

Developing the school plan for English language exposure

SA Tin Ka Ping Kindergarten

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Non-profit making half-day kindergarten located in Sha Tin Wai

Adopting a set of textbooks as the main learning and teaching materials for exposing children to English

English language activities are conducted by a native-speaking English teacher (NET) and the local teachers

Joined the SCOLAR 'Quality English Language Education at Pre-primary Level' Project from 2009/10 to 2010/11

Children' s learning of English

Children in the **non-project classes**:

- were willing to participate in English language activities
- had difficulties in understanding the teacher' s English
- relied much on the teacher' s Cantonese translations during the English language activities
- showed little confidence in using English

Difficulties and weaknesses of the school plan

Limited variety of English language activities

Lack of meaningful and authentic contexts

Too many learning focuses

Learning focuses were too difficult
or not related to children' s daily experience

Difficulties and weaknesses of the school plan

Too much emphasis on print recognition

Covered only a limited variety of English knowledge

Lack of an interactive language environment

Quality plan for English language exposure at the pre-primary level

- Develop children's interest in learning English
- Provide children with enjoyable learning experiences
- Develop English listening and speaking skills
- Develop the awareness of English letter-sound relationships and preliminary reading strategies

(Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 2002; CDC, 2006)

Quality plan for English language exposure at the pre-primary level

- Provide children with meaningful and authentic learning contexts/materials related to their everyday life
- Expose children to English through a variety of learning activities
- Make good use of classroom environment to stimulate children's learning

(Berman, 1998; Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 2002; CDC, 2006; Stewig & Jett-Simpson, 1995)

Photos of English language activities



Shared Reading



Storytelling



Art and craft activity



Storytelling

Developing the school plan for English language exposure

Expose children to English in authentic, interesting and meaningful contexts

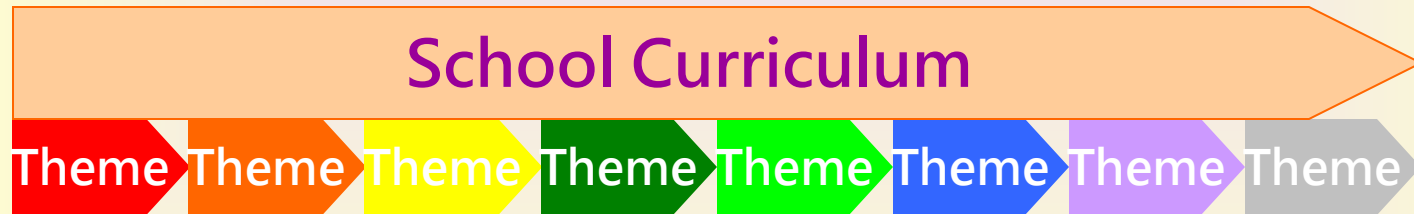
Provide quality English exposure through a variety of pleasurable and developmentally appropriate language activities

