

CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education 2000-2001
Minutes of the Second Meeting

Date: 13 March 2001

Time: 2.30 p.m.

Venue: Rm 1419B, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen s Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present: Mr. Stephen Chan (Chairperson)
Ms Chan Wai-ming (Vice-Chairperson)
Mr Cheung Man-biu
Ms Shirley Chuang
Mr Lam Cho-ki, Luke
Mrs Christina Lee
Mrs Catherine Li
Professor William Littlewood
Mr Lindsay Miller
Ms Mok Fung-ye, Emily
Dr Gordon Slethaug
Mr Derek Rodney Too
Mr Raymond Ng (Secretary)

Apologies: Mr Chan Sai-ho
Ms Chan Wai-han
Mrs Catherine Lui
Dr Angela Mok
Ms Truely Siu
Mr Simon Tham
Mrs Moira Yuen

In attendance: Ms Cindy Chan
Mr Kevin Chan
Mrs Helen Kung
Ms Amy Shu

Documents tabled:

- (1) Minutes of the last meeting (revised version)
- (2) Summary report on the Consultation Forum on Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in English Language Education Curriculum Development
- (3) Findings of the evaluation questionnaire on Consultation Forum on Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in English Language Education Curriculum Development
- (4) CDI/ED responses to feedback from the public on Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document
- (5) Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document
- (6) Press release, CDC receives positive response to curriculum proposals
- (7) CDC Meeting on 28 Feb 2001: Issues for Discussion
- (8) Leaflet on Education Reform Measures
- (9) Basic Competency Assessments in Chinese, English and Mathematics

1 Minutes of the last meeting

The Secretary drew members attention to the two changes made in the revised minutes: the words, found and Rational in item 3.2 were revised to read founded and Rationale respectively. The revised minutes were adopted without amendment.

2 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

2.1 It was reported that the resource package on Self-access Language Learning (SALL) (item 4.3.3 of the revised minutes of the last meeting) had been completed and would be distributed to all secondary schools in April 2001.

2.2 The Vice-Chairperson also referred to item 4.3.6 regarding the Workshops on Between Examination Papers and Tasks , which, according to the evaluations, many teachers found beneficial and effective. She thanked the leaders, Mrs Christina Lee and Mr John Fullilove, and the teacher facilitators for their admirable contribution and effort.

3 Feedback on Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document

3.1 The Secretary referred to the Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document, informing members that it had incorporated the suggested amendments presented in the revised minutes of the previous meeting.

3.2 It was also pointed out that additional points had been included in the document, based on the suggestions of members of the Curriculum Development Council. These points included the references to the learning of grammar in Section 3, Rationale for Development , on p.4 and those to the development of phonic skills in Section 5.5, Teaching, Learning and Assessment , on pp.18-19.

3.3 Members attention were drawn to the errors in Appendix 3 on p.57. Points #9-11 are repetitions of points #6-8. It was agreed that the former set of points be deleted.

3.4 Three tabled documents were referred to: (1) Summary report on the Consultation Forum on Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in English Language Education Curriculum Development ; (2) Findings of the evaluation questionnaire on the Consultation Forum; and (3) CDI/ED responses to feedback from the public on Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document. The general issues identified in these documents were discussed:

- how to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum development proposals, including helping teachers to create time and space;
- the need for re-adjustment in the public examinations/assessments in English Language Education to correspond with the proposed curriculum development; and
- soliciting support from school principals, English panel chairpersons and parents.

3.5 Much consideration was given to the issue of how to help teachers create time and space, and to help effectively implement the curriculum development proposals. It was agreed that a strong partnership be built between the Education Department and schools/teachers. This could be done through various ways including school visits, teacher education programmes, research and development projects, and dissemination of resource packages and effective teaching/learning practices.

- 3.6 As regards the issue of assessment, it was felt that teachers should be reassured that public examinations/assessments in English Language Education would meet the targets and objectives specified in the English Language Education curriculum guides. Towards this end, the Vice-Chairperson pointed out a series of Workshops on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment would be organized for teachers (in particular, panel heads and teachers of junior secondary level) between June and November 2001. Mr Lam Cho-ki added that it would be good if officers from the Hong Kong Examinations Authority would conduct teacher development seminars on the topic of assessment.
- 3.7 It was agreed that through staff development and professional sharing within school, the various stakeholders including principals, panel heads, teachers and parents would gain insights into the English Language Education curriculum development proposals and ways of effectively implementing them.
- 3.8 Members also considered the suggestion from the Curriculum Development Council that the Key Learning Area of English Language Education be expanded and renamed English Language and Other Foreign Languages, so that it could include languages such as French and German. Such an issue had been considered before, and in general members felt that it is not the right time to make this change and that English Language Education is an appropriate name and truly reflects the nature and content of the Key Learning Area.
- 3.9 The Chairperson suggested the inclusion in the final draft of the Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document of a leaflet which outlines the main ideas proposed in the document. Further, the Committee as a whole recommended the inclusion of a summary of the state of play of the English Language Education curriculum framework and syllabuses. The Secretary would explore this possibility by finding out what the other Key Learning Areas plan to do.

