* any training will be converted to action to the extent that it is seen as valuable and necessary to teachers and, as important, to learners. They will, however, reinterpret it in their own terms.

What implications can the ILE draw from the Danish experience? Although at present ILE practice contains elements of all three phases outlined by Breen et al., perhaps more could still be done to try to achieve the attainment of the third phase described by them through building on what happens in the individual participant's own classroom. From a positive angle, ILE participants already spend a great deal of time in group work, exchanging and discussing teaching strategies and experiences with each other and with tutors. For even greater professional development, however, they might be encouraged to take the initiative more by setting their own agenda, e.g. more sessions could be devoted to their own particular concerns and discussion of these issues could be undertaken in such a way as to encourage teacher autonomy. The relationship between teachers and trainers would ideally become increasingly collaborative with the trainers moving away from the position of suggesting solutions to a role of facilitator. With the advent of the Target-Oriented Curriculum, it seems likely that the ability to make sound independent pedagogic decisions at the school level will be even more essential than at present. It would therefore seem appropriate for ILE courses to do the maximum to promote reflection, self-development and autonomy in the teacher.

Another non-prescriptive approach to in-service teacher education is outlined by Morrow and Schocker (1993). The method described in their paper involved process evaluation—focusing on the process by which learning (whether by teachers or students) takes place. Working on a short three-week summer course in England with teachers from a wide variety of countries, the aims of their program were to raise awareness of issues, problems and solutions in teacher-training and to create an atmosphere where insights, ideas, and experiences could be generated and shared.

In order to meet these aims, ongoing participant review of content and methodology was built into the course through daily individual feedback sessions, end-of-week feedback in plenary session, and end-of-course group evaluations. Methods of gathering and discussing feedback included:

(a) 15 minute individual interviews with three different randomly selected individuals daily;

(b) plenary feedback from tutors on issues raised in (a);

(c) open poster forum: 5 posters were displayed, four headed by the main issues raised in (a) and one blank for alternative subjects. By attaching slips of paper to the relevant poster, participants were able to express their views individually and by standing next to the poster concerning the theme they felt most strongly about, they were able to discuss further with their fellow participants;

(d) end of course group evaluation—participants carried out pyramid evaluation through doing the task outlined below:

Think of three practical ways in which the ongoing evaluation of the course actually had an effect on you, in terms of yourself or the group. In what way would the course have been different without it? (Morrow and Schocker, 1993:51).

The task was done first individually, then in pairs and then in groups of four focusing on the most important elements from the individual and pair discussion.

The main positive elements of the process evaluation approach adopted on this course were twofold:
* the participants focused their attention on how they could make what they had experienced on this course work in their own contexts;
* the participants responded more enthusiastically to a formative process evaluation as opposed to the summative evaluation questionnaires often completed at the end of courses.

Summative questionnaires ask the participant to judge the worth of the product which he or she has just received; process evaluation as described in this paper invites the participant to share in the design of the product and to reflect on how it is made. This is a very powerful experience. (Morrow and Schocker, 1993:54)

Process evaluation links closely with the concept of self-development. The more involvement that participants have in tailoring the content and methodology of the course, the more responsibility they are likely to take for their own professional development through the activities experienced. On ILE courses participants have plenty of opportunity for giving feedback but this tends to arise mainly at the end of a workshop or module or at the end of the course. At other times, although there is opportunity to give ongoing feedback, there is no particular course mechanism designed to take it into account. It is clearly far more personally interesting to give feedback when you can still gain benefit yourself rather than at a stage when only your successors on the next course can gain. The feeling of being involved and having your own opinions valued also has a positive motivational effect, particularly if some change results from your comments.

From the broader perspective of the Target-Oriented Curriculum with its emphasis on formative rather than summative assessment, it might also seem appropriate for the ILE itself to move in the direction of evaluating courses more formatively. For this to be carried out practically, careful planning would need to be done and organisational factors would need to be taken into account: obviously, for example, it is not feasible to make major timetable changes during a course. Perhaps as a starting point a form of process evaluation could be incorporated into one module of the course as a pilot project.

Follow-up Projects

Rudduck points out that positive feelings about a short INSET course are no guarantee of a future change in practice. Rudduck (1981:163) states:

a major drawback of the short course is that it tends to be seen as a self-sufficient and self-contained experience whereas, to be an effective force for change or development, it must be conceived and perceived as an *episode* in the process of change.

She mentions two strategies which can be used to build on what has taken place in an INSET course, namely 'follow-through' and 'follow-up'. The former refers to implementation activities where *teachers* utilise what they have learnt on a course to improve their practice. The latter involves activities in which the *trainers* support the teachers in terms of implementation or development. In this section of the paper, I will look at follow-up.

Taking Rudduck's work as a starting-point, a Follow-Up Support Team (FUST) was formed at the ILE in Hong Kong in 1990 (Lai, 1992). The principal aim was to assist participants in continuing to develop and reflect on their classroom teaching after the conclusion of their 16 week full-time refresher course. Participants were visited in their schools approximately three months after their course by one of their tutors. The visits usually included general discussion about progress, changes in methodology or techniques made and any implementation problems that had been encountered. The visit also tended to involve a classroom observation of the participant teaching a class of her choice.

Responses to the follow-up visits have been mixed. Some teachers appreciated the supportive nature of continued contact with the ILE tutors and took advantage of the opportunity for further discussion or advice. Others felt somewhat threatened by being observed in the classroom. Although an evaluation was not being carried out, from a teacher perspective being observed by an outsider and being evaluated are closely linked. From another angle the teacher may feel that the tutor is monitoring the extent to which the communicative methodology encouraged on the course is being carried out and so may feel pressured to try to produce a model communicative lesson. The attitude of the participant's colleagues may also colour the situation: *they* may feel that the teacher is being assessed and additionally may not welcome an outsider coming in to the school and perhaps covertly 'checking up on them'.

Another aspect of FUST was seminars held at the ILE on Saturday mornings-the same seminar was held on consecutive Saturdays because a lot of Hong Kong teachers are required at school on alternate Saturdays. Seminars were led by an ILE tutor but were of a collaborative workshop nature. Because of the above concerns regarding classroom observation, Saturday seminars tended to be the preferred follow-up option of participants. Quantitative and qualitative feedback from teachers attending these sessions was generally positive but unfortunately attendance was sometimes rather low. This was attributed to the relative inaccessibility of ILE for teachers who do not live on Hong Kong Island, heavy workload of teachers and natural desire to take advantage of one's free Saturday for non-educational purposes.

From the perspective of the ILE tutors follow-up visits to past participants are very time-consuming, particularly when one considers that the tutors will already be involved at that time in the on-going courses. As the discussion above indicates the benefits of the follow-up support are debatable and difficult to quantify. The FUST project in the form described here was consequently discontinued. Follow-up has been continuing on an ad hoc basis i.e through individual arrangements between tutors and teachers. This may have several positive effects:

* If the visit is clearly seen as voluntary, it makes it seem less threatening.
* The ad hoc element tends to make the purpose and nature of the visit more of a negotiable process tailored to the specific needs and wants of the participant.
* Tutors would only be spending time with teachers who actively desired further discussion or input. The FUST team itself considered that it might be worthwhile to target individual schools which regularly sent enthusiastic teachers to ILE courses. This might be a useful springboard for school-based change whilst remaining an efficient and productive deployment of human resources.