Target at appropriate learning focuses

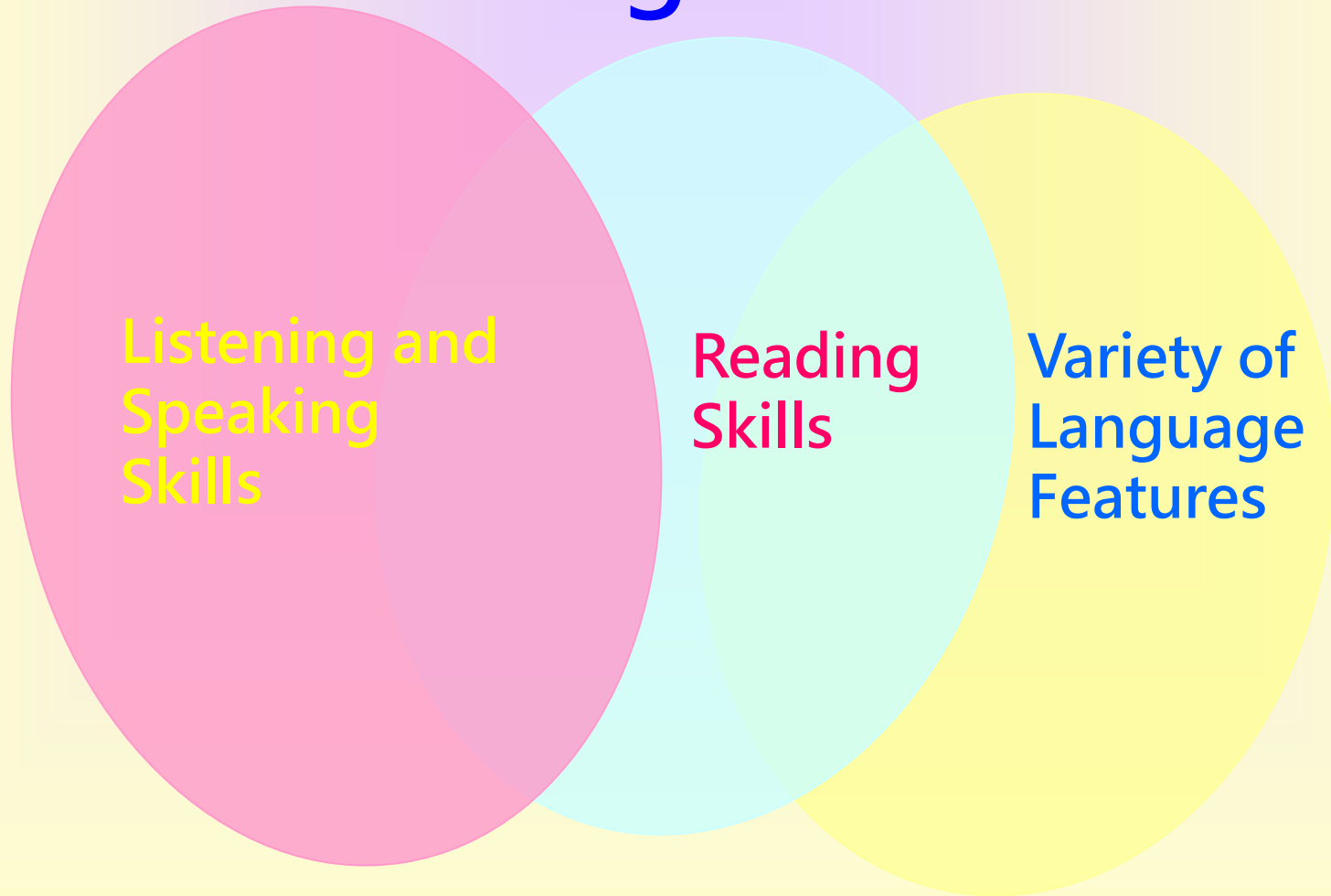
Integrate the exposure to English into the school's curriculum

Integrate English language exposure into the school's curriculum

- Planned different themes
- In line with the themes in the school curriculum



Learning focuses



English language activities

- 1-3 English language activities a week
- Around 25 minutes (including a main learning activity and an extended activity)
- Main learning activities: **shared reading, reading aloud and storytelling**
- Extended activities: **singing, games, real-life experience activities, show-and-tell and drama activities**

Photos of main learning activities



Photos of extended activities



Games



Singing



Drama activities

Learning and teaching materials

- Main learning and teaching resources:
 - 10 stories and 3 songs related to the themes
- Resources for extended activities:
 - 7 songs

Photos of learning and teaching materials



Language environment

Class library

Word wall

English corners

Classroom
routines

Photos of language environment



Teachers' reflection and learning

Challenges:

- Teaching capacity
- Availability of quality learning and teaching materials
- Parents' needs and expectations
- Integration of the plan for English exposure into the school curriculum

Teaching capacity

Teachers of K2:

Two project teachers, five non-project teachers and a NET

Challenge: Difficult for the non-project teachers and the NET to implement the new plan

Teaching capacity

Measures

Assigned two project teachers as homeroom teachers of three K2 classes

Provided non-project teachers with adequate chances for observing and co-teaching

Arranged co-planning meetings, peer observation and debriefing meetings

Teaching capacity

Measures

Deployed the NET to conduct English activities:

- o Focusing on introducing letter sounds
- o Other theme-related activities

Provided professional development workshops for the NET

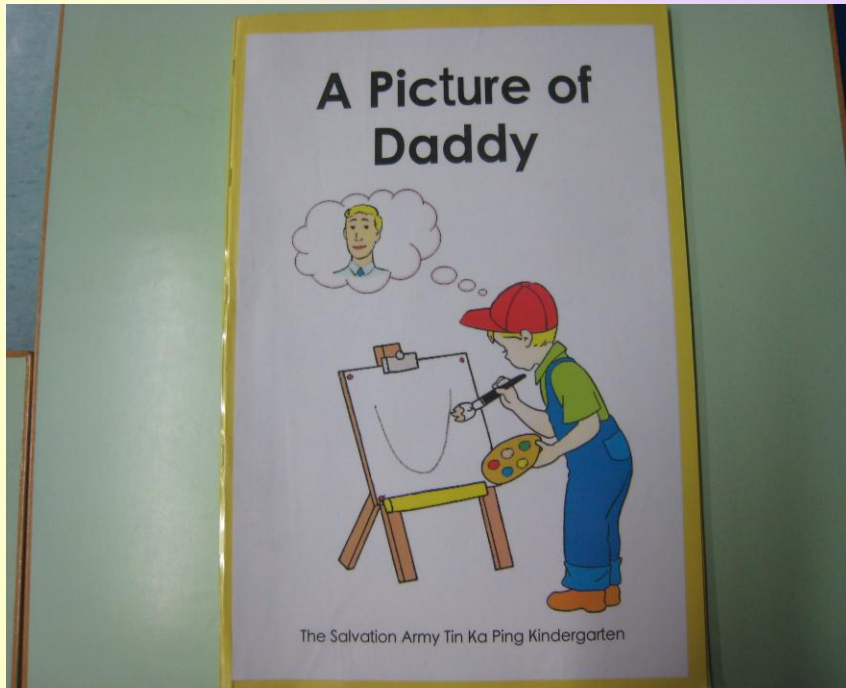
Photos of teachers' professional development workshops



Learning and teaching materials

- Developed interesting stories for some of the themes
- Adapted stories to meet children's abilities
- Advised parents to purchase three (out of ten) stories for children
- Printed stories as picture books
- Placed stories in the class library

