Nurturing Active Learners and Proficient Users

2010 Mother Tongue Languages Review Committee

Executive Summary of Recommendations

January 2011
Ministry of Education

13 January 2011

Mr Lee Hsien Loong
Prime Minister

The bilingual policy is a cornerstone of our education system. To ensure that it can stay effective and relevant with the changing language environment in homes and the community, I appointed the Director-General of Education (DGE) to lead a Committee to review the teaching and testing of Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs) in Singapore schools.

The Committee consulted extensively with different stakeholders in the course of its work. It surveyed over 22,000 teachers, students and parents, and held discussions with language professionals, individuals, media professionals and community leaders. It made study trips to Australia, China, India, Malaysia, and the United States to observe the latest developments in teaching, learning, and testing of languages.

The Committee emphasised that MTL has to be a living language for students, to be used and valued, and not just to be taken as an examinable subject. It made four key recommendations to nurture active learners who can use their MTL to communicate proficiently in everyday life.

First, align the teaching and testing of MTL to achieve proficiency. We must recognise that students enter Primary schools with different home language backgrounds, and we must cater to their different starting points. We should develop clear descriptors of the desired language proficiencies at key stages of education, to guide teachers and students on exactly what is expected. Lessons must be more engaging and interactive, so that students can see the direct relevance of what they are learning. This will require curriculum improvements and more use of info-communication tools.

Just as importantly, examination and test formats have to support changes in teaching and learning. Tests will become more interactive and emphasise more on using the language in realistic situations. The Committee has laid out a time-table for these changes, to give students and parents ample time to prepare for them.

Second, help all students learn MTL to as high a level as they can. We have already added another SAP school. We will enhance existing programmes for students with a flair for MTL and introduce some new ones. For students who have greater difficulties learning MTL, we will update the MTL 'B' syllabus, to help them learn to communicate confidently in MTL, especially orally.

Third, foster a more conducive environment for students to use MTL. This is in fact the best way for them to master the language. Hence, MOE will support schools to work with the wider community to create opportunities for students to use MTL and imbue the right culture and values. For example, schools can organise 'MTL fortnights' to kindle students' interest in the languages through novel and exciting ways. MOE will provide funds to each school to work with community groups to enrich their cultural and language environment to complement MTL teaching.

Fourth, deploy and develop more MTL teachers. This is critical. We already have a dedicated corps of MTL teachers in Singapore, but we need to reinforce their ranks and support them with more resources. We will step up recruitment, open up more career pathways for language teachers, and train them to do proficiency-oriented teaching and assessments.

These initiatives, if implemented well, will keep our bilingual policy up to date and effective. They will enable our young to communicate in their respective Mother Tongues, better appreciate our cultural roots, and connect with other communities in Asia and beyond.

The Committee's recommendations represent another significant step in our efforts to improve the learning of Mother Tongue Languages. Only through continuous improvement and innovation can we retain this precious asset for future generations of Singaporeans.

Yours faithfully,

NG ENG HEN

17 January 2011

Dr Ng Eng Hen
Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence

Dear *Dr Ng*,

I am pleased that the Mother Tongue Languages Review Committee has completed a comprehensive professional review on the teaching and learning of Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs) in Singapore schools. I thank the Committee members for their good work. Their insightful and practical recommendations will improve MTL education in Singapore.

Singapore is one of the few countries in the world that has successfully implemented a bilingual education system. A growing proportion of Singaporeans are literate in two or more languages. But to sustain this achievement, we must continually update and improve our MTL curriculum, teaching and examination, to keep abreast of changing conditions in Singapore and around the world.

This review is therefore timely. Over the last decades, the language environment in Singapore has steadily shifted. We are using English more widely in our daily lives. In schools, English is the medium of instruction, with MTL forming an integral part of the curriculum. In homes, more parents are talking to their children in English, though a significant proportion still use Malay, Tamil, Mandarin or dialects. As a result, students enter school with very varied language backgrounds and abilities. Some already have a good working knowledge of their MTL; others are less familiar with the sounds, patterns and rules; and yet others have grown up learning two languages. These different groups have different needs when it comes to learning MTL.

MOE must therefore enhance and target MTL teaching, to cater to a wider range of students with different starting points. We must help every student to attain as high a proficiency in MTL as he or she is capable of with reasonable effort. We need special programmes to
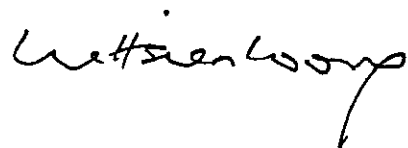
stretch those talented in languages, and nurture a bi-literate cadre adept at traversing languages and cultures. We must also support those who have difficulties learning languages, to encourage them to persevere and acquire the basics of their MTL. For the majority, we want them to become proficient enough to communicate effectively in their MTL, to understand and appreciate their cultural heritage, and to develop a love for the language.

MTL teaching in schools is naturally a matter of great interest and concern to the broader community of MTL speakers. How best to teach and examine MTL are educational issues, so we should be guided by professional advice on the most effective approach educationally. We should recognise the abilities and limits of our students, and take full advantage of the accumulated experience of language teaching in Singapore and abroad, and the possibilities opened up by new technology. At the same time, I encourage the broader community to play an active supporting role, creating an environment where the language is used, and organising enrichment programmes to complement what the schools do. The Government will provide resources to support community projects to raise MTL proficiency levels. I hope MTL communities will understand and support the purpose of these changes, and work with the Government to achieve the language outcomes that we all desire.

Singapore's bilingual policy has served us well. Knowing MTL helps to centre us as an Asian society and retain our Asian roots and values, and gives our people an edge in the global economy. Singapore parents value MTL and want their children to be bilingual. We must do our utmost to maintain our linguistic heritage and advantage.

Cabinet has approved MOE's plan to implement the Committee's recommendations. MOE should now do so progressively and systematically, to keep our Mother Tongue Languages alive and valuable to our young.

Yours sincerely

– Executive Summary –

BILINGUALISM AS CORNERSTONE

1.	Bilingual education in English (EL) and the Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs) remains a cornerstone of Singapore's education system. EL, as the common language of instruction, enables all our students to plug into a globalised world. Economically, it has built an environment conducive for international business here. The learning of MTL for the various ethnic groups has provided a link to their heritage and Asian roots. Collectively, the learning of EL and MTL by the different communities has shaped Singapore into a cosmopolitan city that embraces a multi-lingual and multi-cultural diversity and attracts people from both East and West. Furthermore, with the rise of China and India, and the integration of ASEAN, learning our MTLs will gain increasing relevance and provide our students and companies with a competitive edge. This is a key strength of Singapore that we would do well to preserve and enhance.