Rudduck (1981) also describes two other follow-up strategies that I would like to mention briefly. One idea is to send out a portfolio of notes recalling the agenda of the course and the principles that lay behind some of the workshops and tasks that were attempted. This is intended to act both as a reminder of ideas and as a stimulus to try out methods or techniques that have been shared. This form of follow-up seems highly suitable for the ILE context. A concise restatement of (say) key elements in task-based learning or principles of communicative methodology would not be too time-consuming for tutors and might be a useful encouragement to teachers as well as keeping a channel of communication open between the ILE and the teacher.

The second strategy is that teachers attend INSET courses with their school departmental colleagues. This can reduce the feeling of isolation that the teacher may well feel on returning from the course and so to make it easier to recreate the sharing and enthusiasm experienced. In the ILE context, this would be impractical as English departments in schools of participants would be left too depleted. However, it would be more feasible in those situations where teachers attended workshops in their own time or when specific in-service days have been allotted as already happens in Target-Oriented Curriculum teacher education seminars. If teachers are undergoing professional development in school-based teams, this seems a solid basis for practical change in their own classrooms.

Alderson (1985) describes an alternative form of follow-up tried out on in-service ESP courses at Lancaster University. Towards the end of the course the participants, who came from a variety of overseas institutes, were asked to draw up an Implementation Plan for their return to post. In other words, the participants committed themselves in writing to a kind of contract

outlining techniques that the teacher wished to put into practice. The plan was discussed with a tutor who offered input and tried to ensure that the proposals were practical and workable.

Participants were later contacted by letter in order to obtain feedback on their progress. From the participants' viewpoint, the letter shows that they have not been forgotten on completion of the in-house section of the course and that expert advice is still available. From the provider perspective, the letter acts as further encouragement to the teachers to try out the ideas in their Implementation Plan. Additionally, by enclosing a questionnaire with the letter, useful data is obtained regarding the practicality of ideas covered in the course which provided post-course feedback the analysis of which can be incorporated into future courses.

The problems identified by Alderson for this kind of follow-up were:
* post-course teacher workload which reduced their enthusiasm for implementing change;
* high expectations from colleagues in that having attended a course overseas they would be able to transform their institutes;

Being impelled into a role of adviser and teacher-trainer may be an unwanted by-product of attending an INSET course. Perhaps teacher-trainers need to consider how to prepare trainees for their future role as confidantes, motivators or teacher-trainers when they return to their organisation, particularly as a 'cascade' approach in which knowledge flows from the top down is becoming increasingly common. As discussed earlier, it seems likely that the more the participants have personally put into the content of the programme, the better placed they will be for a future disseminating or advisory role.

Obviously the difficulties faced in following up the kind of course described by Alderson are more problematic than for the ILE in Hong Kong—participants come from different countries and backgrounds, and the possibility of follow-up contact may be proscribed on financial grounds. Nonetheless the idea of an implementation plan seems to be a strategy that is well worth considering for the ILE context. The implementation plan in which teachers outline particular methods, techniques or materials that they intend to try out could also be a useful springboard for a follow-up visit.

Planning for Return to School

The September 1993 ILE Primary Refresher course has undergone a number of revisions. Of particular relevance to the discussion in this paper is the final 5–hour unit of the course entitled Planning for Return to School. It is intended that participants will do the following:
* discuss and share practical matters (e.g. techniques, materials) from the course that can help to renew the English curriculum when they return to their schools; discuss how to overcome any constraints arising in the school situation;
* develop an implementation plan individually from the points raised above and discuss it with their group tutor;

* form support networks amongst themselves; the networks could involve sharing of resources, discussion of implementation progress or special interest groups e.g. Pronunciation Group or Key Stage 2 Materials Development;
* prepare the ground for a possible follow-up visit by an ILE tutor.

Conclusion

To conclude, I want to reiterate some of the main implications for INSET arising from the discussion in this paper.
* Wherever possible the content of courses/workshops should arise from the classroom realities of the participants.
* There should be on-going evaluation of courses/workshops with the aim of improving the present course.
* Follow-up and Follow-through mechanisms should be built into the course.
* Follow-up could take the form of reminder circular of key issues in the course and/or school visits negotiated between trainers and teachers; for maximum effect school visits should involve more than just individual participants.
* Follow-through could involve implementation plans drawn up by participants towards the end of the course.

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GRADED TASKS AND LEARNER DIFFERENTIATION IN THE CLASSROOM

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Background to the Problem

In September 1992, the Hong Kong Education Department began preparing upper primary teachers for the implementation of the new curriculum initiative, Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC, formerly Targets and Target Related Assessment or TTRA). The preparation took the form of three-day introductory seminars for teachers of the core curricular subjects, Chinese, English and Maths. Teachers who attended the seminar were asked to chose one of the core subjects as an elective.

Evaluations took place at the conclusion of the seminars and teachers were asked to assess different aspects of the three days. For teachers who attended the English elective, one aspect of the assessment involved considering the difficulty level of the session on lesson planning. A little more than 35% (1 168) of the three thousand one hundred and twenty seven (3 127) teachers who attended the English elective were sampled. 49.5% of the total number sampled, or approximately 552 persons, rated lesson planning as difficult and 18% or about 201 teachers, rated the session as very difficult. This means that an average of 67.5% (approximately 753 teachers) consistently rated the session as difficult or very difficult. Even though teachers found this session challenging, they found it equally useful as an average of 66.5% (742 teachers) rated the lesson planning as useful. This indicates that teachers recognised the intrinsic value of the session. (Interestingly, the only other session rated as equally or slightly more difficult, was the session on assessment. Another equally demanding session, scheme of work, was rated as less difficult.[1])

This article will focus on the lesson planning aspect of the three-day seminar and examine some of the reasons for the high difficulty rating of the session and the special problems that teachers encountered. The analyses of teachers' difficulties in a central aspect of teaching have important implications for practitioners, teacher educators, curriculum designers and resource developers.

The Lesson Planning Session

This session took place on the morning of the second day of the three-day seminar. Teachers had had a general introduction to TOC, targets and tasks. During this session, they became further acquainted with the concept of tasks and were required to develop procedures to support

teaching a chosen task from the *Programme of Studies (POS)* for Key Stage Two (KS2).

Additionally, teachers were asked to develop graded worksheets to accompany the lesson procedures which would assist in the conduct and development of the task. Planning of the lesson procedures while a problem for some teachers, was not a major problem for most teachers. The development of the graded worksheets is believed to be the major contributing factor accounting for the difficulty level of the session. Feedback of teachers' comments from open-ended forms and the three-day evaluation forms support this view. Lecturers' observations and teachers' verbal comments also lend support to this belief. The difficulties in designing the graded worksheets are the foci of this paper and will be examined from the following perspectives:

1. The rationale for the task and its theoretical underpinnings;
2. A critical examination of the teachers' task; and
3. The teachers' performance on the task.

