Personage description in Hong Kong versus Mainland China entertainment news discourse

Dongying WU and HUI Him Man
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Abstract

With the approach of critical linguistics, the study compares and contrasts the personage description in Hong Kong and Mainland China entertainment news discourse. Examining the texts of the news reports against the different social contexts they were produced, the study establishes three contrastive parameters that characterize the personage reporting across the two regions: contrast in narrative values and themes--realism versus idealism, contrast in representation of the speech by the personage--individualization versus assimilation, and contrast in rhetoric of text--on-line interaction versus planned exposition (fragmented versus elaborated structure). Finally, implications for further development as well as application of critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis are presented.

1. Introduction

1.1 Language use across Hong Kong and Mainland China

The speakers of the Chinese dialects have historically shared a common written language. In fact, it has been China’s written rather than spoken language which has traditionally served both as a symbol of China’s cultural unity and an important agent for the
preservation of that unity (DeFrancis, 1950; Deng, 1980; Ramsey, 1987). Nevertheless, dialect literatures keep emerging. The emergence of dialect literatures becomes especially prominent in Hong Kong which is politically, geographically, and culturally separated from Mainland China. In July, 1997, Hong Kong is to be returned back to China and to become a special administration region of P. R. China. Given the importance of written Chinese as a symbol of Chinese culture and as a symbol of unity, the emergence of language differences between Hong Kong and Mainland China is a phenomenon worthy of note.

In the last decade, just as there has been a distinct increase in the amount of dialect literatures, there has been a distinct increase in the number of studies that have looked into this phenomenon. A heavy use of dialect vocabulary and syntax in the regional literatures of Hong Kong have been found and documented (e.g., Bauer, 1988; Hashimoto-Yue, 1991; Luke and Nancarrow 1991; Snow, 1993; T’sou et al., 1990, Wu & Hui, 1997). Nevertheless, many studies have been confined to the formal aspects of lexical, grammatical, or textual variation, with few (e.g., Cheung, 1995) looking into the functional aspects of language use and into the relationship between ideology and discourse structuring. Even though Luke and Nancarrow (1991) have commented that newspapers in Hong Kong speak a language of their own and that a non-Cantonese speaking person from Beijing may find Hong Kong newspapers not readily comprehensible, little further systematic studies have been conducted in explaining such a phenomenon. Therefore, the present study advances an exploration of points of contrast in personage description between Hong Kong and Mainland China entertainment news discourse, examining the relationship between ideology and linguistic conventions.

1.2 Critical discourse analysis of news media

The present study hopes, especially, to make a contribution to the critical discourse analysis of the news media. Critical Discourse Analysis or Critical Linguistic Analysis emerged from Language and Control by Fowler et al. (1979), and has been developed and
applied in numerous analyses of public discourse (e.g., van Dijk, 1985, 1988, & 1996; Fairclough, 1989 & 1996; Fowler, 1991 & 1996; Gu, 1996a & 1996b; Kress, 1988 & 1996; Leeuwen, 1996). It is an analysis designed to examine the operation of ideology in language use. ‘Critical linguistics insists that all representation is mediated, moulded by the value-systems that are ingrained in the medium (language in this case) used for representations; it challenges common sense by pointing out that something could have been represented some other way, with a very different significance’ (Fowler, 1996:4).

In recent years, there have been some significant studies exploring the relations between ideology and news structuring. Van Dijk (1985, 1988a, & 1988b) have developed models for analyzing news discourse both at the macro-level (through studies of topics, thematic structures, and schematic structures of the news) and at the micro-level (through the analysis of styles). Applying van Dijk’s models, Wang (1993) compared and contrasted the New York Times and Renmin Ribao’s coverage of the failed Soviet coup in 1991. Kress (1988) examined how the linguistic operations, e.g., lexical choice, nominalization, passive agent deletion, and transitivity, function to give differential depicting of the same social actors in the news events, forming the ideological structures in the news. And Caldas-Coulthard (1993) explored the concept ‘accessed voice’ by Hartley (1982) in manifesting the differential representation of women and men speaking in the news. Scollon (1997) focused on the ways of attribution in the press and on the relation between power and news framing in the English versus Chinese news discourse in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, most of the previous studies have been confined to the analysis of hard news discourse. Apparently, further work is needed on both theory and method as well as application of critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis to the study of language use in the news media.
2. Comparing and contrasting PDHKEN with PDMCEN

2.1 Aims

The present study seeks, by applying the approach of critical discourse analysis, to give a systematic account of the linguistic differences between personage description in Hong Kong entertainment news discourse (henceforth, PDHKEN) and personage description in Mainland China entertainment news discourse (henceforth, PDMCEN). The implicit working assumption for discourse is that it is a linguistic communication activity which is determined by its social purpose.

2.2 Data collection

In order to obtain a representative sample of HKEN and MCEN texts for the study, we draw our data from the CBS corpus in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The original corpus contains various kinds of news texts from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China between 1989 and 1992. The newspapers they represent for Hong Kong include: Ming Pao Daily News, Sing Pao Daily News, and Hsin Pao (Hong Kong Economic Journal); and the newspapers they represent for Mainland China include: Renmin Ribao (People’s Daily News), Beijing Wanbao, Xingmin Wanbao, and Yangcheng Wanbao. Both the newspapers from Hong Kong and those from Mainland China are quality papers. A total of thirty-six texts of personage description are selected, with eighteen drawn respectively from each group, i.e., from PDHKEN and from PDMCEN.

