

**DIVIDING CLASSES: SEGREGATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES
IN HONG KONG SCHOOLS**

By

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**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
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Declaration

I certify that the work contained in this thesis submitted by me for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is my original work, except where due reference is made to other authors, and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University.

Signature: _____ Date: June 2011

PhD Thesis Title

Dividing Classes: Segregation of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong Schools

by

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2011

Abstract

This thesis examines some of the issues surrounding the schooling experiences of ethnic minority students who attend mainstream, but segregated, secondary schools in Hong Kong. These ethnic minority students have been labelled by the Education Bureau as “non-Chinese speaking” (NCS) students and the schools they attend have been labelled as “designated schools”. This is a case study which looks into the complex ways in which meritocracy, segregation and social justice work within the Hong Kong education system, affecting higher education opportunities for ethnic minorities. It is commonly accepted that higher education opens doors to more opportunities and higher socio-economic status. Thus in a broader context there is a need to examine what goes on in Hong Kong’s institutional and cultural settings, as well as within the educational milieu of NCS students or ethnic minorities. In this case study approach, issues regarding micro-practices in a segregated school and educational accountability are examined as well. This research is a qualitative inquiry which borrows some of the principles of Foucault (1971) on governmentality and on knowledge/power; and also on Bourdieu’s (1973) considerations of cultural capital. The concepts of both Foucault and Bourdieu have been deployed reflexively. Special focus is put on exploring the choices, access and equity given to ethnic minorities regarding education in Hong Kong. The underlying motivation for this research also stems from the researcher’s personal experiences as an ethnic minority educated in Hong Kong. Hence, the data is founded in tacit knowledge along with data collected from a designated school and narratives shared by the students from that school. The educational policies and curriculum framework laid down by the Hong Kong Education Bureau have intrinsic and far-reaching effects on South and South East Asian students in particular. In this light, redefining the need for inclusive education of ethnic minorities in the name of social justice is also discussed.

Acknowledgements

“When you use the term minority or minorities in reference to people, you're telling them that they're less than somebody else. “

(Gwendolyn Brooks 1917-2000, Poet Laureate)

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List of acronyms used in this research

Acronyms	Full name / description
3+3+4 (or 3-3-4)	The new reform of the Hong Kong educational system to be in full swing in 2012, in which students attend 3 years of both junior and senior secondary school, and a further 4 more optional years at tertiary level
AD	Associate Degree
BCA	Basic Competency Assessments (Chinese, English, Mathematics)
HKBU	Hong Kong Baptist University
CCCU	Community College of City University (under Hong Kong City University)
CCLU	Community College at Lingnan University
CDC	Curriculum Development Council
CIE	College of International Education (under Hong Kong Baptist University)
CityU	Hong Kong City University
CSSA	Comprehensive Social Security Assistance
CU	Chinese University of Hong Kong
EC	Education Commission
EDB	Education Bureau
EFA	Education for All
EM	Ethnic Minority (Minorities); used also as alternative to NCS or SA
HE	Higher Education
HKALE	Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination
HKAT	Hong Kong Attainment Test
HKCC	Hong Kong Community College (under Polytechnic University)
HKCEE	Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
HKU	University of Hong Kong
IB	International Baccalaureate
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
JUPAS	Joint University Programmes Administration
KLA	Key Learning Area
LU	Lingnan University
MH	Mentally Handicapped
MoI	Medium of Instruction
NAS	New Academic System
NCS (or EM)	Non-Chinese Speaking (or Ethnic Minority)
NET	Native-Speaking English Teachers
NGO	Non-Government Organization
Non-JUPAS	Non-Joint University Programmes Administration
NSS	New Senior Secondary
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD	Physically Disabled
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PolyU	Hong Kong Polytechnic University
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PYJ	Project Yi Jin
QA	Quality Assurance
QEF	Quality Education Fund
SA	South Asian
SBA	School-based Assessment
SBCTS	School-based Curriculum Tailoring Scheme
SBRSP	School-based Remedial Support Programme
SBSS	School-based Support Scheme Grant
SEN	Special Education Needs
SES	Socio-economic Status

SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPACE	School of Professional and Continuing Education (under HKU)
SSPA	Secondary School Places Allocation
SWD	Social Welfare Department
TESL	Teaching of English as a Second Language
TSA	Territory-wide System Assessment
TWGHCC	Tung Wah Group of Hospital Community College (under CUHK)
UGC	University Grants Committee
VTC	Vocational Training Council

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CHAPTER ONE

ADDRESSING THE CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

The colonial days of Hong Kong in the second half of the 20th century saw a few British governors who made significant changes to the lives of Hong Kong citizens. One of these governors was Murray Maclehoose, more affectionately known as “Jock the Sock”. MacLehoose introduced many policies which set the stage for Hong Kong in becoming a more self-aware and well-integrated society. Apart from recognizing Cantonese as the official language of Hong Kong, he also introduced the nine-year free and universal basic education in 1978 for children from Primary 1 to Secondary 3 who were Hong Kong residents. Any child between the age of six and fifteen, irrespective of sex, ethnicity, religion, family status and physical and mental ability had the right to enjoy basic education in public sector schools. In 2008, eleven years after the return of sovereignty, the nine year free education was extended to twelve years.

The Hong Kong education system has slowly progressed from roof-top schools (Chung and Ngan 2002) in the 1950s, where schooling took place literally on roof-tops of buildings because of the mass influx of refugees from China, to millennium schools which today boast state-of-the-art equipment and facilities for student-centered learning. Thirty-three years after Lord MacLehoose introduced the mandatory free education policy, schooling for the masses progressed from half-day schools to full-day schools. Not only has the number of mandatory free schooling years been extended from 9 to 12, but the path to Higher Education (HE) and the number of years spent at HE are also longer.

In 2012 the first batch of secondary school graduates will emerge from the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum under the New Academic Structure (NAS). A further description of this NSS revamp will be elaborated on later in this chapter. The 2000 proposal of the education reform stated in the Foreword that “the goal is to ensure that every student attain the basic competencies, while those with greater potentials be allowed to further excel.” Part of the vision of the Reform is “to develop an education system that is rich in tradition but cosmopolitan and culturally diverse” (p 5). Anthony Leung who was the Chairman of the Education Commission in 2000 also wrote in his

Foreword to the reform proposal that “to raise the quality of education, the reform could not be piece-meal and have to be comprehensive.”

In that same year, Tung Chee Hwa the first Chief Executive of Hong Kong accepted the education reform proposal and the stage was set for the NAS. The Reform’s direction to “embrace different cultures to enable students to develop an international outlook” (p 5) is one of the aspects examined in this thesis. Indeed, since 2000 the education system has undergone a major facelift in name and policies. However, the meritocratic structure does not do justice to students whose mother tongue is not Chinese even though they are Hong Kong citizens. And in Hong Kong, these students are often referred to as ‘ethnic minorities’ (EM). They have also been dubbed as Non-Chinese Speaking Students (NCS).

One of the issues that this thesis addresses is whether the Hong Kong education system has ensured that *every* student has attained the basic competencies. If one of the basic competencies is the use of the Chinese language at a functional level, then the NAS has to be readjusted, and done so imperatively, because it is failing to address the education needs of EM students in Hong Kong. The lingua franca for those who wish to pursue careers in the Hong Kong workforce is Chinese. A majority of the EM community in Hong Kong lack one or more of the basic skills in Chinese proficiency needed to pursue higher education in Hong Kong. Within the parameters of this postulation, the chapters in this thesis will be sequenced in the following manner for the following reasons.

This is a case study and Chapter 1 starts off by addressing the general context and historical background of the education system from the colonial period in the 1970’s to around the closure point of this thesis circa 2011. The backdrop of this can serve as an understanding of how and where EM students stand as opposed to their Chinese counterparts. The final segment of the first chapter also describes a more sensitive and personal standpoint of the researcher.

Chapter 2 examines some literature from a philosophical point of view that expounds on cultural and linguistic capital. This chapter also tries to problematize the concept of empowerment in the context of governmentality, social justice and cultural hegemony. The rationale behind this is to query and relate how empowerment plays a part in the

socio-economic position of making education more inclusive for the ethnic minority community in HK. Chapters 3 and 4 describe the data collection process and third person narratives compiled from the semi-structured interviews.

It is from the above vignettes that the second half of the thesis is conceptualized. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 evolved from the many hours of interviewing various informants. The protagonists of which were the students from the case study school and their Head Teacher. Chapters 5 to 7 look into the more pertinent issues that are implied or raised from the semi-structured interviews. And these three major concerns teased out are relevant to the education of ethnic minority students in Hong Kong. They are: Chinese language literacy (Chapter 5); Segregation (Chapter 6); and the need for inclusive education (Chapter 7).

Apart from re-visiting the research questions, Chapter 8 puts forward a recommendation on how education opportunities for ethnic minorities can be re-harnessed. And finally the conclusion in Chapter 9 will pull out of the core microscopic issues and take a wider angle at Hong Kong's positionality in its endeavour to offer education for all.

1.1.1 Education in Hong Kong

In the Overview for the education system, the Education Bureau (EB) states that the government's policy objectives are to:

- provide nine years' free and universal primary and junior secondary education to all children attending public sector schools. Starting from the 2008/09 school year, senior secondary education is provided free through public sector schools. In addition, with effect from the 2008/09 school year, the Government provides full subvention for full-time courses run by the Vocational Training Council for Secondary 3 leavers to offer an alternative free avenue for senior secondary students outside mainstream education;
- provide a balanced and diverse school education that meets the different needs of our students, and helps them build up knowledge, values and skills for further studies and personal growth;
- enhance students' biliterate and trilingual abilities;
- enhance teaching quality and effectiveness in learning;
- improve the learning and teaching environment;
- help newly arrived children from the Mainland integrate into the local school system as soon as possible; and
- enhance the quality, flexibility and accountability of school administration.
(<http://www.edb.gov.hk/>)

The above implies that the policy applies to *all* students in Hong Kong who attend mainstream schools. The EB stated that the Government's language policy is to enable "students to be biliterate (master written Chinese and English) and trilingual (to speak fluent Cantonese, Putonghua and English)" (Ibid). Apart from public sector schools, the government also subsidizes full-time courses offered by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) for Form 3 leavers.

On a separate page on the EB website, however, there is a special section for the ethnic minority communities in Hong Kong under the link, "Education services for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students". It explains what kinds of adaptation programmes there are for Chinese language learning for newly-arrived ethnic minority students in Hong Kong. (Ibid)

The EB also mentioned that in most primary and secondary schools Chinese is the medium of instruction whilst English is taught as a core subject. The EB also further encourages NCS children to "study the local curriculum to integrate into the community as early as possible". (*Education for Non-Chinese Speaking Children*; EB, 2008) and under the Non-Chinese Speaking Parent Information Package, there are links for example, explaining HK education highlights as shown in Appendix 1.1.

In an extended memorandum entitled *Education services for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students*, the EB acknowledges that "some NCS students encounter learning difficulties and adjustment problems when they study in local schools." Thus the EB further recommends that "greater care and help from schools, teachers and parents are required so that these students can adapt to the local education system and integrate into the community quickly." (Ibid)

Newly arrived NCS children are allocated into an Initiation Programme which lasts for six months. This programme offers students "real classroom experience" so as to enhance their Chinese and English language standards and it helps them adjust to the local society and foster their personal development. After six months, the NCS students will be placed into a mainstream school. An anecdote of how the initial stage of data collection was conducted is delineated in Chapter 3. The anecdote is about the six-

month programme which newly arrived children have to attend before being sent to a proper mainstream school.

Another form of support is the Induction Programme. This is a 60-hour course designed by various universities or Non-government organizations (NGOs) as commissioned by the EB. The induction is offered to newly arrived children and the contents include, “knowing the environment, basic learning skills and basic Chinese and English.” The third type of support for NCS students offered by EB comes in an indirect form. This form of support is a grant which is given to the schools which admit NCS students. In other words, for every NCS child that a school admits, EB will allocate monetary incentives to the school via the School-based Support Scheme Grant. With the subsidy, the school managers can make use of the grant flexibly to initiate school-based support programmes (e.g. supplementary Chinese or English language classes) for the children. In short, for special needs students such as NCS ethnic minorities and newly arrived children from the Mainland, the EB offers four kinds of services to help integrate children and familiarize them to the HK school setting. These services are: 1) school placement assistance 2) Induction Programme 3) School-based Support Scheme and 4) Initiation Programme. Appendix 1.2 is a summary of the education support services for NCS students.

1.1.2 Historical Overview

1.1.2.1 The ticket to Higher Education – 1st Class Carriage

In the present education system, as this dissertation is weaved, students who complete junior secondary education i.e. Form 3 move onto senior secondary forms i.e. Forms 4 to 5. This is a two-year course which prepares students to sit for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). In most cases, only those who perform exceptionally well in this public examination is able to move onto another two-year course i.e. Form 6 and Upper 6 (or Sixth Form level). In order to matriculate, Sixth Formers have to pass the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE). And with that qualification, students can apply for an undergraduate programme in the local universities. According to the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA), (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/Media/Leaflets/EA_Brochure2.pdf) over 100,000 candidates sit for the HKCEE at the end of their five-year secondary education.

From this batch of Form 5 graduates only around 35,000 candidates can be promoted to a Sixth Form place and are eligible to sit for the HKALE.

After hurdling over the HKCEE, the HKALE becomes an even higher-stake examination and earning impeccable results in this examination is the ticket to enter university. The HKALE therefore, is also the key to an undergraduate program that can transform the lives of many young people. In order to facilitate HKALE students to smoothly apply for admission to tertiary institutions in Hong Kong, a system was set up in 1990. Today, this is better known as the Committee on Joint University Programmes Administration System or JUPAS. However, if students do not have HKALE results, or opt to use alternative academic qualifications to apply for admission to a tertiary institution in Hong Kong, they can apply through the non-JUPAS route. Further elaboration about the non-JUPAS route will be provided in section 1.1.2.2 under “The Ticket to Higher Education – 2nd Class Carriage.” In brief, before a secondary student can apply for a place at tertiary level, there are essentially three phases in the schooling system in which a student has to hurdle over. These are:

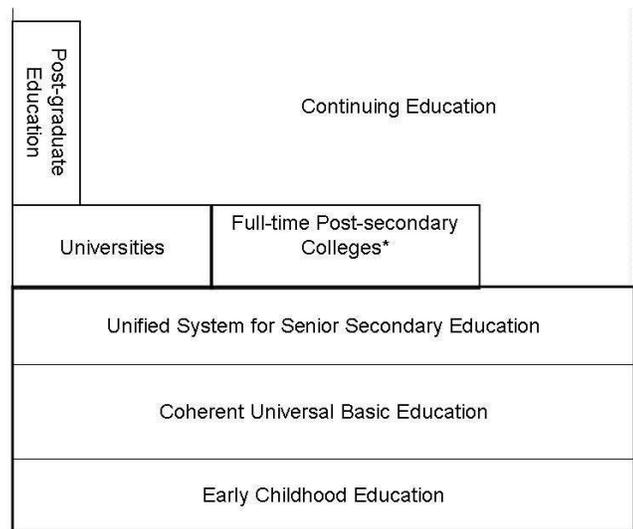
- a. Junior Secondary (Forms 1, 2 and 3)
- b. Senior Secondary (Forms 4 and 5)
- c. Matriculation¹ (Forms 6 and 7 or Lower 6 and Upper 6)

There are altogether eight statutory universities and one teacher-training college which offer undergraduate programmes in Hong Kong. In the last decade or so however, the universities in Hong Kong have expanded into offering sub-degree programmes. Students who are unable to enrol into a regular undergraduate programme because their HKALE results do not meet the university requirements for an undergraduate programme can also opt for a sub-degree programme which will earn him or her, an Associate Degree. These programmes are similar to those programmes in the United States that offer community college courses. As in many places worldwide, earning a Bachelor’s Degree is essential in Hong Kong’s highly competitive job market, and certainly for one’s

¹ The matriculation course or better known as the HKALE will be scrapped in 2012 to make way for the implementation of the new educational reform. Junior secondary and senior secondary comprises of 3+3 years and tertiary comprises of 4 years. This is dubbed in Hong Kong as the 3+3+4 system.

career advancement. This especially holds true when paper qualification is highly regarded in Hong Kong. (See Appendix 1.3 for a general list of all the HE institutes). These institutes are all approved for higher education by the Education Bureau.

According to the Framework for Education Reform set by the Education Commission (EC), a reform agenda was drawn up with a conceptual framework for ‘The Lifelong Learning Academic Structure’ for HK. It is summarized in the diagram below.



*Post-secondary colleges refer to institutions providing post-secondary courses, Vocational courses and compensatory courses.

Fig. 1.1 Lifelong Learning Academic Structure

One of the key issues raised by the EC was to look into the feasibility of establishing a “diverse higher education system that comprises the existing universities, post-secondary and continuing education institutions, so that every person who aspires to higher education will have opportunities to attend programmes appropriate to their abilities.” (source: *The Education Commission, HK*). Many full-time post-secondary colleges such as the VTC do offer bi-lingual courses which EM students can enrol in. But these are mostly vocational courses which are regarded as compensatory courses by the public.

As mentioned, the most direct way to higher education in Hong Kong, is to earn excellent grades in the HKALE and meet the entrance requirements for a direct entry into a local tertiary institution. However, based on the results of the HKALE, each university in Hong Kong has its minimum grade point entry requirement for its undergraduate programmes, and as it were, achieving the minimum score cannot secure a student a place at university because competition is very keen, especially for more sought after programmes. Apart from high HKALE scores, students need to pass an interview before being accepted. The HKALE is very close in nature, to the GCE Advanced Levels in the United Kingdom. As one can surmise, the HKALE thrived in the shadows of colonial influences prior to 1997. The HKALE structure is steeped in the history of the Hong Kong education system and all the local universities give priority to the HKALE candidates when choosing their yearly new batch of top candidates. I will further elaborate in Chapter 5 why applying for a place at a local university becomes almost impossible for an ethnic minority student. Appendix 1.4 is a chart prepared by the EB describing the path that an ethnic minority can take towards HE if he or she cannot handle the regular Form 5 exit examination. This diagram described in Appendix 1.4 is not an equitable solution for EM students because the higher diplomas earned are not as highly regarded as other non-JUPAS qualifications because competition for a place is keen. In other words, this path described is not a realistic pathway to HE. And as mentioned earlier, the first class through train ticket to a place at HE can only be enjoyed if a student's grades at the HKALE are in the top tier. Thus although the minimum requirements are satisfied, admission is not guaranteed because the number of places available is fewer than the number of applicants. Also, the selection of suitable candidates is decided by the particular institution, which is entirely independent of the JUPAS Office. It therefore goes to follow that high grades earned at public examinations does not promise a place in an applicant's first-choice application at the desired university. There are nine institutions² which make up the JUPAS, and out of this total, eight of them offer publicly funded first-year-first-degree (FYFD) places. There are 14,600 of these FYFD places which are funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC).

² City U, HKBU, Lingnan U, CUHK, HKIEd, Poly U, HKUST, Open U and HKU

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=7006&langno=1>

The selection criteria for HE into the nine participating institutions under the JUPAS are summarized as follows:

- HKCEE and HKALE results are minimum requirements
- Performance in interviews and/or tests, banding of programme choices
- Overall grades achieved by other applicants and the number of applicants applying to the programme in the current year, also plays a factor in the selection of students

<http://www.jupas.edu.hk/en/j3/about-jupas/important-notice>

1.1.2.2 The Ticket to Higher Education – 2nd Class Carriage

If the HKALE results are not satisfactory, there are alternative routes to HE for local students. There are post-secondary courses offered by both private and government-subsidized institutions which offer Diploma and Higher Diploma courses in many fields. This alternative route to an undergraduate programme may seem like a detour, for those who are unsuccessful in the HKALE. Eventually however, one can still earn a Bachelor's Degree via sub-degree programmes. For example, an Associate Degree is a possible qualification to apply for an undergraduate programme.

In his Policy Address in October 2000, Tung Chee Hwa, the first Chief Executive of Hong Kong after the end of British sovereignty, laid the blueprint for a new academic programme – the Associate Degree programme. Geared towards school leavers of Upper Sixth Form who could not make it through the JUPAS, this new alternative route proved ground-breaking in the future of tertiary education system in Hong Kong. The Chief Executive also mentioned then that:

“In developed countries and some major cities in Asia, up to 60% of senior secondary school graduates pursue tertiary education. For Hong Kong, however, the rate is just about half that, not only are we lagging far behind, but we are failing to meet the needs of a knowledge-based economy. It is imperative we catch up. Our objective is that within ten years, 60% of our senior secondary school leavers will receive tertiary education. By then, we will need to provide

about 28 000 additional places for higher education, bringing the total number to around 55 000.”

(<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200010/11/1011140.htm>)

In sync with the “Education for all” motif, the introduction of Associate Degree programmes gave birth to new schools within the eight universities almost overnight. For those who jumped aboard this new train to an Associate Degree, some of the first batch of Associate Degree graduates donned their academic regalia in as early as 2001 (Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Community College) or 2002 (Hong Kong Baptist University, College of International Education). Armed with an Associate Degree, many HK graduates can apply for a place in an undergraduate programme via non-JUPAS. This ‘mechanism’ is set aside for candidates coming in from alternative routes of schooling, and are not the public examination winning purebreds from the HKALE. The non-JUPAS caters for those who wish to enrol in an undergraduate programme but might have other types of diplomas.

The Associate Degree programmes and the Associate Degree Foundation Programme; also known as sub-degree programmes, are offered at what is now becoming an alternative route for HKALE and HKCEE graduates. This alternative programmes are offered at all the tertiary institutions, except the HKIED. Thus came to being various community colleges bearing different names which carry different clever and suggestive acronyms. Hong Kong has an uncanny love for acronyms. There are: SPACE; HKCC; TWGHCC; CCLU, CCCU and CIE as a few examples. (See list of acronyms)

As mentioned in 1.1.2.1, more about the non-JUPAS system will be explained here. Each University has its own criteria for accepting students into their undergraduate programme via the non-JUPAS system. The following are descriptors of Non-JUPAS Admissions Scheme from two different universities in HK and the entrance requirements. As a point of reference these two are chosen for comparison.³ The first one is HKU, which ranks amongst the top in

³ Times Higher Education Supplement (THES). According to the QS World University Rankings 2009, HKU is rated 24th worldwide, followed by HKUST and CUHK.
Rank, Institution, (World Rank)

Asia, and the other one is HKBU, which ranks mid-range in Hong Kong. The other tertiary institutions have similar descriptors for their Non-JUPAS Admissions.

Hong Kong University	Hong Kong Baptist University
<p>The University of Hong Kong welcomes applications for admission through what is called the "non-JUPAS" Admissions Scheme to our many undergraduate programmes from local candidates who are not current students in the mainstream schools in Hong Kong and who are not applying for admission on the strength of Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination results. There are no fixed quotas for non-JUPAS applicants, the number of students that are admitted being a function of the number and quality of students applying each year from both the JUPAS and non-JUPAS schemes.</p> <p>Associate Degree or Higher Diploma (i.e. sub-degree) graduates should apply under the non-JUPAS scheme. Applicants who are currently enrolled in a full-time bachelor's degree programme in a local tertiary institution funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) should also apply through this route. Please note however that following UGC's guidelines, inter-institutional transfer is normally not accepted, and the University is only able to consider applicants who are applying to programmes which are the same as or similar to the programme of their current studies.</p> <p>Non-JUPAS Entrance Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students reading an Associate Degree (AD) / a Higher Diploma (HD) in a community college of a UGC-funded institution: 	<p>Associate Degree Student/Holder Holders of or final year students studying for an Associate Degree at a higher education institution recognised by the University may apply for Year 1 or Year 2 entry, depending on the depth and relevancy of the subjects and the programme in which they are enrolled. Non-final year students studying an Associate Degree programme who wish to apply for admission must satisfy the General and Programme Admission Requirements for HKALE and HKCEE as listed in the General University Admission Requirements and Programme Admission Requirements respectively, and are eligible to apply for Year 1 only.</p> <p>General University Admission Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students from Hong Kong with the Highest Qualifications/Status in: ▪ HKALE AND HKCEE examinations (JUPAS applicants). Applicants must fulfill the following requirements for HKALE AND HKCEE: ▪ Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE): ▪ Grade E or above obtained in any two sittings. ▪ AS Use of English¹; and AS Chinese Language and Culture¹; and either: two AL subjects or: one AL subject + two AS subjects ▪ Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE): ▪ Level 2/Grade E or above in at least six subjects² including Chinese Language or an alternative language (other than Chinese and English)

1 University of Hong Kong (24th)
2 HKUST (35th)
3 Chinese University of HK (46th)
4 City University of Hong Kong (124th)
5 Hong Kong Polytechnic University (195th)

<p><u>Gain in the HKCEE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 3 or above in English Language; ▪ Level 2 or above in Chinese Language; or grade E or above in a language other than Chinese and English; ▪ Grade E or above in three other subjects; ▪ At least 13 years of pre-university schooling on a full-time basis, including one year of successful study on a full-time AD / HD programme in a community college of a UGC-funded institution which should be at least two years in duration. ▪ Applicants who do not fulfil the requirements above must have successfully completed a 2-year AD / HD programme or two years' study on a 3-year HD programme in order to be eligible for admission. <p>http://www0.hku.hk/admission/nonjupas.htm#note http://www0.hku.hk/admission/nonjupas-entrance.htm</p>	<p>and English Language³ with at least five subjects in a single sitting.</p>
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Fig 1.2 Non-JUPAS Admissions Scheme

In contrast to Hong Kong, Community Colleges in the United States have been a long-standing part of their education system with well-established articulations with universities across the US. The beginnings of community colleges in the US can be traced back to the early 1900s, and now with a long history behind them, and well established articulations with various state-wide universities, the community college degree is often a recognized qualification for further studies in the United States or can be used for transfer of credits. In contrast and strictly speaking however, community colleges in Hong Kong have not yet celebrated their first decade, and Hong Kong's overall response to this alternative route to HE has been on many occasions the topic for radio programmes and TV talk shows, especially near the time when public exam results are to be released. Many in HK are still reticent towards attaining a sub-degree because the articulations with statutory universities are still not transparent enough.

Since the inception of Associate Degree programmes across the local universities and other post-secondary institutions, there have been mixed feelings from the public about this academic qualification. Firstly, it is considered as a sub-degree and is secondly, labelled as second-class academic fall-back qualification when compared to the matriculation courses geared towards the HKALE. On a more scholarly or political perspective however, the response to the introduction to Associate Degree programmes are yet to be documented. Nonetheless, when a student does not have any offers at all via JUPAS, the best option is to enrol into a sub-degree programme. Thus, overall, HK is steadily accepting this alternative route to an undergraduate program. Tuition fees for an AD are higher than tuition fees for a government fully funded undergraduate programme, and not all HK families can afford to send their children to these AD programmes because often they are not UGC⁴ funded. In contrast therefore, AD programmes tuition fees are far higher than a standard undergraduate programme. Appendix 1.5 shows a glimpse of what HE tuition in 2009-2010 was like in Hong Kong. In putting together these facts, the core of the apprehension for lower income families is that working towards an Associate Degree not only costs a lot, it also does not ensure a smooth transition to an undergraduate programme.

As far back as the days of Imperial China, the major mechanism of recruitment into the central government was via the Imperial Examinations. Thus, traditions of high-stake examinations such as the HKALE are not easily erased and substituted by other entrance requirements into an undergraduate programme. Hence, for many local students in Hong Kong, the HKALE is a “do-or-die” experience. For many Chinese the world over, Hong Kong is also part of the Confucius heritage. The deep seated traditions of Confucius’ teachings mean nurturing a strong sense of hard work and endurance (Louie 1989). In fact, the influence of his legacy among the Chinese people is so pervasive that this Chinese demeanour towards education is well documented and researched (Purcell 1936). One not only accumulates knowledge through education which is

⁴ UGC stands for The University Grants Committee. This is a non-statutory body which advises the Government of the SAR on the funding and strategic development of higher education in Hong Kong. It also tries to preserve institutional autonomy and academic freedom, in the context of appropriate financial and public accountability.

the key to power and ascending the political hierarchy, but also education earns the scholar deep respect and integrity. A Chinese family is always proud when their children are able to achieve the high demands of scholarly achievements. In spite of it all, children are instilled with the belief that stalwartness is a necessary part of life even when chances of success are slim (Hau 1993). Hence reaching beyond the upper rungs of secondary schooling is a major achievement.

Post 1997, however, brought about major revamping in systems and policies in many areas including education. Two of the major proposed educational changes that led to more pathways to HE are:

- a. The introduction of Associate Degree programmes in 2000 and
- b. The reform proposals for revamping the education system in Hong Kong laid down in 2000.

In his speech on tertiary education to the LegCo⁵, Legislative Council member (Functional Constituency) and Chairman of the Vocational Training Institute, Andrew Leung (2007) said:

In recent years, public views have been diverse in the substantial increase in the number of associate degree places. In promoting sub-degree programmes, many of the institutions have advertised the possible articulation for graduates to the second year or third year of the university programme, in order to offer a pathway for further studies to the large number of students who fail to enrol in universities on strength of their matriculation results. However, we can see that the number of sub-degree programmes and the relevant student intake have been on the increase year by year, totalling over 30,000 in 2005-2006. But only 840 subsidized second-year and third-year undergraduate places are offered for the articulation of the graduates. That means less than three in 100 graduates have been offered an articulation place. This ratio is probably higher than that of winning Mark Six. But it falls far short of satisfying the needs of these students for further education. As a result, associate degree students studying hard for two years in difficult conditions have to "fight tooth and nail" or even get bruised and battered before they can realize their dream of having an articulation opportunity to the second year or third year of the university programme. Thus, the general public has got the impression that sub-degree students, particularly associate degree students, are inferior to others.

⁵ The main functions of the Legislative Council are to enact laws; examine and approve budgets, taxation and public expenditure; and monitor the work of the Government. The Legislative Council of the HKSAR is also given the power to endorse the appointment and removal of the judges of the Court of Final Appeal and the Chief Judge of the High Court, as well as the power to impeach the Chief Executive. (<http://legco.gov.hk/english/index.htm>)

It is therefore of crucial importance to take an even closer look at our complex education system and policies, and consider how it can make the academic life of a Hong Kong student or more so, the life of an ethnic minority student doubly difficult. If HE is the key to upward mobility both economically and socially, then the lives of many ethnic minorities in Hong Kong have a higher mountain to climb at a steeper incline.

In this chapter, I shall try to further elaborate on what it takes to reach the HE summit. To recap the EC grid table (Fig. 1.1) for life-long learning in the earlier part of Chapter 1, a student whose goal is to enter university, needs to first jump over the hurdles of: a) the SSPA; b) the HKCEE and c) the HKALE. These three hurdles belong to the bottom two tiers of the HK academic structure as based on Fig. 1.1

The description of the mainstream route to HE is the same for all those who trek the Hong Kong education system⁶. On the outset, all Hong Kong citizens, disregarding whether one is Chinese or not, is given nine years free education by the government. Free schooling is provided from Primary 1 to Form 3. This was already laid down in 1978 during the days of colonial Hong Kong. In those days, after Form 3, a student has the choice of whether or not he or she wanted to continue to study. A student can opt to continue and prepare for the HKCEE or enrol in a vocational school or apply for Diploma courses. In most cases, as with Chinese students, many want to further their studies by taking the next step of completing Form 5 and sitting for the HKCEE.

1.1.2.3 Free Education for All

All students are equal, but some are more equal than the others. A sympathetic onlooker will understand that even though on the outset, all resident children, regardless of their ethnicity, receive free mandatory education (free kindergarten education excluded) until the completion of secondary school, not all of them become proficient in the Chinese language. This is where the narratives of the

⁶ This education system however, is not the same for those students who, for example, prepare for the International Baccalaureate (IB) or the General Certificate Secondary Education (GCSE).

ethnic minorities in HK become pertinent in this study. For although HK has an excellent education system for its youth, it falls short of catering to those who need to learn Chinese as a second language and be immersed and assimilated into the HK culture.

The ethnic minority community in HK is very small,⁷ a mere 5% of the 7 million (and steadily growing with the monthly new immigrants from China) population of HK. Within that 5%, around 300,000 are contract workers from the Philippines or Indonesia who are mostly domestic helpers to middle class families. The ‘dominant’ ethnic minority groups in HK who are residents are Indians and Pakistanis, followed by Filipinos and Nepalese. In HK, there are around 10,000 EM school children attending kindergarten, primary and secondary schools altogether. One of the questions asked in this study is, how articulate are these children in the dominant language of HK? Or, how fluent are these EM children in Chinese? The answers to these questions will be expanded in Chapter 5.

Understandably, the Chinese language is one of the most difficult languages to learn especially when one’s mother tongue is fundamentally a phonetically based language. In the Chinese language, each character is made up of a combination strokes and each character is made up radicals that form a new character. And thus the combinations of strokes are like codes in a combination lock that can give way to multiple new characters and with new meanings and so forth. Every single character has its stand-alone meaning. Chinese children both at school and at home master their mother tongue through hours and hours of rote learning; chanting of phrases and passages; and memorization of such characters and their combination strokes. Needless to say, the constant drill of repetitive character-writing is part of *every* Chinese child’s learning process. Rote learning is part of Chinese language learning. Each stroke in a character should be written in a particular direction and the completed characters should be of uniform size throughout the whole passage, no matter how many radicals each character is made up of. Thus it is not just learning how to make meaning of the combination

⁷ 2006 Population By-Census. Thematic Report: Ethnic Minorities

of strokes, but also learning how to combine the strokes in stylistic penmanship. If a child forgets what is taught in school, there is often family at home who can explain and help the child complete the assignment. The following is a counter-story. The protagonist is Ismail.

A short story about Ismail.

Ismail is a 13-year-old Pashtun from Pakistan, and came to Hong Kong when he was 8 years old. He is the oldest of three siblings. No one in Ismail's family can read nor write Chinese. Ismail and his family are devout Muslims. His mother is a housewife who speaks little English and no Cantonese and his father works as a construction worker and is the sole bread winner. His family's monthly household income is just enough to pay rent, utility bills and daily expenses for a family of five. Ismail's family has no other relatives living in HK, but his father belongs to a small community of fellow-Pakistani workers like himself. Ismail goes to a local school which offers him nine years free education as stated under the Hong Kong law. Like most children in Hong Kong, the learning of Chinese language is a regular part of his schooling. Since Ismail arrived in Hong Kong when he was 8, he did not fit the academic requirements for a typical 6-year-old Hong Kong child who would normally be in Primary 1. So he was held back and had to start Primary 1 at 8 years old.

The issue I wish to bring out from this is this is that learning to be proficient in Chinese language takes endless hours of practice and for someone who is non-Chinese speaking (NCS) and living in HK, often there is no support at home in the form of someone who is literate in Chinese. Thus for the NCS student, the assignment of copy-writing of characters can be completed, but if the assignment involves other tasks such as reading or composition, the NCS student is unable to receive the kind of support needed if he cannot remember what the character means. By "default", ethnic minority children, who live in Hong Kong, cannot easily obtain the same kind of home support when it comes to completing Chinese assignments, simply because they are not Chinese. Ismail's story is fictional. In Chapter 4, the experiences of several ethnic minority students from the case study school and their family will be retold.

Insofar as textbooks or learning aids are concerned, there is no readily available Chinese language learning material that schools can use to teach NCS students Chinese. Out-of-classroom support for Chinese language learning is crucial for NCS students. The teaching and learning of Chinese as a second language in HK, as opposed to English as a second language, is relatively new in local mainstream schools. The language teachers in both primary and secondary

schools are not specially trained to teach Chinese as a second language to these ethnic minority students. Therefore, these teachers are left to their own creativity and working experience as a language teacher to design Chinese learning materials for their NCS students.

Chinese language teachers who teach NCS students find it difficult to obtain tangible support from the EB in the form of teaching materials for NCS students. The EB has not yet, provided schools which have ethnic minority students with an appropriate and centralized teaching material⁸ for Chinese as a second language. A sample of the teaching material can be found in Appendix 4.1 to 4.4. This packet of Chinese language learning material can be further developed by Chinese language teachers for EM students' use. Although there are steadily more and more Chinese learning material being developed, the Assessment Guides in the grading of Chinese language learning for second language learners have not been standardized.

Unlike Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), Teaching Chinese as a Second Language to immigrant children is not offered in any of the Education Faculties in the tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. This is not to be confused with the kind of Chinese language courses offered at Hong Kong universities for foreign adult learners. During the colonial days of the 20th century, the expatriate community who served in the civil service underwent intensive Chinese language courses to serve the purpose of their job nature. The Chinese spoken and written word was for example necessary for the English police inspector or the English senior immigration officer because it was necessary for them to communicate with their Chinese subordinates. Soon after the British government left the major positions in the civil service, the "need" for Chinese as a second language also deteriorated. Post 1997 saw a natural return to the use of the Chinese language. The return to Hong Kong's mother tongue and an upsurge of the use of the Chinese language was the first step for Hong Kong people to rekindle their national identity. English of course remains as the lingua franca

⁸ Appendix 5 is a sample of the (as of 2010) Chinese language teaching material being designed for NCS students in HK. It is hoped that this set of textbooks will be part of the centralized teaching materials for Chinese as SLA for EMs in HK.

for the commercial aspect of Hong Kong lives, but Chinese in all its forms of text, religion and culture had to re-imprint itself after a 99-year rule of the British Empire (Tsui and Shum 1999).

It is important also to understand why Hong Kong had to reshape its Chinese identity without straying away too much from the Motherland. Since reinstating Chineseness is now crucial in the new Hong Kong (I refer to new Hong Kong as post-1997 Hong Kong), it only becomes natural that there is a sudden thrust of a “Chinese agenda” into every aspect of Hong Kong life, including education. Post 1997 saw the implementation of Chinese as the medium of instruction (MoI). Much to the chagrin of many local schools, a new form of bench-marking was introduced in which schools that could not meet a certain threshold in the English standard had to “revert” to CMI on the grounds that the students of those particular schools did not prove themselves proficient enough to learn in English, and thereby were incapable of learning in English. In all fairness, the explanation for being allotted as a CMI school, meant that learning can be enhanced because Hong Kong is after all, predominantly Chinese and it is important to appreciate the Chinese heritage by being instilled in the Chinese language. This meant that if a school was categorized under the CMI label all teaching materials for all subjects, save for English has to be in Chinese. This major revamping for the MoI was a cause for publishers’ rejoicing and a serious moment of transition for many schools because they were now required to teach and learn in Chinese. The political agenda has always played an important role in language policy formulation and implementation. (Tsui and Shum 1999)

In light of all this, the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong could only wait and see what remained in the scraps of token help they were to receive from the government. This was a key concern for those ethnic minority families involved because the switch from learning in an EMI environment to a CMI environment meant much more needed special educational support because ethnic minority students had to first overcome the Chinese language barrier. The initial response from top to bottom, regardless of policy makers or any individual who is part of the Hong Kong community, felt that it is best for the ethnic minority community to be part of Hong Kong and be integrated into CMI schools if possible. That

way, the ethnic minority can assimilate into Chinese culture much more directly. After all, many South Asians have made Hong Kong their home. Thus, it lies in the hands of that particular school as to how Chinese should be taught to NCS. The kind of support from the Head Teacher or Principal also determines how much Chinese language teaching to NCS students can be done.

1.1.2.4 The Dominant Language of Interaction in Hong Kong

Cantonese is the vernacular language of Hong Kong. But if asked what the lingua franca is, one stops short wondering, because it is not English. It is not English unlike the Englishes spoken in other past British colonies like Singapore or India. With 5% of Hong Kong's population being ethnic minorities, which is around 350,000 who are mostly South Asians, along with more new immigrants from the Mainland from different provinces who speak different Chinese dialects, it is interesting to note how Hong Kong still has not yet truly established its lingua franca. However, for the purposes of everyday communication, Cantonese is still the dominant language spoken in Hong Kong.

Before one can appreciate the language policy in the current education system, it is important to consider how Cantonese became the vernacular language of Hong Kong. One of the more pressing issues that indirectly shaped the language policy of Hong Kong, dates back to the 1940's when Hong Kong became the haven for thousands of refugees from the southern provinces of Mainland China. Fleeing the carnage of the Civil War and the Cultural Revolution, many crossed the border into colonial Hong Kong. English, before 1997 was considered the Supreme Language (So 1998) and it was the language that was used by professionals, officials and the upper echelon of Hong Kong society. Aside from the indigenous dialects, Cantonese was the language spoken inside and outside one's home. As a reference point, the 1991 Census and Statistics Report recorded that 95.8% of the population spoke Cantonese which was classified under the "usual language" spoken.

As many Chinese from the region of the Pearl River Delta made Hong Kong their home, the population increased rapidly and schooling needs of the territory became a high priority. Thus in 1978, the government implemented an education

policy that all children in Hong Kong from six to fifteen years old received compulsory education for nine years. That translates into six years of Primary education and three years of Junior Secondary education. After 2008, students will receive mandatory six years of Primary education and six years of Junior and Senior Secondary Education inclusive.

Curiously, the language(s) of instruction in schools evolved from the mechanism that promoted elitism. At the end of Primary Six, students are allocated a place in Junior Secondary based on their academic results both internally and based on the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA). The students are given a place through a Secondary School Placement Allocation System (SSPA). The allocation of a junior secondary place itself is crucial in determining the educational opportunities of a student. Before 1997, schools in Hong Kong were categorized into three major types: These were 1) Anglo-Chinese secondary schools or Grant schools 2) Chinese middle schools and 3) technical schools.

The language of instruction in these three types of schools identified with the schools' prestige and calibre of students. English was the dominant language of instruction for all major subjects, except Chinese Language, in Anglo-Chinese schools. Chinese middle schools taught all subjects in Chinese and for those who did not have the academic aptitude, technical schools were an alternative and Chinese language was also the main language of instruction.

Today, names have been changed, but the labelling still essentially means the same. Instead of categorizing schools as types, schools are identified by the medium of instruction that they use in the classrooms i.e. an EMI school meant English medium of instruction, and CMI meant Chinese medium of instruction.

Schools that taught mainly in English were therefore by far considered top-notch and according to public opinion, preferred by parents because academically strong pupils were allocated to these schools. The standard of English of students in EMI schools is stronger than those who attend CMI schools. In a short paper produced from the Hong Kong Democratic Foundation, Lo (1990) described that in spite of the strong advocates of Chinese as MoI,

many parents are still reluctant to send their children to CMI schools because it lacks a promising future in the realm of HE. None of the statutory universities in HK are completely CMI. Since most undergraduate programmes demand a higher standard of English, the need to be proficient in English becomes much more crucial when studying for a first degree. Thus, a pass in Chinese language might be a pre-requisite for entering university, but the bulk of the learning and teaching is done in English. In this light, many Chinese families try their best to enrol their children in EMI schools so that their chances of entering university are greater.

1.1.3 An Overview of the Education System in Hong Kong

The following grid description (Fig 1.3) of the Hong Kong education system will however be given a new face-lift after 2009. At this moment in time, Hong Kong has just begun her maiden voyage of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Educational Reform. In the NSS system there will be only one major exit examination for students at the end of six years of secondary schooling, instead of the traditional seven years. In short, the HKCEE and the HKALE will be a thing of the past after 2012. In place of the HKCEE and the HKALE, students will be awarded the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). This is an important factor to consider because it means that the academic life span of a student will be prolonged and many will remain at secondary school under the NSS curriculum. In other words, students will complete their senior secondary school at the end of their sixth year instead of five years.

The Hong Kong education system is going through this very transition as this thesis is being shaped. By 2012, the HKALE will become another shelved colonial system in Hong Kong schooling. Thus the old way of “5+2” is now being replaced by “3+3+4”. This new formulaic metaphor of 334 will be in full swing in 2012.

An Overview of the Education System in Hong Kong before 2012

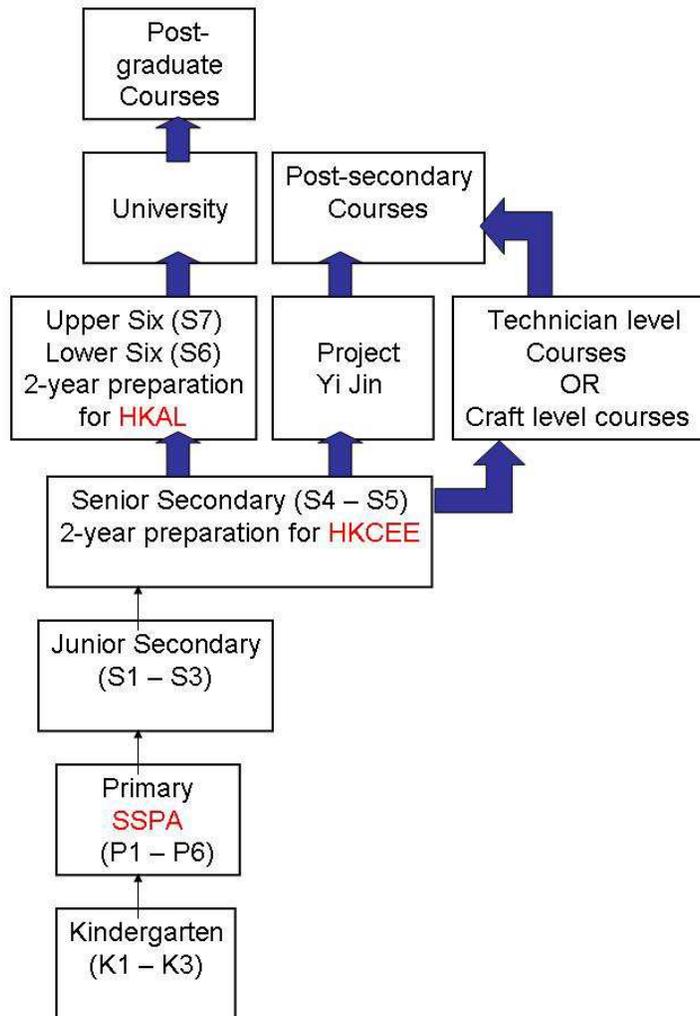
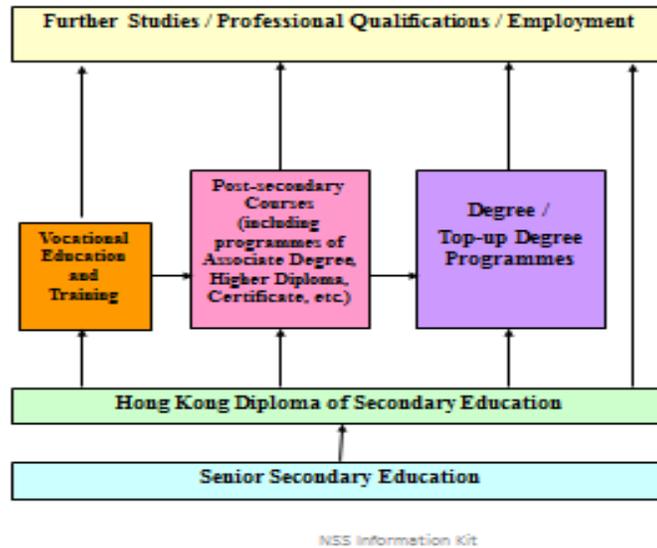


Fig. 1.3 An Overview of the Education System in HK before 2012

The following is an overview of the *new* Education System in Hong Kong i.e. the NSS, which will be fully implemented after 2012.

Multiple Pathways



2

Fig. 1.4 An Overview of the New Education System in Hong Kong after 2012
(Source: https://cd.edb.gov.hk/334info/information_page_en.asp?td=a6)

1.1.3.1 The Ulcer Beneath the Poultice

Under the NSS system the first batch of student will graduate in 2012, with a HKDSE which will be their ticket to HE. 2012 will also bid farewell to the HKAL. It is crucial to mention this fact here because as HK is now undergoing this major educational revamp, there is a group of about 10,000 ethnic minority students who are caught in this NSS educational reform and are now in limbo. Being in limbo means that they are in junior secondary school but they have to be prepared for their senior secondary exit examination and ready to sit for the Chinese language exam as well. The crux of the matter is that many of these NCS students are not ready to take on an examination at L1 level which demands the learning of a completely new language. It is because of this educational revamp that the EB has to confront the issue that has been problematic but unattended to all throughout the years of colonialism. As already mentioned, after the implementation of the NSS system, Chinese was made compulsory and ethnic minority students had to quickly become proficient

in as much Chinese as they could within the years of Form 1 to Form 5, depending at what point they were in Junior Secondary, so that they could sit for the Chinese Language exit exam.

There appears to have been a glitch when Hong Kong embarked on this monumental educational reform. The EB may have ‘forgotten’ about the ethnic minority community in HK, and when Chinese language was made compulsory for *all* students in the 12-year free and mandatory education, the NCS children were left to fend for themselves when it came to picking up the four skills in language learning in Chinese. As a quick response to the protests made on behalf of the EM students, the EB decided to allow EM students to use the IGCSE Chinese Language exam as a qualification for further studies. Therefore, these students had the paper qualification for Chinese Language. But in essence, there is a big gap in the level of difficulty for the IGCSE and the HKDSE. The table below cited from one of the Band 1 schools⁹ in HK, briefly describes the criteria for the eight local universities. To be an eligible undergraduate, *all* of the institutions’ require Chinese Language if the student comes from an HKAL or HKDSE background and is applying via the JUPAS.

Comparison of General Entrance Requirements of Universities

Institution	General Entrance Requirements*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hong Kong Institute of Education • The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology • The University of Hong Kong 	4 core (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics & Liberal Studies) and 2 elective subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City University of Hong Kong • Hong Kong Baptist University • The Chinese University of Hong Kong • The Hong Kong Polytechnic University 	4 core (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics & Liberal Studies) and 1 elective subject
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lingnan University 	4 core (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics & Liberal Studies)

*Note: Individual programmes may have additional requirement(s)
(Source: <http://www.smcc-canossian.org/>)

Fig 1.5 Comparison of General Entrance Requirements of Universities

⁹ There are 3 ‘bands’ of local secondary schools in HK, with Band 1 which is the academically elite, and Band 3 are often slower learners. The allocation bands of students in HK are determined according to a scaled internal assessment in P.5 & P.6 Hence, students in primary schools with better allocation results face keener competition because their grades reflect the secondary school band that they will be allocated to.

If we embrace the needs of HK's EM as part of the entire national curricula, then HK should grasp globalization to include not only financial superiority but also social and cultural aspects of HK society. In other words, the forces of globalization are evolving in nature and impact, and it is imperative that HK takes bigger leaps into more and major inclusion of educating the EMs in HK with Chinese literacy, and not only make cosmetic offers in the likes of reviewing educational policies. Avis (2007) pointed out that "meritocracy is being reconstituted in new economic and social conditions, but which, as in the past, ultimately blames the individual for educational failure." By developing a Chinese language curriculum for non-Chinese speaking students in Hong Kong, the ethnic minorities can progress based on their ability and talent rather than on wealth or class privileges, which many of whom do not have to begin with. Certainly, this also entails a major investment in the schooling of those ethnic minorities in Chinese culture and Chinese language skills. If any city in the world, Hong Kong can be the pioneer in becoming the most sought-after city in which Chinese culture and Chinese language learning can become a hub for both overseas students and her home-grown ethnic minorities. Lowering the exam requirements to GCSE Level from the HKCEE Level is only a temporary poultice to the real needs of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong if we are to prepare them to enter the workforce in Hong Kong and make them socially and economically viable individuals.

Without a centralized method of Chinese Language teaching to NCS, there is no possibility in the near future that EMs in HK can enter higher education in local tertiary institutions without having to tread a meandering route to a Bachelor's Degree. On one hand, students do not have the Chinese Language pre-requisite to enter most post-secondary schools or colleges. On the other, the government promises to give 12 years of free schooling to HK students. But in those 12 years of free schooling, there is no commitment to ensure that EMs are also equipped with the Chinese Language skill strong enough to pursue higher education. Thus EMs are trapped in a system of education that on the outset, has given them the academic qualifications of secondary schooling, but not enough to give them the choice to pursue further higher education, which can in turn lead to better upward social and economic mobility. Ironically, except for

Chinese related courses, most courses offered in the undergraduate programmes are done in English.

The diagram below is the NSS curriculum from the EB describes at a glance what a Hong Kong school leaver must cover at school before moving onto HE. Given that *all* students are treated equally regardless of ethnicity, period of residency in HK and schooling experience, the criteria below must be met before any opportunity can be given for HE.

The New Senior Secondary Curriculum

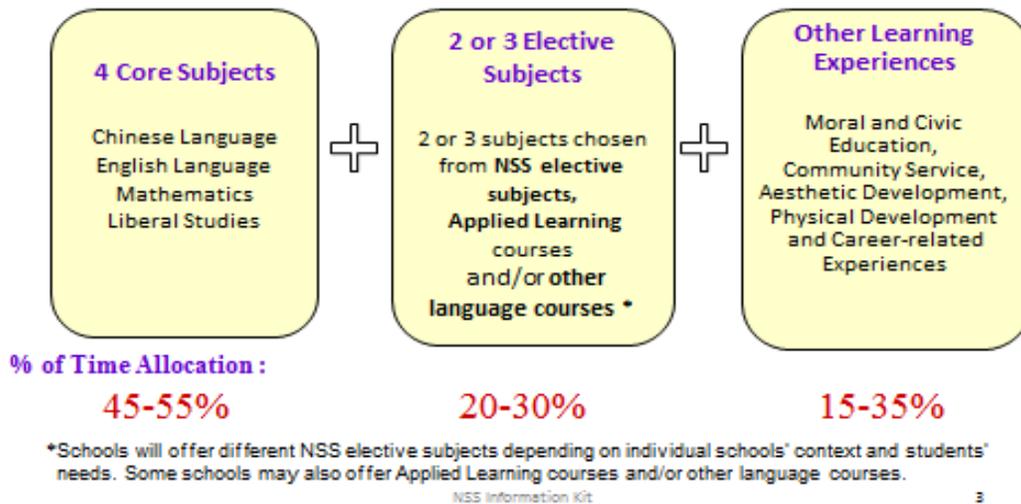


Fig 1.6 The New Senior Secondary Curriculum

(Source: http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Progress_promote_HKDSE/EDB-NSS.pdf)

As seen in the core requirements, Chinese Language is at the foremost. And upon closer scrutiny, Liberal Studies (LS), another mandatory subject in the NSS, also encourages students to examine Chinese social, political and cultural topics as seen in Appendix 1.8 In this reference, four slides are pinned down for a closer scrutiny. Special attention is drawn to the second topic area, “Society and Culture”. Under this topic, modules 2 and 3 require students to tap into

Chinese socio-political issues. On the one hand, the NSS Liberal Studies curriculum has enlarged the periphery for learning about socio-political issues which concern HK and the Mainland. But on the other hand, it is hampering the EM students from fully grasping this course because of language barriers. The introduction of this subject in 1992 not only played a part in paving the way to an increased sense of national belonging, but also was a major step away from the occidental-colonial subjects of the HKALE. The LS syllabus is in every way a method to secure and re-establish the sense of awareness and belongingness for HK and the motherland. Hence it is not merely advocating Chinese as MOI but also re-packaging the HK student as a Chinese National via the subjects taught. This all makes logical sense in welcoming the 1997 handover, and preparing for the new academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education. Amidst all the educational revamping and code switching to CMI, the group of South Asian ethnic minorities – residents and new arrivals alike – are therefore caught in this educational limbo. Many are like their Chinese classmates who were born and grew up in HK. But the only difference is that the ethnic minority student did not have L1 competency in the Chinese Language. By making Chinese a mandatory subject and as an entrance requirement to HE, the NCS student's opportunities for HE are stifled already in the secondary school years.

In Chapter 4, the Head Teacher of the case study school narrated about how difficult it was to implement novel methods of teaching ethnic minority students about Chinese culture and history, let alone, the Chinese language. The Chinese students had the upper hand when it came to learning about their cultural heritage, while for the NCS students it was a completely new subject. The Head Teacher mentioned how for the teacher, it was also a challenge bringing the two camps of students en par with what was being taught. This was one of the reasons why many mainstream schools in HK are reticent in accepting NCS children because it meant various layers of challenges ahead for both teacher and student. When data was being collected for this thesis between 2003 and 2010, the group of student interviewees in the case study school spoke about the challenges of having to learn about Chinese culture 'from scratch' whereas their Chinese classmates had no problem discussing Chinese cultural topics at a

higher philosophical level because it was already part of their heritage. The NCS students on the other hand, were constantly in a ‘catching-up’ mode of learning. Not because they lagged behind intellectually, but because they did not have the advantage of their Chinese counterparts.

As the NCS population grew, teachers had to quickly find methods to teach these EM students the value of Chinese language not only for examination purposes but also from the cultural perspective. The schools which took on EM students grew in number over the last 10 years, until the EB decided that these ‘special’ schools which catered for NCS students were to be coined as *designated schools*. In this context designated means that these schools have predominantly large numbers of children from various other South and South East Asian ethnicities (i.e. NCS students), but very few Chinese students. The ratio of NCS students to Chinese students in a designated school is about 40:1 (as in the case study school in this research). At the start of this research, there were about ten secondary schools in HK which have become designated schools because of the sheer number of NCS students enrolled. A list of these schools is found in Appendix 1.9. There are a few mainstream EMI secondary schools in HK, which are *not* designated schools that have accepted ethnic minority students.

1.2 THE ISSUE AT HAND

1.2.1 Research Aim

In view of the above context, this study will therefore explore the schooling experiences of ethnic minorities, namely South Asians, in Hong Kong. The investigation looks into the complex relationship of dominance and subordination which is at the heart of being an ethnic minority in Hong Kong. In other words, the aims of this research is to discover what challenges Hong Kong South Asian students encounter in the local education system and to find out what opportunities these students have in fact for further education. It is commonly accepted that higher education opens doors to more opportunities and higher socio-economic status. Thus in a broader context, there is a need to examine the micro-practices within Hong Kong’s institutional and cultural settings, as well as within the educational milieu of South Asian students. Issues

regarding educational governance and educational accountability will therefore be examined as well. Special focus will be put in exploring the choices, access and equity given to ethnic minorities regarding education in Hong Kong. Apart from being a study of critical enquiry this particular instrumental case study in educational research aims to inform educational judgment and hopefully contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the making of educational policies for a more global Hong Kong. There is very little literature available on the impact of the Hong Kong education system on the ethnic minorities here with respect to educational accountability and the narratives of the South Asian students. With regard to their aspirations for HE, little has been documented which could lead to a more in-depth study of the role of the Hong Kong government in the lives of the ethnic minority community here. The curriculum and educational policies laid down by the Hong Kong Education Bureau have intrinsic and far-reaching effects on South Asian students in particular. The implication therefore, directs this study to also shed light on social justice for inclusion of the schooling of ethnic minorities in the educational paradigm.

The figure below is the framework to the initial research question. As already mentioned in the first half of this chapter, there is one particular factor that has been a long-standing obstacle to most ethnic minorities in Hong Kong which is the learning of Chinese language. Therefore, even before the pilot study took place, the initial research area as depicted below shows the impact of Chinese language learning of NCS students as the central focus. As the diagram below shows, the four peripheral factors which circumscribe the circle in the middle are the areas in which I focused on. I wanted to find out about how these factors also impacted not just the Chinese language learning, but also the overall schooling experiences of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

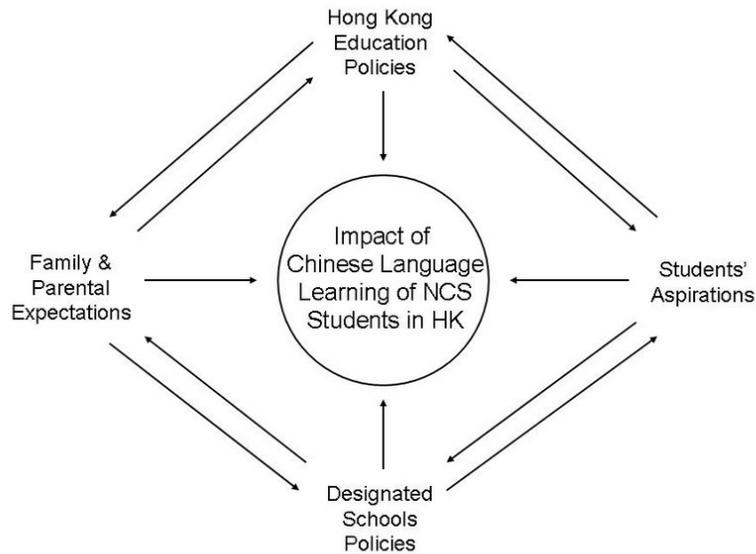


Fig. 1.7 Initial Research Question

After the pilot study as the methodology in Chapter 3 will show, I found out that the four peripheral points (Fig. 1.7) had a more complex relationship with each other, and the issue of Chinese language learning for EM students is just one of the many obstacles that NCS students have to face en route to HE. Hence the radial Venn diagram below could best describe the relationship of the issues above. More about how the process of research and how the conceptual framework evolved will be elaborated on in Chapter 3. At this opening point, however, the second diagram below describes a slight change in presentation of ideas, but implies a larger and more complex relationship of the schooling experiences of EM students in Hong Kong pertaining to the expectations of Chinese language learning.

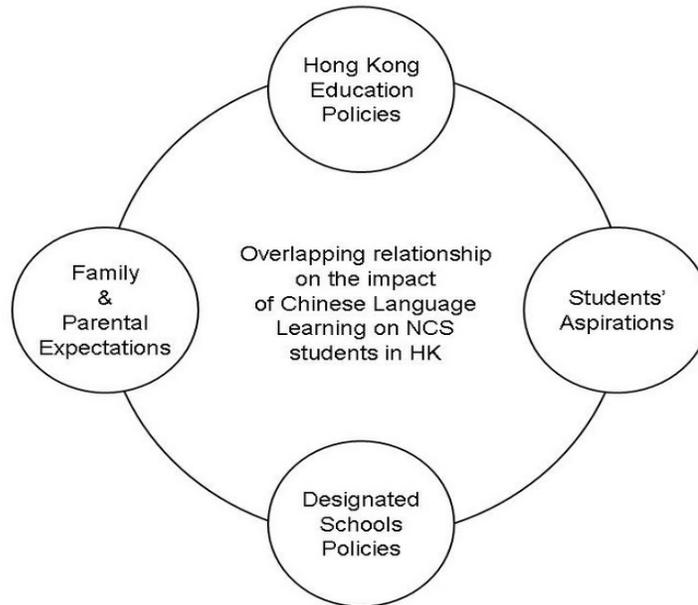


Fig. 1.8 Radial Venn Diagram Describing the Overlapping Relationship to the Central Idea in the Cycle

1.2.2 Research Questions

After many informal chats with friends, and friends of friends who were ethnic minorities, and several failed visits at securing a target school, I finally zeroed in on 4 things which I wanted answers for. The crux of the study is looking into how South Asian students in Hong Kong experienced the (pre-NSS) education system. In other words, this study investigates what are the schooling experiences of ethnic minority students as they move through secondary school, interact with the examination system and the requirements needed for entering sixth form and their aspirations for higher education. The core foci of the study led to specific questions which are:

- What kinds of opportunities do ethnic minority students have for further education in Hong Kong?
- What are the unique challenges that ethnic minority students face as they complete secondary school?
- What are the Hong Kong education policies towards the provision for ethnic minorities in the education system? and
- How can ethnic minority students be empowered to be qualified for HE in Hong Kong?

