

February 13, 2006

Hong Kong Institute of Education & Jockey Club Primary School

Schedule.

1. 9:15 a.m. -10:30 a.m. Round-table discussion with Department of English staff:

The participants were: Ms. Shirley Chan, Ms. Jennie Chan, Dr Ina Sui, Anthony Robins, Anthony Ryan. The themes of the meeting concerned:

- the teacher training program of the Institute,
- the impressions of the Institute staff on the teaching of English at primary schools in both Hong Kong and on the Chinese mainland
- the LPAT tests (Language proficiency Assessment Tests) that all English teachers must pass in order to teach English.
- the TSA (Territory-wide Systems Assessment) tests that are given to all pupils in Years 3 & 6

- the interaction between mainland Chinese education universities and the HKIED
Ms. Shirley Chan had earlier provided us with comprehensive information in answer to an adapted questionnaire (originally written by Prof. Gengi Hatta) prior to the meeting. During the discussion, Anthony and I confirmed many of the details of the report.

2. 10:45 a.m.- Jockey Club Primary School (Mrs. Shirley Duthie - Principal)

3. 11:00 a.m.- 11:45 a.m. Lesson Observation (P2 class)

This lesson was given by two Chinese speakers of English. However, one of the teachers had moved to Canada as a child and had returned to Hong Kong as a Canadian citizen. She was the native-English teacher (NET). The other was a Hong Kong Chinese teacher. Parts of the lesson were video-taped. The lesson was the first of a new module and focused upon the introduction of a new story in the recount genre. The lesson started with the singing of a song that all the children had previously learnt. While singing aloud, students took turns playing a variety of musical instruments. The emphasis was on concrete manipulation of the instruments and the learning of words that expressed the sounds of the instruments. Step 2 was the introduction of the book. The teachers used OHT enlargements of each page of the book, and together they read through the first part of the book. The teaching emphasis was on the actions (verbs) of the character and the events in the story. The character was on his way to school on a rainy day, and he was running, jumping, splashing etc.. the sounds of the objects, and the vocabulary were emphasized. After reading the story to the children, the story was reread and students read after the teachers. Students then acted out the various actions and sounds that the character did in the story. Step 3, each teacher took half the class for intensive vocabulary practice (with flashcards) and re-reading of the story (children had their own copy of the story book)

4. 11:45 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Lesson Observation (P6 class)

This lesson was given by a Chinese teacher of English, and like the P2 class was the first in a module centered around a new storybook text in the narrative genre: 'Minerva Louise Goes to School'.

Step 1: OHT enlargements of the text were used and the teacher and students read through the story together.

Step 2 was a grammar point focus activity taken from the storybook. The teacher wrote the phrase 'She thought she saw...but she really saw...' on the whiteboard, and elicited the answers from the students.

Step 3 was an analysis of the story as regards to its generic characteristics: WHO were the characters; WHERE did the action take place; WHEN did the action take place; WHAT were the events leading to the problem (also a WHAT); WHY did the problem arise; and HOW was the problem resolved.

Step 4. Using the example template of the storybook analysis, the students then formed groups of 4 and constructed an outline of the their own story narrative.

Step 5 was a report back to the class by the group. (Further lessons were to evolve this outline, and produce written stories)

5. 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Lunch with discussion team (as above), Mrs Duthie, & Dr Jean Brewster of HKIEd.

6. 2:00pm - 3:00pm (Tour of Campus of Hong Kong Institute of Education)

=====

February 14, 2006

CCDO((E))Education and Manpower Bureau

Schedule.

1. 8:15 a.m. Met Mr Sheridan Lee and Ms. Rosanna Chong (in hotel lobby)

2. 8:15 a.m.- 8:55 a.m. Proceeded to Sheng Kung Hui Tak Tin Lee Shiu Keung (SKHTTLSK) Primary School - Principal - Ms. Paulina Lu.,

3. 9:00am - 10:20 - Round Table Discussion - school-based curriculum development

The school curriculum team, consisting of the English teachers and a NET (British) presented the school-based curriculum that they as a team had developed from the government guidelines. The leader of the team had spent the previous year seconded to the government department learning about the guidelines and devising suitable procedures for adaptation and implementation at school level. The learning objectives of the government specified curriculum and school-based program have four foci:

a) Language forms and functions (text types; vocabulary; grammar items & structures; communicative functions)

b) Language skills (listening; speaking; reading; writing)

c) Language development strategies (developing thinking skills; reference skills; library skills; information skills; self-motivation)

d) Attitudes specific to English language learning (enjoyment of reading; confidence in using English; Sensitivity towards language use in the process of communication; respect for different cultures)

4. 10:30 - 11:20 lesson observation (P2) Storybook: 'I'm the king of the mountain'

This lesson was taught by a Chinese English teacher to 38 P2 students. Anthony Robins and I agreed that this was the best of the four lessons we observed. Like the other classes, this was the first in a module and again centered on the introduction of a text type in the recount genre. Step 1: Considerable time was spent on the cover of the text. (A Big Book copy of the text was on an easel in front of the children who sat in a cleared space behind the desks). The focus was on prediction abilities of the students. title; possible characters; possible events; and vocabulary. Attention was drawn to the writer's name, the illustrator, the colors etc. The teacher used a stuffed toy 'flea' that was the main character in the story, as a prop. The pupils knew the vocabulary 'Photographer, writer, illustrator, title etc)

Step 2: The teacher read through the text, pointing at the words as she read, and reinforcing the vocabulary and actions etc. Intonation, facial expressions; vocal volume; and questions that brought the action in the book into the experience of the children were

of equal importance at this stage. Students then re-read the text with the teacher, first shadowing, and then reading by themselves.

Step 3: The events in the story were reviewed on an adjacent whiteboard. The teacher drew a diagram depicting the progression of the text, and the students labeled the stages with colored cut-outs of the characters and flashcards of the important vocabulary (i.e. the names of the characters).

Step 4: The teacher had made hats bearing a depiction of each character and handed these out to some students. All of the students read out the text, and when it came time for each 'character' to speak, the selected student read their allotted line. This continued until all students had had the opportunity to be a character in front of the class.

5. 11:30-12:20 lesson observation (P6)

The school NET teacher and a CET team-taught this lesson. The theme was 'Movies' genres: again a text type. The students worked in small groups and selected a variety of movies they wished to see from a selection of movie summaries.

Step 1: Introduction of film genres: comedy, horror, romance; science fiction etc.

Teachers elicited the students' likes and dislikes of the various genres.

Step 2: An example worksheet on the OHT was filled out by the NET. The worksheet asked students to predict from the film description what the type; characters; possible events; were in the movie. Focus was on the vocabulary of films, the parts of a movie DVDs and VCDs etc..

Step 3: Groups were given 5 or 6 descriptions and asked to select two movies they wished to see. They then had to fill out a worksheet (as in Step 2) and give reasons as to why they selected a particular movie to watch.

Step 4: Groups reported back and gave descriptions of the movies they had selected.

6. 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Lunch with colleagues and the principal at the Staff Restaurant

7. 2:00pm - 3:00pm: Discussion with Ms. Chong

The discussion centered on the process of curriculum development; the successes and problems encountered by the government department in implementing the curriculum in the schools; the official government curriculum and policy; the contact between mainland Chinese education department and the curriculum department of the EMB of Hong Kong; the accreditation system for teachers; the curriculum documentation; and plans for the future.