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An Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Hong Kong Government's 1997 Pǔtōnghuà Curriculum for Primary 1-6 and Secondary 1-5¹

Daniel W. C. SO, Karen M. C. LAU,
Shui Duen CHAN, Rining WEI

Abstract Although Pǔtōnghuà is the national tongue of China, there were relatively few Pǔtōnghuà-speakers in Hong Kong in 1997 when the metropolis became under China's sovereignty again. To address this issue, the Hong Kong Government promulgated the Pǔtōnghuà curriculum in 1997 and made Pǔtōnghuà respectively a mandatory subject from primary—1 (grade 1) to secondary—3 (grade 9), and an elective subject after secondary—3. This paper provides the sociolinguistic context where the curriculum is implemented and reports the findings of a comparative study of Pǔtōnghuà abilities of two groups of participants respectively with and without exposure to the curriculum in their Pǔtōnghuà learning experience. The findings indicate that the curriculum appears to benefit the former group: the overall Pǔtōnghuà proficiency of these participants is significantly better than their counterparts whose Pǔtōnghuà learning precedes the implementation of the curriculum. Specifically, the former group of participants' grip on grammar, oral narration, conversational speaking and pīnyīn is much stronger, and their grip of the five specific Pǔtōnghuà skills appears to be more even. Additionally, participants with the following traits tend to do better in the Pǔtōnghuà tests of the study, viz. experience of Pǔtōnghuà-medium instruction, stronger Chinese-mainland backgrounds and better performance in the pīnyīn test.

Keywords Pǔtōnghuà; CLIL; Second Language Learning; Hong Kong SAR

1. Backgrounds

With effect from July 1, 1997 The People's Republic of China (PRC) resumes from-Britain its sovereignty over Hong Kong (HK). At the same time, HK becomes a Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The re-integration of HK to the Chinese mainland is done within a 'One Country Two Systems' framework because of the cultural-historical differences between the two polities. One of these differences, for example, is the way Pǔtōnghuà² has been taught and learned among HK students. As a lingua franca, Pǔtōnghuà is at the end of a long line of lingua franca used among the Han-Chinese³. For example, in the time of Confucius the lingua franca among the elite was called yǎyán (meaning an elegant speech). The lingua franca 500 years later at the time of the Han Dynasty was commonly called tōngyǔ (meaning lingua franca). The lingua franca at the time of the Míng and the Qīng dynasties (1368–1911) was also popularly referred to as guānhuà (meaning the speech of government officials). All these prestige varieties of hànyǔ (languages spoken by the Han-Chinese) have been used as the *de facto* medium of communication for all H functions including being the major medium of instruction (MoI) in the schools especially those in the North (Li 2004). However, it was not until the 17th century that initial, feeble attempts at corpus planning were made, and that more rigorous form of such attempts were only seen after the founding of the republic in 1912. As for status planning, 1909 saw the first attempt by the rapidly declining Qīng regime to officially term guānhuà guóyǔ (meaning the speech of the state). The term was subsequently adopted by the republican regime and gained currency after 1920 when there was a growing consensus among the intelligentsia that the absence of a national tongue among the dialect-speaking masses of Han-Chinese was part of the reason for the new nation's general weaknesses (Norman 1988). According to received wisdom, the Han-Chinese speak eight mutually unintelligible dialects; Pǔtōnghuà and Cantonese are mutually unintelligible (Ramsey 1987).

After 1949, the mainland China dropped the use of guóyǔ and chose instead in 1955 to use the term Pǔtōnghuà (meaning the speech of the commoners) to refer to the lingua franca. This move underpins the fact that the government subscribes to the aforementioned view about the need for a national tongue. For example, in 1956 the State Council issued its directives about the promotion of Pǔtōnghuà wherein it clearly stipulates that the oral and written MoIs in state educational institutions outside minorities regions, and attended mostly by Han-Chinese, shall be respectively Pǔtōnghuà (for oral discourse) and Modern Standard Chinese (MSC) (for written discourse). This policy was later incorporated in respectively The Na-

tional Education Ordinance enacted in March 1995, and The National Common Language and Writing Ordinance, enacted in October 2000. The promulgation of this policy confers, at the temporal threshold when Chinese education was moving from an elitist mode to a mass mode, a *de jure* dimension to a *de facto* practice of long standing. Nowadays all mainland schools instruct in Pǔtōnghuà and the majority of the school leavers are fluent Pǔtōnghuà speakers. According to government estimates announced in respectively 2006 and 2010 (Office of the Steering Group for Survey of Language Situation in China 2006; The Central People's Government of the PRC 2011), more than 53% and 70% of the people on the mainland speak Pǔtōnghuà.

