country as yardsticks for admission (see Kirkland, 1971: 303–306 and Frederiksen: 193–195 for discussions of the effects of these standardised tests on teaching and learning in America). In more recent years, especially since the early 1980's there has been a significant increase in state-government administered achievement tests as part of the whole accountability movement in American public education.

The Hong Kong educational system is characterised as an examination-led system. Perhaps being a British colony on the periphery of China with a largely Cantonese population made Hong Kong particularly ripe for this type of exam-dominated education. Although the teaching syllabus for the Hong Kong schools is written by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) of the Education Department (ED), the autonomous and quasi-independent Exams Authority also writes its own examination syllabuses. The schools, themselves, generally do not create their own individual syllabuses nor do they normally use textbooks which do not carry the imprimatur of the ED (although they may do so if they submit a formal request to the ED). Not surprisingly, as Morris (1990) points out,

> the curriculum in practice [is] defined by publications of the [HKEA], specifically public examination scripts and their accompanying marking schedules. (p. 19)

The textbooks in use locally, too, generally reflect the examination syllabus in their format, emphasis and approach. The primacy of the examination system was noted as early as the 1930's by a visiting British education inspector, Burney, who apparently concluded that the examination system in Hong Kong in that day and age resulted in the same kind of rote learning it is said to foster today (see Lord, 1987: 3).

The Hong Kong educational system over the past decade or so has been moving from a highly elitist system to one of virtually universal education through secondary school and in the 1990's to one with widely-available tertiary places. Thus, Hong Kong has progressed from a system designed largely for academically-motivated students to a system for a much more broadly-based student population. Morris (1990) indicates that although efforts have been made in recent years to introduce educational innovations in Hong Kong such as more heuristic teaching methods, these innovations have had only limited impact on what actually goes on in the classrooms. This has led to what Morris calls, a 'facade of change' whereby the teachers profess to be in favour of the innovations but in fact either cannot or do not successfully implement these changes in the classroom. This absence of actual change, according to Morris, is due to the fact that the changes have been 'imported from the West' without proper adaptation to the local scene and without the input of local teachers into the original proposals. In addition, there have not been sufficient resources available to train teachers in the implementation of the innovations. Finally, the ever-presence of the examination/assessment system is the real shaper of classroom policies regardless of superficial innovations mandated from above. Attempts to introduce child-centred learning and to move away from

rote memorisation in, for example, integrated sciences, social studies and economics were largely unsuccessful. In 1982, the Visiting Panel of Secondary Education (popularly known as the Llewellyn Commission) made the following observation regarding classes which members of the Commission observed in these three subject areas:

> In 'non-exam, [sic] years, the atmosphere seemed fairly relaxed, but in the examination preparatory forms all was deadly earnest and students were seen taking notes, laboriously completing model answers and learning texts by rote. ... Since students are desperate to obtain their qualifications, and as teachers are judged professionally in terms of their students' results, the whole business is understandable. Discovery methods, team teaching and individualised instruction have little appeal to parents, students and teachers in a situation where the ends require more didactic means. (as quoted in Morris, 1990: 33)

Hong Kong's educational system, then, is a clear example of one where what goes on in the classroom is largely dictated by what happens in the public examination halls. It is a system of "friendly conspiracy" (to use a phrase confined by Fabian, 1982: 25), made up of teachers, schools, publishers, course planners and educational institutions, who, together, determine what the students are exposed to in the course of their education.

In general, the Hong Kong system resembles the Classical Humanist system which Clark describes in his analysis of curriculum renewal (1987). In essence, under a Classical Humanist system, the universities largely control the content of examinations and the examinations, in turn, are the most important determinants of the syllabuses of secondary education courses. Some writers, like Fabian (1982), regard this role of examinations as "unacceptable and unreasonable" (p. 25). Others, like Morris in his description of the Hong Kong scene, seem to regard the role of the exams as a fact of life, without imposing quite so negative a judgement on the system. Nevertheless, Morris does specifically state that any change in the educational system in Hong Kong must inevitably first involve a change in the examinations: through the exams syllabus one can effect what happens in classrooms from Wong Tai Sin to Shau Kei Wan. Morris cites the instance of change in the 'A'-level Economics syllabus, initiated by a Hong Kong University professor and implemented through the HKEA examinations syllabus as a successful example of change using the examinations route (Morris, 1990: 67–68). This particular change succeeded largely because the teachers realised that the changes in the nature of the 'A'-level examination would require that they change the content of their teaching syllabus and proceeded to implement those changes in classroom practice.

The Backwash Effect

How do public examinations affect education? In what ways does the backwash work? Today, most educators as well as professional testers, have abandoned the myth prevailing until the 1970's that tests were ideally 'value free', scientific instruments designed by testing professional only to measure

how well the test candidates had mastered a given subject, the content of which was determined elsewhere by professional educators. In the past, testers "were popularly believed to live in an arcane world of numbers and formulae," divorced from the 'real' world (Alderson, 1981: 5). Teachers, especially language teachers, who themselves probably come from non-numerate backgrounds, have been largely suspicious of testers but have viewed testing as a mathematically precise discipline. Increasingly, however, even testers admit that their field is a largely "inexact science"(Clark, 1980: 80). In addition, it is freely admitted that examination are prescriptive as well as reflective (see Matthews: 30), a conclusion which every Secondary 4 or 5 student in any Hong Kong secondary school could readily attest to. How, then, does the backwash lap at the shores of a typical Hong Kong English language lesson?

First, the examinations affect the content of the lessons taught, both in broad terms and in much more specific details as well. This influence on course content may be direct – through what the teacher plans for her lessons – or it may be somewhat less direct, but nonetheless highly significant, – through the content of the recommended textbooks used in most schools. In the broadest terms, the content of courses is influenced by the weighting of the parts or subsections of the examinations. For example, in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE), Syllabus B English Language examination[1], the weightings of the parts of the exam are as follows:

Composition	25%
Reading Multiple Choice	25%
Listening	15%
Oral	10%
Reading, Summary and Usage	25%

Given these weighting, it seems quite obvious that teachers and students will spend more time in class working on reading, writing and usage (comprising a total of 75% of the tests marks) and relatively less time on developing speaking and listening skills (regardless of the real-life usefulness in a place like Hong Kong of improving one's oral/aural abilities in English). Likewise, in the Sixth Form very little classroom attention is paid to helping students with their spoken English, as there is at the present time no oral component of the 'A'-level Use of English Examination (although this situation will change in 1992 when Secondary 6 students begin preparing for the 1994 UE Exam which for the first time will include an oral component).

