FOREWORD

It is with some passing regret that the editors have to report that this edition of the ILEJ will be its last. In September 1994, the ILE will become part of the Hong Kong Institute of Education but it is hoped that a new journal will take its place, so that in honoured Shakesperean fashion we may proclaim, 'The journal is dead! Long live the journal.'

For this, the eleventh and last issue of the ILEJ, the English editors decided on the theme of 'Teacher education: looking back, looking forward'. In this way, significant achievements could be highlighted and consideration given to the measures required to support, sustain and carry forward these achievements.

The eight articles in the English section are followed by a series of reports on major initiatives the ILE is involved in plus summary reports of action research projects carried out by secondary and primary participants during ILE refresher courses.

Cheng Kai-ming's article looks at global issues in teacher education reform with a particular focus on Asia. He examines the role of teachers in such reforms which he relates to teacher competencies and their associated phenomena—budgetary constraints, teacher values, teacher shortage, teaching qualifications and the professional development of teachers.

John Clark demonstrates how lessons learned in the past might usefully guide future language in education policy in Hong Kong, using the ILE as his vehicle. He outlines and appraises the role, functions and significant contributions of the ILE to education in Hong Kong since its inception in 1982. He plots its progress over the years highlighting its achievements but also regretting that its envisaged role did not allow it to realise its full potential as the fulcrum of educational development in Hong Kong. He goes on to indicate ways in which the Hong Kong Institute of Education might respond to the developing and future needs of language in education in Hong Kong.

Carol Maclennan discusses the principles on which pre-service teacher-education courses might be based. She examines first the problems of teacher education generally and then those particular to Hong Kong. Her conclusion is that the essential items of a pre-service course should also be cognisant of the effects these elements will have on the long term development of the prospective teacher. She makes a plea for teacher education to be seen as an integrated whole which 'accepts continuous learning rather than stagnation as its 'raison d'etre' and as 'the cornerstone of pre-service courses which prepare students to become teachers of the 21st century'.

Dave Carless and Icy Lee describe a project on attitude changes carried out in conjunction with primary school teachers on their 16 week in-service refresher course at the ILE. Through pre- and post-course questionnaires and interviews they were able to gauge the extent to which teacher attitudes had changed during the course. The results indicated more positive attitudes, in particular towards the Target Oriented Curriculum. The writers

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suggest that there are wider implications for which further research is needed in that attitude change on an in-service course does not necessarily predict behaviour changes in the classroom.

Bob Adamson's contribution is an intriguingly witty dialogue between a well-known Chinese teacher and his interviewer. From the answers we learn that the idea of a reflective teacher is not new and was in vogue in China thousands of years ago.

Peter Storey's article describes the use of the introspective validation procedure used in the development of a diagnostic test of reading for College of Education Students in Hong Kong. He explains what the procedure can reveal about the test-taking process. Despite certain drawbacks he feels that 'a carefully controlled use of introspection could produce a genuine advance in our knowledge of tests and test-taking'.

The article by Mike Ingham and Mike Murphy seeks to show teachers how to cope with the change in the Form 5 Oral Exam and the new AS oral component which essentially demand more emphasis on presentation skills. Their solution is partly inspired by a joint performance festival by three schools as a result of the action research projects carried out by the teachers during their ILE refresher course. They propose to use the principle of performance which basically encourages students to dramatize their presentations through participating in various ways with varying media e.g. speaking, poems, choral speaking, role-playing and even acting.

With the Government's medium of instruction policy being implemented in September 1994, Gloria Tang's paper is particularly relevant. It addresses the problem of bridging Chinese- medium and English-medium content-area instruction. She reports on an ethnographic study in Hong Kong of how knowledge structures are represented graphically in textbooks and by teachers, and of students' awareness of them. She proposes a classroom model, known as the Knowledge Framework which has been developed with Bernard Mohan in Canada. Though positive results have been obtained in Vancouver, she feels further research is necessary to establish its effectiveness in Hong Kong.

Our report section continues with the medium of instruction issue, as Philip Hoare reports on the new ILE course for subject teachers using English as the medium of instruction. He outlines the background to the course, describes the course components and discusses future issues. May Lee reports on the Intensive English Programme designed to help 6th form students using Chinese as the medium of instruction to make the transition to English medium tertiary education. She describes the course, its progress and evaluation and deals with certain issues which require further consideration.

Vivienne Yu and Graham Bilbow respectively, explain the Extensive Reading Scheme for primary schools and the Hong Kong Vocational English Programme in terms of their background, structure and positive effects.

There are nine Chinese articles in this journal. They are grouped under three headings—vocabulary; the teaching and learning of Chinese; and improvements in language teaching.

There are three articles dealing with vocabulary. Professor Lui Kang-lei's 'A talk on the common word' gives his views on the proper and common aspect of words. The examples used and the comments given should provide useful insights for teachers of Chinese.