However, because of historical and language factors, the pattern of the introduction and the spread of Putonghua in HK is quite different. Historically, HK did not figure much on the national scene until the nineteenth century when, as a result of the First Anglo-Chinese War, the HK Island was ceded to Britain in 1842. The territorial spread of its governance was to be extended further later, first to the Kowloon Peninsula (south of Boundary Street) in 1860, and to the land between Boundary Street and the Shenzhen River, as well as to a total of 235 neighbouring islands in 1898. Since then, HK has played a visible role in the modern history of the nation. From 1842 to 1949, it evolved from a collection of fishing villages and farming communities scattered around the territory to become an entrepôt. And after 1949, it first became an industrial centre, and then an international financial centre.

The sociolinguistic profile of HK also evolved in conjunction with the political and socio-economic changes. Between 1842 and 1949, varieties of the Yue dialect and the Hakka dialect were spoken among the farming population; the fishing communities spoke Danjia and/or Hakka. Whereas the urban population spoke Cantonese mostly; as a metropolis of immigrants, before 1949, there is evidence indicating HK was relatively multi-dialectal with Cantonese spoken by only a plurality. It is only after 1949 that a rapid shift to Cantonese was in evidence (So and Lau 2013), turning HK into mostly a Cantonese-speaking community with an elite bilingual in English and Chinese.

This small group of bilingual elite owes its presence largely to the educational policy. For most part of its colonial history, HK saw Britain adopt a practice seen among the empire's colonies worldwide; its principle feature was to regard education as primarily for the purpose of cultivating a class of brokers to mediate between the govern and the governed. From 1902 until the eve of the Second World War, the lion share of the government budget allocated to education were funnelled, via the regime's Grant-in-aid Scheme, to schools that tended to

admit mostly middle-class children, and had a track-record of graduating students relatively fluent in English via the practice of English-medium instruction. Most of the graduates of these schools were to move on to become members of the HK elite (Fu 1975; Ng 1984).

As a result of this educational policy of the colonial regime, before the Second World War particularly, the provision of education for the children of the population-at-large was a task largely undertaken by dedicated individual educators and/or voluntary agencies, many of which were of Western and/or missionary backgrounds, with or without subsidies from the regime. The great majority of these providers of education offered a form of vernacular education done via Cantonese or a southern Chinese dialect. Neither English nor Pǔtōnghuà was a significant part of the school environment because they simply did not have the resources to keep qualified teachers capable of English-medium instruction, and that Pǔtōnghuà was and remains an extra-territorial language spoken by very few HK residents (Table 1 refers).

Table 1 % Distribution of Population by ‘Usual Language Spoken’

Language	1961	1966	1991	1996
Pǔtōnghuà	1.0	—	1.1	1.1
Cantonese	79.0	81.4	88.7	88.7
Other Chinese dialects	18.2	12.9	6	5
English	1.2	0.8	2.2	3.1
Others	0.6	3.1	2.0	0.5
Total (%)	100	100	100	100

Sources: Barnett, K. M. A. *Report on the 1961 Census*. Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1961/62. Census and Statistics Dept. Hong Kong; *Report on the 1966 By-Census*. Hong Kong 1991 *Census: Main Report*. Vol. 1. Hong Kong 1996 *Population By-Census: Summary Results*.

Before 1949, there were only two significant penetrations of guóyǔ (i. e. Pǔtōnghuà) into HK. The first did not come to pass until after the founding in 1928 of the Nationalist regime in Nanjing under Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, which provided a semblance of national unity. Finally, after decades of civil war, the relatively stable political situation enabled the government to implement its education agenda which included the popularization of guóyǔ in the schools. After 1932 when the problem of standardization of the phonology of guóyǔ was sorted out, it was vigorously promoted as a medium of instruction in schools. Thereafter, modern Chinese schools practising guóyǔ-medium instruction had found itself a political patron, a national structure, and a linguistic medium. By the early 1930s, a Chinese model of

modern education and a linguistic medium of its transmission were finally taking shape, and ready for export to overseas Chinese communities, including Hong Kong.

