

Ready Steady

Issue 1 May 2016



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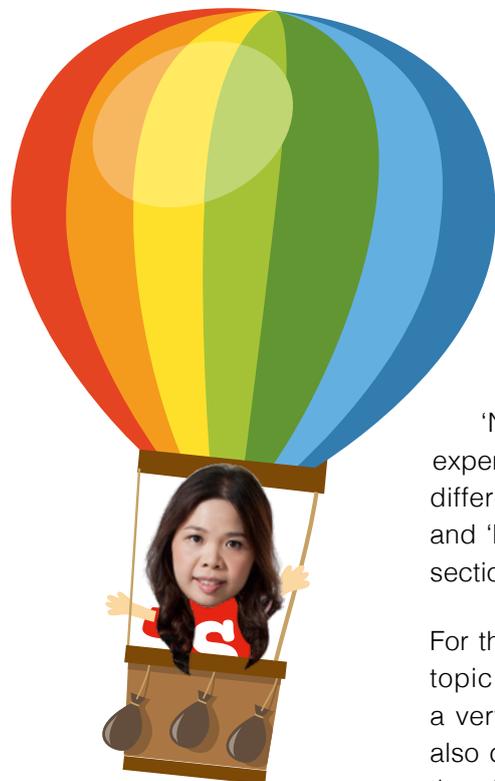
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Adeline Cheung

Chief Teacher Trainer,
Oxford University Press

Foreword

Welcome to the first issue of **Ready Steady!**

Ready Steady is a quarterly publication featuring the latest trends and hot topics in education. In each issue, we'll look into a special topic that matters to us all and we will also invite experts from various fields to share their views and comments.

In each issue, you can see the latest updates in ELT on the 'Noticeboard' and hear experience sharing from teachers and experts in 'Teachers' Corner' and 'Meet Our Expert'. You can also find different teaching tips, reminders and fun exercises in 'Power Bank' and 'Fun with English'. Of course, do not miss the 'Watch This Space' section for updates on upcoming events!

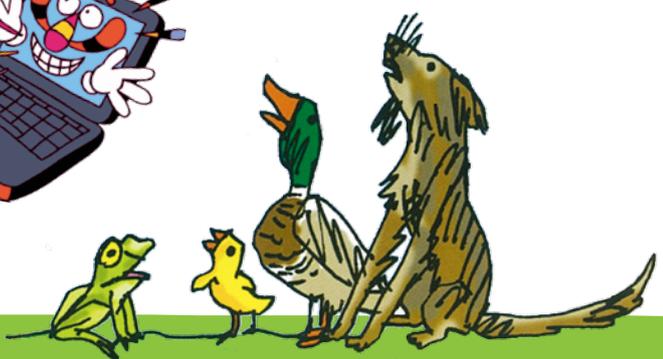
For this debut issue, we have chosen to discuss the most challenging topic of all time: grammar. Undoubtedly, grammar continues to be a very difficult topic for many students today. For educators, we are also debating whether the traditional way of teaching is more effective than learning through reading or watching TV. Is there a 'best' way to teach or to learn grammar? What role does grammar play in teaching and learning English? How can we share our love of grammar with our students? Let's find out more together in this issue of **Ready Steady!**



iClass is an e-learning system developed by the e-Learning Development Laboratory of the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Oxford University Press creates interactive teaching materials with iClass, providing students with a unique learning experience. To let teachers know more about iClass, a seminar was held in March 2016.

Our first speaker from HKU, Dr Wilton Fok pointed out that e-learning is effective for catering to learning diversity as it provides information for teachers to analyse individual performance and needs. Mr Eric Au Yeung then demonstrated the various courseware on the iClass platform and invited teachers to participate in interactive activities using the instant-feedback features of iClass.

This was followed by a user sharing session with teachers from Buddhist Chi King Primary School and Fung Kai No. 1 Primary School. They shared their experience in creating an interactive English lesson using iClass to teach *New Magic*. Teachers from the two schools showed how user-friendly the iClass platform is and how OUP supports them by providing professional technical support. OUP editors also demonstrated how to make good use of iClass to promote self-learning before class, facilitate interactive learning during class and follow up with assessment after class.