The article on 'Variants in Chinese Characters and Words' by Dr. Lee Hok-ming, analyzes the differences between variant characters and words and also indicates the differences between the variant words and their synoyms. He also explains why variant words were coined and their significance in the teaching of Chinese. Mr Chen Ji-fan's article, 'A Comparison of the Putonghua and Shantou dialects', points out the differences in the composition of quantitative words and nouns in the two dialects.

In the first of four articles on the teaching and learning of Chinese, 'The Hau Yu Dialect and Language Teaching', Professor Zhau Bo-hui outlines the principles teachers should use in dealing with interference from the Yue dialect.

Dr Cheung Kwan-lim's article 'The Introduction of an Elementary Course in the Awareness of Speech Sounds', stresses the importance of raising the learner's awareness of speech sounds. To this end he has designed a sequence process which should develop the learners' ability in this area.

Mr Lee How-chong points out the importance of creative thinking in language teaching in his article 'The Teaching of Creative thinking and Language teaching'.

Mr. Fu King-hung's article, 'Reading Processes and the Assessment of Reading Skills', written from a psycholinguistic stand-point, is based on his research work. He suggests several ways in which to assess the learner's ability to decode information.

The final two articles come from Mainland China and are concerned with improving language teaching. In 'The Essence of Chinese', Mr Yu Ying Yuan gives an overview of the essence of Chinese which he considers should be used as a basis for further exploring the principles of language teaching so as to develop a more systematic way of handling content and teaching strategies. Professor Zong Wei-yong's article, 'The Reform of Language Teaching in Mainland China' is an account of language teaching in Mainland China in which he indicates that any reform of language teaching should be viewed from a macro point of view.

前言

　　《語文教育學院學報》是一本以語文教師、語文教育工作者、語文學者為對象的學術刊物，第一期在 1985 年出版，幌眼之間，距今已有九年了。今期是第十一期，也應該是最後一期，因為由今年九月起，語文教育學院就會成為香港教育學院的一分子，即使以後有《學報》的出版，也不可能稱為《語文教育學院學報》了。自茲一別，再會無期，謹向一直以來支持我們的機構、朋友和熱誠工作的同事致謝。

　　為配合《學報》最後一期，今期英文版的主題為「教師培訓之回顧與前瞻」，共收集論文八篇，內容遍及教師培訓、語文的教與學、語文政策和教學語言等題目。今期英文版亦載有四份報告，分別介紹語文教育學院所參與的四項新工作，即專為以英語為教學語言的教師而設的復修課程、中六英語密集課程、職業英語課程及小學英文廣泛閱讀計畫。此外，中小學英文教師復修課程學員提交的「行動研究報告」，也有八篇撮要收錄在內。

　　今期的中文論文有九篇，排列次序，原則上按收稿的先後。九篇論文的內容，可約略分為三類。有關字詞討論的文章有三篇：羅忼烈的《俗字瑣談》，討論的是正字和俗字問題，文中所舉的字例和相關的說明，對語文教師、語文教育工作者和語文學者，都有參考的價值。李學銘的《異體字和異體詞》，除了辨析何謂異體字詞和異體詞與同義詞的分別外，主要是論述異體字詞衍生的原因和異體字詞與語文教學的關係。陳基藩的《汕頭話與普通話的比較——數量詞與名詞的組合特點》，主要用汕頭話跟普通話互相比較，在數量詞與名詞的組合上論述其表示法、搭配、省略等各方面的特點。有關語文教學與學習的文章有四篇：詹伯慧的《談談漢語方言與語文教學》，主要是討論方言與語文教學的問題，作者的主張是：面對粵語給語文教學帶來的干擾，教師應懂得寬嚴結合之道，該寬則寬，需嚴則嚴，實事求是。張群顯的《介紹一個語音意識初級教程》，主要在介紹作者自己設計的新語音教程，並強調語音意識的重要。這個教程，採取循序漸進的方式，去刺激學員的語音意識。李孝聰的《創造思考教學與語文教學》，內容在強調創作思考教學在語文教學中的重要地位。作者認為，創作思考教學是一種多元、開放、活潑而又能訓練學生思維的教學模式。傅健雄的《閱讀認知心理的發展與能力評估》，是一篇從心理語言學觀點討論閱讀心理過程的文章。作者以學者的研究為理據，就學生處理信息的能力，提出幾種評估方法。有關語文教學改進的文章有兩篇：余應源的《論語文科的本質》，詳細辨析了語文科的本質，並進而指出，我們必須以認識語文科的本質為基礎，進一步探討語文教學各方面的規律，建構科學的語文教學內容體系與方法體系。鍾為永的《中國大陸的語文教學改革》，既扼要介紹了中國大陸語文教學的情況，又指出語文教學改革所應注意的事項。最後，作者強調，語文教學的改革，必須立足整體，從宏觀着眼。

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ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE[1]

CHENG Kai-Ming
Dean, Education Faculty, University of HONG KONG

Introduction

This paper is developed from a thematic key-note delivered at the SEAPREAMS[2] 13th regional Symposium which worked on Education Reform. Teacher competency was among the four areas of concern, the others being *curriculum, management* and *finance.* The key-note paper was based on position papers written by various country representatives in response to a situation paper produced by the writer and sent to country representatives well in advance. The countries' responses clearly indicate that the concern about teachers go far beyond the realm of *competency.* This paper is therefore derived from the general literature on teacher education, the issues identified by various country representatives who attended the symposium and the writer's observation of several systems.