This export reached a relatively large scale because of the impetus provided by the ideology of the Chinese Nationalist Party, and the Second Sino-Japanese War 1937–45. Since its founding by Dr. Sun and his associates, the Nationalist Party regarded itself as the leader of all Chinese nationalist movements both at home and abroad. It also treated all Overseas Chinese as citizens of the republic regardless of whether or not they were citizens of their respective host countries. Accordingly, the Nationalist Party found it politically opportune to promote nationalist education for its overseas citizens, and in fact, as early as 1921, when the Nationalist Party consolidated its power in Canton (Guangzhou), agents were sent to Southeast Asia and beyond to assist local Chinese communities in the development of guóyǔ-medium modern education for their children (Akashi 1970:1–14). As the base of guóyǔ-promotion and the source of the norms of guóyǔ, China gradually assumed, for the guóyǔ-medium sector in HK, the role of a model, a provider of resources and financial support (for some schools) as well as a supplier of personnel, textbooks and other ancillary materials. In addition, the mainland also assumed the role of a regulator; a certifying agent and a place for further studies.

The climax of the expansion of guóyǔ-medium education in HK, however, did not come until the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. At its outbreak, many guóyǔ-medium Chinese Middle Schools (CMSs) in China simply moved across the border and re-established themselves in HK which, for four years, became a haven for escapees from the War in China. However, because of a twist in history, guóyǔ failed to sustain and consolidate its foothold in HK. In fact, the number of speakers who used guóyǔ as the preferred language outside the home declined quite rapidly after 1949.

In 1949, the Nanjing regime collapsed and deprived the local CMSs of their centre of reference, and source of logistic support mentioned above. One may assume the vacuum left by the Nanjing regime could be readily filled in by the Beijing regime. Indeed there is evidence indicating that Beijing regime did attempt to promote Chinese-medium education in HK with Pǔtōnghuà as the preferred MoI. Unfortunately, its records of governance in the thirty years following 1949 posed severe constraints on the popularity of these schools. As a result, both CMSs of Communist and Nationalist backgrounds went into decline after 1949, so did the number of speakers using Pǔtōnghuà as their preferred language outside the home.

Given the ideological underpinnings of Pǔtōnghuà mentioned in the foregoing para-

graphs, it is not difficult to understand why the colonial regime had little interest to meddle in matters related to its promotion and spread among the HK population. After 1949 as more and more schools, especially those in the secondary sector, switched to the English-medium (So 1987), and fewer and fewer schools offered Pǔtōnghuà as a subject and/or conducted Pǔtōnghuà-medium instruction (PMI), the colonial regime chose to keep a largely non-interventionist stand. Pǔtōnghuà, the national tongue across the borders, was allowed to go into rapid decline in terms of the number of its speakers. After all, because of the political conditions on the mainland post-1949, for the population-at-large, Pǔtōnghuà-fluency was to an extent a linguistic stigma: it was a sociolinguistic mark of an out-lander with either Nationalist or Communist affiliations and/or backgrounds. It was a mark most Pǔtōnghuà-speaking HK people chose to hide until recent years. Accordingly, in a largely bottom-up fashion, Cantonese quickly became the lingua franca by choice among the dialect-speakers of HK; English quickly became the preferred MoI of both the middle and working class for their children. These conditions gave rise to a trend which looks rather odd to parties not familiar with the aforementioned sociolinguistic conditions: viz. as more and more HK people are Cantonese-speaking, there are fewer and fewer number of CMSs using Cantonese and/or Pǔtōnghuà as a MoI (Table 2 refers).

Table 2 Differential development of Cantonese-speaker numbers and size of CMS as a percentage of the total secondary-school enrolment

Year	% of HK population aged 5 and over speaking Cantonese as the usual language	% of CMSs
1950s	52 (estimate)	45 (estimate)
1961	79	37
1966	81.2	28
1971	88.2	22
1976	n. a.	18
1981	n. a.	10
1996	88.7	<10

Pǔtōnghuà’s second significant penetration into HK, as a result, did not take place until after the transfer of sovereignty. For the first time, Pǔtōnghuà is part of the language agenda of the governing regime. For example, in the ‘Forward’ of *Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools*, it is stated that ‘Our aim is for our students to be biliterate (i.

e. master written Chinese and English) and **trilingual** (i. e. speak fluent Cantonese, Pǔtōnghuà and English)' (Education Department 1997 cited from So 2000). In January 1999, the Education Commission issued the consultation document '*Review of Academic System: Aims of Education*' wherein under § 3.4 it is stated that.