IMPETUS FOR FORMING THE MTL REVIEW COMMITTEE

2.	The MTL Review was motivated by two developments. First, the language environment in Singaporean homes is evolving and will result in a wider spread of exposure and abilities with regard to MTL compared with previous cohorts who grew up in a different home language environment. Second, advances in the understanding and practice of teaching languages have occurred in other countries as increasingly more people want to learn a second language. This has been facilitated by globalisation as well as the rise of India and China. Concurrently, innovations in information technology (IT) devices and software have also expanded the options to enhance teaching and learning of languages.

3.	In January 2010, the MTL Review Committee led by the Director-General of Education was formed to evaluate these developments and their impact on our teaching and learning of MTL in Singapore. The goal was to propose appropriate strategies for MTL teaching, learning and assessment, given Singapore's unique context, to promote the use of MTL as a living language among our students.

4.	Three sub-committees were formed - for Chinese Language (CL), Malay Language (ML) and Tamil Language (TL). The composition of and terms of reference for the Committee and sub-committees are in <u>Annex A</u>. This review also builds on the work of previous reviews of the MTLs – in 1991[1], 1999 and 2004-5[2].

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[1] The review in 1991 was for Chinese Language only.

FACT FINDING

Changing Language Environment in Singapore

5.   The Committee sought to better define the varying proportions of use of and exposure to EL and MTL at home and in different community settings in Singapore. This would impact the speaking and learning environment of MTL for our students. It also sought to assess the impact of the new curricula and teaching approaches introduced after the 2004-5 MTL reviews. To help inform the Committee in its review, the Ministry of Education (MOE) conducted a survey involving 3,799 teachers, 9,543 students and 8,815 parents. The Committee also held 19 focus group discussions with 229 educators (school leaders, heads of department and teachers), 85 parents and 22 community leaders.

6.   Information gathered from MOE's administrative records, the survey and focus group discussions confirmed that the home language environment in Singapore is changing and becoming more diverse.

Key Findings

7.   There is a long-term trend of English becoming a dominant language used in homes, as shown by yearly data of incoming Primary 1 (P1) students over the past twenty years. This rising trend is seen across all communities, albeit not to the same degree.   Among ethnic Chinese students, the proportion with English as the most frequently used home language rose from 28% in 1991 to 59% in 2010. Among Indians, the corresponding figures are 49% in 1991 and 58% in 2010. For Malays, the rise was from 13% to 37% over the same period.

8.   The survey also revealed a more complex picture of the home language environment. For example, among P6 students learning CL or TL, 38% reported using predominantly EL at home, roughly one-third reported using predominantly their MTL at home, and the remaining one-quarter to one-third reported using both EL and their MTL equally. For ML students, the use of ML at home is still prevalent (50%), with one-third using both EL and ML, and the remaining 17% using predominantly EL.

9.   Home language was found to influence students' attitudes towards and proficiency in MTL — fewer students from EL-speaking homes liked learning MTL. This suggested that teaching methods would need to be different for students from different home language backgrounds. However, interest to learn MTL was generally high across all three MTLs.   MTL was also deemed an important subject by a large majority of parents and students across all levels. CL students cited its usefulness and importance for their future, while ML and TL students cited doing well in the subject and enjoyable lessons as

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[2] The recommendations of the 2004-5 reviews have been implemented for the primary levels, and the secondary-level curricular reforms will be rolled out from 2011.

important reasons for their interest in learning MTL. MTL was also seen by teachers, parents and students as important for transmitting culture and values.

10. The survey also indicated that the efforts of previous MTL reforms were working well. It found that a higher proportion of P6 students liked learning MTL in 2010 compared with earlier surveys conducted in 2004-5; teachers felt that the new curricular initiatives implemented since the last MTL review were beneficial for students. During the focus group discussions, parents and teachers also affirmed that the MTL reforms based on the 2004-5 reviews were headed in the right direction and were bearing fruit. Parents recognised the good work of our MTL teachers in implementing the reforms.

Global Advances in Teaching of Languages

11. The MTL Review Committee reviewed developments that had occurred in other countries in language teaching, learning and assessment. It made study trips to Australia, China, India, Malaysia, and the United States of America (USA) and spoke with educators, parents and students to understand their progress and to pick up learning points.

12. Through their visits and exchanges, the Committee learned that native-speaking societies (Chinese in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Tamil in Tamil Nadu, Malay in Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia) do not face the same challenges we face in Singapore. In these societies, students grow up in and are constantly exposed to an environment where the dominant MTL is used extensively in everyday life, starting from the home and continuing into school and the wider community. They have much less exposure to other languages. Even in this context, these countries continue to invest in making language learning relevant, enhancing the use of new pedagogies and technologies, and placing emphasis on students' ability to communicate effectively through both oral and written forms.

Learning in a Multi-Lingual Environment

13. The Committee also learned from experts and educators with extensive experience teaching in mixed-language and multi-lingual environments that **learning is most effective when learners are taught to use the language in an active and interactive manner for a variety of real-life settings, including using the language to learn about its associated culture.** This is regardless of whether the learner is in a dominant MTL or multi-lingual environment.

14. Various systems have shaped their curriculum, teaching and testing methods around this principle. The teaching and learning of languages is focused largely on applying the language in real-life situations. Broadly, students are given opportunities to use the language in three communication modes: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational. A typical lesson might start with the teacher introducing some vocabulary, followed by teaching

sentence-building skills, and then activities such as group work to allow interpersonal communication between students using the language, and oral presentations.

15.   To guide teaching and testing, experts agree on the sound educational principle of stating clear expectations of what learners can master at different stages of learning.   Such **proficiency descriptors** are articulated for six language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing, interacting in spoken forms and interacting in written forms.   They aid teachers to aim for observable outcomes when teaching students.   With clarity of what is expected of them, learners too are better motivated to progress from one level to the next.   There have also been significant advances in using different teaching methods and aids, particularly information and communication technology (ICT)-enabled platforms for more effective learning of languages.

16.   The use of proficiency descriptors extends to testing as well. For example, the Advanced Placement (AP) examination for Chinese Language and Culture developed by The College Board in the USA is designed as a "performance-based assessment" to measure students' attainment of language proficiencies.   The test is also fully ICT-delivered where ICT is used as a tool to provide authentic contexts for assessment.   For example, students use *Hanyu Pinyin* text input to compose an e-mail response, as is the case in work life and in much of contemporary social communications.

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF MTL LEARNING

17.   MOE's educational goal remains to support and enable every student to learn MTL to as high a level as each student is able to.   The Committee acknowledges that schools may have a challenging teaching environment when it comes to MTL, as our students come from homes with diverse patterns of language use.   After studying the developments and practices in other countries, the Committee is of the view that Singapore must evolve its own approach to the teaching of MTL.   The approach must be one that recognises different starting points and applies appropriate methods for different learners, but also builds on past reforms and existing strengths.

