THE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF DIALECTS: THE CASE OF CANTONESE AND SHAAN'XI DIALECTS

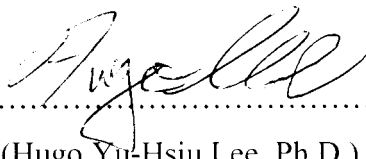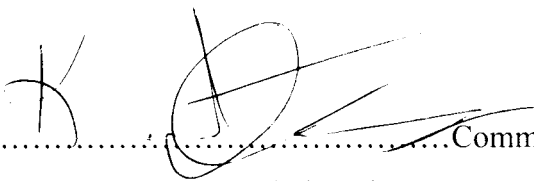**Yuhan Mao**

THE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF DIALECTS: THE CASE OF CANTONESE AND SHAAN'XI DIALECTS

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ABSTRACT

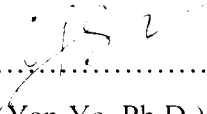|	
Title of Thesis	The Media's Influence on Success and Failure of Dialects:
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Author	Miss Yuhan Mao
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In this thesis the researcher addresses an important set of issues - how language maintenance (LM) between dominant and vernacular varieties of speech (also known as dialects) - are conditioned by increasingly globalized mass media industries. In particular, how the television and film industries (as an outgrowth of the mass media) related to social dialectology help maintain and promote one regional variety of speech over others is examined. These issues and data addressed in the current study have the potential to make a contribution to the current understanding of social dialectology literature - a sub-branch of sociolinguistics - particularly with respect to LM literature. The researcher adopts a multi-method approach (literature review, interviews and observations) to collect and analyze data. The researcher found support to confirm two positive correlations: the correlative relationship between the number of productions of dialectal television series (and films) and the distribution of the dialect in question, as well as the number of dialectal speakers and the maintenance of the dialect under investigation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures   **Page**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

A fundamental question in sociolinguistics and the sociology of language is what makes some languages and/or dialects more powerful than others and what are the reasons behind such differences. Over the past 30 years or more, this question has been predominantly approached by means of sociolinguistic measures such as a domain-based questionnaire - a language-use survey - to obtain self-reported language-use (quantitative) data across various functional and communicative domains (Gal, 1978; Smith-Hefner, 2009; Mukherjee and David, 2011) aimed at measuring the respondents' vitality perceptions of the language in question. Additionally, others have utilized the quantitative survey technique to elicit language-attitude data on a particular language from among majority or minority speech community members (Sallabank, 2013). However, this is not to say that sociolinguists do not adopt qualitative research techniques, as some sociolinguists have utilized a mixed methodological approach and conducted research employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in the collection of their data.

Following the recent trend in the aforementioned sociolinguistic research, this study examines the role of mass media in conditioning linguistic variation by means of qualitative approaches (e.g., literature review, interview and observation) rather than quantitative measures (e.g., a questionnaire survey).

1.1.1 Definitions and Terminology

In the multidisciplinary field of language maintenance (LM), there is a growing concern regarding the vitality of smaller speech communities and language-

user groups. For the purpose of clarity, please see chapter 2 (literature review) of the present study for a fuller treatment of LM.

The present study joins this trend and examines the sustainability status of more dominant Chinese varieties of speech—also known as the Chinese dialects (方言 *fāngyán*)—vis-à-vis less powerful ones spoken on Mainland China. The author sees the need to clarify what constitutes a *dialect*. A dialect is commonly defined as a variety or a variant of a language. Dialects can be categorized as regional dialects and social dialects (Yao, 2013: 3). However, from the point of view of linguistic typology the distinction between a dialect and a language is problematic, as the difference among dialects is great enough to consider them as separate languages. Therefore, in addition to the term "varieties" of regional speech customarily translated into English as "dialects", it is essential to acknowledge that the term of "ethnic language" also refers to the respective languages of the Chinese dialect groups under study. For a detailed discussion defining the operational terminology of local forms of speech on Mainland China, please see Kurpaska (2010: 1-3).

In addition to the definition of dialects, Mandarin is of equal importance and needs to be defined in the current research context. Despite Mandarin's phonology being solely based on the Beijing dialect, it is also referred to as "Putonghua" or "Guanhua". Politically it is the standardized variety of the Chinese language, but linguistically it is one of the varieties or variants of the Chinese language family. According to Yao (2013: 4), Mandarin is the language used by the general public across provinces of Mainland China for the sake of both intra- and inter-ethnic communication (the meaning of "Putonghua"). Mandarin enjoys its official status as the state language of the People's Republic of China (PRC) (the meaning of "Guanhua").

1.1.2 Purpose of the study

An analysis of the language variation in the polyglot nation-state of China will help researchers understand the reasons behind the success and the failure of LM. The researcher aims to illustrate the role of mass media (major factor) played in the

maintenance of relatively more powerful Chinese dialects (e.g., Cantonese) as well as the less-maintained Chinese dialects (e.g., Shaan'Xi).

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1) Compare and examine the extent of the Cantonese dialect vis-à-vis the Shaan'Xi dialect, focusing on the role of mass media's influence on the distribution, spread and maintenance of the two dialects in question.

2) Identify social variables other than the mass media which also influence the maintenance of the aforementioned dialects.

Note that the scope of the present study is on the media influence on the distribution and the maintenance of Chinese dialects. Despite politics play a key role on the distribution and the maintenance of Chinese dialects, it is beyond the scope of the present study to address such a correlation.

The primary methods of investigation are review of existent literature, a reflective viewpoint derived from this researcher as a Shaan'Xi dialectal speaker, and sociolinguistic fieldwork (interviews and observations) carried out in the Shaan'Xi and Cantonese speech communities, respectively (of Mainland China). For the purpose of assessing the vitality of relatively more and less powerful Chinese dialects, Cantonese has thus been selected to represent one of the most widely spoken varieties (derived from Mainland China), whereas Shaan'Xi has been chosen to represent one of the most threatened varieties.

1.1.3 Thesis Outline

In light of the comparative study of the Cantonese dialect and the Shaan'Xi dialect, the thesis is organized in the following manner and the specific aspects examined are thus as follows: Chapter one (introduction) includes a selective introduction to the relatively powerful dialects spoken on Mainland China, a state-of-the-art historical, social and cultural background of the Cantonese dialect, a brief introduction to the less powerful dialects spoken on Mainland China, and an overview of the historical, social and cultural background of the Shaan'Xi dialect. Chapter two (literature review) includes a review of previous studies on sociolinguistics, language in society, underlying factors contributed to the extent of LM, Chinese dialects and

4

media research on Mainland China. Chapter three (methodology) provides the methodological framework of the present study. Chapter four (findings, results and discussion) offers the research findings and a discussion between the present research results and previous research results. Chapter five (conclusion) provides the summary of the present research findings, acknowledges the limitations of the present study, and offers suggestions and recommendations for future researchers.

1.2 Dialects in China

This sub-section provides an introductory and selective review of theoretical and empirical classification of Chinese dialects by defining terminology and providing the background of the study. For a fuller discussion of the classification of Chinese dialects, see Kurpaska (2010: 25-62) and see the detailed list of Chinese dialects in appendix A.

Note that below is a state-of-the-art list of the traditional classification of Chinese dialects:

Traditional classification of Chinese Dialects (Li, 1937; Wang, 1936)
1) Gan (Jiangxinese)
2) Guan (Mandarin or Beifanghua)
3) Kejia (Hakka)
4) Min (including the Hokkien and Taiwanese variants)
5) Wu (including the Shanghainese variant)
6) Xiang (Hunanese)
7) Yue (including the Cantonese and Taishanese variants)

It is widely recognized that Mainland China is a modern nation-state with a vast territory and can be divided into numerous geographical regions (Chun, 2006), a large melting pot of numerous diverse ethnicities and cultures. It is essential to know that cultures, ethnicities, geographies and so forth affect the extent of the formation of dialectical communities in Mainland China (Sha, 2012).

Over the course of the past 50 years, the anthropological and sociolinguistic situations in Mainland China have been extensively debated by Chinese and non-

Chinese scholars, given its plentiful varieties of local speech. It is estimated that ethno-cultural diversities are manifest across Mainland China in innumerable realms—ethnic languages, cuisines, costumes, religions and so forth. Regional dialects in Mainland China in particular not only reflect their own unique cultures, environments, geographies, histories and so on, but also reflects Mainland China's political policies. Linguistic diversity is an indicator of other forms of cultural diversity which exist among the dialect groups in question. Dialects are seen as the most direct interpretation of local ethno-cultures, yet dialects have undergone variations and changes because they progressed and transited at different times (Wang, 2011). By the same token, it is argued that the varieties of speech play a major role in this process of formation and segregation of ethno-dialectical communities. It implies that the comprehension of dialects entails a grasp of historical events and episodes as dialects are seen as communicative tools, folkloric habits and ways of thinking beyond the cultural *per se* (Lin, 2008).

Over approximately the past 80 years, a great deal of empirical research has focused on the classification of Chinese dialects. The classification of the Chinese dialects was initially proposed by the Wang Li (1936) (some argued for Li Fang-Kuei, 1937). In other words, his classification of the Chinese dialects was the first of its kind. Numerous attempts have since been put forth by both Chinese and non-Chinese scholars to reformulate the re-classification of Chinese dialects (Zhan, 1981; Norman, 1988; Ding, 1998; Li, 2002). In spite of their debate, they tended to agree that there are seven major Chinese dialect groups (Kurpaska, 2010). Therefore, instead of reiterating what has been surveyed and described by the aforementioned linguists, below is an overview of the comparatively powerful Chinese dialect groups by identifying and highlighting their importance and significance, respectively.

It should be acknowledged that to provide the full detail of the linguistic picture of Mainland China is beyond the scope of this thesis, as such this sub-section provides an overview essential for the analysis.

The Sinitic Languages

Mandarin

北東官話 Northeastern
冀魯官話 Jilu
膠遼官話 Jiaoliao
北京官話 Beijing
中原官話 Zhongyuan
蘭銀官話 Lanyin
江淮官話 Jianghuai
西南官話 Southwestern
桂柳片 Gui-Liu Pian

Min

閩南 Minnan
莆仙 Puxian
閩東 Mindong
閩北 Minbei
閩中 Minzhong
瓊文 Qiongwen
邵將 Shaojiang

晉語 Jin
淮南 Huainan
吳語 Wu
湘語 Xiang
贛語 Gan

客家 Hakka
粵語 Cantonese
平話 Pinghua
土話 Tuhua
鄉話 Xianghua

(c) 2003, Glossika, Inc.

Figure 1.1 Distribution of Chinese Dialects
Source: Baidu Map, 2014.

1.2.1 Powerful Chinese Dialects

First and foremost, "power" has to be defined in the present research context. What is meant by power (e.g., people who have the power or people who receive the power)? In today's modern society, the concept of power and the manipulation of power are prevalent. Fundamentally, power is a social construct, and one which scholars are interested in studying.

An explicit definition of power and how it is related to language can be found in the book chapter titled "Language and Power" (Damico, Simmons-Mackie and Hawley, 2005) in the text, *Clinical Sociolinguistics*, edited by Martin. J. Ball. According to Damico, Simmons-Mackie and Hawley (2005), the interrelated

sociological variables of social status, social classes, social hierarchies and in-group identities are associated with the concept of power, who has the power and how s/he manipulates their power. By the same token, among and across human communications and interactions, the underlying social forces are correlated with power and solidarity. As a result, in order to accomplish social actions and to navigate the complexity of communications and interactions, one has to understand the power relation and to function under the tremendous influence of power, and in turn the power influences one's language (ibid).

This thesis departs from this operational definition of language and power to list powerful dialects of Mainland China in the proceeding paragraphs. The list below consists of seven major Chinese dialect groups (Wang, 1936; Li, 1937; Zhan, 1981; Norman, 1988; Ding, 1998; Li, 2002). At present, Mandarin (普通話 *pǔtōnghuà*; the Northern Chinese dialect) (literally "common speech") is spoken in northern and southwestern China, which makes up the largest spoken variety in PRC. It is the official state language and the inter-ethnic *lingua franca* in both PRC and Republic of China in Taiwan (ROC). Moreover, it is one of the official state languages of the island state of Singapore.

Additionally, Wu (吳語 *wúyǔ*; the dialect spoken south of the Changjiang River [Yangtze River]) is spoken in Jiangsu Province and Zhejiang Province, as well as the municipality of Shanghai. Despite the fact that the diversification of subgroups of the Wu variety of speech (particularly with regard to the mountainous regions of Zhejiang and Eastern Anhui) results in a mutual unintelligibility among speakers of disparate subgroups, the Shanghai dialect is commonly regarded as representative of the dialect group in question.

Furthermore, Yue (粵語 *yuèyǔ*) is spoken in Guangdong, Guangxi, Hong Kong, Macau, parts of Southeast Asia (mainland and insular) and overseas Chinese communities with Guangdong ancestry. The term "Cantonese" is commonly referred to encompass all the Yue varieties, notwithstanding the fact that they are not mutually intelligible.

Undoubtedly, Min (閩語 *mǐnyǔ*) is spoken in the Fujian Province of Mainland China, the island state of Taiwan, parts of Southeast Asia (mainland and insular)

particularly in Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore, and overseas Chinese communities (e.g., China Town in the New York City of the United States of America) with Fujian ancestry. It is widely recognized that the Southern Min (Min Nan) dialect is the largest Min variety of speech spoken across its speakers' homeland and by those who have resettled abroad.

