DegreeLive

BA English Honours | Semester I | Calicut University

English Language Teaching: Foundations and Practice Level 1

Course Code: ENG1MN103 • Module 4 Notes

MODULE IV: ELT IN PRACTICE

1. Lesson Planning and Modern Classroom Management

Effective language teaching is never an improvised performance; it is the deliberate execution of a well-architected lesson plan. A lesson plan serves as an instructional blueprint, aligning pedagogical objectives, time allocations, learning activities, and assessment mechanisms. In modern ELT, instructional objectives are formulated using the **SMART** criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

The Classic PPP Lesson Staging Model

While TBLT offers an organic, task-driven framework, the structured **PPP** (Presentation, Practice, Production) model remains widely utilized for introducing discrete grammatical and lexical items:

- **Presentation:** The teacher introduces the target language item in a clear, meaningful situational context (e.g., a dialogue, story, or picture), checking learner comprehension through Concept Checking Questions (CCQs).
- **Practice:** Learners engage in controlled, restricted practice exercises (gap-fills, sentence transformation, drills) to build confidence and formal accuracy without fear of error.
- **Production:** Learners use the target item in open-ended, freer communicative activities (role-plays, debates, creative writing) where personal expression takes precedence.

Classroom Dynamics and Teacher Talk Time (TTT)

Masterful classroom management centers on orchestrating optimal communicative dynamics:

- **Minimizing Teacher Talk Time (TTT):** In many conventional classrooms, teachers monopolize 70–80% of classroom time with lectures. Modern communicative pedagogy demands reducing TTT to under 30%, maximizing *Student Talk Time (STT)* to provide learners with maximum oral practice.
- **Seating Arrangements:** Replacing traditional rigid rows of desks (which facilitate only teacher-to-student lecture) with modular clusters, horse-shoe (U-shape), or semi-circle layouts that encourage direct peer-to-peer eye contact and collaborative dialogue.

2. Micro-Teaching and Peer Pedagogy in Teacher Education

Originating at Stanford University in the 1960s, **Micro-Teaching** is a scaled-down, laboratory teacher training technique designed to develop specific instructional competencies in aspiring educators. In a micro-teaching session, the trainee teacher conducts a condensed 5-to-10-minute lesson for a small peer group (5–7 students), focusing exclusively on one specific pedagogical skill.

> TEACHER TRAINING CYCLE **The Micro-Teaching Instructional Loop**
>
> The cyclical process proceeds through six distinct stages: **Plan → Teach (Recorded) → Feedback → Re-Plan → Re-Teach → Re-Feedback**. Trainees receive objective feedback from peer observers and video recordings, enabling immediate, targeted behavioral refinement.

Core micro-teaching skills developed in ELT include:

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- **Skill of Set Induction:** Captivating learner interest in the opening two minutes through intriguing prompts, visual realia, or real-world dilemmas.
- **Skill of Stimulus Variation:** Modulating physical movement, voice pitch, speech tempo, and alternating between sensory channels (auditory, visual, tactile) to maintain learner attention.
- **Skill of Probing Questioning:** Moving beyond simple yes/no questions to employ higher-order open-ended inquiries (evaluative, inferential, synthesizing questions) that stimulate critical thinking.
- **Skill of Blackboard / Board Management:** Organizing the board with logical spatial cleanliness, clear headings, neat legible handwriting, and strategic color-coding for grammatical structures.

3. Language Assessment, Testing, and Evaluation Principles

Assessment is an integral component of the teaching-learning cycle. Professional language testing adheres to three foundational measurement principles:

- **Validity:** The degree to which a test actually measures what it purports to measure. A test designed to evaluate speaking proficiency cannot be valid if it consists entirely of a written multiple-choice grammar exam.
- **Reliability:** The consistency and dependability of test results across different test administrations, different testing conditions, and different evaluators (inter-rater reliability).
- **Washback (Backwash):** The profound influence that high-stakes tests exert on classroom instruction. If an exit exam tests only rote memorization, teachers will abandon communicative activities to "teach to the test" (negative washback). Well-designed communicative tests promote rich, active language teaching (positive washback).