18.   The Committee has outlined three broad objectives in the teaching and learning of MTL to develop proficient language users:

   a.   Communication - This is a valuable skill for life and work. In addition to their mastery of the English language, proficiency and ability to communicate in MTL gives Singaporeans a competitive edge.

   b.   Culture - Learning MTL enables our students to understand and develop their unique identity through a deeper appreciation of culture, traditions, literature and history.   This is a critical base to preserve the transmission of cultural values and traditions associated with each MTL in our society.

c. Connection - Proficiency in MTL enables our students to connect with communities across Asia and the world who speak that language or share that culture.

19. In achieving these objectives, the key is to help students to like, learn and use their MTL as a living language, and produce proficient users who can communicate effectively in a variety of real-life settings.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS - ACTIVE LEARNERS, PROFICIENT USERS

20. The MTL reforms based on the 2004-5 reviews are in the right direction and are bearing fruit. We recognise the good work of our MTL teachers in implementing the new MTL curriculum and will build on existing strengths.

21. The Committee recognises that our teaching methods will have to take into account the different home language backgrounds and language learning abilities of students, especially in the early foundation years. The MTL curriculum should be designed and taught to develop proficient users who can communicate effectively using the language in real-life contexts and apply it in inter-personal communication, listening and reading for comprehension, and presenting in spoken and written forms.

22. To facilitate this, MOE will provide language proficiency descriptors to guide teaching, learning and assessment. Assessment will be aligned with the changes in teaching and learning. There will also be greater use of ICT platforms to create realistic, interactive settings that test students' ability to use the language effectively and meaningfully.

23. Students will continue to be exposed to culture and values through the language. There is also a need to work with the wider community to create environments in and beyond schools that are conducive to MTL learning and use. In this way, we can make MTL directly relevant to students - a living language, and not just an examinable subject.

24. While the main recommendations will help all learners, the Committee also examined ways to help two specific groups of MTL learners - those with high ability in MTL and those who face greater difficulties learning MTL.

25. The Committee has identified four recommendations to further enhance our MTL teaching and learning:

A) Aligning teaching and testing to achieve proficiency;

B) Enhancing different provisions for learners of different abilities;

C) Creating an environment more conducive for MTL usage and learning; and

D) Deploying and developing more MTL teachers.

A) Aligning Teaching and Testing to Achieve Proficiency

i) Recognising Different Starting Points

26.   MOE will expand and build on the customised teaching approaches arising from the 2004-5 MTL reviews. Our MTL curriculum will continue to adopt student-centric, customised approaches especially during the foundation years in primary school. In the early Primary years, schools will place more emphasis on recognising students' different starting points and addressing their learning needs. We will offer more help and support to those with little or no foundation to help them develop confidence in learning the language, while stretching those who are more able or have stronger foundations in MTL.

27.   Oracy is the natural foundation for language learning. Children learn their first language through listening to care-givers and adults in the family, followed by speaking it, and then starting formal learning in school. Hence, for beginning learners and those who need more support in MTL learning, the teaching approach will be to first build the oracy foundation before learning reading and writing.   There will be more systematic teaching of oral vocabulary and sentence structures to develop students' foundational language skills. For students who have some foundation in MTL, the teaching approach will build on the oral skills they already possess, and help them progress to reading and writing.

28.   Reading and writing are integral parts of the MTL curriculum. Developing an early proficiency in reading builds a strong foundation in literacy which will help children acquire the vocabulary to express themselves better. Reading and writing skills will be taught more systemically in MTL lessons, building on the children's oracy foundations.

29.   Teachers will be equipped with the appropriate teaching strategies to cater to different learner profiles. These include motivational strategies to build a positive affirmative learning environment and adopting the bilingual approach where EL is used in the initial learning stage. Teachers will enhance their use of a variety of classroom strategies, such as greater use of group work to encourage interaction, and the use of songs, rhymes and drama to strengthen oracy and make learning more engaging.

ii) Using Proficiency Descriptors to Motivate Progress

30.   The learning of MTL must lead to students *applying and using* it in their lives.   Our MTL curriculum will aim to develop students into proficient language users who can communicate in a confident, effective and meaningful way in real-life situations.

31.   To guide teaching and learning practices for the development of proficient language users, MOE will provide proficiency descriptors to more explicitly spell out the language skills and levels of attainment our students

should achieve at various key stages of learning (P2, P4, P6, S2 and S4). A draft of the proficiency descriptors at P6 and Secondary 4 (S4) is in <u>Annex B.</u> MOE will conduct studies to ensure the proficiency descriptors are validated through empirical research and data, and to refine these over time.

32. The proficiency descriptors will help teachers tailor their teaching, classroom activities and assessments to create more opportunities for students to practise and use their MTL in specific ways, e.g., show-and-tell, role-play and group discussion. With clearer goals, students will also be more motivated to progress from one proficiency level to the next.

33. Furthermore, the use of everyday situations and contexts, current affairs and contemporary themes as well as authentic materials (e.g., reports, news articles) will provide real-world context for classroom learning. This will allow students to see the relevance of MTL to their daily lives, and enable students to achieve practical language competence. MOE will develop teaching resources to support teachers.

iii) Strengthening Interaction Skills

34. There should be more language activities and tasks in class for students to apply and develop their communication skills. In real-life communication, much of language use is for interaction, requiring a combination of receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing). Many real-life situations require spontaneous two-way interaction (e.g., listening and responding orally during a conversation or reading and responding in writing to an email). Hence, our curriculum will emphasise spoken interaction and written interaction skills in addition to the four basic skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing.

iv) Greater Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

35. We should leverage on our students' familiarity with and regular use of ICT for MTL learning. The 2010 survey found that across all three MTLs, students were ICT-savvy and interested in using ICT to learn MTL. ICT opens up new possibilities such as the use of interactive content, assignment of individualised tasks and the provision of different resources and activities to suit the different needs of students. Furthermore, ICT can provide individualised feedback and help the teacher to reach out to all students.

36. To support teachers, a new resource package that promotes interaction skills and greater use of ICT will be produced. There will also be a web-based MTL oracy portal to strengthen oracy learning. MOE will rescope the curriculum to create time for interactive language use at all levels[3]. We

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[3] For P1-P2, there is adequate lesson time to incorporate the new package. For P3-P4, curriculum content will be reduced by 10% to accommodate the new package. At P5 and P6, school-based modules (10-15% of curriculum time) will make way for use of the package. For

will encourage language use in its various forms: inter-personal communication, listening and reading for comprehension, and presenting in spoken and written forms, whilst continuing to expose students to culture and values through the language.

