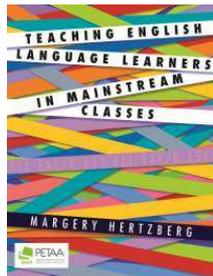


**Teaching English Language Learners  
in Mainstream Classes**  
**Margery Hertzberg,**  
**Primary English Teaching Association**  
**Australia, 2012**  
**ISBN 978-1-875622-85-6**  
**192 pages**

**Reviewed by Nicola Davies**



The aim of this book, published by our Australian colleagues in PETAA, is to assist mainstream teachers who have minimal or no specialist assistance to cater for the English language learning needs of their students across all subject areas. In the current UK context with diminishing numbers of qualified specialist teachers employed in schools and few local authority experts on hand to provide training and support to mainstream colleagues, this certainly seemed to be a book for our times.

The focus of the book is not on beginners in English, but on those who have been learning English for two to five years, who in the terms of the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority will be 'Emerging', 'Developing' or 'Consolidating' their English language use. (see [http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/student\\_diversity/eald\\_teacher\\_resource.html](http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/student_diversity/eald_teacher_resource.html) )

The first three chapters of the book are dedicated to the background to EAL learning and pedagogy. These chapters, like the rest of the book, are designed to be highly accessible and relevant to classroom practitioners signalled by the extensive use of colourful visuals and photographs which are a key feature of the book. In some cases this works well, a photograph of the ideal seating position when using interpreters for teacher – parent interviews reinforcing the straightforward guidance, in other cases, less so.

The next four chapters focus on oracy, reading, writing (written by Janet Freeman) and finally

Role to communicate: Learning English through drama. Each of these chapters begins with a straightforward explanation of the background to the activities, techniques and strategies which make up the bulk of each chapter. So, for example, the chapter on oracy covers the mode continuum; common language functions; initiation, response, feedback versus language for thinking before going on to give numerous examples of techniques and strategies. These include: barrier games; spot the difference; bingo; back to back viewing; collaborative tasks; graphic and matrix organisers; dictogloss; and conversation language prompts.

The chapter Role to communicate: Learning English through drama is where the author's passion emerges. This chapter is based on her involvement within the Fair Go Project (FGP) which focussed on effective engagement for pupils particularly from socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Within this project, Hertzberg looked at how educational drama can engage EAL learners and enhance language and literacy learning. In this chapter she discusses Readers Theatre; Educational Drama; as well as helpful practicalities before going on to show how techniques like sculpting and still image can be used to enhance pupils' understanding of a concept. She also gives ideas of how to plan drama strategies around a text, carefully explaining techniques such as point of view, drama circle, stepping out and parallel improvisation.

In the short final chapter Hertzberg acknowledges the importance of planning teaching and learning sequences over time. She notes that the techniques and activities in the book need to be seen within an approach to teaching rather than simply as tools and provides some useful thoughts on how to plan activities within a teaching and learning sequence. Her book is similar. Although the activities are very accessible, it is a book that mainstream teachers would need to read through rather than just scanning the index for activities. If they do so, mainstream teachers, particularly those in primary schools, will be rewarded with a better understanding of the EAL friendly classroom, as well as being certain to pick up a few more techniques along the way.

The RRP of this book is \$39.95 AUS Dollars and it can be purchased direct from PETAA at <http://www.petaa.edu.au/publicationsstore/publicationdetail?ProductCode=PET097>