ACTION RESEARCH REPORT
AN AESTHETIC DIMENSION MODULE FOR KEY STAGE THREE

Course No.: ELS 912 (1991)
Group 3: Au Siu-lin, Florence
Chan Yuk-ping, Florence
Ho Yuk-ling, Christina
Ko Wai-yin, Virginia
Lam Po Shan, Sara
Lui King, Karen
Group Tutor: Michael Murphy

Introduction

'What is "TTRA"?'

'Why will it be implemented so soon?'

'How can "TTRA" help students?'

'What is the main difference between "TTRA" and the current approach?'

These questions were raised in every "TTRA" lecture, showing that most of the participants were curious and anxious about the implementation of "TTRA". "Why not try it?" was the suggestion, so our group discussed the topic area of our project.

In the Education Commission Report No. 4 Chap 5, it is suggested that a system of target and target-related assessments ("TTRA") should be started for the core subjects, Chinese, English and Mathematics, initially up to Secondary 3 to accommodate the changes taking place in Hong Kong and the needs and interests of the students and their different abilities. The report states that a framework of attainment targets and related assessment involving both internal and external components should be developed for use in Hong Kong. Even though this is a great change in the Hong Kong education system, our group members believe that, if it is to be beneficial to the next and future generations, it is worth doing. In order to get a better insight into it, we teachers, at the frontier of the education system, should not hesitate in experimenting with it in order to judge its effectiveness. Thus, through actual preparation and trying out, it is hoped that we can gain a better understanding of what "TTRA" is so that we can implement our experiences in classroom teaching in our schools.

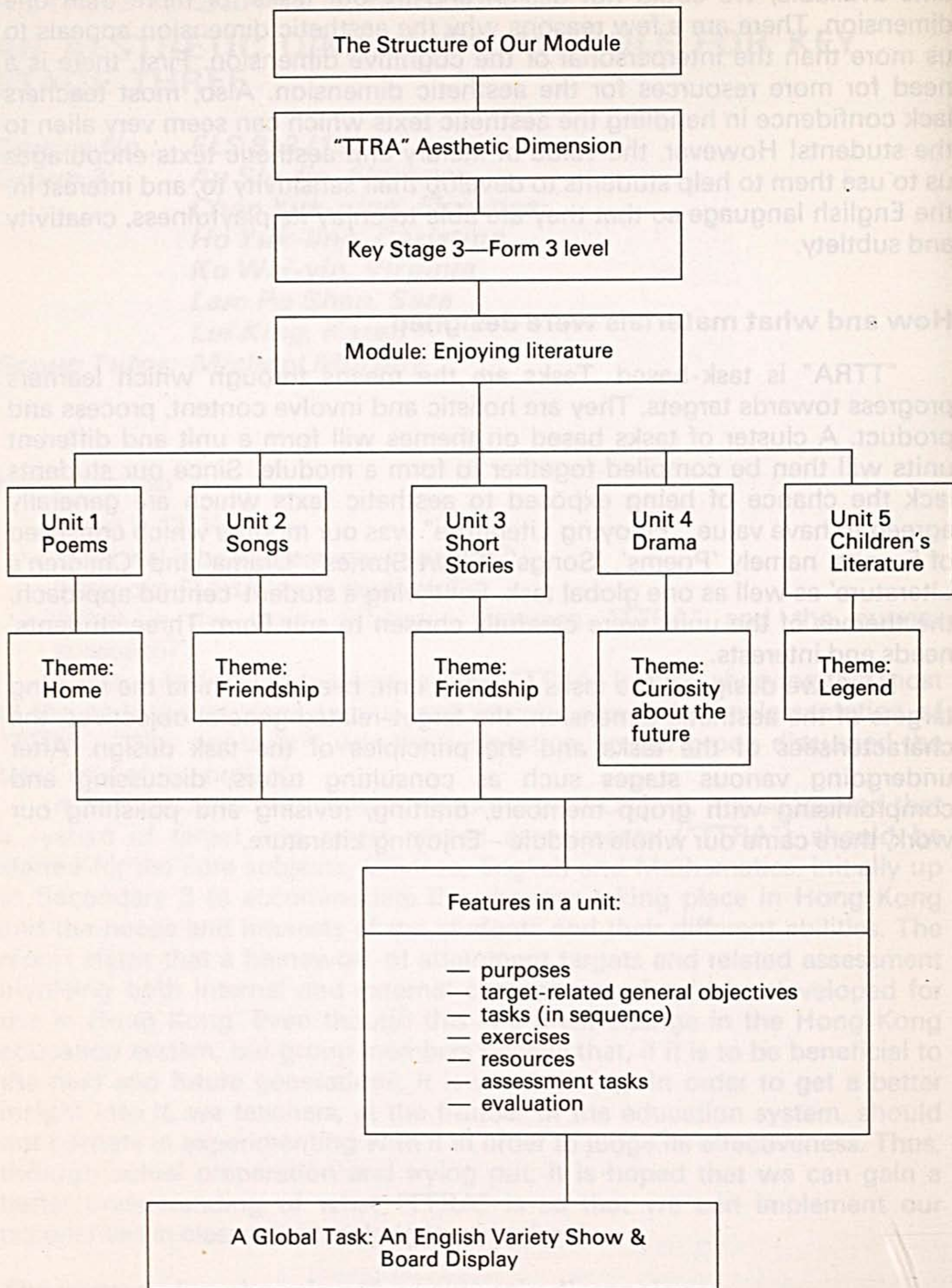## The reasons for choosing the aesthetic dimension

As the development of the "TTRA" programme is at the stage of "Programmes of Study", which are being written by a special "TTRA" team, the focus of our action research cannot go beyond that. Owing to the limited

time available, we could not design and try out tasks for more than one dimension. There are a few reasons why the aesthetic dimension appeals to us more than the interpersonal or the cognitive dimension. First, there is a need for more resources for the aesthetic dimension. Also, most teachers lack confidence in handling the aesthetic texts which can seem very alien to the students! However, the value of literary and aesthetic texts encourages us to use them to help students to develop their sensitivity to, and interest in, the English language so that they are able to enjoy its playfulness, creativity and subtlety.

How and what materials were designed

"TTRA" is task-based. Tasks are the means through which learners progress towards targets. They are holistic and involve content, process and product. A cluster of tasks based on themes will form a unit and different units will then be compiled together to form a module. Since our students lack the chance of being exposed to aesthetic texts which are generally agreed to have value, "Enjoying Literature" was our module which consisted of 5 units, namely 'Poems', 'Songs', 'Short Stories', 'Drama' and 'Children's Literature' as well as one global task. Following a student-centred approach, the themes of the units were carefully chosen to suit Form Three students' needs and interests.

