguistic Typology for Describing National Multilingualism, in Joshua A. Fishman (ed.), *Readings in the Sociology of Language*, 531–545. The Hague: Mouton.

Tabouret-Keller, Andrée (1997). Language and Identity, in Florian Coulmas (ed.), 315–326.

Tacey, Elisabeth (2000). Lessons of Mother Tongue Learning, *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong on 9 April 2000, page 9.

Time Asia (2007). Ten Years, Five Views, in *Time* **169(23)**:46–50 (June 18, 2007). Hong Kong.

Tong, Yuk-Yue, Ying-Yi Hong, Sau-Lai Lee, and Chi-Yue Chiu, (1999). Language Use as a Carrier of Social Identity, in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **23(2)**:281–296. New York: Pergamon Press.

Trudgill, Peter (1974). *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction.* Middlesex, New York: Penguin Books.

Tsui, Amy B. M., Mark S. K. Shum, Chi Kin Wong, Shek Kam Tse, and Wing Wah Ki (1999). Which Agenda? Medium of Instruction Policy in Post-1997 Hong Kong, in *Language, Culture and Curriculum* **12(3)**:196–214. Clevedon, Eng.: Multilingual Matters.

Wang, Gungwu (1991). *The Chineseness of China: Selected Essays.* Hong Kong: Oxford University Press (quoted in Bruche-Schulz 1997:310).

Wang, William S.-Y. (1997). Languages or Dialects? in *The CUHK Journal of Humanities* **1**:54–62. Hong Kong: Faculty of Arts, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Wardhaugh, Ronald (2000). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press/Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Weinstein, B. (1994). *The Civic Tongue: Political Consequences of Language Choices.* New York: Longman (quoted in Tsui et al. 1999:200).

Wikipedia (2007a). Chinese Language. Retrieved on 21 March 2007 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_language.

Wikipedia (2007b). List of Chinese Dialects. Retrieved on 28 April 2007 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Chinese_dialects.

Wikipedia (2007c). Languages by Speakers. Retrieved on 1 June 2007 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_by_speakers.

Wikipedia (2007d). Standard Cantonese. Retrieved on 28 April 2007 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_Cantonese.

Wikipedia (2007e). Identification of the Varieties of Chinese. Retrieved on 9 October 2006 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identification_of_the_varieties_of_Chinese.

Wikipedia (2007f). China. Retrieved on 25 June 2007 from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identification_of_the_varieties_of_Chinese.

Wiley, Terrence G. (1996). Language Planning and Policy, in Sandra Lee McKay and Nancy H. Hornberger (eds.), 103–131.

Wolfram, Walt (1997). Dialect in Society, in Florian Coulmas (ed.), 107–126.

Wolfram, Walt (1998). Language Ideology and Dialect, in *Journal of English Linguistics* **26(2)**:108–121. Bellingham, Wash.: Western Washington University.

Xia, H. (1995). Formidable Dialect Superiority Complex 可怕的方言优越感, in *Beijing Youth Daily*, Beijing, 1 August (quoted in Fu and Kataoka 1997:106).

Yau, Shun Chiu (1992). *Language Policies in Post-1997 Hong Kong*, in Luke Kang Kwong (ed.), 15–29.

Young, Louis, Howard Giles, and Herbert Pierson (1986). Sociopolitical Change and Perceived Vitality, in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **10**:459–469. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Periodicals Consortium.

Zhang, Bennan, and Robin R. Yang (2004). Putonghua Education and Language Policy in Postcolonial Hong Kong, in Minglang Zhou (ed.), 143–161.

Zhou, Minglang (ed.) (2004). *Language Policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and Practice since 1949.* Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Zhou, Minglang, and Heidi A. Ross (2004). Introduction: The Context of the Theory and Practice of China's Language Policy, in Minglang Zhou (ed.), 1–18.

