

Observation and Practicum
Course Guide for Fourth-Year Students

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Microteaching Cycle

1. **Preparation:** Design a short lesson with clear objectives and materials.
2. **Delivery:** Teach the lesson to classmates acting as students.
3. **Observation:** Peers and instructors observe using structured forms.
4. **Feedback:** Receive comments on strengths and areas for improvement.
5. **Reflection:** Analyze feedback and plan adjustments for future lessons.

Practical Tip: Record your microteaching session to review your body language, tone, and timing.

Reflection Prompt: What aspect of your microteaching felt most successful? What would you change next time?

Teaching the Four Language Skills

English language teaching involves the integration of four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A balanced approach ensures learners develop both receptive (listening, reading) and productive (speaking, writing) skills. Below are key strategies with classroom-ready examples:

Listening

- **Use authentic audio materials (dialogues, interviews)**
Example: Play a short BBC interview with a travel blogger. Ask students to listen for places mentioned and activities described.
- **Pre-listening questions to activate background knowledge**
Example: Before playing a dialogue about shopping, ask: “Where do you usually shop? What phrases do you use when asking for prices?”
- **While-listening tasks to focus attention**
Example: Provide a worksheet with true/false statements or a gap-fill activity based on the audio.
- **Post-listening discussions or comprehension checks**
Example: After listening to a conversation at a restaurant, ask students to role-play ordering food or answer questions like “What did the customer order?”

Speaking

- **Encourage pair work and group discussions**
Example: In pairs, students discuss their weekend plans using future tense structures.
- **Use role plays, interviews, and debates**
Example: Role play a job interview—one student is the employer, the other is the applicant.
- **Focus on fluency and accuracy**
Example: Fluency activity: timed storytelling. Accuracy activity: correcting errors in a scripted dialogue.
- **Provide feedback on pronunciation and grammar**
Example: After a speaking task, highlight common pronunciation issues (e.g., /θ/ vs /s/) and offer grammar corrections (e.g., verb tense usage).

Reading

- **Teach skimming (reading for gist) and scanning (reading for details)**
Example: Skimming: Read a news article and identify the main idea. Scanning: Find specific dates or names in the text.

- **Use comprehension questions and vocabulary tasks**
Example: After reading a short story, ask: “Why did the character leave the village?” Then match new words with definitions.
- **Integrate reading with writing or speaking activities**
Example: Read a travel blog, then write a short paragraph about a place students want to visit or discuss it in pairs.

Writing

- **Guide students through brainstorming, drafting, revising**
Example: Topic: “My favorite teacher.” Students brainstorm qualities, write a draft, then revise based on peer feedback.
- **Teach paragraph structure, coherence, and grammar**
Example: Use a model paragraph to highlight topic sentences, supporting details, and transitions. Practice rewriting sentences for clarity.
- **Use peer review and teacher feedback**
Example: Students exchange essays and use a checklist to comment on organization, grammar, and vocabulary.
- **Assign both controlled and free writing tasks**
Example: Controlled: Fill-in-the-blank letter using present perfect. Free: Write a diary entry about a memorable day.

Practical Tip: Combine skills naturally—for example, a reading task followed by a speaking activity or a listening task that leads into writing.

Reflection Prompt: Which skill do you feel most confident teaching? Which one challenges you most?

Teaching Methods

Understanding different teaching methods helps student-teachers choose the most appropriate approach for their learners and lesson objectives. Below is a brief overview of key methods used in EFL classrooms:

1. Grammar-Translation Method

Focuses on grammar rules and translation between English and the native language.

Example: Students translate a short paragraph from English into Arabic and identify verb tenses used.

2. Direct Method

Emphasizes teaching only in English, avoiding the use of the students’ native language.

Example: Teacher uses gestures and visuals to teach vocabulary like “apple,” “run,” or “happy” without translation.

3. Audio-Lingual Method

Based on repetition and drills to form language habits.

Example: Students repeat sentence patterns like “I am going to the market” in chorus, then substitute with new vocabulary.

4. Communicative Approach

Focuses on real-life communication and fluency.

Example: Students role-play booking a hotel room or asking for directions in English.

5. Task-Based Learning

Students complete meaningful tasks using English to achieve specific outcomes.

Example: Students plan a class trip using English to discuss location, budget, and activities.

6. Eclectic Approach

Combines elements from multiple methods depending on the lesson goals and learner needs.

Example: A lesson starts with a grammar explanation (Grammar-Translation), followed by a communicative role-play (CLT).

Practical Tip: Choose a method that suits both your topic and your students' proficiency level.

Reflection Prompt: Which method do you feel most comfortable using? Which one would you like to explore more?

Classroom Management

Effective classroom management creates a positive learning environment and ensures lessons run smoothly. It involves organizing students, maintaining discipline, and fostering engagement.

Key Strategies

- **Establish Clear Rules:** Set expectations from the first day.
Example: "Raise your hand before speaking" or "Respect others' opinions."
- **Use a Friendly but Firm Tone:** Be approachable yet authoritative.
Example: Calmly address disruptions while maintaining a respectful tone.
- **Group Students Strategically:** Use pairs, small groups, or whole-class formats based on the activity.
Example: Pair stronger students with weaker ones for peer support.
- **Vary Activities:** Keep students engaged with different formats.
Example: Combine games, discussions, and writing tasks in one lesson.
- **Use Praise Effectively:** Reinforce positive behavior and effort.
Example: "Great job using new vocabulary!" or "I liked how you helped your partner."

Practical Tip: Always start your class with a warm greeting and a brief engaging activity to set a positive tone.

Reflection Prompt: What classroom management strategy do you think will be most useful in your future teaching?

Use of Teaching Aids and Technology

Teaching aids and technology enhance lesson delivery by making abstract ideas more concrete and engaging. They help students visualize, hear, and interact with content in meaningful ways.

Types of Teaching Aids

- **Visual Aids:** Charts, flashcards, posters, diagrams
Example: Use a labeled diagram of the human body to teach vocabulary like "arm," "leg," "shoulder."