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Understanding Hong Kong's Ethnic Minorities and Non-Chinese Speakers



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Historic Background

- Indians and Pakistanis came to Hong Kong as traders with the British during the colonial times
- Nepalese people came to Hong Kong as part of British Gurkha military service since the 1950s
- The perception is that Filipinos and Indonesians work in HK as domestic helpers. Many were born and educated in HK





Demographic Background

- HK Government categorizes ethnic minorities into three major groups:
 - Southeast Asians
(mostly Filipinos, Indonesians, and Thais)
 - South Asians
(mostly Nepalese, Indians, Sri Lankans, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis)
 - East Asians
(others - including Caucasians)

➤ 6.5% of the population is classed as ethnic minority





| | Population | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| | Number of Persons | Percentage |
| Chinese | 6,752,202 | 92 |
| Filipino | 184,081 | 2.5 |
| Indonesian | 153,299 | 2.1 |
| White | 58,209 | 0.8 |
| Indian | 36,462 | 0.5 |
| Nepalese | 25,472 | 0.3 |
| Pakistani | 18,094 | 0.2 |
| Thai | 10,215 | 0.1 |
| Japanese | 9,976 | 0.1 |
| Other Asian | 19,589 | 0.3 |
| Others | 68,986 | 0.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | 7,336,585 | 100 |

*Source: 2016 Population Census Office, Census and Statistics Department,
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*



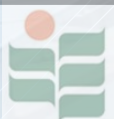


- Which communities might be shown in the images below?
- What is your imagination of those different groups? How would you describe them?



Language Practices

- Dominant use of heritage language/mother tongue in the home
- Can be many languages for different ethnic groups e.g. Indians speak Punjabi, Gujarati, Tamil, Bangla etc.
- About 90% of all ethnic groups use Chinese or English in schools or at workplaces
- Ethnic minority groups tend to use mother tongue language with peers from the same group



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Discussion Points:

- Do you or your friends speak, read or write any ethnic minority languages ?
- What language(s) was/were used in your school?
- Do you think ethnic minority students should be taught in their home languages in schools?



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Cultural Practices

- Indians celebrate various festivals throughout the year such as Diwali, Rakshya Bandhan, Krishna Janmasthanami
- Pakistanis and Indonesians celebrate Ramadan
- Nepalese celebrate Dashain, Tihar (similar to Diwali) and Teej. Different groups celebrate their own festivals e.g. Magars celebrate Maghe Sakranti, Gurung and Tamang celebrate Lhosar, Rai celebrate Sakela, and Limbu celebrate Dhan Naach





Bhai Tika in Tihar



Raksha Bandhan



Ramadan



Merry Christmas





Religious Practices

- Indians are mostly followers of the Hindu religion, while Pakistanis and Indonesians are followers of the Islamic religion. The majority of the Filipinos are Christian
- Nepalese practice Hindu cultural traditions, while there is also quite a large number of Buddhists. Younger generation Nepalese are converting to Christianity



