CANTONESE
as Written Language
The Growth of a Written Chinese Vernacular

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Contents

3

Spoken and Written Cantonese

Introduction

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the development of a spoken L vernacular into the realm of written language is partially an issue of growth in the language's range of social functions. It is also a growth of the purposes to which the language is put to use by the community. However, there are more specifically linguistic aspects of the story which also deserve attention.

One important line along which the development of a written vernacular needs to be traced is an increase in vernacular literacy — in other words, in the number of people who can read and write in the vernacular. To a large extent, this is affected by how easy or difficult it is to learn the written form of the vernacular. Obviously, a written vernacular that is relatively standardized and based on easily understood principles is easier to learn than one that is less standardized or based on obscurer mechanisms. This issue is of particular importance in the Chinese context where students already need to invest an unusually large amount of time and energy in order to become literate. As Chinese is written using a character-based system, it takes longer to learn to read and write than do languages that use alphabetic (i.e. relatively phonetic) writing systems. Given that the written forms of Chinese dialects are generally not taught in Chinese schools, people need to learn to read and write dialects on their own, and under these circumstances whether or not it is easy to learn to read and write a dialect becomes a critically important factor in determining the likelihood of its growth.

Another important line along which the growth of a written vernacular needs to be traced is that of its vernacular "authenticity", i.e. how faithfully it adheres to the norms of the spoken language. As we have already seen, the written and spoken forms of any language generally differ to some degree, so we should not expect written Cantonese to be entirely faithful to its spoken counterpart. However, a developed written vernacular should be fairly

consistent in following the norms of the spoken language it is based on, and one of the most important measures of its growing maturity as a written language is the increased consistency with which written Cantonese follows the norms of the corresponding registers of spoken Cantonese — and diverges from the norms of written Standard Chinese.

In order to set the background for these two story lines in the growth of written Cantonese, in this chapter we shall examine the relationship of spoken Cantonese to Mandarin, and also how one goes about writing in Cantonese. We shall also consider the questions of how faithfully various kinds of written Cantonese adhere to the norms of spoken Cantonese, and whether or not written Cantonese should be considered a language variety distinct from Standard Chinese.

The Relationship of Cantonese to Mandarin

Perhaps a good place to start is with the question of whether Cantonese should be considered a language or a dialect. One problem with the term "dialect" is that it may convey the false impression that Cantonese is more closely related to Mandarin than it actually is, and this is one reason why some have argued that Cantonese should more accurately be described as a distinct language within the Chinese language family.[1] For example, in a controversial 1990 article, Li Jingzhong explicitly rejects the term "dialect" (*fangyan* 方言), arguing instead that Cantonese should be considered an "independent language" (*duli de yuyan* 獨立的語言) within the broader Chinese language family. The major reason given by those who hold this view is that while spoken Cantonese and Mandarin descend from the same ancestor, hence have many similarities in grammar and vocabulary, they also differ enough that they are mutually unintelligible; in fact they are no closer to each other than are the various members of the Romance language family.[2]

The major argument for considering Cantonese a dialect of Chinese rather than a separate language is based more on sociolinguistic grounds than purely linguistic ones. As Trudgill (2000: 4–5) points out, the primary factors in determining what is a "language" and what is a "dialect" are often more political and cultural than linguistic. Varieties that are autonomous and dominant are classed as "languages," while those varieties that are "heteronomous," i.e. that look to a standard or dominant language for their norms, are classed as "dialects." As Deng (1980: 84–85) points out, the major reasons Cantonese is considered a dialect of Chinese have to do with China's tradition of political unity, the traditional unity of its written language, and the subordinate position that Cantonese plays in this scheme of things. It is in this sense that the term "dialect" is accurate in describing the role of Cantonese within the Chinese language family. For this reason, in this book I

shall follow the practice of many scholars in referring to Cantonese as a dialect of Chinese rather than as a separate language.

However, I also wish to emphasize that the degree of difference between Cantonese and Mandarin is quite significant. Given that the development of written Cantonese could be characterized as a gradual shift from the norms of Standard Chinese to those of spoken Cantonese, it is important to examine in more detail the differences that distinguish these two varieties of Chinese.

Grammar differences

Because Mandarin and Cantonese are different varieties within the same language family, they share a great many similarities in syntax. In fact, grammar is the level at which the two varieties are most similar.[3] However, we should not overlook the fact that even at the syntax level there are differences between the two varieties.[4] Some examples of such differences would include the following:

(1) Word order in comparative structures: In Cantonese, the normal word order for a comparative phrase would be: (Subject) + (adjective) + (comparative maker) + (object). So, for example, the sentence "I am taller than him" would be (C) *Ngo gou gwo keoi* 我高過佢 (I + tall + more than + him). In contrast, in Mandarin the normal order would be (Subject) + (comparative marker) + (object) + (adjective), and the sentence above would be (M) *Wo bi ta gao* 我比他高 (I + compared to + him + tall).

(2) Positions of direct and indirect objects after the verb "to give": In Cantonese the indirect object in constructions with "to give" would normally precede the direct object. So, for example, the sentence "I gave him money" would normally be (C) *Ngo bei cin keoi* 我俾錢佢 (I + give + money + he). In contrast, in Mandarin the direct object comes first, so the sentence would be (M) *Wo gei ta qian* 我給他錢 (I + give + he + money).

(3) Deletion of relative marker: In some patterns Cantonese allows deletion of the relative marker in constructions where it would be required in Mandarin. For example, in a Cantonese phrase like (C) *Keoi coeng (ge) go zek go* 佢唱（嘅）嗰只歌 (He + sang + possessive + that + measure word + song), the relative marker (C) *ge* is optional. In contrast, in the parallel phrase in Mandarin, (M) *Ta chang de na shou ge* 他唱的那首歌, the marker *de* cannot be deleted.

Despite the fact that grammatical differences between Cantonese and Mandarin do exist, relatively little attention will be devoted to them in the remainder of this study. The main reason is that through much of the history of written Cantonese, distinctly Cantonese syntax is not very evident in texts which have Cantonese elements. As we shall see, early texts are often

"Cantonese" only in the sense that they contain occasional Cantonese words inserted into a framework that is basically Classical Chinese or Standard Chinese. As later texts become more consistent in their adherence to the norms of spoken Cantonese, distinctly Cantonese syntax patterns do begin to emerge. However, the appearance of such structures tends to follow along after the appearance of distinctly Cantonese vocabulary, with vocabulary leading the way. So separate examination of the development of grammar structures does not contribute much to our tracing of the pattern by which written Cantonese breaks new ground.

A second reason I devote relatively little attention to syntax is that when Chinese people who do not speak Cantonese attempt to read texts written in Cantonese, the primary difficulty they experience is with unfamiliar Cantonese vocabulary rather than grammar. Similarly, when Cantonese speakers attempt to learn Standard Chinese, the main difficulty they face is with vocabulary, not syntax.[5] Given that vocabulary is the main challenge Chinese face in mastering the difference between the two varieties, it seems appropriate that this be our focus as well.

Pronunciation differences

The most important difference between the *spoken* forms of Cantonese and Mandarin lies in pronunciation. Even though Cantonese and Mandarin have many words in common, the pronunciation of such words is often very different, and this is the major reason why the two languages are mutually unintelligible in spoken form.[6] For some words, the pronunciation difference is minimal, lying in a single sound. The Cantonese word for "good," (C) *hou* (好), for example, is quite close to Mandarin (M) *hao* both in pronunciation and tonal value. However, there are other Cantonese words that do not sound like their Mandarin counterparts at all. For example, the Cantonese words (C) *hai* (系) (department) and (C) *hokzaap* (學習) (to study) are substantially different phonetically from the corresponding Mandarin (M) *xi* and (M) *xuexi*, despite the fact that they have evolved from a common phonetic ancestor and are written with the same characters.[7]

While pronunciation is the main area of difference between the spoken forms of Cantonese and Mandarin, pronunciation differences generally do not affect the written form of the two varieties. When Cantonese and Mandarin share a vocabulary item in common, it is virtually always written with the same Chinese character, so the effects of pronunciation differences tend to disappear in the written form of the languages.

Vocabulary differences

The main difference between the *written* forms of Cantonese and Mandarin lies in their vocabulary systems.[8] This difference is particularly evident in the most common daily words of Cantonese, many of which differ considerably from their daily Mandarin translation counterparts. Consider the following examples:

Table 3.1 Examples of vocabulary differences between Cantonese and Mandarin

English	Cantonese	Mandarin	English	Cantonese	Mandarin
(possessive marker)	*ge* 嘅	*de* 的	that	*go* 嗰	*na* 那
(perfective aspect marker)	*zo* 咗	*le* 了	he/she	*keoi* 佢	*ta* 他
(pluralizer for pronouns)	*dei* 哋	*men* 們	now	*jigaa* 而家	*xianzai* 現在
no, not (negator)	*m* 唔	*bu* 不	to look	*tai* 睇	*kan* 看
is (copula)	*hai* 係	*shi* 是	to give	*bei* 俾	*gei* 給
in, on, at (locative)	*hai* 喺	*zai* 在	to like	*zungji* 鍾意	*xihuan* 喜歡
this	*ni* 呢	*zhe* 這	to seek	*wan* 搵	*zhao* 找

Note that the list in Table 3.1 includes a number of very high frequency words, including quite a few basic function words.

It is difficult to quantify precisely how different the vocabularies of Cantonese and Mandarin are, and general estimates range from 30 to as high as 50 percent.[9] A more precise corpus-based estimate given by Ouyang (1993: 23) concludes that about one-third of the lexical items used in regular Cantonese speech are not found in Mandarin. Ouyang, however, also points out that the degree of lexical difference is considerably lower in more formal registers. In an analysis of the transcription of a radio news broadcast, for example, he concluded that only about 10.6% of the lexical items were distinctly Cantonese (1993: 80–82).

As Ouyang's analysis suggests, the first step toward a more precise estimate lies in making a distinction between formal and informal registers of Cantonese because, due to the influence of written Chinese on formal Cantonese, formal spoken Cantonese is considerably more similar to formal Mandarin than colloquial Cantonese is to colloquial Mandarin.[10] Following Ouyang's lead, let us compare the language of two formal Cantonese news broadcasts with that of a colloquial Cantonese radio talk show.

Transcript #1: Examination of a Hong Kong Commercial Radio news bulletin demonstrates two points.[11] First, as Ouyang found, the occurrence of distinctly Cantonese words in formal Cantonese speech is relatively low — only 12 percent of the total number of characters are markedly Cantonese.

Secondly, the great majority of these occurrences are accounted for by repeated use of just a few Cantonese function words. Of all the marked Cantonese characters[12] in the transcription of the broadcast, 42 percent (63 out of 120) are accounted for by just three Cantonese characters: 63 occurrences of (C) *ge* 嘅(possessive marker), 31 of (C) *hai* 係(to be), and 26 of (C) *hai* 喺(in, at).

Transcript #2: A transcript of a Hong Kong TVB news feature story provides similar results, though the language is slightly more conversational.[13] Only 15 percent of the characters in the transcript are marked Cantonese (164 characters out of 1,111), and the same three Cantonese words — (C) *ge*, (C) *hai*, and (C) *hai* — tend to dominate, accounting for 43 percent of the occurrences of marked Cantonese characters.

The percentages of marked Cantonese words above correspond quite closely with Ouyang's results, and suggest that it is safe to generalize that in formal spoken Cantonese the percentage of marked Cantonese items is relatively low, hovering in the 10 to 15 percent range. It also appears that formal spoken Cantonese is "Cantonese" primarily in its pronunciation and use of Cantonese function words. Such markedly Cantonese vocabulary as occurred in news broadcasts consists largely of a few high frequency function words; much of the remaining vocabulary is vocabulary which Cantonese shares in common with Mandarin. We shall later see similar patterns in relatively formal written Cantonese texts.[14]

Transcript #3: Rather different results appear when we examine the transcript of an informal Cantonese radio talk show.[15] First, a much higher percentage of the vocabulary used is markedly Cantonese. Out of all the Chinese characters in the transcript, 42 percent (612 out of 1,448) are markedly Cantonese. This percentage corresponds well with the estimates suggested by Ouyang for informal Cantonese speech.

Second, in this transcript, the three function words (C) *hai*, (C) *hai*, and (C) *ge* account for much less of the marked Cantonese that appears — only 18 percent. Comparing Transcript #1 and Transcript #3, we see that a much wider range of Cantonese words appears in the informal speech of Transcript #3:

Table 3.2 Range of Cantonese vocabulary used in formal versus informal speech

	Total Characters in Transcript	Number of Different Marked Cantonese Characters
Transcript #1	2,353	43
Transcript #3	1,448	105

In fact, in comparison with Transcript #1, Transcript #3 has twice as many *different* marked Cantonese characters in a transcript that is only half as long. Clearly, the less formal language of the talk show not only has a considerably

higher total amount of markedly Cantonese vocabulary, but it also shows use of a much broader range of marked Cantonese vocabulary. We shall later see a similar pattern in the written Cantonese of colloquial novels.[16]

These percentages are important for two reasons. First, they establish a rough baseline from which we can judge how "authentic" a written Cantonese text is; i.e. how faithfully it adheres to the norms of spoken Cantonese. Written language is generally not an exact reproduction of spoken language, even when that written language is intended to approximate speech. For example, many of the features of natural speech — incomplete sentences, errors, repetitions, and so forth — are filtered out when language is written down, so in a written Cantonese text, we might expect to see less particle use than is found in natural speech. However, on the basis of the evidence above, it would seem that in Cantonese texts which attempt to faithfully and consistently replicate spoken Cantonese, we should expect that (1) in *formal written Cantonese* marked Cantonese characters should account for approximately 10 to 15 percent of the total characters in the text; and (2) in *informal written Cantonese* marked Cantonese characters should account for between 25 to 40 percent of the characters in the text.

These percentages are also significant because they underscore the extent to which Cantonese is lexically different from Mandarin Chinese. If a written Cantonese text includes as many marked Cantonese vocabulary items as colloquial Cantonese speech does, the text becomes very difficult for someone who knows only Standard Chinese to read. When 30 percent or more of the vocabulary in a text is unfamiliar, there simply is not enough comprehensible text remaining to make guessing reliable. When a person literate in Standard Chinese cannot read material written in Cantonese (or finds it so difficult that the effort will rapidly be abandoned), it clearly becomes necessary to consider written Cantonese a distinct written variety of Chinese.[17]

Writing Cantonese

How Cantonese words are written

As we have seen above, there is a considerable degree of lexical overlap between Cantonese and Standard Chinese. Thus, for many Cantonese words, there is a pre-existing written form that is known by anyone who is literate in Standard Chinese. The key challenge for a writer of Cantonese is finding written forms for Cantonese words which do not have a pre-existing Standard Chinese written form. As we have seen in the case of written Taiwanese, this problem of "having the sound but no character" (*you yin wu zi* 有音無字) can be a serious obstacle for those who attempt to write or read a Chinese dialect.

The issue of how Cantonese words are represented in written form has

been dealt in some detail elsewhere, most notably in Bauer (1988), Luke (1995), and Cheung and Bauer (2002).[18] My more limited goal here is to present a general overview of the most common mechanisms used, and consider the implications that choice of mechanism has for the growth and development of written Cantonese.

It may help to begin with a hypothetical example. Consider the following Cantonese dialogue, in which a disappointed suitor speaks to the object of his ardor:

> Boy: 但係，**噚**日你**重話**你要同我一齊**食**飯。
> *Daanhai, camjat nei zung waa nei jiu tung ngo jat-cai sik faan.*
> But yesterday you still say you would with me together eat (rice).
>
> Girl: 我**冇咁**講。你真係有**D**討厭！
> *Ngo mou gam gong. Nei zan hai jau di toujim!*
> I didn't so say. You really are a bit annoying!

A reader who understands Standard Chinese will see that quite a few of the Chinese characters in the sentences above — fifteen to be exact — are familiar in both their form and usage. However, eleven other characters, the ones in bold, are "marked Cantonese" which clearly adhere to the norms of spoken Cantonese rather than to the norms of Standard Chinese. Within these eleven Cantonese characters, we see representative examples of the following major categories of ways in which writers represent Cantonese words that fall outside the range of Standard Chinese.

