



# **Executive Summary**

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## Report of the English Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review



## Introduction

1. The English Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Committee (ELCPRC) was set up in September 2005 to undertake a comprehensive review of the teaching and learning of the English Language (EL) in Singapore schools. The terms of reference of the Committee include reviewing syllabus structure and content, pedagogical approaches, instructional materials, assessment, and teacher training and development. The Committee further examined ways in which the community and external partners could be involved to play a supporting role in the teaching and learning of English in school.

2. In its review, the Committee considered the findings of research on the teaching and learning of EL in Singapore. It also consulted several stakeholders. Thirty focus group discussions and dialogue sessions were held with students, teachers, parents, principals, employers and representatives from kindergartens, post-secondary institutions and universities. Feedback received through our public consultation channel was considered in the Committee's recommendations. This was complemented by a survey of about 3600 students and an on-line survey of over 1000 EL teachers. The Committee also undertook study trips to Hong Kong SAR, India and New Zealand to have a better understanding of their language policies, English curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices.

3. The review has been completed and its main findings are presented in this report. Our recommendations are focused on ensuring a strong foundation for all, while stretching the most able students and those with a talent in the language. They encompass four key areas:

- a. A Curriculum for the Singapore Context
- b. Teacher Recruitment, Training and Development
- c. Additional Support for Schools
- d. Community Partnerships and Initiatives

## BACKGROUND

4. Bilingualism is and will remain a cornerstone of our education system. The ability to communicate well in both English and Mother Tongue will remain a key area of focus for us. Our students must have a good grounding in both their Mother Tongue Languages and the English Language. Knowing our Mother Tongue Language enables us to preserve our values and gives us our identity as an Asian society. A command of the Mother Tongue will further enable the next generation to ride the surging tide of economic growth in Asia, the fastest expanding region in the world.

5. Since independence, English has played a key role in nation-building. As a *lingua franca*, it is the common language that binds the different ethnic groups together. It is also the language of business and diplomacy, of science and technology and will remain so in the foreseeable future.

6. While English is the medium of instruction in all our schools and is used widely outside the school, we cannot be complacent about current standards in the language. Language and communication demands have increased considerably with Singapore's growth as an open, knowledge-based economy and the development of new service industries. At the same time, many in non-English speaking countries are learning English and at a younger age than before. Singapore has to keep a high level of proficiency in English and its distinct edge as a bilingual society if it is to maintain its relevance and advantage in an increasingly competitive world.

## PROFILE OF EL LEARNERS

7. Changes to the teaching and learning of EL over the last four decades reflect the changing status of the language. From a colonial language spoken by a small proportion of the population, English became the working language of Singapore and facilitated communication among the different ethnic groups.

8. Over the years, there has been a continuing shift in the profile of students entering our schools, with more students speaking English at home. For instance, in 1996, about 35% of our Primary One (P1) students came from homes where English was the predominant home language compared to 50% of the P1 cohort in 2006.

9. Based on the 2006 Primary One Cohort Data, there are four distinct groups of learners with different predominant home language backgrounds:

- 8% speak EL only;
- 42% speak mostly EL and *some* Mother Tongue or Other Language;
- 37% speak mostly Mother Tongue or Other Language and some EL; and
- 12% hardly or do not use EL.

There are hence two broad groups of EL learners in schools. About half of our Primary One students use EL as the main language at home, while the other half use mainly Mother Tongue or other languages at home.

## STUDENTS' PROFICIENCY IN EL

10. Overall, our students are competent in English, but there is significant scope for improvement in certain areas. Singapore students do fairly well in reading literacy, but standards of oral and written communication are highly uneven.

11. Our students at the primary level have achieved good standards in international comparisons of reading literacy. Data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2001) amongst Primary 4 students showed that on average, our students' reading abilities were above the international average. In particular, Singapore's Primary 4 students who always or almost always spoke the language of the test at home (43% of our P4 students) performed almost as well as students from Sweden (taking the test in Swedish), which was first among the 35 countries that took part. This group of Singapore students (43%) also scored higher than the averages for countries that took the test in English. The study also revealed that 15% of our Primary 4 students had reached the top 10% international benchmark while the top performing country, Sweden, had 20% of its students at this benchmark.