'We wish to ... ensure the attainment of basic standards: School education should enable every student to acquire a basic level of competence in knowledge and skills, including biliteracy and trilingualism ...' (cited from So 2000)

Accordingly, a year after the promulgation of the Pǔtōnghuà curriculum, Pǔtōnghuà became a subject of the 'core curriculum' in 1998/99. In other words, schools in the public sector have to offer it as a mandatory subject from primary-1 (grade 1) to secondary-3 (grade 9). After secondary-3 (S-3), it is offered as an elective subject. Since 1999/2000, it has also been included as one of the subjects of the HK Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE)⁴.

2. The Research Problem

The mounting of the Putonghua Curriculum spanning from primary-1 to secondary-5, together with the inclusion of Pǔtōnghuà in the 'core curriculum' and the public examinations are certainly historic breakthroughs in HK as far as the learning of Pǔtōnghuà in the schools is concerned. Nevertheless, given Pǔtōnghuà has been ignored in HK for so long, the question whether these new measures will enable most school leavers to achieve fluency in Pǔtōnghuà remains. For example, according to a large-scale survey commissioned by the then Education and Manpower Branch of Hong Kong (Department of Chinese, Translation and Interpretation of the Hong Kong Polytechnic 1994), when asked to rate school-age HK people's proficiency in Cantonese, English and Pǔtōnghuà, the percentage of respondents (N=7,288) who returned a 'good' rating was the lowest for Pǔtōnghuà⁵. Similarly, So *et al.* (2005) found that of the 271 candidates at PolyU who took in 2001 all the components of the criterion-referenced Graduating Student Language Proficiency Assessment (GSLPA)⁶, 71 candidates' global score, which may be considered to be a measure of their overall biliterate and bilingual (excluding Pǔtōnghuà) proficiency, may be rated 'better-than-average'. However, if Pǔtōnghuà was included, only five candidates' biliterate and trilingual proficiency can retain the same rating. These findings are corroborated by the HKCEE Pǔtōnghuà subject reports of The HK Examinations and Assessment Authority around the same period. For example, in 2003 and 2004, only a small fraction of the HKCEE candidates participated in the Pǔtōnghuà examination. The outcomes of the examination of these two years show that in a

scale from 'A Grade' (excellent) to 'F Grade' (unsatisfactory) and 'Unclassified' (too poor to be graded), respectively 49% and 46% of the participants received a 'E grade' (barely satisfactory) or below.

Another related issue is that given the aforementioned, pre-1997 failure of Pǔtōnghuà to penetrate HK and to have itself established as a regular subject and MoI in the schools, therefore when the 1997 Pǔtōnghuà curriculum was to be implemented, there were no established practices to follow. Hitherto, there has been little consensus about how to proceed with the learning and teaching of Pǔtōnghuà among Cantonese-speaking students in HK schools. At the moment the debate is centred on three major concerns. First, according to the Pǔtōnghuà Curriculum, students' learning of Pǔtōnghuà in the school is spread over eleven years: the subject is mandatory in the first nine years, it is an elective subject in the next two years. It is suspected that this arrangement is probably based on policy consideration rather than pedagogical grounds (Chan 2012). A significant number of Pǔtōnghuà education specialists (e. g. Huang, Yang and Li 2000a), favour an early, intensive introduction of the subject in primary education instead. They have much reservation about the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of its temporal structure.

The debate about Pǔtōnghuà education in HK to an extent is dominated by the question: Whether Pǔtōnghuà learning among HK students is more a matter of bi-dialectal language learning or foreign/second language learning (Huang and Yang 2003). For those who subscribe to the former, their position tends to favour a division of labour between the Chinese subjects (i. e. Chinese Language, Chinese Literature) and the Pǔtōnghuà subject, with an assumption, for a few, that motivated HK students can achieve communicative felicity in Pǔtōnghuà for ordinary social interaction within a relatively short period of time in, e. g. either conventional or computer-aided, self-learning settings (Huang, Yang and Li 2000a: 4). For those who subscribe to the view that Pǔtōnghuà learning in HK is closer to Foreign/Second Language Learning, they draw on the successful experience of the Canadian Immersion model (see Swain and Johnson 1997) as well as the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) model (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010) and believe anything short of using Pǔtōnghuà as a MoI would not provide the necessary and sufficient conditions conducive to the cultivation of a significant number of fluent Pǔtōnghuà-speakers among the school population.