(1) Standard Chinese characters used in uniquely Cantonese ways: When writing Cantonese, in some cases there is no problem finding the appropriate Chinese character because it already exists in Standard Chinese. This is true not only for the majority of Cantonese words which are the same as Mandarin words in every respect except pronunciation, but also for a considerable number of words that exist in both Cantonese and Mandarin but are used quite differently in the two varieties. For example, in the first sentence of the dialogue above, we find the word (C) *waa* (話) as a verb meaning "to say." This word is also common in Mandarin as a noun meaning "speech," but in Mandarin it cannot function as a verb. Similarly, the words (C) *tung* (同 "with") and (C) *sik* (食 "eat") also exist in Mandarin, but their usage is not the same as in Cantonese.

Many words in this category preserve usages that existed in ancient Chinese but have died out in modern Mandarin. Strictly speaking, then, these are not cases of character formation, because characters for these Cantonese words already exist. However, the way these characters are used in Cantonese texts would often cause difficulty for a reader who only knows Mandarin.

(2) New (previously non-existing) Cantonese dialect characters: Sometimes when confronting the "sound but no character" problem, Cantonese speakers

have resorted to the strategy of creating a new character to represent a Cantonese word. The best-known example of this, the Cantonese character 冇, appears in the second sentence of the dialogue above representing the Cantonese word (C) *mou* (did not, not have). Historically, however, this particular method of character formation has not been very productive, and it is rarely used.[19] To the extent that "new" Cantonese characters are created, they are virtually always combinations of pre-existing and familiar elements. Even the character 冇 above is based closely on its Standard Chinese antonym (M) *you* 有 (to have, to be), the only difference being that two strokes in the center are missing.

The reasons new characters are rarely created from scratch are partly cultural. For most of China's history there has been great reluctance to create entirely new characters, or at least give formal recognition to them. Even in ancient times, new Chinese characters were often combinations of existing elements, and in modern times new Standard Chinese words are created with new combinations of existing characters rather than through the creation of new characters. These character formation traditions have affected Cantonese-speaking Chinese as much as they have Chinese people elsewhere.[20] Another reason why entirely new characters are rarely created is that they present more difficulties to a reader than do characters with recognizable elements. Not only would a totally new character be unfamiliar to a reader, but it would also not be obvious how the reader should go about decoding it.

(3) Romanization: Another way the "sound but no character" problem is sometimes solved is through use of romanization. This approach has often been taken by Western missionaries for the writing of Chinese dialects, and as we have seen in the case of written Taiwanese, it has also sometimes been used by Chinese people for writing in dialect.

Historically, however, this approach has rarely been used by writers of Cantonese, and until recent decades Cantonese was almost always written in Chinese characters. Even today many Cantonese texts do not use romanization at all. This may be due in part to the fact that there are relatively few common Cantonese words that cannot be represented adequately in characters.[21] There are, however, several words that are frequently written using the Roman alphabet, the best-known example being the use of "D" (seen in the dialogue above) to represent the Cantonese word (C) *di* (啲 a bit), which often appears in newspapers and books. There are other examples of alphabet letters being used to represent Cantonese words, but none that has attained the wide acceptance of "D."[22]

While romanization has traditionally not been a very popular solution for dealing with the problem of how to write down Cantonese words, this strategy has become more popular in recent years. Younger Cantonese writers, especially pocketbook writers, often spell Cantonese words out in Roman letters when they do not know what Chinese character to use or feel a Chinese

character is not widely enough known by readers. This most frequently happens with newly coined slang expressions, but sometimes one will find writers spelling out a word even when written Cantonese already has an accepted character for the word. For example, in the *Diary of The Little Man* series, the word (C) *mit* (to tear off) is often written as "Mit" despite the fact that the word is also written with the character 搣. Romanization of Cantonese words has also become common in computer-based interpersonal communications among young people in Hong Kong (ICQ), so may eventually come to be more widely used in published Cantonese writing as well.[23]

(4) Borrowing on the basis of pronunciation: When they do not know how to write a word in Cantonese, the strategy most often adopted by Cantonese people — both past and present — is phonetic borrowing, i.e. using a Chinese character that has the same sound when pronounced in Cantonese as the word to be written down. (When borrowing characters in this way, the original meaning of the character is generally ignored.) This strategy works because literate Cantonese speakers know the Cantonese pronunciation of Chinese characters.

One example of the phonetic borrowing strategy appears in the first sentence of the text above, use of the character 重 to represent the Cantonese word (C) *zung* (still). In both Standard Chinese and written Cantonese, 重 is a commonly-used character meaning "heavy." In Cantonese this character is pronounced (C) *cung*, and because (C) *cung* sounds like the Cantonese word for "still" — (C) *zung* — the character 重 is borrowed to represent (C) *zung* (still). (This particular borrowing took place several hundred years ago; for example 重 appears with the meaning "still" in *The Flowery Scroll*, a text dating from the late Ming dynasty.)[24]

Sometimes phonetic borrowings are marked in various ways. Traditionally, Cantonese phonetic borrowings were often marked by the addition of a "mouth" radical (*kou* 口) to the borrowed character. Many Chinese characters are composed of two parts, a semantic element (usually on the left side of character), and a phonetic component (usually on the right).[25] Phonetically borrowed characters in Cantonese are often marked by the addition of a "mouth" (*kou* 口) radical at the left side of the character, with the borrowed character appearing on the right as the phonetic element.[26] In the dialogue above, (C) *cam* 噚 in *camjat* 噚日 (yesterday), and (C) *gam* 咁 (so) are examples of characters borrowed for their sound and then marked with the "mouth" radical. In more recent decades, phonetic borrowings are sometimes marked by being placed in brackets, particularly if a writer is concerned that readers might not immediately recognize a particular character as a phonetic borrowing. For example, in the book *Diary of The Little Man*, the Cantonese word (C) *laai* (to lick) is represented by the graph 「舐」.

This tendency to mark phonetic borrowings with a mouth radical or brackets illustrates the predominance of phonetic borrowing as the strategy favored by Cantonese speakers when attempting to write their language, and is also no doubt part of the reason why literacy in the written from of Cantonese has become popularized to a greater degree than the written form of other dialects such as Taiwanese. Such marking not only alerts the reader to the fact that a character is being used in a special way, but also suggests the strategy the reader should use in making sense of the character. However, it is important to note that in many cases phonetic borrowings are not marked in any special way at all, even in relatively ancient texts that make use of Cantonese (see Appendix 1, Sample Texts 1–4). The early development of a widespread informal preference for the phonetic borrowing strategy means that even when Cantonese readers are not alerted to a phonetic borrowing by any explicit marking of an unfamiliar character, they still know which strategy is most likely to result in the word's successful decoding.

(5) **"Seeking original characters":** Finally we should note one additional approach to the "sound but no character" problem which is pointedly *not* represented in the sample dialogue text above, and rarely used in written Cantonese — *ben zi kao* (本字考), i.e. "seeking original characters."

The historical fact that Chinese dialects often preserve words and uses from ancient Chinese that have now disappeared in Standard Chinese has given rise to a form of study called *ben zi kao* (本字考) which involves searching ancient texts to find the Chinese characters with which dialect words were written in the past. This approach presumes that many dialect words once had a written form that has since fallen out of use.

One modern example of this kind of study for Cantonese is a 1960 article by Luo Zhengping in which he suggests possible ancient characters for 58 Cantonese words. This article is not only a good example of a "seeking original characters" study, but also of the attitude that scholars who engage in such study usually take toward the widely accepted phonetically borrowed forms of Cantonese words. Luo considers these to be "mistaken characters" (*bie zi* 別字), and he clearly feels that the ancient characters he presents are more legitimate written representations of the Cantonese words in question (Luo 1960: 129).

The "seeking original characters" approach has had some influence among those who advocate written Taiwanese, and some scholars of Cantonese have also engaged in such efforts.[27] However, this approach tends to appeal to scholars more than to the general public, and the dissemination of such scholarly efforts through articles and dictionaries has apparently had relatively little impact on most people who frequently use written Cantonese.

Written Cantonese and phonetic borrowing

Having described the various mechanisms by which Cantonese words are represented in written form, it is important to stress that by far the most important and productive of these mechanisms is phonetic borrowing.[28] One indication of how dominant this tendency toward phonetic borrowing comes from a study conducted by Huang Xiaoya in 2000 in which she categorizes characters in Cantonese dictionaries according to the mechanisms by which they were chosen/created. Of Huang's five categories, the one with the highest percentage of characters (38 percent) is phonetic borrowing. Furthermore, an additional category she calls "popular dialect characters" (*fangyan su zi* 方言俗字) contains many characters which are actually phonetic borrowings to which a "mouth" radical has been added to create new characters.[29]

However, the predominance of phonetic borrowing becomes even clearer if an actual Cantonese text, rather than a dictionary, is used as the corpus. For example, when we examine the two texts in Appendix 1 which are most consistent in following spoken Cantonese norms (Texts 11 and 12, a selection from a Cantonese newspaper article and a popular Cantonese novel) we find that *every* marked Cantonese character in each of these two texts carries significant phonetic clues to its pronunciation. For a few of the marked Cantonese characters in these two texts, such 睇 (C) *tai* (to look), the pronunciation of the phonetic element is not exactly the same as that of the Cantonese word it represents (the Cantonese pronunciation of the phonetic element of this character is *dai*); however, even in these cases the pronunciation is quite similar. In other words, not only are most Cantonese characters chosen on the basis of phonetic borrowing, but the most commonly used Cantonese characters are virtually all chosen on this basis.

Here we might pause to note that this tendency to rely on phonetic borrowing is not confined to the writing of Cantonese; in fact, most Chinese characters used in Standard Chinese today have been created through a process of phonetic borrowing. As noted above, many Chinese characters consist of a combination of elements (radicals), and most Chinese characters used today have a phonetic element — usually on the right hand side of the character — which sounds similar to or even exactly the same as the new word being represented. In traditional Chinese nomenclature, these are referred to as pictophonetic (*xingsheng* 形聲) characters, and have long made up the majority of Chinese characters in use. Even as early as the Shang dynasty (1700–1045 BCE), approximately a third of all Chinese characters included a phonetic component, and by the eighteenth century over 90 percent of the characters in the influential Kangxi Dictionary had a phonetic component. Traditional Chinese discussion of character types also recognizes an additional category

of phonetic loan (*jiajie* 假借) characters, those which are borrowed in their entirety because they have the same sound as the word to be represented.[30]

This tendency to use Chinese characters phonetically is also found among neighboring peoples who have used Chinese characters to represent their languages. For example, the Zhuang people of southern China developed a writing system that made use of Chinese characters to write the Zhuang language, and borrowed Chinese characters for their sound value.[31] Also, before colonization by the French, the Vietnamese language was often written in a system called Nom which used Chinese characters for their sound value to represent Vietnamese words. Sometimes these Nom Chinese characters were borrowed in their original form for their sound value; in other cases, new composite characters were created by borrowing two elements from different Chinese characters, one for meaning and one for sound.[32]

The fact that most Cantonese characters are created through phonetic borrowing is very important to the spread of literacy in Cantonese. From the reader's point of view, the predominance of this mechanism means that readers know what strategy they should use in trying to figure out any unfamiliar Cantonese characters they encounter. Furthermore, this strategy is relatively easy to apply. As long as readers have a reading knowledge of Standard Chinese and the ability to speak Cantonese, they can usually figure out unfamiliar words quite easily merely by sounding them out in context. This means that readers who are already literate in Standard Chinese can learn to read in Cantonese without undergoing an education process like that needed for literacy in Standard Chinese.

Widespread consensus in favor of the phonetic borrowing mechanism is also helpful for writers of Cantonese. There are still Cantonese words for which there is no widely-agreed-on written form, a fact which poses problems for those who wish to write in Cantonese. However, the consensus in favor of phonetic borrowing means that writers of Cantonese have a convenient and widely accepted strategy for dealing with this problem, and this makes it much easier for people to write Cantonese.

The Standardization of Written Cantonese

Written Cantonese is not very standardized in the sense of widespread agreement as to which characters should be used to represent which words. In fact, it is not unusual for two or even more different characters to be in widespread use even for fairly common Cantonese words. The following list (drawn from both published texts and dictionaries) provides a few examples of such words:

Table 3.3 Different graphs used to represent Cantonese words

Cantonese word	English gloss	Characters used	Cantonese word	English gloss	Characters used
bei	to give	俾 畀	*je*	thing	嘢 野
dei	(plural suffix)	哋 地	*jigaa*	now	而家 依家
di	a little	的 啲 D	*ngai*	to plead	嗚 矮 唱
gam	this way	咁 噉	*tam*	to coax	諗 嗲 冧 Tum
go	that	嗰 個 果 箇	*zo*	(perfective)	咗 左 哂
ha	to bully	蝦 嚇	*zung*	still	重 仲
hai	to be	係 系	*zungji*	to like	鍾意 中意

For some of these words, such as (C) *je* and *gam*, the first character listed above is clearly in wider use than the alternative form. However, for other words such as (C) *bei, dei, di, go, zungji, zung,* and *jigaa,* more than one form is in widespread use.

One might suppose that the widespread use of divergent forms would cause confusion among readers, but this confusion is considerably reduced by two factors: (1) the Cantonese pronunciation of all or most of the variants is either the same or very similar; and (2) in many cases the difference between the variant forms is minimal, often the presence or absence of a "mouth" radical.

One reason for this lack of uniformity in which characters are used to represent which Cantonese words is that Cantonese dictionaries do not always agree as to which written form should represent any given Cantonese word. It is not uncommon for the same word to be represented with different characters in different dictionaries.[33] Furthermore, no single dictionary has yet been accepted as an authoritative standard around which others would converge. The influence of dictionaries and reference tools in the process of standardizing a language — particularly its written form — is often considerable. For example, the spelling of English words varied widely from writer to writer until the publication of Samuel Johnson's dictionary in 1755 established a widely accepted standard for English spelling. The absence to date of a widely accepted authoritative reference work therefore helps account for the lack of standardization in written Cantonese.

Of the Cantonese dictionaries available in Hong Kong, the first to make much impact on the writing of Cantonese was the 1981 *Cantonese Dialect Dictionary* (*Guangzhouhua Fangyan Cidian* 廣州話方言辭典) compiled by Rao Bingcai (饒秉才), Ouyang Jueya (歐陽覺亞), and Zhou Wuji (周無忌). Although the authors reside in mainland China, the dictionary was published

by the Commercial Press in Hong Kong, and a few Hong Kong authors and publishers began to use it as their standard reference.[34] However, the impact of this dictionary was limited by several factors. First, it has a relatively small number of entries and does not include all the characters writers and publishers need.[35] Second, while the entries in this dictionary generally provide widely used forms of characters rather than more scholarly or obscure forms, Hong Kong writers find that it does not always accurately reflect Hong Kong usage.[36] Finally, some writers in Hong Kong have been hostile toward the dictionary simply because it is the work of scholars from mainland China rather than from Hong Kong. One example of this appeared from 27 February to 9 March 1990 in a series of articles in Hong Kong's *Tin Tin Daily*'s "Chewing over words" (*Yao wen jue zi* 咬文嚼字) column in which the author, (C) Lau Sing 劉晟(Jung Juk 容若) not only criticized flaws in the dictionary, but even questioned the qualifications of the authors to produce such a dictionary.[37]

The fact that no single Cantonese dictionary has yet established itself as authoritative is no doubt one of the main reasons why most Hong Kong authors do not rely much on formal reference tools when writing Cantonese. Even when existing reference works are unanimous as to their choice of what character should be used for a certain Cantonese word, it is not unusual to find that writers have used another, often simpler, character which shares the same pronunciation.[38] However, lack of an authoritative reference work is only part of the picture; there also seems to be an underlying sense that uniformity of character use in written Cantonese is not terribly important to the average writer. In fact, it is not unusual for an author to use different characters on different occasions, apparently relying more on sound than precedent.[39]

While one could not say that written Cantonese is standardized in the conventional sense, it is important to recognize, as noted above, that there is standardization of a sort in the widely held consensus in favor of using phonetic principles in choosing Cantonese characters. This consensus is important because wide agreement on this easy-to-use principle is sufficient to permit the language to function and grow. Writers know how to go about putting Cantonese words into print, and readers know how to go about decoding the Cantonese words they see in print. While lack of complete standardization is no doubt at times an annoyance for readers and writers of Cantonese, it seems to be little more than that. As Li (2000: 201) notes, users of written Cantonese are "somewhat inconvenienced by the absence of a standardized writing system. Such a handicap, however, does little to prevent speakers of Cantonese in Hong Kong from using the vernacular they know best to represent their thoughts in writing." The fact that both writers and readers can readily go about the task of using written Cantonese means that over time it is likely that higher levels of standardization will eventually emerge.

