

詞語達 10.7 個。其次是消閑娛樂，達 7.6 個，這兩項是學生較熟悉的事項，所以成績還好一點。

另兩項學生不熟悉的事務，即生疏事務的國際時事，40 個空白中，只能填寫 5.3 個，這說明學生平時很少關心時事。最後一項文藝作品，也只能填寫 7.5 個，這也可以看出學生平日很少閱讀文藝作品。

就上述四項完形填充測驗的整體成績而言，其閱讀理解能力平均只達 20%。若以 20% 的理解能力去閱讀報章書刊，是否能夠了解有關篇章的完整內容或大意呢？在新加坡，還沒見過有關這方面的研究報告，無從考查。

不過，根據西方學者的研究報告，英文篇章的閱讀理解能力，可以從完形填充的三個等級去衡量讀者的水平，這三個等級的劃分大致如下：

55%–60% 獨立閱讀水平

40%–54% 輔導閱讀水平

35%–40% 低下閱讀水平

所謂獨立水平 (Independent Level)，顧名思義，意指無需旁人指導，就能大致讀懂原文；而輔導水平 (Instructional level)，意指尚需旁人略作指導，或給提示，或給線索，或略作解釋才能讀懂原文；至於低下水平 (Frustration level)，當然是指在一般閱讀水準以下，無法讀懂原文。這次考核，高二學生的理解水平，只及輔導水平的一半，以此類推，要他們閱讀報章雜誌，恐會如履薄冰，困難重重了。

## 六、結語——有待商榷的一些問題

前面說過，本文的主要目的有二：一為探求高二學生認字辨詞的能力；二為窺測他們的閱讀理解能力。測量結果，學生認字辨詞的能力堪稱理想，總成績達 72.4%，其中辨認單字達 69.7%，辨識詞語和成語分別是 73.6% 和 74.0%。這是通過四個備選答案的多項選擇題進行測驗所得出的成績。

然而，不用選擇題，而是通過書寫詞語的完形填充來測量他們的理解能力，表現卻迥然有別，平均成績只有 20%，屬劣等水平，原因何在？如何補救？值得商榷。

眾所周知，新加坡學生平時的練習或測驗，諸如辨字測驗、詞義測驗、詞語解釋、詞辨練習、選詞填充、配詞練習、選擇適當的虛詞、連接句子、填寫適當的句子、解釋句子畫線的部分、理解測驗、理解問答等等，名目可真不少，但這些練習或測驗，由小學、中學而至初級學院，十之八九是以多項選擇式命題，學生不是勾 1、2、3 或 4，就是圈 A、B、C 或 D。如此勾勾圈圈的選擇題，往往助長學生猜題，已是不爭的事實。有

人做過測驗，在同一個項目中，學生只選 A 或 B，命中率達四分之一，甚至沒有任何華文知識背景的淡米爾族和馬來族學生，答對率可達 26% 至 41% (梁：1990) [3]。因此，通過選擇題的練習或測驗，儘管項目煩多，但是否能夠按部就班訓練學生的四會能力，有待商榷。

這次的完形填充測驗，是採用填詞方式而不是單字 (單詞)，難度較高，所以成績只有 20%。若是填寫單字，其表現如何呢？有待另行測驗。不過，可暫拿中學生的測驗做參考，其成績是 27.09% (吳：1988) [4]，可見無論填寫詞語還是單字，成績都不理想。

完形填充是一種引導、訓練學生利用上下文之間的關聯理解整篇文章的方法。學生要在留空處填入意義上、語法上正確的字或詞，須集中注意力進行推理判斷，而這種推理判斷，又離不開詞匯、語法和篇章結構等知識。因此，完形填充是一種用來檢驗學生的理解能力和應用能力的有效方法。近年來，在英語教學的世界中，在對外漢語教學領域裏，完形程序法已成為教師訓練與考核學生語言的一個重要環節，我國中小學的華文教學、測驗與考試，是否要引進完形程序法，以提高華文的理解能力和運用能力，也是值得商榷的一件事。

附錄 表一 測試成績 (N = 209)

測試項目	題數	信度	平均數 (標準差)	百分比
認字辨詞				
單字	150	0.96	104.5 (24.9)	69.7
詞語	80	0.94	58.9 (14.8)	73.6
成語	30	0.91	22.2 (6.8)	74.0
理解能力				
本地新聞	40	0.77	10.7 (5.6)	26.8
消閒娛樂	40	0.67	7.6 (4.2)	19.0
國際時事	40	0.66	5.3 (3.6)	13.3
文藝作品	40	0.74	7.5 (4.7)	18.8

表二 相關系數

理解能力	認字辨詞		
	單字	詞語	成語
本地新聞	0.666	0.637	0.384
消閒娛樂	0.664	0.581	0.426
國際時事	0.547	0.576	0.407
文藝作品	0.437	0.513	0.487
中數	0.606	0.579	0.417

表三 回歸分析

準則	預測變異(%)				多元回歸 系數(R)
	單字	詞語	成語	總變異(%)	
理解能力					
熟悉事務*	40.42	15.44	-0.88	54.98	0.7415
生疏事務*	6.56	21.75	8.86	37.17	0.6097
理解總分	28.45	23.35	4.18	55.98	0.7482

\*熟悉事務包括本地新聞與消閒娛樂。

\*生疏事務包括國際時事與文藝作品。

附註

- ① 標準測差計算用公式： $SEM = S \sqrt{1 - r_{tt}}$ 。公式中的S是標準差(Standard deviation)，而 $r_{tt}$ 是信度，信度以KR21為準。
- ② 掌握程度的推算法用公式： $\bar{X} \pm 2.58 SEM$ ，再換成百分率。
- ③ 參見梁榮基：《利用多項選擇來測定學生語文能力的利弊》，載《世界華文教學研討會論文集》第689-692頁，新加坡華文研究會，1990。
- ④ 參見吳英成：《以克漏字測驗探討新加坡的華語數學問題》，載《第二屆國際漢語教學討論會論文選》第107-113頁，北京語言學院出版社，1988。

# SUPPORTING CURRICULUM CHANGE

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In this short article I shall offer some suggestions of ways in which teachers can best be supported in the process of curriculum change. The article is not intended to reflect 'received wisdom' from research; it is an impressionistic account which draws on my own experiences in U.K. over the last seven years. I believe that these may have some relevance to the situation in Hong Kong as Targets and Target-Related Assessment (TTRA) is introduced stage-by-stage into the territory's primary and secondary schools.