Next, we designed the tasks for each unit, bearing in mind the learning targets of the aesthetic dimension, the target-related general objectives, the characteristics of the tasks and the principles of the task design. After undergoing various stages such as consulting tutors, discussing and compromising with group members, drafting, revising and polishing our work, there came our whole module – Enjoying Literature.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │   The Structure of Our Module    │
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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │   "TTRA" Aesthetic Dimension     │
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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │    Key Stage 3—Form 3 level      │
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                                     │
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │    Module: Enjoying literature   │
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Unit 1 Poems	Unit 2 Songs	Unit 3 Short Stories	Unit 4 Drama	Unit 5 Children's Literature
Theme: Home	Theme: Friendship	Theme: Friendship	Theme: Curiosity about the future	Theme: Legend

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│  Features in a unit:                               │
│  ────────────────────────────────────────────────  │
│         — purposes                                 │
│         — target-related general objectives        │
│         — tasks (in sequence)                      │
│         — exercises                                │
│         — resources                                │
│         — assessment tasks                         │
│         — evaluation                               │
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│   A Global Task: An English Variety Show &         │
│             Board Display                          │
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Tasks designed in units

Unit	Tasks designed
Poems	Poem appreciation Comparison of poems Collection of materials/articles Writing a poem
Songs	Song appreciation Comparison of attitudes of two song writers
Short stories	Comparison of characters Role play with the help of semi-script Writing to characters in the story Comparison of texts with the same theme Collection of texts
Drama	Creating a new ending Dramatization
Children's Literature	Rewriting legends in children's literature

Experimental Teaching

Heep Woh College was the school we chose for experimental teaching. Trying-out the lesson plans in a co-educational school helped us to see if the tasks designed were suitable for children of both sexes. The small number of participants and the shortage of time discouraged us from trying out everything we had designed. As a result, only two units, short stories and drama, were selected for the try-out in two different classes.

As a student-centred approach was the main approach of our project, all the tasks designed were based on this criterion so as to provide students with more chances to talk. The teacher, whose role was minimal, was to give guidance to students. Throughout the six lessons, students were encouraged to speak freely during the discussions. Other members of our group gave students lots of support because many students lacked ideas and language to express themselves and they were inexperienced in group discussion.

According to the feedback shown in the students' evaluation form, most of the students in these two classes had little exposure to aesthetic texts before. Despite this, most students were interested in the texts chosen for these two units and thus most of the learning objectives could be achieved.

As students were required to be very involved in group work, they showed interest in the tasks given and were willing to take part in them. Although not all of them could respond appropriately, the effort shown was highly appreciated.

However, some problems were encountered during the experimental teaching. To begin with, there was not enough time and this resulted in various drawbacks. Some tasks had to be cancelled. The dramatization took place too quickly. If students had been given more time to rehearse so that the teacher could remedy any problems that arose, the performance would have been much better.

Next, the lack of mutual understanding between students and the teacher certainly accounted for the inappropriacy of some tasks. This spoiled some of the students' interest and prevented some tasks from being carried out efficiently. Also, a better way of grouping could have facilitated group work. Unreliable grouping usually hindered our try-out lessons.

Furthermore, most of the tasks required students to do a lot of group work. Unluckily, many students had limited vocabulary to express their ideas freely or clearly. This led to a lot of hesitations during the discussion and consequently, more time than expected was needed.

Overall review of the project

We are delighted that we have tried a module in the aesthetic dimension with which to gain confidence when dealing with aesthetic texts after this project. Apart from this, we are not as worried as we were when we were introduced to the unveiling of "TTRA". We all agree that this new framework is actually not completely new to English teachers. "TTRA", from our point of view, is only a natural evolution initiated by the change and needs of society. Teachers can adapt the work they have done already to the new approach.

Students can gain a lot from our project as well. Being keen on the texts chosen, students may take initiatives to further their reading on aesthetic texts outside the classroom. Also, learning can usually take place subconsciously when no pressure is exerted on students in a relaxing environment and this is certainly welcomed by most students and parents. Then to a certain extent, most students can learn at their own pace and cooperation is encouraged throughout the tasks.

In addition, well-chosen texts account for the success of the project. If the texts are interesting and can be related to real life situations in which students find themselves, learning can be facilitated.

Recommendations

Although we chose suitable and interesting themes for our students in the units and the activities employed throughout the module were student–centred, active participation was greatly hampered by their

inexperience in group discussion and their lack of classroom language to hold the discussion. Therefore, here are some recommendations:

1. It is recommended that teachers introduce as many student-centred tasks as possible in order to get the students to participate in the lessons.
2. It is recommended that a variety of different types of student–centred activities like pair work, individual work and other different forms of group work be planned for the lessons.
3. It is recommended that teachers provide students with more chances to develop the skill of giving an immediate response during discussions as unpredictability is a very important element in real interaction.
4. It is recommended that transactional language for discussions be taught.
5. It is recommended that more chances for practising the communicative skills be given to students in our lessons.
6. It is recommended that the publishers include more aesthetic texts in the English textbooks.

Findings and suggestions related to the "TTRA"

As mentioned before, "TTRA" is task-based. The tasks designed are based on different themes. However, when we tried to include a variety of themes in our module, we found that suitable themes, which the students could respond to and at the same time feel interested in, were limited. We wonder if we are restricting students to only certain themes that they can cope with and when the whole framework is implemented, will students be fed up with similar themes, which they may have come across in previous years or in other subjects?

In addition, we found the targets and target-related objectives abstract. If the wordings had been more self-explanatory, teachers would have understood better.

Moreover, we hope that more seminars on "TTRA" with more practical suggestions and demonstrations will be held in future, and that more communication between teachers of various key stages will take place so that we can have a better picture of how knowledge can be acquired by students.

Finally, the success of the scheme depends very much on the resources and support given by the Government. With large classes and the heavy workload, no teacher is able to make any changes at the moment.

Conclusion

'Armed' with the belief that 'no gain is without pain', we can manage the work that is necessary efficiently. If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well, though there is still room for improvement in our project. Yet, it was rewarding in a sense that we are now better equipped for future

changes in the Hong Kong education system. In fact, not only students but also teachers may be motivated through this project for we feel there is an urge to do more research into "TTRA" and literature. Since we can only implement the aesthetic dimension for key stage 3 in one school, we hope that future participants on future refresher courses will feel the need to try the other dimensions for the different key stages in different schools so that there can be more valuable findings.

All in all, 'joint effort', 'cooperation' and 'enthusiasm' among all the teachers in Hong Kong are essential for the success of "TTRA".

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT
IMPLEMENTING PROCESS WRITING IN A F.3 CLASSROOM

Course No.:   ELS 912 (1991)
Group 3A: Marie Cheung
               Agnes Wong
               Michael Chan
               Augustine Yeung
Group Tutor: Mike Murphy

The Aim

A process approach to teaching writing was tried with a F.3 class in Methodist College (band 1-3 students) for six lessons over two weeks. The purpose was to examine the feasibility of implementing Process Writing in real classroom situations.

The Problem

Students were seldom interested in writing lessons and reluctant to produce ideas beyond the teacher's guidelines, leading to pieces of boring, similar and minimal writing. Teachers had to innure themselves to going through piles of uninteresting compositions heavily-laden with mistakes. However, this suffering does not meet with rewards as students keep on making the same mistakes over and over again without showing logical thinking or fluent expression.

