

中学英语课程教法

主编 师文箴



天津教育出版社
TIANJIN EDUCATION PRESS

METHODOLOGY FOR MIDDLE
SCHOOL ENGLISH CURRICULUM

中学英语课程教法



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天津教育出版社
TIANJIN EDUCATION PRESS

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

中学英语课程教法 / 师文笠主编.

—天津:天津教育出版社,2008.8

ISBN 978-7-5309-5391-4

I. 中… II. 师… III. ①英语课—教学法—师范大学—教材
②英语课—教学法—中学 IV. G633.412

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2008) 第 134767 号

中学英语课程教法

出 版 人 肖占鹏

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选题策划 匡 威

责任编辑 张 洁

装帧设计 王 楠

出版发行 天津教育出版社

天津市和平区西康路 35 号 邮政编码 300051

[http : // www. tjeph. com. cn](http://www.tjeph.com.cn)

经 销 新华书店

印 刷 天津泰宇印务有限公司

版 次 2008 年 8 月第 1 版

印 次 2008 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

规 格 16 开 (787×1092 毫米)

字 数 230 千字

印 张 11.5

定 价 28.00 元

前言

在近几年的英语教育领域,新课标的出现以及新课标的教育理念在中小学英语教学中的体现,全面启动了在各个层面的英语教学改革。作为师范类院校英语专业的必修课之一的英语教学法,也出现了前所未有的改革和发展势头。

本教材作为原张家口师专内部教材使用多年。在 20 世纪 90 年代初,根据当时人教版教材的需求,在结合当时国内外外语教育和相关领域研究成果的基础上,做过较大改动。其中,特别吸收了人的情绪教育和全面发展的理念和微格教学的训练方法。进入 21 世纪后,新课标的推出特别是任务型教学法的思想在新课标中的体现,更加明确了英语教学法的定位和发展方向。

本教材旨在为师范类院校准教师的英语教育理论学习、研究、实习和就业,中小学英语教师的岗前培训以及英语教师的教学研究提供一本实用并具有指导意义的教科书。针对中学生在不同阶段的学习能力和心理特征,本套教材分为高中版、初中版和小学版。

在该教材的改进过程中,有幸得到多年从事大学英语听、说、读、写、语音和语法教学的专业教师 and 一部分中学一线骨干英语教师的加盟和支持,给这部教材注入了更多的活力,使它的思想、理念和操作方法更加贴近当今蓬勃发展的英语教育事业。

为了给师范生和正在进行岗前培训的青年英语教师提供更多的视听机会,《中学英语课程教法》用英语写成。由于编者水平所限,难免有不妥之处,欢迎各界同仁、中学英语教师和广大读者批评指正。

主编 师文笠
2008 年 8 月

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Chapter I An Introduction to English-Teaching Methodology

- ◆1 *What is English-Teaching Methodology?*
- ◆2 *Why Should a Prospective Teacher Study It?*
- ◆3 *How Will It be Studied?*
- ◆4 *Conclusion*

◆1 What is English-Teaching Methodology?

English-teaching methodology is an independent subject in which laws and approaches for English teaching and learning is studied. Its researching contents are first involved in the system of teaching methodology including teaching policy, teaching objectives, curriculum designs and the principles for the selection of teaching materials. Next are the specific teaching materials and approaches that include the foundational means and ways through which students are helped to learn English language with interest and to develop other abilities focused upon and around language skills.

English-teaching methodology is an integrated science, as the research findings in the domains of philosophy, pedagogy, linguistics, psychology, sociology and other applied sciences are all adopted in this field, and by combining all the refined ideas in above domains, the theoretical base of English-teaching methodology has been built up in its own field of researches and development. When there is something new and advanced developed in those domains, there is some new attempt in English teaching. For example, only when the technology of recording sounds was invented, could people bring native speakers' speech into classrooms without presence of themselves; when there is new findings in human's potential to master a language in linguistics or psychology, there are new approaches practiced in English classrooms. The development of all the mentioned subjects directly affects and promotes the progress and development of English-teaching.

