

**Core Curriculum
English Language Teaching Methodology
Bachelor's Level**

**School Experience
Observation tasks
Module 1**

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Students undertake school practice throughout the whole methodology course. There are three phases to students’ school experience:

- Guided observation
- Teacher assistantship
- Observed teaching.

Guided observation takes place in Semesters 3 and 4. It gives students an opportunity to observe experienced teachers at work and to make connections with their learning during the first year of the methodology course. To help in this process they complete observation tasks provided in this book.

During **Teacher assistantship** in semesters 5 to 7, students act as teacher assistants, planning teaching, undertaking microteaching and generally supporting the English teachers. Modules in these semesters also include observation tasks aimed at linking methodology classes to school experience.



Introduction

Task One

Task focus: Teacher roles

Observe a class and focus on the teacher throughout the lesson. Tick (✓) the relevant cell in the table if you can observe these teacher roles. Make notes.

Role	✓	What does the teacher do?
Manager		
Organiser		
Partner		
Assessor		
Motivator		
Facilitator		
Tutor		
Observer		
Guide		
Language expert		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Task Two

Task focus: Learner-centred or teacher-centred classroom

Observe a lesson and complete the table by ticking (✓) the relevant cell.

In the English classroom, who	Teacher	Learners
chooses the topic?		
selects activities?		
prepares teaching materials?		
prepares activities/tasks?		
talks more?		
asks questions?		
answers questions?		
explains the rules?		
corrects mistakes?		
assesses learners' achievements?		
checks homework?		
gives instructions?		
organises pairs and groups?		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Module 1 Understanding Learners and Learning

Unit 1.1 Psychological Factors in Language Learning

Task Three

Task focus: Learner types

Be sure you know the learners' names in the class you observe. Focus on the learners and complete the table with their names according to their behaviour. Be ready to talk about your findings in the next class.

Name	Behaviour
	takes the initiative, volunteers to answer questions, and asks his/her own questions
	avoids answering questions, or answers if called on by name, does not participate in class activities actively
	takes an active part in pair and group work
	is not afraid of making mistakes
	is reluctant to speak
	understands quickly and follows explanations relatively easily
	often gets confused and frequently seeks clarification from peers

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Task Four

Task focus: Motivational strategies

Observe a class and focus on the teacher throughout the lesson. Tick (✓) the relevant cell if you can observe these motivational strategies. Make notes if appropriate.

Motivational strategies	✓	Notes
The teacher		
shares his/her own personal interest in L2 with learners		
demonstrates to learners that she/he cares about their progress		
pays attention and listens to each learner		
creates a favourable and supportive atmosphere in the classroom		
gives learners responsibility by using small-group activities		
makes learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events and using a variety of learning tasks		
makes tasks challenging		
adjusts the difficulty level of tasks to the learners' abilities		
adapts task content to the learners' interests		
gives equal attention to both stronger and weaker learners		
selects tasks which require learners' active participation		
explains the purpose and usefulness of a task		
draws his/her learners' attention to their strengths and abilities		
promotes cooperation and competition if appropriate		
provides learners with positive feedback (reacts to any positive contributions from his/her learners)		
offers rewards to encourage learning		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Adapted from: Dörnyei, Z. (2001) *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge University Press

Task Five

Task focus: Catering for different learning styles

Observe how the teacher caters for different learning styles during several lessons. Tick (✓) the instances that you observe. Make notes if appropriate.

Learning Style	Techniques and resources the teacher uses	✓	Notes
Visual	Charts, graphs, diagrams		
	Flashcards		
	Pictures and graphics		
	Maps		
	Silent reading		
	Written instructions		
	Videos		
	Other (please specify)		
	Auditory	Discussion, dialogue, debate	
Memorisation techniques			
Reading aloud			
Listening to recordings			
Communication in pairs and groups			
Other (please specify)			
Kinaesthetic	Games		
	Role plays		
	Body language/gestures		
	Mime		
	Drama		
	Memorising while moving		
	Other (please specify)		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation? To what extent did the observed techniques and resources seem to help learners to learn?

Unit 1.2 Second Language Acquisition

Task Six

Task focus: Opportunities for SLA

Observe a lesson to detect opportunities for SLA provided by the teacher. Tick (✓) 'Yes' or 'No' and provide evidence if 'Yes'. Then summarise your observations.

Opportunities for SLA	Yes	No	Evidence
The teacher creates contexts for communication.			
The teacher makes use of a variety of tasks and activities for engaging the learners in natural communication.			
The teacher exposes the class to authentic material (material not designed for language teaching purposes, e.g. a newspaper article, a song).			
The teacher helps the learners to be aware of their errors in spoken English.			
The teacher ensures comprehensible input during a lesson.			
The teacher creates an environment in which L2 is mostly spoken.			
The teacher works with the learners' emerging language during a lesson.			

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Adapted from: Cadorath, J. and Harris, S. 1998. *Unplanned classroom language and teacher training*. ELT Journal, July 1998

Task Seven

Task focus: SLA boosting activities

Observe several lessons to detect ways of encouraging SLA in the language classroom. Tick (✓) the activities you have observed in class. Then summarise your observations.

Activity	✓
Listening to an English song/poem/story etc.	
Reading/Writing an e-mail	
Communicating with a native speaker	
Reviewing a peer's essay	
Interacting with other learners in a group activity	
Playing a language game	
Watching an English film	
Taking part in a role play	
Working in pairs or small groups to discuss a problem	
Working on a project	
Creating visual support for presenting concepts	
Guessing the meaning of new words and expressions	
Brainstorming ideas	
Planning and performing sketches	
Other acquisition oriented activities	

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation? In what ways do these activities boost acquisition?

Unit 1.3 Developing Learner Autonomy

Task Eight

Task focus: Learner in focus

Observe a class and focus on one of the learners throughout the lesson. Tick (✓) the relevant cell if you can observe these characteristics.

Talk to the learner after the class in order to discuss some of the characteristics. Make notes if appropriate.

The learner	✓	Notes
feels good about learning English		
listens attentively		
asks questions		
volunteers to answer		
enjoys pair and group work		
learns from the teacher's corrections of mistakes		
is not afraid to ask for clarification about the teacher's instructions		
sees homework as an important part of learning		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?

Task Nine

Task focus: Teacher in focus

Observe three or more lessons of the same teacher and focus on the teacher throughout. Tick (✓) the relevant cell if you can observe these teacher actions. Provide evidence.

The teacher	✓	Evidence
splits learners into pairs and small groups		
teaches learners to use aids to learning such as dictionaries and grammar books		
involves learners in decision making about learning, e.g. how to form groups		
offers learners choices, e.g. for homework tasks		
encourages peer-assessment and self-assessment		
encourages learners to study beyond the classroom, e.g. using online materials		
informs learners about Internet resources for learning English		
encourages learners to reflect on their own learning		

Observation summary

What have you learnt from this observation?