What Is "Written Cantonese"?

One might assume that "written Cantonese" is essentially Cantonese speech written out in Chinese characters. This would be a fair description of written Cantonese as it appears in contemporary works such as the *Diary of The Little Man* novel series, which are actually radio program scripts later published in book form, and are thus quite literally written representations of speech. However, from a historical perspective written Cantonese has not always so closely followed the norms of Cantonese speech; in fact, early Cantonese texts are essentially written in Classical Chinese with only an occasional sprinkling of Cantonese words. Furthermore, not all written Canontese texts found even today in Hong Kong follow the same conventions in how closely or loosely they adhere to a spoken Canontese norm. In other words, not all "written Cantonese" is the same, and in order to trace the development of the language we shall need to distinguish between at least several basic kinds of written Cantonese:[40]

(1) **Occasional Cantonese terms in Standard Chinese texts:** In some texts, particularly early texts that contain Cantonese, occasional Cantonese words or phrases appear in a text that clearly follows Classical Chinese or Standard Chinese norms. In such texts, Cantonese words are relatively few in number, and may either have been included to give a sense of local color or perhaps slipped in more or less by mistake. Into this category fall many of the verses and songs found in the "wooden fish books" (see Chapter 4).

(2) ***Saam kap dai*:** This is a clearly defined style of writing in which Classical Chinese, Standard Chinese, and Cantonese are all used (see Chapter 6). Cantonese is spread evenly through these texts, as are the other two language varieties and in virtually every sentence there are elements of all three language varieties. This writing style was most popular in Hong Kong newspaper columns from the 1950s to 1980s.

(3) **Random mixing of Cantonese and Standard Chinese:** In some texts, Cantonese terms are mixed into Standard Chinese in a way that is not consistently based on any single spoken or written language norm. Into this category falls much newspaper Cantonese and Cantonese fiction (see Chapter 6). While it may be possible to find a rationale for the author's decision to include Cantonese in these texts, it may not be possible to explain why Cantonese words were used at any specific point.

(4) **Patterned mixing of Cantonese and Standard Chinese:** In some texts that are dominantly Baihua or Standard Chinese, Cantonese is included at specific points for a discernable purpose. The switch from Standard Chinese to Cantonese, for example, might signal a change in the tone of a dialogue. This approach to Cantonese use is found in Cantonese opera texts (see Chapter 4).

(5) **Standard Chinese narration/Cantonese dialogue:** In some texts, Standard Chinese is consistently used for the narrative portions of a text, and Cantonese for dialogue. This approach has been taken by some of the writers associated with *City Magazine* (see Chapter 6).

(6) **Authentic Cantonese:** In some texts, the language adheres consistently to the appropriate register of spoken Cantonese. Writers during the Dialect Literature Movement generally used this approach (see Chapter 5), as have many contemporary newspaper and fiction writers, particularly those who have also worked in film and television script-writing (see Chapter 6).

While even this six-category taxonomy inevitably involves overgeneralization, it provides a starting point for more nuanced discussion of the various ways in which written Cantonese has historically been used, and also serves to make the point that in discussing "Cantonese" texts, some attempt must be made to sort out the elements of Standard Chinese, Cantonese, and even Classical Chinese. In particular, distinctions between different kinds of written Cantonese texts need to be made if we are to see the gradual development of written Cantonese toward more faithful adherence to a spoken Cantonese vernacular norm.

The taxonomy above also serves to suggest that the development of written Cantonese has not progressed simply by a gradual increase of the percentage of Cantonese words found in texts. Rather, its development has progressed in a more clearly patterned way, largely through the appearance of new genres with new conventions that allow greater use of Cantonese. In this sense, the development of written Cantonese shows close parallels to the development of Baihua in China, which, rather than usurping the role of Classical Chinese in established literary genres, tended to appear in new genres which performed new functions (usually related to oral literature). Once established in a genre, Baihua tended to dominate that genre.[41] This pattern also appeared in the development of written Japanese.

Similarly, Cantonese has made much of its progress as a written language through its use in new genres which, from their inception, made use of Cantonese in a particular way. For example, while we cannot be certain that genres such as "wooden fish songs" and "southern songs" (see Chapter 4) always contained dialect, this seems probable because even the oldest extant works in these genres make use of Cantonese. Similarly, other later genres that we will encounter, from the Cantonese love songs of the 1800s to modern-day diary-type novels, have all had clear and relatively stable conventional norms for use of Cantonese. There have also been a few exceptions to this pattern; for example, Cantonese opera originally contained no dialect and experienced only a gradual increase in use of Cantonese. However, in general, the pattern by which written Cantonese has grown is one of the appearance

of new genres, each with conventions of language use that allow closer adherence to the norms of spoken Cantonese than allowed by previous genres.

Is Written Cantonese a Distinct Language Variety?

In this book, I have assumed that written Cantonese can and should be considered a written language variety in its own right, one that is (at least in the later stages of its development) distinct from the written form of Standard Chinese. However, this is not necessarily an assumption that the average person in Hong Kong would always share. This point was driven home to me the first time I went into a Hong Kong bookstore and asked (in Cantonese) whether or not they had any books written in Cantonese. While the point of the question seemed perfectly obvious to me, it was not clear at all to the staff at the store, and it was only after considerable explaining that one clerk suddenly said: "Oh, he means those colloquial books!" (The actual Cantonese term she used for "colloquial" was (C) *haujyufaa* 口語化.) As this experience repeated itself in one store after another, it slowly dawned on me that what I perceived to be a difference between two separate language varieties — Standard Chinese and written Cantonese — was sometimes perceived in Hong Kong mainly as a difference in register, with texts written in Cantonese seen as simply being more colloquial.

At the risk of overgeneralizing, I would suggest that the popular view most people in Hong Kong have toward written Chinese — and the role of written Cantonese within that written language — is essentially the following:

(1) The main language distinction people in Hong Kong make is between "Chinese" (C: *Zungman* 中文), and English. While they are aware of differences between Mandarin and Cantonese, the Chinese/English distinction tends to be much more salient in people's minds, and differences in varieties of Chinese tend to be viewed as variations within a language rather than as different languages.[42]

(2) There is relatively little emphasis on the tie between written Chinese (Standard Chinese) and spoken Mandarin. While it is of course generally known that Standard Chinese is based on Mandarin, from a Hong Kong perspective the tie between these two language varieties is somewhat less salient than it would be in other parts of China. Instead, the tendency in Hong Kong is to view written Chinese as relatively independent of any spoken variety of Chinese. Instead, it is seen more as a supra-dialect written language that stands in roughly equal relationship to all spoken varieties of Chinese, much as Classical Chinese did in pre-modern times. This tendency is due in part to the fact that the Baihua movement reached Hong Kong relatively late, and that Classical Chinese played major role in school curriculums longer in Hong Kong than elsewhere in China.[43]

(3) Elements of Standard Chinese that are more distinctively Mandarin than Cantonese (in other words, vocabulary which is common in Mandarin but not in spoken Cantonese) are still considered to be part of "our Chinese writing" in Hong Kong because they are identified primarily with a written language rather than an (outsider) spoken language.
(4) The written form of distinctively Cantonese words is often viewed as use of local colloquial language, a lower register rather than elements of a distinct language variety.

It should also be noted that language users in Hong Kong frequently are not sure precisely where the lines are between proper Standard Chinese and written Cantonese. While an attempt is made in schools to teach students what is and is not acceptable Standard Chinese, it has been repeatedly observed that neither students nor teachers are always entirely sure which words are acceptable in Standard Chinese and which are not.[44] In part as a result of this confusion, Standard Chinese in Hong Kong has absorbed some Cantonese words that have now largely or completely displaced their Standard Chinese counterparts. For example, one will almost always see the characters for (C) *gaasi* 傢俬 (furniture) on the signs of furniture stores rather than the Mandarin term (M) *jiaju* 家具, and it is not unusual to find (C) *gaasi* also appearing in Hong Kong literary works ostensibly written in Standard Chinese. Other Cantonese terms such as (C) *sezilau* 寫字樓 (office), (C) *saanggwo* 生果 (fruit), and (C) *syutgou* 雪糕 (ice-cream) also appear from time to time in Hong Kong Standard Chinese literary works in which there is no apparent evidence of conscious intent to use Cantonese vocabulary. In Hong Kong, all of these terms are becoming accepted as Standard Chinese, and people are not always aware that these terms would be considered non-standard outside the Cantonese-speaking regions of China.[45]

However, it would be going too far to say that people in Hong Kong do not make any distinction between Standard Chinese and written Cantonese, or to say that written Cantonese is always considered just a lower register of Standard Chinese. To the contrary, there is a general awareness that a distinction should be made in writing between (acceptable) Standard Chinese and (unacceptable) Cantonese dialect. As noted above, this issue is one that is given much attention in schools, and attempts to teach what is and is not acceptable in writing Standard Chinese absorb much of teachers' time and attention.[46] So even if students and teachers are not always sure which terms are acceptable when writing Standard Chinese, they are well aware that some terms are acceptable and that others are not. They also know that the norm they should follow in writing is that of a written language — Standard Chinese — rather than that of their Cantonese speech.

Furthermore, as we will see in the following chapters, there are often fairly clear patterns as to where and how written Cantonese is used, which suggests

that its use is a conscious choice involving awareness of written Cantonese as a distinctive language system rather than merely an occasional shift into a lower register. Perhaps the clearest example of such a pattern is found in texts where the narration is consistently in Standard Chinese but the dialogue is consistently in written Cantonese (a pattern also seen in some Wu dialect literature).

Toward the Story of Written Cantonese (II)

In Chapter 2 we suggested that the story of written Cantonese could be viewed as one of shifting diglossic balance, with written Cantonese (L) moving into the range of functions previously held only by Standard Chinese (H). In this chapter I have suggested several other lines along which we should trace the development of written Cantonese, summarized as follows:

Increasing consistency in use of Cantonese in writing

One of the main lines of development we shall see in the history of written Cantonese is an increasing tendency to adhere to the norms of spoken Cantonese, even when they conflict with the norms of written Standard Chinese. In large part we shall see this in a gradual increase in the percentage of Cantonese lexical items used in texts, and we shall follow this development by looking for the presence of "marked Cantonese" terms in texts. In early texts containing Cantonese, the percentage will be very small, and is not reflective at all of how Cantonese is normally spoken. However, over time, texts will come closer to percentages of distinctly Cantonese lexical items that are normal for spoken Cantonese, approximately 10 percent for more formal registers of the spoken language (news reports and so forth), and 30 percent or more for informal and conversational registers.

At later stages of the development of written Cantonese, we shall also look for the decreasing use of "marked Standard Chinese" as an indicator of the extent to which a Cantonese norm is established and maintained. "Marked Standard Chinese" words are those commonly used in spoken and written Standard Chinese, but rarely if ever used in spoken Cantonese. Use of these terms, therefore, suggests adherence to a Standard Chinese rather than written Cantonese norm, and their disappearance suggests that the norms in a given text have become fully Cantonese. For two reasons, however, less weight can be placed on this indicator than on the presence or absence of marked Cantonese. First, in one sense, there is no such thing as truly "marked" Standard Chinese because even words that are more typical of Mandarin than of Cantonese are sometimes still used in higher registers of Cantonese, though

often in contexts that are closely associated with written texts. Secondly, the use of marked Cantonese is a much more stigmatized choice in writing than the use of marked Standard Chinese ever is; the presence of marked Cantonese is therefore more significant as an indicator of a choice to move toward a Cantonese norm.

Increasing Cantonese literacy

A second main line of development has to do with spreading literacy in written Cantonese. In some cases, particularly early in the history of written Cantonese's development, this may be an issue of primary literacy, of written Cantonese being the first language that people (primarily women) learned to read. However, in more recent years the issue is one more of how well Cantonese speakers who have been educated in the use of Standard Chinese are also able to read and even write in Cantonese. As suggested in this chapter, given that schools do not generally teach written Cantonese, the ease with which Cantonese speakers can attain literary in written Cantonese is a vital factor in facilitating the increase of Cantonese literacy.

Increasing number of genres which allow use of Cantonese

A third important line of development has to do with the kinds of texts and published materials within which written Cantonese is used. As noted above, increase along this line has generally not resulted from Cantonese appearing with increasing frequency in well-established genres of writing. In fact, the evidence will show that once the language conventions of a genre are set, they generally do not change much over time, and a genre in which people expect Standard Chinese to be used will generally not begin to admit use of Cantonese. Instead, increase in the use of written Cantonese normally occurs through the creation of new genres within which written Cantonese has a prominent role right from the start.

8

Epilogue: The Future of Written Cantonese

Will the Growth of Written Cantonese Continue?

Given that much of this book has been dedicated to tracing the growth of written Cantonese, it seems appropriate to close by casting an eye to the future and asking whether this pattern of growth is likely to continue.

The most obvious reason to suspect that the role of written Cantonese might possibly *not* continue to grow has to do with the reintegration of Hong Kong into China, hence into a nation where Mandarin (Putonghua) is the overwhelmingly dominant language. Clearly the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty brings the Hong Kong speech community into even closer relationship with mainland China, and — returning to the analogy used in Chapter 2 — this will inevitably have some impact on the marketplace in which Hong Kong people make their language choices. Because of China's enormous population, growing wealth, growing political and military power, and expanding cultural influence, the appeal of Putonghua in the Hong Kong market cannot help but increase. The question is: In what precise ways?

One safe prediction is that more people in Hong Kong are likely to learn Putonghua than in the past. The Hong Kong government has made more of an effort in recent years to promote study of Putonghua, both among government employees and among the populace at large.[1] Perhaps more important, the case for learning Putonghua is ever easier to make in Hong Kong because the practical advantages of learning Putonghua are so obvious. Not only is there increasing opportunity, and even need, for Hong Kong people to do business on the mainland; it is even becoming increasingly common for young Hong Kong people to seek jobs on the mainland with mainland companies and institutions. Likewise, the flow of people from the mainland into Hong Kong for tourism, business, or simply to visit friends and relatives is also increasing, thus expanding the opportunities for people in Hong Kong to practice whatever Putonghua skills they learn. Because of the

similarities between Putonghua and Cantonese, Cantonese speakers can learn to function in Putonghua quite rapidly if given study and practice opportunities, and once they begin to actually use Putonghua, their Putonghua skills are likely to keep improving. This generates the prospect that Putonghua could become a living language in Hong Kong, one which most members of the community can and do regularly speak, and this would cause Putonghua to seem less like a foreign language.

It seems likely that the role of Putonghua in Hong Kong's schools will also continue to increase, a development which could potentially have significant implications for the future growth of written Cantonese. As we have seen, Putonghua has already become a required subject in Hong Kong schools. Furthermore, as of the time of this writing (2004) there are reports that educational authorities in Hong Kong have begun seriously examining the possibility of moving toward use of Putonghua as the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools (although no specific plan has been presented to date).[2] Were the role of Putonghua in Hong Kong schools to increase dramatically — in particular, if it were to become the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools — the conditions which have facilitated the growth of written Cantonese would be affected in two important ways. First, as Bauer (2000: 44) has pointed out, the ease with which Cantonese speakers learn to read and write Cantonese is based on their ability to pronounce Chinese characters in Cantonese. If the Hong Kong education system were to adopt Putonghua as the medium of instruction, and if students no longer learned to pronounce characters in Cantonese, it would become much harder for students to learn to read and write Cantonese. Secondly, if Putonghua came to dominate the education system to the degree that Mandarin dominated schools in Taiwan for many decades, the result might well be generations of students who were more comfortable expressing themselves in Putonghua than in Cantonese, a development which would not only make written Cantonese harder to learn to read and write, but also undermine its effectiveness as a language of identity.

