Into the Twenty First Century

ISSUES OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN HONG KONG

LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF HONG KONG
Into the Twenty First Century: Issues of Language in Education in Hong Kong

Edited by
Luke Kang Kwong

Linguistic Society of Hong Kong
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Introduction

Luke Kang Kwong

Most of the articles collected in the present volume have their origins in a series of workshops organized by the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong (LSHK) following the publication of two reports by the Government in the field of language and education between 1989 and 1990 — namely, the "Report of the Working Group Set Up to Review Language Improvement Measures" (1989), and the Education Commission Report No.4 (1990). On both occasions, the reports were discussed at length. Formal responses were presented to the Government expressing members' collective views on the reports, and their criticism and recommendations. The full texts of both these documents, which have not until now been made publicly available, are included here as appendices.

Meanwhile, individual members have written more detailed comments for the local press on different aspects of the reports, elaborating certain assumptions that were succinctly stated in the collective response, and explicating their own positions. Earlier drafts of the articles by K.K. Luke, Daniel So, Peter Tung, and P.K. Wong were first written in that context.

The workshops, discussion sessions, and publications culminated in a Symposium entitled 'Bilingualism and Education in Hong Kong: Into the Nineties', convened by the present editor and held in December 1990 as part of the Annual Research Forum of the LSHK. Most of the authors were active participants at that symposium. Mao Jun-nian's paper 'The Basic Law and Language Problems in Hong Kong' was first presented on that occasion.

The other articles have either been written specially for the volume, and as such have been tailor-made to respond to a set of questions coming up in the previous workshops and discussions — this is the case with Yau Man Siu,
Thomas Lee, and K.K. Ho's contributions; or, in the case of Amy Tai and Yau Shun Chiu's articles, an independent attempt was made to address similar questions.

It is therefore reasonable to take the two government documents referred to above — and in particular, the Education Commission Report No. 4, as the point of departure for the ensuing papers. The proposals and recommendations contained in these two reports, and the controversies they have given rise to, provide an initial framework for locating the issues, and a natural gelling agent for the individual contributions. It is not our intention, however, to put together a collection of individual responses to the two educational reports. Many of the articles may have referred to them, perhaps even commented on them. Nevertheless, the discussions have gone beyond the confines laid down by the specific contents of the reports. The authors have tracked further afield, raised more provocative questions, offered alternative perspectives on the issues. It is therefore more appropriate to see the volume as an attempt to locate the most salient issues of language in education in a historical, political, economic, and social context; to turn to the past, to assess the present situation, and to look ahead into the future — to look, as the title of the book says, into the twenty-first century.

As far as the articles contained in the present volume are concerned, four main problem areas can be identified: (1) language planning and language use in the community at large; (2) educational language policy making; (3) the medium of instruction question; and (4) the teaching and learning of Chinese and English, and how this might relate to the other factors. While individual articles do not deal with any one or another of these issues exclusively, I have, for the sake of convenience, put them into four sections under these headings.

Section One contains two papers by Mao Jun-nian and Yau Shun Chiu. Both approach the question of the status and functions of the three main languages in the local community — English, Putonghua, and Cantonese, from a macro-sociolinguistic point of view. Mao takes the Basic Law as his starting point and addresses the fundamental issue of a shift in the positions of English and Chinese relative to one another in the future Special Administrative Region (SAR). He argues that according to the Basic Law, Chinese will from 1997 onwards be the "first official language", which would imply that English will become second official language. Such an about turn "at the top" could have tremendous ramifications throughout Government administration, legislation, the judicial system, and education. As Associate Secretary-General of the former Basic Law Drafting Committee and Vice President of the Chinese Language Association of Hong Kong, Mao is particularly well placed to offer, with some authority, a view on the implications of the Basic Law for a range of questions relating to language use. He has chosen in this paper to concentrate on three issues: the language of education in schools, the continued use of Cantonese in the community as a whole, and the choice between the traditional Chinese script and the simplified one. The article contains by far the most concrete and unequivocal statement on these questions. It deserves to be read by anyone with an interest in language and society in (twenty first century) Hong Kong.

Yau Shun Chiu's article also takes the Basic Law as its starting point. Yau questions the ambiguity in the term 'Chinese language' and argues that such an ambiguity may cause problems of interpretation in future. The same term could mean, in different contexts, Putonghua, Cantonese, or written Chinese — or indeed any combination of these. Given this ambiguity, Yau argues, Cantonese could at some future date be "reduced to the status of a patois". To the extent that this is perceived as a real problem, the need may arise to stipulate a "legal spoken language". Two surveys were conducted to determine whether such a suggestion had any support in the community, and the results are presented and analysed in the paper.

Section Two of the collection focuses on questions relating to educational policy making: its historical context, philosophical underpinning, constitutional establishment, administrative mechanism, and the actual processes involved in decision making. Thomas Lee looks at two Government commissioned reports published in Britain on language and education and compares them with Hong Kong's official documents on education policy, of which Education Commission Report No. 4 is an example. Differences are found not only at the level of theoretical knowledge and familiarity with academic research, but also in terms of the extent to which relevant professional expertise is brought to bear on the problems identified. Through his perceptual analysis of educational policy in the making — the membership and composition of the
relevant commissions and committees, their procedure of work, method of consultation, treatment of disagreement and dissent, and presentation of results. Lee offers a rare glimpse into the machinery (in the two bureaucracies) responsible for the production of advice and recommendations and the formulation of policy.

The main concern of Yau Man Siu’s contribution is also educational policy making, but it is placed firmly within a colonial - and post-colonial - context. She attempts to trace a number of threads running through educational policies in various British colonies at the time of independence. In so doing, Yau identifies certain constant, at least recurrent, features that should help define the nature of the thinking behind educational policy making during the process of decolonization. One significant feature in this regard is the urge to maintain a measure of British presence through promoting the learning of English, and consolidating an elitist sector within education that is English-based.

If one had to single out, amongst all the issues, one that is the most well-known and the most controversial, it would have to be that of the medium of instruction. In one way or other, each author in the collection has to tackle this question, and they all have something directly or indirectly to say about it. Nevertheless, the four papers that now appear under Section Four contain perhaps the most extensive discussions directly on the question of medium.

Daniel So provides a much needed historical account for the proper assessment of the conspiracy theory - the claim that the Government has, through conscious efforts or neglect, played a crucial role in strengthening the position of English at the expense of Chinese. He contests this assumption. Substantial evidence is given to suggest that historically the more crucial factor would have been the eb and flow of Modern Chinese Nationalism, and the constantly changing and shifting relations between China and Hong Kong. The paper assesses the present situation against this historical context, and ends by looking into the future. According to So’s analysis, there will be a growing demand for schools that are “able to make flexible and sensible use of Cantonese, Putonghua, and English; in other words, a trilingual system.

K.K. Ho’s paper is a welcome first-hand account of an educator’s personal experience in experimenting with “mother-tongue education” in the local context. It will be hard to find someone more well qualified than Ho, a scholar specializing in bilingual education and a secondary school headmaster, to offer an insider’s perspective on the medium of instruction question. The paper takes us through a number of ‘experiments’ and in-house research, offering many insights along the way into the advantages and practical difficulties of ‘mother-tongue education’. A bibliography of empirical research on ‘mother-tongue education’ in Hong Kong is attached to the paper as an appendix. This is an invaluable guide to published work within the area.

My own article on code-mixing is a deliberate attempt to ask some (hopefully) provocative questions. Is code-mixing as evidently a culprit for falling language standards, even general educational failure, as all that? In getting fixated on code-mixing as ‘impurity’ and sloppiness, has one not perhaps overlooked the essentially bilingual nature of such a practice? What could one possibly mean, in the absence of code-mixing, by a bilingual or trilingual educational system within the present social and cultural context, if one is to ensure equal and free access to education? I believe that arguments based on the disadvantages of code-mixing tend to be more emotive than rational, and that one would do well to re-assess the situation in a more realistic and clear-headed manner.

In the final piece of Section Four, Peter Tung examines three theoretical concepts that have frequently come up in discussions on the medium of instruction issue. These are ‘threshold level’, ‘interdependence’, and ‘maximum exposure’. The notion of ‘threshold’ was originally proposed as an abstract construct in second language research, but is often referred to in local discussions of bilingual education. The misuse of this term only confuses rather than clarifies the nature of the inter-relationship (and, as Tung would argue, inter-dependence) between first language acquisition and second language learning. While there is a lot to learn from Western experiences, only some experience can be applied successfully to the local situation.

In the final section are two articles on the important question of the teaching and learning of English and Chinese. Amy Tsui explores further one of the themes of Tung’s paper, namely the relationship between learning ‘content subjects’ through English and learning ‘English itself. The Canadian experience in Immersion Programmes is analysed in some detail. In terms of
the four features of 'motivation', 'parental support', 'language input' and 'language output', it is shown that Immersion Programmes in Hong Kong differ in fundamental ways from the Canadian ones, so that there is little reason to believe that they can produce the same successful results in the local context as they seem to do in Canada.

In the final contribution, Wong Pui Kwong discusses the often neglected question of Chinese language teaching methodology. The topic is conspicuous through its sparseness of treatment in either the Working Group report or the Educational Commission Report. If this is indicative of official neglect, it might equally suggest a general lack of any sense of urgency in education of the need for new ideas and methods for Chinese language teaching. Wong's article is particularly helpful in the directness with which it addresses these questions, and it is full of positive suggestions about updating current Chinese language teaching methodology.

Languages are one of the most valuable assets of a society. Economic growth depends on them; political stability hinges on their right balance; they are vital to people's social and cultural lives. The community relies on education to give it batch after batch of competent language users in a host of languages to carry out a range of tasks, and to serve in a variety of positions. Hong Kong needs all the language talents it can get to keep its competitive edge — not merely automatic parsers and electronic lexicons dressed in three-piece suits, but literate and cultivated persons who other than briefcases have respectable traditions to carry, who can be inspired to ask innovative questions and think new thoughts.

PART ONE:
LANGUAGE PLANNING AND LANGUAGE USE
從基本法看香港的語言問題

毛鉤年

中華人民共和國香港特別行政區基本法在一九九〇年四月經全國人民代表大會通過，將在一九九七年七月一日起實施。香港的未來發展，與基本法有密切的關係。現在讓我們探討一下基本法與香港的語言發展問題。

一、法定語文

基本法第一章《總則》第九條的條文如下：

“香港特別行政區的行政機關、立法機關和司法機關，除使用中文外，也可使用英文，英文也是正式語文。”英譯：“In addition to the Chinese language, English may also be used as an official language by the executive authorities, legislative and judiciary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.”

而中文條文多了“英文也是正式語文”一句。

兩者諧音為“Official language”一種，此為港譯習慣作“法定”或“官方”語文。

根據上述條文，中文和英文兩種語言均為香港的法定語文，但有主次之別。在一些場合，可以表現為先後次序，即未來的特別行政區政府是先使用中文，後使用英文。

現時香港政府的重要文件，均先有英文本，然後譯成中文本，音樂作品則根據基本法規定通是先有中文本，再把中文本翻譯成英文。

另一方面，基本法第一百零一條清楚地規定：“……下列各職級的官員必須由在港居留滿年的香港特別行政區永久性居民中的中國公民擔任：各司司長，副司司長，各局局長，處級專員，審計署署長，警務處處長。
香港語言教育論文集

二、教學語言

教學語言是香港人經常爭論的問題，基本法未在這方面有明確規定，只說明特別行政區政府可以“在原有教育制度的基礎上，自行制定有關教育的發展和改革的政策”，包括教學語言。

但倘若特別行政區政府制定改革政策，包含改革教學語言，則需要依據基本法的規定。“香港特別行政區不實行社會主義制度和政策，保持原有的資本主義制度和生活方式，五十年不變。” 語言是生活方式最重要的部分，基本法未在這方面有明確規定，即香港教學語言的改革需要根據《基本法》來制定。中英兩文教學語言的改革，必須根據《基本法》來制定。教學語言的改革需要根據《基本法》來制定。

但香港（中文）和英語哪一種會成為教學語言主流？兩者的比重應該如何？兩者混用的現象現象應該如何？教學語言的改革應該如何？這些問題都需要根據香港的實際情況來制定。根據相關的規定，教學語言的改革應該根據《基本法》來制定。總體來說，教學語言的改革應該根據《基本法》來制定。
四、英語的地位

英語往往是香港的主要官方語言。中文只是次要，但基本法第九條清楚指出：“香港特別行政區的行政機關、立法機關和司法機關，除使用中文外，還可使用英語……”中，英文地位主次分明，久後英文肯定不會完全淡出，但其重要性在行政、立法、司法範圍估計會有所改變。

不過，司法採用英文將出現一個較長的過渡期，因為要把普通話全部翻譯為中文，需要一段很長的時間，司法語言可能要中英兼用，才能解決困難。

香港作為國際城市，需要通曉英語的商界人才。發展香港經濟，英語在這方面的價值是無可置疑的。英語作為國際學術語言也是眾所承認的。過去殖民時期英語被強行推廣，但我們既不可強行過正，貶低英語，也不可能要求全部港人精通英語，更不應為使英語成為教學媒介而犧牲其他學科的學習。基本法的精神是雙語並重，中英並重，這是實事求是，符合社會需要的。

五、結語

基本法的條文涉及語言的並不多，但卻影響深遠。香港特別行政區的語言發展，基本模式已定下來。未來特別行政區的市民，口語應能運用粵語、普通話、英語，書面語要能書中、英文，即二種語言，一種方言（幾種語言能力不必相等），才能適應特別行政區的發展。

基本法有利香港的語言發展，人們關心的是，香港有沒有在行政、立法、司法、教育等方面，有沒有有中文成為第一正式語言的未來格局，作出有效的準備？

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Language Policies In Post-1997 Hong Kong

Yau Shun Chiu

Background to the problem

A significant pointer of ethnic identification is language affiliation. However, within a broad national affiliation there is a place for a narrow or regional identification which is manifested by the choice of a local dialect. Any denial of this dual identification within a country may lead to internal conflicts. In view of the impending return of Hong Kong’s sovereignty to China, this issue of national and regional identification is of special significance. The present survey on language policies in post-1997 Hong Kong was designed with a view to determining how far this dual identification was reflected in language choice.

In designing the survey questionnaire, it was necessary to bear in mind Hong Kong's historical background, its way of life, and its language situation. Most of the data in the present article were collected two years prior to the publication of the Draft of the Basic Law in 1988. In that document, we may notice with regret that the language issue is only briefly dealt with under Article 9 “General Principles." Nor is the problem pursued in Chapter VI: "Education, Sciences, Culture, Sports, Religion, Labour and Social services." Article 9 of the Draft Basic Law reads:

In addition to the Chinese language, the English language may also be used by the executive authorities, legislative and judicial organs of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The term Chinese can refer both to the graphic form of writing shared by all members of the Han group and to an array of distinctive dialects. Its use here
is so loose that a careful reader will realise that there is no mention, directly or indirectly, of Cantonese in the Draft. Thus a host of issues relating to language after 1997 remain to be clarified. For instance, will secondary and primary schools continue with Cantonese as a medium of instruction, or will Cantonese be replaced by Putonghua? Will Cantonese be recognised officially as one of the legal spoken languages in court? Can formal speeches by Hong Kong delegates at international functions be delivered in Cantonese? From what is evident in the Draft, drafters from either China or Hong Kong did not seem to have considered themselves with such problems during the drafting of the Basic Law. It is understandable that Beijing has not only reasons but also has the right not to be specific on this point. After all, Ji Pengfei, the then head of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office under the Chinese State Council, when visiting Hong Kong in 1987, had said that when it came to constitutional matters, there was no necessity to have too detailed rules. We can imagine that Beijing would like to keep the ambiguous element in the term ‘Chinese’, so that there would be more leeway for them in the interpretation and implementation of the language policy in post-1997 Hong Kong. What is more difficult to understand is the reticence and the lack of concern or sensitivity to these issues on the part of the Hong Kong representatives. Not pointing out the fuzziness surrounding the term ‘Chinese language’ is, in my view, a grave oversight. Not alerting the population to its implications can have serious consequences. To avoid controversy after 1997, Hong Kong representatives have the responsibility to point out the ambiguous nature of the term ‘Chinese language’ now in this context.

In recent years, admittedly, more attention has been paid to Putonghua, and more people have been learning it. At the same time, English, because of its international status, has also increased its influence in Hong Kong. But all these recent factors do not undermine the reality that Cantonese is unquestionably the Hong Kong vernacular. We only have to turn on the TV or to take a walk down the street to realise the predominance of Cantonese. The old antagonism of Chinese vs. English is now out of date: it no longer describes the language situation in present-day Hong Kong. The scenario of this old antagonism has already been modified by the introduction of Putonghua into the arena and the ever-increasing predominance of Cantonese in oral communication. With the advent of 1997, if there is no stipulated recognition given to Cantonese, there will exist a potential threat to its present status. After that date, Putonghua may well be put into a competing position with Cantonese. If, for instance, Putonghua is required in courts of law, or for making inquiries at government offices (proficiency necessary in listening, if not speaking as well), what will be the implications for Cantonese-speaking people in Hong Kong? A lot has been made of the Northerners’ stock comment, used to make fun of the Cantonese: ‘One need not fear the sky or the earth. But watch out when a Cantonese tries to speak Mandarin.’ To be fair, the reverse is not necessarily more pleasant to the ear of a Southerner. For most Hong Kong people, psychological pressure in addition to the lack of fluency in (or simply ignorance of) Putonghua, will result in serious problems such as inability to express themselves fully, frustration at inappropriate expressions, even communication breakdowns and speechlessness. This linguistic crisis will get worse if officials in the government can, or will, only communicate in Putonghua, which invariably will be influenced by the vocabulary and accent of their respective dialects. Such a situation may provoke personal resentment, or even a concerted boycott of Putonghua on the part of Cantonese speakers. This possible reaction was already experienced recently by some European tourists who addressed street vendors in Guangzhou in Putonghua. They received the following rebuff: ‘If you are so keen on the Northern dialect, go and use it in the North.’ This uncompromising rejoinder was delivered in perfect Cantonese. Such a scenario is not what anyone would like to see, neither those who advocate the promotion of Putonghua, nor those who would like to maintain Cantonese as the vernacular in Hong Kong.

Language identification in Hong Kong

It is interesting at this point to examine some related studies in the light of the new language situation Hong Kong now faces. The views advocated in Pierson (1988) ‘Language Attitudes and Use in Hong Kong: A case for Putonghua,’ appear to have some currency in Hong Kong at that time.

I choose Pierson’s article as a case in point because his article, although it has not been published in an international journal to my knowledge, has already been translated into Chinese and published in the widely circulated Zhongguo Hua Ren, the linguistic journal of the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. The influence of the article might have been considerable in China. Pierson is conscious, and hopeful, of the potential effect of the intended message on the relevant decision making authorities” in his article when he writes [Editor's Note: All quotations from Pierson (1988), which was published in Chinese, were translated into English by the author of the present article.]
The purpose of this study is to supply the relevant decision making authorities with some sociolinguistic information which will aid them in making enlightened decisions on how to plan the languages of Hong Kong.

However, both his methods of collecting data and the assumptions on which he builds his arguments are highly questionable. He collected his data by asking Form VI students (17 and 19 year-olds) during an examination to write a 350-word letter to the editor of an English language newspaper on the subject of "The introduction of compulsory Mandarin in the secondary school curriculum" (one topic among four choices). Without adopting the necessary statistical control, Pierson assumes that his candidates were spontaneously expressing their true attitude towards Putonghua in their answers. Based on this information he claims that he finds "Cantonese-speaking youth often refer[ed] to Putonghua as their mother tongue." And he adds:

...the spontaneous prose of the students would reveal insights into their present attitude toward Putonghua, and by implication, toward Chinese culture and identity.

I have discussed this article with over twenty colleagues working in secondary and vocational education in Hong Kong. They were of the unanimous opinion that Pierson's conclusions were neither well-founded nor carefully considered. These colleagues observed that once a candidate finds himself inside the examination hall, his priority is to pass the exam and his prevalent exam tactics consist of providing what he perceives to be what the examiner is looking for. In order to verify this opinion, I asked 91 students enrolled in a secondary school in Hong Kong in 1988 to fill a questionnaire. Half of them had the positive statements come before the negative ones; the other half had the statements in reversed order.

Students in a university entrance examination on English composition were asked to write 350 words in English to the editor of an English language newspaper to discuss "The introduction of compulsory Mandarin in the secondary school curriculum." Do you think that ideas expressed in the letter written under these circumstances can represent the student's own views? Please put a mark (a tick) in one of the four boxes, against the statement that best represents your views:

- It can fully represent the candidate's own views
- It can on the whole represent the candidate's own views
- It cannot on the whole represent the candidate's own views
- It cannot represent the candidate's own views at all.

The result revealed that 66% of the subjects felt that such a letter 'cannot, on the whole, represent the views of the candidate' (among them 7 checked "cannot represent the views of the candidate at all"). Only 34% were of the opinion that it can on the whole represent the candidate's views (among them only 2 checked "It can fully represent the candidate's own views"). If these high figures are indicative of the feelings of my subjects, then they should cast doubt on Pierson's methods and findings.

It should also be noted that Pierson's examination question is phrased in the affirmative. Thus the question is phrased to elicit a specific type of answer, in view of the way Hong Kong students are trained to write essays, particularly during examinations. Students do not normally contradict assumptions in the question, unless the statement is obviously untenable, as for example in "Post-1997 Hong Kong must adopt English as the only official language." In that case, candidates would sense that they ought to argue against it. Thus, the following conclusion of Pierson's article remains unconvincing:

In the present research we have found Cantonese-speaking youth often referring to Putonghua as their mother tongue...

I feel Pierson's study can, at best, allow us to see the larger, national identification, but it has certainly not explored the question of a narrow, regional affiliation. With the present attitude of Hong Kong people towards China heavily marked by a feeling of regional attachment, much more attention should be paid to dialectal preference as a demonstration of respect for this sentiment.

To support his argument, Pierson (1988) cites the following view on the functions to be performed by Mandarin, Cantonese, and English:

[Putonghua] will, they maintain, surpass English and Cantonese as the main language of Hong Kong. We might end up with a polyglot situation with two High [languages] and one Low language: Putonghua, the language of politics and administration, English the language of technology and trade, and Cantonese the language of the family.

Apparently this view was cited favourably, as statements such as the following ones found in the article would suggest:

If this [triglossia] is the likely scenario for the future, then a less casual effort should be made to plan for the integration of Putonghua before the takeover date of mid-1997.
It seems that there is fertile ground out there to plan a rational curriculum (for Putonghua) that capitalises on the good will of the students. Action should be taken to see that the motivated youth of Hong Kong are equipped for their responsibilities as citizens of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong.

It would seem proficency in Putonghua, the language of the mother-country, would be a substantial investment in making Hong Kong 'stable and prosperous' after 1997.

One cannot help feeling uneasy about the kind of tragicomic scenario depicted in the above quotations. If realised, it might lead to an antipathy of Hong Kong people towards Putonghua, or to an even more negative situation, if Cantonese is reduced in status to a "patois", the situation might become comparable to that of the Chiuchow-Swatow dialect in present-day Hong Kong; it has remained essentially a home language since the 1950s. Even the Chiuchow-Swatow dialect news broadcast has been abandoned. If the same fate suffered by the Chiuchow-Swatow dialect awaited Cantonese in post-1997 Hong Kong, the reaction of the people of Hong Kong might be entirely different. They could not easily accept this change because Cantonese has always been the vernacular of the majority in Hong Kong. In this regard, lessons might be learnt from the Singapore experience. Mandarin has been designated the official language for Singapore's Chinese population where most speak a Chinese dialect natively, and fewer than 1% have Mandarin as their native tongue (Christian 1988).

Survey: Method and Results

In the two rounds of my survey conducted in 1985 and 1986, it can be seen that the younger generation hopes for the maintenance of, and respect for, Cantonese, their everyday language. This is not driven purely by emotions but is rather a natural expression of identification through one's vernacular.

I started my investigation in 1985. The aim was to look into the attitude of young people in Hong Kong towards the use of Cantonese as the 'legal spoken language' or 'official vernacular' (法定口語). The subjects of my study were students in secondary and tertiary institutions, and secondary school principals. In 1986, I repeated my investigation in the same secondary schools, adding students in the first and third year of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Hong Kong.

The questionnaire, which was administered in Chinese, included six questions: [Editor's Note: See the Appendix to the present paper for the original version of the questionnaire.]

1. Should a 'legal vernacular' be designated in Hong Kong after 1997?
   Yes / No / No Opinion

2. Would it be reasonable to designate Putonghua as Hong Kong's 'legal vernacular' after 1997?
   Yes / No / No Opinion

3. Do you think it is possible to implement a policy of making Putonghua the legal vernacular in Hong Kong after 1997?
   Yes / No / No Opinion

4. Do you think people in Hong Kong would oppose the designation of Putonghua as the 'legal vernacular'?
   Yes / No / No Opinion

5. How would you rate your ability to speak Putonghua?
   Fluent / Passable / Poor / Can't speak it

6. Do you consider the designation of Cantonese as the 'legal vernacular' after 1997 crucial to the maintenance of Hong Kong's status-quo?
   Yes / No / No Opinion

Working under administrative and time constraints, I chose eight Anglo-Chinese schools and two Chinese schools, a number proportional to the distribution of the types of schools (Chinese and Anglo-Chinese schools) in Hong Kong's education system (cf. Gibbons 1982). A total of 1,214 Form IV students (541 boys, 673 girls) were among my subjects for the first survey. Of those subjects, 90% were born in Hong Kong, and the rest had come to Hong Kong before the age of 9. Their average age was 16. The original intention was to use Form VI or Form V school leavers as subjects, but
because of their heavy work load, it was not possible to carry out the study on such a sample. Nevertheless, the sample was reasonably satisfactory. The views of a 16-year-old can be taken for what they are. After all, they are the very people who, by 1997, will have become the mainstays of the productive work force, and the questions raised have everything to do with their personal interest. I called the questionnaire "Survey on Legal Spoken Language" (法定□ 語講卷). The term "legal spoken language" was defined as the common spoken language used in the classroom, radio and television broadcasts, giving evidence in law courts and in oral communications with government institutions. This was how the term was explained to the subjects. Since I myself coined this term, it was necessary to provide this simple definition in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

The same questionnaire was administered to 223 First Year students of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Hong Kong and 71 students at the Hong Kong Polytechnic, of whom 37 were students of translation, along with 22 secondary school principals. One year later, in 1986, I repeated the same investigation with the next cohort of Form IV students from the same ten schools, and the next class of Arts Faculty students. This time, there were 1301 Form IV students, and 220 university students (including 163 First Year, and 57 Third Year Linguistics students).

