

Enhancing Assessment Literacy in the English Language Curriculum at the Secondary Level: (I) Reading and Listening Skills

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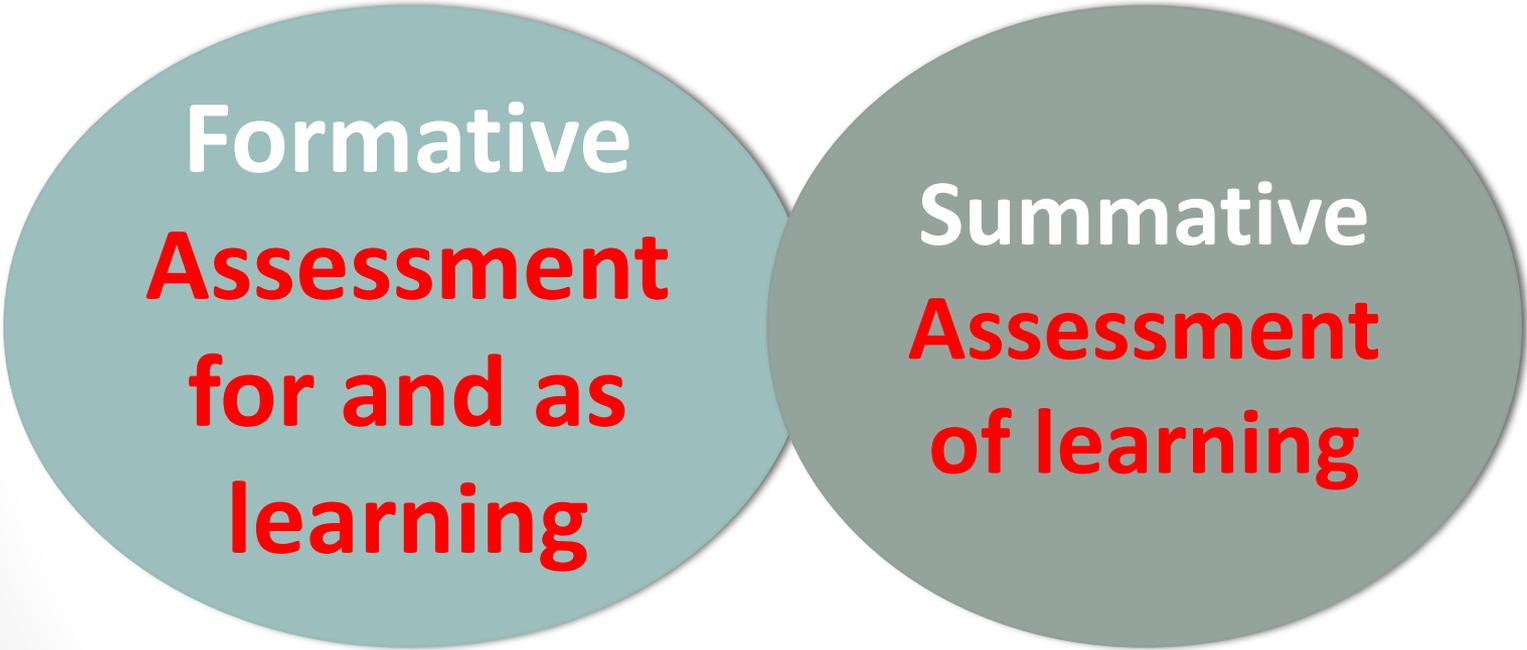
Effective assessment of reading and listening

- **Warm-up Reflection Task:** What makes reading and listening assessment effective **to you as a teacher**? Share your ideas with some neighbors.



What?

