

Peer Review

Review of: "Language Policy and Student Language Identities in Bilingual Classrooms: A Hong Kong Primary School"

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The paper is very well written and clear for the most part. Some specific areas for more clarity are noted here:

Introduction – perhaps add a brief description of the relationship between spoken Cantonese and written Mandarin.

P2, par 1: “it is problematic to assume that one should have a single heritage language.”

Explain this statement more – do you mean mixed marriage/integrated families? Or are you referring to home and school language, where the school language defines Putonghua as a heritage language?

P3: Make clear that this study focuses on the bilingual school setting – and issues related to multilingualism within this specific context (vs. the CMI schools).

P3, par 3: “part of the figured world of the students” – not clear what ‘figured world’ means.

P5: add to references: MacLeod et al. (2022); Pearson (2007), (Chan and Clarke, 2014) – make the citation convention consistent (the rest of the in-text citations use a numeric reference – there is no numeric reference for the first two papers, and the Chan and Clarke study is notated with ‘10’ but not referenced in the list) – if the studies are ‘cited by,’ please correct the citations as necessary. There are a number of other citations without a numeric notation on p. 5.

P5, last par: change ‘focuses’ to ‘foci.’

P6, par 2: “Identities are shaped by social positioning, and where identities are imposed on a language learner, this shapes their opportunities for agency.” This is an important paragraph, with a lot of

information about the key constructs under investigation in this study. It would help to have a fuller summary sentence or sentences about how the language learning context fits with identity, behavior, social positioning, agency, or an additional paragraph to flesh this out more.

Present Study Section

P6 Participants – note whether all classrooms are from the same school and how this school is characteristic of school settings in Hong Kong.

P8, par 2: “Transcriptions provided an understanding of when and how each of the classroom languages was used [by the teacher]”?

Results Section

I think it would be helpful to report the classroom observations first, especially if the classes differed in terms of Table 2 (language use). Since only one classroom’s data is presented in the table, we cannot tell if the language setting is the same across classrooms – and this may help the reader with contextualizing the different student-level data (from the interviews) (e.g., there might be moderating effects of classroom on individual student data). Alternatively, if the classroom contexts are parallel, then this could be explained at the beginning of the results section, and the student data reported first.

P12: It would be good to provide an overview of the classrooms’ schedule of instruction, or *planned* lessons (in addition to what was observed). For example, as each class is bilingual, is there a dedicated time/day of the week for using one language, or are both languages to be accessed throughout the lessons? If there are 2 teachers (one English, one Chinese) always in the class, how do they coordinate the delivery of lessons/provision of instructions/response to students? How do students know which language or teacher to respond to? Are these classroom structures the same across the Y3 and Y5 classes? (Refer to the note above about possible moderation effects.)

P14, Table 3: Are the speaker pseudonyms the two teachers, or students?

P19, par 1: What exactly is meant by “resourcing issues”?

Of the eight observed sessions per classroom, were the data analyzed only from the video-recorded 30-minute sessions (5 per classroom)? This should be made clear in the Methods section.

Discussion

Do the authors have any suggestions for modifications to pedagogical practices or curricular changes? What about the place of literacy and using written forms of the various languages? Is there a conventional

form of written Cantonese? What about literature in the classroom? What texts, narratives, or stories are included in the curriculum, and should these materials be more inclusive in terms of languages?

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.