2.3 Press systems of Hong Kong versus Mainland China

‘The discourse of the media in general is an instrument of cultural reproduction, highly implicated within the power structures and reflecting values about the world’ (Caldas-Coulthard, 1993:198). Therefore, before examining the discourse of PDHKEN and PDMCEN, we will first look at the social structures and ideology that govern the production of the texts.
The press system of Hong Kong is mostly privately owned, and most of the Hong Kong media have operated on a commercial basis (Chen, 1995). The major function of entertainment news in Hong Kong is to provide the reader with amusement and diversion. There is no orthodox principle for entertainment news writing so long as it can entertain and attract as large an audience as possible, increasing the effect of production while minimizing its cost.

But the press system of Mainland China is state-owned and its operation is closely guided by the state (Zhu, 1991). ‘Lenin’s three roles of the press--propagandist, agitator, and organizer--are still official guidelines for the Chinese media’ (Zhu, 1991:37). In the last decade, though there have been great economic development and subsequent slight changes in media operation in Mainland China, emphasis is still heavily placed on the role of the news media in guiding and educating the people in their conduct of work and social life (Chen & Chan, 1997; Sun, 1992). In terms of personage description in news writing, the guiding principles include: to propagate advanced personage or ‘models’; and to correctly reflect the relation between the personage and the communist party, and between the individual and the masses (Tang et al., 1985).

In the following sections, we will examine how the two diverse social structures and values have been represented in the PDHKEN and PDMCEN discourses.

2.4 The analysis

2.4.1 Contrast in narrative values and themes: Realism versus idealism

One parameter that is found to differentiate between the PDHKEN discourse and the PDMCEN discourse is realism versus idealism in narrative values. In PDHKEN, the principle of realism is adopted which portrays the reality of the personage, including the negative as well as positive aspects. We can observe this simply via an examination of the headlines which usually summarize the themes of the news stories. Examples in illustration (1) are all taken from the headlines of PDHKEN. They portray the real activities of
the personage, as in (1.a); reveal the reality behind which the personage's work was born, as in (1.b); depict the real feelings and wants of the personage, as in (1.a-1.d).

1. a) Maan6 Zi2 Tim5 Nau2 paak3dong3 wan2sik6
   Maan Zi Tim Nau cooperate earn living

   bat1fong4 sat6zai3 zi2 kau4 wan2 mai5
   no harm realistic only hope earn rice

   dang1 toi4 wong6 coeng4
   mount stage full scene

   caau1piu3 jyu4 syut3pin2 fei1 loi4
   money like flakes fly COMP

   Maan Zi and Tim Nau as partners on stage to earn money.
   Shows successful. Money flies in like the snow flakes.
   (Sing Pao Daily, 25 February, 1990)

b) zau2zeoi3 dit3 soeng1 cuk1sing4 Gwan2Gwan2Hung4Can4
   drunk fall hurt precipitate Gwan Gwan Hung Can

   daan3sang1
   born

   Saam1Mou4 cyun4sam1cyun4ji3 cong3zok3
   Saam Mou whole-hearted create

   wok6 tai4ming4 Gam1Maa5 zi2 jat1 gu2 daam6jin4
   get nominate Gam Maa only one CL mild

   gam2gok3
   feeling

   Tipsy and injured caused the birth of Gwan Gwan Hung Can.
   Saam Mou is totally devoted to writing. Felt indifferent about
   being nominated for the Gam Maa award.
   (Ming Pao Daily, 11 November, 1990)

c) dong1hung4 si4 jan5teoi3 soeng2 do1se1 jan4
   being-popular time withdraw want more people

   pui4 taa1 naan4gwo3
Withdrawning at peak time because he wanted more people to feel sad with him. Zoeng Gwok Wing told his fans. At the moment of retiring from the stage, his mind was blank. (Sing Pao Daily, 24 January, 1990)

Lai Ming believes in falling in love at first sight. Fans can be his girlfriend. (Sing Pao Daily, 9 August, 1990)

Furthermore, like the Western news media practice which places high emphasis on negativity (Bell, 1991:156), PDHKEN also tends to reveal the negative aspects of the personage, providing the audience with amusement and/or diversion (see illustration 2).

Sleeping two hours a day. No time for eating. The Asian Television system is too bad. Chan Fai Hung lists its defects.
In contrast to PDHKEN, PDMCEN, which aims at educating and indoctrinating the readers with “advanced” models, tends to idealize the personage’s feelings, thoughts, and activities and reconstruct the individuals according to the idealistic themes. As seen in the following selected samples of headlines, only the positive aspects of the individuals are revealed.

3.a) Swing up career and love DE double oar.

