

Connect, Collaborate, Communicate: Cascading Professional Learning In Subject Literacy Across Subject Areas

4th Annual WSA-EC Forum, 2016

Yuying Secondary School

Mrs. Loretta Goh





Outline of Presentation

- ❑ Yuying's WSA-EC Journey
- ❑ Department & School-wide WSA-EC Programmes
- ❑ Collaboration with ELIS
- ❑ Our Plans



Vision

Enterprising Learners for Excellence

Mission

To Nurture Wholesome Individuals with Global Mindset,
Passion to Learn and Spirit to Serve

Values

IR³ : Integrity, Resilience, Respect, Responsibility

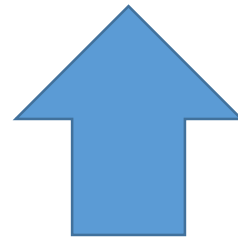
Motto

Together Achieve Personal Excellence



Our WSA-EC Objectives

To create a school-wide culture of effective communication in English among our staff and students.



English Language is **not** the home language of a significant percentage of our students.



Our Success Criteria

- ✓ Staff and students will use English as the **language medium of choice** for communication in school.
- ✓ Students will be able to communicate confidently in English, and to present their ideas clearly and coherently in both **written and oral** forms.
- ✓ Students will achieve **subject literacy** and be able to use the correct subject-specific vocabulary and functional language in the various subjects.



Our Team:

Miss Rebekah Tan	Vice-Principal
Mrs. Loretta Goh	HOD / EL & Literature
Mr. Alvin Peh	SSD / Science Teacher
Mrs. Nisha Khan	SH / EL
Miss Jasmine Lee	ST / EBS & CCE
Mrs. Richard Mahindapala	ST / EL
Miss Ng Li Rong	SH / Geography (Int)
Mdm. Lathamagesh	Maths Teacher
Mr. Colin Chia	EL & Geography Teacher

Supported by our friends from ELIS:

