

COLLOQUIUM BY LITONG CHEN

DAPENG DIALECT: AN UNDOCUMENTED CANTONESE-HAKKA MIXED LANGUAGE IN SOUTHERN CHINA

TIME: 5:00-6:00 PM, TUESDAY, 6 MARCH 2018

VENUE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1079

Dapeng Dialect: An Undocumented Cantonese-Hakka Mixed Language in Southern China

Speaker: Litong Chen, Assistant Professor of Chinese at University of Mount Union (Ohio, USA).

ABSTRACT:

The Dapeng dialect 大鹏话 is a small local dialect spoken by 3,000 to 5,500 speakers in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province. It is a language variety derived from a mixture of Hakka and Cantonese, two of the major varieties of Chinese in Southern China. This talk introduces the Dapeng dialect from three perspectives: 1) linguistic features, 2) the formation process of the dialect, and 3) its vitality in the local community. First, first-hand fieldwork data show resemblance between the Dapeng dialect and the source dialects—both Cantonese and Hakka—and the resemblance pertains to all three major linguistic structures: phonology, lexicon, and syntax. This research also demonstrates that Trudgill’s model of “koineization” is best able to account for the formation of the Dapeng dialect as induced by the Hakka-Cantonese contact, with levelling and simplification being the two main linguistic processes that gave rise to the present-day dialect. Lastly, by using the UNESCO Language Vitality and Endangerment scale, this study shows that the overall vitality of the Dapeng dialect, although spoken by a small population, is surprisingly positive, which is in sharp contrast with the cases of many other small Chinese dialects.

BIO:

Dr. Litong Chen is an Assistant Professor of Chinese at University of Mount Union (Ohio, USA). Dr. Chen received his Ph.D. in Chinese Linguistics from The Ohio State University. His main research interest lies in Chinese dialectology, especially the contact, change, and variation of languages and dialects in Southern China. Dr. Chen also has over seven years of Chinese language teaching experience in American colleges covering courses at all levels from beginning to advanced.

This event is open to all. For any queries email yg73@duke.edu or call 3665 7149.

Hope to see you all.

Yijun