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Curriculum for Hong Kong's non-Chinese speaking, ethnic minority students leaves teachers at a loss as to how to help them

Hong Kong Unison's report says the current framework for teaching ethnic minority children isn't helpful

By Edmund Ho | May 28, 2018

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Schools with ethnic minority students need more support.
Photo: SCMP/Felix Wong

The Education Bureau's attempts to integrate non-Chinese speaking students into the mainstream Chinese curriculum have left "teachers at a loss as to how to teach" them, says a report released by a non-governmental organisation yesterday.

Edmund Ho
REPORTER
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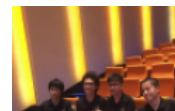
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The report, compiled by the organisation Hong Kong Unison, said the current framework for teaching ethnic minority students – the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" – lacks "clear ... learning goals, benchmarks, systematic teaching materials, and teacher training". This makes it more difficult for local teachers to support non-Chinese speaking students.

The report found that non-Chinese speaking students are often bored with their language curriculum because of the lack of training for their teachers, as well as of clear learning goals.

This phenomenon of teaching Chinese to unresponsive students is not isolated to local schools.

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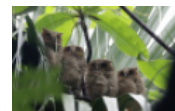
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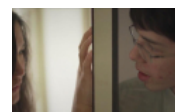
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Zachary Perez Jones, 13, of South Island School, says that learning Chinese as a second language is hard for him as it is not a language he is used to. He says he has to learn about different sentence structures and the order of character strokes, and that he would find hands-on assistance with these sorts of things helpful.

The report argues for more direction from the government to schools with ethnic minority students; more feedback from teachers on the front lines of teaching non-Chinese speaking students; and more cultural sensitivity training for teachers. It also calls for the heightening of the Education Bureau's "monitoring of schools ... to prevent the phenomenon of ... racial segregation [and] promote social integration".

Ip Kin-yuen, a Legislative Council member for the education constituency, said there should be more training for teachers, so that they have the ability to "meet the learning needs of ethnic minority students".

This article appeared in the Young Post print edition as "Non-Chinese speakers left in the cold in class"

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Hong Kong, Hong Kong News, Hong Kong education, Education Bureau, Ethnic Minorities, ethnic minorities in hk, Hong Kong Unison, chinese language, Chinese as a second language, Chinese language proficiency, Edmund Ho, Zachary Perez Jones, South Island School, Ip Kin-yuen

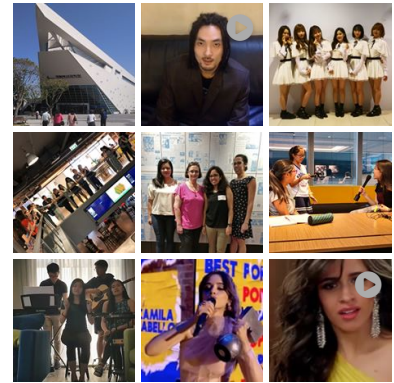
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