

獲卓越教學獎的教學實踐

Teaching practices presented with the Award



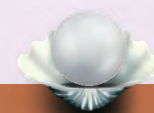
英國語文教育
學習領域
English Language Education
Key Learning Area





Success is the sum of small efforts

▲ Left to right: Ms WONG Mei-chu, Ms KONG Kit-yi, Ms LIU Qianzhao



Teaching Philosophy

" 'Many small streams make one big river.' With persistence and concerted efforts, a team of dedicated teachers taking tiny steps towards building an authentic English learning culture in their school has proven a big success in transforming the school culture and raising students' English standard. At Ning Po College, the team of English teachers named their efforts 'CHANCE'. "



Teachers presented with the Award

Ms WONG Mei-chu
(Years of Teaching: 9)

Ms KONG Kit-yi
(Years of Teaching: 25)

Ms LIU Qianzhao
(Years of Teaching: 4)

School

Ning Po College

Subjects taught

English Language (S1–6)

Interview with the Teachers

Mini-strategies in the classroom that trigger off the butterfly effect in reshaping students' attitude and performance in English



▲ Mini-debates as regular lunchtime activities

The journey begins with small steps

"We never want to surrender to the reality that our students, the majority of which come from grass-root families with little chance to be exposed to English in a Chinese-medium school, could not learn good English," said Ms Wong, the Chairperson of the English Panel at Ning Po College. Instead, the team of English teachers has decided to give their students a chance; a chance for them to build the competence in mastering English. They start off with the most basic step: to nurture students with proper study habits, build up their confidence in using English. Once students have acquired basic language awareness, they would be provided with opportunities to become independent learners, and the whole learning cycle would be propelled by students themselves. That's why they call this reform "CHANCE": (Confidence, Habit, Awareness, New experiences, Challenge and Empowerment).



▲ Regular panel discussions are held to plan and evaluate the effect of new strategies

► The 15-day Summer English Immersion programme is becoming increasingly popular among lower form students



The teachers, who have "big" hearts, dare to dream "big". The first step they take is to start training students in English speaking. "We do what the primary school kids do; we read aloud together in the class for five minutes every day. In this way, even the students who are poor in English speaking would feel comfortable reading aloud in a group." Ms Wong continued, "The reading materials we choose, such as poetry and scripts, really motivate our students to learn." The training in speaking is followed by free writing on a regular basis. Free writing allows students to write worry-free, without the frustration of making mistakes. "It wasn't easy for us in the beginning," admitted Ms Kong. Their efforts soon paid off. With teachers' encouragement to write freely, students are now keen on writing, not afraid of making mistakes anymore.

Motivating less able students to learn English has been an important goal for the teachers at Ning Po. "Whenever students with stronger abilities dominate in the class, the weaker ones tend to remain silent and muddle through. That's why we often assign different roles to students, shifting their duties from time to time, so that everybody in the class gets a chance to play a major role in learning activities," said Ms Kong. Often, students are given ample time to prepare for class in advance in the form of pre-learning activities, which helps learners feel more secure and ready to participate in classroom activities.

"We ask all the students to speak English in class and even after lessons," said Ms Wong. "They may not be able to speak the language properly in the beginning. But that's totally fine, as long as they are willing to take the first step to speak English."

As a teacher of an S1



◀ Learning English through interactive drama activities.

▼ Teachers motivate student to learn English through different ways.



class, Ms Liu, has gone as far as having all the class duties performed in English. "My students are now so used to conversing with me in English," Ms Liu smiled with a sense of fulfillment. These tiny steps, as the teachers called them the mini-strategies, have shaped up students' confidence in using English. "We know that if we deal with all problems at one time, it simply won't work," admitted Ms Wong. "So, we opt for small steps; it may take longer time to reach the goals, but we hope students would stay in the path longer, as we walk with them hand in hand."

Full immersion in English

"Parents often tell us how impressed they are when they see their children immersing in the world of English learning," Ms Kong expressed. Over the years, students have become more eager to take up challenges in English activities.

