

*A Short Intensive Training Course for
In-service Omani Teachers*

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1. Introduction

The field of Language Teacher Education (LTE) has recently received a lot of attention. This is because teaching itself is a difficult profession that requires teachers to come up with new techniques and seek ways of teaching which can help learners reach the desired goals. As a consequence, several Teacher Training (TT) courses have been designed to help teachers continue their professional growth and fill in the gap between their current levels of teaching and the level they should be in. In this essay, I highlight three basic models of teacher education. Then, I discuss in detail a training course I have designed for in-service Omani teachers based on their needs.

2. Models of Teacher Education

There are three main models of teacher education: the craft model, the applied science model, and the reflective model (Wallace, 1991). In the craft model, trainees have to imitate master practitioners in everything they do in order to reach the level of professional competence. The second model involves application of scientific knowledge. The results of such application are then conveyed to trainees who have to apply them as they are to reach professional competence. In fact, this model has the possibility of failing trainees if they do not understand the results well or if they do not apply them properly. The reflective model involves two kinds of knowledge: "received knowledge" which implies facts, theories, and concepts with whom trainees are familiar and "experiential knowledge" which trainees gain through experience. Actually, there is a reciprocal relationship between these two types of knowledge. In other words, received knowledge and experiential knowledge influence and are influenced by each other. Trainees, for example, use their received knowledge when experiencing teaching. Besides, they need to think after each experience of what went well or bad and the reasons behind them. It is worth mentioning that the reflective model is the underlying model I have used when designing the training course. More details are shown later.

3. The Present In-service Teacher Training Course

This course is a short one lasting for two months, and its design is based on the framework of Wallace (1991).

3.1 Rationale

This is an in-service course designed for Omani teachers who have taught in either male or female schools for a couple of years. They speak and teach English as a foreign language. As a group, they might have minor differences in their cultures and customs, especially if they come from different parts of Oman. These teachers have been chosen by the government to teach first-year technical college students as the government plans to replace foreign teachers with Omani teachers who share the same cultural background and L1 with the students.

Despite having teaching experiences, this group of teachers needs to go through a training course for several reasons. First, those teachers have been using traditional ways of teaching most of the time. In fact, the Presentation-Practice-Product (PPP) method is the most popular one for English language teachers. Besides, the school classes are exam-oriented and teacher-led classes. For these reasons, they need to have a training course that enables them to teach in college where the teaching-learning environment is totally different from the school environment. They need to have important skills such as classroom management, error correction and feedback techniques. Furthermore, they need to know about the modern ways of teaching used in college such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and the communicative approach. Another important thing they need to have is getting used to teaching mixed classes and deal with both genders properly based on their cultural knowledge and awareness of the college policy which insists in treating both genders equally. Since those teachers are going to teach first-year students, they need to be familiar with the fact that in technical colleges, students have classes for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. So, they need to know how to teach each skill and prepare students to have an adequate level of English that can help them continue studying their technical

specializations such as engineering, business, and information technology in English and later use English as a tool of communication in their work fields.

Because of the teaching experience the target group of teachers has, the training course is short and intensive; lasting for two months during which the issues raised in the previous paragraph are highlighted. Such issues do not conflict with trainee's culture and are actually applied in technical colleges. Besides, experienced Omani and foreign teachers from technical colleges are chosen to train the target group of teachers and be their mentors during this period of time. It is tempting to say that those trainers have less teaching load than other college teachers because in addition to teaching, they need to run the training course. The course starts in September, the beginning of the academic year, to give trainees the opportunity to have real teaching practice. This is explained in detail when discussing the structure of the course.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

Generally, this training course seeks to achieve the following aims by the end of the course.

1. To develop trainees' awareness of various classroom seating arrangements.
2. To show the importance of having learner-centered classrooms and autonomous learning at college level.
3. To expand trainees' knowledge of error correction and feedback techniques.
4. To show effective ways of giving instructions.
5. To present ways of teaching the four language skills in learner-centered classrooms.

In order to achieve these aims, specific objectives are set to make it clearer and easier for trainers to apply the course as planned and make some changes if needed.

By the end of the course, trainees are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the influence of having different seating arrangements on students' behaviours.
2. Choose seating arrangements which can meet the needs and objectives of the assigned tasks in each lesson.
3. Grasp the importance of encouraging learners to talk and share their personal knowledge and experiences with the rest of the class.
4. Realize the significance of communicative and task-based language teaching.
5. Realize the importance of autonomy and apply it in this course through the research and readings they have to do in order to have up-to-date knowledge on the field of teaching.
6. Apply different methods of teaching on their actual classes.
7. Understand the various ways of correcting errors and giving feedback in structure and meaning.
8. Use several ways to check students' understanding of given instructions.
9. Write clear instructions which are self-explanatory and clearly tell students how to perform given tasks successfully.
10. Implement several sub-skills which can help students from different levels improve their four main language skills.