In addition, the effects of the public examination upon the content of lessons may be quite specific. Paper V (Reading, Summary and Usage) of the HKCEE traditionally has included sections testing phrasal verbs, those troublesome items in English such as *put out* [a fire], *look up to* [a person], and so on, consisting of a verb and a preposition or particle. Although English language specialists might well quarrel with the importance of phrasal verbs or at least might feel that they are exceedingly difficult to

systematically teach, nonetheless in English language classes throughout the Territory, students are subjected to lessons about phrasal verbs because, quite simply, they will probably appear in the 'O'-level HKCEE.

The public examinations also affect how teachers teach and how students learn. However, unlike the influence on content, whereby if one wants to effect a change in content, a reasonably assured way of accomplishing this would be to change the content of the examination, it seems much more difficult to use public exams to consciously change the methods employed by teachers to teach and students to learn (see Matthews, 1985: 28). In general, teachers and students seem to adopt a highly utilitarian approach to examinations: whatever method of teaching and learning seems likely to 'get through the syllabus' and maximise the students' exam results, with the most efficient expenditure of effort (given that scarce pre-exam resource: time), will be adopted regardless of the pedagogical value of that approach. If this means having students memorise essays or learn by heart page after page of vocabulary or having teachers give lengthy and largely unfathomable grammatical explanations to the students, so be it. The desired end (a pass in the HKCEE) would seem to justify even the most dubious means.

Matthews (1985) writes that ".... *the hard fact of day-to-day schooling is that teachers seem to rely heavily on externally prescribed goals of examination results as a prime motivator (for their students)*" (p.23). In fact the role of public examinations in the motivation of students appears to be an extremely complex subject, a matter open to many, sometimes contradictory interpretations. Certainly every secondary school student in Hong Kong is acutely conscious of the importance of public examinations for the individual's future. The fact that exams in Hong Kong are norm-referenced and therefore highly competitive, pitting student against student, classmate against classmate in the high-stakes 'combat' for good exam results would seem to make the examinations in Hong Kong extrinsically motivating for students. It is not evident, however, that Hong Kong students are actually aware of the fact that the exams are norm-referenced or of the implications of such a system in terms of competition. In fact, there is some evidence, for example, that large numbers of Hong Kong students will resit an exam (as in the case of two 1992 exams reoffered because of flooding on the day of the original exam) in the hopes the 'second' exam will be an easier test and therefore that they will do 'better'. This reasoning, of course, pays no heed to the dictates of norm-referencing, as an 'easier' exam simply results in all candidates gaining higher marks but remaining at the same relative position in the norm-referenced results.

In addition, as Crooks (1988) points out in his article, there is widespread agreement that the "use of extrinsic motivation is problematic" (p. 463). The effects depend on the personality and psychological makeup of the individual student. A student with a high sense of self-efficacy may well work hard to prepare for a public examination, feeling as she probably

will, that she has a good or at least reasonable chance of success. On the other hand, a student with a low sense of self-efficacy may well not work to prepare for the public examination, because she feels that even her hardest efforts will not be rewarded with good exam results.

For students who suffer from test anxiety, public examinations like those in Hong Kong probably have quite detrimental effects. Crooks (1988: 461) recognises that the "debilitating effects" of test anxiety are especially noticeable with standardised tests which he calls "particularly intrusive" and therefore disturbing for students prone to test anxiety. Certainly the Hong Kong public examinations, with some 125,000 candidates taking the HKCEE and 17,000 sitting the A-level exams, are 'intrusive' despite the best efforts of the Examinations Authority to minimize those intrusions. The exams are highly impersonal: students are identified by anonymous candidate number, sit the exams in large, and often physically uncomfortable, exam halls throughout Hong Kong rather than in their own schools. The exams of 'necessity' involve bureaucratic red-tape: students must follow detailed and sometimes confusing regulations often specific to each examination paper. Examples can be found in the procedures governing the use of pencil or pen; the directions for making of notes (in spaces provided), the use of machine-graded multiple-choice answer sheets for certain (but not all) papers or questions. Furthermore, candidates are faced with a myriad of rules such as the provision that certain brands or models of electronic calculators are allowed into examination halls, while others are excluded. Candidates may sometimes be confronted with *seemingly* inexplicable procedures although there actually may be very convincing explanations for those procedures. For example: on the English composition papers, students are not allowed to write on alternate lines of the answer books and are warned that they will be penalised if they do so. Why? Because studies have shown that students who do use alternate lines invariably receive higher marks from raters of compositions due to the neatness of their papers and thus the prohibition is designed to remove this 'unfair' advantage gained by line-skippers. (Oddly, students <u>are</u> allowed to take <u>calculators</u> into English language examinations, but must stow them under their desks). It is little wonder, then, that students often feel that they are very small components of an enormous examination system which is highly impersonal on the one hand but personally highly important on the other. In Hong Kong, as might be imagined, students and teachers spend much of the time in their preparation for the examinations not studying the contents of the subjects to be examined, but rather learning the mechanics or rules governing the taking of the examinations.

The Hong Kong Examinations Authority does explicitly attempt to design its examinations so that they test more than simple surface knowledge of facts. In fact, the Exams Authority tries to make sure that no more than 30 percent of any examination paper tests purely factual information. Nonetheless the system, unfortunately, does seem to encourage local students to adopt study strategies to learn at the level of 'knowledge',

rather than at the higher levels of 'application of knowledge' or 'transfer of knowledge to new situations' (to use the three-fold classification which Crooks (1988) employs). Textbooks which contain little more than 'clones' of past exam papers along with 'model' answers seem to abound and some students in Hong Kong, particularly the weaker candidates, tend to spend long hours memorising those model answers, rather, it would appear, than actually learning how to answer similar questions. To be fair, of course, there are many very good students who do not concentrate on rote memorisation. However, among the candidates at the barely pass level and below, there does seem to be an abiding faith that perhaps the same question as appears in the practice book, or at least a question identical enough that the marker will not notice that the memorised answer doesn't quite 'fit' the question, will appear in the examination this year. 'Past paper practice' is a favourite exercise of students, if not of teachers, as a way of familiarising the students with the format and the mechanistic requirements of the papers.