In the literature, Xiang (*湘語 xiāngyǔ*) is spoken in Hunan Province of Mainland China and it is commonly divided into the old and the new dialects respectively (the new Xiang dialect is under tremendous influence of Mandarin due to contact between new Xiang speakers and the Mandarin speakers and media across various functional language domains).

From the actual empirical data, Ke Jia (Hakka) (*客家話 kèjiāhuà*) is spoken by the Hakka people across numerous provinces in Southern China and the island state of Taiwan, and parts of Southeast Asia (mainland and insular) in Malaysia and Singapore. The term "Hakka" literally means "guest families", inasmuch as numerous Hakka people regard themselves as refugees originating originally in Northern China (this viewpoint is highly debated).

In combination with all the six dialect groups, Gan (*贛語 gànyǔ*) is regarded as a powerful dialect family and is spoken in Jaingxi Province of PRC. It is viewed as a closer relative to the Hakka variety of speech because of their similarities in phonology. Therefore, they are referred to as "Hakka-Gan dialects".

1.2.1.1 Most Powerful Chinese Dialect and the Cantonese Community in China

Figure 1.2 Distribution of the Chinese Dialect of Cantonese in Mainland China and
Special Administrative Districts

Source: Google Map, 2014**.**

The current sub-section provides a selective review of the Cantonese dialect and the Cantonese people. From the numerous studies that examine the maintenance and the shift of Chinese dialects, it has emerged that, of all the above-mentioned major Chinese dialect groups and their regional varieties of speech, Cantonese (or Yue) has frequently been called "the most powerful Chinese dialect" by scholars (Xu, 2012). With more than 70,000,000 speakers, the Cantonese community is one of the

largest in the PRC (People's Government of Guangdong Provence, 2007). It is believed that no other Chinese dialects apparently parallel the extraordinary standing and achievements of the Cantonese dialect, inasmuch as its massive number of speakers and the important role the speech community members play in the social and economic sectors, particularly in the mass media (in PRC, neighboring areas outside PRC and abroad).

In particular, the Cantonese dialect is viewed as an inter-ethnic *lingua franca* for the Cantonese people in communicating with other ethnic groups and vice versa in Guangdong Province of the PRC. Additionally, it is spoken by the majority of the population in neighboring areas of Hong Kong (a de facto official language) and Macau (outside PRC), and overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia (e.g., Malaysia), Asia Pacific (e.g., Australia and New Zeeland), North America (e.g., United States of America and Canada) and Europe (e.g., Germany). Nearly all of these speakers originate from Guangdong Province of PRC or of Guangdong descent. Among and across all the above-mentioned Cantonese speech communities, Hong Kong is regarded as the hub of Cantonese culture, inasmuch as its mass media and pop culture has been influential for nearly seventy or more years. For a review Hong Kong's linguistic variations, see Lu (2002).

In addition to the investigation of the Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups in PRC which can be found in the extant literature, much of the classical sociolinguistic literature on the issue of language maintenance and shift among overseas Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups is reported in Australia, Canada, New Zeeland, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Southeast Asia. They commonly include an assessment of the status (e.g., economic value) and institutional support (e.g., mass media) for promoting Cantonese speech. For reviews of these reports see: Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) for the institutional support and language maintenance; see Appel and Muysken (1987) for promoting the language by means of mass media; and see Wang and Chong (2011) for the extensively cited report on the successful maintenance of the overseas Cantonese speech community in the nation-state of Malaysia. As a complement to previous data, this current study examines in particular the

sociological variable known as institutional support with mass media as the major factor governing the maintenance and shift of the two varieties of speech in question.

1.2.1.2 Less Powerful Chinese Dialects and the Shaan'Xi Community in China
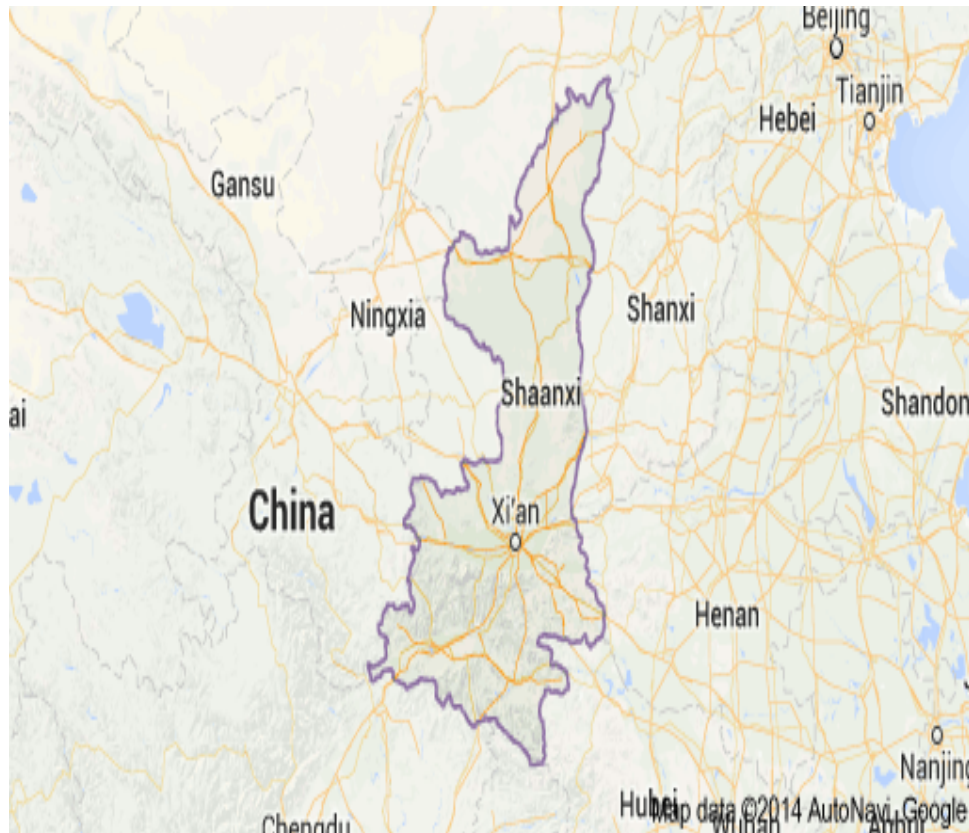
Figure 1.3 Distribution of the Shaan'Xi Dialect Speech Community and Language-
User Group in Shaan'Xi Province of Mainland China
Source: Google Map, 2014.

One of the numerous effects of the implementation of the national language policy and the language-in-education policy in PRC is language endangerment. It has become apparent that ethnic languages and regional varieties of speech are being replaced by the official state language of the PRC. In the reexamination of endangered Chinese dialects based upon the data of Cao (2001),

Yang and Xu (2009) and Tang (2010), the Han-Chinese dialect spoken by the nine-family-name fish men (九姓漁民 *jiǔ xìng yú mín*), the local Chinese vernacular of She (畲話 shē huà) and the Heilongjiang Zhan dialect (黑龍江站話 hēi long jiāng zhàn huà) are extremely endangered, among others.

Among the estimated 3,000 dying dialects (UNESCO, 2006 as cited in Lin, 2011), Shaan'Xi is perceived to be one of the most endangered Chinese dialects in spite of its exceptional past. Shaan'Xi Province of Mainland China is regarded as one of the cradles of ancient and imperial Chinese civilizations, due largely to the fact that it was the ancient capital for 13 dynasties over a period of 1,100 years (from the Zhou Dynasty to the Tang Dynasty). Despite this, substantial evidence can be marshaled to point out the fact that the Shaan'Xi variety of speech—not only the ethnic language of the Shaan'Xi speech community but also the language used to establish the great ancient Chinese civilization—is endangered in the twenty-first century. For an overview of the characteristics of the Shaan'Xi speech community, see Peng (2013).

It is evident that studies measuring the vitality of ethnic languages encounter difficulties in demonstrating the discrepancies between relatively more powerful codes of communication (e.g., Cantonese) and less dominant ones (e.g., Shaan'Xi). This study aims to contrast these two regional varieties of speech by examining factors such as mass media (e.g., films) and speaking population that to a greater or lesser extent plays a role in the maintenance of the two dialects in question.

Taken together, the objectives of the preceding sub-sections are to sketch out the current conditions of the Cantonese dialect as a representative of one of the most powerful Chinese dialect groups in contrast to less powerful ones such as the Shaan'Xi dialect. A later chapter (chapter 4, results and discussion) will trace their differential conditions and explore some of the factors for their discrepancies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

Recent developments in contact linguistics, linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, sociology of language and other fields suggest a considerable overlap—an interdisciplinary field of study—of branches and sub-disciplines. Such is the case in the present research as there is an overlap between dialects and media (derived from their umbrella discipline of language in society and their parent discipline of LM). Thus, this literature will be interdisciplinary in nature.

This section of the thesis provides a selective overview of the recent theoretical and empirical advances in the all-encompassing field of sociolinguistics or the sociology of language, particularly with regards to the study of social dialectology—a branch of sociolinguistics—and the maintenance (and the shift) of the regional varieties of speech, formerly known as dialects. It should be noted that many of the conventional concepts in LM are extended and redefined to reflect the theoretical and empirical emphasis of the current study. The organization of the present section is as follows: 1) a review of scholarly articles on language and society; 2) a review of scholarly articles on LM; 3) a review of scholarly articles on dialects of China; and 4) a review of scholarly articles on the mass media of China, with a focus on the development and the history of Chinese dialects used to produce Chinese films.

2.2 Language and Society

Public discourse and the social sphere are arenas with never-ending interactions and transactions between languages and the societal models that created them, are created by them, are conditioned by them and are accompanied by them. The relationship between language and society has long been central to research in

linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, sociology of language, pragmatics and has also informed other fields of studies such as anthropology, history and sociology. This current sub-section introduces the century-long framework for the study of language and society.

2.2.1 Sociolinguistics (Sociology of Language)

This sub-section is a straightforward introduction of the history of sociolinguistics. In the course of the past 40 years, approximately, the scholarly study of the language in society has been commonly referred to as "sociolinguistics" Dell Hymes (Johnstone and Marcellino, 2010) and/or "sociology of language" (a term coined by Joshua Fishman). Sociolinguists are concerned with the functions and meanings of languages in social life as a response to their resistance to Chomskyan structural linguistics (ibid). The basis for such a study of language in societal use lies in the empirical observation that different members of the same speech community speak their native language differently and speech communities in different regions of the same nation-state (or different nation-states) speak regional varieties of speech styles (Vajda, n.d.). It is evident that not everyone from the same speech community and/or language-user group speaks the native language in the same way as every individual uses his or her language in a unique way.

2.2.2 Language Socialization

The origins of children's language acquisition lie in their reproduction of the adults' social linguistic and communicative interaction. Crystal (2008) claims that the term "language socialization" is seen as the continuous development of patterns of language used among children reproducing the adult system of the social order (See the *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*). Crystal (2008) provides the example of young children being governed by the social norm of adults to perform normative politeness strategies when carrying out their conversations.

Schiefflin and Ochs (1986) define "language socialization" as "socializing through language" and "socializing to use a language". Ochs (2000) contends that "language socialization" is the social and cultural mechanism that operates in the

process of every individual to become a member of a speech community and/or a language-user group.

The author of the present study adopts the concept of "language socialization" as the departure point to examine the social dialectology of Chinese dialects and addresses the extent of their issues of maintenance with the help of mass media (particularly dialectal television series and dialectal films), despite that the researcher does not look into the specific conditions of "language socialization" in the maintenance of Chinese dialects.

2.2.3 Social Dialectology

The study of dialect ("dialectology") is seen as a sub-branch of sociolinguistics and/or sociology of language that investigates the extent of systematic variations of a single language. To determine whether two varieties of speech are dialects derived from the same language family or two separate languages in spite of some shared words and sounds ("cognates"), social dialectologists use a set of criteria, particularly the assessment of the mutual intelligibility of the two forms of languages (Vajda, n.d.). Can speakers of two different forms of language(s) readily understand each other and carry out meaningful conversations? If they can, then the two forms of language(s) are considered variant dialects of a single language (derived from the same ancestral language family). World Englishes are good examples of this as British English, American English, Canadian English and Australian English are mutually intelligible as variants of the same English language rather than separate languages, except for the fact that Indian-accented, Singaporean-accented English and other English varieties spoken in outer and expanding circles are difficult to understand.

