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Internationalization of higher education and language policy : the case of a bilingual university in Taiwan / Ken Lau ; Chia-Yen Lin

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Abstract

Universities worldwide, in placing a greater emphasis on global mobility, have recently seen a growing number of in- and outbound students. Parallel to this development has been the need to internationalize individual campuses, an important aspect of which is to have a common language (or languages) used for communication. The language policies in Asian universities have been complicated by the growing presence of international students who may only understand one of the languages used as the medium of instruction, typically English. Drawing on Tinto's integration (Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987) and Spolsky's language policy (Language management, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009) frameworks, this exploratory, perceptual study solicits the views from 38 international students on the implementation of a bilingual education policy, especially with respect to whether the policy facilitated these sojourners' academic and social integration at a Taiwanese

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university that is actively advocating internationalization. The findings suggest that Mandarin Chinese continues to be the mainstream medium of instruction and social activities, while English is used rather sparingly and on an as-needed basis. The recognition of the growing economic power of China and importance of Chinese as well as the scholarships provided may have overridden these sojourners' integration concerns and challenges arising from the underuse of English as a lingua franca. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Lau, Ken, lauken@hku.hk