Previous Issues

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
1	Nov. 1986	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	[The Need for an Alphabetically Arranged General Usage Dictionary of Mandarin Chinese: A Review Article of Some Recent Dictionaries and Current Lexicographical Projects](#)	31
2	Dec. 1986	Andrew Jones *Hiroshima*	The Poetics of Uncertainty in Early Chinese Literature	45
3	March 1987	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	[A Partial Bibliography for the Study of Indian Influence on Chinese Popular Literature](#)	iv, 214
4	Nov. 1987	Robert M. Sanders *University of Hawaii*	[The Four Languages of "Mandarin"](#)	14
5	Dec. 1987	Eric A. Havelock *Vassar College*	[Chinese Characters and the Greek Alphabet](#)	4
6	Jan. 1988	J. Marshall Unger *University of Hawaii*	[Computers and Japanese Literacy: Nihonzin no Yomikaki Nôryoku to Konpyuta](#)	13
7	Jan. 1988	Chang Tsung-tung *Goethe-Universität*	[Indo-European Vocabulary in Old Chinese](#)	i, 56
8	Feb. 1988	various	[Reviews (I)](#)	ii, 39
9	Dec. 1988	Soho Machida *Daitoku-ji, Kyoto*	[Life and Light, the Infinite: A Historical and Philological Analysis of the Amida Cult](#)	46
10	June 1989	Pratoom Angurarohita *Chulalongkorn University Bangkok*	[Buddhist Influence on the Neo-Confucian Concept of the Sage](#)	31
11	July 1989	Edward Shaughnessy *University of Chicago*	[Western Cultural Innovations in China, 1200 BC](#)	8

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
12	Aug. 1989	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	The Contributions of T'ang and Five Dynasties Transformation Texts (*pien-wen*) to Later Chinese Popular Literature	71
13	Oct. 1989	Jiaosheng Wang *Shanghai*	The Complete *Ci*-Poems of Li Qingzhao: A New English Translation	xii, 122
14	Dec. 1989	various	Reviews (II)	69
15	Jan. 1990	George Cardona *University of Pennsylvania*	On Attitudes Toward Language in Ancient India	19
16	March 1990	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Three Brief Essays Concerning Chinese Tocharistan	16
17	April 1990	Heather Peters *University Museum of Philadelphia*	Tattooed Faces and Stilt Houses: Who Were the Ancient Yue?	28
18	May 1990	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	a. Two Non-Tetragraphic Northern Sinitic Languages b. Implications of the Soviet Dungan Script for Chinese Language Reform c. Who Were the Gyámi?	28
19	June 1990	Bosat Man *Nalanda*	Backhill/Peking/Beijing	6
20	Oct. 1990	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Introduction and Notes for a Translation of the Ma-wang-tui MSS of the *Lao Tzu*	68

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
21	Dec. 1990	Philippa Jane Benson *Carnegie Mellon University*	Two Cross-Cultural Studies on Reading Theory	9, 13
22	March 1991	David Moser *University of Michigan*	Slips of the Tongue and Pen in Chinese	45
23	April 1991	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Tracks of the Tao, Semantics of Zen	10
24	Aug. 1991	David A. Utz *University of Pennsylvania*	Language, Writing, and Tradition in Iran	24
25	Aug. 1991	Jean DeBernardi *University of Alberta*	Linguistic Nationalism: The Case of Southern Min	22 + 3 figs.
26	Sept. 1991	JAO Tsung-i *Chinese University of Hong Kong*	Questions on the Origins of Writing Raised by the Silk Road	10
27	Aug. 1991	Victor H. Mair, ed. *University of Pennsylvania*	*Schriftfestschrift: Essays in Honor of John DeFrancis on His Eightieth Birthday*	ix, 245
28	Sept. 1991	ZHOU Youguang *State Language Commission, Peking*	The Family of Chinese Character-Type Scripts (*Twenty Members and Four Stages of Development*)	11
29	Sept. 1991	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	What Is a Chinese "Dialect/Topolect"? Reflections on Some Key Sino-English Linguistic Terms	31
30	Oct. 1991	M. V. Sofronov *Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow*	Chinese Philology and the Scripts of Central Asia	10
31	Oct. 1991	various	Reviews (III)	68

