Introduction

0.1 "Yue" and "Cantonese"

The present study is intended as the first of a series of studies on the Yue (粵) dialects, which constitute one of the several major dialect groups of Chinese.[1] The Yue dialects are sometimes referred to as the Cantonese dialects. The terms "Cantonese"[2] and "Yue" have been used in two senses. In their broad sense they designate a group of dialects; in their narrow sense they designate the standard dialect (dialect of Canton) of that group. In order to avoid unnecessary confusion, we shall use "Yue" to designate the dialect group[3] and "Cantonese" to designate the norm of the group.

0.3 Present-day distribution

Today the Yue dialects are spoken in central and southwestern
Kwangtung as well as southeastern Kwangsi. The great majority of
Chinese immigrants in North America and a significant portion of those
in Southeast Asia are also Yue speakers. Map 4 shows the Yue speaking
areas in China: names of localities, which are known to be inhabited by
Yue speakers through extant published dialect materials[33] or through
dialect investigations,[34] are circled. These include: Canton, Nan-hai,
Pan-yu (番 禺), Shun-de, San-shui, Gao-yao, Zeng-cheng (增 城), Dong-

guan (東莞), Zhong-shan (中山), Macao, Hong Kong, Xin-hui, Tai-shan, Kai-ping, En-ping, Hao-shan (鶴山), Yang-jiang, Cang-wu or Wu-zhou (梧州), Teng-xian, Gui-ping (桂平), Bo-bai (博白), Gui-xian, and Nan-ning. Localities mentioned by name as Yue speaking areas in extant works but whose varieties of dialect are not actually described,[35] are marked with a question mark, ?. These include: Si-hui (四會), Guang-ning (廣寧), Gao-ming (高明), Yun-fu (雲浮), Yu-nan (鬱南), Feng-chuan (封川), Kai-jian (開建), Xin-xing (新興), Luo-ding (羅定), De-qing (德慶), Bao-an (寶安), Hua-xian (花縣), Qing-yuan, Cong-hua (從化), Fo-gang (佛岡), Long-men, Mao-ming (茂名) or Gao-zhou (高州), Xin-yi (信宜), Yang-chun (陽春), Hua-xian (化縣), Dian-bai (電白), Lian-jiang (廉江), Wu-chuan (吳川), Sui-qi (遂溪), Hai-kang (海康) or Lei-zhou, Xu-wen (徐聞), He-pu or Lian-zhou, Qin-xian (欽縣) or Qin-zhou (欽州), Fang-cheng (防城), Ling-shan (靈山), Rong-xian (容縣), Yu-lin (鬱林).

If we add up the rough figures projected here for Yue speakers both in China and outside of China, we may speculate with some confidence that by the end of 1970, there are at least 40 million people speaking different varieties of the Yue dialects.

0.4 General characteristics

The major dialect groups of Chinese have been classified in terms of the development of the Ancient *quan-zhuo* or voiced stop, affricate, and fricative initials, as proposed in F. Li 1939. The Yue group is generally recognized as characterized by the change of such Ancient initials into voiceless aspirates in the Ping-tone (平聲) as well as part (about 30%) of the Shang-tone (上聲), but into voiceless non-aspirates in the other tones, including the greater part of the Shang-tone.[50] Other characteristics mentioned in F. Li 1939 of the Yue group are: preservation of the final consonants -m, -p, -t, -k; distinction of eight, nine, or more tones. We may add the dichotomy of the Yin-Ru (陰入) tone as another characteristic. It is difficult to generalize on the defining characteristics of the vocalism of the Yue dialects vis-à-vis those of other groups, without resorting to description of how various dialects developed from Ancient Chinese.[51] Such a description will not be forthcoming until we know more of the different dialects in each group. For lack of information from other dialect groups, we shall limit our discussion of vocalism to the Yue dialects only, when we describe the subgrouping of these dialects in section 0.5.