Oxford Primary English Workshops



Grammar Workshop Series

To present some ideas for effective grammar teaching, four sessions of 'The Missing Link in Grammar Teaching' and 'Sharpening Students' Grammar Sense through Language Awareness Activities' workshops were held in January 2016. The workshop series received overwhelming support from teachers and over 350 teachers attended the talks.

Our guest speaker, Dr Paul Sze, Adjunct Assistant Professor of the Faculty of Education at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, generously shared his insights and valuable experience. With authentic examples taken from the classroom, Dr Sze explained the reasons why students make grammar mistakes in writing and speaking. He also gave us useful advice, such as ideas for pre-communicative activities that are certain to raise students' awareness of English grammar.

The workshops ended with a lively and real-time activity using mobile phones. The workshops received remarkable support from primary school teachers, who found Dr Sze's sharing inspiring.



OUT LOUD!

Workshops on how to prepare your students for the Hong Kong Speech Festival

Four workshops were held in October 2015 to provide teachers with coaching tips and practical strategies to prepare their students better for the Hong Kong Speech Festival. Our guest speaker was Ms Tanya Kempston, lecturer in the Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong and adjudicator of various categories for the Hong Kong Speech Festival.

In the workshops, Ms Kempston shared her experience in preparing for both choral speaking and solo verse speaking. She started the workshop by inviting all participating teachers to take part in her fun and exciting warm-up games which helped teachers feel relaxed and prepared for the workshop. Ms Kempston suggested some dos and don'ts when performing the pieces and teachers were all engaged when practising speaking out loud using pieces from the Speech Festival syllabus.



Scan to know more about our events

Teacher's Corner



Phonics teaching can be dull and repetitive, but some teachers have found a way to integrate phonics, reading and writing and make it fun and motivating at the same time. English Panel Head Miss Victoria Poon is going to share her experience and insights using Read Write Inc. (RWI) in her school.



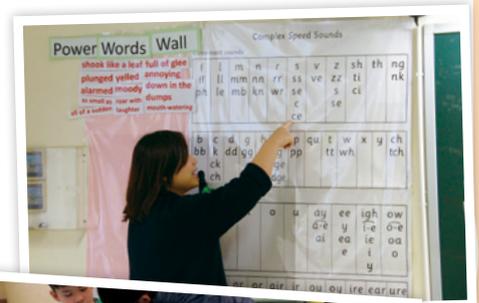
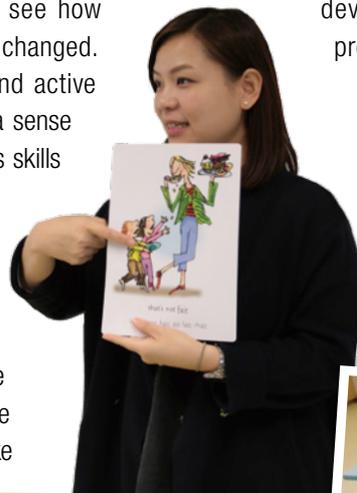
I first heard about RWI in a workshop facilitated by Dr. Paul Sze in CUHK. I was really impressed by the sharing conducted by two primary schools. They shared how they implemented RWI and how effectively RWI helps their students to blend words and read with confidence.

RWI lessons. During RWI lessons, students are encouraged to discuss and help one another in class. They are always involved in the lesson and therefore highly engaged. The more they enjoy the RWI lessons, the more excited we are when we teach!

Our school started using RWI in 2014. We like RWI as the curriculum covers the sounds in a systematic way and builds on students' reading and writing skills effectively. It provides comprehensive teaching support and professional development which help teachers deliver the programme confidently. After adopting RWI, we can see how students' attitudes towards learning have changed. Students have become more motivated and active towards learning English. They have found a sense of achievement when they apply their phonics skills to read and write, even with unfamiliar words. It also helps their comprehension skills because they are required to think about the story critically and creatively.