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
32	Aug. 1992	David McCraw *University of Hawaii*	How the Chinawoman Lost Her Voice	27
33	Sept. 1992	FENG Lide and Kevin Stuart *Chuankou No. 1 Middle School and Qinghai Education College*	Interethnic Contact on the Inner Asian Frontier: The Gangou People of Minhe County, Qinghai	34
34	Oct. 1992	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	1. Two Papers on Sinolinguistics 2. A Hypothesis Concerning the Origin of the Term *fanqie* ("Countertomy") 3. East Asian Round-Trip Words	13
35	Nov. 1992	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania* with an added note by Edwin G. Pulleyblank	Reviews (IV)	37
36	Feb. 1993	XU Wenkan *Hanyu Da Cidian editorial offices, Shanghai*	Hanyu Wailaici de Yuyuan Kaozheng he Cidian Bianzuan (Philological Research on the Etymology of Loanwords in Sinitic and Dictionary Compilation)	13
37	March 1993	Tanya Storch *University of New Mexico*	Chinese Buddhist Historiography and Orality	16
38	April 1993	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	The Linguistic and Textual Antecedents of *The Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish*	95
39	Aug. 1993	Jordan Paper *York University*	A Material Case for a Late Bering Strait Crossing Coincident with Pre-Columbian Trans-Pacific Crossings	17

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
40	Sept. 1993	Michael Carr *Center for Language Studies, Otaru University of Commerce*	*Tiao*-Fish through Chinese Dictionaries	68
41	Oct. 1993	Paul Goldin *Harvard University*	Miching Mallecho: The *Zhanguo ce* and Classical Rhetoric	27
42	Nov. 1993	Renchin-Jashe Yulshul *Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Kokonor (Qinghai)* and Kevin Stuart *Institute of Foreign Languages, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*	Kham Tibetan Language Materials	39
43	Dec. 1993	MA Quanlin, MA Wanxiang, and MA Zhicheng *Xining* Edited by Kevin Stuart *Kokonor*	Salar Language Materials	72
44	Jan. 1994	Dolkun Kamberi *Columbia University*	The Three Thousand Year Old Charchan Man Preserved at Zaghunluq	15
45	May 1994	Mark Hansell *Carleton College*	The Sino-Alphabet: The Assimilation of Roman Letters into the Chinese Writing System	28
46	July 1994	various	Reviews (V)	2, 155
47	Aug. 1994	Robert S. Bauer *Mahidol University Salaya Nakornpathom, Thailand*	Sino-Tibetan *kolo "Wheel"	11
48	Sept. 1994	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Introduction and Notes for a Complete Translation of the *Chuang Tzu*	xxxiv, 110

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
49	Oct. 1994	Ludo Rocher *University of Pennsylvania*	Orality and Textuality in the Indian Context	28
50	Nov. 1994	YIN Binyong *State Language Commission and Institute for Applied Linguistics (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)*	Diyi ge Lading Zimu de Hanyu Pinyin Fang'an Shi Zenyang Chansheng de? [How Was the First Romanized Spelling System for Sinitic Produced?]	7
51	Nov. 1994	HAN Kangxin *Institute of Archeology Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	The Study of Ancient Human Skeletons from Xinjiang, China	9 + 4 figs.
52	Nov. 1994	Warren A. Shibles *University of Wisconsin Whitewater*	Chinese Romanization Systems: IPA Transliteration	20
53	Nov. 1994	XU Wenkan *Editorial Offices of the Hanyu Da Cidian Shanghai*	Guanyu Tuhuoluoren de Qiyuan he Qianxi Wenti [On the Problem of the Origins and Migrations of the Tocharians]	11
54	Nov. 1994	Üjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) *University of Toronto*	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Jegün Yogur	34
55	Nov. 1994	Üjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) *University of Toronto*	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Dongxiang	34
56	Nov. 1994	Üjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) *University of Toronto*	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Dagur	36
57	Nov. 1994	Üjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) *University of Toronto*	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Monguor	31

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
58	Nov. 1994	Üjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) *University of Toronto*	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Baoan	28
59	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart *Qinghai Junior Teachers College;* Limusishiden *Qinghai Medical College Attached Hospital, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)*	China's Monguor Minority: Ethnography and Folktales	i, I, 193
60	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart, Li Xuewei, and Shelear *Qinghai Junior Teachers College, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)*	China's Dagur Minority: Society, Shamanism, and Folklore	vii, 167
61	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart and Li Xuewei *Qinghai Junior Teachers College, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)*	Tales from China's Forest Hunters: Oroqen Folktales	iv, 59
62	Dec. 1994	William C. Hannas *Georgetown University*	Reflections on the "Unity" of Spoken and Written Chinese and Academic Learning in China	5
63	Dec. 1994	Sarah M. Nelson *University of Denver*	The Development of Complexity in Prehistoric North China	17
64	Jan. 1995	Arne Østmoe *Bangkok, Thailand, and Drøbak, Norway*	A Germanic-Tai Linguistic Puzzle	81, 6
65	Feb. 1995	Penglin Wang *Chinese University of Hong Kong*	Indo-European Loanwords in Altaic	28
66	March 1995	ZHU Qingzhi *Sichuan University and Peking University*	Some Linguistic Evidence for Early Cultural Exchange Between China and India	7