Participation rate has soared in most English-related extra-curricular activities, such as Halloween Party, English Easter Camp, English Outing, Public Debating Contests and many other events. "The students engaged in the competitive English activities may not necessarily be the ones who score better academically, but they are willing to take up challenges, working hard to master English as a second language. We truly appreciate their positive attitude," Ms Kong commented.



▲ Guests and experts are observing how effective teaching strategies can be conducted in real classrooms

Teachers united on a shared sense of mission

The changes brought by "CHANCE" never came easily, all three teachers admitted. In the first year of implementing the reform, some students in the school showed a bit reluctance to accept the change. "It won't

be possible if we, the three determined pioneers, did not have so much faith in this reform." Ms Kong said. Indeed, the reform has brought about a big increase in workload for the teachers in terms of lesson preparation. Despite the increased workload, the teachers believe that the change and improvement found in students is worth every bit of their efforts. "In the beginning, it was tough.

But we persevere and stay determined on our path. The small steps have soon built upon themselves, and have created a sort of snowball effect." Ms Wong explained. They find that their efforts have paid off when they witness a change in their students. "For example a few years ago, students relied on the script that I prepared for

them during presentation of the bi-weekly English morning talk. Now they are more self-assured and have improved so much that they can write their own script. I play the role of a facilitator only. This explains why the workload incurred by the reform will even out in the long run." Ms Liu elaborated. Down the road ahead, the teachers aim to continue their "CHANCE" reform and continue to explore more new tactics, provide more challenges and learning experiences so as to enable their students to reach a higher pedestal in English learning.

Teachers' Sharing

We have a very deep-rooted belief in education. If students can develop "confidence" and form good learning "habits", they will be able to perform satisfactorily. If students who have potential want to excel in their English Language, developing their language "awareness" will be an essential step. If students can be provided with "new" learning experiences, stimulated and "challenged" in authentic settings and culture of the language, they can be "empowered" to sustain improvement and the learning cycle by themselves. Then, they will be the ultimate winner in the battle of English Language learning.

Conceptual framework – CHANCE

"CHANCE" is the six necessary stages for developing our students into proficient language learners possessing both confidence and competence. They include: **Confidence; Habit; Awareness; New experiences; Challenge; Empowerment.** With this development model, all panel members can stay clear-minded of where we are all heading towards and aiming at, achieving success in our teaching.

Confidence: building students' confidence

To build up students' confidence in using English, we decided to start off by developing students' speaking abilities with "5-min reading aloud time". It involves reading aloud of literary texts ranging from poems to scripts for role play. Reading aloud has been incorporated into every English lesson as a panel policy. As a result of this strategy, even the weakest students are motivated to learn as it removes the threat

of the lack of vocabulary and what students need to do is simply read aloud and enjoy the beauty of the language.

The subsequent step to the "reading aloud" activity is "10-min speaking activities". As language teachers, we clearly understand that the stronger or more active students will dominate while weaker students will remain silent in speaking activities which lack careful planning. We have therefore introduced the following "mini strategies" as part of our classroom strategies to ensure that students can actively take part in every class and feel secure to participate in classroom activities. This is done not only through the policy of the complete use of English by students and teachers but also by promoting the use of group work, pair work and role-assigning practice. This allows students to be engaged in accomplishing a task in English and boosts participation rate by easing their stress of making mistakes in front of classmates. Peer learning has greatly increased students' sense of security in making new attempts in learning English.

Equal emphasis on reading aloud and speaking is put in extra-curricular activities so as to maximise students' opportunities in English learning and confidence building. A number of activities have been organised both inside and outside the school, such as in-house radio broadcasts, programme recording with RTHK, Speech Festival and Study Tours to Singapore.

With all the teachers' effort, over the years, a number of students have volunteered to take part in at least one of the above, in which students could use English for authentic purposes.

Habits: sustaining students' learning by habit formation

As the confidence building strategies start to achieve results and students start to form good learning habits, their learning is further sustained by learning processes,

▼ Students get empowered by leading English activities



◀ New experiences enable students to gain recognition

such as participation in mini projects, through which students familiarise themselves with co-operative learning strategies, such as peer-learning, presentation in groups. These learning processes can enable students to form independent learning habits that are vital to facilitate lifelong learning. In order to sustain students' commitment on a regular basis, free-writing is also introduced to encourage students to write in authentic situations. This strategy can help students overcome the hurdle of writing by encouraging them to develop the habit of free writing.

