

Third Edition



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Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language

*A Self-Development
and Methodology
Guide*

MICHIGAN
TEACHER
TRAINING

JERRY G. GEBHARD



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I'm an English Teacher!?

— Remark made by an underprepared teacher

Introduction: A Self-Development and Methodology Guide

This book is a teacher development and methodology book. It can be used by those of you who are learning to teach English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) as a part of your pre-service teacher education program. It can also be used as a teacher development text in in-service teacher development programs as a source for experienced EFL/ESL teachers who would like to refresh their knowledge and see their teaching differently. In addition, this book can act as an exploratory text for those who are simply curious about teaching EFL/ESL or by those who have accepted an EFL/ESL teaching position without the benefit of a formal teacher education program and are unprepared to take on all of the responsibilities of being a teacher.

The Purpose and Content of This Book

This book provides ways for you to work on the development of your teaching and classroom practices. It offers ways that you, as an EFL or ESL teacher, can develop your teaching through a process of exploration. This book also provides discussion on the different English teaching settings around the world and teaching issues associated within them. It also provides discussions, examples, and illustrations of how EFL/ESL can be taught as interaction among people; how classrooms can be managed; how teachers and students can make use of teaching materials, media, and technology; what digital technology includes and how it can be used; and the significance of culture for both students and teachers. In addition, this book shows how EFL/ESL teachers teach students to comprehend spoken English, to converse in English, to read for meaning, and to process writing.

This book is based on questions EFL/ESL teachers, including myself, have asked about teaching and learning over a number of years, and each chapter begins with a set of questions related to the content of that chapter. As such, one way to use this book as a part of your development is as a reference for ideas based on the questions posed at the beginning of each chapter and answered within it. This book also has a list of recommended sources at the end of each chapter and includes references to professional books and articles as well as EFL/ESL textbooks. The appendixes contain information on publishing companies and academic and practical journals on teaching EFL/ESL. These additional sources will help further your own development as an EFL/ESL teacher.

The end of each chapter includes a set of self-development tasks that are an integral part of this book. The purpose of these tasks is to offer opportunities to work on your development as an EFL/ESL teacher by observing, talking about, and writing about teaching. I encourage you to spend time on these tasks. I realize that finding the time to do these tasks is not necessarily easy because of busy schedules. However, I encourage you to find the time to systematically think about your teaching in new ways and to stretch your imaginations through the teacher development tasks.

I want to point out that this book is not, and was never meant to be, a book that neatly fits into what is known as “reflective teaching.” I point

this out because one reviewer (Rodgers 1998) mistakenly reviewed the first edition of this book alongside two other books that are clearly within the “reflective teaching” category. The reviewer took issue with the book; as she put it, “A reflective book it is not” (p. 611). As the title tag *A Teacher Self-Development and Methodology Guide* indicates, this book was created so that readers can work on their own development as teachers by understanding what other teachers, including me, believe about teaching and do in their classrooms. In short, reflection is an important part of learning to teach, and I do offer chances for teachers to reflect on teaching in this book. However, the focus of this book is much broader in scope than just reflection on teaching.

About the Third Edition

My approach to this edition was based primarily on feedback from readers, including those who took the time to write formal published reviews in journals, students in my TEFL/TESL Methodology class, and people I have met at conferences or online who offered feedback on the book. I have taken this feedback to heart, and I have done my best to incorporate what I have learned from you, the readers, into this edition.

The basic structure of the book has not changed. It still includes three parts. The first provides background to my understanding of self-development, as well as ways you, as teachers or prospective teachers, can explore teaching to work on your development. Part 2 still includes knowledge and experience related to teaching language, and Part 3 is about teaching language skills.

However, while maintaining the same three parts, I have used readers’ feedback to make several changes in the book. To begin, I have added an additional chapter, Digital Literacy, Technology, and Teaching EFL/ESL (Chapter 7) to Part II. This chapter highlights how digital technology has impacted the field of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL). It begins by defining digital literacy and goes on to discuss the kinds of digital technology that are available to EFL/ESL teachers and students, as well as provides examples of how teachers and students have used digital technology to facilitate language

learning. As technology is changing very quickly, this chapter also addresses the exciting, yet uncertain, future of digital (or other advances in) technology that could impact teaching and learning languages. The chapter closes, like the other chapters in this book, by addressing some of the problems associated with the use of digital technology to teach EFL/ESL.