The phenomenon of students producing low-grade work (both in terms of content and structure) can be attributed to their preoccupation with accuracy in their writing. In Hong Kong, writing lessons are treated as part or extension of structural practice and students are an encouraged to write 'correct' and 'error-free' compositions rather than to reveal to their readers their inner thoughts.

The Process Approach to Teaching Writing

Process Writing helps students to develop their thoughts and to cope with the problems of writing one at a time rather than dealing with all the problems at one time. The recursive stages – pre-writing, drafting, reviewing, rewriting, editing and presenting – help students to develop their ideas gradually through various activities. Peer-reading allows them to share with each other their ideas, and to pool together information. This helps them to substantiate their own writing in the rewriting stage which itself is another chance for the students to explore and to reconsider their own thoughts. This second thought on one's own writing is a constructive habit to be developed as it enables the students to be critical readers of their own

work. The editing stage focuses the student's attention on the use of English in his writing. With some exercises and activities guiding the students to locate certain kinds of mistakes, the students are more capable and alert in detecting the errors. All these stages help to build up confidence in the students and the ultimate improved product may be more satisfactory and satisfying to both the writer as well as the reader/marker.

Design of materials

Materials were used as an instrument and a means by which Process Writing was to be introduced to the students and through various activities so that students would be able to develop new habits in their thinking and skills in writing.

Sound effects for horror elements served as a stimulus for imagination. A radio play and six worksheets were used for introducing the 6 elements of a story, plotting a story line, etc. Materials for teaching reviewing and editing were designed, based on students' feedback in the previous lessons and performance in the drafts.

Self-reflection of the try-out teacher

After the experimental teaching, the try-out teacher indicated his change in perception and attitude towards the Process Approach to teach writing as shown in the following table:

Items	Pre-experimental Teaching	Post-experimental
The Writing Process	—Teacher allowed 10 minutes for planning and students could not plan in detail	—Planning stage is extremely important because it provides a good start for collecting ideas and organizing thoughts
	—No peer-reading	—Peer-reading elicits more ideas from students themselves
	—No re-writing (no chance for students to change the content)	—Re-writing is meaningful when students have some more ideas to add and develop
	—No peer-editing or self-editing	—Peer-editing is helpful in order to learn proof-reading skills
	—Grammar-oriented writing practice	—Writing is a thinking process & should be more content-oriented
	—Teacher expected to have error-free products	—Teacher should allow mistakes at early stages as it is natural for EFL students to make mistakes
	—Students only corrected mistakes for final copies	—Students improve the content & correct mistakes as well focusing more on content & organization
	—Writing was treated as a separate skill	—The 4 skills (L,S,R,W) should be integrated in a writing task
	—Very little input or stimulus was given before drafting	—More and different input should be given at pre-writing stage using a discovery approach

Items	Pre-experimental Teaching	Post-experimental
The Writing Process	—Final products were a kind of homework & the teacher was the only reader —There was no chance for students to present their final products themselves	—The final products are meaningful because real readers such as the classmates and the teacher are going to read them and to give their opinions about them —The presenting stage should be provided because it motivates Ss more if they can present their writing to the others
The Role of Teacher	—Teacher didn't realize that students could help each other —Teacher gave all the guidelines on content and organization and provided all ideas for correction of mistakes —Teacher as supervisor to check students' mistakes —Teacher instructed and students followed —Students wrote and teacher looked for errors without encouraging students to develop ideas —Teacher provided most of the ideas for students	—Teacher should encourage Ss to help each other so that they experience learning from peers —Teacher should act as a helper & facilitator and guide Ss to think during students' discussion & peer-reading at planning, reviewing and editing stages —Teacher should provide chances for students to check their own mistakes & learn editing skills —Teacher acts as helper and students as writers help themselves —Teacher should be more encouraging so that students learn writing skills and practise them with more confidence —Students can get ideas from fellow students and use their imaginations
The Attitude of Teacher Towards Error	—Teacher tended to spot every single error —Teacher expected every error corrected —Teacher expected error-free composition	—Errors are acceptable up to the proof-reading stage so far as they cause no misunderstanding —Teacher should teach editing skills and students should be responsible for editing their own drafts —Teacher should encourage Ss to express their ideas logically & creatively instead of asking for an error-free composition only
Purpose of marking	—Teacher marked writing for finding errors —Teacher marked content only for giving a grade to Ss' work —Teacher did not expect students to improve the content —Teacher pointed out all the weaknesses of the students	—Teacher should look for room for improvement in content —Teacher should suggest ways to clarify or improve the content while marking —Teacher should aim at a better content from the student when marking —Teacher should praise the students for their strengths as well as give suggestions for improving the content

Findings from The Experimental Teaching

1. Were reviewing and re-writing skills successfully taught and learnt?

   The students' drafts indicated that the training in revising and editing skills ultimately helped them to develop their thoughts more logically and creatively and to present them in a more interesting way.

   The findings of the student evaluation showed that most of the students were convinced that if they took time and re-read their writing from another point of view, they would be able to make improvements both in content as well as in form.

   Revising, re-writing and editing skills can definitely be taught but the teacher has to be very careful and systematic in presenting and guiding the students throughout these stages because students are not too familiar with these writing skills and thus, not in the habit of re-considering their ideas. Explicit demonstration and explanation using students' drafts proved to be very useful as it illustrated a procedure for viewing a piece of writing from another point of view. As students pooled together their ideas, they were able to see a better, improved piece of writing after the discussion, thereby building up their confidence for reviewing their own work. Teacher-student conferences, peer-reading, and peer-editing also helped them to develop skills as critical readers.

2. Were the students able to detect and correct certain grammatical mistakes in the language area specified by the teacher?

   As shown in their drafts, students were able to pick out their own grammatical errors and make improvements at this level. However, it must be born in mind that it was a bright class with bands 1 and 2 students and that clear instructions were given so that their attention was focused on a particular type of error – at word level, phrase level, sentence level or organization.

   It seemed that the success of this experiment owed a lot to the good standard, the alertness and intelligence of the students which had helped in the rapid progression of the lessons.

   To implement process writing into the existing teaching-learning environment, teachers usually have constraints posed by the timetable, the scheme of work, textbooks, and large number of mixed ability students in classes of forty. Modifications and adaptations that address the constraints are recommended in the following section.

Suggested Adaptations for Carrying Out a Process Approach in the Existing Framework of HK Secondary Schools

1. Modify or design writing tasks by specifying the following aspects:
   —the communicative context (e.g. the world of the imagination, the world of personal relationships, the world of work)
   —the writing purpose,
   —the mode of interaction (the roles of writer and intended readers),
   —the text (e.g. story, speech, dialogue)

2. Suggest or modify the elements of guided compositions which are set down by the English panel. The following elements may be changed to produce more creative writing:

—changes in content and making amendment,

—changes in the characters of a story,

—changes in the ending: the same situation can lead to an eerie ending, horrible ending or even a funny and amusing ending,

—changes in the writer's role: he can be one character in the situation or a reporter outside the situation,

—changes in the reader may bring forth a change in the writing purpose, thus leading to the development of particular kinds or writing skills or writing from different points of view,

—changes in the setting may alter the course of events and may lead to an entirely different story.