In certain examinations, such as the HKCEE composition paper, the Use of English composition paper or the UE WASPS (Practical Skills for Work and Study, a quite sophisticated and demanding paper), the students do have a chance to extend themselves and their cognitive abilities to levels such as those labelled "relational" or even "extended abstract" by Biggs and Collis (1982). However, students and teachers, as well as textbooks, often seem to encourage the students to take a "unistructural" or at best "multistructural" approach to study for these examinations. Thus, for example, rather than trying to master how to use English language to describe people, the student will memorise one or several descriptions in English of people. The student will then insert into any essay question on the examination this pre-memorised description of a 'person'. The student is using a "unistructural" (or even "pre-structural") approach to a question which actually expects a much higher cognitive level. Likewise, students often learn, by rote, idiomatic phrases in English or 'important-sounding' words which they then throw into any and every essay without regard to appropriateness.

As well as having a profound impact on students, the examination system in Hong Kong also affects teachers and their behaviour. Morris (1990: 49-51) reports on the results of a study he conducted on the teaching of Economics at Form 4 and 5 levels. He found that teachers cite the public examinations as the most important factor affecting their teaching. They generally feel that they need to 'cover the syllabus' and prepare students for examination questions and, in general, they believe that the most efficient way of accomplishing these two tasks within the busy school year is by the traditional teaching method of lecturing to their students. More innovative methods, such as student-centred learning and heuristic methods are generally avoided by the teachers even if they believe these more modern approaches are worthwhile. This failure to adopt innovative practices is due to the constraints of the examination system. Exam pressures are exerted by the students themselves or by the school's

principal. According to the results of interviews which Morris conducted with teachers for his study, the teachers feel that the students will blame the teacher if they fail the examination, and as the students expect the teacher to cover the syllabus, that is what the teacher usually does. Likewise, according to the teachers in Morris's study, if the students do not get what they regard as adequate results in their examination, they will withhold cooperation from the teacher they regard as responsible and thus will make life quite difficult for that teacher. In addition, according to the teachers in Morris's study, the school principal exerts strong pressure on the teacher to teach to the examination. The principal is well aware of how well or poorly a teacher's classes do in the public exams and teachers, at least, believe that their students' performance will directly affect the principal's rating of them and thus their prospects of promotion.

English Language Examinations in Hong Kong

There are quite a few cases of public English language examinations in Hong Kong affecting classroom activities. Johnson and Wong (1981), for example, discuss the Hong Kong Scaling Test for English at the end of Secondary 3, introduced in 1981, though subsequently discontinued. A Working Group which designed the Scaling Test and tried out a sample test on 1,500 students, felt that one desired result of the test would be that ". . . . *classroom activities will . . . . be more valuable and more interesting than preparation for a formal type of test, and will represent worthwhile learning experiences in their own right."* (Testing Communicative Competence, 1979: 52). Johnson and Wong see the Scaling Test as an example of *"testing as a force for change in teaching"* (p. 279). They view the Scaling Test as a way of introducing more genuinely communicative methods of teaching into the classroom, including the use of authentic materials, and thereby:

> *as a way of achieving syllabus revision with the resulting changes in textbook design and classroom learning and teaching techniques.* (p. 277).

The test designers originally planned to include an oral/aural component of the test but were prevented from doing so by *"technical and logistic problems"* (Testing Communicative Competence, 1979: 52). However, they did include cloze tests as well as task-based communicative elements in the examination. They gave heavy emphasis to meaning as well as to form, to contextualised language items rather than to discrete point items and to Hong Kong-based, authentic materials. In these ways, they hoped to ensure that the backwash effect to be beneficial in the classroom. The Scaling Test is no longer used because the educational situation in Hong Kong has changed over the past ten years with the continued expansion of free or subsidised public education, beyond Secondary 3. Nonetheless, the Scaling Test does seem to have affected English language teaching in Secondary 1 to 3 in the more communicative approach it fostered.

A second example of classroom innovation brought about by the introduction of a particular examination can be found in the addition of a listening component to the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination in 1986. Although there had been an oral/speaking component of the HKCEE since at least the late 1940's and although there was already a listening test in the 'A'-level examination, until the introduction of the Paper 3 Listening Test in 1986, there was no listening component of the HKCEE. When the decision was taken to add a listening component, it was with the explicit expectation that this new element of the examination would have a significant effect upon the teaching of English in the secondary schools of the Territory. Towards that end, the Education Department, at considerable expense, had induction loop listening systems installed in each government and aided school to encourage schools to include lessons for improving students' listening skills. The induction loop system, which comprises a tape player and short-distance transmission system as well as headphones for students, theoretically allows students to take part in listening lessons and activities even in schools situated in areas of extremely high-levels of noise pollution, such as those schools located near the flight path of Kai Tak International Airport.

The Paper 3 Listening component of the HKCEE carries a weighting of 15% of the total marks of the English language examination, not as significant as the written composition (25%) or the Reading Multiple Choice (25%) or the Reading/Summary Passage (25%), but nonetheless a rather sizeable portion of the exam. The listening component consists of two parts, Part A and Part B. Part A involves relatively short, discrete listening items, including listening to descriptions and choosing the correct picture being described, task-based items using semi-authentic listening texts simulating media broadcasts of various kinds, and items requiring the students to answer questions relating to maps, diagrams or other pictures. Part B involves an extended listening exercise in which the students listen to approximately five minutes of spoken text and then answer questions about it and a form-filling exercise in which the students hear an interview or exchange and fill in a semi-authentic form as they listen to the tape.

A brief survey of the Annual Reports published annually by the HKEA and written by the Chief Examiners of each paper, respectively, regarding the listening exam since its inception in 1986 reveals four important points concerning this test. First, it is clear that the backwash effect of the exam was quite intentional. The desired changes in classroom practices are spelt out quite explicitly. For example, in the 1986 Report, is the following:

> The intention behind the introduction of the Listening Test was to encourage greater emphasis on listening in the school curriculum and to promote a wider range of listening experiences in the classroom and outside. Teachers should encourage students to take advantage of English listening offered by the media. (HKEA, Certificate of Education Annual Report, 1986: 61).

Second, the Reports specifically suggest that English teachers should familiarise their students with the mechanics of the listening examinations and with day-to-day listening and notation conventions, such as writing out dates, spelling common Hong Kong place names, and so on, particularly for the form-filling listening exercise. Third, the Reports from 1987 onward emphasise that the exam has been purposely made more difficult year-by-year and that from the Exams Authority's point of view, the backwash effect has been quite positive. For example the 1990 Report states that

> *Overall this paper [1990] was marginally more difficult than in 1989, and it is intended that the degree of difficulty will again be slightly increased in the next administration. . . . [I]t is clear that the listening skills of the candidates are improving, no doubt in large measure due to more focused teaching in preparation for this paper. (HKEA CE Annual Report, 1990: 69).*

Fourth, the Reports make clear that the questions on the listening test are designed to test a variety of different levels of cognitive processing. For example, some of the questions involve low-level listening/processing abilities *"with the actual words of the answer to the question occurring in the extract they [the candidates] listened to"*. Other questions required *"higher level skills of interpretation and inference-making"*. (HKEA CE Annual Report, 1988: 65–66).

