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**Communication in a close-knit extended Hakka family in Kuching, Sarawak:  
Mandarin or Hakka?**

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**Abstract**

Many language shift and maintenance studies have shown that there is a shift away from the ethnic language towards more socially and economically viable languages in the family domain. This study investigates the language use of an extended Hakka family to find out whether the close-knit relationship between family members provides a strong enough Hakka-speaking environment for them to resist choosing a more widely spoken language over Hakka in their communication within the family. A case study was carried out on 31 out of 62 family members from five generations in the family. The interview and observation results show that Hakka and Mandarin are dominant languages in the family, with an expected preference for Mandarin among the younger members of the family. The close-knit relationship of members of the