THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Courseware Development Grant (2018-19)

Final Report

Report due 31 May 2019
Please return by email to CUHK cdgs@cuhk.edu.hk

PART I

Project title: A Self-Learning app of Cantonese tones for Non-Cantonese native speaking Students
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Department / Unit: Chinese Language and Literature
Project duration: From September 2018 to May 2019
Date report submitted: 5 June 2019

1. Project objectives

The proposed App aims at providing Non-Cantonese native speaking students with a Cantonese tones self-learning tool, as to enhance their Cantonese learning. Given that most learners of Cantonese speak a native language that does not have tones (e.g. English), lexical tone is arguably one of the most difficult areas for them. As such, an academically substantial yet pedagogically sound illustration of Cantonese tones is provided in the App so that students can master this important and significant aspect of Cantonese sound system. It is expected that their confidence in oral communication can be raised with the use of the App.

2. Process, outcomes or deliverables

The whole App consists of a few different functions:

•   Online teaching materials and self-assessment exercises:
Five lessons (and a supplementary note) are available in the lesson session. Basically, each lesson focuses on teaching a new tone, with comparison to tones taught in the

previous lessons. Pre-recorded model samples and self-assessment exercises are provided in each lesson.

• Voice recording function:

After listening to the pre-recorded model samples, students can instantly record their own voice with the recording button (available at the top-right corner as shown in the screen captures). Users can listen to their recordings repeatedly for comparison with the pre-recorded model samples. The function should allow them to adjust their production of tones to match with the recordings.
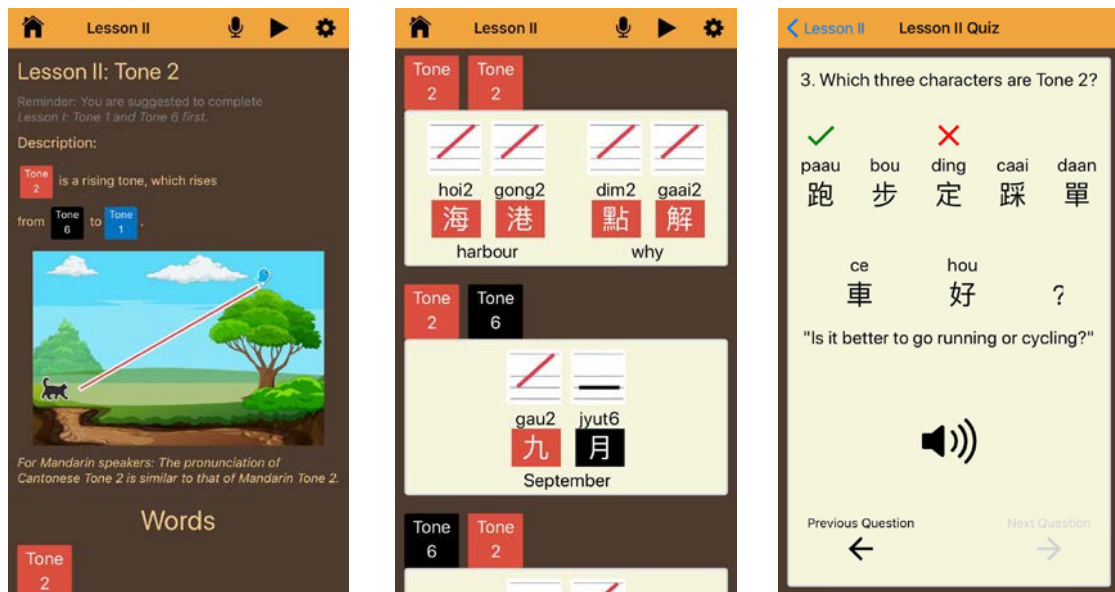
• Sentence examples (with pre-recorded model samples shown in a video):
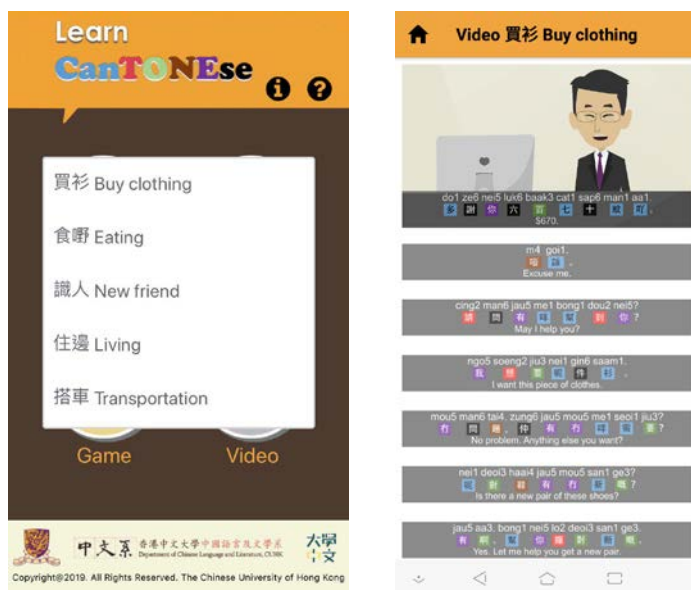
There are approximately 50 simple sentence examples divided into five dialogues with different themes, which are related to University life and Hong Kong Culture. Chinese characters are displayed in different colours to show the corresponding tones. Students can watch the whole video or choose some specific sentences to listen to by clicking the sentences shown right below the video – the video would jump to the time point specified.