3.3 Principles Underpinning the Course

Generally, this course is mainly influenced by the collaborative approach and includes a few elements of the prescriptive approach as well. Collaborative and prescriptive approaches are quite different from each other (Randall & Thornton, 2001; Wallace, 1991). The former gives the sense of collaboration between trainers and trainees and opens a window for discussions while the later gives trainers more authority to talk about and show what should be done in practice. Although the present course gives trainers some authority during the lectures they present, trainees have the chance

during discussions opened after lectures and supervised teachings, as is shown later, to share their ideas and experiences with trainers. Furthermore, in prescriptive approach, trainers provide information about language especially when the teachers are non-native as they might not have strong command of it. Yet, Randall & Thornton (2001) assume that in-service trainees who have long teaching experiences might not accept such information and feel threatened by their trainers compared to pre-service trainees. They argue that this issue can be solved if experienced in-service trainees' attention is drawn to the fact that language and methodology are two different topics and using different teaching methods does not guarantee that the language they speak is perfect.

Another important principle in the present course is having the sense of autonomy. Because autonomous learning is one of the intended aims, the course leads trainees to develop it through the readings and research they have to do for the purpose of professional growth and assessment. This is because if trainees have and practice autonomy, they can help their students practice it as well.

3.4 Structure of the Course

3.4.1 Types of Activities and Topics

In general, the course is divided into two parts. The first part is theoretical and the second is more practical. Each part lasts for four weeks (see appendix 1). The reason behind having theoretical and practical sessions is to combine awareness-raising and experiential practices of teacher training (Ellis, 1986). Awareness-raising practices aim to develop trainees' understanding of teaching methods and techniques used in EFL classrooms, whereas experiential practices involve trainees in real teaching environments. Having the two types of practice in one course gives trainees the chance to know what is new in EFL field and practice their received knowledge to develop their experiential one.

The first four weeks take the form of lectures, discussions, seminars, individual and small group work. Lectures are preferred by several teachers and trainers for many reasons (Wallace, 1991). If human resources' point of view is taken into account, lectures are considered to be cheap, and they ease human contact with people. Also, they are simple to arrange and give trainers the sense of authority which is mentioned earlier. However, Wallace (ibid) points out that lecture modes have disadvantages as well. Listeners may not pay attention for a long time because attention span lasts for 15-20 minutes only. Moreover, there is lack of feedback if the number of audience is large and they have different amounts of knowledge or abilities. In fact, if lectures are used, these negative aspects can be reduced through using audio/ visual aids or asking learners to do small tasks from time to time. Since the governmental replacement program does not take a large number of teachers, the number of trainees is assumed to be small and easy to deal with during lectures. In addition, this course involves discussions along with lecturers to ensure that trainees are paying attention and are welcome to share their different opinions and experiences. Through discussions, trainers can get a better view of the actual abilities trainees have and what needs to be focused on and reinforced in trainees' perceptions of language and methodology. In order to maximize the usefulness of using discussions in the first part of the course, they can be panel or plenary discussions (Ellis, 1986). Panel discussions are given by experts during the first week when highlighting topics such as TBLT and learner-centred classrooms because these are recent issues in EFL field and it is better to have knowledgeable experts talking about them. Plenary discussions are run after lectures and seminars to involve all trainees in exchanging ideas and experiences.

Seminars are another way used in the theoretical training part of the course. Seminars are included in order to give trainees the chance to present papers in the topics discussed. Presenting papers provides an opportunity for reflection which is a key component of this course which is based on the reflective model. "Being reflective assists teachers' lifelong professional development, enabling them to critique teaching and make better-informed teaching decisions" (Burton, 2009: 298). During seminars, presenters, and the audience to some extent, highlight classroom situations they have experienced and show why things went well or bad. This kind of reflection enables

trainees to see the significance of critically analyzing what they experience in their classes as this is one of the best ways leading to professional development. Another reason of having seminars is to make trainees be more autonomous. Instead of depending on trainers in presenting their experiences and leading the lectures and discussions, trainees can be in the position of trainers and present their own materials based on their valued experiences and research and lead discussions with other trainees.