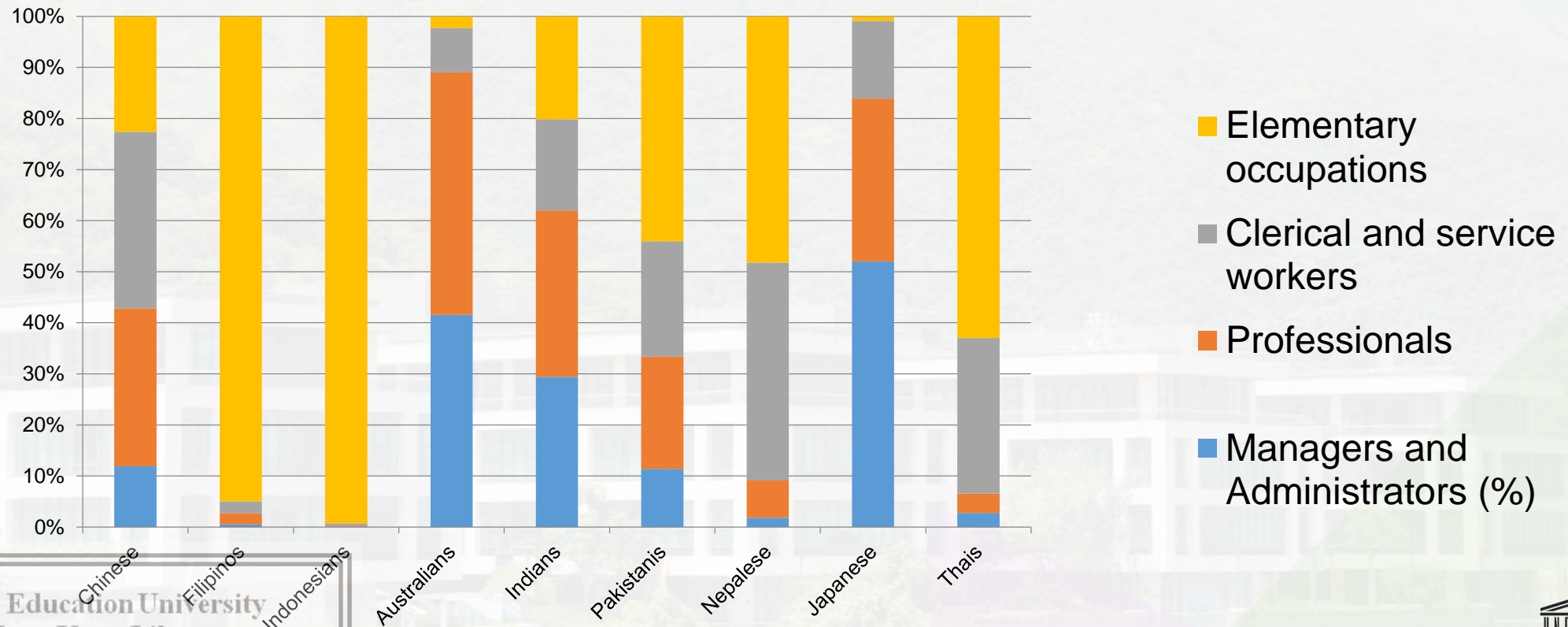


Discussion Point:

- Do you think ethnic minorities should be given days off work/school for their cultural/religious festivals in Hong Kong?



Occupations of Ethnic Minorities





The Indian Community

- Among the ethnic minorities often categorized as the disadvantaged groups in Hong Kong, Indians seem to be the most affluent community.
- Out of 14,197 working people 28% are in managerial positions while another 32% are professionals.





Discussion Point:

- What are the socioeconomic needs of different ethnic groups in Hong Kong?
- Suggest measures that Government could implement to improve the socio-economic, educational and employment needs of different communities.





Refugees in Hong Kong

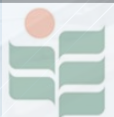
- There are roughly 11,000 refugees in Hong Kong (2017)
- Managing their residence in Hong Kong has never been satisfactorily resolved

Exercise 4



Issues in the Education of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong

- More than 90% of the secondary schools in Hong Kong are CMI
- In locations where ethnic minority residents are concentrated there are only a few aided or government schools using EMI
- Until 2013 there were some “designated schools” that received funding (maximum of \$600,000) to support teaching Chinese to ethnic minority students
- However, there was a view that designated schools were segregating the minority students from the “mainstream community”



Major Concerns and Views of Minority Stakeholders of the Education System

- Lack of support to students in EMI schools to learn Chinese
- Lack of trained teachers to teach Chinese as a second language
- Use of Putonghua to teach Chinese
- Tendency for Government to treat ethnic minorities as special needs students

- Lack of kindergarten support



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Major Concerns and Views of Minority Stakeholders of the Education System

- The Secondary School Places Allocation System (SSPA) does not guarantee places for EM students in designated EMI schools. Students in CMI schools encounter great difficulties
- There is a lot of pressure on schools to get high HKDSE pass rates, hence some schools are unwillingly to take EM students because their low attainment in Chinese





Discussion Point:

- Should schools be allowed to "opt out" of taking students who have Chinese as a second language? Is a segregated education system acceptable in a modern society?