12. However, both student achievement and observations by employers, schools and students themselves suggest that there is a wide range of language abilities and language use among our students. Our survey findings and focus group discussions with students surfaced students' reluctance to use Standard English to communicate with their peers. It was further observed that usage of non-

Standard English was often perceived as 'cool' among peer groups. While the most proficient students showed little difficulty in switching to Standard English, the same could not be said for the rest.

13. Focus group discussions with employers revealed that Singaporean employees in frontline positions were not always able to communicate to the standards expected in their jobs. Some employers also felt that there had been a decline in oral fluency and writing skills, even among those in the professions. While the top end of graduates in management track positions had good standards of spoken and written English, they were sometimes unable to communicate with impact.

14. The wide range of language proficiencies among our students is in many ways a result of our success in mass education and bilingual education in Singapore. In the early years, few spoke English, and they spoke the language fairly well. Now, all students speak English but it is spoken with widely varying standards. It can be spoken better, even among the over 20% of students who go on to university.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR EL PROFICIENCY**

15. It is desirable for all to achieve in EL to the best of their ability. Our target is to ensure that every student is equipped with the English language competency and skills needed for learning, for work and for life in a global economy. Driven by the need to sustain competitiveness, a higher level of EL competence amongst young Singaporeans will be required in future, as employment patterns continue to shift towards the service industries. We will work towards the following desired outcomes:

- Our students should be comfortable using English to express themselves and enjoy learning the language.
- All should attain foundational skills, particularly in grammar, spelling and basic pronunciation. They should be able to use English comfortably in everyday situations and for functional purposes, such as giving directions, information or instructions and making requests.
- A majority of our students have the potential to develop a good level of competence in the English Language, in both speech and writing. Some in this group who have a flair for the language will find this an advantage in frontline positions, and various service industries.
- A significant number of approximately 20% should acquire a high degree of proficiency in the English Language. They will help Singapore keep its edge in a range of professions, and play an important role in teaching and the media. Their command of English should be on a par with the equivalent group in countries such as the UK, US and Australia. Further, within this group, we can expect a smaller group of Singaporeans to achieve mastery in their command of the language, no different from the best in these English-speaking countries.

Our goal will therefore be to raise the general command of the language among all students, while achieving the best international standards among the most able.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

16. The Committee has recommended an EL curriculum which aims to build a strong foundation in spoken English and grammar, and to enrich language learning through the use of engaging and age-appropriate materials. This will be achieved through a focus on developing oral confidence, grammar knowledge and a love for reading to anchor EL learning throughout the primary school years. At the secondary level and beyond, oral skills, grammar knowledge and literacy skills will be progressively reinforced through systematic skills instruction and exposure to a wide range of content, including literature.

17. At the pre-university level, there will be a new subject for students keen to pursue English Language at an advanced level. There will be both structure and flexibility within the curriculum and a diverse range of learning resources to meet the learning needs of students from different home language backgrounds.

18. To complement the enhanced curriculum, the Committee has also recommended strengthening teacher training and development, improving support for schools and developing partnerships with the community.

### **A CURRICULUM FOR THE SINGAPORE CONTEXT**

#### *Structure with Flexibility – A Blended Approach for Singapore Learners*

19. We have a diverse range of EL learners. There is a need to design a curriculum customised to Singapore's needs, given our unique and complex socio-linguistic environment. This involves adopting not just a first or second language approach, but a principled blend of both. Such a curriculum will focus on both a contextualised approach to EL learning, using rich materials, and structured, systematic and explicit grammar instruction.

20. In the few decades from 1950, there were substantial and lasting changes in how English was taught in the UK. Explicit, discrete teaching of grammar gave way to communicative teaching that emphasised student talk and personal response.<sup>1</sup> Grammar was taught incidentally, as and when the need arose, in the context of students' own work. By the 1980s, the communicative approach had gained widespread acceptance as a language teaching methodology.