Swinging the oars of career and love.  
(Renmin Ribao, 7 July, 1990)

b) Grassland De dance proud person --

The pride of the grassland -- The biography of a Zang tribal dancer Pu Hua Jie.  
(Renmin Ribao, 20 October, 1990)

c) ride purple colour car DE A Xin troupe chief
Chief A Xin who rides on the purple bike -- A brief account of the chief of Feng Hua Dian Sheng Light Music Troupe, Li Xia Fang. (Xingmin Wanbao, 11 January, 1992)

d) Pan4wang4 zhong1guo2 ren2 deng1 shang3 ling3 jiang3 hope China people mount up receive prize tai2 -- dian4 hua4 cai3 fang3 Ao4si1ka3 ping2 wei1 platform -- telephone interview Oscar judge committee Lu2 Yan4 Lu Yan

Longing for the Chinese to mount the prize giving platform -- Telephone interview with Luyan, a member of the Oscar evaluation committee. (Xingmin Wanbao, 23 February, 1992)


Zhang Ai Jia’s trip to Mainland China. (Beijing Wanbao, 11 July, 1992)

We can also observe that a major theme that frequently appears in PDMCEN is collectivism. The story that follows the headline in (3.a) focuses on the cooperation between the couple in their work as well as in family life. In the stories that follow (3.b) and (3.c), Pu Huajie and Li Xiafang are extolled for their hard work and dedication to the troupe, to the people and to the realm of art. And in (3.d) and (3.e), the theme of collectivism is represented via the love for the nation and for the Chinese ethnicity.

But in PDHKEN, the collectivistic theme seldom appears while individualism is promoted. Extensive description is given to portray how the personage has gained individual recognition, and/or is feverishly admired by his fans and the people around them.
Illustrations can be seen in the headlines taken from PDHKEN as in (4).

4. a) huk1jap1 sing1、fun1fu1 sing1、zoeng2 sing1
cry noise、cheer voice、hand-clapping noise
cung1sak1 coeng4gun2
fill up coliseum
Zoeng1Gwok3Wing4 fung1mai1 cing4 naan4 se2
Zoeng Gwok Wing retire emotion hard display
leoi6 saa2 mou5toi4 gou3bit6 zi1jam1
tears shed stage farewell understanding friend
The sounds of crying, cheering, and clapping filled the coliseum. As he retired from the stage and bade farewell to his fans, Zoeng Gwok Wing shed tears. (*Ming Pao Daily*, 24 January, 1990)

b) Du1Du4 zung1guk1 so2hoeng3mou4dik6
Du Du advice never-have-enemy
Du Du’s advice is irresistable. (*Ming Pao Daily*, 9 December, 1989)

In short, while realism dominates the values and themes of the news narrative in PDHKEN, idealism controls the values and themes of those in PDMCEN.

2.4.2 Contrast in representation of speech by the personage: Individualization versus assimilation

Many scholars (e.g., Caldas-Coulthard, 1993; van Dijk, 1988 & 1996; Hartley, 1982; Fairclough, 1989) have suggested that power and importance are based on privileged access, which is represented in the press via who is given voice and how this voice is reported. Apparently, in both PDHKEN and PDMCEN which focus on personage description, the personage is given voice. However,
due to the different narrative values across the two discourses, PDHKEN contrasts sharply with PDMCEN in the ways of representing the voice by the personage.

In PDHKEN, the personage’s voice is highly individualized, i.e., the individual is allowed to speak from the authoritative position of an individual. Evidences of individualizing the personage’s voice can be found in that his/her voice is highly “accessed” in the news. “Accessibility” here refers to the extent to which the persons are granted with the access to air their views.

Since the practice of individuating the personage is valued in Hong Kong and the primary aim of PDHKEN is to provide the readers with amusement and diversion, the heroes and heroines in PDHKEN are given a great deal of opportunities to voice their opinions. Consequently, the personage’s speech can sometimes take up most of the space in the news story, as seen in (5).

5. a) Lai4Ming4 hoeng3loi4 jyu5 jan4 dik1 gam2gok3, Lai Ming always give people DE feeling,
dou1 si6 fei1man4 do1do1, all be gossip many,
daan6 san1bin1 koek3 ji1jin4 mei6jau5 zan1ming6 but around yet still not-have real
neoi5jau5 ceot1dou6 zi3 gam1, girlfriend appear till now,
jaaint6 teng3 gwo3 Lai4Ming4 sing4jing6 jau5 also not hear ASP Lai Ming admit have
neoi5jau5, waak6ze2 seoi4 si6 taa1 dik1 girlfriend, or who be he DE
neoi5jau5 dang2。Gau3ging2 taa1 jiu3 gaan2 female friend etc. Afterall he want choose
go3 zam2mo1joeng6 dik1 neoi5jau5? CL what-kind DE girlfriend?
「zeoi3 zung6jiu3 si6 hap6 ngaan5jyun4,
「most important be fit feeling,
dong1 bei2ci2 dai6 jat1 ci3 gin3min6 si4,
when both first time meet moment,

bin6 nang4 jau5 saat3naa5gaan1 zuk1din6 dik1
then can have sudden electric-shock DE
gam2gok3。
feeling。

ho2nang4 dou1 jau5 gei1wui6 faat3zin2 wai4
can be also have chance develop become

ngo5 dik1 neoi5 pang4jau5。」
I DE female friend。
」

Lai4Ming4 ngaan5mau4 leoi5min6 cung1mun5 hei1kei3
Lai Ming eyes inside full of hope
dik1 san4sik1。
DE look。