Awareness: raising students' language awareness

5-min SVO (Subject-Verb-Object) Teaching is implemented to reinforce students' understanding of common sentence patterns. Students' language awareness is further raised through the 10-min Mental Processing Time, which offers regular bite-size reading and mini reading tasks during class time. These activities can help students grasp the basic fabrics of the English Language.

To enhance students' awareness in the English Language, both language arts and non-language arts components are integrated into different parts of our formal curriculum. Students are well exposed to different elements of the English Language curriculum, including poems, songs, short stories and drama during class hours. Debate is also piloted and has received great responses from students.

New experiences, Challenges and Empowerment

As students are getting more ready to move up the

ladder and take on even higher challenges, a wide variety of English activities and inter-school competitions and opportunities for them to take on roles of organisers are provided. These serve as "New experiences" and "Challenges" that stimulate students and keep them engaged and motivated. The last stage of "Empowerment" emphasises the importance for learners to operate freely in real-life communicative situations

and be able to appreciate different cultures through the language. Our students in higher levels are able to benefit from these provisions.

◀ Enhancing students' confidence and English culture through various activities



Throughout the last 6 years, we persist. We act together. We witness changes in the abilities of our students. Some visitors who have come to observe our lessons have made a comment - it's a miracle. But the miracle of English learning at Ning Po College does not have one single ground-breaking initiative. It is just a snowball of mini strategies multiplying the effect as it rolls across these years. It is just a story with teachers' joint effort and blind faith on a series of small steps that bring about a major improvement.



Assessment Summary

Raising students' English standard through an effective language curriculum plan titled "CHANCE"



▲ Students engaged in quality interaction

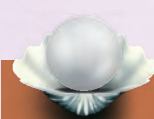
The awardees have led the English Panel in the school to devise a six-stage plan to develop the basic English competence of their students and raise English standard in their CMI (Chinese as a medium of instruction) school since 2009. The design of their plan is underpinned by a conceptual framework called CHANCE (Confidence, Habit formation, Awareness, New experiences, Challenges, Empowerment), which guides the setting of learning objectives for each stage of language development. The CHANCE framework has succeeded in facilitating students' language learning and enhancing their English Language communicative competencies.

A range of well designed resources and teaching materials are used to develop students' confidence, encourage good habit formation, raise language awareness and promote communicative language learning in the school. A reading culture is promoted by adapting different text types from various literary/imaginative sources to enable learners to acquire effective reading skills and form good reading habits. The effective implementation of the school reading programme, establishment of classroom routines conducive to good habit formation, and a learner-centred curriculum have succeeded in nurturing students to be capable of independent learning. Students learn and make progress according to their abilities and pace, and make steady improvement in their command of the English Language. An array of extra-curricular activities is in place to give ample opportunities for students to practise English in authentic situations. Through the promotion of integrative use of language in various activities and a wide range of learning experiences like the use of mini projects and free writing/ journal writing, students' self-learning habits are nurtured and communicative competence enriched. Strategic planning and timely implementation of these effective learning activities not only promote collaborative skills and co-operative learning among students, but also enable students to

achieve personal, intellectual development and cultural understanding.

The teachers have succeeded in changing the school culture and devised exemplary teaching practices based on their conceptual framework titled CHANCE. Through the continuous efforts of the teachers, a school language policy has gradually been formulated, in which the use of English is promoted both inside and outside the classroom. The whole school approach to promote an integrated use of language through different learning experiences has proved to be effective in supporting students' language development. The teachers are highly dedicated to their work and have demonstrated excellent collaboration in building up a motivating learning environment that improves the quality of education for their students.

The awardees have been disseminating the school's initiatives and good practices to parents and the public through forums and seminars. They work with staff members in their school to promote professional development. Their efforts have led to a positive and harmonious school culture in which teachers work collaboratively for a common goal.



Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice



Website:
<http://www.npc.edu.hk>

Contact



Ms WONG Mei-chu



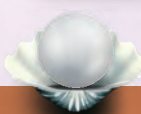
Tel: 2345 5633



Fax: 2341 8282



Email: meichuhk@yahoo.com



Teaching Philosophy

"With the vision to provide quality education and individual attention and care for students, Good Hope School has developed an integrated approach of teaching English in class, blending English Language, literature and drama together to provide various creative platforms for the students to put textbook knowledge into practice. This teaching philosophy, coupled with strategically-designed co-curricular activities, can allow students to learn through experience."



Teachers presented with the Award

Mr DRYSDALE, Matthew James
(Years of teaching: 6)

Ms LUK Ka-yan, Chermaine
(Years of teaching: 12)

Mr TOONG, Kevin Michael
(Years of teaching: 8)

Ms HO Kin-ling, Holly
(Years of teaching: 6)

Ms WONG Hiu-ching, Rachel
(Years of teaching: 5)

School
Good Hope School

Subjects taught
English Language, English Drama,
English Literature (S1-6)



▲ Left to right: Mr TOONG, Kevin Michael, Mr DRYSDALE, Matthew James, Ms HO Kin-ling, Holly, Ms LUK Ka-yan, Chermaine, Ms WONG Hiu-ching, Rachel

Enabling students to experience the real world in their English lessons

Interview with the Teachers

Each student has his/her own learning style, so the best way of teaching English is to address the different needs of each learner.

Pleasurable, meaningful and productive language learning experience

"We do not want our students to memorise vocabulary, proverbs or idioms and regurgitate them on examination paper. Instead, we provide a language-rich environment with lots of activities inside and outside the classroom to encourage our students to learn English in interactive ways," according to Ms Chermaine Luk, the Head of Good Hope School's English Panel. She added enthusiastically that in order to tap the potentials of individual students, the five awardees in the school put their heads together to develop a wide range of co-curricular activities to integrate with the standard English curriculum. These activities include the production of school publications, public speaking, debates, choral speaking, musical theatre and drama. The activities are designed with the element of enjoyment and fun in mind to promote students' ability in daily life communication.



▲ Students are encouraged to make their own choice on the roles and costumes during the choral speaking competition.

"I think providing a broad variety of activities is the most important, so that students can make their own choices, and everyone has a chance to take part and express themselves," according to Mr Drysdale.

Catering for students of different abilities

The awardees believe that each student is unique with their own talents and everyone acquires language skills in different ways. In other words, the best way of teaching English proficiency for a particular student may not work well for others. Therefore, the crux of designing an English Language curriculum is to address the different needs of learners. For example, in activities such as debate and public speaking, there



▲ So many books, so little time! Students make a start at the annual Reading Festival

might be a chance that certain skilful presenters would take up the centre stage and dominate speaking time, while the weaker ones are sidelined. To avoid this, measures are in place to ensure active participation of the whole class. "We encourage shy students to take part in inter-class competitions. Fair chances are there for everyone. An example on how this is achieved can be found in our debate classes," Ms Luk said.

"The debate content is tailor-made to fit into our curriculum across all levels in the school. Students take up different roles at different times so that they can learn at their own pace. The less outspoken students might be assigned with assisting roles to help prepare floor questions and present the research materials to the debaters. Later on, these students will advance to be speakers or debaters, assuming more important or leading roles in competitions."



◀ Demonstrating their competitive spirit at the Inter-class Public Speaking Competition

As a result of such a thoughtful arrangement, several shy students have excelled in various public speaking competitions. "Even their own teachers are amazed by how well they communicate. Imagine the confidence boost that is given to the students!" said Mr Drysdale. In fact, most senior students would be equipped with communication skills and enriched vocabulary to take on a "fight in words" on sophisticated topics or social issues towards the end of their study at the school. But the strongest weapon they have acquired is confidence, that is the vital dynamo of winning a debate.

Synchronising language arts activities with the main English Language curriculum

"Five years ago, when we tried to incorporate drama into the formal curriculum, we did encounter some teething problems. When we first implemented the drama curriculum, students often had to learn poems and short stories that were not part of the core curriculum; therefore they would have to spend extra time and effort on them," Ms Ho and Ms Wong explained.