37.   As computer-based writing is fast becoming the norm in the workplace and for social communications, it should be introduced to students alongside script-writing at an appropriate stage. Script-writing is a core skill that will continue to be taught, as it lays the foundation for the learning of MTL. It has been found that script writing by hand helps strengthen memory retention and word recognition[4]. There should thus be a judicious balance between the use of both methods for more effective learning outcomes.

v) Assessments and Exams that Test for Proficiency

38.   Resulting from the previous MTL reviews in 2004-5, new examination formats have been implemented at the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), O-, N- and A-Levels to reduce rote memorisation, include more contextualised questions, and increase emphasis on oracy and language application.

39.   In the Committee's focus group discussions, teachers and parents were of the view that while MTL pedagogy and curriculum content have become more aligned to the promotion of language proficiency, some assessment formats seemed to have less practical relevance. This underscores the need for better alignment between curriculum and assessment.

40.   The Committee is of the view that school-based assessments and national examinations should be aligned to the overall goal of nurturing active learners and proficient users of MTL. For instance, as we want our students to learn to use MTL for interactive communication, both school-based and national examinations in future will include items which test spoken interaction and written interaction skills.

41.   Examination formats will change, with the addition of new item types (e.g., to test interaction skills), modification of item type (e.g., use of video stimuli instead of line drawings for oral examinations) and the reduction of certain existing items, in order to maintain the current overall difficulty level.

    a.   As it is important for our Higher MTL (HMTL) students to have good oral communication skills, oral assessment will be included as part of the O-Level HMTL examination from 2016. This will

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secondary and JC levels, the new MTL syllabuses will be designed to incorporate interaction skills within the curriculum.

[4] Study by Longcamp et al. 2008. "Learning through Hand or Typewriting Influences Visual Recognition of New Graphic Shapes: Behavioural and Functional Imaging Evidence," Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience 20:5 pp.802-815.

align testing with curriculum, and motivate students to develop strong oral proficiency.

b.   Video clips, instead of line drawings, will be used as stimuli for oral examinations. The video stimuli will provide more engaging and realistic contexts for conversation[5] between students and examiners.

c.   New types of test items on interaction skills will be introduced. MOE will extend the use of dictionaries and e-dictionaries to new written interaction items (e.g., writing an email response to a stimulus) in examinations, in addition to essay writing[6].

d.   In line with the teaching of computer-based writing, computer-based writing for MTL will be introduced in selected sections of secondary and JC level examinations (e.g., written interaction items), starting with groups which have smaller candidature. Once assured of the technical and examination administration aspects, this can be progressively expanded to other groups over time. (Script writing remains an integral part of language learning, especially at primary levels as it helps to strengthen word recognition and spelling. Also, keyboarding skills may not be well-developed among all primary students. Hence, the Committee does not recommend for computer-based writing to be tested at the PSLE.)

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[5] The oral examination tests students' ability to express themselves orally and hence the video clip is meant as a stimulus. Comprehension of details in the video clip will not be tested.
[6] Dictionaries are currently allowed for use in essay writing in the O-/N-/A-Level MTL examinations and the PSLE. E-dictionaries have been allowed since 2007.

42.   The timeline for the changes in national examination formats are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Timeline for Proposed Changes in Examination Formats

Changes in Examination Format	MTL 'B'		MTL/H1 MTL			A-Level H2 MTLL	O- Level Higher MTL
	A-Level	O-Level	A-Level	O- & N-Level	PSLE		
Video stimuli for oral examinations	2014	2014	2015	2016	2017	N.A. *	2016 (Introduce oral exam)
New items testing interaction skills *(Allow dictionary & e-dictionary for written interaction tasks)*	2014	2014	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016
Keyboard input for selected sections of exams	2013	2014	T.B.C	T.B.C	N.A.	2015	T.B.C

* H2 Mother Tongue Language and Literature (MTLL) is a content subject. It includes a literature component. There is no oral component in this examination

T.B.C: To be confirmed, pending further studies.

43.   MOE and SEAB will work together closely to ensure smooth implementation and to give adequate lead time for students and teachers to become familiar with the new curriculum and assessment methods, and make adjustments to classroom teaching.

44.   Schools will be given time to adopt the new assessment modes in classrooms and school-based examinations. School-based assessments will need to incorporate more elements that test language use in familiar and authentic contexts, and that test interaction skills. Schools will need to use video clips as stimuli for oral examinations, instead of the line drawings currently used. Secondary schools and JCs will need to include computer-based writing modules in assessments. Schools will communicate with parents and inform them of the changes before they take effect.

B) Enhancing Different Provisions for Learners of Different Abilities

45.   There is strategic value in nurturing a larger pool of Singaporeans who are effectively bilingual with a strong proficiency in both EL and their MTL, and who possess a deep understanding of the related cultures. These individuals add to the cultural ballast and vibrancy of Singapore and can harness their language and cultural skills to establish connections with the region.

46.   For students with the ability and interest to study Higher MTL (HMTL), MOE will help them develop higher levels of language proficiency and cultural knowledge. MOE will build on enhancements made in past reviews which have resulted in a larger proportion of O-Level students offering HMTL. While the intent to create an enriched environment for our HMTL students is the same across all three MTL groups, the specific delivery model will not be the same due to differences in circumstances and student numbers.

47.   At the same time, we need to help those who face difficulties in their MTL learning to persevere in their efforts. There will be enhancements to the customised approach at the primary level to take into account different starting points. At the secondary level, a different curriculum is available for those who face greater difficulties learning MTL in MTL. The MTL 'B' curriculum, with an emphasis on oracy skills, helps learners to communicate with confidence in their MTL. This will sustain their interest in MTL, and not discourage them. The foundation will also stand them in good stead later in life when they need to deepen their MTL learning for personal or career reasons.

Higher Chinese (HCL)

48.   Current provisions for students interested to study HCL include the widespread availability of HCL instruction across schools, the whole-school environment provided by the Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools, the Bicultural Studies Programme (Chinese) [BSP(C)] available in 4 SAP secondary schools[7], and the Chinese Language Elective Programme (CLEP) available in 5 JCs/schools[8].

49.   Further enhancements for the study of HCL will be made:

a.   Nan Chiau High School will be the 11th SAP secondary school from 2012, providing an enriched learning environment for students to develop fluency in CL and achieve a deeper understanding of Chinese history and culture;

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[7] The BSP(C) is a 4-year programme from Sec 3 to JC 2, to groom highly proficient bilingual and bicultural Singaporeans with a confident and intuitive understanding of history, culture and contemporary developments in China. The 4 schools offering it are: Dunman High School, Hwa Chong Institution, Nanyang Girls' High School and River Valley High School.