21. In Singapore, the principles of communicative language teaching were incorporated into the 1991 EL syllabus and an integrated, thematic and process-based curriculum was introduced. As a result, the formal learning of grammar was given less importance. Given Singapore's unique language learning environment, however, it became apparent that a strong grounding in grammar was important to students' acquisition of English. Hence, when the 2001 EL syllabus was introduced, the explicit teaching of the rules and conventions of English grammar was given particular emphasis.

22. The new EL Syllabus to be implemented in 2009 will build on the strengths of the current 2001 syllabus, particularly its focus on grammar and learning outcomes for the various skills. The systematic learning of grammar will continue to be emphasised in the new curriculum. This will be accompanied by the appropriate use of more holistic methods to contextualise language learning, especially through opportunities to speak English, and extensive reading and writing.

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<sup>1</sup> The Grammar Papers: Perspectives on the teaching of grammar in the national curriculum. (1998). Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, UK.

## **PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

### *Help for Children from Less Advantaged Homes*

23. For children already in pre-schools, MOE is taking a two-pronged approach. The first approach is to teach every child listening and speaking skills, as well as skills leading in to reading. This is already part of the curriculum framework for kindergartens. The second approach looks into providing focused assistance to children who lack adequate home support, especially in EL. MOE is working with selected kindergartens to prototype teaching methods that help build up their confidence in using and speaking up in English.

## **PRIMARY EL CURRICULUM**

### *Building a Strong Foundation in the Primary School Years*

24. To cater to the learning needs of students without prior exposure to EL and those who enter P1 with limited reading exposure, the lower primary curriculum will be strengthened. Strategies for Effective and Engaged Development in English Language (SEED-EL), a programme piloted in the lower primary curriculum in 30 schools this year, will be phased in in all schools by 2009.

25. SEED-EL aims to strengthen oral language, grammar and reading skills as well as promote a positive attitude towards reading in the foundational years through the use of well-established, learner-centred and developmentally appropriate teaching approaches using authentic children's literature. Children in SEED-EL classrooms learn through shared reading and shared experiences. These shared readings and experiences form a common basis for the children to practise using language, in both speech and writing, in the context of what they already know and have experienced. Explicit teaching of grammar, spelling, punctuation and other writing conventions takes place in the context of materials and tasks used in the SEED-EL classrooms. Subsequently, children also work at learning centres (e.g. Listening Centre, Reading Centre and Word Study Centre) where tasks are differentiated so that children learn independently and at their own pace.

26. Pupils who enter P1 with very limited oral language and very weak basic literacy skills will continue to be supported by the Learning Support Programme (LSP). The LSP has been enhanced to focus on developing basic oral language, reading and spelling skills. The enhanced programme, currently piloted in 34 primary schools, will be implemented in all primary schools in 2007.

27. As children progress on to the middle and upper primary years, they will be supported in their oral language development through lessons that are engaging and interactive, using a variety of teaching and learning approaches such as speech and drama, oral presentations and debates to nurture fluent and confident speakers. Reading and writing skills will be taught systematically through the use of rich and engaging materials, including age-appropriate literature and digital resources. Grammatical terms and concepts introduced in the early primary years will be revisited progressively as children learn to read and write more complex texts.

## **SECONDARY EL CURRICULUM**

### *Consolidating Language Learning with Focus on Oral Skills*

28. At the secondary level, students will revisit foundational skills, in particular, grammar and oral skills, and consolidate and extend their learning. The development of language skills is not linear, but recursive in nature. Similar language skills need to be revisited and reinforced at increasing levels of complexity as students progress through the levels. To improve pronunciation, students will be

introduced to pronunciation aids such as the International Phonetic Alphabet and on-line pronunciation software, as part of dictionary skills. Listening and speaking skills will be emphasised by encouraging oral presentations and the use of drama and debates. Building on grammatical concepts learnt in primary school, secondary students will learn more about how grammar works beyond the word and sentence and at the level of paragraphs and whole texts. Students will also be given more exposure to a wide range of text types, including literature, to encourage extensive reading and to stimulate writing.

