英语口语探索

AN APPROACH TO COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH

樊习英 编著

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前　言

　　随着经济全球化的推进及国际交往的日益频繁，英语口语的地位扶摇直上，发展口语能力的呼声越来越高。然而，由于历史的原因，国内英语口语及口语教学的研究一直比较薄弱。近年来，虽然各种形式的口语培训班如雨后春笋般涌现，研究口语及其教学的学术成果也层出不穷，但是属于经验、技巧总结的居多，大部分缺乏必要的理论高度。即使是理论性探索，限于篇幅，也往往针对英语口语或其教学的某些方面、某些角度进行探讨，缺少全面、深入、系统的研究。基于以上原因，本书作者在国外学习深造时搜集了大量国外相关著述，结合中国情景下口语及其教学的研究，从语言学、教育学、心理学、应用语言学等角度，对英语口语的本质、影响口语能力发展的因素及口语活动的设计、评价等进行深入、系统、全面地探索，以期对国内的研究起到抛砖引玉的作用，对口语活动的设计及评价提供新的视角。值得一提的是，作者将诊断性评价、形成性评价及成就性评价引入英语口语能力的评价体系，改变了过去对口语能力单一、静态的评价方式，对不同阶段的口语发展起到了积极的导向作用。

　　本书共分七章。第一章是与口语有关的英语教学法的历史回顾，主要回顾了直接法、口语法、听说法和交际法等四种教学法产生的历史背景，分析了其优势和不足；第二章探索了口语的本质、特点及口语交际能力的模式；第三章集中研究了影响口语能力发展的一系列因素，如动机激发、纠错方式、互动方法、交际策略、情

感因素、社会文化因素等;第四章分析了学生在口语测试中暴露出的问题以及口语活动和口语教学中存在的问题;第五章着重探索了课堂口语活动的设计,包括口语文本的选择、口语活动设计的策略(如责任转移、听说融合、语音矫正、讨论技巧)、课堂口语活动的类型;第六章主要研究了课堂口语活动的评价,包括评价原则与评价方式;最后一章针对学术界口语评价标准中一直争论不休的流利性及准确性问题,分析了口语测评的标准,提出了不同目的的口语活动中二者兼顾、各有侧重的观点,分别介绍了以提高流利性和准确性为目的的口语活动方式。

在撰写本书的过程中,四川大学赵洪定教授、华东师范大学吴长镛教授曾给予作者热情指导并拨冗审阅了书稿,提出了十分宝贵的修改意见;作者还参考吸收了国内外一些专家、学者(如 Anne Burns, Helen Joyce, Rosie Tanner, Catherine Green, Tricia Hedge, Marion Williams, Robert L.Buredn 及文秋芳等)的研究成果;本书的撰写也得到了攀枝花学院张春教授和袁彬副教授的大力支持,在此一并表示衷心感谢!

<div align="right">樊习英</div>

Preface

With the rapid development of globalization and China's entry into the World Trade Organization, frequent international exchanges call for talents with smart colloquial English, which is exactly the challenge the Chinese higher education is confronted with. Therefore strategic significance is attached to the research and teaching of colloquial English. Until now, an increasing number of researches have been conducted and thousands of findings have been made, some of which are incredibly valuable indeed. However, there is still a lack of a comprehensive, thorough and systematic study in this field. To meet the increasing demand for systematic academic research and guide to teaching, especially in the Chinese educational context, this book intends to introduce related foreign research findings into China, combine them with colloquial English teaching in China, integrate theoretical exploration with practical classroom teaching, thus offer researchers and teachers a panorama as well as some practical ideas, and provide new perspectives on the design of colloquial activities and assessments of collo-

quial English as well.

The first chapter of this book is a historical review of teaching associated with colloquial English, which examines four major teaching methods, namely, the Direct Method, the Oral Approach, the Audiolingual Method and the Communicative Approach. Chapter 2 explores the nature of spoken English and the reason for teaching it. It examines the distinction between the spoken English and the written language, as well as the mode of spoken English competence. Chapter 3 focuses on a number of factors involved in speaking English competently, such as aural medium, socio-cultural factors, affective factors, motivation, error correction and classroom atmosphere. It highlights the types and arousal of learners' motivation. Chapter 4 studies the present situation of teaching colloquial English and the problems with it. Chapter 5 is the core of the whole book, which focuses on the designing of speaking activities in the classroom, including the selection of spoken texts, methodology in teaching colloquial English, types of colloquial activities in and out of the classroom, such as seminar, informal debate, Readers Theatre and so on. Chapter 6 explores the assessment of speaking activities in the classroom, i.e., the diagnostic assessment, formative assessment and achievement assessment. Emphasis on fluency or accuracy is a controversial issue in colloquial English, so Chapter 7 discusses this topic and

suggests some fluency-based and accuracy-based activities.

A lot of people have been helpful and encouraging in the completion of the book, without whom the fulfillment of this academic work would not have been possible. So I am deeply indebted to renowned professor Zhao Hongding from Sichuan University and Professor Wu Changyong from East China Normal University, who ardently offered many invaluable suggestioms on the planning of the book, patiently read the earlier versions of the book and offered some constructive comments and advice on the improvement of it.

I should also thank the prominent scholars, such as Anne Burns, Helen Joyce, Rosie Tanner, Catherine Green, Tricia Hedge, Marion Williams, Robert L. Burden and Wen Qiufang, partly owing to whose research findings this book can be accomplished.

My hearty thanks go to Professor Zhang Chun and Associate Professor Yuan Bin from Panzhihua University as well, who kindly offered me plenty of encouragement and timely help.