The School Certificate Listening Test is a very expensive test to set, moderate, and record. It is administratively an extremely complicated component to run, requiring, as it does, some 225 examination halls equipped with induction loop systems and necessitating 5 versions of the test to be given over a two-day period. However, the backwash effects of the test are obviously regarded as important and beneficial enough to warrant the trouble and expense. Now after six years of experience with the test, schools, teachers and students seem to accept the validity of its existence and to have incorporated listening into the prevailing pattern of preparation for the English language examination.

Yet another example of an examination created largely for its expected backwash effect is the case of the Use of English Oral Examination which will go on stream in Hong Kong in 1994. The Use of English Examination is the 'A'-level examination used by the University of Hong Kong and other local tertiary institutions as a standard for admission. The UE Exam was extensively redesigned in 1989. This 1989 New UE includes a largely task-based, thematic listening examination (Paper A), a fairly traditional writing test which is impression-marked and concentrates equally on accuracy and content (Paper B), a reading comprehension and language systems examination which is half multiple-choice and half short answer, non-multiple choice (Paper C) and an examination known as Practical Skills for Work and Study or WASPS which is a task-based exercise requiring broadly integrative abilities of reading, note-taking, synthesising and summarising information and writing (Paper D). However, the 1989 New

Use of English examination *does not* include an Oral Examination component. The omission was in part due to the costs and complexity of running an oral exam, in part because of the problems of reliability at an oral, and in part because the Exams Authority felt that the New UE format, as it was, constituted a large enough change to expect students and teachers to absorb and adjust to at one go. As a result, however, very little attention is paid to encouraging the improvement of English speaking abilities in Sixth Form classes in Hong Kong. Because of a perceived need to improve spoken English and because of the desire to have an assessment of applicants' spoken abilities, the University of Hong Kong and other tertiary institutions suggested in 1989 that it would like the Examinations Authority to include an oral component in the UE Exam. If this were not done, argued the tertiary institutions, they would have to look elsewhere for a test which did measure oral ability, because these schools regarded oral English as particularly important for students admitted to study.

Therefore, the HKEA in 1989 agreed to consider the possibility of adding an oral component to the UE Exam, having first devised a rough format which would allow for up to 20,000 candidates to be examined in a 10-day period at an acceptable cost (i.e. for no more than a 40% increase in the subject fee). In the Autumn of 1990 the HKEA Use of English Subject Committee established a Working Party to make specific recommendations regarding the possibility of an oral exam. That Orals Working Party, comprised of representatives from Hong Kong University, Chinese University, the Hong Kong Polytechnic, Lingnam College, other educational institutions, plus secondary school English language teachers, refined the format for the oral examination. As part of the process of devising the oral, the Exams Authority conducted pilot tests in the first half of 1991. Details of the suggested oral were submitted to all 250 secondary schools which teach Sixth Form in May 1991 and after revising the proposal in light of the schools' reactions, a final proposal was approved by the Board of the Exams Authority in early 1992. And the official version of the oral test was sent to all schools in May, 1992. Sixth Form students in September 1992 will begin preparing for the new oral addition to UE for the Spring, 1994 administration of the UE Examination.

The UE Oral will be composed of two parts: Part One will involve each candidate with a group of three other candidates reading a short passage and then orally presenting an account of the passage to their three fellow candidates and to two examiners. For Part Two, the four candidates will be required to take part in a group discussion for the planning of a project related to the topic or theme of the passages that the candidates presented individually for Part One. The first part, then, will involve somewhat lower level speaking skills and the examiner will be assessing the candidate on accuracy of grammar and of pronunciation and on intelligibility. Part Two of the examination will involve interpersonal interaction and the candidates will therefore be assessed on much higher level skills of communicative abilities over and above purely linguistic

abilities, including fluency, turn-taking, range of vocabulary and structures and intelligibility.

It is obviously too early to tell whether or not the existence of the Use of English Oral Examination will have the desired backwash effect on the teaching of English in Secondary 6 and 7. One assumes that given the weighting of the Oral of 18% of the total UE subject mark, that teachers and students will, in fact, pay close heed to the improvement of oral skills. Presumably this new exam will lead to the publication of new textbooks with accompanying audiotapes and videotapes in Hong Kong directed towards the improvement of speaking in general and the practising of the format of the new exam in particular. At the very least, students will no longer be able to dismiss the need to improve their oral abilities with the disclaimer that, as oral skills are not tested in their UE Exam, their busy timetable of preparation precludes attention to oral work.

An Assessment

Public Examinations are easy targets for criticism and complaint. Few people enjoy taking exams and only a hardened tester could take pleasure in watching young people worrying and working towards the day when they must submit to their fate in their examinations. Purists feel that the content of education should be dictated by educators and educational planners and examinations should somehow be nothing more than evaluations of how well students have achieved the goals set by the planners. In this 'ideal' world, testers and tests would be isolated and not allowed to affect what goes on in the classroom.

The real world, of course, is quite different from this 'ideal', and it is probably never possible to seal tests and testers off from life in the classroom to prevent contamination. In fact, whether the role that public examinations play in the educational process is deplorable or laudable depends in large measure upon who is making the judgement and what roles other actors in the system play. Many authors like Rea (1986) argue that language testing can be a positive force in encouraging communicative language teaching. As has been argued in this article, in a place like Hong Kong, public examinations, in fact, play the most important role in shaping what goes on in the classroom. This predominant role is in part due to the prevailing exam-based ethos, in part because of the reluctance or inability of other actors on the scene to affect teachers' opinion sufficiently to promote change, and in part due to the willingness of the Exams Authority to assume an active role in shaping educational policy.

Certainly in Hong Kong in the area of English language teaching, the Examinations Authority has adopted a number of policies which, one can argue, have had long-term beneficial effects on local secondary school English language classes. The encouragement, though exams, generally, of a communicative approach to language teaching and learning, of the improvement of speaking and listening skills, of attention to the content and style of writing just and not to the grammaticality of the writer's product, of

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the teaching of practical study and work-related reading and summarising skills: all these are examples of examination-led English language policies in Hong Kong.

