

MASTER'S THESIS

L1 maintenance in an L2 environment: the interaction of social-network ties and language choice among the minority students in Hong Kong

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**L1 MAINTENANCE IN AN L2 ENVIRONMENT:
THE INTERACTION OF SOCIAL-NETWORK TIES
AND LANGUAGE CHOICE
AMONG THE MINORITY STUDENTS IN HONG KONG**

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Abstract

This study attempts to look at social networks and their impact on the bilingual development of the minority children born in Hong Kong, but living in minority communities. Social networks involve only the speaker but also people with whom the speaker interacts, and social network analysis essentially measures an individual's degree of integration into informally constituted social groups. This degree of integration can act a norm enforcement mechanism so that members of particular networks display similar social behaviours (including linguistic behaviour) which systematically differ from those of non-members (Bott, 1957). Gal's (1979) study, for example, reveals that there are regularly patterned relations between a speaker's language choice and the characteristics of his or her social networks. In this study, linguistic performance data will be linked with social-network features, demonstrating a direct effect of frequency of input to proficiency. The social-network analysis will be focused on family and friends and generational differences in language use. Fieldwork with 30 students is reported. Teenagers who had the opportunity to use the minority language (with code-mixing) to a close family member or a friend of the older generation were regularly more proficient in their minority language than those who did not.

緒論:

本論文嘗試以社交網絡(social networks)去解釋香港少數族裔年輕的一代如何在第二語言(second language)的環境中維持他們的種族語言(minority language)。根據 Gal (1979)的研究指出，說話者語言的選擇和他的社交網絡有密切關係。在本論文中，根據來自三十個被訪者的語言表現數據(linguistic performance data)分析，可以顯示出社交網絡(social networks)，特別是家庭和朋友的社交網絡，和語言精通是有直接關係。

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