After evaluating the situation, the team decided to re-design the drama curriculum to be based on short prose, novels and poems used in literature lessons in the core curriculum. Now students are able to adapt short stories like Roald Dahl's "Lamb to the Slaughter" into a drama performance without needing to spend drama lesson time on comprehension exercises. While preparing for the drama production, students are motivated to read reference materials and carry out character analysis in class. This instills passion among students to read literature in a more in-depth way, and kindles their genuine interest in reading.

Team work as the key to success

As the school celebrated its 60th anniversary last October, the team of teachers and students staged the

musical production "Alice in Wonderland". "This large-scale production became a showcase for drama and public speaking that aspiring young performers would look up to. The preparation and rehearsals spanned over a year and a half. Both performers and backstage crew members benefited from the experience tremendously," said Mr Toong.

"Having the experience of playing different characters in the drama definitely helps. Acting enables the students to develop empathy with the characters, which further enhances their appreciation of the authors' intention in literature works," Ms Luk explained.

For the future, the panel of teachers is currently exploring the feasibility of transforming the classroom into a "court room". A "court room"? Yes, they plan to add a mock trial into their English Language



▲ Putting their heads together in a mind-mapping activity

curriculum. All these inspirational ideas aim at providing chances for students to master English as a second language, and at the same time, get acquainted with legal procedures and criminal justice process. "There is always room for improvement!" Ms Luk concluded enthusiastically. "We all are dedicated to thinking out of the box to try out new teaching methods," she said with a big smile.



Teachers' Sharing



We are dedicated professionals who work to make English lessons both challenging and accessible to all students. Coming from different parts of the world, we bring with us a huge range of experience and expertise, and we readily pass this knowledge on to every student. We also aspire to create a positive environment to immerse every student in a productive learning process.

Fostering a lifelong interest in the English Language

The ultimate goal of English teaching at Good Hope School is to develop a well-rounded English Language capability in our students. To this end students are given a rich array of learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

An integrated approach combining English Language, literature and drama education is adopted. Through this, we aim to develop in students the confidence and capability to use the language. More importantly, we hope to foster in our students a lifelong interest and appreciation for English as both a learning tool and as a global language for communication and creativity.

Across all levels, we aim to cultivate a self-learning habit, and to develop students' sensitivity to language use and cultural differences. Through the holistic



▲ Brainstorming ideas during process writing

provision of English co-curricular activities, including School Publications, Public Speaking, Debating, Choral Speaking, Musical Theatre and Drama, and by providing opportunities to serve the community, we train students to articulate personal responses, express opinions, and demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the English Language.

Developing students' talents in language arts

We contribute to the development of students via two main threads: through the formal English curriculum - i.e. classroom-based delivery of English lessons - and through co-curricular activities. We have had significant successes in these two threads individually, but our most rewarding achievements have been in the integration of co-curricular activities into the formal English curriculum. This has been particularly notable in the areas of Musical Theatre & Drama, Debating, Public Speaking, Publications and Reading, which play important roles in the language and whole-person development of the students at the school.

We have been improving and expanding the junior and senior English Drama curricula to complement our English Language and English Literature curricula. We also strive to seek new ways for our students to showcase their talents in performing arts and speech, as well as finding new outlets for students to fully utilise their creative potential.

◀ Students building up confidence in a debating group exercise



► Flexible grouping can facilitate the sharing of ideas

▼ Developing eloquence in oral presentation



In particular, an integrated curriculum incorporating English Language, Literature and Drama has been established. In English lessons, students intensively study selected pieces of short prose, poetry and novels. Based on these texts, students are aided to attain a deeper level of understanding of their content. For example, they are given opportunities to establish empathy with the characters, or challenged to interpret a wide range of language and experience in contextualised settings. Furthermore, students are encouraged to invent their own additions to the text and content in their drama performances, through activities like scriptwriting, and insertion of original, authentic dialogue for use.

As we have witnessed significant improvement in students' engagement with and understanding of set texts, as well as their confidence in using English, our belief that drama is an irreplaceable means of language teaching has been further consolidated. By making an ordinary language classroom more animated, it triggers students' interest in appreciating the language.