4 Change of Subject Name from English Literature to Literature in English

- 4.1 Members were provided with the following background information concerning the issue of subject name change:
- At the end of 1998, members of both the CDC and HKEA subject committees on English Literature agreed that the subject name be changed to Literature in English so as to reflect more accurately the content and nature of the subject, which includes not just mainstream British and American Literature, but literature written in English from places such as Asia and Africa.
 - The case was considered at a Curriculum Development Council meeting in February 1999. It was rejected on grounds that the name English Literature could be taken to mean literary works in English rather than just literary works originating from England, and that the subject name should not be changed without strong justifications. The proposal of changing its Chinese name from 英文文學 to 英文文學, however, endorsed.
 - At a HKEA Sixth Form English Literature Subject Committee meeting held in October 1999, members argued that the change of the subject's Chinese name suggested the need for the same kind of change or clarification in English. According to the minutes of this meeting, members requested that the Curriculum Development Council discuss the matter further and give reasons for their decision, whichever way it is decided.
 - The matter was further discussed in the CDC Ad Hoc Committee on English Literature (S4-7) meetings held between April and December 2000. Members deliberated on the

findings of the survey conducted by the English Section among secondary schools and tertiary academic staff regarding name change and the results of an Internet search on how commonly the title, Literature in English, was used in both local and overseas universities. In the end, they recommended that the name change issue be put forward for discussion at the CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education meeting.

- 4.2 Opinions were divided among the members of the CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education as to whether the subject title of English Literature should be changed. After much discussion, it was agreed that the Secretary send out copies of the CE and AS/AL English Literature examination syllabuses for 2001 and 2002 so that members would have a better idea of the kinds and range of texts that students are reading. This would help them make decisions over the matter of the change of subject name at the next meeting.

5 Any Other Business

5.1 Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning

- 5.1.1 The Vice-Chairperson referred to the extract entitled Basic Competency Assessments in Chinese, English and Mathematics from the Education Commission (EC) s educational reform publication (2000), Learning for Life, Learning through Life. The extract presents EC s proposal to develop Basic Competency Assessments (BCAs) to effectively inform teaching and learning. At the Curriculum Development Council meeting held on 28 February 2001, it was agreed that an Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning be set up under each of the Key Learning Areas of English Language Education, Chinese Language Education and Mathematics to facilitate the development of BCA.
- 5.1.2 The new Ad Hoc Committee, to be formed under the CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education, has the main task of developing quality criteria and BC descriptors for English Language Education. It was proposed that the term of office would be one year and that membership should have representation from both primary and secondary schools, along with tertiary institutions, the Hong Kong Examinations Authority and Education Department. It was anticipated that the committee would first focus on developing quality criteria and BC descriptors at Primary 3 level.
- 5.1.3 A letter would be sent to invite members to join the new Ad Hoc Committee and to nominate colleagues whom they deem suitable for membership. Members were requested to return the Reply Slip by the end of March 2001.
- 5.1.4 Mrs Christina Lee was invited to brief members on the development of the Core Competence initiative at CE level. She explained that currently CE candidates could opt for either the Syllabus A or B English Language Examination. However, these examinations would be replaced by one new CE English Language Examination in 2004, which contains two parts in each paper, a Core part and an Extended part. So long as candidates succeed in demonstrating that they have reached a certain standard in the Core part, they will obtain a pass grade. Should candidates demonstrate capability in handling the Extended part, they will score a higher grade. It is hoped that with the introduction of Core Competence initiative, weaker candidates will be better motivated to learn English because as long as they are able to meet the required criteria, they will be awarded a pass, irrespective of the achievements of the other students. Mrs Lee remarked that colleagues at the Hong Kong Examinations Authority were busy developing core competence

criteria/descriptors whose purpose is to help end-users understand what candidates who get a pass can do and cannot do. She also stressed that the Core Competence initiative was to be distinguished from BCA. Nonetheless, the Chairperson noted that the Core Competence initiative could serve as a reference point for the development of BCA at the end of KS3.

5.2 Undertaking to Curriculum Development Council

The Secretary apologized for distributing the Undertaking to members at the last meeting by mistake. It was really meant for new members, and giving it to the continuing members from last year would mislead them to think that their term of office had been extended for another year whereas in fact it stayed the same, i.e., from 1 September 1999 to 31 August 2001. It was noted that members' Replies to the Undertaking would be discarded.

5.3 There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Confirmed on _____

Mr Stephen CHAN
(Chairperson)

Mr Raymond NG
(Secretary)