Assessment (I)



**Formative
Assessment
for and as
learning**

**Summative
Assessment
of learning**

Assessment (II)

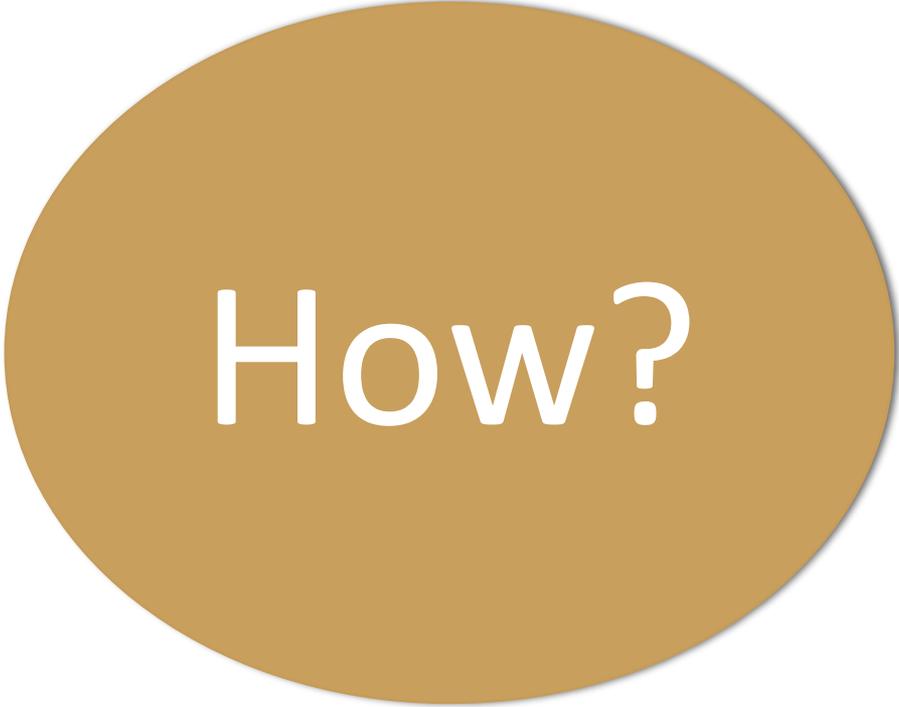
Assessment **of** learning (summative)

Assessment **for** learning (formative)

Assessment **as** learning
(self and peer assessment)

