

The Language of Chinese Fiction of the Cultural Revolution: An Anti-dialectal Style*

LAN YANG

Abstract

This article deals with the language style of official Chinese fiction of the Cultural Revolution (CR). It compares CR novels with previous CR novels regarding their density and distribution of dialectal words and expressions. Statistical analysis is applied and the results are tabulated. It shows a trend of decreasing dialectal elements but of increasing literary words and expressions in the CR novels. The tendency towards unification and standardization in CR fiction language indicated the aesthetic value placed at the time on literature and language. Moreover, unlike the generalization by some post-CR scholars that the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese was impeded during the CR, this analysis indicates that if the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese is reflected in the frequency of dialectal expressions in CR novels, the campaign was not 'impeded' but promoted.

Introduction

It is well known that literature and art were one of the most prominent spheres with regard to the Cultural Revolution (May 1966 - October 1976, 'CR' for short).¹ While criticizing

literature and art produced before the Cultural Revolution, the authorities headed by Jiang Qing vigorously attempted to create new literature and art. The characteristics of the new officially acclaimed literature and art reflected the then current aesthetic views on literature and language.² This paper aims to reveal one aspect of CR fictional language style through comparing CR novels with pre-CR novels regarding their density and distribution of dialectal words and expressions.

According to our statistics, about 120 novels were officially published during the Cultural Revolution.³ The number of works published in a ten-year period is rather small in a country as large as China. However, taking into account the political circumstances during the CR years, this figure is actually high because the average annual quantity was at a similar level to that of the pre-CR period.

Among the categories of CR novel subject matter, the three largest are military affairs, agriculture and industry, which indicate Mao's direction of serving and writing for the workers, peasants and soldiers. Furthermore, most CR novels are set in the post-1949 period, which reflects the official promotion of subject matter concerning the socialist reconstruction under the People's Republic.

The basic method adopted in this research is quantitative analysis, since statistical analysis has more support of objective and concrete evidence.⁴ Moreover, language style is a relative concept, and the study of language style is essentially comparative. We selected seven CR novels and three pre-CR novels for comparative analysis (see Table 1).⁵ For the sake of comparability, the sample novels are all agricultural ones, i.e. those narrating stories about farmers in the countryside. CR agricultural novels are all set after 1949, and mainly represent inner Party struggle, which is the basic 'theme' of the Cultural Revolution and also the most important motif of CR literature. Furthermore, from the point of view of literary creation, agricultural novels have been claimed to represent a higher level of technique in the realm of novel writing during the CR period.⁶

For the seven sample CR novels, the following factors which are concerned with the variants of vocabulary style have been taken into consideration in order to avoid bias or negligence. First, the novels cover different geographical settings. Chinese language is well known for the great diversity of its dialects.⁷ Modern Standard Chinese [putonghua 普通话] is based on the Northern dialect [Beifanghua 北方话] which consists of a number of sub-dialects. The geographical settings must relate to the distribution of dialectal words and expressions in the works if the authors intend to use certain local elements in their writings. On the one hand, the sample avoids settings with an unusually high frequency of dialect lexical items. For example, some novels which are set among minority nationalities and unavoidably include a large number of local words and expressions are excluded. On the other hand, over a half of all CR agricultural novels are set in North China, the dialects of which form the basis for Modern Standard Chinese. For this reason, proper care ought to be taken to pick works set in other dialect regions. Second, the novels cover different types of authorship (single, joint and collective). Third, the novels cover different sub-categories of subject matter of agriculture, which are relevant to a series of politicized agricultural campaigns, i.e. co-operative transformation, opposition to quotas on household basis, socialist education, and learning from Dazhai 大寨.

As for the three pre-CR novels, because the agricultural novels published between 1956 and 1966 focus only on the agricultural co-operative movement, and the authorship is generally single, the sampling is less complex. The three selected novels cover different geographical settings. They are acknowledged to be the best among the agricultural novels during the period.

The ideal quantitative investigation is based on exhaustive statistics. For practical reasons in this analysis, nevertheless, the dialectal items are counted in sample passages. We have taken two pages (2nd and 3rd) from each chapter as the sample in all the novels with these exceptions: *The Golden*

Road, Evergreen, and The Roaring Songhua River. *The Golden Road* and *Evergreen* both have an exceptionally large number of chapters (their chapters are generally shorter). In *The Golden Road*, we have sampled 1.5 pages in every chapter (the 2nd in each chapter, and the 3rd in odd chapters), and in *Evergreen*, 1 page in each chapter. Thus we may keep a balance in sampling, i.e. the proportion of the number of Chinese characters in the sampled pages to the total number of Chinese characters in each novel is set around 15 per cent. In *The Roaring Songhua River*, which has relatively few chapters (its chapters are generally longer), we have sampled three pages in each chapter (2nd - 4th).

The counting involves two types of units. One is the unit for counting dialectal items in the sample texts, and another the unit for counting background text, to which the dialectal items are put in proportion so that the ratio can be achieved. For the former, I take a dialectal item, which may be a morpheme (e.g., an affix), a word, or a phrase, as a unit. The dialectal items will be defined in the coming paragraphs. For the latter, I take the written character as the unit. Since no current software package in Chinese is available that can cope with the complexity of the semantic and stylistic analysis, the present counting is personally conducted.

