



香港教育大學

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of Hong Kong

媽媽，‘I MISS YOU 🥹’: MULTILINGUAL DIGITAL PRACTICES IN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILIES

Speaker: Dr. Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen University of Bath UK

Digital devices are omnipresent in our everyday life and have an immense impact on our social communication and language practices. Transnational families often engage in multilingual practices with their family members close and far via digital devices and through social media. As a result, children are immersed in new technologies from a young age (Teichert & Anderson 2014) which exposes them to multiple languages and digital literacy. This paper focuses on multilingual and multiliteracy practices of three transnational Chinese families in the UK, seen through the lens of family language policy. In particular, it looks into how parents and children establish their family language practices, negotiate meanings and develop multiliteracy skills through social media and digital devices. Using family language audit as a methodological tool, we conducted ethnographic fieldwork through observation of the families to collect ‘live’ events that were captured through digital communications, including Wechat (Chinese social media app), WhatsApp, Skype, and other apps. The findings indicate that social media are powerful tools to socialise children into multilingual practices and thus enable them to engage in both heritage language and cultural activities. Such engagement will have positive impact on their identity and cognitive development.

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Bio:



Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen is Professor in Applied Linguistics at the Department of Education, University of Bath, UK. Her research interests encompass ideological, sociocultural-cognitive and policy perspectives on children’s multilingual education and biliteracy development. She has examined bi/multilingual community-home-school contexts in the UK, Canada, France and Singapore on topics of curriculum policy, language-in-educational policy and family language policy. Her most recent research project is entitled Family Language Policy: A Multi-Level Investigation of Multilingual Practices in Transnational Families, funded by The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Her publications have appeared in leading academic journals, such as Language Policy; International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education; Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development; Language and Education; and Language, Culture and Curriculum.