## **EL AT PRE-UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

### *New English Language Subject at Pre-University*

29. A new subject, English Language, to be offered at H1 and H2 levels, will be developed and introduced at the pre-university level from 2009. This is to encourage students with a liking and flair for EL to pursue their interest. H1 and H2 EL will encompass the critical study of language and communication to deepen students' understanding, use and appreciation of language in all its aspects. This subject will be distinct from the General Paper, Knowledge & Inquiry and Literature. H1 and H2 EL could be offered as a contrasting subject for students majoring in the Sciences, and will be an additional option for those majoring in the Arts, who may offer it in addition to Literature.

### *English Language Elective Programme (ELEP)*

30. To encourage students at the Junior College (JC) level to excel in the language, MOE will introduce the English Language Elective Programme<sup>2</sup> in 1-2 JCs from 2009. Students in the programme will study H1 or H2 EL and will have opportunities to participate in enrichment activities. While students in non-ELEP centres may offer H1 or H2 EL as a subject, the ELEP centres will be given additional resources to consolidate their strengths in EL.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

### *Graded Readers, Rich Resources*

31. Instructional materials with rich content will be used in classroom instruction to bring about more engaging and enjoyable language learning experiences for our students. Age-appropriate literature will be integrated into language learning so that students will develop an appreciation of the language. For all primary and secondary schools, MOE will support the curriculum through materials such as:

- a. Graded readers, including a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts that are rich in literary and factual content, and graded based on reading age norms;
- b. Grammar resource books; and
- c. Digital resources, including voice-recognition software for speech development and online learning resources.

The use of these instructional materials will be piloted in selected schools in 2007-08.

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<sup>2</sup> The other Elective programmes available to schools are the Art Elective Programme, Music Elective Programme, Drama Elective Programme, and Language Elective Programmes offering optional subjects such as Tamil Language, Malay Language, Chinese Language, French, German and Japanese.



## **ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS**

### *Motivating Students and Aligning Assessment with Curriculum*

#### Helping Students Learn through Formative Assessment

32. More will be done to encourage teachers to use assessment for formative purposes, to provide students with feedback that can guide them on how to improve. Teachers will be supported with diagnostic and formative assessment instruments. Knowing where students are at in their language development will help them design lessons and select materials that meet students' learning needs. MOE will co-develop or adopt a series of standardised diagnostic tools so that teachers will have additional information on their students' language development. With this knowledge, they can then better cater to the learning needs of their students.

#### Increased Weighting for Oral Component for 'N(A)' Course and 'O' Levels

33. The current combined weighting for the oral and listening components for PSLE EL (25%), Foundation EL (33%) and Normal Technical (NT) (30%) course is sufficient and no change in weighting is recommended for these examinations. However, to ensure that there is sufficient emphasis on the teaching of spoken English in the secondary curriculum, the Committee recommends an increase of 5% (from 20% to 25%) in the weighting for EL for the Normal (Academic) course and 'O' levels.<sup>3</sup> This would be in alignment with the increased focus on oracy in the new EL curriculum.

#### Combining Listening and Oral Communication for FEL and EL Syllabus (T)

34. Currently, listening is assessed separately from oral communication at PSLE EL, Foundation EL and EL Syllabus T (Normal Technical) examinations. There is no separate listening component for GCE 'N' and 'O' level EL examinations. The Committee recommends that listening and speaking skills (oracy) be assessed holistically as part of school-based assessment at the Foundation EL and N(T) examinations.

35. The assessment of listening comprehension for the PSLE EL examination is relevant and appropriate. However, the type of listening tasks will be reviewed to ensure alignment with the new 2009 EL syllabus.

#### School-Based Oral Examination for Students offering FEL and EL Syllabus (T)

36. To better prepare students taking Foundation EL and EL Syllabus (T) for real world oral communication needs, the Committee proposes the use of school-based oral assessment as part of the national examinations for a start. The use of school-based assessment will be able to provide more authentic tasks and settings for using spoken English compared to a one-off external oral examination.

