



Supporting Struggling Writers: From Theory to Practice

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Summary of the Impact

- Our research has been developed into a Chinese writing curriculum for supporting students with writing difficulties in upper primary schools within a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework, and has achieved impact in the local community.
- Since 2011, we conducted a series of basic research examining the cognitive-linguistic skills and affective-motivational factors contributing to Chinese writing development among typically developing children and children with developmental dyslexia, funded by the Seed Funding Programme, Early Career Scheme, and General Research Fund.
- A “Simple View of Writing” in Chinese, a model conceptualizing the cognitive-linguistic skills that are important to Chinese writing, was developed based on the findings from the research programme.
- In 2014, we developed a core curriculum of writing instruction in Chinese based on the findings from the basic research on factors contributing to Chinese writing development and conducted a pilot study on the effectiveness of the writing curriculum for upper primary grade students within the framework of the Tiered Intervention Model in a local school with the support of a government matching grant.
- In view of the encouraging results of the pilot study, we further develop the Chinese writing intervention in upper primary grades within the Tiered Intervention Model. A 2-year intervention project has been carrying out in 8 local primary schools. There are three critical elements: (1) a core writing curriculum based on scientific research findings; (2) continuous progress monitoring to evaluate effectiveness; (3) professional development for teachers. This work is funded by the Language Fund under Research and Development Projects 2015-16 of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR), Hong Kong SAR. By Dec 2016, the project had benefited directly more than 900 students and 80 teachers.
- Seminars and training courses, including the *Learning & Teaching Expo 2015* supported by the Education Bureau, Symposium on Collaborative Efforts in Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs, the *Summer Workshop on Disability Rights and Equality*, the *SummerFest 2016: Impact, Innovation and Integrity*, have reached hundreds of local and international educators and practitioners.

Underpinning Research (1)

Research on the Cognitive and Affective Factors Important to Chinese Writing Development since 2011

- **3 External Grants**

- The Language Fund, Standing Committee on Language Education and Research
- Early Career Scheme, Research Grants Council
- General Research Fund, Research Grants Council

- **3 Internal Grants**

- 1 Government Matching Grant
- 2 Grants from Seed Funding Programme for Basic Research

Publications

- 3 Journals articles
- 9 conference papers/presentation

Underpinning Research (1)

Research on the Cognitive and Affective Factors Important to Chinese Writing Development since 2011

Publications

- Bridges, S. M., Jackson, L., **Yeung, P.**, Chan, K., Mok, I. A. C., & Aiston, S. J. (2016). Researching diversity in education in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. *The International Journal of Diversity in Education*, 16 (3), 1-14.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2016). A “Simple View of Writing” in Chinese. *Reading Research Quarterly*. DOI: 10.1002/rrq.173
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2016). The Role of Transcription Skills and Oral Language Skills in Chinese Writing Among Children in Upper Elementary Grades. *Applied Psycholinguistics*. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0142716416000163>

Conference papers/presentations

- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2017, April). Contribution of Syntactic and Discourse skills to Written Composition in Chinese. *Presentation for the Society for Research in Child Development 2017 Biennial Meeting: Developmental Science and Society, Austin, The United States*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2017, February). Syntactic complexity in written composition among Chinese with developmental dyslexia in Hong Kong. *Presentation for the First Annual Conference of the Association for Reading and Writing in Asia, Hong Kong, China*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Tsang, P. P.-Y., & Chan, S.-W. (2017, February). A Tiered-Intervention Model on Chinese Writing Instruction for Students in Upper Primary Grades in Hong Kong. *Presentation for the First Annual Conference of the Association for Reading and Writing in Asia, Hong Kong, China*.
- Yeung, P.-S.** (2016, July). Three-tier model for Chinese language learning. Presentation for the *Symposium on Collaborative Efforts in Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs. Summer Workshop on Disability Rights and Equality, Hong Kong, China*.
- Yeung, P.-S.** (2016, July). Cognitive-linguistic Factors Contributing to Chinese Writing among Primary Students in Hong Kong. Presentation for the *SummerFest 2016: Impact, Innovation and Integrity, Hong Kong, China*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2016, March). Relations between cognitive-linguistic skills and Chinese writing among children with dyslexia. *Paper presented at the 10th British Dyslexia Association International Conference, Oxford, the United Kingdom*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2016, January). Transcription skills and written composition in Chinese. *Paper presented at the 18th International Conference on Education, Singapore*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., & Chung, K. K.-H. (2015, July). A “Simple View of Writing” in Chinese: The Unique Role of Transcription Skills. *Paper presented at the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, Big Island, Hawaii*.
- Yeung, P.-S.**, Ho, C. S.-H., Chan, D. W.-O., Chung, K. K.-H., Wong, S. W.-L., & Cheng, R. W.-Y. (2015, July). The Role of Affective-Motivational Factors in Writing Among Chinese Elementary Grade Students. *Paper presented at the Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Society for Text and Discourse, Minneapolis, MN*.

