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Panel on Education

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 12 December 2005**

**Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools
and Secondary School Places Allocation**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Review of Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) conducted by the Education Commission (EC). This paper also summarises the relevant discussions of the Panel on Education (the Panel) on the subject matter.

Background

2. In September 2000, EC published its report entitled “Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong” in which the following long-term goals in reforming SSPA mechanism were proposed –

- (a) the nine-year basic education would become a coherent stage (a through road) during which pupils should no longer be required to take any high-stake public examination; and
- (b) the allocation bands would be eliminated gradually to remove the labelling effect on schools and pupils.

3. The Administration announced that it had accepted the education reform measures put forward by EC, and would start to implement the short-term SSPA mechanism as from 2000-2001 school year in accordance with the blueprint recommended by EC. The key features of the short-term SSPA mechanism were the abolition of the Academic Aptitude Test (AAT), the increase of the discretionary places quota from 20% to 30%, and the reduction in the number of allocation bands from five to three. The Administration undertook to review the short-term mechanism of the SSPA system in the 2003-2004 school year.

4. Separately, the “Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools (the Guidance)” was promulgated in 1997 and implemented in 1998. According to the Guidance, schools which adopt English as their MOI (EMI schools) must demonstrate

their fulfilment of the three prescribed criteria, namely, student ability, teacher capability and support measures. As a result of the implementation of the Guidance, there are 112 EMI schools and some 300 schools adopting Chinese as their MOI (CMI schools).

5. In 2000, the Government accepted the recommendation of a joint working group set up by the former Board of Education and the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) that MOI arrangements for secondary schools should be considered alongside the review of the SSPA mechanism in the 2003-2004 school year. In July 2003, EC set up the Working Group on Review of SSPA and MOI for Secondary Schools (the Working Group) to take forward the review.

6. The Working Group issued a consultation document entitled “Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation” (the Consultation Document) on 3 February 2005 for a three-month consultation on its proposals. At the request of the Panel, EC extended the consultation period to 2 July 2005 to allow more time for the public to discuss the proposals and express their views.

Proposals on MOI policy for secondary schools

Conceptual framework of MOI policy

7. According to the Consultation Document, the Working Group upholds the rectitude of mother-tongue teaching and re-affirms the policy considerations behind the Guidance. The Working Group considers that it is more desirable to continue with the present bifurcation approach (i.e. schools are bifurcating into EMI and CMI schools for junior secondary education), than to adopt a within-school approach (i.e. a school can have both EMI and CMI teaching). In charting the way forward for the MOI arrangement, the Working Group has arrived at the following conceptual framework –

“In principle, all secondary schools should adopt mother-tongue teaching at junior secondary levels. There is no objection to individual schools using English as the MOI if they fully meet the prescribed criteria of student ability, teacher capability and support measures. However, the Working Group encourages these schools to adopt mother-tongue teaching. All secondary schools (including CMI schools) should endeavour to raise the English proficiency of their students.”

Proposed criteria for EMI teaching

Student ability to learn through English

8. For the purpose of assessing students’ ability to learn through English, the

Working Group has proposed that –

- (a) their overall academic performance in the internal assessment of their primary schools in the second term of Primary five (P5) and the first and second terms of P6 is taken as the basis;
- (b) the internal assessment results would be scaled by the pre-Secondary one Hong Kong Attainment Test (pre-S1 HKAT) currently conducted annually;
- (c) samples of the pre-S1 HKAT results would be collected biennially and average of the results of the two most recently sampled pre-S1 HKATs would be taken to derive the instrument to scale primary schools' internal assessment results of the coming cohort of P6 students proceeding to S1; and
- (d) the top 40% of students on the basis of the scaled scores would be taken as having the ability to learn through English.

9. For school level, the Working Group has proposed that –

- (a) schools intending to adopt English as MOI must have at least 85% of its S1 students being able to learn through English;
- (b) should EMI teaching by class be adopted, such a class should have at least 85% students being capable to learn through English;
- (c) should schools be bifurcated into EMI and CMI schools, an EMI school should have at least 85% of its S1 intake being capable of learning through English; and
- (d) a six-year review cycle would be introduced for assessing EMI schools if they still fulfil the three prescribed criteria and CMI schools could apply to adopt EMI if they meet the prescribed criteria.

