

City University of Hong Kong

Press Release



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>> 中文

CityU scholars develop new Cantonese Pinyin Scheme

The Department of Chinese, Translation & Linguistics (CTL) at City University of Hong Kong organized the "LSHK Cantonese Romanization Scheme and Language Education of Hong Kong" press conference today (8 October) to promote the "LSHK Cantonese Romanization Scheme", or its simplified name "Jyutping".

The scheme is a collaboration between linguists from CityU, the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong, and four other universities in Hong Kong. The system is now adopted by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. This project exemplifies CityU's achievements in providing quality applied research and making valuable contributions to society.



Winners and guests at the prize presentation ceremony of "Inter-secondary-school Cantonese Transcription Competition 2005", first of its kind in Hong Kong organized by CityU.



Dr Caesar Lun (left), Assistant Professor in CTL and President of the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong, and Dr Tang Sze-wing, Convenor of the Cantonese Romanization Promotion Working Group, introduces the "Jyutping".

"Pinyin lays the foundation for mother-tongue education, and we cannot ignore its important role in making accurate pronunciation, searching for information, and Chinese word processing," said **Dr Caesar Lun**, Assistant Professor in CTL. He is also President of the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong.

Although Cantonese is the mainstream dialect in Hong Kong, the "Hongkong-ish" pinyin is not accurate and systematic enough for students to understand the phonetic system of Cantonese, Dr Lun said. He also added that students are so confused that they cannot read or pronounce accurately and therefore their language learning may be slowed down.

"Jyutping" is a Cantonese Romanization scheme (using dialects of Guangzhou and Hong Kong). It uses the Latin alphabet (from A to Z) to transcribe Cantonese pronunciation and uses Arabic Numerals (1 to 6) to indicate tones. Dr Lun said at the press conference that "Jyutping" is theoretically sound for academics and has wide applications in information technology such as computer input, Cantonese information exchange, and computer software for learning accurate Cantonese pronunciation. This scheme is also suitable for Cantonese transcription, word searching and speech therapy.

Other speakers included **Dr Jonathan Webster**, Head of CTL, and **Dr Tang Sze-wing**, Convenor of the Cantonese Romanization Promotion Working Group. Dr Tang introduced the role of "Jyutping" in language education and discussed its functionality from a scientific angle and ways to minimize inaccurate pronunciation.

In order to promote "Jyutping" and the underlying message concerning more accurate Cantonese pronunciation, and to encourage the use of the Scheme in areas of information technology, CTL collaborated with the Linguistics Society of Hong Kong and LangComp Company Limited to organize the "Inter-secondary-school Cantonese Transcription Competition 2005". The Competition was divided into Junior Group and Senior Group. The teams first attended a workshop at CityU to understand "Jyutping", and then entered the competition. Three participants from each group were chosen to compete for the Champion in the Final Round held today. The results were announced, followed by an award presentation.

For details of the competition, please visit: <http://www.langcomp.com.hk/jpcomp2005>

For media enquiries >>

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