

Abstract on

**Study on an English Enrichment Programme
in Chinese-medium Schools**

Background of the Study

The Study was made up of two parts. The first part was to develop a set of Enrichment Programme for schools adopting Chinese as the medium of instruction. This part was commissioned to The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. The second part was to assess the effectiveness of the Enrichment Programme. It was commissioned to The Hong Kong Institute of Education. The Study commenced in September 2001 and completed in December 2005.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the Study were:

- (a) To develop reliable monitoring and assessment indicators or measures for evaluating the effectiveness of an Enrichment Programme on Secondary 2 to Secondary 4 students in Chinese-medium schools;
- (b) To investigate the effects of the Enrichment Programme on students' learning of English in Chinese-medium schools;
- (c) To assess how well students of Chinese-medium schools adapt to English-medium learning at Secondary 4 if the Enrichment Programme is introduced at junior secondary levels; and
- (d) To make recommendations, based on the findings of the Study, on the necessary support / conditions to make the Enrichment Programme work in Chinese-medium schools.

Main Features of the Study

The Enrichment Programme developed by The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology comprised 60 teaching modules, 30 at Secondary 2 level and 30 at Secondary 3 level, on cross-curricular topics with a view to increasing students' exposure to English while they continued to learn in the mother tongue. The Hong Kong Institute of Education then conducted a three-year longitudinal study to assess the effectiveness of the Enrichment Programme. The Enrichment Programme was tried out at Secondary 2 and Secondary 3 in 14 Chinese-medium schools. The Study followed a progressive focusing approach through which multiple sources of evidence were used. Data were collected through a blend of research tools including literature review, critical analysis, survey questionnaire, in-depth interview, classroom observation and case study. The findings provided information for the Government to formulate policies on the rendering of effective support in English to students in Chinese-medium schools to prepare them for multi-faceted senior form education.

Major Findings of the Study on the Enrichment Programme

The major findings of the Study were:

- (a) Overall, the Enrichment Programme provided students with increased opportunities to have exposure to and to use the English language (especially in writing) and enhanced students' motivation in learning English. However, there were insufficient opportunities provided in the Enrichment Programme for the development of speaking and extended writing skills.
- (b) Students participating in the Enrichment Programme showed significantly greater improvement in academic subject-related English than students not participating in the Enrichment Programme. Although more Enrichment Programme modules were related to the Social Science subjects, this did not necessarily imply that students participating in the Enrichment Programme

possessed the English proficiency to cope with English-medium learning in Social Science subjects.

- (c) When compared with the high ability students, medium ability students tended to benefit more from the Enrichment Programme as shown by their more notable improvement.
- (d) Students participating in the Enrichment Programme showed better Science-related and Geography-related English skills than their non-participating counterparts when they proceeded to Secondary 4. However, the impact of the Enrichment Programme on students' high order thinking was not significant.

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