Teacher capability to teach through English

10. Regarding teacher capability to teach through English, the Working Group has proposed that –

- (a) the specific basic requirement for EMI teachers should be a Grade C or above in English Language (Syllabus B) of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) or its equivalent;
- (b) for serving EMI teachers who have not attained the qualification or its equivalent, they may meet the specific basic requirement within two years from the 2005-2006 school year, or opt for classroom observation

by subject and language experts; and

- (c) EMI teachers should accumulate a minimum of 15 hours of EMI-related continuous professional development activities for every three years.

School support measures

11. The Working Group has proposed that schools should set out the support measures and their effectiveness in their school development plans and annual school reports. Based on the results of schools' self evaluation and external school review, the Education and Manpower Bureau could assess the adequacy of the support measures.

Enhancing English proficiency of students in CMI schools

12. The Working Group has proposed the following measures to enhance English proficiency of students in schools adopting mother-tongue teaching –

- (a) schools which adopt mother-tongue teaching at junior secondary levels may choose to allocate, on top of English Language lessons, no more than 15% of total lesson time for extended learning activities conducted in English;
- (b) additional resources currently provided for CMI schools should continue and these schools should be allowed to opt for replacing part or all of the additional teaching posts with a cash grant; and
- (c) SCOLAR should further explore ways to create a favourable social environment for English learning, taking into account the latest development of the MOI arrangement in secondary schools.

Proposals on the SSPA mechanism

13. The Working Group has taken the view that the following pre-conditions must be in place before the long-term goal of “no banding and no scaling”, as put forward by EC, could be realised -

- (a) the majority of primary students meeting the basic competency in Chinese, English and Mathematics when they complete their primary education; and
- (b) the majority of secondary school teachers possessing sufficient professional knowledge and skills, as well as the space to develop school-based curriculum and effective teaching pedagogies to cater for widened student diversity to ensure that most of their students meet the basic competence in Chinese, English and Mathematics when they

complete junior secondary education.

14. According to the Working Group, these pre-conditions have yet to be met and in considering the way forward for the SSPA mechanism, the existing mechanism could be improved at the present stage -

- (a) providing parents with more choices and encouraging diversified development of both students and schools; and
- (b) containing the within-school student diversity in secondary schools at a level currently manageable by secondary schools and teachers so that teachers could consolidate their experience in catering for wide student diversity and ensure student learning effectiveness.

15. On the basis of the above considerations, the Working Group has proposed increasing the discretionary place quota from 20% to 30%; ceasing the provision of the “rank order list” to secondary schools; and allowing students to apply to two secondary schools.

16. For the central allocation stage, the Working Group has proposed assigning 10% of the central allocation places of every secondary school for allocation unrestricted by school nets; and retaining a scaling mechanism in order to contain the within-school student diversity in secondary schools within a manageable level.

17. If the community supports the need of retaining a scaling mechanism, the Working Group has further proposed either to continue with the current scaling mechanism, i.e. to adopt the post AAT results; or to use the existing pre-S1 HKAT as a scaling tool, i.e. using the same tool proposed for ascertaining students who are capable of learning through English (paragraph 8 above refers) and the students would then be divided into allocation bands within each school net according to the scaled results.

Deliberations of the Panel on Education

Meetings

18. The Panel discussed the Consultation Document with the Administration and the Working Group at its meetings on 14 March and 6 April 2005. The Panel also received views from 26 deputations at the meeting on 14 March 2005. The views of the deputations are summarised in the Appendix to the minutes of the meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1324/04-05]. The Working Group’s response to these views, as set out in the minutes of the meeting on 14 March 2005 and the speaking note of the Chairman of the Working Group for the meeting on 6 April 2005, are in **Appendices I** and **II** respectively.

19. The views and concerns expressed by members at these two meetings are summarised in the following paragraphs.

The MOI policy

Mother-tongue teaching

20. Ms Audrey EU considered that education should aim to enhance students' language ability, i.e. biliterate in written Chinese and English and trilingual in Cantonese, Putonghua and spoken English so that the competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international metropolis could be maintained in the long run. She asked how the MOI policy would facilitate enhancement of students' language ability and competitiveness of Hong Kong.

