



英语沙龙英语教学系列丛书

THE PRACTICE OF
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
TEACHING
英语语言教学的实践

Jeremy Harmer

THIRD EDITION

COMPLETELY REVISED AND UPDATED



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出版前言

随着国内和国际形势以及科学技术的发展,国际交流日益频繁,我国对外语人才的需求日益增加,英语的重要性也日益突出,从而推动了外语教学事业的迅猛发展。新一轮课程改革的开展和英语课程标准的颁布也对中小学英语教学提出了更高的要求,在这种情况下,外语师资培训和自身建设的重要性与日俱增。从“师资培训”这一概念的变化——由最初的 teacher training (教师培训)到后来的 teacher education (教师教育),再到今天的 teacher development (教师发展)——我们也可以看到教师不断充电、终身学习的必要性和重要性。

目前虽然国内其他出版社也先后引进了一些英语教学理论图书,但大多理论性太强,广大中小学英语教师理解和运用起来比较困难,因此,我们从培生教育集团引进了这套浅显易懂的英语教学法专著。我们首先奉献给大家的有《英语教学实践》(The Practice of English Language Teaching),《如何教语法》(How to Teach Grammar),《如何教词汇》(How to Teach Vocabulary),《如何教语音》(How to Teach Pronunciation)。

《英语教学实践》是世界著名英语教育教学专家 Jeremy Harmer 的力作,本书的前两版畅销世界各地,对英语教学法理论的发展和普及起到了极大的推动作用。《英语教学实践》(第三版)内容更丰富,是一部最新的、全面的英语教学理论与实践的完美结合体,它不但吸收了语言教学法、理论和应用语言学的最新发展和研究成果,而且还提供了丰富又实用的课堂教学指导。因此,无论对有经验的老师,还是没有经验的老师,此书都有很大的参考价值。

全书共分为九个部分(24章):语言、学习者与老师、理论、方法与技巧、课堂管理、聚焦语言、接受与产出技能、设计与计划、评价以及进一步探讨。内容涵盖了当今世界英语的作用、发音、口语与笔语语法、语言研究、现代教育技术在语言学习中的应用、课程设计等最新材料。

书中有丰富、实用的教学思想和选自当前教材的实例。每一章后附有后续任务(follow-up tasks)、详细的参考书目和索引,为读者对本章主题的进一步研究指明方向。

本书既可作为英语教师和英语教师培训者的英语教学法普及读本,也可用作普通中、高等师范院校、教育学院、教师进修学校英语专业学生的教学法教程。

编者

Preface

When the last edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching* was being written some schools used computers for word processing, and there were a few language games and simulations available on floppy disks. But that was about it. In what seems like a ridiculously short space of time, however, all that has changed. Computers are now, for teachers and students, the gateways to a wealth of information, contacts, and activities. The use of the Internet has mushroomed – indeed some countries have wired up their entire public education systems – and the technology for self study, language laboratories, and computer corpora has developed far beyond what many had anticipated.

Such advances are only the most visible signs of progress in a profession which, thank goodness, refuses to stand still. The teaching of English is in a constant state of flux, with new theories, practices, and materials erupting all over the world on an almost daily basis. We are constantly challenged by new research, provoked by the questioning of long-held beliefs, and amazed by the sheer brilliance and creativity of a diverse population of teachers, methodologists, materials designers – and, of course, students – from all over the globe. In a world where certain values are immutable, and where the qualities that make a good teacher may well be universal, change is nevertheless the lifeblood of our profession. To quote David Crystal in another context, ‘we know something is alive when we see it move’.

A book about language teaching methodology has to change too, to take account of all this movement. Since the last edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, there have been many new areas of research and innovation, quite apart from the growth in computer use in teaching and learning. Large corpora have allowed experts to tell us much more about the different grammars for spoken and written English, and now have incontrovertible evidence about the way language chunks itself into phrases of various kinds. Attitudes to language study both in and outside the classroom have been modified too, with serious attempts to put at least one model of language teaching (Presentation, Practice, and Production) firmly in its place. The role of English in our modern world has been the subject of much debate, as has been a growing awareness that language teaching methodology is often as culturally-specific as the cultures it springs from and cannot, therefore, be exported without taking account of where it is headed. At the same time our profession has realised that developing teachers themselves is part of the way they can offer more to their learners whilst at the same time enriching their own lives.

All of these contemporary issues are reflected in this new edition, which also looks (with I hope a fresh eye) at a range of familiar topics, from motivation to the roles of the teacher, from classroom management to feedback and correction. There are completely new chapters on teaching pronunciation, language testing, coursebooks, and learner autonomy/teacher development. The example activities have been taken from up-to-date materials, and the references and bibliography are intended to reflect much of our current states of knowledge and enthusiasm.

