

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Case Study

University: The Education University of Hong Kong

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 30 Chinese language & literature

Title of case study: Connecting the learning of classical Chinese with moral development from a cultural-historical perspective in Hong Kong and internationally

(1) Summary of the impact

This case concerns a body of research on the learning of classical Chinese and moral development from a cultural-historical perspective. The research has impacted upon Hong Kong schools by developing pedagogies and curricula on classical Chinese and providing innovative approaches to support literacy and moral development. The vehicles for achieving impact are collaborations with schools and higher education institutes, community building through cultural activities and competitions, media outlets reporting, and guides to teaching and learning. The range of the impact is both local and international, with a wider influence on the debates and practices in Hong Kong and beyond.

(2) Underpinning research

Due to the current decline of Chinese literary knowledge and moral awareness among Hong Kong students, research in the UoA has integrated cultural-historical elements into classical Chinese language curricula to support their literacy and moral development. The research initiatives consist of studies developing innovative pedagogies and pioneering curricula, with activities through experimental research, university-school partnership, international conferences, student competitions, and Knowledge-Transfer (KT) activities.

The research which first underpinned this case study was undertaken by Dr. Cheung Lin Hong, who led the project entitled “Curriculum Design and the Teaching of Classical Chinese Texts in Secondary Schools in Hong Kong” (HK\$ ██████████, 2016-18). Using a bottom-up approach, the research focused on improving Chinese literacy and understanding of Chinese culture in Hong Kong secondary schools. Through a thorough and comparative investigation of pedagogies and curricula in Hong Kong and beyond, Dr. Cheung’s research efficiently expanded knowledge relating to effective approaches to the teaching and learning of classical Chinese. The project team collaborated with 11 local secondary schools and 8 partner schools in mainland China, Taiwan, Macau, and Singapore, to expand the dialogue and the knowledge diffusion through school visits, observations, consultation, and cluster meetings.

Led by Prof. Si Chung Mou and his research team, the initiatives in the area of connecting classical Chinese literacy with moral education are informed by the on-going project entitled “A Study of Three-Character Classic and Modern Society” (HK\$ ██████████, 2018-20) and the completed project “A Study of Confucius Analects and Modern Society” (HK\$ ██████████, 2015-17). Prof. Si has looked at the feasibility of connecting learning classical Chinese texts, with meaningful reflections on Chinese cultural roots and moral values. The two projects led to the implementation of newly developed teaching materials in 28 primary schools and 17 secondary schools in Hong Kong. KT activities, public talks, workshops, and conferences have been held to increase participation from the wider community. Prof. Si is the first Hong Kong scholar to have efficiently connected the learning of classical Chinese texts with moral development among contemporary Hong Kong students, not only by exploring in-depth the relationship between classical moral values and contemporary thoughts and practices, but also by developing innovative and hands-on activities that facilitate learning.

The work in the area of cultural-historical knowledge and moral development was led by Prof. Leonard Chan Kwok-kou and his team, focusing on the project entitled “Animated Chinese History for Curious Minds” (2016-19), which received HK\$ [REDACTED] from the Ning Po Residents Association. This project paid particular attention to the most important foundations of the Chinese moral system and provided effective approaches to the teaching of Chinese history and culture in the primary school sector. It produced a 10-episode animated series on Chinese historical figures, starting from the pre-Qin period (2,100 BC-221 BC) to the Republic of China (1942-49), with a focus on the life stories of ten influential thinkers and social leaders and their socio-cultural impact. The animations, which were made available in three languages (Cantonese, Mandarin, and English) with teaching materials and worksheets for each episode, received 1,483,283 views on YouTube between 25 Jun 2018 and 11 Jun 2019.