In addition, I have brought in additional discussion about and examples of the use of digital technology in Part III of this book on teaching language skills. However, I also emphasize that teaching and learning EFL and ESL depends on what happens between people inside and outside the classroom and that digital technology simply adds another means through which such interaction can take place. Further, I point out that digital technology is only one kind of technology. As I highlight in Chapter 6: EFL/ESL Materials, Media, and Technology, teaching technology can be placed on a continuum from low technology (e.g., writing with sticks in the dirt, chalk boards) to high technology (e.g., use of computer programs) to higher technology (e.g., digital technology that allows for synchronous interaction), and any form of technology can be used to facilitate learning. It is not what technology we use, but rather how we use the technology that is available to us that is important.

As with the first two editions, Chapters 1 and 2 introduce the concepts of exploring teaching. However, in Chapter 1, *The Self-Developed Language Teacher*, I provide three new-teacher scenarios, and unlike in the first two editions, in which I relied on my memory to recall the teaching lives of two EFL teachers, in this third edition I use classroom observation and research to show how three different teachers approached (or did not approach) development of their teaching beliefs and practices. Chapter 2, *Exploration of Teaching*, still highlights ways teachers can approach the development of their teaching; however, I have woven in different examples to illustrate how some teachers have worked on their development. Further, the third edition maintains the inclusion of teacher self-development tasks at the end of each chapter, some which I have revised or added.

I have also done my best to read extensively and talk with other professionals about teaching, as well as reflect on my own use of innovative ways to teach (especially in Korea and Hawaii), and I have used this experience to revise the content of the chapters in this book. For example, in

Chapter 4, Teaching Language as Communication among People, I have added a discussion on Task-Based teaching; and in Chapter 6, EFL/ESL Materials, Media, and Technology; I have added a detailed discussion on how teachers can select context appropriate textbooks, as well as a discussion on how teachers can discover websites that have teacher-created activities and games, many of which allow students to expand their study of English in a fun way inside and outside the classroom. I have also included a discussion on the value of corpus-informed textbooks.

Likewise, in Part 3 on teaching language skills, I have updated each chapter in regard to ways each skill can be taught. For example, in Chapter 10, Teaching Students to Speak in Class, I have added a detailed section on the use of student presentations, as well as how digital technology has added new means for students to expand their speaking opportunities. In Chapter 11, Teaching Students to Read for Meaning, I have brought in a discussion on the intermediate-level slump problem that readers face and ways to provide opportunities for learners to cope and make progress with their reading. I also updated my discussion on the use of reading strategies and have added a detailed discussion on the importance of teaching students to use metacognitive reading strategies, as well as how they can be taught to use them. In addition, I have added discussions on how teachers can teach vocabulary as well as use grammar to help students to comprehend text. Further, in Chapter 12, Teaching Students How to Process Writing, I have expanded my discussion of the writing process to include how students can get feedback on their writing. I also expanded on an earlier discussion (see Chapter 7) on using blogs and wikis as a way for students to write to a real audience and collaborate on writing projects. I have also added a detailed discussion on how teachers can teach grammar in their writing classes as well as why they should consider doing so. I also added a discussion on the problem of grading essays and how teachers can use a writing portfolio as a favorable way to evaluate what they have accomplished in a writing course.

This third edition also includes an updated Recommended Teacher Resources section at the end of each chapter, as well as updated appendixes on professional journals (Appendix A) and publishers (Appendix B) in the field. I have also updated the endnotes for each chapter to reflect current, as well as historical, theory and practice.

1

Teachers themselves . . . must become the primary shapers of their own development.

—Lieberman 1992, vi

The Self-Developed Language Teacher

- ! *Does self-development make a difference?*
- ! *What factors are central to teacher self-development?*

Does Self-Development Make a Difference?

To emphasize the concept of self-development, I begin this book by illustrating its advantages. To do this, I invite you to enter three different classrooms.¹ The first is of an inexperienced teacher (Amy) who was beginning to work on the development of her teaching. The second is of a teacher (Kumiko) who had taken on the responsibility for her own development. The third is an experienced teacher (Soyoung) who had become complacent about her development. I stress that all three teachers can gain much by paying regular attention to their teaching.

AMY'S CLASS

The first example focuses on Amy, an inexperienced ESL teacher at the beginning of her development. Amy was in the last semester of her MA TESOL program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and had an intern-

ship at the American Language Institute. Her particular job was to co-teach a conversation course to fifteen intermediate level students. As a part of the internship experience, the intern was mentored by a co-operating teacher, as well as by an internship supervisor. I was the internship supervisor. My job was to work with Amy on her development as a teacher, and I asked her to make short video recordings of a few of her lessons. I then viewed some of the recorded class and asked her to describe what was going on in the class. I suggested Amy pick her own parts of the lesson to describe and analyze, as well as to focus on her instructions and what students did just after she gave these instructions.