The statistics from these two investigations are presented below. Since the difference between data obtained from boys and from girls was insignificant, I have merged them in the tables.

The answers to the six questions are tabulated as follows:

(1) "Should a 'legal vernacular' be designated in Hong Kong after 1997?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1985 data</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>17.84%</td>
<td>49.32%</td>
<td>32.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University 1st yr.</td>
<td>38.83%</td>
<td>38.18%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnic</td>
<td>37.06%</td>
<td>44.85%</td>
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<td>Principals</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>22.73%</td>
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(2) "Would it be reasonable to designate Putonghua as Hong Kong's 'legal vernacular' after 1997?"

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<td>School</td>
<td>15.30%</td>
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<td>27.61%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>University 3rd yr.</td>
<td>32.80%</td>
<td>45.61%</td>
<td>14.04%</td>
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</table>

(3) "Do you think it is possible to implement a policy of making Putonghua the 'legal vernacular' in Hong Kong after 1997?"

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<td>56.68%</td>
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<td>Principals</td>
<td>40.91%</td>
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<td>52.15%</td>
<td>34.97%</td>
<td>12.88%</td>
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<td>59.63%</td>
<td>26.32%</td>
<td>14.04%</td>
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</table>
(4) "Do you think people in Hong Kong would oppose the designation of Putonghua as the 'legal vernacular'?"

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<td>36.36%</td>
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<td>31.90%</td>
<td>12.89%</td>
</tr>
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<td>University 3rd yr.</td>
<td>52.63%</td>
<td>35.09%</td>
<td>12.28%</td>
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(5) "How would you rate your ability to speak Putonghua?"

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<td>passable</td>
<td>poor</td>
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<td>9.29%</td>
<td>31.93%</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.70%</td>
<td>17.53%</td>
<td>48.85%</td>
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<td>Polytechnic</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
<td>67.19%</td>
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<td>4.55%</td>
<td>63.64%</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<th>1986 data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fluent</td>
<td>passable</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>3.84%</td>
<td>7.38%</td>
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<td>University 3rd yr.</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
<td>24.56%</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(6) "Do you consider the designation of Cantonese as the 'legal vernacular' after 1997 crucial to the maintenance of Hong Kong's status-quo?"

Survey Results and Discussion

Apart from the responses to the first question, the interpretation of the other questions should be self-evident. I shall therefore say more about the first question and offer my own views. The first question whether a legal spoken language should be chosen received more negative responses than affirmative ones. In order to make these figures consistent with the responses to all the other items, which seem to point to a preference for Cantonese, I would like to venture the following interpretation. Although Cantonese has so far not enjoyed the status of a legal language, it has always been the vernacular for the majority of the population. For this reason, my subjects may have assumed that Cantonese was the de facto spoken language of everyday life in Hong Kong, in which case their negative responses would mean something like: "There is no need to stipulate a 'legal vernacular', as Cantonese is already the de facto spoken language." It is thus likely that their negative responses can be read as indicating a desire to preserve the status quo of Cantonese as the common spoken language. I regret that the possibility of such a misunderstanding was not anticipated. Fortunately, data from the other five items to some extent helped to clarify the meaning behind the responses to item 1.

On the second question, more than two-thirds of the Form IV students are opposed to the use of Putonghua as the legal spoken language (with 10% to 15% in the affirmative). But the percentage of affirmative answers increases...
with level of education. This result may imply that the closer one gets to the
gross-roots level, with presumably less educated people, the stronger the
preference for Cantonese as the vernacular. In light of this, it seems that
Pierson's decision to select candidates with higher examination marks as
subjects for his test may not be a wise one. For instance, on this item, only half
of the tertiary students, and as few as one-third of the school principals, were
opposed to it. Such differences among the groups suggest that people with
more education are more likely to hold more favourable attitudes towards
Putonghua.

With regard to the third question, about three-fifths of the secondary students
felt it will be impossible to implement Putonghua as the 'legal spoken
language' (with one-fifth saying it would be possible), whereas tertiary
students and school principals seemed to exhibit less doubt on this possibility.
These figures confirmed the tendency suggested by data from the previous
item: that better educated people are more likely to believe in education or
learning as a solution to problems caused by language barrier.

On the question of whether Hong Kong people will oppose the use of
Putonghua as the 'legal spoken language' in post-1997 Hong Kong, the
attitudinal dividing line is, however, drawn between students and principals.
Two-thirds of the students, secondary and tertiary, felt Putonghua would meet
with opposition; whereas only one third of the school principals saw the
likelihood of such opposition.

On the one hand, it is surprising that the great majority of the tertiary students
professed to have little or no knowledge of Putonghua. On the other hand,
they seemed to encounter some difficulty in assessing their own standard of
Putonghua. Perhaps this is because in such an evaluation, the subjective
element looms large. For instance, one subject may feel his standard of
Putonghua should be graded as 'Can't speak it' when his mastery may be
better than the subject who answered 'Poor'. Nevertheless, the set of figures
may point to an overall trend. From these figures it would seem that the
standard of Putonghua among students in secondary and tertiary institutions is
rather low. Fewer than 10% of the students reported any competence at all,
and only a pathetic number felt they were fluent speakers, all of them being
either students specializing in translation or secondary school principals.
From this, it is clear that the popularization of Putonghua in Hong Kong has a
long way to go. The present situation explains, at least partly, why Hong Kong
people are reluctant to accept Putonghua as the 'legal spoken language'.

Lastly, over half of the respondents (and over 70% of the secondary school
students) affirmed the significance of maintaining Cantonese as the 'legal
spoken language' in post-1997 Hong Kong as a crucial factor in maintaining
the status quo of the present Hong Kong social system. The reason for this is
evident. Language, especially a common spoken language, is a basic element
in the social system, and its relationship with every aspect of life is closer and
deeper than even religion. To stipulate that one spoken language is to replace
another is easier said than done. Although Putonghua and Cantonese belong
to the same family, their mutual intelligibility is not much better than that
between Italian and Spanish. Under these circumstances, a much more
reasonable demand is to expect Hong Kong people to learn Putonghua as a
second spoken language, and to learn it well. And for a long time to come
(longer than a mere 50 years), there should be no intention of promoting
Putonghua as Hong Kong's only 'legal spoken language'.

People in Hong Kong have so far not exhibited any animosity towards
Putonghua. However, if Putonghua was pushed with too much haste, it might
result in prejudicial treatment against Cantonese (reminiscent of the unequal
treatment between English and Chinese languages as a whole before the 70's).
It will then be likely that the indigenous Cantonese speakers will have some
resentment towards Putonghua and consider it an imposition. If this happens,
it would be difficult for Putonghua to exercise its supra-dialectal functions, or
to assume a positive pan-Chinese role in Hong Kong.

During contacts between Hong Kong people and the mainlanders, Putonghua
will certainly have its role to play. Does this mean that such a necessity for
Putonghua is in conflict with the impression obtained from the reading of my
data? There is indeed such a possibility on the face of it. But from the
perspective of long-term effects, there is no doubt that the use of Cantonese
as the 'legal vernacular' will oblige mainlanders to learn the local vernacular
who come to Hong Kong for play or work. In the process of learning and
practising it, they will arrive at a much more solid understanding of the Hong
Kong situation. The confirmation of Cantonese as the 'legal vernacular' can
perhaps be compared to the installation of ramps on roads. The first
impression is that the ramps force the traffic to slow down. But they would
make things safer for all concerned. In the eyes of the Hong Kong people, any
mainlander who takes for granted that there is a privilege for Putonghua and
decides to take the trouble to learn Cantonese will not be very different from
the Englishman of the early colonial days who only expected others to adapt
to his language. Isn't the consequence clear enough? We only need to look at
the short 100 years of Hong Kong’s history to realise that to officially maintain Cantonese as Hong Kong’s ‘legal spoken language’ will have a cushioning effect. We cannot expect bureaucrats who are here for a short term to spend most of their time in a language centre. But those who are sent here for a longer period are best advised to undergo such a ‘linguistic baptism’. This is what has been revealed by the survey.

* The research reported in this article was sponsored by the French National Scientific Research Centre, whose support is gratefully acknowledged. I should also thank those friends and colleagues who have kindly helped me during this investigation in 1985 and 1986: Chan Kin-hung of Lui Ming Chai Lutheran College; Cheung Chan-kwok and Chau Cheung Wai-ping of Cognito College (Hong Kong & Kowloon); Chau Kee-cheung of the Carmel Alison Lam Foundation Secondary School; Fong Yee-wang of the School of Education, the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Helen Kwok and Lea Lau of the then Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of Hong Kong; Kau Yua College; Lai Po Secondary School; Pui Kiu Middle School; Sheng Kung Hui Lam Kau Mow Secondary School; Shin Chi-lam of St. John of Arc School; Szeto Wah; Yu Fong-ying, Duan Yue and Chin Chi-shung of the then Department of Languages, The City Polytechnic of Hong Kong; and Ip Kung Sau of the then Language Centre, University of Hong Kong.

References:
PART TWO:
EDUCATION LANGUAGE POLICY MAKING IN
BRITAIN AND HONG KONG
從兩份英國語言教育報告書看香港的語言政策

李行德

一個政府的教育部門，如果想提高學生的語言能力，認真地發展語言教育，有幾件基本的工作是必須做的。

首先，教育部門對語言教育的重要性，是否有一個全面徹底的認識。學生語言能力的發展，到底是怎樣的過程？學生的語言能力發展，對他們的認知發展，個性發展，和社會化過程，起著什麼作用？假如學生的語言能力，尤其是母語能力，發展不健全，會如何影響他們的思維模式和對世界的觀察和反應？會如何影響他們的社會認同和個人成長？獲得母語，是否只是掌握一種專業技能或一種生存的必要工具？還是語言裏有更加豐富的內容？針對以上問題，語言學和心理學家們提出過眾多的理論。這裡主要想指出，嚴格的語言教育改革，是無法迴避一個基本問題的。對這些問題的答案，直接影響到語言教育政策的深度，廣度和合理性。

教育部門對學生的語言能力和語言使用的現狀，也應有徹底的了解。就是說：我們的學生在不同的學習階段，他們的母語能力和第二語言能力（包括語言、語法、語義、詞彙、修飾等能力）達到什麼程度？各學校在聽、說、讀、寫方面，用什麼方法進行教學？學生每天花在各種課堂上，用到多長時間？不同學校課堂的使用語言（粵語、普通話、英語）比例如何？任課語言科目的老師，在語言專業方面的資歷如何？其中多少人參加過在職進修課程？要回答這些問題，取得可靠的資料，需要詳細的調查研究。缺乏對現況的基本認識，很可能會看到問題的表面，提出改革的方向。

第三點要求，就是教育當局有責任將語言教育和語言獲得（Language Acquisition）的最新有關研究訊息，準確地介紹給教育界的同仁。語言教育和語言獲得是近三十年來發展很快的領域，其中積累了大量經驗和發現。向教育界介紹新鮮的研究成果，用來推進語言教育事業，這也是改革應當做到的。
香港語言教育論文集

政府對母語教學的態度

香港的教育部門，是否對中文教育的發展未到十分關注。有沒有用一長遠通盤的計劃？從1980年的“政府第四次報告”，（以下簡稱報告書），可見端倪。報告書在語言教育上提出積極性的改變（如語言分流計劃），但涉及中文教育的實質建議是不多的，只限於兩個方面：

（a）重申1989年“工作小組報告書”中的一些觀點，提出：

(i) “中文作為授課語言的價值卻被人低估了。社會人士對中文運用的必要性認知為不足。”（6.3.5）

(ii) “至於中文水準方面，寫作的技巧可能有輕微退步，但社會人士反而不甚關注。”（6.3.4）

(iii) “鑑於中小學的實際情況，小學應該加強使用中文作為授課語言。”（6.3.5）

（b）報告書提出，在小六和中三對學生的英文成績進行評估的時候，也評估他們的中文能力。“...有必要進行兩項評估：一項是評估學生的英文水準；而另一項是評估學生使用中文來處理資料和身體學習的能力。兩項評估可兼並下，可以顯示學生是否有運用母語處理資料的水準，然後把這種能力轉移到應用英文方面。”（6.4.19 : 6.5.1）

必須指出，報告書把中文只作授課語言，當作一種運用技巧，是極其歧視華語的看法。把母語限制在工具、技能的層次，而忽視母語對學生思維發展、社會認同和個人成長方面的重要影響。報告書對中文水準的關注，在於缺乏深入調查的情況下作出的模棱的判斷。其對未來發展的建議，即保留小六和中三學生的中文能力，主要是為了配合分流建議，而不是為了迎合中文教育本身發展目標。中文水準的評估測試，只是為了保證英文教育的順滑的發展。

語言教育政策

政府對中文教育的重視是否足夠？這個問題似乎不容易回答。誠然，報告書有關語言問題的部份，並非只討論如何提高英語能力，而且也論及中文水準的問題。過去數年，政府也採取了一些措施，鼓勵在教室使用中文，例如強化用中文作教學語言的校本，增加一位中文科主導教師，為中學生開辦中文輔助能力課程；將普通話列為小學及初中的選修科目；鼓勵出版中文課本等。（6.2.2）

應該說，這些都對促進中文教育的積極推動。

臺灣政府在這方面的工作是否足夠，視乎母語教育的目標是什麼和壟斷的範圍多寡。如果母語教育的目標取得較低，藍圈變得窄；那麼當然中文教育的現狀還可以接受。反之，如果我們承認，母語除了作為傳播工具外，還有許多其他方面的功能，母語能力的發展就顯得不那麼簡單，這樣的看法，本港應納母語教育。則應更理論化、專業化、科學化，需要更豐富的想象力。


選擇這兩份報告書，一是因為香港教育體系，許多方面的貢獻英國教育，另有一部分有關教育的母語教育問題。對當有何一定的現實意義。二是因為英語的語言教育研究，不管在理論建設還是在實質調查方面，都有相當高的水準。報告書的調查範圍、方法以及委員會的組成和運作，也有不少可以借鏡的地方。其中，《Boulton》報告書，尤其在方面，影響很大，從中可看到一個負責任的教育諮詢委員會，在検討母語教育時，是如何仔細評價，高瞻遠矚。

布洛克報告書

英國教育部在1972年感到有全面檢討語言教育問題的必要，是因為1968 - 72年之間发表了幾份關於母語能力調查的報告，顯示全國的語

文水平有下降的趨勢。例如 Gardner （1968）的研究指出，離校學生當中有四分之一在實際語言使用上與文盲無異（見 Hawkins 1984: 15）。此外又發現，不同家庭背景的閱讀能力，反映了嚴重的階層分化。
Danie et al. (1972) 的數字顯示，來自行政人員家庭的七歲小孩，只有十二分之十一閱讀能力偏低。但來自非技術性工人家庭的同齡學童中，則有一半閱讀能力偏低（見表 22）。由此一種社會階層之間的差距隨學生年齡而擴大，上述的閱讀調查報告，加上大學院校的老師及社會上的當事者普通認為，為學生的語文水準低，不如數學，促使教育部成立這個委員會（見表 3-4）。

當時的教育大臣譚耀宗夫人（譚耀宗）在 1972 年 6 月委任了有關委員，由牛津大學教授、著名歷史學家 Alain Bullock 爲主席，委員共 22 人，包括語言學/教育學專家、中小學代表、政府和地方教育廳代表、傳媒人士/出版界代表，及秘書人員等（見表 3-4）。委員會的主要任務，是針對學校的情況來檢討（i）教授語文使用的各種方法，包括閱讀、說、寫；(ii) 現行的做法應如何改進；職業訓練和在職訓練的關係。為了解學校的現況，委員會首先做了一個調查，對 141 所小學和 322 中學做了同調，而調查了四個年齡組（6 歲、9 歲、12 歲和 14 歲）的學校的活動。內容涉及學校的組織和活動情況，例如教師學生比例、師資在職訓練、學校的閱讀教學法，對閱讀有困難的學生所提供的幫助等。此外，寢要求每個班的教師針對自己班上一個具代表性的學生，詳細報告這個學生在指定一週內的語文學習活動，例如在詩歌、閱讀、戲劇、教師個人等，拼寫、拼字、表格及字典的使用、閱讀理解等各種活動（見表 339-377：445-502）。

除了通過調查收集資料以外，委員會還取得了 94 個機構和 221 個各界人士提供的書面資料（written evidence），並訪問了 100 多位中小學、21 地區辦學點，及 7 所閱讀/語言中心，就語言學習的需要及政策，其中多位委員曾到訪了美國 3 個城市，訪問了 13 個學校，訪問了 16 個有關專家人士，歷時兩年，在這段期間，委員會進行了 54 次全的會議，報告書於 1974 年 9 月完成，翌年 2 月公佈（見表 3-3）。

報告書報告內容達 689 頁，分 10 部份，第 6 章提出 338 個結論和建議，其中包括 17 項主要建議，從全書 26 章的書面可見調查的範圍。

第一部份：態度和標準，對英語教學的態度（第 1 章）；閱讀水準（第 2 章）；語文評核（第 3 章）。
香港語言教育論文集

語音教育政策

（頁：188）

當語言不僅是傳達訊息的工具，它作為一個抽象的符號系統，還讓我們從個別經驗歸納概括到一般原則；它讓我們向自己呈現世界的語言結構更在其中隱藏著向人類發動一個秩序（頁：47-50）。因此報告中提到語言與學習時，反映強調先使用母語並說明自己的個人意見。看法是遠還不夠的。學生應該懂得如何運用母語來探求概念，提出假設，給予邏輯的解釋說明等。語言老師應該有責任提高學生認識語文的能力，鼓勵學生提出。並提示錯誤，培養富有想像力。多元化的事情習慣，不滿足於單一解說（頁：67：145）。

此外，學生也應拓展母語的使用領域，學會如何因不同社會情境、不同聽者而調整自己的語言（頁：8）。

多處指出。學童的語言發展，並不是在學校後才開始的，而是貫徹整個學前期成長階段。因此報告書非常強調幼兒時期的語言發展，及父母在其中的關鍵作用，用了不少篇幅說明為什麼父母與子女的積極對話，能幫助子女的語言發展（頁：54-63）。今天在校的學生未來當父母，如果他們從學校裡吸收了一些有關語言和語言獲得的基本知識，會影響他們日後對子女的語言教育方法。從提高民國國语文水平來看，理應學生了

解語言。假如學生當中，出自低收入家庭，父母忙於生計沒有在學前

教育提供一個豐富的語言環境，學生就應該採取有效辦法，彌補這方面的不足。這方面，教師助理（teacher aide）能發揮顯著作用（頁：55-53：Hamblin 1984：29-51）。

語言的重要性，超越各個學習階段，也超越學科。從這個觀點出

看，並非僅僅是語言的語言使用問題，也提出應該重視其他科目的語言

運用，突出跨學科語言教學（language across the curriculum）這個概念。

研究資料的準確性和技術性

第二，報告書給人一個很深刻的印象，就是對報告資料中的技術

細節，力求準確無誤。例如，有關閱讀教學法，它提出的觀點是：“在不

存在任何一個方法、媒介、角度或哲學，可以解釋人們學習閱讀的過程”（頁：xxi：77）。

報告書沒有刻意研究之名，呈現一個概念的

形象，對於一些看似簡單而理論上站不住腳的結論，特別是某些

具體地討論技術性的細節，存有很清晰的解說：“我們相信，改革的必要

條件，是承認沒有簡單的秘方，更沒有什麼能全部取代在起作用的因素，
因此我們採取了這樣的方法。在若干地方加入相當多的技術性細節，我們認為這些描述對此類數字的質量是必要的。報告書的讀者對象很廣泛，我們首先考慮到的，就是學校的老師。不管這份報告能達到什麼，我們認為它的首要功能是作為給老師的一種支持（盧：1111）。

指出專家目前沒有將意譯，並不表示專家的態度或對教學實踐沒有指導意義。例如引用實踐語言學 60 年代一個重大的發現：如為何在一些受過高教育的學生之間的這種做法，不會隨便解作 put a, the, 然後再一起譯為 pat，這種方法有很大的問題。這樣在於音節 p / t 之間的物理聲學特點隨著前後元音產生很大的變化。因此在 pat 裡的物理聲學特點和 p / t 在 put 裡的就完全不同。甚至可以說，在不同環境裡出現的 p / t 並沒有一定的物理特徵。既然上述結果違反了音學的基本規律，自然不值得推敲。血還詳細地論述，成功的閱讀教學法必須具備哪些因素（盧：85-86）。

委員會的組成和諮詢方法

血的第三個特點是：血委員會專家組，諮詢方法是先做調查，後作結論。根據這種全面的專家諮詢報告，執行官員和教授們工作的報告。血的專家組包括語言學和語言教育學的專家十人，其中教授的人數不足三分之一；其餘是政府機關、學校、研究機構的代表和諮詢委員。由於專家的意見很不一樣，所以專家們在專家之間的意見很不一致，血委員會的專家們在專家組的過程中，委員們內部討論民主，力求反映社會各階層的看法，對社會下層的語言發展給予特殊的關注。這些都是值得參考的。

《京門報告書》(The Kingman Report 1988)

如果說在英國 70 年代最重要的語言教育報告書的話，1988 年發表的《京門報告書》(簡稱京)。則是 80 年代最重要的語言教育報告書。這個報告書的發布時，血的專家們發現，語言教育的改革應當由專家們共同研究，並在專家們的指導下，由專家組的專家們向政府和社會提出建議。血的專家們指出，語言教育的改革必須要專家們共同研究，並在專家們的指導下，由專家組的專家們向政府和社會提出建議。血的專家們指出，語言教育的改革必須要專家們共同研究，並在專家們的指導下，由專家組的專家們向政府和社會提出建議。
香港語文教育論文集

3）

這兩年來，教授語文知識似乎又變得並不是必要的了，在這方面並
沒有新意或進展的方向。

言語委員會成立的招因，可以追溯到香港政府於 80 年代年一個問
就是逐漸把改革重點放在課程的質量和一致性（coherence）上。為此，
語文委員會（Her Majesty's Inspectorate，HM）發佈了幾份報告（HM
1984a），其中包括一份報告，建議讓學生了解語言結構及語義表述的各種方
式，使他們能掌握一套語義來討論語言，而且在使用語言時能夠較高的反
省性（awareness）（見 3）（HM 1984a）。這個建議，在中小學引起極
大的爭議，但最終還是獲得了支持。在 1980 年，又有一份報告（HM 1986）
調查試圖了解教員的的有意義，看語段對學生的語文知識和語言
發展到底應該了解多少、有哪些看法。在這個問題上，教育界分歧很大。有一
個未被注意到的看法，就是大家都拒絕接受語義分析，但又著，教授並不反對討
論如何教授語義知識，最終達成一個課程方案（見 3）。在這種情況
下，成立一個委員會探討有關問題，讓公眾的注意力集中在這方面將，將
有利於提高共識，言語委員會因而產生。

言語委員會成立於 1987 年初，調查時一年。報告書於 1988 年 3 月
公佈，主席是道生，是布列斯 màu 大學校長。語文委員會是一個共有 18 名委員，
包括語文學家、文學、教育學專家、語文及地方
教育管理代表，以及出版業、出版業代表。其他為政府及教育官員
（見 75-6）。

委員會從各級人士和機構收到了 233 份書面和口頭資料，並訪問了
18 所中學、14 所小學和 6 所幼兒園（見 1）。委員會的三大任務
是：(a) 提出一箇分析語文知識，書面語言的模式，以便為基礎將委員會
教授的語文知識如何運作；(b) 提出一套指導原則，讓老師們在這種
情境下應該如何教授語言的語文知識，以提高學生的語文意識
（Language Awareness）；(c) 就學生需要語文知識的語文運用知識，提出
一般性的建議，並指出學生在 7、11 及及 14 至 16 歲階段應該學到的語文
教學內容（見 73）。

以下介紹言語報告書的內容要點。

京門報告書的內容和建議

言語的發展範圍很廣，範圍不一，全書只 99 頁，分六章，第一
章：普通介紹；第二章：語文知識（knowlegde about language）的重要
性；第三章：語言模式；第四章：老師和學生—語言模式的應用；第五
章：學生應有的語文教育權利和應達到的語文水平。結論：第六章：書評
參考— 論述和建議。

京門提出的建議，可以分三方面介紹。

(a) 僱用和報告書精神，強調語文教育

首先，在重申 1975 年在的一些建議，非針對語文的不足，加上
新的要求，例如，京門的建議，中學與政府與語文有關的科題（包括英
語、古代外語、現代外語）應該統一訂一個報告書政策。每期中學
都應該有一個語言範圍，協調語文工作，並就語文工作和語言知識問
題提供意見，要求所有中學委員會主持一個言語通報會，超過一半的時
間教授語文知識（見 69）。展望未來語文師資的水平，京門報告書
建議在 2025 年，專精英語教學的老師，必須精通英語及語文偶
的課程應包括古代及當代語文的模式和使用。

(b) 提出語言模式

報告書建議之二，是提出一個語言模式，用作語文教學和書評培
訓的基礎（見 90）。模式分四個部份，第一部份：英語的形式、分
語語、語言、語言的模式、村語及句子結構、語文結構等五種討論，第
二部份分上下兩節，上節說明語言記錄（communication）的理論，強
調讀寫的模式（上段主，語言的學科（reproduction），及如何編纂語言在特定時空的語文意義，第三部份
為語言獲得和發展（acquisition），第四部份關於語言的歷史演變
和地域差異。
語言能力評估

語言能力評估，對語言能力的評估有關係。它密切考慮到一系列指標，包括"7"、"11"和"16"歲的學童，在語言運用和語言知識兩方面，應當達到什麼水準。並提出英國運用能力以全國性的公開測試為基礎，而語言知識水平的評估，則由特殊學校教師負貴。這些語言能力指標，後來發展成為全國性的評估，列入全國英文課程（English in the National Curriculum）。

語言知識的重要性

語言知識的重要性，對語言知識的重視，在二十、三十年代有一種流行的觀念，認為語言知識的最重要的，只能通過多種語言來培養。對語言知識的表現形式可以有無所知、有識別、有認識，有分析，而這種知識的表現形式可以有多種，沒有知識，它表現於語言知識，就是讓學生知道語言知識，而不表現於語言知識，是因為學生對語言知識缺乏信心（堂：三：三：四）。這種認識，語言教學必然涉及語言知識的討論。少於語言知識的，語言學習會變得緩慢，很少溝通，語言知識，對那些不需要語言知識的學生有利（堂：三：三：四）。這種認識，完全有可能對語言知識和語言運用，給出一個容易理解而又能站住腳的理論，要求所有老師學習。因此提出報告書內的語言模式（堂：三：三：三）。