Effective assessment

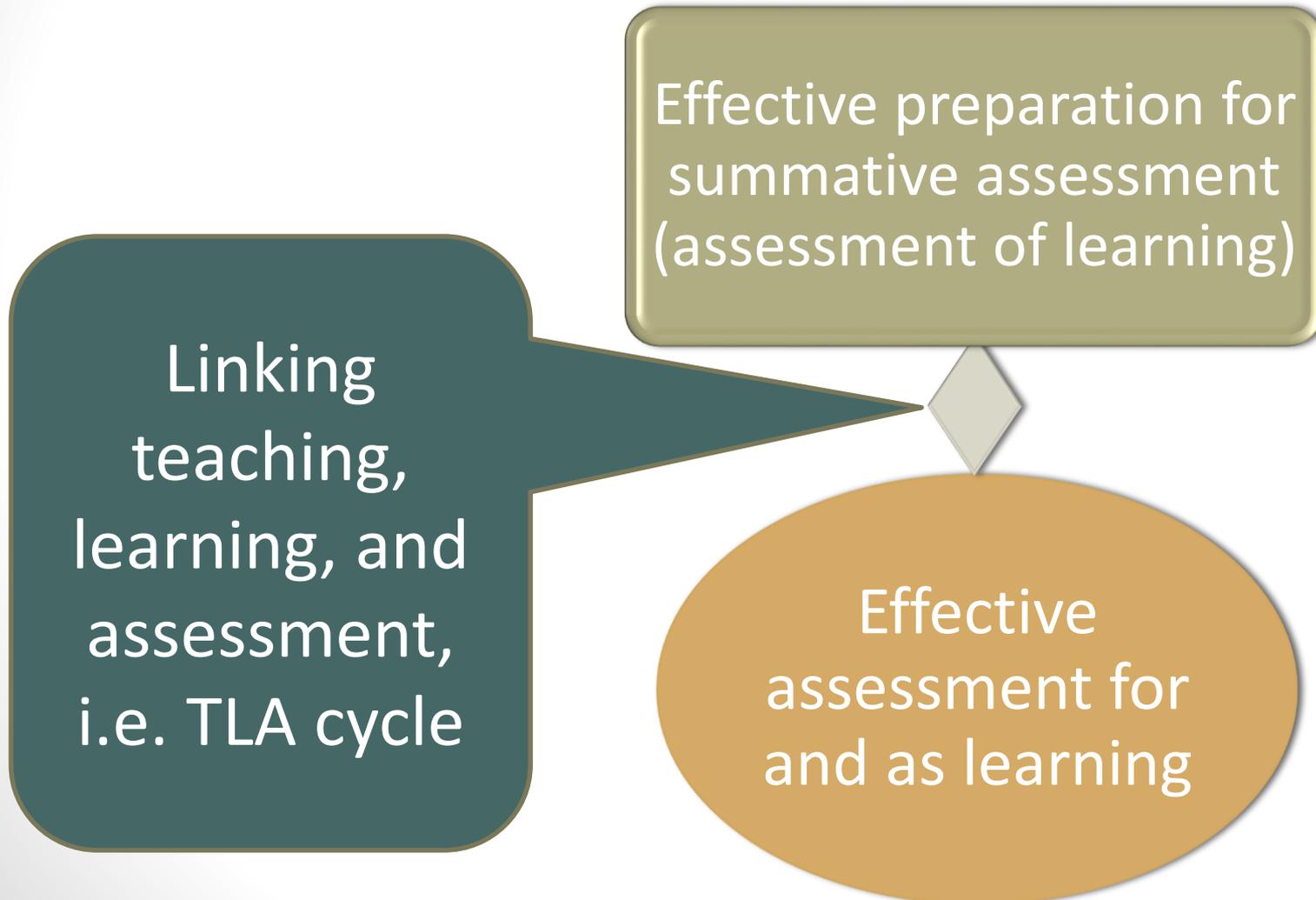
- How can we achieve effective assessment?



How?

Effective assessment

- How can we achieve effective assessment?



Realising the TLA Cycle in Reading and Listening

Preparing our students for reading and listening assessment tasks

Strategies for building the **teaching, learning and assessment cycle**:

1. Manipulating the **interplay between texts and tasks**
 - Selection of right texts for the right tasks
 - Engaging students with the text (and the task)
2. Identification of **testing points** of individual items, and turning testing points into **teaching and learning points**
3. Apprenticing the reading/listening process through **detailed reading**

1. Manipulating the interplay between texts and tasks

Selection of right texts for the right tasks

Task 1: Read Text 1 and Text 2 (both from *SCMP*). Compare and contrast the two texts. Decide which one is more appropriate for setting a reading comprehension task for senior secondary students at your school? Why?

5-8 min for reading

10-15 min for small group sharing

Right texts for the right tasks

Similarities	Differences
Why Text 1 / 2 more appropriate?	

Criteria for text selection:

- **Familiarity with the topic**
 - K-pop Vs Korean culture in general
- **Purpose of the text**
 - Descriptive Vs argumentative
- **Students' prior knowledge**
 - ..of 'Big Bang' Vs of 'Jeong' etc.
- **Vocabulary load (and linguistic contexts for informed guessing)**
 - endeavours, realms etc. Vs victimised, affluent
- **Sentence structures**
 - written Vs spoken-like
- **Discourse structure**
 - Typical essay Vs. Q & A

What if both are not appropriate choices on their own?

- How about using the above criteria to **understand why** our students find a given text **challenging** and thereby providing some **scaffolding support** accordingly?
- E.g., familiarisation with the topic through a video, pre-teaching some vocabulary items etc.

