



外语教学法丛书之四

COURSE DESIGN 课程设计

Fraida Dubin
and
Elite Olshtain

上海外语教育出版社

SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS



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总 序

近年来随着国内和国际形势的发展,我国对外语人才的需求日益增加,有志于学习外语的学生和社会群体的人数急剧上升,从而使我国外语教学事业蓬勃发展。在这种形势下,外语师资培训和自身建设的重要性与日俱增。在这两方面,当务之急是要了解当今国外外语教学的发展情况,要借鉴国外的最新经验,结合我国的具体情况,大力提高外语师资的水平,使我们的外语教学事业更上一层楼。

有鉴于此,上海外语教育出版社为广大外语教师提供了一套由国外引进的外语教学法丛书。这套丛书所涉及的方面广、种类多,包括外语教学技巧和原则、语法教学、语音教学、阅读教学、写作教学、教学管理、测试、教材选择、第一语言和第二语言习得、儿童英语教学等等。其中绝大多数专著是上世纪九十年代和本世纪所出版。它们反映了当今国外外语教学法研究及相关学科的现状。

这套丛书的最大共同特点,也是与传统教学法类专著的最大不同点在于特别强调理论与实践相结合;更是以实践为主,再以理论去分析评述各种实践活动的优缺点。我们所熟悉的传统教学法类专著,一般都是强调教学原则、教学理论,把各种方法的来龙去脉讲得很详尽;然而如何到课堂上去进行具体教学活动,如何在教学活动中去体现教学原则却不多见。这套丛书则几乎全部是从实践活动着手,以说明对理论和原则的应用。

试举两个例证:

一、斯克里温纳:《学习教学:英语教师指南》,麦克米伦海涅曼出版社,1994。(Jim Scrivener: *Learning Teaching: A Guidebook for English Language Teachers*. Macmillan Heinemann, 1994)

作者前言:“本书旨在帮助你去学习如何更有效地进行教学。

它并不给你某一种正确的教学方法。实际上没有任何科学根据可以让我们去描述一种理想的教学方法。我们只能观察教师和学生进行活动的实际,并注意哪些策略和原则更有利于教学。我们没有必要去照搬那些策略和原则,但是要意识到有哪些可能性。”“因此本书并不是告诉你‘就用这种方法’,而代之以‘这几种方法似乎都可行。’主要是由你自己决定用哪一种方法。”

本书共十二章,涉及教与学的关系、教学安排、课堂活动、语言技能等等方面,绝大部分章节都是先介绍该章内容,然后列出各种具体教学活动(tasks),其后是对各项活动的分析评述。例如第六章“说的技能”共有四小节,即1)为什么要说;2)交际性活动;3)语言交际与流利;4)演戏和角色扮演,每节都提供各种相应的具体活动和作者对各项活动的评述。教师可以根据自己的实际情况选择其中某些活动进行课堂教学。

二、努南:《语言学习研究方法》,剑桥大学出版社,1992。
(David Nunan: *Research Methods in Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press, 1992)

作者前言:“传统的语言教学研究方法是教老师怎样去进行教学的。作者主观愿望就是对教学作出种种硬性规定。这种教学科研基于逻辑推理,并要求教学人员接受采纳。上世纪八十年代以来情况有了变化,如今教学人员对自身进行科研。他们用实验方法对教学进行探索。这种科研由于教学背景不同而不同。教学人员不再依赖已有科研成果,而是对自己的课堂教学采取一种科研态度。本书目的在于1.促使教学人员认识对自身进行科研的必要性。2.帮助教学人员进行教学方面的科研。”

本书共十章,介绍科研方法的历史背景、实验性科研方法、个案研究、课堂现场观察和科研、自省方法、语言交流分析等等。试以第六章“自省方法”为例。所谓“自省”,就是不仅仅着眼于课堂上的教学实践,而要更进一步去思考教学步骤。教学人员一方面审视自己的教学,一方面回顾课堂教学的具体步骤并提出问题进行研究。这种科研的基础就是教学人员本人的日记、教学日记和其他种种有关记录,以这些资料为依据进行分析研究,得出结论。