為了論證語言知識的重要性，再研究語言學的語言發展為甚麼影響他們的智力發展、美感發展和社會認同。並配合所提出的語言模式，以具體事實說明語言知識為甚麼有助於提高語言能力。
香港語言教育論文集

在朗讀方面，7 歲的兒童應能朗誦一段由簡單句組成的文本。並顯示對內容的理解。11 歲的學生，應能運用語言來顯示他們對內容的理解。16 歲的學生，應能運用適當的語音、語調和停頓。至於與閱讀有關的語言知識，7 歲小孩應能理解文章的句子和篇章之間的主要對應關係。11 歲的學生應了解英語中語調變化的意義和句子之間的主要對應關係。18 歲學生必須了解修飾，重音和語調如何影響語法。

在寫作方面，7 歲學生應能寫簡單句子，而且能調整句子長度，能運用句號、逗號、大寫和問與答之間的空間。使用適當的符號。11 歲學生應能寫清楚文章和重要標點符號（句號、逗號、問號、引號）以及標點和對話的標記。能夠適當使用記録的格式，而且能发现自己或者他人的錯誤；能正確使用複雜句法來表達複雜的意義關係，能寫出組織嚴密的篇章段落。16 歲學生，要求能按不同的目的和情境使用多樣化的詞法和句法結構；能使用不同正式或熟悉的話語。

與寫作有關的語言知識，要求7 歲學生了解句法、大寫和句子界限的關係；了解句子成分的基本詞序。11 歲學生應能掌握簡單句和複句的主要構造詞語。陳述句一般需要有一個主語，必須了解主語和主要動詞在句中的功能。由語句的動詞和副詞做構造，能使句法變得更清楚；能以簡單句、並列句、複雜句表達不同的語氣關係。16 歲的學生對語言本身有更深人的認識，對下列方面應有基本了解：用語法手段表達已知訊息和未知訊息；怎麼用複句結構表達意思、因果、連接關係；不同類型語言（genre）的形式特點；字彙和句子的意義和相互關係；不同的地景因素（時間、主體、態度）如何影響語言的使用等。

在溝通方面，要求7 歲學童能進行以下語言活動：說/聽故事、講/聽故事、提問/回答問題、解釋事物並說明其解釋的合理性。3 歲需要想象和合作的遊戲、分享經驗。11 歲的小孩應該講故事、解說故事、描述情境和情緒。語言的特性和角色，提出證明。16 歲學生，說話聆聽能力應包括以下範圍，而且能因情況變化而調整自己的語言。至於這方面語言知識，7 歲小孩應能理解，說話是通信用生活中正常，自然而且必需的活動，每個學生都要在這種活動中貢獻一份力量。11 歲小孩應理解，如果英語不同的學生是第二語語的話，那麼那些同學已經掌握了另一個跟英語同樣發達的語言。

利用這種來評估學生，一方面按照指標性質把各指標分成幾個大類，然後每個指標（attainment target）各自為自己程度（level），這樣就對學生的能力有一個較為詳細的層次劃分。這種評估讓老師了解學生的能力輪廓（profile），有利於教學（見 Nattal 1988）。

血液克報告書、克立門報告書和
「教統會第四號報告書」之比較

上面介紹的兩份英國語言教育報告書，儘管質性一樣，教育界對它們的反應也不同。因為只有很有限的書籍出版，兩份報告書都認為：語言是每一個公民貴重的財富，語言教育是優先考慮的教育項目。兩份報告書都強調，要建立語言教育的基礎，不宜把以技術的名義推卸於眾，並詳細地加以闡述，這報告書還提出一些有價值的調查基礎，或者有它的理論根據，報告書的每一章都有詳細的參考書目，以便讀者引證。報告書內容有詳細的報導，也能附錄正式形式，表示保留或改進。

從幾個方面回顧來看香港的「教統會第四號報告書」，就會感到它是對語言教育的指導、政府教育部門和教育諮詢團體所做出的努力實在太少了。表面上看，教統會的許多運作程序，基本上跟隨英國的模式；在這報告書的第二分報告書中，引用語言教育的研究成果，提議進一步研究；徵求各界意見，最後訂出政策。這些報告書顯示了現有的語言教育的に関する影響，特別是在中英文教學應取得一致性，反映了督學科語文教學（language across the curriculum）的構想；語言文教的學科目標（報告書第二章）則是詳述attainment target這種評估概念，也有積極的意義。但仔細分析之下，會發現有很根本的差異。

首先得指出，血和血是關於母語教育的報告書，強調母語發展與學習的意義發展、社會認同、美感發展等多方面的密切關係。兩份報告書都明確指出，語言不只為了溝通，而且也是認識世界、呈現世界的認知工具。反之，兩份報告書都因重視香港教會的第二語（英語），而把他們的母語（中文）局限在技能（skill）的平面上。頂多在教授語言的範疇來討論母語。這顯然是本末倒置，反映政府一直無視母語教育的價值。

第二，教統會報告書的專業性較強，血和血的主体，都是有學術地位的專家，一位是歷史學家，另一位是統計學家，教統會的主席（首先是利國偉，然後是花孫麗麗）都不是學者。血和血報告書，語言學、教學學
香港語言教育論文集

方而的專家佔三分之一到四分之一之間。而教學法只有語言學、中文或英文方面學者；只有一個教學法專家，佔比例的十分之一。但有一個成員是語言學和語言教育方而的原創性研究（見表一）。

表一：政府委員會、立法委員會和香港政府的成員組成

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語言教育政策

研究基礎。在公開的信件下，報告書揭露了一些有關的語言資料。在Annex 6A的。但這些資料並沒有公開發表的研究，只是一個研究列舉理論

表一：立法會委員會和香港政府的成員組成

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香港语言教育论文集

1. 现代语言教育的模式，如做法。同语上与多语部分语言的模式（除香港粤语）有相当差异，因此可以分析，学生的“母语发展”并不完全等同“中文能力”的发展。本文将就这种语言模式与语言模式之间的差异不详。有关问题请参阅附录一。

2. 香港教育局 1989 年 5 月发表“检讨提高语文能力及操行工作小组报告书”，（下简称“工作小组报告书”）1989年 11 月发表“教育局第四号报告书”

3. “工作小组报告书”1.5.2.2 說，“教育局研究中一些與中文科教学有关的教育学者取得一些有关资料，作为列舉中文水平的佐证。但所用的资料，基本上是公会考试的百分比成绩，對語言能力是否存在，在某些方面有争议，提供的资料或表列如下：於“一切有关资料，除了公开考试成绩外，別的资料则未予披露。

4. 中文文法便用作，文笔與英文原著相同。

5. 这份报告书的作者为：K. Garder (1968); K. Sart & B. Velt (1972); R. Davis, N. Butler, H. Goldstein (1972); J. Wish, J. H. White (1972).

6. 基教學者出版的著作有：Alan Bullock 的著作“Elisir: a study in tyranny”是欧洲現代史的經典之作。

7. 撰写报告书者中，有华文教师、学者、以及学生，沃克著的著作“Bullock Pit One”、“Times Educational Supplement”和“Times Higher Educational Supplement”在 1975.2.21 的报告，TBS 以論文篇幅載於 1975.2.21 的建議。

8. TBS 1975.2.21 報告了全港教师工会、全港教师协会、英国教師协会等代表對爸的


10. Times Educational Supplement (TES) 1975.2.21  een 1975.2.21。1975.2.20 也可參看 Reading Education 1975.2.21 的報告，如 J. Stetson “Bullock Report: effect and response, from an educational point of view”;

11. 英語委員會成員之一是中學校長 M. Marland。他後來寫了一本書：進一步闡述“跨学科的語文教學”這個構想。見 M. Marland (1977)。

12. 原文是“there is no one method, medium, approach, device or philosophy that holds the key to the process of learning to read” TES 1975.2.21

13. 有關語言教育的其他建議，可參看 P. Liebesman (1977-116),

14. 這篇有關閱讀過程的章節，由國語教授的 J. Merritt 操刀。語言學習的章節，由國語教授的 J. Britten 起草。語言和閱讀障礙部分，由 V. Bach 負責。中學的部份由中學校長 M. Marland 經幡。見 TES 1975.2.21 的報告。

15. TES 1975.2.20 “Bullock Pit One”, p. 20.

16. 如題，“建議每週每個地方教師應設立一個專業的語文顧問。在 1981 年，只有一半的教師教學到課，及照有

17. 有人估計，20% 的士官長，約有 8 個月電力工作才能實現這些目標，而只需更少時間。剩下的 8% 基本上不需要什麼經費

18. 見 The Association of Commonwealth Universities (1968)。

19. 有關語言水平指標的建議，為另一個探討英語課程的教授提出了基礎。這個工作小組由里茲特大學教授 Brian Cox 領導，1989年發表了 English for Lads 5 to 16, Dept. of Education and Science, NMMO。在這基礎上，教授在 1990 年公佈了 English in the National Curriculum

20. 例如，有人提議，這強調的語文知識並無新意。事實上老師已從傳統這種知


Education Department, Hong Kong. (1989). Report of the working group set up to review language improvement measures. Hong Kong: Education Department.


從殖民政策看香港教學語言問題

導言

香港在經歷近一百五十多年的殖民統治後，將於一九九七年回歸中國，成為中國政府轄下的一個特別行政區。在今天殖民統治快要結束時，我們似乎有必要總結一下過去的歷史，以展望未來。

在過去的半個世紀中，香港在多方面都有長足的發展，其中當然包括教育。這有賴香港政府一向不遺餘力地鼓勵教育發展的努力。當然，這並非表示香港的教育已經十分完美；相反，香港有不少教育問題急待解決，而中學教學語言正是其中極具爭議的問題之一。爭議的焦點主要是在中學應採用英語教育還是母語教育。由於香港目前有九成學生採用英語教育，而政府一向又不願意積極扶持母語教育，以致不少人都認為香港政府重英輕中。

究竟重視英語而忽視當地母語的政策，是香港政府的獨特表現，還是所有英國殖民地的普遍現象？筆者認為在探討香港任何政策時，都不能將香港的問題獨立於其他英語殖民地之外。因為香港的政策包括語言政策，與其他英國殖民地一樣，深受英國整體殖民政策影響。因此，本文在探討香港教學語言問題時，會從英國整體殖民政策的架構出發。

首先，筆者將概述回顧香港語言政策的早期歷史及其發展，並指出其與英國整體殖民政策的相同之處；接著，本文會詳細分析教育統籌委員會
在他們的報告中提出了兩個重要的政策，並要證明這兩個計劃的內容並非如一些人認為的那麼全面面向教育，或是只見到殖民政策的一貫性。在保護主義精神的影響下，他們提出的方式完全符合殖民政策的全部原則，但他們的政策會將殖民教育與政府在教育政策時會面對的困難。

語文政策的早期歷史

在詳細探討香港語文政策前，讓我們先了解一下英國殖民政策對英語教育及母語教育的基本立場。

有可避免，任何一個外國統治者在征服蘭地，總會把本土的語言及制度移諸於受統治的人民身上。例如英國殖民者喜歡把英式教育帶到他們的蘭地，這樣做除了可以把宗主國的優良傳統發揮光大外，也是殖民者在統治初期的唯一策略。試想殖民者在建立政權初期，百廢待興，政府、建設、治安等都需處理，那有閒暇建立一個符合當地社會實際情況的新教育制度呢？卑詩之政府應將殖民者速達的一套——英式教育，完完全全地搬過去使用（Cowan 1964: 172），況且，殖民者亦急於訓練一班掌握英語的本地人士作為統治者及被統治者之間的橋樑，以確保殖民政府順利運作。

故此，在英屬殖民地裡，英式教育成為初期教育制度中一個極為重要的學校，唯一值得研究的，只是母語教育在這個既定模式中可以佔的份額。

而以英語教育為主導的系統中，母語教育存在的原因絕不是因為沒有機會接受英語教育，而是為了擴大殖民地對其本身文化的認同，而非純粹出於實用主義的考慮。

英國對其殖民地的教育發展一向十分重視，發展教育不單包括培養一班精英分子，包括提供一定程度（主要指小學程度）的全民教育。英國殖民地大臣 Oliver Stanley 在一九三二年曾說過：“一個民主制度若要成功，不但領導人需要有領導才能，被領導的人也要懂得適當的作出反應。……要達到這一點，發展小學教育是必須的。”（見 Porter et al. 1939: 60 引述）

但透過殖民地專家對英語課程、教育行政的過程，我們不止看到殖民政策在實際操作中的不足，亦看到殖民政策在實際操作中的不足。我們的歷史研究場景均被殖民者所編造的，我們所述的歷史更多是殖民者所編造的歷史，我們所述的歷史更多是殖民者所編造的歷史，我們所述的歷史更多是殖民者所編造的歷史。
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殖民地及教學語言

殖民地人民對政府英語教育政策態度的轉向，正好說明實際社會環境比政府政策更有效地影響人們對語言的態度。這與 Fuster 提出的論點不謀而合：在研究非洲國家加納的教育發展後總結說，“要研究一個地方的教育發展，關鍵不在於官方表決的政策，而是必須著眼於實際的社會環境”（Fuster 1968: 103）。

香港的語文教育發展，似乎也脫離不了這個情形，所以本文討論香港政府的語文政策時，也會說明每一時期的社會形勢。

正如英國其他殖民地的情況一樣，當殖民地人民發現接受英語教育可以提高其社會地位後，他們都希望學習英語，而為配合學生普遍對英語教育的需要，有接近九成的中學生都採用英語教學。由於早期中學教育未普及，小學生必須參加“開小學”，因語言的差異而有人可以入學，因為學生母語有保障，所以即使部分中學生採用英語教學，學生在學習上並沒有太大困難。

一種“精英政策”在七十年代前期一直運作得十分順利，但自一九七八年起實施九年免費教育後，問題就開始出現。由於所有學生都必須接受高等教育，而會考的數字也超過了兩個 CFL 以上的中學生，結果不少學生在學習上出現困難，例如不懂英文教科書，或聽不懂老師以英語講解。

面對學生面對困難及英語水準低的偏應選擇以英語為學習工具的種種問題，香港政府當時的解決方法是完全按照上面提出的幾項原則行事，從政策的立場，英語教育永遠是主導，但又必須把英語與普通話的教育有學生本科生上。事實上，也明白英語教育對一般學生更合適，所以她也不會反對一些學校採用普通話教學。立場反映於政策上就成為政府一貫對中文政策既不反對，又不鼓勵的“兩樣不干不賭”政策。

期間雖然有不少政黨團體要求政府在初中階段實施全面母語教育，以解決學生不問有無能力是否都一路躲避英文中學的問題，但政府始終沒有積極行動。

政府的解決辦法及其不足

政府對教學語言的處置政策，一直維持到一九八四年及一九八六年的不同報告書才有所改變。這兩份報告書通過不同政策，鼓勵中學採用母語教學，希望藉此減少學生因使用外語學習而要面對的困難。這兩份報告書提出後，一度引起社會人士對教學語言問題的熱烈討論，不少人產生疑問，這些香港政府要安排六年內，一地兩書兩個有關教學語言的計劃，兩者內容又是否有關連？再者，它們提出的政策又是否可以解決問題？

若我們仔細比較以上兩者，將發現當中有不少相同之處：其中最明顯的是：兩者雖然都鼓勵部份中學採用母語教學，但兩者都沒有提倡全面母語教育，而只是建議將一部分學校從英文學科轉為中文學校而已。至於如何界定這些學校應該是中文学校，四份報告書隻提出報告書有更清晰的指示：報告書建議是將學生分流。一般來說，透過試驗分辨哪些學生可以以英語學習，哪些學生不能以母語學習，若學校獲取的支持者於後者，該校校長亦當然可以改為中文學校。

可以說，一號及四號報告書的目標均在保留英語教學課時，增加中文授課的學校之比率，而四號報告書更著重於如何將學生分流的技術問題，好使其目標更易達成。

雖然兩份報告書都保留兩個教學語言而非鼓勵全面母語教育，但四號報告書在介紹其建議的未來改革架構時，卻聲稱“鼓勵各中學採用中文作為教學語言”（教 1990 : 6.4.1）乃是改革的基本原則。因此，不少教職員團體，如教育界，都希望報告書的語言計劃能為校園全面母語教育的第一步。“其目的，是為了條件，最終達到全面母語教育的今後”。(教 1991 : 3.1) 但在這種狀況下，如資源的困難及其他困難，如資源的困難及其他困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難，如資源的困難。
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呈現虛假，究竟誰是誰非？這新政策到底意味著甚麼？是政府終於承認母語教育在教學上的優點，還是像一些人說的，是政策始終擺脫不了殖民主義意識的色彩？

根據本文論點，香港的語文政策與英國其他殖民地一樣，深受英國殖民政策影響。就是一個政策及報告書所提出的鼓勵母語教育的新趨向——一個似乎與殖民地傳統不同的路徑，其實不過是政策中的一個環節，並沒有廢除殖民政策的基本原則。

換句話說，一號及四號報告書的改革，並不全基於政府對母語教育有創新的看法，但政府的確可以藉著鼓勵部份學校使用母語教育解決一些其他的教育問題，例如一號報告書所謂：“實施初級全民教育後，傳統上英文中文使用英文，而中文學校使用中文的界限漸趨模糊，兩種學校實際在不同程度同時使用兩種教學語言”（7.4.3.5.3）。為改變這種混亂情況，一號報告書建議鼓勵部分中文學校採用母語教學，而其估計的八成中小學會在初中全面以中文授課。可惜，一號報告書推出後，成效並未如預料的那樣好。

有鑑於此，政府於一九九零年推出四號報告書，希望可以完成一號報告書沒有完成的任務。根據四號報告書估計，到二零零零年，約有七成中文學校必修母語教學，以配合學生的真正需要。換句話說，兩份報告書都希望通過政策，使大部份學校從英文中文轉為中文教學。究竟這個政策能否成功？

根據前文分析，政府目前學生—語言選擇英文中介的言語現象，並不是直接由政策引起，而是因為社會經濟發展，包括對母語人才的需求，及香港人一種語言教育的態度。這現象需要社會需求而不是政策改變所影響，所以政策現在能否透過政策改變學生對英語教育的態度，還是值得懷疑的。

這種希望以制度內的改革去改變政策外的問題，其實末了在英國殖民歷史中並不罕見，例如在非洲，殖民地官員也曾利用制度上的改革，試圖改變一種殖民教育問題引起的社會現象。

非洲的殖民地教育政策，基本上與英國其他殖民地的教育政策無異，一切都是以英語教育制度為主導：教學語言是英語。課本也是以母語為基礎本身使用的課本而編制的，主要講授英語，宗教及人際科學。結果導致學生內容及風格完全脫離非洲國家本身的文化背景及實際需要，但由於受制於英語教育

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是進入政府部門或獲得其他白領工作的唯一途徑，年青人都趨之若鶩；更因為提供西方教育的學校設置在城市裡，不少人因此選離農村到城市入學，最後引致不少農村人口流失，勞務工作後繼無人。

面對這種情況，殖民地終於決定成立委員會以開創一套適合非洲特色的課程。一九六二年發表的 Phelphs-Sikes 報告書中強調：“殖民地應配合當地人民的精神及傳統……”及應加強教育及傳統工業及促進社會的進步…並應加強人民對其傳統的責任感”（見 Passer 1966：160 引述）。根據報告書的精神，殖民地的官員設計了一套新的課程，一般稱為 “配合教育”。這課程加強了實用的農業科目，特別是因此可以增加學生對農村的歸屬感，從而減少人口流失。

可惜的是，這計劃並沒有考慮到殖民地的教育目標，而且忽略了個人的教育目標。從社會層面看， “配合教育” 似乎可以產生穩定農村及整體經濟的作用，但從個人層面看， “配合教育” 會限制他們的發展，並培養他們符合殖民社會的唯一通路。留在農村意義意義從工作及生活質素，顯而易見，非洲人民根本不會接受這種被认为是不等的教育。果然，不少學校在政策的壓力下放棄了新的實用課程而恢復過去書面書本的文科教學。在荷蘭，更有滋長私立學校與政府採用“配合教育”的學校對峙。

顯然地，殖民地政府推出的教育改革因與社會實際情況相距甚遠，是注定失敗的。有學者分析 “配合教育” 失敗的原因，是政府的設計者及接收人對教育的目標及價值有着嚴重的分歧。

非洲的 “配合教育” 似乎與一號及四號報告書所提出的語文計劃有異曲同工之處；非洲殖民地人民接受實用課程，改變西方教育；而香港則鼓勵人民接受中華教育，放棄英語教學。很可惜，政府沒有以非洲的失敗例子為警，仍希望通過香港式的 “配合教育” 解決社會問題而產生的問題。但在社會上英語的客觀條件未見改變，學生對英語教育的需求亦未見改變，所以此無非是非洲的實用課程，這是香港的英語教學，雖會被殖民地人民視為剝奪他們升學機會的劣等教育而不能被接受。

四號報告書與 “非殖民化” 的關係

香港政府，作為一個英國殖民政府，為貫徹殖民教育政策以英語為主導的精神，拒絕鼓勵本母語教育而堅持保留小部份英語學校，是可以理解的；就是殖民制度要完結時，政府仍如此積極地推動四號報告書。
並在費費資助下設計分流語文計劃，以確保小部份英文中學可以繼續收容寄宿生的優質學校。這也不足為怪，事實上，這種做法在其他英國殖民地歷史中是有先例可循的。從其他前英國殖民地的交流中可以見到，英屬殖民者在撤離前，還會保留一些代表宗主國文化及傳統的制度，例如英語教育或三年制大學等，希望這樣可以繼續在當地發揮一定程度的影響力。

例如在英國快要撤出中東前，英國的東南亞（官方）委員會於一九五九年曾向英國政府提出，為了確保留在英國的中東石油採集者，英国必須在該地區保持影響力，要達到這個目標，英國政府必須採取多方面行動，其中在教育方面，可以考慮“提供教育或訓練機會給部分當地政府僱用英國人當老師”……設立美國學校，例如計劃在黎巴嫩興建的一所，以吸引北非阿拉伯國家的未來領導人，這樣做可能僅在未來十至十五年間英國在當地享有相當影響力”（見Porter et al 1980：390-391 引述）。

Dawkins在研究英國與非洲殖民地時也提出同樣理論，“英國政府希望在獨立國家（指前英國殖民地）內社會及文化態度可以盡量保留英國的模式”……故殖民地通過设立精英教育，培養受英國教育的專業人士以及鼓勵更多學者到英國進行學術研究，以達到這個目標”（1980：299），而香港殖民政府提出的四號報告書——一個可能曾是殖民統治時代的最後一個語文計劃，巧合地包括了“Dawkins 提出的教導政策”。

四號報告書通過測試將學生分類，被證明是可以在中英文中學被“勵”入读中英文中學：沒有證明可以同時以中文及英文學習的精英學生才可選擇入讀英文中學。由於該試題要以實踐數據為基礎的科學研究，故其可信性很高。既然這個值得信賴的測試說明某些學生可以用英語學習，那麼政府為他們提供英語教育似乎是順理成章，而接受中文教育的學生，當然在測試中得分高，是不如人的。

由於這測試的試題期約在一九五七年至一九七零年代，九十年後如何把它妥善處理，將是新特首政的棘手問題。若把它束之高閣，那麼為設計這些測試而耗資過百的過分資源，祇有白白浪費；若繼續利用此試題測試學生，那麼被認定可以利用英語學習的學生，將如何處理？若不為他們提供英語教育，那麼測試的目的在何？若為他們提供英語教育，將使中文教育永遠成為次等教育，而新特首政的政策為保留影響力的計劃就可能落空；透過精英教育，香港可望繼續培養一些精通英文，了解英文化，繼而又

同英式體制的未來社會接榫，換句話說，四號報告書的分流計劃是使英語教育可以在九十年後繼續成為精英精英教育，中文教育成為次等教育的決定，正統化“的絕佳一番”。

筆者在本文曾指出一號報告書鼓勵母語教育的政策若失效，會對中文教育帶來很大的影響（Yau 1983）。其實四號報告書所提出的語文計劃對中文教育的不良影響更有過之而無不及。

從以上分析，我們可以斷言一號及四號報告書的語文計劃並不意味著政府對母語教育立場的改變。反之，四號報告書把殖民地對母語教育及英語教育的分批計劃修改成精英教育，這意味著政府在母語教育的態度上，更強調要保留精英教育的精英教育計劃，這樣做，不但能確保政府培育精英的目標，而且能為政府結納精英的精英教育計劃，這是一個利於香港母語教育的建議。二可以省略語言障礙所需要的大量資源；三可以解決不少學生用英語學習難以進行的問題；四可以安撫民間要求母語教育的呼聲，政府這個計劃可謂是一舉兩得。

未來語言計劃的困境

大概有人會認為在殖民地撤退出以後精英教育為母語教育是當然的，但從其它已獨立的殖民地經驗看，這並不是必然，新的統治階層對語言教育的問題大多會意見分歧：英語教育支持者一般認為通過轉向英語教育會引致語文水平下降，若不維持一定程度的語文水平，會影響新生一代去與世界的聯繫，甚至於孤立。但母語教育支持者則認為母語教育可以加強人民對新政府的認同，同時有人認為保留精英教育會導致社會分化。

基於以上考慮，新特首政在決定語文計劃時，未免會進退維谷，進一步說，由於任何一個決定都有其不足之處，特首政府無論作出任何決定，都會引起部份人士的不滿。

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語言政策不單是一個教育問題，也是一個政治問題，若處理不當，甚至會引發社會分裂。這種情況在過去殖民統治的新興國家十分普遍，一般來說，問題主要是環境與單一或多語種的關係等。例如印度過去就有反英語運動。他們認為“由於懂得英語的精英壟斷了最好的教育及工作機會，造成一種語言分等的階級制度”（見《The Times Magazine September 1985》）。

從印度的經驗，任何語言政策的設計者都應該正視語言政策會帶來社會分化及種族問題。但香港的語文政策中仍然在對全民教育的系統內，透過協議設立立分化的教育制度，將學生劃分為精英與非精英兩等，這對一個正在邁向民主的社會無益。在華文學校，若華語學校學生以華語為主，在蘇校，就會對自己感到自卑，會使其產生所謂“身份危機”；而華語學校的“文化隔離”現象也會加劇，若有華語學校未能得到過去的殖民地的醫護人心，也將不利於培養人民新特區政策的認同。

為避免重蹈其他国家在語言政策而引致社會分裂的覆轍，我們必須把民意調查及各項政策更清晰地表達出來。具體地看，若某學校統一地在教會中使用母語教學，如可減少學生對英語的抗拒，並可減少學習的困難。這樣做才可以更有效地改變過去在教育上必然以英語為主導的政策。

當然，要尊重中文教育在初中以至高中的地位，必須徹底改變社會上對語言環境的不理解。但我們認為，這種情況在中文學校的轉變中也會自然出現。“要改變人民對語言教育的需求”（引自國際母親語言日的建議），“須有著對人民有自治權力才能，例如可以由本地的教育專家鑑定各種語言的價格而不必受制於外部機構的承認”（Ward 1959：185），Sjøsands 在研究非洲殖民地的語文政策時，也作出同樣結論：“只有一個自決政府才可以設計一套適合當地社會的教育制度，因她控制了政府招聘人的條件”（1966：146）。

換言之，若政府可以保證接受母語教育的學生在升學及就業方面不受到歧視，他們自然會偏愛中文教育。

總論如此，要達到目標，必須由殖民地人民自己爭取，通過實際行動反對殖民者強迫中文教育的不滿，同時也給特區政府在制定未來語文政策時一個鮮明的民主意識。

書注：
一、本篇所引用文獻的詳細資料另附文獻。
二、有關香港華語教育政策的詳情可參閱 F. L. Tsang（1975）及 L. Y. Lo（1974）。
三、L. Y. Lo（1974）在其博士論文中研究殖民政府語言政策與華語對等政策之反應時，與Pretorius有相同結論。
四、第一號報告書並沒有提及學校問題，而香港殖民地教育的基本原則為華語教育。一般認為區域的華語教育必須是多元化的，學生必須能夠在華語及英語中選擇其學習語言，老師應在課堂內皆能以華語及英語進行教學，而學校亦應設有華語及英語的文憑。在香港，校際老師可專門以一種語言教學。
五、目前尚有一百多所學校採用華語教育，但仍需詳細研究。
六、在殖民統治尚未結束前，已有人提及應作出這種探索。香港大學英文系系主任 Ray Harris 甚至認為大學不應僅僅限於培育英文的人才，而應為華語學生提供良好的學術環境，便學生有機會學習母語。
七、印度的語文問題極之複雜，除了英語與印度方言之爭外，也涉及印度各地方言之地域之問題。

參考文獻
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Language-based Bifurcation of Secondary Schools in Hong Kong: Past, Present & Future

Daniel W.C. So

Introduction

The proposal of the Education Commission Report No.4 (ECR4) to stream seventy per cent and thirty per cent of Secondary One students into Chinese-medium and English-medium sectors has rekindled the debate concerning the desirability of allowing over ninety per cent of local secondary students to receive their education in Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools which profess to use English as a medium of instruction. This debate can be dated back to the release of a report on the effects of medium of instruction on local students published by Siu et al. in 1979. Since then, the issue has been taken up by the Llewellyn Commission in 1981 (Llewellyn et al. 1982), the Education Commission in 1984 (ECR1), The Report of the Working Group set up to Review Language Improvement Measures in 1989, and, most recently, the Education Commission’s Fourth Report.

