

Poster presentations

Improving reading and writing through creating newspapers

by Shiromi Upulaneththa

Abstract

In 'Improving Reading and Writing through creating newspapers', Shiromi Upulaneththa presents her mini-project, which she has implemented for the past five years with her teacher trainees in the pre-service course, which has helped the trainees to improve reading and writing skills in English. Also, it improved their core skills, which are essential in the modern teaching learning process.

When she was teaching the passive voice as grammar, she asked trainees to go through the weekend newspapers and note down the language used in and the key features of the passive. Then she put them into small groups. She gave each group five A4 papers and asked them to think about a model of a newspaper. They folded the A4 papers and made them into ten pages. Then she asked them to appoint two teammates who could take responsibility for preparing each page in the newspaper. They created different names for their papers. Then she gave them the ground rules: "Duration: one month. Materials to use eco-friendly stuff. Handwritten and drawn on paper". Content, language, organisation and overall presentation were the criteria for the final evaluation. Her main objective was to improve their writing skills in English. It was a good way of making them understand the form and the function of passive constructions. Hence, the work was not rigid or boring, so it was not a stressful form of learning at all. In fact, it helped them to become more autonomous learners who also had a team spirit. She monitored their work and assisted them in correcting their write-ups.

After a month, in the morning assembly, they held the great event: The Newspaper Launch Ceremony. All the newspapers, about 15 of them, were displayed in the main hall. Then the exhibition opened with a panel of adjudicators to select the best five newspapers. This project helped to improve their reading and writing skills.