In addition, individual work and small group work are key methods used in this course. Individual work is used for the purpose of reflection and autonomy in learning. On the other hand, group work is used to establish friendly environment and gives trainees more time to speak (Pica, 1994). It is worth to point out that the success of having group work depends on factors such as the size of the group and physical learning environment. Wallace (1991) claims that although group work gives time for reflection, it can be time-consuming if not organized properly in terms of time and space. To avoid such a problem and benefit from group work, everything needs to be planned in advance and trainers need to think and be prepared to solve any anticipated problems which may occur. In fact, group work is one of the ways trainers and teachers are encouraged to use. Pica (1994) reports that in a study done by Chesterfield and other colleagues in 1983, they noticed that L2 proficiency developed during peer interaction more than interaction with teacher.

Using several ways of training in this course aims to make trainees aware of the impact they have on learners. Sticking to one routine in each class will definitely make students bored and lose interest. In fact, it is easy to use various teaching methods in this course because the number of teachers chosen for the governmental replacement purposes is usually small. Besides, since autonomous learning is one of the aims and principles of this course, it cannot be developed if there is no interest in learning and attending classes. Due to the fact that trainees have used traditional ways of teaching most of the time in their classes at school, they need to experience other ways of teaching and processing information such as seminars and group work. Once

they go through this experience and see their influence on their attitudes as learners, they are assumed to be willing to apply them in their new college classes. Also, it is important to mention that lectures and panel discussions are used only during the first week because the topics introduced in this week are new, while other methods of teaching and involvement are used in the following sessions depending on the topics and knowledge trainees are expected to have. This gives trainees the sense of arranging the class based on the type of activities and aims they want to achieve in each lesson. It is not one way of teaching fits all activities.

I have chosen recent topics which trainees need in order to be able to teach in college. These topics are sequenced from general to specific. During week one, trainees are exposed to areas of using English for communicative purposes since students whom this group of trainees is going to teach need to learn English to be able to communicate well with others in their work fields. Since such purposes are missed in school classes, trainers and experts run the sessions of the first week because understanding such purposes and how they can be applied in class is a fundamental element of teaching in an Omani technical college. During the second session of the first week, topics related to using English communicatively are discussed. These topics are: learner-centered vs. teacher-centered classrooms, negotiating meaning, and TBLT. In fact, the three topics have lots of similarities and seek to increase Student-Talking-Time (STT) and help students be more independent and confident when using English. It is noticed that learner-centeredness and negotiation of meaning can be achieved in TBLT. One point that is discussed during the lecture and plenary discussions of such topics is that students need to practice language to acquire it. Furthermore, TBLT is actually used in technical colleges' classes because it is argued that tasks help learners "engage in certain types of information-processing that are believed to be important for effective language use and/or language acquisition..." (Ellis, 2000: 197). Similarly, Willis (1996) asserts that TBLT seeks to develop students' confidence to use whatever language they have, negotiate meaning and experience spontaneous interactions with others. In fact, this is the aim of having English courses in our technical colleges and this course attempts to prepare teachers to help their learners have this kind of language usage.

In week two, seminars and discussions are led to address significant issues college teachers face in their classes. During the first session, teaching styles and seating arrangements are highlighted because they are closely intertwined. Teachers who have one teaching style usually complain about having uninterested students and trouble-makers in class. Instead of sticking into one teaching style, teachers need to adapt various ways of teaching and use different seating arrangements based on the activities and tasks they use. In fact, having various arrangements in class prevents disruptive behaviours which decrease students' attention during the lesson (Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). In addition to these topics, error correction and feedback techniques are stressed out during this session as they are strongly influenced by teaching styles. Giving feedback and correcting errors take various forms such as recasts, clarification requests, and confirmation checks. In conversations, for instance, participants, either the teacher with students or students among themselves, may ask for clarification or confirmation while negotiating meaning. According to Long's interaction hypothesis (Iwashita, 2003), those requests promote L2 learning even though the purpose is to understand what is going on. Such ways make learners notice wrong utterances they have articulated. Pica (1994) argues that pointing to errors directly and showing students the difference between their errors and the correct form are effective error correction techniques. In contrast, Iwashita (2003) reports that there is research showing that it is better to use clarification requests which turn students' attention to forms and rules they already know. Sometimes, students understand more if their classmates correct them or their errors are pointed out in communicative tasks rather than in traditional and formal learning settings. Yet, this cannot be generalized. It seems that each technique has its own positive and negative sides, and it depends on teachers to choose which technique to use with which learners and when. In fact, this is one of the points trainees need to contribute to when presenting their papers in this course. During the second session of week 2, giving instructions and elicitation techniques are focused on. Mastering giving instructions is crucial because through them, the teacher runs the class and students know what is expected of them to do and share. Besides, trainees need to discuss various techniques of elicitation and when to

use them. Some of the elicitation techniques Wajnryb (1992) mentions are closed questions, open-ended questions, imperative questions, and directed questions.