Underpinning Research (2)

Key findings

Findings from our research repeatedly showed that transcription skills, syntactic skills, and working memory are important cognitive-linguistic skills contributing to writing development among Cantonese-speaking children in Hong Kong. These help develop a “simple view model of writing in Chinese” that conceptualize the developmental skills important for learning to write in Chinese in primary school grades. The model informs the development of the core components in the writing curriculum for students in upper primary grades in Hong Kong.

Underpinning Research (2)

Research on the Cognitive and Affective Factors Important to Chinese Writing Development since 2011

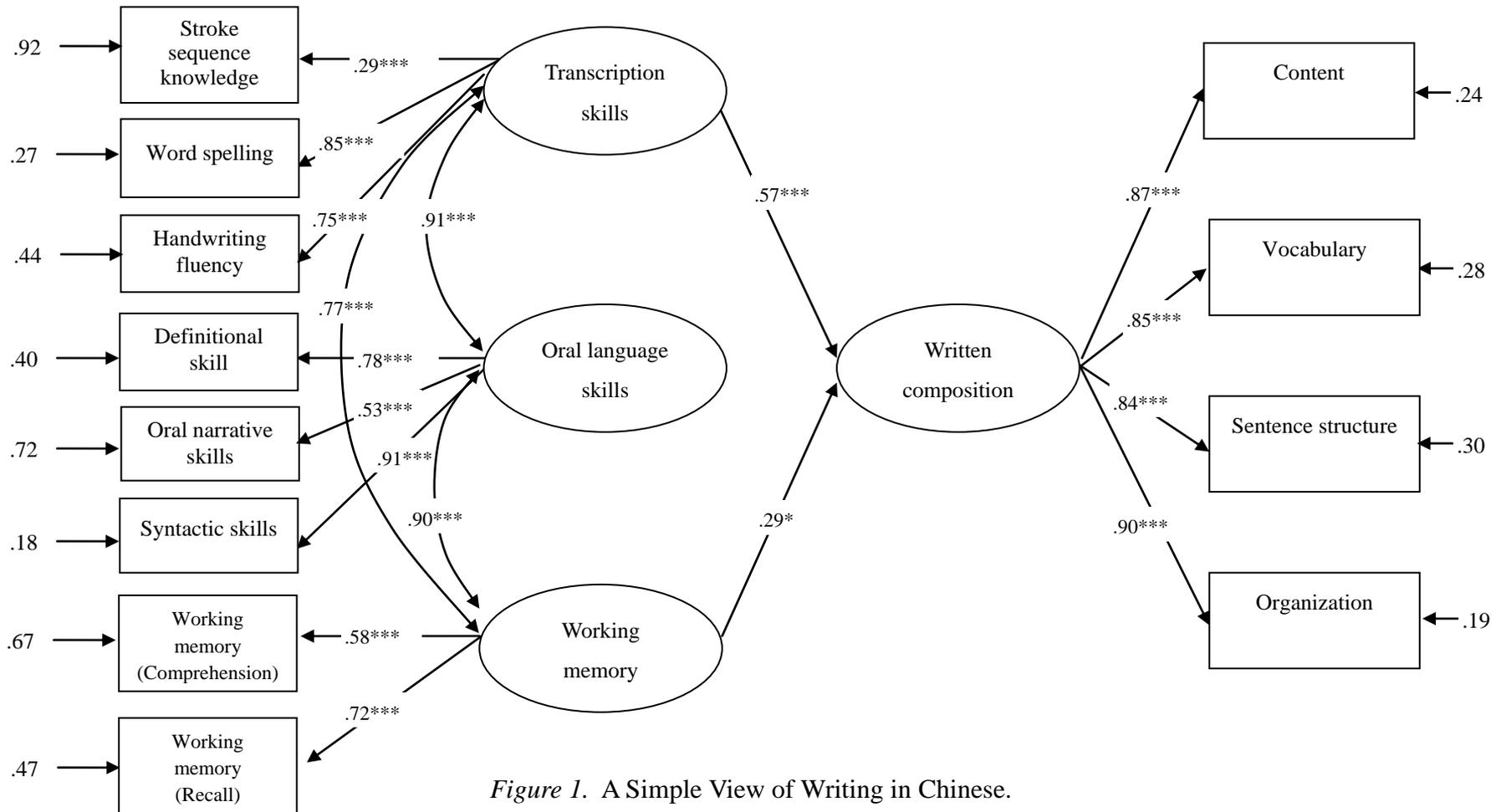


Figure 1. A Simple View of Writing in Chinese.

Note. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Underpinning Research (3)

Team members

Patcy Yeung

- PI of the projects and was responsible for the overall research design

Miss Pauline Tsang

- Senior Research Assistant in the projects supported by the Government Matching Grant and the Language Fund
- Responsible for the curriculum design, school-based support and training for teachers' professional development

Miss Peggie Chan

- Research Assistant in the Seed Funding Programme, ECS and GRF projects
- Responsible for measures development, coordination of data collection and data processing

Miss Yanny Chan

- Research Assistant in the project supported by the Language Fund
- Responsible for the school-based support, training for teachers' professional development, data collection and data processing in the projects

Underpinning Research (4)

The Promise of Collaborative Efforts

ECS and GRF collaborators

- Professor Connie Ho (The University of Hong Kong)
- Professor David Chan (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)
- Professor Kevin Chung (The Education University of Hong Kong)

The Language Fund collaborator

- Dr. Elaine Chan (Po Leung Kuk, The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong)

The Government Matching Fund External adviser

- Dr. Yuk-yung Li (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Underpinning Research (5)

Innovativeness in Supporting Students Struggling with Chinese Writing

Important changes in literacy development are observed in upper primary grades (Key Stage 2 of the language curriculum).

Research and intervention on supporting students with diverse learning needs in upper primary grades is still in the beginning stage. Research and support for students with developmental dyslexia has focused more on reading than writing. Yet, writing is cognitively more demanding and complex than reading. Our research programme aim to address the paucity of research and intervention on the writing difficulties among students in upper primary grades.

Engagement (1)

2014-2015

- Based on the findings from our research programme and the literature on writing instructions, we conducted a project to implement a core writing curriculum within the Tiered Intervention Model (the Model) for students in Grade 4 in a local school. School-based support for implementing the Model included teachers' professional training, monthly collaboration planning, class observation and progress monitoring of students' performance (10 meetings in a year). This project benefited directly 49 students and 22 teachers.