By making alterations to the above elements, students are exposed to new aspects of the topic and this may lead to a more creative way of thinking and writing. This will also lessen the teaching load of the teacher, making Process Writing more feasible in actual classroom situations.

3. Begin with a very simple but interesting writing task, so that the students can experience the whole writing process completely and smoothly in a short period of time.

4. Be ready to spend more time on the first two writing tasks because students can then get used to the new instructions and different way of learning to write.

5. Remove limitations on the length of a piece of writing in order to encourage students to write from where they are.

6. Do some pre-writing, planning, reviewing, peer-reading, and presenting in class and assign drafting, re-writing and editing as homework so that students have sufficient time to draft and redraft and the teacher can complete the scheme of work on time, provided that students are ready to do so.

7. Move on to each stage progressively in the writing process and emphasize one or two particular writing stages in each writing task. In this way, the students have sufficient opportunities and practice to develop particular writing skills.

8. Allow students to re-draft and edit their drafts at home so that they have sufficient time to discover and develop their ideas. In this way, the teacher can save a lot of lesson time.

9. Be particularly careful in dealing with revising and editing skills as the students are specially unfamiliar with these two stages. The teacher, therefore, has to be very patient, and should give sufficient guidance. Students should also be led to understand the advantages of re-considering their own work because writing is a thinking process. It is only when they understand the benefits of so doing that they get themselves involved in the work.

10. Grade the final drafts according to how much progress the students have made across drafts.
11. Be aware of the students' progress and problems so that the teacher is able to make changes on the spot whenever and wherever necessary for coping with a mixed ability class.
12. Ensure that the instructions and materials are carefully designed and written in suitable language so that students will find it easier to follow and understand.
13. Direct students' attention to the development of a line of thought with a choice of comprehensible and interesting materials. If students are guided to see that materials can be reorganized in many ways, they will have the courage to experiment with different forms of organization. As the problem of language difficulty is eliminated, students can concentrate on the development of their ideas. In addition, extensive reading will definitely help students develop and improve their writing as it will provide them with more information and a model of good English.
14. Avoid hurrying through the writing process. Timing is another important factor which the teacher should attend to as teaching too fast may leave the students in a fog. This is especially true during revising and editing stages. But once students get familiar with the procedures, they will be able to benefit from one another. They can assimilate points from others' work through peer-reading and can train themselves as critical readers of others' work at first, and then even of their own work. Given enough training, even weaker students will be able to develop writing skills from Process Writing and to spot mistakes in their own work.

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT
A WRITING PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY 2

Course No.: **EP912**
Group 3:
Name of the participant: Rachel Yau
Project Supervisor: Tony Mahon

Introduction

Based on recent linguistic research, a Process Approach to the teaching of writing has been developed. Unlike traditional approaches, which put emphasis on the error-free product of the pupils' writing, a Process Approach puts more emphasis on the "wandering path that pupils use to get to the product". It involves four writing stages: the Pre-writing stage, the Drafting/Redrafting stage, the Revising/Editing stage and the Publishing stage. Several strategies and techniques are employed to help pupils go through the different stages in writing.

Although Process Approaches to writing have been popular for several years in many countries, it is still relatively unknown in Hong Kong schools, particularly at primary level. In order to find out whether a Process Approach could help improve and develop pupils' writing skills, a writing programme was designed for a P2 class at North Point Government Primary PM School.

Project Design

The experimental class consisted of 30 pupils with an age ranging from 8 to 10. Their language standard was average compared with the other three P.2 classes. Before the implementation of this programme, their experience of writing was restricted to merely copying words or phrases and making simple sentences in a highly controlled situation. Experience in composing their own sentences was very limited. Therefore, this writing programme aimed at helping pupils to produce independently pieces of writing either in phrases or in complete sentences to express their ideas. The estimated time needed for this programme was 5 double lessons.

*The Theme

In designing the programme a thematic approach was adopted. The main theme chosen was 'Animals'. The reason for choosing this theme was that most children love animals. To begin, a story "The monkey, the elephant, the tiger and the deer" was introduced. This story is about four animals which went to drink in a pool of water in the jungle. However, when they saw their own reflections in the water, they were so afraid that they ran away from them. The four animals in the story then became the main subjects for the writing tasks that followed.

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*Writing Tasks

Altogether there were five main writing tasks in the programme. These aimed at giving pupils exposure and practice in writing different text types. Each task was related to the main theme 'Animals'. The five tasks were Caption Writing, Shape Poems, Shape Stories, Letters and Riddles. These writing tasks, unlike those provided in course books, have a communicative purpose and encourage the pupils to use their imagination and creativity.

*Holding Writing Conferences

Holding writing conferences with pupils gives the teacher opportunities to talk and discuss with the pupils in order to find out their problems and progress in writing. Since the pupils would be unable to discuss in English, Cantonese was to be used during the conferences. It was intended that such conferences would mainly be held during the Drafting/Redrafting Stage and the Revising/Editing Stage. Within a 35-minute lesson, the first ten minutes would be spent on holding roving conferences with the pupils: this would involve the teacher in moving around the class to give assistance to pupils who need immediate help. During the next 15 minutes the teacher would hold conferences with about 3 individual pupils to discuss the progress of their writing. Since time was limited, it would be impossible for me to have individual conferences with all the pupils by the end of the programme. Therefore, I intended to hold individual conferences with a target group of 8 pupils. Finally, the last 5 minutes would be spent on holding roving conferences again to check pupils' work progress.

*Using Rewriting Guidelines

During the Revising/Editing Stage, a list of general rewriting guidelines written in questions like 'Did you use a big letter to begin a sentence?' or 'Did you use a full stop to end a sentence?' would be put on the blackboard. These guidelines would serve the purpose of guiding pupils to reflect upon, revise and edit their texts.

*Checking progress & Evaluation

In order to check individual pupils' progress in the development of their writing skills, a writing record with a checklist for evaluating the pupils' use of writing strategies would be kept for each individual. The last writing task would be used as a final assessment of each pupil's progress.

Implementation

"A Writing Programme For P.2" was eventually carried out in North Point Government Primary PM School over a period of two months (from April to June 92) with the P.2 class mentioned earlier. According to my preliminary plan, 5 double lessons from the routine time-table would be spent for the whole programme. However, the actual time needed greatly

exceeded my estimation. In fact, a total of 22 lessons was required to complete the programme. In order to obtain the extra time needed, I needed to arrange my time more carefully to be able to cover the course book more quickly.

In the original Scheme of Work it was presumed that a double lesson would be enough for a writing task. In practice, however, a single task stretched over several lessons. Therefore, it was necessary to re-allocate the time. The Scheme of Work that was actually used is given in the Appendix and it shows how time was re-allocated at the different writing stages.

Findings from the programme

While implementing this project in my school, several important discoveries were made about the Process Approach to writing and pupils' responses to it.

