

## Abstract

The present study examines the interaction between medium of instruction in Chinese class at school and home language for 188 Cantonese-L1 first and second graders in Hong Kong. Three main goals in this study were to examine (1) if there was interaction effect of MoI in Chinese class and the presence of FDH and particularly the language the FDH habitually spoke to the children on children's Chinese skills; (2) different modes of MoI and to compare which mode of MoI would be the most effective in children's Chinese learning; (3) the effect of FDH on language development of children. Although no interaction effect was found, the findings showed that mixed code with Cantonese and Putonghua in Chinese class led to negative effect on children's Chinese reading comprehension skills. Inconsistency in teaching language created confusion and hinderance to children in decoding the passages. The finding may be disappointing to those expect Putonghua as MoI may be benefit to Chinese learning due to the closer alignment of Putonghua and SWC than Cantonese with SWC. Chinese skills among groups of Cantonese as MoI and Putonghua as MoI were not significantly difference. Pedagogical practices and parental support were also accountable for this result. Aligned with previous studies on FDH, this study also found English-speaking FDH posed negative effect on children's Chinese skills. Interestingly, children without FDH performed the best in Chinese Word Recognition task suggested that the role of FDH might not serve as a teaching purpose. This study provides an insight in how MoI and home language interact on children's Chinese skills and perhaps useful for educational practitioners. Further study shall be done on examining the student's motivation, household profiles and home literacy are suggested.