Major Concerns and Views of Minority Stakeholders of the Education System

- Although HK universities may accept the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level Chinese language qualification many EM students drop out before finishing their secondary education. Also, discretion to accept this is not often used.
- Some parents avoided schools that took EM students





Major Concerns and Views of the NGOs

- It is a false assumption that EM parents are not concerned about their children's education. Many EM parents may lack the ability, information and support to make informed choices about the educational paths for their children
- Adequate and appropriate education and language support should be provided to EM students as early as possible, preferably at kindergarten level



Major Concerns and Views of the NGOs (cont.)

- Teacher education should be strengthened to include racial awareness and training for working with EM students
- General education and public information should be strengthened to promote racial harmony
- Government is reluctant to collect and provide statistics on racial profiles in relation to education, employment and social services. Hence, policy development lacks a sound basis



Major Concerns and Views of EM Parents and Students

- Most mainstream schools are CMI. EM students who are less proficient in Chinese not only perform unsatisfactorily in Chinese language but also other subjects
- There is a big gap between the standard of GCSE Chinese and the local mainstream Chinese curriculum. There is a strong body of opinion that an alternative Chinese curriculum should be developed for EM or NCS students to more accurately and fairly reflect their Chinese proficiency for education and employment purposes





Major Concerns and Views of EM Parents and Students (cont.)

- EdB should provide immersion programmes for EM students at the earliest possible stage, preferably at kindergarten level
- Support services and early intervention should be provided for EM children who have special learning needs
- Mixed views on designated schools a) supportive learning environment
b) perpetuates segregation





Result of These Views and Concerns

- NGOs mounted an increasing criticism of the Government for its failure to implement a Chinese as a Second Language Curriculum to help the ethnic minority students in last few years. Media tended to report that teaching or learning Chinese was the only solution to the difficulties faced by ethnic minority students



Government action

- Government so far has only attempted to address the language issue. In 2012 the Government lobbied the tertiary institutions to recognize the GCSE/GCE Chinese qualification. Universities now accept GCSE/IGCSE/GCE Chinese examinations as alternative to the HKDSE for some degree programmes - but the issue of "discretion" arises
- Initially this was considered a major step forward by the EM community

The Reality of the GCSE/GCE Qualification

- Towards the end of 2012, newspaper stories reported that ethnic minority students taking the GCSE exam had inadequate proficiency in Chinese (Cantonese) required for government jobs and university courses. There were other problems identified with the GCSE/GCE Chinese language qualification. However, in 2017 GCSE is accepted by all 8 UGC Universities.

The Reality of the GCSE/GCE Qualification (con't)

- Many NGOs and lobby groups criticized the government for its failure to address the problems.
- They lobbied for formulating a Chinese as a second language policy.



Chinese as a Second Language Framework

In response Government introduced the 'Chinese as a Second Language Framework' (CSL) in 2014. Under this policy, Government planned to:

- (1) migrate ethnic minority students studying in kindergartens or in P1, P2, P3 and P4 to mainstream CMI classes or
- (2) for those not willing to attend CMI schools, teach Chinese in Form Four and allow students to take the GCSE/GCE Chinese language examination.

In a subsequent submission by EDB to the Legislative Council in 2014, Government also listed out the responsibilities of different stakeholders under this policy.



