

3A Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: Introducing Integrative Genre-Based Pedagogy

Presenter: Dr Karoline Anita ANDERSON (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

This presentation reports on a conceptual paper explicating integrative genre-based pedagogy (IGBP), aimed at fostering social responsiveness in English-medium of instruction (EMI) education. Genre-based pedagogy is often employed in EMI classes to enhance the communication of knowledge. Yet, this practice may subjugate culturally diverse forms of knowledge and its communication. IGBP intends to resolve these issues by merging socially responsive practices within traditional EAP/ESP genre-based approaches using three pillars of practice: identifying, enhancing, and critiquing. The pillars promote ongoing critiquing and integrating of culture to generate awareness of bias and its reflection in communication practices and knowledge-building.

The presentation will introduce the four major schools of genre-pedagogy, explicate the rationale behind the expansion of the EAP/ESP school of genre-pedagogy, and illustrate the employment of IGBP within EMI contexts. It serves to share knowledge on pedagogical methods enhancing cultural inclusivity in education.

3B Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: How gender shapes Mainland PhD experiences in Hong Kong: A qualitative study

Presenter: Ms Yingda GUO (The University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

My research explores the gendered experiences of Mainland Chinese PhD students in Hong Kong, focusing on how gender role expectations from both society and family shape their family relationships and perceptions of gender equality in academia. Through in-depth, face-to-face, and semi-structured interviews with twelve Mainland PhD students at the University of Hong Kong, my pilot study examines how diverse identities, such as age, relationship status, and academic discipline, intersect with one another and influence their lived experiences. This research contributes to the fields of gender and sociology of education and argues that gender equity matters to men PhD students too.

Using intersectional feminism as the main conceptual framework, my study highlights rich narratives across three student groups: single PhD students navigating relationship pressures from family, coupled but childless students managing financial and household responsibilities with partners, and parent PhD students balancing childcare duties with academic demands.

Findings reveal that while all single participants face relationship pressure from family, women report more intense and persistent expectations than their male peers. Strategies to cope with such a pressure include strategic communication, passive resistance, and non-traditional dating practices behind parents' back without direct confrontation with family on a face-to-face level. Among partnered participants, men often maintain important decision-making power despite claiming an equal share of domestic responsibilities with their partners. Additionally, mother PhD students face additional challenges due to COVID-19 disruptions and strict age limits for academic job applications.

I will also reflect on potential improvements, future research directions, and the broader implications of these findings for gender equity and justice in the higher education in my presentation.

3C Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: Student as the Arbiter: An Evolving Ideology of Parentocracy to Understand Hong Kong Parents' Changing Aspirations in the post-pandemic period

Presenter: Ms Yvette LEUNG (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

Studies on parental investment and involvement reveal middle-class parents' aggressive strategies in enhancing their children's learning outcomes, which inevitably exacerbates the problem of educational inequalities in the wider context. However, the global Covid-19 pandemic disrupted student's normal schooling routines worldwide. Drawing on the ideology of parentocracy in the context of the post-pandemic and under an emerging trend of self-care and uplifting of students' well-being, this paper seeks to explore how parents' aspirations has been (re)shaped, under a changing social landscape in Hong Kong.

From a qualitative study interviewing 41 Hong Kong parents of a local girls' secondary school, findings of this paper suggest a shift away from exclusive academic performance to a basket of parents' aspirations ranging from a balancing mix of mental well-being, to an alternative definition of success and personality development. The emphasis on academic performance is softened and coupled with a greater awareness of students' well-being, given the climbing cases of student suicide in recent years. Importantly, this paper also highlights the emerging presence of students' desires and preferences, suggesting a growing sense of student's agency and a shift in the original framework of parentocracy since its introduction in 1990s.

Keywords: Parentocracy, Parental Involvement, Student Agency, Covid-19, Well-being

3D Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility

Title: Navigating Cultures and Connections: BRI International Students' Educational Journeys in China

Presenters:

Ms Yabing LIU (The Education University of Hong Kong),
Ms Jie XU and Dr Kun DAI (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has catalysed a significant increase in international student enrolment at Chinese universities, accompanied by systematic efforts to cultivate these students' understanding of and affinity for China. While existing research has examined international students' motivations and learning experiences in China, limited attention has been paid to the comprehensive mechanisms deployed across institutional levels to cultivate students' understandings of and affinity for China and students' responses to these initiatives. This study employs Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to analyse the experiences of 30 international undergraduate students from BRI partner countries at a leading Chinese university. Through in-depth interviews and qualitative analysis, the research reveals a sophisticated multi-layered ecosystem involving various institutional actors implementing coordinated strategies to promote international students' cultural integration. The findings demonstrate that while this ecosystem provides extensive support and engagement opportunities, it simultaneously exhibits exclusionary aspects through policies/practices limiting student integration and post-graduation pathways. Students' responses varied significantly, with some developing strong cultural affinity despite structural barriers to long-term integration, while others leveraged their acquired cultural capital for opportunities in their home countries. This study enriches scholarly understanding of non-Western approaches to international education and highlights the need for more nuanced policy frameworks that can accommodate diverse student trajectories. The findings have important implications for international student support services and higher education policy in emerging education hubs.

