

空中英语教室 丛书系列
Studio Classroom

新英语 教学法

许恩美 博士 著

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Teachers'
Resource
Book

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Teachers' Resource Book

新英語教學法

by Dr. Grace Oon-Bee Hsu



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空中英語教室

新英语教学法

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Grace Hsu received her Ph. D. in Education (Curriculum and Instruction) from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, USA in 1971. She has been an educationist for over 40 years teaching students ranging from preschool age to graduate school adult level. From 1987 to 1993, she was the director of the ESL (English-as-a-Second-Language) Center in Tulsa Independent School District in Tulsa, Oklahoma and presented workshops and seminars at various conferences in Texas and Oklahoma, USA Thereafter, she served as Education Specialist with Studio Classroom in Taipei for four years. Currently, she is the Staff/Curriculum Development Specialist with the Singapore YWCA.

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Dr. Hsu has written two cognitively oriented curriculum monographs and published several articles on various subjects in professional journals. Besides writing articles and educational materials, she also helped to produce children's materials at *Studio Classroom*.

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作者简介

许恩美 (Grace Hsu) 于 1971 年取得美国密歇根州安娜堡校区的教育博士, 其专业领域为课程与教学。她从事教育已经超过 40。学生从幼儿园到成人都有。她于 1987 至 1993 年担任美国奥克拉何马州塔撒学区 ESL 中心的主任。之后的四年任台湾《空中英语教室》的教育专家。目前她是新加坡女青年会的职工与课程发展专家。

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本书如无《空中英语教室》英语部门工作人员的帮忙, 不可能完成。我特别要感谢《空中英语教室》创办人以及救世传播协会国际部总监彭蒙惠女士为此书出版所提供的专业协助。

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Preface

As in any other profession, teaching has its rewards and frustrations. As teachers, no doubt your greatest concern as a teacher is the progress of your students. You may have often asked yourself these questions: Are my students learning as much as I expect them to? Are they really learning what I have to teach? These self – evaluative questions raise an important issue that is closely related to the teaching and learning processes.

The teaching process refers to the techniques and methods used to facilitate learning. On the other hand, the learning process means the production of a relatively permanent change in a learner's mental capacity as a result of reinforced practice. Therefore, the steps taken by a teacher to cause learning to happen can affect the learning behavior of his student. A learner needs practice in order to acquire proficient knowledge of a subject or a skill. This has implications for all language teachers. It is not enough for us as teachers to impart knowledge or teach a language skill; it is vital that we also provide reinforcement for our students to practice constantly and use their new skill.

The main objectives I have incorporated into this resource book are :

- * to encourage English teachers to reflect, rethink and reorganize your classroom practices in teaching and learning processes;
- * to provide instructional strategies for motivating English learning;
- * to present ideas for teaching communicative skills;
- * to direct focus on teaching the English language in meaningful, active and fun situations;
- * to provide application activities for the reinforcement of language skills.

This book is “short” on theoretical principles but “long” on practical teaching ideas in the forms of instructional strategies and application activities. It is designed to address the needs and concerns of the teachers of English at the junior high schools, senior high schools and junior colleges. I hope you will find some new teaching ideas or gain a new perspective on some familiar techniques of teaching skills in the four language areas as well as in vocabulary development.

Happy teaching!

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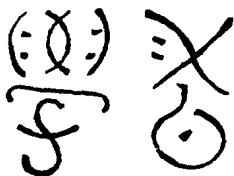
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Becoming an English teacher is what you have chosen for your career. Whether you are relatively inexperienced, or a veteran teacher who has taught for a number of years, you have discovered that commitment, involvement and a total physical, intellectual and emotional response are necessary to communicate successfully in a language other than your mother tongue. To enhance your teaching, you have to spend time and energy in planning and thinking of ways to integrate principles, skills and methods you have learned to motivate your students. Above all, you enjoy teaching your students. Although this may not describe all English teaching professionals, many will find that this matches their experience.

As in any other profession, teaching has its rewards and frustrations. For those of you who have prepared students for the JSSEE (Joint Secondary School Entrance Exam) and the JCEE (Joint College Entrance Exam) in Taiwan, you must have found it rewarding when your students scored high. You feel rewarded when you know that the lessons you taught have made an impact on your students. Success stories may abound for those of you who have found fulfillment in your teaching, while others may wonder if such kind of teaching experience can ever be possible. Some of you may be bored from using the same method of teaching. This frustration is escalated when students are not motivated to learn English or when the same materials are used year after year to teach a class of 50 or more students. Unless there is a change in the regulation for reduced class size, there seems to be nothing you can do about this problem. It appears to be beyond your control. Nevertheless, these problems can be overcome by addressing some key issues vital to your teaching role.