However, it seems that such a scenario is unlikely in Hong Kong, at least within the near future. First, while knowledge of Putonghua will no doubt continue to increase in Hong Kong, this does not in and of itself necessarily mean a decrease in the ability or willingness of people to speak Cantonese; in particular, it does not necessarily mean that Putonghua will replace Cantonese as the language of identity in Hong Kong. Rather, what is happening so far is that people in Hong Kong are adding the ability to function in Putonghua to their toolkit of language skills, rather than replacing their Cantonese with Putonghua. This addition of Putonghua language skills, rather than eradication of Cantonese, is also the goal at which the Hong Kong government aims in its "promote Putonghua" campaigns. Second, the level of Putonghua instruction in Hong Kong schools is currently so low that it does not threaten

the role of Cantonese, and does not even provide much support for students' efforts to learn to read and write Standard Chinese. Putonghua would need to eclipse Cantonese almost entirely within the education system if Putonghua were to replace Cantonese as students' language of identity or undermine their ability to pronounce Chinese characters in Cantonese. It does not seem likely that the role of Putonghua in Hong Kong schools would increase to this degree, at least not in the near future. In fact, if the Hong Kong government continues its recent policy of requiring most schools to use "mother tongue" (spoken Cantonese and written Standard Chinese) as the medium of instruction, rather than using English, it is possible that more young people in Hong Kong will be exposed to greater amounts of educated discourse in Cantonese and develop an even higher degree of proficiency in that language.

Therefore, at least for the immediate future, I suspect that written Cantonese is likely to retain its current role in Hong Kong society, and perhaps even expand its role in Cantonese-speaking areas of mainland China. I make this prediction with some hesitation, because predicting the future — and putting those predictions in print — is always a risky business, but there are several reasons why I feel reasonably confident in this assessment. The first is simply the evidence of the past. As I have endeavored to demonstrate in this book, the trend over the past several centuries has been for the role of written Cantonese to gradually but steadily increase, following the rising prosperity of first Guangzhou and the Pearl River Delta region, and then Hong Kong. While the past is by no means always a reliable guide to the future, there is good reason to suspect that existing trends will continue unless there are significant changes in the factors that have given rise to them.

A second point also has to do with the continued prosperity of Cantonese-speaking regions of mainland China. The growing wealth of Guangzhou and the Pearl River Delta region has contributed substantially to the growing vitality of the spoken Cantonese language, a vitality which is reflected in a variety of interesting ways.

As noted in Chapter 7, the unusually high prestige of Cantonese within its own speech community is suggested by the fact that Cantonese-speaking areas are the only part of China where a significant amount of local television and radio broadcasting is done in a Chinese dialect. A significant amount of this Cantonese-language broadcasting originates in Hong Kong; in fact, since the 1980s the Hong Kong broadcast media have had a very substantial audience in Guangdong province.[3] However, Cantonese is also the language used in a significant amount of broadcasting in Guangdong, and even parts of Guangxi.

The geographic range in which Cantonese is spoken as first language is actually expanding. In some parts of Guangdong province where other dialects were originally spoken, Cantonese is moving in at the expense of the original dialects. This is happening, for example, in Shanwei, in Min-dialect-speaking areas in Zhongshan, and around Huizhou and Boluo.[4]

The influence of Cantonese on Putonghua is growing as more and more Cantonese words are coming to be accepted in Putonghua and used throughout China, many even now appearing in standard Chinese dictionaries. Tang and Tu, for example, count more than 160 Cantonese expressions which appear in the 1996 edition of the widely used *Modern Chinese Dictionary* (*Xiandai Hanyu Cidian* 現代漢語辭典) (2000: 367).[5]

Even in places far from Guangdong, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Tianjin and Wuhan, many Chinese study Cantonese as a second language.[6] This interest in Cantonese study is reflected in the surprisingly large number of textbooks and tape sets available throughout China for Chinese people interested in learning Cantonese. My personal collection of such materials includes over twenty textbooks and tape sets. While many of these are published in Guangzhou, others are published further afield in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hainan, Changsha, and even Dalian.

This prominence of Cantonese in Guangdong and throughout China creates a climate in which the relatively high prestige and influence of Cantonese in Hong Kong is easier to maintain. In fact, it seems that the use of written Cantonese is even experiencing modest and gradual expansion back into its ancestral home. For example, Cantonese terms now appear more often in Guangzhou newspapers, though such usage consists of isolated Cantonese terms (only one or so per page, often marked with quotation marks and sometimes supplied with a gloss).[7] Also, young Cantonese speakers on the mainland have also begun to use Cantonese in informal personal written communication, much as it is often used by young people in Hong Kong.[8]

A final reason I predict a continued role for written Cantonese has to do with the continuing gap between written and spoken language in Hong Kong. Despite the introduction of some Putonghua instruction in Hong Kong schools, for most Hong Kong students Standard Chinese remains a written code which is largely divorced from their spoken language. As long as this situation does not change, the basic conditions which make written Cantonese effective as a language of identity remain in place. So barring a dramatic change in Hong Kong language policy; a dramatic increase of the role of Putonghua in Hong Kong schools; or a dramatic decline in the economic fortunes of Hong Kong and Guangzhou, it seems probable that written Cantonese will continue to play a role in the life of Hong Kong, and perhaps even increasingly in Guangdong.

Where Is the Growth of Written Cantonese Going?

If we accept that the role of written Cantonese may continue to expand, the final question is: How far? Is written Cantonese likely to eventually replace Standard Chinese as the written language of Hong Kong or even Guangdong?

Despite my belief that written Cantonese may continue to grow and

develop, I do not believe the final outcome of this shift in social roles is likely to be a replacement of Standard Chinese by written Cantonese, in Hong Kong or anywhere else. As an important language of wider use the practical value of Standard Chinese for people in Hong Kong is too high for the idea of its replacement by written Cantonese to generate much support. Furthermore, the political implications of abandoning the national Chinese written language in favor of a written dialect would also not be acceptable to the majority of people either in Hong Kong or elsewhere in China.

However, the more important point to make is that there is little or no evidence that the replacement of Standard Chinese by written Cantonese is desired by anyone in Hong Kong, including those who regularly use written Cantonese. There is certainly no organized body working for the replacement of Standard Chinese by written Cantonese, and to the extent that expressions of support for written Cantonese appear in Hong Kong's press and media, these voices suggest toleration of its limited use, not its conquest of Standard Chinese.

The final destination of this growth of written Cantonese seems not to be replacement of Standard Chinese. Rather, it appears to be a new diglossic balance which better reflects the identity of Hong Kong's Cantonese-speaking community, and perhaps to some extent that of other Cantonese-speaking areas in China. In this new balance, Standard Chinese would continue to be the language of choice for most texts, especially those with serious or formal purposes. It would also serve as the written language of wider communication for interaction with the broader Chinese-speaking world. Finally, it would serve as a vehicle for expressing the Chinese component of the Hong Kong identity. Written Cantonese, in contrast, is consolidating a limited role in the Hong Kong community in texts that simulate spoken interaction between Cantonese speakers, and in texts for light entertainment purposes. Underlying this, it is becoming the language of choice for informal written interaction between Cantonese speakers, an in-group language that allows Cantonese speakers to express the local Hong Kong component of their identity. Such a diglossic balance of roles reflects the mixed culture and identity of Hong Kong in a way that neither Standard Chinese nor written Cantonese alone are able to do. It seems likely that this new diglossic balance will continue to characterize the language situation in Hong Kong for the foreseeable future.

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. In the Chinese context, the term "dialect" is used to refer to a variety of Chinese that differs significantly from Mandarin in pronunciation, vocabulary, and to some degree in grammar.
2. A complete listing of books mentioned in this book, including both English and Chinese titles, can be found in Appendix 3.
3. The Chinese titles of this and other periodical publications mentioned in this book are listed in Appendix 3.
4. This particular list of article types is drawn from examination of the 11 November 2001 issue of *Apple Daily*.
5. See, for example, DeFrancis (1950: 194); Yuan (1960: 177); Cheung (1985: 191); Ramsey (1987: 99); and Norman (1988: 215).

CHAPTER 2

1. Ferguson defines diglossia as "... a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation" (1959: 336).
2. For additional discussion of differences between H and L, see Fasold (1984: 53) and Trudgill (2000: 96).
3. Chejne (1969: 39–41).
4. Frangoudaki (1992: 366).
5. Alexiou (1982: 162).
6. Keller (1982: 82). Ferguson also mentions Chinese briefly in his 1959 article, proposing the pre-modern situation in China as a further instance of diglossia, with Classical Chinese as the H language and colloquial Mandarin as L; in fact he suggests that it "probably represents diglossia on the largest scale of any attested instance" (337–8).

7. Fasold (1984: 48–50).
8. Hong Kong Government, Census and Statistics Department (2002).
9. Hong Kong Government, Census and Statistics Department (2002).
10. Even this three-level scheme oversimplifies the situation in Hong Kong to some degree. A more detailed description can be found in Luke (1998: 148–9).
11. Situations where H is only used for writing and L only for speaking have been referred to as "biglossia" (Britto 1986: 42).
12. Haas (1982: 25).
13. Cheung (1992: 210).
14. Alexiou (1982: 159); Frangoudaki (1992: 369–70).
15. Rickard (1989: 81).
16. Anderson (1991: 38).
17. Twine (1991: 8); Mair (1994: 731).
18. Gellner (1997: 52).
19. Miller (1995: 33).
20. Hudson (1980: 33).
21. Twine (1991: 37–38).
22. Throughout Asia, Buddhist writings were often among the first vernacular texts to appear in many societies. For discussion of this phenomenon, see Mair (1994).
23. Takeuchi (1999: 9).
24. Twine (1991: 201).
25. Twine (1991: 85, 98).
26. Takeuchi (1999: 36).
27. Baihua is essentially the same written language as Standard Chinese, but it seems inappropriate to use the term "Standard Chinese" in discussing periods before Baihua had become a national standard.
28. Mair (1994: 707–8) argues that Classical Chinese was a drastically abbreviated "sort of demicryptography largely divorced from speech" which descended from oracle shell and bone inscriptions. While granting that it must also have been affected by spoken Chinese, Mair feels the disparity between Classical Chinese and spoken Chinese was always of an unusual order of magnitude.
29. Norman (1988: 111); Hanan (1981: 10–11).
30. Hanan (1981: 14).
31. Gao (1993: 8–10); Lee and Nathan (1985: 380–1).
32. Gunn (1991: 39); Gao (1993: 10).
33. Chen Ping (1999: 70).
34. While the vernacular was promoted in order to make literature a more effective tool for reforming the nation, literature was also used as a vehicle for promoting the vernacular. "In a retrospective essay on the origin of the vernacular language movement, Hu Shi commented explicitly that he and his colleagues sought to promote the vernacular not through appeal to the government and its education system, but rather by creating major works of literature that would appeal to the general reading public and recommend themselves as guides to writing as well as to thinking" (Gunn 1991: 38).
35. Gao (1993: 58).
36. DeFrancis (1984: 249); Chen Ping (1999: 79).
37. For a full taxonomy, see Giles et al. (1977: 309); also Landry and Allard (1994: 22). The Chinese concept of the "competitive ability" (*jingzhengli* 竞爭力) of a

language variety, as used by Li Rulong (1997: 235), describes essentially the same phenomenon.

38. Allard and Landry (1994: 117).
39. See Ye (1996) and Luo (2000) for discussion.
40. Approximately 7.5% of China's population speaks a Wu dialect as home language, as opposed to approximately 4.5 for Cantonese (Summer Institute of Linguistics 2003).
41. Hu ([1926] 1974: 24–25).
42. Hu ([1926] 1974: 33–34); Lu Xun cited in Cheng (1978: 52).
43. Zhang (1983: 19); Duval (1980: 177). Duval notes that *Nine-tailed Turtles* was the most popular of the Wu dialect novels at its time of publication.
44. As in the case of Cantonese southern songs, the brothel setting was probably also important in providing sanction for dialect use. See Chapter 4.
45. Link (1981: 60).
46. Dolezelova-Velingerova (1980: 9).
47. To date the most comprehensive English-language study of written Taiwanese is Henning Klöter's *Written Taiwanese* (2004). Unfortunately, it appeared too late for me to make use of its wealth of information in this book.
48. Yao (1989: 16); Hsiau (2000: 135). See also Van der Loon (1992).
49. Hsiau (2000: 37).
50. Gu (1989: 80); Hsiau (2000: 40–2).
51. Hsiau (2000: 38–41).
52. Hsiau (2000: 45).
53. Hsiau (2000: 44).
54. Hsiau (2000: 54–5).
55. Hsiau (2000: 137).
56. Chen Ping (1999: 122–3); Hsiau (2000: 139).
57. Hsiau (2000: 7; 105).
58. Lin (1988: 13); Song (1988: 194–5); Lin (1989: 142); Lin Qiyang, interview, 5 June 1990.
59. For analysis of the advantages of romanization, see Zheng (1988b: 32).
60. Interestingly, in response to Chen Ruoxi's complaint, advocate of written Taiwanese Lin Yangmin effectively concedes the point, arguing that this just demonstrates the need for promotion of Taiwanese in the education system (1999: 200).
61. In Song Zelai, *A Weak Small People* (*Ruoxiao Minzu* 弱小民族) (Taipei: Qianwei chubanshe, 1987), 173–263.
62. Hsiau (2000: 140–4).
63. Tsao (1999: 349); Hsiau (2000: 131).
64. Tsao (1999: 369).
65. Such textbooks as I have seen include texts in written Taiwanese, and sometimes also in Taiwanese romanization.
66. There is controversy as to the extent to which the prompt books were used by storytellers. For example, Jaroslav Prusek holds that these texts were used by storytellers, though he concedes that they were also intended for a reading public (1970: 427). Patrick Hanan, on the other hand, feels that these texts were primarily intended for a reading public (1981: 9).
67. Hanan (1981: 6); Norman (1988: 111).
68. Hanan (1981: 20).

69. This pattern is similar to that in which vernaculars first appeared in many European nations. See Joseph (1987: 76).
70. Hanan (1981: 10–11).
71. Hanan (1981: 6); Norman (1988: 111).
72. On the idea that a form of diglossia is developing in Hong Kong's written Chinese, see also Zhong (2000: 156).
73. Halliday (1989: 29–30).