Although growth in enrolment at Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools continues unabated through the course of this debate, ECR4's Streaming Proposal, first mentioned in the 1989 Working Group report, will probably put a stop to this relentless expansion during the past thirty years, as shown in Table 1.
TABLE 1
Hong Kong school enrolment at the secondary level
(by medium of instruction), 1958-1958*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ACS</th>
<th>CMS</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25,663</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>55,310</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>27,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>83,036</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>31,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>66,600</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>37,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>81,140</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>41,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>94,425</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>44,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>109,123</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>45,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>124,406</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>48,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>134,347</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>46,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>149,923</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>50,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>157,581</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>50,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>172,369</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>48,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>184,651</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>51,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>200,188</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>55,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>233,254</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>57,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>235,000</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>63,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
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<td>253</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>303,413</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>67,771</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>331,050</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>63,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>375,470</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>58,545</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>386,331</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>68,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>385,243</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>63,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>383,900</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>61,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>380,205</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>63,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>376,675</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>372,122</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>55,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>370,410</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>365,339</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52,073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures in this table refer to enrolment at day grammar schools only. 1958 and 1959 are the years when figures were reported in the Annual Report for the first time, and the last time.

Sources: Hong Kong Government, Hong Kong Education, various issues.

Now that the administration has cast its dice on the medium of instruction issue and turned a new page in its educational language policy, this is an opportune moment to look back in time to explore the question of how such a differential selection of the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools and Chinese Middle Schools came to pass, to use this historical survey to put the current situation in perspective, and to assess whether or not the Streaming Proposal is an appropriate model for Hong Kong as she moves into a new phase of development towards 1997 and beyond.

One Territory, Two Secondary Education Sectors

The development of a language-based bifurcation in the local secondary system is a result of largely three sets of historical circumstances. First, the cultural backwardness and foreign encroachment of Modern China, as well as her effort to strengthen herself. Second, the colonization of Hong Kong, and the needs of the local colonial administration to cultivate a class of bilingual brokers to mediate between itself and the governed. And third, the Chinese Nationalist Party's political platforms on modern education and the Overseas Chinese. This section deals with the link between and the interplay of these three sets of circumstances and the differential growth of Chinese-medium and English-medium education in Hong Kong before 1949.

This language-based bifurcation can be dated back to 1926 with the founding of the Government Vernacular Middle School (renamed Clementi Middle School in 1951). However, at the time of its founding, there were already at least sixteen well-established institutions offering a rather comprehensive English-medium secondary education by the standards of the times. The dominance of these English-medium schools in the secondary sector was largely a result of the colonial administration's measures, as shown in the careful documentation of government language policy during this period by Fa (1975:38-77). From 1902 until the eve of the Second World War, a substantial amount of the resources allocated to education were funnelled, via the Grant-in-aid Scheme, to English-medium schools with the manifest purpose of cultivating a Westernized and English-speaking elite among the local population. The consequence of this policy can be seen from a remark in the Annual Colonial Report—Hong Kong 1946: "The grant-aided schools mainly use English although one school is entirely taught in Chinese... secondary education in English is to a great extent in the hands of Government and grant-aid schools." (p.44)

It is unfortunate that most of the polemical literature on the medium of instruction issue chooses to stop at this point and, on the basis of evidence such as those quoted above, hypothesizes that the current plight of Chinese-medium secondary education in Hong Kong is a direct consequence
of the colonial administration's pro-English-medium policy. As a result, people who subscribe to this Colonial-Policy Hypothesis tend to pay little attention to an interesting as well as crucial period in the development of Chinese-medium secondary education in Hong Kong. This period begins with the founding of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing in 1928, and ends with its retreat from Nanjing (Nanking) to Taibei (Taipei) in 1949.

The importance of this period to local Chinese-medium secondary education can be seen from the following fact: While it took more than eighty years after the founding of the Colony for Chinese-medium secondary education to get started, a mere fifteen years after 1926, upon the eve of the Second World War, at least forty-nine institutions offering an education up to either junior or senior secondary level can be identified (Wong, 1982:270-353). However, during the same period, the number of English-medium institutions with an upper section increased by only five, bringing their total number to twenty-one. In other words, Chinese-medium institutions with an upper section out-numbered their English-medium counterparts by more than a two-to-one margin, albeit in terms of enrolment, the two sectors were probably comparable in size before the War.

On the other hand, this period saw the colonial administration largely pursuing a policy of providing an English-medium education up to university level for children from well-to-do families, and a vernacular primary education for children from less well-to-do families (Irving, 1914). In other words, the local government did not have much to do with this dramatic expansion of the Chinese-medium secondary sector. Unlike English-medium secondary education whose development was largely determined by local socio-economic dynamics and local government aid, the development of Chinese-medium secondary education in Hong Kong was mostly driven by developments in Mainland China.

At the dawn of the 1928-49 period, modern Chinese-medium education had found itself a political patron, a national structure, and a linguistic medium. 1926 saw a semblance of national unity achieved with the founding of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing. The temporary political unity facilitated the implementation of a national curriculum, which was based on the American model and had been adopted earlier in 1922, as well as the popularization of a national language, Guo Yu, in the nation's schools. For example, in 1931, Guo Yu was made the official medium of instruction in all schools. By 1928, a Chinese model of modern education was finally taking shape, and ready for export.

Evidently, recipients of this export were overseas Chinese communities, including Hong Kong. The scale of this influence can be understood in the light of the ideology of the Chinese Nationalist Party, and the impact of the Second Sino-Japanese War 1937-45. Since its founding by Dr Sun and his associates, the Nationalist Party has regarded itself as the leader of all Chinese nationalist movements both at home and abroad. It also treats all Overseas Chinese as citizens of the Republic regardless of whether or not they were citizens of their respective host countries. Accordingly, the Nationalist Party found it politically opportune to promote nationalist education for its overseas citizens, and in fact, as early as 1921, when the Nationalist Party consolidated its power in Canton, agents were sent to Southeast Asia and beyond to assist local Chinese communities in the development of nationalist modern education for their children (Akashi, 1971:1-14).

However, the climax of the expansion of Chinese-medium secondary education in Hong Kong did not come until the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. When the war came, many Chinese-medium schools in China simply moved across the border and re-established themselves in Hong Kong which, for four years, became a haven for escapees from China.

Given the external origin of the development of the local Chinese-medium secondary education, and the centre-periphery kind of relationship between China and Hong Kong, it is quite understandable that the former gradually assumed, for the local Chinese-medium sector, the role of a model, a provider of resources and financial support (for some schools), a supplier of personnel, textbooks and other auxiliary materials, a regulator, a certifying agent and a place for further studies.

For example, local Chinese-medium schools with an upper section mostly followed China and adopted the American 6-3-3 curriculum structure instead of the local 6-5-1 system (see note 6).

Guo Yu was extensively taught in all Chinese-medium schools until the late 1930's even though opportunities for its use locally were minimal.

Moreover, most CM schools with an upper section, in addition to their local registration, also had registration with the Overseas Chinese Affairs...
Committee of the Nanking Government, and with the provincial Bureau of Education in Guangzhou. Students from these schools also participated in the public examinations administered by the Guangdong authorities. In fact, after 1935, such examinations were made available locally by the Guangdong authorities for the convenience of Hong Kong students (Wong 1982: 347-8).

Also, while evidence is not readily available, it is understood that many local CM schools were regularly inspected by Nationalist Government officials. Usually such inspections were done covertly because the Nationalist Government was acting beyond the scope of its legal authority. In 1945, news of such a visit paid by an official from the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee to local Chinese Middle Schools was leaked to the press, but the colonial administration at that time chose not to create a fuss with an open response (Cheng 1949:322).

Therefore, by the 1930's, the language-based bifurcation of the local secondary sector was about complete. A student who had gone through primary education might choose to continue his education in either a Chinese-medium or an English-medium institution. A student who had finished his secondary education in the Chinese medium might continue his education in any of the tertiary institutions on the mainland, many of which enjoyed higher prestige than Hong Kong University. Measures had in fact been taken by the colonial administration to deal with such a development. In the Annual Report of the Department of Education for 1935, it was said that a curriculum designed to accommodate this choice was planned in 1929, and had since been adopted by the Department.

The Post-1949 Decline of the Chinese Middle Schools

Consequently, as Hong Kong started its reconstruction after the Second World War, its secondary education system was rebuilt on a foundation that not only was marked by its bilinguality, but also by its dual tradition. Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools had their origin in the missionary zeal of the West, had their orientation in meeting the needs of the colonial administration and the expatriate community for bilingual brokers, and had their constituency among the indigenous elite whose elitist status was in no small measure a result of an English-medium education.

Whereas the Chinese Middle Schools had their origin in the patriotic zeal of the Chinese intelligentsia for national salvation and in the political ideology of the Nationalist Party for extending its influence among the Overseas Chinese, they had their orientation in meeting the needs of China for achieving unification and freedom from imperialist encroachment, and they had their constituency among the less well-heeled local families.

Another difference between the two sectors was that the English-medium sector, owing to government aid and resources provided by their patrons in the West, managed to develop an infrastructure that was largely self-sustaining. The entire process of education and certification up to the tertiary level could be conducted locally.

In contrast, the Chinese-medium sector saw itself essentially as an appendage to a larger system with which presumably it would soon re-integrate. Its centres were in Nanking and Guangzhou.

As it turned out, History was unkind to the local Chinese Middle Schools. On the one hand, China’s victory in the Second World War failed to accelerate the de-colonization process in Hong Kong, which would have benefited the Chinese Middle Schools. On the other hand, the collapse of the Nanking regime in 1949 also deprived these schools of their centre of reference, and source of logistic support. As early as 1950, the administration already indicated its concern for the problems faced by the Chinese Middle School graduates as a result of this deprivation (Colonial Office 1950:61). The irony of history in this case is that the Chinese Middle Schools declined during a period when the administration was directing relatively more effort and resources for Chinese-medium education, and adopted a more and more enlightened approach to its language policy. For example, local certification for Chinese Middle School graduates was made available again by the colonial administration in 1952.

In 1963, the Chinese University of Hong Kong was founded to provide, among other things, local opportunities for tertiary education for Chinese Middle School graduates. In the Preamble of its founding Ordinance, it is clearly written that "the principal language of instruction in [the University] shall be Chinese." Moreover, the four-year norm of its curriculum structure also reflects the intention of the authorities at the time to have the Chinese Middle Schools as the major supplier of students to the University.
In 1974, the Chinese language was accorded official status. Since then, the use of Chinese has increased in the public sector. For example, there has been a growing demand for the provision of simultaneous interpretation in government or quasi-government meetings as more and more legislators, municipal and district councillors and advisory committee members choose to speak in Cantonese. Also, the provision of a Chinese version of all communication from the government to the public has long become standard practice.

In 1986, a policy of positive discrimination in favour of secondary schools adopting CM instruction was promulgated.

In spite of all these efforts, there are few signs that Chinese Middle Schools are going to make a come-back. Such a continual decline might have triggered the latest drastic measures from the government to revamp the system. Whether or not these measures will succeed remains to be seen. However, the fact is that proponents of the Colonialist-Policy hypothesis should find it hard to square their thesis with the historical evidence shown above. Indeed, their thesis would create for us the riddle of Chinese Middle Schools flourishing during a period when the colonial administration adopted a manifestly pro-English language policy, and declining during a period when the colonial administration adopted a more enlightened language policy.

Lest it be misunderstood, it is not suggested here that the colonial administration be absolved of its responsibilities concerning the decline of the local Chinese Middle Schools. Rather, what is submitted here is that this decline is a function of forces that are much more powerful than government language policy. The collapse of the Nanjing regime, and the ascendancy of the anti-intellectual, totalitarian Beijing regime created an extremely negative environment for the local Chinese Middle Schools which, short of switching to the English-medium sector, have so far proved themselves not very adaptable to the Post-1949 developments.

Meanwhile, after 1949, the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools found themselves in an increasingly favourable environment as a result of three sets of developments. These are the development of Hong Kong into an international manufacturing and financial centre in relative isolation from the Mainland until the 1980's; the emergence of English as the predominant medium in trade and in academic discourse (Fishman, Cooper & Conrad 1977); and the tremendous advance made in science and technology after the War has intensified the demand for educated labour at the workplace.

The Popularity of the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools

What is significant here about the three aforementioned developments is that their interaction produces an effect that further accentuates the historical role of the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools as a major vehicle of upward mobility. The rapid growth in the local economy after 1949 has dramatically expanded opportunities of such mobility. For example, the number of...
traditionally more desirable and/or more prestigious jobs has been on the increase in the past thirty years. As shown in Table 2, a shift towards skilled-cum-white collar jobs in the occupational structure is very much in evidence in the past thirty years. Between 1961 and 1986, it is estimated that the number of professional, technical and related workers increased by 3.6 times; the number of administrative and managerial workers increased by 2.6 times; the number of clerical and related workers by 5.6 times; the number of sales workers by 3.8 times; the number of servicing workers by 4.8 times.

During the same period, the size of the labour force increased by only 2.17 times. The size of the population by only 1.72 times.

Given the fact that English has become the language of wider communication especially in the domain of commerce and finance, these traditionally more desirable occupations demand varying degrees of proficiency in English. Furthermore, the more prestigious among them often require tertiary education qualifications. To the local people, there is no question what gives one the best access to these occupations. After all, most of the local and foreign destinations of tertiary institutions offer their education in the English medium. Children from the well-established elite usually get a head-start in one of the few local, exclusive English-medium primary schools. Other people try to get into the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools, places where traditionally 'good English' was learnt.

Given the transient nature of the population especially before 1949, the refugee character of the population after 1949, and the laissez-faire ethic of the society at large, there are no entrenched class structure, divisive religious affiliations, or dogmatic ideological subscription to put stops in people's path to upward mobility. In the past, especially during the last thirty years of rapid economic growth, anybody who possesses English skills and secondary education qualifications will avoid himself of a career in the white-collar profession. For somebody who possesses tertiary education qualifications or more, he will be assured of either an upward passage and become a member of the local, expanding bourgeoisie; or an outward passage and become a member of the Overseas Chinese communities in one of the advanced English-speaking nations of the world.

In short, a successful English-medium secondary education has become the principal determinant of upward and outward mobility for the people of Hong Kong. Many, if not most, aspire to both.

The socio-economic transformation of Hong Kong described above and the pathetic post-1949 situation in China have led many local people to perceive the Chinese Middle Schools as some sort of an anachronism, and led to an over-selection of the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools. 19

The Over-selection of the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools: False & Real Issues

By the 1980's when ninety per cent of secondary students were receiving their education at Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools, most, if not all, educators agreed that the use of English in these schools posed problems for students and teachers. After all, Hong Kong is essentially a monolingual, Cantonese-speaking society where English is used in only a restricted number of domains. 20 Given the fact that subsidized junior and senior secondary education are now offered respectively to close to 100 per cent and over seventy per cent of the appropriate age group, it is simply unrealistic to expect that quality English-medium instruction can be provided in all subjects, and at all levels, to such large number of students most of whom are brought up in Cantonese-speaking environments.

What educators fail to agree is what constitutes the best possible alternative to the present situation. And many educators do find the Streaming Proposal leaves a lot to be desired. Before we proceed to examine the Streaming Proposal from the perspective provided by the previous historical survey, and look forward to the future, it is necessary to put the current situation in perspective and expose the fallacy of a number of suppositions many people, including the architects of the Streaming Proposal, subscribe to in this debate.

The Mother-tongue hypothesis

It is regrettable that the current debate on the medium of instruction issue has made such a heavy use of the mother-tongue hypothesis. 21 In a sense this is unfair to the parents in Hong Kong. They do not send their children to Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools because they do not know that Chinese-medium education is easier for them. They prefer English-medium schools for the reasons discussed in the previous section, and not because they were not in favour of teaching in Chinese. In fact, all the experimental studies
on the effect of English-medium instruction on educational outcomes among local students have been churning out findings proving the obvious: when students are instructed entirely in Chinese, they tend to perform better than when they receive instruction entirely in English. The problem is that the constraints of the design of these studies preclude them from taking into account the mediating effect of the use of Cantonesic under naturalistic conditions, and of the fact that in Hong Kong, learning in Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools seldom takes place exclusively in Chinese or in English. Indeed, if the findings of these experimental studies were taken at their face value, it would mean that year after year the Anglo-Chinese schools would be producing graduates with 'brain damage'.

The fact is most parents somehow know that on the one hand, the educational consequences of English-medium secondary education are not as catastrophic as some pundits would have them believe. On the other hand, the education offered by Chinese Middle Schools is not as easy and effective as their advocates say it is. They could sense that it is tricky to equate Chinese-medium education with mother-tongue education. After all, they know a local Cantonese student will not be able to make his grade in a Chinese Middle School with his Cantonese alone. In fact, traditional Chinese teachers would tell him Cantonese cannot be written, should not be used in written academic discourse, and it is merely a 'dialect'. To these educators, the label 'language' should be reserved for the standard variety alone.

Whether a local student goes to an Anglo-Chinese Secondary School or a Chinese Middle School, chances are that he will find himself in an unfamiliar linguistic environment, and his success will partly depend on how well he manages to achieve proficiency in the two standard languages. The local trilingual situation in education (Lord & Tse 1985) is a nettle that most mother-tongue hypothesis subscribers have yet to come to terms with.

Parents=Leemings hypothesis

Another misguided assumption made about the parents is that they are leemings rushing their children towards an English-medium cliff, and therefore have to be stopped, even at great cost if necessary. However, findings from two surveys conducted in 1983 and 1986 offer a somewhat different picture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION PREFERENCES OF HONG KONG PARENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983 &amp; 1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOH at Secondary Level</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N.O.*</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N.O.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BM ONLY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(38)**</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM ONLY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(37)</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No Opinion
**Figures in brackets are percentages

Source: So, 1984; So, 1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILK PARENTS' MEAN RATING OF CRITERIA FOR AN IDEAL SCHOOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Teaching Staff</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Standards</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Campus</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Standards</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige of School</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in Public Rooms</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether English Textbooks are used</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether Chinese Textbooks are used</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The rating scale is from 1 to 5 with 1 meaning the criterion is of no importance at all, and 5 meaning the criterion is very important.
English. However, they would like their children to have access to English-medium education, and may, as a result attain a level of English proficiency that would enable them to progress in the local society. In fact, what the parents are shunning are Chinese Middle Schools, not instruction in Chinese. These parents may have very high expectations of their children, but they are not lemmings.35

Schools have to be forced to switch to Chinese Medium hypothesis

Before we move to the future, there is one more fallacy that needs to be exposed. In 1987, the council of Carmel English School opted to switch the medium of instruction in lower forms to Chinese. The media was informed of the decision, and they in turn heralded it as a historic move, and Carmel was portrayed as taking a lead in the promotion of Mother Tongue education. However, in 1990, the teachers of the school voted to switch the teaching medium at the lower forms back to English, and their decision was endorsed by the council. The saga of Carmel has been taken by the media, and subscribers to the Streaming Proposal, as a prime example showing the conservatism of school authorities regarding the greater use of Chinese at secondary level, and that they would not make ‘the right move’ unless forced to do so.

This sort of allegation is very unfair to many Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools which have been struggling to do a good job in a very difficult situation. Ho (in this volume) details the experience of one school in a self-motivated implementation of greater use of Chinese in lower forms, a practice sustained to this day, in the early 1980’s, years before the Carmel saga. Moreover, as a result of the policy of positive discrimination announced in 1986, by 1990, similar moves have been taking place in 126 schools, some of which have made a more extensive switch than Carmel, as reported in ECR4 (p.89).

In addition, there is also the much lamented use of Cantonese and the mixed code (see Luke, this volume), which, in varying degree of effectiveness, helps the students adapt to the English-medium environment.

Actually, the force of parental preference and the inadequacy of students’ English proficiency have engendered a process of convergence in the secondary sector. While, as mentioned above, many Anglo-Chinese

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### Table 48

**Parents’ Mean Rating of Criteria for an Ideal School 1986**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Teaching Staff</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Campus &amp; Equipment</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Standards</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether English Textbooks are used</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether instruction is in English</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in Public Exams</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Standards</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether instruction is in Chinese</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether Chinese Textbooks are used</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The rating scale is between -2 and 2 with -2 meaning the criterion is of no importance at all, and 2 meaning the criterion is very important.

Source: So, 1984; So, 1986.
Secondary Schools are making greater use of Chinese, many of the thirty-six
Chinese Middle Schools are adopting English textbooks, and opening four
seven classes to better align themselves with the three-year norm of the
curriculum structure at tertiary level.

In other words, the schools have been doing a lot to cope with the linguistic
pressure, and as a result of that, the differences between the Anglo-Chinese
Secondary Schools and the Chinese Middle Schools have been getting
smaller and smaller, particularly in the last fifteen years. Many
Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools have been making greater use of Chinese,
although they have stopped short of making a total switch. After all, many
Chinese Middle Schools themselves do not adhere to the dogma of making
e exclusive use of Chinese in their instruction.

In fact, in recent years, the government has made a number of positive moves
that help promote this process of convergence. For example, after 1978,
partly to enhance the image that the two sectors were on equal footing, the
language-based separate administration of the Certificate of Education
Examinations was abolished, and candidates from the Chinese-medium and
English-medium sectors were given the same examination papers, albeit in
different languages. In 1985, ECR1 recommends to 'put an end to the
distinction between Anglo-Chinese and Chinese Middle Schools by
encouraging the removal of such references from the names of schools' (p.45).
In 1986, in order to encourage employers to focus on students' achievements
rather than on the teaching medium, the medium indicator on the certificate
of education was removed. From 1988, enrolment figures at secondary level
were no longer reported on the basis of medium of instruction. In 1994, in
order to fully align the Chinese Middle Schools with the local tertiary sector,
the Advanced Level examinations will be made available in Chinese, and
students taking the examination in Chinese will not be discriminated against
by any UGC institutions, according to a recent joint announcement made by
the heads of these institutions.

If such a process of convergence is allowed to take its course, over time,
parents will learn to focus on their choice more and more on the school, rather
than on its teaching medium.

Unfortunately, the Streaming Proposal will put a spoke in this development by
highlighting once again the language differences among the schools. It will
also lead to a trifurcation of the secondary sector.

The Streaming Proposal: A Good Model for our Future?

It is submitted here that the answer to the question is 'no', because of the
adoption of the fallacious hypotheses by the architects of the streaming
proposal, and because of their anachronistic vision of our future. In fact,
their Proposal have raised at least two important questions: Will the proposed
scheme be able to meet our future language needs? Do we really want to have
linguistic segregation in our schools?

What are our future language needs?

What we have in Hong Kong is an increasingly service-oriented economy
which demands the provision of a large number of personnel proficient in at
least two international languages - Putonghua Chinese and English - in the
context of a largely monolingual, dialect-speaking environment. Under the
socio-linguistic conditions of Hong Kong, schools are the only places where
our children have a chance to actually use these languages under
quasi-naturalistic conditions before they do so in their respective work
domains. Our future language needs render the dichotomous Chinese vs
English orientation of the current debate out-dated, and point to a need to
eliminate a linguistic environment within the schools that approximate the
linguistic dynamics in Post-1997 Hong Kong. This environment will be
characterized by a shift from a need for bilingual brokers to mediate between
the colonial administration and the governed to a need for trilingual brokers
to mediate among Beijing, the local government and the international
community. Indeed, what is the point of having thirty per cent of our best
secondary schools receive an education exclusively in English, and
reproducing to-day's role models many of whom have a predominant western
outlook, and are functionally literate only in English? Isn't it another form of
anachronism?

If there is anything to be learnt from the decline of the Chinese Middle
Schools, it is that educational development cannot evolve in isolation from
socio-economic developments. Now that the wheel of change is again moving
at a fast pace, we had better take heed of the lesson of history and move with
the times, or bear the consequences of being left behind by a
backward-looking instead of forward-looking orientation.
And if one does look forward, what we see is that the inevitable shift in language demands and political orientation require that our students be given opportunities to perform tasks of various nature in Cantonese, Putonghua and English, rather than in any one of these languages, and also be given a good measure of bilingualism that is grounded in the Chinese tradition. Our next generation will have to be well-versed in the rhetorics of Cantonese, Putonghua and English, and be brought up with a better understanding of their cultural identity in a post-colonial metropolis.