37. In the longer term, school-based oral assessment could be considered for the other Primary, N(A) and 'O' level cohorts. This should be scaled up gradually so that possible issues arising from school-based assessment could be systematically identified and resolved.

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<sup>3</sup> Following the review of the Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs), Malay Language, Tamil Language and Chinese Language, the oral assessment for the MTLs was increased from 25% to 30%.

### Wider Range of Text Types

38. For the Normal (Academic) course and 'O' levels, there should be a wider range of fiction and non-fiction texts for the written component to align with the revised curriculum and its emphasis on authentic texts. Furthermore, it is recommended that critical and creative response-type questions be set in addition to the current type of reading comprehension questions. This will help students to develop the literary and critical skills necessary to respond to a wide range of different kinds of texts.

## **TEACHER RECRUITMENT**

### *Recruiting Sufficient Numbers of Good EL Teachers*

39. Teachers are key to achieving good educational outcomes for EL. The recruitment of adequate numbers of qualified EL teachers is a priority, especially given the growing competition for EL graduates from the expanding media and service sectors.

40. MOE aims to enlarge the pool of EL teachers in schools, and do more to attract those with high proficiency in the language. We will attract qualified EL undergraduates and graduates into teaching by offering more teaching awards. In addition, MOE will intensify efforts to help schools engage experienced former EL teachers to serve as Adjunct Teachers. Through the English Language Elective Programme (ELEP), MOE also hopes to grow a ready pool of students who have a flair for the language and encourage them to consider EL teaching as a career. These measures will be complemented by efforts to strengthen training and development opportunities for EL teachers, as detailed below.

### Selective Recruitment of Foreign EL Teachers

41. MOE's efforts to expand the pool of high quality EL teachers will rest principally on attracting and developing suitable local teachers, but should also involve strengthening the recruitment of foreign teachers with high English language proficiency. There has been positive feedback from schools, fellow teachers and students on the foreign EL teachers who are already in our schools. MOE will continue to recruit suitable foreign teachers so as to add to the number of teachers who are highly proficient in English as well as to inject diversity into teaching. Together with local teachers of similar aptitude, these teachers will be deployed to enhance the English-speaking environment in certain schools and develop niche programmes.

## **TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### *Enhancements to Existing Pre & In-service Courses*

42. EL teachers need to be good speakers of English who have a passion for developing in their students the ability to communicate well. We have a core group of good EL teachers who are highly proficient speakers of EL with a good grasp of EL pedagogy. However, English language competency among EL teachers at large, including primary school teachers who typically teach EL together with other subjects, has been uneven. Focus group discussions with teachers revealed their desire in wanting to upgrade and keep abreast of new curriculum developments. In our on-line survey, more than 70% of teachers in both primary and secondary schools showed interest in spending more time to upgrade their EL content knowledge and pedagogical skills.

43. The Committee has therefore proposed enhancements to existing pre- and in-service courses to ensure that our teachers are adequately supported in building their capacities to deliver the new curriculum. Starting from January 2007, the following recommendations will be implemented in phases.

#### Language and Content Enhancement for Trainee Teachers for Primary Schools

44. Studies have shown that teachers who have majored in EL or Literature had a firmer and more confident grasp of the language. This was confirmed by focus group discussions with Heads of Department and school principals. Study trips to New Zealand and Hong Kong further revealed that good teacher preparatory programmes for English teachers included a substantial component on EL content and pedagogy, particularly for primary school teachers. Primary school trainee teachers with EL as one of their teaching subjects will therefore undergo an additional EL enhancement course in the teacher preparatory programmes at NIE. The course aims to strengthen the EL content knowledge and language proficiency of these trainee teachers.

#### Content Enhancement for Trainee Teachers for Secondary Schools

45. Trainee secondary EL teachers in the post-graduate diploma programmes will undergo an additional course in English Language in their pre-service programme at NIE. This course is designed for these trainee EL teachers to enhance their content and pedagogical knowledge.