(3) References to the research

1. Si, C. M. & Li, K. B. (2017). 論語與現代社會 [Confucius analects and modern society]. Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company.
2. Tong, Ho-kin. (2017). The ancient Chinese views of family education recorded in pre-Qin (before 221 BC) Confucian Classics. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 6(5), 42-54.
3. Cheung, L. H. (2017). 讀《論語》與古漢語知識的建立 [Reading the Analects of Confucius and the knowledge building of classical Chinese], In C. M. Si & P. L. Liu (Eds.), 漢語教學與文化新探 [New horizons in the study of the teaching of Chinese language and culture] (pp. 368-380). Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company.
4. Cheung, L. H. (2016). 海外古代漢語教材與課程研究 [Research on the curricula and teaching materials of classical Chinese overseas], In C. M. Si. (Ed.), 漢語教學與研究新探 [New horizons in the study of Chinese language teaching and research] (pp. 228-241). Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company.
5. Si, C. M. & To, Y. H. (2016). 儒學之階段性演變及其現代意義 [The developments of Confucianism and its significance in the modern society], In 2012 儒學國際學術研討會論文集 [2012 Proceedings of the International Confucianism Conference] (pp. 216-226). Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press.
6. Si, C. M. (2016). 賴太史與香港早期的中文教育 [Lai Tsi-hsi and the early Chinese language education in Hong Kong], In C. M. Si. (Ed.), 漢語教學與研究新探 [New horizons in the study of Chinese language teaching and research] (pp. 77-86). Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company.

(4) Details of the impact

Research by the UoA has influenced beneficiaries both locally and internationally in mainly two ways. First, it informed and underpinned new policy and pedagogical practices in Hong Kong schools. Second, it increased community engagement, which in turn shaped research that influences pedagogical practice and learning outcome. These influences include:

Impact on pedagogies, public discourses, and policy

This impact case has contributed to the establishment of a progressive learning system for Chinese literacy and moral development in around 56 local schools in Hong Kong. A set of school-based curricula, teaching materials, online and multimedia resources were created to assist the teaching of classical Chinese language and culture. The teaching materials and exercises have been uploaded to three project e-platforms, allowing free public access.

Extensive media coverage in Hong Kong has drawn attention to the needs of improving the learning of classical Chinese texts among the students. For instance, the influence from this

case study on the nuanced interpretation and promotion of *Confucius Analects* (論語) in secondary schools was reported by *Sing Tao Daily* respectively on 18 May 2016 and 20 June 2016, and was also reported by *Ming Pao* on 3 January 2017. As noted by both *Sing Tao Daily* and *Ming Pao*, the textbooks developed from the *Confucius Analects* project effectively reduced the complexity of classical Chinese learning, and increased the connectivity between Confucian thoughts and contemporary students. As an expert in his field, Prof. Si Chung Mou was invited by Metro Radio on July 17th and 24th, 2015, to give two radio talks on the relationship between classical Chinese and contemporary society. In 2017, the research team achieved the President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Knowledge Transfer of EdUHK.

This case has accentuated the need for reforming the current classical Chinese curricular in Hong Kong schools. As a result of this case study, the Department of Chinese Language Studies of EdUHK has been invited by the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) of Hong Kong Education Bureau to provide systematic training on how to teach classical Chinese texts for Hong Kong teachers. On 10 May 2019, Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, wrote a Letter of Appreciation to EdUHK, in which she acknowledged the positive social influence generated by the “Animated Chinese History for Curious Minds”, and declared to promote the animations in primary and secondary schools throughout Hong Kong.

Impact on community engagement locally and internationally

This case played an important role in stimulating interaction between teachers, students, researchers, public organisations, and the publishing industry. The impact process was carried out by designing syllabuses and teaching materials, creating multi-media resources, participating in TV shows, organising academic conferences, school-exchange activities, and holding KT activities, to stimulate community engagement. For instance, the Hong Kong Primary School Chinese History and Culture Quiz held by Prof. Leonard Chan Kwok-kou's project team attracted around 190 schools and 4,400 student participants in October 2018.

The research team established effective communication with around 56 local schools, 8 overseas schools, and 6 higher education institutes. Experienced teachers were invited to share their teaching experiences at workshops, conferences, and forums. Additionally, the research team assisted in planning and organising ample KT activities for local schools, such as Confucian Analects 3-Day Camp, Classical Poetry Recitation Contest, Carnival, and Microfilm Contest, to encourage participation from the larger community.

Through a synthetical review of the existing local curricula and comparative analyses of the curricula in Hong Kong, mainland China, Taiwan, and Singapore, the research team successfully provided recommendations on the subject knowledge, pedagogical approaches, and curricula structure for local schools.