Linguistically and sociolinguistically, some languages are homogenous and are mutually intelligible to a large degree, with little dialectal variation (in spite of their respective language variation and change). Such is the case with the Zhuang language spoken in Guanxi Province of Mainland China and the Thai language spoken in the Kingdom of Thailand. (The author uses the Zhuang language and the Thai language to illustrate her point of view.) However, politically (political status),

Zhuang is an ethnolinguistic minority language to be preserved in Mainland China, whereas Thai (particularly the Central Thai variant) is the official state language, an intra- and inter-ethnic *lingual franca* in the nation-state of Thailand and has been promoted as an international language for trade and tourism. The declaration of State Convention #9 established the Thai language as the national language of Thailand and was made on 24 June 1940 during the regime of Field Marshal Plaek Pibunsongkram (Warotamasikkhadit, 2008). To the extent that a language must gain political power to ensure its status in public domains, Zhuang, unlike its sibling Thai, is less likely to be promoted as a national language in Mainland China. Moreover, international trade between Thailand and both Western and Eastern countries, as well as the globalized tourism industry, have encouraged the teaching and learning of the Thai language among and across numerous Asian countries, the Americas, and the European Union, among others (ibid). While several aforementioned factors have led to the promotion of the Thai language at the transnational and international level, less attention has been given to the Zhuang language. Additionally, the two mutually intelligible languages are subscribed to different literary standards (Zhuang adopts the Chinese characters, whereas Thai uses the Thai alphabet).

Note the author of the present research also acknowledges that like most comparisons, to compare the Thai language with the Zhuang language also has its dangers and risks. Boundaries in scientific fields, regardless of whether in the natural sciences or the social sciences (including arts and humanities), are commonly relatively and clearly delineated. The two contrasted languages are used to refer to the slight dialectal variation between two varieties of speech, without serious consideration of the delineation between the social and scientific disciplines.

2.2.4 Language Variation and Change—The Parent Discipline Language Maintenance

In addition to the aspect of social dialectology with regards to language in society, the present subsection addresses another dimension of language in society in a state-of-the-art fashion—language variation and change. There have been a number of theories and empirical data about the parent discipline of language variation and

change, and their child discipline of language maintenance and shift. It is inevitable that languages are constantly undergoing changes. According to the Holy Bible, humanity's original language was spoken by Adam and Eve and their children, and it was only after the construction of the Tower of Babel that 6,000 languages sprung forth—which is difficult to imagine.

Independent sociological variables (existing and emerging social categories) consist of age, gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, socio-economic status which correspond to language variation and change at the individual, society, community, nation and international levels. Phonological changes ("pronunciation") in sounds are not the only area that undergoes changes. Meanings of words ("semantics") and grammar also changes (McWhorter, 2006).

One of the social phenomena of language change is characterized as LM (and shift). The following sub-section will address the extent of scholarly articles on the topic of LM. The research area of language shift, however, is excluded from the current literature review section, due largely to the fact that it is beyond the scope of the current study.

2.3 Language Maintenance

In contrast to the abundance of theories and practices of sociolinguistics and social dialectology reviewed in the sub-sections above, there is a true scarcity of theoretical, empirical and methodological reflections in the study of the maintenance of dialects and in particular of Chinese dialects. The present study will fill in this much needed research knowledge gap for the study of the maintenance of dialects and in particular the Chinese dialects.

2.3.1 Examining the Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives of Language Maintenance

The present study is informed by numerous theories and perspectives. One approach which guides the research is LM. Traditionally, LM is viewed from three different perspectives (Baker and Jones, 1998: 181-185). The inactive preservationist

viewpoint is seemly to maintain the status quo of the variety of speech in consideration instead of implementing a measure of language development. By contrast, the evolutionist point of view argues the "survival of the fittest" (more powerful languages will survive, whereas less powerful ones will die out). Lastly, the active conservationist view is regarded as the most proactive among the three, inasmuch as it takes conscious and deliberate language planning efforts to ensure the maintenance of minority languages. It should be noted that the researcher of the current study is in agreement with the conservationist view.

Relating to the above-mentioned key concept of LM, a second perspective that informs the current study derives from the landmark work of Fishman's language shift (LS) (Fishman, 1991; 2001). In our post-industrial world, LS is a common phenomenon in most developing and developed societies. In conceptualizing "language shift", the author follows the view of social dialectologists/sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists/ethnographers (Gal, 1978; Smith-Hefner, 2009; Mukherjee and David, 2011). The extensive body of LS research has been driven by the theory that some language-minority individuals and/or groups are constantly seeking for opportunities of upper social mobility by means of the shift of their languages. Their research shows that LS is the end result of a single individual or a speech community/group, consciously or unconsciously, for a multitude of reasons and after a period of time, substituting the functions previously performed by their mother tongues and/or ethnic languages in domains with a new language or one within their repertoire (the complete loss of their mother tongues and/or ethnic languages).

Over the past years, numerous theories (along with experimental facts) have been proposed to account for the phenomenon of LMLS. Until recently, underlying factors influencing the process of LMLS are explored and documented in existing literature. The study reported in the present thesis builds on and extends the research line in the area of LMLS. Researchers have explored several variables that are seen as predictive of LMLS. The variables in question of interest to sociolinguistic researchers include the following: the size of population (Wang and Chong, 2011), the mode of settlement (concentration or scatter) (ibid), enlarging or shrinking functional

domains of the language use (Kim and Starks, 2010), institutional support, similarities between languages and cultures of the homeland and the country of resettlement, intergroup marriages and exogamous marriages (David & Dealwis, 2011), language attitude (Sallabank, 2013) and language ideology, government-determined language policy and language planning, and family language policy (Hlfearnáin, 2013).

Despite the fact that previous studies provide a long list of fundamental factors that are involved in determining the extent of LMLS, few of them address the following factors: (1) the role of mass media (viewed as a major factor) on the LMLS of dialects or regional varieties of speech; and (2) the number of the dialectal speakers (viewed as a minor factor) of the speech communities and language-user groups on the LMLS of dialects. This study is concerned with the two above-mentioned factors, aimed at filling the knowledge gap in the current LMLS literature.

As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, there is scarcity of the current scholarly literature that explores the role of mass media in the distribution and the maintenance of the Chinese dialects in Mainland China and overseas (Chen, 2008; Ma, 2006; Sha, 2012). The present study will help better understand the extent of the association between mass media and dialects, by shedding lights on the role of dialectal television series and dialectal films (as two representatives of the mass media sector) in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the dialects in question.

In addition, a large number of current LMLS literature focus on immigrant (stable immigrant communities) (Wang and Chong, 2011; Morita, 2007; Zhang, 2010) and indigenous communities (Meek, 2007; Coronel-Molina and Rodrı´guez-Mondon˜edo, 2011). However, few studies focus on non-immigrant and non-indigenous communities. The present research concerns the LMLS of non-immigrant and non-indigenous communities of Cantonese- and Shaan'Xi-speaking population (of the dominant Han ethnicity).

Note that a few additional viewpoints and perspectives have to be made herein to clarify the extent and the nature of the theories and empirical practices of the LM that informed the current study. The above-mentioned hypothetical vehicle view, theoretical and conceptual stance of the maintenance of language(s), reviewed and commented in the preceding sub-section (2.3.1), are used to inform the present study

of the maintenance of dialects, despite the fact that languages are distinguished from dialects. (It may be useful to distinguish between languages and dialects in other research contexts.) It is due largely to the fact that the common ground of the maintenance of a variety of a speech (by a speech community and/or its language-user group[s]) would be shared by both language(s) and dialect(s). This, in turn, has immediate implications for the use of methodology to survey the maintenance of dialects and in particular the maintenance of Chinese dialects by theories and empirical practices of the LM.

2.4 Research on Chinese Dialects

2.4.1 Overview: Languages of China

Chapter 1 of the present study has briefly introduced the Chinese dialects, nevertheless, a primary premise of the current section is that Chinese dialects are a prominent research area for both Eastern (e.g., Chinese) and Western scholars who are anthropologists, dialectologists, linguists, sociologists, and researchers in other closely related fields. In this light, the author aims to illustrate the varied academic and existent scholarly research on the study of Chinese dialects. Thus, this section is arranged in four sub-sections (2.4.1-2.4.4). The 2.4.1 sub-section provides the background knowledge of dialects spoken in Mainland China. The 2.4.2 sub-section offers the traditional classification of Chinese dialect groups. The 2.4.3 sub-section explores the role of substrate theory in the research on the Chinese dialects. In the sub-section 2.4.4, the history and the development of the research on the Cantonese dialect and the Shaan'Xi dialect are reviewed, respectively. In the final sub-section 2.4.5, the author brings together what she considers to be principal contribution to the field of Chinese dialect research by highlighting the role of mass media and in particular the role of dialectal television series and dialectal films in the Chinese dialect research.

Briefly, when one is inclined to claim that China is a linguistic monolith, this viewpoint is justified by the fact that more than 90 percent of Mainland China's population speak Chinese (Chinese dialects) as their mother tongues. However, one

should also consider the fact that PRC is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nation-state, with 56 officially recognized ethno-linguistic communities/groups and with more than 80 languages (Qingxia, 2009, p. 281).

2.4.2 Classification of Chinese: Dialect Groups of the Chinese Language

Both historically and in the recent past, Chinese dialect research (including but not limited the state of affairs relating to the use of Chinese dialects and the research carried out by both Chinese and non-Chinese scholars) can be divided into three periods (Futang, 2010) as follows: (1) pre-1949, (2) 1950-mid to 1960s, and (3) post-late 1970s. The first two periods are characterized as initial stages, separated by the political transition that occurred in 1945-1949, and the third period is defined as a stage of development. The focus of the Chinese dialect research has varied from stage to stage. Among and across a number of Chinese dialect research carried out during these three periods, it is argued that the interest is mainly in the classification of the Chinese languages and dialects.

The Chinese languages are commonly classified as sub-family members of the Sino-Tibetan language family (Kurpaska, 2010: 4). However, this assertion is somewhat misleading. According to Qingxia (2009: 281), Chinese languages are derived from five major language families: Sino-Tibetan, Altaic, Austronesian, Austro-Asiatic and Indo-European. Sino-Tibetan is one of the major language families with family members spoken by the Chinese people.

In addition to the classification of the Chinese languages as belonging to five major family groups, these languages consist of a number of regional speech styles—known as Chinese dialect groups. Based on the geographical and phonological features, Chao (1943) provides one of the first attempted general overviews of the Chinese dialects. In Chao's early dialectal classification, the dialects are comprised of the southern, central and northern dialects, respectively.

Even though the classification of the dialects has varied, nearly all agree with the following recent classification of dialects into seven regional groups (Xiao, n.d.): Mandarin (spoken in the northern half and the southwest of Mainland China), Wu (mainly spoken in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, e.g., Shanghai and Suzhou

dialects), Gan (mainly spoken in Jiangxi province and its surrounding areas), Xiang (Hunan), Min (mostly spoken in Fujian province, Hainan Island and Taiwan proper—officially known as the Republic of China), Yue (mainly spoken in Guangdong province and the eastern Guangxi, e.g., Cantonese), and Hakka (or Kejia, scattered in many parts of southern China with largest concentrations in a region covering northeast Guangdong, southern Jiangxi and western Fujian). In recent decades, three more regional groups have been proposed: Jin (mainly spoken in Shanxi province and its surrounding areas), Hui (border region of Anhui, Zhejiang, and Jiangxi) and Pinghua (Guangxi). Note that the newly proposed regional varieties of Chinese speech are still being debated among linguists. For a detailed and up-to-date account of the classification of Chinese dialects, please see Oxford Bibliographies at the website: http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199920082/obo-9780199920082-0024.xml

Over the course of past centuries and currently, many languages derived from the aforementioned five major language families as they have been in contact relationships. As a result, there have been numerous loanwords passed between the language families due largely to language contact. Scholars thus began to use the application of the substrate theory to distinguish the elements of Chinese dialects (see 2.4.3 below for a review).

2.4.3 Substrate Theory in Research on the Chinese Dialects

The substrate theory is in widespread use by Chinese linguists, thus it is worth noting the application of substrate theory in the study of Chinese dialects. Since the early 1960s, numerous Chinese scholars have adopted substrate theory to research the dialects (Qingxia, 2009: 282-283) and this line of research has become mainstream in some smaller circles of Chinese linguists. The current sub-section is not aimed to provide an insightful review of research that shows the theoretical and empirical development of the substrate theory in the study of the dialects, but a state-of-the-art overview on how the substrate theory is adopted to study the linguistic-and-communicative contact relationship among and across different dialect groups.

A few studies have proffered definitions of substrate theory. Generally speaking, substratum refers to when a language shift occurs, the speech community members and/or the language-user groups replace their ethnic/heritage language(s) with a new language. However, they do not exclusively use the new language as some lexical, phonological and grammatical elements derived from the lost language(s) are still adopted by its (or their) ethnic/heritage language speakers despite the occurrence of language shift (Qingxia, 2009). By the same token, the replaced language has become the substratum language for the new language.

In Ouyang's landmark research published in 1991 titled "Relationships between Ethnic Languages and Chinese: An application of substrate theory", Ouyang provides an in-depth analysis of the role of Chinese dialects (including the official state language, Mandarin) regarding smaller ethnic languages and/or vernaculars. For instance, it is evident that some elements of the Old Yue language exist as a substratum of the modern day Cantonese dialect (Ouyang, 1991).

2.4.4 The Scholarly Study on the Cantonese and the Shaan'Xi Dialects

In the abundance of theories and empirical research on Chinese dialects as reviewed in 2.4.1-2.4.3, the author now returns to the focus of the present study (on the two Chinese dialects in consideration), the Cantonese dialect and the Shaan'Xi dialect, respectively. It is not surprising that, given the lack of consensus among Chinese linguists as to when the study on the Cantonese dialect commenced, there is agreement that as late as roughly 200 years ago (during the Qing Dynasty) some scholarly works documenting the Cantonese dialect were published (BoHui, 2010). (Nevertheless, what remains remarkably intractable is the common belief that the study of the Cantonese dialect can be traced back to the pre-historic period known as the Bai Yue.) If there has been one major development in the research of the Cantonese dialect over the past century, it has been the role of contemporary linguistic theories that influence the research area in question beginning in the late 1920s and continuing until most recently (ibid).