Taa1 jau6 syut3:
He also say:

「jin6zoi6 ngo5 mut6jau5 neoi5 pang4jau5,
「now I not-have female friend,

so2ji5 bat1 zi1dou3 wui5 gan1 seoi4 caat3 ceot1
so not know will with who strike out

fo2faa1, si6 hyun1 noi6 waak6
sparks, be industry inside or

hyun1 ngoi6 jik6 mou4so2wai6,
industry outside also indifferent,

ngo5 sam6zi3 bat1 fau2jing6,
I even not refuse to admit,

go1mai4 jaa5 jau5 sing4wai4 ngo5 dik1
fans also have become I DE
Lai Ming always gives people the impression that there can be many gossips about him. But up till now, he is still alone and no girlfriend shows up. Since he appeared on the stage, we have never heard of him admitting that he has a girlfriend, or who is his girlfriend. After all, what kind of girlfriends will he choose?

“Most importantly, she must be attractive at the first sight; when we meet each other the first time, there will be a feeling of electric shock. Then she will have the possibility of becoming my girlfriend.” Lai Ming’s eyes were filled with hopeful expressions.

He also said, “Right now, I do not have any girlfriend, so I do not know with whom I will fall in love with. It does not matter whether she is within or outside of the entertainment industry. I will not even deny the possibility of my fans becoming my girlfriend......” (Sing Pao Daily, 9 August, 1990)
ji5 pui4 joeng5 ceot1 gam2 cing4, already develop out feeling,

deoi3 jyu1 jau5 cyun4 zi2 taa1 dong1 syun2 Ou3 Zau1 towards have rumour that she be-elected Australia

waa4 joi6 ming4 haam4 jau5 zou6 maa5 zi1 Chinese descent title have pre-arranged result of

jim4, suspicion,

Wong4 Mei5 Git3 zi6 jin4 bat1 soeng1 seon3 jau5 Wong Mei Git self say not believe have

noi6 ding6 dik1 ho2 nang4, ...... pre-arrangement DE possibility ......

Wong4 Mei5 Git3 biu2 si6 zoii6 man6 tai4 deoi3 daap3 Wong Mei Git express in question answer

zung1, jyun4 soeng2 ji5 gong2 dung1 waa2 midst, originally want use Cantonese

deoi3 daap3, kap6 hau6 wai6 liu5 bou2 him2 gai3, answer, later for security reason,

jing4 si6 ji5 jing1 jyu5 gaau3 wan2 zan6, still be use English comparatively secure,

deoi3 jyu1 Can4 Faat3 Jung4 coi3 hau6 loeng5 towards Can Faat Jung competition afterwards two

dou1 lok6 leoi6, time cry,

Wong4 Mei5 Git3 soeng1 seon3 taa1 si6 hoi1 sam1 Wong Mei Git believe she be happy

ji4 lau4 leoi6, bing6 wai6 bei6 syun1 bou3 and cry, also say PASS announce

nang4 zeon3 jap6 ng5 gaap3, zi6 hei2 jyu5
1989 Miss China Wong Mei Git said that while she felt happy being the champion of three items, she felt a little bad for the other ladies. Because after spending quite a period of time together, they have developed affection for each other. With regard to the rumor that the result of her being the Miss China in Australia was prearranged, she said she doesn’t believe that there was pre-arrangement.....Wong Mei Git said that in the question and answer session, she originally wanted to do it in Cantonese, but to play safe, she used English instead. With regard to Chan Faat Jung crying twice after the competition, Wong Mei Git believed that Chan was just too happy and cried. She also said that when she was announced to be one of the five finalists, both she and Chan Fatt Jung were so excited that they cried........

(Sing Pao Daily, 19 December, 1990)

Here, we can observe that the personage’s voice is made highly present to the audience. In fact, the personage can be taken as so important and powerful that their speech is fully utilized to dramatize and legitimate the story being told. In consequence, the news story is framed and substantiated mainly by the personage’s voice--their points of view concerning different or even diverse topics/aspects. For example, the news story in (5.a.) is embodied by Lai Ming’s voice concerning his expectation of the girlfriend and how he would cope with the relationship between him and his girlfriend, and between him and his fans. And the news story in (5.b) is substantiated by Wong Mei Git’s feelings about the championship, her evaluation of her own performance, her comments on others’ crying behavior in the contest, and her boyfriend, etc.

The individualization of the personage’s voice can also be found in the fact that the individual is given the access to express views which diverge from the normative views or common practice. As seen in (5.a), Laiming is quoted for saying that he doesn’t care if
his girlfriend should be his fan and if she should be within or out of the entertainment circle. Further illustrations can be seen in (6).