Several caveats, however, need to be added to this optimistic picture. First, it goes without saying that the extreme pressure which the examination system in Hong Kong places upon the local students is unfortunate and needs constant reassessing. Second, if the examination includes a large number of questions or parts which require only low level, unistructural or perhaps multistructural answers, then students will largely rely on surface learning, particularly the rote-learning which is the frequent target of critics of the Hong Kong Examinations system. Third, even if the examination questions require higher-level cognitive processes to answer, teachers and students may well resort to attempts to apply lower-level cognitive processes to these questions. So, as has already been suggested, although the composition papers of both the HKCEE and the UE demand higher-order answers for full marks, each year weaker students, though certainly a small minority, memorise compositions or large chunks of compositions in an effort to 'get around' the actual cognitive requirements. Finally, it must be admitted that the norm-referencing of the Hong Kong public examinations does impose a competitive pressure on the candidates which, perhaps in an ideal world, would be best to avoid. The competitive nature of the system is destined to change and to change very rapidly, however, with the explosive expansion of tertiary education in the Territory. No longer will students be madly vying for a scant few places in institutions of higher learning. Universities and polytechnics, instead, will be actively competing to recruit the better students for their particular institution. This will undoubtedly have profound effects on the nature of the examination system. Likewise, the gradual introduction of graded-objective-type teaching in the secondary schools in the form of the Targets and Target Related Assessment Scheme (TTRA) with its emphasis on criteria and on individualization of learning will undoubtedly necessitate a rethinking of assessment policies and practices in Hong Kong. Examinations will need to continue to narrow the gap between the real world and the examination room, to move towards more task-based examinations which are less driven by psychometric objectivity and statistical reliability. The overall effect of the dog and its wagging appendage will undoubtedly continue to be a healthily wiggling canine.

Notes

1. The Syllabus B version of the English language paper is taken by those students who study in what were once called Anglo-Chinese schools in which English is the official medium of instruction. The vast majority of secondary 5 students in Hong Kong opt for the Syllabus B Examination, instead of the alternative, syllabus A which is an easier examination aimed at students who studied in schools where Cantonese is the medium of instruction. All subsequent references in this paper, unless otherwise noted, will be to the Syllabus B Examination.

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TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE

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Introduction

This paper examines the impact of the computer, electronic equipment and new technology on the current generation of teachers of English, and the potential of these forms of equipment for the next generation.

The Current Situation

Travelling around Hong Kong, visiting a large number of teachers in many different schools, I notice that in the room next to the Principal's Office in most standard government-designed schools, there are often two or more computers.

In many schools it is clear that they are used regularly. There are often teachers in the room working at the word processor, or clerks updating a database with records, lists of student names, and timetables. In other schools, however, it is quite clear that the computer is hardly ever used.

English teachers seem to use the computer even less than other teachers. In a recent small survey at The University of Hong Kong only 6 out of 80 teachers had ever used a computer, and only 2 of those 6 used a computer regularly.

By contrast, in the new B.Ed (Language Teaching) programme which starts in September 1993 at The University of Hong Kong, the first module that students will encounter is 'Computer Literacy and Keyboard Skills'. In this 20 hour module, students will be expected to become familiar with the computer and acquire enough word processing skills to be able to produce all their subsequent assignments in word processed form. This will have the tremendous advantage of allowing students to re-work, revise and re-submit assignments as part of the development of thinking and analysis which will lead them to become true professionals in their field.

In a later course these students will learn how to produce worksheets and create graphics (pictures) on the computer for use during their periods of school experience. In subsequent courses they will encounter developments in Computer Assisted Language Learning, Computational Linguistics, Lexicography, and Concordancing. By the end of the four year course, they will be extremely familiar with the Personal Computer (PC) and its facilities and will bring what they have learned into the schools.

In the next ten years the personal computer will become cheap enough for almost every family to own one. They will become as frequent as television sets in the average home and our students will be as familiar with

their use as they are with hand-held electronic games such as 'Game Boy'. Coniam (1992) has ventured to suggest that by the end of the first quarter of the 21st Century, the pen and paper will be replaced entirely, in some societies, by hand-held electronic keyboards.

In the next section we will first explore what equipment and programmes (known as *hardware* and *software*) are currently available to teachers and the uses we can make of it. Then developments now available to researchers will be discussed and considered in relation to how useful they could be for the classroom teacher.

Hardware Now Available—What We Can Use Now

Computers

This section deals with equipment which it is possible to use now to good effect once we overcome the barriers that prevent us from using it.

Computers are already available in the schools and in many homes. A computer of this kind is often referred to as a PC (Personal Computer). Unfortunately, many teachers are reluctant to use them to produce materials such as worksheets. Let us consider possible reasons why teachers continue to use typewriters or to give drafts to the clerks to type out and photocopy. One reason may be that Arts graduates have been educated in an emotional environment which assumes that they are good at reading books but that they are useless at practical, scientific and technical matters.

When introducing teachers of English to simple statistics on testing and evaluation courses (see Falvey et al. forthcoming) I always have to calm fears about the mathematics involved, and show that they are as capable as anyone of carrying out the statistical procedures necessary to discover meaningful information about tests and test items. 'If it's technical leave it alone' seems to be the motto of the teacher of English. However I find that they have no problems with the tape-recorders and other hi-fi equipment required for listening lessons. They can also use the TV set and the video recorder. Postgraduate Certificate of Education students at The University of Hong Kong regularly produce videos of themselves teaching as part of their assignments. They have no problems with these pieces of equipment. However, mention computers and they say, 'No, they are far too technical'.

Once the emotional/technical barrier has been overcome, teachers find that the advantages of the PC are overwhelming. It is possible to produce a worksheet at very short notice. An idea can be worked on and produced very easily, considered, and revised once or twice without inconvenience to the office staff who hate retyping drafts. The worksheets can also look very attractive for students when they are created with eye-catching formats.

How can the barrier be overcome? The answer can be relatively simple. All you have to do is to treat the PC as a very friendly typewriter which helps you when a typewriter cannot. The first thing to do is not attempt to follow the manuals produced by the companies but to get a friend or colleague to show you how to start up the machine and then give you a simple set of

instructions to follow which allows you to type, save what you have typed in the memory of the machine and then to print off what you have typed and saved. It is amazing how much you can do with such limited knowledge.