1.2.3 Significance of the Study (Part 1)

The significance of this study is mainly twofold. In this investigation, the aim is to acquire a better understanding of how the Hong Kong education system affects the schooling choices of ethnic minority students. It is also important to understand how their schooling experiences affect their choices for further and higher education. My search for the answers to these questions stems from a deeply rooted phenomenon in Hong Kong. As a child growing up as a non-Chinese in Hong Kong, I have often sensed that ethnic minority residents here are treated in a somewhat lesser way. Subjective as it is, the interaction with various aspects of the HK society, whether if it is in the options given for a place at school, or the process in applying for a job, or something as simple as taking a seat on the train, there is an unspoken sentiment of “us” (the ethnic minorities) and “them” (the local Chinese in HK). Although unspoken the sentiment is manifested in ways which ethnic minorities are treated in Hong Kong. As a person on the “receiving end” the ethnic minority experience begins with schooling. Apart from the sentiment that I speak of, I also want to find out if today’s ethnic minority students experience similar trials and tribulations at school as when I was a student. It does not require a major investigation to conclude with a formula that a good education offered by a good school can be a meal ticket to an upward social mobility. However, published work on ethnic minorities in Hong Kong only became prominent in the last decade or so. Most available research done in English are conducted by NGOs and uploaded in the EB website. As the NAS is being implemented, the reform shows no particular emphasis on how EM students can be taught Chinese as a second language in schools in order to cope with not only everyday needs in a Chinese community, but also how to tackle the NSS system.

Since there is an issue with the upward social mobility of many South Asians in Hong Kong, these people are deprived of the chance to earn a stronger visibility as professionals or members as higher ranking staff in the Hong Kong civil service workforce, hospitals, law firms, universities or major conglomerates. By visibility, I mean that first and second generation South Asians who have made Hong Kong their home in as early as the 1960s, is low and only a handful of ethnic minorities are seen in the white collar workforce. Perhaps if these career aspirations sound too ambitious, the lens can be shifted to job offers such as positions in the service industry as in fast-food take aways or receptionists; or machine operators like drivers or electricians; or

elementary occupations suitable for unskilled workers such as security guards or cleaners. If any person in Hong Kong goes into any local bank, one will notice that a majority of the bank tellers are Chinese. If any person enters one of the local chain jewellery shops in Hong Kong, one will notice that a majority of the sales assistants are Chinese. If one entered any of the government hospitals in Hong Kong or a privately run hospital or clinic, one will also find that clinic and hospital staff alike, from the receptionists and cashiers to the nurses and doctors is dominantly Chinese. In another instance, if any person enters either one of the two major chain supermarkets in Hong Kong, one will also notice a similar phenomenon as with the banks, hospitals or the jewellery shops. The men-in-black or the women clad-in-Channel who make the central business district buzz with activity and the scenario of the buying and selling of blue and red chips are often not bartered by home-grown South Asians. Interestingly, if one walks into the occasional Prêt-a-Manger, or a deli shop in Hong Kong, or the pubs and bars along the red light districts of Wan Chai, one can observe that these types of service industries are well manned by more of the South Asians who live in Hong Kong. Other more popular jobs which South Asians select are construction work; kitchen and laundry work at major hotels or smaller enterprises, delivery boys or truck drivers. Or a more sedate job which might require wearing a uniform and clutching a rifle might be a post for guardsman outside the aforementioned bank or jewellery shop. Albeit the types of occupation or vocation listed above, there are also smaller Thai or Filipino restaurant businesses or family-run import/export businesses or tailor shops run by South Asians who are mostly Indians.

In 2010, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) released some data which showed the extent of parents' involvement in their children's education. It was mainly a comparison of Chinese and ethnic minority parents on how much resource they can get hold of in order to enhance their children's learning at school. In total, 191 Chinese parents and 189 EM parents took part in the survey. Part of the data released described looked like an inverse proportion of the occupational roles. 325 parents belonging to both groups were asked about the nature of their work. At a glance, the higher the status of a job, the fewer the number of EM parents had it. On the other hand, the lower down the job requirements were, the more EM parents there were that took those jobs. For example, 32.5% EM parents held elementary occupations or were unskilled labourers as opposed to the 11.5% Chinese parents who held the same jobs. Another piece of data

showed that 7.1% EM parents were professionals as opposed to 17.3% who were Chinese. And as for the top tier occupations in the survey, such as managers and other administrators, only 5.9% were EM parents, while 14.7% were Chinese. In 2005, The Centre for Social Policy Studies at HK PolyU also conducted a similar study on the “Education of South Asian Ethnic Minority Groups in Hong Kong.” (Appendix 1.10a & 1.10b) In this study, the interviewees were EM students from 14 to 24 years old who were full-time students in HK. There were 200 respondents from Filipino, Indian, Nepalese and Pakistani ethnicities. In this 2005 study, parents who were at the top tier income range i.e. ‘professionals’ ranged from 6.5% to 6.7%. 14.2% of the parents were manual labourers, and 37.1% were in the service industry or shop assistants. The data collected regarding their parents’ occupations revealed similar findings as the one conducted by the HKCSS in 2010.

Understandably, established family businesses are a source for income and stability, but if job searching at the end schooling is the next major step for a young adult to enter society’s workforce, then a minimal qualification of secondary school education that equips a students with certain life skills is what every government should provide. In extension to this, if a sound higher education is one of the keys to the upper echelon, it would be interesting to find out why the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong do not enjoy the same kinds of opportunities for a better socio-economic mobility as compared to the local Chinese residents. Upward socio-economic mobility in this context means having the right to enjoy the same opportunities of seeking for a place in any discipline in HE. It also means enjoying the same opportunities of seeking for a nine-to-five office job or a position with the civil service and *being* hired so that the income earned can offer the luxury of a better, if not middle class life style. In the same paradigm, it also means having informed knowledge to make decisions in order to enhance a better quality of life. In Chapters 2 and 9, the theories of Pierre Bourdieu on cultural capital and Antonio Gramsci on dominant hegemony will be used to look at how ethnic minorities fare on the socio-economic ladder in HK.

The other significant reason for this study takes upon a more personal conviction for exploration into this topic. The personal reason is perhaps the cornerstone for this thesis. On my part, it is significantly an internal debate of an insider/outsider who has experiences of being an ethnic minority student in Hong Kong; and I have hurdled,

tripped and staggered my way to higher education. The greatest concern in this part of the expository discourse is to warrant a genuine “insider’s” narrative without giving into the dangers of soliciting pathos and sentimentality. My personal concerns as an educator has motivated me into probing further or as the case could be, ‘probe back’ into the issue of heightening the awareness towards ethnic minority education in Hong Kong. Thus, I am fully aware and upfront to the readers about the kinds of biases I have towards the Hong Kong education system when I embarked upon this research.

1.2.4 Significance of the Study (Part II)

- Personal vignettes of the researcher and weaving the narratives

Scenario 1

Setting: in a subway train; a family of three (2 parents and their baby) sitting across from the family were two female foreign (Filipino) domestic workers.

Said one Filipino domestic worker to the other in Tagalog, as she was looking intently at the young family sitting across them: *See that man over there? His wife must be from the poorer parts of China where people farm the land because she looks dark. But look, their baby has very fair skin. Many Hong Kong men today find their brides in China and bring them over to Hong Kong.*

Scenario 2

Setting: a telephone conversation between a retired school principal and a young mother who is trying to get her five-year-old daughter to enter Primary 1 in an elite mainstream school in HK.

Said the retired principal to the young non-Chinese mother: *Oh, you never know why your daughter’s application was rejected. Maybe, just maybe, I’m not saying this is true, but maybe it’s because they know that one of the parents is not Chinese and there can be difficulty teaching the child how to read and write Chinese.*

Scenario 3

Setting: inside a Toyota packed with 6 cackling young female secondary school teachers.

Said one new young Science teacher (a fresh graduate from a teachers’ college) to another new young English Language teacher (also a fresh graduate from a HK university): *You’re really very lucky to get a job here especially in this school given your background.*

The above three sketches share something in common. One person in each of the captured dialogue made a remark about someone else based on their own values, pre-conceptions and experience. If we take a close look at the remarks made by the foreign domestic worker, the retired principal and the young Science teacher, the three of them possibly share a common point of reference

towards the people they were commenting on. It was a point of reference engrained in the mind of the speaker - whereupon a set of values and beliefs were taught, passed down or experienced. These remarks had triggered a form of conviction or certainty towards those three people whom they were speaking about - namely, the Chinese wife on the train, the young mother on the phone and the English Language teacher in the Toyota. Based on the above remarks made, it is not too difficult to recognize traces of biases, which for various reasons, were naturally brought about by the speakers' own (social) experiences. Incidentally, the Chinese wife, the young mother and the English teacher are all the same person. And that person is the researcher in this project. These scenarios set the tone to the terms of endearment that many an ethnic minority in HK might experience.

Beginning this particular section (i.e. 1.2.4) with three anecdotes about perceptions and personal biases or rather, personal biography is like what Goodson (2006) mentioned in *The Rise of the Life Narrative* about telling (“small”) stories of individuals. In this article he mentioned the fall of the grand narratives have given rise to smaller-scale narratives – “infinitely smaller” – which reflect “human belief and aspiration” and that “stories are part of the common currency of the day.” It is important he says, that we should know how learning is contextually situated and that it also has a history. In other words, alongside the (small-scale) life narrative that can tell us something about an individual, we can also look to the history of the institutions that offer formal learning opportunities and the informal learning opportunities that take place in communities and transitional spaces. All these moments or trajectories in life, as Goodson coins it, are opportunities for learning. The narratives of my informants and of my own are certainly not near any of the longitudinal studies on life narratives, but minuscule as it may, these bear testimonies of life experiences – a snippet of life experience – which are telling of the bigger picture of educational policies in HK that in turn, impact the lives of ethnic minorities in HK. The opening 3 fragments in this section may have no direct relation to the education of ethnic minorities in HK, but the thread that links the three is the thread of imbedded bias. And how this thesis might possibly change that canvas for a different narrative is enough grounds for excitement to research

on this subject. In extension of this thought, Goodson (2005) mentioned that “the way we tell our individual tales come from a wider culture.” Hence, how we are socially structured depends on the life politics that we experience. Goodson went on to cite Ian McEwan, Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan as (fragmentary) examples of how the shift in narrative capacity is individualized. Meaning is made from an individual’s life, and that point of view reflects well the narrative capital. Perhaps my socially structured self is imbedded in the nuances of how I tell the narratives of my parents – two protagonists who went in search for cultural and symbolic capital.

My Filipino parents made their way to Hong Kong in 1964 on overseas working contracts, just three years before the big riots in HK which kept the city in curfews and endless tension. Sir David Trench was the governor of HK when my parents arrived. My father arrived in HK to be a cook in one of the night clubs and my mother took the road not typically taken by many Filipino young women today who spend their Sundays in Central under the awning of Norman Foster’s creativity. No, my mother hopped on a plane and tagged along with her boss to be a hairdresser at a beauty salon in Tsim Sha Tsui. Both the night club and the beauty salon were situated in the busier parts of Kowloon which today is still the tourist district in Hong Kong. Apart from the influx of refugees from the Guangdong province in China fleeing the repercussions of the Maoist regime, home-made bombs were a major concern for the colonial government. My parents did not meet in the Philippines. They met in HK. They got married in HK. And I was born in HK. HK has been my family’s home since my parents set foot on this stretch of the Chinese soil almost 50 years ago.

When I reached 4 years old, my mother was aware that I should be sent to school but she did not know how to enrol me into a school. That was 1972. She was not even aware where a kindergarten could be found. Neither of my parents could speak any Cantonese back then. Since both my parents worked day and night shifts, and my father’s day started at night, as night clubs normally would, my schooling was the least of their problems. My parents’ predicament was in a way, similar to the many new Chinese refugees at the time. Jobs were not easy to come by and life in general, was not easy. But every family saved to send

money back home to support even bigger families. My parents were no exception. They sent home what they could back to the Philippines.

The political backdrop of Hong Kong in the late 60s and 70s was not all quiet on the forefront. Although the manufacturing industry was at its height, and the “Made in Hong Kong” tag was a label to be reckoned with the world over, the people of Hong Kong also turned against its colonial government as a ubiquitous scapegoat. There were the infamous 1966 and 1967 riots and the Students’ Movement in the 1970s coinciding with the huge population influx from China (Sweeting 1992). In the midst of all this, it was not a surprise that not every child in HK had a place to study at school. The colonial government had a massive headache of ensuring that all children attended school. The 9-year free education policy implemented in 1978 in fact had political underpinnings because HK was being frowned upon for exploiting child labour in the booming manufacturing industries (Sweeting 1992).

If it was difficult for an ordinary HK Chinese family to make ends meet and send their children to school, it would have been more difficult for a HK Filipino family to find the appropriate sources to send their four-year-old child to school. I was enrolled into a kindergarten quite by accident. By the time I was 4, my mother’s clientele at the beauty parlour had expanded and it so happened that one of her clients was a primary school principal. This woman headed a school which initially gave priority to the Portuguese-Macanese children in HK. The eclectic mix of youngsters who attended this school was interesting. Apart from Chinese children, there were also Indians, Pakistanis and Filipinos. And of course the children from Macau who were half Portuguese. Perhaps unwittingly, my mother’s symbolic capital and cultural capital was increasing because although I was a little bit behind the usual school entrance age, I also inadvertently entered one of the more sought after primary schools in HK. Needless to say, how I ended up receiving schooling in HK was not because my parents were well-informed about how a child could enter school, had it not been for my mother’s job. How apt that it should be that this primary school principal ran a school for ethnic minorities in HK. Coincidence? More like the root and reason for this dissertation. My primary school experience was a ball

compared to what I had to hurdle over as I hit my secondary school years. The primary school I went to no longer exists, but I had fond memories of being surrounded by Indians, Pakistanis, Portuguese, Eurasians, Chinese and of course, Filipinos. Unfortunately, the school was taken over by a very well-established charity organization in HK. Today, part of the original school name still remains, but its board of governors are different. Sliding into a tangent in this educational narrative, I must say that life hands out little ironies now and then. And I say this with a little bit of curious recompense because that primary school which I attended in the 1970s turned out to later be one of the pilot case study schools for this research.

Every child had to pass a central allocation exam in the late 1970s up to the early 1980s referred to as the Junior Secondary Education Assessment (JSEA). The acronyms have evolved since then, but the ways of assessing primary school children in HK are still rigorous and in template form i.e. one exam applies to all students. My fate was sealed at 12 years old when I was allocated to a convent school in my home district. I remember being completely devastated because I was the only girl in my class being sent there, while most my ethnic minority friends were sent to this one particular secondary school that accepted many non-Chinese children. My Chinese friends were sent to other regular mainstream schools. With hindsight I realized that most of my Indian, Pakistani and Filipino friends were sent to the sister school of my case study school. And only with hindsight did I realize that my being sent to the convent school would be pivotal in the many events which were to unfold in my schooling experience as an ethnic minority. I was clueless initially, but soon found out that the convent school was a girls' school 'to-die-for' not only because of its long affiliation with the Catholic Church in HK, but because of its repute and long history in HK. In other words, it was and still is an elite school. To date, the convent school I went to is now 111 years old. I must have been allocated there because of my grades. In my vague memory, there were probably around 15 girls who were ethnic minorities in my secondary school in the six years that I studied there. And by the time I left at 19, there were less than 5 ethnic minority girls in a school population of about 1,400. That was 1986.

Coming from the primary school I attended, had its advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages that I can recall are the strong academic standards that the school maintained and how my friends and I were a rather rowdy free-spirited group of all sorts. Not just in personality, but in ethnicity. It was only when I entered the convent school did I realize that there existed the wrath of the nuns. Some of the disadvantages of attending the Portuguese primary school were that each and every ethnic minority child was placed in the Portuguese class to learn Portuguese while the Chinese students learnt Chinese. Why were the ethnic minority children further separated like this? I could not come up with any reasons except perhaps for pedagogical reasons. The ethnic minority children in my primary school days were not given the chance to study Chinese at all. My parents did not ask and my friends' parents did not ask. Looking back, I did not think much of it then because Portuguese class was fun and we knew that our other Chinese classmates had more Chinese homework compared to us. It never crossed my mind in all my formative years that learning Chinese was essential if I were to move further in my academic career.

At the convent school, the ratio of the Chinese girls to Filipino girls was like 690 to 1. Most of the other girls who entered the secondary school came from the feeder primary school which was also run by the nuns. Like many teenagers, I learnt to adapt – and quickly. Otherwise, I would have no new friends. People of ‘my kind’ had already been segregated. And I had to quickly learn what it was to survive in a highly competitive school. Apart from the few whom I have still kept in touch with, many of my Chinese classmates thought me more of a curiosity because they thought it quaint that an ethnic minority could enter a school like this. And so at 12, I learned how to blend in. The last thing I wanted to be was different. From the primary school I came from, difference was a norm, but in the convent school, sameness was the norm. Unfortunately, my primary school training left me handicapped for the next phase in a student's life in HK. Since I could not write any Chinese at all, I had to study French. In my days, non-Chinese students were exempted from taking Chinese Language when taking the graduating exam as long as they studied a second language. It was a blessing and it was a curse. It was a blessing because only a Band 1 school like this could afford to hire a French teacher to teach 2 students in my year group

(my other classmate who studied French with me was a Pakistani). It was indeed an odd class. A Filipino and a Pakistani learning French from a Chinese. But in all truth, my French class saved me. Had it not been for my French I would not have made it to Form 6 to study for the Hong Kong Advanced Level exams. A second language was a mandatory requirement to enter Form 6 and university for students who did not study Chinese in my days. As I entered my adolescent years, I understood how much narrower my options for post secondary courses or programmes were. Not being able to read or write Chinese proved to be a huge disadvantage from all sides. My spoken Cantonese has always been my instrument for survival in HK when I needed to get around. But when it came to applying for courses that I wanted to study, or jobs that I wanted to train for, I was stuck and cornered.

To illustrate how Chinese was still the stamp of approval for most things, I shall recount a few life experiences that an ethnic minority student might encounter. I had aspirations of becoming an actress doing theatre much to my mother's horror. But at 16 and still impressionable, that was dream worth pursuing. I sent in an application to study at the Academy for Performing Arts, the only one in HK, and was rejected with kind words. The Academy even returned my cheque for the application fee. Their reason was that I cannot be accepted because drama school was taught in Chinese which meant the scripts were in Chinese, which I could not read. Then I wanted to apply to study at the Chinese University of Hong Kong because I knew about the exciting Department of Philosophy and the undergraduate programme they offered. But my handicap was that Chinese Language was a pre-requisite to study any undergraduate programme at CUHK, and I was automatically warded off. So I set my hopes to Hong Kong Baptist University because I wanted to study Journalism. I received similar treatment as with the other two institutions. This time the explanation was that news writing was done in Chinese and what good would a reporter or news reader would I be, if I could not read the prompter in Chinese. Job searching was another litany of impossibilities. To join the civil service was highly unlikely for the same reasons. My father who was still working as a cook when I was still in university got me a part time job at a very posh Japanese restaurant as a waitress. I desperately needed to earn some money for my

exchange programme to France. Imagine the horror of the head waitress when she found out that a university student could not take an order in Chinese. I had to quit after a week of setting tables and pouring green tea and vacuuming the floor because I was too useless for the restaurant. In spite of that, I still was able to earn the money I needed to go to France.

These snippets are of course selective slices of my past, and I have tried to be very self-aware each time I chose a particular part of my past to be narrated. One conscious move in the selection of these scenes in my past is to write as much as I could about the schooling experiences or trying to get enrolled in a school experience logged as authentically as possible.

1.2.5 Overview of the Chapters

To revisit the reasoning behind the sequencing of the chapters, the following is a synopsis of what is to unfold. This dissertation consists of nine chapters. The present chapter sets the scene and outline the background to the study. It briefly describes the context, and provides an overview of the project. Chapter 2 will try to tease out certain themes as part of the Literature Review and looking at how some theoretical parallels can be drawn to the Hong Kong scenario. It will also delineate some local pertinent studies which have been conducted in Hong Kong with regard to the same topic, but will also try to spot some gaps which have not yet been filled. Chapter 3 expounds on the methodology introduces the main contributors. Chapter 4 chronicles the case study school and Chapter 5 examines the pertinent parts of the Hong Kong education system with particular focus on how the policies impact the ethnic minority community and what is Chinese language learning like for non-Chinese speakers. Chapter 6 will try to weave some of the vignettes together addressing the challenges faced by students who are labelled as NCS. Chapter 7 redefines the concept of inclusive education in the context of Hong Kong's schooling of ethnic minorities. A discussion on how recent studies have tried to expand the parameters of "special education needs" (SEN) to include not only those who by conventional understanding are those with physical or mental shortcomings, but to redefine SEN as necessitated by cultural differences. Chapter 8 unpicks the seams of the previous chapters and recommends a way forward and finally Chapter 9 negotiates an alternative conclusion for the cynical at heart.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 delineated the schooling context in Hong Kong and for the purposes of this research, looking at the schooling experiences of ethnic minority students in Hong Kong led to many more questions. The Hong Kong phenomenon of the segregated ethnic minority student in a designated school seems to remain unchallenged. The government has paid lip service to the protests of non-government organizations with regard to segregating ethnic minority students, but none to the extent that warrants any possible educational policy reform which may undo segregation. In fact, with the steady increase in numbers of ethnic minorities who are not of Chinese origin, more and more designated schools in Hong Kong have evolved. When research began for this project, there were 6 designated schools in Hong Kong. In early 2011, there were 22 designated schools around Hong Kong. By the end of 2012, an estimated 30 schools will have been set aside as designated schools. There is however, no visible and prominent presence of ethnic minority students in tertiary institutions. In light of this, the narrowing of the research purpose comes down to one particular question which is: “What are the challenges that ethnic minority students face when opting for higher education in Hong Kong?” The first part of this chapter will attempt to combine what has already been determined in the schooling experiences of ethnic minority students in Hong Kong in terms of local projects or published studies and other sources of local media. The second part will attempt to make interpretations with regard to relevant theory pertinent to the inquiry of the case study at hand. As Mitchell and Cody (1993) explained that since most qualitative inquiries are inductive, therefore, the inquiry and the theoretical approach in this chapter coexist, and do not follow the traditional approach of impersonal objective compilation of “what’s out there”. The viewpoints in mind will therefore, also be substantiated with relevant evidence.

The following local studies have delineated what most of these challenges are in terms of the overall EM community in HK especially in the issues they have to deal with by just being a non-Chinese from a South Asian country. These challenges they face are identified, raised and quantified. General recommendations are offered for a better transition to integration or assimilation. Hong Kong Unison collaborated with a few local universities to research on the predicament of the EM community in Hong Kong. In 2003, two separate studies were done

with the City University of Hong Kong on the employment situation of EMs in Hong Kong. One was with the Working Group of the Social Integration Project for Ethnic Minority and the other was with the Department of Applied Social Studies. In the following year, the same department at CityU conducted another research entitled “Protection of Labour Rights among South Asian People in Hong Kong”. In 2005, HK Unison published its own report entitled “Hong Kong citizens’ perceptions and images towards Hong Kong ethnic minorities”. In 2005 the HK PolyU published their findings on the “Education of South Asian Ethnic Minority Groups in Hong Kong”. Perhaps the most in-depth study to date was released in 2004 by Loper from HKU, done by the Centre for Comparative and Public Law, and entitled “Race and Equality: A Study of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong’s Education System.” And in 2006, the Department of Social Work at CUHK published their work on “Racial Discrimination in Hong Kong – Prevalence and Impact”.

In the following sections of this chapter, some themes are plotted out. These themes emerged from the conducted interviews and played a crucial part in the organization of this literature review, beginning with addressing the concept of Bourdieu’s ‘cultural capital’ and concluding with the challenges of a defective form of ‘social justice’. Within this train of thoughts, however, another prominent theme which emerged that merits discussion is addressing the issue of inclusive education. The theme of inclusive education however, demands more discussion with respect to this study. Hence it will be examined in a chapter of its own in Chapter 7.

2.2 Cultural Capital (Part I)

2.2.1 Cultural Capital in the Post-Colonial Era

One of the intrinsic complexities of Hong Kong’s educational settings at tertiary institutions is that few ethnic minority students have a chance to pursue higher education in Hong Kong. Many quantitative studies have been conducted as to what difficulties are being faced by these group of students in Hong Kong, and the common denominator is that they lack the necessary Chinese language skills which is a pre-requisite when entering many of the universities, post-secondary institutions or vocational institutions in Hong Kong. Chapter 5 will elaborate on these academic requirements for HE. If education is the key to being socially privileged due to academic success, then the simple logic is to work hard towards an undergraduate programme and plan ahead from that accomplishment. In a paper published by the

School of Business at the Arizona State University (2005), “Higher education provides considerable value to individuals, the economies where educated individuals work and live and society in general” (Hill, Hoffman & Rex, 1). And in terms of private returns, an individual’s benefits vary with the quality of the institution that person graduated from. Graduates from esteemed universities earn much more than those who graduate from a less established institution (Hill, Hoffman & Rex). In the Hong Kong scenario, as in other parts of the world, the competition for a government-funded place at tertiary level is very keen. In 2005, 14,500 First-Year-First-Degree (FYFD) UGC-funded places were available to the 17 to 20 age group i.e. 18% of that population (Hong Kong Yearbook 2005). In other words, over 80% of secondary school leavers who wish to enrol in a FYFD programme in HK need to consider applying for non-UGC programmes that are often self-funded programmes. The relationship between UGC and its funded HE institutions is that they are “largely supported by public funds and have significant social, cultural, and economic importance; the UGC has to ensure value for money for taxpayers. It also provides institutions with developmental and academic advice drawing on the expertise and experience of its members, as well as monitors the performance of institutions and promotes higher standards at a system level.”

(Source: <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/faq/q105.htm>)

Pierre Bourdieu postulated that there is intrinsic connection between social privilege and academic success. A synthesis of Bourdieu’s theory of ‘cultural capital’ is that in the appropriate circumstances, any cultural feature of a person’s life can be applied as an explanation of that person’s achievement and with respect to this research - underachievement. One of the assumptions of the theory is that the approach to understanding achievement is to look into “culture-based” factors embedded in a person’s life experiences (Moore 1997). Hence we need to consider closely what the cultural values, for example, are in Hong Kong. In this context, there are two factors embedded that need to be considered. First, is to look at what it is that underpins dominant cultural values, and the other is to look at the potent relationship between ideology and power. In other words, within a capitalist society for example, “a dominant class is able, in effect, to impose its definition of reality upon all other classes.” (Bowles 2005) Bourdieu’s idea of cultural capital is that we are not simply socialized into a society in general. Mere integration is not sufficient for socialization, but a whole complex set of norms and attitudes; values and beliefs which equip people

for life in society. Like a classist, Bourdieu is saying that we are socialized into the culture that corresponds to our class. Thereby our cultural inheritance gives us our social resources namely money, power and prestige, all of which is packaged as our cultural capital. Our cultural capital is then “spent” in the education system by accomplishing and achieving things which are essential culturally. Consider then that the education system is where we “spend” our cultural capital, and thereby the wealthier families have more options to send their children to more esteemed schools, whilst the working class children will have to live with what is dealt to them by the state or government. Thus the cultural capital of a working class child is devalued and in most cases, thus, “working-class kids get working-class jobs” (Willis, 1970). More about this will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Within this context, there is an intentional paradox when I try to re-establish in the sub-heading of this discussion what the cultural capital is in the post-colonial era of Hong Kong. One asset demand that the education system dictates is linguistic capital in the form of written and spoken Chinese, and this linguistic red chip further rises in market value if it includes Putonghua or Mandarin. Within the setting of Hong Kong’s workforce, Chinese language is essential not only as a communication tool, but also a form of cultural capital when it comes to making investments in one’s career. In Hong Kong, being bilingual in Chinese and English is the key to almost every job in Hong Kong. Of course, there are those like the expatriate groups in HK who can find jobs without worrying too much about not knowing enough Chinese. The expatriate groups in HK are the privileged minorities whose time spent in HK is more transient than others and expatriates often do not belong to the grassroots community unlike the South and South East Asian residents in HK.

There is a curious phenomenon that when a student is categorized as an ethnic minority at the end of primary school level, that student is allocated to a designated school via a central allocation system. A reference to this is made about what the case study school HT mentioned, with regard to how EMs were ‘recommended’ to study in a designated school even though they were not allocated to a designated school by the CA. When a student is placed into a school segregated from other mainstream schools based on one’s ethnicity such as, being South Asian, then a mental category is formed believing that being put into a designated school is “for one’s own good” (Willis, 1970) because

learning is made easier since ethnicities that share similar cultural backgrounds can go to school together and there is a kind of kinship based on nationality and religion. In this light, the working class, oftentimes the ethnic minority student learns to remain complacent within the working class. The “working class” in Hong Kong are redefined as those who are exempted from paying taxes or those who need to rely on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA). Oftentimes the grassroots who earn below the minimum wage apply for CSSA. If we consider that the higher rungs of the economic ladder consists of professionals at the top, and elementary occupations at the lower rungs, then the job prospects of EM parents in HK seem bleak. As shown in the 2005 study done by Centre for Social Policy Studies at the HK PolyU, a survey of the employment status of EM parents was conducted. A total of 134 EM fathers and 62 EM mothers were surveyed and Appendix 1.10a summarizes their range of occupation. A quick glance at the data shows that EM breadwinners had elementary occupations as opposed to being professionals.

At the start of this research, the case study school (as Chapter 4 will introduce) had around 95% South Asian students. In the writing up of this thesis, this case study school naturalized itself to 100% ethnic minorities, all of whom were not of Chinese origin. An unheralded transformation of the school from 100% Chinese ethnicity to 100% South Asians and South East Asians occurred before this research was completed. The reasons for the Chinese children leaving the school is yet to be further researched, but the school statistics of ethnic minority still remains at 100%. Those ethnic minority who inadvertently learn to accept that not being able to pursue higher education in Hong Kong, also learn to believe that it is due to their own lack of diligence or competitiveness due to their being part of a designated school. Those who go to designated schools do not have as good a chance of entering University as compared to someone who goes to a regular mainstream school. The reasons behind this will be further elaborated in Chapter 4 in the narrative of the Case Study school. The belief is thus reinforced and perpetuated - amongst students themselves and those who are familiar with the predicament of designated schools, that only very few ethnic minorities can ever enter tertiary education in Hong Kong. This will also be further elaborated in Chapter 5 when the narratives of the informants are analyzed. The Bourdieunian definition also emphasizes on the “exclusiveness” of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984). This is seen when gatekeepers reward cultural capital, only those who

are already in the socially dominant group gains the advantage. The less privileged are therefore warded off by class-linked barriers. It is the elite or middle and upper middle class which are rewarded because the cultural signals of the elite are valued. According to the HT of the case study school, at the beginning of each academic year, fellow Head Teachers from neighbourhood schools would call to ask if they could send over students who had names like, Mohammed, Hussain or Daswani, because although these children had been centrally allocated to these mainstream schools, the concerned HT, who also had veto power over enrolment, is anxious that these one or two South Asian students “should not” be enrolled in their school because they are not a ‘designated’ school. It is a common (but wrong) assumption that only a ‘designated’ school can cater for the Chinese language learning needs of the South Asian student. There is often a preference to “keep” a mainstream school monoculture, because schools are not equipped with the proper support or Chinese language teachers are not trained in teaching second language learners of Chinese. Thus on many occasions the HT from the Case Study school would reluctantly oblige to accept these ethnic minority students if there were vacancies, because at the very least the case study school already has the experience in dealing with the needs of ethnic minority students. And from another perspective, if given the choice, the gatekeeper of a mainstream school would opt for local Chinese students instead of accepting South Asian students because the former has the ‘cultural capital’ and ‘fits’ into a mainstream school.

After a South Asian student is encouraged to enrol into a designated mainstream school, the schooling experiences will be those of ‘segregation experiences.’ (Willis 1970) describes this as “ensembles of systematic types of relationships which set particular choices and decisions at particular times.” How these choices are defined and how these decisions are made will affect the education opportunities of these ethnic minorities. In the decision-making process, whether it is the intention of the parents to send their children to a designated school, or whether they have been allocated elsewhere but encouraged to enrol in a designated school, in both situations, the mindset behind that decision-making process is believing that designated schools are the appropriate choice because these South Asian children will be studying “with their kind”. The truth behind the reason for making this choice is that the idea of designated schools is now feeding on itself since its implementation in 2000 because firstly, other mainstream schools, especially those which have little or no government support to teach ethnic minority

students would rather not accept them because of the challenges in preparing them for the Chinese language public exams. And secondly, those ethnic minority parents who make the purposeful decision of sending their children to attend designated schools would hope to have their children accepted into a ‘designated’ school because they are aware that regular mainstream schools would not have the resources or experienced teachers to cater to the needs of their children. On the outset, it seems like a win-win situation as both sides (parents and HTs from regular mainstream schools) see the value of a designated school. When decisions like these are made, the idea of sustaining designated schools is perpetuated, and as the situation already is, will give rise to more and more designated schools. In other words, segregation will continue for as long as the Education Bureau finds schools willing to be labelled as ‘designated school’. With the onset of down-sizing classes and recent school closures, some schools in remote areas or those facing imminent closure are seriously considering larger intakes of ethnic minority students to keep the numbers up. This will be elaborated in Chapter 6 when the discussion on the various narratives is woven together. The irony is, ‘designated school’ was an ad hoc decision for policy makers when they realized that the ethnic minority community was not “catered for” when Chinese language was made compulsory in the new school curriculum in 1999. In other words, as soon as the handover was consecrated and the Motherland was now the major over-seer of political decisions, education reform took shape with an aggressive re-instilment of the Chinese language by making it a compulsory language for teaching and learning. And thus gave birth to CMI schools, which used Chinese as a medium of language. Forgetting to include in its schooling agenda the 10,000 odd or so ethnic minority students was an oversight and a slight miscalculation on the part of the Education Bureau. The solution was: ‘Designated Schools’. These were supposed to be a temporary piece-meal solution to group students together with similar needs. The government decided to give schools supplementary funding for those schools willing to accept ethnic minority students. Hence the perks from the government for schools which were about to go caput had hopes to keep their doors open if they accepted more ethnic minority students and move towards being a ‘designated school’. As mentioned, more will be expounded on this in Chapter 6 when the narratives are woven together.

2.2.2 Linguistic Capital and the New Imperialism

Hong Kong is the new imperialist whether she cares to admit it or not. In 1998, which was almost immediately after the handover of the colony to the motherland, Chinese Language became the core language in teaching and learning. It is understandable for nationalistic reasons and a propagandist move to rekindle Hong Kong people back to China. But the measures to enhance and sustain the learning of the language should benefit *all* children who are citizens in Hong Kong, and not just the Chinese. The insensitive manoeuvre of neglecting the Chinese language needs of the ethnic minority children in Hong Kong is lamentable because Hong Kong flaunts itself as international but it is not cosmopolitan. The move to include the ethnic minorities in the design of Chinese language learning in the NSS education reform is lip service to the demands of rights groups in Hong Kong such as the UNISON. Few ethnic minorities are equipped with the Chinese language to allow them to go beyond Form 6 (point of secondary school graduation) and thus to tertiary education¹⁰.

The problem is two-fold. 1) In the present education system, the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong must want to learn Chinese Language. But since it is not a mandatory requirement, these students prefer not to learn it. 2) The Education Bureau must have a clear imperative that it can and will invest in the Chinese Language literacy of the EMs in HK, and not just see them as a transient people who have no interest in making HK their home. In other words, new immigrants irrespective of their ethnicity must be offered proper education in the mother tongue of that country, and in this case, it is Hong Kong. As earlier mentioned at the start of this chapter, there were fewer than 10 designated schools when research began for this thesis. At the closure point of data gathering, HK has witnessed a steady and rapid rise of these designated schools. This is not a tactful solution to the special needs of EM students in HK. This steady increase is also not a healthy phenomenon with regard to such concepts such as globalization and integration, because the idea of designating a school to set aside the education of ethnic minorities from the local Chinese population can be viewed as racial segregation.

¹⁰ UNISON is one of the NGOs in HK that has a high profile in defending the EMs in HK (<http://www.unison.org.hk/>)

Hong Kong's idea of global investment is measured in the guaranteed return of dollar signs, but it does not see global investment in the education of NCS by enhancing their Chinese language proficiency to that of a near native speaker. If HK has the mechanism to teach Chinese Language to NCS, its future of being truly a world city will have a genuinely greater asset value because people will choose to stay in HK because HK citizenship also entails Chinese literacy for immigrant children who go to school here. Hence, when we define power in terms a top-down hierarchy, then power is also found in forms of social control in various institutions, in this discussion, power is manifested in schools. The discourse in HK's education institutions are internalized by the individual and thus the individual falls under the education system's social control.

2.3 Governmentality

2.3.1 Governmentality – Michel Foucault and Education

“Every education system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them” (Foucault, 1971). Governmentality as Foucault defined it was the “art of government”. The idea behind the “art” is that governments will try to produce citizens who will best fulfil the policies produced by that government. In other words, the people's rationalities, mentalities and techniques are governed. By extension, the NSS 334 education revamp that will be in full swing in 2012 is an example of a discourse of power in which Hong Kong's context of policy-making for the NSS focuses on an external force with an agenda that will govern the way in which students are educated. Governmentality and education in this context, is a neologism which refers to a particular form of rationality (i.e. form of thought) or mentality that has a particular technology or strategy which will *govern* (Dean 1999). It also means guiding and shaping human beings as subjects within a particular context. As an analytical tool therefore, we look at the power relations linked between the changes of educational policies and social developments in the context of policies and support for designated schools. These power relations will be elaborated on in Chapter 6.

2.3.2 Social Justice – John Rawls

Rawls postulated the ‘Original Position’ in which we are supposed to imagine ourselves standing behind what he called, ‘the Veil of Ignorance’. By that Rawls meant human beings are “ignorant” of for example, their race, their handicaps, their social status etc.

However, since we are self-interested human beings, we are not “ignorant” of a) human nature and b) of the typical / general conditions we find ourselves in. Hence as self-interested rational human beings, we would not opt to belong to group considered as lesser or be treated without respect. Another point that Rawls raised is that as self-interested human beings we would not opt to be part of a generation that can only receive lower or lesser than the average quantity of resources. In principle, Rawls believes that we all have the same rights to various resources in the present moment in which we are living and as well as the future. (Blocker and Smith 1980)

Therefore, Rawls’ principles of justice meant that a) we all have an equal right to the most extensive liberties and b) opportunities are distributed to us in an equal manner. There are however, those of us who might be given more income, status, power etc. because we belong to middle management or because we are professionals, as opposed to the bartender or the janitor. Nonetheless, Rawls argues that everyone in society should raise their living standards and the least advantaged people should be empowered so that they too can aspire to privileged positions. Most importantly, Rawls’ argument is that our opportunities should not be blocked by discriminating actions. And what must not be condoned is that the privileged must not stand around and do nothing for those who are already disadvantaged or make policies that can make life worse than it already is for the lesser (Blocker and Smith 1980). This latter point will be expanded, with regard to the language issues faced by the EM student in Chapter 5.

2.3.3 Cultural Hegemony – Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci formulated the theory of cultural hegemony by arguing that the values and beliefs we have are actually imposed on us by the dominant ruling class within our culture. Our convictions of what we think are our cultural norms are a result of social constructs – our practices, ideals and institutions are dictated by dominant social class. The apparent status quo for the whole society only benefits the ruling class. Our value system i.e. societal culture is dominated by one social class. So even though there is economic and social diversity and the presence of political freedom, the minor classes are not fully aware of their oppression because the very existence of social diversity gives the impression of coalescence. Gramsci explained that the different socio-economic classes can co-exist only because of the systematic socio-economic manipulation and exploitation of the cultural hegemony i.e. the ruling class. Hence the

status quo is not “natural” or “inevitable” (Fontana 2002). Gramsci’s theory is best applied in the expounding of the main idea of this thesis. The title of this thesis, “Dividing Classes: Segregation of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong Schools” encapsulates the concept of cultural hegemony. The double entendre of classes in a designated school and classes of social hierarchy will perpetuate for as long as the EMs in HK remains complacent and for as long as the hegemony dictates this subtle oppression.

2.4 Understanding Power / Knowledge in Making Choices

In their chapter on ‘Ethnic Choosing’ (2003), Ball, Reay and David posed the pertinent question of “who makes the decision for whom?” and it was discussed with regard to the higher education of the different ethnic minority communities in the UK. As early as 2001, the UK government laid down policy tactics to increase the percentage of ‘non-tradition’ students or ‘students from poorer backgrounds’ in highly sought-after Universities. The UK government was hoping to “change the distribution of types of students across the different institutions.” The reference being discussed at hand looked closely into the “processes of student choice of University, related specifically to minority-ethnic students.” (Ball, Reay & David). The two crucial terms which the writers coined were: ‘contingent chooser’ and ‘embedded chooser’. According to them, the contingent chooser is:

“...typically a first generation applicant to HE whose parents were educated outside of the UK. Their parents are working class and have low incomes. The student can expect little financial support from them in choice-making or in funding HE itself; although there may well be emotional support and high levels of encouragement and expectation within the family for the achievement of credentials. But expectations are ‘generic’ and sometimes unrealistic and weakly linked to ‘real’ imagined futures. HE becomes a break or hiatus in family and personal narratives.”

The other form of chooser defined was the “embedded chooser”. This meant someone who belonged to a family that have parents who attended university along with other relatives and friends. In other words, moving up and on to university was a natural part of the embedded chooser’s personal narrative. The embedded chooser possessed the disposition which Bourdieu (1991) described as “within the class and its trajectory.” Stephen Ball and his colleagues also defined that for the embedded chooser:

“University is often linked to particular career trajectories and entry into prestigious professions or highly paid commercial occupations. Career aspirations are often long standing and vividly imagined part of a coherent and connected personal narrative. They are common-sensical and self-evident. The family are able to mobilize various forms of support and information for the student; like arranging work experience or discussions with people in

target occupations. Parents are directly involved in choice-making...the nature of courses as well as institutions are attended to.”

The “ideal types of HE choosers” were summarized in a table and the pertinent reference points of these descriptors bring uncanny similarities to the predicaments of the ethnic minority students in this research. Of the summarized variables which stand out for ‘contingent choosers’ are the following four:

1. Main concern and constraint for HE is finance
2. Minimal support (social capital)
3. Choosing is short term
4. First-time choosers

It seems the ethnic minorities who live amidst the dominant class regardless of what the dominant culture is, inherently a contingent chooser. And it is poignant that Ball and his colleagues describe that the contingent choosers’ “expectations are ‘generic’ and sometimes unrealistic and weakly linked to ‘real’ imagined futures.” In Chapter 4 of this research, the narratives of some of the students interviewed reflect this. With hindsight, the students interviewed displayed signs of regret or frustration because their ‘imagined future’ did not cohere with their present status.

What becomes of the many Form Five ethnic minority graduates from designated schools is still to be accounted for. In terms of an academic aspiration, higher education becomes a distant reality. And for those who do make it to HE, like those interviewed in this study, it is like hitting a glass ceiling in their aspirations. Unless enrolled in a vocational institute which offers (core) courses in English or enrolled at University level, many students remain stagnant after completing secondary school. This is what Willis meant when he argues that choices and decisions made are processes which “help to construct both the identities of particular subjects and also distinctive class forms at the cultural and symbolic level as well as at the economic and structural level.” By reiterating what was said, if “working class” kids go to “working class” (designated) schools, then the cycle will not break unless designated schools are made kaput and ethnic minorities are re-assimilated into mainstream schools in Hong Kong. The “identities of particular subjects” are shaped by the “decisions made”. In this context, it is a story of “them and us” in terms of monoculture mainstream schools vs. designated schools. Read in any direction, “them” is segregated from “us”. Either way, Hong Kong is guilty of perpetuating segregation on the pre-text that it is easier to school ethnic

minorities together because they have similar needs. That is problematic because it implies that those children's needs in segregated schools are similar because they are different from the rest of the Chinese community. Segregation becomes a necessary evil because schooling different (i.e. different from the masses) but similar children together presumes a "better" teaching and learning environment for ethnically different children. Being different from local Chinese children calls for a different schooling environment, and that idea in itself becomes problematic. Upon returning to Bourdieu's argument then, the question is: Is it the 'cultural capital' of the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong a hindrance by default? Put in another way, ethnic minority students are encouraged to attend designated schools because what they represent is not the valued signals of what Hong Kong needs at the moment. Unsaid but understood, ethnic minority children in Hong Kong are an extra challenge or bluntly put, a burden, to the running of a mainstream school. Take for example a child who grew up speaking Urdu at home and knows a little English. This same student attends Form 1 in Hong Kong and has no background at all in Chinese. If the student is enrolled in a regular mainstream school which is also CMI, the Chinese language teacher can only do so much to help the child with learning the language from scratch. Without centralized support from the EB and without proper teacher training for Chinese as SLA, it is very difficult for both the EM student and the Chinese language teacher to help the student especially if there has not been any previous special education needs (SEN) training. More about SEN will be brought forward in Chapter 7.

Kingston (2001) however, tried to challenge this very notion saying that there are too many "conceptually distinct variables have been labelled cultural capital, creating a distorted sense of what accounts for academic success." He explained that the valued signals are not "meaningfully related to what schools and work organizations must centrally purport to accomplish, namely, mastery of academic material in schools and productive performance on the job." Also, Bourdieu (1984) had stressed that valued signals are arbitrary. So the argument is that the kind of exclusionary class-rooted cultural practices pointed out by Bourdieu are distinctive only to France, but they do not have any clear parallels in other cultures Lamont and Lareau (1988). Kingston (2001) stressed that it is "impossible to draw clear-cut distinctions between abilities that are arbitrary and those that are genuinely useful in this society, it is still meaningful to discuss the relative usefulness or arbitrariness of particular ability within the context of the society's aims." In Hong Kong's history thus far, the linguistic capital valued by the education system has shifted. In the days when the British

were the gatekeepers, the added-value of French and German ranked high as second language knowledge. When Mother China returned to claim her rights, it was natural that the new “bias” or cultural value was Putonghua. The interesting fact is that recognized second language subjects such as French and German have been transferable second language requirements when applying for higher education in Hong Kong. However, second languages such as Hindi or Urdu are not. Languages of the Continent are readily accepted in pre and post-colonial times, but even as the number of South and South East Asian immigrants increase in Hong Kong, their mother tongues do not rank as any form of cultural capital. The dominant decision-makers of educational policies in Hong Kong have to perhaps consider how might the South Asian and ethnic minority community are the new arbitrary valued signals. If Bourdieu’s theory stresses on the decisive role of arbitrary cultural displays, Hong Kong needs to undo its blinkers to fully view and accept that Pakistanis, Indians and Filipinos, to name a few, also have intrinsic values that can serve as cultural capital.

2.4.1 Drawing on Informed Choices

This brings us to the next theme in this chapter which teases out issues regarding school choice and social justice. Stephen J Ball (2008), Harry Brighouse (2000) and Morwenna Griffiths (1998, 2003), to name just a few, have all expounded on how educational reforms and policies, with their meta-agenda for teaching and learning, do not necessarily promote educational equality. And social and political institutions do not address the needs of all individuals within a community, state or nation. Hence, although we are given school choice schemes in our educational systems, we are still framed within the social class or household wealth. More truth can be found if egalitarianism is part of a political movement; and sceptic or not we only but realize that the governments which try to advance that ideal is repressive or incompetent, or both (Brighouse, 2000). Already in the 70s, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis had made claims about the relationship between education and social inequality. For them, the social relationships of education replicate the hierarchical divisions of labour. And thus schooling reproduces class inequalities (Bowles and Gintis, 2005). The case study school in this research is just one of the many narratives of a school system in Hong Kong which, out of measures beyond its control, transformed into a designated school. It is a schooling system that is reproducing class inequalities for as long as the Hong Kong government and the Education Bureau allows for its existence.

2.5 Cultural Capital (Part II)

2.5.1 Cultural Capital embedded in the HK Education Policies

The Hong Kong's Secretary for Education described in his message to the public that "The Education Bureau is responsible for the formulation of policies and the introduction of legislation to ensure that quality education is being provided for Hong Kong's young people. The EB also oversees the implementation of programmes that are designed to bring these objectives to fruition." It is every government's civic and moral obligation to provide its people the kind of educational opportunities so that every individual can maximize his or her own potential. Chapter 5 will consider education policies and programmes which shape and affect the education opportunities of HK's students who are not ethnically Chinese. Chapter 1 has already delineated the typical rhythm and a cultural expectation within the academic backdrop of HK and alongside this is the schooling context in HK.

This schooling context in Chapter 1 generalizes the vast majority of HK schooling experiences of the dominant Chinese population. However, the schooling context of ethnic minority students in HK takes a different angle and although everyone is receiving free and mandatory education, not all students are treated the same, and this has led to sensitive questions regarding how HK education policies and programmes have affected the lives of EM students in HK. Thus the narrowing of the research purpose comes down to one particular question which is, with the steady increase in numbers of ethnic minorities who are not of Chinese origin, what are the ultimate challenges that these students face when opting for higher education (HE) in Hong Kong?. In other words, what are the opportunities, if any, for NCS students to enter HE in Hong Kong and thus enhance their cultural capital?

Similar to many other advanced countries which have an education department within its government, Hong Kong's own EB takes pride in its vision and mission in educating the young in this city. The EB's vision is to "provide quality school education for our students, to develop their potential to the full and to prepare them for the challenges in life" and its mission is to 1) "deliver professional services and ensure effective use of resources" and 2) "forge partnerships to promote excellence in school education."

In the 2009/10 school year, there were 582 primary schools, 523 secondary day schools and 61 special schools. Further up the ladder from secondary schools are the EB's policy highlights on post-secondary education. And these are summarized in the following eight objectives. The government pledged to:

1. support the progressive increase in post-secondary education opportunities (Currently more than 60% of our senior secondary school leavers have access to post-secondary education);
2. further develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub and provide multiple and flexible pathways for our young people;
3. provide around 14 600 publicly-funded first-year first-degree (FYFD) places (In the 2010-2011 Policy Address, the Chief Executive proposed to increase the number of FYFD places to 15 000 for each cohort from the 2012/13 academic year and double the number of senior year intake places progressively to 4 000 each year);
4. support the development of the self-financing post-secondary sector and promote the diversification of post-secondary education through various support schemes such as the Land Grant Scheme and Start-up Loan Scheme;
5. ensure that no qualified students are denied access to higher and post-secondary education due to a lack of financial means;
6. make available to working adults further opportunities for higher education through the Open University of Hong Kong;
7. assure the quality of tertiary education and ensure its relevance to the needs and development of the community; and
8. ensure that courses leading to non-local higher academic and professional qualifications are conducted by recognized institutions and professional bodies and have attained comparable standards and recognition as similar courses in the home countries concerned.

(Source <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=7002&langno=1>)

As summarized in Appendix 1.5. Hong Kong has a total of eight UGC-funded¹¹ institutions: seven universities and the Institute of Education. On the outset, these

¹¹ The University Grants Committee (UGC) has neither statutory nor executive powers. Each of the higher education institutions is an autonomous body with its own Ordinance and Governing Council. The institutions have substantial freedom in the control of curricula and academic standards, the selection of staff and students, initiation and acceptance of research, and the internal allocation of resources. Nevertheless, because the institutions are largely supported by public funds, and in view of the social, cultural and economic importance of higher education, the Government and the community at large have a legitimate interest in the operation of the institutions to ensure that they are providing the highest possible standards of education in the most cost-effective manner. The UGC seeks to maintain an appropriate balance in these matters.

The UGC seeks to promote responsible understanding between the institutions, the Government and the community at large. It mediates interests between institutions and the Administration. On the one hand, the UGC safeguards the academic freedom and institutional autonomy of the institutions, while on the other it ensures value for money for the taxpayers. The Committee has open channels to both the institutions and Government, since it offers advice to, and receives advice from, both.

universities and post-secondary institutes are open to all. However, upon a closer scrutiny, their doors are only open to those who can meet the requirements laid down by the gatekeepers of the institutes. As many of these requirements demand the knowledge of Chinese in an almost native-speaker level, these educational policies are only for those whom the government believe have potential cultural capital.

2.5.2 Hong Kong's Untapped Capital

To what extent Hong Kong sees its South Asian (SA) population as an asset depends on how much Hong Kong sees minority population as a source of cultural capital. It goes without saying that there are different educational outcomes for different types of curriculum. In Hong Kong, up until the end of the 2008 academic year, students prepared for the HKCEE which was fashioned after the O-Levels in the UK. Also, the advanced secondary students prepared for the HKALE which was fashioned after the A-Levels in the UK. Apart from the core subjects that each school should offer to students, the elective subjects depend on popularity, places available, subsidies, workforce and other factors pertinent to the teaching of such subjects. One such crucial factor is that the types of syllabi that schools can offer depend on the students' calibre as well. This will be further elaborated in Chapter 4 with reference to the Case Study School.

The differences in educational outcomes manifested in students' chances to reach higher education are traced back to how much schooling and how far up the academic ladder they have reached. One marker for example, which parents check when opting for a secondary school for their children is to compare what the percentage of the senior graduates are able to enter university. HE is one of the keys for an aspiring young adult in order to succeed in seeking well-paid jobs or establishing a career. Reaching a higher level of education is thus linked to what Pierre Bourdieu (1973) coined as cultural capital. Cultural capital is "the knowledge, experience and or connections one has through the course of their life that enables them to succeed more so, than someone from a less experienced background." (Bourdieu, 1973) For example, parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current educational system. Social networks formed with peers from similar or different University faculties or departments are what Dewey explained as "expanded avenues of communication". In *John Dewey and our Educational Prospect: A Critical Engagement with Dewey's Democracy and Education*, Hansen (2006)

mentions that in order to achieve a kind of social efficiency, one needs “genuine social control”.

Within a system of exchange in our society, cultural capital acts like a social relation. Part of this form of capital is the accumulated cultural knowledge that permits power and status within society. Harker (1990) extended the definition to all “the goods material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation, based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support.”

For Bourdieu, another form of capital is social capital which is “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” If we consider “institutionalized relationships” as a source of knowing-who’s-who, then “working class kids get working class jobs” as Willis (1977) points out in his book, *Learning to Labour*. He argues that there is a “working class cultural pattern” which has its own processes and its own definitions. In other words, the working class, per se, has its own version of other social groups that are considered more successful. These versions of *other social groups* belong to a type of mental category or a set of variables which are “prescribed” by the working class and how they see others who belong to the same working class. On the outset and within the context of HK, social justice towards the EMs is maintained pro forma in the websites of the various government departments especially of the EB. Social justice is shown in the opportunities offered to the NCS in terms of support groups for the learning of Chinese language or the “lowering” of Chinese language assessments at the secondary school exit exam. But empowering these EM NCS students to become fully functional citizens is not fully addressed. Sustainable policies have not been drawn to ensure that the NCS in HK can steer away from being perceived and treated like minorities. The labelling effect of being addressed as “minorities” is still on-going. As mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter, there were several studies that were published between 2003 and 2006 on issues relating to the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong. Apart from Unison, the forerunner of NGOs in Hong Kong which advocates equity and equality for Hong Kong ethnic minorities, the other researches were conducted by various university departments from the social sciences and law disciplines. It goes to show that the pressing issues which

revolve around the ethnic minority communities in Hong Kong are not only a concern within the education milieu, but also revolves around a wider issue such as unemployment, labour rights, social welfare and racial discrimination. These various researches bring up only the tip of the iceberg that bare the extent of the much needed social justice for Hong Kong ethnic minorities that the HK government needs to tackle. In these studies mentioned, researchers found that members of the ethnic minority community had difficulties looking for jobs in Hong Kong because they felt that they were being discriminated because of the colour of their skin (Unison 2003). Loper (2004) also looked at how Hong Kong is in breach of certain Race Regulations because of the CMI used in schools. Loper's study suggests that the mandatory use of Chinese and the language of instruction "indirectly discriminate against members of ethnic groups who may not speak and read Chinese at adequate levels to attend CMI schools, and therefore effectively restricts the number of schools willing to accept them as students" (p 30). Hence the vicious cycle ensues when the debilitating education system does not encourage EM students from attending mainstream schools, but pushes them to join the segregated system instead for discriminatory reasons. This manner of schooling further aggravates a stagnation of a group of students who are ill-equipped to be part of the NAS. These recent studies have revealed how the NSS Curriculum has yet to address *all* students' needs in HK have reached "basic competencies" as brought out in Chapter 1. One of the long-term resulting effects of condoning designated schools is that it the segregated image of the student will procreate. And the stigma associated with being an ethnic minority educated in a designated school can take longer to shed. However, before discussing how identities can reproduce themselves (in Chapter 6), a look into the methods first should give a clearer flow of the process of arguments. The following chapter therefore describes the methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As described in the opening chapter, this is a case study of one Hong Kong designated school, which is a mainstream school supported by government funding. This designated school has a student population of 100% non-Chinese ethnicity who mainly come from other Asian countries such as Philippines, Nepal, Thailand, India and Pakistan. Unlike international schools¹² or English Foundation Schools¹³ (ESF), the children who attend a designated school often come from a lower income group in Hong Kong and some of these ethnic minority families live in government public housing which is offered to the lower income groups in Hong Kong if they so wish to apply for¹⁴. This study is a delineation of the schooling experiences of the ethnic minorities and how those experiences essentially contribute to their opportunities for higher education in Hong Kong.

The objectives of the study are: to further contribute to the awareness for stakeholders and gatekeepers – the general public, the HKSAR government and those involved in the policy-making and running of schools across all levels – of a thriving economy that have inadvertently affected the lives of a proportionately small but contributing sector of the Hong Kong community. The initial grounds for this project were to articulate the general schooling experiences of some of the ethnic minority residents in Hong Kong and in the midst of the journey of data collection, one of the more prominent issues that emerged was how the education system in Hong Kong in fact promotes schooling segregation in the name of special education needs. And another aspect of this is how Hong Kong is allowing a new form of postcolonial educational racism to fester. The other objective of this project is to perhaps offer an additional voice for the plight of the schooling opportunities of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. In the following chapters after a description of the methodology

¹² International schools mostly offer the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) or International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes for their students as opposed to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) offered by many of mainstream schools in Hong Kong. Children who attend international schools often have plans to pursue their tertiary education outside of Hong Kong, whereas students who sit the HKDSE aim to enter local universities.

¹³ ESF schools also offer IB programmes and Advanced Diploma courses as well, and like many international schools, do not offer the HKDSE courses either.

¹⁴ Dr. Liang of the designated school explained that over half of the students at MIC apply for government welfare assistance.

and methods, a look into how Hong Kong's schooling system has condoned segregation and how the segregated have become complacent to the schooling system will be articulated.

This chapter covers four major areas. The first area explains the research methodology and the rationale behind this empirical study from the philosophical vantage point. The second area is the overview of the research design and the main methods adopted. The third area looks into insider / outsider issues pertinent to this study. The fourth area addresses the data management and analysis; other pertinent ethical and political concerns. This chapter ends with a signpost to other themes and issues teased out after gaining access to the case study school.

3.2 Research Methodology

3.2.1 Naturalistic Inquiry

This study calls for a naturalistic inquiry because the natural setting is strongly affected by meaning. Crucial to this is the use of human-as-instrument to provide data. Since the underlying motivation for this research also stemmed from my own personal experiences as an ethnic minority in Hong Kong, the data is built from tacit knowledge and the interpretation of the data collected is filtered through my lenses, and therefore represents "a view from elsewhere" (Diversi, 1998). Apart from personal experience, further information collected from observations, interviews and document analysis contribute to the mutual shapings between the enquirer and the respondents; and thereby elucidating on multiple realities produced from negotiated outcomes (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The interpretive research design banks on people's perceptions. These articulated experiences construe the world in ways which are "often similar but not necessarily the same" (Bassegy, 1999). This particular empirical enquiry is both an evaluative and story-telling case study. That is, the interviewees share narratives about their experiences at school and enquiries are made into the educational system via the narratives of the interviewees. Put together, these entail value judgments. Each story told about each experience is a reality perceived by the informant. Reality has many layers of meaning and "the discovery of each new layer changes the perception of the whole" (Blumer 1969). The causes and effects of such realities and how such realities are evaluated is the crux of the study.

3.2.2 Philosophical Approach to the Empirical Study

As the previous paragraph hints therefore, this research is a qualitative inquiry since its scope is a case study school and the data collected shows a more in-depth study. By convention, a case study produces information only in the periphery of that particular case. The drawbacks of opting for a case study project is that one could only conclude in a general manner and come up with informed assertions. But in this study, the designated school is *the* case and any relevant information derived after the data analysis could be used for generalizing beyond this particular (designated) case studied. In shaping the framework for analysis, this study borrows some of the principles of Foucault (1971) on knowledge/power and governmentality. In addition to this, Pierre Bourdieu's (1973) notions on cultural capital which articulates a person's social position will be used as part of this discourse. Due to the nature of the study and the various layers of realities which are construed, the theoretical frames which inform this research are also varied. On the top of the list for a conceptual framework, is about power relations and thus Foucault's ideas (1975) on governmentality underpins how I shape the questions to collect the data I need in order to understand a growing international proletariat – a group dubbed in Hong Kong schools as non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) children.

On one hand, the phenomenological approach to this research sets the stage for symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1969). Phenomenological approach is to describe a lived experience and thus one of the methods used in the data collection is to first target a designated school and interview students who are able to narrate their "lived experience". The reason why this approach sets the stage for a kind of symbolic interactionism is because the narratives collected from the interviewees show how these informants define themselves against their lived experience. This study also investigates how the informants create meaning in situations around others. Blumer (1969) described that people behave according to the meanings they ascribe to interaction with others and with society.

On the other hand, conflict theory that introduces the concepts of asymmetries of power and access (LeCompte and Preissle 1992) into research in education will also be elaborated on. Conflict theories in the social sciences emphasize the material, social or political inequality of a social group. Thus this framework also shaped the way in which

I asked the questions in this research. I shall re-state these questions again in the paragraphs to follow. Still yet, there is this underlying imperative to frame the interpretations of my findings within a neo-Marxist manoeuvre. Hence, using critical theory to unfold the sources of inequality in society and how they are produced and reinforced within the (designated) schools is also part of the framework. For a more in-depth analysis, critical theorists influenced by the neo-Marxist movement, such as Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and the postulations of conflict theory in education for example, postcolonialism, will be instrumental in the interpretation of the data in this study. Needless to say, this study looks into the residual effects of the British influence after 1997 in the perspective of educating citizens of Hong Kong; in particular, those students who have been cloaked under the veil of ethnic minority groups. Thus these two philosophical frameworks side by side encompass stronger explanatory power.

