

**A TEACHER'S GUIDE
TO SUCCESSFUL
CLASSROOM
OBSERVATIONS IN TESL
(TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)**

Ender Velasco Tovar

A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language)

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Contents

	Page
List of illustrations	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Meet the author	vi
Introduction	vii
Part I. Teaching Observations in TESL	
Chapter 1. What is a formal teaching observation?	3
Chapter 2. Why are formal observations necessary?	5
Chapter 3. What does a formal observation process entail?	7
Chapter 4. Observees' common mistakes	9
Chapter 5. Checklist Observation Process	11
Part II. The Observee's Perspective	
Chapter 6. Planning Stages	15
Checklist Planning Stages	27
Chapter 7. Delivery Stages	29
Checklist Delivery Stages	43
Chapter 8. Reflection Stages	45
Checklist Reflection Stages	47
Part III. The Observer's Perspective	
Chapter 9. Teaching Skills	51
Chapter 10. Grading of Observations and Feedback	55
Part IV. Views from experienced observers	
Chapter 11. An Interview with Ceri Griffiths	61

Chapter 12. An Interview with Dan Flynn	65
Chapter 13. An Interview with Daron Keyani	71
Chapter 14. An Interview with Donald Moore	73
Glossary and Abbreviations	75

List of illustrations

	Page
Table 1. Overview of observation types	3
Table 2. Three common ways of checking meaning of TL with students	34
Table 3. Grammar activity differentiated by task in three ways	41
Table 4. Example of grading descriptors for a 60-minute observation	55
Table 5. Synonyms of 'judging words' commonly used in observation reports	57
Figure 1. Stages in the process of a typical formal TESL observation	8
Figure 2. Language systems vs. language skills dichotomy	16
Figure 3. A popular way of staging a receptive skills lesson	19
Figure 4. Example of how to plan a grammar lesson backwards	20
Figure 5. Range of differentiation strategies for a 60-minute lesson plan	25
Figure 6. Execution of a 60-minute grammar lesson planned backwards	33
Figure 7. Execution of a 60-minute skills lesson planned backwards	37

Figure 8. Feedback model part of an observee's classroom routine	40
Figure 9. Five basic teaching skills assessed in a 60-minute observation	51

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Ceri Griffiths is an ESL teacher, freelance CELTA tutor, and Cambridge CELTA assessor. She holds a Cambridge CELTA and Cambridge DELTA. She is also a Cambridge speaking examiner. She has been an English teacher and teacher trainer for over 20 years in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and various countries in South America.

Dan Flynn is a Senior Teacher, teacher trainer and qualified TESL observer. He holds a Cambridge CELTA, Cambridge DELTA, CELTYL, MA in TESOL from NILE, UK, and MSc in Project and Programme Management from University of Limerick in Ireland. He is also a DELTA local tutor and external assessor for DELTA. He has taught English for 17 years in Vietnam, South Korea, Romania, Colombia and the UK. He has been a TESL observer and teacher trainer for about 10 years.

Daron Keyani is an ESL teacher, IELTS examiner and qualified line manager. He holds a Trinity TESOL Cert., Cambridge DELTA and Trinity TYLEC. He has taught English for nearly 8 years in Colombia. He has carried out around 20 observations of prospective hourly-paid teachers in demonstration lessons.

Donald Moore is an ESL teacher, teacher trainer and qualified TESL observer. He holds a Cambridge CELTA, Cambridge DELTA, Trinity TYLEC, and MA in TESOL from University of Chichester, UK. He has taught English for over 15 years and has been an observer for 10 years.

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Meet the author

I have always been fascinated by languages in general. My first experience of learning a foreign language was when I enrolled on an introductory Italian course at the age of 17. This gave me first-hand experience and a true understanding of what is required to study and learn a foreign language.

As a young man, after having worked as a barista and shoe shop assistant in London for a few years, I decided to challenge myself and enrol on a CELTA course. Once I gained more teaching experience I decided to take things further and complete a Cambridge Diploma DETLLS and a MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at University of Portsmouth, UK.

TESL is a rewarding career. 15 years have gone by since I first qualified as an ESL teacher and I am still passionate about teaching and training other teachers. This is because a job in TESL demands plenty of creativity, empathy and willingness to learn something new every day.

This book is a response to emerging patterns I have seen over the years as an observer. I hope this book becomes a useful resource for readers who are about to tackle a formal 60-minute classroom observation as part of their professional development, whether it be trainee teachers who are at the beginning of their careers, or teachers who are applying for TESL jobs, or more experienced teachers who want to succeed in observations as part of diploma-level teacher training courses.

Happy reading!

Introduction

A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) is a resource book for pre- and in-service English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers of adults who need support with the process of formal observations of teaching and learning usually carried out by teacher trainers, line managers, directors of studies (DoSs), senior teachers and coordinators.

A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL is not a resource for observers. It is for teachers and trainee teachers of adults who need to undergo 60-minute-long classroom observations. The book is aimed at pre-service teachers enrolled on initial teacher training courses such as the Cambridge CELTA or Trinity Certificate. It is also useful for recently qualified ESL teachers who are applying for TESL jobs and need to do demonstration classes as part of their recruitment process. The book is also useful for in-service teachers hoping to complete higher level qualifications such as the Cambridge DELTA, Trinity Diploma, and practical modules on MA in TESL courses. It is also a good resource for more experienced teachers who need to brush up on their lesson planning skills before an observation.

There are already a number of excellent TESL resources dealing with classroom observations. These resources range from developments in teacher appraisal, school inspection procedures and research into teaching and learning via classroom observations, right through to detailed descriptions of sampling frames used in observations, useful advice and tips for observers, and critical analyses of the observation process. However, *A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL* is a resource for ESL teachers and trainee teachers of adults who need to tackle a formal 60-minute classroom observation and need help, support and practical guidance throughout this process.

A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL is not theoretical in nature because it is intended for ESL practitioners who need practical guidance and support before a formal 60-minute classroom observation. Nevertheless, the book is based on sound observation practices tried and tested in various contexts, and is the result of a direct response to patterns and issues that have emerged over 10 years as a TESL observer.

The book has been written in a straight-to-the point style which perhaps more experienced ESL teachers of adults may find prescriptive. Indeed, the book is not the ultimate A-Z of observations, and will not solve all the obstacles observees may come across at different stages in their teaching careers, but it should be seen as a practical guide teachers and trainee teachers can consult before a formal 60-minute classroom observation.

A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL is divided into four main sections. The first part gives an overview of different types of observations, the actual process of formal classroom observations and how these are usually set up and carried out. The second part describes key aspects observees need to take into account in the observation process. The third part delves into observers' expectations and crucial aspects observers look for in successful classroom observations. The last part includes four interviews with experienced TESL observers, giving readers an insight into the observers' views on what a successful classroom observation should entail at both certificate and diploma levels.

The innovative features of *A Teacher's Guide to Successful Classroom Observations in TESL* include:

- a fresh take on the process of classroom observations, both from the observee's and observer's perspectives, which helps ESL teachers and trainee teachers succeed in meeting their aims in a formal 60-minute-long observation
- embedded examples of positive and negative feedback given by observers regarding various aspects of a 60-minute lesson
- checklists at the end of sections that teachers and trainee teachers can refer to before, during and after a 60-minute classroom observation
- interviews with experienced TESL observers that give observees valuable advice on how to succeed in 60-minute classroom observations, including observations at diploma level
- a useful glossary with key terminology and abbreviations used in TESL observations