

Promoting Chinese Learner Participation in Classroom Discussion

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

Speaker

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(Chair: Dr Chris Davison, Faculty of Education, HKU)



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Abstract

The participation of students in spoken activities within the classroom is an essential part of the aim of many English medium higher education institutions across Asia to enhance the English language proficiency of their undergraduate populations. However, while many researchers and teachers have discussed the alleged reticence of Asian learners, only limited attention has been given to understanding the process of how second language learners participate in oral activities within the undergraduate classroom. This seminar will draw on questionnaire, interview and observational data collected as part of a larger ethnographic study of Chinese-background undergraduates in an English medium of instruction university in Asia. The seminar explores some of the assumptions about Chinese learners' participation in spoken activities and reveals how one group of freshmen business and economics students participated in situated oral activities within both content and language classrooms. The implications for classroom practices designed to promote student participation in spoken activities and for future research will be considered.

Dr John Trent has been involved in language education at the secondary and tertiary level in Hong Kong since 1996. He completed his PGDE, MA and PhD degrees at the University of Hong Kong. The title of his doctoral thesis is "Second Language Learners' Investment in Classroom Discourse: Developing a Multilevel Conceptual Framework". His work has been published in *TESOL Quarterly*, *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* and *Asia Pacific Journal of Language in Education*. He is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

The HKU Constituent Theme – Languages, Media and Communication: Language in Education and Assessment is co-hosted by the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education in collaboration with the English Centre, HKU (<http://www.hku.hk/clear>).

All are Welcome. Enquiries: 2859 2395