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
67	April 1995	David McCraw *University of Hawaii*	Pursuing Zhuangzi as a Rhymemaster: A Snark-Hunt in Eight Fits	38
68	May 1995	Ke Peng, Yanshi Zhu *University of Chicago and Tokyo, Japan*	New Research on the Origin of Cowries Used in Ancient China	i, 26
69	Jan. 1996	Dpal-ldan-bkra-shis, Keith Slater, *et al.* *Qinghai, Santa Barbara, etc.*	Language Materials of China's Monguor Minority: Huzhu Mongghul and Minhe Mangghuer	xi, 266
70	Feb. 1996	David Utz, Xinru Liu, *Taylor Carman, Bryan Van Norden, and the Editor* *Philadelphia, Vassar, etc.*	Reviews VI	93
71	March 1996	Erik Zürcher *Leiden University* Seishi Karashima *Soka University* Huanming Qin *Tang Studies Hotline*	Vernacularisms in Medieval Chinese Texts	31 + 11 + 8
72	May 1996	E. Bruce Brooks *University of Massachusetts*	The Life and Mentorship of Confucius	44
73	June 1996	ZHANG Juan, et al., and Kevin Stuart *Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, Shanxi, Henan, Liaoning*	Blue Cloth and Pearl Deer; Yogur Folklore	iii, 76
74	Jan. 1997	David Moser *University of Michigan & Beijing Foreign Studies University*	Covert Sexism in Mandarin Chinese	23
75	Feb. 1997	Haun Saussy *Stanford University*	The Prestige of Writing: Wen^2, Letter, Picture, Image, Ideography	40

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
76	Feb. 1997	Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky *Bard College*	The Evolution of the Symbolism of the Paradise of the Buddha of Infinite Life and Its Western Origins	28
77	Jan. 1998	Daniel Hsieh *Purdue University*	The Origin and Nature of the "Nineteen Old Poems"	49
78	Feb. 1998	Narsu *Inner Mongolia College of Agriculture & Animal Husbandry* Kevin Stuart *Qinghai Junior Teachers' College*	Practical Mongolian Sentences (With English Translation)	iii + 49 + ii + 66
79	March 1998	Dennis Grafflin *Bates College*	A Southeast Asian Voice in the Daodejing?	8
80	July 1998	Taishan Yu *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	A Study of Saka History	ii + 225
81	Sept. 1998	Hera S. Walker *Ursinus College (Philadelphia)*	Indigenous or Foreign?: A Look at the Origins of the Monkey Hero Sun Wukong	iv + 110
82	Sept. 1998	I. S. Gurevich *Russian Academy of Sciences*	A Fragment of a pien-wen(?) Related to the Cycle "On Buddha's Life"	15
83	Oct. 1998	Minglang Zhou *University of Colorado at Boulder*	Tense/Aspect markers in Mandarin and Xiang dialects, and their contact	20
84	Oct. 1998	Ulf Jäger *Gronau/Westfalen, Germany*	The New Old Mummies from Eastern Central Asia: Ancestors of the Tocharian Knights Depicted on the Buddhist Wallpaintings of Kucha and Turfan? Some Circumstantial Evidence	9

