Abstract:
In this seminar, I will first outline the reasons why the Hong Kong SAR government’s biliteracy and trilingualism (兩文三語) policy since 1997 is such a tall order, before reviewing empirical evidence in support of alternative measures in our language-in-education policy. The nature of the challenge will be elucidated by examining various critical issues from multiple perspectives: linguistic, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and curricular. I will then briefly review recent research in neurolinguistic research, with a view to addressing a key question at the level of language policy and planning: Is there room for rethinking the priority of language learning and enhancement support for Cantonese-dominant students at earlier life stages?

About the speaker:
David C. S. Li is a professor and head of the Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies (CBS), the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong (PolyU). He obtained his BA in English (CUHK), MA in Applied Linguistics (France), and PhD in Linguistics (Germany). He has published in contrastive aspectology, World Englishes, ‘Hongkong English’, ‘China English’, bilingual interaction and code-switching (translanguaging), multilingualism in Greater China, Chinese learners’ EFL learning difficulties and error-correction strategies, Cantonese as an additional language in Hong Kong, and South Asian Hongkongers’ needs for written Chinese. He is the author of two recent monographs: Multilingual Hong Kong: Languages, Literacies and Identities (1/2017, Springer, http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319441931), and Chinese-English contrastive grammar: An introduction (8/2017, with Z. P. S. Luk, HKU Press).

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