Following the summary, recommendations will be made for providing support for teachers in grading tasks.

The Rationale for the Task and its Theoretical Underpinnings

Chapter 5 in the Education Commission's *Report Number Four* (ECR4, 1990) recognises the need for teachers to address the specific needs and interests of all their pupils. It states that the new curriculum initiative would improve the quality of learning for all individual students from primary one to secondary five. The thrust to view learners as unique individuals is also clearly captured in the Education Commission's document, *Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims* (1992).

It states:

Every school should help all its students, whatever their level of ability, and including those with special educational needs, to develop their potential as fully as possible in both academic and non-academic directions. (p.15)

The document further notes that 'any system of mass education must recognize a wide range of aptitudes among its students, and must strive as far as possible to cater for differing needs and interests' (p.15). These views have strong theoretical underpinnings in the constructivist view of learning.

The constructivist view of learning contends that learners use individual frameworks of knowledge and experiences as foundations for constructing meaning (e.g. Gagne, 1985). Variation in knowledge and experience help to account for learner differences in learning. This diversity is not viewed as a liability (Hiebert, 1991; Sebba & Beyers, 1992), but as a building block for learning and teaching. In terms of curriculum planning, this means that the curriculum should be flexible enough to fit and meet the needs of the child and not so rigid that it blames and punishes the learner for not adjusting to the curriculum (Sebba & Byers, 1992).

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The task that teachers were asked to do in this session is often left to textbook designers. Textbook designers have traditionally graded or sequenced their materials in a linear fashion according to components of language such as grammar or vocabulary. However, current approaches to teaching and learning are much more interactive and interdependent (Biggs, 1990; Gagne,1985) and activities based on the communicative approach to teaching stress more of an integration of components (Scarino, Vale, McKay & Wichman, 1988). In grading tasks a host of variables need to be considered such as learners' needs and interests, text type and level of difficulty, situation, grammar, functions, vocabulary, as well as processing and task demands. Teachers, therefore, need to be cognizant of the interplay of variables when selecting, designing or adapting graded tasks so that they are better equipped to meet the specific needs of their learners.

What is a Learning Task?

The work that the teachers were required to do called for a basic understanding of *tasks*. There is no real consensus on the definition of a task. Nunan (1989) notes that in education and other fields there are numerous definitions. Within second language learning he points out that there are non-linguistic definitions and pedagogical definitions as well as there are communicative and noncommunicative distinctions along with differences cited in real-world and pedagogic tasks. Nunan's (1989) definition of a communicative task is stated as 'a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form' (p.10).

The Education Department (1992) describes a learning task as 'the purposeful and contextualized means through which students progress towards the learning targets' (p.20). When engaging in tasks students are expected to go beyond 'practising elements of the subject' and should instead 'activate and extend their frameworks of knowledge and skill' (p.20).

Tasks are usually contrasted with exercises but they are not seen as mutually exclusive but as coexisting and interrelating. Exercises facilitate tasks and when students focus upon particular elements of knowledge or skills for pedagogical purposes they are said to be doing an exercise (Clark & Scarino, 1992). An exercise would therefore entail as Nunan (1989) describes it 'noncommunicative or pseudo-communicative activity types' such as 'repetition, substitution and transformation drills' (p.41).

The Teachers' Task

Prior to the development of the graded worksheets, teachers had to develop procedures for the learning task *English in the Street* (Appendix A). These procedures included identifying the targets, teaching steps, grammatical structures, text type, vocabulary, assessment, resources, workbook references, etc. Following the development of their procedures,

ideas were exchanged and alternatives offered. From this point, teachers were asked to consider how their procedures would affect the performance of students with different levels of skills (i.e. quicker and slower pupils). A brief discussion followed as teachers considered some of the factors influencing variation in students' performance such as students' backgrounds and mental capabilities.

Following discussion on the contributing factors of student variation, teachers were then given some input on the various options for accommodating individual differences along with approaches to grading activities. The input was based mainly on the description of grading tasks as they are described by Scarino, Vale, Mckay and Wichmann (1988) and the notes in the *POS* (pages 190–193). Examples of graded tasks were used as references. Teachers were asked to consider the following principles when designing graded or layered tasks for a particular class:

* the size of the task in terms of the number of steps as more steps means higher difficulty level;
* the linguistic demands of the task in terms of the language structures and the vocabulary as the more complex the structures are the higher the difficulty level; and the more unfamiliar the terms are the greater the difficulty level;
* the intellectual demands of the task in terms of the mental processes needed to carry out the task;
* the amount of support provided during the task in terms of examples of linguistic structures and vocabulary; more support makes the task easier, less support increases the difficulty level;
* and the difficulty level of the text, determined by familiarity, sentence structures, vocabulary, interest etc.

To support the design of the worksheets, teachers were also asked to consider two possible options of task designs. These were as follows:

OPTION 1

Teachers were encouraged to approach the task by creating three separate worksheets on the same task bearing in mind the skill levels of the students (see Table 1). In other words, the task was held constant. All the students would work with the same task but with varying degrees of support (see Appendix B). Classroom management considerations were primary in the design of this option as roughly three broad groups were being instructed simultaneously.

Table 1: Option 1

SLOWER	AVERAGE	QUICKER
more support	some support	less support or no support

OPTION 2

This option asked teachers to consider the task design from a more extended and elaborated viewpoint (see Table 2). Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) is applied in this option and teachers were required to create three worksheets but this time the focus was on extending the same task so that the learner's knowledge and skills were being stretched incrementally. Unlike option one, learners are given the opportunity to do all three tasks depending on their finishing rates. Because the first task would be at the developing knowledge level, it would be the easier task and would accommodate the slower pupils and simultaneously lay a foundation for all learners (see Appendix C). The final task would cater more to the quicker students but still offer others a chance to apply their skills based on the acquired knowledge and experience of the previous two tasks. No student would be penalised for not completing all the worksheets. The worksheets could focus on different skills or subskills such as reading or writing but it was recommended that teachers be consistent and use the same vocabulary and skills across the worksheets.

Table 2: Option 2

		Task Examples
LEVEL 1	KNOWLEDGE	list, label, name, match, locate
LEVEL 2	COMPREHENSION	classify, read describe, identify
LEVEL 3	APPLICATION	create, report, imagine, apply

Following the input, teachers were asked to refer to their lesson procedures to develop a supportive worksheet on the task *English in the Street*. The teachers were then encouraged to consider one of the options for the design of their worksheets and to bear in mind the classroom management implications of their choice. They were then given approximately one hour to prepare the rough drafts and worked in groups of four to seven persons. Two tutors were available to provide assistance and feedback. Teachers also had access to supportive handouts and worksheets. It was expected that the teachers would complete their designs at home and bring them in the next day for presentation to their colleagues using an overhead projector.

The Examination of the Presentations

During the presentations, the worksheets were scrutinised along the following guidelines:

Appropriacy to the Lesson's Theme

Here, it was expected that all the worksheets would be appropriate for the task English in the Street and that they would facilitate the attainment of the targets in the teachers' lesson procedures.

