

Gender and Codemixing in Hong Kong

Kwok-Lan Jamie, Wong

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts in
partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in the
Department of Linguistics
The University of Sydney**

November 2004

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr Ahmar Mahboob, for his patient guidance, invaluable help and enlightening suggestions during the course of my research project. His enthusiasm and serious attitude towards the academic research has greatly influenced me to work hard for my project.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my mentor, Dr Toni Borowsky for her consideration and necessary guidance.

Appreciation is expressed to Prof. James Martin, coordinator of Honours Program for his invaluable and enriching advice during Honours seminars.

The friendship I enjoyed with my fellow undergraduate students, Aidan, Fiona and Simon has been an unforgettable one. We shared many good laughs together apart from giving each other much needed encouragement and assistance in our work.

My final thanks go to my parents and friends, whose love, encouragement, and support throughout the honour program helped me get through difficult times and achieve academic success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction of thesis	p.7
1.2 Terminology: codemixing	p.7
1.3 Outline of thesis	p.10
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction of the chapter	p.12
2.2 Two streams of approaches towards gender and languages	p.12
2.2.1 Traditional approaches: generalizations of gender pattern of language use	p.12
2.2.2 Look locally into gender	p.15
2.3 Code choice in bi/multilingual speech communities	p.17
2.3.1 Code-alternation as a nonstandard form of speech	p.19
2.4 Code-alternation and Gender.	p.20
2.5 Summary of chapter	p.21
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Overview of the chapter	p.23
3.2 The context of the present study	p.23
3.2.1 Languages and language attitudes in Hong Kong	p.24
3.2.2 Code-alternation in Hong Kong	p.25
3.2.3 Gender relations in Hong Kong	p.27
3.3 The informants	p.28
3.4 The Instruments	p.29
3.4.1 The informal interview	p.30
3.4.2 The language diary	p.32
3.5 The procedure	p.32
3.6 Summary of chapter	p.33
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FOR THE INTERVIEW	
4.1 Overview of the chapter	p.34

4.2 Data-coding	p.34
4.3 The results	p.35
4.3.1 Results for Question 1, 2 and 3	p.35
4.3.2 Results for Question 4	p.36
4.3.3. Results for informants in different working environments	p.37

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FOR LANGUAGE DIARY

5.1 Overview of the chapter	p.40
5.2 Data-coding	p.40
5.3 Results for the language diary	p.40
5.3.1 The variation of pure Cantonese and Cantonese-English mixture with gender	p.44
5.4 Summary of chapter	p.53

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Discussion	p.54
6.2 Conclusion	p.57

REFERENCES

APPENDIX: LANGUAGE DIARY SAMPLE

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	The percentage of English used by the female and male informants during the interview	p.25
Figure 2	Percentages of use of English items of the female informants and male informants in the “more competitive working environments” and the “more competitive working environments”	p.38
Figure 3	Differences in percentage of amount of English used within each sex category	p.38
Figure 4	The percentages of verbal exchanges in each type of code	p.41
Figure 5	Percentage of codes used by informants in relation to the gender of interlocutors	p.45
Figure 6	Percentage of codes used by informants in relation to the educational level of interlocutors	p.46
Figure 7	Percentage of use of codes by male informants in relation to the education and gender of interlocutors	p.48
Figure 8	Percentage of use of codes by female informants in relation to the education and gender of interlocutors	p.49
Figure 9	Percentage of use of codes by informants in relation to the age of interlocutors	p.49
Figure 10	Looking at male informants: Percentage of interlocutors of each age group within each educational level	p.50
Figure 11	Looking at female informants: Percentage of interlocutors of each age group within each educational level	p.50
Figure 12	Looking at female informants: Percentage of use of codes in relation to interlocutors’ relationship with informants	p.52
Figure 13	Looking at male informants: Percentage of use of codes in relation to interlocutors’ relationship with informants	p.52

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Social variables of informants	p.29
Table 2	Summary of working environments of the informants	p.32
Table 3	Summary of percentage of use of English by female and male informants in the interview	p.36
Table 4	The use of the English words “daddy” and “mammy” by the female informants and male informants	p.37
Table 5	Crosstabulation of code and circumstance	p.43
Table 6	Crosstabulation of code and topic	p.43
Table 7	Crosstabulation of code and relationship	p.43
Table 8	Numbers of verbal exchanges in each type of setting in relation to sex of informants and interlocutors	p.44