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The Practice of

English Language Teaching

FIFTH EDITION

Jeremy Harmer

with DVD

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GLOBAL SCALE of English

The Global Scale of English is a standardised, granular scale from 10 to 90, which measures English language proficiency.

Visit **English.com/gse** to learn more.

The Global Scale of English logo appears throughout this book next to activities, accompanied by a number representing a level on the scale.

Video contents

Teachers at work

Introduction

For the fifth edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, we decided to take a film crew out to see what English language lessons look like in different places, in different situations and, crucially, with different age groups. And so we asked a number of teachers if they would let us film them at work, doing one of their 'normal' lessons.

With that in mind, we went to Ankara in Turkey and filmed two teachers, Aslı Nilüfer Usluel and Emel Atasoy, working with young learners.

In the UK, we filmed at a residential summer school in the city of Oxford. Varinder Unlu and John Duthie taught teenagers from a variety of different countries and different language backgrounds.

Back in Turkey, we had the chance to record lessons (taught by Zeynep Büyüktuna and Çiğdem Özen) for adult Turkish students who were getting ready to study at an English-medium university.

In Mexico, at a private language school, we had the good fortune to film teachers Juan Pablo Monfón Jiménez, Ricardo Fajardo Cortés and Araceli Menchaca Sánchez with their adult Mexican students.

In each case, after the lesson, I was able to interview the teachers on camera so that I could ask them about their lessons and about the issues that came up as a result of their teaching choices.

General description

On *Teachers at work* you will see eight videos of the lessons that we filmed, together with conversations with the teachers who taught them. The videos vary in length for a number of reasons: in the first place, there is a limit to how much material will fit onto one DVD, and so we had to think carefully about the things we really wanted viewers to see and which parts of the interviews (see below) to include. However, we also wanted to give an idea of how whole lessons progressed and so, in each case, there is an explanation of what happens before and after the excerpts that you can see.

After each lesson the teacher concerned was interviewed on camera. As a result – and where it is appropriate – there are extracts from these interviews interspersed between, before or after the footage of the classes we recorded.

Together with the lesson videos there are also two 'documentaries' about, firstly, the use of the L1 in the classroom and, secondly, the kinds of classroom technology and aids which we found the teachers using.

Using *Teachers at work*

'Things to look out for', in the detailed contents list below, can be used to cross reference parts of different chapters in the book which deal with the issues that come up on the DVD. Readers can look for the topics on the contents pages (pages ii–v) or consult the index. They can then watch the video(s) in question to prepare themselves to read about the topic. For example, they could watch Ricardo's lesson (see below) before reading Chapter 10 on grouping students. Alternatively, they can watch the video during or after their discussions about the contents of the chapter.

For each video in *Teachers at work* there is a worksheet of tasks on the website which accompanies this book: www.pearsonelt.com/PracticeofEnglishLanguageTeaching. You will also be able to see the teachers' original lesson plans online.

However, you can also react to what you see in the four more general ways below. Some of these activities can be done individually, but it is usually more productive to take part in them with colleagues. Activity A, in particular, requires collaboration.

A *Friend or foe?*

In this activity, one viewer is a 'friend' and should say what is good about what they are seeing. The other is a 'foe' and should (pretend to) identify as many 'holes' as he or she can find in what is on show. Who 'wins' the discussion?

B *Same or different?*

How different are you from the teachers you watch? In what ways is the situation that you teach in similar to, or different from, what you see in the videos? What does this make you think about a) your teaching and b) your teaching situation?

C *How would I do it?*

If you had to teach the same students and you were doing the same kind of lesson, how would *you* do it?

D *What can I steal?*

What techniques and activities can you 'steal' from the teachers on the video to use in *your* lessons?

Detailed contents

Track	General description	Things to look out for	
1 3:10	Introduction – Jeremy Harmer		
2 15:30	Young learners 1 (A2/elementary) Aslı (Turkey) Contents: Vocabulary (revision and learning); Grammar	Teacher for today (starting a lesson) Using vocabulary in grammatical patterns Vocabulary memory techniques Matching/mingling activity	
3 19:59	Young learners 2 (A2/elementary) Emel (Turkey) Contents: Vocabulary (revision, categorisation); Grammar; Reading	Choral repetition Categorising vocabulary Circle drill Jumbled paragraph reading Jazz chants Groupwork and pairwork	
4 38:42	Teenagers 1 (B1/intermediate) John (UK) Contents: Storytelling (past tense); Pronunciation	Warmer (vocabulary game) Mime Vocabulary elicitation 'Hangman' Story reconstruction Pronunciation teaching 'Charades' Groupwork	
5 15:54	Teenagers 2 (B2/upper-intermediate) Varinder (UK) Contents: Vocabulary; Listening; Creative group project	Warmer (word game) Using homemade audio Creative group activity Using 'traditional' classroom aids Students in groups	