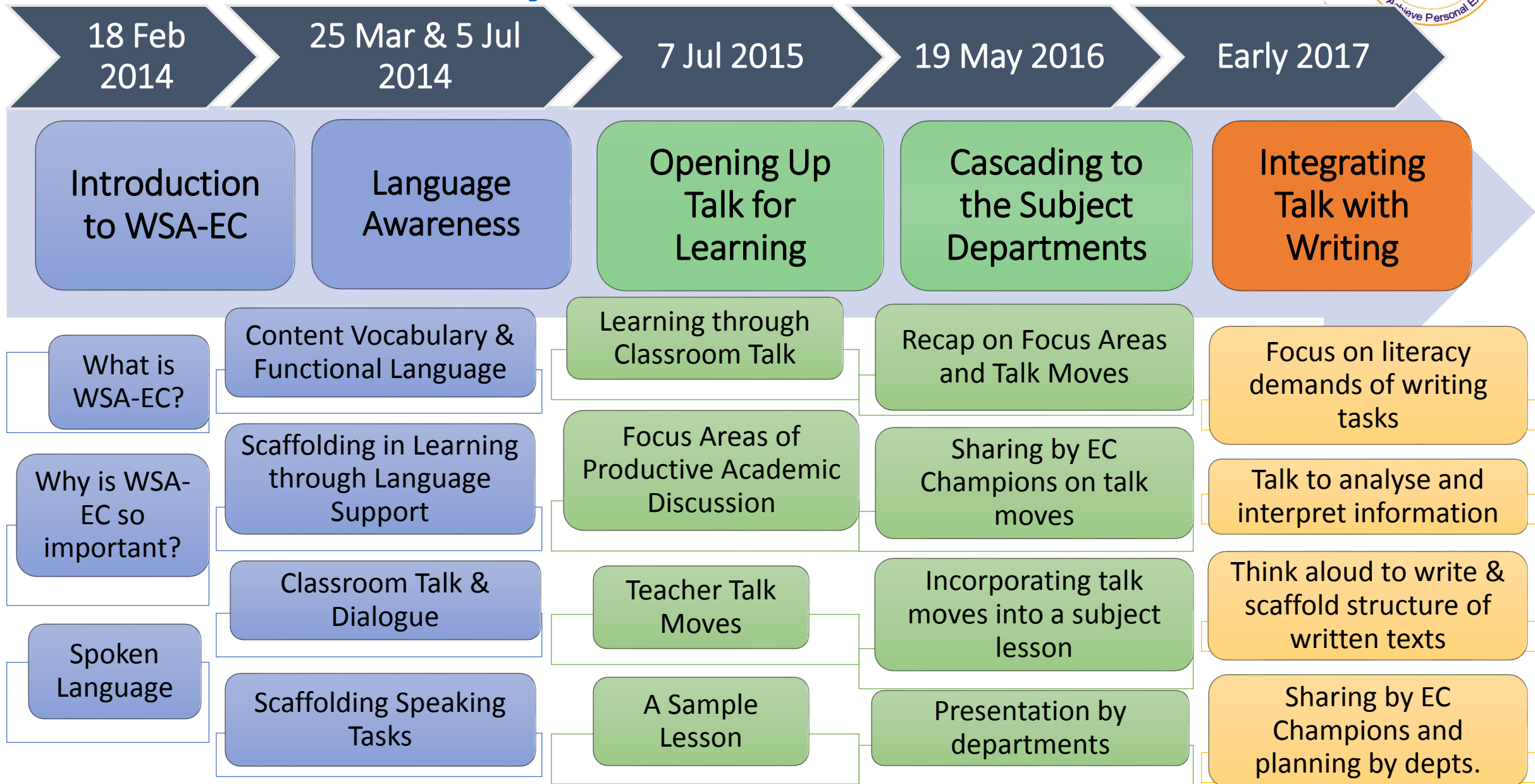
Dr. Caroline Ho

Ms. Jeyalaxmy Ayaduray

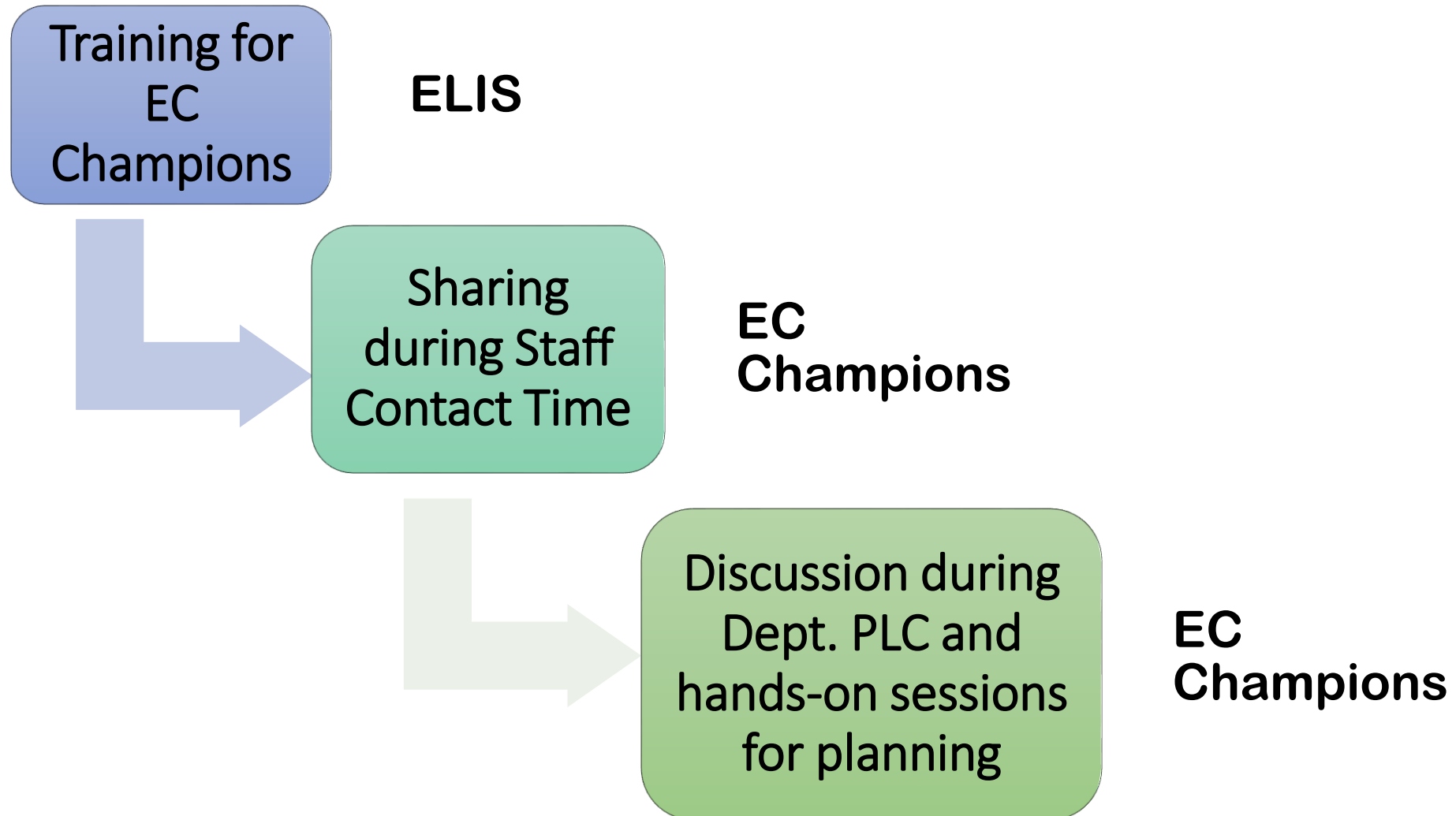
