



Returning to the Face-to-face English Classroom and Rebuilding Human Contact through Drama and Gamification (K12 Theatre)

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- The case was not just a lesson but a 3-day program with 18 hours.
- The program started as a voluntary campaign to give extra English lessons with foreigners(both native & non-native English speakers) to low SES students in HK
- Eventually the program and the research along were awarded by The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2016 and later on the research result was published at the academic conference 2020 of Hong Kong Metropolitan University and The Open University of China

Reports from Award Winning Teams
得獎隊伍報告

Team: InSpire **Team with Best Cultural Integration**

Team leader: Hon Tung Hiu Germen (Hong Kong / Postgraduate Student)

Team Members: Wong Hong Kit Sam, Mak Yau Tung Sarah (Hong Kong)/ Zheng Siyuan, Gu Ming Yu, Zhuang Xiuting (Mainland China)/ Kim Young, Yoon Ji Yeong (South Korea)/ Patricia Piroška Grof (Hungary)/ Polina Malkova (Russia)/ Jacopo Scarin (Italy)/ Bradley Scott Heater (USA)



Certificate of Merit

This is to certify that

Hon Tung Hiu

student of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

completed a project

‘English writing through drama with Process-writing and Collaborative approaches’

and awarded

I-CARE Social Research Scholarship 2013-2014.

English Writing through Drama with Process-writing and Collaborative Approaches: A Case Study in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Purpose – Various temporary funds have been allocated to Hong Kong primary schools to address the scope for English Language acquisition (ELA) with poetic and dramatic approaches; and many of these extra funds have been cut at the end of the 2010s. This new element in the Hong Kong primary English curriculum is not as crucial as in the secondary sector where the authority has declared it compulsory. Its feasibility and application for primary English education should be further emphasized through various research outcomes in order to seek resources for future development. On the other hand, students with low socioeconomic status (SES) in Hong Kong are disadvantaged in English learning which will significantly affect their mobility within the social hierarchy in the long run. It is important to find out to what extent the more interactive and integrative teaching approaches mentioned above can contribute to the ELA.

Collaborative Learning Approach:

collaborative writing can obviously increase students' motivation to participate in writing compositions and stories in English, when the given chance provides them potential audience and platform to help with each other. (Mak et al. and Coniam 2008)

Expressivist Approaches:

Hyland(2003) suggests on this stage(education today) teacher should not teach and transfer all the knowledge and ideas directly to students, not to give them the obvious answers towards the topic, but to become a facilitator to assist students to engage in a cognitive process to develop ideas and chronology for their own writing.



Approach of process writing

Process writing is a method to conduct students writing for testing their language towards the communication of ideas, feelings and experiences. It requires that more classroom time should be spent on writing and its preparation and reviews, as the previously outlined activities show, there is more than just writing happening during a session when the time is dedicated to process writing. (Hedge T. 1988)

Drama for SLA

Inserting Drama in English lessons can expose students to the practicality of communicative competence, para-language and pragmatic usage. It is strongly linked to Task-based learning, ZPD, expression, stage $i + 1$ and interaction towards cooperation. (Mohammad 2012)



Objectives

To improve Ss' writing strategies and styles

To train Ss to use voice and body as instruments properly as a control of medium to acquire identification, internalization, empathy, assimilation, imagination, self-actualization, etc. for consistent self-development (*Zafeiriadou 2009*)

To increase Ss' interests in learning English and English writing outside the class continuously (*"connection with the reading of texts", Stenlev 2003, P.40*)

To improve Ss' writing standard and quality

To motivate Ss towards participation in class, the targeted language, and the targeted knowledge (ZDP and stage $i + 1$)



Objectives

- To enhance interaction in both quality and quantity among Ss, as well as between teachers and Ss (communication & cooperation)
- To structuralize the program for a more effective and efficient teaching and learning flow (Task-based and Process-writing)
- To increase the amount of Student-talking-time(STT) and lower Teacher-talking-time (TTT)
- To build Ss' confidence in practicing and using the targeted language and knowledge
- To increase Ss' interests in learning English and English writing in the class

Program layout

An academically average school, P.5 and 6 students

English level (mixed: beginner to elementary)

No. of Ss: about 16(2 to 3 teams), MOI: EMI, materials should be only in English

Location: a standard classroom or activity room

Duration: 6 weeks (18 hours), 6 sections (3 hrs per one)

The actual product – a standard script with a story created by students and drama performance



Pre-writing(6 hrs)

Firstly, all basic drama knowledge should be introduced to students; use physical games to step them in and activate their body, voice and thought

Using games to introduce Ss, 5Ws+1H, as well as strengthen it with them through various activities (e.g. Fruit Salad and Donald Mc Donald)

Making & writing their own questionnaires; interviewing others to collect data

Organizing collected data to write a script for speech, topic: Introducing one of your friends

Scaffolding is needed, teacher should input the intro and ending for Ss' speeches in advance

Then individual presentations and feedback

While-writing(6 hrs)

Amplify 5Ws + 1H and link it to a structure of stories

Reinforce the concept by showing simple and interesting animations, short films to ask Ss to identify the 5Ws + 1H

