



Letter to the Editor

5D (2018-2019) Kwan Tsz Tsun, Karin

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my disapproval of the speech given by Hong Kong Education Secretary. As a Hong Kong citizen I was definitely angered by what Kevin Yeung Yun-hung said. It seems to me that he did not respect and like his mother language, Cantonese. From his point of view, he only saw the advantages from speaking Mandarin which seems to be the second international language.

Firstly, Cantonese is a unique language that features our city. There are nine tones in speaking Cantonese. Each tone has a similar pronunciation which is believed as the most difficult language in the world. Moreover, when we say the same word with upper tone or lower tone, this can be converted into a question or sentence. This is the amazing side of Cantonese. Currently, there are more foreigners enjoy learning Cantonese as it sounds interesting and challenging. Cantonese is respected by the foreigners, why can't we respect our mother language? It is too ironic to say it. Whenever we go to the popular places, I feel that when everyone speaks together, it creates a 'wonderful and nice' song. I am so proud of speaking Cantonese and won't feel ashamed of it. Thus, Cantonese should be preserved because it features and resembles our beautiful city.

Secondly, Cantonese is an integral part of China. In many dynasties, the poets preferred using metaphors and rhymes make poems which give a lot of deep meaning to modern people. However, we have to use Cantonese to read aloud with the poems if we want to read with rhymes. Moreover, many citizens spoke Cantonese instead of Mandarin during dynasty periods as Mandarin has been created since the establishment of the Republic. Consequently, Cantonese represents the history of us. We have to protect it. How can we put it aside just because of the modern advantages of Mandarin? In my stance, I think it is too ridiculous and narrow-minded. We should respect it but not measure it.

I cannot remain calm about this situation as I really do not want to see another Guangzhou where most children speak Mandarin and use it to be their mother language. I admit that Mandarin can benefit us, but it cannot replace our own mother tongue. I strongly disagree with Mr. Yeung because he is guilty of ignoring our cultural heritage. Being Hongkongers, we need to protect our cultural heritage, so Cantonese should be preserved.