It is generally known that the southern Chinese dialects are quite divergent from the northern dialects in their lexical items for the personal pronouns, deictics including time words and place words, negative forms, question words, gender markers, and the like.[53] The use of the suffix [teĭ], [ti] or [tuĭ],[54] and the use of tonal difference as a device for pluralizing personal pronouns; the use of the suffix [loŭ] or [lo] for designating a human male in not very respectable terms[55] and the suffix [na] for female animals;[56] the use of the suffix [ti], [ʔdi], [naĭ], or [nɐi], for pluralizing demonstratives and for the quantifier for 'little', the use of the localizer [toŭ], [tu], [sy], [si], [ts'y], or [tʃ'uĭ]; the use of tonal difference to differentiate degree deictics ('this much', 'that much') from manner deictics ('this way', 'that way'); the use of [mɐĭ], [m̩hoŭ], [m̩hɔ] or [mouhou] for the imperative negative form; etc. are particular to the Yue dialects, as shown below:[57]

	Pronominal Plural	Male Suffix	Female Suffix	Demonstrative Plural	Localizer
Cantonese	-teĭ²	- ᶜloŭ	- ᶜnA:	-ₒti	-toŭ², -sy:ᵓ
Shun-de	-teĭ²	- ᶜlo	- ᶜla:	-ᵪti	-toŭ², -syᵓ
Zhong-shan	-tiᵓ	———	-ná	-ᵪnai(koᵓ)	-ts'yᵓ [58]
Dong-guan	-ᵪti		-ᶜna, -ₒna	-ₒti	-ₒshü, -shüᵓ
		- ᶜlô			
Wu-zhou	-ti	———	———	———	———
Teng-xian	-ti²	- ᶜloŭ	- ᶜna	-ᵪʔdi	-tu²
Nan-ning Ping-hua	-ti²	———	———	———	———
Gui-xian	-tui	———	———	———	———
Yang-jiang	glottalized low-falling tone[59]	- ᶜlou	-ᶜna	-nɐiᵓ, nitᵓ	-siᵓ
Tai-shan		- ᶜlɔ	-ᶜna	- ᶜnaĭ	- ᶜtʃ'uĭ

	Degree Deictic	Manner Deictic	Imperative Negative
Cantonese	Yin-Qu (陰去)	Yin-Shang (陰上)	ꜝmɐǐ, ꜜm̩ꜝhoǔ
Shun-de	"	"	ꜝmaǐ, ꜜm̩ꜝhoǔ
Zhong-shan	Qu-tone	Yin-Ping	<u>mɔi⊃</u>, ꜜm̩ꜝhou
Dong-guan	——	——	<u>ꜝmǔi</u>
Wu-zhou	Yin-Qu	Yin-Shang	——
Teng-xian	"	"	ꜜm̩ꜝhoǔ~ꜜm̩ꜝk'ɔ
Nan-ning Ping-hua	"	Yin-Shang, Yin-Qu	——
Yang-jiang	——	——	ꜜmouꜝhou
Tai-shan	Yang-Shang (陽上)	Yin-Shang	ꜜm̩ꜝhɔ

	Quantifier for 'little'
	-₀ti:
	-ꜜti
	-ꜜnaiꜝtsai
	——
	——
	-ꜜ?di
	——
	——
	-ꜜnai

Among other lexical items special to this dialect group are the following:

	tomorrow	next year	day time	night time
Cantonese Shun-de[60]	₌t'ıŋ ĭɐt₂	ts'øt₂ °ni:n	ĭɐt₂°t'ɐʊ̆ /ĭat₂ ₌taʊ̆	{ Ĭɛ:² °mʌ:n Ĭɛ:² ᶜmʌ:n hʌ:k₂ /hɛ² ᶜma:n ha:k₂
Zhong-shan	——	——	——	——
Dong-guan	*ᶜt'eng yat₂*	——	——	——
Zeng-xian	₌t'ıŋ ĭɐt₂	ts'ɐt₂ ₌nin	ɲɐt₂ ₌tɐʊ̆	jĭɛ² °man
Yang-jiang	(₌lɔi jɐt₂)[61]	(₌lɔi ₌nin)[61]	(jɐt₂ ₌kan)[61]	(jɛ² ₌kan)[61]
Tai-shan	heĭŋ² ᶜtɔ	tʃ'ut₂ °neĭŋ	°ɲit²haʊ̆	{ ₌jĭɛ°man ₌jĭɛᶜman hak₂
Xin-hui	——	——	——	——