6. a) Zoeng Gwok Wing say,

Zoeng Gwok Wing said that artists like Can Bou Zyu, Gaa Ling, etc. all retired at the peak time of their career life. But there has not been any man artist who has made such a decision; he is the first one. (*Sing Pao Daily*, 24 January, 1990)

b) Can Faat Hung smile say:

Can Faat Hung said smilingly, “In fact, it was not sleeping, but fainting for two hours.” (*Sing Pao Daily*, 4 February, 1990)

c) ask he record this CL record time,
Faat3Zai2 zik6zip3 syut3 mut6jau5, 
Faat Zai directly say no, 
daan6 bat1 wai5jin4 je6sam1jan4zing6 duk6 zo6, 
but not afraid to say mid-night alone sit, 
waak6 jyu5 taa13taai2 Lin4Mui2 jat1hei2 faan1jyut6 
or with wife Lin Mui together read 
soeng3bou2 si4, 
photo-album time, 
wui5 ngau1hei2 deoi3 gau6 cing4jan4 jat1 zung2 
will arouse towards old lover one kind 
si1nim6, 
missing, 

When asked if he thought of his ex-lovers when recording the album, Faat Zai’s reply was a direct “no”; however, he admitted that when he was alone in the middle of the night, or reading the photo album with his wife Lin Mui, it could arouse his missing for the old-time lover(s). (Ming Pao Daily, 6 September, 1990)

In (6.a.), Zoeng Gwok Wing expresses that he likes to withdraw from the entertainment circle at his peak time, which is not a common practice among the male artists in Hong Kong. In (6.b), Can Faat Hung comments that the sleeping time he got is actually a fainting time. And in (6.c), Faat Zai as a married man expresses his missing for the old-time lover, which is against the normative or idealistic value for families.

In contrast to PDHKEN, the accessibility of the individual’s voice is very low in PDMCEN. Only a small quantity of the individual’s speech is reported and heard. Furthermore, when the speech is reported, it is often assimilated in the thematic development of the narrative, i.e., it is embedded, integrated, and/or stereotyped to make it meaningful within the continuing saga of the news discourse.

In PDMCEN, most of the personage’s speech is condensed, summarized, and recasted in the narrative frame established by the reporter or editor.
7.a) Gong Li and Zhang Yi Mou arrived at Venice on the 5th. In the evening of the 6th, Qiuju Da Guan Shi was shown and entered the contest officially. Gong Li said, originally, we were worried that the foreigners might not understand the film, but to our surprise, when the film was over, the cinema was filled with cheers and applause for almost 10 minutes.

(Xingmin Wanbao, 15 September, 1992)

b) Mei dang ta men qi sheng he chang every when they together voice join sing

《feng yu tong lu》 de5 shi2 hou4, “feng yu tong lu” DE time,

Xu Xiao Feng all will anamoured DE and

zi4 hao2 de5 shuo1: “mei3 yi1 ge4 ting4 zhong1 proud DE say: “every one CL listener
dou1 shi4 wo3 zhei4 yang4 yi1 wan3 yi1 wan3 all be I this way one night one night
Every time when they joined in the singing of the song *Feng Yu Tong Lu*, Xu Xiao Feng would be excited and said proudly, “I have found each one of these listeners/audience by singing like this one night after another.” *(Yangcheng Wanbao, 18 September, 1992)*

We can observe here that the speech by Gong Li and by Xu Xiao Feng is quoted and assimilated in informing and completing the narrative event in the news.

Other evidences of assimilating the personage’s speech in PDMCEN can also be found in that the speech is stereotyped and subordinated to the collectivistic theme or other related idealistic themes in the news scripts.

8.a)  

\[
\text{gang1 gang1 zou 3 xia4 fe1 ji1 de5 Gong3 Li4 just just run down aeroplane DE Gong Li}
\]

\[
\text{shun4 shou3 di4 guo4 lai2 yi1 ge4 pi2 xiang1, conveniently pass COMP one CL leather case,}
\]

\[
\text{shuo1 li3 mian4 zhuang1 de5 jiu4 shi4 zai4 Wei1ni2si1 say inside fill DE then be in Venice}
\]

\[
\text{gang1 de2 dao4 de5 zui4 jia1 nü3 zhu3 jiao3 just have COMP DE most best female main character}
\]

\[
\text{jiang3 jiang3 bei1. hao3 chen3. award trophy. Very heavy.}
\]

\[
\text{Wo3 neng2 jue2 de2 shou3 zhong1 de5 I can feel DE hand inside DE}
\]

\[
\text{quan2 bu4 fen4 liang4 -- ta1 bao1 rong2 zhe5 whole weight -- it include ASP}
\]

\[
\text{Zhong1 guo2 nai3 zhi4 zheng3 ge4 China also to whole CL}
\]

\[
\text{Ya4zhou1 nü3 yan3 yuan2 zhi4 jin1 wei2 zhi3}
\]
Gong Li, who just came down from the airplane, handed over a leather case, saying that it contained the best actress award that she had just won in Venice. The trophy was really heavy. I could feel its weight in my hand—it contains the highest honor that the Chinese and the Asian actresses have ever won in history. I asked Gong Li: were you able to hold the trophy with one hand during the prize giving ceremony? She said, no, it is really too heavy, I had to use two hands. (Xingmin Wanbao, 15 September, 1992)
bu4 neng2 zhi3 tao2 zui4 zai4 guo4 qu4
not can only intoxicated in past
de5 hui1 huang2 li3.” shi4 de5
DE glamour inside.” yes DE

zai4 ta1 de5 mei2 yu3 jian4, wo3 kan4 dao4 le5
in she DE forehead between, I see ASP

yi1 ge4 lao3 yuan2 zai4 chuang4 zao4,
one CL old actor ASP create

wan2 shan4 yi1 ge4 ge4 jiao3 se4 de5 tong2 shi2,
perfect one CL CL character DE same time,

ye3 zai4 wan2 shan4, chuang4 zao4 zai4 ji3.
also ASP perfect, create self.

