

黄建滨◎主编

# 英语教学理论系列 中小学英语教与学

English Teaching Theory:  
Teaching and Learning



ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS  
浙江大学出版社

浙江大学-宁波镇海区外语教学改革合作项目

英语教学理论系列

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## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

中小学英语教与学 / 黄建滨主编. —杭州: 浙江大学出版社, 2016.9

(英语教学理论系列)

ISBN 978-7-308-15556-4

I. ①中… II. ①黄… III. ①英语课—教学研究—中小学 IV. ①G633.412

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2016) 第016079号

## 中小学英语教与学

黄建滨 主编

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责任编辑 徐 瑾

责任校对 李 晨 仲亚萍

封面设计 续设计

出版发行 浙江大学出版社

(杭州市天目山路148号 邮政编码310007)

(网址: <http://www.zjupress.com>)

排 版 杭州金旭广告有限公司

印 刷 杭州日报报业集团盛元印务有限公司

开 本 880mm×1230mm 1/32

印 张 11.375

字 数 340千

版 次 2016年9月第1版 2016年9月第1次印刷

书 号 ISBN 978-7-308-15556-4

定 价 35.00元

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浙江大学出版社发行中心联系方式 (0571)88925591; <http://zjdxcbbs.tmall.com>

# Preface

## 前言

现在呈现在读者面前的这一套教材和读物包括了中小学阶段英语教学的方方面面，主要涵盖四个方面的内容：作为校本教材的中国文化阅读系列，用于英语教师教学技能培训的英语教学理论和实践的专题论著，用于提高英语教师知识和口语能力的教材，还有用于提高其他学科课程教师本专业英语水平的手册。

作为编者，我们之所以要编写涉及中小学英语教学如此多方面的内容的系列教材和读物，完全得益于浙江大学外国语言文化与国际交流学院和浙江省宁波市镇海区在2008年开始的一个庞大的共建镇海教育强区的合作项目。镇海区政府为了进一步提高该区的外语教育水平，和我院签订了这个长达5年的合作项目，除了教材建设，还有教师培训项目、外语学校合作项目、网络教学项目、民工子弟学校项目等。这些项目为镇海区的外语教育，尤其是英语教育走在全省乃至全国的前列起到了示范作用。

在和镇海区有关领导和同行多次的交流中，我们为教材系列项目制订了一个涉及内容广泛的计划，旨在为镇海中小学教师和学生提供有针对性的支持。由此产生了今天这一整套的教材和读物等的出版。

在丛书即将出版之际，我们要向在长达5年的时间里给予我们支持和帮助的有关各方表示衷心的感谢。

首先要感谢的是镇海区政府和镇海区教育局以及镇海中小学教师们的全力支持。正是他们提供的经费支持、教师们的参与以及学生们的配合，保证了这个项目的最终顺利完成。

其次要感谢学院领导、各有关部门的同事和同行的指导和帮助。

作为主持这个项目的负责人，我还要感谢参与这个项目的所有同行和学生们的无私奉献。正是他们的不懈努力和勤奋的工作，使得这个项目得以圆满完成。

黄建滨

2015年11月于求是园

# Contents

## 目 录

### 第一部分 中国的外语教育

1. Foreign Language Instruction in China /003
2. 中国当代外语教育发展 /036
3. On Communicative Competence in Curriculum Design: A Comparison of the College English Curriculum Requirements and the English Curriculum Standards /042

### 第二部分 课堂教学研究

4. 背景知识与阅读教学 /075
5. 提问与阅读课教学 /085
6. 背景知识与写作教学 /098
7. 诉诸学生情感的听力教学——关于听力教学内容和课堂活动的探讨 /104
8. 动机教学与研究（书评） /112
9. Teaching Culture in SLT /120

### 第三部分 英语学习研究

10. 阅读模式 /131
11. 走出研究性学习认识上的误区 /141
12. 朗读与背诵——英语学习的必经之路 /147
13. 国内英语写作研究述评 /150
14. 写作图式在英语写作过程中的运用 /167
15. 《英语作为第三语言写作研究整合》评介 /180
16. 《第二语言习得的心理》评介 /189
17. Self-regulation from Educational Psychology to L2 Pedagogy:  
An Alternative to Language Learning Strategies /197
18. Reflections on Identity and English Language Teaching in  
China /209
19. Application of L1 to Promoting “Length Approach” /220