This book is aimed at practising teachers and those studying on in-service training programmes and postgraduate courses. In that, it differs significantly from its sister volume, *How to Teach English*, which is designed specifically for those wanting a more gentle introduction to the science and art of teaching English.

Acknowledgements

The first two editions

The first edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching* all those years ago could not have been written without the input and reaction of teacher colleagues and students at the Instituto Anglo-Mexicano de Cultura both in Mexico City and Guadalajara. They, and the trainees I worked with there, shaped the structure and content of that first edition.

At the very beginning I benefited greatly from help, advice, and reports given by Walter Plumb, Jean Pender, Richard Rossner, Donn Byrne and Jane Willis. Tim Hunt commissioned the book and Judith King edited it.

For the second edition, I was inspired by comments from Richard Rossner, Julian Edge, and Nick Dawson, and spurred on by Damien Tunnacliffe, who together with Helena Gomm and Alyson Lee saw the work through to its completion.

This new edition

Since the publication of the first edition I have had the great good fortune to work with teachers both in the UK and in many other parts of the world. Their responses and concerns, and the enormous amount I have learnt from attending their papers and workshops, led directly to the second edition of the book and have heavily influenced this new version, as have the many teachers around the world whose lessons I have been privileged to observe, and the students I have had the chance to work with.

As this new edition has gone through its various drafts to emerge in this, its final form, a number of people have directly helped the process in many varied and thought-provoking ways.

First among these – and someone to whom I owe a real debt of gratitude – is Martin Parrott, whose advice, encouragement, robust criticism and suggestions have been a feature of the writing process from the very beginning of the project. His unerring ability to spot problems of both style or substance saved me from many mishaps and inspired me to go further than I might otherwise have done.

Sally Blackmore's reports gave a clear, penetrating account of what the manuscript looked like from the point of view of the kind of reader it is especially designed for. She reminded me of what readers like that really need and I am forever in her debt.

Hanna Kijowska's report on part of the manuscript came just at the right time. She was able to bring a unique perspective to her reading of the material, helping me to sort out issues of level and focus. Her influence in the final version of those chapters is strong.

When Katie Head looked at the last third of the book she had little trouble pointing up problems and many roads not taken. Her comments challenged and inspired me, providing just the kind of creative tension that every writer hopes for from his or her reporters.

Thanks are also due to Kip Téllez and David Bowker whose reports helped to guide the book's development in a number of different ways.

Not only have I been blessed with such reporters, but I also got the best editor possible! Brigit Viney's detailed reading of the text and her clear-headed suggestions for how to improve it kept the process going. Without her this book would not be like it is.

Behind all of these people, however, has been my publisher David Lott, who believed in this project from the start, guided it, dealt with all the difficulties I put in his way, read the manuscript many times, and saved me from countless infelicities. Not only that, but he managed to keep me going at times when things got tough. This book exists because of him.

A number of people have generously answered questions, given me their time, or provided me with references I could not find, including Paul Cane, Gillie Cunningham, Chris George, Roger Gower, Kenny Graham, Peter Grundy, Katie Plumb, Michael Rundell, Michael Swan, and Douglas Workman.

When you are writing on your own, you need someone to bounce ideas off, and someone to ask for advice and guidance. As with the previous editions of this book, Anita Harmer has generously provided such counsel, listened to an author's moans and groans, and put up with the whole thing. To her are due heartfelt thanks.

But at the end of everything, the responsibility for what is in this edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching* is, of course, mine. Where it works all of these people should take the credit, both jointly and severally. If there are places where it does not, it is almost certainly because I did not heed their advice carefully enough.

Jeremy Harmer
Cambridge, UK

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Preface	ix
Acknowledgements	xi
PART 1: LANGUAGE	
CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF ENGLISH	
A The place of English	1
A1 The numbers game	1
A2 How English got there	2
A3 Where English fits	4
A4 The future of English	5
B Varieties of English	6
B1 Three circles	6
B2 Appropriate models of English	8
B3 General and specific	9
CHAPTER 2: DESCRIBING LANGUAGE	
A Grammar	12
A1 Spoken and written grammar	13
A2 Problems with grammar rules	15
B Vocabulary	16
B1 Language corpora	16
B2 Word meaning	18
B3 Extending word use	19
B4 Word combinations	20
B5 The grammar of words	21
C Language in use	23
C1 Purpose	23
C2 Appropriacy	24
C3 Language as discourse	25
C4 Genre	27
D The sounds of the language	28
D1 Pitch	28
D2 Intonation	28

