

# Foreword

In spring 2002, I started teaching English at Nykøbing Falster Health and Social Service Education School. I soon discovered that relevant and qualified English teaching material was thin on the ground. For the first few months, I spent a great deal of time researching, modifying and writing my own material. At a conference in Odense in May 2002, I found that there were many other teachers in exactly the same position as me.

A book that could meet the requirements for SOSU English language teaching was definitely in demand; a book that would not only provide enough material to cover the entire curriculum for both programmes, but also allow for the fact that most SOSU classes are made up of students of mixed abilities. I decided to take up the challenge.

The main concept behind this book is to bring English to life – to activate and inspire students to use English freely in a meaningful context. One of my major aims is to encourage students to **speak** English – as much as possible and as often as possible. I have included many different activities with this aim in mind.

Speaking a foreign language is not only about having something to say and saying it correctly; it is also about having the confidence to say it. For me, confidence building is an important element of language learning. Structured communication activities that guide students helpfully into situations where they “need to” use English, can help this process. There are many such structured communication activities within the covers of this book.

A meaningful context is a context that has relevance and interest for the student. I have done my best to provide this relevance by choosing themes that are related to the health and social service education programmes in general. English should not be an island in SOSU, but a part of the mainland.

One problem area in the creation of this book has been the translation of Danish terms to useable English. How should I translate SOSU, SSH and SSA to English, when these titles do not really exist in British or American English as literal translations? Although the Danish Ministry of Education’s translations have inspired me, I have found them to be lacking. They do not sound like natural English in my native ear. For

the purposes of this book, I have translated SOSU to “Health and Social Service Education programmes”, SSH to “care helper”, and SSA to “care assistant”. Where it has been necessary to give both helpers and assistants a common job title, I have used the term “care worker”.

As I have always loved writing, it was natural for me to set out to write as much of the material in this book as possible. In the process, I have had a chance to try out many different roles: from writer and researcher, to poet, photographer and journalist (many of the articles are based on authentic interviews with people who do exist). I am the author of most of the texts in this book: those not written by me are indicated clearly.

I have certainly had a great deal of fun writing this book. I hope that students and teachers alike will find that it is fun to use!

Anna Adh mar  
April 2003

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