Grading

All worksheets were expected to show evidence of grading regardless of the option selected. For option one, teachers were watching for evidence of less or more support with a cautious eye for cases of too much support. Additionally, teachers were to consider the number of steps and the intellectual demands of the task. Option two should show evidence of grading according to level of skill or mental processing demands.

Purpose and Use of Context

A purposeful worksheet gives meaning to what the learners are expected to do. Learners are therefore able to form some connection and relevance to their lives. It was expected that the opening statements on the worksheets would reflect this orientation to meaningfulness. The purpose would be very much supported by the real, simulated or imagined situation or context within which the learners would interact.

Skill Development

The worksheets should reflect an orientation toward a particular skill or an integration of skills. The three worksheets for option one were expected to focus on the same skill(s) with their appropriate degrees of support. This would minimise teachers' classroom management problems and assist with organisation for teaching. Option two could duplicate option one by focusing on developing the same skill(s) across the three worksheets or could focus on three different skills. However, it was expected that option two worksheets would also show evidence of building and application of knowledge.

Language Use

The vocabulary for the three worksheets should be connected and consistent to provide reinforcement and ensure coverage. For option one it was hoped that the vocabulary would be the same but the difficulty level for the manipulation and use of the vocabulary would differ. For option two it was expected that the vocabulary and context would allow for reinforcement and coherence across the worksheets. The same applied to structure.

Degree of Openness and Options

Teachers were encouraged to consider the degree of openness or closure for both options with the degree of openness increasing across the three worksheets. Openness referred to the amount of leeway or freedom given to the learner to initiate original answers while closure referred to the amount of parameters imposed on the task to assist the learner with the production of the answers. It was expected also that learners would be

provided with some options or choices to encourage decision making and risk taking.

Interest

Interest is closely connected to purpose and context but teachers were encouraged to think of this as a separate criterion especially with respect to the first level worksheets. This was to encourage especially, a high interest and level of mental stimulation in the worksheets targeted for the slower learners.

Samples of the Presentations[2]

The following pages offer a sampling of some of the common features of the worksheets as presented by the teachers. For the sake of brevity, only summary descriptions are given. They are presented according to their options as teachers would be better able to see the parallels between similar worksheets although there is an overlap between the two options. A summary of the teachers' presentations follows the examples.

EXAMPLES OF OPTION 1

SLOWER PUPILS	AVERAGE PUPILS	QUICKER PUPILS
1a Use the picture of the park to complete sentences about signs in the park (e.g. You must....). Put the signs in the correct boxes on the picture.	1b Look at the signs in the park and put the words in the correct order (e.g flowers pick don't the). Read the instructions and draw the signs.	1c Look at the signs in the park and give meanings of terms (e.g. entrance/exit). Put misplaced signs in their correct places.
2a Use the map, the marked route and the cues given to complete the description of how to get to the supermarket.	2b How will you get to the supermarket? Use the map with the route given to help you re-arrange the directions.	2c Refer to the map and the marked route to tell how to get to the supermarket.
3a Use the picture of Victoria Park to explain what the signs mean. Use the words given to help you.	3b John is in Victoria Park and he writes down the signs that he saw.	3c What have the children done wrong? Use the picture of Victoria Park and the example given to tell what children should not do.

EXAMPLES OF OPTION 2

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
4a Read the description and clues to label the map with street names and shop names.	4b Use the map to help Mary plan a birthday party. Follow the first example and give the directions for the shops you need to visit to buy the food.	4c Use the map to tell John how to find the party.

EXAMPLES OF OPTION 2

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
5a Mother is planning a party. Use the map to complete the plan of where she needs to go to buy the various food.	5b Tom is shopping for the party. Help him to find his way to buy the food. Use the route given on the map to re-arrange the nine statements to match the route given on the map.	5c Tom is talking to Dick about the party. He is describing the food and where he bought it. Write the conversation.
6a Use the map and the given words to complete the description of the journey to Central Park.	6b Re-arrange the eleven statements by using the map to give the journey to Central Park.	6c Use the map to tell what was bought at the supermarket and what happened on the way to Central Park.

Summary of Teachers' Worksheets

CRITERIA	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Appropriacy to the lesson's theme	Worksheets were supportive of the task; Some expansions on the theme.	Restrictive interpretations of the theme in option 2 examples.
Grading	Generally manipulated by the amount of support given and number of steps taken (e.g. #2).	Distinctions between levels were not always clear; Too many steps for level 2 especially in re-sequencing tasks (e.g. #5b, 6b); Often too much support given (e.g. #2).
Purpose and use of context	Some attempts to develop and expand contexts (e.g. #5).	Purposeful situations not properly developed and tended to resemble traditional exercises (e.g. #3c); First level tasks poorly developed (e.g. #1a); Lack of coherence across worksheets for option 2 related tasks (e.g. #4a).
Skill focus and development	Clear progression in the development of skills across the three levels for option 2 examples (e.g. #4, 5); Vocabulary reinforced across levels in option 2 (e.g #6).	Unclear skill focus across worksheets for option one (e.g. #1); Skills limited to reading and writing areas.
Language use	Consistent use of vocabulary and structures for both options.	Worksheets resembled exercises (e.g. #1c, 3c). continued ...
Degree of openness and options	Element of control present.	Too much control for all levels (e.g. #2a); Few options given to encourage learners to make decisions.

CRITERIA	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Interest	Third level tasks were more interesting (e.g. #5c)	First level worksheets low in interest and intellectual challenge (e.g. #1a); Third level tasks not challenging (e.g. #3c).

Recommendations

Designing layered worksheets is a time-consuming and difficult task. In these TOC introductory sessions, time was limited and teachers had had limited exposure to working with tasks. Designing graded worksheets that meet the criteria for tasks, demands the interplay and balancing of many variables. Teachers had a clear understanding of grading principles but found it difficult to incorporate them into task-like worksheets and they often forgot to consider the classroom management implications of their design. Teachers will need a great deal of support to further develop their skills in this area. To improve teachers' expertise in grading tasks the following recommendations are given:

1. Allow sufficient time to plan and develop or select appropriate materials to meet the needs and interest of pupils;
2. When designing graded tasks consider first the purpose; ensure that the purpose has a meaningful application to the every day lives of the students;
3. Develop contexts or situations that the students can relate to; some degree of familiarity is desirable;
4. Consider which skills and language will be developed in the tasks and try to incorporate them into the worksheets so that there is a common core to what the learners are doing;
5. Provide more support to the weaker or slower students but at the same time try to give them interesting tasks; allow them to have some choice;
6. Always consider the classroom management implications of the tasks; skilled grouping is desirable in some cases; allow all learners access to all of the tasks sometimes.
7. Develop experience with tasks by utilizing all the available resources such as the POS; practice incorporating tasks into lessons; make use of the expertise offered by support institutions.

Conclusion

This brief analysis has provided a closer examination of one of the critical areas in accommodating individual differences, a central concept of TOC. At the present time, teachers are accustomed to traditional whole-class teaching and the bridge towards individualisation in terms of learners' needs and interests will be a long and arduous one for most educators. The broad grouping of tasks as portrayed in this paper, is an interim measure toward

attaining the full accommodation of individual learner's needs and interests in instruction. This approach does not, in the long run, accommodate every learner but it does in the short run, prepare teachers to think about the related issues both in practical and pedagogical terms.