The sessions of weeks 3 and 4 focus on teaching the four main language skills. The reason behind spending the whole session on each of the four skills is that in our technical colleges, there are classes for each skill. Although the class might be for reading or listening, for instance, college teachers do integrate other skills as well since it is almost impossible to isolate one skill from the others. Besides, it is part of the college program to evaluate students' development in each skill separately through having progress tests and level-exit exams. As a consequence, trainees need to know the sub-skills students are supposed to practice in order to improve their linguistic and communicative abilities. For example, there are several sub-skills used in reading such as skimming and scanning and different types of reading like extensive reading and intensive reading. So, during the session of reading skills, trainers discuss such issues with trainees in detail and give them time to practice them individually and in groups to give trainees an idea of how to teach them in class. It is worth to mention that appendix 3 includes some activities which are used during the first four weeks of the course. These activities are adapted from Parrott (1993) and Thaine (2010). It is worth noting that not all of the used activities are adapted or modified. Trainers have to prepare their own materials as well based on the aims and objectives of the course.

Once these topics are addressed, trainees will move to the practical part where they can apply the knowledge they have received in theoretical classes. This part differs from the first one in terms of having micro- and macro-teachings. It is claimed that micro-teaching is a good technique for developing experiential knowledge (Wallace, 1991). Trainees are required to do macro-teaching, lasting for at least an hour, in reading and writing skills because tasks involving such skills normally take some time to be done. That is why reading and writing classes in technical colleges take two hours. Since speaking and listening tasks can be performed much quicker, micro-teachings, about 15-20 min, are done. In fact, all of micro- and macro-teachings are

done in classrooms taught by trainers so that trainees experience the real challenges of teaching college students and get support from their trainers.

3.4.2 Classroom Observations

Classroom observations are a key part of this course (see appendix 2). During the first four weeks, trainees attend classes with different trainers in order to see how trainers relate and apply what have been discussed during theoretical sessions in their classrooms. So, the topics of the observations are taken from the topics used in theoretical sessions. Other purposes of such observations are to give trainees the chance to see how college teaching goes on, to reflect on what they observe, and to relate it to what they have actually done during their school teaching. Besides, Day (1990) asserts that this kind of observations helps trainees identify effective techniques and practices which they can apply in their own teaching. The last four weeks are left for peer observations. Trainees have the chance to observe each other's micro- or macro-teachings which are also observed by their trainers. It is important to note that all the observations are focused. When observing trainers, trainees have to focus on certain issues raised during the sessions of that week. Similarly, during peer observations, observers need to focus on the effectiveness of the techniques used to teach certain language skills. Examples of classroom observation tasks taken from Wanjryb (1992) are shown in appendix 4. They are modified to suit the level of trainees who have some teaching experiences.

After each observation, there are discussions with the observed trainer or trainee. This sort of discussions gives trainees the chance to know why certain strategies went well or bad (Moran & Dallat, 1995). In fact, it is argued that trainers and peers are sources for reflective practice (ibid). This is because when discussing what has been observed, this might make the observed trainers/trainees think of points they have not thought about before. Also, peers can benefit and get more ideas when observing each other. In fact, different classroom observations enable trainees to see to what extent theoretical aspects can be applied in reality. Therefore, trainees have to do more than one observation in each area.

3.5 Progression

Progression is a significant part in teacher training programs. It can be seen through making learners move from easy to more risky "experiential aspects of professional practice" (Wallace, 1991: 151). Although this course is short and the element of progression is not very much clear, the topics and requirements of it move from general and easy to specific and complex. Trainees are required to be engaged in discussions and seminars at the beginning of the course. Then, they have to do more challenging tasks such as micro- and macro-teachings.

3.6 Coherence

The structure of the course and classroom observation tasks show the sequential coherence in it. The chosen topics are related to each other and they are organized from basic and general to more specific ones, from English for communicative purposes and learner-centered classrooms to teaching the four language skills. Moreover, there is strong connection between what is discussed during theoretical sessions and the practical sessions and classroom observations. The previously presented topics reflect the significance of having learner-centred classes. Furthermore, they aid establish the basic elements for TBLT environment required in technical colleges' classrooms.

