

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

Date: 28 June 2001

Time: 2.30 p.m.

Venue: Rm 1028, 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  
Dr. Angela Mok  
Ms Mok Fung-yee, Emily  
Dr Gordon Slethaug  
Mr Derek Rodney Too  
Mrs Moira Yuen  
Mr Raymond Ng (Secretary)

Apologies: Mr Chan Sai-ho  
Ms Chan Wai-han  
Mrs Catherine Lui  
Ms Truely Siu  
Mr Simon Tham

In attendance: Ms Cindy Chan  
Mrs Helen Kung  
Mrs Sheila Anne Ip

**Documents tabled:**

- (1) Minutes of the last meeting
- (2) Extract from Chapter 3 of Learning to Learn: The Way Forward to Curriculum Development Final Report on English Language Education
- (3) Extracts from Exemplars of Curriculum Developments in Schools
- (4) CE and AS/AL English Literature examination syllabuses for 2001 and 2002
- (5) Survey findings regarding the naming of the subject of English Literature
- (6) Tentative Action Plan for Developing Prototype of Student Assessment at P3 Level
- (7) Diagrams on Quality Criteria, Basic Competency and Basic Competency Assessments
- (8) Proposed Definitions for "Quality Criteria" and "Basic Competency"
- (9) Draft "Quality Criteria" for KS1
- (10) Draft Resource Package on the Teaching of Poetry for KS3

## 1 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Vice-chairman drew members' attention to item 3.9 of the minutes. She reported that two volumes of material would soon be published upon the completion of the holistic review of the school curriculum consultation period: the CDC Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in Curriculum Development Final Report, and its supporting document, Exemplars of Curriculum Development in Schools. The CDC Learning to Learn: English Language Education Consultation Document, however, would be published later as an English Language Education curriculum guide in 2002. The possibility of producing a leaflet to outline the main ideas of the guide would depend on the consensus of all Key Learning Areas. The minutes were adopted without amendment.

## 2 The Learning to Learn: The Way Forward to Curriculum Development Final Report and Exemplars of Curriculum Development in Schools

2.1 The Vice-chairman referred to the third chapter of the draft CDC Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in Curriculum Development Final Report, where the major recommended curriculum developments for all Key Learning Areas (KLAs), including English Language Education, are presented. Specifically pages 31-34 highlight what teachers and students are encouraged to achieve at different year levels in the short-term phase of school-based curriculum development (i.e. 2002-2006). For example, excessive dictation and tests are to be avoided, and the teaching of phonics as well as the development of students' vocabulary building skills are greatly encouraged in P1-3. At senior secondary level (i.e. S4-5), ample opportunities should be provided to encourage communicative use of the language, apart from promoting independent learning and the learning/teaching of grammar in a communicative context.

2.2 The Vice-Chairman reported that the major issues of concern collected during the consultation period were addressed on p.39, and an additional point was included to emphasize the English KLA's continuous commitment to strengthening phonics and grammar learning. She suggested that more exemplars be needed to show how these two aspects of language learning could be reinforced.

2.3 The Vice-Chairperson also introduced to members the final report's supporting document, Exemplars of Curriculum Development in Schools, which comprises examples of effective learning and teaching in different Key learning Areas.. There are three English Language Education exemplars in Section I, "Effective Learning and Teaching in Key Learning Areas and General Studies". They demonstrate how the teaching of phonics can be facilitated through shared reading, how grammar can be effectively taught through a variety of materials and activities, and how critical thinking and creativity can be promoted through the use of literary works. There is another English Language Education exemplar in Section II, "Assessment for Learning". It focuses on how formative assessment in the form of process writing serves to enhance language learning.

2.4 The Vice-Chairperson informed members that the Exemplars of Curriculum Development in Schools also had other examples that were contributed by different teams of Curriculum Development Institute relating to English learning and teaching.

2.5 The Vice-Chairperson invited members to comment on how the exemplars could be

improved and contribute their own exemplars for inclusion in the English Language Education curriculum guide to be published in 2002.

- 2.6 In response to Mrs Christina Lee's inquiry about the English Language Education curriculum guide, the Vice-Chairperson explained that the guide would not be a replacement of the CDC Syllabus for English Language (Secondary 1-5) 1999, but the final version of the CDC Learning to Learn: The Way Forward to Curriculum Development Consultation Document.