A *Modern Chinese Dictionary* [Xiandai Hanyu cidian 现代汉语词典] is chosen as the basic reference book;⁸ additional reference books include *Dialectal Chinese Words and Expressions* [Hanyu fangyan cihui 汉语方言词汇],⁹ and a number of works of local dialects, such as *A Study of Gong'an Dialect* [Gong'an fangyan yanjiu 公安方言研究]¹⁰ and *The Dialects of Hubei Province* [Hubei Sheng zhi: Fangyan 湖北省方言].¹¹ Dialectal items under discussion consist of two categories: one refers to those words and expressions which may still not be counted in the vocabulary of Modern Standard Chinese,¹² but are in rather common use in writings in the standard language. Such items are labelled 'fang' 方 [dialectal] in *A Modern Chinese Dictionary*. For example, 'sha' 啥 [what] (E, p. 222 — for reference codes of the novels, see Table 1), 'jinr' 今儿 [today] (E, p. 386),

'*ganqing*' 敢情 [indeed] (G, p. 61), '*gouqiang*' 够呛 [terrible] (D, p. 231), '*duozan*' 多咱 [when] (F, p. 245). Another category covers items that do not appear in *A Modern Chinese Dictionary*. They can be classified into two sub-categories:

(1) items totally unrelated to the elements of Modern Standard Chinese, since the characters only play a role of phonetic transcription. In many cases, they are only intelligible to the speakers of the specific dialects to which the items belong. They are sometimes given footnotes by the authors of the novels under examination. For example, '*huizi*' 挥子 [slogan] (A, p. 91), '*manman*' 满满 [term of endearment for uncle] (A, p. 93), '*dinggang*' 顶刚 [offset] (F, p. 418), '*zhagu*' 扎古 [cure] (F, p. 344), '*gaoxinhe*' 搞信河 [go about something in a haphazard way] (A, p. 109).

(2) items having some relation to the elements of Modern Standard Chinese, such as sharing the same word forms, including the same morphemes, but having the following dialectal characteristics by which they can be distinguished from the lexical items of Modern Standard Chinese:

(i) Dialectal affixation.

A root and an affix may be elements of Modern Standard Chinese, but the derived form (by prefixation or suffixation) is not within the vocabulary of Modern Standard Chinese.

Examples: *lao-di* 老弟 [younger brother] (A, p. 160), *lao-mei* 老妹 [younger sister] (A, p. 127), *guniang-jia* 姑娘家 [woman] (I, p. 322), *jianbang-zi* 肩膀子 [shoulder] (C, p. 328), *Qingming-zi* 清明子 ['Qingming' is here a person's given name] (A, p. 31).

(ii) Dialectal reduplication.

Some morphemes and words are elements of Modern Standard Chinese, but the reduplicated forms cannot be found in the vocabulary of the standard language.

Examples: *didi* 底底 [the truth or root of a matter] (I, p. 37), *chaoshishi* 潮湿湿 [moist] (C, p. 26), *lachelache* 扯拉扯 [chat] (B, p. 168), *toutounaonao* 头头脑脑 [head or tail of

something] (D, p. 313), *fanbai fanbaiyan* 翻白翻白眼 [show the whites of one's eyes] (D, p. 170).

(iii) Dialectal meaning.

Some items have the same form as words of Modern Standard Chinese but have a different meaning.

Examples: *yeye* 爷爷 [D: father; S: grandfather — here in translation, D stands for dialect, and S Modern Standard Chinese] (A, p. 96), *popo* 婆婆 [D: wife; S: grandmother] (A, p. 96), *sihai* 四海 [D: unaffected and casual; S: the whole world] (A, p. 31).

(iv) Dialectal grammatical function.

Some items have the same meaning as words of Modern Standard Chinese, but have different grammatical function in usage.

Examples: ... *Zhuang Yao guniang*, ... *nayang ye bu cha nanzihan* 壮瑶姑娘哪样也不差男子汉. [... the girls of the Zhuang and Yao nationalities, ... do not fall short of men at all. (D: a transitive verb; S: an intransitive verb)] (H, p. 393); ... *naxie laotouzi zhen gou yangxiang de* 那些老头子真够洋相的... [... those old men are really making an exhibition of themselves ... (D: an adjective; S: a noun)] (C, p. 195).

(v) Dialectal morpheme order.

Some items have the same meaning and grammatical function as the words of Modern Standard Chinese, but have different morpheme order.

Examples: *baijie* 白洁 [(S: *jiebai* 洁白) spotlessly white] (A, p. 14), *tuxi* 图希 [(S: *xitu* 希图) harbour the intention of] (F, p. 392), *shiqi* 实其 [(S: *qishi* 其实) as a matter of fact] (A, p. 237), *tanxu* 谈叙 [(S: *xutan* 叙谈) chat] (B, 168).

vi) Dialectal collocation.

Some words of Modern Standard Chinese are used in dialectal collocation.