3.7 Assessment

Since the course is based on the reflective model, its assessment is based on trainees' analytical and reflective thinking skills which are evaluated by their trainers. During the first four weeks, trainees have to submit assignments on weekly basis based on classroom discussions, observations, and their readings on the topics discussed and observed. However, the last four weeks are more intensive because trainees are required to produce three pieces of work. First, they are evaluated on the lesson plans they write for their micro- and macro-teachings. There is no fixed form of the lesson plans because trainees have teaching experiences and are assumed to know the components of good lesson plans. Second, they need to write reflective reports

discussing the positive and negative aspects of their own teachings. Such reflective reports support the fact that "learning to teach involves learning to reflect on teaching in a characteristically systematic way" (Moran & Dallat, 1995). Third, they have to write short essays about their peer observations. Through these essays, trainees take such observations seriously. Besides, those observations help them see the similarities and differences between their own ways of teaching and their colleagues'. It is worth mentioning that after the course is completed successfully, trainees do administrative work which helps them understand some aspects of the educational system in the technical colleges. Besides, they co-teach as well. When the second semester starts, trainees are distributed in different technical colleges and are given their own classes to teach.

3.8 Course Evaluation

The course needs to be evaluated each time it is applied in order to see what is really beneficial, what needs to be omitted, and what needs to be added to it. Such evaluation is fruitful as it is taken from both trainers and trainees. Therefore, questionnaires are given at the end of the course, and the comments taken from questionnaires are considered and modifications are applied to the coming batches of trainees.

4. Conclusion

To this end, I have briefly discussed models of teacher education. Moreover, I have pointed out the main features of the training course I have designed based on Wallace's framework (1991). These features include the rationale, aims and objectives, principles of the overall design of the course, general structure, progression, coherence, assessment, and course evaluation. In fact, such course cannot be applied in all teacher training settings. New courses should be designed based on the needs of the target audience and institutional requirements.

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Appendix 1

General Structure of the Whole Program (Week 1- Week 8)

Week	Session	Type of Activity	Topic	Assessment
Week 1	Session 1	Lecture & Panel Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • English for Communicative and work-field purposes 	One analytical assignment should be submitted weekly based on classroom discussions, observations, and your readings on the areas discussed
	Session 2	Lecture & Plenary Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner-centered vs. Teacher-centered classes • English as a tool for negotiating meaning • Task-Based Language Teaching 	
Week 2	Session 1	Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Styles • Seating Arrangements • Error Correction and Feedback Techniques 	
	Session 2	Seminar Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving Instructions • Elicitation Techniques 	
Week 3	Session 1	Discussions Individual and Small group activities	Developing Listening Skills	
	Session 2	Discussions Individual and Small group activities	Developing Speaking Skills	
Week 4	Session 1	Discussions Individual and Small group activities	Developing Reading Skills	

	Session 2	Discussions Individual and Small group activities	Developing Writing skills	
Week 5		Micro-teaching	Developing Listening Skills	1. Lesson Plans 2. One Reflective Report After Each Micro- teaching 3. One short essay to be Submitted Each week Discussing the Peer Observations you have done
Week 6		Micro-teaching	Developing Speaking Skills	
Week 7		Macro-teaching	Developing Reading Skills	
Week 8		Macro-teaching	Developing Writing Skills	

Appendix 2

Classroom Observations (Depend on Trainer Teachers' Time Tables)

Week	Type of Observation	Focus	Number of Observations Required
Week 1	Observing Trainer Teacher	Student-Talking-Time vs. Teacher-Talking-Time	3
Week 2	Observing Trainer Teacher	Giving Instructions Elicitation Techniques Error Correction	3
Week 3	Observing Trainer Teacher	Effectiveness of Seating Arrangements and Techniques Used in Listening and Speaking Classes	2
Week 4	Observing Trainer Teacher	Effectiveness of Seating Arrangements and Techniques Used in Reading and Writing Classes	2
Week 5	Peer Observation	Techniques Used to Develop Listening Skills	2
Week 6	Peer Observation	Techniques Used to Develop Speaking skills	2
Week 7	Peer Observation	Techniques Used to Develop Reading Skills	2
Week 8	Peer Observation	Techniques used to Develop Writing Skills	2

Appendix 3

Examples of Some of the Adapted Activities and Discussion Questions Used During the First Four Weeks of the Course

1. Exploiting Authentic Materials (used in week 4, session 1, Developing Reading Skills)¹

Trainer's Notes

11 Exploiting authentic material

Summary

Focus	Classroom methodology
Aims	To explore the process of using authentic materials in the classroom
Contexts	New or experienced in-service teachers
Duration	60–75 minutes
Preparation	Photocopy both worksheets for all trainees.