Do we really want linguistic segregation in our schools?

According to ECR4, the Streaming Proposal is based on three premises. The first is the mother-tongue hypothesis; the second is the preference that it is "better if one clear medium of instruction for teaching, textbooks and examinations are (sic.) used" (p. 101); the third is the conviction that students should be grouped by reference to a medium in which they could learn effectively" (p. 101). However, the mixed-code is not regarded as an acceptable option.

The information on the bases of which the grouping will be carried out is to be produced by the two test batteries administered by the Examinations Authority at the end of Primary Six and then again at the end of Secondary Three. It is claimed that by 1994, these tests will have given schools sufficient information concerning who can benefit from English-medium instruction (ECR4, p.112). Indeed, a timetable has been proposed for all schools to adopt a clear language policy (ECR4, p.105).

The fact is many Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools have already been administering an in-house screening test to their new admittees each year to assess their abilities in Chinese, English and Maths. This information is then used to make medium of instruction decisions within the school. However, at present, these decisions seldom involve a total segregation of students within the school. Students who initially are given instruction in Chinese are not precluded from receiving instruction in English later on. There are no official labels attached to them. In other words, what streaming will do to the schools is not so much provide them with new information, but put a medium of instruction label on them, as well as on their students; and in so doing, effect linguistic segregation in the secondary sector. The Streaming Model is one linguistic 'Berlin Wall' of the 1990's.

It is also alleged that after the implementation of the Streaming Model "criticism which has been levelled at existing secondary schools that they claim to teach through English whilst actually using mixed-code, would fall away. The medium of instruction offered by schools would come to reflect the reality of students' needs." (ECR4, p.113). This claim is misplaced, and indicates a lack of understanding of the language dynamics in local classrooms, and of the development of bilingualism under local conditions on the part of the architects of the Streaming Proposal. The fact is the use of the mixed-code is itself a reflection of the reality of students' needs. This issue is dealt with in depth by Luke in this volume. Suffice it to briefly mention three aspects here.

First, code-mixing is a mark of bilingual behaviour. In other words, if more and more bilinguals are produced in Hong Kong, code-mixing will get more and more common, and it appears that this is exactly what is happening now, with the mixed code becoming the native tongue of the local educated community.

Second, the antagonistic attitude towards the mixed-code as a form of corrupted speech is more a case of either a monolingual, inward-looking society unaccustomed to such a language variety, or an inappropriate application of monolingual norms, on the part of language purists, to bilingual behaviour. Numerous recent studies have shown that, far from being a form of corrupted speech, code-mixing behaviour has enhanced bilinguals' communicative efficiency, and enriched his linguistic repertoire.

Third, lest it be misunderstood, it is not suggested here that the mixed-code be treated as a standard variety. The case made here is that it is a functional variety the use of which is not random, and very often serves useful purposes. So long as English Medium or Putonghua instruction is given to a large number of students, the mixed-code will serve a useful function of providing students with a means to negotiate meaning in the classroom. Actually, implicit in the rejection of the mixed-code is the belief that somehow it stands in the way of developing rhetorical skills in Chinese and English among the students. The causal relationship between the two can only be minimal as all parties concerned are aware that the norms used in the evaluation of proficiency in the respective languages remain monolingual. If local students' rhetorical skills in the languages are found wanting, the cause probably lies in the fact that, in addition to Cantonese, they are required to master another two unfamiliar languages rather than the assumed problem of mistaking the
mixed-code as a model. For most students, the mixed-code is a building block rather than a stumbling block of their bilingual proficiency.

Therefore, the so-called "clear policy concerning medium of instruction" that all schools are required to adopt by the middle of the 1990s will only stigmatize the spontaneous use of the mixed-code, limit the options available to schools (including the Chinese Middle Schools), engender divisiveness among as well as within schools, and among students, and necessitate additional expenditure in the recruitment of "language police" to regulate classroom language behaviour.

Such regulators must be recruited if the government is really serious about students being taught in either English or Chinese. After all, anybody who knows the local situation will know: Where are we going to find that thirty per cent secondary students who will be able to have their education exclusively in English (see Tung's article in this volume)? And what are we going to do with those Chinese Middle Schools that make use of English textbooks?

Looking Forward

By force of tradition, there will always be English-only and Chinese-only schools in Hong Kong. No matter how popular is the former, or how unpopular is the latter, the fact remains that the times that produced the dynamics that selected these schools are moving fast behind us. The dynamics in the future will probably select neither Chinese Middle Schools nor English-medium Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools, but schools that are able to make flexible and sensible use of Cantonese, Putonghua and English, as well as provide our young people with an exposure to the cultures of China and of the West.

Having an English-medium cocoon at the top of the secondary sector with a large Cantonese segment at the bottom, which apparently is where the Streaming Proposal is leading us, is a form of anachronism that replicates the pre-1926 situation, and will not last for long even if the departing administration imposes it upon us.

Indeed, it is intriguing to find that the Streaming Proposal opts to intensify the monolingualism of the current model that most people find wanting and out-of-date. As argued elsewhere (So, 1987; 266-67), for the majority of the local students, bilingual education in Hong Kong at present is characterized by its sequential use of monolingual tracking of two different teaching media at two different — primary and post-primary — phases. In other words, currently, students who have gone through a monolingual education in Chinese are then expected to continue their education in a monolingual English environment. Most people today accept that this model is not working. In fact, the popular use of the mixed-code or Cantonese in the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools can be seen as a way of getting round the problems created by the inadequacy of the model.

Our future language needs require that ways should be sought to eliminate the monolingual tracking approach, and to replace it with a concurrent, multilingual approach through a combined use of Cantonese, Putonghua Chinese and English. In other words, instead of having two monolingual phases, a viable model should have provisions to offer a combined use of the relevant languages in all phases (including the tertiary phase). During the course of their education, students should first be given a good grounding in Cantonese, and then with Putonghua as well as English gradually being phased in at varying degree of exposure and pace depending on the respective circumstances of the schools.

Being a vernacular-speaking minority, it would be unrealistic for the people of Hong Kong to believe that Cantonese should remain the major medium of instruction in our system indefinitely. The best protection of the status of our mother tongue in education is not to wave the magic wand of the mother tongue hypothesis, but to promote a multilingual approach to education which will offer the best means to accommodate the linguistic demands of China and to meet the sociolinguistic needs of Hong Kong. In so doing, the planning involved will be able to accord a clear role to Cantonese in the education system.

Such an approach will also entail efforts of codifying and standardizing Cantonese, formulating the teaching of Putonghua Chinese as a second language to local students, and re-focusing the teaching of English for academic and special purposes.

These are by no means easy tasks, and the pointers mentioned here may not lead to a model whose structural elegance matches that of the one proposed by ECRA. However, a model based on the concurrent, multilingual approach
can be pedagogically sound, administratively viable, socially relevant and politically popular. It will be an arrangement that will offer to people things that they want, and will not impose on people things only the government finds desirable.

NOTES

1. The following is an outline of the proposal: Before Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA), criterion reference points of Chinese and English will be established. On this basis, students will be classified into three groups: 'A' for those who would learn best in English; 'B' for those who would probably learn better through the Chinese medium but who are possibly able to learn in English; 'C' for those who are able to learn effectively in English many of whom could equally well learn in Chinese should they so wish.

Similarly, based on the performance of their intake in the aforementioned tests, all secondary schools will be divided into three groups: Chinese-medium schools, English-medium schools and Two-medium schools where classes will be conducted exclusively either in Chinese or English.

Such information will then be given to parents and schools. Parents of children in Groups 'B' and 'C' will be advised to select places in CM or TM schools. Based on researches done under the auspices of the Education Department, it is estimated that students from Groups 'B' and 'C' constitute seventy per cent of their cohort.

There are three other important elements in this proposal: First, an intensive English programme (called 'bridging course') will be provided to Secondary One students at English-medium schools.

Second, at the end of secondary three, all students will sit another battery of criterion referenced language tests. Their performance in these tests will provide grounds for English-medium schools to transfer their weak students to either the Chinese-medium or Two-medium schools. On the other hand, if their performance in English is found to be up to par, students at Chinese-medium or Two-medium schools can be transferred to English-medium schools if they so wish.

Third, an intensive English programme will be provided by all tertiary institutions to their admits from Chinese Middle Schools.

2. In 1973, Cheng et al. put out a tract titled At What Cost? Instruction through the English Medium in Hong Kong Schools and managed to attract some attention to the medium of instruction issue within the educational community. However, sustained debate on the issue both inside and outside the educational community was not in evidence until the 1980s.

3. This paper takes the Opium War of 1839-42 as the event that marks the birth of Modern China.

4. The Government Vernacular Middle School was not the first Chinese Middle School in Hong Kong. The honour should probably go to Langham Middle School which was founded in 1922. Between 1922 and 1926, according to Wong (1982), at least thirteen institutions that offered some form of secondary education in Chinese were founded. In addition to Lingnan, four of these institutions—Sung Lan Middle School, Tack Ching Girls' Middle School, Sung Yen Middle School, and Munung College—are still in operation today, although Sung Lan and Munung are now Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools. Among these thirteen institutions, only Munung College benefited from the Grant-in-aid Scheme.

The rationale of selecting the founding of the Government Vernacular Middle School, instead of that of any of these thirteen institutions, as the occasion marking the birth of the local Chinese-medium secondary sector is largely based on the scale of operation. For example, unlike the thirteen institutions most of which were in fact primary schools with a secondary extension, it was the other way round for the School which started as a middle school and with a normal division, albeit with a 'prep school' attachment. The School was well-endowed at its founding, and had long been regarded as the equivalent of Queen's College in the Chinese-medium sector.

5. These institutions were, in the order of the time of their founding, St. Joseph College, Queen's College, St. Paul's Convent School, St. Mary's (Canossian) College, Bellesis Public School, Ying Wa Girls' School, Diocesan Boys' School, St. Stephen's College, St. Stephen Girls' College, St. Paul's College, Diocesan Girls' School, Wah Yan College (Hong Kong), Wah Yan College (Kowloon), and Maryknoll Convent School.

6. It would not be appropriate to label these institutions Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools during this period because most of them had three sections: a four-year lower section, followed by a two-year 'prep school' (Classes VIII and VIII), and topped with an upper section (Classes VI - I) that offered a curriculum that approximated modern secondary education. Even though their upper sections all became self-contained secondary institutions after the Second World War, many of them still maintain their tradition of keeping 'feeder primary schools' to this day.

7. It should be interesting to explore the apparent lack of interest among most of the Christian missionaries in the Colony, who operated these grant-aided schools, to provide secondary education in Chinese during this period.

8. For example, in discussions on the plight of the Chinese Middle Schools conducted in the media, the catch phrase, 'Zhong Ying Qiong Zhong' (high priority to English,
low priority to Chinese), will invariably be used to label government educational language policy for the past 150 years.

9. This figure can be regarded as a minimum of the actual number of schools in operation at that time because it was a common practice among school administrators of small operations not to register with the Colonial Administration so as to avoid control and regulation, notwithstanding the fact that such acts contravened the stipulations of the Education Ordinance of 1913.

10. They were: Holy Spirit School (Predecessor of today's Marymount Secondary School), St. Clare's Girls' School, King's College, La Salle College and Sacred Heart Conventian College.

11. Figures of enrolment at secondary level in the two periods during this period are not readily available. However, because of government assistance and a longer history, enrolment in the upper sections of the English-medium institutions were usually much larger than that of their Chinese-medium counterparts. Therefore, the English-medium institutions, though much fewer in number, had as many secondary students as their Chinese-medium counterparts.

12. Local tertiary education in English was made available with the founding of Hong Kong University in 1912.

13. Before the adoption of this new curriculum, the common practice, largely based on the Japanese model, was to have seven years for primary education and four years for secondary education. According to the new curriculum primary education took six years, junior and senior secondary education each took three years.

14. On the top of this list is probably Bei Da (Peking University). Others include Tsang Hua, Yenching (both at Beijing), St. John's (at Shanghai), Fu-jen (at Beijing), Lingnan (at Guangzhou), just to name a few.

15. Even to this day, eight out of the Top Ten universities in China are Christian organizations. They are: The Church Body of the Chinese Anglican Church in Hong Kong, The Roman Catholic Church in Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China, Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart Conventian Inc., Society of St. Francis of Sales, Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, The Methodist Church Hong Kong Tsim Sha Tsui district, and The Methodist Church Hong Kong Wei Li District. The other two are the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, and The Hong Kong Buddhist Association.

16. After the war, the colonial administration implemented a recommendation for greater government spending in vernacular education made in a report written by HM Burney in 1935, and launched a large scale Chinese-medium primary school building programme that estimated in the provision of (free primary education for close to all students of the appropriate age group in 1971.

17. To date, medium of instruction practices and student intakes at the Chinese University have departed from these intentions. For example, English textbooks are extensively used, and the main bulk of its students come from the Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools.

18. For example, all local UPGC tertiary institutions use English textbooks extensively, conduct their examinations mostly in English, and have varying levels of requirements of English proficiency in their various courses. For professional degrees such as accounting and engineering, with few exceptions, the external examinations were conducted in English. In the case of local students' favourite overseas destinations of tertiary education, they are all English-speaking countries: Australia, Canada, Great Britain and The U.S.A.

19. For a more in-depth and theoretical treatment of the dynamics of differential social selection of these two institutions, see So (1984).


21. Cheng et al. (1973); Siu et al. (1977); Llewellyn et al. (1982); ECRs 1 and 4; as well as writers of polemical literature on this topic in the media all invoke this hypothesis, and appeal to the government to educate parents about this hypothesis.

22. For example, see Cheung (1974); Poon (1978); Siu et al. (1979).

23. For an examination of this issue, see So (1989).

24. This is not an exaggeration. Cheung (1990) characterizes the situation as follows: "As far as possible, Ah Mow, Ah Sai, Ah Chu—the Chinese expression for every Tom, Dick and Harry—all rush to English grammar schools, resulting in endless problems in learning motivation, attitude and school discipline."

25. For an eloquent expression of these sentiments, see Tien (1978). For an examination of the validity of parents' belief that there is a link between English-medium instruction and English proficiency, and the effects of English-medium instruction on local students' educational development, see So (1987).

26. Solid studies on code-switching behaviour among local people are still few in number. One such study is Gibbons (1987) which focuses mostly on students at Hong Kong University.

27. For example, see Appel & Musken (1987:117-128).

28. Few mother-tongue education advocates note the fact that standard Chinese and Putonghua, in the context of Modern China, are, by definition, nobody's mother-tongue. As for the idea of Teaching Standard Chinese as a Second Language in Hong Kong, see Liu (1979).
References


母語教學在中學實踐的經驗

賀國強

（一）背景

六十年代時筆者就讀於一所官立中學，六年的中學生涯，除了英文一科外，其他各科都是用母語來學習，其间並沒有遇到多大困難。中學畢業之後考進中文大學物理系。雖然課本改為英文，部分課程全用英文講授，適應起來並沒有多大的困難。

七十年代初年，筆者在一一所資助英文中學任教，校長乃洋人，要求校內教師全用英文講授。雖然初時略有困難，總算能應付過來。當時小學教育剛達普及階段，教育當局尚未全面推進中學教育，能進入官立或資助中學的學生，若以今日的標準來說，諾為學能差一般的，而筆者所任教的主要是高年級的數理科，發覺學生們雖然應用英文來學習，似乎並沒有多大困難。

七十年代后期，筆者在加拿大修讀教育，當時班內同學來自五湖四海，特別是非洲和南美洲的一些發展中國家，通過同學間的交流，激發了筆者選擇母語教學為論文的題材，回到香港進行實驗研究。

（二）嘗試階段

筆者當年後，回到香港進行有關母語教學的實驗研究（見 Ho 1980）。研究分為三階段，第一階段的實驗對象來自兩間中學的中四學生，一間為中文中學，一間為英文中學，在同一學期施用同樣的課本，依同
樣的進度，學習相同的物理課題（聲和光學），中學文教授采用的中文文，而英文教授教授采用的英文教授的方式。學期結束時，兩組學生參加同一題目，但不同語言的考卷，統計選取兩組學生的學業差異。發現他們的成績並沒有太大差異。

第二階段的實驗對象為自上述英文教授的學生中，各選兩名學生，學生在期末個月內採用相同的課本。依舊進度，學習相同的課題（力學），其中一組採用英文，而另一組選用數學（英文輔以粵語）。結果，實驗終結時發現兩組的成績沒有太大的差別。

第三階段的實驗仍以上述英文教授的學生中，為教師有關物理課題的課本。其中一組用全英文，而另一組則用中文教授，結果兩組學生的成績仍沒有差異。

從上述三階段實驗研究中，筆者感到學生用英語或母語學習時，雖然在知識和理解上有差異，但已非統計所能觀察得到。若要找尋母語教學的成效，似乎不能從教育上或校舍學生的成績中觀察得到。

（三）實踐時期

八十年代初期，筆者開始授課於中學之學科任教。按校政統一科，所教是物理學，校內各方面的政策受到影響，校中中、初的同學有一班選修機器member統計參加中學會考。報考的學生是英文，該年的及格率低於百分之四十。筆者建議班級教學的師傅翌年改用中文教授，並勉勵學生改用中文報考，經改改次年的合格率超過百分之八十！

到校的第二年，筆者與同中的英、數、史、地、經公及科學老師組成一個研究，於1986年，將兩班學生中中二學生交給他們，一直用英文教授。一班用英文輔以粵語教授（今稱英文中的正常教授形式）。課本仍是原來的英文課本。經過一年的試行，除了經濟及公共關係科外，其他各科的學業成績沒有太大的分別。

到校的第三年，筆者與同中的科學及社會科學老師作進一步的學業。於1986年，四班學生採用不同形式的教學法，課本及老師講授。結果發現中一學生是一般性中文課本，閱讀課本－課題及課時，對其學業有極大的幫助，其影響甚至於與英文課本的差異。
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校的政策，沒有新校的現象。總之，如此，在升中選校時，外圍還有傳聞本校
中的中學，而放在較大的選擇中，學校因數因素的確使得受到的損失
難以評估。總而言之，社會各界對母語教學的疑慮仍未消除，在廿一世紀
前，母語教學難以全面推行的機會。

四・總結

自從一九五三年聯合國世界母語教育的價值後（UNESCO 1953），
母語教學在世界各發展中國家的推廣極為可觀，可是在香港的中學教育方
面卻事事難，六十年代初期中文大學的成立，七十年代的中文運動更未
能助長母語教學的發展。七十年代末期香港推行初級教育，學生程度
普遍下降，教育界才正式剝奪盛行母語教學的迫切需要。縱然如此，社會
人士及家長卻未能面對學生程度不達的實況，仍然強權學生多學英文。教
育局雖然自十八世紀初肯定母語教學在中學階段的價值，在一九六六年局
長結合各科必修驗度的課程，及增加使用母語教學各中學裡的英文
的中學，只有四分之一敢採用較多的母語教學。

九十年少的報告書，表面上肯定母語教學的地位，實際
上卻是阻止母語教學的擴展。因為清一色的英文中學實在少，絕大
部分在英文課本學習英文的學生，最後的課程，強化英文的教學，要
是教育局要徹底界定
各科的語文模式，勢必令那些試圖多用母語教學的英文中學在社會及家
長壓力之下無所適從。過去幾年已有幾所中學放棄母語教學，要是未來幾
年教育局要執行四號報告書內語文論的課文模式，相信母語教學，到時終</p>

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Appendix

A Bibliography of Empirical Research on Mother Tongue Education in Hong Kong, with an introduction and a survey

Introduction

Before 1949, people were able to move freely between Hong Kong and mainland China. The need for English was not as keenly felt during that period because people could go to China for higher education and business, and many did.

Movement in and out of China became increasingly restricted and was subject to strict social and political control. Meanwhile, the importance of English was increasingly felt in Hong Kong for higher education, career opportunities, and emigration.

At about the same time, the use of mother-tongue as the medium of instruction in schools in post-colonial countries was recognized to be automatic and beneficial (UNESCO 1953). Primary education then was already being conducted in Chinese (Education Dept 1947). But plans to extend mother-tongue education to secondary schools met strong resistance from the Grant schools (Sweeting 1960).

The medium of instruction question has been a dilemma in Hong Kong over the past 40 years. Parents, students and members of the community all see the importance of English, which has led to the flourishing of Anglo-Chinese secondary schools and the decline of Chinese Middle schools. On the other hand, educationalists have come to realize that the transition from ethnic education to universal education in the 70's has completely exposed the shortcomings of using English as the medium of instruction in the Anglo-Chinese schools. Most students have more than a little difficulty to use English as the language of learning. Many do not make any progress in learning English at all.

The main problems relating to medium of instruction are: (1) Is mother tongue really a more effective medium of instruction? and (2) Will using English as the medium of instruction enhance students' proficiency in English? Attempts have been made to answer these questions through carefully devised research studies. There have been a number of controlled empirical studies done on this subject in Hong Kong in the past. In the next section, I will survey these studies, then outline areas of research for the future.
2. Survey

(a) Research Studies before 1980

No real climate for educational research was evident in Hong Kong until the 1970s. There were only four studies on the medium of instruction before 1980.

Cheung (1974) investigated the effects of medium of instruction on two samples of Form I & Form III students (315 in total) selected from two Anglo-Chinese secondary schools. A lesson in Topology was taught to both groups in each sample, but through different media of instruction. Results indicated that the two groups of students learning in Chinese performed consistently better.

Poon (1978) investigated learning difficulties in Mathematics among 198 Hong Kong Primary school leavers from four schools. Two sample lessons in binary scale and tests were taught to the students and the following results were obtained.

(1) Students whose mother tongue was Cantonese but who had learned English as a foreign language would learn Mathematics more efficiently in Chinese than in English except for those with high ability.

(2) Chinese primary school graduates obtained higher scores in Mathematics than their counterparts in Anglo-Chinese primary schools. In particular, they were better in specific vocabulary, concept differentiation, problem comprehension, and self expression in the presentation of solution but not in the speed of problem reading.

Siu et al. (1979) did a large scale study on 9005 students chosen from F.2, 3 & 4 levels of secondary schools. Part of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of English and Chinese as a medium of instruction in a controlled study of four lessons on three subjects (History, Mathematics and Science). Results indicated that Chinese was a more effective medium of instruction and English could only be used as medium of instruction in upper forms after students had reached a higher level of proficiency.

Ho (1980) did three studies on 176 F.4 students chosen from two secondary schools of Hong Kong. The duration of the studies varied from four lessons (one week) to 48 lessons (3 months). It was found that achievement in Physics at F.4 level was not affected by the medium of instruction and students did not spend extra time or effort learning Physics when instruction was given in English rather than Chinese.

Even though there were only four studies done before 1980, it can be seen that the results have tended to confirm that it is beneficial for Hong Kong students to learn in Cantonese at least up to F.3 level. It could be that students in higher forms who have reached a more advanced proficiency level can cope with using English as the medium of instruction, although no research findings were available to either prove or disprove this possibility. With the exception of Ho (1980), studies in the 1970s were all done on a short-term basis. They did not always have a firm grounding in actual classroom situations.

(b) Research Studies since 1980

Since the introduction of nine years' compulsory education in 1978, the gradual decline in academic standards has made it difficult for many Anglo-Chinese secondary schools to use English as the medium of instruction. Both the Llewellyn Report (1982) and the Education Commission Report No. 1 (1984) recommended the retention of Chinese as the medium of instruction from Primary to Junior Secondary level, or at least a gradual shift from Chinese to English during that transitional period. It was only then that the government started to do research in the area of medium of instruction. Before the release of their official results, two independent studies had been conducted.

Loi (1984) investigated the effect of the medium of instruction on academic achievement in 82 F.1 students in a secondary school of high standing. The controlled study focused on three subjects (Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) and lasted five months. Results indicated that no significant difference in achievement was found between the use of English or Chinese except for a sub-test in Social Studies.

Ho (1985) investigated the relationship between academic achievement in five subjects (History, Geography, EPA, Science and Mathematics), second language proficiency and language of instruction on 74 F.2 pupils in an above-average secondary school. The controlled period lasted five months. He found that when the above average pupils were immersed in a second language school program, they were not hindered in academic achievement except for subjects closely related to their daily life, nor did it help to improve their second language proficiency.

The Government studies were all organized by the Educational Research Establishment (ERE), a section of the Education Department. They were usually larger in scale and better in sampling. Strictly speaking two of them were not controlled studies. One project was a joint venture of ERE and the University of Hong Kong.

Lo, Chan & Ip (1985) compared the academic performance in five school subjects (Chinese, English, Mathematics, Science, and History) of 1411 F.1 to F.3 students. These students were taken from 25 Anglo-Chinese and Chinese Middle Schools. The study lasted two academic years. They found that Anglo-Chinese school students did better in English while Chinese
Middle Schools students did better in Chinese and History.

Ip & Chan (1985) examined different modes of instruction in four school subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, and History) on 7500 students and their outcomes at junior secondary level in 15 Anglo-Chinese schools. The study lasted two years, and they found that variable amounts of English were being used by schools that claimed to use English as the medium of instruction. In most classes, a great deal of Cantonese was used, and code switching was common. Teachers used Cantonese in class mostly in Mathematics lessons, and then in descending order of use in Science, History and English. Teachers seldom used English exclusively except beyond F.3. Students who were weak in English had poorer results in English version tests than in bilingual or Chinese versions and vice versa. The performance of students from English primary schools was better in English and History but worse in Chinese and Science in F.1. However, they had caught up by F.3.

Briner et al. (1985) looked at the “effects of different modes of instruction on students of different ability and language proficiency. A total of 1175 F.2 students from 36 schools were involved in the study which lasted for six weeks. Results indicated that only an estimated 30% could follow instructions well in English. They suggested that Chinese should be adopted as the medium of instruction for those unable to benefit from English in order to avoid educational disadvantage.

Ho (1986, 1987) studied the effect of spoken and written Chinese on students' achievement in Science and Social Studies on a sample of 152 Form One students from an aided Anglo-Chinese school. All the students were taught orally through the medium of Chinese while the written language was different, half in Chinese and half in English. Results indicated that students who learned all things in Chinese (written and spoken) performed significantly better than the others who used English as the written language. Furthermore, their standard of English remained at about the same level as their counterparts who used English as the medium of instruction.

Siu & Mak (1989) investigated the effect of switching the medium of instruction from English to Chinese on the academic achievement of 238 F.1 students from an Aided Secondary School. The following results were observed:

1. Students taught in Chinese learned much more History in one year than their counterparts taught in English, but no significant difference in progress was observed in two language subjects or in Science and Mathematics.

