

## MASTER'S THESIS

### Language attitudes of Hong Kong youngsters towards Putonghua

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*M.A. in Language Studies*

**LANGUAGE ATTITUDES OF HONG KONG YOUNGSTERS  
TOWARDS PUTONGHUA**

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## Abstract

This paper is based on a research project which involved 273 Form VI students in Hong Kong. The major research theme is to investigate the subjects' general attitudes toward learning Putonghua in Hong Kong contexts and toward the use of Putonghua as the media of instruction. The project is aimed at contributing to the teaching of Putonghua in Hong Kong, providing insights into the essence of the current problems. The research is qualitative in nature, using a series of methodology in this regard such as questionnaire investigation and the examination of documentary materials. It discusses the data through statistical analysis. The major findings are (1) on the whole the students are instrumentally motivated in learning Putonghua; (2) students' learning motivation is related to their political and cultural identity; (3) currently it is premature to use Putonghua as the media of instruction at schools. Based on these findings, it is concluded that the spread of Putonghua in Hong Kong is inevitable but it can only occur gradually; for this particular linguistic change, Putonghua should be taught as an independent subject at present; teacher training is a matter of first importance and therefore should be reinforced to produce more qualified local teachers of Putonghua.

## 概要

本論文以一項由 273 名香港中六學生參加的研究項目為基礎，研究主旨是調查他們對學習普通話的一般態度，以及他們對普通話作為教學語言的意見。是項研究旨在為現存的問題提供見解，從而對香港的普通話教學作貢獻。研究是定質性的，採取了諸如問卷調查和文獻查考等一系列形式；並且以統計分析討論了所得的數據資料。主要的發現有：(1) 大體而言，學生學習普通話的動機是工具型的；(2) 學生的學習動機和他們所認同的政治及文化個性有關；(3) 在現階段採用普通話作為教學語言尚為時過早。根據這些發現，本文的結論是，普通話在香港的擴展勢不可免，但其發展只能是漸進的；為了這個語言上的變化，目前應該把普通話當作一門獨立的科目教授；普通話老師的培訓乃是首要問題，因此應當加強師資訓練，以培養更多合資格的本地普通話老師。

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