21. The Chairman of the Working Group responded that the Working Group shared the view that enhancing students' language ability was vital in maintaining the competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international metropolis. He considered that there were diverse pathways to enhance students' language ability and learning through EMI was only one of them.

22. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and Ms Emily LAU were of the view that MOI policy should be implemented consistently in order to facilitate effective teaching in schools. Mr CHEUNG remarked that while no one would dispute that students would learn best in their mother tongue, which could be supported by the attainment of CMI students in HKCEE, the majority of parents were not convinced that mother-tongue teaching would not affect students' development of English proficiency in schools. He suggested that the Working Group should focus on publicising the results of research findings and the successful cases to convince parents that students in CMI schools could learn and develop their proficiency in English as good as their counterparts in EMI schools. The Chairman of the Working Group agreed that stakeholders would be convinced of the merits of mother-tongue teaching when there were more data on students' performance in HKCEE.

23. Mr Andrew LEUNG expressed concern that the overall English standard in Hong Kong had declined. He asked whether the Working Group could provide empirical data to sustain the educational belief that mother-tongue teaching could enhance students' learning effectiveness. Representative of the Working Group pointed out that MOI-related research studies conducted in the past two decades had confirmed the merits of mother-tongue teaching in enhancing learning effectiveness.

24. Ms Emily LAU considered that as there were clearly dissonant views on the implementation of mother-tongue teaching in secondary schools, the Administration should review the Guidance in a prudent, comprehensive and fair manner, and defer implementation of any policies aiming to expand the scope of mother-tongue teaching in school education.

Bifurcation of CMI and EMI schools

25. Ms Audrey EU considered it too early to label students' ability to learn through English on the basis of their performance at P5 and P6 levels. She asked whether the Working Group would take into consideration the performance and abilities of graduate students of a secondary school to learn through English in determining whether the school could use English as MOI.

26. The Chairman of the Working Group responded that it would be very complicated to establish a measurement of students' English proficiency at the exit point and to provide for exemption from the requirement that EMI schools should have 85% S1 students being capable of learning through English. Students' performance in English in HKCEE after completion of S5 would depend on a number of factors including their proficiency level at the S1 intake. The development of a reliable and accurate formula for assessing the progress of students' English proficiency between the start of S1 and the end of S5 in an EMI or CMI school would be extremely complex and controversial. In addition, it would create pressure on the students in an EMI school if their progress in English proficiency would be taken into account to determine the school's MOI in the future.

27. Ms Audrey EU considered that the top 40% S1 students who were able to learn through English should be provided with sufficient exposure to English. She expressed concern that the number of EMI schools might decrease as a result of the prescribed criteria of student ability. She asked whether the Working Group would examine the impact of implementing its proposals on student enrolment in EMI schools in the long term.

28. The Chairman of the Working Group pointed out that the Working Group had not attempted to project the number of EMI schools after implementation of the MOI proposals in September 2007. Nor did the Working Group had any intention to restrict the number of EMI schools by adopting the requirement in the Guidance that at least 85% of the student intake at S1 in an EMI school should be able to learn through English. The primary concern of the Working Group was the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning in secondary schools, not the number of EMI or CMI schools after implementation of the proposed MOI policy.

29. Members belonging to the Liberal Party expressed support for the broad direction of mother-tongue teaching and opposed the within-school approach for MOI arrangement. Mr Tommy CHEUNG was of the view that the current MOI policy which allowed the operation of both EMI and CMI schools should continue until there were substantial justifications for any change. Mrs Selina CHOW considered that given the cultural and political background of Hong Kong and the preference of parents, EMI schools should continue to exist. She suggested that the Government should endeavour to promote a positive image of CMI schools in the community and provide more resources for CMI schools to enhance the English proficiency of their students.

30. Mrs Selina CHOW also suggested that the Working Group should review the language proficiency requirement of EMI teachers and the six-year review mechanism. She considered that teachers in EMI schools should possess a higher qualification and flexibility should be allowed for CMI schools to change their MOI.

31. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that there were divided views between CMI and EMI schools on the MOI proposals in the Consultation Document. While many CMI schools were concerned about the prescribed criteria for conversion to EMI schools, many EMI schools had expressed reservations about the proposed six-year review mechanism to assess whether there should be any change to their MOI. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that students should be given a choice to attend CMI or EMI schools. He also opined that students could learn well if English textbooks were used but teaching was conducted in mother tongue.

