

<b>Title:</b>	<b>To What Extent Hong Kong English Is Acceptable Viewed by Its Young Users?</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Chan Wai Hang, Marcus</b>
<b>Supervisor:</b>	<b>Professor Rowan MACKAY</b>

## **Abstract**

The colonial background of Hong Kong has given birth to Hong Kong English, an indigenous English variety influenced by Cantonese and used by people in the city. Past researches have given us a holistic overview of the local English variety regarding phonology, syntax, societal perception and so on. However, what sets this project distinctive is the social movements and the rise of localism in recent years as the background. This paper aims at investigating how the young users of Hong Kong English view the local English variety at the very moment in 2020, when they have experienced drastic changes in the local political landscape.

Participants in the survey who were local undergraduates were given some authentic examples of people using native and Hong Kong English on various occasions. Results showed that native varieties were more preferred across all examples regardless of the formalities. Other sections of the survey asked about the participants' impressions of Hong Kong English. It remained debatable whether the unique linguistic features of the local variety were considered innovations or merely errors. However, some of them were still motivated to use Hong Kong English to show friendliness and more importantly, to stress their identity as Hongkongers. A conflicting pair of exonormative and endonormative mindsets could co-exist when determining the appropriateness of Hong Kong English, which could be described as the phenomenon of "Linguistic Schizophrenia". Hong Kong English users may use the local variety with pride and shame at the same time. But if the idea that Hong Kong English as an identity marker grows stronger in society, Hong Kong English is believed to lose its stigma of being "bad English", and become a legitimate English variety in future.

## Reflection

The capstone project has well fulfilled my greatest academic interest and captured my knowledge in applied English linguistics as the English department has designed a range of interesting and provocative courses such as Bilingualism, World Englishes and Hong Kong English. As an English major and a Hongkonger, I am interested in Hong Kong English, our own variety of English, which embodies our linguistic usage, culture, history and social values such as localism and the drive for innovation. The project has prompted me to imagine the future of the local language variety and reflect on my attitude to it. Honoured to be nominated for the Award, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Rowan Mackay, for all her guidance and support along my journey to accomplish the project.