[8] CLEP is offered in Hwa Chong, Dunman High, River Valley High, Temasek JC, and Jurong JC to groom academically-able CL students to become effectively bilingual and nurture literary talents through a deeper appreciation of their MTL and literature.

b. MOE will enhance the CLEP by providing additional funding for overseas immersion programmes and organising a series of CLEP lectures;

c. MOE will allow an additional insertion point at JC 1 in BSP(C) schools to increase access to the BSP(C); and

d. MOE will introduce a new A-Level subject – Chinese Linguistics and Translation, at the H2 level in selected schools from 2015[9]. This subject has practical value, and will help groom future bilingual professionals with mastery in both EL and MTL. The focus on linguistics will also nurture students with an appreciation of the construct of the Chinese language. Some of these students could become future CL teachers.

Higher Malay (HML)

50. Over the past few years, MOE has expanded the number of HML centres to make HML instruction more accessible. Two autonomous schools[10] host the Elective Programme in Malay Language for Secondary Schools (EMAS). EMAS brings together a critical mass of HML students and provides them with an enriched environment to develop fluency in ML and a deeper understanding of Malay language and culture. It also aims to encourage them to eventually become cultural transmitters in areas such as teaching, journalism and the arts. At the JC level, two JCs offer the Malay Language Elective Programme (MLEP)[11].

51. Further enhancements for the study of HML will be made:

a. Anderson Secondary School will be the 3rd school to host EMAS;

b. MOE will enhance the MLEP by providing additional funding for overseas immersion and organising a series of MLEP lectures;

c. Pioneer JC will be the third MLEP centre; and

d. MOE will increase the number of MLEP scholarships.

Higher Tamil (HTL)

52. Since 2004, MOE has also expanded the number of HTL centres, and designated the Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre (UPTLC) as the

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[9] MOE will explore the feasibility of offering equivalent subjects for ML and TL at a later stage.
[10] Bukit Panjang Government High School and Tanjong Katong Secondary School.
[11] MLEP is offered at Innova JC and Tampines JC to groom academically able ML students to become effectively bilingual and nurture literary talents through a deeper appreciation of their ML and literature.

national TL resource centre. UPTLC promotes the teaching and learning of HTL, and makes a wider range of enrichment activities accessible to students interested in Tamil language and culture. The centralised provision of enrichment programmes allows HTL students from different schools to congregate at UPTLC to create the critical mass necessary for delivering quality programmes.

53.   Further enhancements for the study of HTL will be made:

a.   UPTLC will anchor a new National Elective Tamil Language Programme (NETP) catering to secondary school and JC students, to enrich their learning of Tamil language, literature and culture; and

b.   MOE will introduce a new scholarship scheme for deserving NETP students at the JC level.

54.   The measures to provide more opportunities for HMTL students to attain higher levels of language proficiency are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Enhancement and Expansion of MTL Special Programmes

	CL	ML	TL
Sec	- Establish an 11th SAP school at Nan Chiau High School from 2012[12]	- Establish a 3rd EMAS centre at Anderson Secondary School from 2012	- Establish a National Elective Tamil Language Programme (NETP) at the UPTLC from 2012 for secondary school and JC students - Award scholarships to deserving NETP students at JC level from 2012
JC	- Provide an additional insertion point for the Bicultural Studies Programme (Chinese) [BSP(C)] at JC 1 from 2012 - Introduce a new subject in Chinese Linguistics and Translation at the H2 level in selected JCs from 2015 - Enhance CLEP by providing additional funding for overseas immersion and organising a series of CLEP lectures	- Establish a 3rd Malay Language Elective Programme (MLEP) centre at Pioneer JC from 2012 - Increase the number of scholarships for MLEP from 2012 - Enhance MLEP by providing additional funding for overseas immersion and organising a series of MLEP lectures	

More Engaging Teaching for MTL 'B' Students

55.   For students who are weaker in MTL, we aim to equip them with functional competency in oral communications. MOE has made MTL 'B' more accessible to students who are unable to cope with the demand of standard MTL. These include having more MTL 'B' centres and relaxing the eligibility criteria for A-Level MTL 'B'.

56.   MTL 'B' will place greater emphasis on communication, especially in developing listening, speaking and spoken interaction skills. More activity-based approaches (including use of ICT, role play and group discussions) and authentic materials (e.g., news articles, advertisements and ICT-based media) will be used to make lessons more engaging and help students to appreciate MTLs as living languages.

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[12] MOE announced in Nov 2010 that Nan Chiau High School will be a SAP school from 2012.

C) Creating an Environment Conducive to MTL Usage and Learning

57.   Given the changing language environment, the Committee recognises that the usage of MTL beyond class time is critical to making MTL a living language for our students. Together, schools, parents and community partners can play key roles in providing students with opportunities to be immersed in an environment conducive to the usage and learning of MTL.

58.   Schools will have structured time and programmes to create an environment that encourages students to use MTL and appreciate the culture associated with the language. This will enhance the learning experience for students and fuel their interest in MTL.

59.   The Committee makes the following recommendations for schools to achieve this goal:

   a.   Organise school-based CL, ML and TL Fortnights annually, in collaboration with community organisations and key stakeholders including parents and alumni. During the MTL Fortnights, a range of outside-class MTL activities will be provided to enable students to learn and use MTL in novel and exciting ways. The MTL Fortnights should bring MTL learning into the community and the community into the school, to kindle students' interest to use MTL;

   b.   Organise Mother Tongue language and cultural camps to immerse students in an environment that encourages them to learn and use the language;

   c.   Organise structured reading programmes that provide age-appropriate readers and reading corners. Schools should also find creative ways to cultivate in students the habit of reading MTL books; and

   d.   Engage parents to support students in MTL learning (e.g., via sharing platforms or online resources).

60.   Funding will be provided for schools to implement the MTL Fortnights and enrichment programmes.

61.   Arising from the 2004-5 MTL reviews, the Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning (CPCLL), Malay Language Learning Promotion Committee (MLLPC), and Tamil Language Learning Promotion Committee (TLLPC) were formed to rally the support of community organisations to promote the use of MTL beyond schools. Good progress has been made by these committees and students have benefited from the variety of programmes and expertise provided by the community groups.

62.   Going forward, MOE and schools can do even more to tap on these community resources to support the MTL Fortnights and other programmes.

63.   MOE will increase funding for the three MTL Promotion Committees to strengthen their partnerships with schools, the community and the media and organise more programmes to support the learning and use of MTL. Specifically, the Promotion Committees will:

      a.   Support schools in organising activities for the CL/ML/TL Fortnights (e.g., provide resource persons and facilitate language and cultural enrichment activities);

      b.   Organise a variety of language and cultural enrichment activities (e.g., drama workshops, cultural camps, performing arts events, immersion programmes) in collaboration with schools;

      c.   Develop a wide range of age-appropriate reading materials to promote reading, and develop ICT-based resources (e.g., pod-casts or vod-casts) to support MTL learning;

      d.   Explore collaboration with the media to broadcast interesting and meaningful radio and television programmes for children; and

      e.   Organise MTL events for the family, and seminars for parents to learn effective strategies to support their children's MTL learning.[13]

64.   In total, MOE will make available up to $45 million for schools and the MTL Promotion Committees over the next five years to support their efforts in working with parents and the community to create opportunities for the learning and use of MTL.