32. The Chairman of the Working Group responded that the Working Group supported the broad direction of the MOI policy set out in the Guidance. The Working Group, however, considered that the Guidance would be more readily accepted by schools if it had been implemented with an objective mechanism. The Working Group had elaborated on the three prescribed criteria for schools to adopt English as MOI in the Consultation Document. He also pointed out that there was objection to adopting mix-mode teaching in junior secondary education.

33. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered it confusing that although the Working Group upheld the rectitude that students learned best in their mother tongue, it had recommended that EMI schools should continue to operate and only students with good academic results would be allowed to learn in English. He considered implementation of the bifurcation approach to maintain the distinction between EMI and CMI schools too early for junior secondary education.

34. The Chairman of the Working Group explained that mother-tongue teaching had all along be advocated by academics and supported by research findings since the early eighties, but policy on mother-tongue teaching had only started to be implemented in the 1998-99 school year. Before the implementation of the Guidance in 1998, most secondary schools claimed to adopt EMI teaching. In reality, teaching in most of these secondary schools was actually conducted mainly in Cantonese though English textbooks were used and assessment was conducted in English. As a result, students experienced great difficulties in learning and their English proficiency was affected. The Chairman of the Working Group considered that when the merits of mother-tongue teaching became more evident, the community as a whole would accept the adoption of mother-tongue teaching in all secondary schools.

Labelling effect against CMI schools and their students

35. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern that bifurcating schools into CMI and EMI schools would create an adverse labelling effect. He also considered that the prescribed criteria for EMI schools had reinforced the conception that the quality

of education and students in EMI schools was better. He asked whether the recommendations of the Working Group would be able to enhance the acceptability of mother-tongue teaching and convince parents to send their children to CMI schools in the long term.

36. The Chairman of the Working Group responded that mother-tongue teaching should be encouraged since students learnt best in mother tongue, and EMI teaching should only be allowed subject to fulfilment of the prescribed criteria. The Working Group understood that if all secondary schools adopted Chinese as MOI for their S1 to S3 classes, there would be no labelling effect on CMI schools and their students. If students with good academic performance could learn in mother tongue, they would have plenty of time to improve their English proficiency. The Working Group, however, had considered the circumstances in Hong Kong and parents' aspirations. It sought to strike a right balance among various factors when formulating its proposals in MOI. Although the labelling effect on CMI schools would still persist, the Working Group anticipated that implementation of the recommendations in the Consultation Document would enhance learning effectiveness and prove the merits of mother-tongue teaching in the long term.

37. Dr YEUNG Sum commented that the MOI policy would not be an issue if the English proficiency of CMI school students was comparable to their counterparts in EMI schools. He suggested that the Government should allocate more resources to CMI schools with a view to enhancing the quality and effectiveness of English teaching and learning.

The SSPA mechanism

38. In response to the Panel's request for an extension of the consultation period on the Consultation Document, representatives of the Working Group pointed out that the Working Group would have to finalise its recommendations on MOI policy and the SSPA mechanism by the end of the 2005 for implementation of the new SSPA mechanism from the 2007 school year. There was a general expectation that the new SSPA mechanism would be announced in mid-2005, as P5 students in the 2005-06 school year would be the first cohort of students affected. Any extension would need to take into account the possible implications for the implementation schedule. The Chairman of the Working Group also pointed out that the Administration would have to decide the adoption of a new mechanism for determining students' allocation band based on their school assessment results for the SSPA in the 2007-08 school year. Currently, the validity of using AAT for such purpose had been challenged for long and the problem of within-school student diversity had created problems for teaching at schools.

39. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed the view that the decision on an appropriate scaling mechanism for SSPA should not be deferred and MOI and SSPA might have implications on each other.

Relevant papers

40. A list of the relevant papers is in **Appendix III**. These papers are available on the LegCo website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>).