• Feedback:

A web-form link will be available in the App to collect students' feedback for future updates, and thus the teaching efficacy can be ensured.

• Interactive game:

A tone shape drawing game is designed for students to apply what they have learnt about Cantonese tones variation. Chinese characters are randomly selected from a question database (with the recordings played), and students have to draw the corresponding tone shapes. The number of syllables of questions increases through the game so that it gets more challenging.

The courses that have used the deliverables:

CHLT1100 University Chinese I
CHLT1200 University Chinese II
CHLT1104 Self-Learning Elementary Chinese
CHLT1102 University Elementary Chinese I

CHLT1202 University Elementary Chinese II

Students enrolling in the courses CHLT1104, CHLT1102, CHLT1202 are all Non-Cantonese native speakers. The App can greatly enhance their Cantonese learning via training them how to distinguish and pronounce different tones in Cantonese. Mainland students who take CHLT1100 or CHLT1200 can benefit from the App too.

Lecturers of those classes will introduce the App to students and thus help them consolidate what they have learnt in the lessons, in order to put the Blended Learning approach into practice. Moreover, lecturers will set up a discussion forum by the default function of Blackboard with the theme of "Cantonese tonal variations" for students to raise questions and exchange ideas. Lecturers will be encouraged to actively participate in the discussion as a facilitator.

The timeline has been adjusted a bit since it turned out that more time is required for integrating all the materials together into the App. It was expected that the App can be published on CUHK APP STORE in May. Now the App is under final inspection, which is expected to be done in 1-2 weeks. The App should be able to be launched on CUHK APP STORE at the end of this month.

The project has been largely completed satisfactorily. It is expected to open for students to use in the coming semester.

3. Evaluation Plan

Teachers' reflections
• PI will consult the teachers of the trial classes to get a general idea and comments on using the App in assisting in teaching Cantonese in their own classes. In addition, teachers of the trial classes will be invited to share their point of views on the design and other functions of the App.
• PI will consult the experts in teaching Cantonese from Department of Linguistics and Modern Language and Yale-China Chinese Language Centre as well as the Research Centre for Cantonese of our Department to get professional suggestions on improving the self-learning efficiency of the App.
• Project team plans to participate in the Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo 2019 to collect views from the colleagues of CUHK and the experts from other Local Universities.

Students' comments

• PI will ask the teachers of the trial classes to invite some students to form a focus group. PI will meet those students and take in their opinions for the App.

• PI will make use of the web form to collect students' comments. Questions in Web-form are mainly divided into 2 categories:

 I. User's comments on the usefulness of the app for self-learning of Cantonese tones.

 II. User's self-assessment of the mastery of six Cantonese tones and the linguistic knowledge behind it.

The App will be published on CUHK APP STORE very soon. It will be promoted to teachers, students and alumni through CUHK MASS MAIL etc. afterwards. Project team plans to participate in the Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo 2019 to promote the App as well.