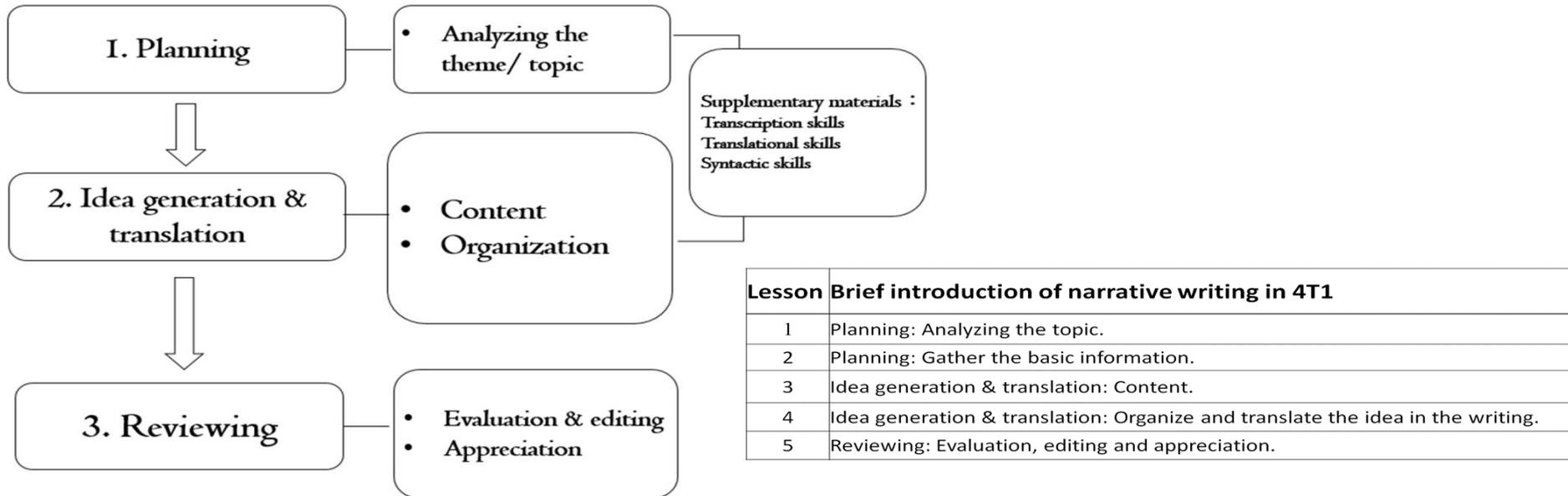
2015-2016

- In view of the encouraging results of the pilot study, we further develop the Chinese writing intervention in upper primary grades within the Tiered Intervention Model. A 2-year intervention project has been carrying out in 8 local primary schools. There are three critical elements: (1) a core writing curriculum based on scientific research findings; (2) continuous progress monitoring to evaluate effectiveness; (3) professional development for teachers. This work is funded by the Language Fund under Research and Development Projects 2015-16 of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR), Hong Kong SAR. By Dec 2016, the team conducted 110 service visits to the 8 participating schools and provided on-site school-based support (including teachers' professional training, monthly collaboration planning, class observation and progress monitoring of students' performance). The project had benefited directly more than 900 students and 80 teachers.

Engagement (2)

Figure 1

A framework of “A core curriculum of writing instruction in Chinese within the framework of the Tiered Intervention Model”



Types of Writing of 4T1	Unit(s)	Types of Writing of 5T1	Unit(s)
Narrative writing	5	Narrative writing	2
Descriptive writing of a person	2	Descriptive writing of a person	2
Descriptive writing of a place	2	Descriptive writing of a place	2
Descriptive writing of an object	4	Descriptive writing of an object	4
Expository writing	--	Expository writing	4
Practical writing	2	Practical writing	2
Total:	15	Total:	16

Engagement (3)

External Partners

Partner Schools in the Projects

- Buddhist Chi King Primary School
- Castle Peak Catholic Primary School
- C.C.C. Kei Tsun Primary School
- P. L. K. Riverain Primary School
- P. O. C. A. Wan Ho Kan Primary School
- Price Memorial Catholic Primary School
- S.K.H Tin Shui Wai Ling Oi Primary School
- Tsuen Wan Trade Association Primary School
- C.C.C. But San Primary School
- Society of Boys' Centres Chak Yan Centre School

Engagement (4)

Innovativeness of the Engagement Approach

There have been a number of initiatives to support students with diverse learning needs in learning to read and write in Chinese in junior elementary grades (Key Stage 1 of the language curriculum). For example, the Tiered Intervention Model developed by the Hong Kong Specific Learning Difficulties Research Team under the READ & WRITE: A Jockey Club School Support Network.

Our projects address the paucity of support for students, teachers and schools in Chinese writing in upper primary grades in the area of writing, which has found to be more challenging to students with reading and writing difficulties.

Impacts Achieved (1)

- In 2014, a pilot writing curriculum for upper primary grade students within the framework of the Tiered Intervention Model was conducted in a local school. The project benefited directly a total of 22 teachers and 49 students. At the same time, there was positive impact on the school culture for supporting students with diverse learning needs and teachers' professional development. In view of the encouraging results of the pilot study, the pilot school strongly requested that we would continue our school-based support for them.
- To further develop the Chinese writing intervention in upper primary grades within the Tiered Intervention Model (the Model), we then applied for the Language Fund under Research and Development Projects 2015-16 of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR), Hong Kong SAR. By Dec 2016, the **Model was implemented in 8 participating schools** (including the pilot school in 2014) and had **benefited directly more than 900 students and 80 teachers**. The teaching package on the Model will be distributed to all primary schools in October 2017 and the findings will be shared in a seminar for all primary schools in November 2017.