2. Identification of testing points of listening / reading items

- Three critical questions:
 - Which listening/reading skill/strategy is being targeted in each item of the assessment task?
 - How could we provide training in those skills/strategies commonly tested in public examinations? i.e. converting **testing points** to **teaching and learning points**
 - How can we promote our students' awareness of such testing points so that they know where **their strengths/weaknesses are, and how to improve?**

Identification of testing points of listening / reading items (Cont'd)

Possible pedagogic implications:

- Identifying and communicating the testing points of the existing assessment items
- Tailor-making assessment items according to the students' ability levels, covering a range of skills/strategies
 - Example: 'Michael Jackson' listening task
- Detailed reading to explore strategies for reaching the answer
 - Example: 'Koreans' HKDSE reading task

Tailoring-making Assessment Tasks

Task 2: 'Michael Jackson' Listening Task

- Listen to two of us reading aloud the Michael Jackson text on the Task Sheet and answer Questions 1-6 following it.
- Read the text carefully. What's the **genre** of the text? Is it familiar to average ability Hong Kong secondary students? How about the **language**? Is it accessible to them?
- Which **listening skill** is being elicited in each question of the task? Would your students find the questions difficult?

Tailoring-making Assessment Tasks

Task 2: 'Michael Jackson' Listening Task

- Are Q3 and Q4 testing the same listening skill? Which one is easier to answer?
- Listening skills targeted:
 - Q1, Q2, Q3, Q5: Specific information
 - Q4: Connection between ideas
 - Q6: Inference
- In groups of 3-4, try to design two more challenging questions for the task. Again decide which skill is being elicited in each.

Tailoring-making Assessment Tasks: 'Michael Jackson' Listening Task (cont'd)

Some example questions:

- Why would MJ call his first charity organisation 'Heal the World Foundation'? Give two reasons from the text. (Inference)
- Name one difference between 'Heal the World' and 'Heal the Kids' Foundation. (Connection between ideas)
- The interview focuses on MJ's _____ . (Gist)

Tailor-making Assessment items based on texts suitable for your students may help bridge them with the tasks that they meet with in the public examinations, i.e. **manipulating text and task difficulty**.

Tailoring-making Assessment Tasks

Some factors to consider:

- Training listening/reading skills **in context** (of the text), with the students **schemata activated**
- Manipulating **‘text’ and ‘task’ difficulty**
- Identifying the **‘testing point’** of the questions with the students, thereby making students’ aware of their own **strengths and weaknesses** in listening/reading (including but not exclusive to skimming and scanning)
=>promoting **self-assessment/ assessment as learning**
- A good and comprehensive reference for the possible testing/teaching and learning points can be found in **EdB’s KLA Guide and/or Learning Progression Framework.**

Detailed Reading: “Korean” Reading task

Task 3: Skim through the ‘Korean’ text on the task sheet (again!). Is it a difficult text for your SS students? Why/why not?

- Which paragraph do you think is the most difficult? Let’s try reading it with our students.

Detailed Reading: “Korean’ Reading task

How about using Paragraph 4 as an example?

(Sentence 1)- Why are ‘Jeong’ and ‘Han’ italicised? What do we know about these two words?

(Sentence 2)- What is nonsense? And what are ‘these things’?

(Sentence 3)- Are ‘oppression’ and ‘injustice’ good or bad things? How do we know that?

...

Detailed Reading: “Korean’ Reading task (cont’d)

Some points to note from the previous demonstration:

- Task taken from HKDSE 2015 PART A =>meant to be read by **all senior secondary students**
- Detailed reading may help **stretch** the more able students to tackle the more challenging questions and **scaffold** the less able ones for the less challenging questions, through asking probing questions focusing on the testing points
- Detailed reading as a **transferrable metacognitive skill**; ultimately the students are to ask themselves questions while reading texts on their own =>Potential for **assessment as learning**

Your Show Time!

Task 4: Setting up Effective Assessment Tasks

- Based on any of the texts we've discussed (or texts of your own choice), try to apply some of the effective assessment strategies we've discussed in this workshop to incorporate the text meaningfully in an English lesson with effective assessment practices. Share your brilliant ideas with the rest of us!

A Wrap up: Effective assessment in the TLA Cycle