Ms. Leong Chui Pink



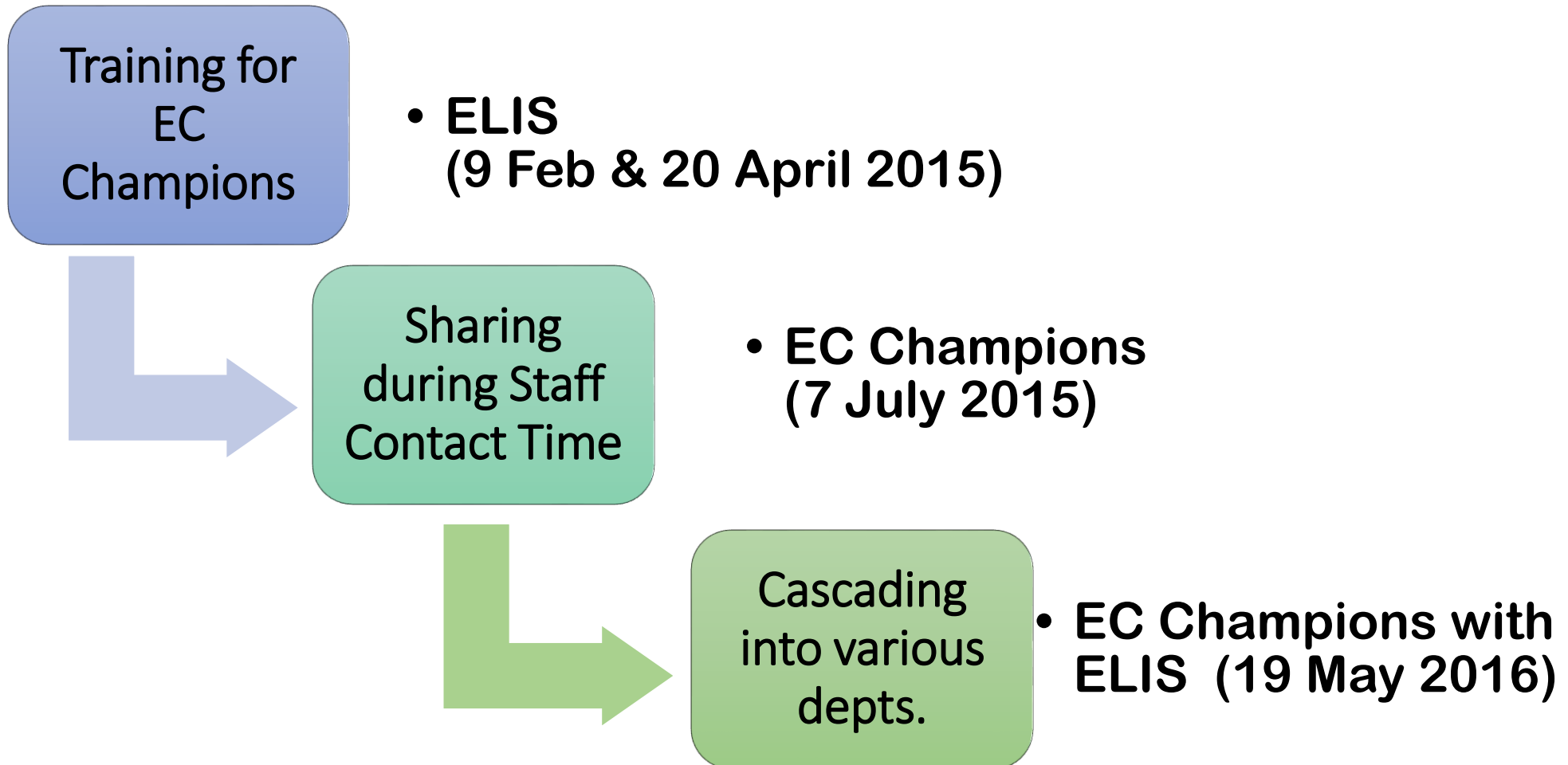
Our WSA-EC Journey so far...



