

MASTER'S THESIS

Topicalization in English writing of form four students

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**TOPICALIZATION IN ENGLISH WRITING
OF FORM FOUR STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the typological transfer in second language writings.

Li and Thompson (1979) introduce a new typology and suggest that Chinese is a topic-prominent language and English is a subject prominent language. In Hong Kong, most students' native language is Chinese and they usually learn English as their second language. It is interesting to investigate whether the topic-prominent features of Chinese will be transferred into the English writings of Hong Kong students or not.

To find out whether there is transfer or not, I have collected 40 pieces of English writings of Hong Kong students for analysis. The data are collected from two different schools. One uses Chinese as the medium of instruction and the other uses English. The present study identified topic-prominent typological transfers in the two groups of writings. The result shows that students receiving Chinese as medium of instruction produce abundant sentences starting with topic and are greatly influenced by other typological features. Writings produced by students receiving English as medium of instruction are less influenced by those features.

簡介

本文旨在研究語言類型學(Typology)中特質(features)，會否轉移到第二語言寫作的問題。

Li and Thompson (1979) 提出新類型學，指出中文為「突顯主題語言」(Topic-prominent language)的一種；而英語則為「突顯主語語言」(Subject-prominent language)的一種。香港學生，大部份均以中文為母語，而他們一般都會學習英語作為第二語言。然則中文「突顯主題語言」的特質，會否轉移到第二語言的寫作中？這一議題，值得探究。

本人搜集了四十篇香港學生的英語寫作，作為研究。資料來自兩間中學，一間以母語授課，另一間以英語授課。本文以中文「突顯主題語言」的特質，會否轉移到第二語言的寫作作為重心，研究兩間中學學生的英語寫作。結果顯示突顯主語的特質，接受母語授課學生的英語寫作，有為數不少的句子以主題為起首，文中亦處處可見「突顯主題語言」特質的蹤影。而以英語受課學生的文章，則不見明顯的影響。

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