4. Dissemination, diffusion and impact

The App should be able to help with Cantonese teaching in CUHK. After implementing the APP, the team members will actively find cooperation opportunities with other departments, such as Chinese Language Centre (CLC) or Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. If necessary, the APP can be open to the students of CLC, and to the newly-admitted international or mainland students to self-learn Cantonese. After it has been publicly launched, it should be able to help Cantonese learners in society as well.

<u>PART II</u>
<u>Financial data</u>

Funds available:

Funds awarded from CDG	$	90,000
Funds secured from other sources	$	0
(please specify_____)		
Total:	$	90,000

Expenditure:

Item	Budget as per application	Expenditure	Balance
Development cost (ITSC)	90,000	71,625	18,375
Student helpers (write the teaching content and design the function of the APP)		11,660	6,715
Student helpers (post-production of the teaching videos)		5,610	1,105
Total:		88,895	1,105

PART III

Lessons learnt from the project

Feedback and opinions are expected to be collected from teachers and students very soon. Adjustments and enhancements will be made according to their needs.

More time is required than expected for integrating all the materials together into the App. The timeline was thus adjusted a bit without compromising the quality of the App.

PART IV
Information for public access

1. Keywords

Please provide five keywords (in the order of relevance to your project) to describe your project.

(Most relevant)   Keyword 1: Cantonese tones

Keyword 2: tone learning

Keyword 3: Fundamental knowledge of Cantonese

Keyword 4: Pronunciation of Cantonese

(Least relevant)   Keyword 5: Cantonese learning

2. Summary statistics

Please provide information, if any, in the following tables, and provide the details in Part I.

Table 1: Publicly accessible online resources (if any)
(a) **Project website:**   *N/A*
(b) **Webpage(s):**   *N/A*
(c) **Others (please specify):**

Table 2: Resource accessible to a target group of students (if any)
If resources (e.g. software) have been developed for a target group of students (e.g. in a course, in a department) to gain access through specific platforms (e.g. CU Learning Management System (Blackboard), facebook), please specify.

Course Code/ Target Students	Term & Year of offering	Approximate No. of students	Platform
CHLT1100 CHLT1200 CHLT1104 CHLT1102 CHLT1202	Year 1 and year 2 students	6500	Blackboard

Table 3: Presentation (if any)	
Please classify each of the (oral/poster) presentations into one and only one of the following categories	**Number**
(a) In workshop/retreat within your unit (e.g. department, faculty)	0

(b) In workshop/retreat organized for CUHK teachers (e.g. CLEAR workshop, workshop organized by other CUHK units)	0
(c) In CUHK ExPo jointly organized by CLEAR and ITSC	0
(d) In any other event held in HK (e.g. UGC symposium, talks delivered to units of other institutions)	0
(e) In international conference	0
(f) Others (please specify)	0

Table 4: Publication (if any)	
Please classify each piece of publications into one and only one of the following categories	**Number**
(a) Project CD/DVD	0
(b) Project leaflet	0
(c) Project booklet	0
(d) A section/chapter in a booklet/book distributed to a limited group of audience	0
(e) Conference proceeding	0
(f) A chapter in a book accessible internationally	0
(g) A paper in refereed journal	0
(h) Others (please specify)	0

3. A one-page brief write up

Please provide a one-page brief write-up of no more than 500 words for posting on the CDG website.

canTONEse is an App which aims to provide Non-Cantonese native speaking students with an online learning platform to enhance their Cantonese learning. Teaching materials with recordings, self-assessment exercises, daily conversations and an

interactive game are available in the App.

Words with different tones are matched to different colours, which has been proved to be useful in learning tones more effectively. Tone numbers and tone shapes are also available. Students can choose what to show inside the teaching materials according to their preference and learning progress.

Besides, there is a voice recording function that allows students to record their voice and compare that with the pre-recorded model recordings immediately. Students can listen to the recordings repeatedly as to slowly adjust their production of tones to match with the recordings.

An interactive game is designed for students to consolidate what they have learnt about Cantonese tones variation. With the recordings played, students have to draw the corresponding tone shapes immediately as to get higher marks in the game.

Vocabularies and sentence examples chosen in teaching materials are common in everyday conversations. Five additional daily dialogues are presented in video clips with subtitles. Except for learning tones, students can acquire some phrases in daily use too.