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
7 December 2005

**Extract from the minutes of meeting of the
Panel on Education held on 14 March 2005**

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The Working Group's response

44. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Michael TIEN, Chairman of the Working Group, said that he was glad that while deputations had different views as to how students' ability in English language could be improved, no deputations had expressed objection to using Chinese as the medium of instruction (MOI) in secondary schools. He thanked deputations for their views and suggestions on ways to improve students' ability in English language in secondary schools using Chinese as MOI (CMI schools), reduce the adverse labelling effect on CMI schools and their students as well as the mis-match of students in EMI or CMI schools in terms of their ability to learn through English, etc. He said that the Working Group had the following views/observations on these issues –

- (a) High proficiency in both Chinese and English would facilitate students' lifelong learning and maintain the competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international metropolis.
- (b) Enhancing English standards and teaching in English were two separate issues in school education, and using English as MOI was not the only or best means to enhance students' English proficiency. For the majority of students, the key to enhancing their English proficiency lay in the teaching and learning of the language, and not necessarily in using the language as MOI.
- (c) Full implementation of mother-tongue teaching was consistent with the Working Group's educational considerations. The Working Group, however, understood that public acceptance and possible impact on the community should be considered.
- (d) The Working Group understood the aspirations of some parents that children who were able to learn through English should be provided with the opportunity to do so. The Working Group therefore recommended that EMI teaching should be allowed when the three preconditions of student ability to learn through English, teacher capability to teach intelligibly through English and school support measures were met. As a corollary, any increase or decrease of the number of schools using English as their MOI (EMI schools) should depend on the number of schools which met the prescribed criteria. He also appreciated

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parents' concern about their children's English proficiency and drew attention to the fact that the core recommendation of the Working Group was that, while the policy of mother-tongue teaching should be continued, the importance of enhancing students' English proficiency, irrespective of the MOI schools would adopt, should also be emphasised.

- (e) The competence of language teachers was pivotal to enhancing language learning in schools. In this connection, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) had conducted a comprehensive review of language education in Hong Kong in 2002 and recommended, among others, the establishment of the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers (the Scheme) to encourage serving language teachers, particularly those who had neither a degree nor any teacher training in the relevant language subject, to upgrade their professional qualification to match that required of their counterparts entering the profession in or after the 2004-05 school year. The Scheme was then set up in 2004 with an initial allocation of \$225 million from the Language Fund. Under the Scheme, each successful applicant would, upon completion of an approved programme, be eligible for a 50% remission of tuition fee up to a maximum of \$30,000. In view of the favourable response from serving language teachers, the Administration had proposed and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council had approved a further injection of \$300 million into the Scheme. In addition, there were now professional teams to assist primary and secondary schools and teachers in the development of their pedagogies and curriculum. As a result, the quality of the teaching workforce and school education would continue to improve in the years ahead.
- (f) There were diverse views in the community on the adoption of the within-school approach which could imply adopting different MOIs for different classes/subjects with or without conditions at junior secondary levels.
- (g) For CMI schools, Government should continue the provision of additional resources for them to create an English-rich environment in the school campus for enhancing student learning. CMI schools would be allowed to allocate, on top of English Language lessons, no more than 15% of the lesson time in Secondary one to three (S1-S3) for extended learning activities such as drama and debate through English, on condition that the normal teaching and learning of the content subjects would not be adversely affected.

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- (h) The current flexible MOI arrangement at senior secondary levels should be continued. CMI schools should be allowed to switch to EMI teaching for certain subjects in some classes at senior secondary levels if they met the prescribed criteria, namely student ability, teacher capacity and support measures, for using English as MOI.
- (i) The three prescribed criteria for EMI schools would not put through-train schools wishing to use English as MOI in a disadvantaged position because, through professional collaboration between the primary and secondary sections, such schools in fact could have longer time to ensure their own students meet the required standard of being able to learn through English.
- (j) The concern that many students who could learn through English were allocated to CMI schools reflected the labelling effect on CMI schools which was likely a result of the community's prevailing preference for EMI teaching. Researches conducted by academics and feedback from students supported the theory that students could learn most effectively through mother-tongue teaching. In fact, since mother-tongue teaching was implemented in 1998, students in CMI schools had demonstrated an overall improved performance in acquisition of subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills, and were now more confident and motivated in learning.
- (k) The Working Group was not aware of any objective and effective mechanism for assessing students' academic and non-academic performance comprehensively and which could be deployed as a scaling instrument for the purpose of the SSPA and MOI implementation. The Working Group thus recommended using the internal assessment conducted by primary schools at the second term of Primary five (P5) and the first and second terms of P6 as the basis of assessment, and the results of the Pre-Secondary 1 Hong Kong Attainment Test as the scaling instrument. The Working Group welcomed any suggestions from deputations on an objective, reliable and feasible way to assess the whole-person development of a student.
- (l) If students' academic result in English language at P5 and P6 was used as the only basis for assessing a student's ability to learn through English, primary schools might concentrate just on the teaching of English, resulting in a distortion of primary education. This would be in contradiction with the MOI policy building

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upon the results of research studies that students learnt best and develop their higher-order thinking skills in their mother tongue.

