

Alternative assessment and the teaching of Mother Tongue languages in Singapore schools

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Abstract

The mother tongue education component of Singapore's bilingual policy aims at achieving a dual goal of empowering its citizens with linguistic capital (which they can use in interacting with people from emerging regional powers) and moral capital (which can help maintain their Asian value and identity). Unfortunately, this goal has seldom been adequately achieved. Among the various affecting factors, the unique language learning environment and the exam-oriented language teaching and assessment practices have imposed great constraints on the attainment of the wonderful intention of policy makers. One piece of evidence is that daily assessment practices in MT teaching focus too much on factual knowledge and knowledge reproduction which are characterized by examining discrete linguistic knowledge and practice and drills. To further improve the teaching of Mother Tongue languages in Singapore and better attain the dual goal, we may need to introduce new assessment practices into daily classroom teaching: alternative assessment practices. [This paper presents an overview about the necessity, feasibility, advantages, how the use of alternative assessments can improve the quality of MT teaching and learning in the actual classroom context, and the practical constraints of introducing alternative assessment into MT education.](#)

1. Introduction

The English-dominated bilingual policy is one of Singapore's fundamental national policies which has contributed and will continue to contribute to its economic development, social stability, and national identity shaping. The importance of English does not require much explanation as it is almost self-revealing by its status as a lingua franca among different ethnic groups, a working language of the nation, and most important of all, the medium of instruction for all subjects except mother tongue languages. English has become a very important linguistic capital at Singapore's disposal in the trend of economic globalization and the ever-intensifying international competition. Of course, English alone cannot sustain Singapore's prosperity and social stability, as the Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong said:

The Singapore Government has made the bilingual policy the cornerstone of our education policy. The objective is for our people to communicate with the world. English is our common and working language. It is also the language of commerce and international interaction. Learning the mother tongue is necessary to preserve our culture and retain our roots (Goh, 2004).

1.1 Mother tongue languages as both linguistic and moral capitals

As a matter of fact, the mother tongue education component of Singapore's bilingual policy aims at achieving a dual goal of empowering its citizens with both linguistic capital (which they can use in interacting with people from emerging regional powers) and moral capital (which can help maintain their Asian value and identity). With the emerging of regional economic powers, all the three MT languages have become valuable linguistic capital (for establishing economic ties, expanding job markets, looking for business opportunities, etc.) for Singapore as a country and Singaporeans as individuals, with Mandarin for bridging Singapore with the Greater China Region, Tamil with the Indian Continent, and Malay with Singapore's most important neighboring countries: Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei. Apart

from working as linguistic capital, these three mother tongue languages can perform another fundamental function which English is not able to perform: working as a moral capital. All three MT languages are carriers of Asian culture and Asian value system; they are of vital importance for Singapore to counter balance the influence of western culture and maintain its identity as an Asian country. Different mother cultures have contributed to the formation of the unique features of the Singaporean society as a harmonious multi-racial, multi-cultural nation. To quote Mr. Goh again,

I believe that to do well in future, Singapore should evolve into a cosmopolitan society. ... Because we will become more cosmopolitan, it is all the more important that we are anchored in our Asian heritage. We will then be a global city but with strong Asian features – a unique country (Goh, 2004).

Despite the good intention of the Singapore government, the dual goal of mother tongue education has not been adequately achieved. In fact, there have been at least two rounds of mother tongue teaching reforms since the early 1990s. Continuous efforts have been made in reviewing and revising the respective MT curricula; new teaching materials have been developed and used; and the priority of language skills has been reassigned. Nevertheless, one aspect remains almost unchanged: the assessment practice. It is still dominated by traditional assessment characterized by focusing on assessing discrete linguistic knowledge, as will be illustrated below. Two main factors have contributed to the reluctance of systemically reforming the traditional assessment practices in the teaching of mother tongue languages. One is the washback effect (that is, the impact tests have on instruction) of the high-stake exams such as PSLE and the other is teachers' belief of language teaching.

