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INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON LANGUAGE ATTITUDES OF HOKKIEN SPEAKERS IN SARAWAK

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Abstract

This paper examines the attitudes of Hokkien speakers in Sarawak towards Hokkien and Mandarin. A case study was conducted with 50 Chinese university students who are of Hokkien parentage and speak Hokkien: 25 female and 25 male. The language attitudes were studied using direct and indirect measures. The direct measure of the behavioural and cognition component of language attitudes was a questionnaire adapted from Hohenthal (1998) which encompassed the instrumental value of speaking Hokkien and Mandarin, social status of the two languages, language preference, pride in Hokkien, Hokkien identity and maintenance of Hokkien. The indirect measure of the affective component of language attitudes used in the study was the matched guise technique where participants evaluated recordings of female and male Hokkien speakers on a semantic differential scale comprising 13 paired adjectives dealing with status