### **3 Seminar on the Proposed 2004 CE English Language Syllabus**

- 3.1 Mrs Christina Lee informed members that the seminar would be held in the Academic Community Hall at Baptist University at 2.30pm on 29 June 2001. Its main purpose was to explain to teachers the proposed Core Competence initiative at CE level. The new CE English Language Examination to be implemented in 2004 will replace the existing CE English Language Examination, which offer the options of Syllabus A and Syllabus B to cater for the needs of different candidates. The new examination will have two parts in each paper, a Core part (60%) and an Extended part (40%). Candidates will obtain a pass grade, i.e. "E", if they meet the required standards in the Core part, and perhaps a "D" grade if they do this part really well. Candidates who also attempt the Extended part, and prove capable of handling it, will be able to score between grades A and D.
- 3.2 Mr Lam remarked that at present, Chinese Medium of Instruction (CMI) schools only needed to prepare students for the CE English Language Examination (Syllabus A). However, with the proposed 2004 CE English Language syllabus, he asked whether CMI schools would need to prepare their students for the Extended part in addition to the Core part (the latter of which might be regarded as similar to Syllabus A). Mrs Christina Lee replied that candidates could choose any parts of the paper to attempt, although in order to get a pass they needed at least to complete the Core part.

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

- 4.1 Members were invited to express their views on the issue of the change of subject name from English Literature to Literature in English based on previous discussions, the survey and Net findings presented in previous meetings and the documents that had been forwarded to them, i.e. the CE and AS/AL English Literature examination syllabuses for 2001 and 2002.
- 4.2 Dr Slethaug was in favour of the change, as more and more tertiary institutions were moving towards the adoption of the name Literature in English. In view of the kinds of texts on offer in the CE and AS/AL English Literature examination syllabuses, i.e., literary texts written in English from various parts of the world, Mr Lam observed that the change seemed inevitable. Professor Littlewood observed that English Literature might not be as all-encompassing a name as some people thought, otherwise it would not be necessary to have the separate discipline of American Literature. However, by adopting the name Literature in English, this contradiction could be resolved. While Mr Too expressed his concern that the change of name might affect the status of the subject, Mrs Christina Lee suggested that this should not be a problem if the Cambridge Examination Board saw it only as a matter of name change.
- 4.3 The Committee ultimately reached an unanimous consensus that the name of the subject be changed from English Literature to Literature in English. The new name would be submitted to the CDC Standing Committee for consideration and, if appropriate, endorsement.

## 5. "Quality Criteria" for KS1

- 5.1 Referring to the "Diagrams on Quality Criteria, Basic Competency and Basic Competency Assessments", the Vice-chairperson explained that Quality Criteria were descriptions of learners' various levels of achievements in relation to the learning targets set out in the English Language curriculum, and that Basic Competency would be the minimum standard expected of learners at different stages of schooling. She added that a bank of Basic Competency Assessment tasks or items based on the Basic Competency descriptors developed by the Education Department would be produced by the Hong Kong Examinations Authority for schools to use in conjunction with other types of formative assessment to inform teaching and learning. At present, the Key Learning Areas of Chinese, English and Mathematics were involved in developing QC and BC. However, the other KLAs would subsequently be involved in developing QC and BC for their various subjects.
- 5.2 The Vice-chairperson noted that to ensure the validity of the QC and BC that were to be developed, there would be extensive consultation involving not only members of the various CDC English Language Education Committees but also teachers, parents and employers. Students' performance would also be studied.
- 5.3 The Vice-chairperson referred members to the "Tentative Action Plan for Developing Prototype of Student Assessment at P3 level", and explained that the development of QC and BC at KS1 would have to be ready by around 15 August 2001 in order to meet the very tight schedule for facilitating HKEA's development of the student assessment prototype.
- 5.4 Mrs Sheila Anne Ip sought members' advice on the options of definitions for "Quality Criteria" (QC) and "Basic Competence" (BC) that had been proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning. After discussion, the KLA Committee on English Language Education agreed on the following definitions for the two terms:

### Quality Criteria

Descriptions that serve to indicate on a scale of performance, in the form of levels or bands, what learners are able to do in relation to the learning targets set out in the curriculum and to the integrative use of language

### Basic Competency

The standard of performance that all learners should demonstrate at the end of each key stage of schooling

- 5.5 Mrs Sheila Anne Ip went over the draft revisions made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning in the "Proposed Descriptions for Quality Criteria at the End of Key Stage 1 (P.3)". Members of the KLA Committee on English Language Education in general agreed to the revisions and further suggested that the first bullet point under Reading in the Experience Dimension be revised to read: "understanding and responding to the main events in short simple stories with teacher support".