Chinese as a Second Language Framework (con't)

- Government funded development of the “Applied Chinese Learning” course for those who study in EMI. This course is taught at Form Four, and is considered another gateway to enter higher education or employment. All the publicly funded universities recognize this qualification. However, media reports indicate difficulties in implementation



Other issues

- Ethnic minority students with special needs are also facing difficulties due to linguistic or cultural issues
- Ethnic minority students' difficulties in learning other subjects such as mathematics, science, liberal studies and computer science remain unnoticed
- Reports also show that the textbooks producers in Hong Kong continue portraying stereotypical views of ethnic minorities



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Ethnic Minority Students Also Have Problems with Other Subjects:

Tsang said many minority pupils had problems in maths and the Centre believed it should not focus only on Chinese tutoring. Pupils can choose the subjects in which they want tutoring, based on their weaknesses. Social workers also take the children on trips to various places in the city where they communicate with Chinese people and are immersed in local culture.

(SCMP news, June 3, 2014)





Problems with Textbooks:

Racial and ethnic stereotypes can be found in Liberal Studies textbooks. These can describe ethnic minorities in Hong Kong mostly as "grass roots" and underprivileged. Such depictions are counterproductive to the subject's multicultural aims of enhancing: understanding of society, respect for diversity, and ability to handle conflicting values, in order to develop the positive attitudes needed in order to become informed, responsible citizens.

(SCMP article, July 9, 2014)





Stereotypes in Schools:

Suleman Siddiqui, a teenager studying in a secondary school (name removed due to privacy issue), said one of his teachers once told him he should not expect to be anything but a train driver or toilet cleaner when he grew up. "Why are we always stereotyped? Why do they have such low expectations of us?" asked Suleman, a Pakistani whose family has lived in Hong Kong for four generations.

(SCMP news, May 4, 2014)



Stereotypes in Curriculum:

Soto says non-Chinese speaking children are often stereotyped in the local curriculum. A guidebook for the Diploma of Secondary Education's liberal studies exams says ethnic minority children suffer in Hong Kong and have problems becoming part of the community as they do not know Chinese, he says.

(SCMP news, May 26, 2014)



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<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1519659/ethnic-minority-children-stereotyped-and-belittled-hong-kong-schools>



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Suggested Solutions

Overseas Opportunities:

- There is a call for policy makers to encourage and support ethnic minority students' education overseas. For example, some ethnic minority students have found better higher education opportunities in Taiwan. There was also a call from people to redirect the financial subsidy provided to ESF schools to support the ethnic minority students.



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Real Financial Support:

Here is an idea to revamp our whole education system that will harness our multi-ethnic heritage, not as a problem, but something to celebrate for our self-styled international city. The annual HK\$283 million the government will save when it cuts funding to the English Schools Foundation should be redirected to those 31 schools. Massive resources will then go to those schools with a multi-ethnic/international outlook, yet follow the local curriculum and exam system.

(SCMP article, May 28, 2014)



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<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1520124/hong-kong-government-should-redirect-esf-subsidy-ethnic>



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Improved Quality of Teacher Training/Education:

I do have complain [*sic*] that the teachers [...] can't communicate well in English because, as I have a history teacher and history I think is a hard subject. I really have interest in history, but he does not really know how to speak English and then he mostly writes his words in a blackboard form and the when we try to correct him, then he says that was just testing if you were seeing or not. I mean, OK, what if the word we don't know and we copy the same wrong thing and you know I sometimes wonder what if the teachers knew more English than us, then I think it would be better so that we can communicate and then it would make us understand history.





Use of Bilingual Teachers

Thapa: Do you find a Nepalese teaching assistant helpful in the class?

Ami: Yes, it does help because like I said some teachers really can't communicate with us in English. Then, we can, you know, we can ask. If we have a same language, then I think we can have a better understanding. While they are teaching us in English, if they can't really teach us properly, I can ask the Nepalese teacher, and he can make us understand what is happening.