NOTES

1. These data are from the unpublished TOC Teacher Education Team's *Summary of Evaluation,* 1992–93. Education Department, Hong Kong.
2. The author wishes to acknowledge the support of the members of the TOC-English Team. Special thanks to Henry Hepburn, team leader and all the teachers whose worksheets made this paper possible.

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ENGLISH IN THE STREET

Targets:
Developing Knowledge (DK)

> A. Identify, name and make connections among concepts and their related procedures drawn from learning in English and in other subjects in the course of creating and using texts.

> F. Search for and gather information on a topic, take notes, synthesize, reorganize and present information in a written report or illustrated talk.

1. Learners are told that they are to find 'the English' that is in the street. They brainstorm where they can find it and compile a list with teacher support. Learners divide into groups. Each group is to record the English found in a particular domain, e.g. road signs, shop-signs, signboards, signs on buildings etc. Learners search and record the findings after the lesson. On returning to the classroom, they report their findings. (D.K.f)

2. With teacher support, they relate the English in the street to what they have learnt in the classroom and other knowledge. They discover the meaning of some of the English (e.g. Post no bill!) through connecting it with the context in which it is used. (D.K.a)

3. Drawing on the English learners found and relating it to the concepts and cognitive processes appropriate for learners of this key stage, the teacher may also introduce some interesting aspects of the language to the learners or explain how the language is used in daily life (e.g. What is HK? What is the NT?/What is this 'M'? (teacher showing the logo of McDonald's)/What is this 'T' (teacher showing a picture of a public telephone kiosk with a T sign)/What does 'P' stand for as a road sign?/What does CMB mean?/What does KCR mean? What does LRT mean? What does MTR mean?). (D.K.A)

Education Department (1992). *Programme of Study for English, Key Stage 2* (Primary 4 – Primary 6) p. 61. Hong Kong.
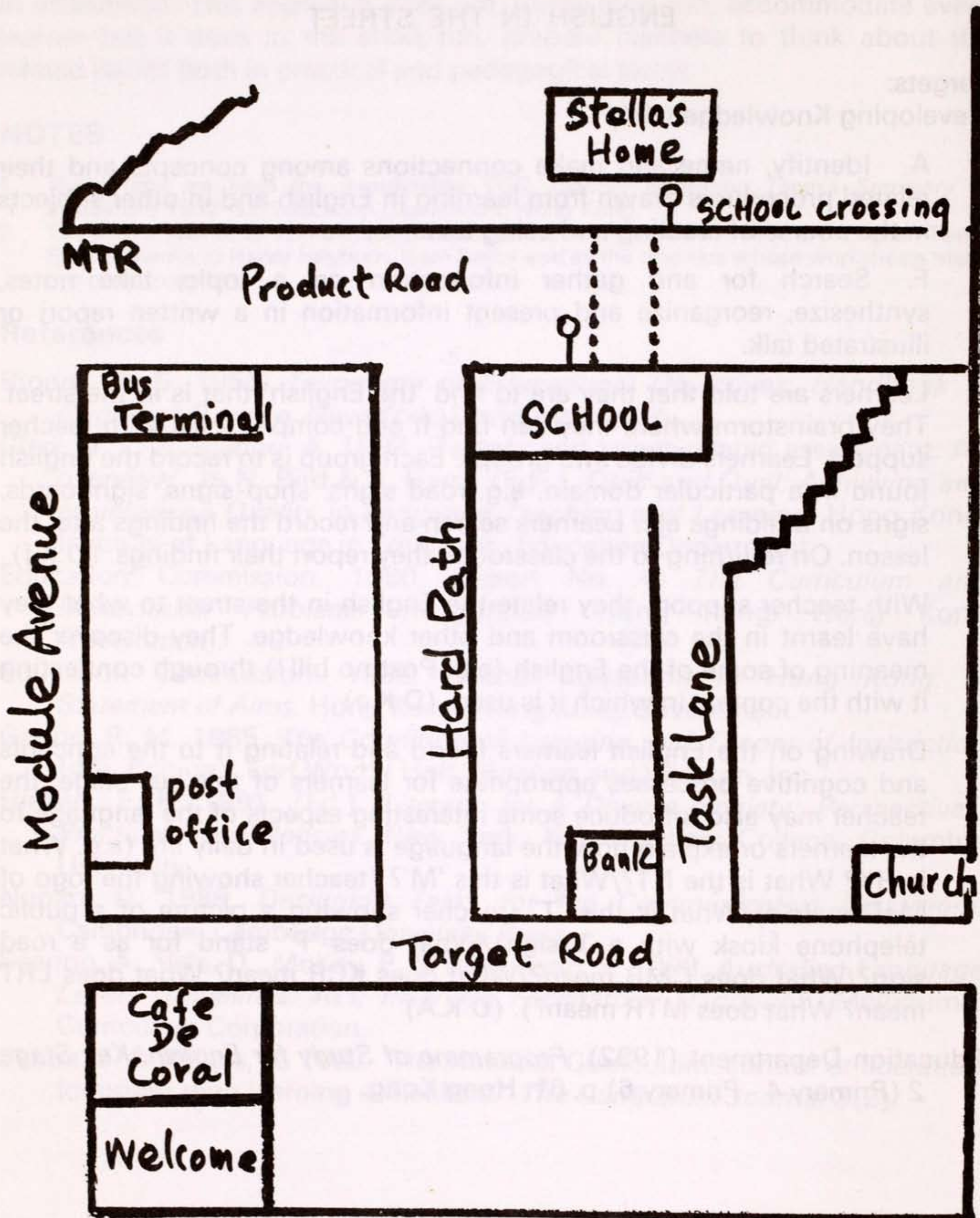
WORKSHEET LEVEL (1)

Fill in the blanks

Taking a walk with your friend

After lunch Stella takes a walk with her friend from Canada near her home.

First they leave their house and walk to the _____ and cross there to the school. They walk down the stairs and come to a _____ at the end of the Lane. They turn left and walk straight ahead to Module Avenue. The _____ is on their left. They want to have a drink so they walk into _____ to buy two cups of tea. Then Stella remembers she has to buy a bag of rice. So they go into _____ the supermarket next to the fast food shop.

