

## 9. CONCLUSION

2009 has been a very special year for the TSA. Due to the outbreak of H1N1 Human Swine Influenza in June, all primary school classes were cancelled by the Education Bureau (EDB). Therefore, except for the TSA speaking assessments in Chinese and English languages, data for all written assessments could not be obtained. Consequently, the tracking of data for the same cohort of primary 3 and 6 students who attempted the TSA in 2006 and 2009 has been interrupted. Therefore, HKEAA has only provided assessment data of the Secondary 3 TSA to schools and teachers in its continued commitment to enhancing teaching and learning.

### ***Accomplishment in TSA 2009***

#### **Improvement of the implementation of Oral Assessment**

HKEAA has always strived to improve the delivery of TSA through various methods and measures. One of the improvements the Authority has accomplished is the enhancement of online training for oral examiners. While the objective of the training for oral examiners is to standardize the scoring in speaking assessments, experienced examiners are not required to attend the live (mandatory) training workshop as this training has been implemented over several years. They can adopt online training since the standard of scoring has been updated. The online training in 2009 has been improved and is fully automated. The assessment exemplar videos of students' presentations and group interactions are synchronized with the scoring activity so that trainees do not need to download them. Furthermore, once all the requirements for the online training have been completed, trainees can submit their results via the internet.

#### **Pilot study of automation of scoring for Oral Assessment (Chinese Language)**

At present, students' scores and attendance are recorded in a paper format which is a time consuming practice in data processing. In order to further improve the implementation of the oral assessment, the Authority piloted the Oral Marking Automation (OMA) programme in July 2009. This pilot programme serves two purposes: to explore methods of transmitting the oral scores via WI-FI system and by USB flash drive and to study the feasibility of shortening times on calculating scores and handling data.

The feasibility study of automation of scoring, OMA programme, was first tried in the Chinese Language as the design is more complicated and the duration is longer than the English Language oral assessment. If the outcome is feasible, the possibility of adopting automation of scoring in oral assessments for both languages is greater.

The original plan of the feasibility study would involve 10 primary and 10 secondary schools. Given that primary schools were suspended in July due to the outbreak of H1N1 Human Swine Influenza, the pilot programme could only be tried in 10 secondary schools. Each secondary school appointed two Chinese teachers as oral examiners and 24 students were selected as examinees. Two modes of collecting data were tested, one via WI-FI system and the other by USB.

The results showed that the data transmitted by WI-FI was unstable because of the network problem in particular districts. However, it was found that USB mode was more reliable in data collection. The time spent on inputting scores was the same as the written mode. Feedback from oral examiners was also positive as they found that the system was easy to operate and handle. The average rating from oral examiners was 4.4 (5 max. score).

### **Assessment literacy training for primary school teachers**

Following last year's practice, three basic courses on assessment literacy were organized for primary teachers. Apart from these courses, thematic training courses on the three subjects such as item setting, establishing portfolios were provided for teachers to learn more about assessment for learning. The Authority conducted surveys evaluating the contents, teaching and learning, and administration arrangement on these courses. Both the basic courses and the thematic courses were very well received by the participants. The results were positive as the mean satisfactory index for the basic courses and thematic courses were 3.12 and 3.26 respectively (4 max. score).

### ***The Way Forward***

#### **Second stage of the pilot study of Oral Marking Automation for Oral Assessment (English Language)**

The first stage of the pilot study of OMA in Chinese Language oral assessment showed high feasibility. Therefore, the Authority will proceed to the second stage on English Language in 2009/10 so that a full study on the feasibility of OMA will be completed by

August 2010. Whether or not OMA can be fully implemented in primary and secondary schools depends very much on the readiness of schools' IT support.

### **Support for Non-Chinese Speaking students**

To address the societal need, EDB and HKEAA have been working on different kinds of support to be provided for the Non-Chinese Speaking students. Several measures are suggested as follows:

- (a) Schools with NCS students will have options on whether to implement newly-introduced facilitation measures or not, depending on NCS students' needs and parents' views;
- (b) Schools concerned will have to provide separate venues to the non-Chinese speaking students if necessary, to facilitate implementation of special arrangements such as reading instructions, questions and/or options that is not applicable to Chinese-speaking students;
- (c) In TSA question papers, a bilingual version of "instructions to students" will be provided in the form of a supplementary sheet in Reading, Writing, Listening and CAV assessments for P3, P6 and S3 NCS students;
- (d) In Oral Assessment, oral examiners will follow the Cantonese instruction scripts prepared by HKEAA and deliver them verbally to all students, i.e. NCS and non-NCS students in the same venue at three levels;
- (e) In the assessment of Listening ability, the questions, including the answer options for multiple choice questions, will be read aloud in Cantonese for NCS students.

The above measures are expected to take place in 2010 TSA onward. It is hoped that these new initiatives will better cater for the needs of different stakeholders and benefit student learning outcomes.