D3	Individual sounds	29
D4	Sounds and spelling	31
D5	Stress	32
E	Paralinguistic features of language	33
E1	Vocal paralinguistic features	33
E2	Physical paralinguistic features	33

PART 2: LEARNERS AND TEACHERS

CHAPTER 3: DESCRIBING LEARNERS

A	Age	37
A1	Young children	38
A2	Adolescents	38
A3	Adult learners	40
B	Learner differences	41
B1	Aptitude	41
B2	Good learner characteristics	41
B3	Learner styles	42
B4	Language levels	44
B5	Individual variations	45
B6	What to do about individual differences	48
C	Motivation	51
C1	Defining motivation	51
C2	Sources of motivation	51
C3	Initiating and sustaining motivation	52

CHAPTER 4: DESCRIBING TEACHERS

A	What is a teacher?	56
A1	Teachers and learners	56
B	The roles of a teacher	57
B1	Controller	58
B2	Organiser	58
B3	Assessor	59
B4	Prompter	60
B5	Participant	60
B6	Resource	61
B7	Tutor	62
B8	Observer	62
B9	Which role?	63
C	The teacher as performer	63
D	The teacher as teaching aid	64
D1	Mime and gesture	64
D2	Language model	65
D3	Provider of comprehensible input	66

PART 3: THEORIES, METHODS, AND TECHNIQUES

CHAPTER 5: SOME BACKGROUND ISSUES

A	Pulling habits out of rats	68
B	'Language learning will take care of itself'	70
C	Noticing	73
D	The affective variable	74
E	Discovering language	75

CHAPTER 6: POPULAR METHODOLOGY

A	Approaches, methods, procedures, and techniques	78
A1	Audio-lingualism	79
A2	Presentation, Practice, and Production	80
A3	PPP and alternatives to PPP	82
A4	The Communicative approach	84
A5	Task-based learning	86
A6	Four methods	88
A7	Humanistic teaching	90
A8	The Lexical approach	91
B	What methodology?	93
B1	Methods and culture	93
B2	Making choices	96

CHAPTER 7: MISTAKES AND FEEDBACK

A	Students make mistakes	99
B	Assessing student performance	100
B1	Teachers assessing students	100
B2	Students assessing themselves	102
C	Feedback during oral work	104
C1	Accuracy and fluency	104
C2	Feedback during accuracy work	106
C3	Feedback during fluency work	107
D	Feedback on written work	109
D1	Written feedback techniques	110
D2	Finishing the feedback process	112

PART 4: MANAGING CLASSES

CHAPTER 8: GROUPING STUDENTS

A	Different groups	114
A1	Whole-class teaching	114
A2	Students on their own	115
A3	Pairwork	116
A4	Groupwork	117

A5	Ringling the changes	118
B	Organising pairwork and groupwork	119
B1	Making it work	119
B2	Creating pairs and groups	120
B3	Procedures for pairwork and groupwork	122
B4	Troubleshooting	124

CHAPTER 9: PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

A	Why problems occur	126
B	Preventing problem behaviour	127
B1	Creating a code of conduct	127
B2	Teachers and students	128
C	Reacting to problem behaviour	129
D	'Please speak English!'	131
D1	Why students use the mother tongue in class	131
D2	Attitudes to mother-tongue use in the classroom	131
D3	What to do about it	132

CHAPTER 10: EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER TEACHING EQUIPMENT

A	Pictures and images	134
B	The overhead projector	136
C	The board	137
D	Bits and pieces	139
E	The language laboratory	141
E1	Advantages of the language laboratory	142
E2	Activities in language laboratories	143
F	What computers are for	145
G	Homegrown materials production	151

PART 5: FOCUSING ON LANGUAGE

CHAPTER 11: STUDYING LANGUAGE

A	Studying structure and use	154
A1	Language study techniques	154
A2	Language study in lesson sequences	156
A3	Known or unknown language?	157
A4	Choosing study activities	158
B	Examples of language study activities	159
B1	Introducing new language	159
B2	Discovery activities	161
B3	Remembering	163

CHAPTER 12: RESEARCHING LANGUAGE

A	What dictionaries are for	168
A1	Reference and production dictionaries	169
A2	Training students to use dictionaries	171
B	What grammar books are for	173
C	What language corpora are for	175
C1	Typical or divergent?	177
D	Examples of language research	178

