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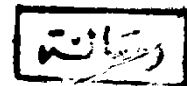
AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXTENT TO
WHICH TEACHERS IN THE PREP. STAGE FOLLOW
THE PROCEDURES PRESCRIBED IN THE TEACHER'S
GUIDE FOR WELCOME TO ENGLISH

A THESIS

Submitted For The MA Degree In
Teaching English As A Foreign Language

BY

FATMA ABDU MOHAMMAD



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SUPERVISED BY

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Prof. Dr.
ABDUL MESSEIH DAOUD
Professor of Teaching English
As A Foreign Language

Associate Prof. Dr.
ZEINAB ALI EL-NAGGAR
Associate Professor of Teaching English
As A Foreign Language

1988



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

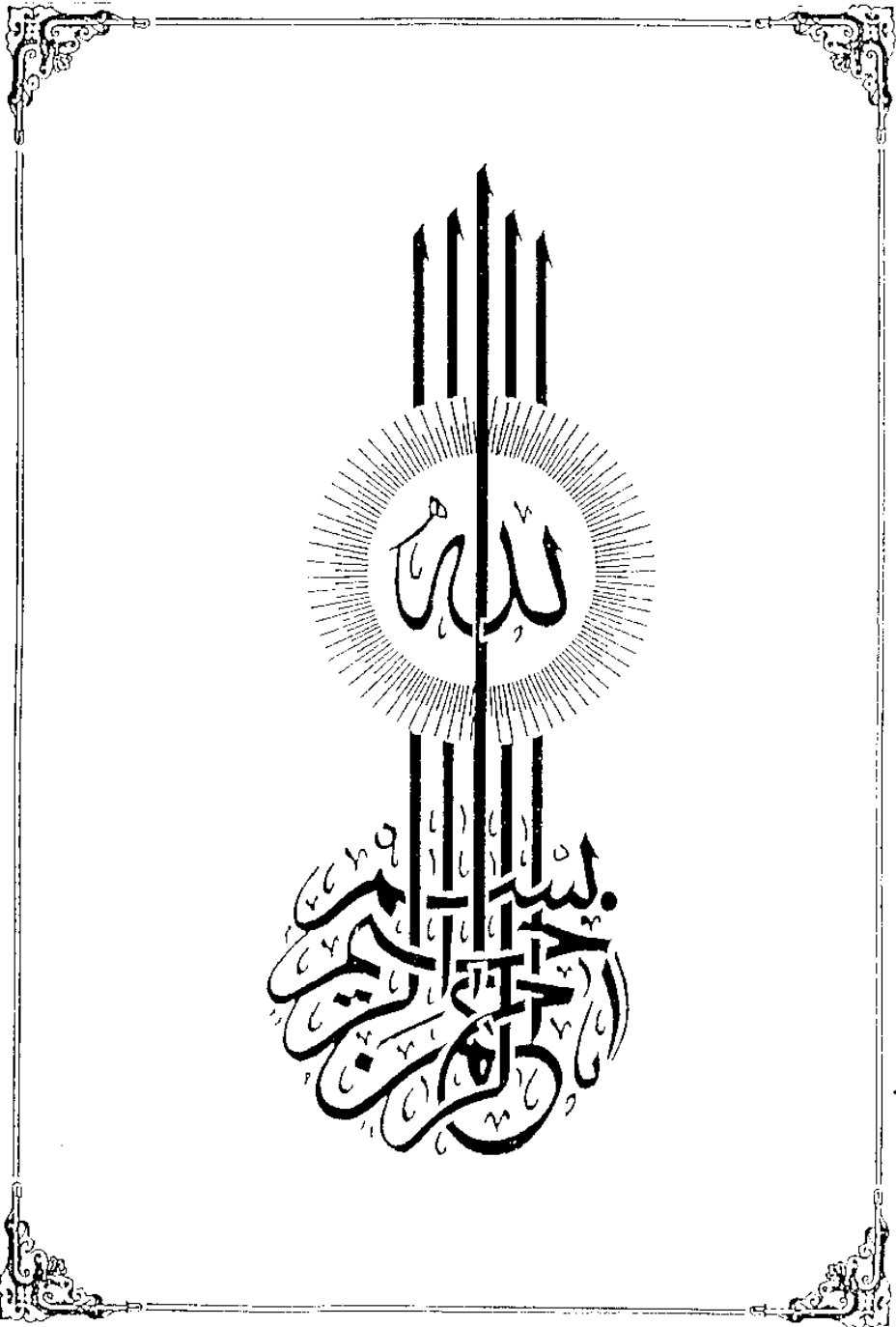
Although it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone who assisted in different phases of this work, I would like to express my gratitude to a number of persons whose valuable comments and suggestions have influenced me most.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Abdul Messeih Daoud for his valuable, skilled and practical suggestions and stimulating comments, which had their influence in shaping my thinking, Dr. Zeinab El-Naggar for her patience, generous help and capable assistance in discussing many of the theoretical issues and procedures of the study. I hope that they approve of what I have done with their comments.