When I mentioned about the characters like Xi Feng and Kang Shun Zi that she had successfully portrayed, she just smiled, shook her head, and said, “Those are history. We old people should also look forward. We should not be intoxicated in our glamorous past.” Yes, looking up at her, I see an old/experienced actress is creating and perfecting herself at the same time as she is creating and perfecting each of the roles she is playing.

(Beijing Wanbao, 22 September, 1992)

We can observe that in (8.a), the speech by Gong Li is selected to be assimilated in the collectivistic theme framed by the reporter—the award and pride does not only belong to Gong Li but also to the Chinese people and the Asian people. And in (8.b), the speech by the personage is assimilated in the theme of constant progress and self-perfection.

In short, while the personage’s voice in PDHKEN is highly individualized, the voice in PDMCEN is embedded and assimilated to support the larger theme of the news narrative.

2.4.3 Contrast in rhetoric of text: On-line interaction versus planned exposition (Fragmented versus elaborated structure)
Another major parameter that contrasts PDHKEN and PDMCEN lies in the rhetoric of the news texts. As PDHKEN is commercial-oriented and aims at amusement and diversion, the rhetoric of “on-line interaction” is favored. It is marked by an abundant use of direct quotes, questions, question-answer pairs, hedges, discourse particles, discourse verbal connectors, and common expressions in the low variety of language. We can observe some incidents of direct quotes in (5.a) and (6.b) in section 2.4.2. In illustration 5, we can also observe the use of questions *Gau3ging2 taa1 jiu3 gaan2 go3 zam2mo1joeng6 dik1 neoi5jau5?* ‘What kind of girl-friend will he choose after all?’ in drawing and preceding the comments by the personage in (5.a), of hedges *jau5dim2* ‘a little bit’ in (5.b). In both illustrations (5) and (6), we can observe an abundant use of discourse verbal connectors, e.g., *daan6, ji4* ‘but’, *waak6ze2* ‘or’, *jan1wai6* ‘because’ and *kap6hau6* ‘later’.

The common practice of news texts would omit the interpersonal features of conversation such as openings, closings, hesitations, repairs, overlaps and gasps, etc., but the PDHKEN discourse sometimes includes the conversational features in creating more involvement from the audience. The typical interactional frame, question-answer pair, can be utilized, as seen in illustration (9).

9.a) 「jau6 waa6 dung1naam4aa3 jyu4gam1
gain again say Southeast Asia now

dang1toi4 ceoi1 daam6fung1,
perform on stage blow slack-wind

mou5 jing2hoeng2 nei5dei6 me1?
not affect you PAR

「di1 daam6 fung1 mou4jing2mou4zung1 aa3!」
those slack wind without trace PAR

Maan6Zi2 syut3: 「gaa1soeng5 nung4lik6 nin4.......
Mann Zi says: plus lunar year.......

22
“Didn’t they say that the entertainment business is slack in Southeast Asia right now? Didn’t that affect you?”
“The slack time is gone,” Maan Zi said, “plus......”
(Sing Pao Daily, 25 February, 1990)

b) 「gei3jin4 ze2mo1 hou2, ho4ji5 bat1 tim1sik6 ne1?」
since that good, why not increase food

「jat1loi4 zeoi3co1 dik1 dong3kei4」
one-reason originally DE schedule

ji5 ding6 hou2 liu5,
already set fine ASP

ngo5mun4 zoi6 Gong2 jau6 ling6 jau5 gung1zok3,
We in Hong Kong also other have work

jiu3 wui4loi4 hoi1gung1 paak3hei3 aa3,
need return work film-making PAR

naan4dou6 jiu3 cyun4 sai3gaai3 ting4 haa6loi4,
cannot have whole world stop

dang2 ngo5mun4 coeng3 jyun4 coi4 hoi1gung1 me1!
wait we sing finish then work PAR

m4 tung1 ge3,......
not good PAR,......

“Since it’s so good, why didn't you continue making more money?”
“Well, the schedule has already been set, and we also have other work to do in Hong Kong. We need to come back here for another film-shooting. We cannot ask the whole world to stop and wait till we finish the singing. That’s not good,......”
(Sing Pao Daily, 25 February, 1990)

In illustration (9), we can also observe many incidents of discourse particles, e.g., *me1*, *aa3*, *laa1*, *ne1*, and *ge3*. The discourse particles do not only occur in direct quoted speech but also in the other parts of narration. For example,

10. Zang6Jyu6Ling4 zoi6 jin2ceot1 「pang4jau5 cai1」 si4,
When Zang Jyu Ling was participating in the shooting of *Pang Jau Cai*, she strictly forbade the actors and workers to smoke in front of her. She also advised them not to smoke... In the end, she even got Zang Zi Wai to quit smoking! (Ming Pao Daily, 9 December, 1989)

Furthermore, common expressions in Low Cantonese are used, as in (11), where *se3maan6 gam2 hau2* is used to refer to extreme happiness, and *siu2 maau1 sam1 sei3 zek3* to refer to very few listeners in the music hall.