Generally speaking there have been Chinese linguistics and Chinese language educators appointed to promote and teach the national state language of the PRC—the

Mandarin language (based on the Beijing dialect)—that have ventured to research the Cantonese dialect in the 1950s. Without doubt the best-known Chinese linguists and Chinese language educators during the 1950s were devising pedagogical tools that enable the Cantonese speakers to master the Mandarin language with the expected fluency (ibid).

Beginning in the 1980s, a fairly strong trend in the Cantonese research has been the development of large-scale ethnography research on Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups in Guangdong Province of Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau special administrative districts (ibid).

In the early and mid-2000s, a further development in the research on the Cantonese dialect has been the investigation of Cantonese, not only viewed from the Chinese dialect alone but also viewing its linguistic affiliation (Hakka-related). In other words, this trend has been an across-linguistic approach to survey both the Cantonese dialect and the Hakka dialect, and their historical (and prehistoric) linguistic relationship. Note that this observation is inferred from BoHui (2010).

Having outlined the history and development of Cantonese research, it is at the time of writing too early to ascertain the future development of the research on the Cantonese dialect. Now the extent to which the early and later development of the study on the Shaan'Xi dialect will be examined.

Recently, Chinese scholars (WeiJia, 1994) have begun to trace the history and development of the research on the Shaan'Xi dialect. The history and the development of the study on the Shaan'Xi dialect can be divided into two periods: 1) the traditional dialectal period (prior to the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912); and 2) the descriptive dialectal period (commenced during the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912).

The historical aspects of the Shaan'Xi dialect have mostly been discussed as the official state language, known as "elegant speech" (yǎyán, 雅言), spoken among and across the imperial government sectors and the official domains during the period after 1046 BC (WeiJia, 1994). While the Shaan'Xi dialect was commonly seen as the official state language since 1046 BC, it was not until 202 BC during the Western-Han Dynasty when the Chinese linguist Yang Xiong (yáng xióng, 楊雄) published the first Chinese dialect book, consisting of an analysis of the Shaan'Xi dialect.

Nonetheless, before the dawn of the Qing Dynasty (1636 AD), Chinese linguists failed to systematically analyze dialects and in particular the Shaan'Xi dialect was researched for the sake of understanding of classical/literary Chinese texts.

Meanwhile, WeiJia (1994) has also listed some breakthroughs in the study of the Shaan'Xi dialect during the descriptive dialectal period (began during the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1912). One reason for being the descriptive dialectal period is that the linguists were under the tremendous influence of Western linguistics during this period of time. It would be wrong to suggest that the scholarly study of the Shaan'Xi dialect has the same approach to elicit and analyze the linguistic data throughout the entire descriptive dialectal period. What scholars (WeiJia, 1994) propose is that the entire descriptive dialectal period can be divided into three phases.

During the first phase (1920s-1940s), there was surely a focus on the analysis of the phonology of the Shaan'Xi dialect (ibid). In the second phase (1950s-early 1960s), the focus shifted to the cross-linguistic contrast between the Shaan'Xi dialect and the Mandarin language (Beijing dialect), aimed to promote the teaching and the learning of the official state language, the Mandarin language (Beijing dialect). The third and the final phase of the recent research on the Shaan'Xi dialect (1979-present) is the most comprehensive. Chinese linguists have not only undertaken the cross-linguistic comparison between the Shaan'Xi dialect and linguistically related dialects, but they also examine the history of its development. Therefore, after 1979, linguists and researchers have been hoping to link the analysis of the macro-level and micro-level Shaan'Xi dialect to its linguistic family members and its historical development.

As the author has argued and reviewed the history and development of the study of the two Chinese dialects in question throughout this sub-section, the subsequent sub-section concludes the review, as well as points out the need for studying mass media as a new avenue for investigation.

2.4.5 Mass Media as a New Venue to Research on the Dialects of China

In the past 50 years, the incorporation of Chinese dialects into Chinese cinema has become prominent. In contrast to the abundance of theories and empirical studies on Chinese dialects (in particular the history and the development of the study of the

Cantonese dialect and the Shaan'Xi dialect, respectively) reviewed in 2.4.1-2.4.4, one other type of data source for dialect research is the role of mass media and in particular the dialectal television series and dialectal films in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of dialects. There is a scarcity of theoretical, empirical and methodological development in the research of the relationship between mass media and dialects. In this new avenue of research, mass media is no longer an academic discipline for scholars exclusively in the field of media studies, but rather a research area for Chinese linguists. In section 2.5, the author reviews the history and development of the mass media in PRC and in particular she will turn the focus onto Chinese dialectal television series and dialectal films.

2.5 Mass Media Research in China

2.5.1 A Brief History of the Development of the Mass Media in China

Over the course of the past 35 years, the mass media sectors in China have undergone different periods of reformation and are constantly undergoing reforms (Akhavan-Majid, 2004). Note that since the dawn of the PRC in 1949, mass media research in China has been concerned fundamentally with the ruling Communist Party and the way in which the news has been generated. In the same vein, it must be acknowledged that news media is traditionally associated with the Chinese government as a "mouthpiece" of the ruling Communist Party (Singh, 2012). Far from being a media made by and for the Chinese people, the media users in PRC have conventionally engaged in the mass media (e.g., listening to and reading the newspapers) as a means of receiving information in respect to the development of the Communist Party's policies and policy implementation (ibid).

Initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 (during the aftermath The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, commonly known as the Cultural Revolution, which was launched in May 1966 and lasted to October 1976), the economic reform process has played a key role in turning China into one of the world's largest economies (Akhavan-Majid, 2004). It has been argued that the opening-up of the Chinese economy was the beginning point of the media reform during the post-Mao period

(Singh, 2012). In keeping with the Chinese economic reform begun in the 1980s, it was not until the rule of Deng Xiaoping when major transformation of the mass media took place despite fundamental change of the society and social structure having been slow (ibid).

This transformation of the Chinese mass media was followed by a major debate of the press reformation in the 1980s (ibid). Since those early days of reform, the number of newspapers has increased from less than 200 to approximately 2200 in the year of 2005 during the rule of Hu Jingtao. In addition to the increased number of newspapers, there in fact has been an equal or greater increase in other mass media sectors, e.g., radio, television and magazines (Singh, 2012). The evolution of Chinese mass media has entered a new era in recent years. It has become more "pluralist" and "market oriented" within a capitalist economic system (Singh, 2012; Akhavan-Majid, 2004).

This sub-section provides a brief overview of the mass media research in PRC, focusing on the history and development of the media in question. On the whole, the results of the studies have shown that the reformation efforts have been constantly undertaken. More recent research concerns the discourse of television development in PRC. In addition, a common concern among media scholars in Mainland China is the extent to which the film industry has developed in recent years. The two aforementioned media under consideration will be explored in the following sub-sections (2.5.2 and 2.5.3).

2.5.2 Television in China and Dialectal Television Series in China

Firstly, the television industry in Mainland China has recently grown into a system in which the high-tech program production, live transmission and relatively comprehensive coverage of content have become the norm (Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, n.d.). Central China Television (henceforth CCTV) is characterized by being what one could call the largest national television station.

One should also warn, however, against the assumption that the CCTV is the one and only channel exclusively watched by all the Chinese viewers among and across the 56 provinces of Mainland China. Yet, it is noteworthy that in addition to

the CCTV, there are 3,000 television stations across the country (Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, n.d.), e.g., Guangzho television station and Shaan'Xi television station, which are the sites and the sample of the current study. Inaugurated in 2003, the Chinese government has the inclusion of numerous trans-regional television stations.

As is pointed out by Li (2010), in the midst of the discussion on globalization, dialectal speech communities and dialect-user groups pay more attention to their dialectal comic dialogues/dialectal cross talk, dialectal literature and dialectal television series. In other words, the use and the integration of dialects in the mass media has gained prominence in recent years in PRC, given the fact that the dialectal television series receive high audience ratings and dialectal films receive high scores at the box office.

Li (2010) also provides comments on the language policy, planning and language policy implementation in PRC, claiming that on the one hand, China is promoting the learning, the use and the spread of its official state language, commonly known as the Putonghua (Mandarin), and on the other hand, it is not by accident that dialects are endangered. Li further specifies that one of the purposes of dialectal television series and dialectal films is that dialects maintain a harmonious relationship with the official state language as are used in the mass media.

Equally important to Li (2010) is one of the features of the dialectal television series pointed out by Zhu (2008), that the use and the integration of the dialects into television series has two significant meanings. First, the dialects in question represent the regional culture, regional life-styles and regional ideology. Second, the dialects in consideration are widespread phenomenon, meaning dialects are spoken among and across provinces and regions in Mainland China and elsewhere.

2.5.3 Cinema in China and Chinese Dialectal Films in China

Having contextualized the development of mass media, television and dialectal television series in China, the researcher now turns to the research scope of the current study: Chinese dialects in Chinese cinema, commonly known as Chinese dialectal films. In recent years, the incorporation of dialects into cinema has become

prominent. For instance, the Sichuan dialect is used in the movie *Let the Bullets Fly* (rang zi dan fei 2010), the Tangshan dialect is used in the movie *Aftershock* (tang shan da di zhen 2010), and the Chongqing dialect, the Qingdao dialect and the Henan dialect are used in the movie *Crazy Stone* (feng kuang de shi tou 2006).

Below is a brief history of the development of dialectal films in Mainland China. The sensational film *White-Golden Dragon* (bai jin long 1934) was produced in 1934 (Yao, 2013: 7). It is the first film to use a Chinese dialect, the Cantonese dialect, in Chinese film history. Co-directed by Xue Juexian and Gao Liheng, this film is a modern romantic story concerning a man and three women. A decade later, the Wu dialect was used (a joke "Crab, aircraft, floating in the air with eight feet" was narrated in this dialect) in the film *The Spring River Flows East* (yi jiang chun shui xiang dong liu 1947) produced in the 1940s (ibid).

However, dialects were not commonly used in films after 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party took over Mainland China and *The Instructions on the Promotion of Putonghua* was implemented by the State Council in 1956 (Yao, 2013: 7). It was not until the 1960s that the Sichuan dialect was used in the film *Forced Recruitment* (zhua zhuang ding) produced in 1963. The plot of this film is about the Nationalist Party's recruitment of men into the Republic of China Army, aimed to fight against the Japanese invaders in the Sichuan-speaking and Chongqing-speaking regions (ibid). It is surprising to know that throughout the film, no actors and actresses spoke the Mandarin (Putonghua) language.

In the same year, the Suzhou dialect was used in another film called *Satisfied or Unsatisfied* (man yi bu man yi 1963), produced in 1963. The plot of this movie is about restaurant workers' activities in the Suzhou-speaking region. This film was screened entirely using the Suzhou dialect in the Wu region, whereas it was screened in the Mandarin (Putonghua) language in the rest of Mainland China (Yao, 2013: 8).

Both during and the aftermath of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the dialects were rarely used in films. Despite this, the movies *Yellow Earth* (huang tu di 1985), *The Horse Thief* (dao ma zei 1988), *Children King* (hai zi wang 1989) and *Red Sorghum* (hong gao liang 1987) were filmed in dialect speaking

regions where the Mandarin (Putonghua) language was not commonly used, but dialects were not used in the production of these films (Yao, 2013: 10).

It was not until the early 1990s that dialects were used again in films (Yao, 2013: 10). For instance, the Shaan'Xi dialect was used in the production of *The Story of Qiu Ju* (qiu Ju da guan si 1992). In the late 1990s, a number of dialects were used in the production of Chinese films, e.g., the Hebei dialect was used in *Xi Lian* (xi lian 1996), the Northeastern Mandarin (a regional variety of the Mandarin language) was used in the film *Er Mo* (er mo 1994), the Shaanxi dialect was used in the movie *The Story of Ermei* (jing zhe 2004), and the Henan dialect was then used in films *The Orphan of Anyang* (an yang ying hai 2001).

Among and across these Chinese dialectal films, they are accompanied, mobilized by and in turn create the new dialectal trends which are spread widely in Mainland China. Commonly these dialectal films are to depict the dialect-speaking people's life, express the identity of the dialect speakers, and at the same time they also make audiences laugh (Yao, 2013).