6 8:05	Pre-university adults 1 (B1/pre-intermediate) Zeynep (Turkey) Contents: Student 'interview'; Reading comprehension with true/false questions	'Hot seat' focus on one student Unusual way of 'planting' questions Comparing answers in pairs	
7 9:28	Pre-university adults 2 (B2/upper-intermediate) Çiğdem (Turkey) Contents: EAP paragraph construction and writing	Paragraph construction Jumbled paragraph Pairwork Using an overhead projector (OHP)	
8 20:05	Adults 1 (B1/intermediate) Pablo (Mexico) Contents: Listening; Grammar	Live listening Using pictures as a comprehension task Using the board Pairwork and groupwork True/false grammar activity	
9 24:39	Adults 2 (B2/upper-intermediate) Ricardo (Mexico) Content: A content-based 'CLIL' lesson	Warmer Prediction and guessing Different (changing) student groupings Using mobile devices Group discussion	
10 12:15	Documentary 1 Using the L1 in the classroom	Aslı, Araceli, Ricardo and Zeynep discuss the use (or non-use) of the students' mother tongue/home language in English language teaching	
11 11:39	Documentary 2 What teachers use in the classroom	Video excerpts of teachers using a range of classroom equipment, including the board, pictures, charts, flipchart (paper), masks, strips of paper, posters, magazine cut-outs, glue, computer projection and mobile devices	

Acknowledgments

I want to express the profound gratitude that Pearson and I feel for all the people who were involved in the making of the DVD that goes with this book. First among these, of course, are the teachers who invited us into their classrooms. Their enthusiasm and 'bravery under fire' was something we will always be grateful for. I cannot thank them enough.

Varinder Unlu facilitated our visit to the International House summer school in Oxford, UK – and then went on to allow us to film her! Özlem Atalay and Pelin Işın at the Middle East Technical University (METU) in Turkey helped to arrange everything for us there, and Grant Kempton's participation was invaluable. At International House in Mexico City, Ariel López and Emma Ford made everything possible in the most incredible way.

For our three visits, Mark Tuffnell directed the film shoots and, as a result, things went remarkably smoothly. He is a joy to work with.

But the DVD would never have come together if it had not been for the organisation, editing, support, enthusiasm and professionalism of Katy Wright. Working with her again has been, as always, a complete joy. And without Luis Espana's wise counsel and organisation, we would never have reached the finishing line.

Introduction

When *The Practice of English Language Teaching* was first published, more than thirty years ago, most teachers used chalkboards, and the overhead projector was still a novelty in some English language classrooms. There weren't many photocopiers around, and the only things that projectors projected were photographic slides. Back then, if we wanted our students to do projects or find out any information, they would have to go to libraries and look in paper encyclopaedias.

But it's all different now. Students can research anything, listen to anything or watch anything on the internet whenever we want them to. They don't even have to go anywhere special to do it. They can use their tablet computers or their mobile phones; we can call up the internet on a smartboard/interactive whiteboard right in front of their eyes! Which just goes to show that everything has changed.

Or has it?

It is true, of course, that modern classroom technology is vastly more sophisticated than it was all those years ago. This is reflected in the way that the chapter on learning technology (Chapter 11) has changed over the last few editions of this book. But the fundamental questions of language learning and teaching are still, it seems to me, the same, however we dress them up with the latest classroom technologies at our disposal: can we persuade learners to take charge of their own learning? What is the value (if any) of explicit language instruction as compared to, say, getting students to 'absorb' language through meaningful activities and texts? How useful is repetition? And what about teaching itself? Is it an art or a science? Or should we perhaps see it as a craft? And so on.

These are the questions which this fifth edition of *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, like its four predecessors, intends to answer. It is informed not only by what went before, but also by the articles and books that have been written in the last eight years and which have, for example, highlighted a renewed interest in repetition, the use of translation, the lingua franca core, teaching 'unplugged' and the rise of digital testing and marking, amongst many other themes. You will find all that here, together with numerous contemporary examples of teaching activities for language systems and language skills.

This fifth edition would never have seen the light of day without the support of Pietro Alongi, for which I am extremely grateful. Laurence Delacroix has guided it through the tortuous road to publication, and without Alice Willoughby, such a thing would not have come to pass. Thanks to them.

At the beginning, though, the 'dream team' of Katy Wright and Helena Gomm got the ball rolling. And it was through the long months of research and writing (and editing and all the other processes that writers go through) that Helena's wisdom, expertise and support as the book's editor were absolutely crucial. This is the fifth project we have worked on together and I, for one, hope there will be many more!

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