It is a history of hundreds of years in English teaching around the world since it has been taught as a foreign or second language, so there are achievements both in TESL (teaching English as a second language) and TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) in the world. And practical experience has also been accumulated in China in the course of one hundred years or so. But people's recognition to language and human's ability to master one or more than one language is a tough and long-lasting way to go, just as human's recognition to other domains in natural science. Even so, language teaching / learning keeps progressing along the history. More-

over, with natural and social science advancing, the assisting aids have been greatly improved, too. Teachers and experts have always been exploring newer and better ways to teach well and for students to learn easily. Therefore, just like everything in the world, English-teaching methodology has been developed along its way and there is always something better that keeps arising.

English-teaching methodology is regarded as a science as well as something of artistic work because, to some extent, human nature and behavior, especially language behavior is something difficult to discuss with scientific rigor, it is not easy to describe or explain language teaching entirely and accurately with scientific terms. Besides, language itself is a work of art shared by human being, and a teacher who teaches language well is often regarded as something of an artist. And more, in teaching a language, it is often considered not only how language structures should be presented properly and correctly but also how they are presented interestingly and impressively. Whether a period of class is successful or not depends, to a great deal, on the teacher's accomplishments in the language arts and how the techniques and skills are applied and how the class is organized and controlled. A teacher of language is always likely to pursue the beauty and perfection of language or try to present it in that way. So language teaching is undoubtedly an artistic work. And above all, language teaching is the most elementary work in education especially in molding the young of their competence in expression, thought, imagination and creation.

Generally speaking, English language teaching as TEFL or TESL is an independent and integrated science in relation to many other researching domains as well as a kind of art concerning language accomplishments. Its researching content is about how English should be taught or learned properly, easily and efficiently. It requires a teacher's knowledge, skills as well as an open mind with foreseeing eyesight. It requires that a teacher of English should be equipped with proficiency of English language (at least quite high above students' levels), language teaching skills and most of the good virtues of human being.

◆2 Why Should a Prospective Teacher Study It?

As we have seen, China is now completely open to the outside world, and the requirements of English as a foreign language are increasingly going up, and 2008 Olympic Games sees greater needs for the language. Many people are keen to know a better and shorter approach to grasping English since it is used so widely as an international language that more and more people feel that nothing could be done without English, especially in the new century. So English learning is getting along almost with all levels of education, from kindergarten to college and people from the young to the aged. Therefore, it is indispensable for us—the prospective teachers to learn and make researches of the development of English teaching in the history, the present state and developing tendency in the future both at home and abroad. And on the foundation of achievements by our predecessors, it is the responsibility of the prospective and young teachers to sum up experience of the older generations and do experiments in our own teaching practice so as to adapt to the needs of economic construction in our country. This is the very starting point of our

learning and researches in this field.

The decisive key to the English-teaching quality lies in the levels and integrated quality of teachers, whose English operated both orally and literally during all the steps of classroom teaching plays a decisive function in students' learning process. So being a teacher, we have to enrich ourselves with profound knowledge and skills concerning language teaching, and to be quite skilled at English-teaching techniques and methods and get to know well the ideas and theories about language teaching. Before stepping onto the platform in a classroom, a teacher of English should always have a clear idea of what will be completed, what techniques and methods should be applied. Any conscientious teacher would do so as the people we face are lovely younger children, on whose shoulders will lay the obligation of constructing the future world. Here the most important of all is to love the cause we are going to undertake and the learners we are going to stand face to face, thinking that we are going for "the greatest profession under the sun". Therefore, a teacher of English must be knowledgeable and expert at the language himself, and constantly reinforce his own professional skills. Teaching is a kind of work full of creation. Every teacher of English will be able to manage his teaching activities as planned with his own style, only if he volunteers to devote himself to the teaching career and is not conservative in accepting new things, as there are many different methods based upon different theories from psychology, linguistics, pedagogy, philosophy and some other theories concerning language teaching. But no universal patterns and approaches could be applied to every kind of situation because ideas and theories that are based upon keep developing, and that is why an open and progressive mind is necessary for a teacher of English.