### 第四部分 英语教材研究

20. 国内中小学英语教材研究分析与思考 /241
21. 剑桥和人教社少儿英语教材的比较研究 /250
22. Comparison of English Textbooks for Middle School Students  
in China and the Republic of Korea /258


## 23. 多项选择题的编写技巧 /303

24. 近十年我国中小学英语教师教育研究回顾与思考 / 309

25. 高考英语短文改错题之审思 /319

26. A Study of Expatriate Teachers' Adjustment to Teaching Large EFL  
Classes in China /328





## 第一部分

# 中国的外语教育

1. Foreign Language Instruction in China
2. 中国当代外语教育发展
3. On Communicative Competence in Curriculum Design: A Comparison of the College English Curriculum Requirements and the English Curriculum Standards



# 1 Foreign Language Instruction in China

**Abstract:** Foreign language education is a hot issue in China's education system. In 2001 a new English syllabus was issued and young children begin to learn English in primary schools from Grade 5 first and then from Grade 3 when they are about nine years old. This has led to a heated discussion as to whether English should be taught to children so young. This paper is to have a look at the history of English education in China and the English education at different levels of schools and universities.

**Keywords:** foreign language; English syllabus; education

## 1. History of English Education in China

English education in schools officially began in 1902. Before that English had already been taught in some academies of classical learning, polytechnic institutions, old-style private schools and schools founded by missionaries.

From 1902 to 1922, English became a required course in high schools and some primary schools.

Eight teaching hours each week was required.

Textbooks edited by English teachers like *Primer* were used. Only some textbooks were compiled by Chinese scholars like Yan Fu (严复), Zhou Yueran (周越然) and Wu Guangjian (伍光建).

From 1922 to 1949, English was treated as a required course for some time and sometimes not as a required course in primary and high schools. Teaching hours was shortened to 3 to 5 hours each week during this period. Most of the textbooks used during this period were compiled by Chinese scholars like Lin Yutang (林语堂), Lü Shuxiang (吕叔湘), Lin Handa (林汉达), Zhang Shiyi (张士一) and Zhou Yueran (周越然). Some of the textbooks were *Kaiming First English Book* by Lin Yutang, *The Standard English Readers* by Lin Handa, and *Model English Readers* by Zhou Yueran.

From 1949 to 1956, Russian was taught in most junior and senior high schools instead of English. From 1957 to 1966, English was a required course in middle schools again. Teaching hours was 3 to 4 hours each week. Textbooks were compiled by Chinese scholars. Only one series of textbooks were used, which were published by People's Education Press. From 1949 to 1966, English was taught only in primary schools of foreign languages. English was not taught in other primary schools.

From 1966 to 1976, English education was not required, but from 1970, English was taught in high schools. Teaching hours was 3 to 4 hours each week. Textbooks were compiled and published by each province.

From 1978 till now, English is a required course in high schools. It is one of the courses examined for national college entrance examination. Teaching hours each week is 3 to 5. Russian and Japanese are taught in some high schools in some northern provinces. Other languages like French, German, Spanish are taught in some high

schools of foreign languages.

People's Education Press published a series of textbooks compiled by Chinese scholars. This series of textbooks was used by all high schools. In 1993, People's Education Press, together with Longman Group Limited published a series of textbooks named *Junior English for China* and *Senior English for China* compiled by British scholars and Chinese scholars, which were used by nearly all high schools. From 1993, some provinces began to compile and publish their own textbooks, like Sichuan, Guangdong, and Shandong.

In 2001, a new syllabus called Curriculum Standards for primary and high school English course was issued, and many publishing houses began to publish textbooks according to the new syllabus. These textbooks were compiled by Chinese scholars with scholars from Britain, Canada, or the U.S.A., including 7 series of textbooks for senior high schools, 18 series for junior high schools and more than 50 series for primary schools.

## **2. English Syllabus for High Schools**

### **2.1 Comparison of the overall aims of English education in high schools**

#### **1) English syllabus for high schools (1941)**

The English syllabus for high schools designed in 1929, 1932, and 1941 are quite similar in overall aims as follows:

- a. Pupils are required to use simple practical English.
- b. Pupils are required to read a little literature in English.
- c. Pupils are required to have a good English foundation for

their specialties.

d. Pupils are required to use English in their academic fields.

e. Pupils are required to develop their language skills through English.

f. Pupils are required to have interest in other cultures through English.