Teachers in Reforms

Education reform is on the agenda of almost all governments in the world. For a number of reasons, the success of any educational reform relies heavily on teachers. First, while the construct of a reform may come from some wise men at the top, plans have to be implemented by grass-root teachers. Educational reforms are perhaps more known for their failures than successes, and most of the failures are attributable to resistance or reluctance of grass-root teachers.

Second, the largest share of any education budget goes towards teachers' salaries. UNESCO statistics reveal that the largest share of the recurrent budget (in the range of 60% to 90% with many countries exceeding 80% in Asia) is spent on personnel which in most countries means teachers' salaries (UNESCO, 1993a: Table 4.2; 1993b: Table 11). The OECD also revealed that its member countries spend an average of 72.4% of recurrent expenditure on teacher remuneration (OECD, 1993:86). In a country like China, where the salary of teachers is always a concern, primary school and secondary school teachers consume 88.8% and 81.7% respectively of the recurrent expenditure (State Education Commission and Shanghai Institute for Human Resources Development, 1993:37–38). In these days when *efficiency* looms high on policy agendas, teacher improvement becomes crucial in improving the efficiency of any education system.

Third, many of the recent education reforms have moved away from quantitative expansion and structural reform and into the arena of quality of

education. During times of expansion and structural reform, the major concerns are the number of places, changes at the system level and resources to support such expansion and changes. However, the degree to which systemic reforms can contribute to improvement of quality of education is limited. As we are aware, quality improvement is often a matter of schools. There is therefore the recent trend of decentralisation in school systems and the encouragement of school-based endeavours. In all these, teachers are again crucial in achieving any success for the reforms (see, for example, Department of Education and Science, 1987 which gives a very useful discussion of the relations between quality improvement and teacher education).

There are other more theoretical reasons why teachers are essential to education reforms (for example, see Elmore & MacLaughlin, 1988), but at least the above pragmatic considerations should have made teachers the focus of educational reform.

However, even in very developed systems of education, the teacher element is often taken for granted in reform plans, and is often not given enough attention during the implementation of the reform. Often, it is assumed that teachers would automatically accept the ideas of the reform, acquaint themselves with the reform processes, identify and solve problems arising from the reform. Everybody knows that this is seldom the case in reality. Too often, elegantly designed reform plans face teachers who are psychologically reluctant to change, physically pre-occupied with heavy workloads and technically unprepared for handling the new tasks required by the reform.

Indeed, reform in teachers is the most essential factor in educational reform. If other elements were held static and teachers alone were significantly improved, our education systems might be very different from what they are today.

About Competency

There is a trend in some countries to consider teacher competency as a central concern of teacher reform. However, whether or not the issue of teacher improvement should be confined to teacher competency is debatable.

To start with, what is meant by competency? In lieu of a specific definition, teacher competency may be taken to mean whatever is required of a teacher. If this is accepted, then the answer to the above question is 'yes'. In other words, if we want to launch a system of teacher reform we need to know what the expected outcomes of such a reform would be.

Traditional teacher training claims that it imparts knowledge and skills. It assumes that teacher competency comprises knowledge and skills. However, most of the effective school literature views teachers as agents of change and committed professionals. Such expectations are hardly only a matter of knowledge and skill. Hence, attitudes or values are becoming

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increasingly regarded as essential ingredients of an effective teacher. In other words, if we are to maintain the term competency, then the term has to be re-defined.

If we adopt this framework, then there could be three dimensions to teacher competency: (a) knowledge about what is to be taught or subject competency, (b) knowledge and skills about teaching or other activities in schools or education competency and (c) commitments or values a teacher should possess or professional values. The following elaborates these three dimensions:

Subject competency is about academic knowledge related to the curriculum the teacher is to teach. Subject competency is often attained during the pre-service stage of teacher development. Ideally, the teacher should have achieved this kind of competency through higher education, either in universities or in post-secondary teacher colleges. A teacher's subject competency is also updated through in-service endeavours. To this end, higher education should also develop among the graduates the capacity to renew their own knowledge.

Education competency is perhaps not an accurate representation of the category. It involves initially knowledge skills related to teaching. It also includes knowledge and skills in other school activities such as counselling, management and curriculum development. The scope of this kind of competency is ever expanding in the light of administrative decentralisation and reliance on school-based endeavours for school improvement. Pre-service teacher education equips teachers with the fundamentals of educational competency, but much of the educational competency is acquired on-the-job through practice or through in-service programmes.