#### Overseas Study Award for Selected Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) Trainees

46. To enhance the pedagogy of selected teachers, the Committee proposes a three-month study award for selected PGDE trainees who have shown outstanding performance in their course of study. The overseas stint could be at reputable overseas teacher training institutes or schools in EL-speaking countries such as New Zealand and Australia. The three-month stint in a different language learning context will provide the opportunity for these trainee teachers to expand their repertoire of pedagogical approaches.

#### International Summer Institute

47. Leveraging on Singapore's unique language environment and globally-recognised education system, it is proposed that NIE and RELC jointly develop an annual International Summer Institute in EL Teaching to attract both foreign and local EL teachers to take up post-graduate level courses conducted by reputable researchers and academics.

#### Regular In-Service Courses

48. In our focus group discussions, teachers said they preferred short in-service courses spanning a few days to a week over longer courses leading to a diploma or specialist certificate so that they would not be away from school for an extended period of time. Our survey also found that 60% of our teachers (Primary and Secondary) were interested in upgrading themselves through short in-service courses.

49. MOE will therefore continue to organize on a regular basis short in-service courses for EL teachers to build teacher capacity. Large scale training in Grammar, Spoken English, Speech and Drama and Phonics has been undertaken in recent years. This will continue, to better support teachers in delivering the new curriculum. Furthermore, to enhance the EL environment in schools, MOE will

work closely with school clusters to organise customised courses in spoken English to encourage not only EL teachers but all English-medium teachers to speak well.

### Immersion Programmes for EL Teachers

50. MOE will organise an annual Teacher Immersion Programme for a group of about twenty experienced teachers each year to countries where they can benefit from a range of language teaching approaches. These EL teachers will be able to derive benefits from studying alternative approaches to teaching EL as well as from being immersed in a rich English-speaking environment.

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS**

### ***Teacher Deployment***

51. In view of the proposed curriculum changes, EL departments will have extended responsibilities in implementing enhancements to the EL curriculum as well as initiating school-wide programmes since English is the medium of instruction and cuts across the curriculum. Hence, more support will be given to schools in the area of teacher deployment and manpower resources.

### Two Additional EL Teachers in Secondary Schools

52. MOE will deploy two more EL teachers in all secondary schools by 2010. This will be part of MOE's plans to deploy an average of 10 additional teachers in every school by 2010.<sup>4</sup>

### At Least One Specialist EL Teacher in Every Primary School

53. MOE will work towards ensuring that all primary schools have at least one teacher specialising in EL pedagogy by 2010. This specialist EL teacher will work with the Head of Department to enhance the EL programmes in the school and also mentor younger teachers.

### Two-Subject Specialisation in Primary Schools

54. English-medium teachers in primary schools typically teach EL, Maths and Science. MOE recognises the value of having teachers specialise in teaching two subjects instead of three so that these teachers can focus on deepening their knowledge and pedagogical skills, and is exploring the scope to which this is possible. Training and deployment of teachers to specialise in two of three subjects is currently being studied.

### Best Practices in Deploying EL Teachers

55. To achieve the desired levels of proficiency, students should be given sufficient practice, part of which should be in the form of written assignments. EL teachers should be given more support to better manage their workload.

56. Cluster Superintendents could mount sharing sessions for Principals, Vice-Principals and HODs/EL to discuss the various ways in which teachers can be deployed optimally in schools. There should be sharing of best practices, for instance, with regard to the effective use of the manpower grant

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<sup>4</sup> In 2004, it was announced that secondary schools will have by 2010, resources equivalent to 10 more teachers in addition to their Teacher Quota (TQ). Teacher Quota refers to the number of teachers a school is entitled to, calculated based on its enrolment size.

to support EL teachers. Schools with similar student profiles and needs could be grouped together for such sessions. Principals have called for more of such sharing so that they can learn from other schools' best practices.

### ***Networks and Niches of EL Excellence***

#### Strengthening Network of Senior Teachers for EL

57. The training framework under Strategies for Effective and Engaged Development in EL (SEED-EL) provides a network of trained Mentors deployed by MOE to provide advice and support on reading pedagogy in primary schools. This model can be strengthened by developing a network of Senior Teachers specialising in EL pedagogy. They could be attached to MOE's Curriculum Planning and Development Division on the existing Teacher Work Attachment programme and receive training in specific aspects of pedagogy such as early literacy, creative writing or diagnostic assessment. These Senior Teachers can in turn provide specialised EL support to their colleagues in school.