CHAPTER 13: TEACHING PRONUNCIATION

A	Pronunciation issues	183
A1	Perfection versus intelligibility	184
A2	Problems	184
A3	The phonemic alphabet: to use or not to use?	185
A4	When to teach pronunciation	186
B	Examples of pronunciation teaching	187
B1	Working with sounds	187
B2	Working with stress	191
B3	Working with intonation	194
B4	Sounds and spelling	196
B5	Connected speech and fluency	197

PART 6: RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

CHAPTER 14: TEACHING RECEPTIVE SKILLS

A	How we read and listen	199
A1	What we bring to the task	199
A2	Reasons for reading and listening	200
A3	Top-down and bottom-up	201
A4	Different skills	201
B	Problems and solutions	203
B1	Language	203
B2	Topic and genre	205
B3	Comprehension tasks	207
B4	Negative expectations	208

CHAPTER 15: READING

A	Extensive and intensive reading	210
A1	Extensive reading	210
A2	Intensive reading: the roles of the teacher	213
A3	Intensive reading: the vocabulary question	213
B	Reading lesson sequences	215
B1	Examples of reading sequences	215

CHAPTER 16: LISTENING

A	Extensive and intensive listening	228
A1	Extensive listening	228
A2	Intensive listening: using taped material	229
A3	Intensive listening: 'live' listening	230
A4	Intensive listening: the roles of the teacher	231
B	Listening lesson sequences	232
B1	Examples of listening sequences	233
C	The sound of music	242

CHAPTER 17: TEACHING PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

A	Productive skills	246
A1	Structuring discourse	246
A2	Following the rules	246
A3	Different styles, different genres	247
A4	Interacting with an audience	248
A5	Dealing with difficulty	249
B	Productive skills in the classroom	249
B1	Reception and production	250
C	Problems and solutions	251
C1	Language	252
C2	Topic and genre	252

CHAPTER 18: WRITING

A	Writing conventions	255
A1	Handwriting	255
A2	Spelling	256
A3	Layout and punctuation	256
B	Approaches to student writing	257
B1	Process and product	257
B2	Writing and genre	258
B3	Creative writing	259
B4	Writing as a cooperative activity	260
B5	Using the computer	260
B6	The roles of the teacher	261
C	Writing lesson sequences	262

CHAPTER 19: SPEAKING

A	Elements of speaking	269
A1	Language features	269
A2	Mental/social processing	271
B	Classroom speaking activities	271
B1	Acting from a script	271
B2	Communication games	271

B3	Discussion	271
B4	Prepared talks	274
B5	Questionnaires	274
B6	Simulation and role-play	274
B7	The roles of the teacher	275
C	Speaking lesson sequences	276

CHAPTER 20: TEACHING WITH VIDEO

A	Using video in language learning	282
A1	Why use video?	282
A2	Video problems	283
A3	Video types	284
A4	Whole-lesson video	284
A5	Video as part of a lesson	285
A6	Self-access video	286
B	Common video teaching techniques	286
B1	Viewing techniques	286
B2	Listening (and mixed) techniques	287
C	Video watching activities	287
C1	General comprehension	287
C2	Working with aspects of language	288
C3	Video as a springboard to creativity	289
D	Video-making activities	290
D1	Video simulations	290
D2	Creative ideas	290
D3	Working with language	291
D4	Getting everyone involved	292
D5	What to do with the videos	292
D6	Video and the teacher	293

PART 7: DESIGN AND PLANNING

CHAPTER 21: SYLLABUSES AND COURSEBOOKS

A	Syllabus design	295
A1	Syllabus design criteria	295
A2	Different syllabuses	296
A3	The multi-syllabus syllabus	299
B	Choosing coursebooks	301
B1	Criteria for assessment	301
B2	Evaluation measures	302
C	Using coursebooks	304
C1	Coursebook or no coursebook?	304
C2	Options for coursebook use	305

CHAPTER 22: PLANNING LESSONS

A	Pre-planning	308
B	The plan	310
	B1 The planning continuum	310
	B2 Making a plan	312
	B3 The formal plan	313
	B4 Planning a sequence of lessons	317
C	Using lesson plans	318
	C1 Action and reaction	318
	C2 Plans as records and research tools	320

PART 8: EVALUATION

CHAPTER 23: TESTING STUDENTS

A	The characteristics of tests	321
	A1 Different types of test	321
	A2 Characteristics of a good test	322
B	Types of test item	322
	B1 Direct and indirect test items	322
	B2 Indirect test item types	323
	B3 Direct test item types	325
C	Writing and marking tests	327
	C1 Writing tests	327
	C2 Marking tests	328
D	Teaching the test	331