Impacts Achieved (2)

Curriculum and Pedagogy

The results of the teachers' survey on the impact of the intervention on Chinese writing instructions suggested that the intervention was effective in enhancing the learning and teaching in Chinese writing in the programme schools. The results of the analysis of variance comparing the teachers' responses on a questionnaire examining their perception on the curriculum and pedagogy of writing instruction before and after the implementation of the intervention showed that the intervention improved the clarity of the aims and goals of the Chinese writing curriculum, and the effectiveness of the teaching activities in enhancing students' writing skills and motivation (as shown in the following table).

Means of Items in Questionnaire for Teachers

Items	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>F value</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	
The curriculum of Chinese Writing of the school:					
1. The aims and goals are clear.	3.90	0.32	4.47	0.52	9.56**
2. It has systematic arrangement, from easy to difficult.	3.90	0.57	4.20	0.41	2.34
3. It is based on theory or literature review.	3.50	0.53	4.00	0.55	4.94*
4. It has integrated with Chinese language knowledge and strategy of which the students have learnt. It assisted them to apply in their writing tasks.	3.80	0.42	4.07	0.46	2.16
5. The teaching activities enhanced the content of the students' writing.	3.90	0.57	4.43	0.65	4.31*
6. The teaching activities enhanced the organization of the students' writing. (e.g., Paragraph, arrangement of action scene)	3.80	0.42	4.20	0.77	2.21
7. The teaching activities enhanced the translation in the students' writing. (e.g., Use of written sentence and punctuation mark)	3.50	0.53	3.93	0.46	4.77*
8. The teaching activities enhanced the writing expression in the students' writing. (e.g., Use of adjective and rhetoric)	3.40	0.52	3.87	0.74	2.97
9. The teaching activities increased the students' awareness of reviewing their writing.	3.20	0.63	4.07	0.70	9.84**
10. The teaching activities increased the students' writing motivation.	3.30	0.82	3.93	0.46	6.13*
11. Assessment goals are clear and related to the goals of teaching activities.	3.70	0.48	4.07	0.46	3.69

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Impacts Achieved (3)

Teachers' professional development

Training and Sharing Sessions

Class observation and Sharing

School teachers' comments on the impact of the intervention on professional development (excerpt of interview data)

Before the intervention

- Teachers only provided input on the writing topic
("響之前呢，都唔會有咁多小組討論果啲既……(略)……之前都係俾塞落去、塞……都係俾啲經驗佢塞落去，可能佢地未必係咁掌握到囉！同埋呢啲又未必係佢地自己諗嘅嘢……同埋我地亦唔會俾咁多時間俾佢做活動。")

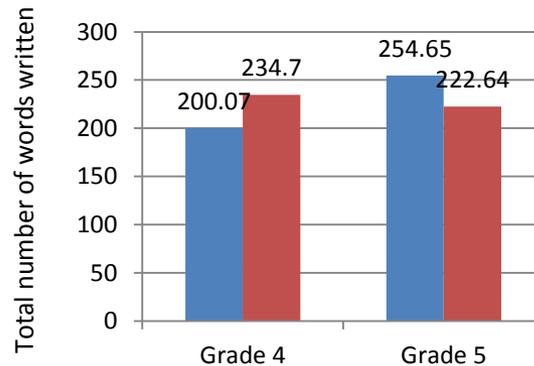
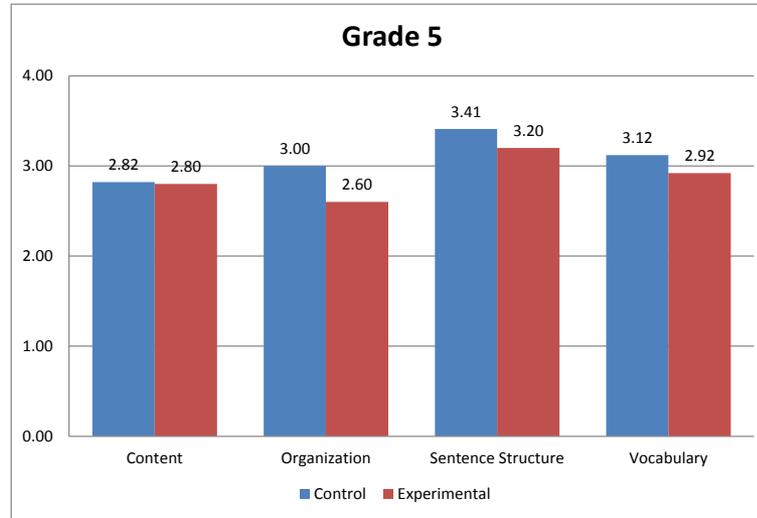
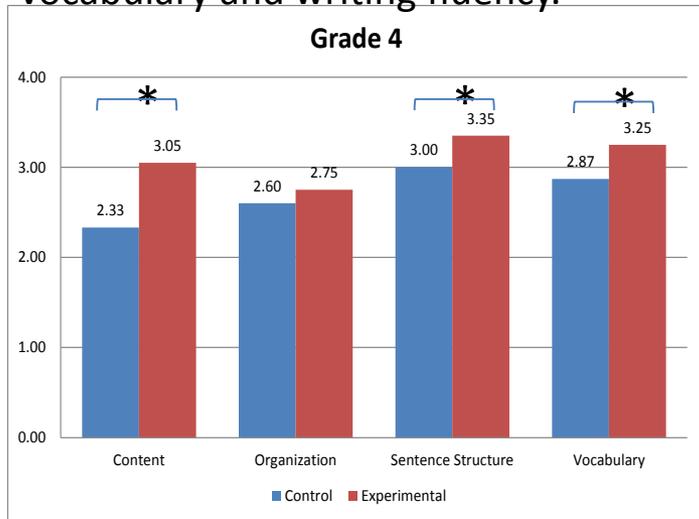
After the intervention