Other Sources of Information on Government Initiatives:

- ✓ <http://www.eoc.org.hk/EOC/Upload/UserFiles/File/rdo/FDHbooklet-e.pdf>
- ✓ <http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2014/eng/EM.html>
- ✓ http://www.had.gov.hk/rru/english/info/info_dem.html
- ✓ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/student-parents/ncs-students/about-ncs-students/index.html>
- ✓ <http://www.jupas.edu.hk/en/page/detail/547/#note>
- ✓ <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1406231/chinese-second-language-be-taught-ethnic-minority-pupils> (Chinese as a second language to be taught)
- ✓ <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1039287/chinese-language-exam-subsidies-rise-ethnic-minority-pupils> (exam fees for GCSE Chinese to be subsidised)





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Teaching Ethnic Minority Students Good Practices

(Acknowledgement to Hong Kong UNISON and EdUHK CGC)



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Things to Remember:

- Most ethnic minority students were born in Hong Kong. They are local students and Hongkongers - they are entitled to the same quality of education as all other students
- Different ethnic groups have different cultures and characteristics. Appreciate differences and avoid stereotyping. Do not over-generalize and assume a "one size fits all" approach will work
- People are individuals. Do not assume certain "behaviours" are characteristic of a whole group





- Discrimination is not the default position. By nature people are inclusive - they learn to discriminate. This needs un-learning and re-learning
- Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights"
- Have mutual respect - there is harmony in diversity
- The importance of providing equity in education of all students





Practical Actions that Teachers Can Take in the Classroom to be More Empathic with Ethnic Minority Students:





- Teachers must move towards respect for ethnic minority students, rather than just tolerance
- Teachers need to understand that they may have to ‘unlearn’ some of their teaching methods. Teachers need to observe, understand and adapt different pedagogies to their classrooms





- Using culturally relevant pedagogy is important for minority language students. Use students' cultural practices as learning materials. Don't stick rigidly to textbooks
- Teachers should try to understand the different identities of students, whilst communicating the benefits of learning. Doing so can boost self-efficacy and confidence in students. Similarly, understanding at risk students is important as some may come from broken families





- Just because minority language students are in an English medium class, does not mean they are proficient in English. Teachers of the same nationality and language to students are best, however if there are teaching assistants with the same background to students this can equally help





- Some teachers report that group work may be better than giving out a lot of homework.
- Typically if students are not doing well, they can get labeled by teachers. as “low level”. Do not fall into this habit





- Teachers should appreciate that during communication with parents, some parents may be involved less due to other issues, such as work constraints. Teachers could instead initiate meeting parents, as they may lack confidence
- Scolding and punishment do not work in a class with minority language students. The idea of ‘remaining silent’ in classrooms might be difficult for minority language students, especially South Asians
- Extra-curricular activities can usefully combine a meaningful social purpose and language learning. For example, visits to the elderly could be combined with teaching context relevant Cantonese words beforehand



- Understand the significance and meaning of different dress codes. Talk to parents about cultural appropriate clothing for different activities. Seek guidance from the EoC Guide on Racial Equality and School Uniforms
- Understand cultural aspects of food. Assist students to get appropriate and suitably prepared food. Make sure caterers and school managers are aware of particular needs. Be aware of Ramadan and accommodate students' needs
- Be aware of prayer times and formats. Provide a suitable area and make time available



- Be patient and understand different cultures have different learning styles
- Be sure the students can understand you whether you are using English or Chinese
- Be respectful - learn how to pronounce students' names properly
- Avoid teaching materials that stereotype or show bias against specific groups
- Value the cultural knowledge in your classrooms - do not rely 100% on text books





- Monitor student progress carefully and take action where problems are spotted
- Engage with parents to learn more about your students
- Engage in further training yourselves to learn more about difference
- Read the available literature (Burnette, J. , Gorski, P. C. etc.)





Exercise 1:

- a) Read the texts in the boxes below and underline texts/sentences that articulate the historical backgrounds of Indians and Nepalese community in Hong Kong
- b) What do you think about their histories? How are their histories valued in Hong Kong?
- c) When did your family come to Hong Kong? Interview your parents or grandparents and write a short story of your family's history in Hong Kong (250 words).