11. a) ze2 deoi3 cing4leoi5 siu3 dou3 this pair lover laugh

   *sei3maan6 gam2 hau2*, fourty-thousand PAR mouth

   hoi1sam1 ji6soeng4, happy extraordinary

This pair of lovers laughed to their heart’s content, extremely happy. (Sing Pao Daily, 25 February, 1990)

b) deoi3 ngai6jan4 ji4jin4, gik6wai4 zung6jiu3, for artists concerned, extremely important

   *seoi4 jyun6ji3 zi2 dak1* who willing only have
For the artists, this is extremely important. Who wants to have only a few small cats (listeners)? The audience will feel lonely, and the singer will find it no fun. (Sing Pao Daily, 25 February, 1990)

In short, the rhetoric of PDHKEN is of what Biber (1988 & 1995) characterized as “on-line interaction” and of what Chafe (1982) called as “fragmentation”. It involves the audience by the use of colloquial features and common expressions, and the resulting text structure is looser and fragmented as seen in short clauses in succession without connectives or joined simply by coordinating conjunctions.

Unlike PDHKEN, the PDMCEN discourse indicates a largely absence of the features that are characteristic of “on-line interaction” or “fragmentation”. Instead, the rhetoric of “planned exposition” is used. It is marked by an abundant use of relative clauses, placing subordinated clauses before main clauses, use of conjoined phrases, and use of metaphors or similes in the high variety of language.

In headlines, we can already observe some incidents of using relative clauses resulting in lengthy Nps, e.g., 

Dang4 qi3 shi4ye4 he2 hai4qing2 de5 shuang1 jiang3 ‘Swinging the oars of career and love’ in (3.a) and Qi2 zi4se4 ch1 de5 a xin tian zhang ‘Chief A Xin who rides on the purple car’ in (3.c). In (8.a), we can also many incidents of relative clauses which consequently lengthen the clauses. For example, Gang1gang1 zou3 xia4 fei1ji1 de5 Gong3 Li4... ‘Gong Li, who just came down from the airplane, ...’, and Tai1 bao1rong2 zhe5 zhong1guo2 nai3 zhi4 zheng3 ge4ya4zou1 nu3yan3yuan2 zi4 jin1 wei2 zhi3 suo3 neng2 huo4de2 de5 zui4 gao1 deng3 ji2 de rong2yu4. ‘It contains the highest honor that the Chinese and the Asian actresses have ever won in history’. 
Examples of placing subordinated clauses before main clauses can be seen in *Mei3 dang1 ta1men2 qi2 sheng1 he2 chang4 Feng1 Yu3 Tong2 Lu4 de5 shi2hou4, Xu Xiao Feng dou1 hui4...* ‘Every time when they joined in the singing of *Feng Yu Tong Lu*, Xu Xiao Feng would...’ in (7.b), and in *Dang1 wo3 ti2 qi3 ta1 ceng2 su4zao4 de5 Si4 Feng4, Kang1 Shun4 Zi3 shi2, ta1 wei1 wei1 yi2 xiao4,...’ ‘When I talked about the characters like Si Feng and Kang Shun Zi that she had portrayed, she just smiled, ...’ in (8.b).

The use of conjoined phrases is also prevalent in PDMCEN, as in (12).

12.a) chu1 tai2 de5 wan3 hui4 jiang4 shi4 out platform DE night show will be yi1 bu4 wan2 mei3 de5 zuo4 pin3, one CL perfect DE work, zhu3 chi2 ren2, yan3 yuan2, le4 dui4, wu3 dui4, take charge person, actor, music band, dance band, deng1 guang1, bei4 jing3, yan1 xiang3 dou1 light, background, sound effect also hun4 ran2 yi1 ti3, yan2 ge4 pei4 he2, yan2 ge4 ti3 xian4 integral whole, strict match, strict embody zong3 ti3 she4 ji4 de5 yao4 qiu2 whole design DE requirement.

The evening show will be a perfect piece of work. The host, the actors and actresses, the musical band, the dancing team, the lighting, the background, and the sound effect will be well integrated and strictly coordinated, embodying the general design. (*Beijing Wanbao*, 3 November, 1992)

b) yi1 zhen1 zhen1 cai3 zhao4 zai4 shu4 shuo1 one CL CL colourful photograph ASP account ta1men2 jin4 nian2 de5 shi4 ye4 you3 cheng2: they recent year DE career have achievement: ta1men2 yan3 chu1 shu4 bai3 chang3, they perform several hundred shows,
pin2 pin2 zai4 ying3 ping 2 chu1 xian4:
frequent in screen appear;

ta1men2 sui2 lan4 chu1 fang7 Mei2 guo2,
yhey follow battleship out visit America,

rang2 min2 ge1 yu4 zai4 Xia4wei2yi2:
let folk song honour carry Hawaii;

ta1men2 lai2 dao4......
yhey come......