Examples: *yi pian laosao* 一篇牢骚 [(S: *yi tong/zhen laosao* 一通/阵牢骚) some grievances] (A, p. 265), *gan le yi jia* 干了一架 [(S: *da le yi jia* 打了一架) have a fight] (G, p. 272), *chi de qi* 吃得起 [(S: *shou de qi* 受得起) be able to suffer wrong] (A, p. 143).

vii) Dialectal idiomatic phrases.

In these idiomatic phrases, there may be some constituents which can be found in Modern Standard Chinese, but the phrases as a whole cannot be found in the vocabulary of the standard language.

Examples: *liao xian pian* 聊闲篇 [chat] (D, p. 132), *chuifeng zhuangdan* 吹风壮胆 [boost someone's courage] (H, p. 228), *jiji feng yin* 寂寂封音 [very quiet] (A, p. 116), *le tou bao yan* 勒头暴眼 [foam with rage] (G, p. 104), *ri biao ye zhang* 标夜长 [grow/develop quickly] (H, 452).

viii) Dialectal figure of speech.

Some words or phrases, which can be found in the elements of Modern Standard Chinese, have dialectal figurative usage.

Examples: *maomaoyu* 毛毛雨 [drizzle, indicating suggestion or criticism in advance] (H, p. 373), *che qi chang mian-xian* 扯起长棉线 [pull long cotton thread, indicating to chat for a long time and casually] (A, p. 98), *da dianhua* 打电话 [make a phone call, indicating to send a secret message to one's partner when playing cards] (A, p. 31).

I organized a group of Chinese linguistic scholars to conduct the statistical evaluation.¹³ Apart from general knowledge about Chinese dialectology, each member of this group could speak at least one dialect. As stated by some linguists, there is not a clear line of demarcation between all the words of standard language and dialects.¹⁴ Although we have the reference books mentioned above, these references are insufficient to cover all the items (no reference books in fact so far published can possibly do that) because of the peculiarity of the extensive originating sources. Therefore, our linguistic intuition is used to decide the classification after failing to

obtain sufficient recorded information. The process of counting is as follows: First, every member of the group had the same sample texts. According to the dialectal features described above, everyone spotted the items by his/her understanding and intuition. Then we picked out the items approved by the whole group. Generally, these selected items were established dialectal elements and nobody doubted their identity. Second, each member tried to identify the dialectal elements from the remaining items by consulting the reference books. Finally, as for the remaining items after the second selection, which were of a small number, we identify the dialectal items by discussion.

Our statistics indicate that there is a tendency in which CR novels have much lower rates of dialectal expressions than pre-CR novels. As shown in Table 2 (b), the gap between the two groups of novels is so wide that the density rate (number per 1,000 characters) in Group I is over twice as high as that in Group II (7.76 vs. 3.28).

According to Table 2 (a), no sampled CR novel reaches the average of the pre-CR novels. *The Golden Road* versus *The Sun Shines Bright*, both by Hao Ran, provides good evidence of the tendency. The former registers a decrease of around 30 per cent compared to the latter. The density rate in *Great Changes in a Mountain Village* is over ten times as high as that in *The Mountains and Rivers Roar*, though both novels are set in the mountains of Hunan and belong to the Xiang 湘 dialect area.

In accordance with the reduction of dialectal items, CR novels include more set literary or bookish expressions, which are established elements of Modern Standard Chinese, and have distinct non-dialectal characteristics. Among the set phrases, idioms [chengyu 成语] are the most important category. In form, they often reflect the syntactic structures of traditional literary Chinese, and generally consist of four syllables. In source and meaning, a great number of idioms come from traditional literature, and they have established literal meanings.

An exhaustive statistical investigation into the density and distribution of idioms of the above ten sample novels has been made. The basic reference book used in the statistics is *A Concise Dictionary of Chinese Idioms* [Hanyu chengyu xiao cidian 汉语成语小词典].¹⁵ The counting was not complex because of the distinctiveness of Chinese idioms for native Chinese scholars. We wrote down first the items by our intuition, which include their page numbers. Then with the aid of the reference book, we picked out the established idioms. Although some uncounted items might be listed as idioms in other dictionaries, we did not count them so as to keep consistency. The number of such items however, was small enough to be reasonably ignored.

According to the statistics, CR novels include substantially more idioms than pre-CR novels. Table 3 (b) shows that Group II has 83.52 idioms more than Group I per 100,000 characters (223.67 vs. 140.15). As for the individual works, six of the seven CR novels have higher rates than the three pre-CR novels. Only in *The Long Rainbow*, which ranks last in Group II, is the rate of idioms marginally lower than that in *The Sun Shines Bright* (158.77 vs. 161.65). For some others, we see a striking difference between them. The highest rate in Group II (*The Mountains and Rivers Roar*) is over twice that of the highest in Group I (*The Sun Shines Bright*) — 334.95 vs. 161.65, and more than three times of the lowest in Group I (*The Builders*) — 334.95 vs. 110.03. We may also compare Hao Ran's *The Golden Road* and *The Sun Shines Bright*. The rate of idiom-use in the former is obviously higher than that of the latter (217.58 vs. 161.65). For example, in *The Sun Shines Bright*, we have not found a sentence by the narrator with less than 30 Chinese characters which includes three idioms, but sentences such as the following are not rare in *The Golden Road*:

(1) *Ta jue zhe zhe feng xin yu wu lun ci, tong pian dou shi hu shuo ba dao, dou shi guyi daoluan, zhen shi qi you ci li.*

(他觉着这封信语无伦次，通篇都是胡说八道，都是故意

捣乱，真是岂有此理。)

[He felt that the letter was incoherent, totally nonsensical and trouble-making; really, it was outrageous.] (D, p. 482)

(2) *Na xiang dao chushi bu li, yu shang le zheyang de ji feng baoyu, ba ta da le ge luohua liushui, langbei bukan.*

(哪想到出师不利，遇上了这样的急风暴雨，把他打了个落花流水，狼狈不堪。)

[He had not expected that he would unfortunately encounter such a heavy storm, which left him badly battered, and in a sorry plight.] (D, p. 610)

A speech such as the one that follows, with so many idioms, and so bookish in nature, directed towards a subordinate by a countryside cadre (commune secretary) in *Mountains Green after Rain*, cannot be found in pre-CR novels.

(3) *Ni de suo zuo suo wei, qishi zao jiu zai qunzhong dangzhong jiyuan hen shen, yijian fenfen le! Gan gongzuo hao da xi gong, bu gu keguan guilü, duduan zhuan xing. Rujin nao qi zheng di jiufen, qunzhong sixiang bodong, jiu shi ni zi xing qi shi de eguo! Dui ganbu paichi daji, dui qunzhong mo bu guanxin, piantan si ji... Zhexie, jiushi Longrong qunzhong gei ni de pinglun! Yi ge ren lü fan cuowu, que bu si huigai, faner qiao yan ling se, jili xishua, shenzhi dao da yi pa, zhe shi shenme taidu? Zai wo mianqian shangqie ruci, geng ke xiang zai Longrong shi hedeng feiyang bahu le!*

(你的所作所为，其实早就在群众当中积怨很深，意见纷纷了！干作好大喜功，不顾客观规律，独断专行。如今闹起争地纠纷，群众思想不通，就是你自行其是的恶果！对干部排斥打击，对群众漠不关心，偏袒私己... 这些，就是龙榕群众给你的评论！一个人屡犯错误，却不思悔 反而巧言令色，极力洗刷，甚至倒打一耙，这是什么态度？在我面前尚且如此，更可想在龙榕是何飞扬跋扈了！)

[The masses have had a lot of complaints about what you did for a long time! Disregarding objective laws, you have a fondness for the grandiose, and like to make arbitrary

decisions and take peremptory actions. Now the quarrel about land boundaries, which upsets the masses, is precisely the evil consequence of your arbitrary action! Discriminating against other cadres, you are indifferent to the masses and partial to your personal friends ... All these are comments on you by the Longrong masses! You have made mistakes again and again, but you have no intention of mending your ways; on the contrary, you have a glib tongue, try to gloss over your faults, and even make unfounded countercharges. What is this sort of attitude? Even to my face, you are so rude, I can thus imagine how arrogant and domineering you are in Longrong!] (H, p. 488)

The anti-dialectal register of CR novel language is also shown in the density and distribution of some other stylistic categories. For instance, according to my other statistical investigations, CR novels include more terminological items, such as ideological expressions and military terms, than pre-CR novels.¹⁶ The terminological items cannot be dialectal. Moreover, in comparison with pre-CR novels, CR novels include much fewer abusive words and expressions, of which many are dialectal.¹⁷

The campaign to popularize Modern Standard Chinese began in the 1950s under the People's Republic and has been the fundamental language policy of the government ever since.¹⁸ As regards the present investigation, all the sample pre-CR and CR novels were produced after the initiation of this campaign. Then what could be the reasons for the anti-dialectal style of CR novels?

One reason could be the ideology of seeking unity in all things or making all things uniform during the Cultural Revolution. As stated by some scholars, the basic spirit of the Cultural Revolution was to unify people's ideology and behaviour, and to oppose individualism (including localism).¹⁹ Seemingly, ideological unification is unrelated to the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese. But the campaign to popularize the standardized language also embodied

a kind of spirit of unification. It is thus plausible that the authors of CR novels were inclined to use fewer dialectal items, consciously or unconsciously.²⁰

Second, during the early stage of the Cultural Revolution, the authorities set a number of theatrical works as models [yangban xi 样板戏], among which most were Peking operas. A nationwide campaign to popularize these theatrical works was then launched, in which the experience of their creation was also promoted throughout the literary and art world. The model Peking operas reformed the traditional Peking opera both in content and form. The traditional Peking opera used the local language of Peking. The language included many dialectal elements which have not been absorbed into Modern Standard Chinese. However, the model Peking operas strictly adopted Modern Standard Chinese. From a linguistic point of view, the language of the model Peking operas, including monologue, dialogue and arias, was elaborately polished and manifested a strong literary and bookish style. Maybe the trend towards literary and anti-dialectal language in CR novels is also partly attributable to the popularisation of the model Peking operas.

However, turning to Table 2(a), in spite of the above general tendency towards reducing dialectal items, we find irregularities of individual distributions within the respective groups. For example, in Group I, the highest rate (*Great Changes in a Mountain Village*) is over three times as much as the second (*The Builders*), and over five times in comparison with the lowest (*The Sun Shines Bright*). Within Group II, the lowest rate (*Qingshi Fort*) and the second lowest rate (*The Mountains and Rivers Roar*) only account for 16.24 per cent and 25.5 per cent of the highest (*The Roaring Songhua River*) respectively.