Box 1 On the history of Nepalese community

"Although no Gurkhas died during active service in Hong Kong, they form an integral part of the city's defence history. The local Nepalese population numbers around 30,000 at present, including hundreds of Gurkhas who chose to stay beyond the handover in 1997. But they complain that their contribution to the city has not been given due recognition, as evidenced in the lack of a proper memorial in the cemetery (SCMP Editorial, April 13, 2015)".

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1765023/hong-kong-should-give-gurkhas-proper-memorial>

Box 2 On the history of Nepalese community

"Before 1997, there were 9,000 Gurkhas in Hong Kong, said retired Gurkha Khimding Ratna, who served in the city in the 1980s and 1990s. Some 500 to 700 Gurkhas remain here today. "We are good [soldiers] because we are willing to do any task and we are very tough," Ratna said. Gurkhas who served in Hong Kong were given residency after the 1997 handover, but many chose to emigrate to Britain, Ratna said. The Gurkhas date back to 1948 in Hong Kong, but had been denied a place in the city's history, Ratna said. "We are unrecognised," he said. "Ours is an incomplete story." Ratna said Gurkha history should be taught in schools. "Our children have the right to know the history as well," he said (SCMP News Report, April 6, 2014)"

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1465924/purkha-diwas-gurkhas-commemorate-their-past>





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Exercise 2:

1) Do you have friends from ethnic minority backgrounds? Have you ever seen them celebrating their own ethnic/religious/cultural festivals? What did you see them doing?



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Exercise 3:

- 1) What festivals do you celebrate? How do you celebrate them?
- 2) How many days of holidays do you get for celebrating those festivals?
- 3) Undertake the following a project in pair/groups:

Find a family from ethnic minority backgrounds in Hong Kong. Inquire about their festivals asking them how they celebrate the festivals, when they celebrate, what they do, and whether or not they think they should be given holidays during their festivals. Write a short report, and present the findings to your class.



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Exercise 4:

a) Read the texts about refugees in the paragraphs below as reported in the newspapers and underline the lines that reflect the Hong Kong society's perceptions about the refugees.

b) Browse UN resolutions on refugees in google and make a short report on the legal/political/social rights of refugees

c) Write a short essay about the refugees based on the following questions (500 words):

Who are the refugees? Why do you think they are in Hong Kong? What do you think about them being in Hong Kong?

If you were a refugee in another country, how would you feel?

How would you want the people of that country recognize you and treat you?

Box 1

"Maina argued that refugees were perceived as a burden on society because they were not allowed to work in the city. "They decided to turn us into beggars by subjecting us to a grossly inadequate welfare system that perpetuates that narrative," he said. There were 11,201 outstanding claimants as of March this year, with most of them coming from Vietnam, India and Pakistan. Between 2009 and March, only 52 people had their claims substantiated (SCMP news, June 20, 2016).

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-crime/article/1977425/respect-refugees-liberties-and-let-them-work-hong-kong>

Box 2

"In Hong Kong, refugees wait a long time for their chance to start life anew. This interminable limbo makes it impossible for them to dream, plan and feel complete as a human being. It robs them of their identity, dignity and future; and it robs us of a more multicultural and open society. Hong Kong must no longer skirt around the issue of resettlement and durable solutions."

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/2069158/hong-kongs-recognition-refugee-status-no-guarantee>





Exercise 5:

- a) Study the texts in the boxes below (Box E-G) and write a summary on the difficulties of ethnic minority students in learning Chinese or for not learning Chinese in education.
- b) Discuss in groups and suggest how they could learn Chinese easily and what help or support you may be able to provide them. Make a list of the ways they could adopt in learning Chinese, and the supports you may be able to provide them.
- c) Discuss whether it is fair to send the ethnic minority children to CMI schools and write an essay of 350 words.