Once you have made progress, the availability of graphics packages means that you can add drawings and shapes (icons) to your worksheets to make them more attractive. Recent software creation by the Microsoft Corporation provides a 'user friendly' environment for the teacher who wants to use programmes such as the wordprocessing package 'Microsoft Word' and their very easy to use 'Windows' software allows the relative novice a great deal of freedom and versatility with pull-down menus instead of commands. This means that words (menus) appear on the screen offering you a choice of what you would like to do next. In earlier times operators had to remember a great number of commands in order to give simple commands to the computer. Now, that is all done for you.

Appendix 1a and 1b show the differences that can be made to a worksheet by using the PC. It is a simple form of what is becoming to be known as 'desktop publishing', publishing which occurs in the workplace rather than in the commercial publishers.

The PC also allows for the publication of student work in an attractive format. Student essays, book reviews, poems and interviews can be collected, word processed by students, and published using desktop software (programmes that allow the teacher to produce pamphlets, brochures and little booklets). Students will write much more carefully, paying attention to the content and accuracy of their texts if they are likely to be read in the real world of parents, relatives, siblings and peers. Access to a PC will give the English Club an incentive to publish what they talk about, produce simple notices and provide information about their activities without creating extra work for administrative and professional staff.

Fax Machines

Fax machines are more common in Hong Kong and Japan than in the rest of the world. Soon, they will become available in schools for administrative purposes linking schools to their sponsors, to the Education Department and to other organizations. One of the big advantages they can bring will be the rapid exchange of information among teachers. Worksheets can be exchanged; tests can be piloted in another school so that items can be moderated before being used in your own school; and student texts can be exchanged and read in other classes thus providing a real audience for their writing (research has shown that the provision of a real audience leads to a significant improvement in student writing because of the greater attention given to it and the willingness of students to revise and redraft.)

Newer Developments

Electronic mail (email) – electronic networks

Email is now commonly used in universities on a worldwide basis. It works in the following way. A university teacher's PC is net-worked (i.e. it

is linked to other PCs in the university so that teachers can 'talk' to each other by typing in their words onto the screen and sending them to their colleagues.) In addition, through the university's mainframe computer in its Computer Centre, teachers can be linked to other academics sitting at their PCs in their rooms in their universities five or ten thousand miles away.

This provides for a tremendous amount of interflow and exchange of information and ideas. Dino Chincotta and Jeffrey Day at The University of Hong Kong are currently working on a project which will allow science teachers in Hong Kong secondary schools to be linked with the university and with each other so that they can communicate with each other and share 'bulletin boards' (information sheets on screen) which provide information to which the teacher would not normally have access (Chincotta and Day 1992). The advantages to the profession of this facility are just now becoming apparent. If the idea is spread to other subject areas, teachers of English will be able to share ideas, share worksheets that work well, share techniques and strategies, and ask for advice or help or information.

As this paper was being written, a piece of information arrived on one of the electronic networks to which I subscribe talking about Dual-coding theory, a suggested replacement for the schema theory of reading which has been so influential in our interpretation of how people learn to understand a piece of writing they have never encountered before. As a result of this information I have been able to contact another subscriber on the network asking for details of the new theory called 'dual coding theory'. Indeed, the Coniam article mentioned above was first 'published' in electronic format in 'The Electronic Journal' which allows ideas to be shared quickly and cheaply by electronic mail before publication in hard print in book form.

New Developments

Scanners

Scanners are electronic machines which allow a text or graphics to be fed into the machine which electronically scans it into a file in the PC. This means that all the text has been captured in a format which teachers can work on as though they are working on a word processor. Teachers then can work on the text as though it was their own writing in the PC. Texts which have been scanned can be altered, shortened, added to, words can be deleted to create cloze passages, questions added for text comprehension, subtitles can be added to make them more readable, questions can be interspersed to help reading attack skills, and sentences can be re-arranged to create jigsaw reading exercises.

Scanners are not, at the moment, sophisticated enough to capture all of the data 'cleanly' (without some errors) but they are 90% correct and improving rapidly.

Concordances

In the creation of a new generation of dictionaries, such as the COBUILD Series, researchers fed millions of words into large computers as running text (i.e. just feeding the text into the computer without stopping for breaks such as chapters or paragraphs). As a result, the dictionary entries could be based on real use, with examples taken from a very large sample of material. In order to process this massive amount of text in a meaningful way, software had to be developed to handle the data in chunks which could be studied. Thus, concordance programmes were developed.

A concordance programme allows the researcher to call up every use of a particular word or set of words in the database of words (called a corpus). As an example, the concordance programme in a 2.5 million corpus of spoken text from the BBC would tell us that the word 'spoken' occurs 71 times in the 2.5 million words in the corpus. The concordance programme would allow you to inspect those occurrences in order to determine the **context** in which they are used. One can inspect the concordance output which can be printed and determine whether, for example, the word 'spoken' collocates with (occurs in the company of) the word 'word'. It does, 7 times!

The advantages that this development brings to the teacher and her students are manifest. First of all, it is possible to help vocabulary development by discovering the most common collocations of key words and teaching them. Secondly, it is possible to sort out problems associated with linguistic elements which often cause problems for teachers (e.g. prepositional use). The concordance programmes allow the researcher, and eventually the teacher, to print out the prepositions that are causing problems and inspect them in order to discover how they are used on a regular basis. For example, it would be interesting to discover how the words 'with' and 'to' collocate with the word 'spoken'. Students find this kind of work fascinating. Teachers can allow the students to inspect the printouts and **work out for themselves** the rules underlying prepositional use. Another example of how the concordance programme can help is in inspecting adjectival order (e.g. one can programme the computer to produce concordances for 'big green' . . . or 'green big' . . . or 'the little' . . . and see what occurs before and after them. Students are soon able to work out for themselves how the adjectives are usually arranged. This 'working out for themselves' is, of course, a much more effective way of learning than being told the rule and then asked to apply it. It is an inductive approach, rather than a deductive approach.

A major advantage of concordances is that they are able to assist both teachers and students in the development of **language awareness**. Language awareness is the term given to techniques and approaches which are designed to help teachers and students become aware of how language is used in context. Two examples have been given above. A further example concerns grammar. Two aspects of grammar can be investigated. The first is morphology. The second is syntax.

