

CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education 2002-2003
Minutes of the First Meeting

Date: 9 October 2002

Time: 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Rm 1023A, 10/F Wu Chung House, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present: Mr. Stephen CHAN (Chairperson)
Ms CHAN Wai-ming (Vice-Chairperson)
Ms CHENG Woon-kai
Mr CHEUNG Man-biu
Mrs Shirley DUTHIE
Mr KUAN Yuk-kin
Mrs Christina LEE
Mrs Catherine LI
Professor William LITTLEWOOD
Mrs LIU LU Lee-Ching
Mr Lindsay MILLER
Dr Angela MOK
Dr Gordon SLETHAUG
Ms Truely SIU
Mr Simon THAM
Mr Derek TOO
Ms WAN Koon-Har
Mr Raymond NG (Secretary)

Apologies: Mrs FUNG Sin Lai-wan
Ms MOK Fung-ye; Emily

In attendance: Ms Eunice CHENG

Documents tabled:

- (1) Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2002
- (2) Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2002
- (3) English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3) (CDC, 2002)
- (4) Membership list of Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning (Secondary)
- (5) A copy of the handout of Powerpoint slides used for the Seminars on English Language Education KLA Curriculum Guide for Primary and Secondary School Teachers

1. Election of Chairman

Mr Stephen Chan was re-elected Chairman of the CDC Key Learning Area Committee on English Language Education for 2002-2003.

2. Confirmation of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2002 were confirmed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3.1 The Secretary referred members to item 1 of the meeting minutes, and affirmed that the minutes of the meeting on 27 February 2002 had been revised, with the inclusion of the point that mechanical drilling of learning elements in isolated context should not be encouraged.

3.2 The Secretary reported that almost all of the members' comments/suggested amendments as found in item 2.3 had been adopted in revising the draft of the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-Secondary 3) (CDC, 2002). The only exception was the suggestion that the section on "Task-based Learning" be placed after "Four Key Tasks", "Life-wide Learning" and "Catering for Learner Diversity", which are common topics across all Key Learning Areas. In the end, the "Task-based Learning" section was placed after "Four Key Tasks" and "Life-wide Learning" but before "Catering for Learner Diversity". Such an arrangement was the result of following the general framework that the CDC Section had provided for the curriculum guides of all the Key Learning Areas.

3.3 Regarding item 3.4, the Secretary remarked that Mr Ronnie Ho, Vice-Chairman of the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong, has joined the Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment for Learning (Secondary).

4. English Language Education KLA Curriculum Guide (P1-S3) and Briefing Sessions on the Guide

4.1 The Vice-Chairperson reported that a series of briefing sessions or seminars have been planned to promote the English Language Education KLA Curriculum Guide (P1-S3). In fact, one seminar on the Guide had already been run on 16 July 2002 for secondary teachers, and two identical seminars had been run for primary teachers on 16 and 17 July 2002 respectively. Three more seminars of the same nature have been scheduled for October 2002, with one catering specifically for secondary teachers, one specifically for primary teachers, and one for both primary and secondary teachers.

(Post-meeting note: An extra session for primary teachers has been arranged to take place on 9 December 2002 because of over-subscription to the October event.)

4.2 The Vice-Chairperson also referred members to the handout of Powerpoint slides tabled, highlighting the key messages to be delivered at the "Seminar on English Language Education KLA Curriculum Guide for Primary and Secondary School Teachers" to be held at Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) on 16 October 2002. She added that apart from ED officers, the speakers for that session also included Dr Angela Mok (member of the CDC KLA Committee on English

Language Education) and Mrs Tse Tso Yuk-wah, both of whom are senior lecturers of the Department of English at HKIED.

5. Teacher Education Programmes in Support of the Implementation of the Guide

In addition to the briefing sessions or seminars on the Guide, the Vice-Chairperson drew members' attention to the other professional development programmes on the Powerpoint handout, which have been lined up to support the implementation of the Guide.

6. Resource Packages in Support of the Implementation of the Guide

It was noted that "Phonics in Action" has been disseminated to all primary schools. Three resource packages for secondary level, "Task-based Language Learning for KS3", "The Learning and Teaching of Poetry for KS4" and "Task-based Assessment for English Language Learning at Secondary Level" are being developed and will be made available to all secondary schools as soon as they are ready.