3.2.3 Restating the Research Settings and Research Questions

Chapter 1 described how educational policy put into practice has led to educational issues found within the ethnic community in Hong Kong. The far-reaching effects of these educational policies which are pertinent to the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong are in effect detrimental to these particular members of Hong Kong in terms of their socio and economic growth. Based on some of the barricading conditions of educational policies, the ethnic minorities' educational opportunities are hampered at the end of the twelve year free education because of the Chinese language shortcomings these ethnic minorities have.

As mentioned in the opening chapter, the foci of the study led to specific questions and again, these are:

- What kinds of opportunities do ethnic minority students have for further education in Hong Kong?
- What are the unique challenges that ethnic minority students face as they complete secondary school?
- What are the Hong Kong education policies towards the provision for ethnic minorities in the education system? and
- How can ethnic minority students be empowered to be qualified for HE in Hong Kong?

3.3 Research Design Overview

The plan for how the research is conducted and how the data is collected is delineated in this section. Before I address the data management and analysis, I will plot how I arrived at the case study school – the story of how it happened – and the “uneven, stumbling, wavering progress” (Griffiths 1998) of data collection.

3.3.1 Refining the Focus and Main Methods Adopted

I opted for purposive sampling (Lincoln and Guba 1985) because I had a “specific predetermined group in mind” and thus designated schools in Hong Kong were targeted because these schools have a high student population of ethnic minorities who were mainly South Asians. Purposive sampling is not new in qualitative research. The sample choice is not a representative of the group nor does it focus on being proportional. Thus the purpose of the sample is to bring newer perspectives. It also leads to the construction of knowledge and understanding of human experiences (Stake 1995) of ethnic minorities and their narratives of schooling experiences. Through exploring these particular stories, I was able to unfold themes from the data. (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Ely 2001).

With a predetermined group in mind, it was natural to zero in on all the possible designated schools in HK. The initial fear was the possibility that none of the designated schools would open its doors for an independent researcher like me. Thus within the range of possible ‘samples’ of designated schools, being accepted as researcher into the first designated school was the start of data collection for this case study. In deciding the sampling, the choice of using this designated school as the case study school was “convenience sampling” which is also known as opportunistic sampling. Within the context of being the lone-ranger researcher, “selecting from whoever happens to be available” (Bogdan and Biklen 1992; LeCompte and Preissle 1993) was decided. The option to use case study is not without problems either. Case studies research is often frowned upon even though these have, since the 1980s, contributed to a vast corpus of knowledge. Adelman et al (1980, 47) however, listed several advantages of using case study and the list below shows why in educational research, for example, this is fitting. Case studies:

1. Are 'strong in reality'
2. Often show attention to subtlety and complex issues, and this is befitting to merit a peculiar strength
3. are complex issues which display an 'embeddedness' of social truths
4. Offer alternative interpretations (as opposed to quantitative data) to tabulations, surveys and charts

Yin (1993) argued that case studies are empirical studies that can investigate a contemporary phenomenon with real-life context. And since data needs to be triangulated, there are multiple sources of evidence. Bassey (1999) explained that Stenhouse (1985) identified "four broad styles of case study" and the one most pertinent to this research is the *evaluative case study*. This is a study in depth "with the purpose of providing educational actors or decision makers (administrators, teachers, parents, pupils etc) with information that will help them to judge the merit and worth of policies, programmes or institutions" (Stenhouse 1985, 50). The issue of the designated school is problematized here because since the handover of HK to China in 1997, the number of segregated schools for ethnic minorities has increased. This is a phenomenon that should not be swept under the carpet of piece-meal policies and programmes. Stake (1995) explained that "issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical and especially personal contexts. All these meanings are important in studying cases (p 16).

After access and permission were gained from the gatekeepers from the case study school, the ensuing steps in the plan of this naturalistic research fell into place, from finding the informants to "leaving the field" (Bogdan and Biklen 1992; LeCompte and Preissle 1993).

3.3.2 Narrative Reporting

Since the approach to this qualitative research is a naturalistic inquiry, the "narrative style of report writing tells more of the story of how the research was conducted" (Bassey 1999 86). The stages through which the research developed and what decisions were made can also be seen in the diagrams in this chapter. The figures 3.1a) to 3.1f) are my 'adopted style' of how I came about my data and conducted the research.

Although there is a need to strike a balance between thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) and paraphrasing these particular stories in distilled editions, I have chosen to now and

then insert the informants' story in verbatim so as to illustrate as well the 'rawness of the moment' as their narratives unfolded. For some points in the dialogue, it does injustice to the data if every detail was retold entirely in paraphrase. Although not ethnographic in nature, the following interviews with the informants are presented in unconventional paragraphs and dotted with ellipses and incoherence. But it is within this "richness" of ellipses and incoherence that contribute to the shaped behaviours of the informants. Hence "thick" descriptions, because it is an interpretation of the narratives in search for meanings. It is the researcher's construction of other people's construction. In other words, thick description is the meaning behind the action (Geertz, 1973).

3.3.3 The Road *Not* Taken

In the initial stages of the research, I tried to generate knowledge by testing the waters about the schooling experiences of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, by visiting primary schools. Potential schools for data collection were chosen from a list of designated schools for NCS students found in the Education Bureau website. Letters were sent out to the principals of these primary schools and the patient wait was part of the process in the making of these cold calls in hope of data collection. It was a hit-and-miss approach and I was glad for any opportunity to enter the schools and meet with the Head Teachers and other teaching staff of those primary schools.

These visited places eventually turned out to be pilot case study schools because after visits to the two primary schools and meeting their principals, teachers and students, I realized that interviewing students in their prepubescent years posed some problems. I soon realized that interviewing primary school children demanded experienced interview techniques which I did not have. As a new-comer in the field of educational research, I found out that semi-structured interviews with children below 12 years old elicited very sparse responses which were dotted by shyness and long pauses. Although the children were willing to talk to me, they could only offer short phrases or single-word answers which could not serve as data rich enough for me to draw themes or conclusions from. It was difficult to 'fill-in' the gaps of their responses and as a researcher I cannot put words into their mouths. Many of those that I spoke to told me that they were happy studying in their school because they had friends who were "like them", which meant that most of the other classmates were also Pakistanis, Filipinos,

Indians etc. However, when I tried to probe further to ask them about going to school in Hong Kong or how they learnt Chinese language, many simply shrugged their shoulders. Others could not yet grasp the question itself. For example, in response to a 'how-question' such as: "How do you learn Chinese at school?" or "How much Chinese homework do you have in a week?", the response was sometimes, "very difficult" or "many homework" or "I don't like Chinese".

Another reason why I soon moved away from researching schooling experiences of primary pupils was the ethical issues involved. They were too young to understand the nature of my research and I was also advised by one of the Head Teachers that it would be difficult to get consent for extended interviews from the parents. That would prevent me from triangulating my data. Apart from requesting permission to speak to their parents and permission from the parents to interview the children, I understood that younger students could not yet reflect with hindsight about their schooling experience. For many of these primary school children with whom I talked to, schooling meant going to school to attend lessons and having fun when you can. As a researcher, I was looking for non-Chinese students who could tell me their story about what it is and was like to grow up in a Hong Kong school. And I wanted them to share with me if they had any challenges for example, in learning a new subject such as Chinese language. And that kind of information could only be elicited if I spoke to a student who has experienced secondary school life in Hong Kong. A good threshold for the kind of informants I needed was to interview students who had completed secondary 5 or secondary 7 (Upper Six).

The rationale for this latter choice was that being at the upper end of secondary school is a crucial point for the lives of any Hong Kong student because this is the time they sit the public examinations¹⁵ for either the Hong Kong Certificate of Examination or the Hong Kong Advanced Level examination. Therefore, I abandoned the idea after visiting three primary schools. Nonetheless, the interviews with the Head Teachers of the three designated primary schools for ethnic minorities which I visited offered me much

¹⁵ The beginnings of this research took root in 2003 and secondary school students sit the HKCEE which is the graduating exit exam. Those who have aspirations to move onto tertiary education sit the HKALE and this takes another 2 years to prepare for. With the implementation of the New Academic Structure in 2009, the final year for the HKCEE is 2011 and the final year for the HKALE is 2013. The pioneers who will sit the HKDSEE will be in 2012 (also the end of the 12-year free and mandatory education).

insight and appreciation of the challenges of being a South Asian pupil studying in Hong Kong.

On this road not taken, there was also a fourth designated school which I visited. The deputy principal was very cautious with regard to my research project and was sceptical about what I might do with the data that I collected from their school. I was not able to meet with the principal at all, because the deputy principal was a staunch gate-keeper who made sure that I first sent them an official letter of explanation regarding my research project and they also requested a formal letter from the University of East Anglia acknowledging that I was a PhD candidate, and specifically asked that my supervisor endorse my research project. Along with those documents, they insisted that I submit a list of all the interview questions that I had in mind, in case the interview digressed to other issues. The deputy principal further explained that when they received my letters, they would then give consideration to my request and asked me to wait for a month or so for a further response from them. With so much red tape involved; my being an independent researcher – intimidated at this point of the pursuit - and taking into account that my research is a part-time programme, time was a crucial factor in the collection of data. With no regrets, I abandoned that fourth school as well. The first three primary schools which I visited yielded interesting notes in my journal that shared some common strands with which I used later in the overall conclusion of this research. In short, the journey in search of a case study school for this project was not totally in vain.

My ensuing site selection landed me a plethora of purposeful sampling of informants. It began with a principal who was willing to allow me access to the school and to freely contact both staff and students in order to gather data that I needed at my own time and pace. Soon after I presented my researcher's pitch, I was introduced to the deputy principal who was to be my main liaison if there was anything or anyone I needed that could help with my research. Within a few months, I found myself sitting in on staff meetings, attending and observing classes, speaking to teachers and interviewing students. The network of other informants with whom I later became acquainted with for my research sprouted from this case study school.

3.3.4 The Road Taken

Shortly after the initial pilot visits to various schools which catered for mostly non-Chinese students, a co-educational secondary school which operates under the Direct Subsidy Scheme¹⁶ (DSS) agreed to be the case study school for this research. The demographics of the case study school are briefly described in this chapter, but the details of the research setting and context are elaborated in Chapter 5.

At the very initial stage of this research, this DSS designated school offered more than 90% of its places to ethnic minority students whose ages are from about 12 to 20 and studying from Form 1 to Form 7 (Upper 6). This particular co-educational school has a student population of over 95% ethnic minorities who are not of Chinese descent. Over half of the ethnic minority students in this school are of Pakistani, Indian and Filipino heritage. The remaining parts of the student population are Nepalese, Thai, mixed heritage. For example, one parent is Filipino and the other parent is Chinese; or one parent is Indian and the other parent is Chinese etc. Most of the ethnic minority students in this school were born and brought up in Hong Kong. The remaining 5% of the student population were Chinese.

Before the explanation of my role negotiation in this study, I shall use the following definition of “entrée.” Chavez (1996) describes the term “entrée” as the phase of the qualitative evaluation process. The researcher selects or specifies a research site and obtains the necessary agreements from participants to conduct the research in ‘their space’. In zeroing in on a school, an initial search was done on the Hong Kong Education Bureau website to gather information on possible choices of schools in Hong Kong which caters for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students. I approached this co-educational school based on the fact that it is well known in Hong Kong for accepting NCS students who are mostly of South Asian and South East Asian ethnicity. This school became the case study school for this project because the Head Teacher welcomed my efforts to collect data in order to research the schooling experiences of ethnic minority students. Before landing on this case study school, I had approached

¹⁶ DSS schools in Hong Kong operate under a scheme whereby the Head Teacher is given more autonomy in the running of the school, and at the same time receives support from the government in terms of monetary aid and infrastructure improvements.

one other government aided¹⁷ school also mentioned in the website of the Education Bureau. This latter school turned me down almost immediately.

It was explained to me at the initial meeting with the Head Teacher of the case study school that the person, who was most in contact with the main gatekeepers in the running of the school, was the Deputy Head Teacher. The Deputy Head Teacher was therefore delegated to be my liaison-person and consultant whenever I needed help in my fieldwork at their school.

As mentioned earlier on, I was invited to attend and observe classes, conduct interviews with both junior and senior students. I also met with other teachers and sat in staff meetings. The Head Teacher also introduced me to the Supervisor of the school.

The Deputy Head Teacher was the person whom I went straight to each time I paid visits to the school to conduct my interviews. It was through the Deputy Head that I met the chairwoman from the school's Parent-Teacher Association and other subject teachers' and the school counsellor whom I interviewed. With recommendation from the PTA Chair, I was able to interview 3 parents altogether. Since the epistemological orientation of this study is constructivist (Guba and Lincoln 1985), the entrée in this study means "interaction between researcher and informants is ongoing" (Pitman and Maxwell 1992) and that interaction requires a lengthy time commitment from those involved. As an independent researcher, perseverance was one of the key factors in collecting data.

Apart from the above network, the Deputy Head also introduced me to other sources such as members from the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong, who are specifically involved in the designing of Chinese language syllabi and the teaching of Chinese language to South Asian students. These sources were contracted by the Education Bureau of the government and this tertiary institute had a pioneering part to play in the implementing of Chinese teaching and learning materials tailored for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Later, the Deputy Head of the case study school also

¹⁷ a government aided school in Hong Kong operates under a scheme whereby the Head Teacher does not have as much autonomy as a DSS Head Teacher would. The government also has a bigger say in the enrolment of students into an aided school as opposed to a DSS school.

recommended that I approach one of the more outspoken non-governmental organizations in Hong Kong, also known as Hong Kong Unison. This NGO was the instigator in speaking out for a more comprehensive education policy for the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. The founder of the Hong Kong Unison is also an advocate for human rights and equal opportunities especially in the milieu of the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong.

3.4 Researcher as Both Insider/Outsider

With my personal agenda which entails both rich and biased information, it is still the backdrop to which this project materialized. Since the handover to China a great number of studies regarding the education of the ethnic minorities in HK have been published. But a project researched by an ethnic minority who experienced the present HK education system first hand can offer a fresher (insider) perspective on the intrinsic value of this topic. As narrated in Chapter 1, the personal road to higher education for an ethnic minority is not as straight as compared to a local Chinese student who has Chinese language skills.

I am aware that there are certainly issues of insider/outsider factors which may be reasons that could have affected the reliable delivery of this project. But the other forms of triangulation such as thick descriptive data of the students' experiences, prolonged engagement with informants, theoretical perspectives and self-reflexivity are also part of the rigor in this study. The telling of my personal schooling experience uses a narrative form as a template (Goodson, 2006). This template is for the "telling of (my) story" as well as imposes a structure on experiences and perceptions. Erben (1998) explained that "lives have to be understood as lived within time and time is experienced according to narrative." My personal narrative therefore served as the initial template for the search of other 'similar' narratives found in the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong. The searing curiosity at the initial phase of framing the research questions were: What happens to today's ethnic minority students after they graduate from secondary school in Hong Kong? Do they have the same educational opportunities as I did as a student or do they have better opportunities today as an ethnic minority? As a teacher of literature, I am familiar with the Freytag theory for drama students that every narrative has a beginning, middle and an end. But in the case of this project, the recapturing of life history or lived experience cannot be simplistically put in a life story (Goodson, 2001). It goes without saying therefore, that for the sake of the discussion in the education of ethnic minorities in HK, there is a 'need' to "prioritize one story over

another”. In other words, as researcher and insider, I have to consciously and as objectively as possible prioritize certain snips of an autobiography or my lived experience as an ethnic minority student in order to highlight or serve as triangulated data the narratives shared by my informants. There is also the issue of gaps as mentioned by Goodson and Sikes (2001). The omissions in the telling of a narrative are just as important as the telling itself. But any researcher knows that it is impossible to find out what omissions informants have made (Sikes, 2000). Sikes also explains that omissions made in the telling of a story might not be deliberate. It could be that the informant was consciously sifting through memory in order to provide the best and relevant piece of information the researcher is seeking for. In light of this, as an insider and researcher, my ethical aim is to offer the most relevant piece of experience as data for this project from the point of view of a past ethnic minority student. And as an outsider, I have the privilege to tease out the patterns and themes from the information given by the various interviewees.

The dividing line therefore is to differentiate between when I am an insider and when I am an outsider. And to problematize the insider/outsider binary is to closely look into how my role as ethnic minority (insider) and researcher (outsider) become a continuum instead of a clear-cut black-and-white position. First of all, to say that I am “one of them” (EM NCS students) is to claim that I too experienced what it is like to not be able to learn the Chinese language fluently in all the language skills combined – reading, speaking, listening and writing. To say that I am “not one of them” is to claim that I *am different from them* because a) I have no (more) worries that I cannot receive tertiary education; b) I have landed myself in a profession that I sought for; and c) I do not belong to the lower income group (anymore). The characteristics of the outsider in this scenario is one who has accumulated the Bourdieunian cultural capital and be part of the differentiated social structure – one who has advantages and favours received via and as a consequence of formal education (Bourdieu, 1977). It is extremely difficult articulating this point to my readers without sounding pretentious and self-aggrandizing. And only to point out the irony that Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) were correct in saying that economic obstacles are not enough to explain the disparities in the educational attainment of children from different social classes. It is the “inheritance” of “cultural dispositions” that are essentially important to school success. The outsider-identity I possess is looked upon with a conscious hindsight that my children can now enjoy the ‘advantages’ I could not. But having been in a former predicament of a segregated school, as were my informants, I was also part of a system that encouraged ethnic minority students to remain

oblivious of what possible ‘advantages’ there were out there. Being segregated meant being blinkered to the possibilities of “exclusive advantages” because being segregated meant not enjoying the institutionalized cultural capital. My positionality therefore, cannot be conceived as one-dimensional, because I have moved along “varying degrees of mobility” (Alcoff, 1995). My lived experience as a segregated student earned me the shared subject position as my student interviewees in this project.

Butler (2004) explained that the inner/outer binary is a stabilizing and consolidating distinction. In other words, as the researcher positions herself as “insider” or “outside” there is an attempt to “make coherent that which is tenuous and discursively constituted.” On my part as researcher therefore, my orientation as insider has shaped the representation of my student informants as “disadvantaged” because they are segregated; and I acknowledge that similarity of experience as they narrated to me their stories of schooling in HK. Thus the participants, especially the students interviewed also affected the process of the data collection. In my various dialogues with the students they regarded me both as researcher/lecturer (outsider) who wants to know and tell their story; and at the same time regarded me as “one of them” (insider) because I am not Chinese. Eppley (2006) describes this insider-outsider dichotomy as:

“insider/outsider positions are socially constructed and entail a high level of fluidity that further impacts a research situation. A researcher, by nature, has to have some level of “outside-ness” in order to conduct research. This does not mean that the inside perspective is surrendered; both exist simultaneously. There is othering in the very act of studying, a necessary stepping back or distancing in varying degrees. There can be no interpreting without some degree of othering.”

Hence, the distancing of me as outsider meant to take the collected data and triangulating the information against other informants and other forms of literature. The writing up of the conclusions and the findings are all part of the “othering” and the “outsidedness”. Nonetheless, DeAndrade (2000) also argued that insider status is not a taken-for-granted position. The insider status is “created through an ongoing process of evaluation that is dependent on the performance of group membership by (the) researcher(s) and participants at multiple levels.” Hence, the rapport that I formed with the student participants in this research depended on how they viewed me as an insider-researcher. When the student-participants understood where I was coming from, an invisible affinity was formed almost instantaneously. My insider status rose with each consequent meeting/interview I had with

them. They were relaxed in revealing more personal information which they felt could add to their narratives. And in some cases, especially with the parents of the students, their guards were let down, and the boundaries of their narratives as ethnic minorities were widened. As researcher, I could only sit back with a nod when one of the parents said, “you should know because you are a parent too.” Although unwittingly, that remark was heavily loaded with meaning because on the one hand, I truly did understand as a parent (insider) what the interviewee had to also go through as an ethnic minority parent juggling work and taking care of my own children’s needs, such as trying to enrol them in mainstream schools without being discriminated for various reasons. On the other hand, I had to keep the distance from absorbing the volunteered information over-sympathetically. Hence, as researcher, I had to constantly consider my elusive and unpredictable positioning and how all this data collected writes my work (DeAndrade, 2000).

Troyna (1995) argued that all research “reflects a partisanship which derives from the social identity and values of the researcher,” (p 403) in which case Bassey (1999) agreed that most researchers have a vested interest in the research subject. Hence one’s social identity and values should be revealed. The narrative of my personal experience as an ethnic minority is construed in the various relevant chapters of this thesis and thereby as Bassey (1999) put it, “locating the polemic firmly within an ethic of respect for truth.” In the fluidity of my positioning, the role reversal of an outsider-insider took a turn. In the following scenario, I emphasize with purpose the ‘role-reversal’ of being the outsider-as-researcher whose double identity as ethnic minority (insider) did not go over as an advantage when trying to collect data. My identity as insider became precarious when I tried to interview members of the Education Bureau. The government officials became weary when they became aware that an insider-ethnic-minority wanted information with regard to education policies and schooling opportunities for ethnic minorities in HK. Phone calls were not returned, and when put though, only the receptionist or lower rank officer responded to my requests and explained that they would gladly send me government published material and literature with regard to the schooling of ethnic minorities in HK. This happened when the deputy Head Teacher of the designated school informed me that there was going to be an open seminar on the recent developments in Chinese Language teaching for ethnic minorities. The open seminar was for Chinese Language teachers and school principals across the territory who taught ethnic minorities in mainstream designated schools. The deputy Head Teacher thought that it would be good idea for me to tag along and the setting would be ideal for me to also network with

other secondary school teachers who also taught ethnic minorities. When the EB officials were asked however, if I could attend the seminar, the response was negative. As it was explained, my presence as an outsider was inappropriate since I was not “one of them” and as a researcher, the EB officials were wary that the information collected might not be appropriately interpreted - a hidden agenda perhaps on the part of the researcher?

On another occasion at a university-wide conference on tertiary education in HK, a senior curriculum officer stopped her conversation short with me and directed me to the Education Bureau website explaining that “all the information” that I would need was there. Hence, the outsider-insider positioning was both disadvantageous because the EB gatekeeper was wary that information divulged about the policies and initiatives for ethnic minority education in HK might be misused. Nonetheless, upon reflection, it might not have anything to do with the researcher as being an ethnic minority but that researching on ethnic minority education in HK is regarded as a rather sensitive topic.

3.5 Data Management and Analysis

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) described that as a research technique, the use of narrative analysis is “the ways humans experience the world.” And Cortazzi (1993) suggested how memory characterizes the psychological approach in narrative analysis. One looks into the “processes of understanding, recalling and summarizing stories.” However, as Coffey and Atkinson (1996) put it, “there are no formulae or recipes for the ‘best’ way to analyse the stories we elicit and collect.” Nonetheless, this project is the study of experience through stories.

As mentioned in the section on data-gathering methods, various kinds of possible resources for data-collection were utilized. From local archives and the local media regarding educational policy to published material regarding ethnic minority education to interviewing various informants – EM students to EM parents to gatekeepers in the education of ethnic minorities. At the same time, alternative explanations were searched for triangulation purposes. Put together, themes and patterns in the data gathered opened the way for data analysis – identifying useful and significant ‘truths’ and realities in the education of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. And as already mentioned, the semi-structured interviews were the main source of my data – most of which were different people’s narratives of their experience at the case study school. With the students, they became the more pertinent group because

they were at the core of the study. It was not only the school that played a part in their lives, or that they also played a part in their designated school, but that because these students who were from different ethnical backgrounds were assumed to be the 'same' by the education system in HK, and therefore segregated. Ironically their 'differentness' as contrasted to the local community meant a kind of 'sameness' for EB because they are not Chinese and hence put together because these children do not fit into mainstream schools. It was by listening to their stories as an ethnic minority, segregated from other mainstream schools and growing up in an 'ethnic school' that was of interest to me.

Hence the consensus of themes that emerged from the various narratives started with coding. Much like reading a short story or a novel, themes were slowly plucked out of the narratives. Certain points of interest are thus raised about ethnic minority schooling; expressions of worthiness / self-deprecation, victory / failure; pride / regret; applauding / resentment and other similar types of binaries started to form a pattern

Since the initial part of the data collection involved visits to primary schools, the decision to move away from primary schools for data collection was quickly made because of the awareness of the loopholes in the validity of such data. The problem of working with younger students was twofold for me. On one level, it was how they expressed their thoughts and the ethical issues involved in working with younger children, and on the other level, I had planned to use open-ended interview questions to work with my informants. This procedure of data collection proved to be rather difficult in eliciting coherent responses from the children. As mentioned, the students who were mostly below twelve years old could not articulate their thoughts in a long coherent manner, and their attention span was rather short. There was also the very practical issue regarding ethical concerns in working with young children. To approach the children's parents and waiting for them to ensure consent to working with their children would not be apt for this project because of the time constraint.

On the other level, as also mentioned, an open-ended interview was more suitable for older teenagers, who were on their way to higher education. Firstly, they had something which the younger cohort did not have, and that was hindsight into their schooling experience and secondly, they were more capable of articulating their thoughts via an open-ended interview. As I was a rather inexperienced interviewer, my improvised communication skills might not work very well with younger children, and that could affect the validity of the interviews.

Hence, after an initial trial of outreaching to Head Teachers from primary schools, I had to immediately move onto the next more plausible source for data, and that was secondary schools. The journey of making cold calls to various designated secondary schools was once again repeated, and the first designated secondary school which opened its doors to this project became my case study school.

Another area in the data analysis that needed measures to improve validity was to not just work with the Head Teacher of the case study school. After about two years of intermittent visits to the case study school, I realized that triangulation was needed in order to enhance the validity of the data collected. And so for the third time, another batch of cold calls was made to various secondary schools. This time, the calls were aimed at regular mainstream schools which were not designated schools. A sizeable amount of information had already been collected from the Head Teacher of the designated school. But more data from another group of Head Teachers who did not run designated schools was needed to triangulate thoughts. Through my networking and some very helpful people from the academia, was I able to enlist the help of 5 Head Teachers who did not run designated schools but regular mainstream schools.

3.5.1 Data Gathering

The school concerned in this research is an instrumental case study, which therefore implies that conclusions drawn may apply beyond just one school that caters for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. In essence however, this is a case study research and not a biographic study of the narratives articulated by the informants. This particular case study school and the vignettes of the interviewed students, their parents, their teachers and five other Head Teachers from non-designated schools, highlight the conditions and practices that shape power/knowledge relationships between the Education Bureau i.e. the Hong Kong government, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the ethnic minority schools in Hong Kong. In brief, these are the parameters which the problem is approached. Of course, the framework shifts; but only to make things clearer as the research moved along. The explanations below are interspersed with diagrams and texts in this chapter on how data was collected. The following describes the various site selections before landing on the case study school which is followed by the data-gathering methods and the reasons for the chosen methods.

The basis of the main methods adopted as with many research projects is to sift through published material – document evidence – related to the education of ethnic minorities or immigrant education in other countries. In the local setting, the sources through which the data was collected came through a plethora of information from the Education Bureau website from the Hong Kong SAR government; reports from the Census and Statistics Department, the Legislative Council, the Curriculum Development Council and more prominent NGOs such as UNISON¹⁸, are a few of the main sources of documents. Local documentaries, some translated from Cantonese, on Hong Kong social issues and newspaper reports are also a source of data from the media. The textual evidence for this study swings between library literature, multi-media and online information. Journal publications, conferences and dissertations are also secondary sources. But the case study school itself serves as the core for the in-depth look into what it is like to study in a school set apart for Hong Kong minorities.

In this chapter, there are five summary diagrams (Fig. 3.1a to Fig. 3.1f) which will briefly describe at a glance how data collected led to themes which emerged for discussion in the latter parts of this research. Each ensuing summary diagram unfolds one more aspect of data collected along the way. Thus more information is included from the preceding diagram. Colour-coded arrows will be used to describe the various stages at which the data was collected as well. And finally, Fig. 3.1e will reveal what often is the final outcome of most EM students who attend designated schools.

In the centre of the diagram are two over-lapping circles representing the two common types of schools in HK. The ‘Designated Mainstream School’ is bounded by dotted lines because in this discussion, the dotted lines suggest that the reality which EM students experience in designated schools reflects a false reality (or only a partial reality) of schooling experiences for minority students.

The first two diagrams Fig. 3.1a and Fig. 3.1b show how ‘hard factors’ and government policies affect the schooling experiences of NCS students in designated schools.

¹⁸ UNISON: The Hong Kong Unison Ltd. was established in 2001 as a non-governmental organisation to service Hong Kong's ethnic minority residents. Its founder realised that the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong was being ignored in the inclusion of various social policies and in the provision of social services.

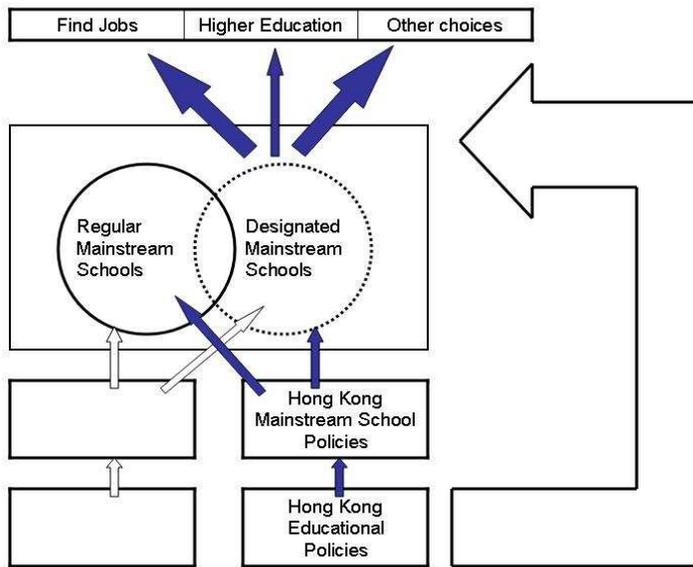


Fig. 3.1a Hard Factors that Affect HE Path of NCS Students
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

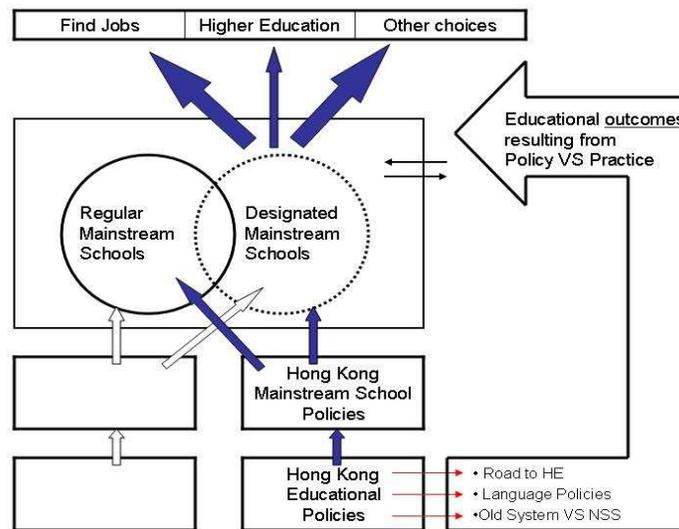


Fig. 3.1b Outcomes of EB's Educational Policies
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

In Fig. 3.1c there are hints at what ‘soft factors’ can have in the lives of EM students. What they aspire to be can be affected by various people around them. These ‘soft factors’ are represented by yellow arrows.

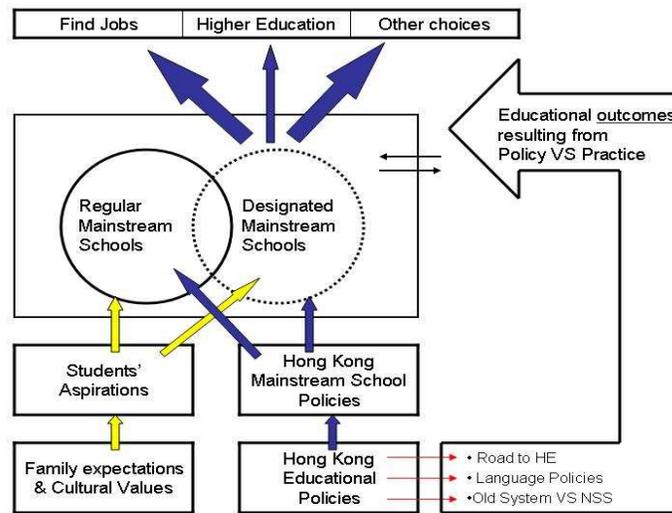


Fig. 3.1c Soft Factors that Affect HE Path of NCS Students
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

3.5.2 Open-ended Interview Questions

The Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher helped to identify potential candidates for the interviews. About 25 students were contacted and later, 13 consented to a more in-depth interview in small groups of 3 to 4 people. 6 students out of the 13 agreed to a further interview *after* they graduated from the case study school. Prior to working with these “selected” interviewees, the Head Teacher invited me to attend classroom observations. Some of the subject classes which were observed were: English Literature, Psychology and Chinese Language. After observing the Chinese Language class, it became evident that the learning of this subject could be the most crucial link to the impediments experienced by these ethnic minority students in secondary school.

In short, there are 9 students, 1 Head Teacher (designated school), 5 Head Teachers (non-designated schools), 2 parents, 1 secondary school teacher and 1 university Chinese language consultant who make up the core participants for the data collected. Other informants who are not directly involved with the case study school will be

mentioned in Chapter 6, when the information from this chapter is analysed. In other words, the issues emerging from the data presented in Chapter 5 that will be further elaborated on; alongside data collected from informants who are teachers, parents and other Head Teachers who run non-designated schools. As expected, the purpose of including this information is to triangulate themes raised from different perspectives. For ethical and privacy reasons, all the informants' names are given aliases including the case study school.

Below is a reference of all the major participants in the interview. These participants form the core of the collected data and they were interviewed at least on 2 different occasions in order to gain a wider perspective of ethnic minority schooling experiences in Hong Kong. Most of them are members from the designated school. The acronym MIC will be used to stand for the designated school.

Interviewee	Occupation	No. of interviews conducted	Estimated duration of each interview (in hours)	Remarks
Dr. Liang	Head Teacher	6	3	MIC Member
Juan Carlos	Student	3	2.5	MIC Member
Cherise	Student	3	2.5	MIC Member
Aisha	Student	3	2.5	MIC Member
Iram	Student	2	3	MIC Member
Latika	Student	2	2	MIC Member
Shakana	Student	2	1.5	MIC Member
Salim	Student	2	2	MIC Member
Farid	Student	2	2.5	MIC Member
Husna	Student	2	3	Member of a CMI School

Fig. 3.2 Primary Informants for the Study

3.5.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured and informal interviews were used to collect data. When the Head Teacher of MIC opened the doors to me and allowed me to freely come and go into the school, it was important that I did not create a 'clinical atmosphere' each time I met a possible new candidate as an informant. On certain occasions when I would bump into various teachers along the corridor, or meet an ex-MIC student who just happened to drop by, I did not want to whip out my mp3 just so that I could record every moment of what was being said, although records were kept in journal form of a particular acquaintance that I might have made that day. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews were the ones which were booked ahead of time and more or less pre-meditated before my arrival at the school. The informants were aware that a 'proper' sit-down interview was going to be conducted.

Over a five-year period of intermittent visits, face-to-face interviews with Dr. Liang the Head Teacher, the Deputy Head Teacher, teachers and senior secondary students in Form 6 were conducted at the case study school – MIC. With Dr. Liang, most of the 6 interviews were conducted inside the Head Teacher's office. On one occasion, the intended interview turned out to be an informal dialogue exchange together with the school supervisor who happened to pay MIC a casual visit. On another occasion, after meeting with the Head Teacher for about 2 hours, the part-time school counsellor who also happened to be on duty dropped in, and Dr. Liang introduced me to the counsellor who later spent about an hour sharing (anonymous) stories about the plight of some of the MIC students. As for most of the student informants, the interviews were held on school campus. Except for the serendipitously conducted interviews, voice recordings were made and later transcribed. Journal entries were also made after each visit.

The 2 Form 2 Chinese language classroom observations were later recorded with journal entries as well, but not recorded with a video because the teachers were not comfortable to have their lessons recorded on video camera, and they were worried that students might be easily distracted by the video camera. I was invited to join 2 Form 6 English Literature classes and 1 Form 6 Psychology class. On those occasions, the teachers invited me to be 'part of the class' by taking part in the group discussions as well on the topic that was being discussed for that subject. After those 3 sessions with

the Form 6 students, a rapport was established and some of the students from those Form 6 classes became the core of my student informants.

The face-to-face interviewing in both semi-structured and informal dialogues were the most appropriate forms of data collection because of the sensitive nature of this study about the narratives which were to unfold. Respondents react to more informal cues in a spontaneous manner and thus via introspection, students reveal their own perceived reality. In this regard, they make sense of the experiences at school which makes them feel like the individuals they are – as symbolic interaction describes it (Blumer, 1969). This form of qualitative research offered the benefits of focusing on the specific experience and perceptions of individuals engaged in the area of interest. The data of the participants' personal experiences provide illustrative evidence as opposed to hypothetical deductions from theory. (Sirotnik, 1986). The interviews conducted covered areas such as biography, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, curriculum, pedagogy and the social lives of these ethnic minority students. In engaging in the dialogue with the students, the researcher allowed conversations to linger and ramble spontaneously on the basis that the ways of expression that the students constructed their stories was more valuable than comparable data. The way in which the students expressed themselves and how they situated themselves in their own narrative was also an important part of the data. The process of analyzing the data was descriptive and it expounded on emerging themes found within the transcriptions of the interviews.

Fig. 3.1d suggests an interesting note of how some lower Form students aspire to also Band 1 mainstream schools; as represented by the green narrow arrows. The narrow green arrows are not depicted in a reverse direction because it is a known but unsaid fact that very rarely do regular Chinese children aspire to enter designated mainstream schools where a majority of students are ethnic minorities.

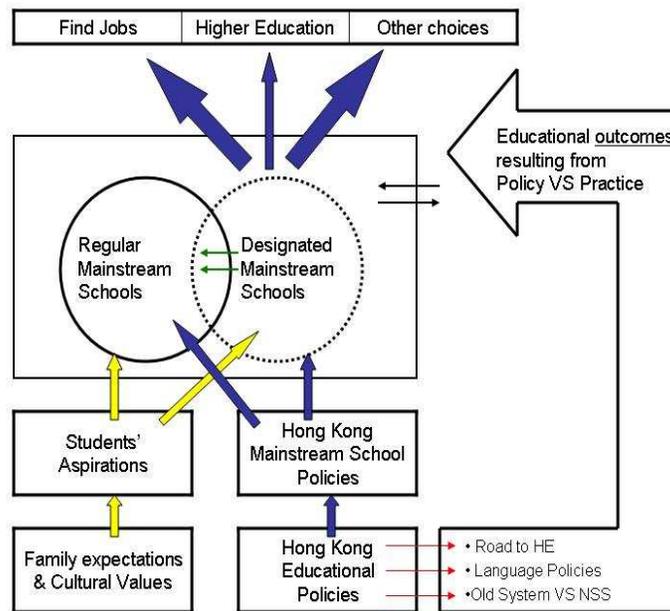


Fig. 3.1d NCS EMs' Goals to Enter Regular Band 1 Schools
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

In order to build reciprocity and reflexivity into the analysis, four interviewees were revisited after they had graduated from secondary school and the ensuing interviews were conducted with the awareness and hind sight of the students. Not only did the researcher and the interviewees recap the initial interview, this post-dialogue was to ensure that the outcomes were “trustworthy”. This term was coined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as an alternative to reliability and validity which are problematic when substantiating qualitative research.

Fig. 3.1e is a crucial summary diagram because after many chats at the designated school with the various students from various levels at various times, I somehow realized that there is a discrepancy of what the NCS students expected or aspired to attain in their further education as opposed to what opportunities they are given in a designated school. For example, some informants felt that they were on par with other Band 1 schools students because the EM students felt that they had very strong English language skills, which was true. Some EM students had native English language proficiency. And that is why some (as represented in Fig. 3.1d) aspired to enter Band 1

schools believing that they had ‘what it took’ to enrol into a Band 1 school. What some of these NCS students did not realize is that very strong Chinese language skills are equally important. The rectangle within the dotted periphery suggests both positive and negative aspects of the (false) reality of these ethnic minority students because on one hand, some of these students are not aware of the true intense sense of competitiveness in regular Band 1 schools as opposed to their haven-like school experiences in growing up in a designated school. True, on one hand, it gives EM students a strong sense of belonging to their (designated) school and many of the interviewed had a healthy sense of confidence; however, there is a danger of them growing up in their formative secondary school years as “big fish in a little bowl” syndrome. Hence although most of the NCS students interviewed did rather well within their school, they were still unaware of how tough academic competition was ‘out there’.

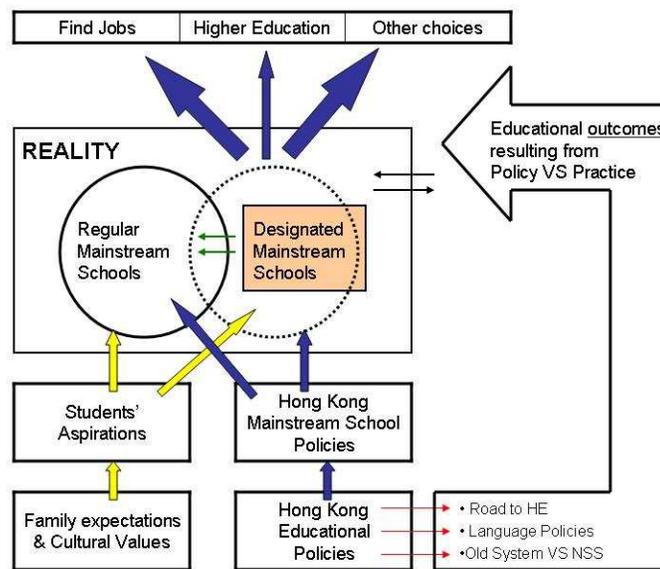


Fig. 3.1e NCS Students Perceived Reality in Designated Mainstream Schools
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

3.5.4 Ethical and Political Concerns

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggested a list of ten things for analysing data as the researcher collects them; the summary of which shall not be inventoried here save for two from the list which is more pertinent to this research. With so much generated data

and so much initial rudimentary analysis done, two reminders from Bogdan and Biklen which stood out were a) to decide (for myself) what type of study is to be conducted and b) to try out themes and ideas on subjects. They mention that “while not everyone should be asked, and while not all you hear may be helpful, key informants, under the appropriate circumstances, can help advance your analysis, especially to fill in the holes of description” (1992). Hence in the autobiographical snippets produced in Chapter 1 bring together several mosaic pieces that “fill in the holes” in this study. These personal narratives are later woven together to form the bigger tapestry. This leads to another important aspect in the collection of data and that is the protocol of the researcher.

3.5.5 Role of the Researcher

Protecting the participants’ right to privacy is done by promising confidentiality. And all informants in this study, those within the case study school and those outside the case study school were given pseudonyms. The school itself was dubbed MIC, short for Mary Immaculate College. The students were the primary informants and the HT, teachers, parents etc. were all given anonymity. The interviews which were conducted from 2004 to 2009 took place in appropriate, non-stressful and non-threatening manner (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2003). Since it was the HT who introduced me to most of the informants, a rapport was naturally formed with the interviewees. The parents whom I interviewed also fell into the ‘opportunistic sampling’ category because it was appropriate to consider them as informants who could provide triangulated information. All the informants were told about the nature of my research and apart from the informants who were from the ‘administration’ personnel, all the South Asian interviewees who gave consent to be interviewed did so in a welcoming manner. Other forms of triangulation were done with notes from the recordings – verbatim – so that I ensured that I did not misinterpret the interviewees in any adverse way.

Codes of ethics are a concern for all social scientists (Sieber, 1992) and they deal with a) weighing the costs and benefits of the investigation b) safeguards to protect the rights of participants and c) with ethical considerations in the presentation of research findings (Diener and Crandal, 1978). In essence, qualitative research presents ethical dilemmas. According to Stake (1994), “qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict.” Hence in all types of qualitative interviewing, there are risks and benefits to the informants.

Interviewees may feel intrusion into their privacy or feel embarrassed by certain questions or might reveal more than they intended to (Merriam, 1998). Within the process of data collection during in-depth interviews, many things can happen along the continuum of the researcher-interviewee relationship. On one hand, it can create “long-term effects” (Merriam, 1998) such as residual effects of an interview in which a teacher expresses frustration or resentment; or a consultant who becomes aware of her dead-end job. Suppressed emotions or memories might resurface even though the interview is supposed to be routine. Other possible unintended scenarios which could happen are more of a positive nature in which the respondents or interviewees act very positively about divulging information. It could be that they are very glad to have shared the information which the researcher wishes to gather; or perhaps the interviewing moment becomes a cathartic moment for the interviewees in which they gain more self-knowledge. In other words, the sharing session with the researcher becomes somewhat therapeutic. Nonetheless, as Patton (1990) points out, the first and foremost is to gather data and not change people. In other words, the interviewer is not a therapist or a judge. As far as academic researching goes, integrity on the part of the researcher is crucial and a researcher must come to terms with whether or not sensitive information should be disseminated or if any kind of intervention is necessary because of the researcher-relationship. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) argued that “the literature on research ethics generally supports a noninterventionist position in fieldwork,” yet failure to act is itself “an ethical and political choice.” But Diener and Crandall (1978) explain the ethical issue rationally:

“There is simply no ethical alternative to being as nonbiased, accurate, honest as is humanly possible in all phases of research. In planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting his work the scientist should strive for accuracy, and whenever possible, methodological controls should be built in to help...Biases that cannot be controlled should be discussed in the written report. Where the data only partly support the predictions, the report should contain enough data to let readers draw their own conclusions.”

And as earlier mentioned, the internal validity means research findings are congruent with reality and reliability means there is consistency in the findings. Qualitative research is different from traditional research and thus the researcher makes the effort to triangulate; check interpretations with informants; and clarifying his or her own biases and assumptions.

3.5.6 Validity and Reliability

In the earlier sections of this chapter (3.3.1), it was explained why case study was chosen, and at this point, it is also worth mentioning that a case study is “the study of a singularity which is chosen because of its interest to the researcher” (Bassey 1999 75). Thus the “issues of external validity are not meaningful” Bassey goes on to say that the concept of trustworthiness “successfully illuminates the ethic of respect for truth in case study research” Hence this particular project goes for depth of inquiry rather than breadth.

Goodson (2001) explained that in a life history context, our language strengths in fluency and the ability to dramatize or narrate our life story “determines how good an informant we are.” This in turn demonstrates the success of the identities we construct. Goodson (2001) quotes Wittgenstein that “the limits of our language are the limits of our world.” It means that some people are good at telling stories while others are not. Goodson (2001) also went further to say that “the language and discourses we have access to depend upon the social contexts we experience and how we are socially positioned.” Hence our social position is the mark of difference, because we are constituted in language and positioned according to the “discursive practices of gender, race, class and ethnicity” (Usher, 1988). How I tell my story and how I re-narrate the stories of my informants in this research is one of the concerns in the reliability of my “facility with language” (Goodson, 2001).

Behind the tapestry of the students’ narratives, as well as mine, the data which was also validated was information collected from the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, teachers, and documents in archives that could give light to educational opportunities for ethnic minority students and thereby offer a kind of realism about their schooling experiences and the challenges they encounter. The data collected also affirms what the educational program or policy can or cannot offer South Asian students in Hong Kong. In light of this, the crucial gatekeeper such as the Head Teacher of the case study school had much to articulate with regard to the educational policies in Hong Kong. Thus triangulating his viewpoints with 5 other Head Teachers from other schools and interviews with Chinese language consultants from universities was also conducted. In sum, published data together with evidence from documents and other archives, supplemented by interviews with other stakeholders are included in this study.

Since the initial push to embark upon this project was based on personal experience as an ethnic minority member in Hong Kong who went through the same HK public education system, and there are implications (subconsciously or not) that this is seems like an attempt to use collected data to vindicate the researcher's (auto)-biographic schooling experience. But the trends for qualitative research have moved beyond conventional forms of triangulation in which objectivity and internal validity can be stand-alone key issues in 'old school' (traditional) forms of triangulation. Guion (2002) describes that for some of the key issues for qualitative research today, apart from convincing arguments also rests the researcher's role, the richness in detail and the success of communicating those details. In light of this, my own schooling experiences as an ethnic minority resident in Hong Kong describes part of the authenticity criteria in this research and plays a part in the components of rigor for judging this piece of qualitative research.

In Chapter 4, most of the account of the HT regarding the case study school, was verified and checked. Some of the information regarding the school could be verified on the EB website as well. Thus checking against publicly available information was also a way for triangulation. Each visit that followed at the school was first recapped and checked before proceeding to other questions. The past, present and future of the school was viewed through the Head Teacher's lens, hence it was important to first verify data, in order for me to base my findings on such information.

3.5.7 Limitations of the Study

Like many independent research, there is bound to be limitations to the study. This study almost turned out to be a mini longitudinal study which was out of my expectation. But unlike funded research which can take a study to a much more in-depth and systematic process, this particular research had a crucial time factor attached to the overall collection of data especially when visiting with various informants and gatekeepers was constrained by the schedules of both interviewees and interviewer. Hence, much as the temptation was there to continue with more interviews, a decision had to be made to wrap up each individual interview in order to meet the due date of the thesis submission.

There are perhaps two major areas in which the limitations of the study can be described. The first area would be the researcher's own limitations, and the other has to do with how the data was collected.

It is best and easiest to describe my own limitations in my role as researcher. As this study stemmed out from my own personal experiences as an ethnic minority student in HK who jumped through hoops and leapt over hurdles (like many of my Chinese counter-parts), it was very tempting to take an overly sentimental journey back to my own academic past in order to throw some light, subjective as it may seem, as to how limited HE opportunities are in HK for someone who cannot read or write Chinese like myself. The autobiographical snippets in the data were also carefully 'tailored' just so that its content was specific to schooling experiences. Hence it may seem paradoxical that my personal experience was both subjectively narrated and yet at the same time pruned to 'fit' the voice of objectivity.

The second area concerned with limitations rests in the process of data collection from the various informants. The most daunting part of the research was making the cold calls from school to school in hope that one would allow me enough time to make the entrée, form rapports and collect the data that I needed. It very well sounds non-academic to say so, however, many of the informants that I liaised with were a result of serendipity and as a solo researcher, I was a more grateful student than I was a stoic researcher. The journey in face-to-face visits lasted nearly to the end of the time period allowed before submission of the thesis; around five to five-and-a-half years. Perhaps that was also another one of this study's drawbacks. I was not sure when I should stop meeting new informants. And hence although there were pages and pages of verbatim, not all the information collected could be thoroughly used.

Nonetheless, this 'excess' of data actually gives way to what could be done in the future, if schooling of ethnic minorities in HK were still a pertinent issue in the academic, political and social arena. Because the bulk of the interviews were done with the EM students, and others were done for purposes of triangulation, there were some very interesting strands which came out of speaking with the Chinese Language teachers and HTs who were not attached to a designated school. On one hand, I could not interview enough Chinese language teachers to gather a sample of what it is like to be given a

language teaching job which they were not trained for nor psychologically prepared for. I deduced that perhaps there was more a cultural difference which hampered to learning / teaching relationship than the actual skills acquisition. Also, when interviewing the five HTs/principals about ethnic minority schooling, a few of them were unaware of the intricate issues that daunted an ethnic minority student. In this perspective therefore, further research could be done in a) the training of Chinese Language teachers to be effective instructors of second language acquisition and b) finding out what roles gatekeepers such as HTs or principals can play in making HK a more cosmopolitan city through educating *all* children irrespective of their ethnicity.

3.6 Signpost to Other Themes

Before examining the themes which arose from the data collecting process, this chapter concludes with Fig. 3.1f. This final diagram in this chapter summarizes what I label as 'harsh truth'. The harsh truth for EM students who attend designated schools is that they are given the illusion and false hope that they have just as much a chance as their Chinese counterparts to enter HE. Fig. 3.1f is also a preview to what it is like being schooled in a designated school. The triangular red roof suggests the harsh reality that most students face at the end of secondary school. The NCS students are given the option that they can sit for an alternative Chinese language exam for second language learners. But in reality, NCS students are not linguistically prepared to enrol in undergraduate courses which require higher levels of Chinese. In Fig. 3.1f, the single blue narrow arrow at the top of the figure symbolizes the possibility of EMs entering HE is lower than their Chinese counterparts. Hence the two blue wider arrows suggest that EM students must make alternative choices if their aspirations to enter HE are dashed.

In the process of coding the data gathered, various themes or issues seem to have surfaced more than once. As suggested in the Abstract, some of the themes which bear greater significance in the study fall under a) governmentality, b) cultural capital, c) social justice and d) inclusion. These themes will continue to be addressed in the chapters to follow along with other possible sub-themes (or issues) which may branch out from the conflict being discussed.

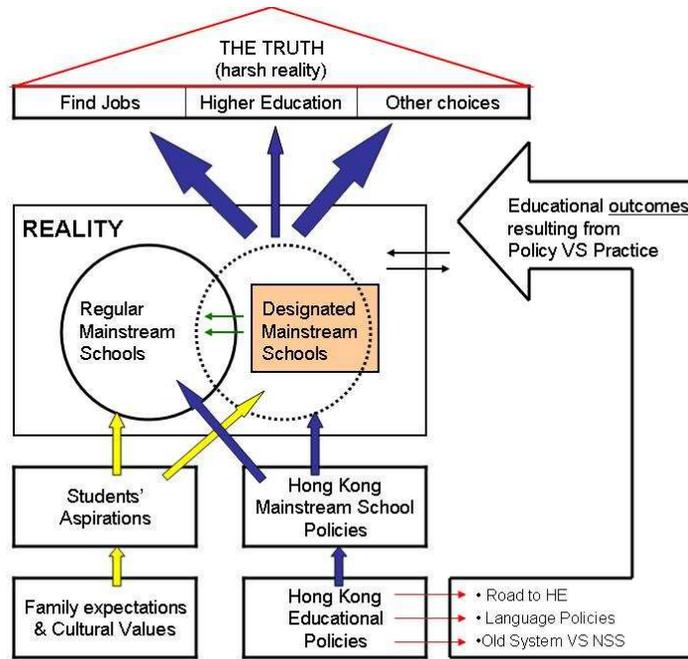


Fig. 3.1f Harsh Truth for HE Chances for NCS Ethnic Minority Students
 (See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

In Chapter 4 which will follow, the designated school will be depicted and the main informants introduced.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

4.1 Introduction

The first part of Chapter 4 delineates the case study school itself – its own journey into becoming a designated school narrated from the HT’s point of view – namely, some pertinent aspects of how a designated school essentially differs from a mainstream school. Included in this chapter is also nine narratives from nine different EM students who at one point or another, studied at the case study school. Two out of the nine students interviewed were already graduates from the case study school when they agreed to take part in the interview.

Since the start of the research, there were a few ‘spin off’ interviews which also took place. This means, I was able to meet various other people who were directly or indirectly involved in designated schools. In short, I wish to include one more narrative of another ethnic minority student who was *not* from the designated school, and the father of that student. The main reason behind including this particular student is because this Pakistani student attended a CMI school throughout her secondary school education and her narrative can solicit another perspective of an EM experience. For privacy reasons, all the informants’ names are given aliases including the case study school.

Below is a quick reference for Chapter 4 of all the major participants in the interview. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these participants form the core of the collected data and they were interviewed at least on 2 different occasions in order to gain a wider perspective of ethnic minority schooling experiences in Hong Kong. All but one of them is members from the designated school. The acronym MIC will be used to stand for the designated school.

Interviewee	Occupation	Remarks
Dr. Liang	Head Teacher	Member of MIC
Juan Carlos	Student	Member of MIC
Cherise	Student	Member of MIC
Aisha	Student	Member of MIC
Iram	Student	Member of MIC
Latika	Student	Member of MIC
Shakana	Student	Member of MIC
Salim	Student	Member of MIC
Farid	Student	Member of MIC
Husna	Student	Member of a CMI school

Fig. 4.1 List of Major Participants in the Interview

4.2 Part I

Since the phenomenon being studied is the experiences of ethnic minority students in Hong Kong, the “natural setting” is the context within which this phenomenon appears i.e. the segregated school. In this research it is dubbed as the “designated school”. There are many factors within the natural setting which impinge upon the phenomenon, and thus the contextual conditions within are also highly pertinent. Since case studies tend to be selective, the researcher usually focuses on one or two issues which are fundamental to understanding the phenomenon. And in this case, it is illuminating with thick descriptions and in-depth examples of what a designated school is like.

4.2.1 The Designated School – *Mary Immaculate College (MIC)*

The case study school in this research does not have any particular Christian affiliation today. But the school government decided, over forty years ago, to dedicate the school to the early founders who established the school which was based on Christian principles. Today the case study school is essentially secular. The ironic beauty however, is that with the rich range of ethnicities, there are students from different religious backgrounds who attend this school. For the purpose of this research, the case study school is baptized and renamed Mary Immaculate College (MIC) notwithstanding the diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds the school nurtures.

As previously mentioned, a ‘designated’ school in Hong Kong is either a primary or secondary school which has admitted a comparatively large number of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students. These NCS students are in a different league of EMI mainstream schools because they are a special needs group of individuals who need to be offered Chinese language courses in the form of second language acquisition. One of the differences between a regular mainstream EMI school and a designated school is that the latter receives steady support from the EB for Chinese language learning and teaching for NCS students. In essence however, designated is a softer word for segregated. By the same warrant of sending gifted children to schools which offer enhanced programmes, or sending mentally challenged children to schools which cater for special education needs, an over-arching definition of a designated school in Hong Kong is a school which accepts mostly South Asian children or other non-Chinese ethnicities. Most designated schools are not given top priority by Hong Kong Chinese parents in terms of school choice for their children. Hong Kong mainstream schools are generally pigeon-holed into 3 types of banding. With Band 1 being the strongest band, and Band 3 the weakest. Therefore, the higher the banding of a school, the better the overall academic attainment of that school. In other words, Band 1 schools, often also EMI schools, are often more competitive and the calibre of students in Band 1 schools is very high. Most designated schools are closer to the Band 3 tier and this will be later explained why they are not Band 1 schools.

In 1999, MIC accepted around 20 South Asian (SA) students. With four classes to each form in Forms 1 to 5, and two classes in Forms 6 and 7 respectively, the overall student population was approximately 1000 students. By the year 2002, out of the four classes in each form, three of them comprised of all EM students and only one class comprised of mainly Chinese students in each form. It is also a note of interest that during the process when the EMs were flooding in and the Chinese were fading out, the classes conducted at MIC were confined to either dominant EM students or dominant Chinese students. In other words, the Chinese students still attending MIC before 2005 were grouped into one class. After 1999, however, the slow but steady increase of NCS rose from 20 to over half the student population. And as fewer Chinese students opted to enrol in MIC, the vacant places were offered to EM students.

It was not the intention of MIC to “become” a designated school. But as the numbers of SA students increased after 1999, the number of Chinese students decreased. Hence, although MIC was tagged as a school that uses English as the medium of instruction (MoI), something which many Hong Kong parents and students covet when applying for secondary schools in Hong Kong, the student population in terms of ethnicity flipped from dominant ethnic Chinese to dominant ethnic South Asian minorities. And that was when the clock could no longer be turned back – MIC’s fate of being a designated school was sealed as the last of the Chinese students graduated in 2006. Of the few Chinese students who were still there in 2005, they instead became the “minority” group of students at MIC because by then the overall student population comprised of over 98% South Asians. Towards the end of this research, the student population at MIC was 100% South Asians along with other ethnic minorities.

At this point in the narrative of MIC, it is important to highlight the peripheral political issues that were going on around Hong Kong. The return of Hong Kong to the Motherland saw many “overnight” changes in policies including the use of Chinese as MoI in schools across the territory in 1998. The rationale behind the blanket application of Chinese as MoI was understandable due to the need to raise a stronger awareness towards the mother tongue and re-ignite a relationship with the Motherland. Taking Chinese language as a mandatory subject and making it a pre-requisite for entering into many university programmes was one of the ‘overnight hauls’ in educational policies made. Only schools which could produce students who scored high in English language in Standard English language tests designed by the EB or the public examinations were given the privilege of flying the EMI flag. Thus it is necessary to mention here why the learning of Chinese language for NCS students in designated schools is a crucial point of discussion in this research. And as mentioned, the language issue for NCS students in Hong Kong will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

Before 1997, teaching Chinese to NCS students was not an issue because any student who was not ethnically Chinese had the option of studying French in order to meet the requirements of applying for senior secondary school and/or University if the student wishes to. Before the handover in 1997 of Hong Kong to China by the British, MIC had a handful of EM students. These EM students had the option of taking French as a second language instead of Chinese. French as a second language was a recognized

second language subject that students could take as a pre-requisite for University entrance. The year 1999 was another turning point for MIC and most decisions made by the school whether it was about student-intake or curriculum changes, the school had to deal with a whole new level of coping with the government's changes in education policies, and this meant slowly 'letting go' of the number of French classes to making way for more Chinese classes for their EM students. The government's policy of making Chinese language a mandatory subject and pre-requisite into Form 6 and eventually University programmes meant a new level of complexity for designated schools. To make it simple, if EM or NCS students aspired to enter an undergraduate programme in HK, a pass in Chinese language is often the prerequisite, especially for sought-after programmes such as Journalism, Law, Medicine, and Engineering and so forth.

The major change for the HT at MIC was taking the whole school through the transitional phase from offering French as a second language option to phasing out that subject; or making it an optional subject; and simultaneously making Chinese language the mandatory subject for all students (NCS included). It was like a rude awakening not just for the administrators of MIC, but also for the EM students that in order for the school and the students to "succeed" into Sixth Form and local universities, MIC had to ensure that her students could measure up to other local Chinese students in the mastery of the Chinese language.

MIC became one of the first designated schools to ask for more resources from the government in terms of Chinese language support for teaching Chinese to NCS students because the mandatory Chinese language classes needed much more support since MIC was, like all the other mainstream schools, familiar with teaching Chinese language to Chinese students, but not to students who had no Chinese background (academically or ethnically). In the years between 1999 and the early years of this century, there was virtually no teaching material for Chinese as a second language for these NCS students. Help from the EB was slow and not forthcoming. The school management and the Chinese language teachers at MIC decided that waiting for directives and practical help from the EB was not going to solve the pressing Chinese language issue at their school.