In addition to the development and the history of Chinese dialectal films as reviewed in the preceding paragraphs, it is of equal or greater importance to know the reasons why the use of dialects in cinema gained prominence. First, one of the reasons is what Yao (2013: 11) refers to as the "brand effect" and "signature style". The dialect is used as the main actors' and/or main actresses' signature styles. After the styles are established, the brand effect is also created. For instance, the Fenyang dialect is used by the main character as the spoken language in the film *Pickpocket* (Xiao Wu 1998). As it turns out, it was extremely popular and the film producer later launched sequels as part of a trilogy. Second, according to Yao (2013: 12), is the film makers catering for the audience's taste. For example, the Henan dialect, the Hunan dialect, and the Sichuan dialects were used in the film *Almost Perfect* (Shi Quan Jiu Mei 2008) to critique and reconstruct a number of ironic jokes during the Ming Dynasty of China. *Almost Perfect* succeeded at the box office (46 million Reminbi) and many subsequent films followed the same marketing strategy to cater for the audience's taste, e.g., *Visitor from Sui Dynasty* (sui chao lai ke, 2009) and *Panda Express* (xiong mao da xia, 2009). Third, dialectal movies attract increasing numbers

of middle and lower class audiences among and across urban centers of Mainland China. Note that these marginal groups in question commonly speak the respective dialects as their first language (Yao, 2013: 12-13). Fourth, according to Hao (2013: 15), in recent years Chinese audiences have become more and more aware of the relationship between language use on television series and films and their identity. In other words, Chinese audiences identify with the dialect-speaking actors and actresses who speak their local and regional dialects. Fifth, dialectal films help audiences to understand a number of local and regional societies and cultures by introducing the dialect speakers and their lives (Hao, 2013: 16).

CHAPRTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

Although the methodology of this research is a mixture of a number of research methods and drawn from a range of fields of literature, it is nevertheless grounded in the qualitative research of Merriam (2009) and the theoretical methods (the constant comparative method of data analysis) of Boeije (2010), along with some other fundamental quantitative and statistical methods, which together provide the overreaching methodological framework for this study. Note that the present study does not exclusively adopt the qualitative research method but a mixed methods approach in a fashion that the researcher borrows from both qualitative and quantitative research. As a result, the interview data are not used substantially as a means to complement the statistical data retrieved from the television ratings and box offices.

Given the variety of qualitative research techniques available in Western and Eastern academia, some commonly used approaches to collect data, including literature review, interview and observation has been adopted. However, a central characteristic of the research methods adopted for the present study is that qualitative data are in interaction with quantitative/statistical data. Note that these numerical data come from a wide variety of documentary materials such as the audience ratings of dialectal television series and the dialectal box office of the films.

3.2 Research Questions

In crafting the research questions, the researcher investigated the extent to which the mass media promotes the distribution of dialects and maintains the vitality of dialects. Despite the amount of research projects carried out on the sociolinguistics

of dialects and socio-dialectology, little is known about how the mass media and in particular dialectal television series and dialectal films have influenced the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of dialects. These puzzles have perplexed and challenged the mind of the researcher of the present study. In light of this, the answers to the research questions asked below are pursued:

1) What are the differences between relatively more and less powerful Chinese dialects under study with regards to their respective situations of LM?

2) What are the social factors (underlying reasons) resulting in such differences?

3) What is the role of mass media in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of Chinese dialects (with a focus on the Cantonese and the Shaan'xi dialects, respectively)?

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis: Data Sources, Sites and Samples, and Instruments

By and large, data collection and data analysis are continuous and simultaneous in the current research design. Collected data are presented in a manner that is intended to be both convincing as actual accounts derived from literature and participants and convincing as analyses. The data presented in the study are derived from three sources as the researcher adopts a multi-method approach (literature review, interview and observation) to obtain data from a representative sample (n =155 participants) of the Shaan'Xi speech communities and language-user groups (n=50 families/approximately 130 participants) and the Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups (n=25 participants).

A review of literature (n =approximately 50 articles published by referred journals and websites) is another primary research method in the current study. Additionally, interviews and observations are conducted to supplement available information derived from the LM literature. Interviews and observations with Shaan'Xi speech communities and language-user groups and Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups (in Mainland China) are conducted.

Participants are recruited through the personal network and snowball sampling strategy (friends' contact) of the researcher. It must be acknowledged that the criteria for the inclusion of the sample are as follows: Essentially, the problem of the ethnic identities of the sample lies in the fact that both Shaan'Xi and Cantonese are not themselves fully homogeneous. In spite of this, the sample is recruited on the basis of linguistically heterogeneous dialect groups by the self-identification of participants (two speech groups identified as the Shaan'Xi speech community and the Cantonese speech community).

Visits are made to 50 homes to study the vitality of the Shaan'Xi dialect (n=50 families/approximately 130 participants). Moreover, interviews are conducted with 25 Cantonese speakers (n=25 participants). Interviews are the primary source of data for the qualitative part of the present study. Participants respond to a semi-structured interview administered by the researcher during the 11 period from March 2013 to February 2014. Interview questions are based upon protocols developed by Lee Hugo (2011).

Furthermore, personal observations of the Shaan'Xi community interactions are made on more than 50 occasions, some located in urban areas (and semi-urban areas) and others in rural areas (and semi-rural areas). In addition to interviews, observation provides supplementary data to the interview data. For the interview protocol and the observation protocol utilized by the researcher, see the appendices (appendix B for the interview protocol and appendix C for the observation protocol).

Figure 3.1 One of the Survey Sites of the Current Study: the Shaan'Xi Speech
             Community and Language–User Group

Source: Youbianku, 2014.

Further to collecting data from the literature review, interview and observation, data was also collected from documentary materials in respect to the dialectal television series and their audience ratings, as well as dialectal films and their box office records pertaining to the two Chinese dialects under consideration. For the representations of Cantonese- and ShaanXi-dialectal films used as data for the present study, please refer to the following four films: the two Cantonese films *Cold War* (寒戰, *hán zhàn*) and *A Chinese Ghost Story* (倩女幽魂, *qiàn nǚ yōu hún*), and the two ShaanXi dialectal films *Crazy Stone* (瘋狂的石頭, *fēng kuáng de shí tou*) and Gao Xing (高興, *gāo xìng*), 1995-2012. A multiple and comparative analysis on these four dialectal films were undertaken.

These four dialectal films are included in the data set of the present study as they better serve the purpose and meet the research scope of the study. The author

established two criteria. First, these dialectal films are not dialectal opera. The dialects have a long-standing history of incorporation into the Chinese operas (e.g., Cantonese Opera, Huangmei Opera, Sicuan Opera and Shaoxing Opera, among others) and Hong Kong in particular has known to incorporate Cantonese Opera into films. *The Butterfly Lovers* (liang shan bo yu zhu ying tai 1954) is one of the most watched operas and it is also the first color film used in the PRC. Despite dialectal opera playing an important role in the history and the development of Chinese cinema, it is beyond the scope of the current study. Second, the dialectal films explored are produced in Mainland China and the special administrative area of Hong Kong excluding dialectal films produced in Taiwan (e.g., *Cape No. 7*). This is because of the fact that the researcher aims to compare the Cantonese dialectal films with the Shaan'Xi dialectal films. Without Cantonese dialectal films produced in Hong Kong, the data for the present study would be incomplete.

These four dialectal films have also been selected because of their excellent record at the box office. In other words, they each represent the best performance (according to the box office) of Cantonese and Shaan'Xi dialectal films. Please see the appendix D to see the summaries of these four films listed. In addition, the representations of the Cantonese dialectal films are selected from as early as 1987 and as recent as 2012, aimed to the inclusion of the representations for the past 20-30 years.

Data are analyzed with a careful reading allowing for the classification of recurring themes (and recurring sub-themes), utilizing the following two categories: 1) Research purposes, and 2) Research questions. Once a tentative scheme of categories, major themes and major findings had been derived, the researcher then proceeded to sort the data into categories. Note that the research purposes and research questions are informed by the literature review (please see chapter 2.), which serves as the theoretical framework for the present study. A theoretical framework as adopted in the current study refers to the underlying structure that scaffolds and frames the study at the conceptual and methodological levels. The framework of the present study draws upon the concepts, terminologies, definitions and explanations/interpretations of the particular literature base and disciplinary

orientation as reviewed in the chapter 2 of the thesis. Two commonly used data analysis techniques in the conventional qualitative research (content analysis and analytic induction) are adopted to implicitly analyze the data in an inductive analysis (Merriam, 2009).

3.4 Validity and Reliability of Data

A careful data analysis informed by the literature review which serves as the theoretical framework is not adequate alone to suffice as valid data. Therefore, to ensure the validity of the study, a two-pronged emic and etic approach has been adopted in order to balance with the researcher's subjective view. Member checking, peer debriefing and triangulation have been employed to enhance the validity of the data and to reduce researcher bias.

The researcher permitted the participants to verify the accuracy of the transcriptions derived from the interview data and field notes derived from the observation data (member checking). Moreover, data analysis procedures cannot prevent the subjective interpretations of the researcher involved in evaluating evidence of data. As a result, peer debriefing (from the supervisor of the researcher) may serve to control effects of researcher subjectivity to some extent. In addition, multiple sources of data are included to confirm one another by means of triangulation. Furthermore, triangulation strategies were conducted to contrast data obtained from interviews with data gathered from field observations and literature to as far as possible verify knowledge claims made by participants.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

In the preceding chapters, the mixed method research design (which borrow some qualitative research techniques, along with some quantitative and statistical research strategies) was outlined. The researcher also presupposes a certain viewpoint of the world which defines and frames how she selects the site and the sample, elicits the data and analyzes the data and approaches to issues of validity, reliability and ethnicity. The present chapter consists of sections and sub-sections that report the data after analysis (findings) and reports on the findings and the discussions between present research results and previous research results, grouped according to the research questions.

4.2 Findings

The present section covers a range of research results related to the data after analysis.

4.2.1 Answers to Research Question 1. What are the Differences between Relatively More and Less Powerful Chinese Dialects under Study with Regards to their Respective Situations of LM?

Viewed from the perspective of the mass media, relatively more powerful Chinese dialects receive higher audience ratings for their television series and receive higher revenues from their dialectal films' box offices than the less powerful ones. In addition, comparatively more powerful Chinese dialects are used among and across more functional language-use domains than the less powerful ones.

"I went to see Cold War, because it has much higher box office than other films [at that time.]" "And, Cold War is a Cantonese film, so it is more attractive to viewers than other [dialectal] films." These two verbalized vignettes are derived from a set of interviews in which a number of participants in the survey site of Shaan'Xi Province orally expressed their perspectives of box office and various dialectal films. Their viewpoints show that box office plays a crucial role to affect potential viewers' choices of dialectal films and the perceived attitude toward Cantonese film is positive (in terms of the quality of the film).

4.2.2 Answers to Research Question 2 What are the Social Factors (Underlying Reasons) Resulting in such Differences?

The difference lies in the fact that the relatively more powerful Chinese dialects have a greater number of dialectal speaking populations than the less powerful ones, among other factors (e.g., the economy of dialect-speaking provinces). In addition to these short answers, the researcher provides three complementary and detailed answers to research questions 1 and 2 by using the following three factors. One is related to the role of mass media in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of dialects (major factor), another is concerned with the number of dialectal speakers (minor factor) and the other is the language-use domain (other factor). The evidence for the three claims is based on empirical data and secondary data (historical document and scholarly literature).

4.2.2.1 Media (major factor)

Prior to sketching the historical, the geographical and the demographical background (of the number of dialectal speakers and the language-use domain in the proceeding sub-sections), the study is also designed to shed further light on the relationship between mass media and LM. In the present sub-section, the relationship between the mass media and the Chinese dialects in question is examined. In agreement with Sha (2012), the mass media is found to be one of the most influential factors, among others, in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the more powerful Chinese dialects (e.g., Cantonese). It is truism that relatively powerful Chinese dialects (e.g., Cantonese) have a significant number of dialectal

speakers compared to their counterparts—less powerful Chinese dialects (e.g., ShaanXi). A significant amount of mass media is broadcast using the Cantonese dialect as a result of its massive population of speakers, due largely to the fact that Cantonese speakers are accustomed to watching television series and dialectal films in the Cantonese dialect.

It should be acknowledged that despite the huge number of ethnic Shaan'Xi in the younger age groups (currently living in Shaan'Xi Province) researched, their language shift to Mandarin is the main factor why they do not support the Shaan'Xi dialectal television series and films.

"Chinese dialects are of interest to me, because they are used among and across the mass media such as television series and films.' ''The reason why I am interested in the Cantonese dialect is because Cantonese-speaking films are screened in the Shaan'Xi Province [where the interviewees reside].' 'I am particularly interested in Cantonese films [but not other Chinese dialectal films], because the Shaan'Xi Province [where I reside] screened many of them in the local movie theaters."

These three responses are derived from a set of interviews in which a number of participants in the survey site of Shaan'Xi Province verbally narrated their viewpoints of the effect of mass media on their preference of dialectal films.

4.2.2.2 Number of Speakers (minor factor)

One of the measurements (interview protocol) is to reveal how many dialectal speakers use the two dialects among and across numerous functional linguistic and communicative domains. Official demographic websites indicate that no more than half of the total population (37 million speakers) in ShaanXi Province use the ShaanXi dialect (Ten Features of the Development of Shaanxi Populations, 2012), whereas Cantonese is the most widely used medium for intra-ethnic communication in Guangdong Province (38 million speakers) (People's Government of Guangdong Province, 2007). More than 98-99 percent of the older age group (aged 70-85) in the research site of Shannxi Province state that they exclusively use the ShannXi dialect. Only (approximately) 20 percent of the middle age group (aged 50-

70) of the participants state that they occasionally use some Mandarin. Conversely, ShaanXi is the dominant dialect in the linguistic-and-communicative repertoire for the middle age group (aged 50-70). In a sharp contrast, the younger age group (aged 10-30) report that their dominant variety of speech is Mandarin. In some extreme cases, some participants in their early 20s only understand the ShaanXi dialect (listening comprehension) but with no or little speaking ability (performance) of it. Please see the comment on the younger age group who are undergoing a language shift away from the ShaanXi dialect towards Mandarin in the last paragraph of the preceding sub-section.

