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Learning your lines: Negotiating language and content in subject English

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Abstract

Subject English is a central feature of state-mandated curriculum in English-speaking contexts and a high-stakes barrier to be negotiated for successful graduation from secondary school, irrespective of language and cultural background. In an increasingly globalized world, subject English is also being reconstituted in new and unfamiliar contexts, as part of the drive to export education services. However, the construction of subject English in the curriculum is rarely subjected to the same scrutiny of applied linguists as mathematics, science or history, partly because of the widespread perception that subject English is language rather than "content", and partly because of the continually contested and changing nature of subject English as a discipline. This paper draws on a larger comparative study of senior secondary school subject English in Hong Kong and Australia. It draws on Bernstein's notions of visible and invisible pedagogies and work on insider/outsider perspectives to explore the perceptions and impact of

subject English on students from language backgrounds other than English.



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Keywords

Language; Content; English; English as a second language; Australia; Hong Kong

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organization shall indemnify piecemeal strategic gyroscopic pendulum, all further far beyond the scope of this study and will not be considered here.