Professional values are perhaps the most neglected items in teacher competency, although they are essential in maintaining a teaching force which is committed to education. Professional values are supposedly acquired initially through pre-service training, but this is true only if the teacher educators are themselves conscious of their role as teaching professionals. Where a mentor system is adopted, the mentor is also essential in 'enculturating' the incoming teacher to the professional culture of teachers. Professional values are often re-confirmed through working in schools. A teacher's professional attitude and values, particularly among young teachers, are shaped by peer influence and school cultures. Teacher's professional values are further developed through professional organisations which extend the professional network beyond school boundaries. These could be subject or task based professional societies such as those for science education or educational administration. The ideal case is for teachers to develop an umbrella professional body such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland, which oversees and co-ordinates teachers' professional development at large. Such a professional body is often equipped with a professional code with internal disciplinary implications (see Hoyle, 1980[3]).

The above is only a brief classification to provide a framework for discussion. There are other ways of classifying which may prove helpful. The Project 21 issued by the board of Teacher Education of Queensland, for example, has made a list of 'teachers' desirable roles and competencies' (Board, 1987:52 & App. V). Meanwhile, the Australian National Teaching Council is launching a validation exercise on Teacher Competencies by December 1993[4]. In the following section certain specific issues of common concern will be discussed.

Teacher Shortage and Competency

Teacher shortage is reportedly a common issue of concern[5]. In some places, a prospering economy has diverted people from the teaching profession. Either young people are not attracted to teaching, or capable teachers leave the profession (e.g. in Singapore). In other places, in developing countries in particular, the salaries for teachers are not enough to attract able young people. In still other places, the education system is not sufficiently developed to produce the required number of teachers (e.g. in Maldives). Apart from matters of supply and demand, there is sometimes the lack of competence to cope with the changing system that causes teachers to leave their jobs.

The improvement of teacher competency is very much hampered by teacher shortage. When quantity is a problem, it is difficult to conceive of dramatic improvements in competencies. Under situations of severe teacher shortage, planners and policy-makers are tempted to lower the qualification requirements for teachers. This may in turn cause a dilution of teacher quality and a decline in the prestige of the teaching profession. As a result the profession becomes even less attractive to young people. A vicious circle develops.

One may understandably argue that the vicious circle can only be broken when there is a 'turn-around' in the supply of teachers. At times of teacher shortage, filling the classrooms becomes an immediate concern and planners are given little choice but to appoint whoever is available. However, one may also justifiably argue that if there is no significant improvement in teacher competency, the professional status of teachers will decline. Then, it would be even more difficult to recruit able young people to the teaching profession. Teacher shortage will be perpetuated.

An issue similar to the problem of shortage is the disparity between 'old' teachers, who are less qualified or less motivated and 'new' teachers who are better educated and better prepared for self-renewal. This occurs often in the systems which have seen significant expansion in the higher levels of education. The 'old' teachers, who need competency improvement, are the most reluctant to undergo any reform. These reluctant teachers will dilute whatever effort is made to improve teacher quality. The difference between this case and teacher shortage is that the dilution is caused by the 'old-comers' rather than the 'new-comers'.

There is perhaps no panacea for the problem. Reports of innovations or suggestions for solving the problem of teacher shortage are relatively rare in the literature. The dilemma is caused by the intrinsic contradiction between long-term strategies and short-term crises.

Qualification and Competency

An issue that grew out of the shortage problem is: Is formal qualification still of prime importance? In theory, it is difficult to argue that formal qualification is not important. One can imagine the chaos when there is no control over teacher qualification. Almost anybody could then teach, and teachers would not be respected as professionals. Such a scenario does exist in the region (e.g. Macao).

However, reality often shows that in rural areas, in developing countries in particular (e.g. China and South Asia), there are often dedicated teachers who do not possess formal qualifications. They may not be perfect teachers, but they are much more needed than those other teachers who are trained in teacher colleges situated in urban centres. During their training in these urban teacher colleges, these teachers are often virtually 'educated' to aspire for urban lives and are likely to leave rural areas at the earliest opportunity. In this case, do we prefer teachers who are without formal qualifications, but who are more dedicated, or do we prefer reluctant teachers with formal qualifications?

A related question is: Is higher education really essential? Again, it is difficult to argue that higher education is not necessary, but to be fair, the case could be argued both ways, and the arguments have to be made in context.

In places where opportunities for higher education are ample and if teaching does not require higher education, only those who are the least successful in education would opt for teaching. We cannot expect these rather unsuccessful students to improve the teaching profession. Under these circumstances, it would be a serious mistake not to require higher education as a threshold qualification for teaching.

However, if we insist on higher education, and if there are ample alternative job opportunities for university graduates besides teaching, we may not be able to attract even an adequate number of teachers. Then, requiring higher education as the threshold qualification may be exacerbating the problem of an already severe teacher shortage. Therefore, whether or not a system should opt for an all-graduate teaching force is often a matter of policy debate.

Solutions to the problem go back to the fundamental philosophy of investment in education. If education is seen as an investment, then the investment should be sufficient to produce quality education so that in the end a good return is enjoyed. From this perspective, the inability to attract good teachers is a sign of under-investment which will result in poor quality education and will lead to poor returns in the end. Unfortunately, few

governments seem to have adopted this strategy. If teachers with the appropriate qualification are not attracted to the profession, enhancement of teacher quality may become a void proposition.