No doubt your greatest concern as a teacher is the progress of your students. You may have often asked yourself these questions: Are my students learning as much as I expect them to? Are they really learning what I have to teach? These self-evaluative questions raise an important issue that concerns the learning behavior of your students. It may be fitting at this point to reflect on the function of "learning" as illustrated in the two Chinese characters below:



Although they are written in the old script, you should not have any trouble recognizing them. Together, they represent the word "learning." The first character, which is composed of two parts, means to study. The symbol that means "to accumulate knowledge" is above the symbol for a child in a doorway. The second character, which also has two parts, means to practice constantly: The upper symbol represents a bird trying its ability to fly away from its nest, and the lower symbol represents youth. Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 1994, made this comment by analyzing the composite meaning of these two characters: "For the Oriental mind, learning is ongoing. 'Study' and 'practice constantly' together suggests that learning means 'mastery of the way of self-improvement.'"

We can apply the composite meaning of these two characters to the teaching and learning processes. According to Kimble and Garnezy (1993), the teaching process refers to the techniques and methods used to facilitate learning.

On the other hand, the learning process means the production of a relatively permanent change in a learner's mental capacity as a result of reinforced practice. Therefore, the steps taken by a teacher to cause learning to happen can affect the learning behavior of his student. A learner needs practice in order to acquire proficient knowledge of a subject or a skill. This has implications for all language teachers: It is not enough for us to impart knowledge or teach a language skill; it is vital that we also provide reinforcement for our students to practice constantly and use their new skill.

It is the general consensus of English teachers who have used the Grammar-Translation approach in their classrooms that it has its limitations and drawbacks. Teaching about the language puts emphasis on grammatical explanations, rules and rote learning in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom situation. Thus, teachers restrict their goals for their students to grammatical or linguistic competence (the ability to produce language structures) instead of helping them attain all of the components of communicative competence (the ability to communicate in real situations). Consequently, classroom teaching becomes stale and boring. After many years of language study, students do not feel competent to use the English language for communicative purposes, especially in speaking. What can be done to rectify some crucial problems in language teaching and learning?

In considering the problems at hand, we take the position that the English teachers in Taiwan need to reorient and aim their classroom practices (a) to teach the English language in realistic learning situations, and (b) to provide purposeful and significant language use in a student-centered learning environment. Let us focus on some assumptions based on research findings (Rivers, 1983; Bowen et al., 1985; and Kumaravadivelu, 1994) that are compatible with EFL or ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom experience:

Language Learning Assumptions

1. Language teachers are the key persons to provide exciting and interesting ways of learning a new language.
2. Language learners learn most effectively by using the language in realistic situations.
3. Language teachers should be concerned in the classroom with language use, not language knowledge.

Accordingly, therefore, the objectives we have incorporated into this resource book are as follows:

Objectives

1. To encourage English teachers to reflect, rethink and reorganize their classroom practices in teaching and learning processes;
2. To provide instructional strategies for motivating English learning;
3. To present ideas for teaching communicative skills in a student-centered classroom;
4. To direct focus on teaching the English language in meaningful, active and fun situations;
5. To provide application activities for the reinforcement of language skills.

INTRODUCTION

This English Teachers' Resource Book is dedicated to all of you EFL and ESL teachers in Taiwan who are looking for help to add "oomph" to your teaching. As the old saying goes, "If there's a will, there's a way." We believe that any of you who are willing and brave enough to try the communicative techniques and activities offered in this resource book will gain a sense of achievement in effective teaching. Moreover, you will even find your students responding with greater enthusiasm when you make it easier and more interesting for them to learn the target language. Be assured however, that the time you spend going through this resource book and working through the various activities should enhance the time you spend in both formal teaching and in preparing your students for the JSSEE and JCEE exams. We hope you will not only use this book with ease but with pleasure.

