

## MASTER'S THESIS

# Measuring second language writing development of primary students in Hong Kong

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*Date of Award:*  
2008

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MEASURING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY  
STUDENTS IN HONG KONG

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A Dissertation Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of The  
MASTER OF ATRS IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

JULY 2008

## Abstract

This study focuses on the second language writing development of primary students in Hong Kong, especially across Primary 2, Primary 4, and Primary 6 development stages. The minimal terminable unit (T-unit) analysis is adopted to measure syntactic maturity in a more objective way, and aiming to quantify the writing quality of students. There are three major areas of investigation, namely linguistic complexity, linguistic accuracy, and productivity. The writing of the students in these three areas is analyzed according the T-unit, and a universal index is proposed to facilitate comparisons across studies. Comparison of the students' performance is made between the three groups of students, as well as between this study and other reviewed studies. The result reflects an improvement from Primary 2 to Primary 4, and to Primary 6 generally. Compared with students in other studies, students of this study perform relatively better in terms of linguistic accuracy, but not in linguistic complexity and productivity.

## 內容摘要

這篇論文試圖研究香港小學生的第二語言(英語)寫作發展，特別是小學二年級、小學四年級、以及小學六年級之間的寫作發展。這篇論文以“最小終結單位”(T-unit)理論為基本，分析以上所提及三組學生的寫作。“最小終結單位”分析是以一個較為客觀的方法探究句法成熟性，並可量化學生寫作的質素。這篇論文主要有三個探討方向：語言的複雜性，語言的準確性，和語言能產量。學生的寫作會根據這三個領域加以分析，並建議一個普遍指數以方便進行研究之間的比較。這篇論文探討了三組學生的英語寫作，並與其他相關的研究結果作比較。結果顯示，學生的英語寫作在小學二年級、小學四年級、以及小學六年級之間是有改善的。在比較本文以及其他研究方面，本研究的學生比較能掌握語言的準確性，但於語言的複雜性和語言能產量方面卻比較為遜色。

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