2) The English syllabus for high schools designed in 1948 was a little different from the former ones as follows:

a. Pupils are required to use simple everyday English.

b. Pupils are required to have a correct English foundation for future studies.

c. Pupils are required to understand British and American national spirits and customs.

d. Pupils are required to have interest in western cultures.

Comparing the two syllabuses, we can see that the latter does not require pupils to use English in their academic fields. Pupils are not required to read literature in English in the latter as literature is difficult to understand by a language beginner. Pupils are not required to develop their language skills through English in the latter. “Other cultures” are a little general in the former, so in the latter, “western cultures” are used instead of “other cultures.”

3) After the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, a new syllabus was designed for the English course in high schools in 1951.

The overall aims of this course are:

a. Pupils are required to develop interest in reading and using English for future studies.

- b. Pupils are required to recognize 1,000 to 1,500 common words.
- c. Pupils are required to use 200 sentences of everyday English.
- d. Pupils are required to read simple English passages with less than 20 percent of new words.
- e. Pupils are required to have clear hand-writing.

Comparing this syllabus with the former ones, we can see that the requirements in the latter are much lower than the former ones in language skills and no requirements are set for culture.

4) The English Syllabus for High School (1980) was designed after the “Cultural Revolution.” The purposes are as follows:

- a. The pupils are required to have a basic practice in speaking, listening, reading and writing, especially in reading and independent study.
- b. The pupils are required to have a good foundation for future study and use of English.

c. The pupils are required to master basic knowledge of English phonetics and grammar, and know 2,200 words and some phrases and expressions.

d. The pupils are required to read articles of general knowledge in simple English with the help of dictionaries, and to have a basic ability in listening, speaking, writing and translation.

This syllabus is more detailed in language skills than the syllabus designed in 1951 but culture is not mentioned either.

5) In 2001, a new English syllabus called Curriculum Standards for primary and high schools was set up, which has 9 levels for different English learners at primary schools, junior high schools and

senior high schools. This Standards was revised for primary and junior high schools in 2011 again with that for senior high school still under revision. Take level eight for example, which is the requirement for pupils of senior high schools who want to pass the national college entrance examinations.

a. Pupils are required to have stronger confidence and ability to study independently in English.

b. Pupils are required to communicate in English with English-speaking people about familiar topics.

c. Pupils are required to give comments and opinions on spoken and written materials.

d. Pupils are required to write coherent and well-structured compositions.

e. Pupils are required to design, organize and carry out various language activities by themselves, such as discussion and drawing of plans, report of experiments and results of surveys.

f. Pupils are required to effectively use websites and other teaching resources to get and use the information and then arrange, induce and analyze the information according to their own purposes.

g. Pupils are required to evaluate their study effects, and develop effective English learning strategies.

h. Pupils are required to know the cultural backgrounds, and understand and tolerate other cultures in communication. (version of 2003)

This set of standards is very high. If a pupil could reach it, his/her English would be excellent. According to Prabhu (1987), a syllabus



is generally thought of as a statement of what is to be taught. It is a form of support to the teaching activity that is to be carried out in the classroom and a form of guidance in the construction of appropriate lesson plan. By using standards instead of syllabus, the designers hope that each school can have their own syllabus designed for their particular pupils based on its own teaching conditions.

## 2.2 Comparison of vocabulary size of some English syllabuses in China

Table 1 shows the vocabulary size for pupils at high school levels required by different syllabuses.

**Table 1 Vocabulary Size for Pupils at High School Levels**

Time	Junior High School	Senior High school
1929	1,500	4,000
1932	3,000 (productive level: 2000)	8,000 (productive level: 5,300)
1941	2,000 (productive level: 1300)	7,000 (productive level: 4,700)
1948	2,000 (productive level: 1300)	6,000 (productive level: 4,000)
1951	1,000–1,500	5,000
1956	No English course	1,500
1963	1,500–2,000	3,500–4,000
1978 (five-year system)	1,250	2,200
1986	1,250	2,750 (productive level: 1,800–2,000)
1992 (junior high schools)	1,000 (productive level: 600)	
1993 (senior high schools)		3,000 (productive level: 1,700)
1996 (senior high schools)		1,940 (productive level: 1,200)
2000	1,200–1,300 (productive level: 800)	1,940 (productive level: 1,200)