3E Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility

Title: The impacts of one-year master degree programmes on non-local students' employability: A case study of a public university in Hong Kong.

Presenter: Ms HUANG Zhe (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

Master degree postgraduate education is rapidly growing worldwide, attracting students from increasingly diverse backgrounds. Despite the rising demand for one-year master degree programmes and their increasingly diverse purposes, limited research has examined the nature of these programmes and students' experiences of their master degree education, particularly in relation to students' employability and career trajectories after graduation. This case study aims to explore how one-year master degree programmes at a public university in Hong Kong impact the employability of non-local students who aspire to work in Hong Kong after graduation.

The researcher adopts a qualitative research design and case study approach by conducting (a) off-line student questionnaires; (b) in-depth, face-to-face semi-structured interviews with four non-local postgraduate students; and (c) analysis of related documents and artifacts of a one-year master degree programme in a public university in Hong Kong. Research participants are categorized into three groups based on their prior work experience. The study is guided by the USEM conceptual model, a powerful framework for understanding and improving employability through four key dimensions: Understanding (U), Skills (S), Efficacy (E), and Meta-cognition (M).

The findings reveal that the impacts of the one-year master degree programme on employability vary significantly depending on students' backgrounds and prior work experiences. For some, the program effectively enriches subject knowledge, broadens professional horizons, deepens awareness of social issues, enhances language proficiency, boosts self-confidence, and stimulates career planning. However, due to the programmes' tight schedule and limited resource utilization, students still face certain challenges, including (a) developing practical skills, (b) cultivating reflective and critical thinking, (c) preparing for the job market, and (d) making long-term career planning, etc. Particularly, students without prior work experience are more likely to struggle with practical job preparation and clarifying career goals.

The study focuses on non-local master degree students in Hong Kong and addresses the gap in the existing literature on postgraduate employability. Although the research participants represent a specific group, the study offers valuable reference for understanding the career development experiences of international students in a globalized context. It also provides evidence for universities, programme designers, and policymakers to supply more targeted and effective support, which can effectively respond to diverse students' needs in career development.

3F Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility

Title: Rethinking Internationalisation: Identity, Inequity, and Symbolic English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Japanese Higher Education

Presenter: Ms WANG Kexin (The Education University of Hong Kong) [Online]

Abstract:

This study explores the experiences of international students in English Medium Instruction (EMI) degree programs—also known as English-Taught Programs (ETPs)—at Japanese universities. While international students are frequently used as rhetorical tools in the discourse of internationalisation in Japan, their lived experiences are often overlooked. This research aims to fill that gap and critically examine the future of EMI in Japan.

Although EMI is widely promoted as a pathway to globalising higher education, findings from this study reveal a stark disconnect between its symbolic promise and the realities on the ground. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 15 international students and guided by Non-Representational Theory (Thrift, 2007), this research analyses EMI as a product of top-down policy shaped by neoliberal agendas and global branding ambitions.

Participants, all highly proficient in English, actively claimed ownership of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Yet, they experienced contradictory identity tensions—asserting global competence while simultaneously seeking validation from Western models and native-speaker norms. Their multilingual abilities were often undervalued, and many felt pressure to conform to Japanese societal expectations, both linguistically and culturally.

Structurally, the study found that ETPs suffer from inconsistent course design, limited student support, and a high turnover of administrative staff, which undermines continuity and institutional memory. Participants noted that Japanese returnees—Japanese students raised or educated abroad—benefit disproportionately, highlighting deeper questions of equity and access: Who are ETPs truly designed for?

This qualitative study adopts a narrative inquiry approach, supported by thematic analysis and policy document reviews. It contributes to the sub-theme Higher Education Internationalisation and Student Mobilities by exposing how EMI can reproduce inequalities and remain performative unless rooted in ethos, inclusivity, and long-term commitment to educational justice.