CHAPTER 3

1. Another problem with the term "dialect" is that it can carry negative connotations of inferiority; in fact, the sinologist Victor Mair has proposed that in discussion of China the term "dialect" be replaced with the more neutral term "topolect," as he does in Mair (1994) and elsewhere. While acknowledging the problem, I have chosen to continue using the term "dialect" in part because of its familiarity, in part because the social role of Cantonese and other Chinese dialects is more limited than that of Mandarin.
2. DeFrancis (1950: 195; 1984: 39); Deng (1980: 84–5). Incidentally, there are, of course, different sub-dialects of Cantonese, some of which differ considerably from the varieties of Cantonese spoken in Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Historically, however, Cantonese has been relatively homogeneous, and until recent years the form of Cantonese spoken in Guangzhou was clearly the prestige dialect of the region and has provided a regional standard (Norman 1988: 214–5). In recent years, Hong Kong Cantonese has taken over much of this role.
3. Zeng (1982: 343); DeFrancis (1984: 63); Chan and Kwok (1986: 407).
4. Bruche-Schulz (1997: 3011); Matthews and Yip (2001: 266). See Zeng (1982: 358–75) and Matthews and Yip (2001) for a more extensive discussion of grammatical differences between Cantonese and Mandarin. For a comprehensive introduction to Cantonese grammar, see Matthews and Yip (1994).
5. Zhong (1994: 224).
6. Zeng (1982: 343).
7. Obviously the difference apparent here to a reader of English results partly from different romanization systems being used for Cantonese and Mandarin, but even so these renderings give a good idea of how different the words sound.
8. As Hanan (1981: 14) notes, this was also the major difference between classical and vernacular Chinese in traditional Chinese literature.
9. Zhan (1986: 47); Deng (1989: 3); Mai (1993: 66–7). Li Jingzhong (1990: 42) proposes an even higher estimate, suggesting that the level of lexical difference between Cantonese and Mandarin may be in the range of 77 to 98 percent, but his results are biased significantly by the fact that the sample corpus Li uses (Cantonese dictionaries) generally only contain lexical items that are unique to Cantonese.
10. Chan and Kwok (1986: 408); Bauer (1988: 249). See Luke (1998: 148–9) for more detailed analysis of the different registers of speech in Hong Kong, many of which include an admixture of English.
11. 5 a.m., 18 September 1989, Commercial Radio, taped and transcribed by the author.
12. Here and throughout this book, the term "marked Cantonese" refers to use of

characters (and occasionally romanization) which is distinctly Cantonese in the sense that: (1) these characters are unique to written Cantonese, and not found in Standard Chinese; or (2) they are used in a way that represents a distinctly Cantonese usage, and would not normally be acceptable in Standard Chinese. All calculations of percentages of marked Cantonese in this book are based on numbers of marked Cantonese *characters* rather than words (some Cantonese words are multi-syllabic and are written with a combination of two or more characters). When some of the characters in a multi-character Cantonese word are the same as those in a Standard Chinese counterpart, but others are different, I have only counted the latter as "marked Cantonese." See the introduction to Appendix 1 for further discussion.

13. 7 p.m., 10 March 1990. The transcript was supplied by the reporter, and then checked against his actual broadcast.
14. See Appendix 1, Text 12, for discussion.
15. 5.10 p.m., 13 September 1989, Commercial Radio. The program consisted of an interview with a retired police chief.
16. See Appendix 1, Text 11, for discussion.
17. I have only had limited opportunity to test how well readers in mainland China can read texts written entirely in Cantonese. However, in the few informal tests I did run (using an excerpt from *Diary of the Little Man*), I found that readers who could speak Cantonese but had little previous exposure to written Cantonese were able to decode it slowly but accurately. Those who did not speak Cantonese were generally able to figure out much of the main outline of the story, but were also often inaccurate in their explanations of individual sentences. These latter readers reported that they were relying heavily on guessing skills, and that the task was burdensome enough that they would not attempt it unless they had to.
18. See Bauer (1988, especially pp. 257–76) and Luke (1995) for discussion of the various mechanisms by which Cantonese words are represented in written form. Cheung and Bauer (2002) provides the most comprehensive compendium to date of the Chinese characters used to represent Cantonese words.
19. In Bauer's discussion of newly created Cantonese characters (1988: 260–2), he concludes that this is both an important and productive method for the creation of written forms of Cantonese words. Our difference of opinion here is more apparent than real, however, because many characters Bauer classifies as new I have considered to be cases of borrowing for pronunciation. The difference in our classification of such characters is due to the fact that Bauer is concerned primarily with the precise written form of Cantonese characters, and classifies them on that basis. In contrast, here I focus on the underlying mechanisms by which characters are created or chosen.
20. DeFrancis (1984: 84–85; 1989: 99–100). This reluctance to create new characters was stated to me explicitly by Dialect Literature Movement author Hua Jia, who said that when he encountered the problem of not knowing what character to use for a Cantonese word, he avoided creating new characters. He preferred, rather, to work within the framework of already existing characters. Interview, 18 June 1990.
21. As Li (2000: 219) points out, some Cantonese words are difficult to represent in Chinese characters because there is no Standard Chinese character which has a sound close enough to the Cantonese word in question, and romanization is often used for such words. The number of these is, however, not very large.

22. Among the other words that have been represented with single letters are some obscene terms. It may be that the use of romanization in these cases emotionally distances the author and audience somewhat from the impact of taboo terms, but more likely the practice was borrowed from the rather handy English custom of just putting down the first letter of an obscene word and then leaving the rest blank, something that is not easy to do with Chinese characters. For example, see Wu Gun-man's *Growing up in Hong Kong*, pp. 16–18.
23. As K. K. Luke points out, ICQ chats tend to be short and rapid, and romanization is often used for Cantonese words in part because English letters are easier to type rapidly than Chinese characters. Interview, 26 September 2002.
24. Xue (1985a: 22). For more on *The Flowery Scroll*, see Chapter 4.
25. See DeFrancis (1984), Chapters 6 and 7 for discussion.
26. Bauer (1988: 261). Chan and Kwok (1986: 423) note that the "mouth" radical is also often added when Chinese characters are used in Hong Kong to transliterate English words.
27. In Taiwan scholars have played a more active role in the creation and promotion of written Taiwanese, and one result of this is that there is a greater variety of principles being used for character selection/creation. Less educated readers and writers are most likely to choose characters for Taiwanese words on the basis of sound, but such choices are often considered ignorant by scholars and more educated groups (Cheng 1978: 311). For Cantonese examples of such studies, see Luo (1960), Bai (1980) and Tan (1994).
28. Bauer (1988: 261, 276); Li (2000: 206).
29. Huang Xiaoya (2000: 246).
30. Hayford (1987: 152); DeFrancis (1989: 99); Norman (1988: 68).
31. Ramsey (1987: 242–3).
32. DeFrancis (1977: 21–24).
33. Huang Xiaoya (2000: 247).
34. The publishing arm of TVB, Publications Holdings Limited, one of Hong Kong's leading publishers of pocketbooks, took the *Cantonese Dialect Dictionary* as its standard, as did a number of writers associated with Publications Holdings (Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 September 1990; Joseph Yau, interview, 3 July 1990; Ng Chun-bong, interview, 3 July 1990). No other publishers that I spoke with used this dictionary, or any other, as their standard reference.
35. Ng Chun-bong, interview, 3 July 1990.
36. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990; Ng Chun-bong, interview, 3 July 1990.
37. This was one of several series of articles criticizing Cantonese reference books produced by mainland Chinese scholars. Lau's suspicions as to the credentials of the authors of the *Cantonese Dialect Dictionary* typify his attitude toward the other works as well.
38. For example, reference works are quite unanimous in assigning the character 躝 to the word (C) *laan* (to crawl). However, A Foon's *Diary of The Little Man* series uses 賴 instead. We find the same pattern with the word (C) *mit* (to tear off). The reference works use 搣, while *Diary of The Little Man* uses "Mit."
39. For example, in the *Diary of The Little Man* series, the following Cantonese words have varying forms: (C) *caan* (to rush): 鏟 and 「剷」; (C) *daap* (to taste): "DEP" and 嗒; (C) *duk* (to poke): 「篤」 and 「督」; (C) *zat* (to squeeze): 質 and 「質」; (C) *zit* (to tickle): 嘟 and 吱. The same phenomenon can be seen

in other books as well. In Gam Gwok-loeng's *Vanishing from the Human Race*, (C) *di* (a little) is sometimes written as 的 and sometimes as 啲.

40. For another taxonomy, see Liang (1987: 65–6).
41. Hanan (1981: 5; 10). For example, rather than replacing classical Chinese as the language of the classical tale (*chuanqi* 傳奇), use of Baihua appeared in a new kind of vernacular short story (*Baihua xiaoshuo* 白話小說). A number of features which distinguish the classical tale from the vernacular story have to do with the role of the narrator. For example, in classical tales the narrator never addresses the audience, and makes "editorial" comments only before or after the tale. In the vernacular story, on the other hand, the narrator interjects comments and questions to the audience throughout the story. For a complete discussion of these and other differences, see Hanan (1981: 20–26).
42. Lin (1996: 80).
43. Chang (1981: 61–62); Chan (1987: 235).
44. Chan (1987: 243); Deng (1989: 3); Kwo (1992: 205); Zhong and Zhang (1993: 24–26); Zhong (1994: 229); Yu (2001: 2–3).
45. Another feature of the Standard Chinese of Hong Kong and Cantonese-speaking areas in Guangdong province is the use of English vocabulary that was first borrowed into Cantonese, and then worked its way into local Standard Chinese usage. Even in Guangzhou, one frequently finds signs for (C) *diksi* 的士 (taxi) and (C) *baasi* 巴士 (bus) rather than for (M) *chuzuche* 出租車 and (M) *gonggong qiche* 公共汽車, and in Hong Kong the two Cantonese terms have won out completely, becoming the normally used terms for "taxi" and "bus" in any writing, no matter how formal or standard.
46. Zhou (1987); Tong (1989: 15).

CHAPTER 4

1. Siu (1993: 20); Lary (1996: 16).
2. Liang (1982: 88); Huang (1999: 215).
3. Wiens (1967: 132); Huang (1999: 34–35).
4. Huang (1999: 36); 209; Lary (1996: 9).
5. Huang (1999: 215; 219).
6. Wakeman (1966: 43); Jiang and Fang (1993: 121); Faure (1996: 38); Huang (1999: 44); Tsin (1999: 17).
7. Faure (1996: 38).
8. Schafer (1967: 45).
9. Wiens (1967: 143–4).
10. Faure (1996: 38).
11. Schafer (1967: 28); Wiens (1967: 143).
12. Huang (1999: 215); Siu and Faure (1995: 2); Jiang and Fang (1993: 158–66).
13. Wiens (1967: 182).
14. Huang (1999: 210).
15. Faure (1996: 38–9).
16. Siu (1993: 22–23); Faure (1996: 44); Siu and Faure (1995: 11–12).
17. Wakeman (1966: 57, 121); Liang (1982: 78–79). An interesting manifestation of this ability to defy national authority while claiming true patriotism may be found in the Triads of the southeast Chinese coast. These secret societies, common in

both Fujian and Guangdong, were ostensibly devoted to the overthrow of the Qing and the restoration of the Ming, though in practice they were often primarily organized crime groups (Wakeman 1966: 119–20).

18. Liang (1988: 28); Naquin and Rawski (1987: 181).
19. Naquin and Rawski (1987: 180). The most complete account of this warfare is to be found in J.A.G. Roberts, "The Hakka-Punti War" (PhD dissertation, Oxford, 1968).
20. Wakeman (1966: 56–58). The role inter-group conflict played in creation of a distinct Cantonese identity was by no means unique. Despite the fact that Hakka people had been present in southeastern China for centuries, it was only when the Hakka began entering Guangdong in the Ming dynasty and found themselves in conflict with neighboring groups, first the She (畲) people and later other Han Chinese, that a common sense of Hakka identity began to grow. Significantly, Hakka-speaking people in southern Jiangxi who did not experience such conflicts were also slow to develop any sense of Hakka identity (Leong 1997: 35–39; 63; Lutz and Lutz 1998: 11).
21. Vogel (1969: 32); Eastman (1974: 255).
22. Eastman (1974: 255–60). Goodman and Feng (1994: 179) point out that, unlike the several independent dynasties that established themselves in Guangdong over the centuries, which aspired to be national rather than regional governments, Chen Jitang's government in the 1930s attempted to promote a localist political identity. However, they also note that this had much to do with his competition with Chiang Kai-shek. Lary (1996: 18) describes the recent "re-discovery" of Chen by Chinese historians, and the tendency to portray him sympathetically as one who was able to keep the Guangdong economy going during the Depression.
23. Attempts of the national government to assert its control over Guangdong are a major theme of Ezra Vogel's 1969 *Canton Under Communism.*
24. Li (1990: 32): Huang (1999: 91).
25. See also Norman (1988: 210–11) and Bauer and Benedict (1997: xxxix).
26. Mai (1993: 69–70).
27. Liu (2000).
28. Naquin and Rawski (1987: 173).
29. Yang (2000).
30. In a recent research project, when Cantonese, Hakka and Chaozhou people in Guangdong were asked how they determined who belonged in which group, the first criterion cited by most people was language. Blood ties were second, and home region third (Huang 1999: 478).
31. Huang (1999: 217).
32. Wakeman (1966: 57).
33. Li (1989: 1); Goodman and Feng (1994: 178); Huang (1999: 222).
34. Wakeman (1966: 57); Pan (1991: 15); Ching (1996: 54); Fitzgerald (1996: 159).
35. Similar arguments have been made for how it was that the vernacular came to be used in the written languages of other Asian countries. For example, John DeFrancis suggests that early vernacular writing in Vietnamese can also trace its origins to Buddhist literature (1977: 21).
36. Liang (1988: 19).
37. Liang (1978: xiii); Xue (1985a: 108–9).
38. Tan and Tan (1982: 7).

39. Rawski (1979: 6, 116–7); Hegel (1998: 6). While there is no conclusive evidence as to the period when wooden fish books were first published, Liang Peizhi believes it was in the late Ming. In interviews with wooden fish book publishers, he found that they had seen woodblocks carved as early as the late 1500s (1978: 245–47). See also Tan and Tan (1982: 2). Gazetteers also preserve some evidence of distinctive Cantonese writing. For example, *New Words about Guangdong* (*Guangdong Xinyu* 廣東新語) by Qu Dajun (屈大均) (1630–1697) has a section on "local words" (*tu yan* 土言) which includes a number of Cantonese terms. However, the section fails to list many of the common Cantonese terms which were already appearing in wooden fish books, and is thus not a very good indicator of the state of the written language at the time.
40. Rawski (1985a: 25–27).
41. Fu (1949: 42); Liang (1978: xiv, 226, 247–52).
42. Topley (1975: 75); Liang (1978: 232); Rawski (1979: 6); Xue (1985a: 2).
43. Tan and Tan (1982: 2, 16); Xue (1985a: 1); Hu ([1926] 1974: 24–25).
44. Liang (1978: xiii); Xue (1985a: 107).
45. Chen (1998: 289); Chan Sauyan, interview, 12 March 2003; Wong Yiu-kwan, interview, 26 April 2003.
46. Xue (1985a: 108–9). There is not complete agreement as to how the term "wooden fish song" (C: *muk jyu go* 木魚歌) should best be used. Some scholars use it as a general term covering a broad variety of genres (Tan and Tan 1982: 19–20), while others use it in reference to a particular genre of long narrative song (Xue 1985a: 108–9; Liang 1988: 18; Yung 1989: 138). The confusion arises from the fact that there is little difference between the verse structures of the wooden fish songs and southern song genres (Yung 1989: 193).
47. Yung (1989: 138); Xue (1985a: 1–2).
48. Liang (1978: 256–7); Tan and Tan (1982: 17); Xue (1985a: 110); Yung (1989: 139).
49. The English title, *The Flowery Scroll,* is taken from the translation by Sir John Bowring published in London by Wm. H. Allen and Co. in 1868.
50. Xue (1985a: 4); Liang (1988: 18); Ye (1996: 59).
51. Tan and Tan (1982: 17); Xue (1985a: 2). There may have been two authors; see Xue (1985a: 4) and Ye (1996: 59) for discussion.
52. For explanation of what constitutes "marked Cantonese" see Chapter 3, and also the introduction to Appendix 1.
53. Xue (1985a: 2). One interesting measure of the influence of the work is perhaps the number of times it has been translated into Western languages. A prose translation into English was published by Sir John Bowring as *The Flowery Scroll* (London: Wm. H. Allen and Co., 1868). Earlier verse translations into English (*Chinese Courtship* by P. P. Thomas) and Dutch (*Geschiedenis van het gebloemde Brief Papier,* by "Mr Schlegel") had also been published (Bowring 1868: v–vi).
54. For discussion of different theories, see Chen (1998: 280).
55. Liang feels that local folk songs formed the base of the southern song genre, and discusses the arguments of other scholars who feel that the southern song owed more to other genres imported from outside Guangdong. In either case, the consensus is that elements of both local and outside genres went into the formation of southern songs. See Liang (1988: 31–33) for further discussion of this theory. For alternative theories, see Chen Zhiqing (1999: 19).
56. Fu (1949: 44); Liang (1988: 24).