My own experience of supporting curriculum change has been gained through involvement with two national curriculum initiatives in U.K. – the National Writing Project (NWP) and the Language in the National Curriculum Project (LINC). I shall give most attention to LINC since the circumstances of the introduction of the National Curriculum most closely parallel those of TTRA.

## **The National Writing Project**

The experience of leading a local part of the NWP – based in Sheffield and called the Sheffield Writing at the Transition Project (which produces the happy acronym SWATT!) – fed into the LINC Project in significant ways.

The NWP was set up in 1985 as a collaboration between several Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and the School Curriculum Development Committee (SCDC). In each LEA there was a high degree of autonomy in determining the focus of the local project. In Sheffield we opted to look at continuities/discontinuities in pupils' experiences of writing as they moved from primary to secondary phases of schooling. The decision to take this focus was based on negotiations with local advisors and a steering committee on which teachers were represented – an important factor since it gave teachers a sense of ownership from the outset of the project.

The initial stage of the work was to investigate the nature of the transitional experience. We collected data and analysed this to reveal what we considered to be significant aspects of pupils' writing experiences as they moved from primary to secondary school. The findings are fully reported in Harris, Horner and Tunnard (1986). Among the most significant findings are:

- attention to the processes of writing was very rare at both primary and secondary stages;
- a very low proportion of writing at secondary level was in the pupils' own words;

- pupils rarely had the opportunity to formulate and express opinions in writing;
- science writing at secondary level consisted of only copied instructions or dictated notes;
- there was little writing other than narrative at primary level, apart from 'topic' writing which was commonly copied.

These findings did not, in fact, surprise us since they had been highlighted in various HM1 reports published in the late 1970s (see, for instance, DES 1978 and 1979). Nevertheless, the fact that our findings were based on locally collected data argued for proceeding in a sensitive way because of the implications that current practice was inadequate; and this, we felt, would be threatening to teachers.

A further factor led us to proceed with caution; and that was the very low morale of teachers at the time. In 1985/6 teachers were engaged in a long drawn-out pay dispute accompanied by industrial action in the form of a work-to-rule. They were also suffering from a systematic, but unprincipled, attack on their professionalism led by Government spokespersons including the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Education. This attack was clearly motivated by a political agenda which included the undermining of the power of trade unions but also by an ideological agenda that sought by ridicule to redress what were perceived as the excesses of the 'liberal' educational establishment. It was not difficult for us to conclude that in such circumstances what teachers needed was support rather than further threats.

Our strategies for coping with this situation were to create open discussion of our findings, which meant we did not address groups of teachers with the assumption that what we had found about current practice was wrong; rather to present our findings, and invite reactions. Sessions were organised with a minimal factual input to allow as much time as possible for small group discussions and feed-back. The project team acted very much as facilitators of the discussion. Thus teachers were able to formulate their own reactions and then identify which aspect(s) of our findings, if any, they wanted to address in developing their own classroom practice.

As the project progressed we were able to offer support in several ways to the teachers who had opted to undertake development in their own classroom—

- team teaching (including planning) in which members of the project team worked with an individual teacher in his or her classroom for a short period of time on a teaching programme determined by the teacher – we found that this teamwork was particularly valuable in unlocking the paralysis that so often grips people when contemplating change;
- the establishment of groups of teachers working on the same or adjacent areas so that they could meet (after school or, occasionally, on half-day release) to exchange experiences, approaches and materials. These groups eventually produced pamphlets which the

project team edited, published and distributed to all schools in the area;

- the establishment of networks to link up teachers with similar concerns who were unable to join a group but wished to have continued contact with colleagues;
- the devising and publication of an in-service pack of activities and materials that would enable teachers to continue their professional development in their own school context, with the possibility of the involvement of either all their colleagues or of a number of colleagues. This, of course, would vary depending on the school. We worked in primary schools with a total staff of less than twenty and in comprehensives with a staff of over a hundred. In comprehensives, we were keen not to work only with English departments. Since we were looking at writing we wanted the focus to be on all subjects that involved writing.

On a small scale, then, this local part of the NWP established the following approaches to supporting curriculum change:

- negotiation with teachers to create priorities;
- establishing groups of teachers in schools to support each other;
- establishing wider networks of teachers also to support each other;
- production and publication of materials by the groups of teachers;
- materials for continued professional development that were designed to foster an active-learning approach.

This last item – the active-learning or activity-based approach to in-service development – was extended to other parts of the NWP and the workshop materials produced across the country formed one of the end – of – project publications (NWP 1989).

## **LINC – The Language in the National Curriculum Project**

By the end of the NWP in the summer of 1988, the legal foundation of the National Curriculum had been put in place through the Education Reform Act of the same year. The framework for assessment, the 'Black Report' (DES, 1987), was also already in place. Teachers were in a mood of sullen resentment at this quite unprecedented political interference in education. They were quite unprepared for the imposition of a curriculum, hitherto the concern of local authorities, headteachers and, to a considerable extent, individual teachers (except, of course, in secondary year 4 and beyond where the examination syllabus dictates the curriculum). They were not consulted, initially, over the National Curriculum proposals; access to in-service training was adversely affected by changes in the funding arrangements. There were also proposals, particularly affecting primary teachers, for introducing, as compulsory areas of the curriculum, subjects such as science and technology, which the vast majority of generalist primary teachers felt ill-equipped to teach.