*Findings about the Process Approach

1. *Time*

Time is a crucial factor in the Process Approach. As described in the previous section, twelve more lessons had to be allocated to this programme. This was necessary because pupils needed more time to go through the different writing stages and do the actual writing. The teacher also needed time to carry out the pre-writing activities and hold writing conferences with the pupils. In using this approach, a writing task will take at least 3 to 4 lessons. This may be a practical problem since we have limited teaching time. Therefore, teachers will have to arrange their time very carefully.

2. *The Pre-writing Stage*

On average, 1 to 2 lessons were devoted to the Pre-writing Stage for each writing task. Even though much time was spent, the Pre-writing Stage was useful and important since at this stage the teacher could help the pupils to explore a writing task as fully as possible by having them participate in various pre-writing activities. It was found that the pupils did use the information they had generated and gathered at this stage in writing.

3. *Writing Conferences*

While drafting and revising, most pupils needed help. They might need a word spelling, a new vocabulary item or a suggestion from the teacher. Roving conferences therefore became very useful in these two stages. To conduct the conferences more efficiently, the teacher read pupils' drafts in advance and then prepared a list of pupils who needed immediate help. Then, in the next writing lesson, those pupils would obtain help first.

It was also found that after just 3 or 4 individual conferences, five of the eight target pupils had made significant developments in their writing and attitudes to writing. They wrote longer texts and were more willing to talk about their written work. In conclusion, writing conferences were useful both to the teacher and the pupils – the teacher could have a better

understanding of the pupils' problems in writing and the pupils could obtain the help needed while writing.

4. *Rewriting Guidelines*

In practice, two kinds of rewriting guidelines were used. The first was the general rewriting guidelines written in questions described earlier. Pupils could always refer to them while revising their texts. However, I found that many pupils still had difficulties in coping with their own problems while revising. Therefore, I had to provide them with individual rewriting guidelines to help them in revising. These guidelines consisted of some suggestions or rewriting instructions written separately for each individual as a small note by the teacher after reading the pupil's drafts. They were notes like 'Re-arrange order of sentences', 'Write more about the look of the animal' or 'Check the following spellings . . .' etc. Considering the level of the pupils and the purpose of providing these rewriting guidelines, some instructions were written in Chinese (depending on the nature of the instruction) so that the pupils could understand the message. The note together with the pupil's drafts were then returned to the pupil for revising and editing. Since these notes mainly dealt with individuals' problems in writing, they were extremely useful in helping pupils to revise and edit their own texts. Besides, they provided both the teacher and the pupils with something to discuss during writing conferences.

5. *The Workability of the Process Approach*

By using the Process Approach, the pupils have made great improvement in their writing ability. Their texts contained increasingly rich content and they have developed various specific writing skills. The fourth writing task required the pupils to write a letter to one of the four animals in the story told in the first lesson. Below is a draft and final copy of one pupil's letter to the monkey:

19th May. 92.

Dear Monkey, How are you?
Hello! My name is Ni Ying Ying.
← I am nine years old. I like sweets
and mangoes. I don't like hamburgers.
~~I go to shool in the afternon.~~ I have one
I am a girl! I like you. Why? You are   sister
lovely. kind. clever, funny and hairy..
Are you a boy or a girl? How old are
← you? ~~Will you come to my home?~~
~~What do you do~~? What do you like
to eat? Where do you live? What
can you do? Will you come to my home?
Please write to me. Goodbye!

Ying Ying

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4th May, 92

Dear Monkey,

Hello! How are you? My name is Ni Ying Ying. I am a girl. I am nine years old. I like sweets and mangoes. I don't like hamburgers. I go to school in the afternoon. I have one sister. I live in Quarry Bay.

I like yow. Why? You are lovely, kind, clever, funny and hairy.

Are you a boy or a girl? How old are you? What do you like to eat? Where do you live? What can you do? Will you come to my home?

Please write to me. Goodbye!

Ying Ying

The above texts show that this pupil was able to use many of the major writing techniques to draft and improve her letter. The following features can be found in the texts:

*Linguistic skills:
—applying previous learnt words (eg. hamburgers, mangoes) and structures (eg. "My name is . . .", "I don't like . . .") in writing an extended text
—using correct question forms
—using correct punctuation marks

*Revising skills:
—re-arranging the order of sentences
—adding sentences to the text
—deleting sentences from the text
—paragraphing the text
—using signs and arrows in revising

*Other skills:
—using a big letter to begin a sentence
—using imagination in writing

In addition to these writing skills, the pupils were also able to use the cognitive skills of generating and organising ideas and the editing skills of discovering and correcting their own or others' mistakes in writing. These findings all show that the Process Approach can be a workable and effective approach in improving and developing pupils' writing skills.

Pupils' Responses to the Programme

On the whole, the pupils' responses to the programme were good. They particularly enjoyed activities such as story-telling, pair-work and reading riddles at the Pre-writing Stage. As the programme continued, most pupils developed an interest in writing. Among the five writing tasks, they enjoyed writing Riddles the most.

To find out more about the pupils' reactions to the programme, a simple questionnaire was given to the pupils to complete in a lesson two weeks after the implementation of the whole programme. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions written in Chinese and discussion of the questions was conducted in Cantonese. According to the questionnaires completed by the pupils, the following information was gathered:

	Percentage
*Interested in the writing programme	100%
*Believe that their writing skills have improved	76.7%
*Have more confidence in writing	93.3%
*Believe that the first draft need not be the final product	86.7%
*Believe that we can improve a text by revising it	93.3%
*Believe that they are also responsible for correcting their mistakes	96.7%
*Pre-writing activities could prepare them for actual writing	100%

*Rewriting Guidelines (general/individual) were helpful in
   revising their texts   100%
*could obtain help from writing conferences   100%
*could learn from peer-reading one another's texts   100%

The above feedback indicates that the pupils now have more confidence in writing and a greater awareness of the different stages in writing. But more than that they have also developed a new attitude towards writing which will be important in the further development of their writing skills.

Evaluation

As mentioned before, the last writing task, Riddles, was used as a final assessment. Thus, when carrying out this writing task, the teacher's guidance was reduced by a considerable degree. Only 20 minutes of a double lesson was spent on the Pre-writing activities. Then for the next 50 minutes the pupils started to write their riddles. While they were drafting, I found that most of them could produce their sentences independently. Though they made mistakes in some of their sentences, they were still able to express themselves in writing. By the end of the double lesson, most pupils had finished two animal riddles without much help from the teacher. Some of them even tried to write riddles about other animals such as frogs, rabbits, pigs and fish. On average, most of them could produce eight sentences in a riddle.

By evaluating the 5 pieces of pupils' work it was found that pupils could compose not only separate complete sentences but also coherent texts. The checklists of individual's progress also showed that pupils had developed several writing skills as mentioned in the above section. Thus, it can be concluded that this writing programme has finally achieved more than it aimed at – pupils should be able to produce independently pieces of writing either in phrases or in complete sentences to express their ideas. The results also prove that a Process Approach can help the development of pupils' writing ability through the act of writing itself. Both the teacher and the pupils were satisfied with the results it helped to produce.

Appendix
Scheme of Work with Lesson Plan Summaries

Aim: Pupils should be able to produce independently pieces of writing either in phrases or in complete sentences to express their ideas.

