

STUDENTS SHOULD TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR LANGUAGE CAPABILITY

You, the students at the College, have a unique linguistic history and one you should be really proud of. You all speak Cantonese as your native tongue and you are now seeking to improve your English and Mandarin which will remain the dominant languages in the world for the foreseeable future.

Thus, you will be tri-lingual in a few years and you should be really proud to be so; you must take pride in your developing English skills and you should take every opportunity to speak it to as many different people as you can. I have asked parents at home to speak five minutes of English a day to you and so reinforce the importance of English. You should seek to show off your English skills to your parents.

If you become fluent in English and Mandarin then you will be highly sought after when you apply for jobs after university. You will have the chance to become the 'interface' between China and its 1.3 billion population and the English speaking nations, which accounts for nearly the rest of the world.

Imagine a job interview where the interviewing panel – say for an international bank, a business firm, or finance centre, or a law firm, all working with China and the rest of the world – asks you, the candidates, all of whom have got university degrees, whether you can speak another language. Half say they cannot and have to leave the interview; the rest, all but one, say they can speak one other language, but the one who is left, YOU, says I can speak two other languages – Mandarin and English – who do YOU think is going to get the job?

Who would you employ if all the other qualifications were the same, but one candidate can speak more languages than the other candidates?

So, you, as students at the college, must be proud of your languages and try to speak all three during the day, not just one, because by doing so you will become part of that very exclusive language club – The Three Languages Club - to which very few others belong.

To find out more about The Three Languages Club, see me at school.

J. Harniess

Dec.08