Lead in

Write the following question on the board:

- Tell your partner about a lesson based on authentic material that you taught and you feel worked well. If you can't think of an example, are there any specific benefits with using authentic materials that you can think of?

Trainees discuss in pairs. Conduct feedback.

- 1a** Give each trainee a copy of worksheet 1. Ask trainees to work alone to do this task. Put trainees in groups of three to share their ideas. Conduct feedback.



Text 1

- 1 Stories of heroism usually have wide appeal.
- 2 Narrative tenses; passive forms; lexical set of words associated with the sea.
- 3 Gist and detailed reading tasks focusing on narrative events.
- 4 Learners role play the story from the perspective of one of the protagonists to a friend/journalist. Or learners write the story from the perspective of one of the protagonists.

Text 2

- Perhaps limited to people who like gardens.
Range of modals – should, can, could, need; imperatives; lexis of gardening and planting.
Gist reading tasks focusing on function of text (advice) and detailed reading focusing on specific examples of advice.
Role play between garden expert and novice gardener. Or learners can write an advice sheet on growing your own food.

- 1b** Ask the groups to discuss the question. Conduct feedback.



Both texts are potentially exploitable, but Text 2 is likely to be restricted to groups of learners who are interested in gardening. Text 1 is potentially of interest to a wider range of learners.

- 2** Indicate the remaining tasks focus on Text 1. Ask trainees to do this task alone, and then put them in pairs to check their ideas and discuss why some aims are inappropriate.



- 1 a. Aim b is not appropriate because it will not allow learners to focus on the key events in the text that will help them understand the narrative.
- 2 b. Aim a is not appropriate because the text is reporting information.
- 3 b. Aim a is not appropriate because there are not enough examples to make it of value to learners.
- 4 a. Aim b is not appropriate because there is only one example of the past progressive in the text.

- 5** a. Aim b is not appropriate because it is not very generative and is not a very challenging aim for upper intermediate learners.

- 3** **a and b** Give each trainee a copy of worksheet 2. Put trainees in pairs to do these tasks. Conduct feedback.



3a Questions 1 and 2 both focus on small details in the text and do not provide practice in gist reading as would be appropriate for a text of this nature.

3b None of the tasks is effective.

- 1 This question is 'liftable'. Learners can extract the answer from the text without necessarily having understood it. The grammar of the question and the grammar of the answer are identical.
- 2 This information is not given in the text.
- 3 There is no information in the text that allows learners to infer this idea.
- 4 This question requires comprehension on a linguistic level rather than merely understanding information. Further, the text does not provide a lot of context that allows learners to understand *huddled*.
- 5 This question is also 'liftable' (see 1).

- 3** **c and d** Put trainees in groups of four to discuss these tasks. After five minutes, re-group the trainees and ask them to share their ideas. Conduct feedback.



3c More appropriate tasks could be a gist reading task consisting of two possible summaries of the article. Learners would choose the best one. A possible detailed reading task could be to put the day's events in order.

3d The following words are critical for understanding the article: *cave, surf, rip*.

- 4a** Ask trainees to do this task alone, and then check their answers in pairs. Conduct feedback.



1 c 2 f 3 d 4 a 5 g 6 e 7 b

- 4** **b and c** Ask trainees to do these tasks in groups. Conduct feedback by asking each group to give one of their drawbacks and its corresponding solution.

- 5** Put trainees in groups of three and give them time to work on the task. Conduct feedback.

Reflection task

- Think of some authentic texts that you have exploited in the past year. How varied are the topics of these texts? Do you think you are choosing texts on the basis of your own interests or the interests of learners?

¹ From: Thaine, G. (2010). *Teacher Training Essentials*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

11 Exploiting authentic material

3 Good task, bad task

3a The two questions below are suggested gist reading tasks for Text 1. How effective are they?

- 1 Read the text quickly and find out about the cave.
- 2 What did John Broad think?

3b The questions below are suggested detailed reading tasks for Text 1. How effective are they?

- 1 Who has told of the 11-hour fight for life?
- 2 What is the weather like at Mawgan Porth?
- 3 Is there a romantic relationship between Shane and Renee?
- 4 What is the meaning of the word *huddled*?
- 5 Who was flown to hospital suffering from hypothermia?