Morphology is the science which investigates the structure of words – how words are formed. It is insightful for teachers and students to work with a concordance programme, call up a word, inspect its uses and then apply morphological rues to it to see that context in which its derivatives occur. One could, for example, take the word 'success', call it up and see the variety of contexts in which the word is used. Then we could add the suffix 'ful' to create 'successful', call it up and inspect the contexts in which it appears. Students soon get into the swing when they start asking for the words 'unsuccessful', 'successfully', and 'unsuccessfully' to be called up for printing out and inspection. The process of inspection and reporting back to the class of what they have discovered can lead to a great deal of language awareness.

Syntax is the discipline which investigates the structure of the clause. Concordances allow us to investigate how words are ordered, how elements of a clause are ordered, how tense agreement occurs and how clauses are embedded. They are particularly useful in helping both teachers and students become familiar with the use of modals and conditionals, both of which cause problems for second language learners. One can call up for inspection a series of modal uses in order to determine when and how they are used and in what contexts. In the same way conditionals can be investigated to explore examples of use by native speakers which run counter to what we are told in the grammar textbooks. An example is when authentic text written by educated native speakers demonstrates that tense agreement as prescribed by the text books does not always follow in real life. An example would be:

'If he comes, I'm gone'.

In this example, teachers would normally teach 'If he comes, I will go.' It would, however, be useful to explore how often the simple present tense of the verb 'to be' is used with the past participle form of the verb 'to go' instead of the modal verb 'will' with the infinitive of the verb 'to go'.

It is important to note that even researchers are not yet able to get their hands on the really big corpora which exist. Most researchers are currently using small concordance programmes which can only deal with limited amounts of text. One really needs about 250 citations of a word in a corpus to be able to say anything significant about the way in which that word behaves in text. It will not be long, however, before teachers will be able to link into large corpora to produce their own printed lists of words and their collocations for analysis by themselves and their students.

CD ROM Machines and Pronunciation

Richard Cauldwell working at the University of Birmingham, UK, in association with Margaret Allen, has made a remarkable breakthrough with CD ROM technology. The equipment consists of a CD disk and a CD player linked to a PC. The text on the CD has been typed onto the word processor. In addition, the phonological representation of the text is shown above each line of text. When the screen is linked to a large screen one can call up any

line of text and hear IMMEDIATELY the words being spoken by the original speaker. The practical use for teachers will be that eventually they will be able to use this equipment which allows for immediate searching and instant playback time and again. Work on pronunciation will be so much easier than it is at present when the teacher has to laboriously rewind and re-cue the audio tape time and again. This breakthrough will almost certainly be seen in the universities before it is seen in the schools, but Collins Harper are interested in the idea and it could be a relatively short time before textbooks are published with the accompanying CDs and software.

Speech Synthesizers

Work on speech SYNTHESIZERS is ongoing in many universities throughout the world. The idea behind a speech synthesizer is that by speaking into an attachment to the PC the spoken word can be received, processed and copied onto a floppy disk in the same way that the written word can be word processed.

The implications of a breakthrough in this area are huge. To begin with student oral work could be put onto disk and printed out. In this way stories and presentations could be worked on, edited and revised and finally created in publishable form. This would also allow teachers to create their own material much more easily and, especially, expand, amend and abridge material from other sources. It would complement the technology of the scanner described above by providing teachers of English with a magnificent tool for materials initiation and development.

Conclusion

There are other pieces of equipment coming on to the market which eventually filter down to be used by teachers in the classroom. However, of all the technological developments mentioned above the PC, its smaller versions the laptop (portable PC) and the notebook (a smaller and lighter version of the laptop) undoubtedly offer the greatest promise for the teacher of English in the short term.

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APPENDIX 1A

This worksheet is presented as though it was typed for photocopying.

You will have 120 minutes in order to accomplish the following tasks.

1. You are required to assemble the materials you collected in the survey of cinema going habits among the different class groups in the school.

2. Then you have to write a 200 word abstract of the main points that you have extracted from the materials you have collected.

3. After that you are asked to present recommendations to the school authorities for the establishment of a cinema club which will show films that students and teachers agree are worthwhile and enjoyable in order to counteract the films which many consider undesirable in our cinemas at present.

APPENDIX 1B

This shows what can be done to the same text, very simply with the PC in only 2 minutes.

You will have 120 minutes in order to accomplish the following tasks.

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1. You are required to assemble the materials you collected in the survey of *cinema going habits* among the different class groups in the school.

2. Then you have to write a **200 word abstract** of the main points that you have extracted from the materials you have collected.

3. After that you are asked to present **recommendations** to the school authorities for the establishment of a cinema club which will show films that students and teachers agree are **worthwhile** and **enjoyable** in order to counteract the films which many consider undesirable in our cinemas at present.

REPORTS AND SUMMARIES
滙　報

香港課程發展議會已於本年初頒佈有關中學中國語文及文化科（高級補充程度）課程綱要。這是一個為預科學生而設的新課程。根據中國語文及文化科聯合工作小組的報告指出，開設本科的意義：

一直以來，關心中文教育的人無不渴望為語文教育開創一條新路，提高學生的語文水平和研習語文的興趣，中六教育工作小組的建議下提供了一個良好的機會。課程發展議會與考試局的科目委員會雖然受命設計本科課程，卻絕無「應制」的感覺，只誠心誠意地設計一個合理而有效的課程，藉以培養提高本港青年的語文能力，進而提升中文在本港社會的地位，保有並發揚中國文化的精粹。[1]

中國語文及文化科聯合工作小組又說明了開設本科的背景：原來在一九八九年底，香港政府發表了「中六教育工作小組報告書」，並宣佈接納該工作小組的多項建議，其中一項為：由一九九二年開始，屬於高級補充程度(ASL)的「中國語文及文化科」，連同「英語運用科」與「社會及人文學科」將為學校開設所有兩年制中六課程的主要組成部分。換言之，在今年，本港的中六、中七學生不論修讀文、理、工商任何科目，也不論在修畢中六課程後升學或就業，預期都會繼續修讀中文。中六教育工作小組提出各項建議的目的，為了達致教育統籌委員會所訂目標，包括：

1. 培養發展均衡、知識豐富的學生；
2. 為學生接受專上和大專教育作好準備；
3. 提高所有學生以中、英文溝通的能力；
4. 為學生即將踏入成年階段作好準備。[2]

因此，報告書特別強調高級補充程度的課程綱要應盡量着重其實用性。對於新開設的「中國語文科」（後來定名為「中國語文及文化科」），中六教育工作小組認為應屬中四、中五「中國語文科」的「自然延續」，功能在加強學生在語文方面講和寫的技巧，以及使他們對語文的句法，結構及修辭等方面具有基本的認識，並加強學生對「中國文化的了解」。[3]