Our Professional Development Process

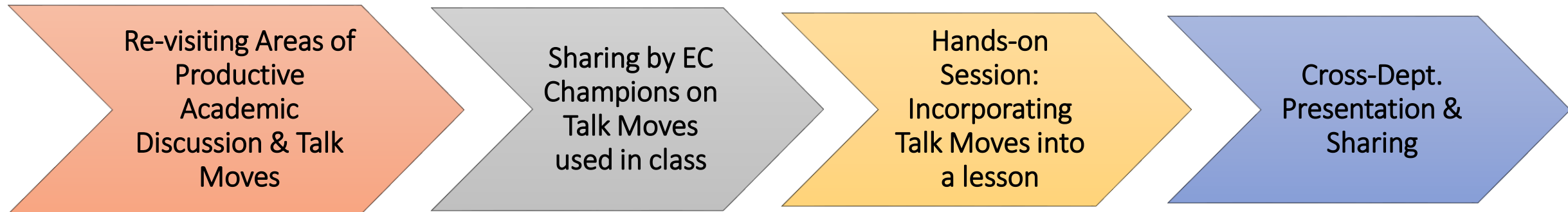


Opening Up Talk for Learning in the Subject Classroom



Training Outline on 19 May 2016

(for 69 teachers across 6 departments,
co-facilitated by 9 EC Champions,
with Dr. Caroline Ho & Ms. Leong Chui Pink)





Classroom Talk (Mathematics)

Teacher: So, Cindy, **do you agree** with Jackson's explanation?

Student: I think I disagree. Sorry, Jackson!

Teacher: Can you tell us **why** you disagree with what Jackson said? **What is your reasoning?**

Focus Area: Engaging with each other's reasoning

Talk Move: Elicit students' views on other students' ideas.



Classroom Talk (Geography)

Teacher: Janice, thanks, but I asked for categories, not examples.
Good try though.

Can someone else share with the class the two other categories?

Student: Social and environmental impacts.

Teacher: Thank you, Thomas.