3c Can you think of more appropriate gist and detailed reading tasks for Text 1?

3d What vocabulary would you pre-teach for Text 1?

4 The pros and cons

4a Points 1–7 below outline different features of authentic materials, while a–g describe an associated benefit. Match the features and the benefits.

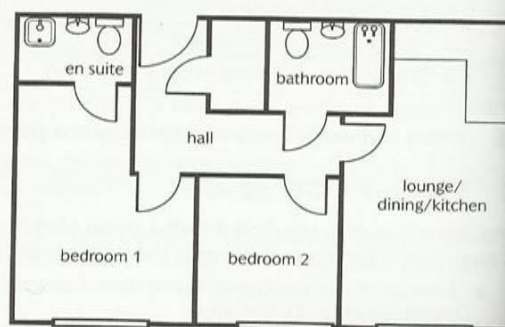
- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Authentic materials contain examples of real language used by native speakers. 2 Authentic materials such as DVDs are perceived as entertainment. 3 Authentic materials can contain a lot of cultural information. 4 Authentic materials can often be quite long. 5 Authentic materials such as maps have real-world transfer. 6 Authentic materials can be quite topical in terms of their content. 7 Authentic materials are often used to supplement coursebook materials. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a This means that learners can get good extensive listening and reading practice. b The variety they offer can increase motivation. c This allows learners to see how grammar and vocabulary behave in natural discourse. d This can help bring knowledge and information from the outside world into the classroom. e This means that teachers have the possibility of making their teaching programme as relevant and immediate as possible. f This means that learners forget that they are doing some kind of learning task and enjoy themselves. g This means that the learners will begin to see materials as something practical they can use. |
|---|---|

4b For each of the benefits listed above, can you think of a corresponding drawback?

4c Now think of possible solutions that will help overcome these drawbacks.

5 Creating some tasks

Imagine you want to use the following floor plan of a flat from www.taylorwimpey.co.uk with a group of pre-intermediate learners studying on an intensive summer course in the UK. Work in groups and brainstorm tasks for all four skills. You can create other materials to use in tandem with the floor plan.



2. Some discussion questions² (used in Week 4, session 2, "**Developing Writing Skills**")
- a. Do you think that written practice of tenses helps to develop writing skills?
 - b. Where do learners usually write their first draft of a piece of writing- at home or in class? Why?
 - c. Do you often get learners focus on cohesive devices in their written work? Why/ why not?
 - d. How good are learners at editing their own and each other's written work?
 - e. Do you sometimes get learners to brainstorm ideas for writing in groups? How effective is this?
 - f. Which of the following aspects of writing do you consider the most important: punctuation, correct grammar, or paragraphing?
 - g. Do you think it helps learners to provide a model text for a piece of writing? Why/ why not?
 - h. Writing is often discussed with reference to *process* (where a new text is built through a series of planning and re-drafting stages) and *product* approaches (where a text is analyzed and imitated). What are the characteristics of each approach?³

² Adapted from: Thaine, C. (2010). *Teacher training essentials*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³ This question has been modified. Originally, this question gives trainees statements to classify into process and product approaches. However, I want trainees to critically think and come up with the characteristics of the two approaches instead of giving them everything.

3. Giving Instructions⁴ (used in Week 2, session 2)

Discussion Task 9

Teachers' language: Instructions

Aim This Task looks at different ways in which teachers give instructions and encourages you to consider alternatives to your normal approaches. It also explores some of the problems which may arise in giving instructions.

TASK

Section A A question of approach

- 1 Consider the following:
 - a) How carefully do you prepare the way you will give instructions in a particular lesson?
 - b) In what ways do you give instructions?
Example (With monolingual classes) The teacher may explain the procedure in English and ask a student to translate this into the learners' first language.
 - c) What (if any) problems arise with regard to students understanding your instructions?
- 2 Comment on the following two points of view. Does either of them seem to be more acceptable than the other? (If you feel that this depends on particular circumstances, qualify your answer with specific reference to these circumstances.)
 - a) Teachers should aim to demonstrate to students as simply and as clearly as possible what they have to do. Non-verbal instructions are often more effective than verbal.
 - b) The giving of instructions in the classroom is one of the few genuinely communicative acts which takes place. The teacher should thus exploit this opportunity by making her instructions as natural as possible. If they are complicated and difficult for the students to understand, learners and the teacher are consequently obliged to 'negotiate meaning' to achieve an authentic communicative purpose.