In practice, once a government plans for dramatic expansion in higher education such that most of those who are willing and able are admitted to universities, then the government should be prepared to pay for an all-graduate teaching force.

Managerial Control versus Professional Development

Another contextual factor that constrains reform in teacher competence is the recent international trend to reform school management in order to enhance the quality of education. There are two conflicting trends.

On the one hand, quality improvement in education, as represented by the effective school movement, lies in the initiatives of schools and their teachers. Systemic policies which are efficient in dealing with expansions and structures, are often handicapped in handling quality issues. Quality improvement is a professional issue which has to be tackled by school-based approaches with teachers of relative autonomy and competency. Sergiovanni's Value-added Leadership and Caldwell & Spinks' Self-managing Schools are all advocates along these lines. Many schools in the region are active participants in the movement.

On the other hand, there is the fashion of applying notions of Quality Assurance to the education system. Often, quality improvement means the administrators' imposition of managerial control over schools. 'Value for money' is the motto. In the name of Total Quality Management, people apply performance indicators, appraisal schemes and so forth, and sometimes they may go even as far as using ISO 9000 for educational institutions. All these should bring about very favourable effects on teachers in theory. In practice, such measures of quality assurance often pay more attention to what is measurable within the school rather than what the school produces for the society. The latter, anyway, occurs beyond education and is hard to measure.

In theory, the two approaches do not conflict. Indeed, they should be complementary. Quality assurance will enhance awareness among schools and teachers about the aims and goals of education. They will then be self-motivated to launch school-based programmes to achieve the goals.

In practice, however, administrators and politicians are easily attracted to quantifiable elements and immediate results, and may easily keep things at the threshold level and do little beyond. Appraisal schemes may penalise low competency, but can do little to reward excellence and innovations, and hence may do very little to facilitate competency improvement.

Quality measures now prevalent on the international scene have made schools accountable. However, these measures are along the lines of managerial accountability or state control (as identified by Kogan, 1986). There is also consumerist accountability which has to do with parents and is only tangentially included in the fashionable movements of quality

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assurance in education. There is the even more important professional accountability which determines the rights and wrongs in educating young people and therefore the quality of education. An emphasis on managerial accountability at the expense of professional accountability may lead to the irony of measuring quality without knowing how to define quality.

A similar problem concerns policies for devolving financial and administrative responsibilities to schools. Decentralisation of administration inevitably involves delegation of responsibilities which eventually amounts to increases in teacher workloads. Such decentralization, unfortunately, seldom carries with it a re-distribution of resources to reflect the shift of responsibilities. This has caused difficulties for teachers in coping with the extra workload in addition to the difficulties of working in areas they were not trained for.

As indicated earlier, teachers' professional competency is largely acquired in schools. Reforms in the school system will definitely affect teacher development. Few reforms, however, ever take into consideration the effects on teacher development. Often, normal teacher development activities are interrupted by reforms in other aspects of school life.

Professional accountability is often consolidated in an organised professional body such as a General Teaching Council. In most systems, such a professional body is yet to emerge. The formation of such a professional council is often not on government agendas. This is understandable, because a General Teaching Council is by nature not a government endeavour. In fact, government is usually sceptical of any organisation not directly under its own control. In this context, a teachers' professional body often faces the task of distinguishing its identity from those of trade unions and political parties.

Schools and Teacher Competency

There is also the issue of what type of institutions should host teacher training. Indeed, in most countries, teachers teaching secondary school subjects are expected to have undergone higher education in those particular subjects. Either it is done before teacher training (as is the case with the UK model which is duplicated in many parts of Southeast Asia), or it is done as the major study together with some education-related studies as is the case with Japan and China in its normal universities. This is less so for primary school teachers who are mostly trained in secondary or post-secondary teacher colleges. In the latter case, the teacher colleges are often monotechnic institutions relatively weak in subject areas. This might lead to the merger of teacher colleges with universities, as is the case in the UK and Australia.

At university level, China operates Normal Universities whose primary aim is teacher training, but most Normal Universities are virtually comprehensive universities. Singapore's Institute of Education is now within the Nanyang Institute of Technology. Hong Kong could be the only place where a monotechnic higher institute for teacher training is being introduced.

A common concern in many countries is about the contribution (or the lack of it) by schools to the improvement of teacher competency[6]. They share the observation that schools are not prepared to share the responsibility of teachers' professional development. Such observations refer to both the co-operation of schools during initial training and the staff development functions the schools should play in general. In this respect, there is a marked difference between countries with a developed education system (not necessarily with a developed economy) and others less well developed. The role the school plays in teachers' professional development often signifies the degree of maturity of the teaching profession in that system.

