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Abstracts

Negotiating Discourse Expectations in an English as a Foreign Language Classroom
Barbara Craig
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature Tunghai University
Taichung, Taiwan

Abstract
When students and instructor have been socialized in different educational systems, they often hold divergent views of the learning process. Such mismatches in instructional expectations can have significant effects on the participants’ satisfaction with their interactions in the foreign language classroom. This paper describes a year-long study of two classes of university English students in Taiwan and contrasts the students' customary approach to learning with that promoted by their American instructor. Through ethnographic participant-observation by the instructor, combined with informal written feedback and brief oral interviews with the students, the study documents the process through which the participants renegotiated their expectations and adjusted their classroom social and linguistic behaviors during the course of the year. The paper suggests that international university English as a foreign language programs can better meet the sociocultural and linguistic needs of their students by basing their initial instructional approach on students’ locally-held attitudes towards learning, rather than by imposing exogenous models of language instruction often promoted in English language teaching.

The Labyrinth of Exit Standard Controls
K.C. Li
The Open University
Hong Kong

Abstract
In view of mounting dissatisfaction with graduates' language proficiency, tertiary institutions in Hong Kong are seriously considering adopting exit controls over their students’ language proficiency. There are three parts to this paper. The first part outlines major theoretical issues involved in implementing any such controls. These issues include the indeterminacy of the targets for controls and the question of how such targets can be controlled. The second part attempts to offer an overview of the major practical
issues. It outlines possible implementation means and compares the key pros and cons of the means. By delineating the complexity of the major issues involved, the first two parts highlight the fact that institutions should answer a large number of important, yet difficult, questions before proceeding to control their graduates’ exit language proficiency. The third part presents four approaches that may help overcome the difficulties in implementing exit controls. They are taking the bull by the horns, accepting a plurality of practices, focusing on communication, and producing different results for different audiences.

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**Chinese ESL Students’ Learning Strategies: A Look at Frequency, Proficiency and Gender**

**Christine C.M. Goh and Kwah Poh Foong**

**Abstract**

This article reports on a study of language learning strategies used by 175 ESL students from the People’s Republic of China. The aims of the study were to survey the frequency of strategy use and to determine how it is influenced by the learners’ proficiency level and gender. The SILL questionnaire (Strategies Inventory of Language Learning) by Oxford (1990) was administered. It consists of 6 categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. Results from the survey indicated that metacognitive strategies were most frequently used, while memory strategies were least frequently used. Statistical analysis showed that significant differences were to be found in the use of cognitive and compensation strategies among learners at three proficiency levels. Gender also played a role in influencing the kinds of strategy used; female students were found to use compensation and affective strategies significantly more often than male students. Findings from this study could help teachers identify appropriate strategies to facilitate the learning of a second language by Chinese learners.

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**An Independent Learner’s Guide to Cantonese Instructional Materials**

**Geoff P. Smith**

*University of Hong Kong*

**Abstract**

This article reviews some available instructional material for learning Cantonese, particularly from the point of view of the independent learner. These materials include introductory courses consisting of printed texts and audio tape recordings, as well as dictionaries and glossaries and academic descriptions of Cantonese. The more successful materials for self-study are identified and some possible ways of avoiding the usual pitfalls involved in learning Cantonese are discussed. Some suggestions for future instructional materials are made.

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**Communication Apprehension of Chinese ESL Students**

**Barley Shuk-Yin Mak**

*Language Centre, Hong Kong Baptist University*

**Cynthia White**

*Dept. of Linguistics and SLT, Massey University, New Zealand*

**Abstract**

Anxiety research in language learning has been carried out largely with English-speaking foreign language learners of Indo-European languages, and, more recently, of Japanese. This article reports the findings of a study into the sources of one type of language learning anxiety, known as communication apprehension (CA), among Chinese ESL students in New Zealand secondary schools. The relative importance of a number of sources of CA (educational, social and cultural) is investigated by means of interviews and a ranking exercise. In addition, a questionnaire and classroom observation session explore the sources of CA in relation to certain in-class practices, such as questioning, voluntary speaking and pair work. Results indicate that the language distance between Chinese and English contributed strongly to CA among Chinese ESL students. Within the classroom, an emphasis on voluntary speaking, insufficient preparation for speaking and fear of negative evaluation were
important sources of CA. The article concludes with a number of suggestions for future avenues of research into CA and language learning anxiety.