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
85	Oct. 1998	Mariko Namba Walter *University of New England*	Tokharian Buddhism in Kucha: Buddhism of Indo-European Centum Speakers in Chinese Turkestan before the 10th Century C.E.	30
86	Oct. 1998	Jidong Yang *University of Pennsylvania*	Siba: Bronze Age Culture of the Gansu Corridor	18
87	Nov. 1998	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Canine Conundrums: Eurasian Dog Ancestor Myths in Historical and Ethnic Perspective	74
88	Dec. 1998	Saroj Kumar Chaudhuri *Aichi Gakusen University*	Siddham in China and Japan	9, 124
89	Jan. 1999	Alvin Lin *Yale University*	Writing Taiwanese: The Development of Modern Written Taiwanese	4 + 41 + 4
90	Jan. 1999	Victor H. Mair et al	Reviews VII [including review of The Original Analects]	2, 38
91	Jan. 1999	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Phonosymbolism or Etymology: The Case of the Verb "Cop"	28
92	Jan. 1999	Christine Louise Lin *Dartmouth College*	The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the Advocacy of Local Autonomy	xiii + 136
93	Jan. 1999	David S. Nivison *Stanford University*	The Key to the Chronology of the Three Dynasties: The "Modern Text" Bamboo Annals	iv + 68
94	March 1999	Julie Lee Wei *Hoover Institute*	Correspondence Between the Chinese Calendar Signs and the Phoenician Alphabet	65 + 6

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
95	May 1999	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	A Medieval, Central Asian Buddhist Theme in a Late Ming Taoist Tale by Feng Meng-lung	27
96	June 1999	E. Bruce Brooks *University of Massachusetts*	Alexandrian Motifs in Chinese Texts	14
97	Dec. 1999	LI Shuicheng *Peking University*	Sino-Western Contact in the Second Millennium BC	iv, 29
98	Jan. 2000	Peter Daniels, Daniel Boucher, and other authors	Reviews VIII	108
99	Feb. 2000	Anthony Barbieri-Low *Princeton University*	Wheeled Vehicles in the Chinese Bronze Age (c. 2000-741 BC)	v, 98 + 5 color plates
100	Feb. 2000	Wayne Alt *Community College of Baltimore County (Essex)*	Zhuangzi, Mysticism, and the Rejection of Distinctions	29
101	March 2000	C. Michele Thompson *South Connecticut State University*	The Viêt Peoples and the Origins of Nom	71, 1
102	March 2000	Theresa Jen *Bryn Mawr College* Ping Xu *Baruch College*	[Penless Chinese Character Reproduction](#)	15
103	June 2000	Carrie E. Reid *Middlebury College*	Early Chinese Tattoo	52
104	July 2000	David W. Pankenier *Lehigh University*	Popular Astrology and Border Affairs in Early China	19 + 1 color plate
105	Aug. 2000	Anne Birrell *Cambridge University*	Postmodernist Theory in Recent Studies of Chinese Literature	31

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
106	Sept. 2000	Yu Taishan *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	A Hypothesis about the Sources of the Sai Tribes	i, 3, 200
107	Sept. 2000	Jacques deLisle, Adelheid E. Krohne, and the editor	Reviews IX	148 + map
108	Sept. 2000	Ruth H. Chang *University of Pennsylvania*	Understanding *Di* and *Tian*: Deity and Heaven From Shang to Tang	vii, 54
109	Oct. 2000	Conán Dean Carey *Stanford University*	In Hell the One without Sin is Lord	ii, 60
110	Oct. 2000	Toh Hoong Teik *Harvard University*	Shaykh 'Alam: The Emperor of Early Sixteenth-Century China	20
111	Nov. 2000	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	The Need for a New Era	10
112	July 2001	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Notes on the Anau Inscription	xi, 93
113	Aug. 2001	Ray Collins *Chepachet, RI* David Kerr *Melbourne, FL*	Etymology of the Word "Macrobiotic:s" and Its Use in Modern Chinese Scholarship	18
114	March 2002	Ramnath Subbaraman *University of Chicago*	Beyond the Question of the Monkey Imposter: Indian Influence on the Chinese Novel, *The Journey to the West*	35
115	April 2002	ZHOU Jixu *Sichuan Normal University*	Correspondences of Basic Words Between Old Chinese and Proto-Indo-European	8