2. The progress in English for students of below average ability who had been immersed in English for two years, was found to be no better than their counterparts in a Chinese Middle School.

On the whole, the studies after 1980 confirmed and provided further support to the studies carried out in the 1970s. Due to the involvement of the Government research team, the sampling size and the generalisability of research results improved significantly. On top of the findings before 1980, studies since 1980 confirmed that only high ability students can cope with using English as the medium instruction at junior secondary level.

3. Directions for Future Research

The above research studies on medium of instruction done in Hong Kong shows quite clearly that the mother tongue is no doubt a more effective medium of instruction for the majority of secondary students.

However, the second problem — whether using English as the medium of instruction will enhance students' proficiency in English, remains unanswered. The study of Lo, Chan & Ip (1985) confirms this hypothesis, but the studies of Ho (1985, 1986, 1987), and Siu & Mak (1989) do not. Longitudinal studies using more precise instruments will be needed to tackle the question.

Since the Education Commission Report No.4 (1990) objected to the use of the mixed code but research in this area is scarce, studies on the effect of mixed-code teaching on student's language proficiency is badly needed in order to test the Education Commission's common sense approach to the mixed-code problem.

Lastly, in view of the language situation in Hong Kong many bilingual educators suggest that students can move gradually from using mother tongue to English as the medium of instruction during the junior secondary level. However, the Education Commission rejected this suggestion without any backup research. This is also an important area for further studies since it will have profound influence on schools and students.

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**A Bibliography of Empirical Studies on Medium of Instruction in Hong Kong**


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中英混合和雙語教學
— 從教學會第四號報告書談起
陸鍾光

一九九六年十一月，教學統籌委員會第四號報告書（以下簡稱“報告書”）面世。報告書以“課程與學生校內行為問題”為主題，分為若干章節，以處理教學語言及相關的問題。報告書共分九章，直接討論教學語言的只佔一小章(即第六章“教育的語言問題”，頁二十九頁)，但第五章“教學目標及有關的評估標準”(頁十七頁)與教學語言其實也有十分密切的關係。因此，報告書除附件外共一百零八頁，其中實有超過三分之一的篇幅（共三十四頁）是直接或間接與教學語言有關的。由此可見，九十年代香港教育發展所面臨的重大課題中，語言仍將是受注意的一環。

三大原則

報告書第六章開宗明義指出，有關教學語言的討論和建議，是建立在三條大原則之上的。其中第一及第二條，第二號報告書（1988年）已提出過，現在只是重新確認，至於第三條，是首次正式提出，也是本文要集中討論的地方。

仔細推敲這三條原則的內涵及其配置，則教學會在教學語言問題上的立場，可見端倪。
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第一章原則是：鼓勵各中學採用中文作為教學語言，因為假如其他條件都相仿，採用中文作為教學語言，一般會使教學與學習兩方面都有較好的效果。（4.1.4.1）

這種原則不妨稱為“母語教學”的原則，它正面肯定了母語教學的優越性，或者做出一個決策要全面推行母語教學的姿勢。不過隨即又加上一項附帶條件：雖然學生精通母語學習會更好，但對於那些已證明有能力透過英語學習的學生，也應給予讓他學習的機會。”（4.1.4.1）

這樣一來，一條表面上看來是清楚明白的原則，但卻又變得有點不甚清楚，好比我們說：“吸煙有害健康”，但接著又說：“雖然吸煙有害健康，但對於那些已證明能夠在沒有電子煙的人士，吸煙還是可以的。”

這種可以看作，政府一方面竭力推進母語教學，但同時又不肯輕易接受英文中學，如“中英文”政策就是在這樣一個進退兩難的境況下勉強構築出來的妥協。

中英文的主要問題是，把教學語言變成了幾乎是無可撼動的政績標準，可以想見，在一個中英文的架構裡，英文應該是變得重要；而中文則以傳統上被視為“第二公民”：

這種做法先不去說它是否對，但至少已經遠離了母語教學的原意，因為的確問題，是語言教學的原則”？

第二章原則是：個別學校應該自主決定採用英文或中文作為教學語言。（4.1.4.1）

表面看來，這種原則也是再明白不過的，個別學校應該根據自己的實際情況和學生的學習背景，自主決定使用英文或中文。例如，某些學校可能認為英文較適合較高的學生，而某些學校則可能認為中文較適合較低的學生。然而，這並不代表政府不會對學校的決定意見。政府仍然會審查學校的教學安排是否合規，並且必須確保學生能夠獲得良好的學習機會。

報告書為什麼要把複合語提昇到大原則的層面上來討論？如果教育當局的立意是逐漸推行母語教學，那麼只有確認第三條原則就已經足夠。但報告書已提到，政府其實並沒有全面推行母語教學的意願，反而是在希望設立一種中英文兼有的制度，要達到這樣的目的，自然不能與母語教學過於平行。

政府的處境是：一方面既要考慮到母語教學的發展，另一方面又要考慮到社會和教育界內的保守勢力的影響。此外還要照顧到家長和學生對英語的需要。在這種進退兩難的境況下，政府採取了逐漸推行的對策。首先是在教育當局的意見上作出必要的調整，當然未能達成母語教學的目標，但仍應考慮到各方面的利益，稿足到各方面的要求。任何正面的決定都不可能討好所有人，而政府在這些問題上卻又是給人一種要討好所有人的感覺。再說，這種逐漸推行的決定之後，必須承擔決定所可能帶來的後果。
混合語是多種語言的混合體，形成原因可能有文化、政治、经济等多种因素。混合語的使用可以追溯到早期的国际贸易和殖民地扩张，随着全球化的加深，混合語的使用范围不断扩大。混合語的使用者涵盖不同社会群体，包括移民、学生、工人等。

混合語的使用在不同国家和地区表现出不同的特征。例如，在美洲的加勒比海地区，人们常用西班牙语和英语混合使用，形成了一种独特的混合語——“克里奥尔语”。在非洲的某些地区，人们会使用不同的语言来交流，形成了一些独特的混合語。在亚洲，特别是在东南亚和南亚的一些国家，混合語的使用非常普遍，如泰语、马来语、汉语等语言的混合使用。

混合語的使用对于语言学研究具有重要意义。它不仅反映了语言的流动性，也揭示了语言和社会的复杂关系。通过研究混合語，我们可以更深入地理解语言的演变过程和社会变迁的关系。
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具規模的英語詞典，任何一本有詞源資料的詞典，隨便翻查一下，就不難發現，幾乎每頁都有好一大堆的外來詞。試舉以下一個實例。 *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* 第 283 頁上收的“三千詞”，九千個來自希臘文和拉丁文的，四個來自法語，另四個來自西班牙語。也就是說，有超過半數的詞，不是本土詞。現代語言中包含大量的外來詞，乃是不爭的事實。

現代語言學的情況又如何？現代語言學所的外來詞也不少，不過由於歷史的字典和詞源學的資料，也缺少嚴格的詞源學研究傳統，所以真實的情況比較難以確認。雖然這樣，我們還是可以從現存不完整的材料中，找到一個相應的輪廓。例如，一九七五年商务印書館出版的《英語外來詞詞典》（修正，高名凱、袁永□，史可為合編），裡面就收了一萬多個外來詞。收詞的標準極為嚴格：（一）字義完整；（二）方音中的外來詞（如粵語、上海話中大量的外來詞）很多字卻寫進去；（三）意譯的外來詞，如“巴士”、“巴士”（“巴士”和“巴士”是同一詞，只是用法不同）。現代外來詞的影響，不可小看。

當然，這些外來詞在現代語言中並不是常用的。但是其中有為數不少的詞為現代語言所接受，如“巴士”、“巧克力”、“沙發”、“革命”、“經濟”、“手賬”、“猩紅”等。

並且還有比較數量和使用頻率更重要的問題，那就是能否取代問題。現代英語和現代語言裡有好些外來詞，是常用而且難以取代的。英語中常用到的 Elite（精英）、ceep（政策）、garage（車庫）等詞，本來都是法語的借詞，但現在要說它們到底是英語還是法語，已無多大意義。反正是精英教育，你不想說 elilist education，想說你就說 garaje，那幾乎是不可能的。香港粵語也是如此。就拿“機車”、“打波”、“打賭”來說，原先是另一個語言中華文的借用，用於現代語言中，也可以發展成是通用詞，取代這些詞。從這種意義上講，要反對語言的混合是放棄的。

### 雙語教育？單語教育？

報告書反對中英混用的主要理由是中英混用使教學效率下降。但教學效率如何界定？如何測量？有何研究？卻不易說服。如果“效率”並

不單是課程短的快慢而是包括教學效益，如學生的理解，對學科的興趣，會否主動思考，提問，探究，以及功課的質量和考試的成績，則所包含的因素甚多，也十分複雜，而混合語言教學效率的關係，更需詳細研究和探討。

在現有的報告書中，似乎不能簡單地得到“混合語言”的結論。有些研究指出混合語言和單語測試，教學效益上並無顯著差異。有些研究則顯示混合語言的效益要比只用英語或者只用中文強。見 *Bringer 1985，Johnson 1986，Lin 1990*。

目前教育當局的政策是：既能培養學生的雙語能力（中，英文），這是既有政策的要求。 *Education Department 1989*：從這個立場出發，一切能有效地培養雙語能力的手段，都是應該予以研究的。所以“中英混用”其實正是得雙語教學的一種模式。這樣做是否周到？有進一步的討論，但大體上講，混合教學的方法都能培養大多數學生的雙語能力。分類教學或學生英文程度提高，而其餘大部分學生的英文水平可能因之下降。分類教學其實是一種單語教育制度——一邊是單純的英語，另一邊是單純的中文。這樣嚴重政府宣揚的雙語政策，是否有會不協調？

因此，報告書反對混合語言的指身边，即使有理，也不能單憑這些理由就認為必須推行分班，因為必須更強化各種制度所能提供的效益和所須付出的代價。推行制度的長處在於機會均等，只要學生成績優劣就能進出較好的學校，分級制度下機會並不是不均等。因為在這制度下學生成績已是最重要的，反而是英文水平的成績（即語言能力），而語言能力在家庭說是可能有一定的關聯，會否因此而令家庭背景較好的學生得到較大的機會進入英語教學的精英學校，這是個值得考慮的問題。

這樣說是否表示支持中英混合教學，或認為這是最好的制度？上面已說過，並沒有絕對優劣的制度，衡量不同制度的相對優劣時，必須認清所能達致的效果和所須付出的代價。分級和混合語言皆有其缺點，兩者相比，混合語言比較容易接受，因為分級會導致單語的分化，而現行制度較有彈性，比較符合教學當局現行的政策，並且保障教學機會均等。
在香港語言教育論文集

至使語言能全面推行中文教學，乃是另一個原則性的問題，而政府不致
以提高雙語能力為目標。那麼中文教學自有它的利處，但也必須認識它的
局限性，也必須就其對學生整體英語水平的影響有所理解。

平情而論，要在可見的將來消滅中英混合的現象，無論在學校裡或社
會上恐怕是不太可能的。香港的歷史社會條件早已決定了這種語言現象
的出現。從教學的觀點看，中英混用意見也是語文教學的一種。政府既然
以提高雙語能力為目標，就不應反其道而行，強行推動單語教學，把學生
逼到分明地“分流”。這樣做甚至會帶來不必要的社會分化，對提高社會
整體的中文英語能力也不見得有利。

註釋：

1. 前章的主要內容是，介紹，闡明，及推廣一種名為“目標為本評估”的公開考
試模式、所謂“目標為本評估”，就是說以目標設定或目標為準，用以
組定各科特在該科目中所佔的水平。現行的考試，一般都是以學生與學生之
間的相互比較或某個標準的比較。從這種意義上說，目標為本評估是建立在“自我
超越”而非相對個性發展基礎上的。但少理論上是這樣，實際起來是否如
此又值得商榷。對於報告書建議的“中國版”目標為本評估的作法是，可以根據小
六學生的英語能力，決定哪些可以入讀“全英”；哪些必須入讀“中文版”。目標為
本評估的作用是：可以根據小

2. 當然不能單純地將教學和教育侷限在那一時，教學是由過去直接委任的基礎
圈，獨立於政府部門之外，而教育政策的制定和執行則是政府和政府及其它部門和
教育界責任。教學的成員包括政府部門的官員（公務員）及非公務員，兩者之間
的關係為直接和微妙，由於教學的組成，創作及與政府部門之間的相互關係
，非本文的重點，因此不作太多闡述討論。簡單來說，教學為教學語言而言，教
學為教學及教學語言，教學的專家論，有關教學各方面的討論和建議基本上是參考教
育界（特別是語文教育學界）的意見，而語文教育學界實在於政府的一個行政部門，
有關教學成員的關係和組成的分析，可參閱本書附錄德德的文集。
Learning from the West: The Medium of Instruction in Hong Kong Schools

Peter C. S. Tung

Educational innovations in Hong Kong have often followed those in the West. In formulating a policy for the medium of instruction for Hong Kong schools, attempts have been made to apply some of the theories, concepts, and practices developed in the West. Recently, for example, the Education Department of Hong Kong has decided to group beginning secondary school students into English- and Chinese-medium classes based on a "Threshold Hypothesis" first conceived in the Western world. Such applications of Western ideas need to be examined carefully, not least because of two notable pitfalls. First, because of a change of context, Western ideas and practices may not be applicable or practicable in the schools of Hong Kong. Second, there is a danger that ideas and practices may be selected and applied to serve largely the interests of dominant groups in society.

To pursue these points further, this paper will focus on three notions originated in the West that are relevant to the current discussion of the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools. The aim is to find out how Western ideas and practices have or have not been applied in Hong Kong and to arrive at some observations on learning from the West in choosing a medium of instruction for Hong Kong schools.

The Threshold Hypothesis

A theoretical notion that the government has made known it will apply in Hong Kong is the 'Threshold Hypothesis'. The concept of a 'threshold level'
The Threshold Hypothesis also postulates that the pattern of bilingual proficiency associated with academic retardation is one in which pupils are proficient in neither their first nor second language. In this case, the pupils' interactions with their educational environment would be restricted. The level of language competence below which academic progress could be hampered is labelled the 'lower threshold'.

It is clear that Cummins's Threshold Hypothesis specifies two distinct thresholds. However, in the Report of the working group set up to review language improvement measures, there is reference to only one threshold. The problem is, it is unclear that the Education Department's threshold coincides with either of the two thresholds described in Cummins's Threshold Hypothesis.

If it is the higher threshold the Education Department is referring to, then the number of pupils who may qualify for English-medium education will be very small. There are simply not many pupils in Hong Kong who are competent to study in both English and Chinese at the end of primary school. In any case, the figure would be very much lower than the 30% of primary pupils suggested by the Education Department's report, which bases its estimation on an interpretation of the studies carried out by the department's Educational Research Establishment (Education Department 1989: 26). It might be instructive to note here that in the context of the highly successful Canadian immersion program, in which English-speaking children are educated in French, only about 8% of the primary school population is involved. This figure has grown from a small experimental program that took place over a quarter of a century ago.

If the Education Department is referring to the lower threshold, then assuming that the predominantly Chinese-medium primary schools in Hong Kong are doing their job, the great majority of the pupils entering secondary education in Hong Kong can qualify for English-medium education. That is, there is no reason to suspect that the majority of primary school children are not competent to study in Chinese and are not performing according to their academic expectation. This group of children clearly far exceeds the 30% of
the primary school pupils referred to in the Education Department’s report (1989). If the figure of 30% is what the Education Department thinks is about right, it is obvious that it is referring to a "threshold" that is neither the higher nor the lower threshold postulated by Cummins’ Threshold Hypothesis on which the recommendation for grouping students is supposedly based. It can only be concluded that this recommendation of the Education Department has little theoretical support.

There are other causes for questioning the Education Department’s understanding of the Threshold Hypothesis that it is determined to put into practice. First, it is not clear whether any threshold level could be described in such detail as to allow an observer to tell with confidence when a pupil’s language ability has reached a threshold level. So far, threshold levels have typically been indicated by children’s scores on vocabulary measures or reading comprehension tests. This is acceptable for research purposes but not for applications where we wish to determine whether a particular child can benefit from instruction in a second language. There needs to be a clear description of a full range of linguistic tasks that a child has to be able to do in order to be judged to have reached a threshold level and to be able to benefit from a certain type of education. In other words, the public must be assured that there is a fair and objective way to establish when a pupil can perform at the higher threshold, and that any assessment method used will bring about beneficial backwash effects on learning activities in the schools. Formulating a policy to group primary-six leavers before these issues are resolved cannot be a valid way to apply Western ideas, or indeed any idea.

Second, in considering the applicability of the Threshold Hypothesis in Hong Kong, it is necessary to examine the context in which it was formulated. The hypothesis was originally conceived in the context of education for majority and minority children in North America and Europe. When the majority English-speaking children in North America are educated in a second language, it is likely that they are adding a language to their first. This is because the children’s first-language development is unaffected in the longer term, since the children’s first-language development does not depend only on the education they receive at school but also on the support they get from their homes and communities. The Canadian school children in French immersion programs generally fit this description and they exemplify those who have passed Cummins’s "higher threshold".

For the minority children, say, children from Spanish-speaking homes in the United States who are educated entirely through the medium of English at school, there is evidence that the children’s first language, Spanish, may be replaced by the second language. English is, of course, the more prestigious and economically consequential language in that society; consequently, the home and community often do not provide an environment conducive to the development of Spanish literacy. Not unrelated to this, as will be shown later, many of these children could only attain a very low level of proficiency in English, far below that required for academic studies. In other words, they are the ones who fall below Cummins’s "lower threshold".

Returning to the situation in Hong Kong, school children here are neither in a majority nor a minority context as described above. First of all, Hong Kong is not a minority situation because most people in the territory speak and use Chinese. However, it is not a majority situation either. This is because the first language of Hong Kong children is not supported to the same extent in the home and the community as in North America. The oral language spoken locally, i.e., Cantonese, is obviously supported, but those aspects of the Chinese language, particularly those related to the written forms of Modern Standard Chinese that are important for work at school, are not. Parents in Hong Kong actively encourage their children’s learning of English because they believe proficiency in English will lead to better educational and career opportunities. On the other hand, these parents are not as keen to promote the learning of Chinese literacy skills. This important contextual difference regarding support for children’s first language development raises a serious question whether the Threshold Hypothesis is applicable in Hong Kong.

In short, the attempt by the Education Department to apply the Threshold Hypothesis in Hong Kong is clearly an example of misapplication of Western ideas. It is tempting to conclude that the educational administrators of the Department have made an interpretation of a Western concept to justify a policy that appeals to them on other grounds.
The Linguistic Interdependence Principle

The contextual difference discussed above leads to the second idea from the West. It has to do with the question whether there is any relationship between a bilingual's proficiency in the first language and his or her proficiency in a second language.

The answer to this question very much depends on the aspects of language proficiency under consideration. An important characterization of language use made by Cummins and others (see, for example, Cummins 1983) relates to the extent and range of contextual cues available to support language comprehension and use. At one end of the scale, language communication may rely to a large extent on the context. For example, in face-to-face conversations, contextual cues such as gestures, facial expressions, and the level and tone of voice can be very helpful in conveying the speaker's intention. As a last resort, utterances can be rephrased at the request of the listener to aid comprehension.

At the other end of the scale, communication using language depends very much on the formal aspects of language, such as spelling and grammar, and interrelationships within the text, such as those between pronouns and their referents. That is, language understanding and use at this end of the scale depends relatively little on contextual support. In this "decontextualized mode," in order that communication may be possible with the minimum amount of distortion, the writer (or speaker) must follow generally established textual conventions, take care to avoid ambiguity, and ensure coherence in encoding information in the text. The reader (or hearer), on the other hand, must be able to engage in a process mirroring the above, in order to recover the information intended by the writer (or speaker) from the text. This kind of language use in encoding and decoding information in relatively decontextualized contexts is important in academic studies for perceiving, analyzing, inferring, developing, and clarifying thoughts and ideas. The textual conventions and other literacy skills needed to recover meaning from the text are formally learnt at school when children learn to read and write.

The single most important fact relevant to the choice of a medium of instruction for Hong Kong schools is that a large number of studies have shown that this ability to use language with relatively little contextual support -- the ability that is crucial to academic success -- can be transferred across languages. (This transferability of language competence, given learner motivation and adequate exposure to the language(s) concerned, has been epitomized by Cummins in his "Linguistic Interdependence Principle." This principle has been supported by research in many contexts.)

In a particularly instructive research study involving children of Japanese expatriates working in Toronto, children who arrived with a better knowledge of Japanese required for academic studies, acquired similar skills in the English language more quickly than children who did not have a good background of Japanese to start with (see, for example, the summary provided in Cummins and Swain 1986: 89-92). Comparable results also emerged in studies of children who arrived in the West at different ages. Older children who had developed reading and writing skills in their first language were found to be better at learning to read and write a second language than younger children who arrived without the benefit of learning to read and write in their first language. This points to the desirability that priority should be given to educating children in their first language until such time important skills needed for academic studies are acquired by the children. A second language can then be added relatively efficiently and to the maximum benefit of the children.

In the context of Hong Kong, two additional factors seem to be relevant to the decision as to when English-medium education should be introduced in schools. First, the great majority of the children in Hong Kong have Cantonese as their first language, which, in many respects, is different from Modern Standard Chinese, the variety of Chinese that is used in formal Chinese writings and in academic settings. Because Hong Kong children do not generally speak Putonghua, on which Modern Standard Chinese is based, it should not be surprising if it takes them somewhat longer to acquire the literacy skills required in academic studies than, say, English-speaking children in England whose spoken language is much closer to the written language. Educated estimates by Chinese language educators cited in DeFrancis (1984: 153) put the length of time needed by Putonghua speakers to master three thousand Chinese characters for reading and writing at seven to eight years, and the time required by Cantonese speakers to attain the same level of competence at an additional one or two years. This consideration
alone argues for introducing English-medium education later rather than
earlier in Hong Kong to allow sufficient time for students to develop their
literacy skills in Modern Standard Chinese.

The second factor which has a bearing on when to introduce English-medium
education in Hong Kong schools has to do with the relative neglect of Chinese
literacy skills in the home and society. Many Hong Kong parents are simply
not aware of the benefits that Chinese literacy skills may bring to their
children. They do not know that proficiency in written Chinese can translate
into proficiency in written English and that a good background in Chinese is
precisely the kind of preparation leading to satisfactory academic results when
English is used as the medium of instruction. Consequently, and because of
the pragmatic considerations mentioned earlier, they have not paid sufficient
attention to the development of Chinese literacy skills of their children. In
this way, Hong Kong is very different from the majority context in the West,
where children's first language development has always been strongly
supported by the home and community. Because of this relative neglect of
Chinese literacy skills in Hong Kong, children here will require a longer
period of time to develop their skills in Modern Standard Chinese.

There are two important lessons that Hong Kong should derive from the
investigations informing the Linguistic Interdependence Principle. The first is
that we should redouble our efforts to educate our students in Chinese. Only
then will our students have a better chance of success in learning through
English. Second, efforts should be made to create favourable conditions for
our students to acquire Chinese literacy skills. This means that the
government must take the lead in recognizing the importance of Chinese for
our children and Hong Kong. For example, a hiring and promotion policy
may be devised to provide incentive for people who are proficient in both
English and Chinese. Without such concrete measures, it is difficult to
evassage how the adverse attitudes of Hong Kong parents towards the Chinese
language will change.

The "Maximum Exposition" Argument

The third idea from the West to be examined in this paper is again closely
related to what has been discussed. Although this idea has already been
discredited by researchers in the West, many people still cling to it for one
reason or another. This is the idea that using students' second language
exclusively as the medium of instruction, thereby maximizing student'
exposure to it, would produce proficient users of that language. (A fuller
exposition of this idea can be found in Cummins and Swain 1986: 80). The
idea forms part of the rationale behind the recommendation of the Education
Commission in its Fourth Report (p. 9 and pp. 10-34) that a percentage of
classes in Hong Kong secondary schools should use only English as the
language of instruction. It also provides a basis for the Education
Commission's condemnation of the widespread practice of 'mixed-code
teaching', where English and Chinese are used in a wide variety of
combinations in the classrooms of nominally English-medium schools (pp.
100-1).

The reasoning of the Education Commission is as follows. Industry and
commerce in Hong Kong require a large number of workers who can conduct
business through English. In order that the education sector may produce
enough competent users of the language to meet this demand, a good
proportion of students in Hong Kong must be instructed through the medium
of English in all subjects other than the Chinese language and Chinese
History. The rationale is that only then will sufficient numbers of students get
the exposure they need to become skilled users of English. The assumption
here is of course that the more the students are exposed to English, the better
they function in the language.

A bit of thought in the light of the discussion so far will show that this
'maximum exposure' argument for English-medium education is false. It is
not the amount of exposure per se that matters. Many Spanish-speaking
children in the United States, for example, are maximally exposed to English
through English-medium education, yet a significant number of them are
unsuccessful in academic studies. Another instructive example comes from
the comparison of early immersion students and late immersion students in
Canada. At the end of Grade 10 (equivalent to Form 4 in Hong Kong), after
three years of about 1400 hours of instruction in French, the late immersion
students performed better on a French reading test than the early immersion
students who had spent over 4000 hours being instructed in French since
kindergarten (Swain 1981: 25). Even the Education Department of Hong
Kong seems to be ambivalent about the "maximum exposure" argument at one point. Its Working Group set up to review language improvement measures concluded that "the time spent on English should not be increased in primary schools since it would lead to higher standards and might indeed result in a distortion of the primary curriculum" (see Education Commission 1990: 94).

Clearly, the heart of the matter with respect to education in a second language is not simply the cumulative amount of exposure to that language. It is whether students' cognitive development is continued when instruction is conducted in their second language. Returning to the example of immersion students in the last paragraph, Swain (1986: 25) reported that the late immersion students received 70% of their instruction in French in Grade 8 (equivalent to Forms 2 in Hong Kong), and only 80% of their instruction in French in Grades 9 and 10 (equivalent to Forms 3 and 4). The continuous development of these students' academic knowledge and skills and their ability to use language for academic purposes is guaranteed by studying partly in the first language. As Swain (1986: 26) remarked, "It is...one problem to learn to read and learn a second language at the same time, and a lesser problem to learn to read a second language when one already knows how to read, and when one already understands the functions reading serves."

The "maximum exposure" argument thus presents a simplistic view of the issue of the medium of instruction. It is supported in the United States by those who fear that "American culture" would be threatened by preserving and consolidating the first language of minority students. In Hong Kong, the "maximum exposure" argument helps the government to justify the continuation of English-medium education for a significant proportion of school children and to minimize the need for drastic changes to the status quo. It also relieves pressure on the government from the business sectors for more workers proficient in English, and it satisfies the wishes of many parents who see English-medium education as the path to success.

