Teaching Listening Comprehension

英语听力教学

Penny Ur 著

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Teaching Listening Comprehension

Penny Ur 著

王松美 导读

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Andrews turns and the 总量 Property to the section and

外研社和人教社联合推出这套"剑桥英语教师丛书",以配合全国中小学英语教师的培训工程。付印之前,他们把这套丛书拿给我看,并让我写个总序。说实话,一看到这 20 个书名,我就十分喜欢,因为它们是外语教师培训中经常提到的题目;再看作者,大部分是应用语言学领域里颇有名气的研究者,如 Gillian Brown, William Littlewood,Jack C. Richards,David Nunan等,于是我就愉快地接受了他们给我的任务。

我翻阅了这20本书,并阅读了《面向21世纪教育振兴行动计划》和 其他有关中小学骨干教师的培训计划和实施方案。可以说,"剑桥英语教 师丛书"涉及的知识面广(包括外语教学理论、外语教学实践、外语测试 理论、外语教学研究中的方法),内容实用,文字通俗易懂,是中小学英 语教师培训的好教材,它的引进出版必将加强外语专业的教材建设,一定 会推动基础外语教育的改革。

细心的读者会发觉, 在英语文献中, 师资培训这个概念已变化三次。 开始, 人们都使用 teacher training一词, 但后来许多人认为, training 一词更多是指技术、手艺上的培训, 是培训教书工匠的, 对教师的通才教 育和智力开发是不加过问的。于是出现了teacher education (师资教育) 这一用法, 意思是说, 这种培训不再只教给老师明天的听力课或阅读课如 何如何去上, 而是开设普通语言学、应用语言学、语言测试和评估、科研 方法等课程, 提高教师的理论意识, 扩展他们的思维空间, 很像我们讲的 素质教育。但是、后来人们还是觉得"师资教育"对教师限制多了一些、 因为这仍然只是把现成的理论或发现告诉教师。于是, 最近常使用的概念 叫 teacher development (师资发展), 更加强调在"教育"的基础上, 鼓 励教师去反思自己的教学,观察自己的课堂行为,评估自己的教学效果, 开展"教学行为中的科研"(action research), 也就是说, 教给教师如何 在教学实践中验证别人的发现, 形成自己的信念, 反思自我, 使每一次决 定都有根有据,每一个判断都有理论支持。此外,还有一个中性的词叫 teacher preparation。这里不妨引用两段话加以说明。在Beyond Training 一书中,作者强调说: Without discounting the importance of basic teaching skills in teacher preparation, the orientation to teaching discussed in this book is an attempt to look beyond these dimensions of teaching to the beliefs, knowledge, and thinking that underlie their successful use. The argument pursued throughout the book therefore is that teacher education needs to engage teachers not merely in the mastery of rules of practice but in an exploration of the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and thinking that inform such practice (XIV)。在 Second Language Teacher Education 一书中,作者说: An alternative approach to the study of teaching and to the development of goals for teacher preparation programs is the examination of the total context of classroom teaching and learning in an attempt to understand how the interaction between and among teacher, learner, and classroom tasks affect learning. This can be called a holistic approach, since it focuses on the nature and significance of classroom events and involves both low-inference and highinference categories. Such an approach implies different goals for teacher preparation: "Holistic approaches work towards training goals not all of which can be broken down into individually verifiable training objectives, and they stress the development of personal qualities of creativity, judgement and adaptability... The formulatic or prescriptivist nature of a mere 'Vocabulary training' approach to [teacher training in TESOL] is contrasted by holists with an 'education' in more general principles". (Britten, 1985a:113)

"中小学骨干教师国家级培训方案"恰好符合"师资发展"这个基本精神。文件规定的培训内容包括: 1.教育理论与教学技能。着眼于提高中小学教师的理论文化素养,开拓视野,更新知识结构,提高职业成熟度,增强学术能力和自我提高能力; 2.教育教学实践与考察。着眼于提高中小学教师在工作中实施素质教育的能力,加强理论指导教学实践的能力,为形成教学风格和教学特色打基础; 3.课程研究。着眼于提高中小学教师的科研意识和研究能力,善于发现和掌握教育教学规律,善于反思性地总结,增强创新能力。这套"剑桥英语教师从书"为这个实施方案的落实提供了教材上的保证。这 20 本书中,有几本是关于外语教学理论的,如Foreign and Second Language Learning,Psychology for Language Teachers,Affect in Language Classroom,The Context of Language Teaching; 有几本