Would you like to get your friend to give us an example of social and environmental impact of deforestation?

I will get someone else to rephrase your friend's answers, so you need to listen carefully.

Focus Area: **Listening closely to other students**

Talk Move: **Ask student to restate another student's contribution**



Incorporating Talk Moves into a Science Lesson

Main Activity

A) Introduction to Metallic Bonding

Students will view a Flash Animation™ showing the metal ions in a sea of electrons

Based on what they can infer from the video, they will then be asked:

- What are the bigger particles?
- What are the moving dots?
- Where do the 'dots' come from?

B) Description of Metals

Students must thus describe the structure of metals as: A lattice of positive ions in a sea of delocalized electrons. Metallic Bonding is thus the strong force of attraction between the positive metal ions and the 'sea of delocalized electrons'.

Talk Moves

- **Seek clarification**
Teacher seeks clarification by saying:
“If any points are not certain ...”
- **Probe reasoning & challenge statements**
Teacher can ask: “What do you think...?”
- **Elicit students' views & guide students to build on one another's contributions**
Teacher asks the class:
“What do the rest of you think ...?”
- **Summarise (by students)**
Teacher will get students to summarize by asking:
“Can someone summarise... ?”



Department & School-wide Programmes to Support Oracy Skills of Teachers and Students

Humanities

See-think-wonder as part of pre-lesson scaffolding in learning through language support for new topics

Thinking routine

1. **Describe** what you can see in this photo. E.g. I can see ...

Photo A : Favelas in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.



<http://brasill.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Favela-Rio-de-Janeiro.jpg>

Thinking routine

2. **Infer** what you can see in this photo. E.g. I can infer that ...



- There is a housing shortage in Rio De Janeiro.
- Housing may be too costly for the people.
- There does not seem to be any control over where favelas are built.
- Environmental pollution persists in the favelas.



Thinking routine

3. **Wonder** what does this photo not tell me? E.g. It does not tell me whether ...



- Are other parts of Rio De Janeiro facing housing shortage too?
- Has the government done something to address the problem?
- Is there proper sanitation in the favelas?
- Are the crime rates and social problems high or low?
- Is the land occupied legally or illegally?



<http://brasill.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Favela-Rio-de-Janeiro.jpg>



Department & School-wide Programmes to Support Oracy Skills of Teachers and Students

English Language

Reciprocal Teaching for strategic processing of texts to support students' reading comprehension



Developing the 21st Century Reader

Reciprocal Teaching



Reading and Viewing Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Process and comprehend texts at **literal and inferential levels**
- ✓ Apply **critical reading and viewing** by focusing on implied meaning, higher-order thinking, judgement and evaluation
- ✓ Apply close and critical reading and viewing to a variety of literary selections and informational/functional texts, from **print and non-print sources**



Our RT Journey (Sec. 3 classes in 2015)

2014

- ELIS's Professional Learning Programme – Teaching Reading & Viewing
- Consultation with Mr. John Yeo (NIE) – 21st CC competencies
- Consultation with Ms. Jeya (ELIS) – Reciprocal Teaching strategy

2015

- Use of rich text – *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*
- Semester 1 – Reading of Book + Pop Quiz + Presentations
- Semester 2 – Lessons incorporating RT roles based on excerpts from book
- Post-reading: writing activities based on selected themes from book

2016

- Enhanced use of Reciprocal Teaching
- Focused on 2 roles: Summariser & Questioner



Teaching Strategy

Dialogic approach to reading comprehension

- Speak and think about text read
- Ask questions during reading to make texts more comprehensible