How This Book Is Designed

This book is not designed as a college or university textbook with the organization of scope and sequence required in a foreign language or second language curriculum. Also, it does not endorse one methodology or approach over others—something that one would normally find in ESL/EFL content books promoted by publishers. Rather, it seeks to extract from the writer's broad teaching experiences and the rich resources in the field of TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) that seem most sound and practical in order to organize that knowledge into a pragmatic and instructive handbook. Specifically, it is designed to address the needs and concerns of the teachers of English at the junior high schools, senior high schools and junior colleges in Taiwan. The main emphases are on active teaching and active learning. Therefore, the theoretical discourse is purposely given minimal treatment. You will find numerous task-based activities in Chapters 3 to 8 to activate meaningful communicative practice in your classroom. In other words, this book is "short" on theoretical principles but "long" on practical teaching ideas in the forms of instructional strategies and application activities.

How to Use This Book

As a refresher course, this book may be used for in-service training or it can be used by any English language teacher as a reference book. Both the novice teacher and the experienced practitioner will, hopefully, find some new teaching ideas or gain a new perspective on some familiar techniques of teaching skills in the four language areas as well as in vocabulary development. For all teachers (and even readers) who use our monthly magazines *Let's Talk in English* (LTE) and *Studio Classroom* (SC), there is a chapter which offers guidelines on effective listening to the radio teaching program as well as follow-up activities to reinforce different language skills in your classrooms. The chapters in this book do not have to be covered in order. Here are some possible ways in which the material could be used:

1. As a way to reflect, refresh or reorient your thinking on the teacher's and learner's roles in the teaching and learning processes, we recommend that you start by reading the first two chapters carefully.
2. As a review to focus on the teaching of any of the four language skills or vocabulary, read the chapter that you most need help in. Then try to select appropriate activities to activate the skills that your students lack.

3. As an introduction to new ways of meaningful interactive communication, use short task-based activities for warm-up, filler (i.e., when you have 5-10 minutes to spare at the end of a lesson), review or reinforcement.
4. As a resource book of practical suggestions, this book can sharpen or expand your classroom teaching techniques.
5. As a starting-point for the teacher trainer, this book can provide assistance for those faced with the prospect of designing a course.

Happy teaching!

Suppose today is the first day of the school year. What are your goals? What expectations do you have for your students? Whether you are a beginning or an experienced language teacher, I hope you will find useful help and information in this manual that you can use as is. Or maybe you can use some ideas as reference points or springboards and adapt them to your individual classroom needs.

As classroom teachers who teach EFL, we are faced with students who are there because English is offered as a school subject. Our students may have various reasons for studying English, each of which can have a profound effect on their willingness to learn the English language. In language teaching, we cannot expect to find ready-made solutions that we can apply without reflection. However, there is much to be learned from our predecessors as well as our contemporaries to help us do a better job as EFL teachers. Here is a list of basic principles adapted from House and Hinkle (1991), Rivers (1992), Hadley (1993) and Brown (1994) that form the basis of successful foreign language or second language teaching:

Basic Principles of Language Teaching

1. The overall goal in language teaching is to help students move from learning the language to using the language.
2. Language should be taught as a live communicative medium, not merely as a school subject for rote learning.
3. A language teacher has the responsibility to help create a good self-image in their students through understanding, by providing opportunity for success, and giving positive reinforcement in a positive learning atmosphere.
4. Language learning activities work best in a student-centered classroom; active student involvement leads to better learning.
5. Good classroom management doesn't depend on directed teaching. Good teachers manage and motivate learners by using a variety of lesson formats, teaching aids and methods.
6. Lessons should have clear objectives and changes of pace and activities.
7. The role of the teacher should vary according to student needs and lesson objectives in order to provide challenge, enjoyment and fun during the teaching and learning process.
8. Mistakes or errors are a natural part of the language learning process. They should be learned from, not criticized. Over-correction can actually hinder effective teaching.
9. Language learning is more successful when an approach of integrating all four language skills is used as a basis for language development and meaningful language practice in the classroom.
10. Teacher attitude is vitally important for motivating student learning.
11. Teacher expectations expressed through classroom instructional and evaluation methods strongly shape learners' strategies (e.g., classroom emphasis on grammar learning vs. teaching strategies for communication).
12. To enhance the processes of teaching and learning a new language, the teacher should conduct English classes in English in order to provide a role model and foster a wholesome language environment for the learners.

