



Foreword

Now into the fifth year of the setting up of the Task Force on Language Support, it is time to celebrate with all language educators the achievements of those schools that have collaborated with us over the years, making up over half the primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. Some of these schools have worked as forerunners piloting different language initiatives (like teaching Chinese to Non-Chinese speaking students, small class teaching) and have generated valuable experiences for aspiring schools. Some have focussed on perennial issues in language teaching (like vocabulary and reading), gaining a deeper understanding of those issues and offering new perspectives and solutions. Others have chosen to work on macro-level projects which have spanned a few years and involved the whole language panel or cross-Key-Learning-Areas collaboration (like the effective use of the English Enhancement Scheme and Reading Across the Curriculum) developing “prototypes” of curriculum development, teacher development and school development. The encouraging performance of our students in international reading assessments (PISA and PIRLS), Territory-wide System Assessment, territory-wide language activities and competitions and internal assessments is the best reward for our committed and professional language teachers.

If it takes the whole nation to raise a child, it certainly takes the whole community to support the growth of the language teaching community. Over the past years, the Task Force has been collaborating with different universities, the media, other bureaux within the government, educational institutes outside Hong Kong and very experienced language experts to conduct professional development activities, organising student learning activities, fostering professional exchange, and publicising the process and outcomes of schools’ efforts in improving language education. We are delighted to see the growing momentum and dynamic impact of these collaborating forces on the teaching community.

To capture the valuable experiences of these schools and to inspire teachers to improve teaching practices with regard to each unique school context, we have included in this publication the distillation of about 90 practices in the Chinese and English Key Learning Areas. Rather than exemplary practices to be replicated, these experiences are meant to illustrate the curriculum development process.

This publication is just one platform for sharing and professional enhancement. The Task Force would like to thank schools and teachers for sharing their school-based experiences with different audiences through seminars and workshops, our web-page (<http://resources.edb.gov.hk/cd/languagesupport>), *Language Matters* (the newsletter of the Task Force) and thematic CD-ROMs which compile school-based learning and teaching resources and document the learning and teaching process.

This special issue of “The Language Teaching Album: A Collection of School-based Practices 2007-2009” is much more than a compilation of a variety of school cases. It captures some of the precious moments in this five-year journey that the Task Force has undertaken with our schools. We are also thankful to all our collaborators for their encouraging words and advice. In the coming year, we are well-prepared to work shoulder to shoulder with our language teachers to embrace the challenges and opportunities brought by the full implementation of the New Senior Secondary curriculum and other educational initiatives.

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