中國語文及文化科教學的目標有三：

1. 鞏固學生以往所學的中國語文基本知識，提高學生閱讀、寫作、聆聽、說話等語文能力，尤其著重思維的訓練與語文的實際應用。
2. 增進學生對中國文化的認識，啟發學生的思想，培養學生的品德，使能建立正確的價值觀，加強對社會的責任感。

3. 提高學生學習中國語文及文化的興趣，並使學生有繼續進修的自學能力。③

當這個新課程頒佈後，很多教師都表示有一種「不知所措」「無所依歸」的感覺。參加語文教育學院921期中學中國語文科復修課程的中學教師，大家實行了集思廣益的做法，在小組設計課中為這個新課程設計了一些教學設計。這些設計也許未盡妥善，但對現職教師應有參考的價值和啟發的作用。

所有有關的教學設計，現存語文教育學院教師資源中心，供各在職教師參考。

現將各小組教學設計介紹如下：

CS921 期第一組：

導師：劉關之英
組員：陳紹舜　　曾偉祺　　郭兆輝　　何偉明
　　　林美玉　　阮麗芬　　羅妍芬　　劉婉萍
　　　任釗嫻　　黃慧薇

設計名稱：實用文處境寫作教學設計　高級補充程度
適合程度：中六、中七
設計意義：一九九二年九月，全港的中六級都要開設中國語文與文化科課程。根據課程綱要所列，寫作教學著重訓練學生掌握各種實用文類的寫作技巧。所以我們提供了實用文體的處境寫作設計，給各位老師參考。

　　　　　這個設計跟傳統的實用文寫作教學模式有很大分別。它的內容共分甲、乙、丙三部份。而乙部的處境寫作教學設計就最能夠突出本設計的特色。在未講述設計的內容之前，我們先闡明這個設計的原則和特色：

（一）　傳統的實用文寫作教學都是按不同的文體獨立命題寫作，但我們採用了綜合處境寫作形式。

（二）　為免學生憑空設想處境實況，所以我們在設計裏提供了很多寫作的輔助資料和多元化的教具，如圖表、圖畫、數據、海報、剪報、場刊、錄音帶、錄像帶、宣傳單張和小冊子等等。希望透過這些資料的幫助，使學生能直接投入處境寫作。

（三）　為了避免寫作枯燥乏味，我們突破了傳統的個別寫作形式，採用分組討論及集體寫作模式。

（四）　通過討論活動，可以提高學生的自學能力、思維能力和讀、寫、聽、說能力。此外，也可增進學生彼此的了解和感情。

（五）　每次寫作評講後，會將各組的優異作品影印派發給學生。這樣可使學生在每次的寫作練習中接觸多類文體和掌握它們的寫作特色。

設計特色：甲部

介紹各類實用文的寫作知識及示例，並附加練習，鞏固學生的知識。

乙部

臚列五個處境寫作教學的設計，希望學生透過這些練習，了解實用文在現實生活裏具有溝通的重要作用，並能學以致用，更可增加他們的寫作興趣。

丙部

這部份是附錄資料，包括了一些應用文寫作的參考資料和處境寫作題目，希望能夠啟發老師自行設計處境寫作的練習。

CS921 期第二組：

導師：鄺銳強

組員：林良堅　　莊潤祥　　朱澤華　　陸明俊
　　　林憶芝　　鄭佩秋　　劉影梅　　盧美蓮
　　　石鳳儀　　梁夏蓮

設計名稱：中國文化介紹——中國音樂
適合程度：中六
設計意義：本設計為配合於九二年推行之中國語文及文化科而製作，目的是使學生通過自學的方法認識中國音樂。

設計特色：設計分兩部分：一、錄影帶
　　　　　　　　　　　　　二、錄音帶

一、錄影帶主要介紹中國樂器的型構與特色。

二、錄音帶主要介紹中國音樂的特質，希望學生通過聆聽中國樂曲，對中國音樂有所認識。

CS921 期第三組：

導師：李孝聰

組員：蘇錦堂　　陳志華　　翁達生　　陳加強
　　　衞家裕　　吳映山　　林素玉　　何美梨
　　　蘇少蓮　　麥婉妮　　薛君儀

設計名稱：中國語文及文化科教學設計

適合程度：中六、中七

設計意義：一九九二年開始，在預科會開設兩年制的高級補充程度中國語文及文化科課程。課程分為語文及文化兩部份。在文化部份指定了六篇文化專題篇章，作為介紹及探究中國文化精神的教材。本組同學選取了五篇，做了五個教學設計，以供老師們參考。

設計特色：一、本教學設計之形式，乃參考課程綱要中的建議教案。
　　　　　二、每一文化篇章的教學節數均為九節。
　　　　　三、本設計與寫作、聆聽說話、閱讀等語文教學環節相配合。
　　　　　四、教學活動以學生為中心，多以討論形式進行。
　　　　　五、部份篇章附有供老師參考的資料。

CS921 期第四組：

導師：鄭仕源

組員：林惠棠　　鍾英傑　　劉　永　　李永洪
　　　何玉沂　　鮑國鴻　　林佑家　　高金枝
　　　高少英　　余潔儀　　楊小惠

設計名稱：高級補充程度說話能力訓練設計

適合程度：中六、七

設計意義：在新科目——中學高級補充程度「中國語文及文化科」中，聽說能力成為考核學生語文能力的項目，對學生聽說能力的要求大大提高。今天，聽說能力的訓練、系統、方法、考核方法等還未完善建立，仍須摸索方向，努力實踐。面對新課程，我們

嘗試根據課程綱要的要求，針對描述、報告、演講、評論、辯論、討論等範圍設計一些練習，訓練學生的說話能力；同時亦就各考核項目設計一些練習，期望能減輕老師備課的負擔。

設計特色：一、設計內容集中在說話能力訓練的六個項目：

1. 描述、	2. 報告、	3. 演講
4. 評論、	5. 辯論、	6. 討論

二、每一項目先解釋定義，說明種類，再詳述訓練重點、方法及注意事項。

三、每一項目都附有配合訓練、考核的練習設計及題目舉隅。

四、富實用性。

附註

① 《中國語文及文化》1990.6. 中國語文及文化科聯合工作小組編。
② 見《中六教育工作小組報告書》第1.12頁。
③ 參閱《中國語文及文化科課程綱要》1991.11. 香港課程發展議會編訂。頁9。