是关于语言教学技能和实践的,如 Teaching Listening Comprehension,Developing Reading Skills,Beginning to Write,Lessons from Nothing,Teaching the Spoken Language等;有两本是关于语言测试与评估的:Testing for Language Teachers 和 Classroom-based Evaluation in Second Language Education;有两本是关于外语教学中的科研方法的:Understanding Research in Second Language Learning,Action Research for Language Teachers;还有三本是关于师资发展的:Second Language Teacher Education,Beyond Training 和 Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms。有关教师培训的这三本书也可以看作是有关教育理论和外语教学理论的著作。对一项中小学英语教师培训工作来说,这样几种内容就是足够用的了。

我建议,本套丛书的使用者注意两点:第一,这套书不仅仅传授技巧,更重要的是提供思想和方法;不是提供对问题的现成答案,而是告诉你各种理论观点和看法;阅读它们的最终目的不是要知道一篇课文如何来教,而是要知道如何进行创造性的思维。换句话说,这套书不是培训"教书匠"的,而是培训善于思考的教师和研究者的。每位语言教师对外语应该如何教和如何学都是有自己的信念的,只是有的教师的信念不可明白而已。学习语言教学理论,就是把你的信念理论化,让你在见到多种不同看法之后,根据自己的经历,形成自己的、有根有据的、可以言明的教学观点,并在实践中不断完善这种观点。只有这样,你在将来的实际工作中所作的决定才不是盲目的,而是有根据的,有一种自我反思和自我纠正的机制。

第二,本套丛书的读者应该努力初步掌握外语教学中的科研方法,学会设计小型的科研项目,学会进行课堂观察,设计问卷,经常写教学日志,会抽样,会收集各种数据,会统计和分析数据等。一旦学会进行研究,教学过程就不会再那么枯燥(因为你随时都在反思眼前所发生的一切),学生的语言错误不再那么令人愤怒(因为学生的中介语系统能告诉你许多鲜为人知的学习理论),教、学、科研将会成为一个有机的整体(教与学不断向科研提出新的问题;科研不断反馈于教和学)。可以设想,如果我们的绝大部分中小学英语教师都能做到以上两点,我国的基础英语教育会出现质的变化。

祝贺"剑桥英语教师丛书"在我国的出版! 祝中小学英语教师国家级培训工程圆满成功!

导 读

《英语听力教学》(Teaching Listening Comprehension)是英语作为外语课堂教学中听力理解练习方面的一本专著。作者 Penny Ur 是一名教师、师资培训工作者,同时也是著名的英语教学法专家。其主要著作有: Discussions that Work, Five-Minute Activities, Grammar Practice Activities 以及 Teaching Listening Comprehension。作者在本书中主要讨论成功的外语听力理解包括哪些因素,并提供了一套有效的课堂听力练习活动。全书共分两大部分。第一部分重点讨论三个问题: 人们在现实生活中的听力活动有哪些? 学习者在应付这些听力活动时会遇到什么样的困难? 作为教师我们应怎样尽我们的力量去帮助他们克服这些困难? 第二部分提供了一系列的课堂听力理解活动。这些听力理解活动符合听力的心理过程。既有对语言组成部分的听辨,又有对语言内容的信息加工处理。

作者在第一部分谈到了现实生活中的听力及其特点。她认为英语 听力教学的目的是使学生能够具备成功理解真实语言材料 (Authentic materials) 的能力。她认为现实生活中的听力情境主要有以下特点:

1.目的与期待。

听是有目的的交际行为。在现实生活中,人们进行听说活动,都是有一定的目的与期待的。打开收音机收听新闻,是因为我们想了解周围发生的事情。通过海关,想听海关官员问一些什么问题。因此训练学生有目的地接受语言材料,是课堂听力训练的一个基本原则。我们的学生在第一语言的习得过程中已经自然形成了这种能力:即无须注意语言形式而直接听懂讲话人所表达内容的能力。但在外语听力教学中则需专门培养这种能力。