58. A virtual learning community for EL could also be facilitated under the auspices of Teachers Network in order to connect classroom teachers, Senior and Master Teachers, curriculum developers, specialists and researchers.

#### Niches and Centres of Excellence

59. To enhance the existing strengths in the teaching of EL in selected schools, MOE will facilitate the matching of schools with organisations which have expertise in EL pedagogy and a network of qualified trainers. In time, these niche schools can share their expertise and best practices with other schools in their cluster or zone.

60. There will be different types of EL Niche schools in order to leverage on the diverse strengths of our schools. Some will have an established culture and ethos conducive to EL learning, while others will have effective programmes that cater to students who find EL particularly challenging.

61. Niche schools are encouraged to develop further to become Centres of Excellence (COEs) in EL. Master Teachers and Senior Teachers could be attached to these COEs for specific programme development. Opportunities to collaborate with these COEs will be made available to teachers in other zones and clusters. Specialists from NIE or the British Council could be attached to these schools.

62. Teachers could be offloaded or take advantage of the Teacher Work Attachment programme in order to benefit from collaborating with these COEs.

#### Literacy Resource Centre at READ@TN

63. To support teachers with the necessary resources to deliver the curriculum effectively, the Committee recommends the establishment of a one-stop Literacy Resource Centre at Teachers Network. This resource centre can reside at READ@TN, the library at Teachers Network, to leverage on existing EL resources and services provided by the library.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & INITIATIVES

64. Community and media organisations have an important role to play in creating a conducive EL environment for our students. MOE will continue to collaborate with the following strategic partners to encourage the creation of a favourable EL environment and a culture of good speech:

- **Speak Good English Movement**

The Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) and Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) will launch an annual award to recognise outstanding EL, Literature or General Paper teachers. SGEM will also establish an award to encourage schools to create a conducive environment to support the learning of English. The *SGEM School Award* will be similar to awards such as the Singapore Environment Council's *Green Audit Awards* and the National Arts Council's *Arts Education Award*.

- **Media Organisations**

SPH will assist in spreading the use of good EL through *The Sunday Times* and its '*English As It Broken*' column helmed by the Master Teachers of EL and supported by MOE's Curriculum Planning and Development Division. SPH has agreed to subsidise the cost of *The Sunday Times*, with its new EL feature, to be sent to the homes of students from low-income families. Schools can draw on the Opportunity Fund to pay for the subsidised newspapers. Programmes targeted at our school-going population such as a new debate series are in the pipeline.

- **National Library Board**

MOE will collaborate with the National Library Board (NLB) to reach out to parents and schools to encourage the reading habit. More Book Clubs and Buddy Reading programmes such as *KidsREAD* will be formed. MOE and NLB will also develop book lists that will help teachers and parents in selecting age-appropriate books.

- **Co-curricular Activities**

To establish a culture of speaking good English, it will be necessary to influence and support language-based co-curricular activities, such as media clubs and debating societies. Furthermore, as a large number of students take part in Uniformed Youth Organisations, it is proposed that a Communication Badge be developed to encourage students to use Standard English.

## **CONCLUSION**

65. The Committee's recommendations involve changes and refinements in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and teacher training. Teachers in our schools will need time, resources and curriculum space to prepare for these changes.

66. Our goal is to ensure that all students have the EL competency needed for learning, for work, and for life in an increasingly competitive, globalised economy. They should be comfortable using English to express themselves and enjoy the ways in which the language can be used to shape meanings. Those who have the potential should acquire mastery of the language and achieve the best international standards.

67. We will strive towards realising this through our new EL curriculum which aims to build a strong foundation in grammar and spoken English and to enrich language learning through the use of engaging and age-appropriate materials for reading and writing for all students. We will further strengthen teacher training and development and improve support for schools to ensure that our enhanced curriculum is successfully delivered. While the main responsibility will rest with educators, we would require the active involvement of parents, the community and key partners to complement the work of schools.