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
116	May 2002	LIU Yongquan *Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	On the Problem of Chinese Lettered Words	13
117	May 2002	SHANG Wei *Columbia University*	*Baihua, Guanhua, Fangyan* and the May Fourth Reading of *Rulin Waishi*	10
118	June 2002	Justine T. Snow *Port Townsend, WA*	Evidence for the Indo-European Origin of Two Ancient Chinese Deities	ii, 75, 1 color, 1 b-w print
119	July 2002	WU Zhen *Xinjiang Museum, Ürümchi*	"Hu" Non-Chinese as They Appear in the Materials from the Astana Graveyard at Turfan	21, 5 figs.
120	July 2002	Anne Birrell *University of Cambridge, Clare Hall*	Female-Gendered Myth in the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*	47
121	July 2002	Mark Edward Lewis *Stanford University*	Dicing and Divination in Early China	22, 7 figs.
122	July 2002	Julie Wilensky *Yale Univesity*	The Magical *Kunlun* and "Devil Slaves": Chinese Perceptions of Dark-skinned People and Africa before 1500	51, 3 figs.
123	Aug. 2002	Paul R. Goldin and the editor	Reviews X	30
124	August 2002	Fredrik T. Hiebert *University of Pennsylvania* John Colarusso *McMaster University*	The Context of the Anau Seal Remarks on the Anau and Niyä Seals	1-34 35-47

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
125	July 2003	ZHOU Jixu *Sichuan Normal University Shanghai Normal University*	Correspondences of Cultural Words between Old Chinese and Proto-Indo-European	19
126	Aug. 2003	Tim Miller *University of Washington*	A Southern Min Word in the *Tsu-t'ang chi*	14
127	Oct. 2003	Sundeep S. Jhutti *Petaluma, California*	The Getes	125, 8 color plates
128	Nov. 2003	Yinpo Tschang *New York City*	On Proto-Shang	18
129	Dec. 2003	Michael Witzel *Harvard University*	Linguistic Evidence for Cultural Exchange in Prehistoric Western Central Asia	70
130	Feb. 2004	Bede Fahey *Fort St. John, British Columbia*	Mayan: A Sino-Tibetan Language? A Comparative Study	61
131	March 2004	Taishan Yu *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	A History of the Relationship between the Western and Eastern Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Western Regions	1, 3, 352
132	April 2004	Kim Hayes *Sydney*	On the Presence of Non-Chinese at Anyang	11
133	April 2004	John L. Sorenson *Brigham Young University* Carl L. Johannessen *University of Oregon*	*Scientific Evidence for Pre-Columbian Transoceanic Voyages* CD-ROM	48, 166, 19, 15 plates
134	May 2004	Xieyan Hincha *Neumädewitz, Germany*	Two Steps Toward Digraphia in China	i, 22

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
135	May 2004	John J. Emerson *Portland, Oregon*	*The Secret History of the Mongols* and Western Literature	21
136	May 2004	Serge Papillon *Mouvaux, France and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*	Influences tokhariennes sur la mythologie chinoise	47
137	June 2004	Hoong Teik Toh *Harvard University*	Some Classical Malay Materials for the Study of the Chinese Novel *Journey to the West*	64
138	June 2004	Julie Lee Wei *San Jose and London*	Dogs and Cats: Lessons from Learning Chinese	17
139	June 2004	Taishan Yu *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	A Hypothesis on the Origin of the Yu State	20
140	June 2004	Yinpo Tschang *New York City*	Shih and Zong: Social Organization in Bronze Age China	28
141	July 2004	Yinpo Tschang *New York City*	Chaos in Heaven: On the Calendars of Preclassical China	30
142	July 2004	Katheryn Linduff, ed. *University of Pittsburgh*	*Silk Road Exchange in China*	64
143	July 2004	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Sleep in *Dream*: Soporific Responses to Depression in *Story of the Stone*	99
144	July 2004	RONG Xinjiang *Peking University*	Land Route or Sea Route? Commentary on the Study of the Paths of Transmission and Areas in which Buddhism Was Disseminated during the Han Period	32
145	Aug. 2004	the editor	Reviews XI	2, 41

