

MASTER'S THESIS

The deletion of final stops in coda clusters in Hong Kong English

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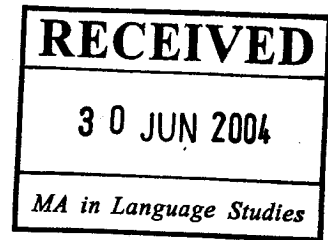
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**THE DELETION OF FINAL STOPS IN
CODA CLUSTERS
IN HONG KONG ENGLISH**

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Abstract

The study aims at exploring the deletion process of final stops in coda clusters in Hong Kong English. Different phonological environments that trigger this process will also be described with respect to the more or less similar circumstances where the deletion of final stops occurs in native varieties of English and Singaporean English. In addition, the favorable factors affecting the deletion process will be discussed and ranked.

Totally 15 young educated HK speakers of English who are tertiary students were selected as the subjects of the study. Two rounds of data collection were conducted. A total of 58 sentences covering 13 attested coda clusters placed in different phonological environments were read by each subject in the pilot study and the second round data collection. The deletion of final stops in coda clusters demonstrated by a majority of the subjects is examined in terms of the phonological features of the adjacent consonants of the coda clusters.

It is found that different adjacent consonants in different ranks with the same features of the final stops may function differently with different degree of preference to deletion. The deletion pattern was compared with native varieties of English and non-native varieties of English. The final stop deletion phenomenon is regarded as one of the distinctive feature of HKE accent.

提要

本研究旨在探索在香港英語中，最後阻塞音 (final stops) 在音節尾音叢 (coda clusters) 中的省略過程。

首先，研究會描述引發上述省略過程的不同語系環境，尤以在本族變體英語及新加坡英語為例，說明上述過程如何在大致相似的情況下發生。

此外研究中也會討論及排列會影響上述過程的各個有利因素。

本研究的對象為15名能操英語的香港專上程度學生；而研究的數據，則是分兩個階段收集得來，分別為試驗和第二階段。在兩個階段中，每名對象均必須讀出共58句英語完整句子，句子中包含13個已獲確認但分別放置在不同語音環境的音節尾音叢。在列出所得的數據後，本研究會根據大部份研究對象在誦讀時所表現的最後阻塞音省略情況，分析音節叢鄰近輔音的音韻特點。

分析結果顯示，等級不同但最後阻塞特點相同的各個鄰近輔音，可以發揮不同的作用，即會有不同程度的省略取向。此外，本研究亦會將本族變體英語和非本族變體英語的最後阻塞省略模式進行比較。

最後，本研究認為，省略最後阻塞音的現象是香港英語口音的一種獨有特色。

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