	morning	noon, noon meal	evening	neighboring
Cantonese Shun-de	₌tsi:ŭ(₌t'ɐʊ̆) ᶜtsoʊ̆ /₌tsiŭ ₌taʊ̆ᶜtso	ʌ:n² tsɐʊ̆²	ᶜmʌ:n ₌t'ɐʊ̆(hʌ:k₂) ᶜmʌ:n hʌ:k₂	kʌ:k₍ ₌leĭ
Zhong-shan	₌tsiu ᶜtsou	——	——	——
Dong-guan	——	——	——	——
Zeng-xian	₌tsiŭ ₌tɐʊ̆ᶜtoʊ̆	an² tsɐʊ²	ᶜman ₌tɐʊ̆	kɪk₂ ₌li
Yang-jiang	₌tsiu ᶜtsou	an² tsɐu²	ᶜman hɐk₂	kak₍ ₌lei
Tai-shan	ᶜtɔ°tʃĭɐʊ̆[62]	an² ⁰tʃiŭ	ᶜman₌haʊ̆ hak₂	kak₍ ⁰li (tʃak₂ ⁰ʃin)[61]
Xin-hui	——	——	——	——

	why	other (thing)	other (people)	drawers
Cantonese Shun-de	ᶜti:mᶜkʌ:ĭ	tɐĭ² Ĭi:² °Ĭœ:ŋ	₌Ĭɐn teĭ²	kŭɐĭ² ᶜt'ʊŋ
Zhong-shan	ᶜtimᶜka:i	tai² i² iœŋ²	——	——
Dong-guan	——	——	——	——
Zeng-xian	⁰ʔdimᶜkaĭ	tɐĭ² ɲi² jĭɛŋ²	₌ɲɐn ti²	kŭɐĭ² ᶜt'ʊŋ
Yang-jiang		tɐi² ji² jiɛŋ²	(jʊk₂)[61]	kwɐi² ₌t'ɔi ᶜt'ʊŋ
Tai-shan	ᶜkiᶜkaĭ	aĭ² ɲi² °jĭɛŋ	(₌ŋin)nĭɛk₂	kŭi² ᶜhoŭŋ
Xin-hui	——	——	——	——

	to move	to think[63]	to like	to hate, to dislike	to give
Cantonese /Shun-de	ˇiuk₂	ᶜnɐm/ᶜlɐm	₂tsuŋ ǐi:ᵓ	₂tsɐŋ	ᶜpeǐ
Zhong-shan {	iok₂ nok₂	_nɑm_	——	——	ᶜpi
Dong-guan	——	_nɑm_	——	——	_péǐ_
Teng-xian	ɲuk₂	ᶜnɐm	tsuŋᵓ ǐiᵓ	₂tɐŋ	ᶜʔbi
Yang-jiang	——	——	₂tsuŋ jiᵓ	₂tsɐŋ	——
Tai-shan	ŋoǔk₂	ᶜnam	tʃoǔŋᵓ ǐiᵓ	taŋᵓ	ᶜi
Xin-hui	——	_nɐm_	——	——	_péǐ_

	to lick	to tuck up	foolish	angry	inclusive aspect marker[65]
Cantonese /Shun-de	ᶜlʌ:ǐ	ŋʌ:p₂ /_ngɐp_[64]	ŋɔ:ŋ²	₂nɐǔ/ ₂lɐǔ	-sʌ:ǐᵓ
Zhong-shan	——	_ngâp_	_ngong_	——	-_sâǐ_
Dong-guan	——	_ngâp_	_ngong_	——	-_sâǐ_
Teng-xian	ᶜsaǐ	ŋǐɛp₂	ŋɔŋ²	₂nɐǔ	-ɬaǐᵓ
Yang-jiang	ᶜsai	——	——	——	——
Tai-shan	ᵒʃaǐ	ŋap₂	ŋɔŋ²	niǔᵓ	-ɬaǐᵓ
Xin-hui	——	_ngâp_	_ngong_	_nǐǔ_	-_sâǐ_

