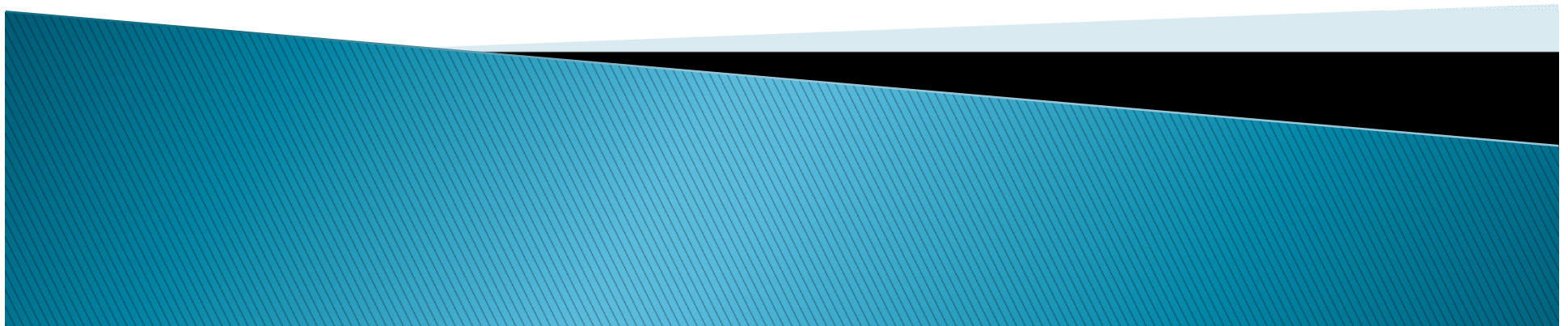


Challenges faced by Mainland Chinese students in an AD Programme: A Case Study of College of International Education, HKBU

13TH November, 2014



Research Methodologies

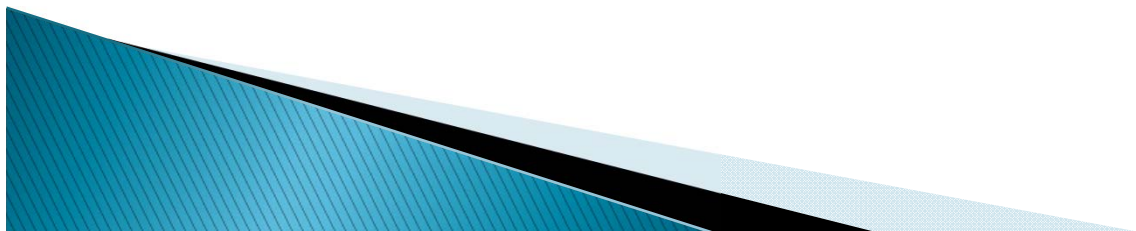
Purpose of study: to examine challenges faced by Mainland students in the AD programme.

Methodology: The current study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods using survey questionnaire and focus group interviews.



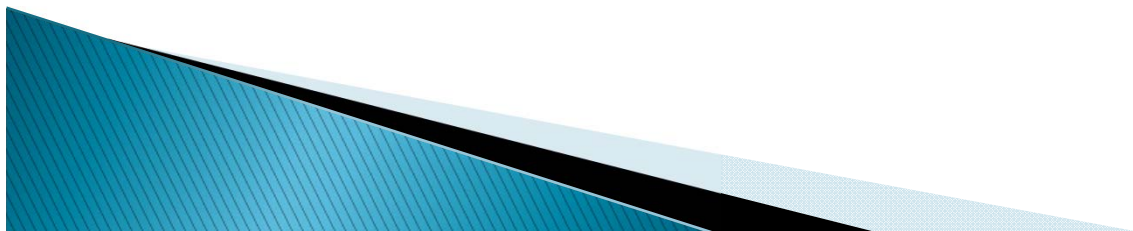
Major Challenges and Adjustments

- ▶ Linguistic Adjustments as the greatest challenge
 - English
 - Cantonese
- ▶ Different Teaching and Learning approach
- ▶ Cultural differences