Theme: Animals

Main Writing Tasks	Objectives	Pre-Writing	Drafting/Redrafting	Revising/Editing	Publishing
Caption Writing (5 lessons)	Pupils should be able to write about a picture using a word, a phrase or a sentence.	*1 double lesson: —Story telling *1 lesson: —Retelling the story —Discussing pictures from the story —Making phrases/sentences about the story using T's sentence maker	*1 lesson: —Drawing pictures about the story —Writing a caption for the pictures —Writing Conferences	*1 lesson: —Rewriting —Guidelines —Peer reading —Proof reading —Correcting mistakes —Writing Conferences	—Finish colouring pictures at home —Display on boards
Shape Poems (3 lessons)	Pupils should be able to write a Shape Poem of an animal using words or phrases.	*1 lesson: —Brainstorming —Discussing & listing ideas about the animals —Demonstrating writing a shape poem	*1 lesson: —Writing shape poems —Writing Conferences	*1 lesson: —Rewriting —Guidelines —Peer reading —Proof reading —Correcting mistakes —Writing Conferences	—Finish copying the final poems at home —Display on boards

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Topic (lessons)	Objectives	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Shape Stories (4 lessons)	Pupils should be able to write a Shape Story of an animal using phrases or sentences.	*1 lesson: —Pair work: reading texts about the animals & taking notes —Classifying ideas about the animals in a table —Making sentences using T's sentence maker	*2 lessons: —Writing sentences about an animal —Writing Conferences	*1 lesson: —Rewriting —Guidelines —Peer reading —Proof reading —Correcting mistakes —Writing Conferences	—Finish copying texts at home —Make into story books to be kept in class library
Letters (6 lessons)	Pupils should be able to write a letter to an animal using complete sentences	*2 lessons: —Reading a letter from the animals —Brainstorming —Discussing & classifying the content —Demonstrating writing a letter —Teacher & pupils revise & edit the letter together	*2 lessons: —Writing a letter to an animal —Writing Conferences	*2 lessons: —Rewriting —Guidelines —Peer reading —Proof reading —Correcting mistakes —Writing Conferences	—Finish copying the final letter at home —Drawing a picture for the letter at home —Display on boards
Riddles (4 lessons)	Pupils should be able to write a riddle about an animal using complete sentences	*1/2 lesson: —Reading riddles & making guesses —Listing ideas about the animals	*1 & 1/2 lessons: —Writing a riddle about an animal —Writing Conferences	*1 lesson: —Rewriting —Guidelines —Peer reading —Proof reading —Correcting mistakes —Writing Conferences	—Copying the final riddles —Drawing the answers —Make into riddle books to be kept in class library

*No. of lessons spent (each lesson lasts for 35 mins)

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT
LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT THROUGH AUDIO AND VISUAL MATERIALS

Course No.:   EUS 912
Group 2A: Au Foon-yee, Carole
Cham Mei-yu
Chan Lai-kuen, Emily
Chan Wai-chun, Eleanor
Chan Wai-yee, Janet
Hui Lai-kuen, Belina
Lee Wan-lung, Leo
Li Mei-yee, Mabel
Mak Wing-cheung
Ting Lai-king
Tuit Shiu-kee
Wong Tai-yuen, Albert
Group Tutor: Barbara Chan

Introduction

Before starting our action research, first of all we identified one of the current problems in teaching and learning English. We found that learning English has become a chore or drudgery for most students in Hong Kong. We considered ways of coping with the problem by making English lessons more enjoyable, stimulating and effective, instead of remaining routinized, teacher-centred and textbook-bound.

In our Action Research, twelve of us worked as a group. We organized ourselves into four sub-groups. First of all, we tried to find out what might and could be done to make learning English in the classroom more fun and enjoyable. We opted to develop and produce a set of language enrichment materials of radio, video, songs and story-telling. We expected that this package of materials could serve as a reference or a supplement to everyday stereotyped teaching.

In the Radio Play section, we made use of authentic materials such as actual radio excerpts, which included news announcements, advertisements etc. Students were taught how to extract main ideas, what the language of advertising was like and how to make use of it.

In the Video section, we made use of an interesting cartoon, a success story of a celebrity and funny video strips. Students were expected to make predictions of the story plot, note-taking, script writing, role-playing and some sharing of their own past experiences etc.

In the Story-telling section, a set of visual aids which included pictures and cartoon strips were used. Students had to use their imagination to build up stories of their own and report them afterwards.

In the Songs section, we prepared sets of songs depicting different facets of love, including parental love, love for the world, and love seen through the eyes of people of different ages. Apart from appreciating the songs, students were helped to reflect on the subject of love with its many interpretations and implications through activities like questioning, locating the main themes and relevant expressions from the lyrics.

We tried out our materials in four different secondary 4 classes. As we aimed at senior form students, S4 was the ideal choice as they were free from immediate public examination pressure. They could be exposed to activity-based forms of learning. Besides, we thought the activities we prepared were well-suited to S4 level.

The school we chose was Ming Kei College, an English medium co-educational school in Kowloon. The students there are of above average academic ability and have a good command of English.

We had four main objectives in carrying out the experimental teaching:

a.   To develop language enrichment materials to try out in class.
b.   To explore how these language enrichment materials and activities benefit students in general and how much they enjoy them.
c.   To find out how students of different disciplines i.e. Arts and Science, respond to these activities.
d.   To develop further teaching materials for language enrichment in class.

In actual practice, we allocated four lessons to each of the S4 classes. Two Arts classes and two Science classes formed two separate groups. We tried out the whole set of four different activities for each of the groups. Each class had two different activities as follows:

4A		Video & Story-telling
	(Arts Group)	
4B		Radio News & Songs
4D		Songs & Video
	(Science Group)	
4E		Story-telling & Radio News

Each of our sub-groups was responsible for designing lesson plans and teaching materials. It then conducted the lessons allotted for its activity. For the preparation part, all members of each group collaborated, while finally, one member of each sub-group was in charge of the teaching. Evaluation was done towards the end of each activity. The last fifteen minutes were used for the students to complete two questionnaires, each on a different activity tried out by them. Both questionnaires were designed for the students to give their feedback and remarks.

In addition, observation forms were completed during each lesson by observers, who included Miss Barbara Chan, our tutor, and ourselves. We had at least four observers each time, two being primary observers, i.e. they

did the observation throughout the 16 periods to ensure more consistent assessment and evaluation.

After the actual try out, we collected data from the questionnaires completed by the students, and based on these, we carried out investigations in the following areas:

(1) Whether and to what extent upper secondary students enjoy language lessons in the aesthetic domain
(2) Whether and how often they want to have these lessons
(3) Whether they think they can learn from these lessons
(4) Whether they want to pursue activities in language enrichment on their own beyond the language class
(5) Whether students of different disciplines, i.e. Arts and Science, have different reactions to learning activities in the aesthetic dimension

We are delighted to find that students' overall feedback is positive and encouraging. In addition, there are observable points of difference in the ways Arts and Science students reacted to various teaching strategies. In all, it is fair to say that the experimental teaching programme was largely an enjoyable and helpful experience to all who took part in it.