The maturity of a teaching profession entails the identification of schools as professional institutions which are not just administrative units (see discussions in Dean, 1991). Such professional institutions survive and thrive upon the autonomous contributions from their members who are professionals and not subordinates. As such, schools are capable of achieving their professional goals only if they can continuously renew themselves and such renewal is built upon the initiatives for the professional development of its members. Reform of teacher competencies is meaningful only in this context.

It is in this context that the Holmes Group[7], in its second report, proposes close co-operation between teacher education institutions and schools. In what is known as Professional Development Schools (Holmes Group, 1990), experienced teachers in schools co-operate with professional teacher educators using both the institutions and the schools as training grounds for new teachers. The second Holmes report has received some theoretical sympathy from the educators' community in the United States, although its real achievement in practical terms is yet to be seen.

However, a very similar concept has been put into practice in England and Wales as result of forceful government directives. Currently, teacher education institutions are expected to negotiate with schools in their neighbourhood to arrive at terms for co-operation. The basic pattern is for the schools to share as much as around 60% of the responsibilities and, accordingly, consume 60% of the resources for teacher education[8]. The net result is that teacher education will be virtually converted to mentor schemes and teacher education institutions have to reduce their sizes considerably according to the resources available. The existence of many long-standing institutions of teacher education is at stake. Before long, Britain may lose many of its distinguished teacher education institutions for which it has been famous. Apparently, the movement has not gone very far because of the resistance from both the teacher education institutes and the school teachers.

Hence, in terms of school participation in the reform of teacher competency, we have a whole range of possibilities. At the one extreme, schools may be reluctant to participate and teachers receive little support from schools in terms of professional development. At the other extreme, schools may be asked to take over the major part of teacher education and

teachers' professional development may be reduced to little more than an apprenticeship.

The move in England and Wales, nevertheless, has raised the alarm. The important role schools have to play in teacher development is well recognised, but is not matched by resources earmarked for the purpose. It has become increasingly difficult to conceive that schools should undertake both mentoring in initial teacher education and continuous professional development of teachers within their original financial constraints.

Does Culture Matter?

This issue has grown out of the writer's research in recent years in East Asia, and in China in particular. Marked differences emerge between the East Asian and Western European cultures in the realm of education.

Cultural difference is by no means new to other disciplines. In management studies, for example, there is a school of thought which identifies Chinese and people in East Asian countries as particularly low in individualism when compared with other countries (Hofstede, 1984:150). In psychology, there is a new school which has discovered that people in East Asia place much more emphasis on effort than ability in student learning, whereas the emphasis in the West is often the opposite (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). There are other scholars, mostly in philosophy and language, who find that the Chinese adopt holistic or synthetic rather than analytic approaches to life. All these are established theories respected by the international community (Liu, 1988).

It is difficult to conceive that education as a cultural activity could be immune from cultural influences. It is perhaps only because of the localised nature of education that comparison across cultures in education is rare. This writer argues that findings in other fields are also reflected substantially in education. The attention to individual needs, for example, is comparatively recent in East Asian communities. Often, individual needs are subsumed under the uniform curriculum, common standards and keen competition in examinations. Teachers in East Asian communities, as another example, believe that students can always succeed if they aim high and strive hard, regardless of their genetic conditions.

In the realm of teacher development, a teacher in traditional Chinese societies is regarded as a whole person who should be a model for students. This leads to a holistic approach to teacher training, where the theory of teaching and attitude moulding dominate the programmes, and techniques and skills in teaching are given little attention. 'Teachers should use themselves as good examples' is a Chinese concept of a good teacher, but this is seldom a requirement for a teacher in the West[9]. On the other hand, the western approach to teacher competency is analytic and is often described as items in a particular framework, sometimes as a list of competencies.

Identifying differences is perhaps less meaningful than finding ways to get the best of both worlds. Cultures are developed over long periods of time

and are not meant to be transplanted. However, concepts and practices which are foreign to us may provide alternatives which are not available in our own framework. Not all educators are given the opportunity to encounter different cultures. However, educators in the region enjoy the privilege of practising education under the influence of various cultures.

Notes

1   An earlier version of this paper was presented as a thematic key-note at the 13th Regional Symposium of the SEAPREAMS (South East Asia and the Pacific Region Educational Administration and Management Symposium) held December 7-11, 1993, Guangzhou.
2   Southeast Asian and the Pacific Regional Educational Administration and Management Symposium, held in Guangzhou, December 7-11, 1993.
3   Eric Hoyle's 14 characteristics of a profession is well quoted in the literature and is a very useful framework for discussions about teacher's professionalism.
4   D. McGufficke: a position paper submitted to the SEAPREAMS Symposium.
5   As is reflected in the country position papers submitted to the SEAPREAMS symposium.
6   This is reflected in many of the position papers submitted to the SEAPREAMS symposium.
7   The Holmes group is a coalition of 30 leading teacher education institutions in US universities. Their mission is to deliberate on policies for teacher education in US.
8   Readers may like to read John Elliot's recent compilation which sees this movement as rendering teaching education to the 'atomistic specification of discrete practical skills' (Elliot 1993:17). This echoes the earlier discussion about the meaning of teacher competency.
9   This is a finding in an effort to draft a Professional Code for Hong Kong teachers. Seventeen Codes from various countries were collected for reference.