Therefore, in 2002, MIC applied for the Quality Education Fund¹⁹ (QEF) in order that they could design teaching materials for Chinese language learning for NCS students. This initial project that MIC embarked on was more for generic and immediate needs for Chinese language learning. As the numbers of EMs multiplied in MIC, the HT and the Chinese language teachers realized that these NCS EM students had to be introduced, if not taught, with “everyday Chinese usage” and some kind of introduction to Chinese culture. Since many of the students came from Indian, Pakistani, Filipino and Nepalese backgrounds, the acquired Chinese language skills, understanding of and knowledge about Chinese language and culture by these children could not be presumed or taken for granted. MIC also had to demand for teaching materials for Chinese as a second language such as textbooks or curriculum guidelines and was looking toward the government for tangible support. Since the EB had no clear vision with regard to the Chinese language learning support for NCS at the time, the only immediate assistance that could be offered was in the form of funding. Thus in 2002, MIC applied for the QEF so that they could just take the matter into their own hands, by designing suitable Chinese-as-a-second-language textbooks for their ethnic minority students. Their proposal to the government was welcomed and their tender for funding was successful. The first round of QEF assistance allowed MIC to produce three sets of textbooks written under various themes. The pleasing outcome of the pioneered work of the dedicated Chinese language teachers at MIC and their consultants formed a kind of template for the next few sets of Chinese textbooks for the NCS students at MIC. Hence a second round of funding was approved and in all, twelve books were produced.

The first set of teaching materials designed by the Chinese Language Team at MIC was published for their own use. The Chinese textbooks which they designed were geared towards the lower secondary school i.e. Forms 1 to 3. The rationale at the time was to equip the students with a basic understanding / comprehension of everyday Cantonese.

¹⁹ QEF stand for *Quality Education Fund*. In October 1997, the Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address the establishment of the Quality Education Fund (QEF) to finance projects for the promotion of quality education in Hong Kong. The establishment of the QEF is one of the major recommendations of the Education Commission Report No.7 (ECR7). Formally established on 2 January 1998 with an allocation of \$5 billion, the QEF provides an effective channel for worthwhile projects from the school education sector to be funded. The QEF mainly caters for worthwhile non-profit making initiatives within the ambit of basic education, i.e. pre-primary, primary, secondary and special education.

Many primary school NCS children were centrally allocated or applied on their own to MIC, but their levels of Chinese language skills were disparate while some could not understand Chinese at all because they were new immigrants. MIC named their textbooks appropriately: “Chinese as a Second Language” comprising a series of twelve books; each book being one unit under a particular theme. The twelve themes were: a) School Life; b) My Family; c) School Picnic; d) Festivals; e) Entertainment; f) Sports; g) Weather; h) Food; i) Human body and health; j) shopping; k) Career and further studies and l) Information technology.

4.2.2 The Head Teacher (Principal) – Dr. Liang

The Head Teacher, Dr. Liang explained that it was crucial to introduce NCS students to a more comprehensive knowledge of the Chinese language. But the school was also aware that it was a massive task to take upon. The looming issue that they had to confront was that the immersion programs which were NGO-operated or short term did not have a comprehensive Chinese language learning workshop for NCS students who were enrolled there. When these same NCS children were re-allocated to their school, for example, MIC had to deal with the Chinese language teaching pretty much on their own initiative. The other reason why it was a massive task was because there was no actual direct support from the government in terms of expertise for a Chinese as a second language program. The members of staff within MIC’s Chinese Department approached friends of friends they knew who were also Chinese teachers, who were interested in embarking upon a project to design Chinese language teaching and learning material for second language learners. The QEF was therefore a quick answer to a more formalized Chinese language course for NCS students. The first formal Chinese language lessons for the NCS students at MIC set sail on their maiden voyage in 2003. For Dr. Liang and the Chinese think tank group of teachers, the rationale behind developing their first set of Chinese textbooks for second language learners was to equip them with general expressions which could help the NCS students go about their everyday encounters in Chinese. These were mundane but very taken-for-granted things such as asking one’s way around or purchasing a newspaper from a street vendor (who spoke no English); or telling a mini-bus driver where they wanted to get off; or simply buying a soft drink from a store.

The brainchild and blueprint for these initial teaching materials for Chinese as a second language belongs to MIC. As more and more other designated schools were pressing for Chinese language teaching materials for their NCS students, the EB decided that since MIC had done such a good job in producing their first set of teaching materials for second language learners, the twelve sets of books designed by MIC were soon readapted and republished by the EB. And since then, the EB has repackaged these teaching materials, and redistributed these “Chinese as a Second Language” materials to other designated schools as reference or as actual teaching materials for NCS students in their own schools. (see Appendix 4.1 to 4.4)

The twelve books were designed for NCS students who had completely no background of the Chinese language and therefore MIC resolved to design the texts using a variation of the Yale pinyin (Appendix 4.2). When the texts were designed, it was not the intention of the MIC’s Chinese Language team to teach the students Chinese by learning how to write Chinese characters at the same time. They felt that if character writing was introduced alongside speaking, then the students would find the task too difficult. Hence the group of teachers decided that romanising the Chinese language was a better form of learning, because it was closer to the English language. After all, the students were familiar with the English alphabet. The run up to the production of these Chinese as second language textbooks was not without disagreements amongst the writers. In the end however, the language team felt that Chinese character writing was far too complex for the teenagers to grasp especially when only 2 to 3 lessons per week could be spared to learn the new language. Also, the main point of argument on the MIC Chinese Language Team’s part was that, they wished to train the students in speaking Cantonese first and foremost – everyday life phrases – because that was the crucial need. Reading and writing Chinese was not, at the time, the priority.

Dr. Liang and the deputy principal described to me how some of the students were allocated to MIC via an ad hoc programme for new immigrants to Hong Kong. For many new South Asian new immigrants, linguistic minority students undergo a transition in ‘sheltered Chinese immersion’ before being allocated to a mainstream (EMI or CMI) school setting. Students attend an ‘induction’ Chinese program for cultural exposure. This is a six-month program organized by funded or sponsored by the EB which was mainly aimed for newly arrived immigrants from China who were

arriving by the hundreds soon after 1997, and who needed to learn about aspects of Hong Kong culture and its pace of life. It was only in 2000, after complaints from NGOs and a few designated schools lobbying for the rights of NCS students, that the EB further extended this programme to South Asian NCS students as well those of other Asian heritage. Since the six month programme is a general programme which helps to initiate newcomers to Hong Kong and introduce them to the general Hong Kong cultural agenda, only general aspects pertaining to helping students settle in could be introduced. The six-month programme was not a formal academic programme either. Part of this immersion program is mentioned in Chapter 3 – the pilot visits as the methodological process. It was however, a transitional period for new arrivals and time bought by the government so that the EB could allocate these students to various schools in which the new arrivals lived in. After the six month programme, these new immigrants were sorted out to join different mainstream schools and most of the NCS or South Asian students were allocated to designated schools.

The six-month immersion program initiated by the EB is contracted out to various NGOs or schools which operate on a smaller scale. The schools which take in these new arrivals try to as much as possible, to fit the children into classes of similar age groups. But when this is not possible, an immersion class might have an 11-year-old sitting next to a classmate who is 16 years old. Therefore, not only are these children from diverse ethnic backgrounds, but also vary in age and academic aptitude. Dr. Liang explained therefore that it was important to understand where these children were coming from, because even though the EB boasts a six-month immersion programme for these new arrivals, the actual schooling and coping with various other issues – including the teaching of Chinese as a second language – are left in the hands of a designated school such as MIC. To put it differently, the six-month programme is like a temporary placement for any new immigrant, irrespective of ethnicity; to be temporarily schooled until a particular mainstream or designated school has been identified. The EB's job is completed once the new immigrant is placed in the allocated school, and naturally, the student has to learn the ropes in the new school environment with the help from the school which has enrolled him or her.

Returning to MIC's narrative, Dr, Liang then asked me to imagine all the other "issues" that come with accepting new EM students. Along with the process of integration, the

new student must learn Chinese as well. Given that the students did not receive any prior schooling in Hong Kong, one cannot expect that the newly allocated EM students who not only are from diverse ethnic backgrounds, but also vary in age and academic aptitude, could quickly be introduced into a language which intricacies lie in the combination of strokes and dashes that form a single character; a language which is rather complex and overwhelming to master especially when it is a third or fourth language to learn. In spite of these challenges, the reality for a school like MIC is to try as hard as it can to introduce and teach the spoken and written form of Chinese language to the students because as policy would have it, all students are equal under the mandate that free education in Hong Kong includes the learning of Chinese, irrespective of one's ethnicity. The challenge for designated schools however, is to find the much needed support to teach Chinese to these NCS ethnic minorities, because for many of them Chinese is second language learning. With the above concerns in mind, MIC developed a more systematic and comprehensive Chinese language program to offer to their students who are either accepted or allocated there. When in 1998, EB decided that the Chinese language was a mandatory subject for all students in mainstream schools, MIC quickly tried to be on par with the new protocol of language pre-requisites.

A city like Hong Kong, tries hard to be global and yet loyal to the Motherland, yet there are nuances within the education system which still prioritizes the Chinese over the others. The symbolic power of instilling knowledge about Chinese history and culture is reaffirmed in the complex nature of the topics that are essentially Chinese. This is a noble and symbolic cause especially when Hong Kong has to display its affinity with China. This has to be reflected in the core subjects being taught and learnt. Any student who completes the HKDSE can walk away with more exposure to the Chinese heritage. As we move away from this microscopic viewpoint of the NSS curriculum, we can see how there is another newer challenge for ethnic minority students and those involved in educating them. In practice, NCS students receive a lower level of simplified Chinese language in the classroom. The six years of primary school experience in Chinese language learning can equip them to read and write at a somewhat functional level. And if the student continues with Chinese immersion until the end of their secondary school, sitting for the IGCSE exam should pose no problem.

Dr. Liang and the teachers at MIC understood all too well that since many of the students at MIC did not know any Chinese, whether written or spoken, it was difficult to integrate into Hong Kong as a whole. On the teaching end, the Chinese language teachers are also wary because many do not have training in teaching Chinese as a second language, and for the students, the inability to communicate in Cantonese can be encumbering in many aspects. Dr. Liang spoke about one ordinary day at school that encapsulated what it is like to be an NCS student in Hong Kong. The HT's story went like this: One day, during the regular lunch hour at school, Dr. Liang went to have a quick bite to eat at a Chinese fast-food shop which was very close to MIC. In walked Juan Carlos (who happens to be one of the student informants in this study). Juan Carlos was trying to order take-away – a dish of stir fried noodles with sliced pork – but he could not make himself understood at the cashier because the woman could not understand any English, while of course, Juan Carlos could not string his Cantonese words together to make his order. “My heart sank,” recalled Dr. Liang when told me about this small encounter at that fast food shop.

This designated school principal (at the time of this interview) had accepted close to 100% NCS students at MIC, and to see one of the students like Juan Carlos unable to order lunch in Cantonese was a blatant sign that the Hong Kong education system is very much at fault in the schooling of ethnic minorities. For Dr. Liang, it was also a sign that MIC had to quickly remedy the situation of NCS students graduating without being properly taught the Chinese language let alone, educated about the Chinese culture. With hindsight, for Dr. Liang, it turned out that at one point in the late 1990's when MIC was at the verge of being closed down because of the poor student intake, not being given proper teaching resources for Chinese as a second language, was just the least of the school's challenges which were about to unfold a few years later. When Dr. Liang began to welcome ethnic minority students into MIC the problem of low student numbers was soon solved, but the result of which led to a new issue in the Hong Kong education – and not yet tackled upfront by the Hong Kong government – the schooling of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. It did not dawn on Dr. Liang back in the late 1990's that the teaching of Chinese language as a second language to the ethnic minorities would pose so many problems. When children of families from South Asian backgrounds began to conglomerate into a particular school, the wave of people from similar ethnicities who wished to enrol into a designated school became bigger. The

‘designated system’ began to feed on itself when word got out. For example, hypothetically speaking, School X, was accepting students of ethnic minority background. By word of mouth, therefore, more and more NCS students tried to enrol into MIC. Dr. Liang had vivid memories of how almost overnight many NCS parents were trying to enrol their children in MIC because relatives or friends of friends had children who were also attending MIC.

4.2.3 Children left behind

Dr. Liang took some measures to accommodate more NCS students so that at least they can have a chance to move on to Lower 6 (A-Levels). Most students are left to their own resources after Form 5 because of the competition in which only the best are allowed to continue to Form 6. The nine-year free education ends at secondary 3, and if students are not able to move upwards academically, many are forced to enrol for other types of diploma courses or some may need to join the work force. The nine-year free education context was not without problems. Many students were labelled as “doomed” to continue into senior secondary (Forms 4 and 5) and upper senior secondary (Forms 6 and 7) if they did not make it into the Science stream at Form 4. Hence, when Dr. Liang took office over 10 years ago, a major change was needed if more schooling opportunities were to be given to NCS students.

In this case study school, the historical context for further promotion to Form 6 was mainly “reserved” for Science stream students. In other words, students who belonged to the Arts stream, studying History or Literature for example, are forced to leave school after Form 5 because most places at Form 6 are for Science stream students. Also, in Hong Kong there is a biased culture towards appreciating the Science stream students more because the Chinese feel that Science students are smarter students. Dr. Liang noticed that the latent talent of many NCS students was in their English language ability and thus they would fare better if they opted for Arts subjects or subjects that required more written forms of expression and articulation in essay formats. Therefore, he made a change in the choice of subjects offered to eligible Form 6 candidates. The upper senior secondary school changed from a mainly Science stream to offering more Arts and Business classes. Students could now opt for subjects such as History, Geography, English Literature, Business, Commerce, Tourism and Psychology and not solely focus on pure science subjects such as Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Dr.

Liang realized that NCS students were more inclined to the Arts stream because it offered more subjects which were language-oriented. As opposed to the Chinese students the NCS students showed stronger English language abilities.

As previously mentioned, in the very early days of this case study school, it was a school which mainly catered for Science students in which case a majority of the student population then was boys. The Arts students, who were mainly girls, went to a nearby sister school. It was not until the early 80's that this phenomenon began to change. Not only did this case study school slowly become a co-ed school, it moved away from being a "pure science" school to being a school that offered a combination of Science, Arts and Business subjects. In order to survive, the school had to move with the times.

MIC had to design teaching and learning materials for Chinese as a second Language for their school because there was over 95% of their student population were South Asian students and there were no Chinese-as-a-second-language textbooks available from any of the major local school textbook publishers. The explanation to that is simple – the market demand was not great enough. There was no one ready yet to take up the task of designing teaching materials for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Dr. Liang explained that since the phonetic system they adopted was not a widely used system, it still needed to be accepted. Nonetheless, the school became pioneers in establishing the much needed teaching tools for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Also, Dr. Liang felt that the government remained apathetic towards the urgent need of a proper and standardized curriculum for Chinese language learning of the ethnic minority group in Hong Kong. As earlier mentioned, the case study school slowly developed its reputation for catering to the needs of South Asian students in Chinese language learning that the government decided to re-adapt the material that was produced by the school. It was "re-packaged" as a reference source for schools which intended to accept NCS students and might need a "survival kit" for Chinese Language learning. The NSS curriculum made it mandatory that all students who will take the HKDSE must also sit for the Chinese Language subject. This forced all designated schools and those which accepted NCS students to face the demand that their students, NCS or otherwise, needed to be prepared for this new Chinese language exam.

In 2010, French no longer was a core subject for the Form 1 NCS students at the case study school because these batch of students are expected to sit for the Chinese Language subject exam in 2016. One may ask if French for example, is still an option for students as a second language equivalent. The answer is affirmative; however, the French has to be taken at AS Level according to the UK grading system. In this context, the threshold is raised and level of difficulty is also raised. Many students have to think carefully if they still wish to sit for the French exam. From another point of view, there will be a demand for a better qualified French teacher who can teach French at AS Level. In a way, therefore, all students are “encouraged” to take Chinese Language subject. After all, it is a subject necessary for entry into many post-secondary programs. In the professional arena, Chinese is still a requirement in many job positions. In a way, this also is subtle method of shedding the European language from the “localized” curriculum.

The issue with taking Chinese Language as a core subject and acquiring it as a qualification for post-secondary programs or job applications seems to be solved for the time being because in 2007, the government recognized that NCS students are eligible to take the Chinese Language subject at GCSE level. However, a newer problem arose with the NSS curriculum.

As the Hong Kong education system is undergoing a major revamp, many of the core subjects have also undergone a face-lift in terms of syllabus requirements. One of the newer core subjects is Liberal Studies. Dr. Liang expressed concerns that the tackling of this subject is also a headache. Apart from the subject being new, the demands of the Liberal Studies (LS) syllabus are also high because there is another element within this subject that NCS students will find more challenging than their Chinese counterparts.

It seems that NCS students have to jump over more hurdles in the new curriculum. Not only do they have to master the Chinese language and its calligraphy, they also need to take an exam which tests their knowledge and research abilities on the history and culture of Hong Kong and China. There is a great demand for well qualified teachers of LS. The teacher has not only to be adept at researching the necessary materials to prepare students for the public exam, but in situations where teachers have to teach

NCS students this subject, there is also a subtler anxiety on the part of the teacher of how to motivate the NCS student to tackle the topic related to Chinese studies.

What has not been articulated in the teaching of LS to NCS students is that the Chinese component in the syllabus is also mandatory in the exam. Teachers feel that this is again a form of discrimination against NCS students because Chinese students have the advantage of knowing about their own history and culture purely by being Chinese. The Chinese children live and breathe their history and culture in their literature, their rituals, their religion, their festivities and their core value system. All of which an NCS student has to absorb and assimilate through textbook and internet knowledge and classroom learning.

For the initial purposes, the Hong Kong government had no particular plan to cater for the needs of children of NCS background. During the colonial days of Hong Kong, NCS children were also regarded as children of the expatriates who came to live and work for as long as their contracts allowed them. Usually these NCS children were English, Americans, Australians, French and various nationalities from Europe. The schooling of NCS was conveniently taken care of International schools which charge a much higher tuition fee. The children of the Occident often took the GCSE, GCE, AP, IB, HD because their academic path is the (privileged) path of entering universities in the UK, USA, Australia or other parts Europe. In short, the expatriates “took care” of themselves because the schools that their children went to suited the needs of the expatriate community. In the meantime, the lives of school children from another type of NCS background were quietly left unnoticed. These NCS children were children from South Asian communities of whom many have made Hong Kong their homes, unlike their expatriate counterparts whom many have left after 1997. Most of the South Asian communities are immigrants from India, Pakistan, Nepal, and the Philippines etc. Many of these NCS were grassroots families unlike those of the expatriate community who worked for corporate magnates or the civil service under the colonial days. In simpler perspectives the NCS children of South Asian backgrounds did not attend international schools or schools ran by the ESF because of high tuition costs. On a socio-political note, the Chinese Language education of the NCS community is the task and responsibility of the government. The Hong Kong government however, had a short term solution to this problem of avoiding the teaching of Chinese to NCS students.

A second language such as French or German was considered as an equivalent qualification if a student wished to further advance into upper secondary school and sitting the Advanced Level examination. Thus a European language taken at the IGCSE level was considered as a substitute for the numerous NCS children of South Asian background. In fact, French was the most popular subject for these children. On an interesting note, however, there were many children who are Pakistanis or Indians who also went to regular mainstream local schools and wished to take their own language such as Urdu or Hindi in hope to use it as a second language equivalent to enter Form Six or upper secondary school. It is natural for these Pakistani and Indian children to do well if not excel in their own mother tongue. The response from the Education Bureau however was a firm negative. In other words, Urdu and Hindi were not considered as equivalent subjects for entry into upper secondary school. It is rather an odd phenomenon that Hong Kong only considers the European languages as a recognized subject for further academic advancement. There is still that unanswered question why Urdu or Hindi were not given equivalent academic recognition or status for entry into an undergraduate programme, as was given to French or German.

The solution of the government was relatively simple. The initial response to the catering for the South Asian NCS community was to “bring together” children from different South Asian backgrounds so that there can be a better sense of belonging and kindred. The cliché “birds of a feather flock together” is not without a certain agenda. There were other intrinsic issues that had to be dealt with and at the same time, there was a pressing need to also ensure that children of a NCS background were also enjoying the nine-year free education promised by the government. The foremost intrinsic issue which is understood but unsaid is that each time a new member of the South Asian community joins a school, the chances of a local Chinese student leaving that school increases. Or another phenomenon is that fewer Chinese children will enrol at Form 1 into that school because the number of ethnic minority students attending that school is increasing. Like many parents who conscientiously seek for a school for their children, the word of mouth and the school’s reputation are some of the things taken into consideration before opting to enrol. This is a phenomenon not peculiar to Hong Kong. If we take the urban areas of any major city in the United States for example, Ohio, we come across a similar picture. As the black community increases in the urban areas, the white community leaves and moves into the suburbia. At some tipping point,

all the “original” inhabitants of that particular community disappear and new communities of non-whites occupy the area which was once populated by whites. In a similar context therefore, the intrinsic issue which arises as with the case study school was that the more ethnic minority students it accepted the more Chinese students left. It was like a “natural exodus” of the original Chinese community from the case study school. This was mentioned by the consultant who was working on an on-going project conducted by the University of Hong Kong whom the researcher interviewed in 2009. The expression used was “take 1 and 3 go”.

The government does not have a clear cut policy on Chinese as a second language per se which solely serves the ethnic minority community in HK. However, the new NSS curriculum which suits the 334 arrangements has guidelines which explains how Chinese as a second language can be taught to NCS students. Therefore, in this perspective it is “already a policy” (Head Teacher of case study school, 2010). In the 334 policy, adjustments have already been made for the teaching and learning of Chinese Language subject. For NCS students, one of the adjustments in the 334 curriculum is that the GCSE Chinese Language will be accepted as an equivalent pass to the Chinese Language taken in the HKDSE exam. However, if the student received 6 years of education in a CMI or has studied Chinese prior to the HKDSE, then they will not be allowed to take the Chinese Language at the IGCSE level.

Some EM children have been studying Chinese Language both in a CMI and EMI primary school for their whole primary school life. Therefore, according to the NSS policy, these children are expected to take the HKDSE exam for Chinese Language. However, upon closer survey, many of these primary schools which serve EMs do not follow the curriculum of regular mainstream schools in Hong Kong. The reason is that, much as these primary schools wish to train EMs primary school students to be fluent in Chinese, they can only offer a lower level or simplified version of the Chinese syllabus to these NCS. These schools do not follow the regular Chinese Language curriculum as would other mainstream schools because the needs of the NCS community are different from regular Chinese children in Hong Kong. Chinese Language taught to NCS is taught as Chinese as a second language (CSL). Although dubbed as NCS, many of these South Asian children in fact can speak Cantonese fluently. It is the acquisition of

writing and reading skills that becomes the greater challenge of school authorities and the government.

The schools which in truth, courageously accept a wider variety of ethnic minorities have to design and create their own Chinese Language teaching material specifically catered for the ethnic minorities in their school. In essence, they try to generate texts from scratch so that the NCS children can learn Chinese language. The other reason for “taking things into their own hands” is that there are no ready textbooks or published teaching material or hardware available for schools to use so that Chinese can be taught to these NCS children. For Chinese Language teachers who teach in such schools that accept ethnic minorities therefore, there is another task on top of their teaching workload, and that is to write up teaching materials for second language learners. Many teachers, as Dr Liang mentioned, do not have special training in teaching Chinese as a second language. In the recent past, in 2010, the EB decided to solicit help from various teachers of Chinese Language from all levels. Apart from the language experts from various universities, it was crucial to also seek advice from actual designated schools, especially those schools who were the forerunners in the deed of educating the NCS in Chinese language. That year, on a return visit, Dr Liang mentioned that the deputy principal, who was also one of the Chinese language teachers, was being “borrowed” by the EB on a 3-month contract to help design a new set of textbooks for Chinese as a second language. See Appendix 5.1 to 5.7. These sample pages were the draft and the Deputy Principal explained that the content of the textbook was still being fine-tuned.

4.3 Part II

One of the goals in narrative inquiry is to give voice to those whose stories have not been heard of in educational research (Creswell, 2008; cf. Chase, 2005). The quote below is from the author of *The Peter Principle* on his view about education. It can serve as kick-off to the nine vignettes and at the same time bring out the irony of what education gives us.

“Education is a method whereby one acquires a higher grade of prejudices.” (Laurence Peter 1919 - 1988).

4.3.1 The Ethnic Minority Vignettes

The following are eight narratives from students who at one point or another were students. The blurb that immediately follows their name tells us some crucial information about the interviewee at the time of the interview at Mary Immaculate College (MIC). The ninth narrative – Husna’s narrative – is also included here. Husna’s story shows a different perspective of an ethnic minority in Hong Kong who attended a CMI school, unlike the other students who attended MIC which was an EMI school. As their stories unfold, we will find out that although all of these students were not Chinese, not all of them were NCS either, as conveniently labelled by the Education Bureau. As with MIC, the students are given aliases. Some of the student interviewees were more spontaneous and forthcoming than the others. Hence some of the data below are intrinsically richer. The two parents interviewed were also candid about their thoughts and opinions regarding their children’s schooling in Hong Kong.

4.3.1.1 Juan Carlos

At a glance: Filipino, Form 6, 18 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

I shall refer to Juan Carlos as simply Juan; he was also one of the students who agreed to engage in an interview after he graduated from MIC; after completing the A-Levels. He had just turned 18 years old when I first met him. Juan is a Filipino and is the elder of 2 siblings. Like his sister Jessica, he was born and raised in Hong Kong. His sister, a year younger, was also studying in the same designated school i.e. MIC, in Form 6 at the time of the interview. Both their parents were Filipinos. His mother worked at the Hong Kong International Airport and his father was a residential services supervisor. Both parents were permanent residents in Hong Kong. For Juan and his younger sister, MIC had been their secondary school since Form 1. English is the main language of communication in their home. Both attended mainstream English primary schools in Hong Kong and learned some Chinese at primary school level. Both of them also attended a designated primary school. The pupils from their primary school are often allocated to MIC. After being accepted into MIC, they were enrolled in the French class because they were part of the larger ethnic minority students whose Chinese was not at L1 level, hence not as fluent as their

Chinese counterparts. In other words, Both Juan and Jessica would not be able to handle the Chinese Language syllabus and sit for the secondary school graduating examination (HKCEE). Juan and his sister mainly spoke English at home, and growing up, they did not see the need to learn the Chinese language formally. Neither of them could speak Cantonese fluently either. Juan explained that he felt comfortable just speaking in English to his friends and teachers at school. He did not feel the need to learn how to converse in Cantonese. At one point during the interview, Juan was asked if he felt that speaking Cantonese was important, he shook his head firmly and replied that learning how to speak Cantonese was not really necessary since many (if not all) of his Chinese friends at school spoke English and in fact, he felt that he was doing his Chinese classmates a favour because they were glad to practice their spoken English with him. In the designated school, although the students were from different Asian countries, all of them communicated in English. Juan also mentioned that Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city and thus many people can communicate in English anyway, which therefore would not magnify his handicap in the Chinese language.

Asked if he enjoyed studying at MIC, Juan shrugged and felt that the school was “okay” He explained that he did not seem to have many friends at school. He did not like to hang out much with his Chinese classmates because most of the time they would slip back into chatting in Cantonese which he could not follow. He also did not mingle much with his Pakistani school mates because they were relatively sporty characters who enjoyed cricket, and Juan felt that he was not much of sportsperson. He said he preferred mixing with other Filipino friends at school and explained to me that it was very natural for students to hang out with classmates who shared the same ethnicity. He also felt that although there was a diverse mix of students from other cultural backgrounds, it was not that they disliked each other, but that it was natural that cliques were often formed with friends who shared the same ethnic background.

Within the classroom setting, Juan described that MIC separated their students as well. There were four classes to each Form. Two classes comprised of all Chinese students and two classes comprised of all ethnic minorities i.e. NCS

students. Lessons were conducted mainly in Cantonese for the classes which had dominant Chinese students. And lessons for the NCS students were mainly conducted in English. Occasionally, inside the NCS classroom, the teachers would slip back into teaching in Cantonese. The reason being, some of the EM students can understand Cantonese, and for some year groups, there are one or two Chinese students who opt to attend the NCS class because English was the MoI. Juan also mentioned that sometimes he wished the teachers would not come and go so often. There were some teachers who did not stay very long at MIC in his seven years of study there. Some of them quit teaching at MIC after a couple of years. In his senior secondary school years, Juan opted to study Science. He studied Chemistry and Biology for the HKCEE and so opted for these two subjects again for his A-Levels. At a later interview (after graduating into University), Juan regretted making those subject choices. One of the things he mentioned regarding the school facilities was that he wished the school could offer more opportunities to conduct laboratory work. As Science students he felt that they could have been given better lab equipment to work with.

The highest score he earned in his A-Level exams was in English Literature; Juan scored an 'A'. But the rest of his results were not good enough to earn him points into a place at a university through the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS). He then decided to enrol into an Associate Degree program²⁰. It was a two year program that offered General Education. Although he had to take a detour in order to have another go at university, Juan felt that at least he could still vie for a place if he took a step back by enrolling into an Associate Degree Programme. At University he was planning to choose his major in Journalism. But in the end, he earned a degree in Associate in Arts from a community college. Juan wanted very much to try again to enter the School of Communications at the Hong Kong Baptist University, in hope to major in Journalism. Juan's wish is to become a reporter or a newscaster working in Hong Kong.

²⁰ The Associate Degree (AD) programmes in Hong Kong are fashioned like the programmes offered in community colleges in the US. Some students in HK who were unable to enter UGC (government) funded undergraduate programmes, opt for AD and try to get into an undergraduate programme again using their GPA from the AD programme instead of their A-Level results.

The last time Juan shared his story with me, he was accepted into Year 2 at the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), reading Journalism. Before entering HKBU, he chose the College of International Education (CIE) which is an independent academic unit – a community college that offered sub-degrees - at HKBU. Juan's acceptance into the undergraduate programme was not without difficulty. It was explained to him at the HKBU entrance interview that his lack of Chinese language skills would create challenges in his studies because many of the classes, especially the core courses, were conducted in Chinese. Juan would not have many courses to choose from. But Juan persevered in the end. Although he failed two out of the five subjects he took for A-Levels, he scored 3.65 for his GPA at CIE. On most occasions, a GPA score of 3.5 or more gives an AD student a chance for an interview at a University undergraduate programme. With hindsight, Juan again explained that had he known better, he would not have opted for Science subjects at A-Levels. But perhaps should have opted for Business subjects instead. He realized afterwards that options taken at A-Levels had to be made with a strategic goal. He relied on himself when deciding what subjects to take at senior secondary school level, and did not seek any particular advice from teachers and friends. Juan explained that both his parents were not familiar at all with the HK education system, and how the subject choices should be made to enhance better possibilities of higher education (HE). He said that his mother left it all to him and his sister to decide what choices to make.

Researcher: Do you feel that they (parents) understand the school system and the challenges you face?

JC: They don't. They don't understand the school system. Whatever I'm doing for school right now, they will rely on me, to know exactly what I'm doing. And as long as I tell them exactly what it is, and explain it, then if it's okay for them... if it's okay for me, then it's okay for them.

At the last interview with Juan; already in Year 2 Journalism at HKBU, he remarked:

JC: If someone had told me that biology, chemistry will just be repeating what you've already learned, and that business would be like some... actually you'll be learning very basic information, then maybe I would have taken it. I would have

still being very one-track minded into being something science-related. I think maybe something to do with my mum and her 'be-a-doctor' joke.

Juan also remarked that his mother kept reminding him that he had to improve in his Cantonese so that he could find a better job than she did.

4.3.1.2 Cherise

At a glance: Filipina, Year 2 undergraduate at HKBU, 21 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads some Chinese

Like Juan, Cherise also agreed to be interviewed after she graduated from MIC. She came from the year group which was a year younger than Juan's year group. The last interview done with Cherise was when she had just completed her second year, English major, at the Hong Kong Baptist University. Cherise first arrived in HK when she was around 16 years old. She is the eldest of 4 children. Cherise is from the Philippines. Her mother is Filipino and her father is Chinese.

After her family arrived in HK, Cherise and her siblings were sent to the 6-month induction programme before being re-allocated to a school in HK. When the induction programme was over, the EB allocated her and all her siblings to a Chinese school which was near to their home. She recalled that at first, her father was pleased because it was a Chinese school, and all the siblings would be together. Her father also believed that together with all her siblings, they could learn Chinese and integrate into the HK Chinese setting quickly. She also remembered being held back one year and was enrolled into Form 2, much to her disappointment, because she was in Form 3 in the Philippines, before coming to HK. She felt that she was purposely being held back by the EB because she was from a "third world developing country" (Cherise's own words). The school she was allocated to, was in the New Territories and at one point in the interview, she described her experience in that school as "one year of pure hell." Cherise did not understand why she was held back at Form 2 level. She explained that the school was a Band 3 Chinese school and remembered that some of her schoolmates were "really immature violent students." Back in the Philippines, Cherise and her siblings went to a private Chinese school. In fact,

they could read and write some Chinese. In the Philippines, they learnt Chinese in Putonghua, not Cantonese. So, one of the language transitions that Cherise went through was to learn how to speak Cantonese when she arrived in HK. At home they spoke mostly Tagalog and English but not much Chinese (and no Cantonese). Cherise's Chinese father also spoke Tagalog at home.

Since they were allocated to a CMI school, all the textbooks (except English subject) were in Chinese and lessons were conducted in Cantonese, not Putonghua. Although they could read Chinese, Cherise recalled how she and her younger sister had to share a translation machine to translate their school textbooks into English because it was easier for them to study that way. She explained that together with all her siblings, they were all allocated to a CMI school because they were (half) Chinese. Cherise felt that it was assumed by EB they would just "pick up Cantonese" as they immersed themselves in the CMI school. Her class teacher was expected to help her out with regard to the difficulty in understanding the texts. But Cherise also understood that her teacher was too busy to only cater for her needs as an EM student. She also remembered how she picked up Cantonese from her classmates, and figured that with her Putonghua background and a bit of Fujianese which she learned from her grandmother, she was able to articulate some sort of Cantonese.

She found it strange that her HK classmates thought it was bizarre that she could not understand any Cantonese even though she was Chinese. At the CMI school she resorted to her own methods of translating the contents of the Chinese lessons and other Chinese textbooks. She felt that this was a hindrance to her learning of the subjects, because it was rather time consuming. Cherise felt that she had double or triple work as compared to her classmates because lessons were conducted in Cantonese. If she had been allocated to an EMI school, she felt she could have learnt her subjects much faster. After about a year in this Band 3 school in HK, Cherise and her family went back to the Philippines. But they soon found themselves back in HK again, because her father had started a business partnership with her uncle here in HK. The second time around, Cherise persuaded her father that they must not go back to a CMI school

because she did not want to go through again what she experienced in an all-Chinese school.

Cherise: How did we know? (about MIC)... wow, because actually I think my parents were the ones who found out... oh no no no! The transition school has links with this school...Except my dad, at the first time, had this notion that we had to go to a Chinese school, so we can learn Cantonese...Yeah. An immersion idea, but he didn't know how hellish that was...So... um... Afterwards when he decided... you know, you guys are going to come back here, we all asked him like, we can't go to a CMI school.

After asking around and learning from friends, they chose to enrol in Mary Immaculate College, the case study designated school. Cherise recalled that upon being accepted into MIC, she was still a little bit angry, somewhat resentful, because she was already given a conditional offer at La Salle University in the Philippines. That meant, Cherise was qualified for a place at an undergraduate programme in the Philippines, but she can only be offered a secondary school place in HK, and to sit for the HKCEE. With hindsight, Cherise explained that she had to accept her reality because since her father wanted the whole family to be in HK, it also meant that she had to make some sacrifices in terms of her schooling choices.

Hence, the second time around, Cherise and her siblings all were enrolled in MIC. They arrived sometime in the month of May, which in HK, was towards the end of the academic year. Cherise explained that Dr. Liang was ready to accept her into Form 4 at MIC, although she was qualified for Form 5, because if Cherise had started Form 5, she would not be able to prepare in time and sit for the HKCEE that same year, which was only three months away. Hence another hiatus towards HE for Cherise. Among the entire core subjects she had to sit for the HKCEE, Cherise also had to take French because she could not opt for Chinese Language as it was too difficult. The dialogue between her and I on the language issue at school which Cherise had to hurdle over was like this:

(R → Researcher; C→ Cherise)

R: Did you do Chinese or French?

C: French. Yeah, that was the hardest, actually.

R: But that was picking it up at form 4!

C: Yeah... no, form 5! Because form 4 I rarely came to school...

- R: So you used less than a year to prepare for...
Something they've been learning since form 1...
- C: Yeah, tell me about it...I had to like... for French, actually... I spent more time on French I think, because you can't get into University unless you get a C. That time I thought if you get an E, it was enough. I didn't know you had to get a C until I...
- R: How did you find out?
- C: When I was in form 6. I found out... I was like... 'Oh thank God I got a C!' Yeah. If you don't get a C, they (*University requirements*) don't consider...
- R: So this is the language requirement?
- C: Because for...that's quite a long story, the struggle for JUPAS, but then for form 5, for French, I... I bought a book in the Philippines that's like... you know... 'French for Dummies', something like that... So I just memorized everything...
- R: Translations... How did you manage?
- C: Um... you know, I searched for a book that matches how I think, in a way... so that book was like, categorized into like time... instead of those you know, like communicative style books, it was more like a memorizing type of book, which was what I needed because I had to memorize something in like, 7 months, before the exam. So I just memorized everything...
- R: So you knew that the Cert (*HKCEE*) was your ticket to A levels?
- C: I knew because that was what everybody kept telling me. And then, at that time I thought, 'Oh, okay, I have an exam to do, whatever...'; because um... my uncle... 'cause my father's elder brother has this... he said that... because he has been here... he was living here a long time ago, he said it's quite difficult, and it's like nearly impossible for me to get into Form 6... so I think my dad was quite proud when I got in. But then, at that time, I believed him (*her uncle*), I didn't really care, so I was applying for IVE. I applied for IVE, I even had a Chinese interview for IVE.

Cherise was apprehensive about her performance in her HKCEE. She said that she really thought that she would fail the HKCEE. And on the day of the release of the public examinations results, Cherise did not go to school until late in the morning. It was not until her class teacher called her asking her to enrol into Form 6, did she quickly get to school. Otherwise the spot would be offered to an outsider student, that is, someone who did not graduate Form 5 at MIC. Cherise scored 14 points for her HKCEE, which is the recommended minimum requirement for a school to accept a student into Form 6, i.e. A-Levels. At the start of the following new school year, in Form 6, Cherise realized that out of all the NCS students in her entire Form 5 year group, only 11 were able to make it back to study A-Levels. There were a total of 40 students enrolled into Form 6 in her year. She also found out that within that group of 11 NCS students, some of them did not meet the recommended minimum 14-points entrance requirement, but were nonetheless given a place to study in Form 6. In her generation of Form 5 students there were altogether 4 classes (as in Juan's year

group). In Cherise's cohort however, 3 classes consisted of mainly NCS and 1 class was all-Chinese (unlike in Juan's year group in which there was 2 classes of NCS students and 2 classes of Chinese students). Cherise further described that in her cohort of A-Level students, most of those who were able to score enough points to return to Form 6 were the Chinese students who came from that one single class of all-Chinese students.

Further into the conversation, Cherise described what she felt about having to take French as a pre-requisite to enter University. Her depiction of the mandatory language courses necessary for University entrance for students, Chinese or NCS students is captured as follows: (R → Researcher; C→ Cherise)

- R: So okay... reflecting... do you think the form 5 or the form 7 system is... does it help people like non-Chinese people? You had the option for taking French although you're...
- C: But now it's gone.
- R: But what do you think of...
- C: Um, it gives the options but it doesn't give you a lot of freedom. It's kind of like the system is forcing you to adjust to what they (*EB*) want because you had to take French, you must take another language, it's a 'must'. It's like their philosophy but you had to take another language which I really did not understand. Because...um, you know, they are trying to be fair to us...Chinese students had to take English and you guys had to take another language to like... study, so you can feel what the locals are feeling, I guess, but then... actually the French thing wasn't really that fair either, because not all universities and not all courses accept it. So when we applied for form 7 JUPAS, we had to look at the course requirements, and then it always, mostly, mostly said, 'must have AS Chinese Language & Literature', or, they go 'an equivalent language'...
- R: French?
- C: Yup, but then that's only some, not all. That's mostly for the Arts faculty. But then some of the Science majors, they can't go to those courses, like if they want to study Science or Engineering, they must have Chinese...
- R: Because... that's the...
- C: That's the requirements...
- R: So did you... were you given this piece of information at form 5? Or you only realized this at form 6?
- C: We realized it at form 7.
- R: Because you were going to apply for JUPAS...
- C: Because we were going to apply for JUPAS, that's when they started giving us all the... you know, the JUPAS booklets, and I think those information should come in Form 6. Because by that time, we are too focused on studying for your exams, and you don't have enough to focus on what you're going to put on the 25 choices... or the top 6 because that's the only one that counts actually. And then you realize that what you've been studying, or what you've studied before was useless. The French was so useless for the Science majors; they all still chose teaching in the end, because that's the only one that's open...

- R: So are you saying that they thought that they have the pre-requisite but then...
 C: But they didn't...

Like Juan, Cherise also had dreams of becoming a journalist. But she was very clear about the requirements needed for University entrance and was not ready to take risks when filling out her JUPAS application form. One of the strategies of filling out the joint-universities application form was to know one's own potential score for A-Levels; and one's own strengths and weaknesses, to say the least. Each Form 7 student had a maximum of 25 choices of programmes from all the 8 universities put together. However, it is an understood exercise that the first 6 choices that students make are the most crucial ones. It is like a hit-or-miss competition i.e., as a strategy, students get offered a University place based on a combination of a) the results of their A-Levels and b) how popular the programme is and c) how big the quota for JUPAS and non-JUPAS applicants is. And although Cherise wanted badly to study Journalism, she knew that she could not enrol into a programme like that in HK because one of the entrance requirements was Chinese language, which she did not have. Therefore, even though her English language skills were strong, it was not enough to earn a place at a journalism school. The following is what she had to say about taking Chinese language for the HKCEE:

(R → Researcher; C → Cherise)

- R: So for you, was Baptist U... was that in your first 6 choices?
 C: Yup! Baptist was... at that time... since I thought Journalism was really out of the question 'cause...it requires Chinese. And um...
 R: Did you know this back in form 5?
 C: No... no. I didn't know.
 R: But were you...sort of entertained the thought that you want to go into Journalism?
 C: It's what I applied for back in the Philippines, and like, in UST (*University of Santo Tomas*)... so I've always had this thought... you know... either become a journalist or...
 R: ...so given the fact if you had known back in form 5 that Chinese was required for Journalism, do you think you would have taken it?
 C: No way. 'Cause I came from the CMI school, so I know what they were studying for Chinese, because I had to stay in the class. And it's nearly impossible for me to pass...
 R: So even though you do have Chinese background, and you can read and write, you know...
 C: It's not enough...for the local Chinese AS system. But I know now they have the CSL, that might have been different, but then the Chinese...like the local Chinese students...what they were studying, is too hard...especially the...
 R: So there's still a big gap from what...
 C: It's a really big gap.

- R: So what you have because of your background is, you've got the Chinese skills that will get you around, and still get a job, you can order from a fast-food shop...
- C: Yeah, I can... probably...
- R: You can read signs and...
- C: Yeah... or menus...
- R: And menus and won't get lost. But to take a public exam...
- C: Impossible.

When asked about what she thought about other aspects of school life at MIC, such as what her friends were like or what extra school activities were like, Cherise thought for a short moment and described most of the students at MIC as "a bit immature." She said that the school emphasized a lot on the importance of the public exams but, did not instil enough of the idea that the students ought to be more wary about their future; or at least students should be encouraged to plan ahead after secondary school. Cherise saw that there were many opportunities at school for the students to have fun doing extra-curricular activities. However, she implied that some of her schoolmates were too carried away with other activities and said, "they kind of forget the other goals, like what are you gonna do with your life?" Although fun, Cherise felt that the distractions at school made some of her friends neglect their studies even though they knew that public exams were just around the corner, because the subjects were difficult to handle. She said:

"...one of the problems with ethnic minorities, because they group us into one group, so we all think this is our world. So they kind of like, you know, just internalize everything, they don't really think about anything else."

She went on to say that most of her peer group chose to focus on the 'now' only. And when asked about what she thought about MIC being an almost 'all exclusive' school with many NCS schoolmates, her opinion was:

"I think a little bit... because they are here in this school, in this world, in this small tiny world, but they think 'this is my world', that they kind of neglect the outside and what are they gonna do, when they get into that outside world, I think that's one of the biggest problems. That's why they're not focusing on anything else..."

Cherise however also felt that her Alma Mater was doing a good job in a way because the teachers created a home for the students. Another crucial issue that was discussed was whether she thought there was a mismatch between what

happened after graduating from Form 5, and how the students viewed their academic abilities. Cherise had this to say:

“I think they have to learn that the hard way, because you’ve gotten used to being the majority in a place, and then you come out, and you’re the minority again. So that’s why students here often times are more arrogant, you know, they’re kind of more proud of themselves, and I’m not saying that’s bad, you know, you should be proud of yourself.”

She went on to express her worry over her younger brother, who at the time of the interview, was awaiting the release of his HKCEE results. She felt that he too was under the influence of his *barcada*²¹. She noticed how he enjoyed hanging out with other Filipino classmates. Cherise also expressed her concern about how a large number of students at MIC had a “live-for-now” attitude and did not seem to care about what could happen to them if they did not move on to HE. Cherise wondered if it was because MIC was such a haven for NCS students that they did not realize how competitive the HK education system really is, and a mere secondary school certificate is not enough to secure a well-paid job.

4.3.1.3 Aisha

At a glance: Pakistani, Year 2 student at HKBU, 20 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

Like Cherise, Aisha had already graduated into university when I met her, and was in her final year at university. She is the fifth of seven children. Her father came to HK in the late 60’s when he was about 18 years old. Aisha explained that her father left his farming community in Pakistan because many people in his village were trying to leave the country for a better life. HK happened to be one of the coveted destinations next to the US, and her father chose HK. He had no family nor friends in HK back then, and ventured on his own to start a new life in HK. Soon after he settled in HK, his relatives arrived as well. In the mid 70’s he had to return to Pakistan. An arranged marriage was waiting for him. Her father remained there for a few years and in the late 70’s he came back to

²¹ “*barcada*” is a slang word in Tagalog for gang or groupie. It has its etymological roots in the Spanish word, meaning boatload. Within this context, it meant that Cherie’s brother chummed around.

HK with his wife and first three children. Aisha said that all the rest of her siblings including her were born in HK. Her parents are now permanent residents in HK and have been living here for just over thirty years. Aisha's father has worked as night watchman, construction worker and salesman in a retail shop. In the 80's he started a partnership business with Aisha's uncle in babies' wear and the business flourished. At the time of the interview, Aisha also said that her 2 other younger siblings were awaiting the HK public examinations results. One was waiting for the release of the HKCEE and the other was waiting for the HKAL.

Aisha and her six other siblings went to different types of schools in HK. From regular mainstream Band 1 EMI schools to Band 3 designated schools. Aisha went to a designated primary school as well and had a similar story to that of Cherise and Juan about some of her classroom experience at secondary school. All the EMs were allocated to one class for English language purpose, whilst all the Chinese students were segregated to another class which was predominantly taught in Chinese. After the release of the HKCEE, Aisha was only 1 of 4 EM students who made to HKAL in her year group.

Aisha's story in primary school went like this: There were three second languages to choose from to study at her primary school. When still in the designated primary school, Aisha remembered that her father wanted her to opt to learn Urdu, even though it was not their mother tongue. Her native home language was Pashto and everyone spoke that at home. Aisha's father thought that Urdu was an 'international language' and since it was being offered in HK, she should seize the chance to study it. Urdu was the second language Aisha learnt at school in primary school and that was the main language of communication she used at school with her friends outside of the classroom setting. In her words, she described:

"Yah. I mean, there were groups like Filipino speaking Tagalog, Indians speaking Indian, except for like Filipinos when they had to talk to us, then of course we use English."

In other words, in Aisha's primary school, the NCS students were given the choice of which second language they wanted to study. Chinese was not a mandatory subject for the EMs. Her school was still a half-day school back then and the morning session (8 a.m. to 12 noon) was for Chinese children and the afternoon session (1 p.m. to 6 p.m.) was for NCS students. Aisha said there were very few Chinese students who attended the afternoon session; and those that did often chose to do so explicitly because the afternoon sessions were taught in English. Parents of these Chinese children wanted them to attend school in which English was the MoI. Aisha went back for a visit to her primary school recently and was surprised to find out that the designated primary school that she used to attend not only was a full-day school, but there were "no more" Chinese children. When asked if she knew where they went, she said, "I don't know." Today, her primary school is almost an all-NCS school.

When asked about her standard of Chinese language, Aisha put herself at Primary 1 level; understanding a few simple Chinese characters, but not enough to read a Chinese newspaper or read a menu in Chinese. She said however, that at home, she spoke some Cantonese with her siblings because they could all speak Cantonese, and she learnt how to speak from other Chinese children when they used to play in the park. In recollection, Aisha said she had a happy childhood when she was in primary school. And when asked about second language acquisition at primary school, she said she did not think much about it and that it was her father who helped her make the decision to study Urdu. She said that she did not think much about the learning of Chinese back in primary school and that it was not as much an 'added value' as Urdu was. However, since she did not learn much Chinese, she had to opt for a secondary school which offered French. And that often meant a designated school.

Aisha recalled one of the turning point moments in her junior secondary school life when she was offered an interview at a Band 1 Catholic girls' school; the same school that one of her elder sisters attended. However, Aisha missed the interview because of family matters. The girls' school did not offer another chance for an interview. Aisha explained: (R: researcher; A: Aisha)

- A: I was in Pakistan.
R: Did they offer you a...
A: No, competition was keen. So we were all sad in a way but... I applied for all these band 1 schools but coming from (*name of her primary school*), that school, I think they had sort of a bias towards students like us, the school we're from, our background, because not all of them... I'm not sure, maybe because maybe my studies were not good or something, I have no idea, but like hearing what my dad said, it was very difficult for...like our people, like ethnic minority to study in those schools.
R: But why do you think so?
A: One of the reasons is maybe because of the primary school we come from, like (*name of her primary school*), it's not really a good...
R: So you think it's the nature, the repute of the school that...
A: Yah. That's right.

When considering all her siblings' standard of Chinese language, she said that it was her youngest sister and second eldest brother who both had the best standard of Chinese in her family. Both these two siblings could read and write Chinese as well as speaking it. The reason being, her brother went to study in a CMI school and her sister belongs to the new generation of HK students who have to take Chinese as a mandatory subject. In contrast to Aisha's primary school experience, Aisha's sister had to take Chinese as a core subject while Urdu became the elective subject. Aisha said that her sister was mainly her translator when it came to sitting down and making options for University applications. There were a lot of secondary materials such as booklets or pamphlets which gave secondary school students advice for HE, but these were mainly published in Chinese. University brochures were bilingual, but printed resources for academic advice in English were few. And Aisha felt that she needed other opinions or suggestions other than her teachers at school when it came to making choices for HE. But she could not make proper informed decisions because she could not read Chinese.

Aisha said that English Literature was her favourite subject at school when she was studying for her HKCEE and perhaps that was why she did well overall. Aisha scored 17 points and that was a guarantee to move onto A-Levels. As she was preparing to sit for both her public exams, she remembered that sometimes lessons became disrupted by rowdy classmates; trouble-makers who did not want to study. Aisha said sometimes twenty minutes was spent disciplining the class and only fifteen minutes left for an actual lesson. This became a stigma for

the EM students. Many teachers especially the inexperienced ones, Aisha recalled, were rather intimidated by South Asian students because, although on one hand, there were the attention-seeking trouble-makers, EM students were overall much more outspoken than Chinese students. Aisha felt that Chinese students were comparatively more passive than EM students. She said that when she was in Form 5, she found out that certain topics in some subjects such as Maths for example, were altogether missed out, or not taught by the teacher because the NCS students “would not be able to grasp it anyway.” Or sometimes the reason for not covering the topic was because there was not enough time or on some occasions, the teacher left in the middle of an academic year. Aisha suspected that it was perhaps because the students were too difficult to handle. She remembered how in one particular year, she had three different Accounts teacher because they left after teaching only a couple of months. Her words were:

“It was just like that, we had a lot of different teachers and we couldn’t learn anything consistently.”

Something else which she remembered when she was in Form 5, was that perhaps because the NCS students were somewhat stigmatised as being lazy or not academically inclined, she found out one day that her Chinese counterparts in the segregated class were given extra assignments as drills to prepare them for the public exam. The NCS classes however, were not given as much homework as the Chinese students. Apart from recalling classroom rowdiness or teacher resignations that affected her schooling experience, Aisha said that on many occasions, especially during her A-Level years, some of her teachers would naturally switch to speaking Cantonese when teaching, irrespective of whether or not the school should be English MoI. Aisha said she felt sorry for her other three fellow EM classmates because there were two could not understand Cantonese very well. So eventually they approached the teacher and arrived at a compromise in which the teacher agreed to code-switch. Aisha said that in her small group of 4 ethnic minority students in the A-Level class, she was the only one who passed the exams and scored enough to earn herself conditional offers from Hong Kong Baptist University, Lingnan University and City University.

Aisha eventually opted for HKBU and she studied for a double degree in English and Education. She recalled that when she was accepted into HKBU, her whole family celebrated and her father was very proud of her. She said, “I wanted to prove that I could be one of the first few Pakistani girls in Hong Kong to actually go to university.” Looking back, Aisha realized that she had to put in more effort in her work because she really wanted to go to university. She explained that in her culture, for most girls, they were not strongly encouraged to go beyond secondary school because they are expected to be engaged by the time they are twenty years old and married soon after. That is why studying for the A-Levels was not the most crucial thing for Pakistani girls, according to Aisha. However for Aisha, she felt that career came before marriage and she was not looking forward to being matched with someone for marriage. Aisha believed that a degree would be the ticket to a better job. She said that without it, she would end up in some small office job perhaps or a stay-at-home mother. There was no discouragement from her family with regard to pursuing HE, but she felt that it was something she had to “fight for.” She had a clear goal in mind back then. She elaborated:

“...I would also, after school stay long periods in school and go to teachers, people called me the nerd, I was like ‘okay, whatever’. I just wanted to go to university cause everyone said it was difficult so I thought, no.”

Her entering university was another milestone in her schooling experience, especially because this was not expected from a girl in a Pakistani family. Unlike her mother, her father was not too upset that Aisha was pursuing HE. Aisha’s father believes that “a career in teaching is pretty good in Hong Kong” and she has made it clear that she wanted this more than getting married. When asked about what she thought about the chances for EMs moving onto HE in HK, she said that chances were few and in her culture, girls were not encouraged to move further beyond Form 5 anyway. Hence she thought, there are quite a few EM students in HK who do not see the HKCEE as a ticket to HE, but as a closure to schooling. Girls are expected to get married anyway and raise their families. Aisha mentioned a story about one of her Form 5 Pakistani female classmates who was told that the only reason why her parents allowed her to complete Form 5 in HK was because they did not want her to get too

bored. They already had plans to marry off their daughter after she completed Form 5.

Since Aisha did not entertain too much the thought of getting married, she felt that she had to put all her energy into studying for her A-Levels. On hindsight, she had a few other things to say about her classroom experiences at school. She regretted that she was not given the chance to study Chinese in Form 1. She said that NCS children who did not have any formal training in Chinese at primary school level were encouraged to take French. She felt that French was a waste of time, but she had no choice. She also said that she could feel that teachers had various stereotypes regarding ethnic minorities. She knew that being part of the NCS group of students, a different kind of treatment was given to them. She had this to say:

“It’s just the way we are. I think they (teachers) were not used to students asking them questions or challenging them once in a while, we would like, ‘Sir, but I don’t think it’s like that, it’s supposed to be like that..’ or making jokes once in a while. I think those teachers are used to where students are passive learning or just listen and then do it, but for our kids, we are not like that, we like to joke around once in a while, we like to... the smart kids will be asking a lot of questions. I think those teachers are not used to it. I have no idea...”

As with the year group of Cherise, Aisha pointed out that there were not many ethnic minorities who made it to A-Levels in her year group. Those who did make it to the A-Levels, irrespective of their ethnicity were the ones who had stronger aspirations of entering university. When Aisha spoke about her classroom teaching experience, she felt that even though her role was temporary, the students in the classroom, especially those who shared the same ethnicity gave her a lot of respect. She felt this rapport with the ethnic minority students because they realized that if they worked hard at school, they could realize their potential to move on if they applied themselves at school. Aisha suggested that there seemed to be an air of “that’s-not-for-us” attitude amongst some ethnic minority students who have decided to take a negative attitude towards schooling because they felt that they were not as deserving as the Chinese students in terms of promotion into tertiary education. In other words, Aisha meant that sometimes she could feel a sense of learned helplessness amongst the ethnic minority students.

On a final note on Aisha's narrative, she mentioned how one day she met a fellow worshipper at the mosque who also happened to be a young teacher who had just graduated from university and returned to his alma mater (also a designated school) to teach. Since the Muslim community in HK is relatively small, both Aisha and the other teacher felt that they had a mission to actualize in their roles as teachers in a designated school.

4.3.1.4 Iram

At a glance: Pakistani, Form 5, 17 years old, speaks near native Cantonese, literate in Chinese

The story shared by Iram and her mother, Farva, unfolded in their home when they agreed to let me pay them a visit one Saturday afternoon. Farva's family are Pashtuns from Pakistan. It was only towards the end of the interview that I realized it was Ramadan – the period of fasting for Muslims. Although embarrassed about my faux pas, wondering if I should have just visited them another day because I thought Ramadan was a time of solace and meditation, both mother and daughter treated me with utmost hospitality. They served me homemade Pakistani snacks and desserts while they refrained from eating as the sun had not yet set. The conversation with Farva and Iram was conducted in almost 100% Cantonese.

Farva's recollection of her daughter's experience at primary school shaped a bigger picture of Iram's overall schooling experiences in Hong Kong, as opposed to the other stories from Juan or Cherise. Iram's story showed a little more because there are also perspectives of her mother involved in helping Iram in her education.

When Iram was ready for primary school, Farva's family moved to Tai Wai from Tai Po in the New Territories (NT). For residents in HK, the NT is situated in the "outer" or urban districts of HK where most of the public housing estates are located for lower income families. After asking around and seeking advice from Iram's kindergarten teachers, Farva initially wanted to send Iram to a

Catholic school in Tai Po because schools with a religious affiliation in HK often have the reputation of being more disciplined with their students. But Iram's application was unsuccessful because the school was not within their home district for central allocation by the government. At around the same time, Iram's mother, Farva had applied for government public housing and the family's housing application was successful. Hence the EB allocated Iram to a nearby CMI school in their new home district and that meant the hopes of applying for a school which had a better reputation were dashed because government allocation meant going to a school in one's home district. Iram's younger sister was also later allocated to the same CMI school. Farva wanted her children to learn Chinese but her biggest problem was that she was not familiar with the school system in Hong Kong at the time and did not know how intricate the relationship between home district and school choices was. Farva said she felt that there was a lack of information for someone like her who could not read Chinese. "That was the biggest problem", Farva recalled.

Farva had no other options to choose from and could not make an informed decision in finding a school place for Iram except for what was offered by the EB. She did mention however, that it was acceptable since the allocated primary school was very close to the public housing estate where they lived. Also, since it was a CMI school, Farva felt that her daughters could still benefit from learning Chinese. Both Iram and her younger sister were the only two Pakistanis in their school. The rest of the students were Chinese. Some of the main episodes that Farva remembered very clearly about Iram's schooling experience were going to this CMI primary school. It was a regular mainstream school.

Even before Iram and her sister went to this CMI school, Farva had taken pains to learn how to recognize and pronounce the Chinese characters in the school textbooks which her children used at kindergarten. Farva felt that it was only through personal involvement as a parent in helping her children with homework, especially Chinese homework, so that they could improve in their academic work. Hence, whenever she had the chance, she would go to the school to ask Iram's teachers how to read the Chinese textbooks in order that

when she went home, she could teach Iram. Farva added, “I think the teachers must have thought I was very troublesome to keep asking about Chinese.” She recalled that Iram’s grades were pretty good for Chinese language and sometimes scored in the 90’s out of 100 in Chinese dictation.

“I learned the words one by one during the time they were in kindergarten...and that was how I learned Chinese...from the words they learned. I was able to follow until they were in Primary 1.”

Farva beamed as she described how later on, Iram came in 6th position in Primary 1 out of a class of over 30 children. Farva felt that it was through her diligent learning of kindergarten level Chinese that helped Iram in passing her tests at school.

Hence when Iram moved onto primary school as they moved into the new neighbourhood, Farva continued to help her daughters with their homework. Since, it was also a CMI school, all subjects, except English, was taught in Chinese. But by the time they reached Primary 3, it had become rather difficult for Farva to help them with homework because the Chinese characters were much more complicated. So she sent them to a tutorial centre nearby which helped the girls temporarily. By the time Iram was in Primary 5, the tutorial centre moved and Farva was forced to find a private tutor for her children. She said that as a mother, she felt very helpless because without the help of the tutorial centre, she watched how her children’s grades slowly declined. It was demoralizing for her children because the sisters felt that their grades were a measurement of their aptitude, and for Farva, she found it frustrating because the Chinese language was the main barrier to her children’s learning. Another aspect which created a headache for the family was that the hiring of a private tutor was very costly as compared to what it costs at a tutorial centre.

Farva went on to explain that since the level of Chinese was already beyond her ability, she could not help her children anymore, and the private tutor put a financial burden on their family. So she felt that Iram’s grades suffered a lot because she could not catch up with her peers at school. Farva did not doubt the academic ability of her daughter, Iram, but felt that if Iram had the proper

schooling in Chinese as a second language, she could have done much better at school, or if the school curriculum was in English MoI. There was no help available coming from home because no one else could handle a higher level of Chinese, and at school, it was very difficult to be up to speed with Iram's peers. Iram's grades suffered because coping in a CMI school was too difficult and there was no support for students like Iram – second language learners in Chinese.

Other fragments of Farva's recollection of Iram's primary school days was that she remembered at times how her children were treated unfairly or teased by the other children in that CMI primary school. According to Farva, she felt that the discriminating attitude of Iram's peers was quite serious. She went on to explain that Iram's class teacher was aware that Iram was having difficulties in Math class and in Chinese class because she was too slow in catching up. The consolation that Farva received from Iram's class teacher was that she (Farva) should not mind the discrimination too much because "the Chinese mind was like that." The class teacher promised that she would monitor the people close to Iram and hoped that Iram would not feel being isolated too much. Another occasion which Farva remembered was a Christmas party held at school. Every child was asked to bring a present to school so that they could exchange gifts. Farva remembered how bad she felt for Iram because "normally" none of the classmates wanted to exchange presents with Iram and she would return home with the same present which was brought to school. One particular year however, the class teacher noticed how Iram had the same present and so the teacher gave Iram an extra present. As Farva explained this to me, she opened both her hands in a gesture of frustration and remarked, "but that's the way it is" and at times like these, she would explain to Iram that it was "their (the Chinese) problem" and not Iram's problem that her classmates treated her differently. Farva hinted quite strongly that being treated differently meant being discriminated because they were not Chinese.

As the conversation shifted to Iram, she spoke about being a lot happier when she was sent to MIC to start her secondary school. And her mother piped in by saying:

"I observed a big change during the first year she entered MIC. She had a higher self-esteem, and she regained her confidence. She became another person...from primary school to Form 1. She had a lot of friends and was happier. I really thought whether it was worthwhile to sacrifice all these for Chinese."