As the performance in PSLE will determine what kind of secondary education a student is going to receive, which will in turn determine a student's academic future to a very great extent, everyone has to take it really seriously. Students, parents, teachers, and school administrators are all concerned about it. As a result, preparing students for the PSLE has become the natural and most important duty of school teachers. The washback effect has placed huge constraints on what teachers can do in their daily teaching practices. The second language learning nature of mother tongue education further worsens the situation.

The other factor is related to teachers' belief about language teaching and learning. The logic behind the dominance of traditional assessment practices is still that language learners can automatically acquire the communication skills as soon as they have an adequate command of discrete linguistic knowledge. This kind of logic may make some sense in a context where the medium of instruction is congruent with students' native language, for instance, American students learn English in the States, Chinese students learning Chinese in China or Japanese students learning Japanese in Japan. The reason is that in the above-mentioned countries students have already acquired the spoken language by the time they go to primary school. What students will learn in school will focus on literacy and standardization. Over the years of their language learning, they will have a continuous support from the family, the mass media, and the society in terms of providing a language learning and using environment. In addition to that, the language they are learning is also the language of instruction for other subjects, which means even if students have missed out certain things in their language course it is highly likely that they will get compensated for from the learning of other subjects. Students in Singapore, on the other hand, cannot enjoy such luxury. Due to the English-dominated bilingual policy, to the majority of students in Singapore, all the major languages taught in school are learned as second languages (including English). As English is not the native language of most Singaporeans, very few local students have really acquired the

spoken language by the time they go to primary school. The other three major languages: Mandarin Chinese, Malay, and Tamil which are supposed to be the mother tongue languages for the three major ethnic groups Chinese, Malay, and Indian due to the unique linguistic environment of Singapore and various other social, political reasons are not necessarily the languages spoken at home. According to the statistics released by Singapore Department of Statistics in 2002, as of the year 2000, only 45.1% of the Chinese families speak Mandarin at home, 23.9% of them speak English, and the other 30.7% speak Chinese dialects. 91.6% of the Malay families speak Malay at home with another 7.9% speak English. For ethnic Indians, 42.9% speak Tamil, 35.6% speak English, and 11.6% speak Malay. Even if we are looking at data by age group, say 5-14 (which is more relevant to our topic here), the situation is not much better from the point of view of mother tongue teaching. For ethnic Chinese, 59.6% of children aged 5-14 speak Mandarin at home (that's a piece of good news from Chinese teachers) while 38.6% speak English. For Malays, 90.1% of children at the same age group speak Malay while 9.4% speak English. For ethnic Indians, only 36.3% speak Tamil, 43.6% speak English, and another 12.9% speak Malay. It won't take much inference to reach at the conclusion that quite a number of students have not acquired their mother tongue (or more accurately their father tongue) by the time they start to learn their mother tongue subject at primary school. The language using scenario also makes it very difficult if not totally impossible for quite a number of students to "automatically" piece together the discrete linguistic knowledge they have learned from their language classes and translate it into language competence. Consequently, many of them will take their mother tongue language just as another subject to pass and forget. The rather confusing language learning environment in Singapore has actually caused disappointment among many people. MT learning has become a source of frustration for many students and parents. The Ministry of Education has also been bearing considerable pressure from the society on issues concerning the teaching of mother tongue languages. Under such circumstances, realizing the dual goal of empowering its citizens with both linguistic capital and moral capital in general will turn into empowering only elites with both capitals.