With my encouragement, Amy transcribed her instructions and what students did and said. When she met with me, I recall that she laughed and said, “The students really didn’t understand my instructions, did they!” She had asked the students to form groups of four, read the role card she would be giving each of them, not to read other students cards, and then get ready to do a skit. The students looked at each other, moved their chairs slightly, not forming complete groups, and sat silently. Then, students asked each other – some in their native language – what they were supposed to be doing. Amy repeated the instructions as she handed out role descriptions on index cards, making sure to give the waiter a set of menus. Students looked at each other’s cards and some took a menu to read. Amy told them not to do this, as she physically helped students move into groups of four students. The students read their cards in silence, and some students asked the teacher what they were supposed to do with the cards. Amy got the students’ attention and explained that they were supposed to create a restaurant scene. The waiter should be standing and the customers should read the menus and do what is on the card. Examples of cards are:

Role 1: You are a waiter. Greet the customers. Give them menus. Give them time to read. Write down their orders.	Role 3: You are a customer. You are very hungry. Ask the waiter, “What do you recommend?”
Role 2: You are a customer. Study the menu. You have only eight dollars to spend.	Role 4: You are a customer. You don’t eat meat. Ask the waiter, “What vegetarian food do you have?”

After six minutes of moving students into groups and explaining what they were supposed to do, the students started working on the role-play skit.

After the class, Amy and I talked. It was obvious to Amy that the students were confused about what they were supposed to do, and we talked about different ways to give instructions. Amy said that she could show them what to do by asking three students to help her with a demonstration. I added that she could write down the instructions and ask students to read them silently, as well as have a student paraphrase them. Since Amy was a talented artist, I suggested she could draw the instructions. She smiled. I also suggested she could give the instructions as a dictation. Amy pointed out that she also had trouble having students form groups, and we talked about different ways to do this. Students could count off, “one, two, three, four...” and Amy could instruct all number ones to form a group on the right, twos on the left, threes in the back, and so on. I also gave her one of my favorite ways of forming groups by giving students pieces of different flavored candy. Students with cherry-flavored candy are one group, lemon another, and so on. In the spirit of generating alternative ways of forming groups quickly, Amy smiled, eyes widening, as she expressed an idea to ask students to practice forming groups and maybe to have a contest on how fast they could form their groups based on her instructions.

KUMIKO'S CLASS

The second example centers on Kumiko, an experienced EFL teacher in Japan who consistently spent time working on her development. She believed that development of teaching is not something teachers just do when they are new to teaching, but should be a part of a career-long endeavor. In addition to joining JALT (Japanese Association of Language Teachers), attending their national and regional conferences and conducting workshops at these conferences, she decided to study for her MA TESOL degree at Teachers College, Columbia University, Tokyo campus. To gain entrance into this program, students had to be teaching. As such, students attended classes during weekends.

I taught at Teachers College during my sabbaticals from my university position in Pennsylvania, and Kumiko enrolled in my Speaking Practicum. As a part of this course, students were expected to visit each other's classes in small groups to observe classroom interaction, and three of us

visited Kumiko's YWCA evening conversation class. In addition to having three observers jot down descriptive notes, short dialogues, and sketches of interaction, we audio-recorded the class.

After the class, the four of us went to a coffee shop to talk about the class. After each of us showed and explained our descriptive observation notes, Kumiko said she particularly was interested in the short dialogues one of the observers had jotted down. Here is an example:

[Chart on the wall with everyone's names and birthdates.]

Teacher: Look at the information on the chart about your classmates' birthdays. Yuki, when is Toshinobu's birthday?
January ...?

Yuki: Birthday. January.

Teacher: Very good. When in January?

Yuki: November.

Teacher: Good. Very good. But, look at the chart. Here is Toshinobu's name and here is his birthday date.
When is Toshi's birthday?

Yuki: Ano, January ten.

Teacher: Yes. Very good, Yuki.

This and other short dialogues raised questions about praising students, and we analyzed the way Kumiko praised students. We discovered that she used *good* and *very good* often, even when students did not answer questions correctly, such as when Yuki did not understand the teacher's question "when in January [is Toshi's birthday]?" and replied, "November." We then considered how the students might understand her praise, and we decided that it was likely ambiguous to the students. Because she praised them often, even when they gave wrong responses, we wondered if students knew she was praising them or if they were accepting the praise as an empty gesture or as a sign of encouragement. We then talked about the value of praising students and the how to use it to motivate students. We decided that genuine praise can be a motivating factor in students learning, especially if students know why they are being praised.