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
146	Feb. 2005	Hoong Teik Toh *Academia Sinica*	The *-yu* Ending in Xiongnu, Xianbei, and Gaoju Onomastica	24
147	March 2005	Hoong Teik Toh *Academia Sinica*	Ch. *Qiong* ~ Tib. Khyung; Taoism ~ Bonpo -- Some Questions Related to Early Ethno-Religious History in Sichuan	18
148	April 2005	Lucas Christopoulos *Beijing Sports University*	Le gréco-bouddhisme et l'art du poing en Chine	52
149	May 2005	Kimberly S. Te Winkle *University College, London*	A Sacred Trinity: God, Mountain, and Bird: Cultic Practices of the Bronze Age Chengdu Plain	ii, 103 (41 in color)
150	May 2005	Dolkun Kamberi *Washington, DC*	Uyghurs and Uyghur Identity	44
151	June 2005	Jane Jia SI *University of Pennsylvania*	The Genealogy of Dictionaries: Producers, Literary Audience, and the Circulation of English Texts in the Treaty Port of Shanghai	44, 4 tables
152	June 2005	Denis Mair *Seattle*	The Dance of Qian and Kun in the *Zhouyi*	13, 2 figs.
153	July 2005	Alan Piper *London (UK)*	The Mysterious Origins of the Word "Marihuana"	17
154	July 2005	Serge Papillon *Belfort, France*	*Mythologie sino-européenne*	174, 1 plate
155	July 2005	Denis Mair *Seattle*	Janus-Like Concepts in the *Li* and *Kun* Trigrams	8
156	July 2005	Abolqasem Esmailpour *Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran*	*Manichean Gnosis and Creation*	157
157	Aug. 2005	Ralph D. Sawyer *Independent Scholar*	Paradoxical Coexistence of Prognostication and Warfare	13

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
158	Aug. 2005	Mark Edward Lewis *Stanford University*	Writings on Warfare Found in Ancient Chinese Tombs	15
159	Aug. 2005	Jens Østergaard Petersen *University of Copenhagen*	The *Zuozhuan* Account of the Death of King Zhao of Chu and Its Sources	47
160	Sept. 2005	Matteo Compareti *Venice*	Literary Evidence for the Identification of Some Common Scenes in Han Funerary Art	14
161	Sept. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London*	The Names of the *Yi Jing* Trigrams: An Inquiry into Their Linguistic Origins	18
162	Sept. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London*	Counting and Knotting: Correspondences between Old Chinese and Indo-European	71, map
163	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London*	Huangdi and Huntun (the Yellow Emperor and Wonton): A New Hypothesis on Some Figures in Chinese Mythology	44
164	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London*	Shang and Zhou: An Inquiry into the Linguistic Origins of Two Dynastic Names	62
165	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London*	DAO and DE: An Inquiry into the Linguistic Origins of Some Terms in Chinese Philosophy and Morality	51
166	Nov. 2005	Julie Lee Wei *London* Hodong Kim *Seoul National University* and David Selvia and the Editor *both of the University of Pennsylvania*	Reviews XII	i, 63

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
167	Dec. 2005	ZHOU Jixu *Sichuan Normal University*	Old Chinese '帝*tees' and Proto-Indo-European "*deus": Similarity in Religious Ideas and a Common Source in Linguistics	17
168	Dec. 2005	Judith A. Lerner *New York City*	Aspects of Assimilation: the Funerary Practices and Furnishings of Central Asians in China	51, v, 9 plates
169	Jan. 2006	Victor H. Mair *University of Pennsylvania*	Conversion Tables for the Three-Volume Edition of the *Hanyu Da Cidian*	i, 284
170	Feb. 2006	Amber R. Woodward *University of Pennsylvania*	Learning English, Losing Face, and Taking Over: The Method (or Madness) of Li Yang and His Crazy English	18

Beginning with issue no. 171, *Sino-Platonic Papers* will be published electronically on the Web.
Issues from no. 1 to no. 170, however, will continue to be sold as paper copies until our stock runs out,
after which they too will be made available on the Web. For prices of paper copies, see the catalog at
www.sino-platonic.org

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
171	June 2006	John DeFrancis *University of Hawaii*	The Prospects for Chinese Writing Reform	26, 3 figs.
172	Aug. 2006	Deborah Beaser	The Outlook for Taiwanese Language Preservation	18
173	Oct. 2006	Taishan Yu *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*	A Study of the History of the Relationship Between the Western and Eastern Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Western Regions	167
174	Nov. 2006	Mariko Namba Walter	Sogdians and Buddhism	65

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
175	Dec. 2006	Zhou Jixu *Center for East Asian Studies, University of Pennsylvania; Chinese Department, Sichuan Normal University*	The Rise of Agricultural Civilization in China: The Disparity between Archeological Discovery and the Documentary Record and Its Explanation	38
176	May 2007	Eric Henry *University of North Carolina*	The Submerged History of Yuè	36
177	Aug. 2007	Beverley Davis	Timeline of the Development of the Horse	186