Relationship Between Teaching and Learning

What is teaching and what is learning and how do they interact? How are they interdependent? Based on educational research (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Cohen, 1990; Krashen, 1995), teaching cannot be defined apart from learning. How a language teacher organizes and conducts instruction in the classroom makes a world of difference for the language learners. Teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling the students to learn by setting the conditions for learning. A teacher's understanding of how the learner learns will determine his/her philosophy of education, teaching style, approach, methods and classroom techniques.

As in any teaching and learning situation, the one variation that does not change is that what most learners want are results, in the quickest way possible. In an English classroom, this means that our students are not interested in merely learning about the English language as a subject. To them, the tangible results that will motivate them to learn will be the ability to produce the language. The opportunity to perform in the language is extremely important in the learning process. As teachers, we must constantly be looking for better ways to help our students achieve lasting results as quickly as possible.

Most EFL classes present English as a content subject using a teacher-centered approach. In order to adjust your teaching style to match the needs and expectations of your students, it is important to reorient your thinking to the viewpoints that student learning is central and teaching is a process of facilitating learning.

New Roles for Teachers

Traditionally, teachers are viewed as instructors who explain exactly what the students should do. But in an EFL classroom, the subject matter and the changes in the lesson objectives make it necessary for you to function in different roles. In fact, these changes strengthen your roles, making them more varied and more creative. You may have already experimented with some classroom activities (such as word games, small group activities, role play, brainstorming, debate, etc.) which allow you to be viewed as more of a facilitator or a coordinator than a director.

According to Kumaravadivelu (1994), strategic language teachers spend a considerable amount of time and effort (a) reflecting on the specific needs, wants, situations and processes of learning and teaching; (b) stretching their knowledge, skills and attitudes to stay informed and involved; (c) exploring and extending instructional strategies to maximize the learning potential in the classroom; and (d) monitoring students' ability to react to varied situations in meaningful ways.

A skillful teacher wears many hats. Don't you think it's a welcome change to be recognized as a guide, facilitator, helper, adviser, coordinator, idea person, encourager, evaluator, and co-communicator, in addition to being an instructor or director? Your new teaching capacities should also include identifying learner strategies and helping students become more independent. When students take more responsibility, more learning occurs, and both teachers and learners feel more successful.

Teacher Goals for Student Learning

Depending on the language proficiency level and the needs of your students, you can pattern your long-range goals on the basic principles of EFL teaching in your class. Select at least three or four principles to focus on for a couple of weeks, a month, two months or a semester. For example, the guiding principle of classroom management could be a short term goal for the beginning of the school year. Depending on your teaching style and/or relationship with your students, you may take a short period of time, or maybe even the whole year, to concentrate on developing a student-centered learning classroom. If you are not teaching in the target language now, you might want to focus on gradually switching from teaching in "Chinglish" (combination of Chinese and English) to teaching English in English as your long-term goal. If your objective is to improve your classroom management technique, you may want to consider adding a variety of teaching aids to motivate your class and to relieve you of the necessity of talking all the time. Whichever principles you choose to focus on, remember that your main goal is to improve your teaching skills and thereby give your students both a reason and a way to continue learning English.

Lesson Planning

There are four basic elements in a language teaching situation: the teacher, the subject matter, the learners and the instructional objectives. All four are of equal importance. Whereas this manual addresses instructional techniques and the four language skills and learner strategies in other sections, special attention is given to lesson planning here. Lesson planning seems to have become almost non-existent in a traditional teacher-centered language classroom. Some teachers have taken the easy way out by merely covering page after page of a lesson using the same teacher-directed method without giving any consideration to classroom interaction or use of different teaching resources. No wonder students are not motivated to learn—it's like being offered a dish prepared the same way on every day's menu. If it is that hard for you to change your teaching style, what little chance you have of trying to change your students' attitudes in learning English as a foreign language.

In lesson planning, the objectives of instruction are an overriding consideration. That is to say, in the language teaching situation, it is the methods used more than any other factor that determine the results achieved. You should have as clear an idea as possible of what objectives you want to accomplish through a learning activity, and use appropriate resource materials and teaching techniques accordingly. A wide range of activities and topics in real situations are necessary for effective language learning. However, at all times, try to think about the activities from the student's point of view. Ask yourself these questions:

- For what stage of the lesson is the activity suitable?
- How valuable is the activity? What do students learn from it?
- Is the activity suited to one level (e.g., second year students) more than others?
- How often do students do this activity in your class?
- What kind of interaction would be suitable for this activity?
- Which of the four language skills do you want to develop most through this activity?