

Unpacking Learner Factors in L2 Learning: A Comparative Study of Students from Hong Kong and Mainland China

Dan LU
Hong Kong Baptist University, HKSAR

Yili LI
Hong Kong Baptist University, HKSAR

Yue Yuan HUANG
Hong Kong Baptist University, HKSAR

This study adds to the growing literature on Hong Kong students' English learning processes and problems with the focus on learner factors. A group of Hong Kong students was compared with a group of exchange students from Mainland China. Both groups were required to take a 30-hour TOEFL preparatory course, a pre-course TOEFL test, and a post-course TOEFL test. The results show that though the Hong Kong group had a much longer history of learning English and a much favourable learning environment, their performance was poorer in both the pre- and the post-tests, and their achievement rate in the post-test over the TOEFL course was much lower than that of the mainland group. This difference could be accounted for by some learner factors. The mainland group had higher motivation and more positive attitudes toward learning, and they proved to be better and more effective learners.