In this difficult context, practices of the teaching of English were also called into question, first by the Kingman Report (DES, 1988) and then by

the draft proposals for English the National Curriculum – finalised in the official document of March 1990 (DES, 1990). It was a period of rapid change, of persistent rumour, of high communal anxiety and much individual stress. The teaching of English was generally perceived by teachers as an area of the curriculum that needed little change and, therefore, little support. With the publication of the reports on English, however, the situation changed dramatically. It became apparent that teachers needed to know about the forms and structures of English. This may seem strange to readers in Hong Kong, but in U.K. linguistics or language study has not formed part of, nor has it informed, mother-tongue English teaching which has been concerned, principally, with literature, creative writing and social and personal development through a thematic or topic-based approach. Thus, what had appeared to be one of the few 'safe' areas was suddenly revealed as yet another minefield.

This was the situation when the LINC Project was established, directly funded by DES, to ensure that all primary teachers and all secondary teachers of English were trained in the knowledge of the English Language specified by the Kingman Report. I was asked to act as joint coordinator for a consortium of the five local authorities in the South Yorkshire and Humberside area of England – along with a colleague I was seconded on a half time basis from my duties as Head of Academic Development in the School of Education at Sheffield City Polytechnic. Professor Ron Carter of Nottingham University was appointed as the National Coordinator.

The DES planned (and funded) the LINC Project on the 'cascade' model – i.e. at the first stage of 'training' local authority appointees were to receive a year's full-time training in those areas of linguistics identified by the Kingman Report as needed by all teachers. These appointees (one per local authority), in turn, would give five days of training to language coordinators/ consultants in each primary school in the authority while the regional coordinators gave a similar training to the Heads of English Departments (Panel Chairpersons) in all the secondary schools in the consortium. Language coordinators would then be expected to train all the staff in their schools using some of the regular allocation of school-based curriculum or 'Baker' days (5 per annum). Heads of English were to do the same for their departments; no provision was made for teachers of other subjects.

It was, in fact, a proposal of considerable ineptitude; and it also carried messages of imposition, of the inadequacy of teachers and of a heavily transmissive mode of in-service training. Added to that was a widespread feeling that the proposals of the Kingman Report, whatever their merits as a linguistics course, were not mediated for teaching purposes in an appropriate way. This was a view held not only by teachers but by a large number of linguists.

However, from these inauspicious beginnings the LINC Project became well-regarded by teachers and local authority advisors. It received what is believed to have been a favourable report from HM1 (Her Majesty's

Inspectorate) – this cannot be verified because publication of the report was suppressed by Kenneth Clarke, then Secretary of State for Education. The materials produced by the project are widely sought after, not just in U.K., but world-wide, including in Hong Kong – again, despite a ban on publication by the Government. The 'reader' produced by the project team nationally has headed the publishers' educational sales list for over a year (see Carter (ed.), 1990). It is an extraordinary turn-about in fortune; and, it seems to me, the approach to supporting curriculum change merits attention, the more so once this turn-about is appreciated.

I suggested at the beginning of this article that the experiences of working on the NWP influenced the LINC Project. Apart from myself, there were six other LINC regional coordinators, out of the total of twenty four, who had previously worked on the NWP. Since there were significant differences between the two projects a major issue was how far the approaches that had proved to be successful on the NWP could be transferred to LINC. The difference included:

### *NWP*

Voluntary participation; supporting desirable developments in the writing curriculum;

small-scale with only a selection of LEAs involved and only a small proportion of teachers within those authorities.

### *LINC*

obligatory participation; supporting statutory curriculum requirements for the teaching of English;

large-scale and intended to involve every primary teacher and all secondary teachers of English in England and Wales.

As this project developed, however, it became apparent that because of these differences and particularly because of the statutory nature of the National Curriculum it was all the more important to include and refine some of the approaches to in-service that had been pioneered during the NWP. It should, of course, be borne in mind that the LINC approaches and perceptions were developed through, literally, thousands of in-service sessions – some highly successful, some disastrous and many somewhere in between these extremes!

## **Lessons from LINC**

I shall devote the rest of the article to making observations on ten aspects of the LINC approach. These points, which are not listed in any order of priority, are:

1. Don't attempt to cover everything at once – avoid lectures and set up as much group work as possible;
2. Engage as fully as possible with teachers' current experiences and practices as points of departure;
3. Never dictate about what must be done – avoid, at all costs, an authoritarian stance;

4. Accept that you will be the target of hostility and be prepared to cope with it;
5. Be honest and open about difficulties;
6. Give due regard to teachers' existing knowledge and expertise;
7. Use activities that promote participation and active learning – support these by commentaries where appropriate;
8. Help teachers to identify important issues, give guidance but don't prescribe solutions;
9. Use authentic illustrative materials;
10. Involve teachers in the development and trialling of materials.

### 1. *Don't attempt to cover everything at once*

It is a common fault with teaching and with in-service work in particular, that pressures of time and the desire for comprehensive coverage lead people to abandon good principles of teaching. With major curriculum initiatives this is particularly the case. The developers will naturally feel that every nicety of phrasing, every detailed point is important – often because they will have debated and revised such points many times in the development stage – but teachers are not engaged in the same way and will simply 'switch off' if they are bombarded by the fine details of frameworks, concepts and specifications, often in alien terminology, which take a lot of time to absorb.

On the LINC project we had strong sense that we needed to 'cover' a vast amount of linguistics and all aspects of the requirements for English in the National Curriculum. Yet, it was quickly apparent that engaging in restricted and carefully selected areas enabled teachers to begin to fill in parts of the whole design for themselves. This really amounts to little more than saying that the transmission of great amounts of information is, ultimately, counter-productive. Enabling teachers, however, to develop an independence through which they take responsibility for their own continuing development within the context of a curriculum initiative is infinitely more helpful.

It follows that group discussion is a more enabling approach than lecturing which tends to foster passivity and dependence.

### 2. *Engage as fully as possible with teachers' current experiences and practices*

All curriculum change that is imposed runs the risk of 'de-skilling' teachers (i.e. making them feel inadequate, unprepared and incapable of coping). This is particularly true in a situation (as with the LINC project) where there is both a likely change in teaching styles and also new knowledge to be absorbed. If teachers are intrinsically motivated to acquire new knowledge and new aspects of professional practice, that is a positive outcome. The reverse, however, is more likely; and sensitivity to this issue is, therefore, of great importance. One must start from where teachers are in their existing perceptions of teaching.