WORDS FOR REFERENCE

church   Welcome   post office

Cafe De Coral   bank   School Crossing
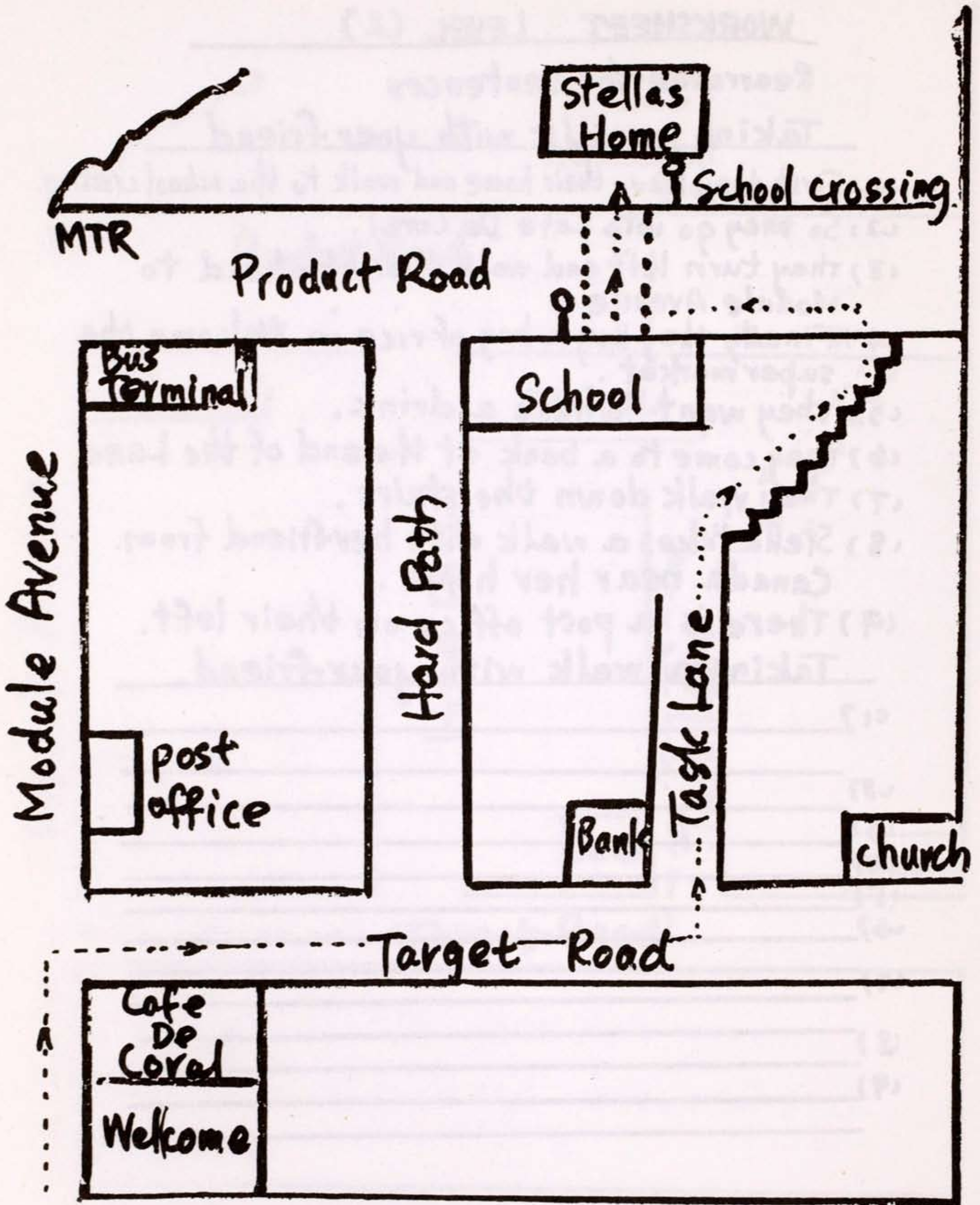
WORKSHEET LEVEL (2)

Rearrange the sentences

Taking a walk with your friend

(1) First they leave their home and walk to the school crossing.

(2) So they go into Cafe De Coral.

(3) They turn left and walk straight ahead to Module Avenue.

(4) Finally they buy a bag of rice in Welcome, the supermarket.

(5) They want to have a drink.

(6) They come to a bank at the end of the Lane

(7) They walk down the stairs.

(8) Stella takes a walk with her friend from Canada near her home.

(9) There is a post office on their left.

Taking a walk with your friend

(1) _____

_____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

(6) _____

(7) _____

_____

(8) _____

(9) _____

_____

WORKSHEET LEVEL (3)

Going Back To Stella's Home

Stella has something to do and she tells her friends to take the bag of rice home first. Please help her :-

First walk along Module Avenue. Turn right when she comes to Target Road
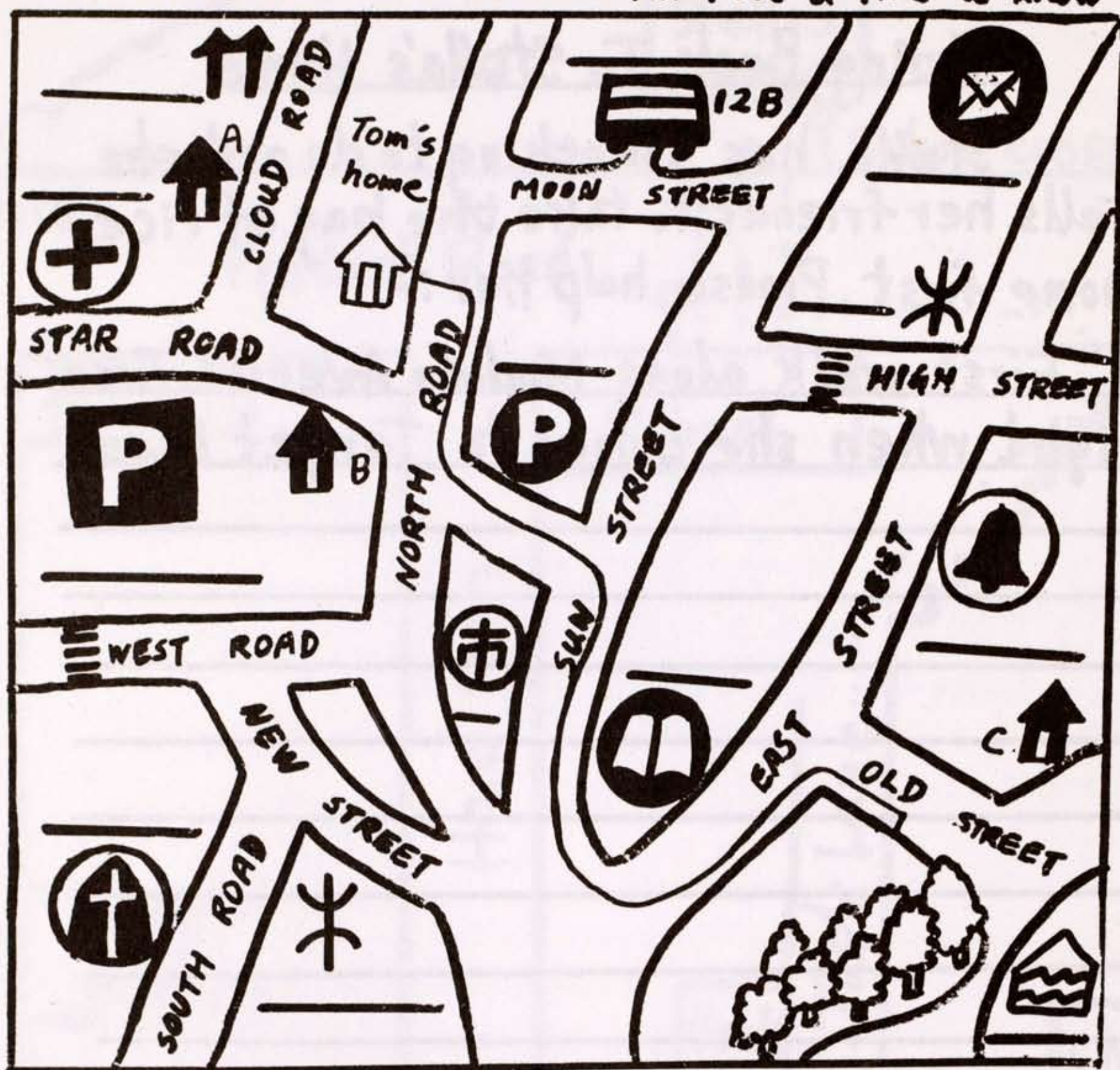
_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WORKSHEET A

Tom's friend has come to visit him. He'd like to know the district

Label the signs in the map with the following:

MTR station	police station
bus terminal	fire station
car park	post office
church	hospital
temple	market
library	swimming pool

WORKSHEET B

Yesterday, Tom went to the park.