- (m) Adoption of the within-in school or school-based approach in determining the use of MOI in secondary schools might repeat the history prior to 1998, viz. that the majority of secondary schools continued to profess the adoption of English as MOI, while in practice mainly using Chinese in classroom teaching.
- (n) The prescribed criteria of student ability, teacher capability and support measures for adopting English as MOI was aimed to facilitate student learning effectiveness in EMI schools and to assure the quality of EMI teaching. While appreciating the concern of some schools about the switch from EMI to CMI, it was important to note that students who were able to learn through English but allocated to an EMI school that did not meet the other prescribed criteria would not be taught and could not learn as effectively as in an EMI school meeting the prescribed criteria.
- (o) The provision of a historical perspective to the development of the MOI policy might be useful backdrop to facilitate the consultation exercise.

45. In respect of point (o) above, Professor LEE Wing-on, member of the Working Group, briefed the meeting that many educational reports, dating back to 1935, repeatedly suggested the merits of mother-tongue teaching. More recent Education Commission Reports, such as Education Commission Report No. 1 in 1984 and Report No. 2 in 1986, also recommended the adoption of Chinese as MOI in secondary schools, as elaborated in Annexes 2 and 3 of the Consultation Document. He highlighted that there were many academic works from both the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong argued for the adoption of mother-tongue teaching in secondary education in past decades. Professor LEE pointed out that the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools was drawn up against this background. He stressed that the education policy documents in Hong Kong had all along been promoting the adoption of Chinese as the principal MOI in school education; he thus could not agree that the MOI Policy was inconsistent. He added that the Working Group anticipated that the allocation of 15% of the total lesson time in S1-3 for extended learning activities conducted through English in CMI schools would help reduce the disparity between CMI and EMI schools in respect of students' exposure to English.

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二零零五年四月六日
立法會教育事務委員會會議
檢討中一派位機制及中學教學語言工作小組主席
田北辰先生發言稿

在上次的會議，我們聽了二十多個代表團提出的意見，總體來說，工作小組認為其中兩點是很重要的：(一)大家沒有懷疑母語教學的好處，但關注到學生的英語水平；(二)不少人關注中中/英中分流所帶來的標籤效應。

關於第(一)點，問題源於部分社會人士對英語能力和英語教學的誤解，以為英語教學就能自然地提升學生的英語能力。正如我在上次的會議談及，香港大學徐碧美教授最近的研究、最近兩年的中學會考成績、及一些中中的成功經驗，都顯示「母語教學」與「學好英文」兩者可以兼得。母語教學能幫助學生啟迪思維，提高學習興趣、動機、自信心和成功感，加上他們可以學得更快，可騰出更多時間學好英文，他們又怎會不能學好英語呢？所以，我們未來的路向，應該是「母語教學，學好英語」。

有人提出，既然有40%的中一學生可透過英語學習，就應該確保這些學生可以入讀以英語授課的學校或班級。這其實是一個「心結」，以為要這些學生用母語學習，是「委屈」他們。

首先，我想指出一點，我們曾經分析家長選校的情況，見到不少成績好的學生家長，都不是盲目地選擇英中，在他們的首三個志願當中，有英中的、亦有中中，也不是所有家長都把英中放在第一志願。況且，當家長選校時，他們已清楚知道所選

的學校是用母語還是英語教學。在這幾年的中一派位，都有 80% 的學生獲派首三個志願的學校。至於入讀中中而又屬成績好的學生，當中也是大部分將獲派的中中列入首三個志願。可見家長的選擇是得到尊重的。

我想重申，母語教學的好處有明確的、科學化的證據。有能力以英語學習的學生，不會因用母語學習而有所「損失」，因為他們更能掌握學科知識、發展高層次思維、培養正面的價值觀，在將來的升學和就業上，都會有優勢。所謂「委屈」，跟本不存在。