4.2.2.3 Language-Use Domain (less important factor)

Both concrete and hypothetical data suggest that the usage of the two dialects in question exist in differing geographical locations and discrete domains, wherein Shaan'Xi is commonly used in Shaan'Xi Province whereas Cantonese is not only used in Mainland China (Guangdon Province and some parts of Guangxi Province) but also in Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region), Macau (Special Administrative Region) and communities of overseas Chinese immigrants (North America, EU countries, Southeast Asia, among others).

4.2.3 Answers to Research Question 3. What is the Role of Mass Media in the Distribution, the Spread and the Maintenance of the Chinese Dialects (with a Focus on the Cantonese and the Shaanxi Dialects, Respectively)?

The relatively more powerful Chinese dialects have longer history of the development of their mass media sectors than the less powerful ones. Also, the more powerful Chinese dialects evidently have more numbers of the production of dialectal television series and dialectal films than the less powerful ones by their respective mass media sectors. Furthermore, the mass media provides institutional support to help the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the more powerful Chinese dialects more so than the less powerful ones.

After answering the research question 1 and 2 in the preceding sub-sections, a problem immediately arises: the historical work and scholarly literature never

formally document mass media's alleged role as the underlying reason for the wide dispersal and robust maintenance of the relatively powerful Chinese dialects (despite the scarcity of literature address the linkage by Chen (2008), Ma (2006) and Sha (2012). Therefore, how the mass media connects to the spread and the maintenance of the two Chinese dialects must be taken in consideration. This is principally conducted through a comparison of three main themes explored in detail: 1) the history of the dialectal films and integrated televisions; 2) the number of dialectal films and television series being produced; and 3) the box office of the dialectal films and audience ratings of the dialectal television series.

Below are the complementary and detailed answers to research question 3. This sub-section presents the history and the development of the Cantonese films that have been generated by the museum of *FoShan* (佛山, *fóshān*) (2004). In view of the evidence, the Cantonese films inaugurated the work of the director Xiao-Dan Tang (湯曉丹, *tāng xiǎo dān*) and his first film titled *White Gold Dragon* (白金龍, *bái jīn lóng*), which was dubbed into the Cantonese dialect (ibid). Since the early 1930s, Cantonese films have gained popularity. In the 1950s, Cantonese films enjoyed their Golden Age (in 1958 alone, 89 Cantonese films were produced).

Table 4.1 and the linear graph (Figure 4.1) below present audience ratings of television series from Cantonese- and ShaanXi-broadcasting television channels, respectively.

Table 4.1 Audience Ratings of Television Channels: Focus on Cantonese-broadcasting Guangzhou and ShaanXi-broadcasting Xi'an Integrated Televisions, 2009-2010

| Months and Years of Broadcasting	Television Channels			
	Guangzhou Integrated Television (Highest \ Lowest)	Xi'an Integrated Television (Highest \ Lowest)	Guangzhou Television Series (Highest \ Lowest)	Xi'an Television Series (Highest \Lowest)
July 2009	13.25 \ 6.09	9.7 \ 3.26	No Statistics	No Statistics
August 2009	14.19 \ 6.09	9.14 \ 3.71	8.37 \ 3.27	5.42 \ 1.26
September 2009	No Statistics	No Statistics	No Statistics	No Statistics
October 2009	12.99 \ 6.32	22.19 \ 4.47	7.51 \ 2.84	4.08 \ 1.45
November 2009	10.07 \ 6.40	11.39 \ 4.22	7.09 \ 2.42	5.20 \ 1.62
December 2009	13.93 \ 6.30	11.45 \ 4.06	5.62 \ 3.29	8.24 \ 2.10
January 2010	8.74 \ 5.85	12.56 \ 3.64	5.17 \ 2.29	5.23 \ 1.14
February 2010	9.39 \ 6.72	40.15 \ 4.22	4.76 \ 2.35	5.23 \ 1.14
March 2010	9.35 \ 5.21	11.61 \ 3.68	6.52 \ 3.46	7.32 \ 1.76
April 2010	No Statistics	No Statistics	7.81 \ 3.37	4.38 \ 1.35
May 2010	No Statistics	No Statistics	6.62 \ 2.54	3.45 \ 1.41

Source: China Central Television, 2010.
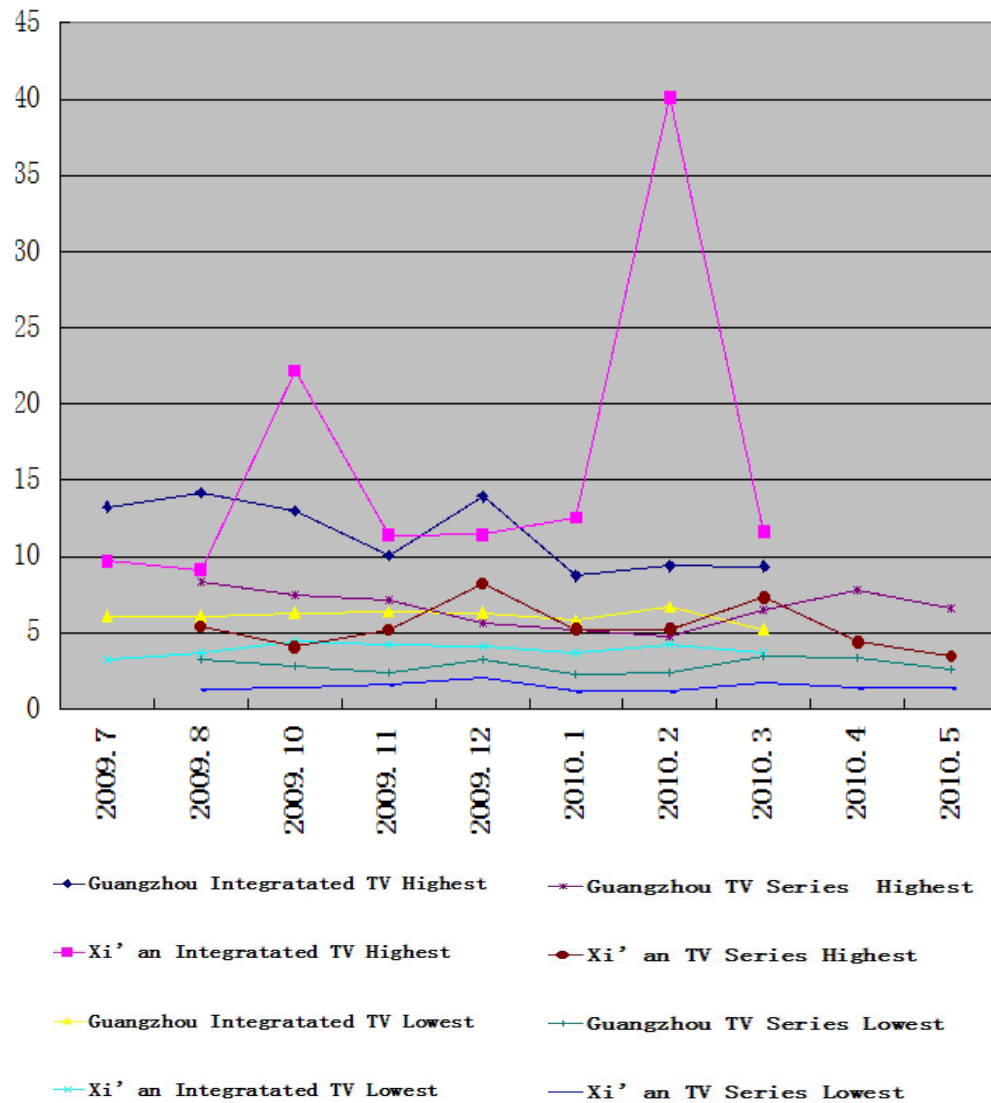
Figure 4.1 Linear Graph of the Audience Ratings of Television Channels
(Cantonese-broadcasting Guangzhou and ShaanXi-broadcasting Xi'an
Integrated Televisions, 2009-2010)

Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 show that the average (mean) of audience ratings for Cantonese-broadcasting Guangzhou Integrated Television (5-6) is higher than the Shaan'Xi-broadcasting Xi'an counterpart (3-4). Complementary to the audience ratings on the integrated television, the audience rating on the television series

broadcast in the Cantonese dialect (2-3) is higher than its counterpart of Shaan'Xi-broadcast television series (1-2). Similarly, according to Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1, it can be concluded that the highest audience rating for Cantonese-broadcasting Guangzhou Integrated Television (14-19, July 2009) is higher than the Shaan'Xi-broadcasting Xi'an counterpart (11.45, December 2009).

In addition, Table 4.2 reports the box office returns of Cantonese- and Shaan'Xi-dialectal films compared to the box office returns of all Chinese films (excluding all non-Chinese or foreign films in Mainland China).

Table 4.2 Box Office of Cantonese- and ShaanXi-dialectal Films in Comparison to all
　　　　Chinese Films

| Years | Cantonese- and ShaanXi-dialectal Films | | | | Annual Revenue from all Box Office of Chinese Films in Mainland China, excluding all foreign-language (non-Chinese) films |
	Number of Cantonese Films	Box Office of Cantonese Films (*Measurement of Box Office: ¥ Ten Thousand China Yuan or CNY*)	Number of Shaan'xi Dialectal Films	Box Office of Shaan'xi Dialectal Films (*Measurement of Box Office: ¥ Ten Thousand China Yuan or CNY*)	
1995	1	9,500	0	0	95,000
1996	2	13,700	0	0	115,000
1997	1	6,500	2	7,900	100,000
1998	1	8,000	0	0	140,000
1999	1	2,000	1	3,000	81,000
2000	0	0	0	0	86,000
2001	2	5,500	0	0	89,000
2002	3	28,200	0	0	90,000
2003	8	11,070	0	0	100,000
2004	6	28,440	1	12,000	150,000
2005	13	44,955	0	0	200,000
2006	6	24,830	2	8,500	260,000
2007	9	53,908	3	4,300	330,000
2008	9	59,107	1	4,696	430,000
2009	9	97,760	6	44,520	630,000
2010	12	105,710	2	11,790	889,059
2011	12	148,415	2	25,900	1,226,420

Note: The analysis of movie box office in the Mainland China 1995-2010, 2011

Moreover, Figure 4.2 gives an overview of the box office of the Cantonese and Shaan'Xi dialectal films, 1995-2011.
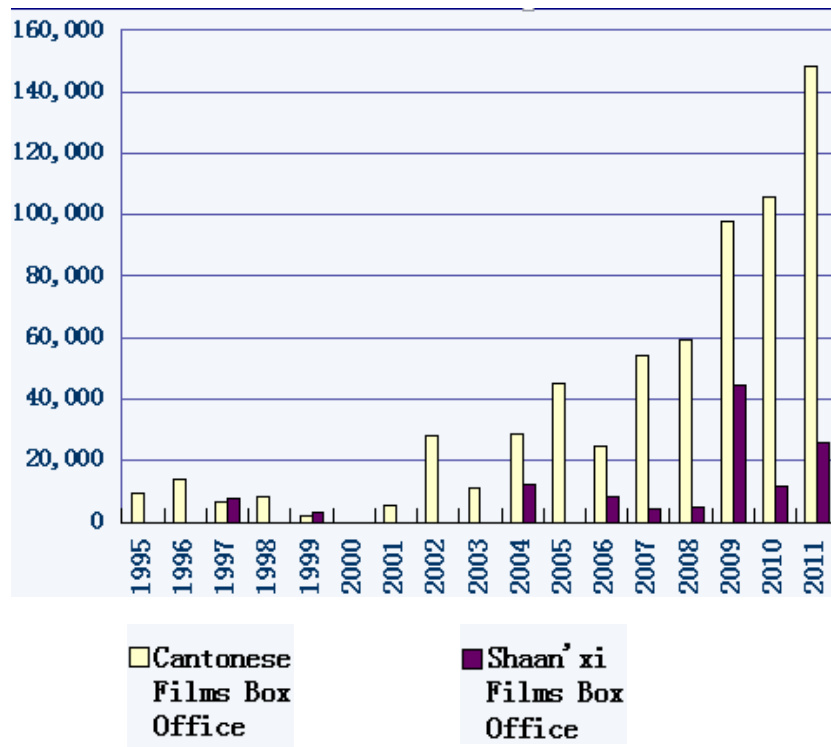