The second concern is therefore about whether PMI of content subjects should be implemented, preferably starting from primary-1 (cf. So 1987; 2000). Their position is supported by findings of studies that show, e. g., students of a primary school which adopts

Pǔtōnghuà as a MoI can achieve high levels of proficiency in the target language within ten months (Huang and Sun 1997, cited in Huang, Yang and Li 2000a); and that PMI education shows superiority in improving students' language as well as thinking skills (Lau 2005; see also Evans 2013).

Many participants in the debate are aware that the quality of the debate suffers from a lack of evidence-based data produced by reliable and valid instruments, that cover not only students' active and passive Pǔtōnghuà abilities, but also include at least some of the many factors involved in achieving bilingualism (including Pǔtōnghuà) through schooling in HK⁷. Among the factors that are deemed crucial are that of age (see e. g. Singleton and Lengyel 1995), opportunities for learning in formal and/or informal contexts (see e. g. Kuo 1985; Garcia and Diaz 1992), motivation (see e. g. Cheung 1987; Moyer 1999), and school language-learning conditions (Huang, Yang and Li 2000a; 2000b). In addition, students' grip of MSC-grammar and pīnyīn are considered relevant by many Pǔtōnghuà educators in HK as well. The former skill is taught from primary-1 onwards as part of the subject of Chinese Language; the latter skill is included in the Pǔtōnghuà curriculum although many educators believe it should be taught in an optional rather than mandatory fashion. Whereas at the moment empirical studies that inform these debates are few in number and are mostly pedagogy-based.

The third concern is therefore to produce basic empirical information about what factors are relevant and by how much a measure. An opportunity to address these concerns presents itself to the authors as a result of developments transpired at their institution towards the end of the last century. In response to the aforementioned language agenda of the HKSAR government, PolyU developed the GSLPA which includes Pǔtōnghuà, and a percentage of the graduating students were expected to take part or all of the Assessment to fulfil their award requirements with effect from 1999/2000. The Chinese (including Pǔtōnghuà) components are administered by the Chinese and Bilingual Studies (CBS) Department. In 2005, PolyU further resolved that with effect from the 2005/06 intake cohort, all students on UGC-funded undergraduate programmes are required to take all the components of the GSLPA. CBS took the opportunity to use the resources provided by the university to develop the Pǔtōnghuà Shuiping Kaoshi (PSK) which forms a component of the PolyU Graduating Students Language Proficiency Assessment (GSLPA). It composes of 5 sub-tests: listening comprehension (LC), grammar, oral narration (ON), conversational speaking (CS), and pīnyīn. This test instrument has been recognized by the State Language Commission as a proficiency test

of Pǔtōnghuà developed for Hong Kong learners and have equivalent assessment levels with that of Pǔtōnghuà Shuiping Ceshi (PSC) established by the State Language Commission.

In the summer of 2005, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB and today's Education Bureau) of the HKSAR government commissioned CBS to establish the band descriptions for S-3 students' Pǔtōnghuà competency. In January 2006 a validating panel from the EMB validated the PSK *vis-à-vis* Whether or not it is an appropriate instrument for this purpose and the appropriacy of the 'rudimentary levels' established by the CBS for candidates from HK schools. In its report, the panel concluded that: 'The grading of PSK and the two 'rudimentary levels' have constituted the complete system of Pǔtōnghuà grading structure in Hong Kong. The grading can be applied to assessments at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Pǔtōnghuà test for secondary students in Hong Kong and similar assessments.' (Authors' translation). The report of the panel was endorsed by Fanny Law, Permanent Secretary of EMB. As a result, a professionally developed instrument is available to the authors to conduct research that will provide useful information to the aforementioned concerns. 2007-2008 saw the first cohort of S-3 students who had completed the Pǔtōnghuà curriculum; sampling of schools commenced in the same year.

3. The Research Question

The thrust of this study attempts to address the general question Did these students' Pǔtōnghuà proficiency benefit from this new measure? In addition, it seeks to provide findings addressing the more specific concerns mentioned above:

(1) Whether the new curriculum makes a difference in the specific aspects of this proficiency measured by the five sub-tests, especially the one about pīnyīn

(2) Whether the impact of school factors, especially Pǔtōnghuà-medium instruction, is in evidence

(3) Whether the impact of learner factors, especially mainland backgrounds, is in evidence.