Limitations of the Study

The programme was carried out in a single school and at a single level. In the absence of a representative sampling design, we saw no point in using methods of inferential statistical analysis. The overall design of our action research therefore does not put us in a position to generalize our findings externally.

The collected data indicated only 'self-reported' behaviour. Owing to limitation of time, we have not been able to find out the differences, if any, between 'self-reported' behaviour and actual behaviour.

Constraints in time and resources have also prevented us from carrying out investigations into other areas of interest to us. One of these areas is how other variables, such as gender, may affect learners' reactions towards language enrichment programmes.

Implications

Language enrichment is an interesting area that warrants exploration in further breadth and depth. We suggest that further research be conducted with experimental or quasi-experimental designs including representative sampling and statistical analyses of data to ensure that findings which emerge can be externally generalized. In addition, longitudinal studies should be carried out to convince sceptics that students did not enjoy the enrichment programmes merely because of innovation effects.

Our overall findings have left us in little doubt that language teaching/learning activities in the aesthetic domain are effective incentives to students' motivation to learn. This is borne out by the fact that close to

90% of the students indicated that they wanted to have enrichment lessons as an integral part of their language curriculum. We, therefore, believe that enrichment programmes should be extended to all levels in secondary schools. Nevertheless, an important lesson we have been able to draw from clinical experience in the experimental teaching programme is that both teachers and learners need time to adjust themselves to 'novel' patterns of classroom interactions. To conclude on a clinical note, hasty 'transplants' of research findings into classrooms may well result in 'rejections' on the part of teachers and learners alike.

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT
LEARNING ENGLISH IN AN INTERESTING WAY THROUGH ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN LOWER SECONDARY CLASSES

Course No.: ES 912
Group 4: Lam Ngan-fung, Winny
Lau Kwan-ying, Winnie
Shiu Lai-wan, Constance
Chan Yu-yu, Olivia
Leung Chung-fun, Grace
Leung Oi-ling, Julia
Yuen Wai-ling, Winnie
Ip Kit-yi, Jackie
Lai Tak-ming, Katherine
Chan Yuet-yi, Phoebe
Cheng Wai-chee, Betty
Group Tutor: Mr Wu Kam-yin

Introduction

We believe that using English newspapers is a valuable teaching and learning asset. Students should be motivated to engage actively in language learning in an effective and realistic way. They should be encouraged to learn about the world around them and gain familiarity with current English usage. In this aspect, as a kind of authentic material, English newspapers are a valuable resource. Moreover, English newspapers can form interesting teaching materials if they are carefully selected to cater for the needs and interests of students.

Despite being such good resource material for language teaching and learning, English newspapers are not being well-exploited by English language teachers in Hong Kong. Many students, especially junior secondary students, are unaware of the value of English newspapers. They think that reading English newspapers is boring since the subject matter is dry and serious. To change their misconception of English newspapers, students have to be assisted, encouraged and motivated by teachers with a suitable selection of material chosen from English newspapers. For example, material from the 'Young Post' of the South China Morning Post and the 'Education' of the Hong Kong Standard can be selected and adapted to provide interesting, varied and easy materials for even junior form students.

In order to prove the value of English newspapers to junior secondary students, we carried out an action research project on using English newspapers with junior form students. Our hypotheses were:
1. English newspapers can be used as a source of teaching materials in junior English classes.
2. Junior secondary students will find English newspapers interesting.

3. Junior secondary students will find English newspapers suitable for their level.
4. Junior secondary students will use English newspapers as a tool for learning English.
5. Junior secondary students will develop the habit of reading English newspapers.

Implementation

We selected and adapted certain columns from English newspapers for our teaching activities, namely, advertisement, shopping guide, horoscope, celebrity, comics, games and news.

We did our experimental teaching in T.W.G.Hs. Chen Zao Men College from 3rd December, 1991 to 5th December, 1991 with two Form 2 classes. Ten lessons were used and the duration of each lesson was 40 minutes.

In these ten lessons, students worked either individually or in pairs. We designed tasks on reading, writing, skimming, scanning, problem solving, decision-making, discussing and guessing. Through these tasks, we wanted to show students there were easy and interesting columns in English newspapers and they could learn English by reading them.

To test our hypotheses, we used questionnaires, interviews and task observation forms as our evaluation instruments.

Findings and Analysis

From the information we collected from the questionnaires, interviews, task observation forms, and students' results on worksheets, we obtained the following findings:

1. Before the experimental teaching, 12% of the students said that their teachers used English newspapers in class. However, after the experimental teaching, 74% of the students indicated that they would like their English teachers to use English newspapers in future. So, the first hypothesis that English newspapers can be used as a source of teaching materials in junior English classes is established.

2. Before the experimental teaching, only 31% of the students found English newspapers interesting but after the experimental teaching 88% of the students said that they found English newspapers interesting. Therefore, our second hypothesis that junior secondary students will find English newspapers interesting is supported.

3. At the beginning of the experimental teaching, 63% of the students found English newspapers difficult but after the experimental teaching 49% of them found English newspapers not as difficult as they had thought. Hence, hypothesis 3 that Junior secondary students will find English newspapers suitable for their level is valid.

4. One of the common remarks from the interviews with the students was that they could learn more English such as new vocabulary and sentence structures from English newspapers, especially from the news column, 'Education' and the 'Young Post'. According to the data collected from the questionnaires, 96% of the students thought English newspapers could help them learn more English and improve their English. Thus, hypothesis 4 that junior secondary students will use English newspapers as a tool for learning English is established.

5. Our last hypothesis that junior secondary students will develop the habit of reading English newspapers is also supported by the data collected from the questionnaires. Before the experimental teaching, only 17% of the students read English newspapers in their spare time, but after the experimental teaching 81% of them said that they would read English newspapers in future.

Conclusion

After this action research project, we firmly believe that both average and bright students can learn English in an interesting way through newspapers.

We hope that other English teachers will share our belief and start making full use of English newspapers for classroom teaching.

ACTION RESEARCH REPORT

WIDENING STUDENTS' INTEREST IN READING ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS THROUGH CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Course No.:   *EUS 921*
Group 5:   *Lourdes Chiang*
                    Elsa Kwok
                    Raymond Kwong
                    Bernard Lam
                    Fiona Lo
                    Wing-Mui Pang
                    Irene Tam
                    Zachary Tien
                    Betty Wong
Group Tutors: *Mike Murphy and Philip Hoare*

Introduction

English newspapers have long been regarded by many teachers of English, especially those of senior secondary forms, to be very useful tools for teaching and learning English. However, many students often read a small part of the newspaper or show an interest in only a few sections, despite the fact that many of them are regular subscribers to the South China Morning Post or the Hong Kong Standard. The teachers involved in this project set out to find the sections of English newspapers which the students were most and least interested in and attempted to widen the students' interest in reading English newspapers through classroom activities.