Photos of storybooks



Parents' needs and expectations

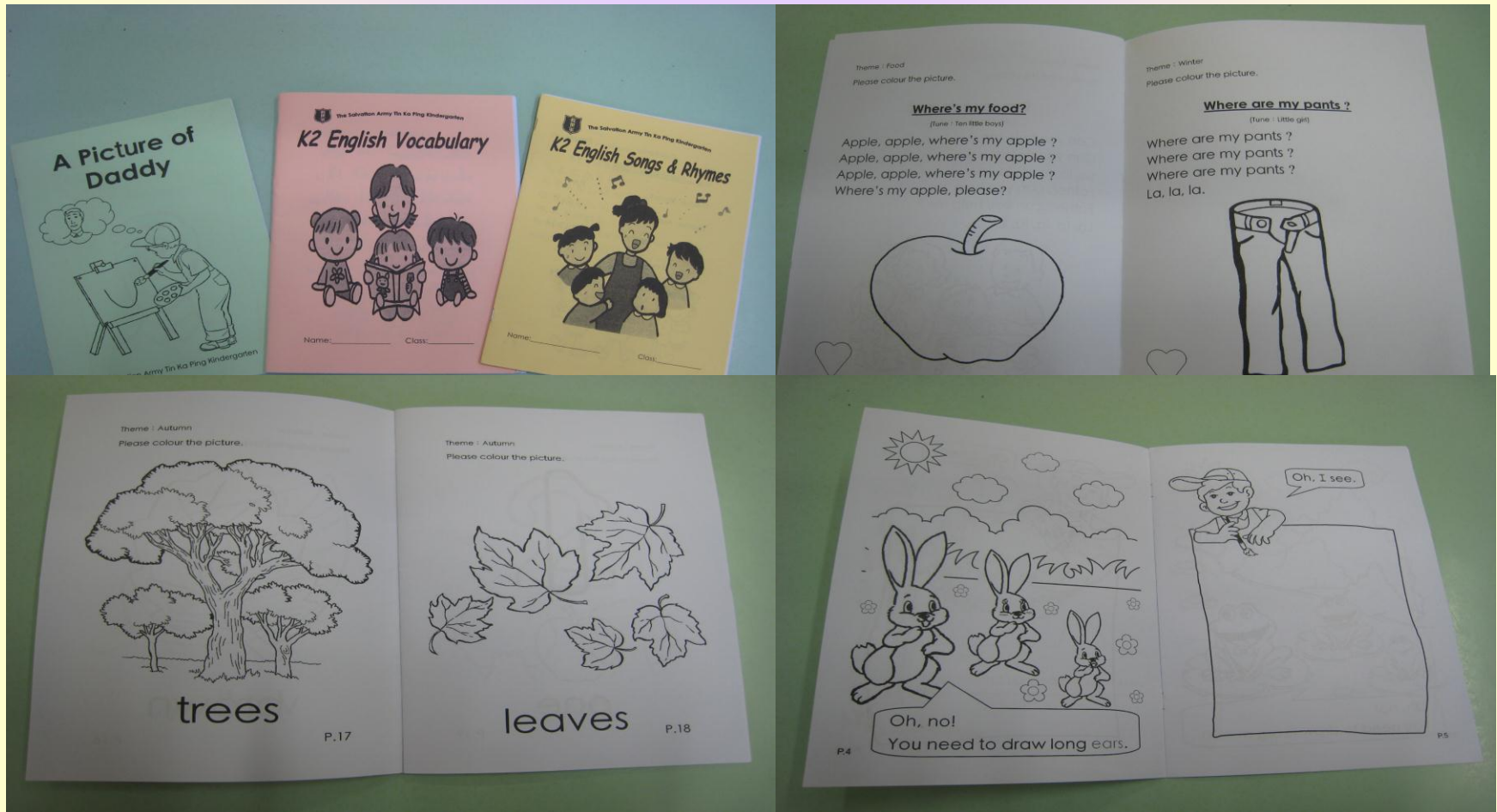
To let parents know children's learning progress, the school provided children with:

A booklet
'English Songs and
Rhymes'

A picture-word booklet
'English Vocabulary'

Four chosen stories

Photos of picture-word booklets



Parents' needs and expectations

To let parents know children's learning progress, the school:


conducted a parent seminar
at the beginning
of the school year

informed parents of
the stories and songs introduced
through weekly notices




Integration of the plan for English exposure into the school curriculum

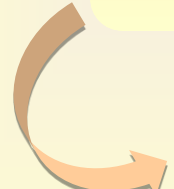
Conducted unit planning meetings



Developed the overview of English language activities two or three weeks prior the starting of each theme



Ensured balanced activities in different learning areas when developing the overall plan



Ensured effective communication among different stakeholders

Sustaining the project

The project teachers would continue to:

- develop the plan for English exposure
- provide training workshops for non-project teachers

The non-project teachers would help:

- refine the new plan
- sustain the new plan for English exposure in K2

**Actions taken to develop the school plan for
English exposure in 1st term of K2**

Implications for practitioners

- School leaders:
 - Understand teachers' needs and provide adequate support to them
 - Ensure clear division of labour and allocate sufficient human resources
 - Maintain good communication with parents
- Teachers:
 - Collaborate and maintain effective communication with colleagues
 - Be positive when facing changes or challenges

References

- Berman, M. (1998). *A multiple intelligences road to an ELT classroom*. Bancyfelin: Crown House.
- Brewster, J., Ellis, G. & Girard, D. (2002). *The primary English teacher's guide new edition*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Curriculum Development Council. (2006). *Guide to the pre-primary curriculum*. Hong Kong: The Education and Manpower Bureau, HKSAR.
- Stewig, J. W. & Jett-Simpson, M. (1995). *Language arts in the early childhood classroom*. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

The End

THANK YOU!