Physical games to assist Ss to make their own stories through their bodies

Introduction of a standard script

Ss need to write their own story in script



Post-writing (6 hrs)



Rehearsal for their drama shows

Performance and feedback



Post-task, each Ss needs to write the synopsis for their own stories 50% and also their reviews on the course (how they feel, what they learned, pros and cons of the program) 50% (altogether around 200 words)

In Practice



Pros and Cons

Advantages:

Refer to the achievable objectives (e.g. pair-work, team-building interchange among teams, Round Robin, communicative competence, self-esteem, motivation, etc. *'increase Ss' speaking time tenfold or twenty-fold* <Stenlev 2003 P.36>)

Disadvantage:

1. Need extra hardware(materials, manpower, place, etc.<Royka 2002>)
2. Need extra time, while implementing (*Stenlev 2003 & Royka 2002*)
3. In short run, the result is not as tangible and measurable as the one from traditional programs

Conclusion

- The findings from both the students' reviews and observational results, had matched and showed a moderate progress in academic performance but a major increase in learners' motivation and creativity. The research also illustrated such approaches help very significantly in authentic language learning which can also be paralleled with communicative learning teaching (CLT) and this not only occurs between the teachers and students but also among the students.

Discussion

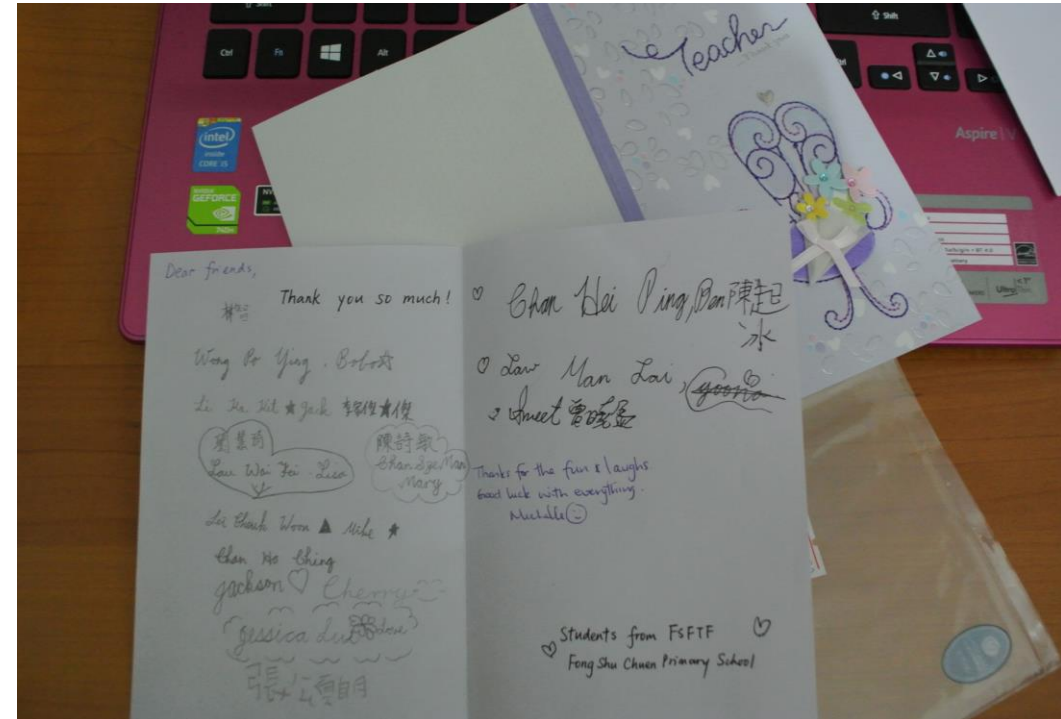
Heavy workload for the English teacher (*EDB curriculum, ECA, admin, etc.*)

Administration

Space and hardware limitations

Lack of manpower

Family SES influence Ss



***Distance between Ss and teachers – "non-threatening environment" (*Vygotsky 1986, p.99*)
<highly disputable>

highlights

- **It is important that when practicing proceed-writing, collaborative and drama in teaching, teachers should raise the morale for teamwork and challenge the students based on team cooperation. For example, there is a game called 'counting number' which is originally to calm the students down with the rules: every time only one student can speak, the one needs to speak the right thing and no talking for communication. When modifying the game to the next level, students cannot speak for the next number when the student around them has just spoken but the others can continue counting the next number and this really challenges students to use teamwork concept, cooperation and planning with their creativity.**

highlights

- **Besides the final outcome(the story and drama) should be up to certain standard(the best is to have no grammatical mistakes), the creativity of the story and presentation skills in acting with authentic language use are even more important for evaluating the students' learning outcome. E.g. one of the students pretends to be a talking-tree in teh drama and when facing a typhoon, he said "I am only 500 years old, I am so young, I do not want to die!". In this case, he used authentic English to make a joke.**

highlights

Games, gamification towards teaching materials and target knowledge, all students love playing games and it is the best to learn something when playing and being happy! Games can also cater learners' diversity that the more capable can help the weaker ones and they will not feel bored.

ZDP and MKOs, as a student, you need to learn from others and practice the learnt knowledge with others so group activities are highly important.

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