We all enjoy teaching RWI. Not only do we see the transformation in students' learning, we are also impressed by how much students like

'Adopting RWI is one of the wisest decisions we have made. It not only provides a comprehensive phonics curriculum for our students, but also an enjoyable learning experience in reading and writing.' It is more like professional development rather than simply a set of products.



Read Write Inc. Phonics (RWI) is a phonics-based literacy programme which combines the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening in a fun and effective way.



Scan to know more about RWI.



Meet our Expert

Playing by and with the rules



Dr Paul Sze
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Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
Faculty of Education,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

For the last few years, I have been promoting the concept of language awareness through various channels. The well-known British applied linguist Ronald Carter has defined language awareness as ‘an enhanced consciousness of, and sensitivity to, the forms and functions of language’. I particularly like the notion of sensitivity, as, in my experience, this is what distinguishes the successful language learners from the not so successful ones. Experienced teachers will tell you that despite their repeated reminders to students that they should proofread their first drafts before turning in their compositions, some students seem to be quite slow in spotting the obvious errors in their writing. Then, there are students whose English does not seem to improve much in spite of sustained effort in extensive reading. Of course, multiple reasons may be at play, including the crucial factor of learner motivation. But sometimes, even motivated and diligent language learners do not progress as much and as fast as they should. More and more scholars in language teaching methodology have attributed that scenario to differences in language awareness: some learners notice a new language usage—a

different pronunciation from the one they have been accustomed to, a variation of a grammar structure that they have learnt before and nuances of meaning in an expression—more quickly and easily than others.

In the area of grammar teaching and learning, language awareness has come under varied but related concepts: grammaring; consciousness-raising; training learners to notice; attention to form within a communicative methodology; discovering grammar; etc. In workshops and talks on language awareness, I can easily cite several pedagogical reasons why teachers should complement their grammar teaching with language awareness training. But I often drive my point home by asking one simple question: ‘Think of those people you know who are very good at English. How did they learn their grammar?’

Structured grammar presentations that are followed by form-focused grammar exercises are necessary but not sufficient in bringing students to an exquisite level of mastery of English grammar.



Dr Sze's recent book 《英文秘道》 ('Secret passage to learning English') uses ample daily life examples to illustrate how language awareness is essential to the mastering of the English language.



Power Bank

Fun ways to teach grammar

Why do repetitive grammar exercises when you can play your way to better grammar?

Playing games is a vital and natural part of growing up and learning. Through games, students experiment, discover and interact with their environment. Games also add variation to a lesson and increase motivation by providing an incentive to use the target language. Here are some language games you can play with your students:

Animal charades (P1–3)

Language focus: Descriptive adjectives; abilities; animal names; It is ..., It has ..., It can...; Am I a...? Yes, you are/No, you're not.

- 1 Prepare some animal picture cards and place them in a deck, picture side facing down.
- 2 Divide the class into 3–4 groups. Invite a student from one of the groups (e.g. Group A) to come out and pick a card. The student places the card with the picture side facing the class without looking at it.
- 3 Group A then describes the animal without naming it to the student.
- 4 The group will score one point if the student guesses the animal correctly.
- 5 Repeat with another group (Group B–D). Play the game for a few rounds to decide which group scores the most number of points.

Variation

Use other picture/word cards for the game to practise different vocabulary groups, such as occupations, feelings, food, etc.

Variation

Make word cards for students to include in their sentences when they are creating the story.

Chain Story (P4–6)