4. Hands-on Typologies of Language Tests in ELT

Language tests serve distinct diagnostic and administrative functions across an educational institution:

Test Classification	Primary Operational Purpose	Timing & Administrative Context	Standard Illustrative Example
Aptitude Test	Measures a person's innate cognitive capacity or talent for learning a foreign language.	Administered prior to language training or military/diplomatic posting.	Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT).
Placement Test	Determines a student's current proficiency level to assign them to an appropriate course level.	Administered at institutional admission prior to course commencement.	University language center leveling exams (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced).
Diagnostic Test	Identifies specific linguistic strengths, learning gaps, and persistent pronunciation/grammar errors.	Administered early in a course to guide teacher lesson planning.	Pre-course phonetic inventory or diagnostic essay evaluation.
Achievement Test	Evaluates how successfully a student has mastered the specific content of a completed syllabus.	Administered at mid-term or end of semester (summative evaluation).	Calicut University End-Semester Degree Examination.

Test Classification	Primary Operational Purpose	Timing & Administrative Context	Standard Illustrative Example
Proficiency Test	Measures global, overall language competency independent of any specific course or textbook.	Administered for global migration, university admission, or employment.	IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge English (C1 Advanced).

Advanced Applied Linguistics, SLA Theory & Pedagogical Frameworks

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1. Core Psycholinguistic Principles and SLA Debates

Academic inquiry into Classroom Management, Micro-Teaching Pedagogy, and Language Assessment centers on foundational psycholinguistic and methodological tensions:

- **Explicit Instruction versus Implicit Acquisition:** Stephen Krashen's celebrated Input Hypothesis posited a rigid division between 'learning' (conscious metalinguistic knowledge) and 'acquisition' (subconscious internalized competence through comprehensible input). Modern cognitive SLA scholars (such as Rod Ellis and Michael Long) qualify this, demonstrating that *Focus on Form* (FonF)—brief, context-sensitive attention to linguistic elements during meaning-focused tasks—significantly accelerates acquisition compared to purely incidental exposure.
- **The Sociocultural Turn and Vygotskian Scaffolding:** Following Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, language development is understood as an inherently dialogic, socially mediated activity. Learning occurs within the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD)—the distance between what a learner can achieve independently and what they can achieve with instructional scaffolding from a teacher or more proficient peer.
- **Post-Method Condition and Critical Pedagogy:** B. Kumaravadivelu famously critiqued the imperialist imposition of Western 'methods' (such as CLT), arguing for the *Post-Method Condition*. Language teachers must develop localized pedagogies grounded in three operating parameters: *Particularity* (sensitive to local linguistic and institutional realities), *Practicality* (teachers theorizing from their own practice), and *Possibility* (empowering learners to interrogate social inequalities).

2. Comparative Evaluation Matrix of Historical & Contemporary ELT Methods

A structured comparative assessment delineates the theoretical foundations, classroom roles, and learning targets across ELT paradigms:

Methodological Paradigm	Underlying Linguistic & Psychological Theory	Teacher & Learner Roles	Target Competency & Error Treatment
Grammar-Translation (GTM)	Faculty Psychology & Traditional Prescriptive Grammar.	Teacher is supreme authority; learners are passive memorizers.	Reading literary classics & deductive accuracy; immediate rigorous error correction.
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Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)	Structural Linguistics & Skinnerian Behaviorism.	Teacher is drillmaster and orchestra conductor; learners mimic habits.	Automatic sentence habit formation; errors strictly avoided as bad habits.
Communicative (CLT) & TBLT	Hymesian Communicative Competence & Cognitive Interactionism.	Teacher is facilitator, resource manager, and guide; learners are active negotiators.	Authentic real-world communicative competence; errors treated as natural developmental milestones.

3. Glossary of Essential Applied Linguistics and ELT Terminology

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Communicative Competence	Dell Hymes (1972)	The holistic ability to use language appropriately in social contexts, encompassing grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.
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Interlanguage	Larry Selinker (1972)	The dynamic, rule-governed linguistic system developed by a second language learner that evolves gradually toward the target language norm.
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Teacher Talk Time (TTT) vs. STT	Classroom Management	The ratio of time spent talking by the instructor versus Student Talk Time (STT); modern pedagogy prioritizes maximizing STT for active language use.
Formative Assessment	Educational Evaluation	Ongoing diagnostic evaluations (quizzes, peer reviews, classroom observations) conducted during the learning process to modify teaching and improve student learning.

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4. Professional Instructional Design and Lesson Delivery Framework

Designing effective ELT lessons within Classroom Management, Micro-Teaching Pedagogy, and Language Assessment adheres to a structured four-stage instructional protocol:

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