Box 1 Difficulties in learning Chinese

"A recent study of the linguistic perceptions and language-learning experiences of 15 South Asian undergraduate students (including four from the Philippines), at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, found that the methods for teaching written Chinese were far from efficient and effective. Some students compared their experience of composing Chinese characters with drawing pictures, which, according to their teachers, could only be learned through rote learning and frequent practice. They found Chinese characters difficult to learn and easy to forget. (SCMP news, April 16, 2014)

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1483745/grounding-cantonese-will-help-ethnic-minorities-learn>

Box 2 Chinese language learning portrayed as a panacea

"Since the handover in 1997, a growing number of jobs once open to English speakers have added a Chinese-language requirement. In the past, many Indians and Pakistanis worked in the disciplined services, as police or immigration officers, Fisher says, but the requirement for Cantonese and even Putonghua knowledge has ruled that out for most. "The new language requirement was not reflected in our education system - no changes were made to help students cope with the new demands," Fisher says. "It is a policy failure that made [ethnic-minority pupils] unable to learn Chinese well enough." Fisher says the best way to help non-Chinese-speaking children catch up with their Chinese peers is to offer a curriculum, spanning no more than 24 months in Primary One and Primary Two, offering extra support in Chinese." (SCMP news, Sept. 18, 2013)

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1311812/ethnic-minorities-face-uphill-education-fight-hong-kong>





Exercise 6:

Study the text in the box below

- a) What do "UGC-funded institutions" in line 1 stand for?
- b) What does it mean by "alternative qualifications" in line 2?
- c) Which category of NCS students are eligible to take GCSE/IGCSE/GCE examination as an alternative qualification?
- d) What is your view about the "alternative qualification" for ethnic minority students? Give reasons to support your argument (250 words).

Box 1

For Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students, all UGC-funded institutions accept alternative qualifications in Chinese Language including those under General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) for students who have met the specified circumstances: (a) Students who have learned Chinese Language for less than 6 years while receiving primary and secondary education; or (b) Students who have learned Chinese Language for 6 years or more in schools, but have been taught an adapted and simpler Chinese Language curriculum not normally applicable to the majority of students in our local schools.

Under the New Academic Structure, all UGC-funded institutions continue to accept alternative qualifications in Chinese Language for students who have met the specified circumstances.

From EDB Website:

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/student-parents/ncs-students/about-ncs-students/jupas-admission.html>





Exercise 7:

Study the text in the box below

- a) What does it mean by the phrase “crashed out” in line 3 of paragraph 1?
- b) What are the advantages of having GCSE as mentioned by Lilibetm?
- c) What are the differences between GCSE Chinese examination and HKCEE Chinese examination?

Box 1

Shaman Mehnaz, 17, and Lilibetm Hilman Siu Xiao, 18, were celebrating at having aced their GCSE Chinese exam - both scoring the top mark of A*, despite having crashed out in the HKCEE earlier this month.

'I thought I might manage to get an A, but obviously an A* is even better,' said Lilibetm. 'I just got a level 1 in the HKCEE so it is a big difference.'

She said she felt unfamiliar cultural elements in the HKCEE exam's oral test had thrown her.

'I think having the GCSE available in Hong Kong is an advantage for non-Chinese people as it does mean we can use this to get a job or go to university,' she said. 'This shows the Hong Kong government is willing to do something to help us.'

Shaman, whose score was unclassified in the HKCEE exam, agreed that there was a huge gulf between the two qualifications.

'The two exams have a very different focus,' she said. 'One is quite easy while the other is very, very hard. But I think that trying the HKCEE was good preparation for the GCSE.'

SCMP news report, August 22, 2008

<http://www.scmp.com/article/649899/ethnic-minority-students-thrilled-chinese>





Exercise 8:

a) here are three major problems discussed in the newspaper reports in the boxes below associated with GCSE Chinese examination. What are they? Discuss and write a short report of the problems raised by the newspaper articles.

b) How do you think those problems can be fixed? Make a list of recommendations to the institutions, teachers and the government.

