

A Report on English Teachers Development Seminar: Sam Shui Natives Association Huen King Wing School

by Emily Wong

Topic: How to teach reading to low-level students

Date: 14 November, 2018

Time: 2:45p.m.-4:00p.m.

Venue: School (Computer room)

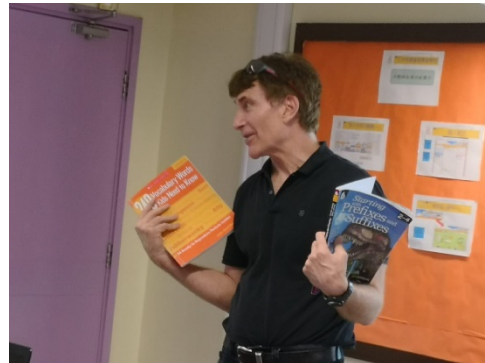
Speaker: Mr Robert Badal

Target: All English teaching staff

Introduction:

The seminar focused on teaching reading to low-level students. Students at our school are generally weak in English as a number of them are from mainland China, while most of them have little parental support at home. Teachers usually spend a huge amount of time to teach students to read passages from line by line. Students lack motivation in reading English books both at home and at school.

Mr Robert Badal, has been a university professor in Japan and Korea as well as an award winning published author and professional editor, has shared his teaching experiences and views on teaching reading to students with low English proficiency.



Summary:

Parental support:

The seminar was divided into two parts: education pedagogy and practical application. Ideally, we encourage parents to read with their kids. Even though our school children lack parental support, parent engagement is necessary. For example, parents may limit children's screen time, school may provide workshops for parents for home reading...

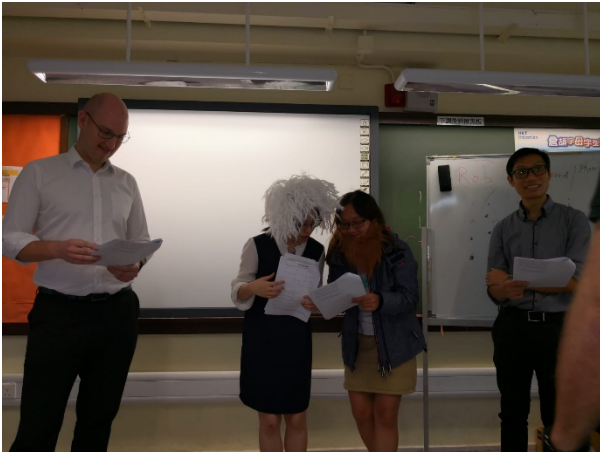


Classroom engagement and effective use of class time:

There are ample methods for teaching reading at school:

Reading aloud (Reader's Theatre style)

Teachers were provided with a short play and some simple costumes. They acted out a story which could be used during English lessons.



Teachers were experiencing teaching reading in a fun way.

Songs

Songs were encouraged to use in language teaching. ***'Songs are one of the best and most motivating resources in the classroom, regardless of the age or background of the learner,' Robert suggested.*** Songs contain authentic language, are easily obtainable, provide vocabulary, grammar and cultural aspects, and are fun for the students.



Teachers sang Christmas songs!

Classroom activities and class games

Language card games such as “Go Fish,” “Silly Sentences,” etc., were suggested to use in teaching vocabulary building and sentence structure forming. These allow students to learn language in by using a communicative approach.



Teachers had to ask each other questions in order to win!

Conclusion:

Language learning is a hard task and is often considered to be boring by our students. During the seminar, teachers were exposed to different ways of teaching reading to students with low motivation and capabilities. The seminar provided inspiration for our teaching.

Our P.1 curriculum needs to be revised it is believed that our students will benefit from a more communicative and interactive approach, rather than the traditional “sit and listen” teaching style. When our P.1 LETs were designing the reading curriculum, we ‘borrowed’ ideas, such as Reader’s Theatre, we learnt from the seminar to teach reading and the Go Fish games and Silly sentences for the teaching of sentence structures.

All in all, the seminar was motivational and inspired. Our English teaching staff gained insights into English teaching, especially in the area of reading.