The colorful photos are telling us about their recent career achievement: they have performed several hundreds of shows, appearing frequently on the TV; they follow the battleship to visit America, bringing the Chinese folk songs to Hawaii; they have been...... (Renmin Ribao, 7 July, 1990)

Furthermore, in the PDMCEN discourse, uncommon metaphors and similes which are characteristic features of the high variety of language are also used. One evidence of this can be seen in the headline illustrated in (3.a): swinging the oars is used figuratively to stand for one’s career and love life. Further illustrations can be seen in (13). In (13.a), string is used to stand for love and boat to stand for life; and in (13.b), knocking open the door of folk arts is used to stand for the pioneer and exploratory work by the artist.

13.a) yi1 gen4 gan3 qing2 de5 lan4 sheng2
one CL emotion DE string

ba3 liang3 zhi2 sheng1 ming4 zhi1 zhou1
BA two CL life POSS boat

quan1 zai4 yi1 qi2.
tie COMP together.

A string of love ties the two boats of life together. (Renmin Ribao, 7 July, 1990)

b) ta1 huai2 zhe5 dui4 yi4 shu4 de5
he hold ASP toward arts DE
In short, while the rhetoric of PDHKEN is characterized by “on-line interaction” and “fragmentation”, PDMCEN manifests “planned exposition” and “elaboration”.

3. Discussion and implications

The study has again manifested that there is a determinate relation between ideological process and linguistic process. As Hong Kong and Mainland China have operated on different ideology in entertainment news reporting, three contrastive parameters are found to exist between PDHKEN and PDMCEN discourse structuring: contrast in narrative values and themes--realism versus idealism, contrast in representation of speech by the personage--individualization versus assimilation, and contrast in the rhetoric of text--on-line interaction versus planned exposition.

The news media in Hong Kong operates on a commercial basis, and there is no orthodox principle for entertainment news writing so long as it can entertain and attract as large an audience as possible. Therefore, the PDHKEN discourse tends to take a realistic approach in organizing the narrative themes. More often than not, it tends to reveal the negative aspects of the personage, providing the audience with amusement and diversion. In representing the speech by the personage, PDHKEN tends to individualize it, i.e., giving high access to the personage to express views which diverge from the normative practice as well as highly utilizing the individual voice to dramatize and legitimate the story being told. In terms of the
rhetoric of text, PDHKEN favors on-line interaction and fragmentation, involving the audience by the use of colloquial features and common expressions.

But the news media in Mainland China is operated by the state, and the official guidelines for the Chinese media emphasize the role of the media in educating and indoctrinating the people in their conduct of work and social life. Therefore, the PDMCEN discourse tends to take an idealistic approach in organizing the narrative themes. It tends to portray only the positive aspects of the personage’s feelings, thoughts, and activities, and reconstruct them according to collectivism or other ideal communist themes. In representing the speech by the personage, PDMCEN tends to assimilate it. The accessibility of the individual’s voice is very low compared to that in PDHKEN. Furthermore, the personage speech is often condensed and summarized to be embedded in the narrative frame established by the reporter or editor, or is stereotyped to be subordinated to the collectivistic theme or other related idealistic themes in the news scripts. In terms of the rhetoric of text, PDMCEN uses planned exposition and elaborated linguistic structure, which serves well in indoctrinating standard language use and spreading literacy among the masses of people in Mainland China.

The study has also meant to suggest that there is not always neat fit between ideological and linguistic categories. For example, the ideology of education and indoctrination by the news media in Mainland China has been coded implicitly in at least three levels—idealization in narrative theme, assimilation in representation of speech by the personage, and planned exposition/elaborated structure in the rhetoric of the text. Apparently, it is important that further work be done on both theory and method as well as application of Critical Linguistics or Critical Discourse Analysis (Fowler, 1996:8).

Nevertheless, in developing the apparatus for critical linguistics, we should not be too concerned with the lack of invariance between linguistic structures and their significances. Leeuwen (1996:33) points out that ‘either theory and method are formally neat but semantically messy (as in the dictionary: one form, many meanings), or they are semantically neat but formally messy (as in the thesaurus: one concept, many possible realizations).’
Therefore, we should choose either to focus on the concept/meaning/ideology and examine its different possible realizations, or to focus on the form and explore its different possible functions.

Notes:

1 The Communist Party paper *People’s Daily* as well as the local newspapers in Mainland China are used since while they differ in their roles and functions in hard news writing, they all observe similar roles and principles in entertainment news writing.

2 The transcription for the data from Mainland China is based on *Pinyin* while the transcription for the data from Hong Kong is based on *Jyutping*.

3 The definitions for low versus high variety of the language are based on Ferguson (1972) classification.

References


Chafe, Wallace L. 1982. Integration and involvement in speaking,


Erlbaum.


------ 1996b. The changing modes of discourse in a changing China. Plenary speech at the *International Conference on Knowledge and Discourse* in Hong Kong University. (It is to be published in Barron and Bruce, Vol.2.)