In addition, we often notice the fact that two teachers nearly at the same level in mastery of the language and teaching skills using nearly the same method can get vastly different effects. There may be a lot of reasons but among them, the teacher's attitude to the students may be the most essential one. As the teacher's manners is one of the most essential factors in the transmission of information between him/her and students, and any teaching-learning activities take place between the two parties (the teacher and the students). It is students' proficiency in the language knowledge and skills that both the teacher and students want to attain. So English language teaching is nothing but means or process through which students make progress in English language ability, develop their intelligence, character, personality and emotion. And moreover, it is the teacher's duty to help them learn as easily and effectively as possible. Of course, there are many other factors involved in English teaching such as educational policy and situation of the state etc.

Thus, we can define that English-teaching methodology is one of the required subjects for a prospective teacher who majors in English in a teachers' college, and that is also knowledge and skills to know and obtain for anyone who is ready to be at such a position or has something to do with English teaching. More obviously to say, a prospective teacher of English is required to prepare himself for the abilities and qualities in the following aspects:

2.1 Ideology and Morality

2.1.1 Devoted to the students and English-teaching career;

- 2.1.2 Good sense of conscience and responsibility;
- 2.1.3 Sound personality with good character;
- 2.1.4 Right recognition to English language and the elements in the process of language learning and teaching.

2.2 Language Knowledge and Skills

- 2.2.1 A high aural–oral competence with good pronunciation and intonation;
- 2.2.2 A proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating between English and Chinese;
- 2.2.3 A sound command of traditional and contemporary knowledge and usage of English grammar;
- 2.2.4 An ability to deal with the phonetic, lexical and grammatical difficulties encountered by the students;
- 2.2.5 A larger vocabulary;
- 2.2.6 A well command of knowledge of cultures between English speaking countries and China.

2.3 Professional skills

All the materials in this book will help a prospective teacher to be well prepared with English teaching knowledge and skills and be good at coping with affairs about both teaching contents and teaching objects (students), because the present situation requires us prospective teachers to work as an skilled and experienced teacher at a teaching post with a good mastery of the following:

- 2.3.1 A well understanding of the teaching principles, aims, and requirements in the teaching syllabus and the English Curriculum Standards;
- 2.3.2 An ability to modify teaching material and texts and to supplement it when necessary;
- 2.3.3 The effective and creative employment of various teaching methods or approaches to realize the teaching objectives;
- 2.3.4 A sensitive mind to knowledge of current development in teaching theories and methods;
- 2.3.5 A high quality of teaching manners;
- 2.3.6 A good command of classroom English;
- 2.3.7 Be skilled at normal handwriting, chalk sketches and making/using teaching aids;
- 2.3.8 Be good at organizing, controlling and managing an English class with a well-prepared plan.

Thus, only when a prospective teacher is in possession of these qualities can he be hopeful of becoming a successful teacher of English. If one wants to be so but lacks some qualities in some aspect, he can also realize his dream with hard work, which could make up the deficiency in certain qualities. Of course, a capable teacher will appear in the classroom if he works hard with good quality in all aspects.

◆3 How Will It be Studied?

As we mentioned above, teaching is a special work full of practice and creation. We could not simply learn some rules about some methods or approaches and adopt them in our practice

rigidly, because we will be facing classes of innocent and artless children with naked nature. We have to be very careful to take every step in the teaching practice. Therefore, we will have a thorough study, on one hand, of all the concerned theories and skills, then discuss among ourselves about advantages and disadvantages of all the theories and techniques developed in the history and at present time in TESL and TEFL in order to get a sound comprehension; on the other hand, more chances will be given in practicing the ideas and techniques. When a certain skill or technique introduced, micro-teaching practice will be done by the prospective teachers, each having several minutes to perform on the teaching platform. Then the practice will be again followed by discussion, analysis and evaluation, all taking place among the prospective teachers ourselves on the purpose of getting some initial experience and feelings of teaching, during which preparing a teaching plan is one necessary part for the tasks.