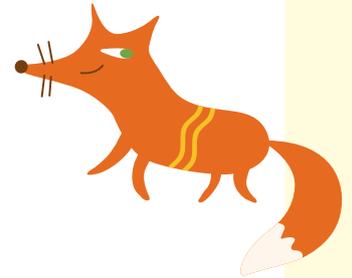
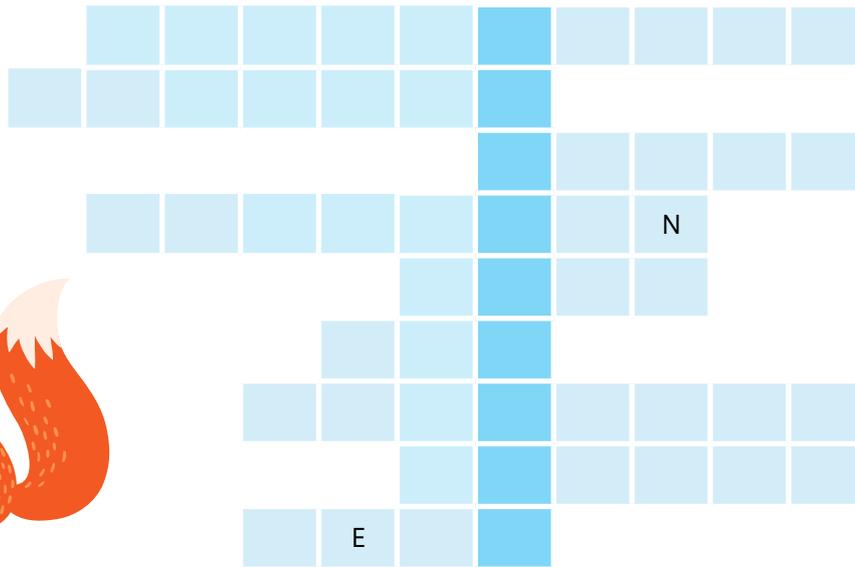
Language aims: First conditional (If I have ... I will ...)

- 1 Write the first sentence, 'If I have time, I will go to the party.' on the board.
- 2 Tell students they are going to make a story one by one using this pattern, by using the second part of the phrase as the beginning of each sentence:
If I have time, I will go to the party.
If I go to the party, I will have a lot of fun.
If I have a lot of fun, I will come home late.
If I come home late, my mum will be angry.

Fox, foxs or foxes?

A Change these words into the plural form. Put them into the puzzle to find out what Franky the Fox wants to be when he grows up.

FOOT	VEGETABLE	CHILD	MAN	TOOTH
POTATO	BOY	PARTY	BUSH	



B Use the above words to complete the story below. You may use the singular or plural form.

Mr and Mrs Fox are holding a birthday 1)_____ for their twin 2)_____,
Franky and Freddy. Mrs Fox is cooking in the kitchen. She is making soup with 3)_____
and 4)_____. Mr Fox is picking flowers from the 5)_____ in the garden.

Ding Dong!

Many 6)_____ arrive at Mr and Mrs Fox's house. Franky and Freddy are happy to see
them. They take off their shoes and play in the garden.

'What's that funny smell?' sniffs Danny the Dog. 'Something smells bad!'

'Is it your soup, darling?' whispers Mr Fox to Mrs Fox. 'Of course not! My soup smells delicious!'

'It must be your 7)_____, Leo the Lion! You are always eating!' teases Tommy the Tiger.

'I don't think so! I brush them every day!'

'Then what is it?' ask Franky and Freddy.

'Err ... maybe it is my 8)_____, ' says Molly the Monkey as she scratches her head.

'Sorry, everybody!'

Photocopiable

Watch This Space

Things to look out for in the coming months



Hong Kong Book Fair

Reading the World •

Heroism and Romance of the Chinese Martial World

Date 20–26 July 2016 (Wednesday–Tuesday)

Venue Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Come and visit us at the Hong Kong Book Fair and check out our amazing titles such as Dr Paul Sze's 《英文秘道》 ('*Secret passage to learning English*'), *Oxford Story Tree* series and our home learning package *Oxford Path* and *Oxford Path Primary*!

Fun With English (Answers)

Part A

V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	
P	A	R	T	I	E	S				
					T	E	E	T	H	
C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N			
					B	O	Y	S		
				M	E	N				
P	O	T	A	T	O	E	S			
					B	U	S	H	E	S
F	E	E	T							

Part B 1 party 2 boys 3 potatoes 4 vegetables
5 bushes 6 children 7 teeth 8 feet
(answers to no. 3 & 4 are interchangeable)



In the next issue

- Focus on writing
- More news, interviews and students' activities

Look out for the next issue of **Ready Steady** in November 2016.

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