

The Regional Language Center (RELC) Portfolio Series

Review by Elise Fader

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THE RELC PORTFOLIO SERIES. Willy A. Renandya and Jack C. Richards, Series Editors, Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Center (2002).

The Regional Language Center (RELC) Portfolio Series is comprised of twelve booklets written by individual authors. The booklets serve as resource material for ESL/EFL teachers, TESOL professors, and other language experts. The information in the booklets is presented in a succinct manner that is hands-on and user-friendly. The booklets range in length from approximately thirty to sixty pages. Each text is focused on one practical classroom topic such as teaching pronunciation or managing vocabulary learning, and a variety of principles, methods and techniques that can easily be used in one's own classroom, in workshops, or in-service courses. A valuable feature of the series is the ability to combine the topics or methods according to teacher and/or student needs.

Each booklet contains an introduction to the topic followed by explanations and tasks. The booklets end with a reference list and appendices, which vary depending on the topic. For example, the appendices in the booklet entitled *Planning Lessons for a Reading Class* has a model lesson plan designed for a thirty-five minute lesson and the reading to be used as part of that plan. *Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom* has several appendices containing a chart of listening strategies and tactics, a model of a listening diary, and a guide for self-directed learning. The appendices in other booklets provide answer keys to some of the tasks given in the booklets.

Due to the number of books in this series, it is not possible to give specific details about each one. However, it is important to give some idea of at least one booklet in the series. The booklet entitled *Planning Lessons for a Reading Class* introduces the topic by giving a definition of reading and three models of how reading occurs (Top-down, Bottom-up, and the Interactive). Chapter One gives general information about reading and lesson planning, Chapter Two discusses factors to consider when creating reading lesson plans, Chapters Three and Four focus on reading strategies (activating prior knowledge, making predictions, skimming/scanning, vocabulary development, and identifying main ideas) and the development of exercises to teach the strategies, and the last chapter concludes with a short summary of the concepts presented in the booklet.

Some of the ideas presented in each booklet will serve as validation of one's current teaching practices while others will give new ideas or techniques that will be beneficial for both teachers and students as they are implemented. One could purchase the entire series for a comprehensive set of resource materials or purchase books in a combination that would fill needs in a particular area. For example, if one wants to focus on only listening/speaking, it would be appropriate to purchase *Managing Vocabulary Learning*, *Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom*, and *Teaching Pronunciation: Why, What, When, and How*. Those studying in the TESOL field, both novice teachers and seasoned professionals, would be well served by reading this series.

The following is a list of the individual titles that comprise this series:

1. *Giving Feedback in Language Classes*. Marilyn Lewis. *S\$6.00
2. *Managing Vocabulary Learning*. Paul Nation. S\$7.00
3. *The Reflective Teacher: A Guide to Classroom Research*. Sandra Lee McKay. S\$5.00
4. *Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom*. Christine G. M. Goh. S\$7.00
5. *Planning Aims and Objectives in Language Programs*. Jack C. Richards. S\$6.00
6. *Planning Lessons for a Reading Class*. Thomas S. C. Farrell. S\$6.00
7. *Intervening to Help in the Writing Process*. Antonia Chandrasegaran. S\$6.00
8. *Action Research in Action*. Edited by Gregory Hadley. S\$7.00
9. *Teaching Pronunciation: Why, What, When, and How*. Gloria Poedjosoedarmo. S\$6.00
10. *Text Features and Reading Comprehension*. Mary Lee Field. S\$6.00
11. *Developing Language Course Materials*. Brian Tomlinson and Hitomi Masubara. S\$6.00
12. *Learning Strategies: A Guide for Teachers*. Sara Cotterall and Hayo Reinders. S\$6.00

*The S listed in front of each dollar sign stands for Singapore dollars.

About the Reviewer

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