In the teaching practice, it is more significant for the prospective teachers often to attend English classes in local schools given by experienced teachers, and such arrangements could always help young teachers to realize real problems in the teaching and ways to solve them.

◆4 Conclusion

As we have seen, a teacher of English is made, not born, and we have many reasons to learn the teaching methodology well and become good, successful language teachers after learning certain knowledge and receiving certain skill training. But still, please remember the proverbs: NO PAINS, NO GAINS. AND GOD ALWAYS HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES. No matter what advanced techniques or reasonable theories or modern teaching equipments are applied, it is the teacher who uses and operates them. Though sometimes a teacher may play different roles in teaching activities such as the role of a demonstrator, an assessor, an organizer, a monitor or even as a knowledge source, he always plays the most dominant and decisive part — a designer who controls directly or indirectly all the language-learning activities of the class. So “the teacher will be in a position to derive useful techniques or principles by studying all the available approaches and methods”.(Language Teaching Approach: An Overview by Marianne Celce-Murcia) But it is helpful to remember the advice given by some expert in using all these methods: Adapt; don't adopt.

* * * *

Discussion Questions:

1. What is English-teaching methodology?
2. Why is it necessary for the prospective teachers to study English-teaching methodology?
3. Knowing a little science about education, linguistics, psychology and philosophy will help a teacher of English work well and successfully, why? Try to tell the reasons.
4. What do you think a teacher of English should be skilled at?
5. What knowledge should a qualified teacher obtain?
6. Who were your favorite English teachers during your school days? Why did you like him/her? Do you like to work as they did? Why?

7. Besides language knowledge and skills, a teacher of English should set a good example for students in words and deeds. Do you think it is necessary? Why?
8. What does a devoted teacher look like? Give some descriptions.
9. In your opinion, what roles should an English teacher play in teaching-learning activities in the classroom?
10. What relationship do you hope to establish between you and your students?

Chapter II An Overview to TEFL & TESL in the History

- ◆ 1 *A Description to the Development of TEFL & TESL*
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- ◆ 7 *The Communicative / Functional Approach*
- ◆ 8 *Comprehension-Based Approaches*
- ◆ 9 *Production-Based Learning*
- ◆ 10 *Humanistic & Psycho-Suggestive Approaches*
- ◆ 11 *Task-Based Learning Approach*
- ◆ 12 *Conclusion*

◆ 1 A Description to the Development of TEFL & TESL

It is a long history of thousands of years in teaching English, but teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) or as a second language (TESL) arose in the 19th century, as an educational phenomenon to meet the needs of development in economy, politics etc. firstly in Europe, then around the world.

So far, a number of teaching methods have been developed in the field of TEFL and TESL in addition to the classical Grammar-Translation Method. We will proceed to make a detailed study of them one by one, and they will help a prospective teacher to know which method to employ and how to teach in a certain situation, which is one of the aspects dealt with in teaching methodology.

As we have known, most methods and approaches in English-teaching history were based upon practice and the research findings in other concerned fields. Every teaching theory and method has its own background, starting and developing stages, and of course, each has its limits. A little acquaintance with this knowledge can help a prospective teacher to be well equipped for the teaching practice. The developing periods of English-teaching can be divided into five

periods like this:

1.1 Before the end of 19th century

The Translation Method played a dominant part in the long Middle Age in Europe for teaching Latin and Greek, which were regarded as the standard languages at the time and used as means for educated people to teach themselves classical literature works. Language teaching remained at a low level and in small scale. At the end of 19th century, grammar schools appeared in Prussia first as a new education style in which more students were taught together in a classroom by one teacher. Then it spread out in most of the European countries. In those schools, French, English and other “modern” languages were taught, since the pedantic translation method could not adapt to the needs of the social development and the new style of education, especially, the age characteristics of young children. Therefore the Grammar–Translation Method was produced as an innovational attempt.