Being easily accessible and inexpensive, newspapers offer a wealth of authentic materials which enable students to come into contact with English in real life situations, making learning more realistic, meaningful and purposeful. Besides authenticity, newspapers also provide great variety in terms of topics, language and style of writing. As newspapers differ from other reading materials in the sense that they are most current and provide "up-to-minute" information, they help students keep abreast of the latest happenings around the world and thus broaden their general knowledge with the wide range of selections available. In fact, the newspaper is just like a kaleidoscope, each section has its distinct characteristics to inform, to report, to comment, to persuade, with the style ranging from informal (as in the Advertisements) to formal (as in the Editorial). We are, therefore, convinced that reading newspapers can improve students' language proficiency tremendously. However, as teachers, we find that it is often difficult to convince students to develop reading English newspapers as a

habit. Moreover, students' knowledge about newspapers is also limited. Through our action research, therefore, we tried out different classroom activities with English newspapers to help students know more about them, so as to boost their level of interest and widen their interest in various sections of the newspapers.

We carried out our experimental teaching in a Secondary 4 Science class at Christian Alliance S.C. Chan Memorial College in Tuen Mun on May 29th, June 2nd, June 3rd and June 4th, 1992.

Plan of Activities for Experimental Teaching

ACTIVITY 1—5 minutes

Objective: To find out students' attitudes and interests towards reading English newspapers.

Steps: Students are asked to complete a questionnaire.

ACTIVITY 2—35 minutes

Objective: To familiarize students with different sections of the SCMP and to provide students with a chance to practise scanning skills.

Steps: Students are given the SCMP of 28-5-92 and are given 10 minutes to read through it.

Students are given 10 minutes to complete a quiz on the SCMP.

Teacher goes over the answers and introduces different sections of the newspaper.

ACTIVITY 8—20 minutes

Objective: To provide students with an opportunity to read articles cut out from different sections of the SCMP and to share with their group members what they have read.

Steps: Students in groups of 4 or 5 are given a set of 5 sheets with 2 articles each from the SCMP.

Each student is given 10 minutes to read one of the worksheets.

After reading, every student is to tell the other members of the group what the articles on his or her sheet are about.

ACTIVITY 9 – Project—40 minutes

Objective: To give students an opportunity to design activities using the English newspaper.

To encourage discussion through exchanging ideas.

ACTIVITY 3—10 minutes

Objective: To find out students' interests in particular sections of the SCMP.

Steps: Students complete questionnaire ranking the different sections of the newspaper according to their interest and indicating the sections which they had seldom read before.

ACTIVITY 4—10 minutes

Objective: To find out students' interests in different sections of the SCMP and to provide students with an opportunity to read English newspapers in their spare time.

Steps: Teacher shows students a sample of a scrapbook and explains to them how to prepare it. Students in groups of 4 or 5 are asked to cut out materials they are interested in from any English newspaper and stick them into the scrapbook.

Students are asked to put down the date of the newspaper, the sections the materials are cut out from and to highlight the main idea of that particular article.

This activity will continue in the following two sessions.

ACTIVITY 5—5 minutes

Objective: To get students motivated as a warm-up activity.

Steps: Every student is given a worksheet for matching headlines to news items.

ACTIVITY 6—10 minutes

Objective: To get students motivated as a warm-up activity.

Steps: Students in groups of 2 or 3 are given a set of worksheets for matching headings to pieces of information. Students are encouraged to discuss and work out the answers with their group members.

ACTIVITY 7—15 minutes

Objective: To promote among the students cooperation and exchange of ideas.

Steps: Students in groups of 4 or 5 are given a set of 5 sheets
(*a*) a photograph
(*b*) a short article
(*c*) another short article
(*d*) a headline
(*e*) another headline
Each member of the group holds one of the above sheets and is reminded not to let others read his or her own sheet.
(Note: One student in each of the 2 groups of 4 has to hold the 2 headline sheets.)
Students are given one minute to read the sheets and figure out what each of them is about.
After reading, every student should be ready to tell the other members of the group what his or her sheet is about.

When the information on all the sheets has been exchanged, the whole group has to work out together the matching of the photograph (Sheet a) with one of the headlines (Sheet d or e) and one of the articles (Sheet b or c).

Students in groups of 4 or 5 choose articles/comic strips/photos from various sections of the newspaper and design activities based on their cutouts.

ACTIVITY 10—35 minutes

Objective: To promote peer learning through English newspaper activities designed by peers.

To provide students with an opportunity to evaluate activities designed by peers.

Steps: Students in groups of 4 or 5 try out activities designed by different groups.

After trying out each activity, they are required to fill in an evaluation sheet.

ACTIVITY 11—5 minutes

Objective: To evaluate whether the objectives of our Action Research have been achieved.

Steps: Students answer questionnaire.

ACTIVITY 12—15 minutes (4/6)

Objective: To provide students with an opportunity to evaluate the overall objectives of the Action Research.

Steps: Students are divided into groups of 4 or 5 and each group is interviewed by a teacher.

Students are invited to give their opinions on all the activities done from lessons 1 to 8.

TTRA Perspectives

Broadly speaking, the following Target and Target-Related Assessment (TTRA) targets are aimed at in the design of the activities.

I. *Social Interaction Target*

During most of the teaching sessions, the students are expected to participate actively in discussing in groups, exchanging ideas, making judgements and decisions, exploring through argument and persuasion, etc. These activities enable the students to use English for interacting with their counterparts purposefully and communicatively. (Activities 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12)

II. *Problem-Solving with Others Target*

Students are engaged in solving problems with others when they work on many of the activities, especially the designing project. They plan and organize activities based on English newspapers and solving

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various problems during the process of designing and trying out these activities. (Activities 2, 6, 7, 9, 10)

III. *Developing and Applying Knowledge Target*

Students identify and make connections among concepts and related processes drawn from learning in English in the course of making use of newspaper texts for various activities. Moreover, they are engaged in identifying and clarifying ideas through designing the activities and exchanging ideas with their peers. (Activities 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

IV. *Personal Response Target*

Students respond to interesting texts, personal anecdotes, stories or comic strips commonly found in newspapers by extending and making use of them in activities. (Activities 4, 8, 9, 10)

Findings

To evaluate whether the objectives of our action research had been achieved, three questionnaires and two lesson observation and evaluation forms were designed and used before, during and after the lessons.

The two overall objectives—

(1) to determine which particular sections of the Hong Kong English Language newspapers students are most interested in;

(2) to widen students' interest in reading English newspapers through classroom activities—

were well achieved during and after the series of activities.

Before the lessons, most of the students were interested in the Young Post. After the activities, however, around half of the students indicated that they began to find interest in sections which they had seldom read previously such as the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL section. This shows that students' interests have been broadened and we hope that they will continue to read these sections in the future.

Students also found the lessons more interesting than the normal everyday English lessons. They were given freedom to select their own newspaper articles and to read at their own pace. The workshop gave students the opportunity to work as a group. Through this, they could share and exchange ideas, thus giving them a chance to practise their oral English and hence increase their confidence in the spoken language.

Recommendations

A. *Recommendations on the Use of English Newspapers in the Classroom*

1. Teachers reflected in the group interview forms that students welcomed the idea of using more newspapers in class.

2. A resource bank of newspaper cuttings and ideas on classroom activities with newspapers can be set up in the English panel to

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