基于上述原则,教师应注重向学生提供以实际内容为中心,而不仅仅以语言形式为中心的训练活动。另外在听力活动开始前帮助学生熟悉所听材料的话题,必要的背景知识乃至讲话人本身的情况都是有必要的。

2. 外在反应。

多数听力情景要求听话人对所听信息做出明显的、即时性的反应。这些反应可能是言语的或非言语的,如回答问题、根据指令操作等。即使是演讲人也会从听众的目光接触、面目表情、打断讲话等表现中获得某种反

馈。作者谈到现实生活听话的这一特点对外语听力教学的启示是: 许多课堂听力理解练习缺乏对于学生在听的过程中对材料理解程度的检查。在一大段听力材料结束后的听力理解练习, 往往变成了对学习者记忆能力的测试。因此, 教师应在学生听的过程中加强对学生听力理解情况的检查与监控。

3. 讲话人的可视性与环境线索。

交际是双方的,在口头交际中,通常能看到讲话人。研究结果表明,视觉支持能提高听力理解的程度。如通过录像等材料对学生进行听力训练要比没有视觉辅助的听力材料收效好。讲话人的非语言线索及环境线索能帮助学生理解所听到的内容。

作者在书中还谈到了口语本身的特点: 语句短而结构松散, 俚语、俗语的大量使用, 冗余信息多, 如重复、解释、自我纠正等。另外, 缩略、连读及语速的不可控性等因素都造成了学生听力理解的障碍。但从另一方面看, 它们恰恰是真实语言运用的典型特征。

因此,在英语听力教学中,教师应有意识地选择具有上述"真实语言"特点的、具有交际意义的语篇材料。但在目前课堂听力教学中,教师常常使用不具有或很少具有上述话语特点的材料训练学生的听力,学生听惯了人为减速的、过于清晰化的语言,这样做不利于学生交际性听的能力的提高。

作者在书中还对英语教师应如何对学生进行听的微技能训练提出了切实可行的建议。如对语法的组成部分(音、词、句)的识别,对重音、节奏、语调的听辨,对口语诸多特点如语速、解释、停顿、游离主题等的适应与对策,对所听内容的预测,以及抓主题大意,抓特定细节,根据语境猜词悟义的能力等。

Penny Ur在全书第二部分提供了精心选择及设计的听力训练活动,这些活动具有很强的可操作性。从音、词、句的听辨练习到交际性的对话及语篇材料的理解训练,练习形式多样化,新颖、有趣。这些活动引导学习者从"自上而下"(Top-down)和"自下而上"(Bottom-up)两个不同方向共同运作,理解意义,并在不同的听力训练阶段有所侧重,逐步达到交际运用的目的。

王松美 北京教育学院 2000年2月20日

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Part 1 Understanding spoken English

This book is about listening comprehension practice in the foreign-language classroom, and is intended primarily for teachers of English. It does not undertake a psycholinguistic, philosophical or communications engineering analysis of the process of listening and understanding; nor, on the other hand, does it consist entirely of a series of exercises. It is, perhaps, an attempt to bridge the gap between the two: to discuss what, in practical terms, successful foreign-language listening comprehension entails; and on this basis to propose types of practice that may be effective in the classroom. Some of these may be found to be suitable for testing purposes also; but their primary aim is to teach rather than to test. I hope that the reader may emerge with some relevant criteria by which to evaluate, select and devise different kinds of exercises.

The three aspects of the subject I shall consider in Part 1 are these: what sort of listening activities actually go on in real life? What are the particular difficulties likely to be encountered by the learner when coping with them? And how may we, as teachers, best help him to master these difficulties?* In other words, we need a clear idea both of where we are going (what we want our students to be able to do as the end result of their learning) and how to get there (what we need to give practice in and how).

^{*} The English pronoun system obliges me to choose between 'he' and 'she'. Since I and most of the English teachers of my acquaintance are women, I have chosen to refer to the teacher throughout in the feminine, and the student in the masculine.