57. For example, the *Xiangjiang Wanbao*, a Hong Kong newspaper which was published between 1922–24, included a southern song, a dragon boat song, or a Cantonese love song in its entertainment section almost every day.
58. Fu (1949: 44); Xu (1958: 30); Liang (1978: 256–7); Tan and Tan (1982: 17); Yung (1989: 138).
59. This was the highest national imperial examination.
60. For discussion of this theory, see Liang (1988: 85, 98–99) and Tan and Tan (1982: 23–25). Another possibility is that the author was a native of Hangzhou writing under the name Liao Lianxian (Ye 1996: 53).
61. Here and following I use the term "Standard Chinese" to refer to a written language which was somewhere between Classical Chinese and modern Mandarin. As Hanan notes, early "Baihua" texts were actually written in a mix of Baihua and Classical Chinese (1981: 6–7). My point is to distinguish between Cantonese dialect and forms of written Chinese used widely throughout China.
62. Interview, 17 May 1990.
63. Wong Yiu-kwan, interview, 26 April 2003. See Yung (1989, Chapter 9), for discussion of padding syllables as used in Cantonese opera.
64. Liang (1988: 19); Chen Zhiqing (1999: 20); Yung (1989: 138); Ye (1996: 49–50).
65. Fu (1949: 44). This is not to say that dragon boat songs were never published. One collection from the late 1800s, *Improved Lingnan Notes* (C: *Goiloeng Lingnaam Ziksi* 改良嶺南即事) contains a number which are very colloquial. (Reprint; Macao: Xinsheng chubanshe, pp. 24–28).
66. Liang (1988: 24–25); Chen Zhiqing (1999: 20).
67. Liang (1988: 149, 151).
68. This was the degree granted for passing the imperial examination at the provincial level.
69. Jiang and Fang (1993: 498). For biographical information, see Tan and Tan (1982: 24); and Liang (1988: 156).
70. Chen Zhiqing (1999: 23). The translation of *Jyut Au* as "Cantonese Love Songs" follows Sir Cecil Clementi's 1904 translation and also Peter Morris' 1992 translation. Liang (1988: 165) notes that there was at least one other writer of Cantonese love songs who was a contemporary of Zhao Ziyong, a holder of the *jinshi* degree named Feng Xun (馮詢). Unfortunately, however, Feng's works are now all lost.
71. See Liang (1988: 215) for discussion.
72. Liang (1988: 228–9).
73. Clementi (1904: 1); Chen (1986: 8–9). Over ten editions of the *Cantonese Love Songs* have survived, and according to Chen (1986: 5–6) even non-Cantonese speakers have read and enjoyed these verses. Hu Shi, for one, was familiar with them and cited them as the leading example of Cantonese dialect literature ([1926] 1974: 27).
74. For text, see Liang (1988: 235–6).
75. This single case is the usage of *zai* as the preposition of place, and even this case is not clear. While *hai* is the more common preposition of place in Cantonese, even today sometimes *zai* (C: *zoi*) will be heard, and it often appears in texts which are otherwise quite purely Cantonese, a fact that would tend to indicate that it is generally not considered marked Standard Chinese.
76. The edition of *Cantonese Love Songs* found in volume 56 of the Folklore and Folk-

literature Series edited by Lou Zukuang [Lou Tsu-k'uang] (Taipei: Orient Culture Service, 1971) includes the dialect term glossary, which explains 74 Cantonese words and expressions. Unfortunately, while *More Cantonese Love Songs* is included in the same publication, its dialect glossary is not included.

77. Yet a third possibility is that the glossaries reflect the needs of Cantonese people living in Shanghai, Beijing and other places who might have been interested in such works but not gained literacy in Cantonese. Chan Sau-yan, interview, 12 March 2003.
78. A substantial literature in Cantonese was produced by missionaries in the late 1800s, written for the most part in Chinese characters, and this book may be an example of such efforts. Ball (1894: vii–xvi) provides an annotated bibliography of 64 texts either written in or translated into Cantonese by missionaries. Unfortunately, Ball provides no information as to how widely these texts were circulated.
79. By contrast, the romanization system for the Xiamen (Amoy) dialect of Fujian devised in 1850 still plays a role in the church in Taiwan today, and outside the church romanized Taiwanese is now advocated by a number of writers as the best system for writing down Taiwanese words for which there are no agreed upon characters (Zheng 1988b: 32).
80. This text is reproduced in volume 122, set 7, of the Folklore and Folk Literature Series of Peking University and Association for Chinese Folklore edited by Lou Zukuang [Lou Tsu-k'uang] (Taipei: Orient Cultural Service, 1974). While no publication information is given, it was probably published in 1929, the same date as other materials in the volume. It could not be much earlier as Nanjing is referred to as China's capital in the text.
81. For biographical information on these two men, see Luk (1984).
82. This was the degree granted for passing the imperial examination at the county level.
83. There is some doubt here, because the copies in my possession were rescued from a library garbage heap some years ago by David Faure, and the two texts which I discuss in this paragraph may or may not have been published in one single bound volume along with Chen Ronggun's *Essentials for Women and Children.* The string binding had deteriorated, so it was no longer clear what exactly had been bound to what; they seem to have originally been published separately, and then republished together in 1919 by the Shanghai Geyan Congjishe. The similarity of the titles of these books to Chen's other texts also suggests that Chen was the author.
84. Ching (1996: 56).
85. Lai and Huang (1988: 12).
86. Liang (1982: 7, 174); Liang (1988: 259); Yung (1989: 9).
87. Liang (1982: 153–4). For the story of Li Wenmao, see Lai and Huang (1988: 13–17); also Lai (2001: 127–31).
88. Liang (1982: 55–56).
89. Liang (1988: 259–60).
90. Lai and Huang (1988: 26–27); Lai (2001: 206).
91. Liang (1982: 174, 179); Liang (1988: 20).
92. Liang (1982: 179); Liang (1988: 259–60).
93. Liang (1982: 177).

94. Huang (1971: iv, ix).
95. Yung (1989: 18).
96. The dialogue in this particular selection is entirely spoken rather than sung, but the general pattern of dialect use shown is not unique to spoken dialogue sections in Cantonese opera.
97. Hayes (1985: 91) describes this as an early twentieth-century collection, but it is older. In 1904 Ball guessed that it was published "in the last century or two" (xxi). Ogaeri dates it sometime after 1871 (1964: 172), and Ye (1996: 315) dates it to 1864. Huang (2002: 53) suggests this was the first novel written in a style called *saam kap dai* that combines Classical Chinese, Standard Chinese, and Cantonese. For more on *saam kap dai*, see Chapter 6.
98. Ye (1996: 315).
99. Ball (1904: xxii).
100. Ye (1996: 305). Hayes also mentions a collection of stories called *Xun huan jian* which are written to some extent in Cantonese and, unlike *Casual Chats in the Colloquial*, actually set in Guangdong (1985: 91).

CHAPTER 5

1. As a very large percentage of the Chinese laborers working in the United States were from the Pearl River delta region, it is not surprising that Guangzhou became one of the main centers of the boycott movement. See Liang (1988: 266–74) for a detailed account of the role of traditional verse forms in the boycott.
2. Liang (1988: 267).
3. Ye (1996: 52).
4. *Xiangjiang Wanbao*, 4 June 1922, p. 4.
5. *Xiangjiang Wanbao*, 3 May 1922, p. 1.
6. This journal only lasted a few months and ceased publication in 1933 when Ouyang Shan and other leftists had to flee Guangzhou (Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990). The journal evidently had little influence (Jing 1949c: 6).
7. Mao Dun was in Hong Kong in 1938 and was the editor of one of *Lih Pao*'s feature sections (Lu 1987: 145).
8. See page four of the 5 July, 12 July, and 14 November 1938 issues of *Lih Pao* respectively.
9. *Lih Pao*, 9 July 1938, p. 4.
10. Despite the apparent lack of success of the *Lih Pao* experiment, it may have had some influence on the Dialect Literature Movement through Mao Dun. In his role of editor on the *Lih Pao* staff, he would almost certainly have been aware of the column, and in his postwar involvement with the Dialect Literature Movement it is reasonable to assume that he would have passed this experience on to other writers more deeply involved in the movement than he was.
11. It should be noted, however, that some early proponents of Baihua, including Qian Xuantong (錢玄同) and Hu Shi, had a relatively positive attitude toward the inclusion of dialect terms in Baihua (Gao 1993: 63–64).
12. Ramsey (1987: 12).
13. Gunn (1991: 46); Holm (1986: 7–8).
14. Gunn Piing (1991: 46); Chen Ping (1999: 80); Ramsey (1987: 13); Gao (1993: 119).
15. Gao (1993: 117–8, 135).

16. Holm (1986: 8–10, 13–15).
17. For a detailed summary of the history of the DLM, see Huang (1988: 158–72).
18. Jing (1949c: 6). It later became the Dialect Literature Research Society (*Fangyan wenxue yanjiu hui* 方言文學研究會).
19. Liu (1997: 129).
20. Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990; Lou Qi, interview, 19 June 1990.
21. Jing (1949c: 6) lists seventeen names of writers of either theoretical or literary works — eighteen including himself. "DLM participants" Hua Jia and Lou Qi stated that even they did not know who many of these writers were, citing frequent use of pen-names as one reason. Interviews, 18 June 1990; 19 June 1990.
22. Feng and Quan (1948: 48); Hua (1949: 40).
23. Cited in Huang (1949: 18–19); Mao (1948: 16).
24. Liu (1997: 127).
25. Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990; Lou Qi, interview, 19 June 1990.
26. Liu (1997: 137).
27. Liu (1997: 140).
28. See the "People's Wind" (*Min feng* 民風) section of the 17 March 1949 issue of *Sing Tao Jih Pao* and the "Literary Weekly Supplement" (*Wenshi zhoukan* 文史周刊) section of the 17 January 1948 issue of *Wah Kiu Yat Po* for examples. While it seems odd that papers which tended to lean to the right politically would publish material written by leftist writers, the editors of the supplement sections tended to be more liberal than the other editors (Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990).
29. Jing (1949c: 6).
30. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
31. Lin (1947: 7); Hua (1947: 22).
32. Lou Qi, interview, 19 June 1990.
33. *Ta Kung Pao*, 9 March 1949, p. 7; *Fangyan Wenxue* (1949: 146–50).
34. First installment, *Zheng Bao*, 29 November 1947, p. 27; *Ta Kung Pao*, 29 June 1949, p. 7. Also in Hua (1949: 117–37).
35. *Ta Kung Pao*, 9 March 1949, p. 7; and *Ta Kung Pao*, 23 March 1949, p. 7. Also in Hua (1949: 61–67).
36. An interesting parallel is Hu Shi's famous 1917 article "A Preliminary Discussion of Literary Reform" (*Wenxue gailiang chuyi* 文學改良芻議) which advocated that China should replace Classical Chinese with Baihua. The article itself was written in Classical Chinese.
37. Hua (1947: 5), Hua (1949: 22); Jing (1949a: 4).
38. Chen Canyun's "Third Aunt Yang" is one rare example.
39. Hua (1949: 40).
40. Hua (1947: 10); Hua (1949: 40); Jing (1949b: 7); Huang (1949: 26).
41. Feng and Quan (1948: 46). The term "mosquito press" is borrowed from Link (1981: 118). For discussion of the mosquito press in Hong Kong, see Chapter 6.
42. Cited in Mao (1948: 16). One issue which the DLM writers did not discuss was the extent to which these other "dialect" works were actually written in dialect. As we shall see in Chapter 6, the dialect works published in the mosquito press were written in a mix of Standard Chinese and dialect, and were thus quite different in their language from the works of the DLM writers.
43. Frankly, I must confess some sympathy for Lan Ling as I am also not entirely sure what the title means. In a later *Zheng Bao* article (15 November 1947) Hua Jia mocks Lan Ling for being unable to read the title, but Hua never explains it either.

44. *Zheng Bao*, 8 November 1947. Ironically, however, the letter itself is written in rather formal Standard Chinese.
45. Huang (1988: 161).
46. Hua Jia (1949: 34–35).
47. Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990; Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
48. Holm (1986: 13).
49. Feng and Quan (1948: 53).
50. Fu (1947: 16); Feng and Quan (1948: 47); Mao (1948: 17).
51. Hua (1949: 22); Liu (1949: 6).
52. To the best of my knowledge, neither Lan Ling nor Lin Luo was able to publish anything related to the DLM after 1947, and in Jing Wen's 1949 list of the movement's major theorists they are not included despite the amount of debate generated by their 1947 articles (1949c: 6). Even though they were silenced fairly early in the movement, the fact that in 1949 Hua Jia still felt the need to refute their views suggests that other writers shared their feelings on this issue.
53. See Hua Jia's "Counting Dead Grass" (C: *Syun sei cou* 算死草) in Hua (1949: 100–16); Chen Canyun's "Third Aunt Yang" (*Ta Kung Pao*, 9 March 1949, p. 7); and Gan Niu's "The Strange Case of the Guangzhou Baby Murder" (C: *Joengseng saat jing kei on* 羊城殺嬰奇案) (First installment, *Zheng Bao*, 3 April 1948, p. 27).
54. Huang (1988: 167–8).
55. Hua Jia, interview, 18 June 1990.
56. Hua (1987: 7).
57. Hua (1949: 63–64); Huang Sheng (1949: 24).
58. Hua (1949: 34–35).
59. Lou Qi, interview, 19 June 1990.
60. Hua (1949: 61).
61. Hua (1949: 62).
62. Lou Qi, interview, 19 June 1990.
63. Hua Jia said he did not recognize any of the names of the writers who wrote dialect works in the *Nanfang Ribao* in 1950 and 1951. Interview, 18 June 1990.
64. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
65. Of the writers and newspaper personnel I talked to in Hong Kong, most had never even heard of the DLM, or remembered it only vaguely. The exceptions were all people who had been involved in leftist politics, such as Cheung Chor, editor of the *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*. As a youth he studied the DLM works while working in a factory, and even wrote dragon boat songs in that style. His interest in dialect writing, and the influence it has had on *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*'s policies toward dialect material, were the one concrete legacy I was able to find of the DLM's influence on the growth of written Cantonese. Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990.
66. For the beer advertisement, see *Nanfang Ribao*, 10 March 1951.
67. DeFrancis (1984: 226).
68. Peterson (1994: 934–5).
69. Yu et al. (1979: 462); Hayford (1987: 167).
70. For example, see Chen Canyun's 1960 "Duck-House Notes" (*Yaliao ji shi* 鴨寮記事). There are four dialect terms used in a 13-page story, all footnoted. In *Guangdong Zhong-duanpian Xiaoshuo Xuan* (廣東中短片小說選), vol. 2 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1979), pp. 33–46.