3G Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: A critical review of higher education budget cut-off policy in Hong Kong

Presenters:

Mr Qibang SU (The Education University of Hong Kong) and
Ms Chengyao ZHANG (Xiamen University)

Abstract:

The Hong Kong government claimed to decrease its financial support for the Hong Kong public universities in February 2025, with some reserve funds of universities also having to be returned. We made a critical review on the coming challenges for Hong Kong higher education. As a capitalist special administration region, it could be reasonable for Hong Kong to decrease part of funding for higher education in the age of neo-liberalism as many Western countries did, especially during the challenging time of government deficit. Neoliberalism has appeared in Hong Kong's higher education since the 2000s. Three pathways to getting enough income exist: students' tuition fees, research commercialisation, and community resources mobilisation. Nevertheless, current research has found that Hong Kong's universities may overextend their enrolment of non-local postgraduate students and fail to provide corresponding high-quality education. For instance, the University of Hong Kong increased over 60% of its postgraduate student's enrolment from 2020 to 2023, while an Ex-employee of the Poly University of Hong Kong claimed that some graduate programs use outside, low-cost part-time staff to teach classes. The qualitative research has pointed out that some graduates who finished their postgraduate studies in Hong Kong did not get the expected returns on career or financial development. Therefore, more research is needed to improve the quality of higher education in Hong Kong, especially in postgraduate programmes, to achieve Hong Kong higher education's sustainable leadership during the uncertain Sino-US rivalry age.

3H Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: Urban Hierarchies and AI Policy in Higher Education: Insights from Beijing, Hangzhou, and Guiyang

Presenter: Mr Wanru ZHAO (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

How does city hierarchy shape the development of artificial intelligence (AI) education in China? This study investigates how AI policy implementation differs across first-tier (Beijing), second-tier (Hangzhou), and third-tier (Guiyang) cities, and how these differences influence universities' approaches to AI education, research, and talent development.

Using a qualitative multi-case approach and policy document analysis, the study reviews local government initiatives and institutional practices between 2015 and 2025. The first case, Beijing, illustrates how a first-tier city leverages abundant resources and international partnerships to focus on core AI technology R&D and high-end talent cultivation. Universities such as Beijing Union University are integrated into global innovation networks through strong policy support and curriculum reform. The second case, Hangzhou, reflects a second-tier city driven by the digital economy. It emphasizes building an AI industrial ecosystem through university–industry collaboration and interdisciplinary programs, with platforms like Zhejiang University's "Zhihai Platform" supporting application-oriented training. The third case, Guiyang, demonstrates how a third-tier city with fewer resources promotes localized innovation by investing in big data infrastructure and exploring initiatives like "AI + agriculture." Institutions such as Guizhou University exemplify a model of pragmatic adaptation to regional needs.

The comparative analysis highlights how city tier affects policy strength, resource input, and execution pathways. Higher-tier cities demonstrate greater strategic coordination and institutional capacity, while lower-tier cities rely more on central support and local adaptability. Despite limited resources, some lower-tier universities exhibit strong flexibility and innovation in response to local needs.

By linking urban hierarchy with education policy outcomes, this study fills a gap in AI policy literature and offers actionable insights for optimizing regional resource distribution and promoting educational equity. Future research should explore how evolving AI technologies may further shape talent development and institutional change across diverse city contexts.

Keywords: AI policy; Higher education; City tier; Comparative study; Resource Allocation

31 Sub-theme: Educational equity and justice

Title: How to Sustain: Exploring Stabilization Mechanisms for “Nomadic” Rural Teachers (online)

Presenter: Ms Xuetong DONG (Wuhan University) [Online]

Abstract:

The phenomenon of teachers commuting between urban and rural areas, characterized by a dissonance between their professional and residential environments, exemplifies the uneven distribution of educational resources. The causes of this issue are complex and multifaceted. In the context of urbanization, the "nomadic migration" of rural educators who continually travel between their workplaces and residences has become a way of life for some rural teachers in China. This study, set in a specific rural township in China, uses a mixed-method approach to explore generational differences and inequalities within the “nomadic” rural teacher population, and discusses the educational challenges that arise from this "nomadic" trend. It finds that rural teachers in real life undergo a dual "migration state" - an interplay of physical and mental factors that influence each other, resulting in staffing instability and a recurring cycle of turnover. This situation has led to a gradual decline in the quality of rural education, producing individuals who are "rootless," existing in a state of suspension between urban and rural environments, and being increasingly swayed by urban culture. In order to establish a stable environment for rural teachers and rejuvenate rural education, it is imperative to employ a comprehensive array of educational policy tools. Globally, teacher mobility between urban and rural areas has evolved into three main models: "institution-driven" (Japan and South Korea), "market selection" (US and Canada), and "compensation-oriented" (Northern Europe). Addressing job-residence separation requires a comprehensive management framework that includes economic compensation, career development, life support systems, and digital administration. This provides a multidimensional reference for developing new policies on teacher mobility in the world.