### 3. *Never dictate about what must be done*

This is really a simple point. If curriculum change is imposed by statute (as in the case of the National Curriculum), it is a self-evident matter that if, in in-service work, you dictate to teachers about courses of action you ally yourself with the regulatory powers. In an 'us and them' situation you become identified with 'them'. This usually leads to a pretty swift rejection of whatever you say or suggest. It is not necessary to 'curry favour'; a stance of neutrality is possible and is likely to be respected.

### 4. *Accept that you will be the target of hostility*

Apart from a few restless souls, most people cannot cope well with change. Change produces stress and people express their sense of stress through hostility to whoever is immediately accessible and identified with the agents of change. Therefore, whether it is just or not, it is one part of the role of people supporting curriculum change to absorb the hostility. It is important to recognise that this is not personally directed, though it may often be hurtful. Many times on the LINC Project I have wanted to protest that "It's not my fault. I've just been told to run these sessions. Blame the Government!" However, experience has suggested that it is much better to make a minimum of comment, to allow opportunities for teachers to 'let off steam' and to avoid at all costs any type of confrontation.

On the positive side, people who complained bitterly at the outset of the LINC Project were often those who wrote or spoke most enthusiastically in their evaluations at the end of the Project.

### 5. *Be honest and open about difficulties*

When involved in supporting curriculum change the in-service provider is likely to feel caught between loyalty to the curriculum developers, on the one hand, and the teachers (the curriculum deliverers) on the other. This can lead to a glossing over of difficulties which will leave teachers dissatisfied. With the requirements for English in the National Curriculum, there were several areas of difficulty – hardly surprising in view of the speed of development. There is no point served in trying to hide such difficulties – pretending they do not exist does not eliminate them in reality. It is much more positive to acknowledge them openly, create debate and invite teachers to formulate their own solutions.

### 6. *Give due regard to teachers' existing knowledge and expertise*

On the LINC Project there was a risk that knowledge about language would be perceived by teachers as a new area into which they had to be forcibly inducted – again, with the strong implication of an imposed agenda. With language, of course, there is an important distinction to be made between implicit and explicit knowledge. We all know a great deal about language implicitly because we are skilful users of language. We were able, in the course of the project, to utilise this implicit

knowledge to good effect and to offer ways of making it more principled and systematic; and this is essentially what the study of linguistics is about. The same is true of teaching. Teachers have great funds of experience and expertise which should not be ignored, but should provide the points of departure in creating change. It is sometimes surprising how probing existing experiences brings to light dissatisfactions that suggest a readiness for change.

#### 7. *Activity-based materials and the use of commentaries*

Probably the greatest success of the LINC Project has been the actual design of the in-service development materials. The process of developing these was lengthy - well over a year of drafting and revising, with many weekends locked in hotel rooms and many holidays passing unnoticed. However, the design is basically a simple one:

- identify a teaching/learning issue;
- present a relevant activity in which teachers can participate actively;
- follow this up with a commentary that highlights significant aspects of the experience and relates the perceptions to the development of classroom practice;
- offer suggestions for further, classroom-based follow-up work, in the nature of small-scale action research.

The nature of the activities in the LINC materials varies considerably. There are fairly obvious and conventional ones such as studying a sequence of writing as a text is created through a series of drafts; there are some games that highlight teaching points; there are readings for 'jigsaw' groupings. There are sets of texts with analytical frameworks which can be applied. Some activities would last for ten minutes; others could occupy a whole morning.

Commentaries are important to reinforce the workshop experience of the activity. These provide necessary guidance if teachers have to use the materials without an in-service provider being present. Thus, the commentaries need to be able to stand by themselves.

#### 8. *Identifying issues without prescribing solutions*

Part of the aim of the activity approach was to enable teachers to come to see what were likely to be the major issues in implementing English in the National Curriculum. A judicious mix of leading and pushing meant that, as far as possible, teachers came to identify crucial issues for themselves. Thus they were motivated to seek solutions. Again, group work enabled them to debate solutions rather than to sit passively and be told what to do.

#### 9. *Use of authentic illustrative materials*

This may sound an obvious point. In fact, it is extremely difficult to support curriculum change with authentic materials simply because existing practice may not produce the desired examples. On LINC we overcome this very real problem only partially. We found that teachers

who became involved early on with the project were able to supply examples of materials. In the initial stages, there were problems in not being able to obtain suitable examples of classroom work (children's writing, tape and video examples of talk and so on). It is, of course, vital to ensure credibility by the choice of appropriate examples. Teachers are very quick to denigrate anything that appears to them non-authentic. Interestingly, teachers have often praised the final materials for their authenticity. The officials who criticised the materials and eventually banned publication did so, in part, because they felt the materials contained unfortunate examples (of bad writing, sloppy speech, non-standard forms and so on).

#### 10. *Involvement of teachers in the development and trialling of the materials*

This is a crucial part of supporting curriculum change. If teachers are involved in the process of developing materials it gives them a strong sense of ownership and the materials the stamp of authenticity. It takes time and energy to organise, but the pay-off makes it worthwhile.

### Conclusion

These, then, are some thoughts drawn from experience of ways in which we can support curriculum change. There are, of course, implications in terms of costs and in terms of the time-scale. However, in a context in which TTRA is being introduced with its emphasis on an active, task-based approach to learning, it would be ironic if the in-service support did not also incorporate an active-learning approach.