As a result of the observation and conversation, Kumiko decided to implement small changes in her praising techniques. For example,

she monitored her use of praise and verbally expressed it only when she was genuinely impressed with a student's spoken and written English. When students submitted written work, such as written dialogues, she put happy-face stickers on it, but only when their work was considered outstanding.

After recording and analyzing her praise behaviors again, she knew that she used praise behaviors far less frequently and usually at times when students met her high expectations. She also looked at the quality of the students' written work, such as written dialogues, and she concluded that their work was genuinely improving. Some students even told her that they tried harder because they wanted to see a happy face on their written work.

SOYOUNG'S CLASS

The third example focuses on Soyoung, an experienced teacher who had become complacent about her development. Soyoung was an English Education major at a prestigious university in South Korea, and after graduating and passing the teacher exam, she began teaching middle school students and had done so for the next seventeen years. When she was a new teacher she attended a variety of teacher education workshops during winter and summer breaks, and she earned her MA in Education.

Relatively recently the Korean government incorporated The 7th National English Curriculum, which emphasizes the need to maximize the learner's opportunities for meaningful communication in English in the classroom.² This is a significant change as it points to a new direction of language teaching in the local scene. To accomplish this, the school system requires teachers to use specific textbooks that include chapters on different topics and a variety of readings, listening activities, and communication activities. Every three weeks the students are tested on the content of lessons.

I became interested in Soyoung's teaching as a result of directing one of my student's doctoral dissertation at Pusan National University.³ The student had video recorded lots of interaction in one of Soyoung's middle school English classes, transcribed the interactions, and analyzed them. The student and I met often, and she described the patterns she saw in Soyoung's teaching. The same patterns happened over and over again; there was little change in the way she taught. Let's take a look inside one of her classes.

The scope of this 45-minute class was on Lesson 11, titled “I Hope We’ll Arrive on Time” and tells a story of Mina’s trip to New York. The general objective of this lesson is to learn the expressions needed for a trip. The specific objectives are to be able to ask a favor, inquire about factual information, reconfirm a fact, and express hope, as well as to use various grammatical structures, such as *to*-infinitive verbs.

Soyoung began the class by speaking Korean while reminding the students that their homework was to memorize a dialogue about being on the plane (from the textbook) and to use it to write their own announcements. She then called on a student to stand up and give the announcement. The teacher stood in front of the class. The other students looked down at their desks. The student stood while looking at his handwritten speech:

This is the captain speaking. Welcome aboard Hell, Hell Airline flight 444 bound for hell. It’s, it’s a pleasure to have you with us. Our flight time will be forever after takeoff. We hope you will enjoy the flight. Thank you.

The student had made four creative changes to the original announcement. Soyoung then asked four other students to stand up and give their announcements. They each made two changes.

Next, the teacher asked two students to stand up to read from the text. As each student read aloud, the others looked at their textbooks, following along. After reading, the teacher checked students’ comprehension on the content. She asked each question in English, translated it into Korean, and then repeated it in English: “Where are they now? 지금 어디 있어요? Where are they now?” A student responded “Manhattan” with a heavy Korean accent. The teacher repeated it with her standard English pronunciation. She continued to ask comprehension questions in the same fashion, sometimes stopping to explain a point in Korean.

Next, the class moved to the usage of a grammar point, *to*-infinitive. The teacher advised the students in Korean not to care about the complex grammar term but when and how to use **to-infinitive** in speaking. She then asked the students to make up sentences using this grammar point, such as “I like to study English” and “I hope to go to New York.” Soyoung corrected the students when they made grammar or pronunciation errors.

Like previous editions, the third edition is an ideal teacher development text for pre-service and in-service EFL/ESL teachers, as well as a guide for those who find themselves teaching English overseas but who do not have a master's in TESOL.

This edition has the same three major sections: (1) Self-Development, Exploration, and Settings; (2) Principles of EFL/ESL Teaching; and (3) Teaching Language Skills. New to this edition are:

- a chapter on digital literacy, technology, and teaching
- the addition of technology issues as they relate to the teaching of the various skills in Part 3
- discussions of task-based teaching, student presentations, how corpus linguistics can inform teaching, metacognitive reading strategies, collaborative writing, assessing writing, and the teaching of grammar.

The lists of recommended resources that appear at the end of each chapter have been updated, and all research and pedagogical practices have been revised and updated.

ALSO AVAILABLE

Course Design for TESOL:

A Guide to Integrating Curriculum and Teaching

Florin M. Mihai and Kerry Purmensity

Second Language Acquisition Myths:

Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching

Steven Brown and Jenifer Larson-Hall

www.press.umich.edu/elt/

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