For the following items, we find data for three of the Yue dialects only:

	to dispute	to cover	To descend	to collapse	to guess
Cantonese	ʌ:ǔᵓ ᶜkɛ:ŋ	k'ɐp₂	lɔ:k₂	lɐm²	ᶜku:
Teng-xian	aǔᵓ ᶜkɪŋ	k'ɐp₂	lɔk₂	lɐm²	ᶜku
Tai-shan	aǔᵓ ᶜkǐɛŋ	ᵒk'ap	lɔk₂	lam²	ᶜku

	to gratify anger	to thank	to step over	to heed	to turn somersaults
Cantonese	ts'ø̷t₂ heǐᵓ	₂tɔ: tsɛ:²	lʌ:m²	ᶜts'ɔ:ǐ	ᶜtʌ:kɐnᶜtɐǔ
Teng-xian	ts'ɐt₂hiᵓ	₂ʔdɔ ɬiɛ²	lamᵓ	ᶜt'ɔǐ	ᶜta kǔanᵓ ᶜʔdaǔ
Tai-shan	tʃ'ut₂hiᵓ	uᵓ tiɛ²	lamᵓ	ᶜt'ɔǐ	ᶜa kǔanᵓ ᶜaǔ

	to lift	to hold down	to help	to throw	willing	advanta-geous
Cantonese	₍ts'ɐŭ	kɐm²	₍pɔ:ŋ ᶜsɐŭ	tɛ:ŋ³	tsɐĭ³	tsœ:k₂ soŭ³
Teng-xian	₍ts'ɐŭ	kɐm²	pɔŋ³ ᶜsaŭ	ʔdɪŋ³	tɐĭ³	tsĭɛk₂su³
Tai-shan	tʃ'aŭ³	kim²	pɔŋ³ ᶜʃiŭ	ĭɛŋ³	tʃaĭ³	tʃĭɛk₂ʃu³

	thrifty	no good	protruding teeth	scar	scissors
Cantonese	₍hʌ:n ki:m²	₍m̩ tɐk₂	sʌ:ŭ³ ₍ŋʌ:	ₒnʌ:	kʌ:ŭ³ ᶜtsi:n
Teng-xian	₍han ᶜkim	ˢmaŭ tɐk₂	saŭ³ ₍ŋa	₍na	kaŭ³ ᶜtin
Tai-shan	han³ kĭɛm²	₍m̩ tak₍	ʃaŭ³ ₍ŋa	ᵒna	kaŭ³ ᶜteĭŋ

	fire-tongs	an intruder or thief	everywhere	all
Cantonese	ᶜfɔ:₍k'i:m	pʌ:k₂ᵒts ɔ:ŋ	seĭ³ ₍ŭɐĭ	hɐm²p(ʌ²)lʌ:ŋ²
Teng-xian	ᶜfɔ₍kĭɛm	pɪk₂tsɔŋ²	ɬi³ ₍vaĭ	hom²plaŋ²
Tai-shan	ᶜfɔ₍k'ĭɛm	pʌk₂ᵒtʃɔŋ	ɬu³ ₍ŭi	ᵒhamᵒplaŋ

	immediately	together with	at the beginning	certainly
Cantonese	tsɪk₂hʌ:k₂	₍t'ʊŋ₍mʌ:ĭ	₍t'ɐŭᵒt'ɐŭ	ᶜkɐŋ
Teng-xian	tɪk₂hak₂	₍tʊŋ₍maĭ	₍tɐŭ ₍tɐŭ	ᶜkɐŋ
Tai-shan	teĭk₂hak₂	₍hoŭŋ₍mɔĭ	₍haŭᵒhaŭ	ᶜkaŋ

	very	progressive aspect marker	resumative [66] aspect marker	entailative marker[67]
Cantonese	ᶜhoŭ	-ᶜkɐn	-₍fʌ:n	₍ts'ɐn
Teng-xian	ᶜhoŭ	-ᶜkɐn	-₍fan	₍t'ɐn
Tai-shan	ᶜhɔ	-ᶜkin	-fan³	t'in³

Phonology of Cantonese

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