This impact case was ground-breaking in initiating cross-regional collaboration to promote the teaching of classical Chinese. An international communication platform was successfully created for non-local collaborators to share their practices and experience with Hong Kong teachers and scholars. The compendia of teaching activities and classical Chinese units, designed by EdUHK students, were hugely welcomed in other regions outside Hong Kong. For instance, teachers in Macau proposed to invite our undergraduate students to help them organise on-site extra-curricular activities. International conferences on Chinese language education reform were organised by the research team or jointly organised with partner universities, such as the *Inheritance and Innovation: International Conference on Chinese Education Reform* held on August 12th and 13th, 2016, *The 1st International Conference on Chinese Language and Literature Education* held on December 16th and 17th, 2016, and *Symposium on Teaching and Learning of Classical Chinese Language and Literature* held on May 26th, 2018.

(5) Sources to corroborate the impact

(a) Websites and multimedia resources:

- 1) www.eduhk.hk/cctt (“Curriculum design and the teaching of classical Chinese texts in secondary schools in Hong Kong”)
- 2) <http://www.eduhk.hk/analects/> (“A Study of Three-Character Classic and Modern Society” and “A Study of Confucius Analects and Modern Society”)
- 3) <http://achist.mers.hk/chihistoryanime/> (“Animated Chinese History for Curious Minds”)

(b) Peer-reviewed Journal:

- 4) *International Journal of Chinese Language Education* 《國際中文教育學報》
<http://ijcle.eduhk.hk/?lang=en>

(c) Selected KT activities, conferences, symposiums, and workshops:

- 5) The 2nd Workshop on the Teaching, Learning, and Research of Classical Chinese: Learning from the Past and Looking Forward, Feb 17th – 18th, 2016,
<https://www.eduhk.hk/chl/sc/page.php?msid=90>
- 6) Chinese Culture Camp, Mar 29th – 31st, 2016,
http://www.eduhk.hk/analects/campus_learning.html
- 7) Six Arts Five Constant Virtues Carnival, Jul 8th – 9th, 2016,
<http://www.eduhk.hk/sixarts2016/carnival.html>
- 8) Classical Chinese Texts Teaching Workshop, Dec 17th, 2016,
<https://www.eduhk.hk/cctt/view.php?m=51256&secid=51266>
- 9) The Analects and Modern Society – Microfilm Contest, Dec 2016,
<http://www.eduhk.hk/analects/microfilm.html>
- 10) The 1st International Conference on Chinese Language Education, Dec 16th – 17th, 2016,
<https://www.eduhk.hk/chl/sc/page.php?msid=94>
- 11) Classical Chinese Texts Teaching Activities Workshop, May 20th, 2017,
<https://www.eduhk.hk/cctt/view.php?m=51256&secid=51617>
- 12) The International Forum on the Learning of Classical Texts, May 19th – 20th, 2017,
<https://www.eduhk.hk/chl/sc/page.php?msid=106>
- 13) The 3rd International Conference on Chinese Language Education, Nov 16th – 17th, 2018, <http://www.eduhk.hk/ticcle/index.html>
- 14) Parent-child Camp of the Three-Character Classic, Apr 19th – 20th, 2019,
<http://www.eduhk.hk/analects/index2.htm>

(d) Selected from the 56 local school collaborators: Lingnan Dr. Chung Wing Kwong Memorial Secondary School, Ying Wa College, The ISF Academy, Kiangsu-Chekiang College (Shatin), Buddhist Fat Ho Memorial College, Buddhist Wong Fung Ling College, School, King's College, etc.

(e) 8 partner schools: Colegio de St.Rosa De Lima (Macau, China), UWC Changshu China (Changshu, Jiangsu, China), Shanghai Luwan Senior High School (Shanghai, China), Nanshan Foreign Language School (Shenzhen, China), Taipei Municipal Zhongshan Girls High School (Taipei, Taiwan), Eunoia Junior College (Singapore), Jiangcui Junior High School (Singapore), Jurong Junior College (Singapore)

(f) 8 university collaborators: Columbia University (USA), East China Normal University (Shanghai, China), Education and Youth Affairs Bureau of Macau (Macau, China), National Taiwan Normal University (Taiwan), National Dong Hwa University (Taiwan), Yale-NUS College (Singapore), Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), Singapore Centre for Chinese Language (Singapore)