65.   In addition, MOE will also work with the National Library Board (NLB) to promote reading for children across community libraries. Furthermore, we will review the curriculum guidelines for kindergartens and childcare centres for alignment with the direction of the Committee's recommendations (e.g., help children build good oracy foundations through songs, rhymes and games).

66.   Beyond the efforts of schools and community groups, parents can play a key role in creating an environment for their children to learn MTL. Early exposure to spoken MTL and the use of MTL at home and with relatives provide children with stronger foundations for formal learning in school. Parents are encouraged to participate in the schools' MTL fortnights where possible, and to leverage on the various programmes organised by public libraries and the community groups.

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[13] The 2010 survey found that the majority of parents, regardless of home language background, acknowledge the importance of learning MTL and are supportive of their children's MTL learning. The three Committees should leverage on the high level of parents' support to enhance MTL learning.

D) Deploying and Developing More MTL Teachers

67.   The Committee's recommendations will require more MTL teachers. Good teachers are key to the delivery of quality teaching and learning in the classroom. While we have a dedicated corps of MTL teachers in Singapore, more are needed. We will step up recruitment efforts and groom more potential MTL teachers.

68.   An additional 500 MTL teachers will be deployed to schools by 2015[14]. The additional teachers will help to support the implementation of the MTL Review Committee's recommendations.

69.   We will strengthen teacher training and in-service professional development to enable our MTL teachers to meet the learning needs of students with different MTL abilities and home language environments.

Growing the Pool of Potential MTL Teachers

70.   The various initiatives to develop students with the ability and interest to pursue MTL at a higher level will help to grow and strengthen the pool of students who could become future MTL teachers. MOE will also encourage more students to offer A-Level H2 and H3 Mother Tongue Language and Literature (MTLL) and continue to offer more teaching scholarships and awards.

Broadening Recruitment Pathways

71.   Currently, high performing A-Level students with good grades in H2 or H3 Mother Tongue Language and Literature and who demonstrate an interest in MTL teaching may be offered the Overseas Teaching Scholarship (Specialist). To broaden the potential catchment of MTL teachers, MOE will also open applications to candidates with good O-Level HMTL or A-Level H1 MTL results and have the aptitude and interest to be MTL teachers.

Strengthening Pre-Service and In-Service Training

72.   Pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development will be further enhanced to support the implementation of the Committee's recommendations, including different pedagogical methods required to deliver customised approaches at the primary level, and more proficiency-oriented teaching and assessment across the board.

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[14] Some of the increase will be part of MOE's overall plan to add 3,000 more teachers to the teaching force by 2015.

73.   MOE will continue to work closely with the National Institute of Education (NIE), the Singapore Centre for Chinese Language, the Malay Language Centre of Singapore and the UPTLC[15] to strengthen professional development for MTL teachers.

74.   A summary of the Committee's recommendations and the intended implementation timeline is attached at <u>Annex C</u>.

CONCLUSION

75.   The Committee affirms the importance of bilingualism as a cornerstone of our education policy. To maintain our bilingual policy and respond to the changing home language environments, it is necessary to refresh and update our approach to the teaching and learning of MTL from time to time.

76.   The Committee sees the objectives of MTL education for our children as helping our young to acquire the necessary proficiencies to communicate, to appreciate our culture, and to establish connections with other communities in Asia and beyond. We aim to develop proficient language users who can communicate effectively using the language in real-life contexts and in various forms - inter-personal communication, listening and reading for comprehension, presenting in spoken and written forms. Students will continue to be exposed to culture and values through MTL.

77.   The Committee acknowledges the fine work done by our corps of dedicated MTL teachers. It recognises that its recommendations build on the good work of previous reviews. In the areas of teaching and learning, the Committee recommends enhancements to the customised approach for different groups of students, taking cognisance of their different starting points. Clearer descriptors of the desired language proficiencies at key stages will be used to guide teaching, learning and assessment. There will be updates and refreshing of the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment for MTL, all with the aim of making MTL a living language, not just an examinable subject.

78.   More MTL teachers will be provided, and training will equip our MTL teachers to implement the new initiatives. More pathways will be opened for individuals strong in their MTL and interested in becoming teachers to take up teaching of MTL as a career.

79.   Schools, homes and the wider community need to work in concert, to create opportunities for students to be immersed in an environment conducive to MTL learning. To this end, MOE will enhance its support for the good work

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[15] In line with the Committee's recommendations on curriculum, pedagogy and assessments, more structured training and support will be provided in areas such as: the explicit teaching of language skills, differentiated and structured pedagogical approaches, designing of ICT-integrated lessons and authentic assessments.

of the community groups, working hand-in-hand with schools. Parents can help by exposing their children to MTL regularly and from their early years.

80.   Singapore's distinctiveness and competitive edge will continue to be built on our people's proficiency in English and their Mother Tongue Languages. The recommendations in this report represent another step in the continuous innovation required to keep our Mother Tongue Language education relevant for our nation and citizens. It is only with this mindset of continuous improvement and innovation that we can ensure we keep this precious asset for future generations of Singaporeans.

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Annex A   Composition and Terms of Reference of the Mother Tongue
             Languages Review Committees

Annex B   Draft Proficiency Descriptors for Primary 6 and
             Secondary 4 MTL

Annex C   Table of Recommendations and Implementation Timeframe

COMPOSITION OF MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGE REVIEW COMMITTEE (MTLRC)

Chairperson:
Ms Ho Peng
Director-General of Education

Alternate Chairperson:
Ms Low Khah Gek
Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Members:

Ms Tan Lay Choo
Chief Executive, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board

Ms Evelyn Khoo (until September 2010)
Director, Planning Division

Dr Cheong Wei Yang (w.e.f. October 2010)
Director, Planning Division

Dr Cheah Horn Mun
Director, Educational Technology Division

Mr Manogaran Suppiah
Executive Director, Academy of Singapore Teachers

Assoc Prof Goh Yeng Seng
Head, Asian Languages and Cultures, National Institute of Education

Mr Sng Chern Wei
Deputy Director, Schools Division

Mr Zainal B Sapari
Superintendent, Schools Division

Dr Elizabeth Pang
Programme Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Secretariat:
Mr Yue Lip Sin (Head)
Deputy Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Ms Melissa Khoo (Head) (until September 2010)
Deputy Director, Planning Division