PART 9: LOOKING FURTHER

CHAPTER 24: LEARNER AUTONOMY, TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

A	The autonomous learner	335
	A1 Routes to autonomy	336
	A2 The self-access centre (SAC)	340
	A3 After the course	342
B	The developing teacher	344
	B1 Action research	344
	B2 Professional literature	347
	B3 Developing with colleagues	347
	B4 A broader view of development	350

FOLLOW-UP TASKS	354
-----------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY	359
--------------	-----

INDEXES (Subject and Author)	365
------------------------------	-----

1

The world of English

A The place of English

Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or 'first' language speakers, it has become a **lingua franca**. A lingua franca can be defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other's and where one or both speakers are using it as a 'second' language. Many people living in the European Union, for example, frequently operate in English as well as their own languages (where these are different), and the economic and cultural influence of the United States has led to increased English use in many areas of the globe. Like Latin in Europe in the Middle Ages, English seems to be one of the main languages of international communication, and even people who are not speakers of English often know words such as *bank, chocolate, computer, hamburger, hospital, hot dog, hotel, piano, radio, restaurant, taxi, telephone, television, university* and *walkman*. Many of these words have themselves been borrowed by English from other languages of course (e.g. *chocolate, hamburger, taxi*, etc.), and speakers of Romance languages are likely to have a number of words in common with English. But there are many 'false friends' too, where similar sounding words actually mean something quite different, for example, Italian *eventualmente* (= in case) contrasts with English *eventually* (= in the end).

A1 The numbers game

Whatever the spread of English across the globe and whatever its overlap with other languages, there has been an intriguing debate over the years as to how many people speak English as either a 'first' or a 'second' language. Estimates of speaker numbers are somewhat variable. For example, Braj Kachru (1985) suggested between 320–380 million people spoke English as a first language, and anywhere between 250–350 million as a second language. On the other hand David Crystal (1995 and 1997) takes 75 territories where English 'holds a special place' (territories which include not only Britain, the USA, Australia, Canada, etc. but also places such as Hong Kong, India, Malaysia and Nigeria) and calculates around 377 million first language speakers of English and only 98 million speakers of English as a second language. However, he points out that it would be easy to get nearer a total of 350 million for second language speakers if we were able to calculate how many speakers of English as a second language there were in, say, Canada or Australia, or in countries like Pakistan or Nigeria. Not only is the calculation of such figures problematic, but a lot, he

suggests, also depends on how well we expect people to be able to speak English before we can start including them as second language English speakers. As he points out, 'the more limited command of English we allow to be acceptable, the more this figure can be inflated' (Crystal 1995: 108). It seems to be the case, therefore, that anywhere between 600–700 million people in the world speak English, and of that huge number, a significant minority speak it as a second language.

In 1983, however, Kachru made a prediction which, if correct, means that there are now more second language than first language speakers. He wrote:

One might hazard a linguistic guess here. If the spread of English continues at the current rate, by the year 2000 its non-native speakers will outnumber its native speakers.

From B Kachru (1983: 3)

David Graddol, writing some fourteen years later, thought it would take until at least 2007 before this position was reached (Graddol 1997).

As we shall observe (in A4), it is not necessarily the case that English will remain dominant among world languages. However, there is no doubt that it is and will remain a vital linguistic tool for many business people, academics, tourists and citizens of the world who wish to communicate easily across nationalities for many years to come.

A2 How English got there

There are a number of interlocking reasons for the popularity of English as a lingua franca. Many of these are historical, but they also include economic and cultural factors which have influenced and sustained the spread of the language:

- **A colonial history:** when the Pilgrim Fathers landed on the Massachusetts coast in 1620 after their eventful journey from Plymouth, England, they brought with them not just a set of religious beliefs, nor only a pioneering spirit and a desire for colonisation, but also their language. Although many years later the Americans broke away from their colonial masters, the language of English remained and it is still the predominant language of the world's greatest economic and political power.

It was the same in Australia, too. When Commander Philip planted the British flag in Sydney Cove on 26th January 1788, it was not just a bunch of British convicts and their guardians who disembarked (to be rapidly followed by many free settlers of that land), but also a language.

In other parts of the British Empire, English rapidly became a unifying/dominating means of control. For example, it became a lingua franca in India, where a plethora of indigenous languages made the use of any one of them as a whole-country system problematic. The imposition of English as the one language of administration helped maintain the coloniser's power.

Thus, in the same way as Spanish was imposed on much of the new world by the conquistadores from Castile, or Brazil and parts of Africa took on the language of their Portuguese conquerors, English travelled around many parts