

Project Title : Meeting the Challenge of Teaching and Learning
Language in the University: Enhancing Linguistic
Competence and Performance in English and Chinese

Leading University : City University of Hong Kong

Participating UGC-funded
University(ies) : Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese
University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong
Polytechnic University

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This project aims to enhance university students' linguistic competence and performance in meeting the academic challenges of higher education. It integrates FOUR mutually inclusive and complementary sub-components to provide a multi-dimensional and balanced teaching and learning environment for upgrading English and Chinese language abilities.

The goal of Sub-component #1 is to develop an intelligent web-based system for university students to improve their proficiency in EFL writing tasks and prepare them to cope with more demanding writing tasks in both occupational and academic settings. Through the project, students will gain mastery both in comprehension and production of the full range of alternatives between what is common in everyday speaking, and what is often expected and thus required in academic writing.

The goal of Sub-component #2 is to ensure an effective upgrade of language ability and a lasting impact on all language learners with a discovery-enriched adventure of making sense of Chinese and English. The goal will be achieved via FIVE crucial components of learning: Motivation, Engagement, Relevance, Innovation, and Transferring of knowledge. Through the implementation of discovery-enriched activities, the MERIT programme is designed to motivate students for active

engagement in finding relevant issues and discovering innovative solutions for practical knowledge transfer. Students will work together to create a website called Ask-Me-Why to share and publicize the learning outcomes.

Sub-component #3 aims at improving adult learners' Chinese language skills (both written and spoken Chinese (Cantonese and Putonghua)) and their ability to communicate through the creation of a webbased multi-modal environment for learners, known as the International Chinese Language Salon (ICLS). The ICLS platform will provide interactive speaking coaching and online writing tutoring, with individual feedback provided to each student, as well as a variety of online resources, such as video tutorials, audio recordings, useful grammatical and phonetic reference guides.

The goal of Sub-component #4 is to create An English Pronunciation Guide for Cantonese Students in Hong Kong (The Guide), which will include (1) a description of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), the universal system of symbols for representing speech sounds of human languages; (2) a description of the English sound system and a comparison of the sound systems of British English and North American English; (3) a description of the Cantonese sound system and a comparison between the Cantonese and English sound systems; and (4) lists of possible pronunciation errors in English made by Cantonese students.