I also acknowledge with thanks the contributions and comments of CDELT staff members and visiting lecturers, Mr. B. Heasley, Dr. J. Scherer, Mr. David Hopkins, Prof. Dr. M. Celce-Murcia and Mr. Martin Bates.

Special and Sincere appreciation is due to Prof. Dr. M. Abou-Seida, Professor of Applied Linguistics at Al-Azhar University, for his valuable suggestions.

I should like also to mention in particular other colleagues and supervisors who gave me helpful and detailed comments and supported me during the observation, Mr. M. El-Okda, Mr. E. El-Baz and Miss H. El-Shandawili.



I also wish to express my appreciation of the help given by the school principals and the teachers who willingly allowed me to observe their classes,

Miss Boutheina the CDELT Librarian deserves a word of gratitude for her whole-hearted encouragement, and for providing me with many useful references.

Finally, this work also owes a good deal to my family who kept my spirits up and my feet firmly on the ground.

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ABSTRACT

An Investigation into The Extent to Which Teachers in The Prep. Stage Follow the Procedures Prescribed in The Teachers' Guide for Welcome To English:

The study is an attempt to evaluate teachers' performance with regard to the implementation of the procedures of the teacher's book (TB) of Welcome to English (WE), a textbook newly introduced into the prep stage, in 1987. The study also tries to find out the difficulties teachers encounter when using the textbook and sources of guidance at their disposal.

As an endeavour to better things for both the learner and the teacher WE is introduced with a TB which is supposed to back the teachers up and develop their self confidence through demonstrating to them how teaching is best practised.

Therefore, investigating how the WE TB is used in the schools is of great importance when the aim is to secure effective utilization of the textbook. Thus this study, is an attempt to do so. It addresses the following questions:

1. How far do teachers in the prep stage follow the TB procedures prescribed for implementing the lessons?

2. To what extent are the variations among teachers attributed to experience and level of proficiency?

Two hypotheses were stated on the basis of the above questions. (See Chapter I).

To answer the above questions an observation and evaluation checklist as well as a structured interview were developed and used for data collection (See Chapter 3 and Appendices I and 2).

The basic findings of the study are consistent with findings of similar studies in Egypt (El-Okda, 1986, Gad, 1980 and Sheir 1975). The findings indicate that most teachers miss much of the orientations as well as the principles of the new textbook. This inevitably leads to misusing the WE TB in most cases.

In a situation like this, both co-operative education and practical training undertaken by teacher trainers and trained supervisors can probably provide teachers with the necessary theoretical and practical considerations.

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM

1.1. Introduction:

Welcome To English (WE) is a new textbook recently introduced (in 1987) to replace Living English (LE) which was broadly handled according to the Audio-lingual Method.