1.2 At the End of 19th —the Early Ages of the 20th Century

The Direct Method played an active part during this cross–centennial period in meeting the needs of development of capitalist politics, economy in newly sprung–up European countries like the Great Britain, France and some other countries. It arose as a reaction to the Grammar–Translation Method, claiming its failure to train learners who could have applied the foreign language they had learned. And it was believed that English as TEFL or TESL should be taught directly without interference from the mother tongue. The idea was highly valued by experts in the fields of education, linguistics and psychology.

1.3 In the Mid of the 20th Century

During the period from 1940s to 1960s, Audio–Lingual Method, which was based on the theories of structuralist linguistics and behaviorist psychology were popular and became dominant in foreign language teaching in the United States because of its short–term effect during the Second World War. And at the same time across the Atlantic, the Situational Approach was promoted in Europe in an effort to develop the learners’ oral–aural abilities with proper living situation supplied for students in learning, and to a great extent, it was a success.

1.4 In the last half of the 20th Century

In the late 1960s, structuralism linguistics and behaviorist psychology was challenged by cognitive psychology and Noam Chomsky’s Transformation Theory, which criticized severely that it was not humanistic to treat learners like machines and it was not always effective on all the occasions to give endless, tiresome imitation and repetition in learning a foreign language. And in the 1970s, the Communicative Approach was put forward by notional–functionalist. Later some more theories and techniques were put forward to serve the purpose of teaching students as the main bodies in teaching–learning activities. And in last score of the century, Task–based Learning began to take its shape, which was supported by most of the advanced ideas, theories at the end of 20th century, especially the research findings in people’ emotion quotient (EQ).

1.5 In the new century

As a result of development in natural and social science, and deeper recognition to the

structure of human brain in which any language originates, English teaching has been greatly progressing and new research findings and ideas keep pouring in. Teaching has been more focused on full development of students instead of teaching only for knowledge and skills. For example, how should students be encouraged to be responsible for themselves, and how should students be more active and enthusiastic for creation and dare to challenge language difficulties during the learning process. All those problems have been explored, experimented, tried and then developed in the field of language teaching. And after years of practice and experiment, Task-based Learning becomes more and more popular in this field, with taking nearly all the advantages of the research findings of the 20th and the new century. In China, since 2001, the birth of the English Curriculum Standards declares to the world that English taught as a foreign language in schools began to step onto a normal way in the process of students' full development.

In short, different teaching methods arose at different times, adapting to the situation and needs of the time, and each gives some particular emphasis for the sake of some theory that is based upon. No wonder that some people described the researches of foreign language teaching in the 20th century as the history of researches of teaching methods, which can be seen clearly from the descriptions above. Besides, this remark also suggests that English teaching is facing with the global teaching reform of the 21st century. As more and more modern equipments, means and techniques are applied to language teaching, and moreover, technology and means that are used to do researches become more and more advanced, it is no doubt that there will be great leaps in this field. Sometimes even the prophets could not tell exactly what the classroom teaching will look like and what a teacher has to do at the end of the 21st century since the development of applied science and technology is advancing at such a fantastic speed that it often goes beyond the imagination of human in modern time. But one thing is certain: nothing can take the place of the teacher since everything developed could not tell the difference of human beings, neither could they offer proper guide and help to individual students accordingly. So it is advisable for us prospective teachers to make a thorough study of all these approaches and methods in an effort to make our classroom teaching reasonable and effective.

◆2 The Grammar-Translation Method

2.1 Background

The Grammar-Translation Method came into being as a vogue in Europe in the 18th century. It derived from the Translation Method, with which the educated people studied the classical culture and taught themselves Latin and Greek, the “classical language” at the time. A language could be learned through translation into the mother tongue with the help of a dictionary. The teaching contents were famous classical literary works, to which explanation and translation were taken as an assisting means during teaching and learning.

After Renaissance in Europe, there was great progress made in natural science, industry, literature, humanities. And in education, English and other foreign language began to be taught in grammar schools, where the teacher helped students to learn foreign languages by means of