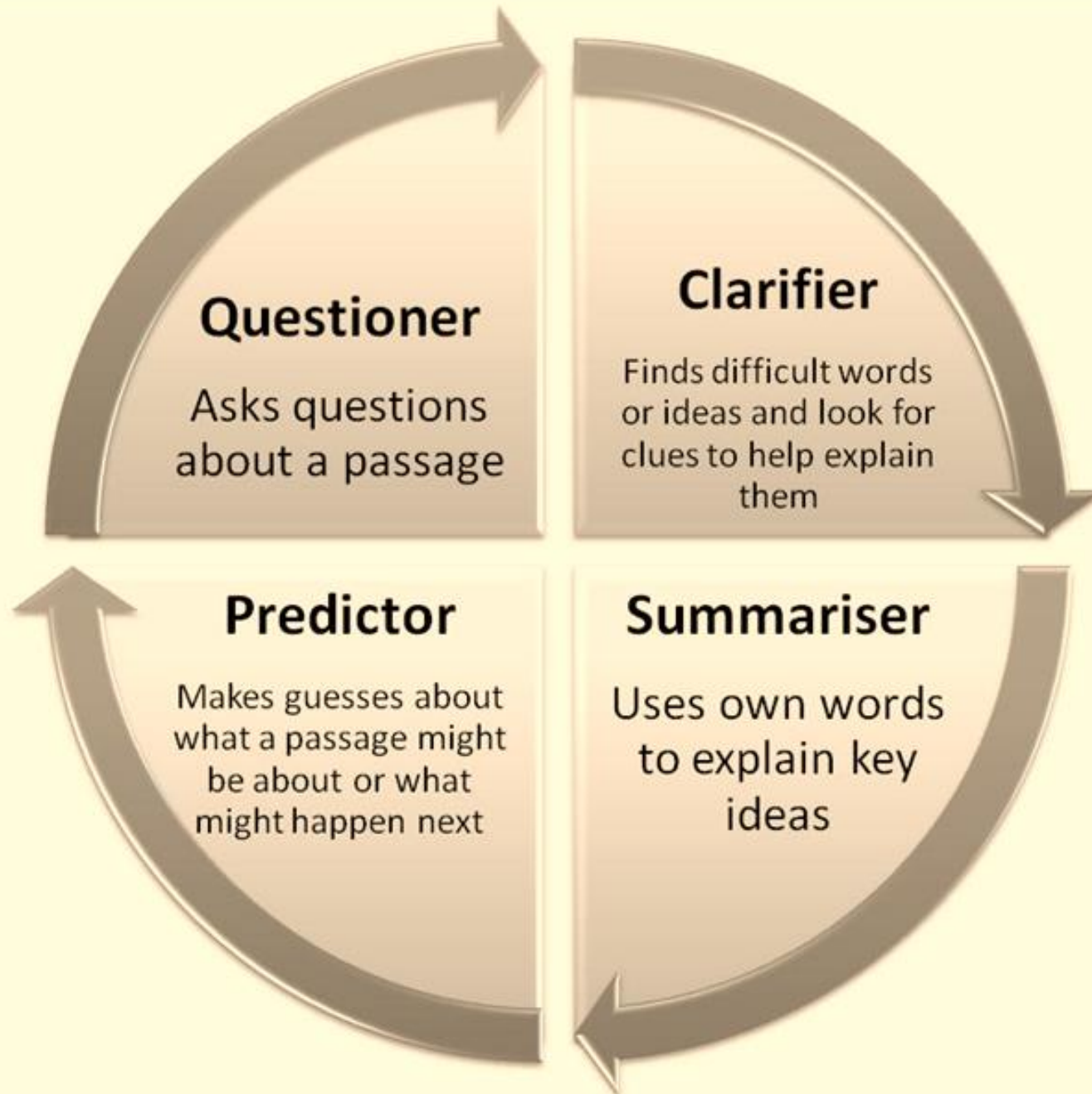
**4 Reader Roles
(Collaborative Learning)**

Predictor
Questioner
Clarifier
Summariser

**RECIPROCAL
TEACHING**

Facilitates metacognitive processing through active monitoring of comprehension & thought processes

**OUTLSC through questioning by students for students
(with teacher modelling)**





Skills that students learnt in RT were applied to a lesson on Opening Up Talk for Learning

With the skills they learnt in RT, students were able to:

- engage in rich and productive discussions
- speak aloud and express their views confidently