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THE INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION: AN EVALUATIVE OVERVIEW

John. L. Clark
Institute of Language in Education

Introduction

The Institute of Language in Education (ILE) is to be amalgamated with the four Colleges of Education in September 1994 to form the new Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), and will shortly cease to exist as an independent body. It is now perhaps appropriate, to attempt to describe and evaluate the ILE's work, in order to learn from the experience gained over the twelve years of its existence, and in order to guide future initiatives in language in education in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

In this article I shall attempt to describe and to evaluate what was intended (the ILE's origins, mission and functions), what was designed (the ILE's structure), and what initiatives were taken to fulfil the intention and the functions.

The intention: the ILE's origins, mission and functions

The perception that there is a language problem in Hong Kong has been with us for many years. It is not the purpose of this article to set out the history of the problem, or the various policies that have been tried out, but rather to indicate the particular problem that lay behind the setting up of the ILE and to discuss what was done to address it.

The rationale for setting up the ILE was set out by Government in 1981 as follows:

> The main justification for dealing with the language element of teacher training differently from other subjects is that language and communication occupy a crucial position in the process of education. English and Chinese are much more than subjects in the curriculum; they serve as media of instruction. Thus, if there is a drop in the levels of effective communication in both English and Chinese in schools, it adversely affects the teaching of other subjects as well ... In recent years, a drop has been observed in the levels of effective communication in both English and Chinese in schools, and this is causing much concern in educational circles and in the community at large ... It is therefore proposed to establish an Institute of Language in Education to raise substantially the professional standards of English and Chinese in the schools (Hong Kong Government FCAI 1981).

The problem to be addressed was thus perceived to be the low levels of communication in both Chinese and English in schools across the curriculum. In particular it was felt that many students were not developing

academic Cantonese or good writing skills in standard written Chinese, and they were failing to develop effective English in all four skill areas. The solution proposed was to set up an ILE whose mission would be to focus on improving the teaching of Chinese and English as subjects.

The more specific functions ascribed to the ILE by the Government in the FCAI paper (1981) for fulfilling its mission were set out as follows:

running refresher courses for teachers of English and Chinese;

conducting research into all areas of language learning and teaching;

undertaking the design and development of prototype instructional materials for the teaching of English and Chinese;

serving as a language teaching resource centre and providing a central venue, facilities and services for all language teaching professionals;

rendering advice and assistance to the Colleges of Education and the Advisory Inspectorate of the Education Department in matters related to language teaching;

participating in exchanges on language teaching at the international level.

It was believed at the time that improving the teaching of Chinese and English as subjects would automatically lead to an improvement in the communicative use of these languages across the curriculum. This does not take into account the fact that teachers of other subjects involve students in a great deal more use of Chinese or English than do teachers of Chinese and English as subjects, and have therefore much more influence on students' language development in the language that serves as the medium of instruction than do language teachers. Such is the power carried by labels, however, that there was and still is a widespread belief that Chinese and English are learnt and developed in Chinese and English language classrooms only.

It would have been more logical and effective had the ILE been set up from the outset to improve the teaching, learning and use of Chinese and English across the curriculum, including languages as subjects, in an integrative manner, rather than limiting its concerns to the improvement of the teaching of Chinese and English as subjects only. It is at least arguable that had the debate and the changes in understanding, attitude and practice that are currently beginning to occur in the choice and effective use of an appropriate medium of instruction been promulgated ten years ago, when the ILE was set up, language proficiency levels and academic levels across the curriculum might already have started to improve. The common consensus among school and tertiary educators is that they have not yet started to do so.

An evaluation of the origins, mission and functions of the ILE has to acknowledge, therefore, that while the problem to be addressed—poor levels of communication in Chinese and English across the curriculum—was

clearly diagnosed, the way chosen to address the problem severely limited the potential role that the ILE was initially able to play in bringing about improvements. It is only since the publication of the Report of the Working Group set up to review language improvement measures in 1989 that the ILE has been able to adjust its original brief, widen its and the Government's concerns, and begin to address the problem of language across the curriculum, in order to raise both academic and language levels.

The Structural Design and Staffing of the ILE

Inevitably, an educational institution can only be as good at carrying out its mission and functions as its structural design and staffing enables it to be. It is necessary therefore to outline these and attempt to evaluate them in the light of the reality of its operation.

The ILE was designed and established as a separate Division of the Education Department, headed by an Assistant Director of Education who would also serve as Director of the Institute of Language in Education. Despite its role in teacher education and in curriculum development for languages in education, the ILE was not linked in any structural way to the Further Education Division which manages the Colleges of Education, or to the Advisory Inspectorate which at the time had responsibility for curriculum development, inspection, and policy-driven in-service education.

The major advantage of belonging to the Education Department was that it enabled the ILE to be at the heart of ongoing educational developments in Hong Kong, and to play a major role in the review and implementation of language in education policy. The ILE has therefore been close to the action in a way that it could not have been, had it not been part of the Education Department. The ILE has also had easy access to generous Government resources such as the printing services of Government for all its publications.