3J Sub-theme: *Higher education internationalization and student mobility*

Title: Interculturality and the Cosmopolitan Teacher: The Role of International Mobility in Mexican Teacher Education

Presenter: Mr FLORES OROZCO, Octavio (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

FLORES OROZCO, Octavio has been a language educator for more than 10 years and his academic and professional experience involves various international settings and levels. Before commencing his current PhD in the department of Education Policy and Leadership at The Education University of Hong Kong, he served as a lecturer at a Normal School dedicated to teacher education in Mexico.

Teachers are challenged by growing cultural diversity in schools and the need to prepare students for an interconnected world. Policymakers have recognised this phenomenon and urged teacher education to promote global citizenship. One strategy to achieve this is through the internationalisation of teacher education, particularly by offering pre-service teachers opportunities to study abroad as part of their training. Although international mobility in teacher education has been slow to develop in Latin America, it has become an established area of focus. However, most research has focused on the mobility of teachers within the Global North, which misses other circuits of mobility within the Global South.

This presentation reports on semi-structured interviews with teachers in Mexico as part of an ongoing qualitative project. Applying the concepts of “interculturality” and the “cosmopolitan teacher” as a framework, the presentation discusses how the mobility experiences of teachers can shape their perspectives and practices in K-6 education. Key preliminary findings, such as the integration of foreign and local languages into the mainstream curriculum and the inclusion of school activities that foster global perspectives and interactions, will be highlighted. Finally, the discussion will address the role of the Global South in addressing current issues related to social justice and equal access in international student mobility and its implications.

3K Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility

Title: Dual-City Journey: Exploring the rise, responses, and daily lives of cross-boundary students in Shenzhen and Hong Kong

Presenter: Ms Li Yuting (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

Every day, more than ten thousand students who live in Shenzhen cross the boundary to go to school in Hong Kong. CBS between Shenzhen and Hong Kong are a distinctive phenomenon in global cross-border educational mobility. Although the flow of CBS is within a country, they need to undergo identity and security checks at border control points, and the nature of this mobility is more like mobility across national borders. The emergence of CBS has acted as a catalyst for social and political issues in Hong Kong. This thesis investigates the historical emergence, challenges and policy responses, and lived experiences of CBS students in Hong Kong. It provides an in-depth analysis of CBS and answers three main research questions: (1) How has the phenomenon of CBS in Hong Kong emerged and evolved over time? (2) What major issues and challenges regarding CBS have been identified by the government and local schools, and how have they attempted to address them? (3) To what degree do official accounts and policies reflect the lived experiences and daily challenges facing CBS? To address these questions, the thesis first traces the historical emergence and evolution of CBS mobility. This phenomenon is the result of the synergy between institutional differences and economic strength between Hong Kong and mainland of China. Next, it explores the challenges faced by CBS and the measures taken by the government and schools. Despite efforts by the government and schools to address learning issues such as language barriers and commuting fatigue, personal development issues, such as concerns about their sense of identity and a lost sense of belonging to Hong Kong, have not been adequately addressed. Finally, drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and interviews, it examines students' lived experiences to surface previously unidentified and unresolved issues, providing reflections for policy.

Keywords: Cross-boundary students, education mobility, education policy

3L Sub-theme: *Higher education internationalization and student mobility*

Title: Understanding the Experiences behind International Students Decision to Study in the Greater Bay Area: A Cultural and Identity Perspective

Presenter: Mr WANG Haoran (The Education University of Hong Kong) [Online]

Abstract:

This study examines the phenomenon of international students' experiences study in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) of China from a cultural and identity perspective. The GBA's modern culture, unique blend of multiple ethnicities and globalization has made it a hot spot for international students. This research uses semi-structured interview method to extract narrative data from international students attending different universities within the GBA Region. The study attempts to understand cultural factors, such as image of China, prestige of academics, and employment opportunities, into account within the decision-making process. It also seeks to understand the interaction of international students' identities constructed from home culture, personal experiences, and expectations, with the phenomenon of studying in the GBA. As a preliminary analysis, findings suggests that international students' engagement goes beyond academic and career goals, but also includes their interest to interact with a multicultural and globalizing culture. The research ends with the discussion for implication on university advertisement policies and responses to international students' concerns towards changing conditions in the world.