With the use of talk moves to generate productive academic discussion, students were able to:

- respond to the questions asked at a deeper level
- give elaborated responses to the questions asked



Department & School-wide Programmes to Support Oracy Skills of Teachers and Students

School-wide

- Staff workshop on effective questioning techniques
- Sharing by staff and students during the morning assembly
- Students sharing during school celebrations, commemoration of events using PowerPoint & videos
- PLC for WSA-EC department discussions and professional development materials via staff newsletter, e-Buzz
- Use of 'Let's Talk' card games by ELIS by EL Dept. for Upper Secondary lessons on speaking & representing
- Active participation in competitions, e.g. National Storytelling, National Literature Festival
- Use of Lesson Observation rubric to observe use of content vocabulary and functional language by teachers
- TV Broadcast



Lesson Observation Rubric

An extract from the lesson observation form

B. PEDAGOGIES

1. Teaching strategies and resources (√):

Class lecture	In groups	In pairs	Self-paced learning
Demo	Pupil presentation	Gallery Walk	Hands-on
PBL	IBL	Others :	
ICT Tools :			

2. Caters to different levels of student readiness
3. Caters to different learning styles of pupils
4. Uses pupils' existing knowledge / experience effectively to acquire the new learning content
5. Uses ICT & other resources effectively to support the teaching strategies adopted
6. **Uses Content Vocabulary and Functional Language to enhance students' understanding**
7. Explains concepts clearly



Our Reflections

Prior to my encounter with WSA-EC programme, I had never been so mindful of the importance that language can have on the effectiveness of a typical Science lesson.

It was after the series of WSA-EC workshops that I realised how language can be used to enhance the effectiveness of my lessons.

I am more equipped to use appropriate functional language to support my instructions to the class and became aware that even the unique content vocabulary used exclusively for different subjects can be part of WSA-EC.

I am most intrigued by the various talk moves which allow teachers to create productive discussion in class based on the 5 focus areas.

More importantly, I think the role of EC champ has opened up for me a new perspective of how language plays a key role in helping a student understand a subject better.

Alvin, School Staff Developer and Science teacher



Our Reflections

Deliberate talk moves can actually enhance engagement level in the daily classroom, as the autonomy for using talk is transferred to them. Students, in turn, feel more confident and more willing to volunteer their answers.

In the course of planning questions, I also learn that scaffolding of questions is also a skill that I have to sharpen. Just like words, questions serve as signpost – one leading to the other. Having a series of scaffolding questions allow students to connect what they have learn.

Increasingly, they begin to appreciate each other's contribution and, in turn, this boosts their confidence in speaking.

I feel that consistent and deliberate use of talk in classroom will enhance and improve my students' learning.

Li Rong, Geography & Social Studies teacher



Our Reflections

The Opening Up Talk in the Subject Classroom session conducted for my department was engaging and the teachers participated well.

This session also helped me to recall the focus areas and explaining some of these focus areas to my department teachers enabled me to strengthen and deepen my understanding on the role of talk.

After discussing the lesson plans, some of the points brought up by my department teachers encouraged me to look at the lesson plans from different angles (differentiated versions) to support students' learning.

Through the verbal sharing, we, **teachers, were able to highlight some of the misconceptions that can develop with the wrong choice of words/phrases. This served as a reminder to us not to repeat such mistakes.**

Latha, Maths teacher

Our Challenges



Time factor:

Teachers have to balance the teaching of subject content with the use of talk moves to generate productive academic discussion.



Teachers' readiness and know-how:

Newer teachers (less than 10 years in service) who make up quite a large number of our teaching force need more support and guidance.

Our Plans for 2017

Cascade 'Integrating Talk with Writing in Subject Classrooms' to all department teachers through co-facilitation with ELIS in early 2017.

Make use of PLC time once a term to share good WSA-EC practices across departments and carry out lesson demo on effective classroom talk.

Explore possibility of a subject-based inquiry with ELIS: questioning techniques in Physics, scaffolding writing in Geography.