以上两书的内容安排大体上可以概括整套丛书的全貌。换言之

之,各书的最大特点就是以实践为主,而实践都来自相应的理论并与理论密切结合;其实用性强,可操作性强。有大量的实践举例,还有不少个案研究(case study),在其后多数有分析评述。这些例证分析、评述给予教师很大的空间去进行思考、探索。各种例证并不是仅仅给教师提供方便,让教师有所参考。更重要的是促使教师结合自己的具体教学情况,通过思考和探索有所发展,制订出切合自己需要并切实可行的教学方法去进行教学。

我相信这套丛书能为促进我国外语教学事业的进一步发展作出巨大的贡献。

李观仪

2002年6月

出版前言

随着我国改革开放的深入和进入世界贸易组织的需要,英语教学在国内有了进一步的发展,对英语教师的需求量日益增大。为了培养一大批高素质的英语教师,必须有组织地开展师资培训。在职的英语教师也必须继续充电,通过种种途径进一步提高业务水平。然而,许久以来,系统介绍英语教学法的专著极为匮乏。因此,上海外语教育出版社特地从国外知名出版社,如牛津大学出版社、剑桥大学出版社和麦克米伦出版社引进一批有关外语教学法和第二语言习得研究的学术专著,出版了外语教学法丛书。《课程设计》(*Course Design*)就是其中的一本。

本书是论述课程设计的专著。作者 F. 杜宾(F. Dubin)和 E. 奥尔西坦(E. Olshtain)曾经在美国南加利福尼亚大学、加拿大英属哥伦比亚大学、以色列特拉维夫大学、古巴哈瓦那大学等多所大学任教,多年来一直从事第二语言习得和课程设计方面的研究和教学工作。本书全面探讨了在外语教学的课程设计和教学大纲制定方面应该注意的原则和步骤,并通过丰富的实例阐明自己的观点。在每一个章节后,作者都提出了一个实际运用的课题,要求学习者通过完成该课题掌握有关章节阐述的要点。

本书共分为八章。第一章阐述了在制定课程设计和教学大纲前必须认真实施的社会实情调查,评估影响外语教学的社会因素,诸如在特定社会中,目标语言是属于第二语言还是外语,社会对目标语的需求形式,社会对目标语的态度等社会和政治因素。第二章阐述了课程设计和教学大纲必须考虑的全局性问题,诸如目前的教学现状,包括教师、学生以及所使用的教学大纲和教材的情况,从而确立切实可行的目标,使新的大纲能够达到承上启下的作用。第三章讨论了实现既定目标的具体教学内容和教学方法问题,包括教学内容的安排,教学过程以及教学成果。第四章和第五章探讨了以交际为目的的课程设计和教学大纲中涉及的教学原则,诸如对语言和语言教学的观点,教学的方法以及教师、学生和教材的作用。第六章探讨了在交际法的课程设计中如何将意义、功能、语

法、语言结构和词汇等方面有机地综合在各种教学任务之中，从而达到语言的内容和形式、形式和功能、语言表达的准确性与流利性的最佳统一。本书的第七章探讨了教材编写人员的作用和任务，并以编写阅读教材为例，说明教材编写应该注意的有关原则。本书的最后一章提出了教材应该起到的作用，即成为使用教材的人员和实施课程设计和教学大纲之间的一座桥梁，从而最终达到既定的教学目标。

本书通过论述课程设计和教学大纲的制定的各个步骤，回顾外语教学的各个环节的作用，从而成为一本不可多得的外语教师培训教材，为可能承担外语课程设计或教学大纲制定的教师提供了一本既全面又实用的手册。本书也可以作为外语专业研究生和博士生的选修教材或案头参考书。

本社编辑部

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Introduction

1 Instructional planning and English language teaching

At various times during their careers, professionals in the field of language teaching find themselves involved in tasks quite removed from actual classroom instruction. Among these non-teaching assignments are the planning of courses and the writing of materials. Both require specialized background of a kind which is commonly glossed over lightly or benignly ignored in too many university programs in applied linguistics, English language teaching and teacher training. Yet, graduates of such programs are often called upon to fulfill course design tasks without having received the proper training to do so. Throughout these chapters, we have tried to maintain the point of view of designers and writers rather than the one more frequently employed, that of teachers, the objective of this book being to enable teachers to expand their expertise so as to become course designers. We have done this deliberately – and we hope consistently – because we feel that it is a view which has been undervalued and relatively unexplored.