至於解決中中/英中的標籤問題，除非所有中學採用母語教學，或無條件地由學校完全自決，但我在上次的會議上，已詳細分析，兩者都難以接受。要確保英語教學的成效，我們必須設定客觀的條件，有條件就自然有人符合條件，有人不符合，這樣，標籤便自然出現。換句話說，要有條件但同時完全沒有標籤，是不可能的，我們只能將標籤的不良影響減至最低。

直覺上，人們以為分班採用不同的教學語言可以消除中中/英中的明顯界線。但經深入探討，發現這反而會加深標籤的負面影響。我談過多次的「七重標籤」，對學校、學生和教師都沒有好處。相對而言，中中/英中分流的標籤效應明顯較少。關於這些論點，我在上次的會議上已作詳細的介紹，為了多留時間討論，我不在此重覆，請大家參閱夾附會議紀錄的講稿。

我們亦知道有人提出，除小部分英中外，應讓其他中學用較大百分比的課時（例如 30%-50%）

以英語教學，這意味應讓學校分科採用英語教學，以解決標籤的問題。換言之，這是否意味在這方案下，毋須設定學生能力的條件呢？如果我們不管學生是否有能力以英語學習，分科採用英語教學，是否不再理會有些學科的學習效能？

更有趣的現實是，若分科以英語教學，很多學校都傾向在數學及理科採用英語授課，原因是這些科目語文成分較輕，相信學生和教師較易應付。但是，在初中階段，學生在學科和語文的能力上，仍在發展階段，未有穩固的基礎，若只在語文成分較輕的科目用英語授課，是否能達到我們所期望，透過英語教學讓學生多接觸和多使用英語的目的呢？況且，有些理科教師表示，數學和科學的概念較抽象，認為用中文教授，更為有效。

教統局曾委託學者，進行一項關於教學語言的研究，證明學生用英語學習數理科，其實要面對「雙重的語言障礙」。為甚麼呢？因為數理科本身有它的一套符號，構成了第一種語言障礙，如果用英文學習，英語就成為第二重的語言障礙。這研究亦顯示，若學生的能力相近，學生用母語學習數理科，比透過英語學習，成績高出 20 個百分值。

當然，能力較好的學生可以克服這種「雙重語言障礙」，但始終是少數，如果很多學校都選擇在數理科以英語教學，那些未能克服這些障礙的學生也要用英文學習這些科目，結果既不能學好學科，亦不能多接觸英文，豈不是造成「雙輸」？一直以來，香港學生的優勢是在數理科，在不同的國際比賽中，名列前茅。以最近兩次的 PISA(學生能力國際評估計劃)為例，香港都在數學排名第一、科學則第三。如果勉強學生用英文學這些科目，長遠來

說，我們可能要在我們的強項---數理人才上，付出代價，是否值得呢？由此看來，分科用不同的教學語言所涉及的問題，並不比分班的做法簡單，我們需要深思。

綜合以上的論點，我想強調，觀念上，社會必須認清學好英文和以英語學習其他學科是兩回事。工作小組認同，在落實母語教學的同時，必須幫助學生學好英語。在教學語言的安排上，很多人批評小組提出的學校分流方案，但其他方案卻帶來更複雜、更難解決的問題。

今天，我希望能多聽取各位議員的意見，現將以下的時間交給主席。

**Relevant documents on review of medium of instruction for secondary schools
and secondary school places allocation**

Date of meeting	Council/ Panel	Document	Paper No.
14.3.05	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting and Summary of deputations' views on the Consultation Document	CB(2)1324/04-05
		Legislative Council Brief on Public Consultation on the Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation	EMB (EC)101/55/1/C
		Consultation Document on Review of the Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation	Annex A to File Ref : EMB (EC)101/55/1/C
16.3.05	Council Meeting	Hon MA Lik raised a written question on "Secondary School Places Allocation"	Hansard
6.4.05	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)1431/04-05
		Executive summaries/summaries of 11 research studies conducted/commissioned by the Education and Manpower Bureau or the former Education Department related to Medium of Instruction which are listed as reference in Annex 2 of the Consultation Document entitled "Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation"	CB(2)1441/04-05(01)