

Abstract of the thesis entitled English in Post-1999

Macau – the Functions and Status of English

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This research focuses on the functions and status of English in post-1999 Macau.

The study begins with a description of Macau in its macro-sociolinguistic context,

showing how the existing four main language varieties – Cantonese, Portuguese,

English, and Putonghua – interact in Macau society in terms of their status and

functions. The aim of the study is to explore how these language varieties

(English in particular) have been used in four domains (education, employment,

media, and government). The sociolinguistic situation in Macau from the 1980's

to the present is described. Impacts on language use due to the liberalization of

the gaming industry and the implementation of the individual visiting scheme are

discussed, and so are other language-related issues such as

societal-multilingualism; code-switching; medium of instruction; and language

attitude. This study is modeled after previous descriptions of Hong Kong (Luke

& Richards 1982; Li 1999), which analyze the language choice of Hong Kong

Chinese in different domains. The primary data for this study are drawn from

statistical figures from the Statistics and Census Service, personal interviews, a review of recruitment advertisements from a local newspaper, and a small scale survey concerning language attitude towards the major varieties. Findings and data derived from statistics and personal interviews are compared with those of previous studies.