The authors of WE state that their aim is to introduce students to the use of everyday English in speech and writing", (The Teacher's Book of W E, 1987 (i)). This initiative represents an attempt to overcome one of the main sources of difficulty for both teachers and students, i.e., the great distance between the situations traditionally presented in the textbook and those relevant to the learner's real life. Furthermore, the authors of the new textbook explain that in this course "English is to be taught through activities which are meaningful , interesting and relevant to the future needs of the students learning the language in Egypt (The TB: (i): 1986).

The call for teaching a second language through meaningful and interesting activities has been currently

reiterated by quite a number of TEFL specialists. James Ward (1984: 11) states that EFL students "should be given the opportunity to expand their ideas, initiate questions, reinterpret what has been presented to them and behave in a more natural way." Corder (1973) was among others who called for specifying the learner's needs and objectives as a basis for designing the content and structure of the syllabus.

The Ministry of Education in Egypt (1987) has stated that the aim of teaching the language in the prep stage "is to prepare the students for a vocational or a professional career in which a foreign language is an important tool, and to help students to be able to communicate to meet their everyday needs". (Objectives of Teaching English, 1987). Since the aims of the Ministry and those of the textbook writers reflect students' needs in a concrete, realistic fashion, they are to be kept foremost in mind when implementing the new course to ensure continuity and coherence throughout the implementation process and along the three year span during which the course is used. Therefore, one of the main responsibilities of Ministry consultants, supervisors, teacher trainers and senior teachers is to acquaint teachers with the dimensions of any change if a change in the programme objectives is declared. This is a measure of security, for teachers

who are not clear about the course objectives are pushed to perform a task they know very little about. In this situation, using a good textbook where ultimate objectives are not clear as Hermann (1980) and Stern (1983) say, is an aimless task generally characterized by false starts and frustrations.

In an attempt to stimulate a higher degree of student involvement, the WE authors state that "there is a strong emphasis on interesting content so that the students can talk, read and write about matters appealing to their imagination (TB, (ii): 1987). This seems to echo some of the principles of Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition (1982), which emphasizes the availability of comprehensible input that is sufficient in quantity, interesting and relevant to the needs of the learner. Both Ullmann et al. (1984) and Iyons (1984) also suggest that language teaching materials need to be relevant, useful and interesting, as a successful discussion occurs only when it is based on a topic in which the participants are keenly interested.

One of the main functions of relevant and interesting content is that it provides opportunities for shifting from mere rigid grammatical or functional language focus to more creative and probably personalized language use. Tylor (1983: 72) argues that "neither a grammatical focus, nor a

notional functional focus without a real communicative component would be sufficient for students to acquire the ability to communicate in the target language".

However, evidence from the literature reveals that with most text-based instruction, the ultimate goals of language teaching are not easily attained, even with communicatively well designed syllabi, because in most cases, as Bellack et al (1978) say, the communicative needs and wishes of the students are neglected in favour of learning a complex communication medium which they can not yet use to communicate things of importance to them 'here and now'.

Believing that teachers can work wonders in helping the learners to interact using the second language, many ELT writers have stressed the teachers' roles as the most important agent in this respect. Teachers can, to a great extent, affect the process of teaching/learning. That is the reason behind the continuous attempts to upgrade teachers' skills and language competence through education, training and supervision which aim at pushing teachers to embrace and put into practice the principles and techniques of the various teaching approaches.

The introduction of the WE TB provides orientations for the teachers to understand the nature of the textbook which they are using and why and how different types of classroom language activities are to be conducted.

Hence, for a teacher to be put on the right track, he should either be able to read it or he should receive orientations from another source, in this case, a supervisor, a senior teacher, or from a training course.

The WE TB Orientations:

The following is an overview of the main orientations provided in the introduction without any attempt to evaluate the features of the course, as this is beyond the scope of the study:

The introduction presents the teaching methodology and the teaching stages for each activity, as it introduces techniques of how to conduct the different exercises aiming at developing the four language skills. Oral practice activities are first explained as the authors believe that the emphasis on spoken English should generate an interest in the language as a living thing, and as a means of communicating with others and finding out about the world "(The WE TB: (v)). They clarify what is meant by choral drilling and how this activity can be used effectively,