



# **Bilingual/ Biliteracy Education**

Possible Lines of Inquiry

Bilingual Education has been a cornerstone of Singapore's education system.

Learning English and the Mother Tongue Languages (MTL) helps prepare children to plug into a globalised world and strengthen links to their Asian heritage.

AIMS:

- strive to ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn two languages to the best of their abilities, and
- those most talented and able in languages can be much more – bi-culturally savvy or multi-lingual.

**What are some  
Problems of Practice and Possible Lines of Inquiry?**

# Problems of Practice and Possible Lines of Inquiry

- ✓ Raising MTL proficiency for weaker students
- ✓ Measuring MTL baseline proficiency
- ☐ Effects of text input vs handwriting
- ☐ Levelling up English Language (EL) competency of N(T) students
- ✓ Supporting bilingualism in early years
- ☐ Understanding lifelong learning and MTL attrition

# Outstanding Lines of Inquiry

## Effects of text input vs handwriting

- *Learning*: What is the impact of the use of ICT-enabled text input in place of handwriting on CL/TL word recognition and writing at upper primary (P4) and upper secondary (S3)?
- *Learners*: To what extent does the impact of text input differ for learners with better CL/TL proficiency and those with lower CL/TL proficiency?

## Levelling up English Language (EL) competency of N(T) students

- *Learners*: How varied is the EL competency of Sec 1N(T) students? What are the areas requiring most support for EL learning?
- *Teaching*: Recognising the diversity of needs among N(T) students, what is the efficacy of instructional approaches for levelling up Sec 1N(T) students' knowledge and use of academic language and literacy skills at word (decoding and fluency) and text (comprehension) levels? What is the best model of support for them (e.g., pull-out classes during curriculum hours, remedial lesson after curriculum hours, or a structured intervention programme like the primary school levelling-up programmes)?
- *Interaction across languages*: How does the learning of MTL strengthen or interfere with the learning of EL for this group of students?

## Understanding lifelong learning and MTL attrition

- To what extent are Singaporean adults aged 18 - 40 using the official MTL in contrast to other languages including EL? Why and how are they using the official MTL? What are the factors influencing language choice for parents of young children?
- *MTL attrition, maintenance and recovery*: What are the common symptoms of MTL attrition (i.e., specific linguistic features/domains that experienced changes) among adults? What are the factors that contribute to successful MTL maintenance and recovery?

# Lines of Inquiry covered in some projects

## Raising MTL proficiency for weaker students

- *Learners*: What are the characteristics and learning difficulties of learners with very low MTL proficiency at P1, P3, P5, S1 and S3? How do these learners learn? (to be covered in GiBBEr for P1-P4) How can these difficulties be identified and addressed? (covered in OER2019VV for K)
- *Teachers*: What are the teachers' beliefs in teaching learners with very low MTL proficiency at P1, P3, P5, S1 and S3? What are teachers' prevalent pedagogical and assessment practices, learning environment, and learning resources designed for such learners, and how do these impact their learning (e.g., learners' motivation, achievement outcomes)?
- *Interaction across languages*: How does the learning of EL strengthen or interfere with the learning of MTL for such learners? (to be covered in GiBBEr for P1-P4)

## Measuring MTL baseline proficiency

- *Learners*: What foundational MTL proficiency is required in order to participate functionally in a typical MTL lesson at lower primary levels? How have the standards of our MTL learners changed over the years (e.g., from the start of P1 to the end of P2, P4 and P6)? (covered in OER 03/19 SBQ)
- *Measurement*: How can MTL proficiency be measured before the start of P1 and end of P2, and subsequent key stage points? (to be covered in GiBBEr for K1-P4)

## Supporting bilingualism in early years

- *Teaching*: What are some effective language instructional approaches (e.g., code-switching, translanguaging) and programme structures (e.g., amount of exposure time within the curriculum) that can support children's early bilingual acquisition in Singapore's unique language environment? Are there effective approaches to building bilingual skills (both EL and MTL) particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds with little language support at home? (covered for K in OER 20/19 VV; NRF2016-SOL002-011; GiBBEr)
- *Measurement*: What are some reliable and valid tools to measure the MTL proficiency of pre-school children in Singapore? (to be covered in GiBBEr for K1-K2)
- *Learning*: How can informal learning (e.g., use of ICT, apps, TV programmes) outside classrooms support the development of early bilingualism? (to be covered in GiBBEr for K1, P1)

# Thank you

Please contact Dr Goh Sao-Ee ([goh\\_sao\\_ee@moe.gov.sg](mailto:goh_sao_ee@moe.gov.sg)) for further clarification

RESTRICTED