Arguing from the needs of industry and commerce for more workers capable of functioning in English and concluding that a sizeable proportion of the student population should be identified and taught only through the medium of English cannot be supported by research on the development of bilingual proficiency. There is, however, considerable support from numerous studies for the notion that knowledge and skills learnt through Chinese are transferable to English. It makes educational, social and economic sense, therefore, to promote and strengthen students' academic knowledge and literacy skills in Chinese as far as possible, and to institute procedures to help them transfer these skills to English. This strongly suggests that public funds should be used to instruct students firstly in Chinese, which has been shown for some time to be the more effective medium of instruction for students in Hong Kong. To ensure there is transfer of skills from Chinese to English, adaptations of various late French immersion programs in Canada could be adopted. For example, students may be taught select subjects entirely in English for part or all of their secondary school years. In this way, students' continuous cognitive development will not be impeded, and proficiency in the second language can be an attainable goal. In the final analysis, it is the ability of students to function effectively in both Chinese and English that matters in study, work or life. This will also benefit the whole of Hong Kong, not least its industry and commerce.

Conclusions

It has been argued in this paper that Western ideas and practices have influenced government decisions on the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools. However, these borrowed ideas and practices have not always served the best interests of Hong Kong. This may be due to an inadequate understanding of the principles involved and a lack of appreciation of the contextual differences between Hong Kong and the West. Such is the case of the Education Department's application of the Threshold Hypothesis. Another reason for the unsatisfactory application of Western ideas and practices may be the government's desire to placate as many influential groups as possible. An example is the decision to maintain English-medium education for a sizeable proportion of the secondary school population, which looks to the discredited "maximum exposure" argument for support.

There is of course much that Hong Kong can learn from the experience gained in the West regarding the choice of a medium of instruction for school children. Four general theoretical principles that have been shown to hold in
different contexts are described in Cummins (1988), a speech he gave at an international conference in Hong Kong organized by the Education Department’s Institute of Language in Education. Among these general principles, the Linguistic Interdependence Principle is central to the present discussion. The Education Department (1989: 13) has alluded to research supporting this principle when it refers to the need for coherence in the efforts of those educators working in Chinese and those working in English, but it has not applied the principle to contexts where research has demonstrated it to be fundamental, in ensuring that children’s literacy-related skills in their first language and second language are maximally developed.

In learning from the West, it is crucial to identify general theories that are applicable across contexts and pertinent to our problems. In particular, if a general theory is to be useful for identifying appropriate languages for instructing children in Hong Kong at different stages of their education, it should help us to understand the present situation and to anticipate the likely consequences of educational measures that might be adopted. The Linguistic Independence Principle clearly fulfills these requirements. It helps us to understand why many of our children are less than competent in both English and Chinese, and it aids us in choosing languages of instruction that will ensure both the uninterrupted development of our students’ academic knowledge and their bilingual proficiency.

Once general theoretical principles have been chosen and their implications for Hong Kong recognized, the authorities must undertake to create conditions for implementing educational measures consistent with them. Specifically, if the Linguistic Interdependence Principle is to be successfully applied in Hong Kong, the government must undertake to publicize its merits widely in terms that can be comprehended readily by various sectors of the community. Necessary teaching materials and other resources must be made available and teachers trained to make full use of them. Teachers, as well as parents, must be convinced of the virtues of any changes to the present system. Then careful research and evaluation studies must be carried out to monitor the progress of students and other expected and unexpected outcomes. The implementation of educational measures must of course be responsive to feedback gained from these studies.

All things considered, there is no reason why Hong Kong cannot profit from the experiences of other societies.

References


PART FOUR:
ENGLISH AND CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING
Using English as a Medium of Instruction and English Language Acquisition

Amy B.M. Tsui

Introduction

There is a common belief among parents and some educators in Hong Kong that using English as a medium of instruction necessarily facilitates English language learning, and necessarily leads to higher standards of English. The immersion programmes in Canada have often been quoted as an example of successful second language acquisition through using it as a medium of instruction.

But does using a second language as a medium of instruction necessarily lead to better second language acquisition? What are the factors that may affect the acquisition of a second language? In the following discussion, I will look at some of the important factors in second language acquisition: motivation, parental support, language input, and language output. I shall make comparisons between the 'immersion programme' in Hong Kong schools and Canadian Immersion Programmes.

Canadian Immersion Programmes

Before we discuss the four factors, it may be useful to give a brief account of the Canadian Immersion programmes.

Immersion programmes are defined in Canada as programmes where half or more of the instruction occurs in a second language.

The immersion programmes began in the mid-60s in response to the considerable pressure by a group of English-speaking parents in Quebec who
wanted their children to become highly proficient in French. At that time, French was being increasingly emphasized as the language of work and has become legalized as the official language of work in Quebec. The Federal Government was also introducing bilingual services in English and French. Hence, there was an increased recognition and acceptance among English-Canadians of the value of French. Therefore parents and educators across Canada looked for educational solutions that would lead to increased proficiency in French. The solution was to use French as a medium of instruction in schools, but ensuring that students get the same type of education as they would in regular English schools. Hence the Immersion Programmes.

There are three major models. Table 1 is a summary of them. (see Table 1)

The first model is 'early total immersion' (Carleton, Ottawa, and Toronto Boards of Education) where 100% French is used from Kindergarten to Grade 1, from Grades 2 to 4, 80% French is used, in Grade 5, 65%-80% French is used and from Grades 6-8, 50% French is used. (Follow-up programmes have been designed so that the early immersion students may take 3 to 5 subject options in French at high school.)

The second model is 'early partial immersion' (Elgin County Board of Education) which begins at Grade 1, following a half-day English Kindergarten, with English and French used equally as the medium of instruction up to Grade 8. This model arose out of parents' concern that early total immersion would have negative effects on first language development.

The third model is 'late immersion' (Peel County Board of Education, Toronto, Ottawa and Carleton). There are different versions in this model: (a) late entry immersion, which begins at Grade 6 or 7, following core French which starts at Kindergarten, with 100% French for Grade 6, and 50%-80% French in Grades 7 & 8; (b) late extended immersion, where 25% to 40% French is used in Grades 7 and 8; and (c) late partial immersion, where there is core French for Grades 6 & 7 and 55%-70% of the curriculum is in French.

The rationale behind these programmes is that using a second language as the medium of instruction will provide a naturalistic setting for second language acquisition. It is thought that by interacting with speakers of the language in authentic and meaningful communicative situations, students will acquire a second language in the same manner as children acquiring their first language.
In both cases, students are provided with rich language input and they gradually learn to use the language in order to communicate.

**Evaluation of Canadian Immersion Programmes**

**Academic Achievement**

The obvious concern of both parents and educators was whether these immersion programmes will adversely affect the academic achievement of the students and their first language development. They were also interested in finding out whether these programmes indeed helped students to achieve a higher standard of French. Studies were carried out and some of the findings are summarized as follows (see Swain and Lapkin 1982 for detailed findings).

The academic achievement of immersion students was compared with their peers in the English-only programme. The results associated with early total immersion consistently showed that in both science and mathematics, the immersion students performed as well as their English-instructed comparison groups. (Note that the tests were administered in English.) For example, in summarizing 9 years of testing early total immersion students in Ontario, Swain and Lapkin (1982) report that in 38 administrations of standardized Mathematics achievement tests from Grades 1 to 8, the immersion students performed as well as, or better than, their English-taught comparison groups in 26 instances. In 3 instances, the English-taught comparison groups scored significantly higher than an immersion group in one or two of the subtests, but never the test as a whole.

Results in the science tests were similar. The average scores of the immersion and comparison groups were similar in 14 separate administrations from Grades 5 to 8.

Results associated with early partial and late immersion, however, did not consistently show equal performance between immersion and comparison groups. In Mathematics, inferior performance has occasionally been measured among some groups of early partial immersion from Grade 3 onwards, and in Science, from Grade 5 onwards. Inferior performance in Science and Mathematics has also been occasionally measured in late immersion groups.

Results from the early partial and late immersion programmes suggest that students' inferior performance could well be due to the lack of an adequate command of French to deal with the complexities of the subject material taught in French. (This will be discussed in a later section.)

**Second Language Performance**

In terms of second language performance, each and every study that has compared the second language performance of students in early total immersion programmes with that of students in core French programs (20-40 minutes of French each day focusing on specified vocabulary and grammatical structure) has shown a significant difference in favour of the immersion students.

**First Language Development**

As for the first language development of immersion students, the results indicated that although they were initially behind students in unilingual English programmes in literacy skills, they were able to catch up within a year of introduction of an English language arts component which is usually at Grade 2. In some cases, the immersion students even outperformed their English peers in some aspects of English language skills.

The above results show that, as far as Canada is concerned, early total immersion is the answer to achieving high standards of French in schools while maintaining first language and academic standards.

**Hong Kong 'Immersion Programmes'**

Does this mean, however, that immersion in English is the answer to achieving high English standards in Hong Kong schools? What are some of the factors that we need to take into consideration?

Before we discuss the factors, it must be pointed out that the 'immersion programmes' in Hong Kong are very different from the Canadian models. There are very few early total immersion schools. The model for English medium schools in Hong Kong are supposed to be late total immersion in which, except for Chinese as a subject, 100% English is used throughout Forms 1 to 7. (This model is not found in the Canadian experience.) In reality, however, most schools are adopting late total mixed-code immersion, or the 'mixing approach' (McLaughlin 1978). Some schools have adopted late partial immersion.
Factors in Effectiveness of Immersion Programmes

In the following, I shall examine four factors which contribute to the effectiveness of immersion programmes. I shall compare the Canadian experience with the Hong Kong experience.

Motivation

In learning a language, motivation is the most important factor. In fact, it is the most important factor in learning in general. So long as students are motivated to learn the language, they will learn it well no matter whether they are integratively or instrumentally motivated.

In Canada, parents send their children to immersion programmes by choice. In a sense, we could also say that parents in Hong Kong send their children to English medium schools by choice. However, if we compare the status of French and English in Canada and the status of English and Chinese in Hong Kong, we will see that Hong Kong parents do not really have a choice. In Canada, English is a majority language and a prestigious language. Although French was at that time becoming more and more important and prestigious, it was not threatening the status of English. By contrast, in Hong Kong, Chinese is the majority language in the sense that it is the language used out of school and at home, but it is not a prestigious language. English is. It is the language of work, government, business, education. If parents want a better future for their children, they have no choice but to send them to English medium schools.

A comparison of the percentage of students enrolled in the immersion programmes in Canada and the percentage of students enrolled in English medium schools in Hong Kong is telling. In 1979-80, 2.5% of the total English-speaking student population enrolled in the immersion programmes at elementary school level, that is, from kindergarten to grade 8. In Swain (1980), the figure was 5%. And in a recent discussion with Dr. Merrill Swain, the figure provided was 2.5%. By contrast, in Hong Kong, over 90% of the students are studying in English medium schools.

When immersion and core French students were asked about their views on the French programmes in which they were enrolled, it was found that relative to the core FSL students (students studying French as a second language, with a 20-40 minute French lesson each day), Grades 4 and 5 immersion students were much more likely to say that they enjoyed studying French the way they did. They thought their programme had just about the right amount of time spent on French and that they wanted to continue learning French. Some even said that it was a bit too short. The core FSL students, by contrast, tended to say that too much time was spent on learning French. In a study where Grade II students and their parents were interviewed, there was a very clear appreciation for the early immersion experience both on the part of the students and the parents. They said that they would choose the immersion option if they had to do it all over again (see Swain and Lapkin 1982).

To the best of my knowledge, there is no large scale survey of Hong Kong secondary students' attitude towards English learning in English medium schools (see however Pierson, Fu & Lee 1980). A rough guess would be the top 5% to 10% students who do well in their English language are likely to say that they enjoy studying English and studying in English. However, it will hardly be surprising if the remaining 80% or so students say that they know that English is very important, but they find it difficult and boring, and that far too much time is spent on studying English.

Parental Support

The second factor is parental support. Parents of immersion students in Canada are very keen that their children do not suffer first language loss. The majority of the immersion students come from middle and upper-middle class families. This suggests that students will be able to get support at home in their first language development as well as their cognitive development.

In Hong Kong, the scenario is very different. Students come from a much wider range of family background, mostly working class and lower-middle class. Parents do not seem particularly keen that their children do not suffer first language loss. These two factors mean that the majority of students do not and cannot get the kind of parental support that students in Canada do in terms of both their first language and cognitive development. Learning in the mother tongue is not easy without parental support. Learning in a second language without parental support is something which only a very small percentage of students can cope with.
Language Input

The third factor and a very important factor indeed in second language acquisition is input. According to Krashen (1980), the input that learners receive is crucial. Firstly, if students are exposed to rich language input in communicative situations where meanings are negotiated between speakers, they are more likely to acquire the language. Secondly, not only does the language input have to be rich, it must also be comprehensible. Krashen maintains that the best second language learning environment is one in which the input that learners are exposed to is slightly more difficult than learners’ present level of proficiency so that they can understand most of it. Krashen refers to it as $+1$ or $+1$, i.e., for comprehensible input. The part that learners do not understand will challenge them to go a bit beyond their present level of proficiency.

I would like to consider comprehensible input first. In the Canadian experience, it was found that it was not until Grade 6 of early total immersion that students’ French performance is equivalent to an average Francophone student. In other words, it was not until after 7 years of French immersion that their level of French is comparable to an average French native speaker at Grade 6. In the process of early total immersion, as we have already seen, students are allowed to talk to their teachers and peers in their mother tongue, and there is also a gradual increase in the use of English in the curriculum.

If we look at the Hong Kong situation, students in Secondary One have had only six years or less of English as a subject. In immersion terminology, this would amount to six years of ‘core English’. And yet, at the point of entry to Secondary One, students are expected to handle the curriculum solely in English. This is clearly unrealistic. In fact, from the Canadian experience, we have already seen that the inferior academic performance of the early partial immersion and late immersion students is a strong indication that unless students have attained a sufficiently high level of French, their academic achievement will suffer. Cummins & Swain (1986) refer to this level as the threshold level. When the second language input is largely incomprehensible to students in Hong Kong, not only will their academic achievement be adversely affected, so will their English language acquisition.

Secondly, the kind of input that students are exposed to in Hong Kong are nowhere near the rich and communicative input that they receive in their first language. A look at the kind of interaction that goes on in Hong Kong classrooms shows that it mainly consists of the teacher imparting knowledge to students and a question and answer interaction where the teacher checks students’ knowledge. This kind of communication is far from the kind that one finds outside the classroom. In fact this is one of the problems that the Canadian immersion students have as well. I shall deal with this when we discuss the fourth factor—language output.

Thirdly, unless the language that students are exposed to are of native speaker quality, we cannot expect them to acquire native-like proficiency. In the Canadian immersion programmes, all teachers are either native speakers of French or English speakers with native speaker proficiency. Decisions with regard to which subjects are to be taught in English and which in French are made on the basis of the language proficiency of the teachers available. The language in which school subjects are taught varies among boards and even among schools so that the best use be made of teachers available. If a given subject is taught in different languages in two consecutive years, the teachers and/or the consultants involved will discuss the course content and develop the same type of sequential curriculum that characterizes any well-planned English programme. This is possible in Canada because of the small percentage of students enrolled in the immersion programmes. The number of teachers with native-like French proficiency required is relatively small and the logistics of ensuring parity and continuity in the curriculum simpler. I am sure if only such a small percentage of students were enrolled in English medium schools in Hong Kong, there would have been sufficient numbers of teachers with native-like English proficiency. But when the number is as great as more than 90% of the student population, it is clearly unrealistic to expect that there would be an equally large number of teachers with English native speaker proficiency to teach the content subjects. The result is that the language input that students receive is largely substandard. How then do we expect students to attain good English standards?

Language Output

In the Canadian immersion programmes, it was found that when compared with Francophone students in Grade 6, immersion students’ French was not native-like in terms of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and global discourse competence. Educators in Canada asked why they were still significantly not as good as French native-speakers when the language input that they received was clearly comprehensible because they did as well as native speakers in listening comprehension and written production. One
reason they proposed is that the interaction that immersion students were involved in was not as rich as the kind that one finds in first language interaction. Many teachers were concerned with imparting knowledge. Very few exchanges in the classroom were motivated by two-way exchange of information as among conversational equals. Another very important reason that they proposed is the output. They maintained that not only were they not being pushed hard enough to produce the target language more accurately and precisely. In other words, they now maintain that it is not enough to just get students to convey their message. They need to do it precisely, coherently, and appropriately. Therefore, they proposed that in order that immersion students be able to achieve a high standard of French, they need not only comprehensible input, but also the production of comprehensible output.

Concluding Remarks

In the above discussion, I have only outlined some of the factors that need to be taken into consideration when making decisions on medium of instruction. I am sure there are many that have not been outlined here. For example, the importance of first language proficiency in acquiring a second language. In the bilingual programme in the U.S. for minority language students, it was found that before students had reached a threshold level in their first language, more exposure to second language in fact resulted in poor second language acquisition and poor cognitive development. In a number of researches done to investigate the interdependence between cognitive/academic skills in the first language and those in the second language, it was also found that students' first language cognitive/academic skills are just as important as their second language exposure for the development of cognitive/academic skills in the second language (see Cummins 1984; Dolson 1984, quoted in Cummins & Swain 1986; Cummins & Swain 1986 for example). This suggests that when we make decisions on the medium of instruction, we should consider not only whether students have attained the threshold level in the second language, but also in the first language.

What I hope I have demonstrated in this paper is that while a bilingual programme is desirable and attractive, there are many variables and interacting factors which contribute to the success of such a programme. When we make decisions on language policies, we must be able to identify these factors and carry out large scale longitudinal empirical research. Otherwise, the ones to suffer are not a handful of policy makers, but thousands of helpless students.

Notes

1. This paper has been presented at the Northcote Education College Staff Seminar held on 2 May 1991.
2. This was a discussion with Dr. Merrill Swain when she visited Hong Kong in November 1991.
3. The research conducted by Pierson, H., Fu, G. & Lee, S.Y. (1980) is an investigation into the relationship between language attitudes and English attainment of secondary students in Hong Kong. The subjects involved were 466 Form IV (Grade 10) students.
4. This is an impression I get from visiting many schools in Hong Kong supervising teachers and talking to students.

References

中文教學除舊佈新的設想

從「檢討提高語文能力措施工作小組報告書」
談到中文教學的有關問題

王培光

一、重英輕中使人費解

重英輕中！這是「檢討提高語文能力措施工作小組報告書」（以下簡稱「報告書」）給人的印象。香港語言學會批評「報告書」的「重點顯然放在英語上」，這是不偏資施都可以看到，「報告書」論述中文教學的篇幅甚少，論述英文教學之處則甚多。中文與英文的教學集中在報告書的第三部份討論，但這部份論述英文的多，提及中文的少。第三部份的論述與第一節至第三節，論述中文與英語，令人驚奇莫名的是，第四節至第七節共有四節專論英文教學。而偏偏第八節—節淺涉中文教學：論英文教學的四節，所陳述的措施其實都應用到中文教學上，例如第四節提及學生使用無線接收系統吸聽英語，這系統何時不可用於吸聽普通話或粵語，何故當局未能推廣及此呢？

第三部份的論述說第八節將「檢討關於中文的措施」，但該節僅僅探討了普通話的推廣辦法，標題是「鼓勵學校課堂時間或以課外活動形式教授普通話」。此節沒有著重中文的寫作或閱讀教學，也未涉及粵語的說話或聆聽教學，莫非普通話就等同中文的全部？這種偏該全的作法，使人百思不得其解。
二．中文教學的主要問題

除了上述問題使人費解外，報告書還有一點批評值得注意。報告書對英語教學法的敘述，提出了一些批評和建議，但對於中文教學的問題則少有著墨。作者認為，中文教學方法的欠缺主要表現在以下幾個方面：

1. 導師的教學方法過時，缺乏現代教學理論的指導。在教學實踐中，導師們往往通過簡單的章節講授和手寫板書來傳授知識，學生在這種教學模式中無法自主學習，學習效果不佳。

2. 導師的教學方式單一，缺乏多樣性。導師在教學中往往習慣於使用一種教學方式，過於形式化，導致學生的積極性和參與度降低。

3. 導師在進行教學時，往往過於注重知識的傳達，而忽略了學生的思考和探索能力的培養。這種單純的知識傳遞方式，往往會使學生缺乏對知識的深刻理解，影響了學習效果。

4. 導師的教學評價方式過於單一，缺乏多元化的評價標準。往往通過測試成績來評價學生的學習情況，過於注重知識的傳遞，而忽略了學生的思考和探索能力的培養。

5. 導師的課堂管理方式過於鬆弛，缺乏有效的課堂管理措施。導致課堂秩序混亂，影響了教學效果。

6. 導師在進行教學時，往往過於注重知識的傳達，而忽略了學生的思考和探索能力的培養。這種單純的知識傳遞方式，往往會使學生缺乏對知識的深刻理解，影響了學習效果。

三．語法教學的問題

傳統的中文教學以語法教學為重，導致對語言知識的過於強調，甚至出現學生在語法教學中過於注重詞彙和句型的記憶，而忽略了語法的實際運用。這種過於注重知識傳遞的教學方式，往往會使學生缺乏對知識的深刻理解，影響了學習效果。
結構主義的主要觀點是，結構主義認為語言的發展是通過語言的內部規律和外部因素共同作用的结果。它認爲，語言系統是由一系列的規則和規律構成的，這些規則和規律的相互作用是語言發展的重要動力。因此，結構主義強調語言的內部結構和規律是語言發展的根本。另一方面，結構主義也強調外部因素的作用，認爲語言不僅是內部規律的進化，還需要外部環境的影響。因此，結構主義強調語言的發展是內部規律和外部環境相互作用的結果。
香港語言教育論文集

拙詩話是中華人的共同語，極有學術的價值，另外，拙詩話以中文書
面而相傳，掌握詩話對寫好中文書面語大有裨益。因此，一些人主
張以拙詩話教授中文，以收一舉兩得之效，既可學到拙詩話，也可學好
中文，而這是最少僞高率的方面。一部分，學生應有能力使用拙詩
話理解；第二，教師的拙詩話必須相當標準能耐，目前，拙詩話的書
面不詳，難得以拙詩話教授中文的師資；況且，學生的拙詩話能力亦
不足以應付課堂上溝通所需；故此，拙詩話還是避為獨立科目教授為宜。

將來即使有足夠的師資，如果要採用拙詩話作教學語言，也要考慮兩
方面：首先，要考慮師生、教師與學校的意願，師生與學生願意使用拙詩
話進行教學，拙詩話才能得到真正的推廣，Fasold (1984) 說得好，必須得
詩話使用者的首肯，才有真正的語言轉型，其次，要考慮學生能否聽懂自
言話，使用拙詩話發問與討論。人口統計資料顯示，香港百分之九十八的
家庭都使用粵語，所以粵語是絕大多數香港兒童的母語。周祖墀 (1981) 與
王子元 (Wang & Wang, 1982) 都認為粵語區中學生的人纔學習普通話，不能立即
理解普通話，因此，學生應先以拙詩話作獨立科目學習，掌握基本的愚
話後，才在一些科目上接觸普通話作為教學語言，這樣，可以減少突然
全面以普通話教學對學生帶來的衝擊。

報告書建議練習小學拙詩話教師的口語水平，這對提高普通話教學
水準而言，確有必要。報告書關注到普通話標準的問題，卻未論及粵語規
範的問題。為一部分，香港人在許多場合的場合需要說比較標準的粵語，學
校內說教
的是否就是這種標準的粵語？這種標準粵語的規範是怎樣的？在香港，這
些問題在教學上是極關緊要的。

本文根據“中文未受教育者重視”一文改寫而成，該文載於一九九零年五月十一日

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Appendix I

A Blueprint for Linguistic Chaos:
A Critique of the Report of the Working Group
Set up to Review Language Improvement Measures

The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong

1. Facing Up to the Language Realities

The Report of the Working Group set up to Review Language Improvement Measures represents the first major attempt by Government to spell out policy issues on language in education.

The Report reviews a range of social and educational factors underlying the standards of achievement in English and Chinese in Hong Kong. It addresses the problems of learning and teaching which stem from using English as the medium of instruction in the schools. It also draws attention to the need for stepped-up efforts in language education for teachers.

The Report ends with a list of 78 recommendations, the most controversial of which is the proposal to stream students on the basis of their English proficiency at entrance to secondary school. Another proposal which has sparked off considerable debate is the setting up of a Language Planning Unit within the Institute of Language in Education.

The Report marks a break from the past in trying to face up to the complex realities of the language situation in Hong Kong. It recognizes the dominance of spoken Cantonese and written Chinese in the local community and in the lives of the learners. It rightly observes that the English language, despite its being highly valued, is restricted to certain specific domains of use. Further, it
candidly acknowledges that negative sentiments about the use of English as a medium of instruction are felt in the classroom.

A professional effort has been made by the Working Group to draw on selective research findings in formulating their analyses and recommendations. Their willingness to tackle controversial issues such as the decline or maintenance of standards in Chinese and English in the schools is commendable.

It is also a step forward for the Working Group to emphasize the importance of and necessity for language planning in Hong Kong. The proposed survey of language needs and language use in the local community reaffirms the need for empirical research as a basis for rational and informed decision-making.

2. A General Appraisal

However, the Report has a number of serious problems, in its theoretical underpinnings, its arguments and its concrete proposals. Four salient problems deserve our attention. One is that while the main concern of the report is improving the language standards of students in Hong Kong schools in the context of bilingual education, the emphasis is clearly placed on English. Where the analysis touches on Chinese, no clear differentiation is made between spoken and written Modern Standard Chinese. The amount of attention paid to mother tongue education in the document is cosmetically minimal.

Secondly, the key proposal of the Working Group - the streaming proposal - lacks a sound theoretical basis; its foreseeable negative social consequences far outweigh the benefits it is supposed to bring.

Thirdly, the research methodology, as well as the findings of some of the studies upon which the recommendations are based, has not been made known to the public. It is not clear whether these studies can meet the normal standards of the academic community.

Fourthly, setting up a language planning unit within an executive branch of the government bureaucracy, where conflict of interests is hard to avoid, is not likely to lead to critical thinking about language issues and effective coordination with educational bodies, institutions, and professionals.

2.1 A Taste of the Mother Tongue?

As stated, it is government policy "to promote bilingual skills in Chinese and English among all students in schools at both primary and secondary levels." It is also the express purpose of the Working Group to look into ways of improving learners' proficiency in the two languages.