Iram then began to explain her initial Chinese learning experience at MIC. The sample texts are found in Appendix 4.3. Iram admitted sheepishly, when she first started out at MIC, she failed her Chinese miserably. She also mentioned how her mother scolded her for failing because it was impossible that Iram should fail her Chinese in Form 1 when she had done six years of Chinese at primary school. Farva continued to explain that Iram, like all her other ethnic minority classmates, had to take the Chinese test in English. The Chinese tests were done in Romanization and not in Chinese characters. (These were the Chinese as a Second Language textbooks mentioned at the earlier part of this chapter – the QEF Chinese textbooks designed for NCS students at MIC). Iram said that she was actually quite surprised for failing. She knew that the Form 1 book was so easy that even a primary 4 student could manage it, but she failed. And Farva quickly added:

"She learned to write Chinese, and now you require her to write in English, how would she pass?"

Iram explained that her mom talked to the teachers about her failure in Chinese. The teachers then allowed Iram to take a re-test. This time in Chinese characters, and Iram concluded with a beam, "...then I got 100 marks."

It was a case of presumption on the part of MIC and misunderstanding on both sides when Farva discovered to her dismay that after the placement tests, Iram was allocated by mistake to the French class instead of the Chinese class. Farva had expected that Iram would continue learning Chinese at MIC since she had already been learning the language for 6 years at primary school. One day however, Farva discovered that Iram was not using her school's Chinese textbooks and only found out then that Iram was doing French instead at school. Farva remembers being rather upset that her daughter had "wasted" her Chinese language learning from primary school. But at that point, Iram explained to her

mother that studying French was much simpler because had she had purposely made French her chosen second language. Iram explained that studying Chinese for the HKCEE would be very difficult for her to get a pass, and she realized that the total points earned in the public exam was crucial to her entering Form 6, and therefore did not want to risk taking Chinese at HKCEE level.

Iram understood very well that firstly, Chinese language was for L1 learners and the subject also required some knowledge of Chinese history. Iram knew that it was a disadvantage for her had she chosen to take Chinese. Hence, French was a safer bet since a second language was required to be promoted to Form 6. Iram added that although she had abandoned formal Chinese lessons at MIC, she would regularly keep up her reading of Chinese especially the local Chinese newspapers. She did however sit for the GCSE Chinese language as well, because her school highly encouraged it. Firstly, it was a lot easier as compared to the HKCEE (equivalent to Primary 3 or 4 level local curriculum). Secondly, taking this particular GCSE public exam paper was a “privilege” for ethnic minority students in Hong Kong. Students categorized as NCS students were allowed to sit for this exam instead of the regular HKCEE paper. Iram therefore, took both language exams - French and Chinese (for NCS) and passed both subjects. Iram’s own strategy in learning and maintaining her level of Chinese was to keep reading Chinese books on her own even though she was not receiving formal Chinese language training at school. She said that at least she made sure that she did not “forget the words”. Another way in which she kept up with her Chinese privately was to read Chinese comic books that were popular at the time.

Iram’s aspiration was to be a teacher and she knew that her knowledge in Chinese can be a strong asset for her. Unfortunately, Iram’s HKALE results were not satisfactory enough to earn her a place at university. She did however land into a part-time job at HKU helping the Department of Chinese with some of their initiatives for the teaching of Chinese to ethnic minorities in HK, the details of which Iram did not disclose at the interview. She simply explained that her role was like an assistant teacher; and because she was one of the few rare ethnic minorities who was sufficiently bi-lingual in her native tongue

(Pashtu and Urdu) and Chinese, she was a suitable candidate for the part-time job. Iram explained that even though she could not enter into an undergraduate programme because of her examination results, she certainly did not want to apply for an Associate Degree programme. She was planning to apply for a place at the Open University and study for her first degree and her part-time job could pay for some of the tuition fees.

4.3.1.5 Latika

At a glance: Indian, Form 6, 18 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

Latika's story is not very long. She was born in HK and 18 years old at the time of the interview and was studying in Form 6. Latika had two older brothers studying in another designated school. And she was the youngest and only daughter in the family. Her mother was a stay-home mom and her father was a business man. They are an Indian family. Latika was Juan's classmate and they studied very similar subjects for the HKAL. Latika's favourite subject was Biology and she wanted to pursue that subject when she entered university. She said that her aspiration was to become a science teacher. Latika had been studying at MIC all her life. She graduated from the primary school which was a feeder school for MIC. In fact, she was the only other interviewee who was born and raised in Hong Kong. Latika came across as a vibrant confident teenager who liked studying and described her academic work at school as good. She enjoyed reading a lot and that was also the reason why she opted to study English Literature for the HKAL. When asked which university she wanted to attend, she said University of Hong Kong. Her first choice was to study Biology at the Faculty of Science and as a 'fall back' she said she would also be happy studying English at the Arts Faculty.

Latika's recollection of studying at the designated schools (primary and secondary) was mainly very positive. She said school life was fun especially in her secondary school years. In primary school, she had learnt how to write Chinese. But it was Chinese for ethnic minority students like her. This meant that the Chinese language classes conducted in her school were geared at a

lower level suitable for second language learners. And compared to regular mainstream Chinese schools, the Chinese language taught at Latika's primary school was not up to the regular standard. When she was promoted to Form 1 at MIC, Latika opted to study French because it was an easier option for her. She knew that French was also a recognized language requirement to continue into Form 6 (HKAL). Latika was sure that she did not want to study Chinese for the HKCEE because it was much more work than studying French. She believed confidently that in HK, many people speak English and it was an advantage in fact to be fluent in English. She did not worry too much about not being able to read and write Chinese or being conversant in Cantonese. Latika felt that "everyone around her speaks English" so the Chinese language would not pose an obstacle for her.

In her recollection about days of "hanging out" with friends at school, she described that she was quite happy to know how some Chinese friends at school enjoyed her company along with the other non-Chinese students. Latika described that her Chinese classmates liked being part of her group because they could practice their English when they were with their non-Chinese friends. When asked if she would sometimes speak Cantonese with her (Chinese) friends, Latika felt that she preferred speaking in English.

Towards the end of the interview, Latika shared that although apprehensive, she had high hopes of continuing into University and she wanted to become a teacher someday. Later that year, unfortunately, she found out that her HKAL results were not satisfactory enough to continue into tertiary education. Her university dreams were crushed and she did not wish to repeat the HKAL because she thought that it was a waste of time. Although detracted, Latika was not ready to give up. She had really wanted to become a teacher and since she could not apply for an undergraduate programme, she approached the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) to enrol for a higher diploma course in Early Childhood Education. Latika realized that although the course would not lead to a bachelor's degree, it would be one step closer to realizing her aspirations in becoming a teacher. And for the second time her plans were dashed because she found out that although she was qualified to enrol in a diploma course at a

university, she was not capable of attending the course because it was explained to her by HKBU that the course was conducted mainly in Cantonese and most of the material given out in the course was in Chinese, which Latika would not be able to understand. It was also explained to her that when it came time for the practicum, it would be done in Cantonese as well. However, she was told, HKBU explained that they offered one or two programmes that would lead to a Master's Degree in Education, and that was conducted in English. Latika recounted to me that conversation with the university in animated frustration. "How" Latika asked, could she be eligible to study for a Master's programme when she did not have a first degree yet. Her resolution was to be undeterred.

Latika soon found a full time job as an assistant kindergarten teacher and although it was not the conventional way of earning a degree as she had anticipated, she believed that by taking this route of earning some teaching experience first, she could eventually enrol into a programme as a mature student.

4.3.1.6 Shakana

At a glance: Pakistani, Form 6, 19 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

Shakana was 19 years old at the time of the interview and I was only able to meet her twice to capture a few memories of her schooling experience in HK. I was not able to complete a 'mini longitudinal' interview after she completed her A-Level exams because she left HK soon after the release of her exam results. Shakana came to HK from Pakistan when she was 2 and was the eldest of 6 children. She had 2 younger sisters who were also studying in MIC at the time. Her 3 other brothers studied in a different school. She joined MIC in Form 6 after she completed her HKCEE at another designated school.

Shakana attended one of the 'better' designated schools in the territory in which she completed her secondary 5. Many students who went to the same school as she did often tried to enrol into other well-reputed schools for Form 6. Shakana earned 16 points for her HKCEE and felt that she might try her luck at other

schools for a Form 6 place. The nightmare began however, when she discovered that she was not qualified to enter Form 6 even though on paper she met the minimum points required for a Form 6 place. She was shocked and utterly frustrated. Completely discombobulated, Shakana only found out on the day of the exam results that apart from English language, a student should also have sat for either Chinese or French to qualify for HE in HK. She had neither, and when she arrived at the doorstep of the school which she yearned to enter, she found out that she did not meet the language requirements for HKAL even though in terms of scored points, she was qualified to enter Form 6. The other school refused to accept her because it meant offering her a place in Form 6 which will not bear fruit in the form of a university acceptance.

Shakana's flashback goes like this: She was misinformed when she was in Form 4 by her own teachers that she had the choice of taking "any other" second language if she did not wish to take Chinese. Her school offered French, but she opted to take Urdu instead because she felt that it was her native language after all, and she knew that it would be easy for her to score a high grade in Urdu at the HKCEE. She made this decision because her secondary school teacher suggested that she could opt to take Urdu because being a Pakistani, she should be able to manage the exam quite well as it was also the language she spoke at home anyway. Shakana agreed to this because given the choice, she would rather take a second language exam that she was familiar with, rather than learn French from scratch.

Shakana went ahead with the suggestion made by her secondary school teacher, oblivious of the fact that Urdu was not a recognized second language for entry into Form 6. That unresolved problem of course would catapult into the closed doors of any University programme in HK. Thus Shakana was in a state of panic after the release of the HKCEE when she only realized that she did not have the minimum requirements to pursue A-Levels. In Shakana's case, she was misinformed by her school with regard to subject choices. It was too late however to turn back. As soon as the HKCEE results were released, every Form 5 student was scrambling to secure a place in Form 6. But to her dismay, she had to accept the fact that she was truly "unqualified" to apply for a place at her

coveted school. The school that she wished to enter could only offer to put her on their waiting-list. But Shakana was also told that her chances were very slim, and that she should seriously go elsewhere to find a fall-back school that would accept her because if she put all her eggs in that one basket, she would surely blow her chances of getting into any secondary school for Form 6, which had a better reputation.

Disillusioned, Shakana said that the only thing that she could do was to return to her school principal and ask how the situation could be remedied. She felt that her school was responsible for the fiasco and predicament in which she found herself. Worse of all, she said that she felt betrayed by her secondary school. Shakana's HKCEE results could have earned her an A-Level place in her choice of school, but she said she felt "shoved aside" by the other schools because she made a mistake of studying a subject that cannot have credits recognized or transferred. Hers was an unwittingly serious mistake.

It was then that Shakana's school principal made a phone call to contact Dr. Liang at MIC, explaining her plight. Dr. Liang agreed to offer her a place at MIC to continue her A-Level studies even though he knew that she was not qualified to apply for many of the undergraduate programmes at tertiary level. Shakana was aware of this, but because she still wanted to pursue her A-Levels and because Shakana had no other options, she accepted Dr. Liang's offer.

Shakana's A-Level results could only earn her offers for Diploma programmes but not undergraduate programs. She was given offers through JUPAS but felt that since these programmes were not what she wanted to pursue, it would be better for her to return to her own country to "shop" for a suitable programme. Soon after the release of her A-Level results, Shakana decided to return to her home in Kashmir, Pakistan. In a tone of self-consolation, Shakana explained that was in no hurry to find a place at a university in HK. She felt that if the tertiary institutions did not offer her something that "fit" her needs, she would rather opt out than pursuing a Diploma course in HK. Towards the end of the interview, Shakana said that an uncle of hers came to HK to chaperon her back to Pakistan. Her parents and siblings remain here in Hong Kong.

4.3.1.7 Salim

At a glance: Pakistani, Form 6, 20 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

Salim was 20 years old when the initial interview took place with him. His family is also from Pakistan. He is the youngest of three siblings and his father is a businessman. Salim was born in Singapore and his family transferred to Hong Kong when he was an infant. He lived in Hong Kong until he was six and then returned to Singapore to study primary school there. When Salim turned 14, his family returned to Hong Kong again. That was when he tried to enrol into a regular mainstream school in Hong Kong. His parents did not wish for him to study in a local international school. However, they could not find a regular mainstream EMI school that would accept Salim. Salim's family heard about designated schools in Hong Kong and so they approached MIC, and Salim was accepted to study in Form 2.

Salim's case was typical of many students who are non-Chinese but wish to study in a regular mainstream school in Hong Kong. High tuition fees are usually the main reason why ethnic minority students cannot apply to International schools. What differentiates Salim (and the other eight interviewees in this research) from other non-Chinese students who attend international schools or English Foundation Schools (ESF) in making school choices is often, but *not* always, socio-economic reasons. The main points can be summarized as:

1. Tuition fees in International schools and ESF schools are very high as compared to a) free mandatory education offered by the HK government b) DSS schools that are also EMI schools.
2. Most ethnic minority families who are not living on expatriate conditions in HK cannot afford to send their children to schools in 1) and schools mentioned in 1b) are few and very difficult to get in.
3. If an ethnic minority student is not able to enrol into a designated school, he or she can and will be allocated by the EB on the central allocation system. Under these circumstances, since a student is eligible for 12-year free and mandatory education in HK, he or she can be enrolled in schools which are similar to RMS (C), as seen in the table below.

Below is a table a sample of a general overview of the annual tuition fees paid in various types of schools around HK. Most designated schools in HK are similar

to the school, RMS (B). All the tuition fee figures below are in Hong Kong dollars.

	Forms 1 – 3	Forms 4 – 7
International Schools		
IS (A)	\$89,500	\$89,500
IS (B)	\$148,000 – 165,000	\$165,000 – 165,500
ESF Schools		
ESF (A)	\$93,000	\$93,000 – 94,000
ESF (B)	\$97,000	\$97,000 – 98,000
Regular Mainstream Schools		
RMS (A)	\$0	\$0
RMS (B)	\$0	\$3000
RMS (C)	\$0	\$0 (Forms 4 – 5)
RMS (D)	\$ 52,000 – 55,000	\$55,000 – 78,000

Fig. 4.2 Overview of the Annual Tuition Fees Paid in HK Schools

Salim’s return to HK at 14 years old posed some problems for him. He was also held back a year (as was Cherise and Farid), compared to others in his year group, because he was new to the school system, and in order to be properly integrated, he was given the choice to “repeat.” Salim’s story in some ways was similar to Farid’s (see 5.2.1.8) because his performance at the HKALE was quite successful. Salim was MIC’s “star student” the year he completed Form 7 because he was the only one who was accepted into the University of Hong Kong that year.

4.3.1.8 Farid

At a glance: Pakistani, Form 6, 21 years old, speaks no Cantonese, reads no Chinese

Farid just turned 21 years old when I first met him at MIC. Amongst all the student interviewees, he was the oldest in his class at Form 6. Farid’s family is from Pakistan. He first arrived in Hong Kong when he was 13 years old. He spoke very little English and needless to say, no Cantonese at all nor could he read or write Chinese. When I met him at the initial interview, he had already been living in Hong Kong for 9 years. Farid had a younger brother and younger sister studying in another designated primary school. As in other designated

schools, the primary school which his siblings went to was mostly made up of ethnic minorities.

When Farid first arrived in Hong Kong in the late 90's, there was very little educational support that he could receive from local schools or the Education Bureau. He remembered how his parents were unable to find the proper channels to help him find a proper full-day school. His father had to work long hours in security management, and his mother was a stay-home mom who spoke very little English and no Cantonese. From Form 1 to Form 3, Farid attended night school because the day schools that he applied to would not accept his application. Farid did not have the proper network or channels back then, so his family sent him to take part-time courses and night school instead. Farid described those schooling conditions as atrocious and did not want to continue studying random courses like that because he understood that it would not lead him to a proper degree programme. Farid aspired to be a doctor. It was not until he met someone who suggested that he could approach MIC. At this point, he was already 17 years old. Normally, in Hong Kong a 17-year-old student would have just completed Form 5. Farid's case was heard and was given the chance to study at MIC. He was held back one year to study Form 3 so that he could take time to immerse in a fulltime day school. By the following year, Farid was ready to embark on the first leg of the HKCE course as a Science student in Form 4. Similar to the story of Cherise, Farid had to opt for French as a second language in order that he met the criteria to be promoted to the HKAL and eventually acceptance into tertiary education. And like Cherise, he took extra pains to pick up French outside of class time because most of his classmates had already been studying French since Form 1.

Farid's schooling years as a junior secondary student took some twists and turns at first, but after MIC accepted him, he was able to apply himself in a more assertive way and knowing that he had a clearer goal in front of him – tertiary education. He said that he could not help being held back when he enrolled into MIC because he did not transfer from a proper full-time programme into MIC. And although he was older than many of his classmates, he said that it did not bother him too much because he had his heart set at entering university. Farid's

story as an MIC graduate was one of the few success stories in which he was accepted into an undergraduate program via the Hong Kong education system. It served as good publicity as well because both Farid and Salim were mentioned in the local Chinese and English newspapers. About three months after the release of his HKAL results, I visited Farid at the Polytechnic University. He was studying in the Faculty of Applied Science and Textiles and although he realized there was so much more to learn and so much work as an undergraduate, he was enjoying a dream come true. Farid was not as apprehensive as when I first met him when he was a Form 6 student. He said that in looking back, all he needed was a break. And it was MIC that gave him the break he needed. He thought about what could have happened if he had remained a ‘vagabond student’ taking courses here and there and never really completing Form 5 properly. He was grateful for the chance that was given to him and felt a need to reach out more to ethnic minority students like him. So he decided to return to his Alma Mater and offered to take the role of chairperson for the Parents & Teachers Association at MIC. Farid still had a younger brother who was studying in Form 1 at the time. He felt that in this way, he could connect better with students at his old school and to the parents as well, even though he was not a parent himself. Farid mentioned also at the interview that his hopes of becoming a doctor will not materialize in Hong Kong because he cannot read nor write Chinese, but he said that exposure to tertiary education was making him think about doing research. One of the last things he mentioned to me at that visit in the PolyU grounds was that he was thinking of pursuing a PhD.

4.3.1.9 Husna and her father, Sohrab

At a glance: Husna, Form 5, 18 years old, speaks near native Cantonese, Chinese literacy level at Form 5. Sohrab, her father insisted that she went to a CMI school and he refused the offer made by EB to allocate Husna to a designated school.

Similar to Iram and Farva, the story of Husna and her father Sohrab unfolded in their home. They are a Pakistani family. They lived much farther from the main city centre in Kowloon, which was called the New Territories (NT). The NT districts in Hong Kong is different from the other districts in that there are far

more government public housing estates. As a source of background to the reader who is unfamiliar with the geography of Hong Kong, the NT districts are not the 'savvy' districts. Kowloon and Hong Kong island are the areas where all the 'action happens' i.e. the central business districts, higher-end residential areas, haute cuisine, Band 1 schools, private hospitals and main tourist attractions just to name a few. Husna and her family of 6 members altogether live in Tuen Mun district in a 350 sq. ft. flat. The Tuen Mun district is an area in Hong Kong in which a large majority of government public housing estates can be found. These NT government housing estates are built around schools, wet markets, post-offices and hospitals and most of these estates are self-contained. It takes at least an hour's ride to Kowloon by bus. Most residents of the NT districts, especially those living under social welfare from the government would rather live and work within their home district because transport costs are high and the commute is far if they were to work in Kowloon or the Hong Kong Island.

The semi-structured interview for this research that took place in Husna's flat started with Sohrab (Husna's father) telling me a story about how he ended up in Hong Kong. But for the purposes of the topic of this project, I shall focus first, and more on Husna's schooling experiences in Hong Kong. As previously mentioned, Husna's story was a 'spin-off' from my main track of collecting data from the designated school. The deputy HT of MIC invited me to a seminar hosted by the University of Hong Kong (HKU). The organizers of the event were from the Chinese Department of HKU, and they were hosting an event where ethnic minority students and their Chinese Language teachers from several designated schools across Hong Kong were invited to attend a sharing session about their Chinese Language learning experiences at school. The students of the case study school, MIC were of course also there with their Chinese Language teacher, Miss Fung. Apart from teachers and their students, some parents of the ethnic minority students were also there to attend this seminar. And it was after the sharing session that I jumped at the opportunity to approach Husna and Sohrab.

When I found out that Husna ‘grew up’ in a regular Chinese (CMI) mainstream school, unlike MIC the case study school, I thought that it would be a good ‘triangulation’ opportunity to speak to someone who did not experience what it was like growing up in a designated school for ethnic minorities.

It was mostly Sohrab who enlightened me about how his daughter Husna ended up in a CMI school. First of all, he explained to me that since they were living in the NT district all their lives, he did not wish for his children to travel all the way to Kowloon to attend school. He felt that all the time spent on the long commute could be spent in doing homework. He also insisted that he did not wish for his daughters to travel alone on long distances because they were a conservative family. Sohrab explained that when his daughters completed primary school, he knew that his children would most probably end up being allocated to a designated school such as MIC. He knew that the government (EB) central schools allocation system would somehow send his children to a designated school because of their ethnicity. When asked how he “knew about” how ethnic minorities were allocated to designated schools, he answered me with a question. He said:

“Why are all the Hussains, Masoods and Singhs sent to schools like MIC?”

Sohrab had other plans for his daughters’ education in Hong Kong and was at the time, adamant not to send his children to designated schools even if they were allocated there by the central system. By the time Husna graduated from primary school, Sohrab had already knocked on doors of nearby schools within his home district hoping to apply for a Form 1 place for Husna. It was to no avail and Husna remembered being told at a Catholic school that she was not suitable to study in that school. Husna’s words were:

“They already rejected you when they see how you looked like.”

Sohrab finally secured a place for Husna at a Chinese secondary school with the help of the principal of Husna’s primary school. Sohrab was very pleased with the arrangement because he felt that it was important that his daughter learnt the Chinese language in a “proper” setting where there were mainly Chinese children. His conviction was that if his children attended a CMI school, they

would be properly immersed in the Chinese language setting and will be “forced” to learn in that Chinese setting. Thus Husna’s secondary school choice was decided mostly by her father. When asked about what it was like, Husna explained that it was actually rather difficult at first because all the textbooks were in Chinese and it was very difficult for her to catch up with what was happening in class. (At this point, it is also interesting to note that 95% of this whole interview was conducted in Cantonese. Both Husna and her father spoke to the researcher in Cantonese). She explained that her Chinese standard was good enough for her to read Chinese newspapers. In fact, Husna had formed the habit of reading the Chinese news every day online. There was no problem for her to go to a fast-food shop and read the menu in Chinese and order a meal in Cantonese. The biggest challenge for Husna was preparing for Chinese Language as an examination subject. She explained that there was great deal of Chinese literature and history embedded in the works that students had to prepare for the exam. Not only was the reading a challenge, but also she felt that she lacked a kind of cultural background to appreciate the texts that she was studying. Sohrab added in defence of his daughter by saying:

“Even the Chinese students find Chinese Language difficult.”

At the time of this interview with Husna, she was already awaiting her HKCEE results for the second time. She had to repeat Form 5 because she failed in the first HKCEE Chinese Language examination. And an ‘F’ grade meant that she could not be promoted to Form 6 to continue studying for the HKAL.

Husna described that she nonetheless preferred to study in a CMI mainstream Chinese secondary school because she knew that other ethnic minority students who studied in an EMI school were taught the Chinese language at a lower standard and at a slower pace. Husna felt that although it was difficult to catch up with lessons in a Chinese school, at least she was receiving the “authentic” Chinese schooling which was different from the abridged curriculum that other non-Chinese students studied in EMI designated schools. Soon, all of Husna’s siblings were encouraged by her father and herself to study in a CMI school near their home in Tuen Mun.

During her primary school years, Husna also attended a CMI primary school which catered to a few ethnic minorities. She attended the Chinese stream but was doing very poorly because all the texts were in Chinese. And because she could not catch up with studying, her father felt that it was pointless to go on insisting to be enrolled in the mainstream Chinese class. At home, Husna could not revise what had been taught at school because no one at home could read Chinese and when there were difficulties in doing assignments, Husna had no one to turn to until she returned to school. The teachers at school could only do so much in helping Husna and they could not offer long-term extra support for Husna in all the subjects. So in Primary 3, Husna switched to the English stream (where the ethnic minorities were put together in a class) in her CMI school. There was however, still Chinese language learning in the English stream that Husna attended, up until she completed Primary 6. But the Chinese language taught was at a much lower level which was not on par with what the regular Chinese stream was learning. For example, Husna explained, that the students in the English stream in her Primary 6 class were learning Chinese at a Primary 3 level. She felt that even though she could read and write some Chinese, it was not enough to prepare her to study in a CMI secondary school. But her father felt that despite this, Husna should still be immersed in a Chinese secondary school.

By the time Husna reached Primary 6, her school had switched from being a CMI school to an EMI school. Thus this meant that the textbooks were also changed from all-Chinese to all-English. Husna remembered that there were only a handful of ethnic minority students in her primary school when she studied there, and that all these non-Chinese students were grouped together in one class, and the Chinese students were grouped together in other classes. In other words, Husna attended lessons amidst ethnic minorities only, even though there were other Chinese students in the school. After her primary school phased into an EMI school, more and more ethnic minority students living in the district enrolled into her primary school. Husna explained that her primary school today hardly has any more Chinese students. A majority of the school population is now made up of ethnic minority students. Husna knew this because her mother was a part time assistant teacher at her primary school teaching Urdu. When

asked what her thought were the reasons for the decrease in number of Chinese students, Husna said:

“I think it’s the name of our school. Sounds like a school for ethnic minorities.”

As mentioned above, when I met her at the time of the interview, she was already in Form 5 (for the second time), and she explained to me that she really wanted to pass the HKCEE this time. Her father’s aspiration for her was to become a teacher and wanted her to find a teaching job in Hong Kong. He felt that he had made the right decision to enrol his daughters in a CMI secondary school, because he believed that English was a relatively easier language to learn, whereas Chinese was far more difficult. So it was important to learn it now at school while they could. Husna’s aspiration, on the other hand, was to become a translator. Towards the end of the interview with Husna and Sohrab, the doorbell rang and two primary school aged children entered the flat. Within five minutes, another three children arrived. They huddled around a small foldable table and sat on children’s stools and pulled out some homework from their bags. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that Husna and her sister offered private tuitions to neighbouring Pakistani children. Sohrab explained that when Pakistani friends and neighbours found out that Husna and her sister could read and write Chinese, they approached Sohrab and his wife and asked if their daughters could help by tutoring the other Pakistani children especially in Chinese. Sohrab explained that most of these families, like himself, were from low income groups, and it was impossible for them to enrol in private tutorial centres or find a regular Chinese tutor because it would be unaffordable. Since Husna and her sister could speak both Cantonese and Urdu, learning Chinese from them would be ideal. Sohrab thought that not only was it an opportunity to put to good use the Chinese language skills of his daughters, but they could also help fellow Pakistanis. So like clockwork, five days a week, these children would come to Husna’s flat and finish their Chinese homework.

About a month after the interview, I spoke to Husna over the phone. Her hopes of entering Form 6 were dashed because she had again failed the Chinese Language examination. She explained that since she was not qualified for a

Form 6 place, she and her sister were going to apply for a one year diploma course in Putonghua. She did not mention any concrete plans but was waiting for what her father was going to decide for her.

4.4 Conclusion

Amongst these interviewees who agreed to share some memories about their journey into Form 7 and beyond, Aisha and Salim experienced 'smooth' transitions during their secondary school years, and could directly move on to an undergraduate program after the HKALE. The information below stands correct up until 2009, or the last interview held with the interviewee. All of them had aspirations to enter university, but not everyone's aspirations could be realized. On hindsight, they realized that the choices they had for a HK education during their junior or secondary school years were either limited or they had insufficient information in making an intelligent and informed choice for an education beyond Form 5 or Form 7.

Although Husna attended a CMI school at the insistence of her father, she also could not enter Form 6 because her overall results at the HKCEE did not meet the cut-off point at her school to enrol into the HKALE class. None of the other interviewees could read nor write Chinese at a standard that could meet the language requirements at tertiary level as well. With regard to choices for university education, all of the interviewees in this study had to make one or more detours in order to reach or aim to reach the upper rung of tertiary education in Hong Kong. One of the factors worth considering as well is that these informants were in fact the 'minorities of the minorities' because they had the desire and perseverance to try to enter university by defying the system. A few of these informants mentioned that sometimes, however, they felt a strong sense of being 'lost in the system' because as they approached the years of tackling public examinations, they realized that their choices for further education became fewer and fewer. And on these occasions, felt a low sense of self-worth or frustration knowing that they did not have the same kinds of choices for further education as their Chinese counter-parts. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, some of these students expressed resentment because they were segregated; or they felt regret because they did not realize how crucial Chinese language was in their further education. At one point, Cherise mentioned that many students simply gave up at the end of Form 5 because they felt that they would not have a chance against other students from other local schools. When asked where she thought these students moved on to, she said that if the students were fortunate, their families could

send them back to their home country to continue with further studies. But if not, these fellow school mates would probably be absorbed by the work force or evening schools. More will be discussed about meritocracy in the next chapter and Chapter 8 will try to make stronger linkage to theoretical ideas that underpin this study. But before this chapter closes, one more look at the following table (Fig. 4.3) can give the reader a brief summary of what these interviewees have achieved.

Interviewee	Aspiration	Road taken towards tertiary education	University entered	Remarks
Juan Carlos	journalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 2-year Associate Degree programme after Form 7 	HKBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited course choices at HKBU because of lack of Chinese knowledge Realizes his options of being a journalist in HK are slim because of language barrier
Cherise	teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated some years at secondary school because did "not meet" entrance requirements 	HKBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to realize aspiration in becoming an English teacher
Aisha	teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "smooth" transition into HKBU throughout secondary school 	HKBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to realize aspiration in becoming an English teacher
Iram	teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time job after Form 7 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering part-time degree programme
Latika	teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time job after Form 7 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for undergraduate studies deferred
Shakana	teacher or designer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Returned to Pakistan after Form 7
Salim	unsure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated some years at secondary school because did "not meet" entrance requirements 	HKU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No concrete plans until after undergraduate
Farid	doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated some years at secondary school because did "not meet" entrance requirements 	PolyU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realizes his options of being a doctor (MD) in HK are slim because of language barrier
Husna	translator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not qualified for HKALE Enrolled in diploma course in Putonghua

Fig. 4.3 Achievements of Interviewees in this Research

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IN HONG KONG

5.1 Introduction

Chapters 5 to 7 tease out separately the three issues: a) Chinese language proficiency; b) how designated means segregation; c) and how inclusive education might be an answer to the upward mobility of EM students in Hong Kong. These three separate chapters will serve as background to the sequential analysis in Chapter 8, in which all the threads will be woven to show how the ideas underpin this study. In other words, the lack of Chinese language proficiency is a cause for segregation, and a possible remedy for segregated education is inclusive education. This chapter will first tease out to what extent does Chinese language learning play in being promoted to upper secondary school and eventually higher education.

5.2 The Language Issue in Hong Kong (Part I)

The high status of Chinese language in the curriculum is derived from the language's role as an official language of Hong Kong and from the subject's importance as a vehicle for cultural transmission. Its prominence has been notable in the final quarter of the last century which has also seen the increased awareness of a Hong Kong identity amongst its citizens (Sweeting, 1995: 69).

5.2.1 Linguistic Capital and Linguistic Equity

For many new South Asian new immigrants, linguistic minority students undergo a transition in "sheltered Chinese immersion" before being allocated to a mainstream (Chinese) school setting. Students attend an "immersion" Chinese program for cultural exposure and very basic Chinese language learning. This is a six-month program organized by funded welfare organizations or sponsored by the EB which was mainly aimed for newly arrived immigrants from China who have never had any exposure to the Hong Kong way of life. In 2000, the EB further extended similar immersion programmes for NCS students as well who are mainly of South Asian heritage or those from Pakistan or India. Since the six month programme is a general programme which helps to initiate newcomers to Hong Kong and introduce them to the general Hong Kong cultural agenda, one cannot expect that these students who not only are from diverse ethnic backgrounds, but also vary in age and academic aptitude, could quickly be introduced into a language which is rather complex. The spoken and written form of

Chinese is essential for those who wish to sit the local exit examination irrespective of his or her ethnicity, and in this aspect, one cannot argue that this is not an equitable treatment of all citizens. But the immersion programmes are not a centralized programme monitored by the EB to ensure that the new immigrants especially the South Asian students learn to be fluent in Chinese. Therefore, with these concerns in mind, MIC developed a more systematic and comprehensive Chinese language program to offer to their students who are either accepted or allocated there.

To refresh the points made by Dr. Liang about MIC in Chapter 4, the issues on EM students' acquisition of Chinese as a second language will be briefly repeated here. Dr. Liang and the deputy HT explained that it was crucial to introduce NCS students to a more comprehensive knowledge of the Chinese language. But the school was also aware that it was a mammoth task to take upon. The looming issue that they had to confront was that the immersion programs which were NGO-operated or short term did not have a comprehensive Chinese language learning workshop for NCS students who were enrolled there. When these same NCS children were re-allocated to their school, for example, the case study school had to deal with the Chinese language teaching tailored for ethnic minorities, by themselves. The other reason why it was a mammoth task was because there was no actual direct support from the government in terms of expertise for a Chinese as a second language program. The members of staff within the case study school's Chinese Department approached friends of friends they knew who were also Chinese teachers, who were interested in embarking upon a project to design Chinese language teaching and learning material for second language learners. For the HT and the Chinese think tank group of teachers, the rationale behind was developing their first set of Chinese textbooks for second language learners in order to equip them with general expressions which could help the NCS students go about their daily life. These were mundane but very taken-for-granted expressions or phrases such as asking one's way around or purchasing a newspaper from a street vendor (who spoke no English); or telling a mini-bus driver where they wanted to get off; or simply buying a soft drink from a store.

Outside of the classroom setting, most NCS children did not have as much opportunity to practice what they learn in their Chinese lessons because most of them are segregated into designated schools. Since there are relatively fewer Chinese students enrolled in

these designated schools, the NCS children naturally express themselves in their mother tongue or in English. The use of Cantonese or Chinese becomes unnecessary outside the classroom because their own language is a comfort zone for communication. But if a school is to look much closer at how important Chinese language is in Hong Kong, teachers will need to share the same vision for their NCS students and tell these children that to live (and survive) in Hong Kong as a working adult, one must know enough Chinese to qualify for a decent white collar office job.

Linguistic capital is based on ideological assumptions, and these assumptions are: competition for the value between different communities, through the manipulation of symbolic assets such as what dominant language should be used in a community. And in this particular case for example, it is Chinese. Thus the ability to “manipulate” Chinese as an ethnic minority (EM) in Hong Kong means less discrimination on linguistic grounds. By that, the EMs’ symbolic asset becomes more valuable as opposed to someone (e.g. an EM) who cannot speak, read or write Chinese.

However, in Hong Kong, the perception towards EMs who are from different South Asian backgrounds and the perceptions of their aptitudes are somewhat stereotyped. Some common presumptions are:

- Hong Kong is a transit place for them; thereby they will leave Hong Kong and the investments used to teach the EMs Chinese language will be wasted
- It is too difficult to teach EMs this language and vice versa too difficult for them to learn Chinese. For even the Chinese people find the Chinese language difficult to learn

5.3 The Language Issue in Hong Kong (Part II)

5.3.1 Investing in Chinese Language Literacy of HK Ethnic Minority Students

Since many EMs cannot read or write Chinese, their job options are constrained to blue collar jobs because many office jobs in Hong Kong requires one to be fluently bi-lingual in Chinese and English. It is not an uncommon remark that a lot of resources are needed to train the EMs to reach or nearly reach L1 standard (first language) in Chinese language. In fact, to say that Chinese is an L2 (second language) for many of the EMs in Hong Kong is somewhat a misrepresentation and an improper conclusion about the language abilities of EMs in Hong Kong. There are two different examples from the

case study schools to explain this point: One of the students interviewed has parents who migrated from Afghanistan to Pakistan. Although this interviewee grew up hearing parents speak Pashto, many in the family spoke Urdu. And in school, (before coming to Hong Kong), this same interviewee learnt how to communicate in English as well. Thus if this was a kind of chronological order of language experience for the student, then Chinese is probably the fourth language learnt. The other NCS student also has an interesting background in language ability. The father is Chinese and the mother is Filipino. However, the student lived and grew up in the Philippines. Chinese was seldom spoken in the family nor was it a language they learnt formally while growing up in Manila. The father spoke English at home. Hence, when the whole family moved to Hong Kong (the interviewee was about 14 years old at the time), Chinese language learning in Hong Kong became a challenge at school for the interviewee. On the contrary therefore, Chinese was the interviewee's L2 even though one of the parents is Chinese.

There are many different EMs from different countries, and many argue that there are too "few" to be taught and there is a shortage of resources and trained teachers who can teach Chinese to these EMs. However, there are many tertiary training institutions which offer a wealth of programmes for Chinese majors in Hong Kong. The niche and innovation for Hong Kong would be to offer second language acquisition to trainee teachers in Chinese Language teaching. Familiarity with the language and pedagogical skills for teaching second language learners can be a plus for Hong Kong.

Different ethnicities have different learning needs. To say that these NCS students are L2 Chinese language learners is a blanket-condition that all of the NCS student population in Hong Kong only needs to deal with Chinese as a second language. One hasty and temporary conclusion is that EMs in Hong Kong are better off together schooled in designated schools because the one "common" lack - their weakness in Chinese language learning.

Thompson (1981) described that "ideologies function to maintain the status quo." And thus "the prevailing ideology is commonly a legitimation of the status quo." The status quo of Hong Kong in pre-1997 is manifested in the dominant use of the English language. It only comes as natural that after the handover to China, post-1997 Hong

Kong pushed for a more prominent and aggressive use of Putonghua and the urgent use of written Chinese in many aspects of everyday life in Hong Kong.

This is one of the reasons why in 1997 the Chinese medium of instruction was implemented in many of the schools in Hong Kong. The policy for secondary schools on the use of the MoI is below:

Policy for Secondary Schools

Medium of Instruction Policy for Secondary Schools

- Our language policy is to enable students to learn effectively, to be biliterate and trilingual.
- We are implementing a comprehensive strategy to enhance language proficiency.
- Research worldwide and in Hong Kong has shown that mother-tongue teaching is generally the most effective learning tool for students. Using their mother tongue to learn, students will be better able to understand what is taught, analyse problems, express views, develop an enquiring mind and cultivate critical thinking. Students can also have more time to concentrate on the learning of English.
- We are therefore committed to promoting mother-tongue teaching.
- We recognise that it will take time for schools, parents and the community to fully appreciate the benefits of mother-tongue teaching.
- We therefore introduced measures under the Medium of Instruction Guidance, to enable schools and parents to see for themselves the benefits of mother-tongue teaching.
- We have enhanced measures to strengthen the teaching and learning of English in schools using Chinese as medium of instruction.
- We will closely monitor progress to see how best we could achieve the ultimate objective of our language policy.

Source: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=1901&langno=1>

Fig 5.1 Medium of Instruction Policy for Secondary Schools

Only those schools which could exhibit a high percentage of strong English ability could opt for English medium of instruction. This was a kind of segregation in which only the stronger students can learn in English. Below is an excerpt from the Education Bureau's (EB) webpage on the medium of instruction (MoI); uploaded in preparation for the imminent handover in 1997:

Our students face a unique language environment:

Our community is essentially Chinese. We speak, read and write Chinese in our daily life. Government has therefore been promoting the use of Chinese over the years. We have also encouraged teaching and learning in the mother tongue.

Hong Kong is an international business, financial and trading centre, and English is the language of business worldwide. To maintain a good standard of English is crucial to our economic competitiveness. Learning of the English language in schools is therefore a Government priority.

Our aim is for our students to be biliterate (ie master written Chinese and English) and trilingual (ie speak fluent Cantonese, Putonghua and English).

Source: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=1902&langno=1>

Fig 5.2 Highlights of Reasons for Promoting Chinese as MoI

Since Hong Kong was a British colony before 1997, the upper echelons of society along with government officials and expatriate gate-keepers saw English as the dominant language and lingua-franca. It was the structure for example, of the civil service and corporate magnates that effectuated an unequal division of power and resources, because English was the language of the elite and the social construction in the days of colonialism legitimated that particular symbolic valorisation of the English language. In other words, English language maintained the status quo in the socio-political dimensions of life in Hong Kong before the handover.

The struggle over languages is not a debate over linguistic codes. Language is conceived as ideologically saturated (Hamston 2006). For this reason, English becomes *the* representative of perspectives. The institutional ideological position of English has a higher symbolic value. For example, schools that employed EMI were considered far more superior to schools which were designated to use CMI. The Hong Kong setting in pre-1997 hinged on the ideologization of the English language, and thus other European language such as French or German which were studied at school as a second language also were “automatically” rationalized as the languages of the elite. It was “fashionable” to take French or German as a subject for second language learning. Schools in Hong Kong that were able to offer these European languages were considered first tier schools or more commonly known as Band 1 schools, and often French and German

were offered to students as an alternate second language for the public exams. This was the convenient solution for NCS students who could not sit the Chinese Language exam at HKCEE level because the subject is geared for L1 learners of Chinese. It was simple enough to offer French or German to EM students in Hong Kong. French was a more popular language and the teaching and learning of a phonetic language, as opposed to Chinese script, was far more accessible in pedagogical terms and assessment terms. The dominant expatriate community in Hong Kong was not unfamiliar with French or German since these were also the “imported” occidental languages in the secondary school curriculum during the colonial days. As such, all these foreign languages including the institutional English are the Occitan languages of colonial Hong Kong that were accepted as part of the secondary school curriculum. Most importantly, these were recognized by the Education Bureau as legitimate credit bearing second languages. As mentioned however, second languages such as Urdu and Hindi were not recognized by the Education Bureau as legitimate credit bearing second languages. An interview with one of the subjects in this study confirmed this. This NCS student opted for Urdu as a second language instead of French or Chinese, but was later turned down when she tried to apply for a place in Form 6. She was told that she did not meet the requirements for entry into Form 6 and sit for the Hong Kong Advanced Level (HKAL) because Urdu was not a recognized subject by the Hong Kong Examinations (HKEA) as an entrance qualification into Form 6 and Higher Education.

Heath (1977) defined language ideology as “the self evident ideas and objectives and group, holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of that group.” In the context of this particular discussion, English therefore dictated “the linguistic preferences and practices of international alliances...regional institutions and local communities” (Heath 1977). With the return of Hong Kong to the arms of the Mainland under the political awning of ‘One country, two systems’, Hong Kong needed to re-establish its identity by re-grasping the symbolic power of Chineseness, and how much better than to do this via an upsurge of learning a new form of nationalism through (re)localization of the Chinese language. Thus although English will remain the unspoken collateral of economic and international partnerships, the magnum task of re-instilling a stronger sense of Chineseness into the Hong Kong people began with polishing Putonghua and the vernacular Cantonese in all walks of life. On the one hand, English was still the coveted language of superiority, but

Chinese language had to find its way back into the sociopolitical dimensions of life such as the service industry, politics and the civil service, media, education and all possible conceivable professions. With the dawn of 1997, “Localization” was the new buzz word and schools were quickly polarized into either the English medium of instruction (EMI) or the Chinese medium of instruction (CMI).

Re-affirmation of identity through the Chinese language meant a robust and aggressive move into lobbying for reverting of teaching and learning methods back to Chinese. The decades of conditioning of English as the superior language were thus being undone after 1997. But not so overnight, because enforcing the Chinese language as the main tool for communicating and learning at schools were met with frowns and scepticisms. Those in the political arena who were pro-China felt the urgent need to (re)convert the children of Hong Kong to the values of the Chinese language. Therefore the perceptual configuration of Hong Kong after the handover to China emerged a spontaneous “return to Chineseness” as well. The idea of a social Gestalten code switch (Bourdieu, 1974) from English to Chinese was a crucial symbolic move to regaining power from the colonialists. It is therefore fair to say that Hong Kong needed a legitimate and recognized symbolic order which framed itself in the Chinese language.

5.3.2 The White Elephants

In November 2008, the Education Bureau published the *Supplementary Guidance to the Chinese Language Curriculum for non-Chinese Speaking Students* (see Appendix 5.1 to 5.5). This was recently done after many protests from schools which have a high number of ethnic minority students enrolled and various NGOs in Hong Kong. But according to Hong Kong Unison, this published supplementary guidance is lip service to what the ethnic minority ardently needs. It is being argued that the EB has yet to set up a systematic Chinese curriculum for ethnic minority students. What both teachers and students need is a specific “national” curriculum tailored especially for second language learners. At present, Chinese language teachers are left to their own resources and creative genius to design and implement Chinese language teaching materials for their (ethnic minority) students who are second language learners.

It is not surprising therefore, that the range and diversity of the materials of the Chinese language syllabus will differ from school to school. As yet, the Education Bureau has

not yet set a threshold for which ethnic minority students need to reach in order to be considered competent in Chinese. Teachers are also concerned that a more streamlined pedagogy is needed for these students because learning how to write characters is not the same as learning a language that requires a certain alphabet which works on some form of phonetics.

In order to appreciate the complexity of Chinese language learning for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, we need to first understand the unique challenges of how one can be considered as functional with Chinese language in Hong Kong. Functional, by definition here means that a person not only can use Chinese to go about the everyday business of communicating with fellow Hong Kongers from buying the English morning paper at the kerbside newspaper vendor in Cantonese, or ordering a bowl of wonton noodles, to buying from the elderly woman at the wet market who sells kale and cilantro and speaks no English; to being conversant, being able to read and write the Chinese language. Appendix 5.6 is a sample released by members from MIC who are members of the working committee which is trying to implement a more comprehensive and 'centralized' Chinese textbook for second language learners at secondary school level. The sample as seen in Appendix 5.6 is aimed for Secondary 1 second language learners of Chinese. Put next to the sample materials in Appendix 5.7, the difference in standard is easily seen even to the untrained eye.

Chinese language learning in Hong Kong is a unique and special blend language experience because the vernacular or lingua franca, if you may, is actually Cantonese. Ellis (1985) explained that there is a difference between acquisition and learning. For him, the former means picking up a second language through exposure whereas learning for Ellis means the conscious study of a second language. His ideas on second language acquisition (SLA) are that it refers to:

"the subconscious or conscious processes by which a language other than the mother tongue is learnt in a natural or a tutored setting. It covers the development of phonology, lexis, grammar and pragmatic knowledge. The process manifests both variable and invariable features. The study of SLA is directed at accounting for the learner's competence, but in order to do so has set out to investigate empirically how a learner performs when he or she uses a second language." (Ellis 1985 6)

In light of what Ellis describes, the complexity of Chinese i.e. Cantonese becomes even more complex because the written is different from the spoken. The spoken Chinese i.e. Cantonese, is a tangent different from the written word, or in this situation, the written character as we see it in the newspapers or menus in a *kaifong*²² restaurant. The Chinese writing system is made up of a combination of thousands of strokes. One has to know how the combination or radicals work before one can read a single character. Unlike European or other Asian languages, Chinese does not work on a phonetic system. Thus learning to speak Chinese in Hong Kong through immersion or assimilation of sorts, is a different language experience from learning to read and write Chinese. Granted however, that someone who was born and raised in Hong Kong, but whose parents are both ethnic minorities, might be able to pick up spoken Cantonese (i.e.acquisition) with less difficulty as compared to one who is a new arrival to Hong Kong and has never heard Cantonese. Reading and writing Chinese hence is a different learning curve altogether.

The issue is more complex in the perspective that Chinese Language learning for EMs means for most, learning a completely new language from scratch as opposed to for example, a German student learning French or an English student learning Spanish. The learning of Chinese character writing is far more complicated because it is logographic. In contrast to achieving literacy in a language that uses countless combinations of strokes and radicals, learning European languages are in theory, phonetically based and words can be strung together by understanding how the vowels and consonants work for that particular alphabet. Learning a new language in which one shifts from a new form of alphabet and phonemes to another new form of alphabet and phonemes, is thus “easier” than having to rely on memorization and rote-learning of separate and individual strokes and dashes which form characters. In Chinese language learning therefore, the mastery of the skill takes more than just remembering an alphabet per se.

The first step in looking at the challenge of learning Chinese from the perspective of an ethnic minority is to realize that Chinese language learning in Hong Kong is two-layered. In other words, the dominant spoken language in Hong Kong is Cantonese, a dialect brought over to Hong Kong, and used by the many that fled from Guangdong

²² *Kaifong* is a Cantonese colloquialism for ‘neighbourhood’

Province during the era of the Communist regime in the 1940s. On one hand, Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong have their own distinct blend and accent of spoken Cantonese with its nine tones. Hence, it being a tonal language gives it another level of difficulty i.e. it can be more challenging to learn how to speak Cantonese as opposed to the four tones needed when learning Putonghua, the lingua franca of China.

Simply put, when a student learns Chinese in Hong Kong, the reading of the characters is done in Cantonese, not in Putonghua – the official language and lingua franca of China. Since Cantonese is the vernacular in Hong Kong, reading, writing and speaking Chinese is predominantly a Cantonese-learning experience, unique to Hong Kong. Putonghua is not the lingua franca of Hong Kong. By describing it as two-layered means therefore, that Chinese language learners in Hong Kong are speaking and reading the written Chinese characters in Cantonese. The other layer is an understanding that Chinese characters are by official standards “supposed to be read” in Putonghua. In other words, if a student learns Chinese – reading, writing and speaking – in other major cities in China, Chinese is taught using Putonghua. The reading, writing and speaking is taught in Putonghua. On the other hand, if a student learns Chinese – reading, writing and speaking in Hong Kong, Chinese is taught using Cantonese. The Chinese characters are the same. But the reading and speaking is Cantonese in Hong Kong whereas the reading and speaking is Putonghua in for example, Beijing.

Imagine then an everyday example of Chinese language learning in Hong Kong:

Students X, Y and Z are classmates in the same level but of different nationalities.

Chinese Hong Kong student X learns Chinese language in Cantonese. Student X can read and write Chinese. However, this does not mean that student X can read in Putonghua or can speak Putonghua.

Imagine also an everyday example of Chinese language learning in Hong Kong. But this time, for a South Asian ethnic minority:

Indian-Hong Kong student Y learns Chinese language in Cantonese. Student Y was born and raised in Hong Kong and can speak basic Cantonese that allows him to ask for directions; order a meal at a fast food shop; or tell the bus driver that he wants to get off. But student Y cannot read nor write Chinese. In a classroom setting, student Y can follow simple instructions given by Chinese language teacher and can grasp the teacher's explanation.

Imagine now the scenario for student Z. Student Z is a new arrival in Hong Kong from Pakistan and has no exposure to Chinese or Cantonese prior to his arrival in Hong Kong. He is however, put into the same class as students X and Y. Student Z will have more challenges to face in the learning of Chinese language than would student Y.

The cluster of student samples X, Y and Z come from the case study school. The teacher explained to me that everyday Chinese language learning is more often met with dread than optimism because the gap in Chinese language ability varies from student to student. The eager ones plod on stalwartly while some switch off because listening to the spoken Cantonese is a challenge in itself. Another similar example is commonly found in the case study school. If the lesson was a writing class, someone like student Z cannot perform a task of stringing a sentence together. While someone like student Y will manage to get by. And although student X can follow, he could also be disadvantaged because the course content is at time dumbed down to cater for NCS students. Student X is thus not pushed further for more challenging learning material because the Chinese language teacher has to strike a balance between the learning needs of EMS and the native Chinese speakers.

From the Chinese language teacher's point therefore, the teaching of the language becomes a rather complex task because of the varying degrees of aptitudes and attitudes of the students. In one academic year (Form 1), to reach a similar standard as a Chinese student, an EM student is expected to learn approximately 1000 characters. By the end of Form 3, an EM student should have around 3000 characters. One needs to recognize about 3000 Chinese characters to be able to just handle reading a newspaper. Below is a sample of how many Chinese characters one needs to grasp in order to be 'functional.'

Task	No. of characters
Fill in a Chinese application form	2K
Read a menu	2K
Read a newspaper	3K to 4K
Read a passage for comprehension exercise (F5 level)	3K
Read a book	3K to 5K

Fig. 5.3 Sample of number of Chinese Characters needed in order to be 'functional'

For an EM therefore, to learn Chinese in Hong Kong means tackling the first layer of Chinese learning by being conversant in Cantonese. Being conversant would be an advantage in learning the writing system. In this perspective, to be 'functional' in HK, one must be able to read and write Chinese. Hence the foremost issue as other related research have pointed out is that the Education Bureau has yet to set down a specific blueprint for Chinese language learning in schools catered for second language learners who are residents in Hong Kong in order that they may be given the same opportunities for entry into tertiary education and thereby have the same opportunities for white collar jobs in Hong Kong. From the above classroom scenario, the senior Chinese language teacher, Ms Fan (from MIC), also explained that she was already 'used to' over-coming the eclectic mix of student aptitudes in her everyday teaching, and often after she designed her teaching materials, there is a (long) period of trial and error to see if the material 'fit' the students. She complained that students often forgot easily what was taught from one week to the next. Retention of what was taught was therefore an issue as well. This Chinese language teacher expressed that she hoped there were courses for her and her colleagues so that they can be trained to teach Chinese as a second language. As well-seasoned teacher, Ms Fan was prepared for all the challenges that classroom management brought, but for many of the newer colleagues, teaching Chinese to foreign students was a daunting task. This was especially true when the Chinese teachers have to design their teaching materials as well, because there are not enough available textbooks in the market in Hong Kong as resource to teach Chinese as a second language. Many of the Chinese language teachers were competent in the knowledge of the subject, but what they wanted was the pedagogy for Chinese as a second language.

As we see the growing numbers of designated schools in Hong Kong, the concerns for a more systematic Chinese language curriculum for second and third generation ethnic minorities and new NCS immigrants is not the only issue, but that HK is moving towards a more and more segregated education community in which it has become an issue of “them” and “us”. Educational policy has a role to play in this festering phenomenon and the present segregation of ethnic minorities from the Hong Kong Chinese community needs to be addressed more seriously. There are piece-meal policies in which Chinese language classes and cultural induction programmes are held for the new NCS immigrants, and these programmes are also more short-term intensive classes in Chinese for NCS students. These programmes however, as suggested are only piece-meal and many non-Chinese children are not fully functional in the lingua-franca. Further educational opportunities lead to better job opportunities but this does not apply to many of the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, because their educational opportunities are hampered because of their Chinese language shortcomings.

The story behind the white elephants during the times of the Southeast Asian monarchies is perhaps familiar to many, and the term white elephant has more idiomatic use today. For many, the ethnic minority and South Asians in HK are seen as white elephants. HK does not need to feel that the South Asian community is a burdensome concern because we have to invest in this (mammoth) undertaking to educate this small section of the community in a language unfamiliar to them. The HK government and particularly the EB has to step forward boldly in announcing and implementing a feasible long-term plan that will address the issue of Chinese as a second language for non-Chinese residents in Hong Kong. Rather than showing knee-jerk responses such as offering outside-classroom language support for both students and teachers; or passing a bill that recognizes varying levels of different academic qualifications as entrance into tertiary education; or using propaganda tactics in showing how EM children are also part of HK; or monetary incentives for establishing designated schools, the core of the problem must be dealt with directly. And segregation is not the answer to this problem.

5.3.3 The Language Issue According to the HT of the Case Study School

In trying to appreciate the nature of Chinese as second language learning for EMs in Hong Kong, the dialogue excerpts below show what are the challenges faced by students whose mother tongue is not Chinese. The following will also describe how the Schools Banding system works and how students are assessed.

Dr. Liang from the case study school had this to say about the MoI policy in Hong Kong. In a published article to the media in 2005, Dr. Liang explains how a designated school is, like any other mainstream school, very much tied to the language policy set by the EB, and being designated cannot untangle itself from the language policy. Dr. Liang's article stated, "Segregation is no exaggeration since these schools only start training NCS the basic skill to immerse in local society in the beginning of this century – Chinese Language. It is still not surprising to see NCS from these schools who can barely comprehend the most common language, Cantonese, in Hong Kong, even for the children who are born in Hong Kong."

Two things stand out in Dr. Liang's article: a) that NCS students are regarded as a "burden" to HK society and/or because secondary schools are reticent in accepting these ethnic minorities due to their "special needs" in Chinese language acquisition and b) HK needs a recognized Chinese as a second language educational policy. Upon closer examination of a) and b), it is not difficult to see what the vicious cycle in the schooling of ethnic minorities is. After the handover of HK back to its motherland, Chinese as MoI was quickly implemented, which intentionally or unintentionally, neglected the Chinese language needs of the 10,000 or so ethnic minority children. Many of these EM families also belong to the average or below average income group. The government is still deciding whether or not Chinese should be taught to ethnic minority children at a more comprehensively; so that they too can be on par with their Chinese counterparts. Dr. Liang described how this was a Catch 22 situation. Regular mainstream schools have reservations to take on EM students because firstly, they do not have the expertise nor the manpower to bring the ethnic minority children up to standard in Chinese acquisition in order to meet the demands of the public examinations. The sample teaching materials as shown in Appendix 5.7 is MIC's new attempt to assist in helping EB produce a more comprehensive textbook that can raise the standards of second language learners. Learning Chinese by means of Romanization, as shown in

Appendix 4.1 to 4.4 is not a suitable method to prepare students for the eventual HKDSE.

Chapter 6 which follows will look into how empowerment is attained through meritocracy and that segregation hampers this. The following chapter will also show how cultural capital is also partly due to the symbolic significance of the knowledge of the dominant language.

CHAPTER SIX

EMPOWERING NARRATIVE

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 unfolded the intricate narratives of student informants and the personified Mary Immaculate College (MIC) whose voice is given by one of the key gatekeepers and witness to the changes of the school's growth – the principal and Head Teacher, Dr. Liang. Chapter 5 suggested some of the issues that ethnic minority students face as secondary students in Hong Kong with regard to learning Chinese as a second language.

This chapter will discuss what HK education policies there are towards the provision for ethnic minorities in the education system. In other words, the discussion surrounds to what extent is a designated school in HK useful in the education of the ethnic minorities. More data and analysis of the school's responses to the policies will be raised. The title of Chapter 6, "Empowering Narrative" has a double entendre. On the one hand, I wish to elaborate on what empowers the ethnic minority student to be en par with a Chinese counterpart in order to enter HE. The other side of the title carries the metaphor of the ethnic minority's empowering narrative/story that allows him or her to be part of the upper socio-economic strata.

The first part of this chapter is mainly derived from dialogue with the HT, Dr. Liang from MIC. The second part of the chapter raises pertinent points regarding the nature of allowing designated schools to continue to thrive. These perspectives are mainly triangulated from the interviews done with a) other teachers from MIC b) Head Teachers of other non-designated schools and c) parents of the NCS students.

6.2 The Schools Banding System and the Assessment of Students

Dr. Liang explained why it seemed that within the internal school assessment, the students seem to be doing fine, but the overall rate of students entering university or tertiary education was low. The reason for this backtracks to the earlier years of schooling of these ethnic minorities. To understand this is to trace the overall aptitude of these students by looking at their attainment test scores at the exit point from primary school. There is a mechanism (only the EB has access to) which measures their academic aptitude at Form 1 which gives an overall grade for Chinese, English and Math against all students in Hong Kong who are just

starting Form 1. This mechanism takes the form of a territory-wide mandatory attainment test. There is more than one reason why this territory-wide attainment test is conducted. It not only gives an estimate of a school's overall performance of their primary school students, it also gives the stronger students a better chance into getting into a band 1 school or a school of their own choice.

A whole school is seen as a unit and the overall score each school earns is generated in a percentile. The bandings of the schools are represented from 1 to 5, with band 1 being the strongest band of schools. For MIC, the NCS students ranked at position 11 out of 100 schools for English which means they rank in band 1 because they fall into the top 20% in the whole of Hong Kong. For Math, they rank 89/100 and for Chinese they rank at 99/100. This means therefore, that in the whole of Hong Kong, MIC ranked among the strongest for English (top 20%) and ranks among the weakest (bottom 10%) for Chinese language. Here, it should be noted that apart from the Chinese subject, the attainment test for Math is mainly done in Chinese as well. For example, the problem solving questions for Math are assessed in Chinese. Although most NCS learn Chinese at primary school, they are not rigorously trained and drilled for such kinds of Math attainment tests done at L1 standard, unlike other Chinese children who also go to mainstream schools but learn Math in their mother tongue. Apart from English, the attainment tests are done in Chinese language. Thus for a subject like Math for example, a student not only has to be both clever at solving Math problems, but also be able to read and interpret the Math question in Chinese.

Hence, the end results of the attainment test for most NCS are somewhat predictable in terms of academic attainment because the tools used to measure their academic aptitude are inappropriate and somewhat unfair. The attainment tests are geared for HK born children who are also Chinese L1 learners and in this regard, the tests do not reflect the true aptitude of NCS students. In other words, the Hong Kong attainment tests given to Form 1 students on a territory-wide scale cannot truly measure the academic ability of EMs because it is language biased. Two out of three subjects are tested mainly in Chinese language. Therefore when compared to all other Hong Kong students at Form 1 level, MIC ranked 99/100 for Chinese. The reason being that NCS students are not adequately prepared to take a Chinese attainment test geared for L1 learners.

In the above context therefore, the banding of the school such as this particular case-study school will naturally drop because the students' overall score for the attainment tests is low as already explained. Earning a position in the top 20% for English is not sufficient enough to "upgrade" MIC to Band 1. In simpler terms, the banding system set by the EB is unfair to ethnic minority students. There is a higher chance therefore, that segregated schools will "naturally" be placed in a lower band because these schools cannot perform as well due to a Chinese language handicap. Once the labelling sets in, the impression of NCS as weaker students is difficult to slough off. At the primary school exit point, therefore, there is a good chance that the NCS student could very well be placed into a lower band secondary school as well, because the primary school in which he or she attended already belongs to a lower band school. The banding system inadvertently breeds more NCS students, and this cumulative effect will continue unless the ethnic minority children are given mandatory and comprehensive training in Chinese language acquisition. The issue at hand therefore begs the question: Who will set the educational policy, and implement it and sustain it, to truly assimilate the ethnic minorities in HK?

To take this picture into its next frame, at the exit point of primary school every year, there will be a scramble of ethnic minority students who wish to enrol into a designated school because they know that at the very least, a designated school is more attuned to the needs of the ethnic minority, whereas a regular mainstream school could very well be a lower band school or a school that uses Chinese as MoI or both. The student is at the mercy of the central allocation system if he or she does not approach another school to be enrolled in.

According to Dr. Liang, every year there are NCS students who are unable to enter designated schools, and they end up in a CMI school of a lower banding. There are also of course the few rare ones like Husna and her family who purposely choose CMI schools. But generally speaking, comparatively few in numbers, these handfuls of EM students study in a Chinese setting in which all subjects except English, are taught in Chinese. Although these NCS students are not fluent in Chinese, they are centrally allocated to a CMI school because they could not score high enough in the central allocation scheme to enter an EMI school, which is often a higher band school.