1.2 Status quo of assessment practices in terms of MT teaching in Singapore

If there may be speculative elements in the situation depicted in the previous section, what we are going to present next will show a more concrete picture of one very important aspect of the teaching of mother tongue languages in Singapore—assessment. What is the status quo of the assessment practices in terms of MT teaching in Singapore schools? In order to answer this question, we have collected 92 P4 and P5 Chinese tasks from 14 schools over a period of one and a half years. We have conducted a thorough analysis of the item types employed and what aspect of language learning they are employed to assess, and found that the assessment tasks focus considerably on discrete linguistic knowledge. This might have something to do with the nature of primary mother tongue teaching and the washback effect of the PSLE. The 92 tasks can be roughly categorized into two kinds: the single-item-type kind and the multiple-item-type kind, as is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Meta-info of Tasks Collected

Total number of schools	14
Total number of tasks	92
Single-item-type tasks	49 (53.3%)
Multiple-item-type tasks	43 (46.7%)
Total number of item types (token)	246
Total number of item types (type)	21

The single-item-type task, as the name suggests, refers to a task which has only one item type; while the multiple-item-type task refers to a task which consists of two or more item types. The latter is actually a combination of different single-item-type tasks. The 92 tasks consist of 246 occurrences of item types which can be classified into 21 types. Table 2 shows the details.

Table 2. Distribution of Item Types

Serial No.	Name of Item Type	Number of Occurrence	Percentage
1	Filling in the blanks	72	29.3%
2	Multiple Choice Questions	40	16.3%
3	Making up sentences	35	14.2%
4	Question and Answer	24	9.8%
5	Rearranging jumbled words into sentences	19	7.7%
6	Writing down characters according to Pinyin	13	5.3%
7	Composition	13	5.3%
8	Dictation	6	2.4%
9	Penmanship	6	2.4%
10	Rearranging jumbled sentences into a paragraph	3	1.2%
11	Picking out correct sentences	2	0.8%
12	Pairing up radicals to form characters	2	0.8%
13	Matching two parts of a sentence	2	0.8%
14	Identifying phrases from jumbled words	2	0.8%
15	Writing down characters according to definition	1	0.4%
16	Spot dictation	1	0.4%
17	Pairing up words	1	0.4%
18	Generating phrases	1	0.4%
19	Generating a list of phrases through association	1	0.4%
20	Categorizing words according to their radicals	1	0.4%
21	Matching words which collocate with each other	1	0.4%
	Total	246	100%

Most of the top ten frequently employed item types fall into the categories of fill-in assessments, selected-response assessments, and short-answer assessments defined by Brown and Hudson (1998). According to them, the fill-in assessments give a language context with part of the context removed or replaced with a blank. Fill-in assessment comes in many shapes and forms, from single-word fill-in items in single sentences to cloze passages with many blanks embedded in a longer stretch of text. It is generally very narrowly focused on testing a single word or short phrase at most. Filling in the blanks belongs to this category.

Selected-response assessments present students with language material and require them to choose the correct answer from among a limited set of options. In selected-response assessments, students typically do not create any language. The Multiple-choice Questions fall into this category.

Short-answer assessments require the students to scrutinize a question or statement and respond with one or more phrases or sentences. One disadvantage of short-answer assessments is that they focus on assessing a few phrases or sentences. The Question and Answer type falls into this category.

If we take a closer look at the function distribution of these item types, we can find that in 76.4% of the cases they are used for assessing discrete linguistic knowledge. They are used to

assess students' command of individual characters, phrases, and sentence-making. Table 3 shows the details.

Table 3. Function Distribution of Item Types

Frequently Used Item types	Purpose	Number	Percentage
Filling in the blanks, MCQ, Making up sentences, Rearrangement words into sentences, Writing characters according to Pinyin	Assessing discrete linguistic knowledge	188	76.4%
MCQ, Questions and Answers	Assessing comprehension	45	18.3%
Composition	Assessing writing ability	13	5.3%
Total		246	100%

Judging from the item types employed in Chinese assessment tasks and their functions, we can say that the assessment tasks are basically form-focused. This seems to be understandable in the context of primary school language teaching whose major job is to lay a solid foundation for future learning. However, for the development of communicative ability, research findings overwhelmingly support the *integration* of form-focused exercises with *meaning-focused experience*. Basic knowledge is important; and learners will only find this knowledge relevant when it relates to their communicative needs and experiences.