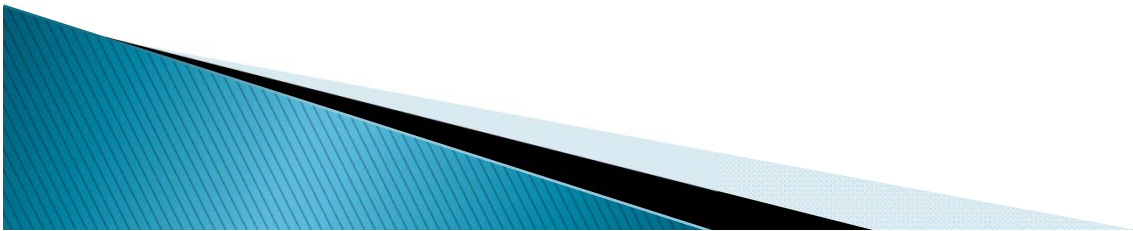


Other Challenges

- ▶ Lack of Critical Thinking skills
- ▶ Group Projects and Presentations
- ▶ GPA-based continuous assessment
- ▶ Adjustment to new learning environment affects overall GPA
- ▶ Time Management
- ▶ General bias against Mainland students in the city
- ▶ Educational policy against Mainland students



Linguistic Adjustment



English as Medium of Instruction

Around 66% respondents see English as most challenging and the major reason for affecting their study.

- “Doing everything by English is a very difficult challenge for me.” [G9]
- “[Listening to teacher] teaching in English was not that difficult, but writing essay in English would be an issue” [ZJ2]



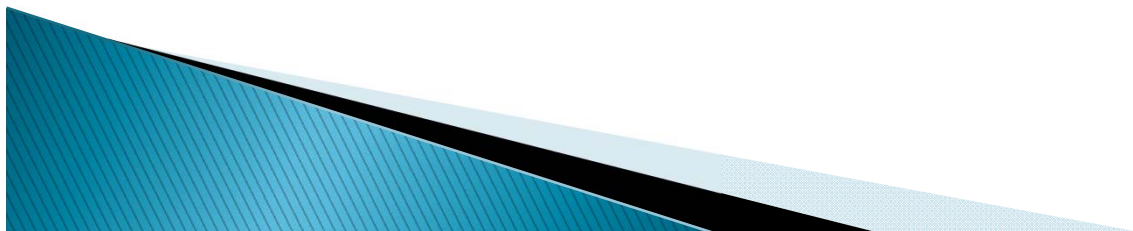
- ▶ “Not good at English [affects]” “presentation experience”
- ▶ “Presentation in English is most challenging to me” [HE1]
- ▶ “All courses are taught in English, and sometimes I need more time to learn and study materials in English.” [G4]



Cantonese as language of social bonding and teamwork

Lacking fluent Cantonese

- affects co-operation and communication with local teammates.
- inhibits the building of deeper relationship with local teammates
- widen cultural and ideological gap
- in some cases, sense of isolation

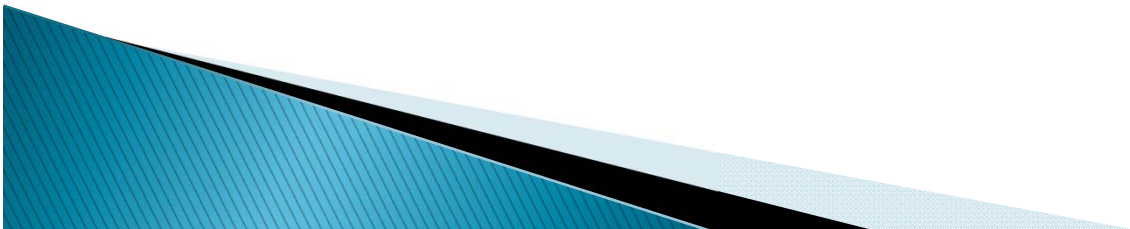


How lacking fluent Cantonese affects their adjustment....

- ▶ “Unable to understand popular Cantonese slang”
- ▶ “因為不會說粵語在交流方面會有不便” [*not being able to speak Cantonese creates inconvenience in communication*]
- ▶ “The obstacle is the language...not familiar with Cantonese...[I] was afraid to speak...I am more introverted” [HN2]
- ▶ “...it is hard for some students from Mainland to understand local students’ way of expression”[G1]



Different Teaching and Learning Approach



Different Teaching and Learning Approach

Differences would include the emphasis:

on critical thinking rather than regurgitation of materials

on continuous assessments e.g. projects and presentations etc.