From Graphic Literacy Across Languages to Integrating English and Content Teaching in Vocational Settings

Gloria M. Tang
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Abstract
This paper is about integrating the teaching of English and specific content areas in vocational settings. It supports the recently established Hong Kong (HK) medium of instruction policy which "is designed to encourage schools to move away from mixing and switching between Chinese and English in each subject of the curriculum towards the consistent use of one language or the other across the curriculum for any one particular class" (Bird, Harris & Ingham, 1993, p. x). It aims to contribute to the HK government’s initiative to improve the use of language in the workplace by advocating a model which employs knowledge structures and graphics. The paper suggests that knowledge structures and graphics can be used to promote the use of one language, English, for teaching vocational subjects by integrating the teaching of English and content. It reports on the findings of research conducted in a prevocational school in Hong Kong (HK) which show (1) that knowledge structures and graphics are common across English and Chinese, and (2) that HK students were aware of knowledge structures and could interpret graphics presented in an unfamiliar language. It demonstrates how a content unit taken from HK vocational materials, in English or Chinese, can be planned according to Mohan’s categorization of knowledge structures indicating that language and content knowledge can be taught simultaneously.


Cheng Ngai-Lai

Abstract
A study is reported of one hundred and twenty cases of English-Chinese biliteracy in the Republic of Singapore. Two writing tasks designed to investigate the written proficiency of secondary school pupils were supplemented by a survey of the linguistic background of the pupils. The results reflect that the pupils' writing ability was significantly better in English.
Articles

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Hong Kong Children's Rights to a Culturally Compatible English Education
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From Dialect to Grapholect: Written Cantonese from a Folkloristic Viewpoint
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Two Name Formation Systems in One Country: Cantonese People's Attachment to Names in Hong Kong
Fu Kin-hung and Shin Kataoka

Abstracts

Language Rights and the Medium-of-instruction Issue in Hong Kong

Phil Benson

Abstract
Language policy and human rights are both areas of lively debate in Hong Kong. Language rights, where language policy and human rights intersect, are less frequently discussed. Nevertheless, rights are often mentioned in connection with language policy. For example, in the field of education some argue for Chinese-medium education on the grounds that the right to mother-tongue medium education is fundamental, while others argue that parents should have the right to choose between Chinese- and English-medium. This paper aims to establish the extent to which statements of these kinds can be grounded in recognised principles of language rights that are applicable to the unique sociolinguistic setting of Hong Kong. The first part of the paper discusses general principles of language rights as they apply to Hong Kong. The second part discusses the medium-of-instruction issue in Hong Kong from the perspective of language rights.

Hong Kong Children's Rights to a Culturally Compatible English Education

Angel M.Y. Lin

Abstract
In this paper I discuss why the right of access to the socioeconomically dominant symbolic resource, English, is a fundamental language right of Hong Kong children. I also discuss why current English curricular design and practices do not provide such access and how they can be changed in order to provide Hong Kong children with access to an English education that is compatible with their native culture. In a culturally compatible curriculum, emphasis is placed on affirming and capitalizing on what children bring to the classroom: their indigenous linguistic, discourse, and cultural resources. It aims at building on and expanding the child’s existing resources to bridge the gap between her/his native resources and the socioeconomically important language of the society. I also propose some directions for future research and curricular development that researchers, teachers, and teacher-educators can take in the context of Hong Kong in order to develop a culturally compatible English curriculum that will deny neither the Cantonese child’s rightful linguistic and cultural identities and resources nor her/his right to have access to English.
Language Rights and the Hong Kong Courts

Anne Cheung  
Department of Law  
University of Hong Kong

Abstract  
Ever since the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984, legal bilingualism has become the leading fashion. However, the implementation of legal bilingualism in the court rooms is a difficult, complex and on-going gradual process. This paper will concentrate on the assertion of language rights in four different aspects, namely pre-trial process and trial process, in jury participation and in the law reporting and recording system. There are strong theoretical grounds for the recognition of language rights, yet Hong Kong may not be ready for their full enforcement. Hong Kong has to juggle with the problems of relying on enormous amount of English cases, a lack of legal personnel that are proficient in both official languages and financial concerns. It is hoped that the implementation of language rights and the legal principle of upholding language rights can be matched in the near future.

From Dialect to Grapholect: Written Cantonese from a folkloristic Viewpoint

Chin Wan-kan  
Hong Kong Policy Research Institute Ltd.

Abstract  
Written Cantonese used to prevail in Cantonese opera scripts, pop song lyrics, comic books and other forms of folk literature in the Cantonese dialect areas of southern China. With the economic boom of the 1980s and the export of culture to mainland China, Hong Kongers tend to take pride in their cultural identity and Cantonese is enjoying a resurgence. This paper discusses the spread of written Cantonese in the new media from the point of view of language rights as the right to diversity in post-industrial Hong Kong.

Two Name Formation Systems in One Country: Cantonese People’s Attachment to Names in Hong Kong

Fu Kin-hung  
Department of Chinese  
Hong Kong Institute of Education
Shin Kataoka  
Language Centre  
Hong Kong University of Science & Technology

Abstract  
In Hong Kong, personal names are written with Chinese characters and pronounced in Cantonese. Each name also has a romanized equivalent that reflects Cantonese pronunciation. This paper reports on a small-scale research project to investigate the attachment of Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong to their names and their attitudes to using mainland Chinese simplified characters in names and the use of Pinyin instead of existing romanization conventions.