Our research findings from other primary and secondary subjects reveal that teachers tended to place more emphasis on drill and practice of basic knowledge and skills. The majority of the classroom assignments required a shallow understanding of subject matter knowledge and a low level of higher-order thinking. Students were asked to regurgitate information given by the teachers or textbooks, to reproduce memorized basic concepts, or to repeat use of previously learned skills or procedures. The majority of the student work demonstrated high levels of regurgitation and reproduction of factual and procedural knowledge. Figure 1 shows the overall authentic intellectual quality of the P5 Chinese language assessment tasks in 2005 and the P4 Chinese assessment tasks in 2006.

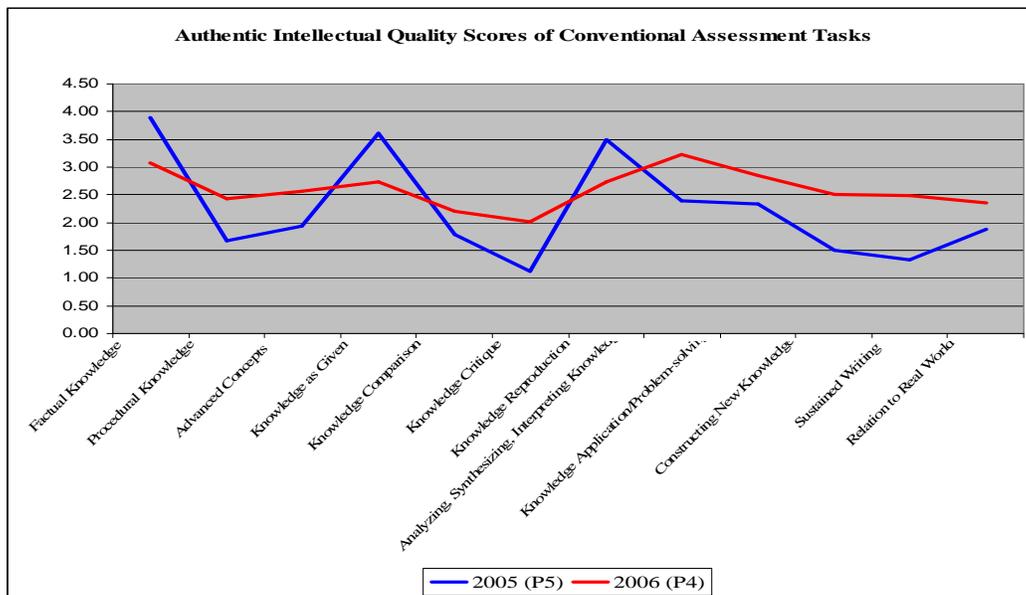


Figure 1 Authentic Intellectual Quality Scores of Conventional Tasks

From the assessment information data we have obtained, we can still see traces of behaviorist theory of learning which emphasizes drill and practice. Moreover, explicit attention to form seems to have been limited to sentence-level morphosyntactic features. Broader features of discourse, sociolinguistic rules of appropriacy, and communication strategies themselves which are supposed to be included (Savignon, 1991, p. 269) are absent from the tasks we have collected. This does not seem to be congruent with the current trend of language teaching which focus on developing learners' communicative competence.

The term "communicative competence" was coined by Dell Hymes, yet its well-known content was defined later by Canale and Swain (1980) which includes the following four components:

1. grammatical competence: words and rules
2. sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
3. discourse competence: cohesion and coherence
4. strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies

Bachman (1991: 283) proposes a more recent description of communicative competence by dividing it into three major components which can be further subcategorized, as the following figure shows:

Organizational knowledge ((Determines how texts-oral or written-are organized)

Grammatical knowledge: Determines how individual utterances or sentences are organized

Textual knowledge: Determines how utterances or sentences are organized to form texts

Pragmatic knowledge (Determines how utteranced sentences, intentions and contexts are related to form meaning)