Figure 4.2 Box Office of the Cantonese- and ShaanXi-Films, 1995-2011

Further, the number of films using the two Chinese dialects under consideration is provided in Figure 4.3.
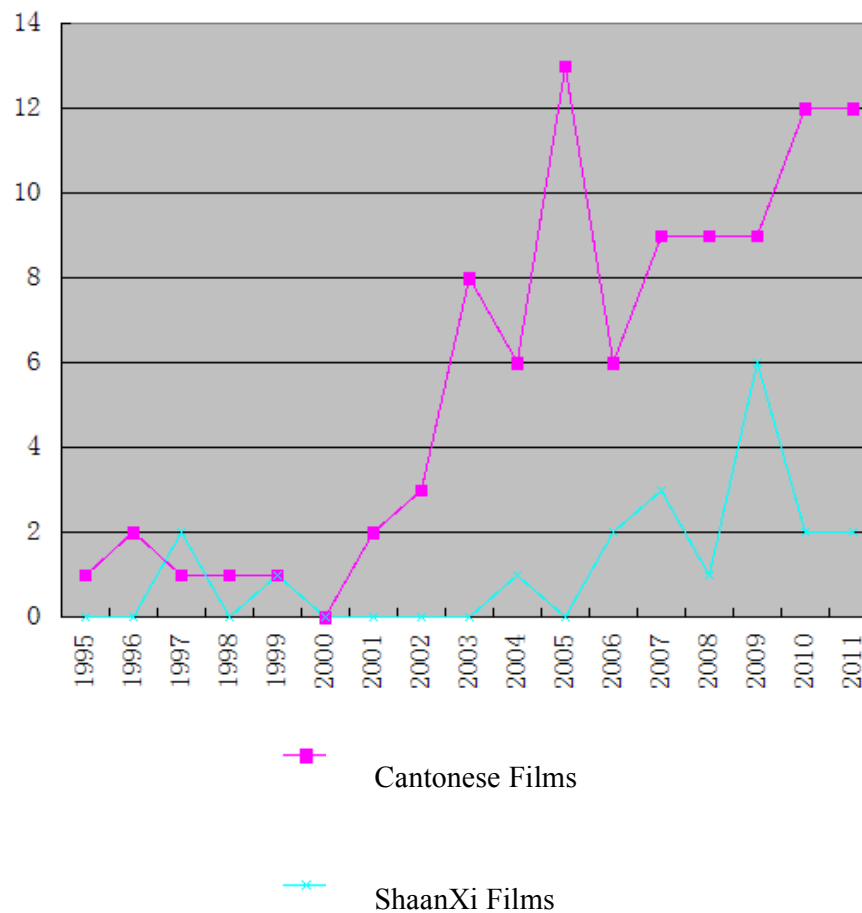
Figure 4.3 Number of Cantonese and ShaanXi Films, 1995-2011

It has become evident that the mass media—particularly with regard to the film industry—has promoted the Cantonese dialectal films over the ShaanXi dialectal films. As shown in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.3, 2005 is the year when the highest number of Cantonese films were produced (*n*=15), while 2009 is the year when the most number of ShaanXi films were manufactured (*n*=6).

Furthermore Table 4.2, Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 reveal that the box office returns of the Cantonese films steadily grew from 2002 to 2008 and reached its peak in 2011, with an estimated revenue of 150,000 CNY generated. In contrast, the maximum amount of revenue generated by ShaanXi films was only 45,000 CNY in 2009.

In all cases, the Cantonese films outperformed ShaanXi films. For instance, the averaged (mean) revenue per day made by the Cantonese film *Cold War* (寒戰, *hán zhàn*), was 1,235,088 Hong Kong Dollars (HKD) (Twenty First CN, 2012) and its 10-day box office was totaled 95,000,000 CNY (Mtime, 2012). It is not surprising to see that the revenue made by the Cantonese film *Cold War* during the first week in the movie theaters totaled 1.8 billion HKD (Mu, 2012) and its accumulative box office totaled 1.91 billion CNY (Mtime, 2012).

In combination with the analyses of the Cantonese dialectal film *Cold War*, another comparison can be made. In 2012, *Cold War* received an above average box office revenue in ShaanXi Province, however, it received much higher box office returns in the Cantonese-speaking regions of Mainland China. By contrast, the ShaanXi dialectal film of Gao Xing (高興, *gāo xìng*) received a relatively higher box office in ShaanXi Province than other Chinese dialectal films in 2009, whereas its box office revenue was lower than 10,000 HKD in the Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong Special Administrative Area in the same year (Liao 1 News, 2010).

"The reason why I particularly love to see Cantonese films because it is massively produced and has many choices [unlike other dialectal films, I have few choices], such as, horror movies and comedian movies." This verbalized vignette is derived from a set of interviews in which numerous participants in the research site of Shaan'Xi Province orally expressed the relationship between the number of the dialectal films manufactured and the choice of genres available for viewers. Cantonese films, on the one hand, have produced massively. As a result, viewers have more options of genres of the Cantonese film. Shaan'Xi films, on the other hand, are not produced in greater numbers. Thus, viewers have fewer options of the genre of Shaan'Xi films [comparing to Cantonese films].

4.3 Discussion

The present section compares and contrasts present research results generated by the current study with the findings obtained from the existing academic literature. The findings of the current study not only confirm the previous research (i.e., the use

of dialects by means of the mass media influence the extent of the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the dialects under consideration), but also provides evidence on the correlation between the popularity of dialects researched (as stated earlier, the popularity of dialects are measured by their productivity, audience ratings and box office) and their extent of maintenance, which are unrepresented and under-addressed by previous research.

Comparative information with regard to the role of mass media on the extent of the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of dialects under study are obtained by the following two papers, among others. The findings of Chen (2008) show that dialects are widely used in the television series (manufactured in Mainland China). Moreover, the use of dialects in television series, to a certain extent, results in the dialect fever—the popularity of the use of the dialects among viewers (ibid). In addition, the use of dialects in television series also helps speed up the spread of the dialects at differing timescales, and among and across geographical spaces (ibid). These findings derived from the current study are in agreement with Chen (2008) by clearly showing that both Cantonese and Shaan'Xi dialects are widely used by Guangzhou Integrated Television and Xi'an Integrated Television, respectively. Additionally, the Cantonese-broadcasting Cuangzhou Integrated Television and films, as well as the Shaan'Xi-broadcasting Xi'an Integrated Television and films, have proved to help the spread and the maintenance of their respective speakers.

Previous researchers other than Chen (2008) also had similar findings to those of the present study. Among and across numerous studies concerning the Shaan'Xi dialectal mass media (e.g., television channels and films), Sha (2012), for example, argues that media products (e.g., television series) play an essential role in the spread and the maintenance of dialects (e.g., after viewing Cantonese television series and/or films, Shaan'Xi native speakers may acquire some Cantonese lexis, phrases, syntaxes, etc.) viewed from the perspective of social development. Thus, the present research conforms with the findings of the research undertaken by Sha (2012).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In summary, the current study may provide empirical and statistical answers to the question of the disparity between relatively powerful and less powerful dialects by exploring sociological factors in the role of mass media (more powerful Chinese dialects receive higher audience ratings for their television series and receive higher revenues from their dialectal film's box office revenues than the less powerful ones), the number of dialectal speakers (more powerful Chinese dialects have a larger dialectal speaking population than the less powerful ones) and the language-use domain (more powerful Chinese dialects are used among and across more functional language-use domains than the less powerful ones) (answers to research questions 1 and 2).

In addition, the findings of the present research may provide evidence on the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of dialects in the public and social discourse (answers to the research question 3) as follows: 1) the history of the dialectal films and integrated televisions (of the dialects in consideration) (more powerful Chinese dialects have a longer history of the development of their mass media sectors than the less powerful ones); 2) the number of dialectal films and television series being produced (of the dialects under investigation) (more powerful Chinese dialects have larger numbers of productions of dialectal television series and dialectal films than the less powerful ones by their respective mass media sectors); and 3) the box office database/movie box office and the audience ratings (of the dialects researched) (the mass media provides institutional support to help the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the more powerful Chinese dialects than the less powerful ones).

Despite the possible contributions to dialect studies, LM, and other related fields, there are nevertheless some limitations to the current study. First, the sample size is small. The representative sample (n=155 participants) of the Shaan'Xi speech

communities and language-user groups (*n*=50 families/approximately 130 participants) and the Cantonese speech communities and language-user groups (*n*=25 participants) participated in the present research constitute only 0.00035 percent of the total Shaan'Xi-speaking population (*n*=approximately 37,000,000) and 0.00006 percent of the total Cantonese-speaking population in Cantonese-speaking provinces (*n*=approximately 38,000,000), and 0.00035 percent of the total Cantonese-speaking population in Hong Kong (*n*=approximately 7,130,000 to 7,138,000) (Source: hk.szhk.com).

Second, in addition to the relatively smaller sample size recruited to participate in the study, the other primary data source is also problematic and questionable: the statistical and numerical data of the audience ratings (on the television series) and the box office returns (of the films). The problem lies in the fact that the mechanism through which the audience ratings of television series and the box office returns of films are calculated cannot be verified by the researcher. Moreover, there is no complementary data on the audience ratings of the television series and box office returns of the films researched. Further, simply because Guangzhou Integrated Television received higher audience ratings does not mean that viewers favor the dialectal television series due to the fact that the television channel in question also broadcasted non-dialectal (Mandarin-medium) television series.

In spite of these criticisms and limitations, the present study potentially benefits the scholarly community, the mass media sector, and the speech community members and/or language-user groups of the endangered languages and/or minority dialects. The present study is aimed to fill the knowledge gap in the literature on the role of mass media in the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the endangered languages and minority dialects. It is hoped that this research will be of some interest to academics who undertake their research on endangered languages and minority dialects, but historically have overlooked the importance of the role of the mass media. The entertainment sector is another potential beneficiary of the current research. The study is supported by evidence derived from the mass media (e.g., dialectal television series and dialectal films) and its effect on the extent of the distribution, the spread and the maintenance of the dialects. Moreover, the members

of the speech communities and/or language-user groups of the endangered languages and/or minority dialects may benefit from the current study by raising their awareness of the maintenance of their less powerful dialects and by increasing their interest in learning the ethnic and/or heritage languages.

There are several recommendations and suggestions for future researchers who may wish to compare more dominant and less dominant dialects in the same nation-state and who undertake research on the distribution, the spread, the maintenance and the shift among and across endangered languages and/or minority dialects under their consideration. Future researchers are recommended to: 1) recruit a larger sample size of the participants (speech community members and/or language-user group members) to be surveyed, interviewed and observed; and 2) adopt a more objective measurement (instead of a subjective measurement) on the popularity and the audience ratings of dialectal television series and dialectal films. Moreover, future researchers are advised to take into account the role of mass media (which has been conventionally under-addressed by previous researchers in media studies, dialect studies and sociolinguistic studies of LM and shift, among others), particularly dialectal television series and dialectal films, on the extent of the vitality, maintenance, shift and extinction of dialects in question.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

List of Chinese Dialects

Gan Chinese

1   Dongkou dialect

洞口话

2   Huaining dialect

怀宁话

3   Fuzhou (Jiangxi) dialect

抚州话

4   Ji'an (Jiangxi) dialect

吉安话

5   Leiyang dialect

耒阳话

6   Nanchang dialect

南昌话

7   Xianning dialect

咸宁话

8   Yichun dialect

宜春话

9   Yingtan dialect

鹰潭话

Chen Changyi. Summary of Gan.
Chen Changyi. Chorography of
languages in Jiangxi.

Guan (Mandarin) 官话/官話

The eight main dialect areas of
Mandarin in Mainland China.
Main article: Mandarin dialects

1   Beijing Mandarin

北京官话

2   Beijing dialect

北京话

3   Standard Chinese

普通话

4   Guoyu (ROC)

国语

5   Biaozhun Huayu (Singapore)[1]

标准华语

6   Philippine Mandarin

菲律宾华语

7   Malaysian Mandarin

马来西亚华语

8   Chengde dialect

承德话

9   Chifeng dialect

赤峰话

10   Hailar dialect

海拉尔话

11 Ji–Lu Mandarin

      冀鲁官话

12 Baoding dialect

      保定话

13 Jinan dialect

      济南话

14 Shijiazhuang dialect

      石家庄话

15 Tianjin dialect

      天津话

16 Jianghuai Mandarin

      江淮官话

17 Hefei dialect

      合肥话

18 Hainan Junjiahua

      军家话

19 Nanjing dialect

      南京话

20 Nantong dialect

      南通话

21 Xiaogan dialect

      孝感话

22 Yangzhou dialect

      扬州话

23 Jiao–Liao Mandarin

      胶辽官话

24 Dalian dialect

      大连话

25 Qingdao dialect

      青岛话

26 Weihai dialect

      威海话

27 Yantai dialect

      烟台话

28 Lan–Yin Mandarin

      兰银官话

29 Lanzhou dialect

      兰州话

30 Xining dialect

      西宁话

31 Yinchuan dialect

      银川话

32 Northeastern Mandarin

      东北官话

33 Changchun dialect

      长春话

34 Harbin dialect

      哈尔浜话

35 Qiqihar dialect

      齐齐哈尔话

36 Shenyang dialect

      沈阳话

37 Southwestern Mandarin

      西南官话

38 Changde dialect

      常德

39 Chengdu dialect

    成都话

40 Chongqing dialect

    重庆话

41 Dali dialect

    大理话

42 Guiyang dialect

    贵阳话

43 Kunming dialect

    昆明话

44 Liuzhou dialect

    柳州话

45 Wuhan dialect

    武汉话

46 Xichang dialect

    西昌话

47 Yichang dialect

    宜昌话

48 Zhongyuan Mandarin

    中原官话

49 Dungan language

    东干语

50 Gangou dialect

    甘沟话

51 Hanzhong dialect

    汉中

52 Kaifeng dialect

    开封

53 Luoyang dialect

    洛阳

54 Nanyang dialect

    南阳

55 Qufu dialect

    曲埠话

56 Tianshui dialect

    天水

57 Xi'an dialect

    西安话

58 Yan'an dialect

    延安话

59 Zhengzhou dialect

    郑州话

Hui 徽语/徽語

Sometimes subcategory of Wu.