The inner irregularities within the two groups cannot be well explained by the time-setting and place-setting of the novels, which are assumed to be important in influencing the distribution of dialectal elements. For time-setting, some novels are set before the initiation of the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese, and some others after or during

the campaign, although all of them were written after the start of the campaign. It could be expected that those novels with a time-setting before the initiation of the language campaign might have a higher density of dialectal items, but no consistency can be affirmed. For example, within Group I, *The Builders* is set before the campaign, but it has a much lower rate of dialectal items than *Great Changes in a Mountain Village*. Within Group II, *The Golden Road* is the only CR novel set prior to popularizing the standard language, but its rate of dialectal items is not the highest among the seven CR novels. *Mountains Green after Rain*, *The Long Rainbow*, and *The Mountains and Rivers Roar* are all set in the Cultural Revolution, but there is no consistency among them.

Place-setting could also be expected to be related to the density of dialectal items because the settings are related to different specific dialects. We have actually found a number of dissimilarities concerning form and meaning of the items due to different place-settings. For example, the words meaning 'wife' in Modern Standard Chinese are commonly 'qizi' 妻子, 'airen' 爱人 and 'laopo' 老婆, but there is a series of different words for 'wife' in the dialects. In the sampled novels, we can find such items as 'poniang' 婆娘 (B, p. 133), 'poyi' 婆姨 (I, p. 110), 'popo' 婆婆 (A, p. 96), 'tangke' 堂客 (A, p. 74), 'xifu' 媳妇 (C, p. 299), 'niangmen' 娘们 (D, p. 212), and 'shaohuopo' 烧火婆 (H, p. 183), which reflect the differences produced by different place-settings. Nevertheless, we cannot reach a conclusion that place-setting is the main factor determining the different density of dialectal items in the novels.

Our explanation for the irregularities within each group is that under the prerequisite of period style by which the CR novels tend to have fewer dialectal expressions, authors' individual language style plays a significant role in the distribution of dialectal items. For example, Zhou Libo, the author of *Great Changes in a Mountain Village*, is well known for his frequent use of dialectal items. It was his practice to learn local dialects for use in his writing when he went down to 'immerse himself in life' [shenru shenghuo 深入生活] at the

places which were claimed to be the original settings in his novels.²¹ His well-known novel of 1952 *Bao feng zhou yu* 暴风骤雨 [Hurricane],²² which is set in the Northeast, also has a high density of dialectal expressions. So the two novels *Hurricane* and *Great Changes in a Mountain Village*, which not only have different time-settings and place-settings but cover different writing periods (the former written before the campaign of popularization of Modern Standard Chinese, the latter written after the start of the campaign) have in common a frequent use of dialectal items. However, Hao Ran is known to be familiar with the countryside, but his works have a lower density of dialectal items in contrast with not only Zhou's but also the other sampled professional authors'. Nevertheless, his individual style in using dialectal expressions is observably consistent in his two sampled novels, i.e. the rates of both are on a low level within the respective groups, although the decrease in *The Golden Road* reflects the general trend of reduction of dialectal items in CR novels.

There is another characteristic concerning the irregularities, which also relates more to the CR authors' individual style than to the CR period style, i.e. the young and new authors use fewer dialectal items than the older professional ones. A plausible explanation for this phenomenon is that the young and new writers had their school education during the 1950s and the early 1960s, when Modern Standard Chinese was being popularized. The government's campaign may have had more influence on their negative attitude towards dialectal elements.

Linguists Ronald Carter and Walter Nash state in their famous *Seeing Through Language*, that the sense of ideology is 'a socially and politically dominant set of values and beliefs which are constructed in all texts especially in and through language'.²³ The principle of unification was prominently represented in the leading ideology of the Cultural Revolution. On the one hand, the tendency towards unification and standardization in CR fiction language indicated the current aesthetic value placed on literature and language.

On the other hand, it reflected the control of the authorities over literature and language.

It is generally thought by post-CR scholars that the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese was impeded during the Cultural Revolution.²⁴ We have not so far found special official CR documents in favour of the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese, although nor have we found official statements against the campaign. However, our statistics show a trend of decreasing dialectal items in the CR novels. In other words, if the popularization of Modern Standard Chinese is reflected in the frequency of dialectal expressions in CR novels, the campaign was not 'impeded' but promoted.

Moreover, general accounts of CR literature emphasize its ideological nature and common characteristics. Nevertheless, with regard to CR novel language, the general tendency towards unification did not completely obliterate authors' individual style. Under the prerequisite of following the general tendency, CR novelists demonstrated perceivable personal writing styles. In studies of CR literature, therefore, it is necessary for more emphasis to be placed on characteristics of individual works and authors.