Propositional knowledge: Determines how utteranced sentences are related to propositional content

Functional knowledge: Determines how utterances/sentences are related to intentions of language users

Sociolinguistic knowledge (Determines how utteranced sentences are related to features of the language use context) (Bachman, 1991)

Despite the differences in terminology and focus, both definitions suggest that grammatical knowledge (or competence) is just a necessary but not sufficient condition for language learners to acquire the skills of using the target language for communication. In other words, language teaching should not focus on grammatical knowledge alone. Accordingly, language assessment should not focus on assessing learners' discrete grammatical knowledge only. To fully develop learners' communicative competence, we need to seek for supplementary assessment methods.

2. The relevance of alternative assessment

2.1 Change of theoretical paradigm in education and assessment practices

The past three decades has witnessed the rise and flourish of constructivism as an educational theory, which is grounded in the work of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner. According to constructivism, there is no such a thing as an objective reality; we human beings construct our version of it and through construction we are transforming it and ourselves (Fosnot, 1996, cited in Anderson, 1998: 7). Under this theory, knowledge is not a pool of "truths" existing

out there and waiting to be transmitted from one person to another through instruction but rather something “temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective” (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Learning from this perspective is understood as “a self-regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts through concrete experience, collaborative discourse, and reflection”. In constructivist classrooms, students learn from active participation and have opportunities to explore their own ideas through discourse, debate, and inquiry (Anderson, 1998, p. 7). Teachers, in this case, assume a facilitator’s role and students assume responsibility for their learning. Although constructivism is not a theory about assessment, it is often considered the theoretical basis of nontraditional approaches to assessment and alternative assessment in particular.

2.2 From assessment of learning to assessment for learning

Assessment is a very important part of school education and it can be used for very different purposes. Assessment can be used to gauge students’ learning and it can also be used to promote students’ learning. Stiggins (2002) labels the former assessments of learning and the latter assessments for learning. The crucial distinction is between assessment to determine the status of learning and assessment to promote greater learning. Assessments *of* and *for* learning are both important.

What we need to think about more is how to make sure that our assessment instruments, procedures, and scores serve to help learners *want to learn and feel able to learn*. To achieve that goal, we need to introduce alternative ways of assessment into our daily teaching practice.

2.3 Features of alternative assessments

Most definitions of alternative assessment have similar notions that require a movement away from multiple-choice or standardized tests and a movement toward learner-centered assessment that relies on student generated responses (Veronesi, 1997). Brown and Hudson (1998) have made a comprehensive list of the features of alternative assessments based on their review of publications in the field of language assessment. The following are some of the most salient features:

1. Alternative assessments require students to perform, create, produce, or do something;
2. Alternative assessments use real-world contexts or simulations;
3. Alternative assessments focus on processes as well as products;
4. Alternative assessments tap into higher level thinking and problem-solving skills;
5. Alternative assessments provide information about both the strengths and weaknesses of students;
6. Alternative assessments encourage open disclosure of standards and rating criteria; and
7. Alternative assessments call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles.

(For the whole list, please refer to Brown & Hudson, 1998: 654-655)

From the above listed features, we can see that alternative assessments are basically alternatives to standardized or traditional tests for finding out what a student knows or can do. They are criterion-referenced and authentic when it is based on activities that represent actual progress toward a broad range of instructional goals and reflects tasks typical of classrooms and real-life settings. Moreover, they are intended to show growth and inform instruction (Veronesi, 1997).

Traditional (conventional) assessment and alternative assessment are not mutually exclusive. Quite to the contrary, they are mutually complementary. We may need conventional assessment for training the basic skills and alternative assessment for more meaning-focused, more higher-order thinking activities. The problem is how to balance the use of both in our daily language teaching.

