

**Project:** Teaching Approaches and English Literacy Skills: An Investigation into Young Hong Kong Chinese ESL Children

**Grantee:** The Hong Kong Insitute of Education (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Principal Investigator:** Dr YEUNG Susanna Siu Sze  
Department of Psychology  
The Education University of Hong Kong

**Co-investigators:** Dr NG Mei Lee  
Department of Early Chlidhood Education  
The Education University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:**

Currently, there is a lack of understanding in current practices of English language teaching and its impacts on early literacy skills. Therefore, the present project was proposed to fill this research gap by (1) describing the current English language teaching practices in preschools through analysis of curriculum documents and observation of English lessons; and (2) examining the impacts of various teaching approaches on early English literacy. Thirteen local kindergartens with varying teaching approaches in English language instruction were recruited in the present project. Curriculum documents were collected from these schools. Lesson observation from the beginning to the end of the school year were conducted in one K3 classroom in each school. One hundred and twenty-eight lessons were recorded and coded in terms of teaching content, quality of instruction and pedagogy with an observational system developed by the team members of the project based on existing documented and validated observational systems. Children in these classrooms were assessed three times in a year (beginning, middle and end of the year) on English language and reading skills. The impacts of the teaching approaches both in terms of teaching components and teaching quality on the mentioned literacy outcomes were examined. Results indicated that the current English practices in the sampled kindergarten got commonalities as well as differences. School/teacher variations as reflected in the document analysis and lesson coding were found to explain language and literacy gains over the year. Implications on providing quality English instruction in pre-primary setting were discussed.

**Keywords:**

Teaching approaches; language and literacy skills; young children; second language learning