The complex nature of sorting and streaming students around Hong Kong for secondary school does not end there. Stronger students are allocated to EMI schools or are allocated to

schools within their top 3 options, while weaker (NCS) students are sent to CMI schools which are further down their secondary schools choices allocation list. They are allocated to these schools in spite of the fact that they may not be able to fully partake in classes because as policy would have it, lessons are mainly conducted in Cantonese and almost all the textbooks used are published in Chinese. If the EM student is not able to read the books which are written and geared for L1 learners, then it can become a challenge for them to follow what the textbook knowledge is about. This is already illustrated in Cherise’s narrative in Chapter 4. Also, if the EM student also cannot speak enough Cantonese to communicate, then the teachers’ explanations of the on-going lessons will also pose as a challenge for these EM students.

The Chinese language issue for NCS children is “passed on” from year to year – from primary to secondary school – and these NCS children’s standard of Chinese is left to the school’s internal assessment. The “quality assurance” of the standard of Chinese reached by these NCS is not standardized. The school will decide what level of Chinese language fluency the NCS student has or has not reached. But since these children are segregated into such schools of which many are non-Chinese, the issue is not as prominent, because the NCS “problem” will be passed on to the secondary school and can be later dealt with there and then.

There are far-reaching effects of being schooled in a designated school and the kind of Chinese language ‘handicap’ is manifested after six years of primary school education and five years of secondary school education, when the NCS student wishes to enter Form 6. At the exit point in Form 5 he or she realizes that Chinese Language is actually an essential subject for entry into many university programmes. And of course Chinese language is also essential whether one ends up doing a blue collar or white collar job in HK.

When asked how qualified were these NCS students, in terms of entering Form 6, Dr. Liang responded with this: (R – researcher ; HT – Dr. Liang)

R Are they qualified to... enter form 6?

HT On the surface, their chances for entering university are considerably low. To most, it seems like a fair situation, because they could take the Chinese GCSE if their Chinese were not compatible. The passing rate for GCSE is high. The passing rate (for GCSE Chinese) was 100% in the

2009 exam, and more than half of them attained an A* result, but they are not smart at all, most of them were actually quite surprised that they got an A*. They could actually attain an A* result with a primary 2-3 standard, and since it's a second-language exam in the UK, it doesn't examine their real ability.

In Hong Kong we have to consider the complete development of these ethnic minorities. Did they stand a fair chance when they entered kindergarten? Meaning, a fair chance to being successful in the future. Perhaps since day one, they were already deprived of many things.

In trying to unpick the dense language issue faced by EMs in Hong Kong, what Dr. Liang meant was that the reasons for the poor Chinese language abilities of EMs can be traced back to the day they start kindergarten. What is being offered now to NCS students at secondary school level is a “quick-fix remedy” to their inability to enter Form 6. The government is now allowing students of NCS background to take the Chinese Language at GCSE level and they can use this qualification to enter Form 6. As mentioned by Dr. Liang, the passing rate was 100% in 2009 and many scored A* (as in “A-star”) which is the highest score that can be attained. But in essence, in contrast to the HKCE Chinese Language, the GCSE Chinese language is geared for second language learners and is only equivalent to lower primary school level in Hong Kong. The Chinese Language paper at GCSE level is nowhere near the standard of Chinese learners at L1 level. Hence the A grade or A* grade which the NCS students attain cannot truly reflect the Chinese language standard needed to pursue senior secondary level.

Allowing the NCS to take the GCSE exam is like a token appreciation offered by the EB that NCS can assimilate into the Chinese Language culture of Hong Kong, but in truth, the level of Chinese fluency is not enough to compete with the Chinese counterparts. Any HE programme will have its demands in entrance requirements, and for HK, it is natural that Chinese fluency is a must. Again this begs the question: Who will assure that the ethnic minority students are taught the Chinese language skills needed as entrance requirements for HE. To be functional in Chinese, a second language learner needs more than an A* grade in the GCSE Chinese language. Thus NCS students are still hampered even though they are moved upwards towards senior secondary schooling or even tertiary education. Dr. Liang further explained that this is all traced back to the kindergarten level of schooling because the teaching of Chinese language to EMs is not always tailored for second language learners. Children of non-Chinese ethnicity are already segregated into primary schools which accept

NCS students. From then onwards, if the NCS students are fortunate enough, they are taught the designated school's version of Chinese as a second language (CSL) based on what the Chinese teachers at the school have prepared or designed for these NCS students. Or if not, the schools follow the exact same syllabus as their Chinese classmates in a sink-or-swim manner, as in the case of Iram who was mentioned in Chapter 4. The versions and standards of CSL can vary from school to school. There is no monitoring system that ensures NCS children are receiving the same kind of training in Chinese as a second language.

In Hong Kong, there is no standard or “national” curriculum for CSL textbooks given to NCS students in primary schools. In other words, since there is no “national” curriculum for second language Chinese learners, every school has to come up with their own version of a CSL syllabus for their NCS students and the design of such Chinese textbooks or syllabus depend on resources available in their school. With this particular case study school, the Chinese language department initiated their own CSL package via the Quality Education Fund (QEF). It is therefore, understandable that the standard of Chinese language ability of these NCS students can vary from school to school depending on the level of difficulty that the school teaches for Chinese language. When Dr. Liang mentioned in his article that ethnic minority students are “deprived of many things” the word “many” encompasses more than just the learning of Chinese. “Many” is a blanket for a) lack of resources; b) lack of teacher-training; c) lack of government policy for a “national curriculum” for second language learners such as ethnic minorities in Hong Kong; d) the general mindset of Hong Kong towards teaching Chinese to NCS, which is diffidence.

The general mindset is: Investing in the teaching of Chinese to the ethnic minorities is costly because there are too few learners overall. The general assumption is that the cost is more than the demand, and hence cautious steps must be taken before investing in the Chinese language education of these ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. For the time being therefore, (since the 1970's), the best way to school the ethnic minority students in Hong Kong is to segregate the few from the many. But this should not be so. A responsible government would ensure that not only would children be given the right to receive their education in the official language, but they are also given the respect and integrity to uphold their native language. In Australia, bilingual education for indigenous children was offered starting in the 1970s. Aboriginal bilingual education in Australia represents much more than a range of education programs. It has been a measure of non-Aboriginal commitment to either assimilation or

cultural pluralism (Harris and Devlin 1996). Another context for example, would be Belgium. It has three official languages, Dutch, French and German. Belgian children are constitutionally protected with the right to receive their education through any of the three official languages. One of the most unfortunate ethnic minority students – a Pakistani girl – in this research was misinformed about taking Urdu for her HKCEE exam. She sat for the exam believing that it was an accepted criterion for application into HE, but only to be told that Urdu was not recognized by EB as a pre-requisite. However, had she taken French or German, it would have been recognized. There seems to be two levels of second language discrimination here. On the one hand, positive discrimination to the Occidental languages as accepted entrance criteria into university, but Urdu will not count as an HE qualification because it was not recognized second language subject.

6.3 Chinese Language Assessment in a Segregated System

There are many reasons as to how and why NCS children who attend mainstream CMI or EMI are disadvantaged. One reason is that in the early stages of Chinese language learning, for example at kindergarten, students have to follow through some stages of rote learning or memorization of Chinese passages which are used as seen or unseen dictation exercises. Chinese children have family members or other relatives who can help with Chinese homework and preparation, but the Pakistani, Indian or Filipino child have to rely on his or her own resources after school hours. Since many NCS students have NCS parents, there is a very challenging task of preparing or revising for the scheduled dictations or tests. It then becomes a vicious cycle when children cannot do well in Chinese language because the NCS children do not have the same kind of support that a regular Chinese child can have at home. In this scenario, the NCS is already disadvantaged. A typical phenomenon at home for a 10-year-old HK child preparing for class the following day can for example, look like this:

- a) completing a page or two in exercise workbooks for Chinese, English and Maths. b) rote learning a Chinese comprehension passage of about 100 characters; and memorizing a Chinese passage for the following day's 'seen' Chinese dictation.

Memorization and regurgitation is a very typical method of Chinese language learning in HK. Helping a child prepare for such a task by an NCS parent can be daunting because, there is no one else but the child to depend on for remembering how the characters are read and pronounced. There are a few layers of learning – reading, writing, listening and speaking - to

be done before a child can regurgitate a passage on paper and not miss any strokes out in the writing of the Chinese character.

Dr. Liang was asked to elaborate on the issues of Chinese language learning for EMs in Hong Kong and whether or not segregation was a better learning environment (as opposed to integration) in the teaching and learning of Chinese language. Below is Dr. Liang's response.

HT: What we observed in the school was that even though the children were enrolled in Primary 1, we didn't understand why (Chinese) teachers couldn't affect the EM children to learn Chinese, even at such a young age.

R: Who didn't understand?

HT: Me! I asked the teachers...(what hampered the children's learning of Chinese)

Teachers are very direct; they say the learning environment itself is not encouraging...for this school, there's only 10% ethnic Chinese children studying here... Chinese for many of the NCS students is most probably their 3rd language. Other than the few Chinese lessons a week, the NCS children do not have the chance to practice the language. They do not speak Chinese at home and at school, Chinese is treated as L2 when teaching.

R: ...for the ethnic minority children to learn Chinese as L2, and local Chinese Hong Kong children to learn English as L2...is it actually two very different things?

HT: Yes, absolutely treated differently.

But the Hong Kong syllabus is pretty interesting. If you compare the Chinese and English exams in Hong Kong, in terms of the level of difficulty, I would definitely say Chinese is an L1 subject, an exam which treats it as a mother-tongue. And English... I'm not an expert,...but comparing that with other overseas exams for example, I personally think that, the Hong Kong English exam is not even close to the L1 level.

For example, the students who only gained Level 1 or Level 2 in the HKCE, we have special descriptors for that, but when you compare these descriptors with those of TOEFL or IELTS, we find the standard of an English exam at HKCE level is only compatible and similar to those of TOEFL. It's also after all, only a test of the use foreign language. Therefore I believe the Hong Kong English syllabus is still an L2 syllabus.

Our children gain an advantage in this way. Since you are assessing them using an appropriate tool, as our students are also L2 learners; English is not their mother-tongue either. The English Language assessment is an appropriate tool for assessment, but the assessment tool used for Chinese Language is not appropriate.

Therefore when you look back on the development (schooling experience) of these ethnic minorities from the day they enter school...there are several types of schools in HK...say, if they enter a local Chinese school, they are doomed. They stand no chance at all for Chinese language learning. They do not have teachers who will spend extra time teaching them individually. There is no extra mentoring or Chinese language coaching that can be given to these EMs.

Therefore the first question is: What could the government do? The government has to identify this problem. It has to allocate resources to schools.

I think about it this way, we have around 5000 ethnic minority primary school

children, and 3000 ethnic minority secondary school children (in all of Hong Kong). (For me) the best thing to do is to close our school; but this is not ideal... here we have around 90% ethnic minorities. Why is it not ideal? No matter how we boast about our school – “Harmony in Diversity” – that the children are very happy here... that the teachers have autonomy over what they want to do here...we make it sound like the relationship between teachers and students is harmonious or as you say, very intimate. But somehow when they leave the school after form 5 they realize the school has been giving them an illusion. They soon realize that in reality, society is not as welcoming as the teachers in school.

R: So,...the harshness is when you realize that you are considered handicapped when you can't read and write Chinese...

HT: Every year when I receive applications for Form 1, there are around 20-30 students from local schools...These students came from a peculiar education system...in a sense that they might excel in certain subjects, but on the other hand, they feel really desperate in other subjects.

In the Hong Kong system, these (EM) children will never be able to enter Band 1 schools, or those other coveted schools. So naturally they will enter local schools which might not have the readiness to cater to the needs of these children. Therefore they might immediately have to worry about how the new school or new environments will perceive them.

After 6 years of atypical education, they have to face another familiar moment (of not being catered for)...I believe they experience a hard time in search of their own identity...I suppose you have a more thorough understanding of this than I do...

Dr. Liang was trying to explain how the intricate language assessment system works in Hong Kong at exit level in secondary school. On a personal level, he believes that the actual HKCEE English exam is still tailored for L2 learners. This belief is based on how for example the TOEFL is also geared towards non-native English language learners. In other words, if a high grade in English is achieved at HKCEE, the results needs to be compared to the descriptors for a TOEFL or a TESL in order to find out that the level of HKCEE English is really not for L1 but L2 learners. Based on this assumption Dr. Liang thinks that HKCEE English is a “lower” level assessment tool when compared to internationally recognized tests such as TOEFL or IELTS. Thus for the Hong Kong EMs, taking the English exam is appropriate for their level because this assessment tool is geared for L2 learners, and because for many of the NCS, English *is* their second language as well, just as it is with the local Chinese Hong Kong students. In the above dialogue, the HT mentioned that Chinese for many NCS is their third language. On the one hand, it is advantageous for EMs to sit the English language exam, but they fall short when it comes to being tested for Chinese language proficiency because the assessment tool for Chinese language is geared for L1 (mother tongue) learners. Therefore, this is what Dr. Liang meant by EMs being “doomed” if they were allocated to a regular mainstream Chinese school. These EMs often have no extra Chinese language support service when they enter CMI schools because not all schools in HK

have special resources for the teaching of Chinese language geared for NCS students. Above all, the subjects are all taught in Chinese and the textbooks are all in Chinese, save for English language.

Another issue that emerged in this dialogue was the conflict of whether or not segregation of NCS was an ideal learning environment. On the one hand, there is a kind of “convenience” in grouping all ethnic minorities under one roof because their common language is English and they share a similar level of challenge in the learning of Chinese. For most, speaking Cantonese does not come naturally to them; and the learning of reading and writing is also a high hurdle for the EMs. By putting them in a designated school, there is an understood but unspoken streaming of these children into (Chinese) classes which are catered to their level. It is understood that these EMs will not be able to sit the regular Chinese language exam at HKCEE because the exam is geared for native speakers. And within this context, the EMs are “doomed” because not only will their learning needs not be catered for because of the Chinese language issue, but there is another racial facet which the ethnic minority student has to deal with. Iram and Husna both spoke about how difficult it was for them to be part of a larger Chinese school community because they were often targets of verbal bullying. Nonetheless, within the context of the year 2010, it is relatively better for an ethnic minority to study in a designated school not only because of the cliché, “birds of a feather flock together” but he or she will be protected from the “indifferent” system of regular mainstream Chinese school. In other words, opting for a designated school is better because resources for designated schools have been improved in the last five years or so. The EB has links on their website that are specially designed for ethnic minority students in HK, and the EB has recently taken steps to translate some necessary information for parents in certain languages of the NCS communities in HK can illustrate this again.

On the one hand, it is preferable to opt for a designated school because the overall school ethos caters for the type of diversity that is part of the evolving school heritage and the sense of belonging for these EMs is further strengthened. But on the other hand, the system will feed on itself and thereby encouraging more and more designated schools to evolve. Agreeing to school NCS students in the name of a designated school is to agree with segregation. And not to address the problematic issues intertwined in segregating darker skinned children from the dominant Chinese children is widening the parameters of cultural and racial biases. But the fact of the matter is, for now, apart from designated schools, a majority of mainstream

schools in Hong Kong might not have the same kind of readiness as would a designated school, in the education of an ethnic minority. This not only is true at an academic and pedagogical level, but on a larger scale, what slackens the education of the Hong Kong South Asians is also the overall mindset or attitude of the Chinese Hong Kong people towards the South Asians in Hong Kong. According to Dr. Liang, as long as Hong Kong does not perceive the NCS students as assets and future professionals in our society, they will always be treated as lower class citizens. However, the complexity has to be acknowledged as well in that EM parents and immigrants must also want their children to be educated in Chinese. Schooling itself will not right the problems of socio-economic status of ethnic minorities. There is a need for a stronger integrated approach whereby the EM parents also must be educated to know that being fluent in English alone will not make job-seeking any easier. EB must promote more vigorously to EM parents the imperative and the work can be done by the schools; to invite EM parents to know more about the system and know what is needed to be in the system. Hence, the EM parents need to be educated on policy issues as well.

There are also other unaccounted narratives of EMs who end up in CMI schools because of the central allocation system in Hong Kong. When the more established designated schools, such as this present case study school, have reached their maximum enrolment capacity, other EMs have to make their way to other secondary schools which will and have to accept them, because of the twelve year free education policy, but might not be ready to cater for their needs as ethnic minorities. Dr. Liang understands that for an EM student, there is another layer of anxiety that he or she needs to face and that is the fear of “not being accepted” because he or she is different. There are deeper layers of needs which an impressionable adolescent has, especially when that person is an NCS in Hong Kong. In conclusion, designated schools are not ideal because it does not enhance integration and assimilation, but on the other hand sending NCS students to regular mainstream schools will be an injustice to them because the large gap in Chinese language ability will hamper their learning.

6.4 Higher Education Opportunities for Ethnic Minorities

Like many who complete the Advanced Level exam, the chances of an NCS student who wishes to enrol into a University programme is the same as any student who completes Form 7 in Hong Kong. The NCS student however, finds that many of the gateways to a Bachelor’s Degree are closed for them because Chinese language qualification (at L1 standard; or near L1 standard) is an entrance requirement for many undergraduate degree programmes. Based

on the interviews done with the various NCS students in Chapter 4, there are undergraduate programmes that they can apply for because they have reached the standard to be accepted into the programme, but eventually could not enrol in because of the lack of Chinese language ability. In other words, these NCS students may have scored enough points at the HKAL examinations and earned themselves a slot for an interview to read for a particular undergraduate programme, but only to find out that they cannot enrol in their choice programme because they realize that Chinese language fluency is a requirement. The stories of Juan Carlos, Cherise, Latika and Farid reflect this.

6.5 The Unspoken and Unchallenged Biases

How is linguistic capital a form of symbolic asset? Those who live here are all too familiar with the political motto: “One country, two systems.” The country is China and the two systems – Hong Kong and the Mainland – are supposed to be autonomous yet dual at the same time. In terms of education, the first crucial method to manifest itself as one country is to re-establish itself via the mother tongue, and that is Chinese. Although the intrinsic values of English are still there, however, Hong Kong wanted Chinese language to be the dominant tool of communication in the post-1997 era. Thus the symbolic significance attached to Chinese language is very important especially if one wishes to make HK their home.

Whether it is the complex socio-political issues concerned with the running of a school, or the fear of taking on an ethnic minority student into a school because of the lack of resources, Head Teachers, as educators, have the moral responsibility to accept students based on their overall aptitudes. The HT recalls certain incidents on a few occasions which show how difficult it is to really undo the stigma or “fear” of educating EMs in Hong Kong. Below are a few excerpts about educators who have reservations about the schooling of EMs in Hong Kong.

HT: ...We have to change our mentality... why do I say this? For example the principal next door, whenever he sees students with the surname Monsoo... or Medu...

R: Or Mohammed...

HT: Whenever he sees these types of names, he'll call up, and I'll ask him to send them over. But as time passes, I start to realize a problem...some of these children grew up in local schools and have studied Chinese...This means a lot of schools do not care where these children were born or where they grew up, and it turns out to be a racial issue again. Therefore it's the mentality... what do you treat these ethnic minorities as then?

There was a sense of frustration and unspoken helplessness on the part of Dr. Liang's rhetoric because between the lines, this is reality for an administrator of a designated school. Although unintentionally prejudiced, there is a racist outcome in the choices made by fellow Head Teachers in the district. Since this case study school is a fairly established designated school in that district, peers would call up to ask if it is possible to recommend someone over to enrol in Form 1. The recommendation is solely based on the name, Moodhood or Mohammed or any name which rings ethnic minority. Dr. Liang realizes that "a lot of schools do not care where these children were born or where they grew up, and it turns out to be a racial issue again." He finds this kind of passing up of students problematic because fellow HTs do not seem to consider thoroughly enough that some of these Primary 6 NCS graduates who wish to apply to their schools have had six years of primary education schooling in Chinese language as well. The impression that Dr. Liang gathers from these "recommendations" is that other HTs do not wish to deal with students whose names stand out from the regular pool of Chinese names. It does not really matter which schools these NCS students come from – EMI or CMI - The initial response is "I do not want them" – and this boils down to a racial issue but is unspoken because there are after all, designated schools which can deal better with ethnic minorities and are more ready to accept them. This is a racial issue which will fester if ethnic minority children are being recommended back to designated schools; and thus the designated schools system will feed on itself and the cycle continues. But how does an HT say "No" to a peer when that other school does not have the resources to support an NCS student? In situations like this every minority student who gets passed up ends up as a refugee in a designated school and not a welcomed member in a regular mainstream school. In an interview with another HT who runs a Christian school, (but is not a designated school), he had this to say about accepting ethnic minority students into his school – "I'm sure the other designated schools will take care of these students." This HT from the non-designated school went on to explain that his school did not have the resources to teach EM students and some of the teachers "will be afraid" to teach EM students because they have no experience teaching non-Chinese children.

At another interview with a different HT, who ran a Catholic boys school in the district of Kwai Fong, the attitude towards ethnic minority students was slightly different. For the purposes of this account, this HT will be called Mr Lo. As HT of the school, Mr Lo had reserved funds to hire a Pakistani assistant teacher (whom we shall name as Hassan) to work at the school on a part-time basis, doing multiple jobs. The job description included working

at the school office doing general clerical work; doing shift duties at the school's main gate, and most importantly, helping a few Pakistani students who spoke absolutely no Cantonese with their studies at the school when possible. Hassan acted both as tutor to the few Pakistani students and mentor to the boys if they had any personal problems other than homework questions. Mr Lo hired Hassan because he was impressed with his bi-lingual skills. Hassan was a HK resident who used to be a businessman, but lost his business due to recession. Hassan learnt how to speak Cantonese after many years living in HK as a permanent resident. Mr Lo needed someone like Hassan because he could serve as interpreter as well. Although the students spoke some English, Mr Lo felt that if someone could play the role as counsellor and teacher for the boys, life at this CMI secondary school would be less harsh for these few EM students. The 2 Pakistani boys would be able to relate better to someone who spoke their language. Mr Lo explained that he had to accept these EM students because they were allocated to him via the central allocation system. And there were no nearby designated schools that would take these students. The HT understood that for every new EM student that was taken in, the school would be given incentives by EB. And if a certain quota was met, the mainstream school could be re-formed as a designated school. Mr Lo expressed that he welcomed the monetary incentives that was offered by the EB, and for that reason he could not see why he should not ask for more. Mr Lo's rationale was that whether he had to teach one EM student or more, the resources would still be the same. Hence it would be a wise idea to accept more EM students to his school. Unlike the HTs that might call up Dr. Liang, who would rather release EM students from their school, Mr Lo welcomed EM students to his school.

6.6 Guidelines to the Teaching of Chinese as a Secondary Language

There are recommendations for institutions as to how Chinese language can be taught to the NCS community and what can be included in the course syllabi. The government has recently taken initiatives to outsource the teaching of Chinese language to various tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. Hence we have for example, university A working in close collaboration with designated schools #1 and #2, while university B works in close collaboration with designated school #3. Each school is offered consultation; teaching and learning materials designed by that particular university. Each outsource to a designated school will last as long as the funding lasts or until the "project" is complete. The common and predictable outcome to this kind of outsourcing is that Hong Kong will not have a "national curriculum" in which there is a uniformity and quality assurance of the teaching and learning of Chinese Language. A more

deep seated issue is that, Hong Kong lacks a proper teacher training program that can prepare potential language teachers to fully engage in the education of the EMs in Hong Kong. Teacher training programmes can be initiated that adopts the methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). More of this will be mentioned in Chapter 8. At the present moment, various short-term or one-off Chinese Language projects are being conducted on worthwhile initiatives made by tertiary institutions such as HKU, CU and PolyU. Before looking at how CLIL could be included in the teaching of subjects, we shall in Chapter 7, first look at what the implementation of inclusive education can mean for the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

7.1 An Overview of Inclusive Education

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights pronounced education as a human right. Inclusive education, thus, in the broadest sense of the term means that all people have the fundamental right to access education and not be excluded. Over 40 years later, in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child further addressed the pertaining issue of every child's access to education. Article 28 stipulated that the right of the child to education be achieved progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity. In particular, the State Parties should "encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education; make them available and accessible to all children. (Article 28, 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). Not only should educational and vocational information and guidance be made accessible to all children, but it also further urged that higher education be made accessible to all.

The decades which followed the Universal Declaration saw other attempts to progress towards this goal, and in 1990, The World Declaration on Education for All tried to re-state that education was a basic right for all people. This World Conference on Education for All (EFA), however, was criticized for not strongly advocating inclusive education as opposed to segregated education.

Ainscow (1999) stated that what might be the most influential document in the narrativizing of inclusive education is perhaps the one drawn up in 1994 in Salamanca. The Salamanca Conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) expanded on the word *all* with regard to EFA, in that:

Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas and groups. (UNESCO 1994, 6)

By the year 2000, The Dakar Framework for Action addressed the term 'inclusive' more closely in Article 8. World leaders and agencies pledged to create "...inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning with clearly defined

levels of achievement for all.”²³ Since then there have been many comprehensive reports detailing the global monitoring of the goal in order to achieve education for all. Although the global scale is to outreach to poorer countries which for example, have a high illiteracy rate or targeting people defined and categorized with special education needs (SEN) i.e. physical or mental disabilities or deviant behaviour; countries which need to deal with gender discrimination against the schooling of girls; cultural differences which lead to segregation of students from mainstream schools or those children from countries displaced by war. It is within this tenor that the importance of addressing the issues pertinent to quality education be asserted in this research. At the core of this study, the type of marginalized groups that is being examined is in essence, no less different from the marginalized groups which are mentioned in the world conventions addressing education for all, in the last 20 years. The Dakar Framework for Action, 2000 states that “...education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners.”²⁴

7.1.1 Parameters of *Inclusion* in Education

In the book *From Them to Us* (1998), Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow put together researches done on the inclusion and exclusion of students in educational processes and practices. This collection of studies addresses the narratives of eight different countries regarding the issue of “inclusive education”. As pointed out clearly, Booth and Ainscow (1998, p.1) explain how the book offers perspectives on new definitions of “special needs” and it looks at “the shaping effect of national and local policies and cultural and linguistic histories on educational practice.” This thesis does not aim to address inclusive education in the traditional lens of special education, but to throw light upon an intrinsic phenomenon of special needs pertaining to the ethnic minority communities in Hong Kong. Although Hong Kong is not a country per se, and much of its political and economic progress depends on a watchful eye from Greater China, it nonetheless deserves a spot on the stage for a new perspective on inclusive education. And in the same spirit of the aforementioned book on the international study of inclusion in education, this thesis also tries to uncover the way in which Hong Kong is “culturally and politically constrained” in the schooling of ethnic minorities.

²³ UNESCO (2000) The Dakar Framework for Action, Education For All: Meeting our collective commitments.

²⁴ Ibid.

In light of the aims and scope of the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, founder of the journal, Professor Roger Slee described that there are many children who are ‘schooled together’ because they are “particular kids with particular identities...outside the mainstream form of education.” He explains that institutions create these forms of exclusion to provide “an education that wasn’t otherwise provided.” Since the meaning of ‘inclusion’ has taken up such broad context, Slee begs the question, “inclusion into what?” The binary therefore of inclusion / exclusion needs a clearer form.

If exclusion education implies a better form of providing SEN children, a form of greenhouse schooling, then by the same token it becomes segregation. Slee elaborates on the issue of segregation:

“...segregation I think is a really easy concept to understand and also a real difficult one simultaneously. The test is hard. The question is: who gets to make a decision for whom?”

What Slee has to say about segregating children in the following is pertinent also to the Hong Kong scenario:

“If you have people segregated into construct one group of deserving kids and another group of kids that we deal with to keep them out of the road of others, that I think is really problematic. If children and parents are taken out of processes and decision-making, about where they get their education, that too is really problematic, so there is controversy.”

As this study has already discussed in previous chapters, there is already a built-in system within the school allocation process in Hong Kong which pigeon holes children into designated schools. It *is* like a type of racial profiling. Otherwise, the system would not be feeding on itself as more and more designated schools have propped up since the start of this research. What Slee has offered with regard to exclusion is that:

“exclusion will happen to different groups of people over time, as a reflection of different social movements and global. To that extent, there will always be a need to research into how these exclusions happen, and the inclusive question is, what are we going to do about it, given that we know that?”

The term inclusive education however, has evolved into more diverse definitions around the world. Miles and Singal (2009) queried that there is also a need to look into

the “cultural appropriateness of educational programmes which address social and educational inequities.”²⁵ In other words, although policy makers and practitioners are aware that inclusive education and Education for All (EFA) should be aligned, there is the imperative that the educational needs of marginalized groups should be met by being more coherent and sustainable. Miles’ and Singal’s arguments converged on samples of cases of marginalized groups with special educational needs due to disabilities, or who had intellectual impairments or children who were marginalized as ‘ineducable’. They pointed out that if we dwell too much and too long on ‘individual groupings’ such as marginalized groups with disabilities, we are not really responding to “the needs and concerns of a new global era.” Miles and Singal explained that attention has moved in EFA from the original proposition of gaining access to education, to receiving and *completing* (my italics) quality education. Inclusive education for all means developing appropriate and sustainable policies on teaching and learning. There is a ‘value added’ attribute to inclusive education because it addresses the issues of social justice. There are broader concerns for enhancing better pedagogy and greater competence for both the learner and the teacher. Singal (2004) went on to explain that inclusive education is more than just ‘input’ i.e. access to education, but also about ‘processes’ i.e. teacher training. Hence, for the policy makers and the practitioners alike, there is a greater need to form an alignment in the understanding of the complex concepts of ‘education’, ‘all’ and ‘inclusion’. Only then can context-appropriate and sustainable policies on teaching and learning be drawn. Hence, it is not only pertinent to making education inclusive for all children, but also offering teacher training which gears towards inclusive education. Today’s generations especially those in multi-cultural communities need policy makers and university administration gatekeepers to produce trained teachers sympathetic to the cause for a more inclusive education. More about teacher training will be mentioned in Chapter 8.

7.2 Inclusion in Education

The Assistant Director-General for Education of UNESCO wrote in his 2009 Foreword that one of the aims of inclusive education is to “eliminate exclusion that is a consequence of negative attitudes and a lack of response to diversity in race, economic status, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability” and that “inclusive

²⁵ The Education for All and inclusive education debate: conflict, contradiction or opportunity?; International Journal of Inclusive Education; October 2009.

education is essential to achieve social equity and is a constituent element of lifelong learning.” He also calls for a holistic approach to education reform and this means addressing the challenges in an education system by tackling exclusion. In 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, UNESCO reaffirmed that inclusion is a process which addresses and responds to the diversity of needs of all children. There is also an urgent need to reduce and eliminate exclusion within and from education. The outline which UNESCO produced for inclusive education included several justifications – educational, social and economic. The imperative was to develop ways of teaching that caters to individual differences and change attitudes toward diversity by educating all children together and thereby enhance a non-discriminatory society. The guidelines also stipulate that when we set up a complex system of different types of schools specializing in different groups of children, the cost is greater. Therefore, inclusive education is in the long run more cost effective. Allowing for the increase of designated schools in HK is in other words costing the taxpayers more.

7.2.1 Defining Equity and Equality

If we go further back the timeline, the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) stipulated several points regarding inclusion and equity. Not only are these two aspects in education reciprocal, but also very crucial in the long term well-being of an individual because he or she can improve the quality of life by making informed decisions and develop his or her full capacity. Part of the EFA Global Monitoring Report (*The Quality Imperative* 2004) stressed that “learning should be based on the clear understanding that learners are individuals with diverse characteristics and backgrounds, and the strategies to improve quality should therefore draw on learners’ knowledge and strength.”

The above suggestions for promoting equity are pertinent to this study of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong because the individual differences of these South Asian children are vast and complex. It is interesting to note that Hong Kong is showing signs of going the reverse direction of what UNESCO recommends for inclusion in education. Hong Kong’s number of designated schools which cater for the growing number of ethnic minorities, of which most are South Asians, is still on the increase.

7.3 Inclusive Education in Other Countries

Susie Miles and Nidhi Singal (2009) contended that in the narrowing of the agenda for EFA, there is a human rights perspective which needs commitment. They cite the UK Department for International Development (2006) which stipulates that:

“Education benefits not just children, but families and communities, and whole countries. It improves job chances and prosperity; promotes health and prevents disease.”

Furthermore, Peters (2003) concluded that inclusive education is a complex issue and that there is yet no “coherent approach” to its discourse. Inclusive education can be carried out at various levels which have different objectives. Thus the global needs for inclusive education have “a range of varied motives which reflects different classifications of special educational needs” (Peters, 2003). For example, in India, inclusive education focuses on providing education for disabled children (Singal, 2004). This is also evident in Zambia in which children with special needs are the “sole responsibility of specialist teachers (Miles et al, 2003). On the other hand, Uganda’s policy rhetoric on inclusive education is implemented in a form of “positive discrimination” towards girls in primary schools (Kristensen, 2006). Yet in another context, Thomazet (2009) explained that in France or French-speaking countries, the term ‘integration’ is still preferred. This also applies to Quebec where schooling of children with special education needs means that support is given in a mainstream classroom rather than in a specialized place. Hence, for the French, the term ‘intégration’ means admission for SEN students into an ordinary school. In the 1970’s Quebec closed most of its special schools (Horth, 1998) and ordinary schools had to accept all pupils in spite of their difficulties. It is worth noting however, that such an example of inclusive education in Quebec means admission to a special section of an ordinary school. This special section of the ordinary school has its own separate entrance with little chance of mixing of the students. For the Québécois, ‘intégration’ does not mean inclusive within a classroom setting, but co-existing on the same campus.

Inclusive education can however suffer a backlash. In the 1970’s several San Francisco public schools were sued for failing to meet its obligation to provide equal educational access to the Chinese-speaking community. The Chinese immigrants claimed that their children were disadvantaged because their children could not benefit from schooling in the same way as their native-English-speaking counterparts at school. The rulings of the lower courts were overturned and the US Supreme Court ruled in favour of the plaintiff. The ruling was:

“There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.” (Lau v. Nichols, 1974)

Ironically, equitable treatment is not the same as identical treatment. According to the court, the schools were failing to provide equal access to education simply by offering the same instruction to all students. In this manner of speaking, inclusive education for all Americans, immigrants included, did not provide equitable educational opportunities.

7.4 Inclusive Education in Hong Kong

In light of the above ideas from 7.1 to 7.3, the following part will try to define what inclusive education is in the context of the Hong Kong education system.

7.4.1 Education for *All* in Hong Kong

The NSS curriculum is the greatest move in education re-structuring since the return of HK to the Mainland. The new system not only tries to be global in its outlook by mimicking the International Baccalaureate, but it also maintains strong overtones of Chinese patriotism. As already mentioned in the earlier chapters, not only is Chinese language made compulsory, the introduction of Liberal Studies (Appendix 1.8) is a clear sign that transfusion of Chinese national pride starts with the schools. The agenda is upfront and not hidden at all. Education for *all* children in HK includes embracing not only the linguistic side of the culture but also the political and historical aspects of China. This is the discourse that Foucault spoke of i.e. the discourse of the dominant ruling party. HK’s historical change with the handover is part of its social transformation. And HK’s reality in post-1997 is shaped in the political and economic interests of China. Hence there is more to just making education inclusive for all ethnic minorities in HK, because on a wider scope, the ethnic minorities should also be ready to embrace the Chinese completely by being part of that discourse. Before inclusive education for NCS students can work, they have to want to be included in the Chinese agenda first.

For the purposes of re-defining the parameters of inclusive education, the pertinent ideas raised by Thomas and Loxley will be adapted here. The term inclusive education

is often juxtaposed with integrated education and special education. In a study by Gary Thomas and Andrew Loxley (2001), described inclusive education as something more than just integration. They elaborated that inclusive education is about “extending the comprehensive ideal in education”. The term inclusion encompasses a more complex range of contexts which includes political, social, psychological and educational parameters. Thomas and Loxley went further to redefine the parameters of inclusive to mean “an education system in which tolerance, diversity and equity are striven for.”

However, we need to first redefine other aspects which ‘spin off’ from the notion of inclusion. Inclusion in the broadest sense means “Education for All” as stipulated in UNESCO. For example, in many studies or recommendations which focus on inclusive education, the argument for special education needs also falls within the parameters of inclusion. Special education needs (SEN) oftentimes denotes having impairments - physical or mentally challenged students who require trained teachers to not only deal with instilling knowledge or skills for SEN students, but also having to deal with the students’ individual pathology due to a *medical deficit* (Slee, 1998). Hence, in such circumstances, special education needs refer to those students who require special attention as a result of a physical or mental disability that may hinder schooling or learning alongside mainstream students. Special needs here mean the call for extra attention due to medical or clinical reasons. For example, paraplegics in wheelchairs need a special programme for physical education; or students who have Down’s syndrome, a lower IQ and acute myopia need to have teachers who have received special teacher training and the experience to handle such kinds of special needs.

The perspectives of disability and special education needs therefore require further scrutiny because the very notion of inclusive education draws upon itself other perspectives of ‘disabled’ and ‘special’. As generic as these terms may seem, they also call for an inclusionary mindset which presents ‘disability’ or ‘special’ as a socially contrived construct (Slee, 1998). Thus with respect to this study, there are ‘special needs’ for the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong because of their ‘disability’ which is not being able to use the Chinese language to further increase what Bourdieu coined as, “cultural capital”. Thus Slee’s (1998) stipulation on the notion of ‘disability’ is, “a socially contrived construct, which is deployed against minorities enforcing social marginalization.” Inclusive education of the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong means

including them in the preparation for lifelong learning skills to ‘survive’ in Hong Kong so that they can “live and work in dignity” (EFA 1990). The social order in Hong Kong excludes many ethnic minorities from fully realizing their potential as professional contributing individuals because inclusive education is not clearly defined in the curriculum. The result of which is a kind of social marginalization quite unique to Hong Kong. The initial results of the recent Education Reform will make its first wave in terms of secondary school graduates in 2012. The discussion about inclusive education cannot disengage itself from social and political issues pertaining to the recent policy changes in Hong Kong’s educational setting. To elaborate, the latest Hong Kong Education Reform affects all students, ethnic minority students included. Thus with the new revamp in curriculum, education is not for *all* in HK. Tomlinson (1987) explained that it is useful to interpret events in the complex area of special education needs. One of the issues she critiques is that it is easier to examine social processes when we look at how ‘achievement’ is defined. However, she also queries:

Who, for example, decides what achievement is in a society where the highest achievers are almost always white, upper- or middle-class males? Why does being a poor reader and working class seem to have much more serious and long-term social consequences than being a poor reader and upper or middle class? (Tomlinson 1987)

Drawing upon the above, we can somewhat conclude a similar rhetoric when we think about the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Only this time, we factor in the racial identity of the Hong Kong citizen. In other words, Tomlinson’s question can be adapted as: Why does being a poor reader in Chinese language and working class seem to have much more serious and long-term social consequences for say, a Pakistani or Filipino in Hong Kong? The more serious and long-term social consequences for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong is the inability to cash in on their social and cultural capital because they will always remain on the bottom rung of any career ladder. Since achievement is defined by the number of passes earned at HKCEE and HKAL, the education atmosphere in Hong Kong circumvents a naturally competitive arena which only welcomes privileged players. What comes to my mind as researcher is the 2004 theatre production, *The History Boys* written by Alan Bennett. It is a story about a group of boys in England preparing for their A-Level exams. They are of course, white English boys preparing for the Oxbridge examinations. Among the many other themes embedded in this play, the plot is about a group of boys whom Tomlinson might refer

to as “white upper-middle class high achievers”. The spin off question from *the History Boys* that demands an answer is: Why are there so few south Asian high achievers in Hong Kong? In other words, has the Hong Kong education system failed to cater for the special needs of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong? Tomlinson also argued about how critical theorists offer answers to ‘why children fail’. Her conclusion is not new knowledge. The intrinsic reasons for failures rest in the social, economic and political structures of a society. However, such is the viewpoint of critical theorists. They question the deficit model of children, as Tomlinson explains, by which negative properties intrinsic to children are assumed. Examples of these intrinsic negative properties are low IQ, disability or inability. And these properties or impairments are responsible for the child’s educational failure. However, these reasons also cannot be disengaged from the “way that education often helps to reproduce the children of black, minorities and working-class into inferior, powerless, social positions” (Tomlinson 1987). Paul E Willis expounded on this similar idea in his book, *Learning to Labour*. In it, he argued how “middle class kids got middle class jobs is how others let them” and how “working class kids got working class jobs is why they let themselves.” In other words, children learn disempowerment just as they can learn empowerment. In the context of this study, as expressed by some of the interviewees in this research, there are strong opinions towards what kinds of “negative properties” (as coined by Tomlinson) ethnic minority students in Hong Kong have. This will be further discussed in Chapter 8 which will tease out whether or not Hong Kong is inadvertently producing more and more disempowered ethnic minority children.

7.5 Conclusion – Opportunity or Oppression?

In conclusion, the discourse of a dominant group remains strong as long as the dominant group constructs dominant stereotypes. Dominant stereotypes in this context mean the contrived perceptions that EM students in HK are lesser in aptitude. To revise what was discussed earlier, EFA and inclusive education as recommended by UNESCO, needs greater collaboration and synergy. In the context of Hong Kong, the NAS is a new attempt to streamline the transition of formative years schooling into tertiary education. But the concept of EFA and inclusive education as described in recent global initiatives are not yet clearly spelt out in the ‘inclusiveness’ of *all* students in Hong Kong. Thus initiatives should mean more than just access to education, but also needs to address a greater collaboration between policy makers and practioners. The rise of designated schools in Hong Kong is a new form of

exclusionary practice – not inclusion – and the NAS is allowing exclusion to propagate. We have to probe further whether segregation of ethnic minority children into designated schools in Hong Kong is the answer to special education needs of EM students. Although SEN is catered for, it is done so in the name of segregation which is a different of labelling with strong racial prejudice.

The NSS curriculum does offer equity to all students in Hong Kong in terms of entrance requirements for further vocational course or HE. But this applies to only those students who have already started on an ‘equal’ footing in which Chinese is already their mother tongue. Hence to re-cap the initial research question in this thesis as to what kinds of opportunities do EM students have for further education, the answer is straightforward. For as long as students (ethnic minority or otherwise) opt to take the HKDSE, the opportunities are there for them to compete for a place at HE in Hong Kong as long as they meet the necessary entrance requirements for the programme they seek to enrol in. But as Dr. Liang of MIC school mentioned, the opportunities for further education is already blocked; for at the very beginning, EM students are not expected to reach the same standard of Chinese as their Chinese counterparts.

In his comment on the issues which surround segregation, Slee (2009) remarked that “there’s always been a controversy around the relationship between that which is described as inclusive education, and traditional forms of special education.” SEN in Hong Kong has taken on new parameters because the teaching and learning of Chinese as a second language should also be considered as a ‘special need’ for the growing numbers of non-Chinese children in Hong Kong. Their disability is in their being culturally and politically constrained from mainstream schools and this is quickly becoming a long haul problem for Hong Kong.

The learning of Chinese as a second language *is* a special need in Hong Kong. For ethical reasons, although it is challenging to implement, it does not mean it should not be done. Hong Kong has no excuse to say that it does not have the funds to initiate this. Inclusive education in Hong Kong must address the special education needs of the Chinese linguistic disability of ethnic minorities. There is a pressing need for the Hong Kong government to take full initiative and responsibility in ensuring that the South Asian children in Hong Kong do not remain marginalized or disadvantaged in their Chinese language ability. Regardless of ethnicity or national origins, non-Chinese students in Hong Kong need the Chinese linguistic

skills necessary to become *productive* members of society. Linguistic proficiency in Chinese is essential since it is in Hong Kong, among the most important skills and it is a necessary tool for equality of opportunity in Hong Kong.

The four research questions put forward in Chapter One are addressed but only somewhat resolved. I consider them only somewhat tackled because based on the collected narratives of the gatekeepers and ‘outsiders’ interviewed, the implied equity in the NAS reveals that a looming vicious cycle of exclusion in education is not being addressed by EB in earnest. The initial question seeks answers for further education opportunities for ethnic minorities who live in HK. Further education opportunities are available, although not always within reach. And in fact, further education opportunities are plenty, but only for those who have reached above and beyond middle class income groups. Many ethnic minority Hong Kongers, however, belong to the lower income group. There are more answers to the second research question as the student informants have revealed in the interviews. On the one hand, they find themselves ‘taken care of’ in a designated school so that the gap of learning Chinese as a second language is lessened. On the other hand, ethnic minority children who wish to pursue education beyond secondary school boundaries find it very challenging to leap over the hurdle of the exit exam and into higher education because they have already hit the glass ceiling of schooling which is the end of secondary school. Slee (2009) contested that any “one form” of school is not adequate “for a whole range of students with different needs.” In a designated school, there are those on one end of the pole who are like Cherise and Aisha. In spite of the HK curriculum and their narrow choice of subjects, Cherise and Aisha are able to reach HE via the UGC subsidised places. For those who want to enter a UGC-subsidised place in HE, but are unsuccessful, they have to take a detour via an Associate Degree programme giving up. From another perspective, the challenges are not unique within or amongst the EM students themselves because they are segregated into a comfort zone. The ‘apartheid’ setting gives them an unrealistic perspective of the level of competitiveness in pursuing HE. This unrealistic perspective stems from a kind of homogenous setting where the EM students do not have much exposure to Chinese peer influence (and vice versa) in their formative years as an adolescent. The comfort zone setting is ironically an oppressive setting, but many residents of the EM community do not understand the complex nature of how disadvantageous it can be for students to attend a designated school. Only after graduating from secondary school do EM students realize the *unique* challenges they face. The informants in this case study described that they only realized after graduation that their

alma mater turned out to be a deficit exclusive school of ethnic minorities. Not only did these hard-working students miss out on integration, they also realized that the lack of proficiency in Chinese language was prohibitively punishing because their road to further education or job-seeking is curbed by their own inadequacies ‘imposed’ on them.

The third research question has more straightforward answers as opposed to the other questions. The immediate response of the EB in working towards the educational provision for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong in the education policies is what Gillborn (2009) coined as “add-ons”. He described that there will be special initiatives here and there, but could be short-lived and soon forgotten. He went further to explain that policy makers are more concerned with maintaining equilibrium, but that they are not serious in reducing oppression by addressing race inequalities. On the one hand, there will be debates about social mobility or the state of economic gaps found in students from the lower income group against those who can enjoy the privileges of an elite school, but on the other hand, there will be no “meaningful moves” from the government (Gillborn 2009). The foremost concern that should be addressed is the approval of the ever growing number of designated schools in Hong Kong. Gillborn (2009) mentioned how in the UK, ‘setting by ability’ has also sparked much debate. There are black students in a UK school setting who “are disproportionately put in the bottom groups where they cover less of the curriculum” and this applies to classroom settings. The similarity of situations can also be found in Hong Kong, but to a larger extent more severe because we speak of a whole school that is set aside due to their ‘ability’ or rather, their ‘inability’ in the Chinese language. The problem of setting and streaming is succinctly expressed by Gamoran (2000) below,

“when educators divide students by achievement levels, they also tend to segregate them by race, ethnicity, and social class. Because of inequality in the wider society, test scores tend to be stratified along these dimensions, so classes restricted to high-achieving students tend to have a higher number of majority-race and privileged social class students relative to their proportion in the overall student population of the school. Correspondingly, minority and disadvantaged students tend to be overrepresented in low-level classes” (p 2)

In short, the EB is trying to resolve problems raised by offering piece-meal solutions such as passing double standard recognition of Chinese Language qualification in the form of IGCSE or HKCEE / HKDSE. Ethnic minority students can opt for either exam, but in reality the IGCSE level of Chinese is insufficient for HE requirements. This brings us to the final

research question pertaining to empowerment of ethnic minority students. Policy makers in Hong Kong should not think that designated schools effectively allow teachers to target students' learning needs. These settings do not mitigate inequality, but does the reverse. Students are already given the short end of the stick by being a non-Chinese growing up in Hong Kong. And students like Cherise and Aisha or Juan who are essentially high achievers get trapped in a system that not only exacerbates inequalities in assessment but also condones social segregation.

The label, 'Non-Chinese Speaking' or NCS Hong Kong students as opposed to 'international' students is the first tier of valuation. As the title of this project suggests, "Dividing Classes" does not only imply how Chinese Language classes or designated schools have been divided in Hong Kong. The second tier of valuation implies how the educational glass ceiling for ethnic minorities hinders them from an upward socio-economic class. The stagger in this upward mobility can be retraced to the provision of, or lack of, Chinese language skills and the policies which govern the entrance to tertiary education in Hong Kong.

A review of Fig. 3.1f, which encapsulates the harsh reality that EM students face in the Hong Kong NAS, suggests that this new educational revamp is not a viable system. To educate is to develop the faculties of a person. Unless we are speaking about the 'Technologies of the Self', by which Foucault describes the "autonomous" individual's capacity for self-control with regard to how this autonomy is linked to forms of economic exploitation and political rule, then Hong Kong is violating the rights of the non-Chinese student who studies in a designated school. In this understanding, the EM students are subordinated people because the NAS represents educational domination in favour of the Chinese students. The EM students have little room to manoeuvre any form of choice with regard to schooling options. If the NAS is sustained, the way in which this government rules is regressive. Based on Fig. 3.1f, the dotted circle should be non-existent. But the NAS theorizes an asymmetrical power-relationship, and not only is there a handful of designated schools in HK, the rise in numbers of such schools is at an alarming rate.

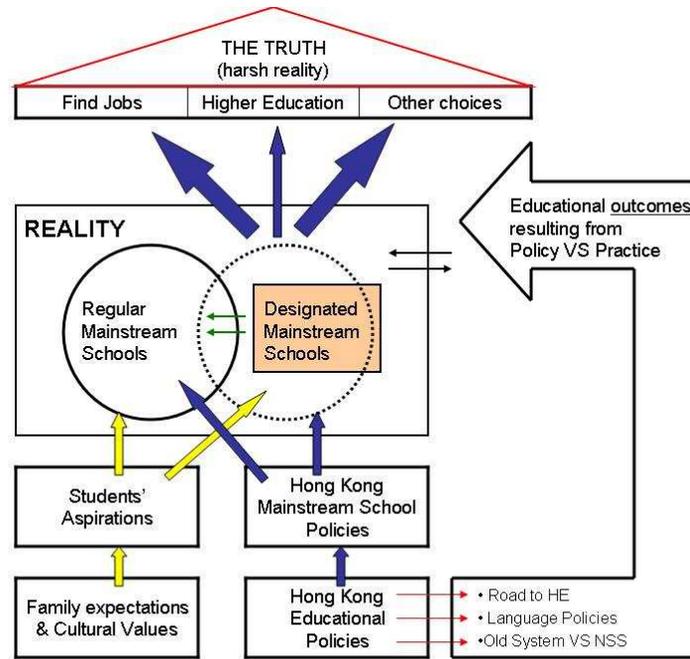


Fig. 3.1f Harsh Truth for HE Chances for NCS Ethnic Minority Students
(See *Legend* in Appendix 3.1)

Having revisited the four research questions and the above diagram (Fig. 3.1f), this chapter draws to a close and the next chapter points to a way forward and will try to move on to what suggestions can be made to prove how Hong Kong can be more global in its education policies.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE WAY FORWARD

8.1 Recapitulation and the Race to Re-harness Education Opportunities

Chapters 2, 5, 6 and 7 raised pertinent questions revolving around linguistic equity, cultural capital, the idea of power/knowledge struggle, and also re-interpreting social justice in the form of inclusive education. In addressing these thematic issues, this thesis has looked at how ethnic minority children in Hong Kong thrive in segregated schools. It is improper to claim that all Hong Kong resident ethnic minorities are oppressed handfuls who are unaware of their education rights and rights to universal suffrage in Hong Kong. But on the other hand, these smaller ethnic communities in Hong Kong are far from being emancipated in their socio-political status. With the limited number of informants and the challenges of being an independent researcher, Chapter 3 addressed the kinds of limitations that this study has.

Since designated schools only results in further segregation of the ethnic minorities, they are further corralled into stigmatised minority communities. These schools have further sprouted into the outer areas of the New Territories, where there are more government public housing estates for the lower income families. The mere rise in numbers further complicates a new form of institutionalized racism. There is a need to quickly curb this from becoming a phenomenon before they turn into an ‘accepted norm’ in the Hong Kong education setting. Hong Kong should not condone this because EM students should be given the tools to re-harness education opportunities.

Hong Kong is global in her acceptance of those who can measure up to a kind dividend to the economy of Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong is not global when it comes to embracing the international community, in the likes of the South Asian community in its education policies. The kind of apartheid education that Sweeting (1992) mentioned is still present and there are no signs of it being tackled with a clear and long-term plan from the EB for true academic equity that can enhance social equality.

8.2 Rebranding the Designated School

The Head Teacher, Dr Liang of MIC expressed at one interview that it would be ideal if one day there will be no more designated schools like MIC. Ideally, Dr. Liang said, if every mainstream school accepted 5 to 10 students from a designated school, there will no longer be this blanket of designated being “lesser” because in truth, the EM students cannot receive equal treatment when it comes to Chinese language learning. Only 5 percent of the HK population are non-Chinese, and out of that percentage is South Asian or Asian resident children of schooling age which amounts to only around 10,000. Thus it is not surprising that immediate changes are not ensured because the ‘demand’ for all ethnic minority children to be educated as fluent Chinese language learners is not high. Ethnic minority residents in HK do not rake in as much income as opposed to the more productive community of the expatriates in HK. In fact, there are also grassroots minorities who are reliant on government welfare as well. It seems that this minuscule fraction of HK residents is not a priority for a long-term investment such as designing for them an alternate Chinese language curriculum in the package of second language acquisition.

What the EB can think of doing however is to take the ‘ready-made’ designated schools and rebrand them. In universities the world over, a lot is spent in marketing to rebrand their schools. This is an important move when a university wants to change its image for various reasons, in order to increase the number of student admissions. Granted, HK taxpayers might not want to spend money in revamping the image of a designated school. But like what happened to MIC when she turned into a designated school almost overnight, the same could be done if all designated schools collaborated to rebrand themselves as an exclusive Chinese language school. In other words, rather than being branded as “designated” which denotes a less glamorous status, the image of being “exclusively Chinese” and yet international can pull off a completely new dimension of an image of a sought-after school.

Cucchiara (2008) drew on observations and interviews that northeastern American middle and upper class parents are targeted clientele who can “gain and retain positions of influence over the direction” of a school. Thus there are schools in “regenerated cities” that are rebranded and promoted to these affluent families. Understandably, this will further marginalize lower income groups and minority parents. It is like “reinscribing existing status positions and inequalities” (Cucchiara 2008 165) by targeting wealthy families. This may be true, especially when schools are merged or “taken over” by another larger group or groups

of schools. In Hong Kong, one such school is the Portuguese Community Schools, Inc. Escola Camoes built in the 1950s. In 1996 the well-established Po Leung Kuk charity group took over Escola Camoes and rebranded it as “the pioneer DSS primary school in Hong Kong” and renamed it as Po Leung Kuk Camoes Tan Siu Lin Primary School. The rebranded school takes pride in claiming that it is truly geared towards nurturing global citizens because it has “created a multi-cultural cosmopolitan atmosphere” for both Chinese and non-Chinese students.

Rebranding does not mean only the change of a logo or refurbishment of school premises, or for that matter, knocking down a whole school and rebuilding a newer campus. A few DSS Band 1 schools have in the recent 10 years, and as recently as 2010, done this in Hong Kong, namely, Diocesan Girls’ School (DGS), Diocesan Boys’ School (DBS) and St. Paul’s Co-Educational Primary School (SPCPS). These are a number of DSS schools in HK which already thrive on a legacy of having an ‘international outlook’ and are also Band 1 schools that have further undergone extensive refurbishment and more than a simple cosmetic campus change. These schools²⁶ are the well established schools which are very select in their intake of students. Hence, a student must already be an all-rounder – academically and otherwise – before being offered an opportunity for an interview. Students from such schools in HK are those which Cucchiara (2008) refers to as children from “professional families”. And as seen in Chapter 3, an EM family is further segregated from an opportunity to enrol into these types of Band 1 schools because of the nature of their annual household income.

English has always been the language of the educated upper class in HK, and all upper echelons require a high standard of English. The common language of communication in most designated schools is English and if the tables can be turned, it will be the Chinese students who will want to consider enrolling in an exclusive Chinese Language school which already has a major population of English speaking students. These once-upon-time designated schools can be rebranded into being openly exclusive, but not segregated. The designated school is “othered”²⁷ by being racially profiled, but an exclusive Chinese Language school can be rebranded as a language college and thereby raising its profile and status because it has a specific purpose and thereby validates itself. The ‘class identity’ is

²⁶ DGS was established in 1860; DBS was established in 1869 and SPCPS was established in 1915

²⁷ The idea behind this word is borrowed from Gayatri Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?"--originally published in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg's *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (1988)

reversed and no longer comes across as a school which people flee from but a school which people will covet being a part of, because the Chinese Language school now as a status of specialization. And more importantly, the purpose, aim, mission or what-have-you is much clearer for the public to know about.

Most of the hardware is already there in a designated school. You have your dedicated team of experienced teachers who are already very familiar with the system and the needs of EM or NCS students. And in the process of re-branding, the ‘whole package’ is redone by including a rigorous teacher-training programme for earning the qualifications of Teaching of Chinese as a Second Language. This evolved Chinese Language School therefore can also be the source of practicum for the HK Institute of Education and the various Universities around HK. The Chinese Language School can be a training school specifically with foreigners in mind. The principles of teaching English as a second language are similar to the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

The HKCEE will be completely nullified as a mechanism for students to earn their secondary schooling qualification in 2012. Thus by introducing a lesser equivalent of Chinese language learning and its assessment for NCS, is a temporary non-solution to pacify the requests of those who want Chinese literacy for EMs in HK. In other words, by the time the NSS Chinese syllabus enters its full swing phase, the curriculum for NCS students who want to sit for the Chinese Language exam has to be reviewed again.

In so far as the IGCSE Chinese Language syllabus is concerned, there are no proper textbooks recommended by the EB, or standard teaching tools for teachers to use. Any teachers involved in the teaching of Chinese Language to EMs in HK are left to their own creativity and pedagogy to enhance NCS students to become Chinese literate. This becomes patchwork teaching and frontline teachers have to brave stumbling over obstacles of teaching NCS students without direct support from EB. With proper channelling of resources from the EB and the government along with expertise from qualified academic personnel in the teaching of Chinese language, several facets in making education inclusive can take place at the same time. For one, it is revamping schooling policies so that minorities are *more* included, and not offered piece-meal policies of after school support for Chinese as a second language learning. Another is the expansion of teacher training in Chinese as a second language acquisition. HK can set the stage to be Asia Pacific’s forerunner in teacher training

for Chinese Language acquisition. Aspiring Chinese language teachers can make HK a choice to receive teacher training in ‘Teaching Chinese as a Second Language’ (TCSL) or we can stylistically change this acronym to TeCSL, to make it more pronounceable. There is a niche that HK can carve out for herself so that Chinese as a foreign language does not need to be a second language course which people enrol for only at tertiary level for self-interest at language centres, which is similar to what the Chinese University of HK is offering right now. Chinese can be introduced to school age children who are from all sorts of ethnic backgrounds. The Chinese language is an instrument for job-seeking in HK. It is as much a skill as knowing how manoeuvre machines. In the following section, ‘Content and Language Integrated Learning’ (CLIL) will be discussed. It is also a way forward for HK if she wishes to truly make Chinese inclusive for NCS students.

8.2.1 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

In the recent Cambridge publication (2010), *CLIL Content and Language Integrated Learning*, the authors Coyle, Hood and Marsh explained that CLIL is a:

“Dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content *and* language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus not only on content, and not only on language. Each is interwoven, even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time.”

The unique approach to CLIL is that it is content-driven, and hence learning in the learner’s ‘foreign language’ or second language, extends the experience of learning because it is different from existing language-teaching approach. In other words CLIL is an educational approach in which “language-supportive methodologies are used which lead to dual-focused form of instruction where attention is given both to the language and the content” (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010). If applied within the context of HK, the EM students can learn their subjects in their ‘foreign language’ which is Chinese. NCS students can for example, study Mathematics in Chinese, thus providing more exposure to the language itself. The unique element of CLIL is that it can be applied in various ways for different types of learners. CLIL is the ‘vehicular language’ in which the student learns the subject. Language is methodically adopted to suit the individual learner. There is now more demands on making Asian, European and heritage language the vehicular language for learning. The authors of the books describe that with globalization and demands of a modern education, CLIL can open doors for immigrants to a better socio-economic and political experience with their nation.

The following quote is taken from the website of the *European Commission for Multilingualism*, on the subject of Language teaching. Its supporters declare that CLIL is possibly the one of the best methods of teaching students from primary school all the way to HE. The principle behind the teaching is that it “involves teaching a curricular subject through the medium of a language other than that normally used. The subject can be entirely unrelated to language learning, such as history lessons being taught in English in a school in Spain.”

The CLIL method is very effective and successful in Europe in the last 10 years. The idea behind this is that instructors or teachers working with CLIL are already experts in their own field or subject rather than traditional language teachers. They are usually fluent speakers of the target language, bilingual or native speakers. The main idea is that the learner is gaining new knowledge about the 'non-language' subject while encountering, using and learning the foreign language.” For example, the EMs in HK can learn Geography in the dominant language of Chinese from teachers who are working with CLIL.

Hargreaves (2003) explained that CLIL cultivates a “cosmopolitan identity” and this is exactly what HK needs. HK is indeed an international city but it is nowhere near being cosmopolitan. Because in being a true global citizen one can generate tolerance of race and gender differences. There is a natural curiosity and willingness when learning and using languages from other cultures. The global citizen also shows tolerance towards excluded groups. This is the reason why the rebranding of designated schools into an exclusive Chinese Language School can be an innovation and the next step in making HK more embracing of excluded groups rather than segregating the EMs.

8.2.2 The Chinese Language School

As a responsible government, Hong Kong has the moral obligation to ensure education for all her citizens without discrimination (Loper, 2004), and bound by other demands such as the Bill of Rights Ordinance, the Basic Law and other international protocols such as the ones laid down by UNESCO. The provision of free education in Hong Kong is now increased to twelve years, which means until the end of secondary school. In

other words, there is no legal right to education after compulsory education ends. The choice of entry into tertiary institutions or HE, however, is arbitrary and no longer the government's obligation to provide further education. Hence it is a challenging issue if ethnic minorities or NGOs who speak on their behalf try to enforce this right in practice. But if ethnic minorities were to truly adapt to life in Hong Kong, the kind of piece-meal solutions such as those mentioned in the previous chapters are not a solution. The mother-tongue teaching policy had already been laid down. In order not to be branded discriminatory, the Hong Kong government needs to show more transparency in its initiatives to provide a comprehensive Chinese Language training for anyone who is given a right of abode in Hong Kong. If it is laid down in policy that education is for *all*, then this should also include preparing *all* primary school age children in HK to be skilled in Chinese language. In the same way Europe, Australia and the US introduce European languages or English to their new immigrants.