3. Trying out alternative assessment in MT classes

In order to translate our perceptions about alternative assessment into classroom actions, we started our collaborative research project with a number of primary schools in January, 2006 following our investigation about the assessment practices in Singapore schools from 2004 to 2005. The school intervention model we employ can be described as follows:

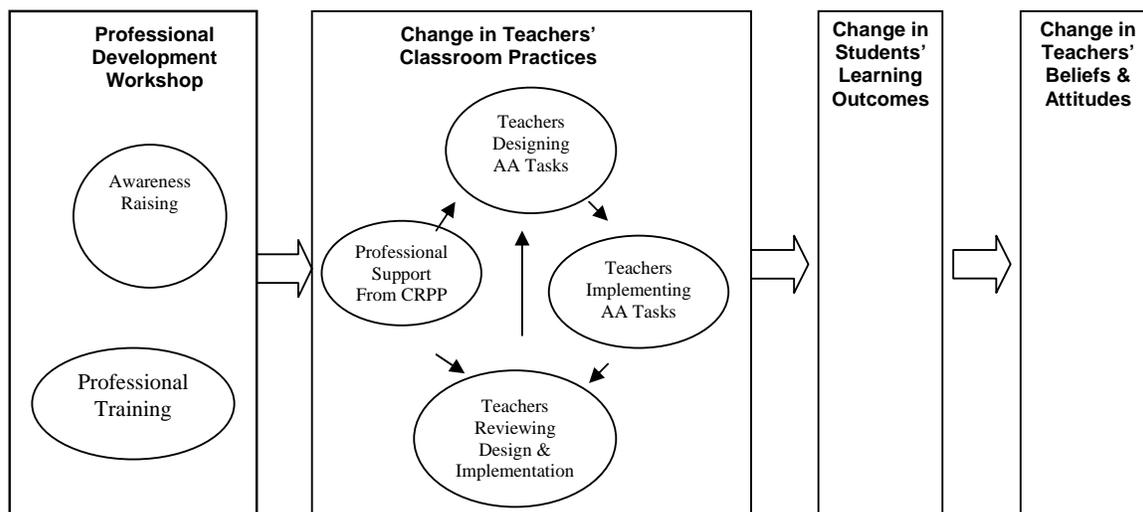


Figure 2. Alternative Assessment School Intervention Model

The model we are following is quite similar to what Guskey (2002, p. 383) has proposed for teacher change through professional development. The difference lies in the specific content of professional development and procedures involved in teachers' change in classroom practices. We fully agree with Guskey arguments that the change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes can only be achieved after the intervention has produced positive results. What they hope to gain through professional development are specific, concrete, and practical ideas that directly relate to the day-to-day operation of their classrooms (Fullan & Miles, 1992)

3.1 The professional development workshop

According to our research design, there will be three rounds of professional workshops over the three-year period of collaborative project. In other words, there will be one round of professional workshop for each school year. Each round of professional workshop consists of two workshops and one teacher moderation session. These workshops are intended to enhance teacher capacities in designing high-quality classroom assessment tasks and in using scoring rubrics to look at their students' work and at the same time empower teachers in the utilization of alternative assessments and engage teachers in reflective teaching to improve their pedagogical and assessment practices in the classrooms.

The first round started in March, 2006 and ended in November, 2006. In the March PD workshop, we focused on offering teachers some theoretical background about the rise of alternative assessment practice and why they are relevant to education in Singapore. We analyzed the mother tongue language teaching situation in Singapore and explained the necessity of assessment reforms in mother tongue teaching. We tried to raise teachers' awareness of their own assessment practices through analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the conventional assessment tasks they had been using in their daily teaching and showing them the possible benefits of conducting alternative practices. We also had discussions with them to make sure that alternative assessment could be a good supplement to conventional assessment if used properly. Apart from awareness-raising, we also provided professional training in terms of alternative task design and rubrics development, teaching them the basic principles of alternative assessment task design and the things they should pay attention to. In spite of our good intentions, teachers did not feel very confident and they were still doubtful about the usefulness of alternative assessment in mother tongue language teaching. Nevertheless, they decided to try it out in their classroom.