Encouraging participation for all

Alongside Drama Education, Debating, Public Speaking and Publications play complementary roles in Good Hope. There is a debating component in the curriculum of each level, with the end goal of holding an inter-class debating contest for each form. By tailoring the debate topics to the curriculum, students' learning in those areas is reinforced, but now with the extra motivation of competition.

We work tirelessly to develop the diverse skills involved in drama, debating, public speaking and publishing in our students. Our teachers show students what it takes to be a competent future leader with good communication, interpersonal and self-management skills by acting as their role models. More importantly, the English panel firmly believes that equal opportunities should be given to all students in developing their English proficiency. Conscious efforts are made to develop inclusive learning activities that can cater for students of all levels of ability. We feel so pleased and satisfied as all our students are actively engaged in the process of learning and acquire an improvement not only in their command of English, but also their character, communication and problem-solving skills, as well as learning the values of teamwork, commitment, self-discipline and leadership.

Throughout the years, we have helped our students to serve the community by teaching English to new immigrants in Hong Kong and primary school children in Mainland China. The English panel trains students and conducts micro-teaching sessions to equip students with the skills necessary to deliver effective teaching.



Over recent years, with the collaboration of our colleagues and the enthusiasm of our students, we have made a significant change to the teaching and learning of English at Good Hope School. With dedication and commitment, we have worked together to ensure that the broad range of co-curricular activities can integrate seamlessly into the core English curriculum to improve the quality of English learning at our school.



Assessment Summary

Enhancing students' learning outcomes through an integrated approach based on language arts and literature



▲ Enhancing students' creativity and free expression through drama activities

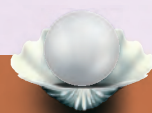
The awardees are a team of dedicated teachers, who have developed a coherent, balanced and diversified school-based English Language curriculum, incorporating drama, public speaking, and reading programmes to immerse learners in a productive English learning environment. An integrated teaching approach with English literature and drama as its focus is adopted to extend language abilities of students to the fullest. Reading habits are nurtured through activities such as extensive reading schemes, a reading festival, "Battle of the Books" and literacy circles. A language-rich environment is created in the school, so that learners are provided with ample opportunities to use English for different communicative purposes. A learner-centred approach in which students are encouraged to contribute to the learning process by sharing their views and learning experiences is embraced. Learners feel motivated to acquire English as a second language through a subconscious process of acquisition. This is achieved by exposing learners to carefully designed learning activities that engage them in group work or pair work for quality interaction and genuine communication.

A wide range of life-wide learning experiences in the forms of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are organised for the students to widen their exposure to the authentic and integrative use of English. Life-wide activities are organised on a regular basis to extend the learners' experience in the use of English and to enhance the development of generic skills, positive values and attitudes conducive to both language and whole-person development. Students are constantly involved in various activities conducted in English around the school.

The main focus of instruction is to develop learners' strategies and skills in self-directed learning and foster positive attitudes of lifelong learners. Processes that assist students in managing their thoughts, behaviours and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences and extend their language abilities

are adopted. Learning strategies such as forethought and planning, performance monitoring and reflections on performance are emphasised. As a result, learners' confidence as well as interpersonal and collaboration skills are fully-fledged. Students are able to develop the ability to appreciate the beauty and power of the English Language in creative or literary texts and other cultural forms, and develop a critical attitude towards ideas and values.

The teachers have demonstrated passion, expertise and outstanding efforts in devising an effective school-based curriculum which promotes an integrative use of language in a language-rich environment, and providing a wide range of learning experiences to enhance students' language competencies and cultivate their personal and intellectual development, cultural awareness and understanding of the world. They are also committed to supporting school development, which is evident in the constant sharing of their teaching ideas both inside and outside school. Above all, at Good Hope School and beyond, they have fostered a culture of collaboration among English teachers.



Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice



Website:
<http://www.ghs.edu.hk/sec>

Contact



Ms LUK Ka-yan, Chermaine



Tel: 2321 0250



Fax: 2324 8242



Email: luk@ghs.edu.hk