Accordingly a number of null hypotheses are devised to guide the research design, including the following eight covered in this paper: *viz.* there is no significant difference (<0.01) between:

(1) The PSK test scores of the S-3 participants and those of the PolyU participants

(2) The PSK subtest scores of the S-3 participants and those of the PolyU participants

(3) The PSK subtest scores of

a. the S-3 participants

b. PolyU participants

(4) The order of PSK subtest means of the S-3 participants and those of the PolyU participants

(5) The PSK test scores of the participants with PMI exposure and those participants without such exposure

(6) The PSK subtest scores of the participants with PMI exposure and those participants without such exposure

(7) The PSK test scores of the participants with relatively more mainland backgrounds and those participants without such backgrounds

(8) The PSK test scores of the participants with high pinyin subtest scores and those participants with low pinyin subtest scores

4. Research Design

The study population is secondary school students who have taken the mandatory Pǔtōnghuà subject from primary-1 to S-3. The majority of the members of this population have a contact time with Pǔtōnghuà via formal classroom instruction of more than one hour (during primary education) to less than one hour (during secondary education) per a 6-day cycle in a 190 teaching-day school year. After nine consecutive years by the end of S-3, these students would have 140-210 hours of contact time with Pǔtōnghuà. The comparison group is the 2009 cohort of graduating students of PolyU who started school around 1993. The Pǔtōnghuà learning experience of the comparison group varies from student to student although, according to the prevailing practice in the pre-1997 period, most of them have been taught Pǔtōnghuà when they were either in primary-4 to primary-6, and/or secondary-1 to secondary-3, and at PolyU. As a result, for the great majority of the members of this group, their contact time with Pǔtōnghuà via formal classroom instruction is much below 140 hours. Therefore, if the curriculum is effective, with all things being equal, the sampled participants' Pǔtōnghuà proficiency of the target group should be better than those of the comparison group by a significant measure.

As a number of academic departments at PolyU included taking the PSK component of the GSLPA as a graduation condition, data on the Pǔtōnghuà proficiency of the comparison group are readily available once the individual student's consent to be a participant is obtained. Whereas data on the Pǔtōnghuà proficiency of members of the target group will have to be produced via the administration of the PSK on the site of schools which agree to participate in the project.

In addition to the GSLPA data, the participants are requested to take part in a self-administered questionnaire survey wherein data pertaining to their Pǔtōnghuà learning experience *vis-à-vis* age, opportunities for learning in formal and/or informal contexts (including mainland backgrounds), motivation, and school language-learning conditions are collected.

Also, participants who achieve a Pǔtōnghuà-proficiency at C1 or C2 levels according to their performance in the PSK are invited to attend an interview with the principal investigator so that more could be learned about their Pǔtōnghuà-learning experience *vis-à-vis* the aforementioned factors.

As indicated, the test instrument used is the PSK. A summary of its structure, design and pegging with the PSC is provided in Table 3. The test is heavily weighted towards candidates' ON and CS skills, and that pinyin is included as an option. The PSK taken by the participants of the study also include this option for testing the 8th null hypothesis.

In the PSC, candidates below the 60th percentile are not assigned a grade. If the PSC were administered among the HK student population at large, given the aforementioned proficiency level of the candidates, most of them would not be assigned a grade, and their proficiency would not be properly differentiated accordingly. This is part of the reason why the PSK is developed, and the grades R1 and R2 are tailor-made for HK students.

5. Data Collection

Contacts were made with target secondary schools in the fall of 2008. In spite of the Swine Flu pandemic of May 2009, the self-administered questionnaire survey and the PSK were successfully administered to 343 participants in ten secondary schools between June and the end of the year. Among these participants, 12.5% were in S-3 in 2007-2008; 87.5% were in S-3 in 2008-2009. In addition, 33 secondary-school participants with levels at PSK C1 or C2 were successfully interviewed at their respective schools between January and April of 2010.

Table 3A: The composition of PSK scores

Components	Weighting	Sub-test score (Total Score)
LC	10%	50
Grammar	10%	50
ON	40%	200
CS	40%	200
Total	100%	(500)
Pinyin	N. A.	100 (600)