7. Thoughts and Views Regarding the Implementation of the Guide

Members were invited to share thoughts and views about the implementation of the Guide. The following views were expressed:

- 7.1 Mr Simon Tham said that the Advisory Teaching Team made up of 20 Native-speaking English Teachers (NETs) and 16 Local English Teachers (LETs) was familiar with the English Language Education Curriculum Guide and was very ready to promote it. He further appealed to the Committee, particularly the primary school heads, to be flexible with their deployment procedures for NETs, who obviously had a lot of adaptations to make to the local teaching context.
- 7.2 Members agreed that NETs are an important resource, and that concerted efforts should be made to provide a work environment conducive to facilitating their effectiveness as a school-based resource person promoting English learning and teaching.
- 7.3 Dr Angela Mok observed that school-based professional development could be looked at from two levels. At the macro level, teachers need to gain an overall understanding of the English Language Education Curriculum Guide; at the micro level, they need to see how they can make use of the various resource packages produced by ED in support of the implementation of the Guide.
- 7.4 The Vice-Chairperson suggested that teachers could be asked to reflect in professional development sessions on their experience in using the resource packages and how the materials were used or adapted to contribute to school-based English Language Education curriculum development.
- 7.5 Mr Lindsay Miller raised the question of how the Guide fits in with the recent news report that English should be taught two levels lower to better suit most students' needs and abilities.
- 7.6 The Vice-Chairperson explained that the news report was based on a study on "Appropriate Curriculum Level for Secondary Schools (ACLSS)" and on what the researcher had done with the four secondary schools in which the project was

piloted. The English Language Education Curriculum Guide, or indeed the Education Department, never recommended that English should be taught two levels lower to suit students' needs and abilities.

- 7.7 In response to the question whether there would be a curriculum guide for senior secondary English Language, the Vice-Chairperson said that such a guide will be planned and developed when details concerning the new senior secondary curriculum are released.

8. Work progress of the Ad Hoc Committees on Assessment for Learning

- 8.1 The Vice-chairperson informed members that alongside the Basic Competency (BC) descriptors, the Quality Criteria (QC) that colleagues on the Ad Hoc Committees on Assessment for Learning have been working on would be called Learning Outcomes (LO), which is a more user-friendly term and reflects more appropriately what they really are. The Curriculum Development Council (CDC) is considering developing a Progress Map made up of Learning Outcomes from Key Stage 1 (KS1) to Key Stage 4 (KS4), with the aim of providing an overall picture of the learning targets that students are expected to achieve at the end of different Key Stages.
- 8.2 Members were also informed that the proposed BC descriptors for KS3 and KS4 (Tryout Version 1) would be passed on to the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) in mid-December 2002. The KS3 descriptors would be used for developing Basic Competency Assessment tasks at KS3 level, and the KS4 descriptors would be used to define the standards for determining the cut-off point for a pass at the Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCE) English Language Examination.
- 8.3 The proposed BC descriptors would be validated/calibrated by collecting and annotating students' work in assessment tasks developed on the basis of these descriptors. Though it would take time, validation/calibration of the BC descriptors is an essential process.
- 8.4 The question on how the development of LO and BC would affect the public English Language examination was discussed. Both Mrs Christina Lee and the Vice-Chairperson pointed out that the purpose of developing LO and BC is to facilitate effective learning and teaching. Together the two types of descriptors seek to provide teachers with a clear picture of the language proficiency level that students are expected to achieve at various Key Stages, and the basic proficiency level that they need to attain at each Key Stage. Teachers can thus teach with reference to these descriptors to suit students' different needs and abilities. Being able to learn more effectively, students at KS4 would be better able to cope with the public English Language examination. After all, what the HKCE English Language Examination seeks to do is to assess students on what they have been learning in school.

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 The Committee endorsed the dissolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on English Language (S1- S7), as it had completed the tasks it was set up to accomplish, which included (1) the development of the resource package on "Self-access Language Learning for Secondary Schools"; (2) the development of the resource package on

“Task-based Language Learning (Secondary 4-5)”; and (3) the organization of the workshops on “Between Examination Papers and Tasks”.

9.2 Members also endorsed the setting up of an Ad Hoc Committee to develop the English Language (Primary 1-6) Curriculum Guide, which is to be an updated version of the CDC Syllabus for English Language (Primary 1-6) 1997. Members were encouraged to submit membership nominations to the Secretary.

9.3 There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6.30pm.

Confirmed on: _____

Mr Stephen CHAN
(Chairperson)

Mr Raymond NG
(Secretary)