For a professional group embarking on such an important task, a clear definition of the concept of 'bilingual skills' is an obvious prerequisite to any policy recommendations. Does the term 'bilingual skills' refer to equal competence in Chinese and English? If not, what levels of competence are learners expected to attain in Chinese (spoken Cantonese and written Modern Standard Chinese)? What levels of proficiency are expected of learners in English, in various domains of its use? What roles are played by these languages in the overall intellectual development of learners in Hong Kong?

It is not clear from the Report what view is being taken of the relationship between knowledge in Chinese, the primary language, and the teaching and learning of English as a secondary language. Recent research has shown that a sound knowledge of one's mother tongue may facilitate the effective development of one's competence in a second or foreign language, a point acknowledged in the Report. If so, what measures should be taken to recognize the importance and priority of Chinese language learning, and how can its positive contributions to English language learning be maximized?

Nowhere in the report are these fundamental questions addressed. Still larger but highly relevant issues such as the educational implications of the relative status of Cantonese, Putonghua and English, especially in the context of possible changes in the coming decade, have been entirely ignored. Also conspicuously missing is any discussion of the divergence of norms between spoken Cantonese and written Modern Standard Chinese, and the problems this poses for the teaching and learning of Chinese.

The Working Group clearly accept the value of mother tongue education. And yet, in spite of the professed emphasis on coherence in planning across languages (Chinese and English), the Report's focal attention is clearly on English. The amount of thinking devoted to the learning and teaching of Chinese is, to say the least, cursory.

The concerns of the Working Group on these matters are restricted to appeals for additional Chinese textbook materials, language training for
teachers using Chinese as the medium of instruction, and minimal proficiency requirements for the teachers of Putonghua in the schools.

It is not difficult to imagine the immensity and complexity of the task of training and retraining secondary teachers (the majority of whom have been trained in their subjects partially in the English medium) with a view to enabling them to teach effectively through Chinese. A comprehensive, well thought-out plan is required to make this conversion feasible. The Report fails even to consider the complexity of the issues involved. The proposals for such teacher training are limited to teacher education at the College of Education level and short-term in-service courses, and as such do little justice to the problems involved.

2.2 "Streaming": An Incoherent Option

The most damaging proposal of the Working Group must be to stream students according to their level of English proficiency. On the basis of diagnostic tests, primary students would, according to the Report, be assigned to English-medium or Chinese-medium classes at the beginning of Secondary One. Likewise, students in the colleges of education will also be categorized into two groups: those fit for teaching in the English medium, and those who are not so qualified.

The Streaming proposal is based on two premises: (a) only 30% of the secondary school students can benefit cognitively from an English-medium education; (b) the mixed use of Cantoneese and English in the classroom, which is prevalent in the schools, is detrimental to language learning. This code-mixing is considered undesirable and is to be banned from the classroom.

Accepting for the sake of argument these premises (which we will return to in later discussion), these proposals would amount to the government using simplistic administrative measures to impose a 'solution' on the complex, age-old educational problems that have arisen as a result of using a non-native language as the medium of instruction.

Whatever its original intentions, streaming is on all counts a regressive and socially divisive measure. It runs counter to the egalitarian spirit in education. If practised, what is bound to happen is that education through one's mother tongue will be stigmatised. Those who learn through the Chinese medium will be those who cannot make it to English-medium classes. The damage this will inflict on the self-esteem of the majority of learners is unthinkable.

As already observed by other critics, streaming will inevitably increase the academic pressure of primary students, who will have to compete for eligibility for the English-medium stream. It may also disrupt the subsidized schools sector, as parents are likely to send their children who are unsuccessful in the diagnostic test to private English-medium schools.

Given the dominance of Cantonese and the status of English as a non-native language in the community, it is highly unlikely that code-mixing in the teaching of non-language subjects (e.g. history and biology) will disappear from the proposed 30% English-medium classrooms. One can also be sceptical of the effectiveness of bridging programs. Presumably these programs will not last for more than several months. Will learners emerge from these brief programs so proficient in English that teachers and learners alike will have no need to fall back on code-mixing in classroom communication? If code-mixing should persist after the introduction of streaming, the measure would defeat its own purpose. One wonders what is there to gain at such a huge social cost.

2.3 A Question of Research Validity

A positive feature of the Report is the importance it attaches to research findings as a basis for the Working Group's assessment of the language situation in the schools and for its policy recommendations.

However, much of the research cited in the Report which is crucial to one's evaluation of the language situation has been conducted by the government's Educational Research Establishment (ERE) in the Education Department, and has not been released to the public. The lack of public access to these studies casts doubt on their methodology and severely weakens the credibility of their findings.

For example, research is cited to dispel the belief that the standards of English and Chinese have declined over the past decade. While the Report provides some useful information on this issue, the question whether students' proficiency has declined is far from settled.
The claim about the absence of decline in language standards is based on results from public examinations. It is unclear, however, how the results of one year are made comparable to those of another in the official analysis. It is also unclear whether a decline has been observed in specific areas of proficiency, e.g., oral or writing ability.

Methodological issues are important because other statistics (e.g., TOEFL scores) are available suggesting a drop in the English proficiency of local candidates as compared to candidates in other countries. Unless we have full information about the government's research, it will be difficult not to remain sceptical about the theoretical foundations of the Report's proposals.

To take another case in point, the estimate that only 30% of Secondary One students can benefit from English-medium education is also based on government research. The figure was deduced from three completed experimental studies of which only two are directly relevant to the issue in question. We do not feel that this trickle of research provides an adequate basis for a major change in educational policy.

One might also take issue with the way published research findings are interpreted and used in the Report. For example, the notion of 'threshold', which forms the theoretical underpinning of the Streaming proposal, deserves closer examination.

The term has been used to explain the differential educational outcomes in bilingual education in Europe and North America. What does this mean in practice, and is it a meaningful concept in the context of bilingual education? The term essentially says that children must achieve certain levels of proficiency in both their mother tongue and the second language before they can benefit from an education in the second language.

Therefore, 'threshold' is a hypothetical concept used to reconcile seemingly contradictory findings in bilingual education research. To say that such a critical point in fact exists among our students, and that this point is identifiable by a test battery, is very close to committing the reification fallacy -- making real and concrete that which is hypothetical and abstract. The potential dangers of basing a drastic administrative measure on a theoretical notion that has not found empirical support in the Hong Kong context cannot be emphasized more.

As a further example of a theoretical pitfall in the Report's analysis, consider the educational effects of using both Cantonese and English in the classroom. The Report advocates a categorical rejection of code-mixing in the classroom. It is plausible that code-mixing does not provide an optimal environment for the learning of either Chinese or English. However, it is not at all clear what the harmful effects of code-mixing are as far as the teaching of such content subjects as biology, history, geography, or computer science is concerned. Code-mixing clearly serves specific pedagogical functions. For example, content subjects may be more effectively taught and interest more successfully aroused if the language most familiar to the students is used in explanation of terms and concepts in English. It may even be argued that, given the sociolinguistic situation in Hong Kong and the constraints imposed on teachers and students alike, code-mixing is an indispensable means to ensure that learning takes place at all. The learners can be drawn closer to the teacher in a language which as members of the wider community they share. It is obvious that learning depends crucially on a lasting, trusting relationship between teachers and students which would be hard, if not impossible, to establish in any other language.

The negative attitude toward code-mixing reflected in the Report can be seen as a consequence of applying monolingual norms in a bilingual educational context. Code-mixing is a natural behavior of a person becoming bilingual. At the societal level, code-mixing is an inevitable linguistic phenomenon in a community like Hong Kong, where languages come into contact. In fact, code-switching abounds in the speech of educated speakers in the local community who serve as role models for the young.

If code-mixing is part of Hong Kong's social reality, then it should be recognized as such by educationalists. It should not, and cannot, be banned by administrative decree. Launching a policy that renders code-switching illegal in the schools without substantial research evidence is no rational decision. Such a policy can hardly be enforced anyway.

2.4 Plan Now For the Future

As the Report indicates, the need for coordinated efforts in language planning in a multilingual society like Hong Kong has finally been accepted by the government. The question remains how this planning should be carried out.
3. As We See It

To conclude, while the Report represents an attempt on the part of the government to come to grips with a range of problems relating to language in education in Hong Kong, it has serious pitfalls. It sidesteps completely the important issue of mother tongue education. It has failed to fully appreciate the weight and scale of the adverse social effects of streaming.

Many of its policy recommendations are either based on undisclosed research or controversial interpretations of published research findings. It assigns to a single government institution too large a role in language planning and research.

We recognize that the issues are complex and the local research data available are meagre. In the absence of reliable empirical information, one should be doubly cautious in policy recommendation. A wider range of alternatives should be considered and opened up for discussion before a final decision is made.

We urge that the Government attach greater importance to the teaching and learning of Chinese in the schools. The aims of Chinese language education should be spelled out in detail in the larger context of possible changes in the next decade. Attention should be paid to the norms and the complex roles of spoken Cantonese, spoken and written Modern Standard Chinese, and the implications of these for language education.

We firmly object to the implementation of the streaming proposal of the Report. We urge the Working Group to consider alternatives to streaming at Primary Six in helping learners achieve bilingual skills, such as boosting resources in teacher education and the development of textbook materials.

The Government should always take into account the uniqueness of the local sociolinguistic situation in borrowing from overseas experience in the promotion of bilingualism.

We call for the publication of all government researches relevant to the formulation of language policies. These documents should be made available, commercially or otherwise, to all citizens who are interested. We urge that the Government support more controlled and more comprehensive studies on the educational effects of various modes of instruction before taking a final decision on streaming.

We endorse the setting up of a language planning advisory commission. Given the complexity of the language planning task, we believe that this commission should be external to government departments, and should therefore not be placed within the Institute of Language in Education. This commission could coordinate work carried out by units focusing on various aspects of language planning, for example bilingual policy, English, Chinese, and legal aspects of language use. This commission could also oversee the way in which government research funding on language education is allocated.

We hold that the Chinese Textbook Committee is not adequate to meet the needs of Chinese language education. We urge the government to reconsider the feasibility of establishing a Chinese Language Foundation as recommended in the Llewellyn Report.
Appendix II

Education Commission Report No.4: A Response

The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong

1. Introduction

In spite of its title ("The Curriculum and Behavioural Problems in Schools"), a major feature of the Fourth Education Commission Report (November 1990) is a set of proposals relating to educational language policy.

In chapters 5 and 6 of the Report, a scheme is sketched which purports to tackle problems in the field of language in education in terms of a broad, comprehensive, and "coherent framework" (p.98).

As a group of professional linguists and language teachers, the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong are concerned first and foremost with educational policy and practice where they impinge on the teaching and learning and use of languages. In particular, we are concerned with the theoretical and empirical foundations of local language policies. The following comments and recommendations are therefore offered with a view to addressing mainly chapters 5 and 6 of the Report.

2. Background


While the Report says it does not fully endorse all the points made in the Working Group's report, it should be evident that the basic approach and
many of the main proposals contained in the latter have been adopted more or less wholesale.

In particular, the concepts of streaming, criterion-referenced tests, and bridging programmes remain a "central feature" in the Fourth Report's recommendations.

Also inherited from the Working Group's report is a distinct lack of interest in the teaching and learning of Chinese as a subject, and the question of how Chinese-medium instruction in the classroom can be made a truly viable and practicable option.

In response to the Working Group's report, the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong made a formal submission in February 1990. The following recommendations were made in our submission:

1) The streaming proposal should not be adopted as government policy.
2) All government research relevant to the formulation of language policies should be published and made publicly available.
3) A language planning advisory commission should be set up at an appropriately high level.
4) The Education authority should attach greater importance to the teaching and learning of Chinese in the schools.
5) The Government should reconsider the establishment of a Chinese Language Foundation, as recommended in the Llewellyn Report.

There is unfortunately little sign in the Fourth Report that any of these recommendations have been seriously considered.

We must therefore reiterate our deep concern that many of the Working Group's proposals, which have found their way into the Commission's report, contain serious inherent defects. Their adoption and implementation would trigger a major setback to Hong Kong's education in terms of language learning and language use in the schools.

3. A General Appraisal

Our overall impression is that the set of proposals relating to language in education do not form a conceptually coherent framework.

Nor do they, in the context of ongoing reforms in education, constitute a genuine continuation and strengthening of principles previously discussed and agreed upon, and policies currently being practised.

We are concerned that the learning of Chinese as a subject and the use of Chinese as a medium of instruction continue to attract very little attention.

We remain opposed to streaming, criterion-referenced tests, and bridging programmes, which we believe are theoretically unsound, unsubstantiated, and in any case impracticable.

The Report re-affirms the two principles underlying the Government's current policy on language in education, namely, a move towards greater use of Chinese as the teaching medium in view of its educational efficacy, and the principle of non-cumbersome whereby schools and parents retain their right to choose. We endorse these two principles. However, we are of the view that the newly added third principle, which makes it a mission to eradicate the concurrent use of Cantonese and English in the classroom, is ill-founded and misguided.

Finally, we notice that the research basis of most of the recommendations is extremely weak. As a professional body of teachers and researchers in Language and Linguistics, we must point out that the implicit claim that the proposals in the Fourth Report are supported by the latest in scientific innovations and academic research is but a false impression.

In the rest of this paper, each of our main objections will be dealt with in a separate section.

4. Abandoning Current Policy?

The Report purports to support the general philosophy underlying previous recommendations concerning language in education. However, its proposals appear to have departed from these previously adopted principles in fundamental ways. There are two main considerations here:

1) Whereas current policy is predicated upon Chinese-medium education being a valuable provision in and of itself, and therefore greater use of Chinese should be encouraged as a general goal in secondary education, the streaming proposal emphasizes division and stratification instead. Under this proposal, students would be classified on the basis of their
English language proficiency. This proposed policy to divide and teach does not appear to follow from any previously accepted general principles.

(2) Whereas current policy is to encourage schools to adopt at least some degree of Chinese-medium teaching – incentive being provided in the form of measures such as ‘positive discrimination’, with a view to helping schools to gradually, and over a period of time, change over into an essentially Chinese-medium system, the present proposals contain no strengthening of such incentives, or any sign that this policy is still being actively pursued. Instead, one finds punitive measures designed to ‘firmly guide’ principals and schools who, by implication, cannot be trusted to make sensible decisions.

Indeed, the overall tone of the Report seems to be more punitive than encouraging, reflecting an urge to press for quick results rather than patience and confidence in allowing changes in school’s policies and parents’ attitudes that are already underway to take their course.

We support the current policy to encourage and help schools to effect changes in the language of instruction initially in some subjects and at some form-levels. We think time should be allowed for experiments to be done, and for changes to gather momentum. We do not believe that the success of this policy should be gauged entirely in terms of quantity (i.e. how many schools have effected changes), but also in terms of quality – for example, student motivation and participation, examination results, teacher-student relationship, and discipline. The Government can do more to help by publicizing examples of successful cases.

Unfortunately, the tenor of the Report suggests abandoning, perhaps even reversing, current policy which has proved to be acceptable and, given greater conviction on the part of the Government itself, may yet have a chance to work.

A case in point here is the ‘positive discrimination’ measure. What is the Commission’s stand on this? Is it the Commission’s intention to continue with the current provisions? Have they considered the need to further strengthen this measure, such a recommendation being explicitly made in the Working Group’s report, but has become noticeably absent in the Commission’s Report?

5. The Teaching of Chinese and Its Use as a Medium of Instruction

Precious little attention is paid to the teaching and learning of Chinese in the schools. The whole issue is dismissed in one sentence in the Report: ‘There was concern over standards of Chinese although writing skills might have declined slightly.’ (6.3.4). The assumption seems to be that all is well and little needs to be done about the teaching of Chinese as a subject.

We must ask, however, if such a stance does not smack of complacency. In view of a steady growth in the importance of, and therefore greater need for, Chinese in many sectors of the community, which is duly acknowledged in the Report, the last thing we should do is sit and wait until problems become unmanageable. In planning, one surely must look ahead, identify future developments and needs, and anticipate problems. Even now, there is widespread dissatisfaction among Chinese teachers as to students’ inability to speak and write effectively. We believe maintaining current levels is not enough. Looking ahead at future opportunities and needs in the context of the complex relationship between Cantonese, Putonghua, and Modern Standard Chinese, we are of the view that measures to improve the quality of Chinese language teaching and to raise the standard of Chinese will need to be considered without any further delay.

As far as using Chinese to teach, in spite of the rhetoric about Chinese-medium education, little is said about how favourable conditions can be created to foster the use of Chinese in teaching and learning in the schools. It would be naive to assume that just because most of our teachers happen to speak Cantonese, they would automatically become effective instructors in particular subjects using Chinese as the medium. Proper programmes, pre-service as well as in-service, will need to be designed to help teachers perform effectively. This will in turn have to be backed up by basic research into the use of Chinese in the classroom, of which practically nothing is known. This is not a satisfactory situation if the Government intends to promote and encourage greater use of Chinese in the schools.

6. Streaming, Target-Related Assessment and Bridging Programmes

6.1 Streaming

We pointed out in our previous response to the Working Group’s report:

(1) that the basic assumptions underlying the streaming proposal (namely, that only 30% of the secondary school students can benefit from
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English-medium education, and that the mixed use of Cantonese and English is detrimental to language learning) were either highly dubious or excessively simplistic;

(2) that, if adopted and implemented, the plan would have the self-defeating consequence of lowering the status of Chinese-medium education;

(3) that primary schools would be put under a great deal of pressure, and primary education would as a consequence suffer; and

(4) that it was socially divisive;

Our view has clearly failed to impress upon the Commission. We must now reiterate that we remain utterly opposed to the idea of streaming and its attending apparatus (target-related assessment and bridging programmes), because we are convinced that the proposal as a whole is unsound, and almost all of its component parts suffer from problems and inadequacies of a very serious nature.

The greatest problem with streaming as we see it is that it immediately implies a two- (or three-) tier system in which a school's inherent value is determined on the basis of its language of instruction. All-English schools will almost certainly be seen to be superior to English-and-Chinese schools and All-Chinese ones. This will then have the undesirable effect of making English-medium education an even more intensely sought commodity, and will therefore make secondary entrance once again very competitive. This may result in greater pressure being felt in the primary schools, and a consequent shift back into more examination-oriented approaches in primary education.

We understand that in principle, the proposed target-related assessment (TRA) to be administered at P6 are not meant to be competitive, being not norm-referenced. And yet, given (1) that English-medium is the superior option that most parents and students would go for; (2) that streaming will be based on students' results in the TRA; and (3) the testing criteria to be set up for the TRA will be as clear and detailed as possible; then there is a strong likelihood that classes in P5 and P6 will once again devote their full attention to drilling and training students in order to obtain good results in the TRA and secure the right to enrol in the English stream.

We are not in principle opposed to drilling and examination as such. We are concerned, however, that the proposed system of streaming based on TRAs may turn out to be counter-productive by rendering Chinese-medium education second-class, and by turning it admission into a fierce competition for better results at an English language proficiency examination.

But if the Government is adamant in pushing through the streaming proposal, then we would like to make a strong plea for schools to be given the option of streaming by subject. We believe this is a more realistic way of moving into a Chinese-medium based system. It is also more consonant with the Report's stated intention that 'secondary school authorities should be encouraged to adopt Chinese as the medium of instruction' (p.99). This should also be a welcome move for those schools which are already developing in this direction.

It must also be pointed out that even if we were to agree with the entire framework, the present proposals would still fall far short of addressing and giving due consideration to the Chinese stream. What should be done to help Chinese-medium schools and classes in their transition towards using Chinese? Should English teaching in the Chinese stream be given further assistance? And how about making it a really attractive option by taking measures to ensure that students in the Chinese stream will not be handicapped or treated differently when it comes to admission to tertiary institutions? For after all, under the streaming system, Chinese must surely be the mainstream, and as such should deserve the allocation of the bulk of educational resources. The proposals contained in the Report, however, give one the impression that more caring attention is being given to the minority English stream. This cannot be right.

6.2 Bridging

Bridging plays an important role in the streaming proposal by providing (in principle) a linkage between stages in the education system. A switch from Chinese into English as the medium of instruction is to be facilitated by an appropriate bridging programme. Thus, under the streaming proposal, the majority of secondary students would eventually be educated in the Chinese-medium. With a bridging programme they are reassured of access to English-medium tertiary education. Without effective bridging, streaming would be extremely hard to justify.

But effective bridging remains a big "if". Not enough information is available on the proposed bridging programmes. What is their exact nature? How are they to be funded and implemented?
In any case, it does not sound at all convincing that as much as 30% of the P6 students entering secondary schools, who have been taught in the previous 6 years in an all-Chinese environment, can, at the application of some magical formula, in a matter of a few months, become so proficient in English that they can study a range of subjects in the language, and benefit from it.

As teachers in tertiary institutions, we have extensive experience in teaching students at Hong Kong's universities and polytechnics. In our experience, even students from English-medium schools often have difficulty learning in English at the tertiary level. We can only assume that the problems for Chinese-medium educated students are likely to be that much more serious. In our view, with regard to the proposed bridging between end of secondary and beginning of tertiary, a short bridging course of two or three months' duration is vastly inadequate in bringing students up to the required level for studies at the tertiary level.

6.3 Target-Related Assessment (TRA)

Target-related assessment is the third integral component in the tripartite structure of the streaming proposal. They provide the basic means for streaming students, i.e. classifying them in terms of their English language proficiency. In particular, TRAs are supposed to make it possible for the authority to tell whether any student has the ability to benefit from English-medium education.

Again, little is known about TRAs. Local experience is unavailable; TRAs have not been tried out in Hong Kong before. International experience is unlikely to be of direct relevance. What targets should be set at the different levels, and how should this be done? For students entering S1 to be able to study and function entirely in English – given that the content of the subjects taught at S1 be roughly comparable to those in other countries around the world – the targets would presumably have to be set at a level comparable to native learners in an English-speaking setting. This is obviously totally unrealistic. It is unlikely that more than an extremely small proportion of the students can reach these targets. If the targets are to be set differently, then we have yet to be informed of the precise definition of 'being able to benefit from English-medium education'. Without a clear definition of this in terms of a set of targets, the whole exercise could become totally arbitrary and serve no useful purpose other than provide the administration with an excuse for drawing any line of division to suit itself.

In any case, we fail to see how, given the basic tenets of criterion-referencing, more or less fixed cut-off points (70%-30%) can be set on the TRAs with the advantage of their administration, since in principle any proportion of candidates in any one year could reach a pre-determined set of targets. We believe it is important that the targets be set in terms of a clear definition of 'ability to benefit from English-medium education'. We also think that TRAs should be conducted without any pre-determined cut-off points.

Without a firm basis in extensive local experience with such tests, it does not seem wise to us to build an entire secondary education system on the foundation of TRAs.

7. Mixed Code

The Report's attitude towards code-mixing reflects an unwillingness to appreciate the complexity of the phenomenon. The Report proposes to stem out the 'mixed code' but presents no evidence or argument for doing so. The preference for adopting a 'clear and consistent' language is presented largely as dogma.

We think this urge to get rid of the mixed code reflects deep-rooted puristic prejudices: the assumption that regardless of particular historical, social, and economic conditions, languages (or should be) always and invariably 'pure'. But this ignores the actual service that such a mode of communication has contributed to a uniquely bilingual setting in the domain of education in Hong Kong.

The only argument given in the Report against the mixed code is that it involves translation, and translation is a waste of teaching time. But how should one balance this against its greater effectiveness in most classroom situations? There is some research evidence to suggest that mixed code is, under certain circumstances a more effective medium than either Chinese or English.

We do not wish to sound as though we approved of the use of mixed code as an ideal system. We merely point to its practicality and proven usefulness, and the need for a considerable period of time (not a matter of a few years) for conditions in society as much as education - to evolve which would render it no longer necessary. We do not believe that these conditions obtain at the moment.
8. Research Basis

It has been mentioned above that neither the proposals for target-related assessment, bridging programmes, nor the 'no code-mixing' principle are backed up by solid research evidence. Equally lacking is any research input on the question of how Chinese-medium education should best be facilitated and achieved in practice.

Also, the assumption that about 30% of students entering S1 should be capable of benefiting from English-medium teaching does not seem warranted by the research in question (presumably Brimer et al.'s "The Effects of the Medium of Instruction on the Achievement of Form 2 Students in Hong Kong Secondary Schools", Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong, December 1985). The division of students into three ability-groups (in terms of their proficiency in English) of 30% (high), 40% (medium), and 30% (low) of the sample, was made with some degree of arbitrariness. It was at least 'judgmental', and therefore to some extent subjective. Although the results showed significant differences in the groups' ability to learn in English, it must be stressed that the ability groups could have been divided at quite different cut-off points, and the differences between the groups might still be statistically significant. In any case, the research in question represents but one study and a study whose usefulness must, like any other study, be qualified against its own inherent limitations. As the researchers rightly point out in the final chapter of the report, "it should be remembered that [the study] involved only Form 2 students, covered no more than six weeks' teaching of two topics and could not claim to have controlled the language used by teachers to students in more than an advisory fashion."

In the light of these cautionary remarks, the comfortable and confident way in which conclusions have been drawn from the study, and the way in which they have been used to justify major policy recommendations, would strike one as unnecessarily rash - almost cavalier.

As a general comment, we believe that there is a need for greater openness by making research reports available to the public. Many of the research on which major recommendations are based are not readily available, making discussion of policy proposals based on them more difficult.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

At this crucial time in the history of Hong Kong, fundamental policy changes in education must be taken with great caution. The proposals contained in the Fourth Report strike us as being overly rash and lacking in adequate consultation. And yet precisely these same proposals are to take us all the way into the twenty-first century. Once adopted and implemented, they would have tremendous repercussions and far-reaching consequences. We cannot afford to rush into a plan unless we are absolutely satisfied and totally confident that it is conceptually coherent, theoretically sound and stands a good chance of success in practice. The consequences of any major error would be too formidable to imagine.

May we conclude by urging the Government in the strongest possible terms:

(1) not to adopt the proposals in the Fourth Report relating to language and education;

(2) to put on hold the entire package of proposals regarding educational language policy until further notice;

(3) to allow current policy to take its course, by encouraging schools to adopt Chinese as the teaching medium possibly on a subject by subject basis;

(4) to further encourage schools to adopt such changes by providing extra resources for the enhancement of English learning in those schools which opt for such a change;

(5) meanwhile, to initiate a serious and thorough-going re-examine of the entire package, by re-examining counter-arguments and counter-evidence with an open mind, in particular with regard to streaming, bridging, and criterion-referenced testing;

(6) to allow more time for research and pilot projects which are already underway to bear concrete results, and for locally relevant experience to accumulate, and to support new and independent research on pertinent questions.

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