71. Yang Chonghua, interview, 18 June 1990.
72. Dai (1987: 24).
73. Tang and Tu (2000).

CHAPTER 6

1. Fonoroff (1988: 297).
2. Li Jiayuan (1989: 31).
3. See Link (1981: 18–19) for discussion of the mosquito press in Shanghai.
4. Choi notes the predominance of Cantonese people, especially those from Hong Kong, in the early Mandarin as well as Cantonese film industry, and attributes this to the greater familiarity of the Cantonese with Western culture (1990: 63).
5. Various explanations have been offered for the origin of the term *saam kap dai.* At a dinner with several of the "elder statesmen" of Hong Kong's newspaper world, Hon Zung-syun (韓中旋), editor of *Sing Pao Daily*; Leung Tol (梁濤), best known as the columnist Lou Gam (魯金); and the columnist Lau Sing (劉晟), the following two explanations were offered to me. One possibility is that the term may somehow be derived from the traditional Chinese examination system. In Cantonese, the three top places in the provincial examinations are known collectively as the (C) *saam jyun kap dai* (三元及第), or (C) *saam kap dai* (三及第) for short. A second explanation is that the term comes from a kind of porridge eaten in Guangdong which is made with three different kinds of pig innards and is called (C) *saam kap dai zuk* (三及第粥) or (C) *kap dai zuk* (及第粥). A final possible explanation, suggested in Huang (2002: 3) is that the term originally referred to badly cooked rice that had three levels: uncooked on top, cooked in the middle, and burned on the bottom.
6. The Classical Chinese elements are generally particles, such as (M) *ye* 也 and (M) *yi* 矣 , used at the ends of sentences, and (M) *yue* 曰 (to say) which is normally used to introduce quotations.
7. Such as (M) *yue* 曰, (M) *yun* 云 , (M) *yi* 矣, and *ke fou* 可否.
8. Li Jiayuan (1989: 29–30).
9. Mao (1948: 6); Feng and Quan (1948: 46); Jing (1949a: 10).
10. Even in 1938, (C) Jam Wu-faa (任護花), the same man who was later to start *Hung Lok*, started a short-lived newspaper called *Xian Dao* (先導) which made considerable use of *saam kap dai.* Huang (2002: 92).
11. The focus of the paper on the working class is suggested by one regular column called "A Record of Workers' Grievances" (C: *Daagungzai sou jyun luk* 打工仔訴冤錄). As the writer of the 10 August 1947 column asserts, *Hung Lok* is the only place a poor worker can go to have his case heard.
12. One interesting point is that the word (C) *saau* 哨 (to skim — in reading) is marked in brackets, probably indicating that this is a term the author felt readers might not be familiar with, and that they needed to be warned to pronounce this word rather than read it for its normal meaning, "to whistle."
13. This last-mentioned feature was cited in an article by Mao Dun as an example of the success of many urban writers (*shimin zuojia* 市民作家) (1948: 6).
14. To some extent, popular kungfu novels (*wuxia xiaoshuo* 武俠小說) were also a part of the history of published Cantonese in this period. While most novels in this genre did not use Cantonese, the books of authors such as (C) Chan Ging (陳勁;

pen-name *Ngo si saanjan* 我是山人, "The Mountain Man"), were written in a *saam kap dai* style that included some Cantonese.

15. Li Jiayuan (1989: 63).
16. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
17. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
18. This honor may belong to odd opinion columns written by (C) Gam Ngaa-ji (金牙二) in the mosquito press newspaper *Xian Dao* in the late 1930s. Huang (2002: 92).
19. For a collection of Saam So's articles, see *Selected Odd Opinions of San Su* (C: *Saam So gwaaileon syun* 三蘇怪論選) (Hong Kong: Zuojia shuwu, 1975). For English translation of one of Saam So's odd opinion articles, see *Renditions* 29 & 30: 68–70.
20. For example, (C) Haa Gong (哈公), one of Hong Kong's better-known odd opinion columnists, more often wrote without using Cantonese than with it.
21. Interview, 3 July 1990.
22. Gou Dak-hung (Ginggei Laa), *The Stockbroker's Diary* (C: *Ginggei jatgei* 經紀日記) (Hong Kong: Dagong shuju, 1953).
23. For a collection of Haa Gong's odd opinion articles, some of which contain Cantonese, see Haa Gong, *Haa Gong's Odd Opinions* (*Haa Gong gwaaileon* 哈公怪論) (Hong Kong: Xingji chuban youxian gongsi, 1986). For English translations of Haa Gong columns, see *Renditions* 29 & 30: 320–28; and *Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience*, edited by Geremie Barme and John Minford (New York: Hill and Wang, 1988).
24. Among the mass-market newspapers, through the 1980s, *Oriental Daily* published a column called "Third Uncle's Odd Opinions" (C: *Saam Suk gwaaileon* 三叔怪論), later replaced by "Brother Liao's Odd Opinions" (C: *Liu Go gwaaileon* 了哥怪論). *Sing Pao Daily* ran the column "Chats" (C: *Taam tin* 談天), and *Tin Tin Daily* had one called "Sound from Beyond the String" (C: *Sin ngoi jam* 絃外音). Among leftist newspapers during the same period, *Wen Wei Po* ran a column called "Ms Lu's Odd Opinions" (C: *Luk neoisi gwaaileon* 陸女士怪論) which had some of the characteristics of the odd opinion genre. A column which appeared in *Ta Kung Pao* in the mid-1980s, "Go Naa's Notes" (C: *Gonaa saugei* 歌娜手記), was also arguably at least descended from the odd opinion tradition. While it used little Classical Chinese, it did introduce direct speech with the classical *yue* 曰, and while the author did not refer to herself by name, she continued the tradition of strong narrator presence by writing in the first person.
25. Interview, 3 July 1990.
26. Interview, 10 July 1990.
27. For example, as of the early 2000s, *Oriental Daily* (東方日報) had an odd opinion column entitled "The Crow's Odd Opinions" (*Wu Ngaa gwaaileon* 烏鴉怪論), and *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報) had a column entitled "GG's Tidbits" (*GG sai jyu* GG 細語) with all the traits of an odd discourse column.
28. Ng (1989: 392); Rafferty (1989: 44).
29. Vogel (1989: 58); Rafferty (1989: 65).
30. Cheung (1985: 99).
31. Luk (1989: 55–56).
32. Chan and Kwok (1986: 407); Chen (1989: 33).
33. Zou (1989: 3).

34. Vogel (1989: 52–3, 61).
35. Siu (1996: 83).
36. Lau and Kuan (1988: 2, 181).
37. See, for example, Bolton and Kwok (1990: 65); Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (1996: 7); Public Opinion Programme (1998); Brewer (1999: 94); Tong et al. (1999).
38. Choi (1990: 70–1).
39. Chan and Choi (1989: 294).
40. Choi (1990: 72).
41. Fonoroff (1988: 306).
42. Choi (1990: 68–170).
43. Fonoroff (1988: 306); Choi (1990: 09, 73).
44. Liu (1984: 21). Kwan Wing-kei noted that it was only in the 1980s that songs in Cantonese gained widespread acceptance. Interview, 25 May 1990.
45. Siu (1996: 84).
46. Ng Chun-bong, interview, 3 July 1990; Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
47. Choi (1990: 73). For example, the (C) *mou lei tau* 無厘頭 "nonsense humor" style of Chow Sing-chi's (Zau Sing-ci 周星馳) films are rich in such word play.
48. J. Chan (1987: 2–13).
49. Chan and Choi (1989: 312).
50. Steven Yao, interview, 25 May 1990.
51. Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990.
52. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990. Fung noted that the newspaper considered Cantonese acceptable in columns which are not considered very serious, mainly those intended for entertainment.
53. Rafferty (1989: 31–32).
54. Leung Tol, interview, 3 July 1990. Leung noted that many of the early "horse classic" writers were more familiar with horses than with the rules of proper written Chinese, a judgment shared by Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990. Leung also argued that because both races and soccer matches were broadcast over the radio, people were accustomed to hearing reports of these events in Cantonese and were thus more accepting of Cantonese in written reports as well.
55. See *Hong Kong Economic Journal* 3 July 1980, p. 3, for example.
56. *Hong Kong Commercial Daily,* 5 January 1970, p. 2.
57. See *Hong Kong Commercial Daily,* 4 January 1975, p. 1, for example.
58. In the earliest issue of *Tin Tin Daily* I was able to locate (1 April 1978), there was also a Playboy advertisement with a Cantonese line in large print, and two large advertisements (which had Cantonese in a speech bubble) for a restaurant called the "Foreign Devil Street Stall" (C: *Gwailou daai paai dong* 鬼佬大牌檔). Unfortunately, *Tin Tin Daily* did not fulfill the promise of this colorful start, and later issues show its Cantonese advertisements to be rather more standard and tame.
59. Much of my information about comics in the 1970s comes from a 1974 report entitled "Sex and Violence in Comics" (*Gongzaishu zhi baoli ji seqing* 公仔書之暴力及色情).
60. Gongzaishu (1974: 3, 22–28).
61. Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
62. Andy Wong, interview, 16 July 1990.

63. Figures for number of columns containing Cantonese per day are approximate. Features regularly appear and disappear in Hong Kong newspapers, and columnists are not always consistent in their choice of style or language.
64. Chan and Choi (1989: 312).
65. To some extent, the relatively large number of Cantonese features in top-selling mass-market newspapers is accounted for by the fact that the mass-market papers tended to have many pages, hence more features than some other newspapers such as *Express* or *Jig Yip Ma Po*. However, some newspapers with relatively few Cantonese features, such as *Ming Pao Daily* and *Sing Tao Jih Pao* were also large newspapers with many pages, so in these cases the difference in total Cantonese use was accounted for by policy rather than size of the newspaper.
66. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 27 September 1990, p. 26.
67. Chan and Choi (1989: 312).
68. Leung Shu-chiu, interview, 9 July 1990. Hon Zung-syun, editor of *Sing Pao Daily* also attributed the success of his paper (it had the second largest circulation in Hong Kong through the 1980s) to the fact that it was responsive to the culture of Hong Kong, a culture which he explicitly argued was not simply Chinese but rather something unique and distinctive. Interview, 7 July 1990.
69. Steven Yao, interview, 25 May 1990.
70. *Sing Pao Daily*, 13 September 1989, p. 32.
71. *Tin Tin Daily*, 13 September 1989.
72. Like odd opinion articles, "Notes" articles are also generally written by upper-level members of the newspaper staff. Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990.
73. See *Nan Bei Ji*, 16 October 1982, p. 2, and 16 March 1986, p. 8, for examples.
74. It is not unusual even for Hong Kong publications which are written entirely in Chinese to have an English title along with a Chinese title. In fact, for some Chinese publications like *Movie* and *Fun Magazine*, the English title is displayed far more prominently on the cover than the Chinese title.
75. Cheung (1985: 97).
76. See *City*, October 1984, p. 8; December 1984, p. 8; and October 1989, p. 46.
77. See, for example, the January 1990 special issue on young Yuppies. Incidentally, the English word "Yuppie" is generally used, even in Chinese text.
78. Cheung (1985: 91).
79. *City*, January 1980, p. 91.
80. *City*, December 1982, p. 30. For another article defending *City*'s liberal approach to use of dialect, see Ye (1981: 82).
81. In a 12 June 1990 interview with Joseph Yau, one of the founders of *City* and a frequent contributor during its early years, he noted that the magazine never had a formal language policy and that there was considerable diversity of viewpoints within the staff. Support for the views he presented in his December 1982 article was by no means unanimous.
82. Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
83. Liang (1989: 5).
84. Among the better-known pocketbooks writers are numbered one college professor, a CPA, and a middle school Chinese teacher. To the best of my knowledge, most pocketbooks writers are graduates of tertiary institutions.
85. Luke (1995: 102).
86. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.

87. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
88. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
89. Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
90. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
91. Liang (1989: 5).
92. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
93. Lo Wai-luen, interview, 13 June 1990; Luke (1995: 1).
94. Liang (1989: 6).
95. Interview, 10 July 1990.
96. Interview, 10 July 1990.
97. Ng Chun-bong, interview, 10 July 1990; Joseph Yau, interview, 12 June 1990; Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
98. Tsui (2000: 3).
99. Lee (1992: 398).
100. Public acceptance of use of Cantonese in quotations now seems quite widespread. For example, one school teacher I interviewed noted that while she is generally opposed to use of written Cantonese in the media, she can accept its use in direct quotations as long as no foul language is involved. Fok Lai-zan, interview, 24 September 2003.
101. Chen (1993: 216). Schools generally try to prohibit students from reading *Yes!* and similar magazines, though this is generally more because of their content than because they use so much written Cantonese. Kwok Wing-ki, interview, 14 September 2002. Chung Ling-sung, interview, 26 September 2002.
102. 21 July 1992 issue.
103. 25 February 2000 issue.
104. Chin (1997: 87).
105. Shi (1999: 56).
106. Shi (1999: 2).
107. Chin (1997: 82).
108. K. K. Luke, interview, 26 September 2002; Stephen Matthews, interview, 26 September 2002; Leung Wai-mun, interview, 26 September 2002.
109. Bauer and Mo (2001: 1).
110. Huang (2000: 354) lists more than forty monolingual Cantonese dictionaries that have been published since the 1930s, more than half since 1990. Many of these, however, have been produced in mainland China, and have thus had relatively little impact on the development of written Cantonese in Hong Kong.
111. K. K. Luke, however, notes that the *Hong Kong Style Cantonese Dictionary* has fewer entries than the Rao et al.'s *Cantonese Dialect Dictionary* (1981), and is thus unlikely to thoroughly replace it. Interview, 26 September 2002.
112. As Stephen Matthews points out, the fact that the grammar does not include Chinese characters limits its appeal to Chinese readers, so most buyers have tended to be English-speakers who are studying Cantonese. Interview, 26 September 2002.
113. Hu (1994: 25). Increasing interest in this romanization scheme from the Hong Kong government may eventually lead to a larger role for it in Hong Kong, as may its future adoption by software designers as an input method for computers. K. K. Luke, interview, 26 September 2002; Stephen Matthews, interview, 26 September 2002.
114. As of 2004, the website is: www.info.gov.hk/digital21/eng/hkscs/download.html.

115. See Yau (1992: 6) and Chin (1997: 80) for expression of such concerns.
116. I make this claim realizing full well that Cantonese has so far only "proven itself" in light entertaining texts. However, in theory at least, formal texts written in Cantonese should be easier to read than colloquial Cantonese texts because formal Cantonese is closer to Standard Chinese than is colloquial Cantonese (Bauer 1988: 249).

CHAPTER 7

1. Joseph (1987: 38); Crystal (2000: 138).
2. Ho (1976: 551–4); Harrell (1993: 93–94); Lewis (1999: 339); Hansen (2000: 104).
3. Ramsey (1987: 3–4); Fitzgerald (1996: 13).
4. DeFrancis (1984: 225).
5. DeFrancis (1984: 226); Hayford (1987: 167).
6. Fitzgerald (1996: 14).
7. See Li Yunhan (1997: 190) and Pei (1997: 34) for views on the proper use of dialect in Chinese literature.
8. Chen Ping (1999: 118).
9. Chan Chee-shing (1987: 242); Yu (1987: 229): Kwan-Terry and Luke (1997: 291–2).
10. Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990; Leung Tol, interview, 26 June 1990; Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990. See also Chen (1985: 85) and Deng (1980: 86).
11. Kwok Wing-ki, interview, 14 September 2002; Fok Lai-zan, interview, 24 September 2002. For examples of such accusations, see Yin (1981: 38–40); Yang (1982: 36); Lin (1986: 116); Liu (1986: 79): He (1987: 39).
12. Chan Man-hung, interview, 12 July 1990; Robert Lord, interview, 17 July 1990. Kwan-Terry and Luke (1997: 292).
13. Fu (1975: 85–86; 1987: 28–29); Liang et al. (2001: 2).
14. T'sou (1985: 16); Zou [T'sou] (1989: 3).
15. Si (1981: 101); Tong (1989: 14).
16. Deng (1980: 87); Chan Chee-shing (1987: 243); Chen (1988: 18); Li (1988: 42).
17. Chang (1981: 61–62); Chan Chee-shing (1987: 235).
18. Deng (1980: 87); Li (1988: 41–42). While Deng does not stress the value of a knowledge of spoken Mandarin in the process of learning to write Standard Chinese, he does note that knowledge of written Standard Chinese would facilitate students' acquisition of spoken Mandarin.
19. Kang (2000: 7–9); Yu (2001: 2).
20. Zhong and Zhang (1993: 17); Kwo (1992: 205); Huang (1998: 3); Liang et al. (2001: 4).
21. See also Yang (1982: 37); Fu (1987: 29); Zhou (1987: 71); Deng (1989: 3).
22. Deng (1989: 3).
23. Kang (2000: 10); Yu (2001: 2).
24. See also Kwo (1992: 209); Yu (2001: 3). As more teachers in Hong Kong have studied Mandarin (Putonghua) in recent years, the ease with which they can determine what is and is not acceptable as Standard Chinese is also increasing. Chung Ling-sung, interview, 26 September 2002.
25. Yang (1987: 53).