3.2 Teachers putting theory into practice

Armed with what they had learned from the PD workshop and their enthusiasm, teachers from a number of schools started their journey of exploring the feasibility of applying alternative assessment in mother tongue languages teaching. They worked together as a team, held discussions about which texts or topics or themes lent themselves to what kind of alternative assessment tasks and at what stage of the teaching these tasks should be introduced. In addition to task design, they also spent lots of time discussing the development of corresponding rubrics. After they came up with the alternative tasks, they would implement them in their respective classes. Teachers were encouraged to make small adjustment to the tasks according to the actual language proficiency of their students so that they are more suitable for assessment purposes. After the implementation of each task, they would hold discussions and share their comments about the design and the implementation of the task. They tried to figure out what worked and what did not work and why. They noted down the problems they had encountered in the implementation of alternative tasks so that when they are designing similar tasks in the future they can take these records for reference.

3.3 Professional support from researchers

Teachers are the major players in this intervention project, but they are not the only players. Language facilitators from CRPP have also played an active role in the whole process. Through monthly school visit, facilitators exchange views about the alternative assessment tasks designed by the teachers, point out weaknesses, and make suggestions regarding how improvements can be made. Apart from providing professional consultancy, facilitators have also offered moral support and helped to clear teachers' worries, doubts, and concerns. By working closely together with the teachers, a friendly rapport between researchers and teachers has been established, which has in turn contributed to teachers' acceptance of the projects and their willingness in putting extra effort and time on trying out this new form of assessment practice.

Through professional development workshops, collective planning, collective implementation, and collective reviewing and improving of alternative assessment tasks among teachers and subsequent formation of a collegial peer learning community, together with the professional help from facilitators, a model of school intervention in terms of assessment reform has been formed.

4. What has been achieved

The first phase of the CRPP-schools collaborative project has witnessed some exciting changes in terms of change in learner motivation in mother tongue languages learning and good performance in conventional exams. After one year's hard work, our teacher participants have also experienced considerable changes in their beliefs and attitudes about alternative assessment and they have become better aware of the importance of assessment in language teaching and they have begun to see the link between assessment practices and their daily teaching practices.

4.1 Change in students' motivation and performance

The ultimate goal of enhancing teachers' professional development is to promote students' learning and enrich their learning experiences. The first year's involvement into the alternative assessment intervention project seems to have caused some noteworthy changes among the students. Take the cohort of P4 students from Zhangde Primary School as an example. Due to the implementation of alternative assessment tasks, students are reported by their teachers to be more engaged in mother tongue languages learning. They are more confident to present in front of a group of audience. Students complete their work more carefully due to the interest in alternative assessment tasks as well as the competition spirit embedded in the new tasks. They enjoy the lessons more and they show greater interest in learning their mother tongue. Both the mid-year score and the end-of-year score have increased.

4.2 Improvement of teachers' professional development

Students' benefits from the intervention project should be mainly attributed to the teachers who have worked as the changing agent. After one year's participation in the project, the teachers involved have obtained a better understanding of alternative assessment practices. They have learned how to design and implement alternative assessment tasks which align with the curriculum, their teaching objectives, and their students' levels of mother tongue proficiency. Now they are better aware of the importance of higher order thinking and how to incorporate higher order thinking elements into their alternative assessment task design, as can be seen from the figure below.

