

DESCRIPTION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE COMPONENT OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR MA

This document describes the components and theoretical bases of the teaching practice in the English language instructor MA under five headings: (1) aims, (2) type, location, and time frame, (3) role of the trainee, (4) role of the mentor, (5) role of the language school coordinator.

### **1. Aims of the teaching practice**

The aims of the teaching practice are to familiarize trainees with the work of the language instructor through complex independent tasks supported by a methodology teacher from the university on the one hand and, on the other, to gain experience in teaching English in a language school under the guidance of a trained mentor. The teaching practice primarily prepares trainees to be able to plan and critically reflect on lessons, and deliver lessons that cater to the unique needs of a given group based on professional and methodological considerations. During the teaching practice, trainees become acquainted with the language instructor's profession and can take part in teaching-related and organizational activities outside the lessons. Apart from planning the teaching process, the trainees also teach at least 30 lessons in pairs or individually. The teaching practice is intended to improve trainees' methodological competence as well as their skills in getting to know the learners, developing and evaluating their skills, in pedagogical observation, recording lessons, and analysing and evaluating lessons reflectively.

### **2. Type, location, and time frame of the teaching practice**

This intensive and professionally very strongly supported teaching practice involves 'group practice', which means that one mentor coordinates the work of a group of four trainees in a language school or other course-based environment. Possible locations are (a) language schools or (b) the English Foundation Programme of the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University. The teaching practice provides a gradual shift from university-based theoretical and methodological instruction to real-life language instruction. This gradual shift can be successfully achieved if trainees receive minor tasks in the lessons held by their mentors even before they start teaching on their own.

The strong prerequisite of the teaching practice is the completion of the two methodology seminars and the language proficiency exam. The teaching practice takes place in the second semester, is worth five credits, and requires 60 hours of personal presence (not including preparation time). Trainees teach in pairs or individually, and then participate together in post-lesson discussions with their mentor.

Parallel with their teaching practice at the language school, trainees attend a support seminar led by a tutor at the university. The aim of this teaching practice support seminar is to provide further professional guidance and support by discussing the trainees' insights from lesson observations, the steps of lesson planning, the implementation of teaching activities and the possible methods of assessment as well as post-lesson reflections on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the trainees throughout this teaching experience.

### **3. Role of the trainee**

The 60 hours of personal presence required of trainees include the following activities: 10 hours of lesson observation, 10 hours of pair teaching, 20 hours of individual teaching, 15 hours of post-lesson discussion, 5 hours of other activities (e.g. further post-lesson discussions, or other language-school based tasks).

Activities performed by trainees include:

- Creating an individual development plan at the start of the teaching practice.
- Becoming acquainted with learner groups and their work; individual and group lesson observation based on given observation criteria, evaluating lessons in reflective discussions. Becoming familiar with course-based instruction and the properties and the overall operation of the language school. Getting to know the learner groups involved in the teaching practice; the aims, content, and learning outcomes of the lessons to be observed.
- Becoming acquainted with the infrastructure related to language instruction.
- Individual lesson observation: observing lessons taught by the mentor, other language instructors, or other trainees based on given criteria; evaluating lessons in reflective discussions.
- Lesson planning: lesson planning is supported by pre-lesson discussions between the teacher trainee(s) and the mentor as well as the tutor of the Teaching support seminar at university.
- Contributing to lessons held by the mentor (e.g., active participation in a sub-task, organizing group work, designing and correcting tests).
- Holding lessons individually or in pairs.
- Evaluating lessons with the mentor, as well as the instructor and the participants of the Teaching support seminar at the university.

Compulsory documents to be prepared: individual development plan, teaching schedule, lesson observation notes, lesson plans, reflections, other documents designated by the mentor or the methodology instructor at university.

### **4. Role of the mentor**

#### **4.1. General role of the mentor**

The mentor supports trainees in becoming instructors of English as a foreign language and continuously cooperates with methodology instructors at the university in order to build a coherent system of teaching practice.

#### **4.2. Tasks of the mentor**

- Discusses the formal requirements and contents of the teaching practice with the trainees.
- Invites trainees to her/his own lessons and then reflectively discusses these with the trainees.
- Helps trainees become acquainted with language school life, supports them in creating new connections and participating in the life of the language school.

- Supports trainees in creating a teaching-focused development plan that includes a teaching schedule. Negotiates with trainees about the elements of the curriculum to be taught by them, while keeping in mind the needs of the learner group.
- Familiarises trainees with the special features of course-based foreign language instruction, the curriculum, learner groups, the characteristics of the learners, and of working with these learner groups.
- Prepares partial and complete lesson plans, and draws up teaching schedules together with his/her group of trainees.
- Provides trainees with opportunities to plan and execute sub-tasks in the mentor's own lessons.
- Observes the activities of trainees and provides constructive feedback.
- Supports trainees in the preparation for and execution of individual activities.
- Holds post-activity reflective discussions with trainees; supports, encourages, and motivates them towards conscious self-reflection, the use of innovative tools and methods, and learner-centred instruction. Supports the professional development of trainees, using continuous evaluative feedback.
- Facilitates cooperation and knowledge sharing between trainees.
- Cooperates in teaching practice-related issues with the methodology instructors of the Department of English Language Pedagogy at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University, and especially with the instructor of the Teaching Support seminar.
- Reports any serious issues experienced during teaching practice to the coordinator of the English language instructor MA programme at the Department of English Language Pedagogy.
- At the end of the teaching practice, the mentor evaluates the performance of the trainee throughout the entire period of the teaching practice by giving both a grade and written evaluation based on the training and outcome requirements.
- The 'open lesson', which is part of the evaluation process, is evaluated together by all those present (e.g. university instructors, language school colleagues, the mentor, fellow trainees).
- The mentor participates in quality development and professional discussions related to the training program organized by the Department of English Language Pedagogy.

## **5. Role of the language school coordinator**

### **5.1. General role of the coordinator**

The language school coordinator ensures communication and flow of information between the Department of English Language Pedagogy at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University, the location of the teaching practice (the language school or the English Foundation Programme of the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University), and the mentor. The coordinator also provides support in resolving any questions or issues that arise and fall under his/her discretion during the teaching practice. S/he seeks help from the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy, if necessary.

### **5.2. Tasks of the coordinator**

- Keeping track of colleagues at the language school participating in the teaching practice (mentors), informing the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd University of any changes.

- Informing the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy about the number of trainee that the language school's mentors are willing to accept.
- Greeting trainees at the language school and introducing them to mentors, keeping track of their work.
- Supporting the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy in drawing up and signing contracts (by providing data).
- After the completion of the teaching practice, forwarding the documents (evaluation, certificate of completion, report, teaching schedule) to the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy.
- Providing feedback to the professional coordinator at the Department of English Language Pedagogy about mentor experience.
- Participating in professional discussions in relation to teaching practice organized by the Department of English Language Pedagogy.