Mr Lim Tze Jiat (w.e.f. October 2010)
Deputy Director, Planning Division

Ms Wang Yujing (Head w.e.f. October 2010)
Assistant Director, Planning Division

Mr Mohamed Noh Daipi
Assistant Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mr Tajudin Jaffar
Head, Malay Language, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mr Venugobal M Thangaraju
Head, Tamil Language, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mr Tan Ken Jin
Planning Officer

Mr Lan Mingjun
Planning Officer

Mr Eugene Lin
Planning Officer

Miss Ong Xu Ying Aysel
Curriculum Planning Officer (CL)

Mr N Subramaniam
Curriculum Planning Officer (TL)

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Mrs Susan Wee
Assistant Director, Planning Division

Mdm Ng Huey Bian
Research and Evaluation Officer

Miss Elaine Chua
Research and Evaluation Officer

Mr Chee Weihui (until August 2010)
Research and Evaluation Officer

COMPOSITION OF CHINESE LANGUAGE REVIEW COMMITTEE (CLRC)

Chairperson:
Ms Ho Peng
Director-General of Education

Co-Chairperson:
Ms Low Khah Gek
Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Members:

Ms Tan Lay Choo
Chief Executive, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board

Ms Evelyn Khoo (until September 2010)
Director, Planning Division

Dr Cheong Wei Yang (w.e.f. October 2010)
Director, Planning Division

Dr Cheah Horn Mun
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Assoc Prof Goh Yeng Seng
Head, Asian Languages and Cultures, National Institute of Education

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Programme Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Dr Tan Chee Lay
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Principal, Anglo-Chinese School (Barker Rd)

Dr Foo Suan Fong
Principal, Dunman High School

Mrs Lee Hui Feng
Principal, Nanyang Primary School

Miss Antonia Teng Kit Wah
Principal, St Gabriel's Primary School

Mr Tan Yee Kan
Principal, Yishun Town Secondary School

Mr Low Chun Meng
Vice-Principal, National Junior College (until March 2010)

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Deputy Director, Planning Division

Mr Lim Tze Jiat (w.e.f. October 2010)
Deputy Director, Planning Division

Ms Wang Yujing (Head w.e.f. October 2010)
Assistant Director, Planning Division

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Mr Lan Mingjun
Planning Officer

Mr Eugene Lin
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Miss Cai Junjun
Curriculum Planning Officer (CL)

Miss Ong Xu Ying Aysel
Curriculum Planning Officer (CL)

Miss Ong Hui Chee
Curriculum Planning Officer (CL)

Miss Lee Wei Hui
Curriculum Planning Officer (CL)

Mr Lim Heng Lee
Special Project Officer, Schools Division

Mrs Pang Lai San
Head of Department/MTL, Temasek Secondary School

Mr Ng Teo Heng
Teacher, East Spring Secondary School

COMPOSITION OF MALAY LANGUAGE REVIEW COMMITTEE (MLRC)

Chairperson:
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Director-General of Education

Co-Chairperson:
Ms Low Khah Gek
Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Members:

Asst Prof Mukhlis Abu Bakar
Assistant Professor, Asian Languages and Cultures, National Institute of Education

Mr Toh Poh Guan
Director, Assessment and Research, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board

Mr Yue Lip Sin
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Mr Zainal B Sapari
Superintendent, Schools Division

Mrs Marian Chia Siew Yong
Principal, Innova Junior College

Mr Abdul Harris B Sumardi
Principal, Juying Secondary School

Miss Azizah Ismaun
Principal, Jingshan Primary School

Mdm Aini Ma'arof
Principal, Tanglin Secondary School

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Mr Mohd Khir Mohd Sapuan
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Subject Head, Bukit Panjang Government High School

Mr Mashor Bin Arshad
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Head, Malay Language, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mdm Pairah Satariman (Head)
Head, Malay Language, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mdm Murni Osman (until December 2010)
Curriculum Planning Officer (ML)

Miss Siti Fazila Ahmad
Curriculum Planning Officer (ML)

Mdm Maswati Abdul Ghani
Curriculum Planning Officer (ML)

Ms Dorothy Ong (until December 2010)
Curriculum Planning Officer (EL)

Mr New Wei Siang (until May 2010)
Planning Officer

Ms Marlini Fonseka
Planning Officer

COMPOSITION OF TAMIL LANGUAGE REVIEW COMMITTEE (TLRC)

Chairperson:
Ms Ho Peng
Director-General of Education

Co-Chairperson:
Ms Low Khah Gek
Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Members:

Mr Manogaran Suppiah
Executive Director, Academy of Singapore Teachers

Assoc Prof Chitra Sankaran
Department of English Language & Literature, National University of Singapore

Mr Toh Poh Guan
Director, Assessment and Research, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board

Mr Yue Lip Sin
Deputy Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division

Mr Krishnan Aravinthan
Principal, Bedok South Secondary School

Ms Geetha Doraisamy
Principal, Blangah Rise Primary School

Mdm Elsie Jeremiah
Principal, Sembawang Secondary School

Mdm Vasundhara Reddy
Vice-Principal, CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace

Mr Venugobal M Thangaraju
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Educational Technology Officer

Mrs Sumanthi Siva Kumar (w.e.f. July 2010)
Educational Technology Officer

Secretariat:
Mdm Suppulachemy Singaram (Head)
Curriculum Specialist (TL)

Mr N Subramaniam (Head)
Curriculum Planning Officer (TL)

Mdm Magespari Ammayappan
Curriculum Planning Officer (TL)

Mdm Murugeswathy Ramasamy
Curriculum Planning Officer (TL)

Mrs Kokilavani Vassou
Curriculum Planning Officer (TL)

Mrs Varalackshmi Durai
Curriculum Planning Officer (EL)

Mr New Wei Siang (until May 2010)
Planning Officer

Ms Marlini Fonseka
Planning Officer

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGES REVIEW COMMITTEE (MTLRC)

1.   Articulate the philosophy and aims underlying the teaching of MTL to different groups of learners;

2.   Identify the implications of longer-term trends and developments in the language environment in Singapore for the teaching and learning of MTL;

3.   Survey best practices in the teaching, learning and assessment of MTL;

4.   Recommend the appropriate approach to customise MTL learning for learners of different MTL abilities;

5.   Review the use of ICT in the teaching, learning and assessment of MTL;

6.   Recommend appropriate enhancements to the teaching and learning of MTL. Specifically, the Committee should:

   a.   Define the learning outcomes for the different groups of MTL learners;

   b.   Recommend effective pedagogies to engage the interest and maximise learning of students across the spectrum of MTL ability;

   c.   Recommend appropriate assessment modes and formats for the various target groups, including the greater use of computer-aided assessment; and

   d.   Recommend measures to support our most capable MTL learners in achieving a higher level of proficiency.