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# **AND SO TO B.ED – The University of Hong Kong Bachelor of Education programme**

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## **Introduction**

The Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) has recently initiated a B.Ed. programme. Starting in 1991–92 with a 4-year part-time course for serving teachers in the area of special educational needs (known as the B.Ed. Children with Learning Difficulties), the programme will be extended in 1992–93 with the commencement of two similar courses. One of these will be specifically for teachers of Physical Education (the B.Ed. Physical Education and Sport Science). The other will be for teachers of a variety of subjects who work with students in the upper primary—junior secondary age range (the B.Ed. Primary/Secondary). There will be an intake for the latter from two subject areas each year: the first cohort will be teachers of English and Maths. Then, in 1993–94 (having been postponed from 1992–93 because of the Government's decision to cut back its proposed increase in tertiary places), a 4-year full-time B.Ed. in Language Education will be launched. When the course is fully operational there will be an intake each year of 30 prospective teachers of either Chinese Language and Literature or English. This paper will begin by sketching in some of the background to the creation of the HKU part-time B.Ed. programme and will go on to discuss in detail the programme to be offered to serving language teachers. It will then describe briefly the background to, and contents of, the full-time pre-service B.Ed. in Language Education.

## **The HKU part-time B.Ed.: the Background**

For several years now, in one government report after another, there have been calls for an enhanced in-service training provision in Hong Kong to give non-graduate teachers the chance to study for additional qualifications in order that they might continue to develop professionally and also have the opportunity to prepare for future leadership roles within their schools. Graduate teachers have enjoyed the possibility of Certificate, Advanced Diploma, M.Ed., M.Phil. and Ph.D study for some time. The opportunities for Hong Kong's non-graduate teachers have by comparison been severely limited, although the desire of many such teachers for self-improvement is apparent to anyone involved in education and can be clearly illustrated by the large numbers who endure considerable financial expense and personal and family inconvenience to undertake 1-year full-time B.Ed. programmes in countries like the UK, at institutions such as Wolverhampton Polytechnic.

This broad recommendation of improved in-service teacher education opportunities for non-graduates in general has frequently been accompanied by a particular reference to the needs of Primary School teachers, who have had no tailor-made degree programmes until very recently (the Chinese University's 4-year part-time programme, which began in 1988) and no salary reward for achieving graduate status. This specific point was emphasised by the 1982 Visiting Panel of experts whose views were published in the so-called Llewellyn report,

... steps must be taken to enhance the status of primary school teachers and extend career structures for all ... (Visiting Panel, 1982: 89)

and again,

Primary school teaching in particular lacks prestige. This is aggravated by the fact that there are no degree courses to prepare Primary School teachers, nor even a separate salary scale for primary graduates. Such omissions should be rectified. (p90).

One of the recurrent suggestions for filling the perceived 'qualification gap' has been the introduction of B.Ed. programmes. A government report on the Hong Kong education system prepared primarily for the Visiting Panel and published in 1981 raised this possibility when speaking of the potential benefits of closer links between the Teachers' Colleges and the Schools of Education of the Universities,

... association with one or both of the universities would certainly be in keeping with overseas systems of teacher education which have proved generally beneficial to the students concerned, and [would] provide opportunities for the more able non-graduate teachers to improve their qualifications (in some cases, perhaps, acquiring B.Ed. degrees). (Hong Kong Government, 1981: 102).

The possibility of closer ties between the Colleges and the Universities has not been followed up as a priority issue in recent years. Indeed, the fifth Education Commission report has specifically come out against any such move, preferring to recommend instead the upgrading of the Colleges and the ILE into an autonomous Institute of Education (ECR5, June 1992: 59-60). The possibility of an in-service degree course for teachers has, however, been taken up in successive Education Commission reports. The first of these reports, published in 1984, came out strongly in support of the Chinese University's proposal to introduce a Bachelor's degree in Primary Education,

We are aware that there is a proposal currently in hand to introduce a Bachelor degree course in Primary Education to promote leadership at the Primary School level. We endorse this proposal and recommend its early implementation. (ECR1, 1984: 58).

Two years later, the Commission's second report noted that this had been the only recommendation from ECR1 not accepted by the Government for implementation and set out the case for such a programme once more,

A three-year part-time degree course is required to provide adequate opportunities for the holders of these highly responsible posts to

develop their grasp of issues of both educational theory and educational management; and to provide more time for them to strengthen their leadership by trying out in their own schools the practical applications of their training. (ECR2, 1986: 106).

ECR2 recommended that the proposed Chinese University course be introduced not later than 1991. It also recommended, among other things, that there should be graduate posts and salary increments for graduates in Primary Schools and that there should be a B.Ed. programme for non-graduate teachers in charge of practical, technical and cultural subjects in secondary schools.

ECR3 remarked that at least some of its predecessor's recommendations had received the Governor's blessing,

In February 1988, the Governor in Council endorsed our recommendations, subject to the availability of funds, in the following terms:

(c) the Government should declare its support for the introduction of a Bachelor of Arts course in primary education for heads of primary schools and special schools;

(d) graduate teacher posts in schools should be provided for the teaching of practical, technical and cultural subjects; (ECR3, 1988: 9-10)

This may not have been exactly a ringing endorsement of B.Ed. programmes, but it at least indicated the beginning of a move towards a broadening of the range of areas of the profession in which one could eventually expect to find graduates. The fourth Report (ECR4, 1990), rather than addressing issues of teacher education itself, identified the need to do so in a separate report, the long-awaited ECR5, which was finally published in June 1992.

There had been expectations that ECR5 would urge the government to move as quickly as practicable towards an all-graduate teaching profession. It also appeared likely that any such recommendation would be greeted sympathetically by the government. For instance, the former Secretary for Education and Manpower, K. Y. Yeung, had said in an address to graduating students of the HKU Faculty of Education (6th October 1990) that an all-graduate profession would be a desirable aim, though one which might not realistically be achieved in the 1990s. It seemed, therefore, that the government already saw a policy goal of this sort as a key element in any attempt at an overall upgrading of the teaching profession.

In the event, the recommendations in ECR5 were for about 35% of primary teaching posts to be upgraded to graduate status within 15 years. It was felt by the Commission that it was not realistic to consider a firm time-scale for the achievement of an all-graduate teaching profession. As a first step, a figure of 35% within 15 years was thought to represent both a realistic target and one which was sufficiently large to make a significant difference to the quality of education,

We agree that this [an all-graduate profession] is a desirable goal, but it cannot be reached quickly. We believe that our proposals define a realistic first stage towards the goal. (ECR5, 1992: 6).