⁴ Adapted from: Parrott, M. (1993). *Tasks for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- 3 Evaluate the following instructions, keeping in mind any conclusions you may have reached in discussing the previous question:
- a) Teacher: 'A. Now, I'd like you to get into pairs, A and B. A, I want you to ask questions to find out what is in B's picture. B, be careful not to let A see your picture. OK, here are the pictures. That's right, Maria, turn away from Aziza so she can't see it. Everyone, look at Maria and Aziza and see how they're sitting. That's right. Good.'
 - b) The teacher gets the attention of the whole class. Then she gives a picture to Maria and gestures to her not to reveal it to others. The teacher asks Maria three or four questions to find out what is in the picture. She then gestures to Wang (who is on the opposite side of the room) to continue the questions. She then uses gesture to divide the students into pairs and gives one student in each pair a picture. She says, 'OK? Now you.'

Section B *Some common problems*

Look at the following situations and identify what might have gone wrong. What else could the teacher have done?

- a) (Class of any level) The teacher hands out a passage for the students to read. She then tells them to read it very quickly in order to extract the gist. The students begin to read painstakingly.
- b) i) (Lower-intermediate class) The teacher wants to teach the question *How long + present perfect continuous*. She wants the students to repeat 'How long have you been studying English?' but, instead, the students answer her 'Six months'.
- ii) (Lower-intermediate class) The teacher has drilled the question 'How long have you been studying English?', and now wants the students to ask each other across the class and to elicit the appropriate answers. However, the students simply keep repeating the question.
- iii) (Elementary class) The class is learning and practising the simple present. The teacher has drilled the question 'What time do you get up?' and now wants the students to ask other questions beginning 'What time do you . . . ?' However, the students keep asking 'What time do you get up?'

Appendix 4

Classroom Observation Tasks⁵

Task: To observe the language of feedback and error

1. Observe and complete the following table.
2. See if there is any non-verbal and supplementary support that is given to the information, for example, use of the board, visual, gesture.
3. Consider whether the feedback was generally positive and encouraging (+) or negative and discouraging (-).

Teacher question	Student response	Teacher feedback	Student response to feedback	Supplementary support	+ OR -

After the lesson:

1. Look at the information content of the teacher's feedback. To what extent is the teacher's feedback providing for the learner:
 - a. Information that explicitly highlights where the error is?
 - b. Information that defines what the choices are, thereby reducing the alternatives open to the learner?
 - c. Information that helps the learner correctly adjust their current understanding?
2. On the basis of your analysis, comment on the language of the feedback in these terms:
 - a. Was the information supported by other messages through different media, such as gesture, visual?
 - b. Was the message appropriately limited (not overloaded)? Did it reduce, rather than increase ambiguity?

⁵ From: Wajnryb, R. (1992). *Classroom Observation Tasks: A resource book for language teachers and trainers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Note: All of the tasks provided in this appendix have been modified and some questions have been added to suit the level of in-service trainees and make them think reflectively and analytically of what they observe in classrooms.

Task: to observe seating arrangements

1. Draw the physical seating arrangements in this lesson

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing the physical seating arrangements for a lesson.

2. What kind of activity was appointed to each arrangement?
3. Do you think these arrangements were suitable for the kind of the activity used?
4. If the teacher uses one seating arrangement throughout the whole class, what do you think the reasons behind it? Should the teacher have used many arrangements? Would the lesson be more successful if more than one seating arrangement was used?

Task: Elicitation Techniques

1. Observe what the teacher does to elicit answers from students. Use this table to help you.

Closed Questions (e.g. What is the meaning of ...?)	Open Questions (e.g. What do you think of...?)	Imperative Questions (e.g. Tell me what you know about...)	Directed questions (e.g. Sara, what can you tell me about...)

2. Which of these techniques the teacher used most? Why?
3. Which technique(s) was/ were more effective and activated students to participate more?
4. Were there any times in the lesson when you think it was better for the teacher to tell the students rather than attempt to elicit something from them?

Task: Giving Instructions

1. Listen carefully to the teacher's instructions. Collect them by scripting them as accurately as possible using the following table.
2. Try to notice whether there was any visual support, modeling or concept checking and whether the teacher had to repeat the instructions. Note whether the instructions were understood. Note information of this kind in the *Comments* column.

Phase of lesson	Scripted instruction	How it is actually given	Comments

3. Were there any differences between the written instructions and the way they were delivered? Explain.
4. What language/ techniques did the teacher use to make students understand what they were supposed to do?
5. Did you notice whether students struggled to get any of the instructions? If so, why?