Draft Proficiency Descriptors for Primary 6 and Secondary 4 MTL

Levels	Primary 6 Standard MTL	Secondary 4 O-Level MTL
Listening	Can understand main points in daily conversations and media programmes on topics familiar to students.	Can make inference from daily conversations, talks, reports and media programmes on common everyday topics.
Reading	Can understand main points from texts on topics familiar to students. Can understand a range of text types such as student newspapers, simple personal letters, newsletters, brochures, notices, advertisements and email messages.	Can make inference from texts on common everyday topics. Can understand a range of text types and longer texts from various sources such as magazines, newspaper and prose passages.
Speaking	Can describe a situation or share an opinion on topics familiar to students, using appropriate vocabulary and common sentence patterns. Pronunciation and intonation are accurate.	Can clearly describe a situation, recount details of an event or share an opinion on common everyday topics with a reasonable degree of fluency and using a suitable range of vocabulary and different sentence patterns. The opinion is supported with appropriate examples. Pronunciation is clear and accurate; sentence intonation is natural.
Writing	Can use appropriate vocabulary and common sentence patterns to write a simple narrative that include feelings and thoughts.	Can use a suitable range of vocabulary and different types of sentence patterns to write an essay to describe experiences and feelings or one that expresses an opinion on a common everyday topic.
Spoken Interaction	Can engage in conversations on topics familiar to students, asking for clarifications when unsure. Can exchange simple ideas with others in discussion.	Can interact with a reasonable degree of fluency on common everyday topics. Can participate in discussion on topics of personal interest, exchanging opinions with others.
Written Interaction	Can communicate through email or simple personal letters, describing events related to familiar contexts and expressing feelings and ideas.	Can communicate through email and blogs, commenting on common everyday topics, using appropriate language and expressions.

TABLE OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME

Key Recommendations	Details	Levels Affected	Year of Implementation						
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ALIGNING TEACHING AND TESTING TO ACHIEVE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY									
Customised Curriculum Catering to Different Home Language Backgrounds	Research to develop corpus of daily vocabulary and sentence structures.	-	X						
	Training on systematic teaching of oral vocabulary and sentence patterns, especially for Primary students who need more support in MTL learning.	All	X						
	Enhance resource support (e.g., use of songs and rhymes, multimedia resources and supplementary readers) to cater to different learner profiles.	All	X						
Using Proficiency Descriptors to Motivate Learning Progress	Develop and validate proficiency descriptors at key stages to explicitly articulate focus and levels of attainment for the respective language skills	All	Development and Validation / Refinement						
	Develop resources to support teachers' effective use of proficiency descriptors to guide teaching and learning	All		X	X	X			
	Implement new instructional materials and learning resources based on proficiency descriptors	All		Develop syllabus and instructional materials		Proto -type	P1	P2	P3

Key: X = Year of implementation

Key Recommendations	Details	Levels Affected	Year of Implementation						
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ALIGNING TEACHING AND TESTING TO ACHIEVE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY									
Strengthening Interaction Skills	Teacher training to strengthen the teaching of interaction skills	All	X						
Greater use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	Resource package (including ICT-based resources) to support learning of interaction skills.	All		P1-2 S1-2 JC	P3-4 S3	P5-6 S4			
	Web-based oracy portal to strengthen oracy learning	P4- JC2		P4 S1	P5 S2-3	P6 S4			
Aligning assessment and examinations to achieve language proficiency	Introduce test items on interaction skills (i.e., spoken and written interaction) and allow use of dictionaries or e-dictionaries for written interaction tasks (e.g., email response)	All				O- & A-Level MTL 'B'	A-Level H1 MTL	O- & N-Level MTL	PSLE MTL
	Introduce oral examination in O-Level Higher MTL	Sec						O-Level HMTL	
	Use video clips as stimuli in oral examinations	All				O- & A-Level MTL 'B'	A-Level H1 MTL	N-/O-Level MTL and O-level HMTL	PSLE MTL
	Use computer-based writing in selected sections of examinations (starting with MTL 'B' and then progressively extending it to other levels)	Secondary and JC			A-Level MTL 'B'	O-Level MTL 'B'	A-Level H2 MTLL		

C - 2

Key Recommendations	Details	Levels Affected	Year of Implementation						
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
MORE SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS									
HCL	Establish 11th Special Assistance Programme (SAP) school	Secondary		X					
	Enhance Chinese Language Elective Programme (CLEP) with lecture series and provide additional funding for immersion	JC	X						
	Introduce additional insertion point for Bicultural Study Programme (Chinese) [BSP(C)] at JC 1	JC		X					
	Introduce H2 Chinese Linguistics and Translation in selected schools	JC					X		
HML	Establish a 3rd Elective Programme in Malay Language for Secondary Schools (EMAS) centre	Secondary		X					
	Establish a 3rd Malay Language Elective Programme (MLEP) centre	JC		X					
	Increase number of MLEP scholarships	JC		X					
	Enhance MLEP programme with lecture series and provide additional funding for immersion	JC	X						
HTL	Establish National Elective Tamil Language Programme (NETP) for both Secondary and JC levels at Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre	Secondary/ JC		X					
	Offer scholarships to deserving NETP students at the JC level	JC		X					

Key Recommendations	Details	Levels Affected	Year of Implementation						
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
MORE SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF LEARNERS									
MTL 'B'	Enhance O-Level MTL 'B' curriculum	Secondary	X						
	Enhance A-Level MTL 'B' curriculum with core and elective modules	JC		X					
CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO MTL USE AND LEARNING									
MTL Enrichment Programmes for Students	Schools will organise MTL Fortnights, cultural camps and structured reading programmes to enrich learning	All	X						
MTL Promotion Committees	Collaborate with schools to support MTL Fortnight and enrichment programmes.	All	X						
	Organise MTL events to promote learning and use of MTL beyond schools (e.g., family events)	-		X					
	Explore with media industries to broadcast more interesting MTL programmes for children	-		X					
Funding Support	Increase funding support to Language Promotion Committees to promote learning and use of MTL	All	X						
Pre-Schools	Review curriculum guidelines to align pre-school MTL learning to new directions	Pre-School		X					

Key Recommendations	Details	Levels Affected	Year of Implementation						
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
DEPLOYING AND DEVELOPING MORE MTL TEACHERS									
Increase recruitment	Recruit additional 500 MTL teachers over next 5 years	-	X						
Grow pool of potential MTL teachers	Overseas Teaching Scholarship (Specialist) award to students with good O-Level HMTL or A-Level H1 MTL results	JC		X					
Enhance pre-service and in-service training	Leverage on partnerships with NIE, Singapore Centre for Chinese Language, Malay Language Centre of Singapore and Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre to strengthen professional development of MTL teachers	All	X						

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