- Teachers had a clearer understanding about the learning objectives of writing instruction.(“老師同學生既目標會清晰啱”)
- Teaching activities were more diversified.(“教學活動都多元化既。”)
- With the diversified learning activities, students had a better understanding of the writing tasks.(“做咗活動之後，佢哋對果樣嘢(寫作)係清晰好多。”)
- Teachers had clearer expectations of students' writing, which help students understand their writing performance indicators(“我會參考你果個寫作提示……所以就知道自己有咩Focus，知道自己要改啲咩。”)

Impacts Achieved (4)

Students' Performance

Preliminary analyses comparing the written composition task performance between the Grade 4 and Grade 5 participants in the programme school and their counterparts in the control school during the 1st phase of the project (i.e., 6-month intervention) suggested that the intervention was effective in enhancing students' performance in Chinese composition in the areas of content, sentence structure, vocabulary and writing fluency.



Impacts Achieved (5)

Students' Performance



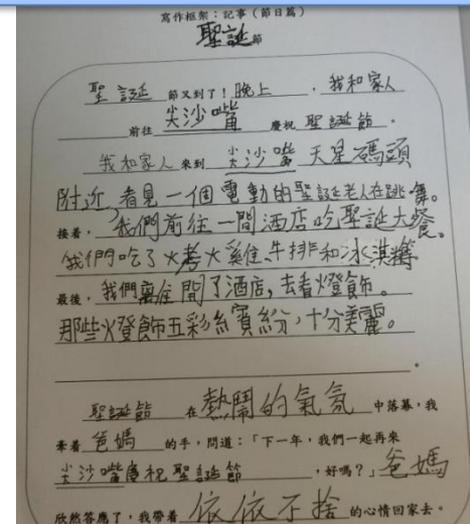
請畫出及寫上你對成為「大特寫專員」的感受：



我成為「大特寫專員」後，我非常
開心，我想我在五六年級時，我
也可以上這個班呢！

Sharing of a primary 4 student in Tier 2 class:

“I am so happy to be a ‘writing officer’.
I would like to join this class when I am
in primary 5 and 6.”



A sample of students' collaborative writing (Tier 2)

School teachers' comments on the impact of the intervention on students' performance
(excerpt of interview data)

Before the intervention

- Students did not know how to approach the writing task. (“以前佢哋寫野係坐響度發「牛逗」，因為唔知要寫咩。”)
- The content was relatively poor. (“以前講來講去都係果一句”)

After the intervention

- Students had a clearer idea about how to approach the writing tasks. (“我同學生兩個方面(寫作目標和技巧)都清晰左同清楚左好多”)
- Students could follow clear steps to organize their writing and were more willing to do the writing task. (“寫野寫快左……依家因為有果個Step架嘛，快好多囉！因為佢地知道個Step，要砌咩嘢。”)
- The content became richer. (“以前寫咪會重複番之前果句既，依家無咗咯，依家都可以寫番經過果啲嘢”)
- Students were very engaged, interested in the teaching materials and motivated to learn. (“佢哋好投入，有Powerpoint果啲，分組果啲好OK架！佢地覺得得意架……佢地好鍾意。”)