Since the planning of courses and the writing of materials is a sparsely documented area, designers and writers have tended to work on the basis of their best intuitions. Fortunately, people who design language courses are usually thoroughly familiar with what goes on in classrooms. However, designing courses which will be used by other teachers or writing textbooks for a wide and unknown audience is different from planning one's own teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to use a different frame of reference, to acquire new perspectives from which to see the issues.

The very complexity of human language together with the wide variety of circumstances in which it is taught may partly explain why the field of language pedagogy has paid comparatively slight attention to the basics of course designing and materials writing. Instead, it has stressed the activities of single teachers and their students, as evidenced by the long history of methodology directed at this audience alone. Among other reasons, this concentration on the individual pedagogue has tended to keep second and foreign language specialists from paying much attention to the well-developed field of general curriculum construction outside ESL. For its part, the general curriculum field, in the United States

at least, has only been concerned with foreign language teaching (typically of major European languages to American students); English as a second language is such a newcomer in North America that some in the educational system believe the letters 'ESL' stand for one, particular methodology.

2 General curriculum planning

As background information for second and foreign language course designers, a brief review of a few of the outstanding contributors to the general curriculum planning literature is warranted. Taba's outline (1962:12) of the steps which a course designer must work through to develop subject matter courses has become the foundation for many other writers' suggestions. Her list of 'curriculum processes' includes the following:

1. Diagnosis of needs
2. Formulation of objectives
3. Selection of content
4. Organization of content
5. Selection of learning experiences
6. Organization of learning experiences
7. Determination of what to evaluate, and the means to evaluate

Adapted to English language teaching matters, her list, although suggestive, is not sufficiently explicit regarding the area of language content. Nor does it allow for a distinction between broad, national goals for courses in multilingual contexts and narrower course objectives for the teaching of actual language skills and competencies.

Another writer who also has written on general curriculum designs, McNeil (1977:1), offers guidelines for planning which are extremely valuable for identifying the role that a curriculum plays in establishing the intellectual backdrop or policy for instructional plans. He categorizes recent curriculum designs in the United States under four general headings based on their educational-cultural orientations: humanistic, social-reconstructionist, technological, and academic subject matter. Any one of these orientations could serve as the basis for a curriculum for a language program. However, since McNeil's model is not specifically concerned with language programs, what is lacking is some mechanism for including a theoretical view toward language and language learning.

3 The aim of the book

The chief purpose of this book is to present an overview of the course designer's task, beginning with its most fundamental aspect, societal

needs assessment, then working through curriculum and syllabus construction, finally coming to the stage of materials preparation. In relation to materials, a few selected aspects of the craft of writing are illustrated. In following this outline, we have drawn on the steps proposed by Taba, applying her suggestions in the context of second and foreign language teaching. To formulate this comprehensive view of designing for language learning, we have established certain basic definitions of key terms: 'curriculum', 'syllabus', 'goals', 'objectives', and 'needs'.

The terms 'curriculum' and 'program' are used interchangeably in this book to describe the broadest contexts in which planning for language instruction takes place, either on the national level or for a community's schools. A 'syllabus', on the other hand, is a more circumscribed document, usually one which has been prepared for a particular group of learners. In some places, the terms syllabus and course outline mean the same thing, although recently the term syllabus has taken on a special meaning concerning the specification of language content alone.