In any move towards the creation of an all-graduate teaching profession, the B.Ed. would be expected to have a central role to play, as it has in countries such as Australia and the UK. The arguments in favour of ultimately making teaching an all-graduate profession and, with that aim in view, introducing B.Ed. programmes on a wide scale seem overpowering if there is, indeed, any serious wish to raise the standards of teaching and teachers, enhance the status of teaching as a profession and improve the quality of teacher education. B.Eds. also have a vital part to play in breaking down unnecessary and unhealthy divisions within the profession and ensuring that qualifications are comparable between teachers working in different sectors,

Distinctions between non-graduate/primary and graduate/secondary teachers are out-dated; their continuity is divisive and harmful to the status, esteem and function of teachers. They fail to acknowledge the demands made of all teachers in a modern, developed society which are, whilst different, no less challenging and significant for pre-primary and primary teachers than for their secondary counterparts. If concern for quality and high standards is to be more than rhetoric or lip-service then societies must expect all of their teachers to be well educated and professionally trained. (Cooke 1991: 21–22).

ECR5 undoubtedly took such views into account when making its final recommendations: that two types of degree course should be designed specifically for local primary teachers – one a four (year) part-time in-service course, the other a two (year) full-time pre-service course. Of the proposed in-service courses ECR5 said,

They should equip trained and experienced teachers with the knowledge and skills needed for instructional and managerial leadership in primary schools, and could comprise at least the following components: education theory ... subject expertise ... education management ... and specialisms ... (ECR5, June 1992: 49–50).

It has been in anticipation of ECR5 and its expected recommendations that HKU's Faculty of Education has embarked upon the creation of its wide-ranging B.Ed. programme with the three specialist fields of study referred to in the Introduction. The next section of this paper will discuss the development of the 4-year part-time B.Ed. Primary/Secondary course with particular reference to the pattern of study for teachers of English and Chinese.

### **The HKU B.Ed. Primary/Secondary: the Content**

The course is intended for practising certificated teachers who have been working in the profession for at least two years. A decision was taken at an early stage of planning not to limit the course to only one of the two levels: upper primary or junior secondary. The focus of the course will,

therefore, be the full range of the school years primary 4 to secondary 3. Course participants will normally be serving teachers working within that range, although there will be occasional exceptions (for instance, head teachers and college lecturers).

In offering teachers of upper primary/junior secondary classes the opportunity to gain a first degree, the aim is to enhance the expertise of teachers within their present chosen sector and to enable them to take up leadership roles within the profession. It is intended, for instance, that this B.Ed. should provide a route for serving primary teachers to qualify for the anticipated graduate posts in that sector, as referred to, for example, in ECR5 (chapter 4). It is *not* the intention to provide a means whereby teachers of upper primary and junior secondary classes can convert themselves into senior secondary teachers, although it would not, of course, be possible to prevent B.Ed. graduates from applying for posts in a different sector.

In contrast with the other options of routes to a first degree currently available to the non-graduate Hong Kong teacher (such as the programme offered by Wolverhampton Polytechnic), the HKU B.Ed. is tailored to the needs of a relatively homogeneous group of course participants; it is sensitive to Hong Kong educational issues and it does not involve the inconvenience and expense of overseas study. For these reasons among others the demand for places is likely to be far in excess of the forty places available each year.

The specific aims of the course are as follows:

- (1) to extend teachers' understanding of education as a human enterprise, its social context and its provision, with particular reference to Hong Kong;
- (2) to improve teachers' understanding of the teaching-learning process, and to strengthen the quality of their work in classrooms or other educational settings;
- (3) to enhance the capacity of teachers to engage positively in wider professional activities, especially curriculum development;
- (4) to offer preparation for various leadership roles in schools;
- (5) to extend teachers' personal education, particularly in subject areas that relate to the school curriculum.

The course consists of 32 modules, 8 per year, each module involving 15 hours' contact time. The academic year is divided into two 10-week semesters. Within any one semester a student will take 4 modules. Teaching will take place on two evenings each week.

The course will have a dual focus – the study of education and the study of an academic subject. More than two-thirds of the modules are in one of these two areas. There will be no supervised teaching practice as such, since a practicum will have formed a substantial part of the 2-or 3-year initial training received by all B.Ed. course participants in whichever college they attended. There will, however, be an opportunity to focus upon methodological issues in the more practically-oriented modules.

The three main components of the B.Ed. Primary/Secondary course are (1) *Educational Studies*, (2) *Subject Studies* and (3) *Pedagogical Studies*:

(1) As one would expect of a B.Ed., the course has at its core the study of education. 13 of the 32 modules are concerned with *Educational Studies*, 5 of them in the first year alone (Psychology of learning, Language and learning, the Hong Kong education system, Children with learning difficulties and Childhood and adolescence). The other 8 *Educational Studies* modules are Curriculum design and development, Understanding educational enquiry, Social perspectives in education, Concepts and values in education, Guidance and counselling, Assessment and evaluation, the Nature of teaching and learning and Personal and social education.

(2) At the same time, in order that course participants should be able to develop their personal academic education, they will take 10 modules of undergraduate-level *Subject Studies*. Two of the 10 modules will be Foundation modules in different subject areas, each giving an overview of the nature of that subject area. The remaining 8 modules will be specialised study within one of the two subject areas available to a particular cohort. Those taking *Subject Studies* in *English* will study the following modules:

- (1) Introduction to language and linguistics (Foundation)
- (2) Phonetics/phonology and the teaching of pronunciation
- (3) Lexis and semantics
- (4) Morphology and syntax
- (5) Pedagogical grammar
- (6) & (7) Introduction to spoken and written discourse
- (8) Language and society
- (9) First and second language learning

The *Subject Studies* modules for *Chinese language and literature* (likely to be on offer to the 1993-94 cohort) will be as follows:

- (1) Modern Chinese language (Foundation)
- (2) Classical Chinese language
- (3) Developing reading and writing skills
- (4) Modern Chinese literature (1917-1949)
- (5) Contemporary Chinese literature since 1949
- (6) Classical Chinese literature (the pre-Qin period)
- (7)-(9) 3 from the following:
  - (a) Classical Chinese literature (from the Han to Qing dynasty)
  - (b) Children's literature
  - (c) Putonghua and Cantonese
  - (d) Psycholinguistic aspects of Chinese language
  - (e) Language and communication
  - (f) Chinese culture and language

(3) In order to enhance course participants' professional expertise in the classroom, and also to provide a direct contact between the

programme and their daily work, a sequence of five modules are devoted to *Pedagogical Studies*. These modules will cover the methods and practice of teaching in general, with some specialisation in specific subject areas. They will focus on the school years Primary 4 to Secondary 3. *Pedagogical Studies* modules will recognise that course participants are qualified and practising teachers. While school-based activity may be part of the prescribed syllabus, there will be no element of supervised teaching nor any attempt to assess teaching performance.

In addition to the above, course participants will have the opportunity to take two elective modules. The equivalent of a further two modules is allotted to study towards completion of a dissertation.

## **The HKU B.Ed. in Language Education : the Background**

The background to the development of the full-time B.Ed. course (now due to start in 1993–94) is somewhat different from that of the part-time in-service B.Ed., the origins of which can be found, as we have seen, amongst recommendations in government papers and Education Commission reports going back over several years. The history of the full-time B.Ed. is somewhat shorter, whilst the course itself represents an attempt to begin to address a separate problem – the shortage of well-qualified language teachers in secondary schools.

The 1989 'Report Of The Working Group Set Up To Review Language Improvement Measures' identified the problem quite explicitly:

4.1.3 It is estimated that 45% of teachers of Chinese in secondary schools are untrained and that 28% are not subject-trained;

4.1.4 It is estimated that 46% of teachers of English in secondary schools are not subject-trained.

(Education Department, 1989: 60)

This would certainly seem to be borne out by recent experience with HKU's part-time in-service PCEd., where amongst the English Majors, for instance, a course participant who had actually majored in English in his/her first degree studies would be very much the exception.

ECR5 made a similar observation,

We are concerned about the shortage of competent language teachers. Few tertiary graduates with language degrees become school teachers; so many senior secondary forms are taught English or Chinese by graduates of other subjects.

(ECR5, 1992: 75)

The Commission went on to say,

We envisage that there might be considerable interest in local language-teaching first degree courses.

(ECR5, 1992: 76)

The 4-year full-time B.Ed. represents a first step towards attempting to redress the balance a little by providing pre-service degree-level training tailored to the needs of prospective language teachers. The course offers,

in a single programme, the equivalent of a 3-year honours degree plus a 1-year post-graduate certificate of education of the University of Hong Kong. The main difference between the B.Ed. and the current conventional way of achieving Graduate Teacher status is that in the B.Ed. degree subject courses are integrated with professional courses and with school and classroom experience throughout the four years of the programme.

It is hoped that the introduction of this course will encourage high-quality students to commit themselves (psychologically, at least) to language teaching at the beginning of their undergraduate careers, so that each year (from 1997 onwards) the profession will benefit from an injection of fully-trained, talented and well-motivated personnel. The initial signs are encouraging – there were nearly 1300 JUPAS applicants for 30 places in 1993, suggesting that there is indeed considerable interest in local language-teaching first degree courses – although it remains to be seen whether the 1-year postponement of the starting-date (from 1992 to 1993) has a dampening effect on the interest leading to a reduction in the number and quality of applicants.

## **The HKU B.Ed. in Language Education: the Content**

The full-time B.Ed. will have two separate streams. One stream will concentrate on the study and teaching of Chinese Language and Literature. The other stream will concentrate on the study of English Language, Linguistics and Literature and the teaching of English Language and Literature.

There are a number of similarities between this course and the part-time B.Ed. Students will, for instance, take roughly the same number of identically-titled Educational Studies modules. However, because students on the full-time course will have had no previous specialist subject study at tertiary level and no professional training or school experience/practicum, these three latter components of the course will receive much greater emphasis than on the part-time programme. In addition, and in contrast with the part-time programme, students on the full-time course will take modules in Language Proficiency and Computer Literacy in their 1st year.

The course will consist of 72 modules. Each module will last for the equivalent of 20 class contact hours (as opposed to the 15 hours for the part-time programme) and will usually be taken during one term. The course is broken down into 8 major sections. These sections are as follows:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) Language Proficiency                         | 5 modules                                    |
| (2) Computer Literacy<br>(Wordprocessing skills) | 1 module                                     |
| (3) Main Subject Studies<br>(Chinese or English) | 27 modules (English)<br>28 modules (Chinese) |
| (4) Educational Studies                          | 13 modules (English)<br>12 modules (Chinese) |
| (5) Professional Studies                         | 8 modules                                    |

(6) Dissertation	2 modules
(7) School experience and practicum	11 modules
(8) Overseas experience	5 modules

The Main Subject Studies for English Majors will be within the following areas: Phonetics, phonology and the teaching of pronunciation; Lexis, semantics and the teaching of vocabulary; Morphology, syntax and pedagogical grammar; Spoken and written discourse; Pragmatics; Language and society; First and second language learning; and Literature. For Chinese Majors their Main Subject Studies will be within the four broad areas of: Chinese language studies; Chinese literature studies; Chinese culture studies; and Linguistic studies.

School experience and the practicum will be spread over the four years of the course as follows:

Year 1	10 days	of visits to schools
Year 2	Term 1	3 weeks of school experience
Year 3	Term 2	8 weeks of teaching practice
Year 4	Term 2	8 weeks of teaching practice

It is also planned that (funding permitting) students will travel overseas in their second year for the equivalent of 5 modules (approximately one term) for cultural and language experience in the target language.