## 6 Progress Reports of CDC Ad Hoc Committees on English Language Education Department

- 6.1 CDC Ad Hoc Committee on English Language (P1-S3)
  - 6.1.1 Ms Cindy Chan reported on the following:

- members were usually divided into two teams, with the primary team focussing on the development of cross-curricular modules to enhance English language learning and foster in pupils positive values and attitudes, and the secondary team exploring ways to integrate language arts into the school English programme at S1;
- the committee also considered the feasibility of developing cross-curricular activities to enhance English language learning in CMI schools, and probably these ideas would be tried out in schools in the coming academic year;
- members shared experiences in making use of community resources to facilitate pupils' learning and use of English in natural and realistic settings, e.g. arranging visits to Central Soho and participating in the Hong Kong Youth Arts Festival organized by Hong Kong Arts Centre; and
- book titles had been suggested by members to facilitate the revision of the booklist for the Extensive Reading Grant (ERG) for Key Stages 1-3, and these included information books rather than just fiction; the booklists would be uploaded to the Education Department's homepage and disseminated to public libraries probably by the end of July.

## 6.2 CDC Ad Hoc Committee on English Literature (S4-S7)

6.2.1 The Secretary reported on behalf of Mr Kevin Chan (who was on leave) that the final draft of the Resource Package on the Teaching of Poetry for S4-5 had basically been completed. The outstanding work included copyright clearance for some songs and poems, sound recording, illustration and layout. It was expected that the package would be ready for dissemination in the second half of the coming school year.

6.2.2 The Secretary also requested members of the KLA Committee on English Language Education to review the draft resource package and return their feedback to the English Section on or before 8<sup>th</sup> September 2001.

## 6.3 Ad Hoc Committee on English Language (S1-S7)

6.3.1 The Secretary reported on behalf of Ms Amy Shu (who had to attend another meeting) on the following:

- the Resource Package on Self-access Language Learning (SALL) was distributed to schools in April 2001;
- the development of the Resource Package on Task-based Language Learning for Senior Secondary classes was in progress;
- the first round of the Workshops on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Part 1), with its major focus on summative assessment, was conducted between June 12 and 15:
  - the first of the four identical workshops held on June 12 was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions
  - a total of 267 teachers attended the remaining 3 workshops, and the workshops were generally well-received (of the 206 returned evaluation questionnaires, 13.6% indicated that they were "very good", 52.7% "good", 26.9% "satisfactory", 4.4% "unsatisfactory", and 2.4% "no response");
- the second round of the Workshops on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Part 1) would be conducted in October/November 2001:
  - the programme would be modified to include hands-on practice in

grading students' work according to assessment criteria. For this purpose, sampling of students' work would be necessary and teacher members of the Ad Hoc Committee on English Language (S1-S7), including Mr Stephen Chan, Mrs Nancy Cheng and Ms Christine Langley, had agreed to give support by trying out assessment tasks with their students; and

- the first and second round of the Workshops on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Part 2) would be organized for November/December 2001 and February/March 2002 respectively. The Part 2 Workshops would focus on formative assessment.

## 7 Any Other Business

### 7.1 Seminar on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment for Principals

7.1.1 The Secretary reported that one of the major concerns expressed by teacher participants in the first round of the Workshops on Task-based Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Part 1) was that support from school principals would be greatly necessary if the task-based approach was to be implemented effectively. In particular, since the approach would necessitate a different system of reporting from that currently adopted in most schools, changes would need to be made in the format of school report cards and this had to be endorsed by the principals.

7.1.2 It was agreed that a full-day seminar/workshop for principals on the topic of Task-based Teaching, Learning and Assessment be organized to familiarize them with the nature of the task-based approach as well as its connection with the curriculum developments in English Language Education, and to discuss the kinds of support to be provided to facilitate its implementation.

7.1.3 Members suggested that the seminar/workshop be run as early as possible in the coming school year. They also expressed their preference that the seminar/workshop be run by district so as to facilitate more interaction among school principals.

7.1.4 It was also suggested that examples of how reporting could be done should be provided for principals' discussion and consideration at the seminar/workshop. As a first step towards facilitating the work of developing different possible formats of reporting, both teacher members as well as school principal members of the Committee were requested to send a copy of their school report cards to the English Section for reference and use.

7.2 There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5.00pm.

Confirmed on \_\_\_\_\_

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Mr Stephen CHAN  
(Chairperson)

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Mr Raymond NG  
(Secretary)