Although the terms 'goals', 'objectives' and 'needs' are apt to be used without regard for the important distinctions among them, a model for designing language programs should set them apart. Goals address more general, societal, community, or institutional concerns. In developing a language curriculum, issues concerning language planning and policy must be taken into account since it is the society or broader community which the program serves that fundamentally determines the goals to be manifested in the course. In an ideal situation, thus, goals are determined by carefully examining information about the patterns of language use within the various domains of the society, as well as by studying group and individual attitudes toward English and toward all other languages which are used in the setting. We have also used the term 'societal needs assessment' in relation to determining program goals.

A curriculum which is not in line with the broader community's concepts of language education, certainly one which does not accommodate the immediate audience's expectations – those of teachers and learners – may just gather dust on a shelf. Such could be the fate of a document which reflected the latest discussions of professionals in language teaching/learning circles yet which did not include sufficient explanations for local teachers who were asked to use it. In many ways, curriculum designers must constantly juggle and balance the disparate aspirations, opinions, and beliefs of all of those groups that look to the document they produce for guidance and inspiration.

Objectives, in turn, are specific outcomes or products of courses which are outlined in a syllabus. Objectives guide teachers; they also help learners understand where the course is going and why. Objectives can be expressed in terms of proficiency scores, or as performance objectives such as language skill attainments: a reading rate of so many words

Introduction

per minute with X% comprehension, or the ability to write a five-paragraph composition with acceptable sentence and paragraph sense. Setting objectives in the course plans makes it possible to carry out the necessary evaluation measures. It also makes it possible to specify the various levels of instruction within a program. Course designers ideally make use of information from all interested sources when they write objectives: learners in previous courses, teachers who are ESOL specialists, teachers in other subject areas – all those in the institutional setting who share an interest in the program.

Needs, on the other hand, are associated with individual learners. Since they change and shift during the period of a course, needs are best addressed at the level of classroom instruction, where a teacher can select appropriate techniques and materials to accommodate individuals. From the course designers' point of view, however, the crucial factors are those that must be determined before the learners arrive. Since a curriculum and a syllabus are documents which are produced to guide teachers and learners, they must be in place and ready to be used before learners and teachers meet together on the first day of the program.

4 Practical applications

An important part of each chapter in *Course Design* is called 'Practical Applications'. These sections have been included to involve readers more personally in the topics presented, giving them an opportunity to consider the issues through their own experience and background. Although the Practical Applications sections are intended to augment university courses and workshop sessions, individual readers will find that themes developed in each chapter are carried into the Practical Applications section in more concrete form.

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- Taba, H. 1962. *Curriculum development: theory and practice*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

1 The fact-finding stage: assessing societal factors

Overview

Before initiating a new language program, vital preparatory work in the form of information gathering must take place. This fact-finding stage provides answers to the key questions in any program: Who are the learners? Who are the teachers? Why is the program necessary? Where will the program be implemented? How will it be implemented? The answers to these questions, in turn, become the basis for establishing policy or formulating goals.

The first two of these key questions deal with the audience for whom the program and materials are to be developed, the actual consumers of the new program – teachers and learners. To know who the teachers and learners are requires thorough attention to needs assessment of a societal nature. Just as in the business world, market research has become an essential ingredient for commercial success, so in curriculum design, the fact-finding stage is an imperative prerequisite for effective decision-making regarding the participants.

In a country or setting where the language program planners and designers do not know the existing conditions, the fact-finding process must rely heavily on basic sociolinguistic research which relates to national concerns, international ties and political trends. However, in those places where the planners are conversant with local conditions, they may be able to supply the answers to some of the questions themselves, or at least be able to call on other specialists who can provide the necessary information.

Assembling data bearing on these factors is usually carried out by means of two basic techniques: collecting information that appears in governmental and other institutional documents, for example in census reports, and administering questionnaires and interviews which collect both objective and subjective feelings and attitudes prevailing among the members of a community. However, in those places where the planners are conversant with local conditions, they may be able to supply the answers to some of the questions themselves, or at least be able to call on other specialists who can provide the necessary information.

In order to answer the key questions inherent in the fact-finding stage, investigations are necessary in each of the four areas specified in diagram