Impacts Achieved (6)

School-based Assessment

A sample of formative assessment (Tier 1)

(3) 注意字詞： 沒有 有： 一次

二. 請根據事件，構思情節：開始、經過和結果。

事件列車：

開始：
放學後，我乘
上巴士回家

經過1：
遇到一位復原的
母親。

經過2：
我禮座給她。

結果：
她多謝我。

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香港大學教育學院融合與特殊教育研究發展中心

A sample of formative assessment (Tier 2)

小評估

T2 小評估 (一) HM
修改日期：2016年12月13日

第二層 (T2) 小評估 (一)

班別：() 年級 () 班
姓名：_____ () 日期：_____

評估重點	已能掌握 (能掌握 80%-100%)	部分掌握 (能掌握 60%-79%)	未能掌握 (能掌握 0%-59%)
能在句子中運用適當的標點符號(包括:逗號、句號和冒號和引號。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

一. 請在空格中填上最適當的標點符號。(9個, 45%)

， 。 : 「 」

1. 天亮的時候 公雞總會在啼叫 把我們都吵醒了
2. 遊樂場裏有很多設施 例如 滑梯、攀爬架和長椅
3. 健明活潑好動 是我班上的 小跳豆

School teachers' comments on the impact of the intervention on School-based Assessment (excerpt of interview data)

Before the intervention

- The integration of assessment and instructions for writing was not strong. They did not know how to help students review writing instructions. ("佢地以前係唔會溫寫作野，其實都唔知溫咩野，我俾本寫作冊佢，佢都係擺響度算架嘞，佢唔會睇。")

After the intervention

- A structured assessment system for writing was established. ("因為你地今次教左幾種文章呢，我就響考試之前整左一張總結表.....我就話(向學生說)因為四年級你學咗呢幾個重點，所以就將Powerpoint果啲重點Key左出黎，整左一個表。")
- with clear writing goals, the writing instruction was improved and became more systematic. ("會睇記敘文作啲咩嘢，記物作啲咩嘢，記人作啲咩嘢，咁佢地就可以溫番果啲架構。")

Impacts Achieved (7)

The Community

博覽簡介 About the Expo

Learning & Teaching Expo 2015
學與教博覽 2015

學與教博覽旨在為亞洲地區的校長、教師及教育界人士提供一個年度學與教專業交流平台，並肩探討最新學與教資源及發展趨勢。博覽會集展覽及研討會於一身，今年除了設有超過200個展位外，場內同時舉行多場與教育相關的研討會及課堂示範。

Learning and Teaching Expo provides an annual platform for school leaders, teachers and educators in Asia to discover the latest developments in educational resources and learning technology. Learning & Teaching Expo hosts a combination of more than 200 exhibition booths plus a comprehensive programme of speeches, presentations and lesson demonstrations.

主題演講 Main Stage Presentations
2015-12-10 (Thu)

*所有主題演講內容將視情況調整。有關各場主題演講的詳情及最新版本，請瀏覽：www.LTExpo.com.hk。
All details are correct at time of printing. For further information and updates, please check www.LTExpo.com.hk.
* Simultaneous Interpretation available.
英文演講備有普通話即時傳譯。

09:00 - 10:00 開幕典禮 Opening Ceremony

環球視野 宏觀教育 Global Horizon on Education: Holistic Planning

Keynote Speaker in Learning and Teaching Expo 2015



14:30 - 15:15	探索、利用學習風格與教學風格：改善學生課堂學習效能 Exploring and Using Learning Style and Teaching Style to Improve Students' Learning Efficacy in the Classroom	吳武典教授 Professor Wu Wu-tien 台灣國立台灣師範大學特殊教育學系名譽教授 Emeritus Professor of Special Education, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan	ENG
15:15 - 16:00	高小中文寫作教學支援：從理論到實踐 Supporting Struggling Writers in Upper Elementary Grades: From Theory to Practice	楊佩詩博士 Dr Patcy Yeung 香港大學教育學院學習、發展及多元教育部助理教授 香港大學教育學院研究發展中心研究總監 Assistant Professor, Division of Learning, Development and Diversity, Faculty of Education; Research Director, Centre for Advancement in Inclusive and Special Education, Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong	ENG