*Lan Yang is Lecturer of Chinese at the University of Leeds. He has published widely on Chinese linguistics and literature. His publications include A Study of Gong'an Dialect [Gong'an fangyan yanjiu] (1992), A Dictionary for Young Readers: Reviews of Famous Books [Qingnian dushu cidian] (1993), The Concise Encyclopaedia of China: Linguistics [Zhonghua xiao baikequanshu: Yuyan wenzi] (co-authored, 1994), The Dialects of Hubei Province [Hubei fangyan] (1996), and Chinese Fiction of the Cultural Revolution (1998).
E-mail: easily@ARTS-01.NOVELL.LEEDS.AC.UK*

Table 1: Sample Novels

Group	R e f. c o d e	Author and title	Publi- cation year	Time set- ting	Geogra- phical setting	Subject matter	Authorship	
I Pre- CR novels	A	Zhou Libo, <i>Great Changes in a Mountain Village</i> [Shanxiang jubian] (vol. 1)	1958	1955-1956	South-central	Coopera- tive Transfor- mation	Professional	
	B	Liu Qing, <i>The Builders</i> [Chuangye shi]	1960	1953	West			
	C	Hao Ran, <i>The Sun Shines Bright</i> [Yanyangtian] (vol. 1)	1964	1957	North			
II CR novels	D	Hao Ran, <i>The Golden Road</i> [Jinguang dadao] (vol. 1)	1972	1950-1951		North	Opposi- tion to quotas on house- hold basis	Novice
	E	Chen (Shen) Rong, <i>Evergreen</i> [Wan nian qing]	1975	1962	North- east			Two; one professional
	F	Lin Yu, <i>The Roaring Songhua River</i> [Paoxiao de Songhuajiang] (vol. 1)				1976	1964	East
	G	Zhu Jian, <i>Qingshi Fort</i> [Qingshibao]	South- west	'Three-in- one' group				
	H	The 'Three-in-one' Group of Baise Prefecture, <i>Mountains Green after Rain</i> [Yu hou qingshan]	1964-1968	North	Learning from Dazhai			Novice
	I	Tian Dongzhao, <i>The Long Rainbow</i> [Chang hong]	1970					South- central
J	Gu Hua, <i>The Mountains and Rivers Roar</i> [Shanchuan huxiao]	1972-1973						

*Table 2: The Density of Dialectal Expressions**2 (a). The ten novels*

Novel ref.	Total no. Chinese characters in the sample pages	Total dialectal expressions in the sample pages	No. dialectal expressions per 1,000 characters
A	32,292	633	19.6
B	42,120	249	5.91
C	71,604	251	3.51
D	63,180	157	2.48
E	36,600	173	4.73
F	37,050	276	7.45
G	36,400	44	1.21
H	39,600	157	3.96
I	37,440	101	2.70
J	62,608	119	1.90

Table 2 (b). The two groups compared

Novel ref.	Total no. Chinese characters in the sample pages	Total dialectal expressions in the sample pages	No. dialectal expressions per 1,000 characters
I	146,016	1,133	7.76
II	312,878	1,027	3.28

Table 3: The Density of Idioms

3 (a). The ten novels

Novel ref.	Total no. Chinese characters	Total idioms	No. idioms per 100,000 characters
A	215,000	308	143.26
B	359,000	395	110.03
C	472,000	763	161.65
D	455,000	990	217.58
E	339,000	662	195.28
F	313,000	666	212.78
G	345,000	691	201.45
H	353,000	825	233.71
I	359,000	570	158.77
J	392,000	1,313	334.95

3 (b). The two groups compared

Novel ref.	Total no. Chinese characters	Total idioms	No. idioms per 100,000 characters
I	1,046,000	1,466	140.15
II	2,556,000	5,717	223.67

Notes

- * The author is thankful to the anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions. Thanks should also be expressed to Hu Xiaoming, Li Yelin, She Shenglin, Hu Xiaoyan, Hu Cen and Yang Qiming for their help in the statistical evaluation.
- 1 Some scholars prefer to date the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1969 and to define the period from 1969 to 1976 as a radical leftist phase. We here adopt the definition which dates the CR from 1966 to 1976 and divides the decade into two periods. Cf. Lowell Dittmer, *China's Continuous Revolution: The Post-Liberation Epoch 1949-1981* (Berkeley: Centre for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1987), pp. 77-78.
 - 2 This study is focused on official CR fiction. Unofficial (underground and exile) fiction is beyond the scope. Among studies on Chinese literature and art of the Cultural Revolution (official and unofficial) are D. W. Fokkema's 'Chinese Literature under the Cultural Revolution', *Literature East and West*, 13 (1969), pp. 335-58; Hua-yuan Li Mowry's *Yang-pan Hsi: New Theater in China* (Berkeley: Centre for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1973); Bonnie S. McDougall's 'Poems, Poets, and Poetry 1976: An Exercise in the Typology of Modern Chinese Literature', *Contemporary China*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Winter 1978), pp. 76-124; D. E. Pollard's 'The Short Story in the Cultural Revolution', *The China Quarterly*, No. 73 (1978), pp. 99-121; Leo Oufan Lee's 'Dissent Literature from the Cultural Revolution', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 1 (1979), pp. 59-80; Perry Link's 'Hand-copied Entertainment Fiction from the Cultural Revolution', in Link et al. (eds), *Unofficial China: Popular Culture and Thought in the People's Republic* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 17-36; and Liu Dawen 刘达文's "'Dixia xiaoshuo" de cangsang' 地下小说的沧桑 [Vicissitude of "Underground Chinese Fiction"]', in Liu Dawen, *Zhongguo wenxue xinchao* 中国文学新潮 [The New Trends of Chinese Literature] (Hong Kong: Dangdai Wenyi Chubanshe 当代文艺出版社, 1988), pp. 179-85.
 - 3 The statistics are based on the following materials: Meishi Tsai's *Contemporary Chinese Novels and Short Stories, 1949-1974: An Annotated Bibliography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1979); Kam Louie's and Louise Edwards' *Bibliography of English Translations and Critiques of Contemporary Chinese Fiction 1945-1992* (Taipei: Centre for Chinese Studies, 1993), and Beijing Tushuguan Zhongwen Tongyi Bianmu Zu 北京图书馆中文统一编目组 [the Cataloguing Group of Chinese Books of