The creation of designated schools only results in further segregation of the ethnic minorities because they are corralled into stigmatised minority communities. Thus rather than condoning segregation in the name of being designated, and receiving piece-meal Chinese classes from teachers untrained in second language teaching, these designated schools can be rebranded into an exclusive Chinese Language School that adopts CLIL. In HK, word of mouth goes around very quickly, and savvy Chinese parents alongside expatriates might turn the tables around and opt to send their children to such an exclusive school, because it not only promotes Chinese culture at the top of its agenda, its intake is also international. If an international Chinese language school is founded, and it has a school mission of teaching Chinese as a second language as its priority, it can attract a larger pool of students from various socio-economic backgrounds. Armed with Chinese language acquisition, students then have the power and the option to apply for other schools if they so wish.

The EB can turn a defect into something more lucrative. With so much being brought up by rights groups, now is the best time to advocate exclusive Chinese Language schools – transformed from designated schools. Within one generation (i.e. 12 years), HK will see the fruition of her investments. This is also an excellent opportunity to introduce comprehensive teacher-training programmes in Chinese as a Second Language for aspiring language teachers. Teacher training institutes and universities

should see this as a potential market demand. Offering university programmes such as teaching of Chinese as a second language (TCSL) as opposed to Teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) can be a niche that Hong Kong can carve out for itself. The Chinese language in the global market is a much sought-after skill amongst professionals and laymen alike. Hong Kong remains blinkered if it only sees that investment in Chinese language teaching is for designated children. By adopting CLIL and similar expertise in the teaching of a second language, the mandatory learning of Chinese can make schools exclusive by being inclusive.

Although difficult, it is not impossible to change the mindset of all people in Hong Kong that ethnic minorities are not second class citizens who only deserve second class education. But at the same time, schools must instil in non-Chinese children that the Chinese language is essential in Hong Kong. Ethnic minority children must be taught that cultural capital is their key to other forms of capital that leads to upward socio-economic mobility. Not being Chinese is not an excuse to give up on learning Chinese and both teachers and learners should adjust the teaching and learning attitudes - the thought that Chinese language learning is very difficult to teach and very difficult to learn. The educational system is part of the knowledge / power struggle that shapes the lives of all children and by encouraging EM students to sharpen their Chinese language skills they will not be denied a closer experience of the Chinese culture. Most important of all, for social, economic and ethical reasons, it is imperative the EB put an immediate stop to sanctioning new designated schools.

Sweeting (1992 67) mentioned that “the transient nature of the Hong Kong population has often been used as an excuse to avoid long-term planning and, especially, as a reason to refuse to improve both quantitative and qualitative aspects of education.” However true this may seem, times are moving swiftly and HK will have the third Chief Executive at about the same time as the implementation of the NSS in its full swing. Thus HK has to move away from its own kind of apartheid education (Sweeting 1992 44). In the same way Chinese parents aspired that their children learnt English during the British colonial days, ethnic minority parents also aspire that their children be fluent in Chinese. Hong Kong is a lucrative place to live and work in. It looks like we welcome internationalization only by way of openness to foreign values and norms

as seen in the trajectories of political openness; world markets; cultural impact of other countries and so forth, but in the very essence of whom we have here *at home* – Hong Kong – we have not yet fully embraced the ‘internationalness’ of the diverse ethnicities who can on the contrary, make Hong Kong, “a world city”. In other words, if one immigrates to Hong Kong as a professional or financial investor who can measure self-worth on a monetary scale, then the welcome-to-Hong-Kong mat will be laid down. Hong Kong can and should invest in her South Asian communities by way of education. As long as people in Hong Kong have the right of abode, and even if they have an agenda of transient residence in Hong Kong, the tangible worth of an immigrant, whether or not he or she holds dual identities, should be valued. Only when resident children are comprehensively schooled in a non-biased system can they step into the professional arena of Hong Kong. Perhaps the EB should reconsider its preferences for an “international outlook” as suggested in the NAS. There is already much “internationalness” embedded in this “world city”. Chinese children need not look too far to understand that the South Asian community in Hong Kong is as ‘international’ as the expatriate community.

As a closure, Chapter 9 will revisit the philosophical ideas mentioned in earlier chapters and I will conclude with a strong personal conviction of what lies ahead for a South Asian student who aspires to be part of Hong Kong’s higher education.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

9.1 Dividing Classes

I would like to revisit the ideas of Antonio Gramsci on hegemony, Foucault on governmentality and the power/knowledge binary; and finally end with the arguments of John Rawls on social justice as part of the last few thoughts with regard to this study. In the previous chapter, a few innovative and optimistic ideas were proposed as recommendations for a way forward to ascertain that the ethnic minority communities in Hong Kong are dealt their fair share of education opportunities which would give way to all sorts of infinite possibilities of enjoying the goods of a laissez-faire society.

Looking again at how Hong Kong is going through this major transformation of revamping educational policies to make way for new ones, shows that the new 334 road to a better education is actually a road paved for the bourgeoisie/middle class, the elite and the wealthy. The grassroots majority and the rest of the working class will have to clock in more hours to accumulate more of the very recently implemented HK\$28²⁸ per hour minimum wage in order to pay for an ever increasing schooling expense. Granted, those who earn less than the minimal wage or those families who depend on government welfare can receive token subsidies to pay for other expenses for their children's education. However, just as there are many Chinese families who are not eligible for government financial support, there are also South and South East Asian ethnic minorities who find themselves in a similar predicament when it comes to school-related expenses. How does this entirely tie in with the topic of this research? The answer lies in the very nature of what a segregated school is.

The numbers of designated (or segregated) schools have increased almost three-fold in the last 10 or so years and at the closure point of this research, there are now over 30 of these schools peppered around the poorer districts of Hong Kong. The students who attend these segregated schools often will not be able to completely enjoy the wide range of (optional) learning experiences attached to the new academic structure because the outside-of-classroom activities incur larger expenses. The NCS group which I speak of in this study have a greater

²⁸ The Statutory Minimum Wage came into force on 1 May 2011 and the initial Statutory Minimum Wage rate is \$28 per hour. (<http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/mwo.htm>)

chance of falling into the two categories of a) being ethnically profiled by the EB and b) being in the financially volatile group because long-term high-paying jobs are not frequently offered to the less educated. Gramsci pointed out that the ways of Capitalism entrenches the society further into the controls of economy, politics and violence, and above all, in ideology (Fontana 2008). In other words, the hegemonic culture that dominates a capitalist society is the core values of the bourgeoisie; their values become everyone else's values including the working-class. The working-class learn to shape their identity alongside the bourgeoisie. In doing so, the working-class inadvertently help maintain the status quo rather than revolting against the structure. Rather than being lured into believing that bourgeois values are 'normal' and 'correct', Gramsci argued that the working-class should first come together to produce their own cultural hegemony, and exert their own intellectual and moral leadership so that working-class intellectuals can articulate for the working-class masses. Within the context of this research, Gramsci's ideas throw light upon the crux of the argument of this research in that the few (as opposed to the dominant hegemony) must first come together to form their own class consciousness and emerge above the "consented" coercion. In this perspective the hegemonic language is Chinese. A majority of the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong would argue that Chinese is a challenging language to learn. How then can ethnic minorities grasp the language of power in Hong Kong? To be part of the hegemony is to be tri-lingual and bi-literate. However, based on this study, most of the public, including the middle class and the working-class alike believe and are convinced to believe that because Chinese is difficult to learn, it is better to send the ethnic minorities to segregated schools. In order to 'fit in', one would argue that the minority have to be given the power to understand themselves in the same way the subaltern classes have to struggle to create their own reality in order to understand that the hegemonic language here is Chinese. It is not a proper form of 'value' to believe that one can manage to "get by" even without any Chinese or to "get by" with a very limited Chinese. The question is: do the minorities wish to remain subaltern or do they wish to merge with the dominant hegemony? In order to merge with the dominant hegemony, the wish to be at least bi-literate in both English and Chinese must first be fulfilled.

The more complacent the minority become, the more it is easy to generate what Foucault terms 'docile bodies' – a term which is used in economic or political institutions (Foucault 1975). 'Docile bodies' are a result of how the individuals are "taught" to govern themselves. In other words, people are controlled through institutions. In light of this study, schools or

rather, designated schools are examples of institutions which create their own discourse - creating people (students) that are governable. The members of a designated schools are examples of the subjugated – the docile bodies. And this is how governmentality comes into play. Determining what ethnic minorities have to learn as opposed to what regular mainstream schools learn; or in this case, determine that ethnic minorities *cannot* learn Chinese in contrast to what their Chinese counterparts can learn is an example of the ruling power creating a discourse to justify the norm. The metaphor of the panopticon which Foucault uses when interpreting Bentham’s design can also be further extended in this context. On the one hand, the panopticon describes how a group of prisoners embodies the form of control. The “designated” ethnic minorities also embody a false sense of awareness that these are the best-suited schools for them because, (they are told) that other types of mainstream schools cannot offer them what they “need”. The idea that ethnic minorities are not aware of what other alternatives are out there, makes them an example of the subjugated. If however, at one point in the near future, an ethnic minority knows more (via higher education) i.e. know more about what the real (hegemonic) power is, then this knowledge will form more power to the individual because this is how the power/knowledge binary works. Knowledge leads to power, and more power leads to more knowledge. When one day the ethnic minorities can subvert the discourse, then they can also subvert the power. But that can only happen when ethnic minorities have learnt the dominant hegemonic language which is Chinese.

Schubert (2008) explained that in Bourdieu’s definition of ‘suffering’, “contemporary social hierarchies and social inequality, as well as the suffering that they cause, are produced and maintained less by physical force than by forms of symbolic domination.” This kind of domination is referred to as symbolic violence. In short, language is the symbolic violence and seen as “an instrument of power and action” (Bourdieu and Eagleton 1992). In whichever angle this is viewed, empowerment for the ethnic minorities to be part of Hong Kong’s higher education can only be achieved if this symbolic violence is lifted.

Finally, a walk through John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*. Rawls conception of justice is that people are equal and free. Our freedom consists in our possession of 2 moral powers. These are having the “capacity for a sense of justice *and* for a conception of the good.” Rawls believed that in order to be equal, we must also be “fully cooperating members of society.” In the context of this study, Rawls’ *Two Principles of Justice* offers an illustration of a political

conception of justice based on a) that “each person has an equal right to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties which is compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for all” and b) that social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions. First, they must be “attached to offices and positions open to *all* under conditions of fair equality of opportunity”; and second, “they must be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society.”

The above equal basic liberties include 1) freedom of thought, 2) liberty of conscience, 3) political liberties, 4) freedom of association, 5) freedoms specified by the liberty and integrity of the person and 6) rights and liberties covered by the rule of law. Another of Rawls’ ideas that can be considered here in this study is the *Difference Principle* as well. The explanation of which means: “inequalities in the distribution of goods is only permitted if those inequalities benefit the worst-off members in society.” That is to say, “every member in society has an equal claim on their society’s goods.”

In a warped manner, Hong Kong can perhaps fulfil Rawls’ Second Principle of Justice i.e. the *Difference Principle*, but not the First Principle of Justice – the principle of equal liberty. To shed light on this, one needs to briefly appreciate the short history of Hong Kong after the handover in 1997. Five years after the British government returned a borrowed Hong Kong to China, the HK government released proposals for the anti-subversion law. This is known as the ‘Hong Kong Basic Law Article 23’ or simply coined as Article 23. The gist of which is stated as below:

“The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People’s Government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies.”

The debates surrounding Article 23 ignited much angst and the controversy gave way to an unprecedented march to the streets on 1 July, 2003. Over half a million people thronged the streets towards the Government Offices in Central, fearing that the law would be enacted. The “glaring ambiguities” embedded within Article 23, as quoted from the chairperson at the time, Alan Leong of the Hong Kong Bar Association, and the unsaid but implied overtones was enough to spark off more fear and more restlessness among the Hong Kong people after the return to the Motherland. China’s track record with human rights issues needs no further

elaboration here. By sliding off slightly on a tangent, in order to understand Hong Kong's reality on the political arena, the hypothetical negotiations that Rawls revived can now shed a little more light towards Hong Kong's inchoate and at the same time ambivalent attitude towards democracy and freedom of speech. Although Article 23 has been shelved indefinitely because of other more far-reaching and potential repercussions, such as the threat to Hong Kong's position as Asia's financial centre, this red letter day in 2003 awoke Hong Kong into reconsidering her positionality in reaffirming her identity in this 'One Country, Two System' framework. After so many years of living as the colonized, but with enough freedom to appreciate some level of personal autonomy, Hong Kong realizes that the Article 23 scare is enough to awaken the people into seeing themselves as docile bodies who must not give into subjugation. From the British Empire to the Chinese supremacy, Hong Kong is warped in a frigid zone of people wanting some kind of cultural hegemony but unsure of how to fight for it. Hong Kong citizens are still groping for their own 'technologies of power'. In conclusion therefore, to the quest for social justice for the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, the picture is bleak. Hong Kong is very generous by nature when we speak about caring for the disadvantaged, but to also give a voice to the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong is not something that will happen in the near future. The socio-political agenda that Hong Kong is now attending to has very little room for ethnic minorities who do not speak the hegemonic language. As this thesis title proposes, "Dividing Classes" is not simply the metaphor for segregated schools, but also the metaphor for us and them.

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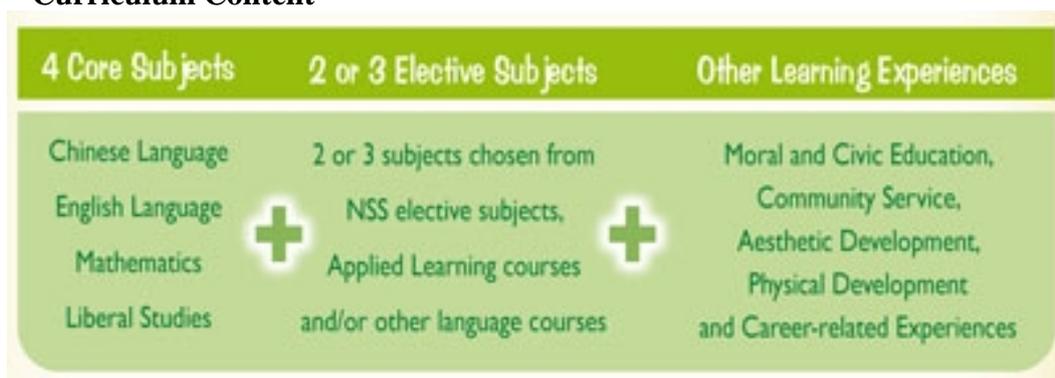
Appendix 1.1

Introduction of New Academic Structure

Globalisation, the advancement of information technology and the development of knowledge-based economies in a climate of global economic restructuring have brought about unprecedented worldwide changes. To maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness in international arena, Hong Kong citizens need to enhance their adaptability, creativity, independent thinking and life-long learning capabilities. The New Academic Structure (NAS) implemented since September 2009 principally aims to prepare students for such future challenges. Under the NAS, all students will have the opportunity to study up to Secondary 6. Students with different abilities, interests and aptitudes can give full play to their talents through the broad and balanced senior secondary curriculum.

Apart from taking the four core subjects (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies), students can choose 2 to 3 elective subjects. These elective subjects can be chosen from NSS elective subjects of different Key Learning Areas, Applied Learning courses and/or other language courses. The curriculum breaks the barrier of traditional arts and science streaming. The subjects are diversified. They suit different students' interest, aptitudes and abilities. Through the participation in Other Learning Experiences, students can acquire learning experiences of moral and civic education, community services, physical and aesthetic education and career-related experiences, etc. The knowledge and learning experiences in NSS curriculum are broader and richer than previous curricula. Students' pathways for further education and employment are thus more diversified. The new curriculum can also foster a broader scope of views and life-long learning abilities for students.

Curriculum Content



Key Learning Area	NSS Subject (Core and Elective)
Chinese Language Education	• Chinese Language (core subject)
	• Chinese Literature
English Language Education	• English Language (core subject)
	• Literature in English
Mathematics Education	• Mathematics (core subject) – including the Compulsory Part and two Extended Modules: Calculus and Statistics, Algebra and Calculus
	• Liberal Studies (core subject)
Personal, Social and Humanities Education	• Chinese History
	• Economics
	• Ethics and Religious Studies
	• Geography
	• History
	• Tourism and Hospitality Studies
Science Education	• Biology
	• Chemistry
	• Physics
	• Science (Integrated, Combined)
Technology Education	• Business, Accounting and Financial Studies
	• Design and Applied Technology
	• Health Management and Social Care
	• Information and Communication Technology
	• Technology and Living
Arts Education	• Music
	• Visual Arts
Physical Education	• Physical Education

Applied Learning

Areas of Studies	
• Creative Studies	• Services
• Media and Communication	• Applied Science
• Business, Management and Law	• Engineering and Production

Other Languages

French	German	Hindi	Japanese	Spanish	Urdu
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*School will offer different NSS elective subjects depending on individual schools' context and students' needs. Some schools may also offer Applied Learning courses and/or other language courses.

Source: <http://334.edb.hkedcity.net/EN/intro.php?code=3>

Appendix 1.1 Hong Kong's Education Highlights

Appendix 1.2

Types of Services	Name of Services	Target of Services	Application Method, Contact and Concerned Website
Curriculum Development	Support network (Education services for non-Chinese-speaking children)	All schools with an intake of non-Chinese-speaking (NCS) children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill in the Application Form, & fax it to Placement and Support Section (Fax: 2116 0531) ▪ Tel: 2863 4713 ▪ URL: http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=4740&langno=1
	On-site curriculum development support service (Language support services) Support focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Catering of learning differences ▪ Raising of teaching & learning effectiveness 	All schools, particularly those with an intake of NCS children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For details, pls refer to EDB CM No. 52/2010 or call 2152 3227 / 2152 3215 ▪ Online application system ▪ URL: http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeid=3565&langno=1

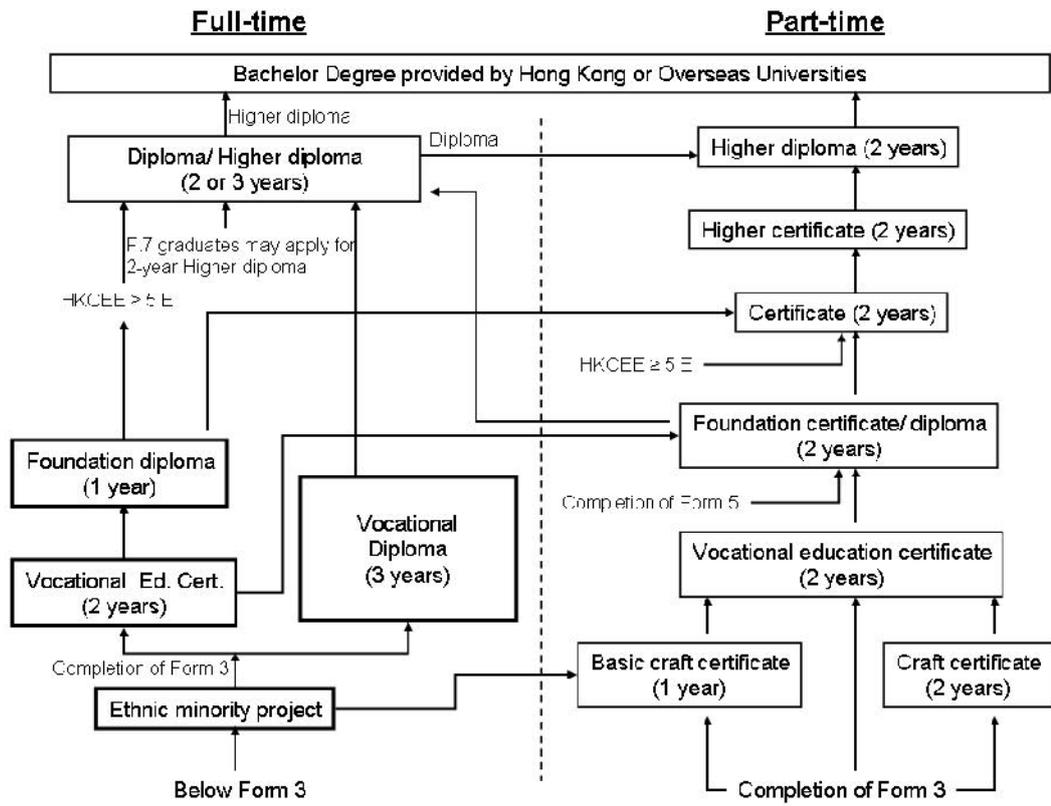
Appendix 1.2 Summary of Specific Support Services

Appendix 1.3

Institution	Program Title	Specific Requirements (HKALE)	Specific Requirements (HKCEE)	Remarks
HKBU	BDDc (Hons) in Communication – Broadcast Journalism Concentration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grade D or above in AS Chin Lang & Culture; & Grade E or above in AS UE; & Grade E or above in 2 AL subjects, or Grade E or above in 1 AL + 2 AS subjects 	Chin Lang cannot be substituted	
HKBU - SCE	Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education	---	Grade E or above in 5 subjects including Chin & Eng	<p>Have obtained the Higher Diploma of Early Childhood Education certificate (HKBU/HKBUSCE)</p> <p>Possess Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) or Child Care Worker (CCW) Qualifications</p> <p>Work experiences may also substitute the above under special circumstances</p>
HKU	Bachelor of Science	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grade E or above in AS Chin Lang & Culture; & Grade E or above in AS UE; & Grade E or above in at least 1 AL & 1 AS subjects (Physics or Engineering Science), Chemistry, Biology, Pure Math, Applied Math, Math & Stat, Computer Studies, Computer App, Geog or Econ 	HKCEE weighs ~25% in admission	Students with other subjects will be considered individually
CUHK	Bachelor of Laws (LLB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grade E or above in AS Chin Lang & Culture; & Grade E or above in AS UE; & Grade E or above in 2 AL subjects, or Grade E or above in 1 AL + 2 AS subjects 	Grade E or above in at least 7 subjects (in one sitting) including 2 language subjects (Chin Lang, Eng Lang, French or German)	A pass grade or above in a Chinese subject in other recognized public exams to substitute HKCEE Chin (only under very special circumstances)
PolyU HK	Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Food Safety & Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grade E or above in AS Chin Lang & Culture, or in AL Chin Lit; or Grade E or above in AS UE; & Grade E or above in 2 AL subjects, or Grade E or above in 1 AL + 2 AS subjects 	<p>Grade E or above in 5 subjects</p> <p>Grade D or above in an HKCEE language subject other than Chin & Eng (For applicants who have not taken Chin since F.5)</p>	Level 2 or above for attempts at Eng Lang & Chin Lang in 2007 & after OR Chin Lang requirement: GCE O-Level/ GCSE/ IGCSE Grade C

Appendix 1.3 Samples of Entrance Requirements for an Undergraduate Programme

Appendix 1.4



Appendix 1.4 Alternative (Vocational) Study Path for Ethnic Minority Students in Hong Kong

Appendix 1.5

Programme	Institution	Tuition fees (per annum)
Undergraduate degree	HKU	\$42,100
Associate degree	SPACE	\$49,800
Undergraduate degree	CUHK	\$42,100
Associate degree	TWGHCC	\$46,000 - \$48,000
Undergraduate degree	HK Poly U	\$42,100
Associate degree	HKCC	\$47,400
Undergraduate degree	HKBU	\$42,100
Associate degree	CIE	\$45,000
Undergraduate degree	City U	\$42,100
Associate degree	CCCU	\$31,575 / \$45,000
Undergraduate degree	Lingnan U	\$42,100
Associate degree	CCLU	\$50,000

Appendix 1.5 Table showing 2009-2010 Tuition Fees of some of the Statutory Universities for Degree and Sub-degree Programmes

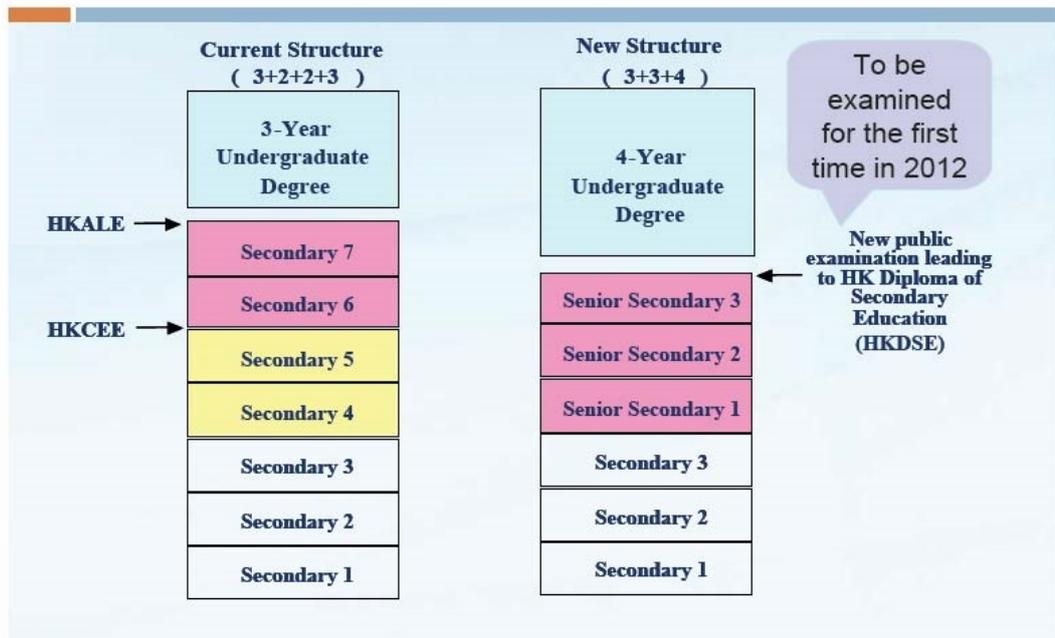
Appendix 1.6

Institution	Category	Type	Funded by	Accreditation status	Academic awards (Honorary degree excluded)
The University of Hong Kong (HKU)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
HK University of Science and Technology (HKUST)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
HK Polytechnic University (PolyU)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
City University of Hong Kong (CityU)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK)	Statutory University	Public	Self	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
Lingnan University (LU)	Statutory University	Public	UGC	Self-accredited	Subject to legal regulations
Hong Kong Shu Yan University (HKSJU)	Approved Post-secondary College (APSC)	Private	Self	Programme Area Accreditation	Master degree or below
The HK Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA)	Statutory Institute	Public	UGC	Programme Area Accreditation	Master degree or below
Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd)	Statutory Institute	Public	UGC	Self-accredited (only in teacher training programmes)	Subject to legal regulations
Caritas Francis Hsu College	APSC	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	Associate degree (AD) or below
Chu Hai College of Higher Education	APSC	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	Bachelor degree or below
Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE)	Vocational Training Council Member Institution	Public	UGC	Programme Area Accreditation	Higher diploma or below
Caritas Bianchi College of Careers	General Institute	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	AD or below
Hong Kong Institute of Technology	General Institute	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	Associate degree or below
Hong Kong College of Technology	General Institute	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	AD or below
Hang Seng Management College	APSC	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	Bachelor degree or below
Tung Wah College	APSC	Private	Self	HKCAAVQ	Bachelor degree or below

Appendix 1.6 A Brief Description of the General HE Institutes Approved by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong

Appendix 1.7

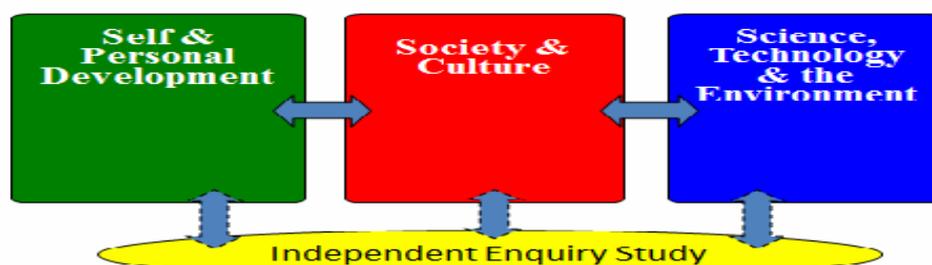
New 334 Structure



Appendix 1.7 Revamp of the HK Education System (D. Horner, 2010 adapted from HKEAA)

Appendix 1.8

NSS Liberal Studies Curriculum Framework



NSS Information Kit

1

Areas of Study	Independent Enquiry Study (IES)
<p>Self & Personal Development M. 1: Personal Development & Interpersonal Relationships</p> <p>Society & Culture M. 2: Hong Kong Today M. 3: Modern China M. 4: Globalization</p> <p>Science, Technology & the Environment M. 5: Public Health M. 6: Energy Technology & the Environment</p>	<p>Students are required to conduct an IES making use of the knowledge and perspectives gained from one or more Areas of Study and extending them to new issues or contexts. To help students develop their IES titles, the following themes are suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Media > Religion > Art > Education > Sports > Information and Communication Technology

NSS Information Kit

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Module 2: Hong Kong Today

Themes	Key Questions for Enquiry
1. Quality of life	Which directions might be chosen in maintaining and improving Hong Kong residents' quality of life?
2. Rule of law and socio-political participation	How do Hong Kong residents participate in political and social affairs and come to grips with rights and responsibilities with respect to the rule of law?
3. Identity	How are the identities of Hong Kong residents developed?

NSS Information Kit

3

Module 3: Modern China

Themes	Key Questions for Enquiry
1. China's reform & opening-up	What impact has reform and opening-up had on the overall development of the country and on people's life?
2. Chinese culture & modern life	With respect to the evolution of concepts of the family, what kind of relationship between traditional culture and modern life has been manifested?
	To what extent are traditional customs compatible with modern Chinese society?

NSS Information Kit

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Appendix 1.8 The New Senior Secondary Liberal Studies
(Source: https://cd.edb.gov.hk/334info/information_page_en.asp?td=a2)

Appendix 1.9

Name	District	Remarks
Sir Ellis Kadoorie Secondary School (West Kowloon)	Yaumati, Kowloon	Government
Islamic Kasim Tuet Memorial College	Chai Wan, Hong Kong	Aided
Caritas Tuen Mun Marden Foundation Secondary School	Tuen Mun, New Territories	Aided
Bethel High School	Yuen Long, New Territories	Aided
Salesians of Don Bosco Ng Siu Mui Secondary School	Kwai Chung, New Territories	Aided
Delia Memorial School (Hip Wo)	Kwun Tong, Kowloon	Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)
Delia Memorial School (Broadway)	Mei Foo, Kowloon	Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)
Pak Kau College	Yuen Long, New Territories	Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)
St Margaret's Girls' College,	Central & Western, Hong Kong	Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)
Buddhist Fat Ho Memorial College	Lantau Island, New Territories	Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

Appendix 1.9 Schools Admitting Greater Number of Non-Chinese-speaking Children

Adapted from:

http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_3601/contact%20&%20address%20for%20ncs%20schools_e.pdf

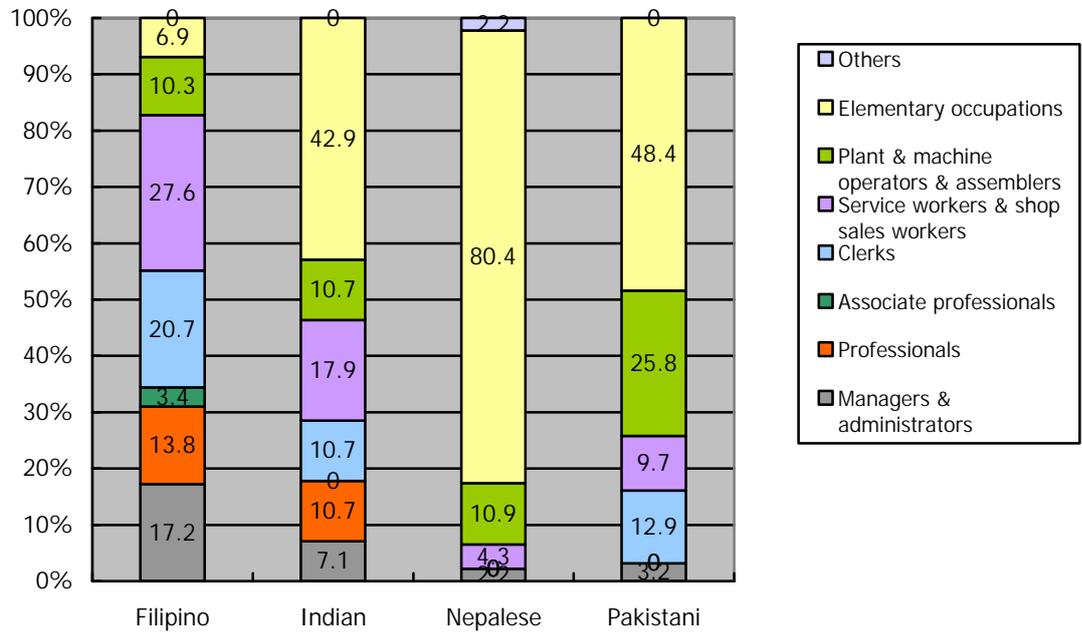
Appendix 1.10a

		Ethnic Origin				
		Filipino	Indian	Nepalese	Pakistani	Total
Father's occupation	Manager & administrators	5 (17.2%)	2 (7.1%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (3.2%)	9 (6.7%)
	Professionals	4 (13.8%)	3 (10.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (5.2%)
	Association professionals	1 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)
	Clerks	6 (20.7%)	3 (10.7%)	0 (0%)	4 (12.9%)	13 (9.7%)
	Service workers & shop sales workers	8 (27.6%)	5 (17.9%)	2 (4.3%)	3 (9.7%)	18 (13.4%)
	Plant & machine operators & assemblers	3 (10.3%)	3 (10.7%)	5 (10.9%)	8 (25.8%)	19 (14.2%)
	Elementary occupations	2 (6.9%)	12 (42.9%)	37 (80.4%)	15 (48.4%)	66 (49.3%)
	Others	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)
	Total	29 (100%)	28 (100%)	46 (100%)	31 (100%)	134 (100%)
<hr/>						
Mother's occupation	Professionals	4 (15.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (6.5%)
	Associate professionals	1 (3.8%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	5 (8.1%)
	Clerks	9 (34.6%)	2 (20%)	1 (4.2%)	0 (0%)	12 (19.4%)
	Service workers & shop sales workers	9 (34.6%)	3 (30%)	11 (45.8%)	0 (0%)	23 (37.1%)
	Elementary occupations	3 (11.5%)	3 (30%)	12 (50%)	0 (0%)	18 (29%)
	Total	26 (100%)	10 (100%)	24 (100%)	2 (100%)	62 (100%)

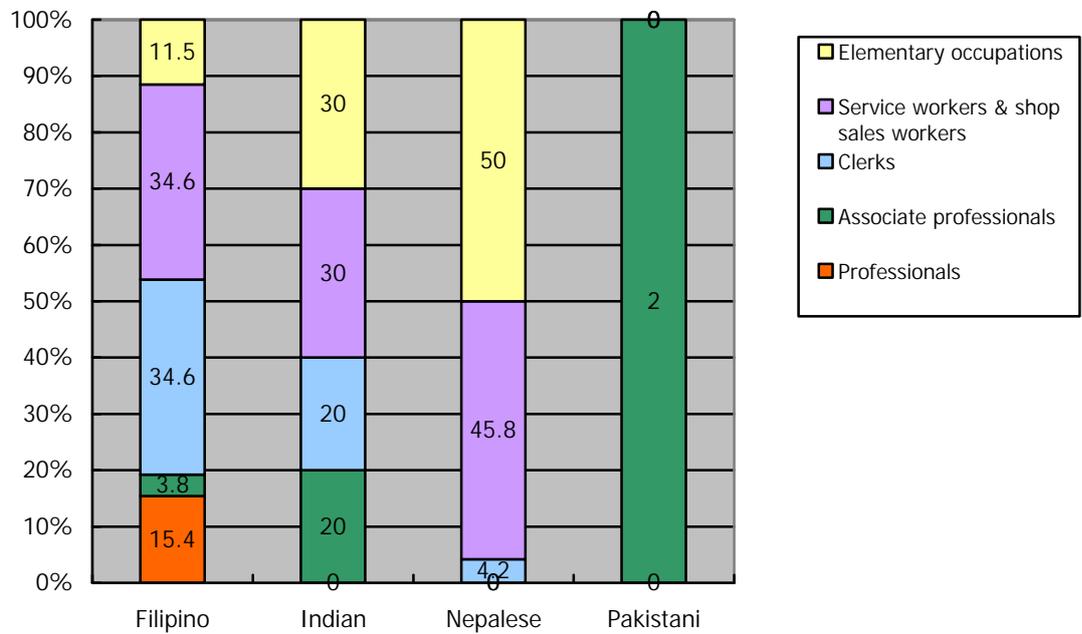
Appendix 1.10a Fathers' and Mothers' Occupation and Ethnic Origin (table)

Appendix 1.10b

Father's occupation and ethnic origin



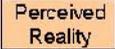
Mother's occupation and ethnic origin



Appendix 1.10b Fathers' and Mothers' Occupation and Ethnic Origin (bar chart)

Appendix 3.1

Legend

-  ('hard' factors) Policies that affect NCS students' path to HE
-  ('soft' factors) Reasons that affect NCS students' path to HE
-  Outcome of EB's educational process
-  'Policy vs Practice' affecting reality; and vice versa
-  Solid lines reflect the periphery of conditions being discussed
-  Dotted lines reflect the periphery of conditions which does not reflect a true reality
-  NCS students' goals / Aspirations to enter regular (Band 1) mainstream schools
-  Perceived reality of NCS students in designated mainstream schools

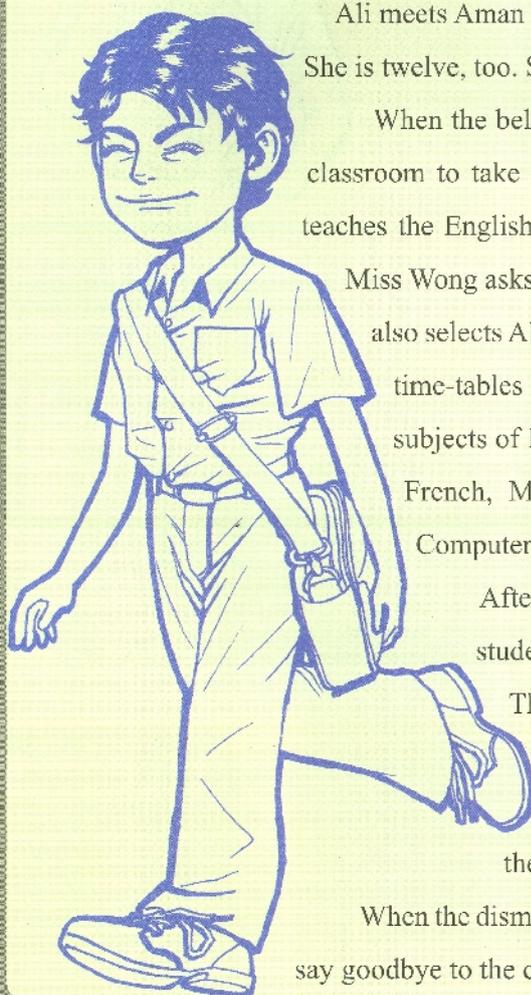
Appendix 3.1 Legend for HE Path of NCS Students

Unit 1 School Life

The First School Day

Text (English)

Ali is a boy. He is twelve years old. He is a Pakistani. He studies Secondary one in a secondary school in Kowloon.



Ali meets Aman on the first school day. Aman is a girl. She is twelve, too. She was born in India.

When the bell rings, the class teacher goes into the classroom to take the roll call. She is Miss Wong. She teaches the English Language. There is no lesson today.

Miss Wong asks students to introduce themselves. She also selects Ali and Aman as monitors. She gives the time-tables to each student in the class. There are subjects of English Language, Chinese Language, French, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer, Music, P.E. and Art.

After the first recess, Miss Wong leads the students to walk around the school campus.

There are library, school hall, playground, tuck shop, laboratories, music room, computer rooms and classrooms in the school.

When the dismiss bell rings, Ali and the other students say goodbye to the class teacher and go home.

單元一：學校生活

課文 Fo3 man4

Daan1 jyun4 jat1: Hok6 haa6 sang1 wut6

開學了 Hoi1 hok6 liu5

阿力是一個男孩，他今年十二歲，是巴基斯坦人。他在

Aa3 lik6 si6 jat1 go3 naam4 hai4 , taal gam1 nin4 sap6 ji6 seoi3, si4 baan1 gei1 sil tnan2 jan4 - Taal zo16

九龍區一所中學就讀中一級。

Gau2 lung4 keoi1 jat1 so2 zung1 hok6 zau6 duk6 zung1 jat1 kap1 -

在開學的一天，阿力認識了同學阿文。阿文是個女孩，

Zoi6 hoi1 hok6 dik1 jat1 tin1 , aa3 lik6 jing6 sik1 liu5 tung4 hok6 aa3 man4 - Aa3 man4 si6 go3 nei5 haai4 ,

也是十二歲。她在印度出生。

jaa5 si6 sap6 ji6 seoi3 - Taal zo16 jan3 dou6 ceot1 sang1 -



當上堂鐘響起，班主任進入課室點名，她是王老

Dong1 soeng5 tong4 zung1 hoeng2 lei2, baan1 zyu2 jam6 zeon3 jap6 fo3 sat1 dim2 meng2, taal si6 wong4 lou5

師，教他們英文科。這天不用上課，王老師要同學自我

sil , gaau3 taal mun4 jing1 man4 fo1 - Ze2 tin1 bat1 jung6 soeng5 fo3, wong4 lou5 sil jiu3 tung4 hok6 zi6 ngo3

介紹，還選了阿力和阿文做班長，並派發各科上課時間

gaai3 siu6, waan4 syun2 liu5 aa3 lik6 wo4 aa3 man4 zou6 baan1 zoeng2, hing6 paa3 faat3 gok3 fo1 soeng5 fo3 si4 gaan3

表，科目有英文、中文、法文、數學、科學、社會、電腦

biu2, fo1 muk6 jau5 jing1 man4, zung1 man4, faat3 man4, sou3 hok6, fo1 hok6, se5 wui2, din6 nou5

、音樂、體育及美術。

, jam1 ngok6, tai2 yuk6 kap6 mei5 seot6 -

過了小息，王老師帶領同學遊覽校園，學校有圖書

Gwo3 liu5 siu2 sik1, wong4 lou5 sil daai3 ling5 tung4 hok6 jau4 laan5 haa6 jyun4, hok6 haa6 jau5 tou4 syu1

館、禮堂、操場、小食部、實驗室、音樂室、電腦室和課室。

gun2, lai5 tong4, cou1 coeng4, siu2 sik6 bou6, sa6 jun6 sai1, jam1 ngok6 sat1, din6 nou5 sat1 wo4 fo3 sat1 -

當響過下課鐘，王老師和學生說再見，阿力和同

Dong1 haa6 gwo3 hoeng2 fo3 zung1, wong4 lou5 sil wo4 hok6 saung1 syut3 zoi3 gin3, aa3 lik6 wo4 tung4

學便放學回家。

hok6 bin6 fong3 hok6 wui4 gaa1 -

2

UNIT ONE: SCHOOL LIFE

Appendix 4.3

Chapter One - Who am I?

第一課 - 我是誰?

Dai6 jat1 fo3 - Ngo5 si6 seoi4

Learning objectives 學習目標

In this chapter, you will learn:

1. the way to introduce oneself;
2. the formation of plural pronouns;
3. the use of "hai6" and "giu3";
4. the way to address teachers at school;
5. the six tones in Cantonese; and
6. the Cantonese finals "aa1 - ai" and "aam - am".



Self introduction 自我介紹

Cantonese	English	Chinese
nei5 hou2!	Hello!	你好!
ngo5 si6 (<i>hai6</i>) aa3 lik6 , gam1 nin4 sap6 ji6 seoi3 ,	I am Ali. I am twelve years old.	我是阿力，今年十二歲，
ngo5 si6 (<i>hai6</i>) baal1 gei1 sil1 taan2 jan4 .	I am Pakistani.	我是巴基斯坦人，
ngo5 dik1 (<i>ge3</i>) tung4 hok6 si6 (<i>hai6</i>) aa3 man4 ,	My classmate is Aman.	我的同學是阿文，
baan1 zyu2 jam6 si6 (<i>hai6</i>) wong4 lou5 sil1 .	My class teacher is Miss Wong.	班主任是王老師。

Colloquial 通俗語 Tung1 zuk6 jyu5

There are formal and informal Cantonese. Usually we have to use formal Cantonese in reading and writing, we use informal Cantonese only in dialogic, e.g., the formal Cantonese for "he" is "taa1" and "*keoi5*" in informal. Look at the table of pronoun below:

Formal Cantonese	Informal Cantonese	English
taa1	<i>keoi5</i>	He, she, it
taa1 mun4	<i>keoi5 dei6</i>	They
ngo5	ngo5	I
ngo5 mun4	<i>ngo5 dei6</i>	We
nei5	nei5	you
nei5 mun4	<i>nei5 dei6</i>	you

We can see that not all the Cantonese words have informal form (*bold italics*), sometimes, we use formal Cantonese in both speaking and writing.

Appendix 4.4

Vocabulary 詞語 Ci4 jyu5

➤ Self introduction 自我介紹

Cantonese	English	Chinese
nei5 hou2	Hello	你好
scoi3	Age	歲
hok6 haau6	School	學校
duk6 syu1	Study	讀書
tung4 bok6	Classmate	同學
baan1 zyu2 jam6	Class teacher	班主任

Activity 活動 Wut6 dung6

Presentation

Please introduce yourself to the class in Cantonese.

- Who are you?
- How old are you?
- What is your gender?
- Which school do you go to?



Grammar 文法 Man4 faat3

1. Pronoun “doi6 ci4” 代詞

Cantonese		English		Chinese	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
ngo5	ngo5 mun4 <i>ngo5 dei6</i>	I, me	We, us	我	我們
nei5	nei5 mun4 <i>nei5 dei6</i>	You, you	You, you	你	你們
taa1 <i>keoi5</i>	Taa1 mun4 <i>keoi5 dei6</i>	He, She, It	They	他、她、它	他們

- In Cantonese, there is no masculine and feminine gender for “taa1”/“keoi5”; but for plural, we have to add “mun4”/“dei6” after the pronoun, e.g., “ngo5 dei6”, “nei5 dei6”, “keoi5 dei6”

Classwork 1

Match the following English meaning with the Cantonese Romanization form.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| He, She, It | • | • | ngo5 mun4 (<i>dei6</i>) 我們 |
| They | • | • | nei5 你 |
| I, me | • | • | taa1 (<i>keoi5</i>) 他、她、它 |
| You, you (Plural) | • | • | nei5 mun4 (<i>dei6</i>) 你們 |
| You, you (Singular) | • | • | ngo5 我 |
| We, us | • | • | taa1 mun4 (<i>keoi5 dei6</i>) 他們 |



U LIFE 5

Appendix 5.1 (4 pages)

Supplementary Guide to the Chinese Language Curriculum for Non-Chinese Speaking Students

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Preamble

1. Under a common curriculum framework, the Supplementary Guide supplements principles, strategies and recommendations for implementing the Chinese Language curriculum in schools in the learning context of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students. For a holistic view of the curriculum, this Supplementary Guide should be read together with other curriculum guides for Chinese Language Education issued in recent years.

Chapter I - Introduction

2. Usual languages spoken by NCS students in Hong Kong include Urdu, English, Nepali, Tagalog and Hindi.
3. The language education policy of Hong Kong is to promote students' language proficiency, making them bi-literate (in Chinese and English) and tri-lingual (in Cantonese, Putonghua and English). For better integration into the Hong Kong society, it is in the interest of NCS students to learn Cantonese and traditional characters, which are most widely used in Chinese Language lessons and the community as a whole.

Chapter II - Curriculum Framework

4. The Chinese Language curriculum designed by the Curriculum Development Council of Hong Kong provides a flexible and robust curriculum framework that is applicable to all Primary and Secondary school students. Based on this central Chinese Language curriculum framework, schools should adapt their own curriculum to cater for the diversified learning needs of the students.
5. The learning contents of the Chinese Language Education Key Learning Area include nine learning strands of *Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Literature, Chinese Culture, Moral and Affective Development, Thinking* and *Independent Language Learning*. These learning contents are applicable to all students.
6. Based on characteristics of NCS students' learning, schools should consider realistically various factors when designing suitable learning contents, e.g. recognising and writing Chinese characters, communication skills, knowledge acquiring skills, aesthetic development, diversified culture, moral and affective development and independent learning capabilities.
7. The Chinese Language learning process of NCS students typically reflects the characteristics of second language acquisition - starting with listening and speaking, then recognising and writing Chinese characters, then reading, then integrating writing with reading.

Chapter III - Curriculum Planning

8. Schools should plan the Chinese Language curriculum to cater for NCS students' ability, standards and interests, etc. The principles of curriculum planning include: to provide balanced and comprehensive language learning, to adapt the curriculum for students' needs and to meet the aspirations of parents and students.
9. School practices on curriculum provision can be categorised into four modes: immersion in Chinese Language lessons, bridging / transition, specific learning purposes and integrated.

Chapter IV - Curriculum Modes

10. Schools may opt to use the following curriculum modes flexibly:

- **Mode I - Immersion in Chinese Language Lessons**

NCS students are studying Chinese Language alongside Chinese-speaking students. Schools may have to cater for students' varied needs in learning, and provide focused remedial teaching outside lessons to facilitate immersion.

Prevalent Conditions: students arrived in Hong Kong before teenage, had early contact with Chinese language, learned Chinese in the kindergarten, almost reached the Chinese standard required for learning in Chinese.

Advantage: has rich Chinese language environment, provides peer assistance, displays racial harmony, merges different cultures.

Challenge: NCS students studying Chinese Language alongside Chinese speaking students of the school, demand for remedial programmes, need for diagnostic assessment tools.

- **Mode II - Bridging / Transition**

NCS students would have to leave normal Chinese Language lessons at the beginning. They would have intensive studies for a relatively short period in order to promptly enhance their Chinese language standards for studying Chinese Language alongside other students of the school.

Prevalent Conditions: students arrived in Hong Kong at teenage, have late contact with Chinese language, and have aspirations to stay in the education system in Hong Kong as well as to seek employment in fields requiring proficiency in spoken and written Chinese.

Advantage: school provides focused learning, intensive learning, ample time for adaptation, makes allowance for lower Chinese language standard at the start.

Challenge: need for diagnostic assessment tools, adoption of elementary levels of competencies.

- **Mode III - Specific Learning Purposes**

For specific learning purposes, learning Chinese language would facilitate communication in daily-life contexts.

Prevalent Conditions: students are returnees or transient residents leaving Hong Kong after their study and do not aspire to stay in the Hong

Kong education system or to seek employment in Hong Kong, or students arrived in Hong Kong at teenage/ have late contact with Chinese language and do not have aspirations to stay in the education system in Hong Kong or to seek employment in fields requiring proficiency in spoken and written Chinese.

Advantage: meeting with specified learning needs, allowance for selected (but narrower) learning, with daily-life contexts fully employed, focus on communication and application, flexible requirement in the level of learning standards, alleviate learning burden and pressure.

Challenge: only meeting with the specified learning needs.

- **Mode IV - Integrated**

To suit the different needs, aspirations and development of NCS students in the same school, it may be necessary for a school to develop more than one of the above modes.

Prevalent Conditions: school has a large intake of NCS students with diversified backgrounds, different family expectations and demands, a wide range of Chinese language standards.

Advantage: school can offer different programmes, each with a critical mass, tailored to cater for individual student's needs.

Challenge: need to allocate more resources for designing various programmes with different targets to meet diversified needs.

Chapter V - Learning and Teaching

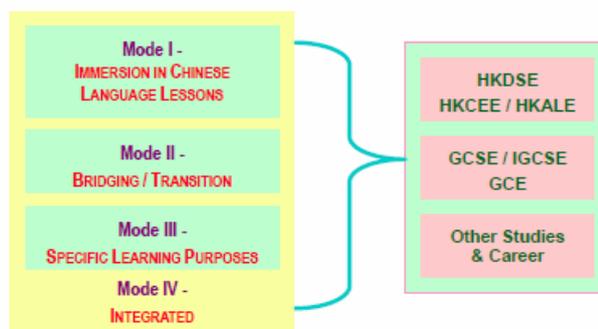
11. To teach NCS students Chinese Language, it is necessary to understand the differences between first language and second language learning, and targeted adaptation of learning and teaching strategies should be employed.
12. Affected by the differences of their mother languages from Chinese, NCS students are likely to encounter difficulties in learning Chinese graphemes, tones, vocabulary, classifiers, word order, etc.
13. Learning and teaching principles: to understand students' ability, to have well defined learning targets, to meet diversified learning needs, to adjust learning standards, to adapt learning materials, to use self-access learning resources flexibly.
14. Learning and teaching strategies: to develop spoken language through imitation; to separate the teaching of recognition and writing of characters, to employ reading materials according to students' vocabulary and psychological development, to integrate reading with writing, to provide language learning context, peer learning.

Chapter VI - Assessment

15. Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. Diversified assessment methods are suggested in order to assess students' learning performance comprehensively. Teachers should make use of assessment feedback to understand the learning progression in different stages.
16. Diversified assessments and multiple exits are provided in NCS students corresponding to different learning modes. Qualifications in Chinese Language:

Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE), Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE), the coming Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE); General Certificate of Education (GCE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

For the alignment of curriculum modes, assessments and exits, please refer to the diagram below.



Chapter VII - Learning and Teaching Resources

17. Development of curriculum resources for NCS students: basic vocabularies, learning software, examples of adapted school-based curriculum plan, learning and teaching exemplars, learning materials, assessment tools for learning, etc.
18. Further support and resources for NCS students: continued on-site school-based support, enhanced partnership schemes with tertiary institutes and Non-Government Organisations, enhancing teacher professionalism, support to parents, enhanced community support, various research and development projects.

Appendix

19. Reference materials include: linguistic characteristics of modern Chinese language, radicals and components of Chinese characters, Chinese Language learning experiences in districts with large Chinese population, a series of exemplars on curriculum and teaching, e.g. school adaptation of learning objectives and learning modules, school curriculum framework, teaching plan and scheme of work, school learning and teaching materials. Information is also provided on overseas Chinese Language examinations, multiple exits, package teaching reference materials that helps self-access learning of NCS students, and examples of learning and teaching resources available.

Education Bureau
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
November 2008

This document is originally written in Chinese. In case of discrepancy between the text of this translated version and that of the Chinese version, the Chinese text shall prevail.

