

# Understanding MI from and for all stakeholders

Dr. Ka Wai Yeung

Front-line teaching has been busy enough for most educators to barely keep their heads above the water, and the effort of conducting evidence-based research and presenting findings from students' and teachers' voices can be hardly imaginable. *Research MI* should deserve all educators' recognition and applause for doing so. The development of Multiple Intelligences (MI) has been outlined as a goal, among many others, in the local education community. Yet teachers have often been left to work on their own outside the curriculum or in their own time without school-wide policy support. The demand of customized learning plans and off-campus support necessary for the effective nurture of multiple intelligences, as identified by the articles in this issue, further complicates the issue and creates challenges for school administrators to provide appropriate policy support to this relatively small group of students. It was sad but true to read from the interviews, in which students reflected how they had gained proper recognition and support only when they met singular teachers supportive of MI. These are valuable voices all educators, teachers, school administrators, and parents, should hear and reflect upon their approaches in education.

When coordinating initiatives to promote MI at school, I have often been confronted with the problem of apprehension among teachers: Should MI be promoted by only extraordinary teachers? Should it be catered for academically gifted students only? Would it be worth it, or should my students prioritize academics over other intelligences? For

those teachers, *Research MI* should be a good read, as it has successfully debunked some of these myths and informed teachers of the proven effective practices, not only from its great digest of literature review but also from solid first-hand research findings.

It has been clear that school-wide support is imperative for teachers to exercise teaching autonomy needed for the holistic MI education, but with an array of priorities on their checklist, only a handful local schools are committed to promoting MI as their school-wide mission. While giving accolades to those avant-garde pioneers in the industry, educators can benefit most from reading about what it takes for the school policy makers to embrace this noble pursuit. For example, the strategic support through teachers' recruitment and staff development, which is slightly touched upon by a new teacher's reflection in this issue, can shed light for school policy makers. Apparently MI education takes support beyond classroom practice. After hearing the students' and teachers' voices from an MI-embracing school, parents and school administrators should come into the picture to show the other building blocks necessary for effective MI education. The trials, successes and challenges of MI-promoting teachers from "average" local schools could be relevant to the majority of the education community too. I believe all passionate educators cannot wait to read the next issue on these topics.



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Embracing Multiple Intelligences herself, Dr. Yeung has enjoyed an academic journey with mixed experiences in interdisciplinary learning and teaching. Graduating with a double-major in English Studies and in Translation, she continued her research in comparative linguistics, the scientific studies of languages, at the University of Hong Kong, where she obtained her doctoral degree in the interdisciplinary studies of applying linguistic theories into translation practices. She has been teaching in various levels from university to secondary since 2001. Her research interests focus on language acquisition and pedagogies, comparative linguistics, and the development of linguistic intelligence in a cross-curricular approach. She is currently working in a local girls' school as the subject leader of the English Language and of Life and Society, and serves as the coordinator of school-wide gifted education programmes and language across curriculum (LAC) policies.