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Putonghua Salon: A Language Learning Enhancement Program for Students and Staff Members in the City University of Hong Kong

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Abstract:

Putonghua Salon has proved to be successful in providing face-to-face individual and group counseling service and various modes of practice for 4 semesters. Post-Salon follow up questionnaire surveys (See Attachment I) revealed that a majority of the respondents reported that after participation in the Salon activities their speaking skills (in terms of fluency, naturalness and confidence) improved, their vocabulary choices were more appropriate and pronunciation more accurate, and they were able to identify and correct their own speaking mistakes. These survey results suggest that the four intended learning outcomes listed in the original Putonghua Salon proposal were achieved. In addition, in order to provide further supports for Putonghua learners, a website was created in Semester B, year 2008-2009. Up to this moment, there are more than 10,000 people who have been to the website. The web site provides lots of different online resources, such as audio recordings, vocabularies with pinyin phonetics and Pinyin learning software. Students can review what they have learnt and played during the Salon's in-class section every week, they can also interact with the teachers or other students by leaving messages or questions on the message board, which has been provided on the web site. It is necessary to continue this good practice in the 2010-11 academic year.