It has proved a disadvantage, however, to have to work within a civil service culture which tends to place restrictions on academic freedom. It has been necessary to encourage those brought up in this environment, when posted to the ILE, to work in a team and take and share responsibility, rather than working compartmentally and hierarchically.

A further disadvantage of belonging to the Education Department is that the ILE has had to follow civil service salary levels and staffing procedures. These have made it extremely difficult to attract senior level school staff, whose experience is essential to effective in-service work.

The disadvantages of being structurally separated from the rest of teacher education and from curriculum development, however, have been considerable. It has proved extremely difficult for the language staff of the ILE and Colleges of Education to establish meaningful links, in order to achieve a sense of common purpose, a framework of common concepts, and continuity in pre-service and in-service teacher education. Only in the last few years, through the establishment of a voluntary and loose 'triangulation' cross-institutional framework, have all those concerned with teacher

education for English across the ILE, Colleges, Advisory Inspectorate (and later the Curriculum Development Institute) been able to come together. The triangulation' framework for English, however, was very much an ad hoc response to a problem which required a structural solution.

Being separated from the curriculum development part of the Education Department has meant that it has not always been easy over the years for the ILE to contribute expertise to curriculum development work as was the original Government intention. While it has been possible to participate in some of the smaller-scale ongoing developments in Chinese and English as subjects, it has not been possible until recently to bring in the best that is known about learning and about teaching and assessment to support this, or to work on language across the curriculum. The Advisory Inspectorate and the Curriculum Development Institute have tended to operate on a subject-specific basis and there has therefore been little work done on the curriculum as a whole or on language across the curriculum. Since 1989, however, the Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) initiative has brought about better coordination among Chinese, Maths and English curriculum developers, and between the ILE and curriculum developers in the Education Department. There have been no proper structures, however, to enable the ILE to carry out its curriculum development function effectively.

The fact that the ILE was not structurally integrated within teacher education or within curriculum development has made it difficult for the ILE to bring about many of the much needed changes in teacher education practices and in the design, resourcing and delivery of the curriculum, without which improvements in learning and language learning are impossible.

Within the ILE, the initial structure provided for a Chinese Department, an English Department and an Administration Unit. In 1991 a Research and Development Unit and a Resources and Educational Technology Unit were added. Until the establishment of the ILE Academic Board in 1991, however, there was no internal structure through which a common framework of understanding could be established across the two language departments. The teaching of Chinese as a mother tongue and the teaching of English as a second or foreign language were kept separate. Although the disciplines of education and of applied linguistics have provided common ground through which to bring the two language teaching traditions together, the ILE has found it difficult to develop a common framework to enable teacher educators of both languages to work together in a more systematic and integrative way. Without this, the current fragmentation and incoherence across Chinese and English in language in education in Hong Kong will persist, and language development and cognitive development as a whole among students will continue to suffer. It has, I believe, been recognised within the new HKIEd that there must be a structure and staffing provided that integrate the two departments of Chinese and English, so that each can contribute in its own distinctive way towards effective language development as a whole among teachers and students.

Being a somewhat independent division within the Education Department, the ILE has been able over the years, within the limits set by civil service procedures, to establish its own internal structures and academic style of work. In 1991 the ILE established its own Advisory Committee, made up of school Principals and panel-chairpersons, as an external source of advice and evaluation on ILE work. This committee has begun to provide the critical climate necessary to examine ILE plans and initiatives. The Academic Board plans, monitors and evaluates all academic work. It has a number of committees under it, which take their direction from it and report back to it. These committees cover teacher education courses, research and development work, resourcing, staff development, seminars and in-school support work, and publications. The administrative management of the ILE is now effected through a Management Committee which looks after finance, staffing and departmental organisation, premises, housekeeping, and welfare. All members of staff are members of one committee or another. Communication and a sense of common purpose is achieved through team involvement in academic activities, through the various committees, through social programmes, and by means of a monthly staff meeting.

Teacher education work in the ILE has been structured on a matrix basis since 1991, with teams involved in course planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation on one axis, and specialist area academic development on the other. All members of staff are involved in both types of activity.

ILE Initiatives

While it is clearly impossible to do justice to all that has gone on in the last twelve years, I shall attempt to describe and evaluate some of the more important initiatives that the ILE has taken or been involved in within each of the macro-functions ascribed to it. I shall attempt to cover:

consultancy work in the area of policy formulation and curriculum development;
teacher education and school support initiatives;
research and development;
resource centre provision;
publication and academic exchange work.

Consultancy Work: Policy Formulation and Curriculum Development

Since its inception the ILE has been seen by Government as a source of advice on language in education matters. It is clearly not the only one, since there are language and language in education specialists in other tertiary institutions, in Colleges of Education and in schools. The ILE, however, by virtue of being a Division of the Education Department, has been in a central position to put forward views. In addition, members of ILE staff have served