Beijing Library]'s 1974-1978 *Zhongwen tushu yinshua kapien leiji lianhe mulu* 1974-1978 中文图书印刷卡片累积联合目录 [A Joint Catalogue of Chinese Books between 1974 and 1978] (Beijing: Shumu Wenxian Chubanshe 书目文献出版社, 1979).

- 4 As for methodology of quantitative analysis of language style, ref. John Spencer and Michael J. Gregory, 'An Approach to the Study of Style', in N. E. Enkvist *et al.* (eds), *Linguistics and Style* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 66-83; G. N. Leech and M. H. Short, *Style in Fiction* (London: Longman 1992), pp. 10-185; and Raymond S. W. Hsü, *The Style of Lu Hsün: [Vocabulary and Usage]* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1979), pp. 36-75.
- 5 (Supp. to Table 1). The Chinese titles of the ten sample novels are *Shanxiang jubian* 山乡巨变 [Great Changes in a Mountain Village] by Zhou Libo 周立波; *Chuangye shi* 创业史 [The Builders] by Liu Qing 柳青; *Yanyang tian* 艳阳天 [The Sun Shines Bright] by Hao Ran 浩然; *Jinguang da dao* 金光大道 [The Golden Road] by Hao Ran; *Wan nian qing* 万年青 [Evergreen] by Chen (Shen) Rong 谌容; *Paoxiao de Songhuajiang* 咆哮的松花江 [The Roaring Songhua River] by Lin Yu 林予; *Qingshibao* 青石堡 [Qingshi Fort] by Zhu Jian 朱剑; *Yu hou qingshan* 雨后青山 [Mountains Green after Rain] by Baise Diqu Sanjiejiehe Chuangzuo zu 百色地区三结合创作组; *Chang hong* 长虹 [The Long Rainbow] by Tian Dongzhao 田东照; and *Shanchuan huxiao* 山川呼啸 [The Mountains and Rivers Roar] by Gu Hua 古华.
- 6 Post-CR Chinese critics generally gave more praise to the following works: Hao Ran's *Jinguang da dao* (2 vols) (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe 人民文学出版社, 1972-1974); Ke Fei 克非's *Chun chao ji* 春潮急 [Swift Is the Spring Tide] (2 vols) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe 上海人民出版社, 1974); Chen Rong's *Wan nian qing* (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1975); Li, Yunde 李云德's *Feiteng de qun shan* 沸腾的群山 [Seething Mountains] (3 vols.) (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1966-1976); and Li Ruqing 黎汝清's *Wan shan hong bian* 万山红遍 [Mountains in Red] (vol. 1) (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1976). The first three are agricultural novels. See Guo Zhigang 郭志刚 *et al.*, *Zhongguo dangdai wenxue shi chugao* 中国当代文学史初稿 [A First Draft of the History of Contemporary Chinese Literature] (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1993), vol. 2, pp. 878-79.
- 7 The diversity of Chinese dialects is so great that some scholars think that 'the Chinese dialectal complex is in many ways analogous to the

