

# 各執一詞

*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*

Hong Kong University students who stormed a council meeting of the school have triggered (觸發) a noisy squabble. Former CUHK vice chancellor Lawrence Lau Juen-yea said they should be jailed for a day or do community service.

Former Hong Kong Bar Association (香港大律師公會) chairwoman Audrey Eu Yuet-mee countered that she was shocked by Lau's comments. Civic Party (公民黨) leader Alan Leong Kah-kit asked Lau to consider what the board had done to antagonize (使反感) students before criticizing them.

A *People's Daily* (人民日報) editorial, meanwhile, accused the Civic Party of ruining the autonomy of HKU in the name of defending it. We can call the verbal crossfire “各執一詞” (*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*).

“各” (*ge4*) is each,” “執” (*zhi2*) is “to hold,” “to grasp,” “to stick to,” “to persist in,” “—” (*yi4*) is “one” and “詞” (*ci2*) means “a word,” “a term.” Literally, “各執一詞” (*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*) is “each stick to one word.”

## Idiom by Lon Yan

“各執一詞” (*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*) means “each person sticking to his or her own version of events or arguments.” It denotes an unyielding (不讓步的) attitude of all of the parties involved.

A related expression in English is “dig one's heels in,” meaning to refuse to alter one's course of actions or opinions, to be obstinate (執拗的).

The Legislative Council is designed for vigorous debates on controversial social issues, so it is not surprising that council members often “各執一詞” (*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*). But politics is the art of compromise (妥協的藝術). So lawmakers must strive to agree on a course of action at some point, or society will not move forward.

**Terms containing the character “詞” (*ci2*) include:**

誓詞 (*shi4 ci2*) - text of oath

歌詞 (*ge1 ci2*) - the lyrics of a song

填詞 (*tian2 ci2*) - to write lyrics

判詞 (*pan4 ci2*) - text of a court's decision