1 Jixi (Anhui) dialect

    绩溪话

2 Shexian (Anhui) dialect

    歙县话

3 Tunxi dialect

    屯溪话

4 Yixian (Anhui) dialect

    黟县话

Jin 晋语/晉語

The main dialect areas of Jin in China.
Sometimes subcategory of Mandarin.

1   Baotou dialect

包头话

2   Datong dialect

大同话

3   Handan dialect

邯郸话

4   Hohhot dialect

呼市话

5   Taiyuan dialect

太原话

6   Xinxiang dialect

新乡话

7   Kejia (Hakka)

客家话/客家話

8   Huizhou (Hakka) dialect

惠州客家话

9   Meizhou dialect

梅州客家话

10   Wuhua dialect

五华客家话

11   Xingning dialect

兴宁客家话

12   Pingyuan dialect

平远客家话

13   Jiaoling dialect

蕉岭客家话

14   Dabu dialect

大埔客家话

15   Fengshun dialect

丰顺客家话

16   Longyan dialect

龙岩客家话

17   Lufeng (Hakka) dialect

陆丰客家话

Min 闽语/閩語

The main dialect areas of Min in
Mainland China, Hainan and Taiwan.

1 Min Bei (Northern Min)

闽北语

1.1 Jian'ou dialect

建瓯话

1.2 Shao–Jiang Min

邵将语

2 Min Dong (Eastern Min)

闽东语

2.1 Fu'an dialect

福安话

2.2 Fuding dialect

福鼎話

2.3 Xiapu dialect

霞浦话

2.4 Shouning dialect

寿宁话

4.8 Hainan dialect (Hainanese)

海南话

4.9 Leizhou dialect

雷州话

4.10　Zhanjiang dialect

湛江话

Wu 吴语/吳語

The main dialect areas of Wu in Mainland China.

1　Taihu

太湖片

1.1 Changzhou dialect

常州话

1.2 Suzhou dialect

苏州话

1.3 Wuxi dialect

无锡话

1.4 Hangzhou dialect

杭州话

1.5 Huzhou dialect

湖州话

1.6 Jiaxing dialect

嘉兴话

1.7 Shaoxing dialect

绍兴话

1.8 Ningbo dialect

宁波话

1.9 Shanghai dialect

上海话

2　Taizhou

台州片

2.1 Taizhou dialect

台州话

2.2 Linhai dialect

临海话

2.3 Sanmen dialect

三门话

2.4 Tiantai dialect

天台话

2.5 Xianju dialect

仙居话

2.6 Huangyan dialect

黄岩话

2.7 Jiaojiang dialect

椒江话

2.8 Wenling dialect

温岭话

2.9 Yuhuan dialect

玉环话

2.10　Leqing dialect

乐清话

2.11　Ninghai dialect

宁海话

3　Oujiang (Dong'ou)

瓯江（东瓯）片

3.1 Wenzhou dialect

温州话

3.2 Rui'an dialect

瑞安话

3.3 Wencheng dialect

文成话

4 Wuzhou

婺州片选

4.1 Jinhua dialect

金华话

4.2 Lanxi dialect

兰溪话

4.3 Pujiang dialect

浦江话

4.4 Yiwu dialect

义乌话

4.5 Dongyang dialect

东阳话

4.6 Pan'an dialect

磐安话

4.7 Yongkang dialect

永康话

4.8 Wuyi dialect

武义话

4.9 Jiande dialect

建德话

5 Chuqu

处衢片

5.1 Lishui dialect

丽水话

5.2 Qingtian dialect

青田话

5.3 Quzhou dialect

衢州话

5.4 Shangrao dialect

上饶话

6 Xuanzhou

宣州片

6.1 Xuancheng dialect

宣城话

Xiang 湘语/湘語

New Xiang is orange, Old Xiang yellow, and Chen-Xu Xiang red. Non-Xiang languages are (clockwise from top right) Gan (purple), Kejia (pink along the right), Hunan Tuhua (dark green), Southwestern Mandarin (dark green, light blue, medium blue, light green on the left), and Waxianghua (dark blue)

1 Chang–Yi dialects

长益片

1.1 Changsha dialect

长沙话

1.2 Yueyang dialect

岳阳话

1.3 Hengyang dialect

衡阳话

1.4 Hengnan dialect

衡南话

1.5 Hengshan dialect

衡山话

1.6 Hengdong dialect

衡东话

1.7 Qidong dialect

祈东话

1.8 Qiyang dialect

祈阳话

1.9 Leiyang dialect

耒阳话

1.10　Changning dialect

常宁话

1.11　Yiyang dialect

益阳话

1.12　Ningxiang dialect

宁乡话

1.13　Zhuzhou dialect

株洲话

1.14　Changde dialect

常德话

1.15　Pingjiang dialect

平江话

2　Lou–Shao dialects

娄邵片

2.1 Loudi dialect

娄底话

2.2 Shaoyang dialect

邵阳话

2.3 Shuangfeng dialect

双峰话

3　Chen–Xu dialects

郴溆片

3.1 Chenxi dialect

郴西话

3.2 Xupu dialect

溆浦话

Yue 粤语/粤語

1　Yuehai dialect

粤海方言

2　Cantonese (Guangfu)

广东话

Hong Kong Cantonese

香港用语

2.1 Wuzhou dialect

梧州话

2.2 Tanka dialect

蜑家话

2.3 Xiguan dialect

西關話

3　Sanyi dialect (Samyap)

三邑方言

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Interview # (for data management):

Name of the project/study: The Media's Influence on Success and Failure of Dialects: The Case of Cantonese and Shaan'xi Dialects

 Date: Setting:

Duration of interview (indicate starting time and ending time):

Interviewer(s): Yuhan Mao

Interviewee(s):

Position(s) of Interviewee(s):

1. Briefly Describe the Purpose of this Interview:

2. Interview Questions that Elicit Personal Background:

For example, tell me about yourself (age, gender and educational background)?

Tell me what you like about your speech community?

3. Interview Questions that explore [WHAT & HOW]

For example, what has been the greatest challenge in practicing your dialect?

Do you watch television shows in your dialect? Why or why not?

Do you see movies in your dialect? Why or why not?

What do you think is the major factor that causes your dialect to be maintained (or shifted to the Mandarin)?

4. Context-based Interview Questions:

In addition to interview questions listed in this sample protocol, other interview questions are highly context-dependent. Those questions should emerge from the situations. Because researcher(s) will be interviewing many different individuals and

groups, he/she will need to prepare follow-up questions whose answers will give more information or explanations. Context-based interview questions are prepared for this unexpected variability.

5. Probes that Keep Interviews Going:

Researcher(s) may need to ask participants to clarify unclear claims and provide further detailed information. If participants tend to give one or two word answers, or not give reasons for their answers, these questions or probes will be asked to elicit more specific answers.

For example, can you be more specific about that?

Could you give me a real example of that?

That sounds really interesting! Would you explain more about that?

Is there anything else about that you think might be interesting about that?

6. Ending question(s):

For example, is there anything else you would like to add that I didn't ask you about?

Researcher(s) will always thank interviewees for their participation and reassure individual and group participants that all answers in any interviews will be held in the strictest confidential.

Source: Lee, 2011:90

Appendix C

Observation Protocol

Observation # (for managing data):

Date/Time:

Place/Field-Site(s):

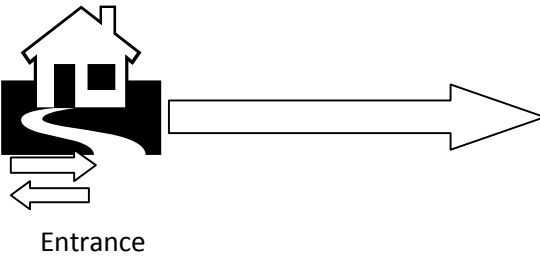Researcher/Observer: Yuhan Mao

Purpose of Field Visit:

Duration of Observation (indicate beginning and ending times):

Individual(s) or group(s) observed:

Observer's Involvements (participant or non-participant):

Drawing a Diagram of the Setting :

Descriptive Notes (emic data)	Reflective Notes (etic data)
(Thick description of what occurs, is seen, and heard at the site chronologically or thematically)	(Concurring personal reflections, thoughts, and ideas of the observer for events and episodes occurred)

Source: Lee, 2011: 94

Appendix D

Four Dialectal Films in the Inclusion of Data Set for the Present Study

Movie Flyer 1 The Cantonese film of *Cold War* (寒戰, *hán zhàn*) (Wikipedia, 2014)

Below is the plot of the Cantonese film of *Cold War* (寒戰, hán zhàn), taken from the Wikipedia.

> "*In Asia's safest city, the police have long been untouchable. Approaching midnight in Hong Kong, police headquarters receives an anonymous call: a fully loaded police van carrying the force's most advanced equipment and five highly trained officers has disappeared off the grid. The hijackers possess direct knowledge of*

police procedures and are already several steps ahead. The police must meet a list of demands to ensure the hostages' release, including the delivery of a large ransom. Any delay will cost lives. The clock has begun to tick."

The plot of *Cold War* (film)

Movie Flyer 2 The Cantonese Film of *A Chinese Ghost Story*
(倩女幽魂, *qiàn nǚ yōu hún*) (Chinese Films, 2011)

Below is the plot of *A Chinese Ghost Story* (倩女幽魂, *qiàn nǚ yōu*
hún), taken from the Wikipedia.

> "*Ning Choi-san is a timid debt collector whose job requires him to*
> *travel to rural areas. He arrives at a town but is forced to seek shelter*
> *in a deserted temple in the forest on the outskirts because he ran out*
> *of money in the first place due to his inability to collect the debt as*
> *initially planned. That night in the temple, Ning meets a beautiful and*
> *alluring young maiden called Nip Siu-sin and falls in love with her.*
> *However, when he later recalls last night's events the next day, he*
> *becomes increasingly fearful and superstitious because a Taoist told*

him that the people he saw at the temple were ghosts. That night, he returns to the temple to spend his night there and confirms his theory that Nip is actually a spirit.

Nip tells him her story of how she became eternally bound to the servitude of a sinister Tree Demoness. She explains that as long as her remains are buried at the foot of the tree, her spirit will be forever enslaved by Tree Demoness. Ning attempts to free her from her suffering. He seeks the help of a powerful Taoist priest and master swordsman called Yin Chik-ha, who he met earlier. Yin battles the Tree Demoness and attempts to free Nip's soul but fails. Nip's soul is taken to the Underworld for betraying her master.

Ning is unwilling to give up on Nip and insists that Yin helps him. Yin manages to open a temporary portal to the Underworld. Ning and Yin enter the Underworld and attempt to free Nip's soul from suffering. They are unable to find her in the midst of thousands of other spirits. Eventually, Ning and Nip are able to see each other briefly near dawn when they come back from the Underworld after the fight. Sunlight shines on the urn containing Nip's cremated remains, but Nip cannot be exposed to sunlight or her soul will disintegrate. Ning holds on to a curtain to shield the urn from sunlight as he has a final conversation with Nip. Nip tells Ning that the only way to save her soul is to place her remains to rest at another more auspicious burial site before she returns to the darkness. Ning follows her instructions and with Yin's advice, Ning buries Nip's remains near the crest of a hill. He burns a joss stick for her and prays for her soul while Yin watches solemnly behind him.”

The plot of *A Chinese Ghost Story* (film)

Movie Flyer 3 The ShaanXi Dialectal Film of *Crazy Stone*
(瘋狂的石頭, *fēng kuáng de shí tou*) (Wikipedia, 2014)

Below is the plot of The ShaanXi dialectal film of *Crazy Stone* (瘋狂的石頭, *fēng kuáng de shí tou*), taken from the Wikipedia:

> *"When a precious jade stone is discovered in an old outhouse, the*
> *owner of said outhouse and the surrounding buildings suddenly finds*
> *himself with the financial clout to withstand the buy-out pressure of*
> *an unethical developer who wishes to build a large building on his*
> *plot. The owner, intending to display the stone to the public, puts his*
> *dedicated chief of security in charge of keeping it safe. But with the*
> *stakes running high, this is easier said than done. The developer hires*
> *a high-tech cat burglar from Hong Kong to steal the stone, the*

owner's wayward son sees the jewel as the perfect symbol of wealth and hatches a plan to use it to increase his chances at getting laid, and a gang of three con-men who hear about the jewel see it as their ticket to the big time. These three groups find themselves in direct competition and, finding their attempts foiled as often by the security guard as by each other, become more and more desperate as the film progresses."

The plot of *Crazy Stone* (film)

Movie Flyer 4 The ShaanXi dialectal film of Gao Xing (高興, *gāo xìng*) (Wikipedia, 2014)

The plot of *Gao Xing* (film) is as follows:

> *"Gao Xing" tells the story of a man who makes a living by collecting trash. This film depicts what life is like for people who are in the bottom of social hierarchy in a China's big city.*

BIOGRAPHY

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ACADEMIC BACKGROUND   Bachelor's Degree with major in Mass
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