Appendix 5.2 (4 pages)

Hindi

हिन्दी

चीनी भाषा पाठ्यक्रम के अतिरिक्त गाइड
(गैर-चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये)

कार्यकारी सारांश

आमुख

- यह अतिरिक्त गाइड साधारण पाठ्यक्रम की व्यवस्था के आधार पर उन चीनी भाषा सीख रहे हुए गैर-चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों की परिस्थितियों को देखते हुए बनाया गया है। इस में चीनी भाषा पाठ्यक्रम लागू करने का सिद्धांत, रणनीति और सलाह आदि पूरक सूचना के रूप में दिए जाते हैं। चीनी भाषा पाठ्यक्रम की पूर्णतावादी दृष्टि पाने के लिये, पाठकों को यह अतिरिक्त गाइड के साथ आजकल कुछ सालों में प्रकाशित किये हुए चीनी भाषा के अनेक अन्य पाठ्यक्रम गाइड भी पढ़ने चाहिये।

भाग १ परिचय

- हांगकांग में गैर-चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों द्वारा बोली जाने वाली सामान्य भाषाएँ ये हैं: उर्दू, अंग्रेजी, नेपाली भाषा, तगालोग और हिन्दी।
- हांगकांग की भाषा शिक्षा की नीति का लक्ष्य यह है: विद्यार्थियों की दुभाषिया (चीनी और अंग्रेजी) या त्रिभाषिया (कैंटनीज, मू तोल हुआ और अंग्रेजी) क्षमता को बढ़ाएँगे। हांगकांग में स्थानीय स्तर पर समाज में और चीनी कक्षों में कैंटनीज और परंपरागत चीनी लिपि के बहुत व्यापक उपयोग करते हैं। इसलिये, हांगकांग में रहने वाले गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये परंपरागत चीनी लिपि और कैंटनीज पढ़ना बहुत लाभदायक है, जिससे वे लोग हांगकांग के समाज में एकीकृत किया जा सकें।

भाग २ पाठ्यक्रम की व्यवस्था

- हांगकांग पाठ्यक्रम सुधार परिषद के द्वारा बनाये गए हुए चीनी भाषा पाठ्यक्रम में बहुत लचीला और विस्तृत पाठ्यक्रम व्यवस्थाएँ दी जाती हैं, और यह पाठ्यक्रम पूरे हांगकांग के प्राइमरी स्कूलों और मिडिल स्कूलों के सभी विद्यार्थियों पर लागू होता है। प्रत्येक स्कूल इस केंद्रीय पाठ्यक्रम के अनुसार अपने पाठ्यक्रम अनुकूलित कर सकता है और अपने विद्यार्थियों की विभिन्न परिस्थितियों तथा विविध सीखने की आवश्यकताओं पर ध्यान रखना चाहिये।
- चीनी भाषा शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में निम्नलिखित नौ मुख्य विषय हैं: पढ़ना, लिखना, सुनना और समझना, बोलना, चीनी साहित्य, चीन का संस्कृति, गुण और भावनाओं का विकास, विचार-पद्धति और स्वयं भाषा सीखना। ये नौ विषय पढ़ाई के नौ पहलुओं पर ध्यान देते हैं और सभी विद्यार्थियों के लिये व्यावहारिक हैं।
- प्रत्येक स्कूल को गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये चीनी भाषा शिक्षा की विशेषताओं के अनुसार यथार्थवादिता से पढ़ाई के विभिन्न तत्त्वों पर ध्यान देना चाहिये और व्यावहारिक विषय पर उपयुक्त कोर्स का निर्माण करना चाहिये। उदाहरण के लिये, चीनी अक्षरों का पहचानना और लिखना, आपस में बातचीत करने की क्षमता, जानकारी ग्रहण करने की कुशलता, सादर्य-रुचि, विभिन्न संस्कृति, तत्कालताओं और भावनाओं का विकास, और स्वयं भाषा सीखने की कौशल आदि।
- चीनी सीखने की प्रक्रिया में गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये द्वितीय भाषा ग्रहण करने की विशेषता दिखायी जाती है: सुनने और बोलने से शुरू करके, अक्षरों को पहचानेंगे, फिर लिपि सीखेंगे, इस के बाद पढ़ना सीखेंगे, और अंत में पढ़ने के साथ लेखन सीखेंगे।

भाग ३ पाठ्यक्रम की योजना

- प्रत्येक स्कूल को गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों की क्षमता, चीनी भाषा सीखने की विभिन्न स्तर, और रुचि के आधार पर चीनी भाषा पाठ्यक्रम की योजना बनानी चाहिये। पाठ्यक्रम की योजनाएँ बनाने के सिद्धांतों में जो शामिल किये

जानें चाहिये, जैसे संतुलित और विशद भाषा सीखने की व्यवस्था देनी चाहिये, छात्रों की परिस्थिति के अनुसार कोर्स बदलना चाहिये, और छात्रों और उन के पिता-माता की आशाओं का उत्तर देना चाहिये।

- अनेक स्कूलों के व्यावहारिक अनुभव के आधार पर पाठ्यक्रम संगठित करने के चार तरीके वर्गीकृत किये जा सकते हैं, ये हैं: चीनी भाषा कक्षा में डुबाना, सहयोग देकर संक्रमण कराना तथा जोड़ना, विशेष लक्ष्यों पर निशान किये हुए चीनी भाषा सीखना, संघटक तरीकों से भाषा सीखना।

भाग ४ पाठ्यक्रम संगठित करने के तरीके

- विन्तलिखित पाठ्यक्रम संगठित करने के चार तरीके हैं, जिन में से कोई स्कूल अपने पाठ्यक्रम को संगठित करने के लिये अपनी आवश्यकता के अनुसार लचीला चुनाव कर सकता है।

- पहला तरीका: चीनी भाषा कक्षा में डुबाना

गर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थी और चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थी एक साथ एक ही कक्षा में बैठकर भाषा सीखेंगे। पर इस तरीके का प्रयोग करते समय यह याद रखना जरूरी है कि भाषा सीखने में सभी विद्यार्थियों की आवश्यकता अलग अलग होती है, इसलिये कक्षाओं के अलावा, स्कूलों को यह प्रस्तुत करना चाहिये कि सीखने के विभिन्न पहलुओं पर ध्यान केंद्रित करते हुए विद्यार्थियों को सुधारान्मक अभ्यास देंगे, जिससे गर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों को चीनी भाषा कक्षा में जल्दी से मिलने के लिये सहायता देते हैं।

अनुकूल परिस्थिति: यह तरीका उन विद्यार्थियों पर लागू होता है, जो लोग छोटी उमर में तो हांगकांग में आ गये और चीनी भाषा से चलने वाले किंडरगार्टन में शिक्षा लेने लगे, जिस के चीनी भाषा का स्तर इतना होता है कि चीनी भाषा से पढ़ाई कर सकता है।

श्रेष्ठता: ऐसी कक्षा में चीनी भाषा सीखने के लिये वातावरण बहुत समृद्ध है, सब लोग मिल-जुड़कर मेल से रहते हैं और एक दूसरे की मदद करते हैं, अलग अलग जातियाँ और संस्कृति एकीकृत होती हैं।

चुनौती: गर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों और चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों को एक साथ एक ही कक्षा में बैठकर भाषा सीखना चाहिये, कक्षाओं के बाद स्कूल से सुधारान्मक अभ्यास कराना जरूरी है, विद्यार्थियों को जाँच और निरीक्षण करके राय देने के उपाय की आवश्यकता पड़ती है।

- दूसरा तरीका: सहयोग देकर संक्रमण कराना तथा जोड़ना

विद्यार्थी आरंभ में साधारण चीनी भाषा की कक्षा से दूर बैठते हैं, इस के विपरित, सब से पहले उनको अपेक्षाकृत थोड़े समय तक चीनी भाषा की गहन कक्षा देंगे, जिससे उनके चीनी भाषा का स्तर जल्दी से बढ़ाएंगे ताकि वे दूसरे चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों व ऊँची भाषा स्तर वाले विद्यार्थियों के साथ कक्षा ले सकते हैं।

अनुकूल परिस्थिति: यह तरीका उन विद्यार्थियों पर लागू होता है, जो युवा काल में हांगकांग में आये और थोड़ी देर से चीनी मातृम करते हैं, पर उन की इच्छा है कि हांगकांग में आगे पढ़ाई करें और ऐसा धंधा ढूँढ जाएँ जो अच्छी तरह चीनी बोलने से ही चल रहा है।

श्रेष्ठता: ऐसे तरीके से विद्यार्थियों के लिये बहुत गहन चीनी भाषा की कक्षाएँ मिल सकती हैं, और ऊँचे स्तर की कक्षा के अनुकूलन में भी पर्याप्त समय मिलता है। और इन लोगों के लिये, जिस के चीनी भाषा का स्तर अच्छा नहीं है, सबसे पहले विन्त स्तर से शुरू कर सकते हैं।

चुनौती: निरीक्षण करके राय देने का उपाय की आवश्यकता पड़ती है, और विद्यार्थियों को प्रारंभिक स्तर से पढ़ाई शुरू करनी चाहिये।

- तीसरा तरीका: विशेष लक्ष्यों पर निशान किये हुए सीखना

विद्यार्थी विशेष लक्ष्यों पर निशान किये हुए साधारण संपर्क करने के लिये चीनी भाषा सीखेंगे।

अनुकूल परिस्थिति: यह तरीका उन दो तरह के विद्यार्थियों पर लागू होता है, पहली तरह जो हैं, वे विदेश से हांगकांग वापस आये, और थोड़े समय के लिये यहाँ रहेंगे, बेसिक पढ़ाई समाप्त करने के बाद हांगकांग से निकल जाएंगे। आम तौर पर इसी तरह के विद्यार्थियों के चीनी भाषा का स्तर अच्छा नहीं है, और उनकी हांगकांग में आगे शिक्षा लेने या यहाँ कोई एक नौकरी ढूँढने की कोई इच्छा भी नहीं है। या दूसरी तरह जो हैं, वे युवा-काल में ही हांगकांग आये और बहुत देर से चीनी भाषा को मातृम करते हैं, और भी आगे

शिक्षा हांगकांग में नहीं लेंगे तथा अच्छी तरह चीनी बोलने से चलने वाला काम नहीं चाहिये।

श्रेष्ठता: इस तरीके से चीनी भाषा सिखाने समय विद्यार्थियों के लिये वास्तविक जीवन के आधार पर भाषा सीखने का दायरे संकुचित और परिष्कृत कर सकते हैं, और भाषा सीखने वालों की विशेष जरूरतों को सपष्ट रूप से पूरे कर सकते हैं। संचार और आवेदन पर ध्यान केंद्रित करके विभिन्न सीखने के स्तर की जरूरतों को लचीलापन से पूरे कर सकते हैं, इस बीच, भाषा सीखने के साथ पढ़ा हुए मानसिक दबाव और बोझ को भी कम कर सकते हैं।

चुनौती: सिर्फ सीखने की विशेष आवश्यकताओं को पूरा किया जा सकता है।

• चौथा तरीका: संघटक तरीकों से भाषा सीखना

एक ही स्कूल में अलग-अलग गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों की विभिन्न आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिये, और उन की विविध आकांक्षाओं और उम्मीदों की तृप्त करने के लिये, यह हो सकता है स्कूलों को अनेक पाठ्यक्रम बनाने के तरीकों को विकसित करना है, और विभिन्न पद्धतियाँ मिलकर इनका प्रयोग करना है।

अनुकूल परिस्थिति: यह तरीका जो स्कूलों पर लागू होता है, जिस में गैर भाषी विद्यार्थियों की संख्या बहुत बड़ी है और अधिकांश विद्यार्थी विविध पृष्ठभूमियों से हैं। विद्यार्थियों के माता-पिता के अलग अलग निवेदन व आशा होती हैं, इस बीच विद्यार्थियों की चीनी भाषा के स्तर में भी बड़ा अंतर है।

श्रेष्ठता: व्यक्तिगत विद्यार्थी की आवश्यकताएँ विभिन्न द्यूटोरियल से पूरी की जा सकती हैं।

चुनौती: विभिन्न लक्ष्यों के विविध जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिए विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों की योजना करनी है और अधिक शिक्षा संसाधनों का वितरण करने की आवश्यकता पड़ती है।

भाग ५ सीखना और सिखाना

११. गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों को चीनी भाषा शिक्षण देने के लिये यह जानना जरूरी है कि मातृभाषा और द्वितीय भाषा ग्रहण करने में बड़ा अंतर होता है, इसलिये सीखने और सिखाने की लक्षित रणनीतियों का प्रयोग करना चाहिए।
१२. चीनी से अपनी मातृभाषाओं के अंतर से प्रभावित होने की कारण, चीनी भाषा सीखने की प्रक्रिया में गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों को ऐसे विषयों पर कठिनाइयों का सामना करने की संभावना होगी, जैसे चीनी लिपि, टन, शब्दावली, परिमाणवाचक शब्द और शब्द-रूप आदि।
१३. सीखने और सिखाने का सिद्धांत : छात्रों की क्षमता अच्छी तरह जानना, सीखने के लक्ष्यों को अच्छी तरह से परिभाषित करना, सीखने की विविध आवश्यकताओं पर ध्यान देना, सीखने का स्तर समायोजित करना, सीखने की सामग्री अनुकूलित करना, स्वयं सीखने के योग्य संसाधनों के उपयोग लचीलापन से करना।
१४. सीखने और सिखाने की रणनीति : नकली से बोली चीनी को विकसित करना, अक्षर को पहचानने के शिक्षण लिपि सीखने से अलग देना, छात्रों की शब्दावली और मानसिक विकास के अनुसार पढ़ने की सामग्री देना, लेखन सिखाना पढ़ना के साथ एकीकृत करके होना, चीनी भाषा सीखने के माहौल बनाना, और सहकार सीखना।

भाग ६ मूल्यांकन

१५. मूल्यांकन करना सीखने व सिखाने का एक अभिन्न अंग है। विद्यार्थियों के सीखने का प्रदर्शन पूर्णतः मूल्यांकन करने के लिये अलग दृष्टिकोण अपनाना चाहिये। शिक्षकों को मूल्यांकन से पायी हुई प्रतिपुष्टि का प्रयोग अच्छी तरह से करना चाहिये, और सीखने की प्रगति के अलग अलग चरणों को समझना चाहिये।
१६. विभिन्न सीखने के तरीके से चीनी भाषा सीखने के बाद, गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये अलग अलग तरह के मूल्यांकन होते हैं और इस के अधारित पर उन को अलग अलग उपाधि भी मिलती हैं। विद्यार्थियों को चीनी भाषा की मिश्रलिखित उपाधि मिल सकती है: हांगकांग शिक्षा परीक्षा का उपाधि (Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, HKCEE); हांगकांग वरिष्ठ स्तर परीक्षा (The Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, HKALE); आनेवाले हांगकांग माध्यमिक शिक्षा का डिप्लोमा (The coming HongKong Diploma of Secondary Education, HKDSE); जनरल शिक्षा का प्रमाणपत्र (General Certificate of Education, GCE); अंतर्राष्ट्रीय जनरल माध्यमिक शिक्षा का प्रमाणपत्र (International General Certificate of Secondary

Education, IGCSE)। माध्यमिक शिक्षा का जनरल प्रमाणपत्र (General Certificate of Secondary Education, GCSE)

पाठ्यक्रम, मूल्यांकन और विविध रास्ते के विन्यास, कृपया निचे चित्र की दृष्टि देखें



भाग ७ सीखने और सिखाने का संसाधन

१७. गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये उपयुक्त पाठ्यक्रम संसाधनों का विकास करना, जैसे मूल शब्द, स्वयंमं सीखने के सॉफ्टवेयर, स्कूल पाठ्यक्रम डिबग के उदाहरण, स्कूल आधारित पाठ्यक्रम अनुकूलित करने की योजनाओं के उदाहरण, सीखने और सिखाने की प्रक्रिया के उदाहरण, सीखने वाली सामग्री, सीखने के प्रदर्शनों को जाँच करने वाले उपाय आदि।
१८. गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये आगे देने वाले सेवा या संसाधन : स्कूल में जाकर सहायता देने वाली सेवा जारी रखना, विश्वविद्यालयों, कालेजों या अन्य संस्थाओं व गैर सरकारी संगठनों से मज़बूत साझेदारी विकसित करने की योजना, शिक्षक व्यावसायिकता में वृद्धि करना, छात्रों के माता-पिता के लिये सहायता देना, समुदाय के सुविधाओं का सुरक्षाकरण करना, विभिन्न अनुसंधान और विकास करने की परियोजनाएं आदि।

परिशिष्ट

१९. निम्नलिखित संदर्भ सामग्री शामिल हैं : आधुनिक चीनी की विशेषता, चीनी अक्षरों के कण और लिपि के घटक, चीनी भाषी क्षेत्रों में चीनी भाषा सीखने का अनुभव, और पाठ्यक्रम और पढ़ाने पर उदाहरण की एक श्रृंखला, जैसे स्कूल से द्वारा किया गए सीखने के उद्देश्यों का समायोजन, स्कूलों के पाठ्यक्रम की रूपरेखा व शिक्षा की योजना तथा कार्य-क्रम की उदाहरण, स्कूलों की सीखने की सामग्रियों के परिचय, पढ़ना, लिखना, सुनना और बोलना आदि शिक्षण की गतिविधियों की उदाहरण आदि। विदेश में चीनी भाषा की परीक्षा के परिचय, गैर चीनी भाषी छात्रों के लिये बेसिक शिक्षा बहूण करके विविधीकरण रास्ते, गैर चीनी भाषी विद्यार्थियों के लिये सहायक शिक्षण संदर्भ, अन्य सीखने और सिखाने के लिये उपलब्ध सामग्री आदि।

शिक्षा विभाग, हांगकांग विशेष प्रशासनिक क्षेत्र
नवम्बर, 2008

इस दस्तावेज़ को मूल चीनी में लिखा है, और इस का अनुवाद चीनी संस्करण के आधार पर किया गया है, अगर इस अनुवाद संस्करण और चीनी संस्करण के बीच कोई अंतर होता है, तो चीनी संस्करण अभिप्रायी होगी।

Appendix 5.3 (4 pages)

Tagalog

Tagalog

Pagbubuo ng “Karagdagang Panuntunan Para sa Kursong Wikang Tsino Para Sa Mga Estudyanteng Di-Nagsasalita ng Tsino”

Kabuuang Paglalagom

Pambungad

1. Layunin ng pagbubuo ng Karagdagang Panuntunan na ito na makatulong sa prinsipyo, estratehiya at rekomendasyon para sa pagpapatupad ng Kurikulum ng Wikang Tsino para sa mga paaralang may mga estudyanteng hindi nagsasalita ng Tsino, sa ilalim ng nag-iisang pamantayan ng kurikulum ng CDC. Ang Karagdagang Panuntunan na ito ay dapat basahin kasama ng mga kinauukulang panuntunan para sa pagkaalam ng buong kurso.

Unang Kabanata—Introduksiyon

2. Ayon sa estadistika, ang mga pangunahing wika na ginagamit ng mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino ay Urdu, Ingles, Nepali, Tagalog at Hindi.
3. Layunin ng edukasyong pangwika ng Hong Kong ang maitaguyod ang kagalingan ng mga estudyante sa wika, gawin silang magaling sa dalawang wika (Tsino at Ingles) o tatlo (Cantonese, Putonghua at Ingles). Para sa mabuting pakikilahok sa lipunan sa Hong Kong, makabubuti para sa mga estudyanteng ito na matuto ng Cantonese at mga tradisyunal na titik, na malawakang ginagamit sa mga araling Tsino at sa komunidad.

Ikalawang Kabanata—Balangkas ng Kurso

4. Bukas at maiaakma ang bimuong Kurikulum ng Wikang Tsino ng Curriculum Development Council (CDC) ng Hong Kong sa lahat ng baitang ng paaralang elementarya at sekondarya. Batay sa pangunahing kurikulum na ito ng Wikang Tsino, maiaakma ng lahat ng paaralan ang kanilang sariling kurikulum para matugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng iba-ibang mag-aaral.
5. Ang mga nilalaman ng edukasyon ng Wikang Tsino ay nasa 9 na aspektong gaya ng pagbasa, pagsulat, pakikinig, pagsasalita, panitikan, kultura, moral education, pag-iisip at pag-aaral sa sarili. Ang mga ito ay bagay sa lahat ng mga estudyante.
6. Batay sa katangian ng mga estudyante, dapat isaalang-alang ng mga paaralan ang iba't ibang elemento para itakda ang angkop na nilalaman ng kurso na gaya ng pagkilala at pagsulat ng titik, kakayahan sa komunikasyon, kakayahan sa pagtatamo ng kaalaman, aesthetic development, magkakaibang kultura, moral education at kakayahan sa pag-aaral sa sarili.
7. Ang proseso ng edukasyon ng wikang Tsino ay nagpapakita ng katangian ng pag-aaral ng ikalawang wika: magsimula sa pakikinig at pagsasalita, pagkatapos ay pagkilala at pagsulat ng titik, pagbasa at panghuli ay pagsasama ng pagbasa at pagsulat.

Ikatlong Kabanata—Pagpapalano ng kurso

8. Ang pagpapalano ng mga paaralan ng kurso ng wikang Tsino ay dapat isagawa batay sa kakayahan, lebel at pagkagusto ng mga estudyante. Ang mga prinsipyo nito ay kinabibilangan ng pagkaloob ng magkabalanse at komprehensibong kurso, pagsasaayos ng kurso ayon sa pangangailangan ng estudyante at pagtugon sa inaasahan

ng mga estudyante at magulang.

9. Maikakategorya sa apat ang mga gawaing pampaaralan sa pag-aangkop ng kurikulum: **Pagbababad sa Araling Tsino (immersion), bridging o transisyon, pag-aaral bilang ikalawang wika, at pagsasama-sama ng mga ito / integrasyon.**

Ikaapat na Kabanata—pamamaraan sa pag-aaral ng kurso

10. Maaaring pagpilian ng mga paaralan ang mga pamamaraang ito batay sa pangangailanag nila:

- **Unang Lapit—Pagbababad sa Araling Tsino**

Paglalarawan ng Lapit: Kasalamuha ng mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino ang mga kamag-aral na marunong nito. Pupunan ng paaralan ang iba-bang pangangailangan ng mga mag-aaral at maglalaan ng focused remedial teaching sa labas ng klase upang mapadali ang pagkatuto sa mga aralin sa Wikang Tsino.

Kalimitang Kondisyon: Dumarating ang mga mag-aaral sa Hong Kong bago magtinedyer, maaga ring nagkakaroon ng ugnayan sa wikang Tsino, natututo ng Tsino sa kindergarten, halos nagiging magaling sa wikang ito para maabot ang pamantayang kinakailangan sa pag-aaral ng wikang Tsino.

Adbentahe: may mayamang kaligiran sa pag-aaral ng wikang Tsino, natutulungan ng mga kamag-aral, may pagkakaunawaan ng mga lahi, napagsasama-sama ang iba-ibang kultura.

Balakid: Mangangailangan ng remedial programme at karampatang diagnostic assessment tools ang mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino na kasalamuha ang mga estudyanteng magaling dito.

- **Ikalawang Lapit—Bridging o Transisyon**

Paglalarawan ng Lapit: Mangangailanag ng masinsinang pag-aaral ng wikang Tsino ang mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino sa loob ng maikling panahon (mula ilang buwan hanggang isang taon) hanggang maabot nila ang pamantayan upang makapag-aral sila kasabay ng iba pang mag-aaral.

Kalimitang Kondisyon: Dumarating ang mga mag-aaral sa Hong Kong habang tinedyer, medyo huli na ang pakikipag-ugnay sa wikang Tsino, gayong may hangaring manatili sa sistemang pang-edukasyon sa Hong Kong at makapaghanap ng trabaho sa mga larangang kakailanganin ang galling s pagsalita at pagsulat ng wikang Tsino.

Adbentahe: Naibibigay ng paaralan ang focused learning, masinsinang pag-aaral, sapat na panahon para makasabay, at nagbibigay ng mas mababang pamantayan sa simula.

Balakid: Pangangailangan ng diagnostic assessment tools, pagbuo ng mga pamantayan sa kasanayan na higit na mababa kaysa karaniwan.

- **Ikatlong Lapit—Pag-aaral Bilang Ikalawang Wika**

Paglalarawan ng Lapit: Upang maituro ang wikang Tsino bilang pangalawang wika, binibigyan ng diin ang gamit ng komunikasyon sa pang-araw-araw na buhay.

Kalimitang Kondisyon: Mga balik-bayan ang mga mag-aaral o pansamantalang nanimirahan sa Hong Kong na hindi nagpaplanong magtapos sa sistemang pang-edukasyon ng Hong Kong o hindi nagbabalak magtrabaho ditto, o kaya tinedyer nang lumipat/huli na ang ugnayan sa wikang Tsino at walang planong magtapos sa paaralang Tsino o nagbabalak maghanap ng trabaho dito na mangangailangan ng

pag-aaral at mababang pamantayan.

Balakid: Sinasagot lamang ang kahingian ng pakikipagkomunikasyong sosyal.

• **Ikaapat na Lapit—Pagsasama-sama ng mga Naunang Lapit / Integrasyon**

Paglalarawan ng Lapit: Upang matugunan ang iba-ibang pangangailangan, hangarin at kagalingan ng mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino, baka kinakailangan ng paaralang bumuo ng higit sa isa sa mga lapit na inilarawan sa itaas.

Kalimitang Kondisyon: May karamihan ang populasyon ng paaralan ng mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino na mula sa iba-bang pinagmulan, may iba-bang hangarin at kahingian ang pamilya, may malawak na pamantayan sa pag-aaral ng wikang Tsino.

Adbentahe: Makabubuo ang paaralan ng iba-ibang programa na may sapat na mag-aaral, at pinupunan ang tiyak na kahingian ng mga estudyante.

Balakid: May kahingian na maglaan ng pondo para makabuo ng iba-ibang programa na tutugon sa iba-iba ring kahingian.

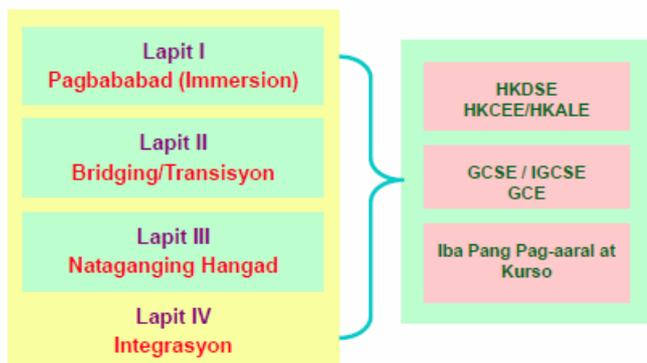
Ikalimang Kabanata—Pag-aaral at Pagtuturo

11. Dapat maunawaan ang pagkakaiba ng umang wika at ikalawang wika para isagawa ang mga katugong pamamaraan ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo.
12. Dahil sa pagkakaiba ng wikang Tsino at kani-kaniilang sariling wika, kahaharapin ng mga estudyante ang kahirapan sa pag-aaral ng grapheme, tono, bukabularyo, salitang pamukat, ayos ng mga salita at iba pa ng wikang Tsino.
13. Mga prinsipyo ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo: pagkaalam ng kakayahan ng mga estudyante, pagpapaliwanag ng target ng pag-aaral, pagsasalang-alang sa iba't ibang pangangailangan sa pag-aaral, pagsasaayos ng pamantayan ng pag-aaral, paggamit ng angkop na materyal para sa pag-aaral at pagsasama-sama ng mga yaman para sa pag-aaral.
14. Mga estratehiya ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo: sanayin ang mga estudyante sa pagsasalita sa pamamagitan ng panggagaya, magkahiwalay na ituro ang pagkilala at pagsulat ng titik, gamitin ang mga babasahin batay sa bukabularyo at kaisipan ng mga estudyante, pagsamahin ang pagbasa at pagsulat, likhain ang kapaligiran para sa pag-aaral ng wika at itaguyod ang magkakasamang pag-aaral.

Ikaanim na Kabanata—Pagtasa

15. Pagtasa ay isang bahagi ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo. Kailangang isagawa ang iba't ibang paraan para komprehensibong tasahan ang ginawa ng estudyante sa pag-aaral. Pahalagahan ang resulta ng pagtasa para malaman ang kalagayan ng pag-aaral sa iba't ibang yugto.
16. May iba-ibang pagtatapos (exits) para sa mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino. Puwedeng kumuha ng kwalipikasyon sa Wikang Tsino: Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE), Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE), the coming Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), General Certificate of Education (GCE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

Para masunod ang pamantyan ng mga inirerekomendang lapit, ebalwasyon at pagtatapos assessment and exit, mangyaring tingnan ang diagram sa sunod:



Ikapito na Kabanata—Material para sa Mag-aral at Tuturan

- Pagbuo ng mga material pangkurikulum para sa mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino: batayang talasalitaan, learning software, mga halimbawa ng planong iniakma ang kurikulum sa mga paaralan, mga modelo ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo, mga material sa pag-aaral, mga anyo ng ebalwasyon sa pag-aaral, at iba pa.
- Karagdagang Suporta para sa mga estudyanteng di-nagsasalita ng Tsino: Patuloy na suporta sa mga paaralan. Pinagyabong na programang pang-ugnayan sa pagitan ng edukasyong panterisyaryo at Non-Government Organization. Patuloy na pagkakaloob ng programang propesyonal sa mga guro. Pagsuporta sa mga magulang. Pabutihin ang suporta mula sa kapitbahayan. Pagsasagawa ng iba't ibang proyekto ng pananaliksik at pagpapaunlad.

Apendiks:

- Ang mga reperensya: mga katangiang lingguwistiko ng makabagong wikang Tsino; radicals ng titik na Tsino; karanasan ng pag-aaral sa wikang Tsino sa mga lugar na may malaking populasyon ng etnikong Tsino; serye ng mga halimbawa ng kurso at pagtuturo na kinabibilangan ng pagsasaayos ng target at module ng pag-aaral, balangkas ng kurso, plano at iskedyul ng pagtuturo, materyal para sa pag-aaral at pagtuturo. Mga iba pang impormasyon ay: iksamen ng wikang Tsino sa ibang bansa, iba't ibang posibleng pinili ng mga estudyante, materyal para sa pag-aaral sa sarili ng mga estudyante at halimbawa ng mga makukuhang yaman ng pag-aaral at pagtuturo.

Education Bureau
Gobyerno ng Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Nobyembre 2008

Ito'y pagsasalin ayon sa orihinal na wikang Tsino. Kung may kaibahan sa kahulugan ang pagkakasalin, mag-alinsunod sa orihinal na wikang Tsino.

Appendix 5.4 (4 pages)

Urdu

اردو

چینی زبان کے کورس کی اضافی ہدایات
(چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے)

مرکزی خلاصہ

پیش لفظ

۱۔ اضافی ہدایات میں مشترکہ مضامین کے کورس کے مطابق چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کی پڑھائی کو پیش نظر رکھ کر چینی زبان کے کورس کے اصولوں، تدبیروں اور تجویزوں میں کچھ اضافہ کیا گیا ہے۔ قارئین کو اس دستاویز کو اس سے پہلے جاری شدہ چینی زبان کے کورس کے متعلق دستاویز کے ساتھ پڑھنا چاہیئے تاکہ چینی زبان کے کورس کے بارے میں مکمل معلومات حاصل ہو جائیں۔

مختصر تعارف

پہلا باب

۲۔ ہانگ کانگ میں رہنے والے چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علم عموماً اردو، انگریزی، نیپالی، نیپالوگ اور ہندی زبانیں بولتے ہیں۔

۳۔ ہانگ کانگ میں زبانوں کی تعلیم کا مقصد طالب علموں کے مندرجہ ذیل زبانوں کے معیار کو بلند کرنا ہے، جن میں چینی (معیاری بیجنگ بولی اور گوانگ دونگ بولی) اور انگریزی شامل ہیں۔ ہانگ کانگ کے سماج اور کلاسوں میں عام طور پر گوانگ دونگ بولی بولی جاتی ہے اور چینی زبان کا پرانا رسم الخط استعمال کیا جاتا ہے۔ گوانگ دونگ بولی اور چینی زبان کا پرانا رسم الخط سیکھنے سے چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے سماج میں گھلنا ملنا آسان ہو جاتا ہے۔

مضامین کا ڈھانچہ

دوسرا باب

۴۔ چینی زبان کا نصاب ہانگ کانگ کی "نصابی ترقیاتی کونسل" (می ڈی سی) کا مرتب کردہ ہے جو لچکدار اور مضبوط ڈھانچہ فراہم کرتا ہے جس کا اطلاق تمام ابتدائی اور ثانوی سکولوں کے طلباء پر کیا جا سکتا ہے چینی زبان کے اس مرکزی نصاب پر انحصار کرتے ہوئے سکول اپنا ایسا نصاب تیار کر سکتے ہیں جو کہ طلباء کی مختلف النوع ضروریات سے مطابقت رکھتا ہو۔

۵۔ چینی زبان کے کورس میں مندرجہ ذیل مضامین شامل ہیں: مضمون خوانی، مضمون نویسی، سماعت، بول چال، ادب، چینی ثقافت، اخلاق، تفکر، اور زبان کا انفرادی مطالعہ۔

۶۔ ہر اسکول کو چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کی خصوصیات کے پیش نظر مناسب مضامین کا بند و بست کرنا چاہیئے۔ مثلاً چینی کیریکٹر پہچاننا اور لکھنا، انسانی تعلقات، جمالیات، مختلف ثقافتیں اور اخلاق۔

۷۔ چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کا چینی زبان سیکھنے کا عمل دوسری زبان سیکھنے کے قانون کے مطابق ہونا چاہیئے۔ یعنی سب سے پہلے سننا اور بولنا، پھر چینی کیریکٹر پہچاننا اور لکھنا، پھر پڑھنا، پھر مضمون لکھنا۔

- ۸۔ ہر اسکول کو چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کی صلاحیت ، معیار اور دلچسپی کے مطابق چینی زبان پڑھانے کا منصوبہ بنانا چاہیئے۔ منصوبہ بنانے کا اصول یہ ہے کہ طالب علموں کو چینی زبان کی ہمہ جہت تدریس دی جائے اور ان کی پڑھائی کے مطابق مضامین میں رد و بدل کیا جائے تاکہ طالب علموں اور ان کے والدین کی خواہش پوری ہو جائے۔
- ۹۔ مختلف اسکولوں کے تجربوں کے مطابق مضامین کے بند و بست کے چار نمونے ہیں: چینی بولنے والے طالب علموں کی چینی زبان کی کلاسوں میں شرکت ، عبوری مطالعہ ، خصوصی مقاصد کے لئے مطالعہ اور مختلف نمونوں کا ارتباط و اختلاط۔

۱۰۔ مضامین کے بندو بست کے چار نمونے مندرجہ ذیل ہیں:

- نمونہ نمبر ۱ : چینی بولنے والے طالب علموں کی کلاس میں شرکت

اس نمونے کے تحت چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علم چینی بولنے والے طالب علموں کے ساتھ ساتھ کلاسوں میں شرکت کرتے ہیں۔ چونکہ چینی زبان سیکھنے میں غیر چینی نژاد طالب علموں کو مختلف طرح کی ضرورتیں ہوتی ہیں، اس لئے ہر اسکول کو کلاسوں کے بعد ان کے لئے کوچنگ کلاس کا بند و بست کرنا چاہیئے تاکہ وہ چینی طالب علموں میں گھل مل سکیں۔

مناسب کوائف : یہ نمونہ ان چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے مناسب ہے جو بچپن ہی سے ہانگ کانگ میں رہ رہے ہوں اور ہانگ کانگ کے کنٹرولرز میں پلے بڑھے ہیں اور بنیادی طور پر چینی زبان میں مختلف مضامین پڑھ سکتے ہوں۔

خوبی : چینی زبان کا ماحول بہتر ہے۔ مختلف قومیتوں کے لوگ اور ان کی ثقافتیں باہم گھل ملتی ہیں۔

چیلنج : اسکول کو چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے کوچنگ کلاس کا بند و بست کرنا پڑتا ہے۔

- نمونہ نمبر ۲ : عبوری مطالعہ

اس نمونے کے تحت چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علم شروع شروع میں ایک مختصر عرصے تک غیر معمولی محنت سے زبان کا مطالعہ کرتے ہیں تاکہ ان کا چینی زبان کا معیار تیزی سے بلند ہو جائے ، یہاں تک کہ وہ چینی نژاد طالب علموں کے ساتھ چینی زبان کی کلاسوں میں بیٹھ سکیں۔

مناسب کوائف : یہ نمونہ ان چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے مناسب ہے جو لڑکپن یا نوجوانی کے زمانے میں ہانگ کانگ میں آئے ہوں۔ چینی سے ان کا واسطہ نسبتاً دیر میں قائم ہوا ہو۔ لیکن ہانگ کانگ میں مزید تعلیم حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہوں اور چینی زبان کی مدد سے ملازمت کرنا چاہتے ہوں۔

خوبی : غیر معمولی محنت سے پڑھنے کی بدولت چینی زبان کی ایک اچھی بنیاد پڑ جاتی ہے۔

چیلنج : چونکہ ابتدائی دور میں ان طالب علموں کا چینی زبان کا معیار پست ہے، اس لئے اسکولوں کو ان کا امتحان لینا چاہیئے۔

- نمونہ نمبر ۳ : خصوصی مقاصد کے لئے مطالعہ

اس نمونے کے تحت چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علم مقامی لوگوں سے راہ و رسم اور تبادلہ ئ

خیال کرنے کے لئے چینی زبان سیکھتے ہیں۔

مناسب کوائف : یہ نمونہ ان غیر چینی نژاد طالب علموں کے لئے مناسب ہے جو مختصر عرصے تک ہانگ کانگ میں ٹھہرنے اور گریجویشن کے بعد یہاں سے چلے جانا چاہتے ہوں۔ یا وہ لڑکین میں یہاں آئے ہوں، لیکن ہانگ کانگ میں مزید تعلیم حاصل کرنے اور چینی زبان کی بدولت ملازمت کرنے کا ارادہ نہیں رکھتے ہوں۔

خوبی : یہ نمونہ مختلف مقاصد پورا کر سکتا ہے مطالعے کا دائرہ اور معیار طے کیا جاسکتا ہے ، طالب علموں پر پڑھائی کا بوجھ کم کیا جاسکتا ہے اور بول چال پر توجہ مرکوز کی جاسکتی ہے ۔

چیلنج : طالب علموں نے جو سیکھا ہے وہ صرف اپنے خصوصی مقصد کو پورا کر سکتا ہے۔

● نمونہ نمبر ۴ : مختلف نمونوں کا ارتباط و اختلاط

کی اسکولوں میں بیک وقت کئی نمونوں پر چینی زبان کی تعلیم کی جاتی ہے تاکہ اپنے اسکول میں غیر چینی نژاد طالب علموں کی مختلف ضرورتیں اور خواہشیں پوری ہو سکیں۔

مناسب کوائف : اس نمونہ کو ایسے اسکولوں میں عمل میں لایا جا سکتا ہے جہاں چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کی تعداد زیادہ ہو ، ان کی ضرورتیں مختلف ہوں اور ان کے چینی زبان کے معیار بھی واضح طور پر مختلف ہوں۔

خوبی : مختلف طالب علموں کو مختلف مضامین پڑھائے جاسکتے ہیں۔

چیلنج : ان اسکولوں کو زیادہ تدریسی وسائل کی ضرورت ہوتی ہے اور تاکہ مختلف مضامین کے ذریعے مختلف مقاصد پورے کر کے پڑتے ہیں ۔

پڑھنا اور پڑھانا

پانچواں باب

۱۱۔ چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کو چینی زبان پڑھانے والوں پر مادری زبان اور غیر مادری زبان کی پڑھائی کا فرق واضح ہونا چاہیئے تاکہ تدریس میں تیز بہ ہدف تدبیروں کا استعمال کیا جائے۔

۱۲۔ چونکہ چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کی مادری زبان چینی زبان سے مختلف ہے ، اس لئے چینی کیریکٹرز کی شکلیں ، آوازیں ، الفاظ اور جملوں میں الفاظ کی ترتیب کے لحاظ سے ان کو اکثر مشکلات کا سامنا ہوتا ہے۔

۱۳۔ پڑھنے اور پڑھانے کے اصول یہ ہیں : طالب علموں کی صلاحیت جانتی چاہیئے ، پڑھنے کا مقصد واضح ہونا چاہیئے ، مختلف ضرورتوں کا خیال رکھنا چاہیئے ، تدریس کے مختلف معیار طے کرنے چاہئیں، مناسب مواد چننا اور مناسب تدریسی وسائل استعمال کرنے چاہئیں۔

۱۴۔ پڑھنے اور پڑھانے کی تدبیروں یہ ہیں : چینی زبان کی نقل سے زبانی مشق کرنی چاہیئے ، چینی کیریکٹرز پہچاننا اور لکھنے کی الگ الگ کلاسیں ہونی چاہئیں، پڑھنے کا مواد طالب علموں کے ذخیرہ ئی الفاظ اور ذہنی فروغ کے مطابق ہونا چاہیئے ، پڑھنے اور لکھنے کو مربوط کرنا چاہیئے ، اور چینی زبان سیکھنے کا ماحول پیدا کرنا چاہیئے۔

ٹیسٹ

چھٹا باب

۱۵۔ ٹیسٹ چینی زبان کی تدریس کا ایک اہم حصہ ہے۔ اسکولوں کو طرح طرح کے طریقوں سے طالب علموں کی پڑھائی ٹیسٹ کرنی ہے تاکہ مختلف دوروں میں ٹیسٹ کے نتائج سے تدریس کی حالت معلوم ہو سکے۔

...

۱۶۔ چینی زبان سیکھنے کے بعد طالب علم مختلف ٹیسٹوں میں حصہ لے سکتے ہیں اور مندرجہ ذیل اسناد کو الفیکیشنز حاصل کر سکتے ہیں: چینی زبان کی قابلیت / اعلیٰ تعلیم کی اسناد: پانگ کانگ سند برائے تعلیمی امتحان، پانگ کانگ کا اعلیٰ درجے کا امتحان، پانگ کانگ ڈپلومہ برائے ثانوی تعلیم، عام تعلیمی سند، بین الاقوامی سند برائے ثانوی تعلیم، عام سند برائے ثانوی تعلیم۔

مندرجہ ذیل ڈانگرام میں یہ شامل ہیں:

مضامین کے نمونے، چینی زبان سے متعلق ٹیسٹس اور چینی کورس سیکھنے کے بعد طالب علموں کے مستقل



ساتواں باب بڑھنے اور پڑھنے کے وسائل

۱۷۔ چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے لئے مناسب تدریسی وسائل کو توسیع دی جانی چاہئے، مثلاً: بنیادی کیریئرز اور الفاظ کا انتخاب، انفرادی مطالعہ کے سوفٹ ویئر، پڑھنے اور پڑھانے کی مثالیں، پڑھنے کا مواد اور ٹیسٹ کے ذرائع وغیرم۔

۱۸۔ ہر اسکول کو چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کو دوسری خدمات بھی فراہم کرنی چاہئیں، مثلاً: طالب علموں کو اسکولوں میں آنے کی سہولت فراہم کی جائے، کالجوں، یونیورسٹیوں یا غیر سرکاری اداروں کے ساتھ تعاون کیا جائے، اسنادوں کے معیار کو بلند کیا جائے، طالب علموں کے والدین کی مدد کی جائے، تحقیق اور ترقی کے مختلف منصوبے بنائے جائیں۔

ضمیمہ

۱۹۔ حوالہ جاتی مواد میں مندرجہ ذیل چیزیں شامل ہیں: جدید چینی زبان کی خصوصیات، چینی کیریئرز کے اجزا، چینی زبان سیکھنے کے تجربے، سلسلہ وار مضامین کے موڈل، مثلاً: کورس کے مضامین میں اہم رد و بدل، مضامین کے ڈھانچے، تدریسی منصوبے، تدریسی ارتقا کا شیڈول، پڑھنے، لکھنے، سننے اور بولنے سمیت تدریسی پروگرام کا اہتمام، بیرون ملک چینی زبان کے امتحانات، چینی نہ بولنے والے طالب علموں کے مستقل، طالب علموں کے لئے انفرادی پڑھائی کا مواد، سماج میں طرح طرح کے تدریسی وسائل۔

ایجوکیشن بیورو

پانگ کانگ خصوصی انتظامی علاقہ

نومبر ۲۰۰۸ء

* یہ اردو ترجمہ چینی سے کیا گیا ہے۔ اگر مفہوم اور معنی میں کوئی سقم ہو تو اصلی چینی متن سے رجوع کریں۔

Appendix 5.5 (4 pages)

Nepali

नेपाली

चिनियाँ भाषा पाठ्यक्रमसम्बन्धी परिशिष्ट निर्देशन
(चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीका लागि)

कार्यकारी उपसंहार

प्रस्तावपना

एक. परिशिष्ट निर्देशन भनेको साझा पाठ्यक्रमको प्रारूपमा चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीको सिक्रे वातावरणबमोजिम चिनियाँ भाषा पाठ्य पुस्तकलाई व्यवहारमा उतारिने परिशिष्ट सिद्धान्त, उपाय तथा सल्लाह हुन्। पढ्ने व्यक्तिहरूले त्यस ग्रन्थ्यादिको भूमिकालाई वितेका केही वर्षयता सार्वजनिक गरिएका चिनियाँ भाषासम्बन्धी अनेक शिक्षा पुस्तकसँग जोडेर पढ्नुपर्छ। जसबाट पाठ्य पुस्तकको सम्पूर्ण विषयबारे स्पष्टसँग बुझ्न सकिनेछ।

अध्याय एक: परिचय

दुई. हङ्गकङ्गमा रहेका चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूले सामान्य रूपमा प्रयोग गर्ने भाषाहरूमध्ये उर्दू भाषा, अँग्रेजी भाषा, नेपाली भाषा, तागाओग भाषा तथा हिन्दी भाषा आदि हुन्।

तीन. विद्यार्थीका लागि चिनियाँ तथा अँग्रेजी अक्षरका साथै क्यान्टोनिज भाषा, फु योङ्ग न्हा र अँग्रेजी भाषाको स्तरलाई माथि उक्लाउनु हङ्गकङ्गको चिनियाँ भाषा प्रशिक्षणको मुख्य नीति हो। हङ्गकङ्ग समाज तथा माध्यमिक विद्यालयमा सामान्य रूपमा क्यान्टोनिज भाषा तथा चिनियाँ परम्परागत अक्षरको प्रयोग गरिन्छ। चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीले क्यान्टोनिज भाषा तथा चिनियाँ परम्परागत अक्षरको अध्ययन गर्ने कुरा उनीहरू समाजमा मिल्न र बाँच्नका लागि सघाउ पुग्छ। साथै जुन कुरा उनीहरूको आफ्नो हितसँग पनि अनुकूल छ।

अध्याय दुई: पाठ्यक्रमको प्रारूप

चार. हङ्गकङ्ग पाठ्यक्रमको विकास समितिद्वारा तर्जुमा गरिएको चिनियाँ भाषा पाठ्यक्रममा पाठसम्बन्धी लचिलो र फराकिलो प्रारूप प्रदान गरिन्छ। उक्त पाठ्यक्रम हङ्गकङ्गका समस्त माध्यमिक तथा प्राथमिक विद्यालयका विद्यार्थीहरूको प्रयोगसित अनुकूल हुन्छ। विद्यार्थीहरूका लागि अध्ययनसम्बन्धी विभिन्न किसिमका चाहनालाई पूरा पार्नका लागि विद्यालयले केन्द्रीय पाठ्यक्रमको प्रारूपबमोजिम आ-आफ्नो पाठ्यक्रमको समन्वय गर्नुपर्छ।

पाँच. चिनियाँ भाषासम्बन्धी प्रशिक्षण र अध्ययनका विषयहरूमा पढाइ, लेखाइ, सुनाइ, बलाइ, साहित्य, चीनको परम्परागत संस्कृति, नैतिक उपदेश, विचार र आफूद्वारा चिनियाँ भाषा सिक्रे नौवटा चरण आदि समावेश छन्। ती विषयहरू समस्त विद्यार्थीहरूका लागि अनुकूल हुन्छन्।

छ. विद्यालयले चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूको विशेषताबमोजिम वास्तविक रूपमा विभिन्न किसिमको कारकत्वको सोचविचार गर्नुका साथै अध्ययनसम्बन्धी उपयुक्त विषय तर्जुमा गर्नुपर्छ। जस्तै: अक्षर सिक्रे र लेख्ने, मानिसहरू बीचको सम्पर्क र आदान-प्रदान गर्ने क्षमतालाई उक्लाने, बौद्धिक क्षमता प्रारूपको स्थापना गर्ने, सुन्दर र सुमधुर चीजको दृश्यावलोकन गर्ने, विभिन्न किसिमका संस्कृति सिक्रे र आफूद्वारा सिक्रे क्षमतालाई बलियो पार्ने आदि विषयहरू छन्।

सात. चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूले चिनियाँ भाषा सिक्रे प्रक्रियाबाट दोस्रो भाषाको अध्ययन गर्ने विशेषता पनि प्रतिबिम्बित गरिन्छ। शुरुमा सुनाइ र बोलाइ गरिन्छ, अनि अक्षर सिक्रे र अक्षर लेख्ने गरिन्छ। त्यसपछि अधिकांश पाठ पढेर विद्यार्थीको पढ्ने क्षमतालाई माथि उकासिन्छ। अन्त्यमा पढ्नुका साथै लेख रचना गर्न लगाइन्छ।

अध्याय तीन: पाठ्यक्रमको योजना

- आठ. विद्यालयले चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूको दक्षता, स्तर तथा चासोब्रमोविम् चिनियाँ भाषा पाठ्यक्रमको परिकल्पना गर्नुपर्छ। तीमध्ये सन्तुलित एवम चौतर्फी चिनियाँ भाषा पढाइ, विद्यार्थीहरूको अवस्था ब्रमोविम पाठ्यक्रमलाई मिलाइनु, अभिभावक तथा विद्यार्थीको कौतुहलताको जवाफ दिइनुलगायत् विषयहरू समावेश छन्।
- नौ. विद्यालयको व्यावहारिक अनुभवबाट पाठ्यक्रमलाई चारवटा भागमा विभाजन गर्नसकिन्छ: चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षामा भाग लिनु, एक अवस्थाबाट अर्को अवस्थामा जानु, विशेष उद्देश्यका लागि पढाइ, समग्र रूपमा प्रयोग गर्नु।

अध्याय चार: पाठ्यक्रमका ढंगहरू

दश. विद्यालय लचिलो रूपमा छनौट गर्नसक्ने पाठ्यक्रमका ढंगहरू

ढंग एक: चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षामा भाग लिनु

चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरू चिनियाँ भाषा बोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूसँगै मिलेर एउटै कक्षामा पढ्नु। चिनियाँ भाषा पढाइमा विभिन्न विद्यार्थीको विभिन्न माग रहेको हुनाले विद्यालयले कक्षावाहेक विभिन्न विद्यार्थीलाई विभिन्न महत्त्वमा रहेको निर्देशन दिनुपर्छ। जसबाट चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूलाई चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षामा भाग लिन सहायता पुऱ्याउन सकिनेछ।

पालना गर्ने शर्त: विद्यार्थीहरूले तिनीहरूको बच्चाको बेलामा हडकडमा आएर चिनियाँ भाषाको शिशु विद्यालयमा पढेका छन्। यो गरेपछि उनीहरू चिनियाँ भाषामार्फत पढ्नसक्छन्।

फाइदा: चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्ने वातावरण राम्रो छ। एक-अर्कालाई सहयोग गर्नसकिन्छ, विभिन्न जातिबीचको मेलमिलाप हुनसक्छ, विभिन्न प्रकारका संस्कृतिबीच जानकारी लिन सकिन्छ।

चुनौति: चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरू चिनियाँ भाषा बोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूसँगै मिलेर चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षामा भाग लिन्छन्। विद्यालयले कक्षावाहेक सम्बन्धित निर्देशन दिनुपर्छ तथा चिनियाँ भाषाको स्तरलाई निर्धारण गर्नुपर्छ।

ढंग दुई: एक अवस्थाबाट अर्को अवस्थामा जानु

चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूले तिनीहरूको पढाइको शुरुमा सामान्य चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षाबाट छोड्नुपर्छ। तिनीहरूले छोटो अवधिमा प्रबल सिकाइमा भाग लिनुपर्छ। जसले तिनीहरूको चिनियाँ भाषाको स्तरलाई तीव्र गतिले माथि उकासिन्छ। त्यसपछि उनीहरूले अरु विद्यार्थीहरूसँग चिनियाँ भाषा कक्षामा भाग लिनसक्छन्।

पालना गर्ने शर्त: विद्यार्थीहरूले तिनीहरूको युवा अवधिमा हडकडमा आइपुगेर तुलनात्मक ढिलो रूपमा चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्न थालेका छन्। यसका साथै विद्यार्थीहरूले हडकडका विश्वविद्यालयमा पढ्न खोजेका तथा स्तरीय चिनियाँ भाषा बोल्न तथा लेख्न चाहिने पेशा खोजेका छन्।

फाइदा: प्रबल तरिकाबाट चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्नु यसको मुख्य फाइदा हो। आफ्नो चिनियाँ भाषाको जगलाई राम्रोसँग बसाल्नसकिने छ, पढाइमा हुने कठिनाइको सामना गर्नसकिने छ, पढाइसँग अभ्यस्त हुनेसमय प्रशस्त छ, पढाइमा तल्लो स्तरमा परेका विद्यार्थीहरूलाई पनि चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्ने अनुमति दिइएको छ।

चुनौति: विद्यार्थीहरूको स्तर तोक्ने तरिका हुनुपर्छ। जसबाट विद्यार्थीहरूले तुलनात्मक रूपमा तल्लो स्तरबाट पढ्न प्रत्याभूति दिनसकिनेछ।

दंग तीन: विशेष उद्देश्यका लागि पढाइ

विशेष उद्देश्यका लागि चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्नु हो। जसबाट दैनिक आदान-प्रदान तथा सम्पर्क गर्नसकिनेछ।

पालना गर्ने शर्त: विद्यार्थी विदेशबाट हडकड फर्कने, छोटो समय बस्ने, उत्तीर्ण भएपछि हडकड छोड्ने, चिनियाँ भाषाको स्तर उच्च नहुने, हडकडमा अरु बढी रूपमा पढ्ने र नोकरि गर्ने मन नहुने, बालककालमा मात्र हडकडमा आएका विद्यार्थी, चिनियाँ भाषासित अलि डिलो रूपमा सम्पर्क गर्नुका साथै हडकडमा माथिसम्म पढ्ने तथा राम्रो चिनियाँ भाषा चाहिने नोकरि पाउने मन नहुने।

फाइदा: विशेष चाहनालाई पूरा गर्न सक्नु, सीमित पढ्ने परिधि, वास्तविक जीवनसित जोडिएको, केन्द्रीत रूपमा आदान प्रदान र उपयोगी विषय पढ्ने, पढाइको बहन र दबावलाई सन्तुलित गर्नका लागि पढ्ने स्तरको चाहनालाई लचिलो रूपमा व्यवहार उतार्न सक्नु।

चुनौति: पढेर पाउने ज्ञानलाई केवल विशेष चाहनालाई पूरा गर्ने रूपमा मात्र लिनु।

दंग चार: मिश्रित उपयोग

विद्यालय बढी पाठ्यक्रम राम्रै दंगको विकास गर्ने सम्भावना हुनु, विभिन्न उपायको मिश्रित उपयोग गर्नु, जसबाट एउटै विद्यालयमा चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीहरूको भिन्ना भिन्नै चाहना, आकांक्षा र प्रतीक्षालाई पूरा गर्न सकियोस्।

पालना गर्ने शर्त: विद्यालयले चिनियाँ भाषा बढी बोल्न नसक्ने विद्यार्थीलाई भर्ना गर्नु, विद्यार्थीहरूको पृष्ठभूमि विविध हुनु, अभिभावकको भिन्नाभिन्नै प्रतीक्षा र माग तथा विद्यार्थीहरूको चिनियाँ भाषाको स्तरको विषमता ठूलो हुनु।

फाइदा: विभिन्न पाठ्यक्रमको उपयोग गरी अन्य विद्यार्थीको चाहना पूरा गर्नु।

चुनौति: बढी स्रोत साधन र जनधन लगाउनु पर्नु। विभिन्न खालको पाठ्यक्रम राम्रै दंगमार्फत विद्यार्थीहरूको भिन्नाभिन्नै लक्ष्य र चाहनालाई हेरचाह गर्नु।

अध्याय पाँच: पढाइ र सिकाइ

एघार. चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थीलाई चिनियाँ भाषा पढाउनका लागि पहिलो भाषा र दोस्रो भाषाको पढाइको फरकलाई बुझ्नु पर्ने। त्यसको आधारमा लक्ष्यसहित पढ्ने र पढाउने रणकौशल अपनाउनु।

बाह्र. चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थी चिनियाँ भाषा पढ्ने बेला आफ्नो मातृ-भाषा र चिनियाँ भाषाबीचको भिन्नताले हानु च्को आकार, टोन, विशेष शब्दभण्डार, वर्गीकरण र शब्दको क्रम आदि क्षेत्रमा तिनीहरूले कठिनाई भेट्नेछन्।

तेह्र. पढाइ र सिकाइको सिद्धान्त: विद्यार्थीको खुबीबारे जानकारी लिनु, पढ्ने लक्ष्यलाई प्रकाश पार्नु, पढाइका विविध चाहनालाई हेरचाह गर्नु, पढाइको स्तरलाई सामन्जस्य गर्नु, शैक्षिक सामग्रीलाई अनुकूल पार्नु र लचिलो रूपमा प्रबल सिकाइको स्रोत-साधनको उपयोग गर्नु।

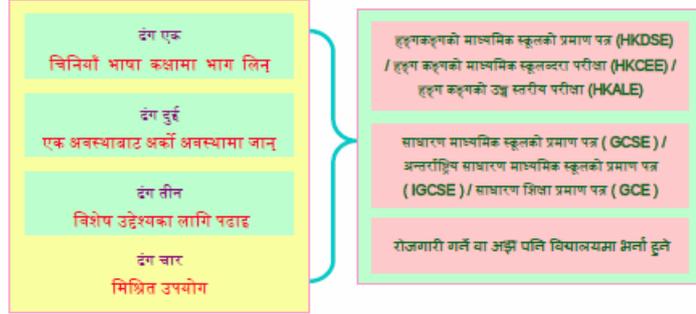
चौध. पढाइ र सिकाइको रणकौशल: अनुकरणमार्फत मौखिक भाषाको विकास गर्नु, शब्द चिन्ने र लेख्ने सिकाइ छुट्याउनु। शैक्षिक सामग्री शब्द संख्या र विद्यार्थीको बुद्धि र मनको विकाससित जोड्नु, पढाइ र लेखाइसित जोड्नु, भाषा पढाइको चातावरण तयार पार्नु, अभिजात पढाइ।

अध्याय छ: मूल्याङ्कन

पन्ध्र. मूल्याङ्कन पढाइ र सिकाइको संगठित भाग हो। विभिन्न उपायको उपयोग गरी सर्वतोमुखी रूपमा पढाइको प्रदर्शनको मूल्याङ्कन गर्नु अनुकूल हुन्छ। मूल्याङ्कन सामग्रीबाट पढाइमा मदत मिल्छ। विभिन्न चरणमा पढाइको प्रगतिबारे

जानकारी गराउनु।

सोह. चिनियाँ भाषा नबोल्ने विद्यार्थी विभिन्न ढंगको पढाइपछि विविध मूल्याङ्कन र अस्तित्व पाउनेछन्। हङकङ प्रमाणपत्र-तह परीक्षा, हङकङ उच्च स्तरीय परीक्षा,हङकङ माध्यमिक स्नातक शिक्षा,साधारण शिक्षा प्रमाण-पत्र, अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय साधारण माध्यमिक शिक्षा र साधारण माध्यमिक शिक्षा प्रमाण-पत्र।



अध्याय सात: शिक्षण तथा सिकाइ स्रोतहरू

सत्र. चिनियाँ भाषा बोल्ने नसक्नेहरूका लागि पाठ्यक्रम स्रोतको विकास—आधारभूत शब्दभण्डार,सिकाइको लागि उपयोगी सफ्टवेयर,विद्यालयहरूका अनुकूल आधारभूत पाठ्यक्रमका उदाहरणहरू,सिकाइ सामग्री,सिकाइका लागि उपयोगी अन्य सामग्रीहरू।

अठार. चिनियाँ भाषा नजान्नेहरूका लागि थप सहायता र स्रोतहरू-विद्यालयले दिने लगातारको सहायता,तेस्रो पक्ष तथा गैरसरकारी संस्थाका सहायक योजनाहरू,शिक्षकका पेशागत सीपहरू,अभिभावकको सहायता,समुदायको सहयोग तथा विविध अनुसन्धान र विकास योजना।

परिशिष्ट

उन्नाइस. हायक सामग्रीहरू-आधुनिक चिनियाँ भाषाविज्ञान,चिनियाँ भाषा र अक्षरका विविध सामग्रीहरू,चिनियाँ भाषा बोल्ने र लेख्न सक्ने चीनका विभिन्न क्षेत्रका जनताहरू,सिकाइ र पाठ्यक्रमका विविध सामग्रीहरू जस्तै:भाषाअनुकूल विद्यालयको शिक्षण सिकाइका विविध ढंगहरू,विद्यालय पाठ्यक्रमको प्रारूप,शिक्षण योजना र कार्यउद्देश्य,विद्यालयका शिक्षण सिकाइ सामग्रीहरू आदिसी सबै कुराको सूचना समुद्रपार चिनियाँ भाषा परीक्षालाई पनि दिइएको छ।त्यस्तै गरेर बहु भाषा शिक्षण,शिक्षण सिकाइका सहायक सामग्री,चिनियाँ भाषाका आत्म-सिकाइ गर्नेहरू तथा शिक्षण-सिकाइका सामग्रीहरू समेत उपलब्ध छन्।

शिक्षा ब्युरो
हङकङ विशेष प्रशासनिक क्षेत्र सरकार
नोभेम्बर 2008

यो अनुवाद गर्ने क्रम पत्र हो। अनुवाद गरिएको कुनै विषयको अर्थ चाहिँ चिनियाँ भाषी दस्तावेजसित फरक भएमा चिनियाँ भाषी दस्तावेज अनसार गर्न सक्छ।

Appendix 5.6 (9 pages)

核心活動一：常用交通工具

(一) 常用交通工具

選擇適當的詞語，寫在橫線上。

巴士 電單車 電車 小輪
私家車 的士 小巴 單車 地鐵



單車



巴士



小輪



小巴



私家車



的士



地鐵



電車



電單車

(二) 我每天走路上學

👋 (1) 請參考示例，訪問同學。



阿星

我每日走路上學。你呢？

我每天坐地鐵上學。



古可兒

我

我每天坐巴士上學，你呢？

我每日坐巴士上學，你呢？

我每日坐巴士上學，你呢？

我每日坐巴士上學，你呢？

同學 1

同學 2

同學 3

我 每天 _____

我 每天 _____

我 每天 _____

我 每天 _____

(2) 請聆聽阿星和古可兒的對話，選出正確答案。



阿星

古可兒，你住嘅邊架？

我住嘅大帽山腳。



古可兒



1. 古可兒住在哪兒？

(i) 大嶼山

(ii) 大帽山

(iii) 太平山

2. 古可兒怎樣上學？

(i) 坐車

(ii) 船

(iii) 飛機

3. 古可兒通常幾點起床？

(i) 五點

(ii) 六點

(iii) 七點

4. 為甚麼古可兒要早起？

因為可以 (i) 先吃早餐 (ii) 先做運動 (iii) 先做家務，再出門。

5. 為甚麼阿星不用早起？

因為 (i) 家在學校附近 (ii) 住在學校 (iii) 喜歡遲到

6. 阿星怎樣上學？

(i) 騎單車

(ii) 坐巴士

(ii) 走路

(三) 口語和書面語的對比

1	你	住 係 zyu6 hai5	邊 bin1	?				
	你	住 在	哪 裏	?				
2	你	點 dim2	返 faan1	學 hok6	架 gaa3	?		
	你	怎 樣	上	學		?		
3	你	點 解 dim2 gaai2	咁 gam3	早 zou2	起 hei2	身 san1	?	
	你	為 甚 麼	這 麼	早	起	床	?	
4	由 jau4	屋 企 uk1 kei5	到	學	校	要	幾 耐 gei2 noi6	?
	從	家 裏	到	學	校	要	多 久	?

(四) 句式練習



教師提示

1. 解釋「都」及「然後」之間的關係；
2. 請同學口頭造句，待同學掌握要領，再寫句子。

太帽山腳？好遠呀！
你點返學架？

我每日都坐小巴去錦上路站，然後
轉搭西鐵返學，都好方便。



阿星



古可兒

示例：



我每天都騎 單車 去元朗，然後坐 巴士 上學。

1.



我每天都 走路 去 電車站，然後坐 電車 上班。

2.



我每天都坐 小巴 去荃灣站，然後轉乘 地鐵 上學。

3.



我每天都坐 小巴 去碼頭，然後轉乘 渡海小輪 上學。



(五) 重組句子：

參考示例，把詞語組成通順句子。

示例：王老師/ 坐地鐵/ 七時半/ 上班/每天/ 。

王老師每天七時半坐地鐵上班。

1. 古可兒/ 騎單車/ 上學/ 每天早上/ 。

古可兒每天早上騎單車上學。

2. 阿星/ 乘搭巴士/ 去圖書館/ 下午/ 。

下午阿星乘搭巴士去圖書館。

3. 媽媽/ 走路/ 到菜市場/ 早上/ 。

早上媽媽走路到菜市場。

4. 弟弟/ 坐小輪/ 去外婆家/ 每個星期天/ 去中環/ 都坐地鐵/ 然後/ 。

每個星期天，弟弟都坐地鐵去中環，然後坐小輪去外婆家。

5. 阿文/ 每個星期六/ 坐電車/ 去球場/ 然後轉乘小巴/ 都/ 到灣仔/ 。

每個星期六，阿文都坐電車到灣仔，然後轉乘小巴去球場。

✍️ (六) 寫字練習

巴巴巴巴

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士士士

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的的的的的的的的

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單單單單單單單單

單單單單

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車 車 車 車 車 車 車 車

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

火 火 火 火

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

電 電 電 電 電 電 電 電

電 電 電 電 電

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

私 私 私 私 私 私 私

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

家	家	家	家	家	家	家	家
家	家						
走	走	走	走	走	走	走	
路	路	路	路	路	路	路	路
路	路	路	路	路			

閱讀六層次工作紙 (五)

第二階段先導計劃

中一級 中國語文

閱讀篇章：《街景》 小思

沒有電視節目可看的童年，我們看街景。

其實，也不見得有甚麼好看，冷冷清清的一段軒尼詩道，店舖沉沉實實的幾家。對街就有三家中藥店，其餘是雜貨店、裁縫店、麵包店、米店、都做街坊買賣，招牌掛上不知多少年代，又不作興賣廣告，誰好誰壞街坊心裏有數。

只有對戶一家怪魚酒家，有點新鮮氣味。為什麼叫怪魚酒家，孩子誰也沒有問過。店外一堵大牆上，是幅海底奇景圖。每年歲暮修爐前，就有油漆匠在上面繪新的一幅。無論畫面怎樣不同，但例少不了一條美人魚和一個潛水銅人。看人家繪這牆畫，是這條街上孩子的大節目之一。我們會熱心猜想：今年的美人魚的姿態會怎樣子，旁邊又會有多少條怪魚。鮮明的漆油迎著新年，看得人很開心。我們會天天看這畫，一直到它不知不覺的風雨侵剝中褪了顏色，一年就差不多過去了。

晚上，酒家燦爛的燈火，在沉寂的長街上，顯得充滿誇張的歡愉。設宴人家還會請來粵曲班助慶。入席前，多會燒一串很長的爆竹。儘管我們不喜歡燒爆竹，因為在很靜的晚上，實在太吵了，火藥味又嗆得人辛苦，但我們依舊會熱心地看。憑爆竹的長度，可以猜測擺宴人家有多體面。爆竹燒過後，濃煙未散，野孩子在滿一地爆竹衣堆裏，搶拾未燒過的小爆竹，使夜間街頭充滿刺激。

白天，街景也並不流動。但每隔一段日子，總有些異常的一熱鬧，那是出殯的行列經過。孩子心中沒有死亡的悲哀，不過仍知

道看那種「熱鬧」就不該笑，我們默默看一對藍字白燈籠，看中西樂隊不整齊的步伐，藏著棺材的大花塔，白幛帳裏，要人參扶的披麻帶孝的死者親人，跟在後頭的送殯行列。我們默默聽哨啞刺耳的長號，洋樂隊大鼓一下又一下，震動由耳膜傳到心裏，孝幛裏偶有個人呼天搶地的哭聲過後，看熱鬧的人散去，長街又回復老樣子——不流動。

問題：

1. 怪魚酒家的大牆有何特色？（2分）（層次一撮取資訊）

怪魚酒家的大牆上，是一幅海底奇景圖。每年歲暮修爐前，就有油漆匠在上面繪新的一幅。無論畫面怎樣不同，但例少不了一條美人魚和一個潛水銅人。美人魚的姿態年年不同，旁邊的怪魚數目亦會不同。

2. 既然街景「不見得有甚麼好看」，作者仍愛看街景的原因是什麼？

（2分）（層次二解釋資訊）

街景「不見得有甚麼好看」，作者仍愛看街景的原因是當時還沒有電視，作者的童年沒有電視節目可看。

3. 作者所描述的白天和晚上的街景有何不同？（6分）（層次三重整資訊）

作者所描述的白天和晚上的街景都是偶爾才會有的活動，而作者就用了白天「出殯」和晚上「擺宴」這兩種不同的「熱鬧」去描寫兩種不同的街景。白天偶有出殯行列經過，吸引小孩子默默在旁觀看白幛帳內披麻帶孝的死者親人及佈置，看著中西樂隊不整齊的步伐，聽著刺耳的長號漸漸散去。晚上就是擺宴人家的歡愉場面，看著人家燒爆竹和野孩子搶拾未燒過的小爆竹，聽著粵曲班助慶，使夜間街頭充滿刺激。

4. 作者所說的「白天，街景也並不流動。」這句說話是指什麼意思？作者想藉此帶出她的童年生活是怎樣的？（5分）（層次四延展資訊）

作者所說的「白天，街景也並不流動。」這句說話是指白天的街道沒有什麼特別活動，大概都是千篇一律的街頭買賣，毫無變化。

作者藉此帶出自己的童年生活是枯燥乏味，沒有太多的生活變化，娛樂亦欠奉。

5. 你最欣賞作者哪一種描寫街景的手法？(6分) (層次五評鑑資訊)
6. 除了作者所提及的街景外，你在生活上所見到的街景又有何不同呢？
(5分) (層次六再創造資訊)

Appendix 5.7 Chinese Exercise for Mainstream School Students (Sample – Form 1)
http://resources.hkedcity.net/resource_detail.php?rid=986799506