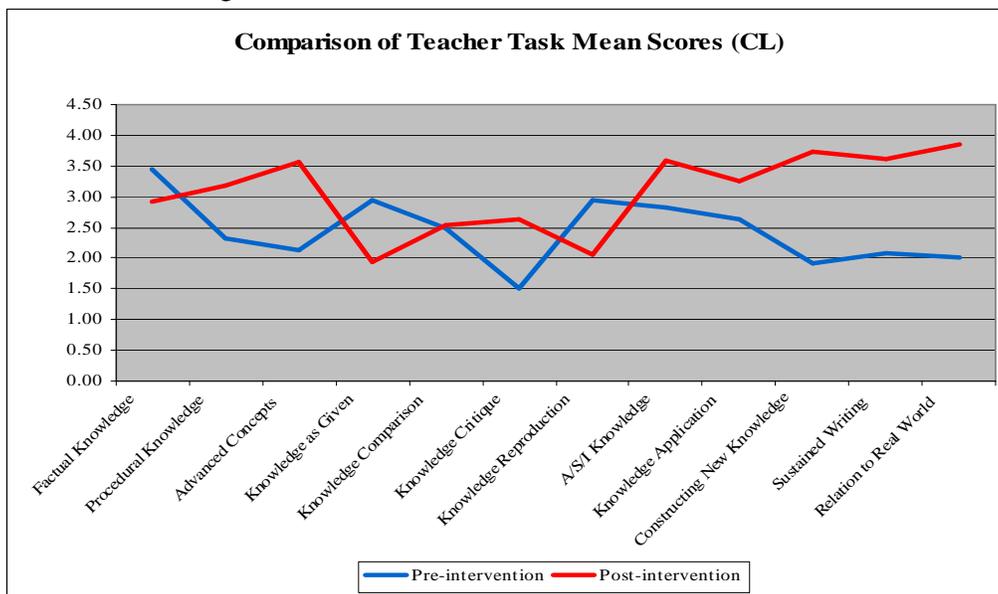


Figure 3. Comparison of AIQ Scores between Conventional Tasks and AA Tasks

Compared with the conventional assessment tasks they have been using before the intervention project, the alternative assessment tasks they have used after the intervention focus less on factual knowledge and require less knowledge reproduction. Meanwhile, they have increased demands regarding advanced concepts, incorporated more higher-order thinking components, and given students more opportunities to apply what they have learned to expressing themselves. Moreover, and the alternative assessment tasks are considerably more related to the real world or students' real life. In a word, the teachers have made considerable progress in alternative assessment task design.

Through the process of task design and task implementation, teachers have experienced certain things which have never experienced before. For instance, before they are involved in the project, very few teachers really think about why they assign their students certain kinds of classwork or homework since every teacher is giving more or less the same work for students and teachers have been doing this for ages. After going through the task design and task implementation processes, they have realized the importance of the task objectives. Even when they are using conventional tasks, they are more aware of their objectives.

4.3 Change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes

One thing worthy of particular mention here is the change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes after one year's participation in the project. At the very beginning of the project, most of the teachers involved were very doubtful about the relevance of alternative assessment to their daily teaching practice. They were very concerned about the possible negative effect alternative assessment would have on students' performance in the school exams. Very few of them saw the real point in carrying out this new type of assessment experiment. By the end of the first phase, however, their attitudes towards the alternative assessment and the whole research project have witnessed very significant changes. They have become more interested in alternative assessment. They are convinced that alternative assessment can achieve what conventional assessment cannot easily achieve. More importantly, they began to conduct critical reflection on their daily assessment and teaching practices.

5. Problems encountered

Of course, the implementation of alternative assessment is not without problems. The biggest problem reported by teachers involved is time. Since the planning, designing, implementing of alternative assessment tasks all takes time; teachers sometimes find it extremely difficult to find a common time for group meetings and discussions. Another problem is that they find that in order to conduct alternative assessment practices, they need to train the students first. Alternative assessments are not only new to teachers; they are also new to students. Being accustomed to the traditional assessments, students will feel at loss how to respond when they are placed in a new assessment environment they have never experienced before. How to solve these problems should be taken into consideration when we are planning the remaining phases of the intervention project.

6. Conclusion

What our intervention project has achieved so far shows that alternative assessment is feasible in Singapore schools and it can make up for the shortcomings of conventional assessment practices. If we can give full play to both conventional assessment and alternative assessment in mother tongue teaching we will achieve the dual goal of making the mother

tongue teaching a real process of empowering our citizens with both linguistic and moral capitals.

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