- Romance language family in Europe'. See Jerry Norman, *Chinese* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 187.
- 8 Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan Yuyan yanjiusuo 中国社会科学院语言研究所, *Xiandai Hanyu cidian* [A Modern Chinese Dictionary] (2nd rev. edn, Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan 商务印书馆, 1983).
 - 9 Beijing Daxue Zhongguo Yuyan Wenxue Xi Yuyan Jiaoyanshi 北京大学中国语言文学系语言教研室, *Dialectal Chinese Words and Expressions* [Hanyu fangyan cihui] (Beijing: Wenzhi Gaige Chubanshe 文字改革出版社, 1964).
 - 10 Lan Yang 杨岚, *A Study of Gong'an Dialect* [Gong'an fangyan yanjiu] (Shanghai: Hanyu Da Cidian Chubanshe 汉语大词典出版社, 1992).
 - 11 Jingkui Tian 田景奎 and Lan Yang, *The Dialects of Hubei Province* [Hubei Sheng zhi: Fangyan] (Wuhan: Hubei Renmin Chubanshe 湖北人民出版社, 1997).
 - 12 There exists some inconsistency about the definition of the vocabulary of Modern Standard Chinese. Some scholars define it as being based on the Northern dialects, which cover a vast region. See Li Xingjian 李行健, *Putonghua he fangyan* 普通话和方言 [Modern Standard Chinese and Dialects] (Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaoyu Chubanshe 上海教育出版社, 1985), pp. 24-27; Huang Borong 黄伯荣, *Xiandai Hanyu* 现代汉语 [Modern Chinese], 2 vols (Lanzhou 兰州: Gansu Renmin Chubanshe 甘肃人民出版社, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 12-13. Some others state that it is based on Beijing dialect, which covers a small district. See Jerry Norman, *Chinese*, pp. 136-37; T'ung and D. E. Pollard, *Colloquial Chinese*, p. 1. However, it is agreed by all that the vocabulary of the standard language has incorporated a lot of dialectal (Northern and other dialectal) words and phrases. Large numbers of items labelled dialectal in *Xiandai Hanyu cidian* have been accepted or are being accepted into Modern Standard Chinese.
 - 13 The names of the group members have been listed in my acknowledgements at the beginning the footnotes of this article.
 - 14 See Beijing Daxue Zhongguo Yuyan Wenxue Xi Yuyan Jiaoyanshi, *Dialectal Chinese Words and Expressions*, p. 1.
 - 15 The most popular dictionary of Chinese idioms in China. Compiled by Beijing Daxue Zhongwen Xi 1955 Ji Yuyan Ban Tongxue 北京大学中文系1955级语言班同学 [The Linguistics Class (1955) of Chinese Department of Beijing University] (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1981) (4th edn).

- 16 See Lan Yang, 'Ideological Style in the Language of the Chinese Novels of the Cultural Revolution', *Modern Chinese Literature*, vol. 10, 1998, pp. 149-72; 'Military Style in the Language of the PRC Novels during the Cultural Revolution', *Macrolinguistics*, No. 6-7, 1996, pp. 113-24.
- 17 See Lan Yang, 'The Language of Chinese Fiction of the Cultural Revolution: A Style of Anti-vulgarity', *Leeds East Asian Papers*, No. 52 (1997), pp. 1-25. A statistical analysis is made in the paper, which shows low density of abusive words and expressions in CR novels.
- 18 In 1951, the government noted that 'Correct use of language was politically significant in all walks of life under the leadership of the Communist Party', and called people 'to use the language correctly, and to struggle for the purity of the language'. In October 1955, the norm of Modern Standard Chinese was set, and then the government initiated the campaign to popularize the standard language. As the basic language policy of the government, it was written into the Constitution. See Li Xingjian, *Putonghua he fangyan*, pp. 24-29, p. 109.
- 19 There is a wide range of opinion on the main purpose and the basic spirit of the Cultural Revolution. See for example Gargi Dutt and V. P. Dutt, *China's Cultural Revolution* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1970), pp. 1-2, pp. 13-14, pp. 24-25; Lowell Dittmer and Chen Ruoxi, *Ethics and Rhetoric of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, pp. 1-11; Lowell Dittmer, *China's Continuous Revolution: The Post-Liberation Epoch 1949-1981*, pp. 91-93. Nevertheless, seeking unity in all things or making all things uniform was noteworthy. See also H. C. Chuang, *The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: A Terminological Study* (Berkeley: Centre for Chinese Studies, 1967), pp. 27-38.
- 20 We can find quite a few general criticisms concerning stereotyped ['taohua' 套话] style of the language use during the Cultural Revolution although these criticisms are not specifically related to language in fiction. The manifestation of the style was to repeat words and expressions from official newspapers, magazines and other propaganda documents. This parroting fashion is itself an aspect of uniformity. Under the impact of the stereotyped style and the spirit of unity, CR novelists might be inclined to use standardized language elements rather than diversified local items.
- 21 From the 1940s to the 1970s, it was common for Chinese authors to go down to observe real life. According to Wendy Larson, 'Leftist efforts to make certain that writers "immerse themselves in life" were initiated in the 1930s and took concrete form in Maoist literary policy'. See Wendy Larson, *Literary Authority and the Modern Chinese Writer: Ambivalence and Autobiography* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 158. In 1942 Mao proposed that writers should have a good

- knowledge of those whom they described, including their language. See Mao Zedong, 'Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art', in Foreign Languages Press (ed.), *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung* (Beijing, 1971), p. 254. In the 1950s, in response to calls from the authorities, some professional novelists settled in the countryside. Liu Qing and Zhou Libo were representative of this trend. See Ershi Er Yuanxiao Bianxiezuzhu 二十二院校编写组 [The Writing Group of Twenty-two Universities], *Zhongguo dangdai wenxue shi* 中国当代文学史 [A History of Contemporary Chinese Literature] (3 vols) (Fuzhou 福州: Fujian Renmin Chubanshe 福建人民出版社, 1982-85), vol. 1, pp. 113-15, vol. 2, pp. 148-52.
- 22 Zhou Libo, *Bao feng zhou yu* [Hurricane], 2 vols (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1952). English trans. by Meng-hsiung Hsu (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1955).
- 23 See Ronald Carter and Walter Nash, *Seeing through Language: A Guide to Styles of English Writing* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 21.
- 24 See Li Xingjian, *Putonghua he fangyan*, pp. 43-44, p. 110.