

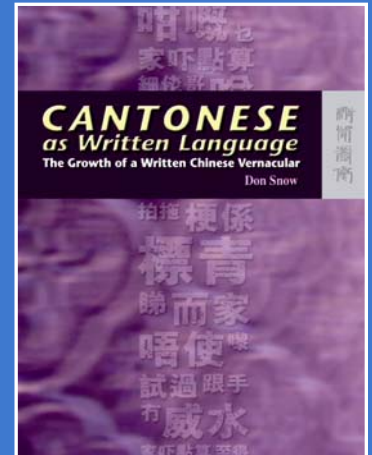
# Written Cantonese and Implications for Hong Kong

HKU Constituent Theme-  
Languages, Media & Communication:  
Language in Education & Assessment Seminar Series

Speaker

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China



2 February 2007 (Friday) 12:45-2:00pm  
LG01, Hui Oi Chow Science Building, HKU

## Abstract

This presentation will briefly introduce the history of written Cantonese, tracing its development from use in late Ming Dynasty song texts up through its role in contemporary publications in Hong Kong. I will argue that the increasing use of written Cantonese in Hong Kong: 1) should not be viewed as an aberration resulting from some kind of decline in language standards; rather, it should be viewed as the natural outgrowth of a long historical process; 2) can be viewed in part as a reflection of shifts in identity patterns in Hong Kong; 3) can also be seen as a reflection of the unique challenges students in Hong Kong face learning to write their “mother tongue”; and 4) exemplifies broader historical patterns which can be seen in many other societies in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

**Dr Don Snow** has an MA in English (TESOL) from Michigan State University, and a PhD in East Asian language and culture from Indiana University. He has taught language, culture, and linguistics for over two decades in various parts of China, as well as in the United States, and currently teaches in the English Department of Nanjing University. He is the author of several books, including *Cantonese as Written Language: The Growth of a Written Chinese Vernacular* (Hong Kong University Press). His most recent book, *From Language Learner to Language Teacher*, will be released by TESOL Publications in early 2007.

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**All are Welcome. Enquiries: 2859 2395**