26. Liang (1987: 66). Similarly, Zheng Liangwei points out that for more than twenty years after 1945, Taiwan's noted authors were almost all native Mandarin speakers from outside Taiwan, and feels that even now the ability of Taiwanese authors to break into the creative writing scene is somewhat hampered by their non-native Standard Chinese skills (1984: 5).
27. Interview, 3 July 1990.
28. Interview, 13 June 1990.
29. Interview, 18 June 1990. This view was echoed by Guangzhou publisher and author Yang Chonghua (interview, 18 June 1990), and also by the Dialect Literature Movement writer Lou Qi, who commented on the unusual difficulty Cantonese speakers seem to have in learning to write Standard Chinese (interview, 19 June 1990).
30. Choi Po-king, interview, 29 November 1989; Joseph Yau, interview, 12 June 1990.
31. As LePage and Tabouret-Keller (1985: 188) note: "For some people in the world it is true that one particular variety of linguistic behavior has a peculiar force and intimacy from being powerfully associated with early childhood ..."
32. Zhong (1994: 227). As David Li points out, an additional reason why Hong Kong people may prefer to use Cantonese terms to Standard Chinese equivalents is that the Standard Chinese "equivalents," having arisen in a cultural context different from that of Hong Kong, may actually not mean exactly the same thing as the Cantonese term in question (personal communication).
33. Writers to whom I spoke generally felt that the only real difficulty involved in learning to write in Cantonese was that of choosing characters for less common dialect terms. Joseph Yau (pen-names Gu Sai-mung, Wu Gun-man), for example, noted that the only composition problem he faced when working in Cantonese was that of finding characters for obscure dialect words, a problem he can generally solve by reference to a dictionary. Interview, 12 June 1990. When faced with the same problem, Ng Chun-bong (pen-name Ng Hau) said he often simply avoids the obscure word, partly out of concern that if he does not know the character, readers might not know it either. Interview, 3 June 1990. Chan Hing-kai (pen-name A Foon) said he usually either spells such words out in romanization or simply uses another character which has the same sound. Interview, 10 July 1990. None of the above said they found learning to write Cantonese difficult.
34. This is the experience described to me by a number of people in Hong Kong. Kwok Wing-ki, interview, 14 September 2002; Fok Lai-zan, interview, 24 September 2002; Leung Wai-mun, interview, 26 September 2002. Incidentally, it also describes my own experience of learning to read written Cantonese.
35. Kwok Wing-ki, interview, 14 September 2002; Fok Lai-zan, interview, 24 September 2002; Leung Wai-mun, interview, 26 September 2002. Discussions I had with university and middle school students elicited very similar responses.
36. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Hu Shi felt that heavy use of dialect was a major reason for the low readership of *Shanghai Flowers;* other Wu dialect novels which made much more limited use of dialect sold much better. The sheer difficulty in reading works written entirely in Taiwanese has also been a major factor in their poor sales to date.
37. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
38. As of 1990, approximately 20,000 copies had to be sold for a book in mainland China to break even. Yang Chonghua, interview, 18 June 1990. Yang stated that

while a few books of the Guangdong publishing house are marketed mainly in Guangdong, most are distributed nationally.

39. Luke (1995: 101).
40. Lin Qiyang, interview, 5 June 1990.
41. For example, the *Diary of The Little Man* radio scripts were later published as books with little further editing. Chan Hing-kai, interview, 10 July 1990.
42. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
43. Singer (1998: 56).
44. Giles and Coupland (1991: 96). See also Giles et al. (1977: 307).
45. Psychologist Marilyn Brewer argues that two of the most basic human motivations are: (a) the need to be included by and assimilated with other people, a need met within the in-group; and (b) the need to be differentiated from other people, a need which is met by making distinctions between in-groups and out-groups (1999: 188).
46. Tong et al. (1999).
47. Public Opinion Programme (1998).
48. For similar survey results, see also Brewer (1999: 194).
49. Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (1994, 1998, 2000).
50. Rawski (1985b: 400).
51. Pierson (1994: 81).
52. Li and Thompson (1982: 87).
53. See Cheung (1985: 195–8); Bauer (1988: 282–3); Snow (1991: 260–82, 1993: 143); Li (2000: 221–3); Wu (2000: 91).
54. Pierson (1992: 1295).
55. This belief that Cantonese has no grammar was one of the motivations behind the writing of *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar.* As Virginia Yip, one of the authors, noted: "We want to debunk the myth that Cantonese has no grammar. This is entertained by so many educated people — even our scientist friends and students. They were so shocked and surprised to hear that we have produced a whole book for Cantonese grammar." Quoted in Tsui (2000: 3).
56. Kalmer, Zhong, and Xiao (1987).
57. See Pierson (1994); Tong et al. (1999).
58. Report (1993: 3). See also Zhan (1997: 36).
59. Bauer (1988: 285).
60. Wu Changjiang, interview, 18 December 1991.
61. Kwan-Terry and Luke (1997: 289).
62. Bauer (1984: 298); Lo and Wong (1990: 29); Huang (1999: 171). For examples of such attitudes, see He (1982: 45); Li (1982: 60); Yang (1982: 37); Li et al. (2000: 288); Tacey (2000: 9); and Tsui (2000: 3).
63. Liang (1987: 65); Li (2000: 222).
64. This quotation came from an informal survey I conducted in a university evening school linguistics class. While many students in the class said they found the language of a selection from *Diary of The Little Man* lively, all but three commented that it was "sub-standard," "bad," or "unacceptable." Even those who, on the whole, liked the passage felt compelled to note that the language was not appropriate. See also Pierson (1992: 195).
65. See 錦繡中文 (C: *Gamsau Zungman,* Splendid Chinese), Hong Kong: Education Department, 2001.

66. Kwok Wing-ki, interview, 14 September 2002.
67. Rickard (1989: 19).
68. Barber (1993: 177).
69. Twine (1991: 28, 198–206).
70. DeFrancis (1977: 27, 37).
71. DeFrancis (1989: 198).
72. Rawski (1985b: 400).
73. DeFrancis (1984: 249).
74. Hu (1989: 72); Dai (1987: 27).
75. See Joseph (1987: 92) for further discussion of how European vernaculars were considered rude or vulgar during the early phases of their rise.
76. Similarly, women's literature provided one of the earliest and most important contexts in which vernacular Japanese made its appearance in written form (Twine 1991: 39).
77. Unfortunately, I have only been able to examine a few copies of mosquito press newspapers from that period, and thus cannot conclusively say that I know what Lan was referring to. I have been unable to discover material that is explicitly pornographic, but my sample has also been small.
78. For example, the pornographic newspaper *Kam Yeh Pao* (今夜報) not only made less use of Cantonese than the mass-market newspapers; in fact, it contained little Cantonese at all, and the more explicitly pornographic articles were written primarily in Standard Chinese. A similar case is provided by the now-defunct *Blue Cover Mystery Magazine* (C: *Laam pei syu* 藍皮書), sometimes mentioned as a magazine which contained both soft-core pornography and written Cantonese. While such a magazine no doubt helped establish in people's minds a connection between sex and written Cantonese, in issue number 431, the only issue I have been able to examine, the two do not coincide. There are quite a few pornographic, or at least titillating, articles, but none make use of Cantonese. The only feature which does make use of Cantonese, a crime story written in *saam kap dai*, portrays no sex.
79. I had this experience with the works of two Hong Kong writers, Xia Fei (夏飛) and Yang Tiancheng (楊天城). In both cases, I was assured by academics, writers, and booksellers that these authors wrote pornography in Cantonese. However, for Xia Fei, I was able to examine quite a number of books without finding any Cantonese whatsoever, and in the case of Yang Tiancheng, even a series to which I had been specifically directed proved to be written in Standard Chinese.
80. Deng (1980: 79); Song (1984: 23).
81. Wang (1978: 31–32); Yu (1987: 229); Chan Chee-shing (1987: 231, 233–5).
82. 29 October 1987, p. 34.
83. Lan (1947: 18); Feng and Quan (1948: 48); Hua (1949: 40); Huang Sheng (1949: 26); Jing (1949b: 7).
84. Ng Chun-bong, interview, 3 July 1990; Ng Hon-jyun, public lecture, 23 June 1990. Joseph Yau justified use of dialect in his fiction because of its "forcefulness." Interview, 12 June 1990.
85. Chen (1988: 18). For example, poet Tsai Yim-pui (蔡炎培) notes that he generally avoids use of dialect in his work (a fact which may be due partly to the fact that he also works for *Ming Pao*, a newspaper which discourages use of Cantonese), but he does feel the need to use Cantonese on occasion in order to give a stronger

Hong Kong flavor to his poems, and he believes that Hong Kong audiences respond positively to written Cantonese. Interview, 25 May 1990. As mentioned earlier, essayist Lo Wai-luen (小思, pen-name Siu Si 盧瑋鑾) both teaches and writes in Standard Chinese, but has also made some use of written Cantonese in her essays because she feels it gives her work more punch. Interview, 13 June 1990.

86. Wu (1992: 94).
87. Fok Lai-zan, interview 24 September 2002.
88. An interesting reflection of this is the strong tendency for Hong Kong young people to spell out Cantonese words using the English alphabet when engaging in ICQ chat on the computer. In this approach, students are writing down what they would say — representing the sounds of their Cantonese speech — rather than following a purely written norm. Cheng (2002: 26–27).
89. Liang (1989: 106); Ng Chun-bong, interview, 10 July 1990; Chan Hing-kai, interview, 19 July 1990.
90. Joseph Yau, interview, 12 June 1990. Chan Hing-kai said his target audience is the 14–30 age range, and noted that many of his readers are students. Interview, 10 July 1990.
91. Bi and Shu (1989: i). All of the works included in the reader were, however, in Standard Chinese.
92. Interview, 12 June 1990.
93. Kwan Wing-kei, interview, 25 May 1990.
94. Lau Sing, interview, 3 July 1990; Cheung Chor, interview, 10 July 1990; Fung Gwong-lit, interview, 11 July 1990.
95. Public panel discussion, 23 June 1990.
96. Interview, 12 June 1990.
97. Kwan Wing-kei, 25 May 1990; Ng Chun-bong, interview, 10 July 1990. Two pocketbooks which are readily comparable are Joseph Yau's (Gu Sai-mung) *On a Weekend Bed*, published by Publications Holdings in 1986, and Chan Hing-kai's (A Foon) *Diary of The Little Man*, published in 1988. Both share the same office setting and content matter, and the same diary format. Both also made unusually heavy use of Cantonese, and sold unusually well. However, *Diary of The Little Man* was written entirely in Cantonese, was targeted at a younger audience, and sold many times more copies. There are, of course, a variety of possible explanations for the sales differences between these two books, but it is quite possible that the key lies in the combination of colloquial Cantonese use and a young audience (Liang 1989: 106).
98. Public panel discussion, 23 June 1990.
99. Halliday (1989: 29–30).
100. In my own admittedly much more informal investigations of Nantong dialect (Jiangsu province), I have also found that while people who speak the dialect do have a sense of identity which is related in part to the dialect, they do not feel their local Nantong identity — or the preservation of their distinct local dialect — to be a terribly high priority.
101. An interesting case in point is provided by the role of the Chu Nom written vernacular in Vietnam in the 1800s. While some were entirely against use of Chu Nom, preferring Classical Chinese, and others wished to replace Classical Chinese entirely with Chu Nom, many favored a middle ground in which Classical Chinese was retained in the H role, but Chu Nom had a limited role in certain kinds of literature, especially poetry. DeFrancis (1977: 44).

CHAPTER 8

1. Even as I write this chapter in Hong Kong, we are in the midst of a "promote Putonghua month," with an abundance of billboards and television advertisements encouraging people to study Putonghua. However, for perspective it should be added that similar campaigns for promotion of English are even more common.
2. See the *South China Morning Post*, 9 November 2003, Agenda, p. 11, for articles debating the relative merits of replacing Cantonese with Putonghua in Hong Kong schools.
3. White and Li (1993: 170); Guldin (1995: 96–99); Huang (1999: 144–6).
4. Huang (1999: 101, 142); Chen Ping (1999: 51).
5. See also Chen (1994: 304); Qian (1995: 38); Zeng (2000: 28).
6. Zhan (1993: 52).
7. Tang and Tu (2000: 357–8; 370). See also Huang (1999: 141); Chen (2002: 6).
8. Through friends teaching in Guangdong I have seen at least a few examples of personal notes passed between secondary school students which are written in Cantonese.

APPENDIX 1

1. Use of a measure word without being preceded by a number or demonstrative is distinctively Cantonese, so it is in bold as marked Cantonese. In later texts this distinctly Cantonese grammar structure will appear repeatedly.
2. This text is taken from Xue (1985a: 14).
3. Soeng Ngo (嫦娥) is a famous character from Chinese legend who stole a potion of immortality and floated off to the moon.
4. Text from Liang (1988: 63–64).
5. Sung Juk (Song Yu 宋玉) was a poet of the Warring States period (circa 300 BCE).
6. This is an allusion to a line in the poem "Song of the South" (*Jiang nan ge* 江南歌) by Tang dynasty poet Li Yi (李益) (748–827?).
7. Text from Fu (1949: 45).
8. Bags from Siu Hing (Zhaoqing), a city near Guangzhou, were made of a local variety of reed, and did not stand up to wear and tear as well as bags made of leather or cloth. The tendency of these bags to leak coins caused them to become a symbol of bad luck (Guan 1990: 220).
9. Text from *Folklore and Folk Literature Series* #56 (Taipei: Oriental Cultural Service, 1972), pp. 37–38. This text is also in Morris (1992).
10. This is an allusion to a line in a poem composed by an early Ming dynasty poet from Guangdong, Sun Fen (孫賁), as he was on his way to execution (Chen 1986: 99).
11. Text from *Jiu ben Yueju congkan* (舊本粵劇叢刊) #9 (Hong Kong: Shenzhou tushu gongsi, 1980), no pagination. Originally published in Guangzhou by Da xin shuju, probably in the 1920s.
12. There is apparently a misprint here of the Cantonese character 佢 (he).
13. This is also apparently a misprint; the character should probably be 個.
14. Text from *Zheng Bao*, 4 October 1947, p. 28.
15. Text from Hua (1949: 61). Originally published in *Ta Kung Pao*, 9 March 1949, p. 7.
16. This character is rather puzzling; it is neither Cantonese nor Standard Chinese.

It probably represents an odd pronunciation of the Mandarin demonstrative *na* (那).

17. The brackets around this character are a good example of the way a writer warns the reader to sound out a character rather than read it for its original meaning. The original meaning of this character is "sentry post" or "whistle," but in Cantonese its pronunciation is the same as that of the word for "to scan."
18. Text from *Hung Lok*, 10 August 1947, p. 3.
19. This last phrase has a very strong Cantonese flavor, but is quite intelligible to a Mandarin speaker. This is a good example of a case where it is difficult to decide whether or not to mark a phrase as Cantonese.
20. Text from San (1975: 118–9). Unfortunately, this collection does not give the dates or locations of the original publication of these articles.
21. Text from *Sing Pao Daily*, 13 September 1989, p. 32.
22. A Hong Kong pop group which was very popular in the 1970s.
23. Of course, a Hong Kong reader will not normally read these lines aloud, and if one did so, he or she might well translate the markedly Standard Chinese terms into Cantonese. Many people in Hong Kong are quite proficient at "translating" texts written in Standard Chinese into Cantonese when reading them aloud, and it is not unusual for newscaster and other people who need to read scripts aloud to write the script entirely in Standard Chinese but then translate it in to Cantonese as it is read aloud. (Others just write the script in Cantonese right from the start.)
24. Text from the column "The Reporter's Notes" (記者手記), *Tin Tin Daily*, 13 September 1989, p. 14.
25. US$1.00 converts to approximately HK$7.80.
26. Text from *Diary of The Little Man #2* (小男人周記 #2) (Hong Kong: Tomakazu Production House, 1988), pp. 5–6.
27. Text from *YES!* Magazine, 2 May 2003, p. 24.
28. Name of a film.
29. This text is taken from *Apple Daily*, 3 May 2003, p. A4.

Index