on analysis rather than right or wrong answer

on understanding on current affairs

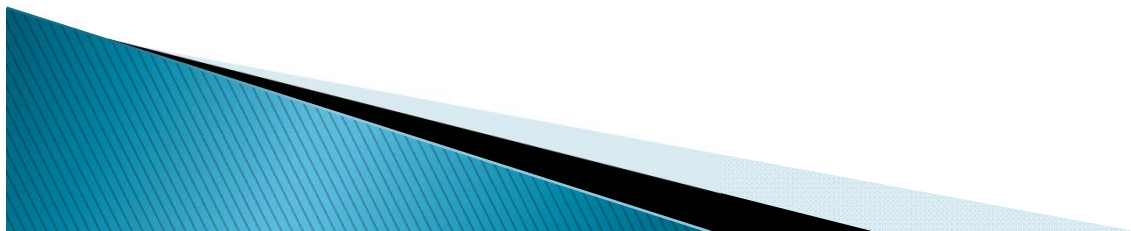
on independent learning



- ▶ “..teaching and learning styles in Hong Kong are very flexible” with “no standard answers for assignment and examination” and “no one would monitor you to study.” [G3]
- ▶ “teaching mode is totally different...we grow up in different environments” [G7]
- ▶ “different teaching model” [G6]



- ▶ “quiz, mid-term text, presentation or final exam, all takes certain percentage of the final grade” [G12]
- ▶ “In Mainland...the student cannot talk in class.... [In a Hong Kong classroom] I always feel nervous when I stand in front of classmates”



Cultural Differences



“there is a gap between us because of different cultural environment” [G14]

“Due to some political reasons, we still have some misunderstandings between us. As mainland students, we try to break this invisible barrier.” [HN1]

“Ways of thinking is different” [HN1]

“As far as I am concerned compared [comparing] mainland students and Hong Kong students, mainland students are not enthusiastic in current affairs and current politics” [G4]



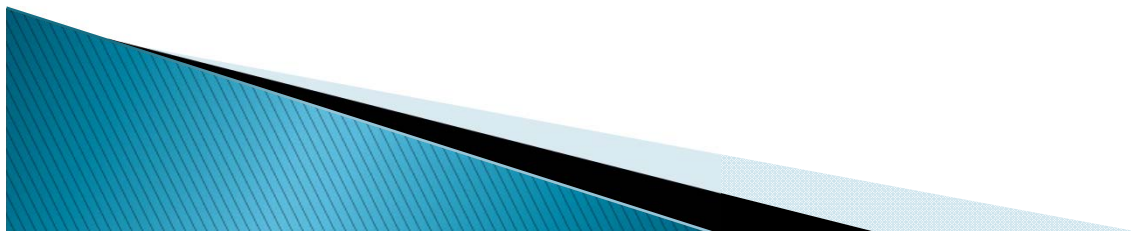
Existing and New Support Measures for Mainland Students



English Support Measures

- ▶ Mandatory English Enhancement Courses for two semesters.
- ▶ Oral English workshops
- ▶ Enrichment courses
- ▶ Convo Circles

In our recent feedback for the mandatory English Enhancement courses for Mainland students, 69% felt English language support they received is good and very good.



Integration with local culture and local students

- ▶ Cultural Orientation for Non-local students

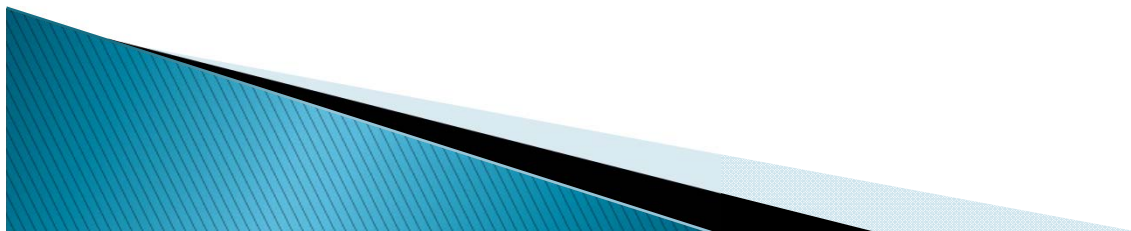
 - Walking Tour on Hong Kong History (to help understand Hong Kong culture)

 - Mid-Autumn Festival Gathering (ease homesick)

 - Chinese New Year Gathering (strengthen common bond)

- ▶ Service Learning Programme

- ▶ Cantonese Class (newly implemented)



Mentorship Programme

- ▶ Dual Mentor system
 - 1 discipline specific mentor
 - 1 mentor from Non-local Student Committee
- ▶ Peer Mentorship
 - Alumni and current student
 - Year 2 student and Year 1 student (in planning)



Teacher–student Rapport as the most effective support

98% of all respondents rated very positive relationship with teachers.

“Some teachers as friends” [G3]

“Like friends, family members”[G6]

“In my mind, teachers are mentors and friends” [G4]

“The teachers are enthusiastic, I got lots of help from my teachers.” [HN1]

“Good. Love to join the activities in college [because of the teachers]”[G5]



Thank you