Locate the park and indicate it in the map with an 'X'. Then describe Tom's journey.

Tom lives on North Road. Yesterday, he left home for the park in _____.
First he turned right and walked along North Road . Then he turned left to _____. He saw the _____ on his left and the _____ on his right . Then he turned_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WORKSHEET C

Imagine you live in a house in the map. You went to the nearest MTR station yesterday. Create your route and report what you saw on your way.

How to get to the nearest MTR station

I live

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DEVELOPING LEARNER RESPONSIBILITY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF WRITING

Lynda Poon, Anne Lo, Stella Kong
Target Oriented Curriculum Teacher Education Team

'If you give a man a fish, you feed him for one day. If you teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.'

Confucius

'The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn'.

Carl Rogers

Introduction

In the process of training teachers for the curriculum renewal brought about by Target Oriented Curriculum (previously referred to as Targets and Target Related Assessment), it was realized that, inter-alia, one of the major difficulties that teachers face is how to accommodate the changes required of them. Giroux (1981) indicates that the curriculum cannot be truly renewed if it is simply recycling and repackaging forms of the existing rationality. Curriculum renewal implies critical reflection on a series of pedagogical issues like the aims of education, the principles of learning, and the roles of teachers and pupils.

One area for reflection is the roles of the teacher and the learner in facilitating learning. In many Hong Kong primary classrooms, the curriculum is heavily teacher-centred and content-based. The teachers feel that their responsibility is to teach their learners all the content of the textbook no matter whether it can be digested or not. The effect of this is that learning becomes passive knowledge-receiving and the responsibility for learning remains with the teacher, who has to make sure that the learners learn what is taught. But since it is not possible for the teacher to disseminate all the knowledge and skills needed by the learners in a classroom, teachers should therefore help students learn how to acquire knowledge — 'to think, make connections and relate what they have learnt to their own situation' (Education Commission 1992:19) — so that learning is self-directed and does not stop after learners leave school. The TOC Programme of Study for English: Key Stage 2 also points out clearly that 'learning a language is a process which depends on the learners' capability to engage their minds actively with the language ..... It is therefore important for learners to develop, as soon as possible, a sense of responsibility which will motivate them to engage actively in their learning.' (Education Department 1992:16)

Purposes & Scope of Article

The traditional view of teachers as the providers of knowledge and authority is still strongly held by many teachers as well as students in Hong Kong. The purposes of this article are, therefore, to raise teacher awareness of the need to promote learner responsibility among students when they are young so that they can be more self motivated and independent in learning; and to propose some practical means of developing self-assessment[1] among primary pupils in writing.

There are many different aspects in developing learner responsibility. They include the opening up of more choices for learners to make decisions and the provision of more opportunities for participation of learners in their learning so that they can decide upon their pacing, contribute to the lessons, get involved in monitoring, evaluating and assessing their progress, and help their peers. In other words, the classroom is to move from a continuum of direct to indirect control and from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation.

The scope of this article is developing learner responsibility in self-assessment, with special focus on writing. The reasons are:

(1) As reflected from teachers' feedback to the TOC Teacher Education Seminars, teachers are most concerned with the changes brought about by the procedures involved in target-related assessment. The concept of assessment as part of the teaching and learning process and the emerging importance played by formative assessment in the curriculum is still very new to most teachers. Helping learners learn to evaluate and assess their own performance is one way of involving learners in such an assessment process.

(2) Writing is a skill which involves more easily observable processes and yields more concrete products. Moreover, 'process writing' (as defined in the TOC Programme of Study for English: Key Stage 2) is considered a 'prominent' aspect in TOC teaching and learning for English (Education Department 1992:205). It, therefore, serves as an appropriate aspect for illustrating how teachers can help learners develop their own responsibility and independence in self assessing their writing.

Self-Assessment in Writing

The ability for learners to self-assess is essential in helping learners to benefit from the process of writing and become more creative and independent writers. This is because the fundamental purpose of assessment is to provide feedback to learners about their strengths and weaknesses, thus promoting their learning. Self-assessment in process writing helps learners examine 'what they do as they write, the strategies they use and the decisions they make as writers' (Tompkins 1992:244). Although it is often held that teachers and specialists will be more reliable in their assessment than the learners themselves, many learners do have an idea of their own performance and they can learn to get information about their own learning with proper guidance (Dickinson 1987). The main issue in this context is

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indeed not whether self assessment is reliable but whether it enables learners to become better learners.

Self-assessment can be done in different ways using different instruments. In this article, three types of instruments are proposed for helping primary pupils in Hong Kong become responsible and independent writers. Some fundamental changes, however, are needed in the current writing classroom to make it possible for these instruments to be employed.

The basic question that needs to be addressed is whether pupils receive opportunities to write for genuine communication where they can express their own ideas and feelings for specific purposes and for specific readers. It is doubtful whether the conventional practice of guided writing in the primary classroom in Hong Kong actually helps pupils become effective writers. Guided writing, whether in the form of filling in blanks or answering questions is, strictly speaking, not writing at all. It is only a kind of linguistic exercise which does not allow many chances for pupils to express themselves creatively, to experiment and to take risks. Consequently, pupils' duty in a writing lesson is to try their best to write in order to conform to the answers expected of them within one or two periods; after which, the teacher will assume the role of an item checker (Mahon 1992), trying to correct all the mistakes of the pupils. Such an experience makes writing very contrived and does not really help learners explore the art of writing and acquire the skills needed for a responsible and independent writer. Moreover, writing is considered a lonely and individual activity. This is especially so in a conventional writing classroom where pupils are not encouraged to talk or consult others for ideas.

In short, there must be a change in the way the writing exercise is conducted in the classroom before self-assessment instruments can be meaningfully used. The above discussion shows that the fundamental change is teachers' willingness to let go and allow children more opportunities to write without fear of making mistakes. As Rowe and Lomas put it, 'Writing is a skill that will flourish only if children are free to experiment with written language' and 'the best way to learn to write is by writing' (Rowe and Lomas 1984:1). The teacher's role is to guide learners through the stages of the writing process and turn the classroom into a writing community where there is mutual sharing and support among learners and also between the teacher and learners. As the teacher assumes the role of a guide through the writing process and that of a critical reader, giving pupils feedback on content and form wherever appropriate, pupils will gradually learn to take up a more active role in writing and be ready to assess their own work as well as their peers' work.