Fan Xiying

Contents

Chapter 1

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF APPROACHES ASSOCIATED WITH ORAL ENGLISH TEACHING

1.1 Direct Method

The Direct Method is a method of foreign or second language teaching which insists that only the target language should be used in class and meanings should be transferred "directly" by associating speech forms with actions, objects, mime, gestures, and situations. It emphasizes the importance of spoken language, therefore, holds that reading and writing should be taught only after speaking. The Direct Method believes in the natural process of language learning and in the inductive teaching of grammar.

1.1.1 Background

The Direct Method gets its name from the assumption that meanings are to be connected directly with the target language, without going through the process of translating into the students' native language.

In the mid and late 19th century, international ex-

changes increased very fast because of political and economic factors. But the different languages used in different countries created a barrier in such exchanges. Increased opportunities for communication in spoken language among Europeans created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages. Therefore, language teaching innovations in the 19th century were inevitable. The Direct Method emerged as a result of the innovations.

The new world in the late 19th century made the Direct Method not only a necessity but also a possibility. The rapid development of linguistics, psychology and education greatly stimulated the establishment of the Direct Method. The best known reformers in the mid 19th century was the Frenchman F. Gouin who applied his linguistic and psychological theories and developed an approach to teaching a foreign language on the basis of his observations of child first language learning. Another reform-minded language teacher was Berlitz who established the first Berlitz school in the U.S.A. in 1878. He used a method which was known as Berlitz Method and it was one school of the Direct Method.

1.1.2 Main features

Students learn to think in the target language, so target language is the language of instruction and communication in the classroom and meaning is presented by relating directly to the physical world. Spoken language is preferred rather than written language. The syllabus is arranged semantically

according to situations or topics. Therefore correct pronunciation is emphasized. Grammar is acquired inductively through listening and speaking activities.

Listening and speaking skills are emphasized, though the teaching of all four skills is not neglected. Regarding listening and speaking as the basis of reading and writing is a strategy in fostering the four skills. Designing listening comprehension tasks is one of the ways to establish a favorable classroom climate in the Direct Method. It mainly uses such techniques as question-and-answer, dictation and conversation practice. Special attention paid to pronunciation and intonation is desirable in teaching spoken language. Reading and writing exercises should be based upon what the students have practised orally first.

1.1.3 Comments

1. Merits

The following advantages can be found in the Direct Method:

(1) The use of the target language as a means of instruction and communication in the classroom contributes greatly to forming the habit of thinking in the target language, which is necessary in efficient real communication.

(2) The emphasis on practice with new language items and on language skills, rather than on language knowledge, is important in achieving automaticity of using the target language.

(3) Regarding listening and speaking as the basis of reading and writing is a strategy in fostering four skills. Using full sentences as teaching units makes foreign language learning more natural and efficient for students to understand a new text and acquire a language.

2. Defects

There are also aspects in the Direct Method which are not satisfactory:

(1) Overemphasizing the similarities between naturalistic first language acquisition and classroom foreign language learning results in the exclusive use of the target language. The absolute avoidance of the native tongue occasionally troubles the Direct Method in transferring the meaning of abstract concepts.

(2) Without explicit grammar explanation, students lack necessary knowledge of the target language. As a result, they tend to produce utterances with a lot of grammatical mistakes in them.

(3) The Direct Method places a high demand on the teacher. It requires native-speaker teachers or teachers who have native-speaker-like fluency in the target language.

1.2 Oral Approach

The Oral Approach (or Situational Language Teaching) refers to an approach to language teaching developed by the British applied linguists from the 1930s to the 1960s. It is a

grammar-based method in which principles of grammatical and lexical gradation are used and new teaching points are presented and practised through meaningful situation-based activities.

1.2.1 Background

The Oral Approach originated from the work of British linguists in the 1920s and 1930s. Two of the most important and influential figures of the approach were Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby. Both of them were familiar with the Direct Method, but they were dissatisfied with its practice, and they had recognized its limitations in their teaching experience of English. Therefore, what they attempted was to develop a methodology of language teaching that was theoretically well grounded, intellectually ordered and practically workable. The result was the development of an approach to methodology that involved systematic principles and procedures that could be applied to the selection and organization of the content of a language course.

Palmer spent many years in Japan working towards two complementary objectives in English language teaching. The first was the realization of the principles of the Oral Method in a concrete form. Another objective was to develop principles of vocabulary control. According to Palmer and some other linguists of that time, vocabulary played one of the most important roles in foreign language learning, and frequency counts showed that a core of 2000 words occurred

frequently in daily use and written text.

Palmer and Hornby had also paid much attention to the important role of grammar in their writings. In their view, organization of the grammatical content of a language course should be based on the principle of gradation. It was an obvious requirement of any course that it should proceed from easy to difficult without sharp breaks. Hornby and others analyzed the English language and classified its major grammatical structures into sentence patterns which could be used in oral practice.

1.2.2 Main features

(1) Language teaching begins with the spoken language.

(2) The target language is the language of instruction. Translation should be avoided.

(3) New language points are introduced and practiced situationally, i.e., words should be presented in sentences, and sentences should be practiced in meaningful contexts and not be taught as isolated, disconnected elements.

(4) Vocabulary selection procedures are followed to ensure that an essential general service vocabulary is covered.

1.2.3 Comments

1. Merits

(1) The Oral Approach/Situational Language Teaching has made the first attempt to establish theoretical principles to develop a methodological framework for teaching English as a