Box 1

Cyndi Nguyen was shut out of two associate degree programmes because she could not get her Chinese examination results in time.

After she received her Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) exam results last Monday, the 18-year-old went immediately to the University of Hong Kong's community college to apply for the programmes in nursing and biomedical sciences.

The enrolment centre told her the nursing programme was full, and that she could not apply for the biomedical sciences programme before she received the results of her General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Chinese exam on August 22.

But by then, places in most programmes - which have been open to applicants since Monday - would have long been taken up.

Most minority pupils take the GCSE Chinese exam because they cannot handle the more difficult HKDSE test. Usually, they sit the exam a year before they graduate to get the results in time.

SCMP news report, July 22, 2013

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1287905/ethnic-pupils-one-step-behind>





Exercise 9:

Study the text in the boxes below and answer the following questions.

- Who are considered having "difficulty integrating fully into the community"? What does the term "community" stand for?
- What issues are considered the barriers for their integration into the community?
- Which issues are addressed in the policy?
- What would it mean by "migration" of ethnic minority students to "mainstream Chinese classes"? What might be the implications for the ethnic minority students' education? List out the implications.
- What roles should different stake holders be playing according to Figure 3.1?
- Which medium of instruction should be prioritized for ethnic minorities? Discuss and write a short report (200 words).

Box 1 Chinese as a Second Language Framework

There are more than 60,000 South Asian ethnic minority people living in Hong Kong, an increase of 50% over the past decade. They have much difficulty integrating fully into the community due to differences in culture, language and ethnic background. The government will strengthen education support and employment services for them. Most South Asian ethnic minority residents call Hong Kong home. To integrate into the community and develop their careers, they must improve their ability to listen to, speak, read and write Chinese. We will strengthen the Chinese learning support for ethnic minorities from early childhood education through to primary and secondary levels.

From the 2014/15 school year, the Government will implement a Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework with supporting learning and teaching materials as well as assessment tools for ethnic minority students in primary and secondary schools. Annual funding of approximately \$200 million will be provided from the 2014/15 school year to enhance school support, such as an intensive teaching mode to improve the Chinese foundation of ethnic minority students at junior primary levels to facilitate their migration to the mainstream Chinese language classes.

From Policy Address, 2014

<http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2014/eng/p76.html>





Exercise 10:

a) Study the text in the box below and make a list of reasons why ethnic minority students are not receiving the CSL programme well. What other reasons do you imagine to be behind such the response?

b) What does the term "reform" in line 1, paragraph 2 refer to?

c) In line 4 of paragraph 3 it reads: "whether this is the case has to be verified". Elaborate what it means by "this case" and what the newspaper story means by "it has to be verified".

Box 1 Ethnic minority students not receiving the CSL programs well:

"If a policy is snubbed by nine in 10 of those it intends to serve, commonsense would say that it is probably worthless. In the case of the Chinese-language courses for ethnic minorities in local high schools, they risk degenerating into something futile if no improvements are made. Designed explicitly for ethnic minority pupils, the two courses - Chinese language for service industries and Chinese for hospitality professions - were to offer them an alternative route to qualifying for university admission and civil service recruitment. But enrolment has been low, with only 150 pupils from 15 schools signed up, representing just 12.5 per cent of the 1,200 eligible.

Skepticism was rife when officials announced the much needed reform last year. While the new courses will free ethnic minority pupils of pressure to compete with native speakers in the more difficult Chinese language curriculum under the Diploma of Secondary Education Examination, they were criticized as preparing those who fail to move to universities to do low-end jobs in service industries.

As reported in this newspaper earlier, local schools generally lack confidence in the new course. Some schools stayed away due to concerns over the instructors' qualifications. Many teachers were said to be part-time instructors with only one or two years of experience. Whether this is the case has to be verified."

(SCMP editorial, April 9, 2015)

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1761236/hong-kongs-ethnic-minority-students-ill-served-chinese>





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Selection of video interviews

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXB2nEdLXa4>



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