

Classroom Observation Tasks



CAMBRIDGE TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Series Editors: Marion Williams and Tony Wright

This series is designed for all those involved in language teacher training and development: teachers in training, trainers, directors of studies, advisers, teachers of in-service courses and seminars. Its aim is to provide a comprehensive, organised and authoritative resource for language teacher training and development.

Teach English – A training course for teachers

by Adrian Doff

Training Foreign Language Teachers - A reflective approach

by Michael J. Wallace

Literature and Language Teaching - A guide for teachers and trainers*

by Gillian Lazar

Classroom Observation Tasks – A resource book for language teachers and trainers*

by Ruth Wajnryb

Tasks for Language Teachers – A resource book for training and development*

by Martin Parrott

English for the Teacher - A language development course*

by Mary Spratt

Teaching Children English - A training course for teachers of English to children*

by David Vale with Anne Feunteun

A Course in Language Teaching - Practice and theory

by Penny Ur

Looking at Language Classrooms - A teacher development video package

About Language - Tasks for teachers of English

by Scott Thornbury

Action Research for Language Teachers

by Michael J. Wallace

Mentor Courses - A resource book for trainer-trainers

by Angi Malderez and Caroline Bodóczky

Alive to Language - Perspectives on language awareness for English language teachers

by Valerie Arndt, Paul Harvey and John Nuttall

Teachers in Action – Tasks for in-service language teacher education and development by Peter James

Advising and Supporting Teachers

by Mick Randall and Barbara Thornton

^{*} Original Series Editors: Ruth Gairns and Marion Williams



Classroom Observation Tasks

A resource book for language teachers and trainers

Ruth Wajnryb





CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521407229

© Cambridge University Press 1992

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1992 18th printing 2008

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Library of Congress catalogue card number: 91-33131

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-40722-9 paperback



Contents

Thanks	vii
Acknowledgments	viii
PART ONE: Introduction	
1 Observation as a learning tool	1
2 Who is this book for?	2 7
3 Why a book on observation?	7
4 How the tasks are organised	16
5 How to use the tasks	17
6 A word of caution	26
PART TWO: The tasks	
1 The learner	28
1.1 Attending to the learner	28
1.2 Learner motivation	31
1.3 The learner as doer	34
1.4 Learner level	36
1.5 The learner as cultural being	40
2 Language	43
2.1 The teacher's meta-language	43
2.2 The language of questions	46
2.3 The language of feedback to error	49
2.4 Language echoes	52
2.5 Language as the negotiation of meaning	54
3 Learning	58
3.1 The learning environment	58
3.2 Checking learning	62
3.3 Learning and teaching compared	65
3.4 Learning aims	67
3.5 Lexis and learning	71



4 The lesson	74
4.1 Lesson planning	74
4.2 Openings and closures	78
4.3 Lesson phases and transitions	81
4.4 Grammar as lesson content	85
4.5 Lesson breakdowns	87
5 Teaching skills and strategies	91
5.1 Presenting	91
5.2 Eliciting: teacher prompts	94
5.3 Eliciting: teacher responses	96
5.4 Giving instructions	99
5.5 Managing error	103
6 Classroom management	106
6.1 Managing classroom communication:	
patterns of interaction	106
6.2 Managing pair and group work	109
6.3 Teaching and learning roles	113
6.4 Timing and pace	116
6.5 Classroom power	119
7 Materials and resources	122
7.1 The board as resource	122
7.2 The learner as resource	124
7.3 'Whole-learner' materials	126
7.4 Task analysis	129
7.5 Task design and evaluation	132
Bibliography	136
Task index	139
Index	141

vi



Thanks

The relationship between teaching and learning is a complex and fascinating one, generating ironies as well as beauty and reward. The overwhelming impression in my mind today, after more than twenty years' work as a professional teacher and teacher trainer, is how much I have learned from those I set out to teach.

In their own ways, the diverse groups of people with whose education I have variously been involved, have contributed to the knowledge base of *Classroom Observation Tasks*. I therefore gratefully and respectfully acknowledge my current and former language learners, trainee teachers and trainee trainers, as well as teaching colleagues, for their role in my learning and in this book.



Acknowledgements

The author and publishers would like to thank the following for permission to reproduce copyright material:

I.F. Fanselow and Cambridge University Press for the extract from "Let's see": contrasting conversations about teaching by J.F. Fanselow on p. 12; Longman Group UK Ltd for the extract from 'Observation for training, development or assessment' by P. Maingay on p. 14 and the questions adapted from Lessons from the Learner by S. Deller on p. 120; the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Sydney for the extracts from 'Learning to teach: four instructional patterns in language teacher education' by D. Freeman on p. 15; Oxford University Press for the extract from Aspects of Language Teaching by H. Widdowson on p. 45; the United States Information Agency for the extract from 'A system for improving teachers' questions' by I.W. Tollefson on p. 48; V. Zamel and TESOL Inc. for the extract from 'Cybernetics: a model for feedback in the ESL classroom' by V. Zamel, 1981, TESOL Quarterly, 15, 2, Copyright 1981 by TESOL, reprinted by permission on p. 51; S. Lindstromberg and The Teacher Trainer for the extract from 'Teacher echoing' by S. Lindstromberg on p. 52; Heinemann Publishers (Oxford) Ltd for the extract from 'Are trainees human?' by R. Gower and S. Walters on p. 101; T. Woodward and The Teacher Trainer for the diagrams adapted from 'Observation tasks for pre-service trainees' by T. Woodward on p. 107; Newbury House/Heinle & Heinle Publishers for the adapted extract from Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways by E.W. Stevick on p. 108; R. Brown and The Teacher Trainer for the adapted extract from 'Classroom pedagogics - a syllabus for the interactive stage?' by R. Brown on p. 112; D. Nunan and Cambridge University Press for the extract and material from Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom by D. Nunan on pp. 130–132.