Instruments for Self-assessment in Writing

Three types of instruments for self-assessment in writing are proposed here for use by primary pupils in Hong Kong. They are (1) checklists, (2) progress cards, and (3) self-evaluation questionnaires.

(1) *Checklists,*

The checklists designed are based on Tompkins' ideas (1990, 1992). The stages outlined in the checklists basically follow the five main stages of process writing stated in the TOC Programme of Study for English: Key Stage 2 i.e. pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Checklist 1 is the comprehensive checklist for all the stages in the writing process. Checklists 1.1 to 1.4 each deals with one or two of these stages. Checklist 1.1 deals with the Pre-writing stage and the Drafting stage, Checklist 1.2 the Revising stage, Checklist 1.3 the Editing stage and Checklist 1.4 the Publishing stage. Together, these 4 checklists include exactly the same steps as those in the comprehensive Checklist 1. These 4 checklists are designed for beginning writers and are therefore presented in the form of pictures so as to help illustrate the steps visually. The metalanguage is kept as simple as possible but some process words are included since both the teacher and pupils need to establish a bank of familiar terminology for discussion and conferencing where the teacher meets pupils individually or in groups on particular aspects of their writing.

At the Pre-writing stage, it is suggested that pupils should be helped to get into the habit of developing a Word Bank for each particular writing task. The Word Bank will include the target words needed for that particular piece of writing and it will be the source of reference when pupils have to check spelling in the Editing stage. We think it is sufficient for pupils to check the spelling of the target words only because these are words specially learnt for writing a particular piece.

The Feedback Checklist (Card 1) to be used at Step 9 is designed to help pupils develop revision skills.

(2) *Progress Cards*

Pupils can be guided to develop a variety of progress cards to use in charting their own learning progress in various writing sub-skills. Two exemplar progress cards, one on grammar and one on punctuation (Cards 2 and 3), are presented here. These two progress cards can be used as checklists when pupils are working at the Editing stage (Steps 13 and 14, Checklist 1.3).

According to Walshe, 'there are five small areas of grammar teaching/learning that can help writers to be conscious avoiders of error' (1981:165). These are:

1. A sentence needs a verb.
2. It is sometimes useful to distinguish between 'sentence', 'clause', and 'phrase'.
3. Verbs need to agree in number with their subjects.
4. Simple present and past tense differences need to be identified.
5. Subject and object forms of personal pronouns need to be distinguished.

(from Walshe 1981:165)

Four of these 'five small areas of grammar' are included in the Grammar Progress Card (Card 3). The distinction between 'sentence', 'clause' and 'phrase' is not included since the concept may be too difficult for beginning learners. The items on the progress cards, however, are not exhaustive and both the teacher and learners can always add any items as appropriate.

Some grammar terms e.g. subject-verb agreement, pronouns etc are kept in these progress cards since they are 'indispensable' and 'can grow on children as specific terms need to be used in the classroom' (Walshe 1981:165).

(3) *Self-evaluation Questionnaire*

The self-evaluation questionnaire is designed to help pupils reflect on both the process and the product of their own writing. The questionnaire is made as simple as possible but two openended questions are included in order to develop pupils' ability to think more deeply and critically about their own writing.

Use of the Instruments

Beginning writers will need to be shown how to use these instruments. Teachers should deal with the items on these instruments one at a time rather than expecting pupils to be able to use them all immediately. But the ultimate aim is that pupils should be trained to be responsible and independent writers who can make use of these instruments to help themselves write on their own as well as to help their classmates.

These instruments should therefore be used for training primary pupils' writing ability as early as possible. However, teachers can start using these to help pupils at any level. Pupils must be allowed ample time to progress at their own pace in the process of learning how to write. It is, therefore, not appropriate to assign any time schedule for the use of these instruments. Teachers should decide when individual pupils can use which one according to their ability and needs.

(1) *Checklists*

As a start, teachers should introduce Checklist 1.1 to the whole class as they take a class through the Pre-writing stage to the Drafting stage. Time must be allowed for pupils to practise using the checklist in conferences. When pupils can monitor their movement through the various steps in Checklist 1.1, teachers can introduce Checklist 1.2 for the Revising stage. At Step 9, pupils can make use of the Feedback Checklist (Card 1) to help their Writing Partner(s) clarify the meaning and enrich the content of their piece(s) of writing. When pupils are familiar with using Checklist 1.2, Checklists 1.3 and 1.4 can then be introduced in the same way. At Step 12, pupils have to check spelling by referring back to the Word Bank they have

created at Step 5 (Checklist 1.2). At Steps 13 and 14, pupils can make use of the two progress cards (Cards 2 and 3) as checklists for editing.

To facilitate learning, the checklists can be made into large posters for display in the classroom. For beginning writers, Cantonese can be used in conferences so as to encourage interaction.

When pupils can use Checklists 1.1 to 1.4 without problems, they can start using Checklist 1 on their own. They can put a tick or give themselves a grade against the steps they can perform on the checklist.

(2) Progress Cards

Other than being used as checklists at the Editing stage, the two proposed progress cards can also be used for self-assessment and teacher-assessment on individual pupils' progress in their mastery of various punctuation and grammar items. Items in the progress cards are non-exhaustive to allow for addition or deletion as according to the ability and needs of individual pupils. Pupils can always enter more items as they have learnt more. These two progress cards, and any others pupils have developed, should be kept in individual pupils' writing folders as a form of record keeping for monitoring their own progress.

(3) Self-evaluation Questionnaire

When pupils are familiar with the various steps and stages in this process writing approach, they can use the self-evaluation questionnaire to give themselves an overall assessment of their own writing. The self-evaluation questionnaire helps pupils to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses as writers. The reflection can provide the basis for setting targets and goals for improving their future writing tasks.

Conclusion

The three types of instruments proposed for self-assessment are intended to help primary pupils develop intrinsic motivation as they learn to write and assess their work throughout the writing process more independently. As pupils also play the roles of writing partners and readers for each other, the writing classroom can actually be developed into a supportive writing community where pupils grow to be responsible and independent writers. All in all, this article is an attempt to raise teacher awareness of the need to release learning responsibility back to pupils. It is hoped that it can help teachers, especially primary school teachers, to realise that learner responsibility can be developed gradually when learners are young through different means. Self assessment in writing through the three types of instruments proposed is one way. It is hoped that teachers can put these instruments into practice and feedback on the practicality of using these instruments is welcomed.

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A Writing Checklist

Pre-writing : — Why write ?
— Who for ?
— What about ?
— Where to get ideas ?
— What words to use ?

Drafting : — Make notes
— Write Draft 1

Revising : — Re-read Draft 1 to check meaning
— Ask Writing Partner for feedback
— Make changes based on feedback and re-reading
— Write Draft 2

Editing : — Check spelling
— Check punctuation
— Check grammar
— Get help from classmates
— Get help from teacher

Publishing /Sharing : — Write the final draft
— Draw some pictures
— Share it with other readers
— Put it on display or in your writing folder