## Conclusion

Given the numbers of non-graduate teachers needing to be upgraded to graduate status and given also the extent of the shortage of qualified language teachers in Hong Kong schools, it is clear that the HKU B.Ed. programme can make only a relatively small contribution in numerical terms to teacher output. It is to be hoped, however, that the HKU programme, together with that at the Chinese University, can perform a useful 'trail-blazing' role, and can provide a model for other institutions to evaluate and improve upon as they work upon the development of their own B.Ed. programmes in response to the challenge issued by ECR5.

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# CLASSROOM DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN ESL TEACHER EDUCATION

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## **Abstract**

This paper discusses the place of classroom discourse analysis in ESL teacher education. It points out that it is very important to expose teachers to classroom discourse data and help them to develop a sensitivity towards the language they use in the classroom and its effect on student participation and learning. It then outlines some important aspects of the discipline and discusses how this will help teachers to understand better what is going on in their classrooms.

## **Introduction**

Research on language classrooms began in the sixties with the aim of trying to find out which is the more effective language teaching method, audiolingual or grammar-translation. The inconclusive results led researchers to retreat from the investigation of methods to techniques<sup>1</sup>. However, research again gave no supporting evidence for a particular teaching technique. Politzer, who conducted a seminal study on a number of secondary school classes, concluded that "the very high complexity of the teaching process makes it very difficult to talk in absolute terms about 'good' and 'bad' teaching devices." (1970:43). Language classroom research, therefore, moved from looking at techniques to processes and from a prescriptive approach to a descriptive one. Studies in the past two decades have focussed on unravelling the complexities of classroom processes rather than on prescribing a particular technique or methodology for teachers.

The development in language classroom research shows that it is very important for ESL teacher educators to introduce teachers to classroom research in order to raise their awareness of the complexities of classroom language teaching and learning, and to encourage them to investigate their own classrooms. As Allwright and Bailey point out,

The business of doing classroom research, of looking carefully into classrooms, can be extremely fruitful for the people doing the looking. And in many cases, the teacher who is already in the classroom, who already has the day-to-day experience of working with learners, is surely in a particularly privileged position to decide what needs to be investigated. (1991: 13-14)

This paper focuses on an important aspect of classroom-centred research, classroom discourse analysis, and discusses its relevance to English ESL teacher education.

## Awareness Raising

Providing teachers with transcriptions of classroom data and asking them to make some general observations about the data is an effective means of raising their awareness of classroom dynamics. As Allwright and Bailey point out, "Transcripts show us, in ways that coded data and frequency counts often mask, how classroom interaction develops, as a dynamic phenomenon." (1991: 62). Some general guiding questions can be given to teachers to provide a focus for the discussion. For example,

- (1) What kind of relationship did the teacher(s) have with the students?
- (2) Was there active participation from the students?
- (3) What kinds of interaction pattern can you observe?
- (4) Was the teacher keen to get students to participate? Was she successful? Why?

In my experience of conducting classroom discourse analysis workshops with teachers, invariably, and quite understandably, they came up with impressionistic remarks. Some of the observations they made are:

"Teacher A is very strict and authoritarian but Teacher B is very friendly and caring."

"Teacher A is very impatient. She kept firing questions at students and didn't give them a chance to respond."

"Teacher B is very encouraging."

"I think the atmosphere in class B is more relaxed. But in class A, the students are afraid of the teacher. I think the teacher is very discouraging."

"The students in class A are very passive. They seldom volunteered answers."

"The students in class B are more active. But their responses are also very short."

"I think that the students' responses in Class B are very good."

"Both classes are dominated by the teacher. But I think Class B is better."

After reporting the observations, teachers should be asked to give evidence to support the observations they have made. This requires that teachers examine the data more closely and see if their observations were well-grounded. In the workshops that I conducted, teachers were mostly able to provide good evidence. For example, to support the observation that Teacher B is more friendly, they gave the example of the teacher asking a student who came into the classroom after the lesson had started whether she was feeling better.

- (1) [Class B/Excerpt 1]

(A student comes into the classroom)

T: Are you feeling better now, Lisa Ma? Any more vomiting?

P: No.

T: No. Alright.

To support their observation about teacher A being strict and authoritarian, they pointed out that she used a lot of imperatives, such as "Don't use the

pronoun.", "Don't tell me I don't know.". She also gave negative feedback when students gave the wrong answer. For example,

(2) [Class A/Excerpt 4]

T: Now what did they do after their wonderful meal? What did they do after their wonderful meal? What did they do after their wonderful meal? (Nominate)

P: They told stories and sing songs by the—

→T: Sing song? Pay attention. Once again, not sing song, past tense please.

P: They told story and sung song.

T: Sung? No.

Teachers pointed out that by saying "pay attention", the teacher was reprimanding the student for making a mistake rather than rewarding him for making an attempt to answer the question. To support the observation that Teacher B was encouraging, they quoted the following example,

(3) [Class B/Excerpt 1]

T: Do you know the name of any architect who designs buildings in Hong Kong at all?

P: (raises hand)

T: Yes?

P: My father is an architect.

T: Oh, is that so? Well, tell me, do you know the name of any building which your father has designed?

They observed that the teacher, instead of just accepting the answer as correct, showed interest in it and followed it up by asking the student for further information about her father. This kind of feedback encouraged students to participate in class.

There were also times, however, when teachers could not substantiate their observations with evidence. One example is that they felt that the atmosphere in Class B was more relaxed but they could not specify what contributed to this impression. Another example is that they felt that there was a qualitative difference between the responses in both classes and yet they could not specify what constituted the difference. This is hardly surprising for teachers who were novices in classroom discourse analysis. Discussions of this kind serve as a very good basis for introducing to teachers the need to analyze classroom discourse systematically.

## A General Framework for Analysis

A systematic analysis of anything requires an analytical instrument. The aim of introducing analytical instruments to teachers is to enable them to analyze their own classroom data. Therefore, it is not necessary to give a comprehensive coverage of *all* the instruments designed for classroom observation or analysis because some of them are for research purposes<sup>2</sup>. As Allwright and Bailey point out,

Fundamental research needs fully developed, reliable observational instruments and analytical systems. Teacher training, on the other hand,