

Commodification of the Chinese Language: Investigating Language Ideology in the Chinese Complementary Schools' Online Discourse

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Abstract : Despite the increasing popularity of Chinese and the recognition of the growing commodifying ideology of Chinese language in many contexts (Liu and Gao, 2020; Guo, Shin and Shen 2020), the ideological orientations of the Chinese diaspora community towards the Chinese language remain under-researched. This research contributes seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the micro-level language ideologies embedded in the Chinese complementary schools in the Republic of Ireland. Informed by Ruiz's (1984) metaphorical representations of language, 11 Chinese complementary schools' websites were analysed as discursive texts that signal the language policy and ideology to prospective learners and parents were analysed. The results of the analysis suggest that a move from a portrayal of Chinese as linked to student heritage identity, to the commodification of linguistic and cultural diversity, is evident. It denotes the growing commodifying ideology among the Chinese complementary schools in the Republic of Ireland. The changing profile of the complementary school, from serving an ethnical community to teaching Chinese as a foreign language for the wider community, indicates the possibility of creating the a positive synergy between the Complementary school and the mainstream education. This study contributes to the wider discussions of language ideology and language planning, with regards to modern language learning and heritage language maintenance.

Keywords : the Chinese language; Chinese as heritage language, Chinese as foreign language, Chinese community schools

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