# English Language Curriculum & Pedagogy Review Steering Committee

Name	Designation
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Mrs Tay Sor Har (Deputy Chairman, Sep – 15 Dec 06)	Deputy Director Languages & Literature Branch, MOE
Mrs Lim Lai Cheng (Deputy Chairman, 15 Dec – present)	Deputy Director Languages & Literature Branch, MOE
Mrs Doreen Goh	Deputy Director, Assessment Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board
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## Academic Advisory Panel

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A/Prof David Deterding	Associate Professor, English Language & Literature Academic Group, National Institute of Education
A/Prof Lionel Wee	Deputy Head, English Language, National University of Singapore

## Resource Panels

Curriculum and Assessment	
Name	Designation
Mrs Lim Lai Cheng (Co-chair)	Deputy Director Languages & Literature Branch, MOE
Mrs Christina Ratnam (Co-chair)	Head Pre-School Education, MOE
Mrs Doreen Goh	Deputy Director Assessment, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board
Dr Elizabeth Pang	Assistant Director Languages & Literature, MOE
A/P Anneliese Kramer-Dahl	Deputy Head (Academic), English Language & Literature Academic Group, National Institute of Education
Dr Peter Tan Kok Wen	Senior Lecturer Department of English Language & Literature, National University of Singapore
Mrs Lysia Kee	Principal Bukit Batok Secondary School
Mdm Sally Ng Siew Hiang	Head of English Henderson Secondary School
Ms Thoo Mei Lan	Senior Reading Specialist, MOE
Dr Lim Yi-En	Gifted Education Officer 23, MOE
Mrs Jeyalaxmy Ayaduray	Master Teacher Cluster North 6, MOE

## Pedagogy, Instructional Materials and Information Technology

Name	Designation
Mrs Tay Sor Har (Co-chair, Sep – 14 Dec 05)	Deputy Director Languages & Literature Branch, MOE
Dr Elizabeth Pang (Co-chair)	Assistant Director Languages & Literature, MOE
Associate Professor Lubna Alsagoff (Co-chair)	Head English Language & Literature Academic Group, National Institute of Education
Associate Professor Christine Goh	Assistant Head, English Language & Literature Academic Group, National Institute of Education
Ms Fuziah Taha	Principal North View Primary School
Mdm Lim Cheng Liew	Vice-Principal Fuchun Primary School
Mrs Regina Davamoni	Master Teacher Cluster South 5, MOE
Ms Clarisse Ng Min Kiak	Head of English Yusof Ishak Secondary School
Mr Leonard Chua	Head of English Fairfield Methodist Primary School
Ms Pearly Chai	Senior Teacher, Punggol Primary School
Ms Mabel Chia Bee Kim	Education Technology Officer/Professional Development & Consultancy 19, MOE
Mdm Goh Lei Ying	Gifted Education Officer 21, MOE

## Teacher Training and Development

Name	Designation
Ms Tay Siew Lian (Co-chair)	Deputy Director Staff Training, MOE
Dr Irene Ho (Co-chair)	Principal, Balestier Hill Primary School
Mrs Wendy Lim	Superintendent Cluster South 1, MOE
Ms Shakila Vasu	Head of English Canberra Primary School
Mdm Adibah Binte Abbas	Head of English Changkat Changi Secondary School
Mrs Lim Tai Foon	Senior Teacher, St Hilda's Primary School
A/P Peter Teo Chin Soon	English Language & Literature Academic Group,

	National Institute of Education
Ms Claire Dawn Yio Siew Koon	English Language & Literature Academic Group, National Institute of Education

## Secretariat

Name	Designation
Mrs Lucy Toh (Head)	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Ms Patricia Chan (Deputy Head)	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Mrs Lydia Tan-Chia	Curriculum Specialist, MOE
Ms Tan Yi Ling	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Ms Tracy Yong	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Ms Charmaine Kuek	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Mrs Rabia Shahul Hameed	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE
Mdm Noorismawaty Ismail	Curriculum Planning Officer, MOE

