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## Training Pre-Service Language Teachers

### Summary

This article considers some ways of tackling input in pre-service teacher training. First, it highlights the context and structure of a pre-service course currently provided by the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Then it goes on to describe the process of designing a syllabus for the course capitalizing on its methodology component which draws on a wide range of current reflection-oriented models and approaches to teacher training. From these models, a teacher-training activities 'generator' is derived, which allows for the formation of many teacher-training procedures. It is argued that such methodology, besides giving trainees the opportunity to examine their attitudes, beliefs and assumptions, also echoes classroom practice.

## Začetno usposabljanje tujejezikovnih učiteljev

### Povzetek

Pričujoči članek preučuje različne načine obravnave vnosa v okviru začetnega izobraževanja učiteljev. Na začetku avtor osvetli kontekst in strukturo programa začetnega izobraževanja učiteljev, ki se trenutno izvaja na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani. V nadaljevanju je opisan proces oblikovanja učnega načrta za program, pri čemer je poudarek na metodološki sestavini, ki temelji na širokem razponu sodobnih reflektivnih modelov in pristopov k izobraževanju učiteljev. Iz teh modelov je izpeljan nekakšen 'generator' aktivnosti, ki omogočajo oblikovanje številnih postopkov v okviru programa za izobraževanje učiteljev. Avtor zagovarja stališče, da takšna metodologija ne samo omogoča udeležencem, da preučijo svoja stališča, prepričanja in podmene, ampak da tudi odslkava razredno prakso.

# Training Pre-Service Language Teachers

## 1. The context and outline structure of a pre-service course

In this paper, I would like to highlight the context and outline the structure of a pre-service language teacher training course currently provided by the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The students in the English Department (i.e. those taking English as a single subject, and the double-major students) can choose between two options. They can follow (a) the long-established pedagogical route, or (b) the fairly recent non-pedagogical route (omitting all teacher training courses). The student intake in the pedagogical option is about 60-70 students a year.

The pre-service teacher training programme is progressive and simultaneous in its nature, which means that it is spread almost throughout the four-year syllabus. The full syllabus is as follows:

2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3rd year	4th year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>psychology for teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pedagogy</li> <li>adult education</li> <li>didactics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>English Language Teaching Methodology</i></li> </ul>
Totalling: 90 hours	totalling: 120 hours	totalling: ~ 150 hours

The providers of the 'general' teacher training courses in the second and third year are other departments at the Faculty, whereas the course in *English Language Teaching Methodology* is provided by the Department of English. The full syllabus for *English Language Teaching Methodology* is as follows:

Number of contact hours:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>120 ('lectures' interspersed with practical work)</li> <li>10 + 10 (group observation lessons with follow-up discussions)</li> <li>2 (assessment lessons) + 2 after-observation feedback conferences</li> <li>4 (individual observations prior to both assessment lessons)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">⇒ Totalling: 148 hours</p>
Assessment:	continuous; optional term exam (written); final exam (oral); two assessment lessons; seminar paper

## 2. Constraints

The existing training scheme may give the impression that it is a springboard for effective teacher training. However, there used to be and still are many constraints imposed on the pre-service teacher training course. Most of these negative external parameters may be attributed to the fact that the pre-service course is provided by and embedded in the institution which has, paradoxically, never had a good 'pedagogic pedigree'. The general climate at the Faculty

could be described as ‘pro-scientific’ and ‘anti-pedagogic’. The pedagogical-route courses are, therefore, kept firmly in a secondary position, often performing no more than a cosmetic function.

The resulting situational and subjective constraints which used to and keep determining the course significantly can be summarized as follows:

- When I took over the pre-service teacher training course nine years ago, it was relatively ‘low status’ compared to other language-study courses (e.g. literature and linguistics). One of my first tasks was to improve the *a priori* negative attitude of many students to the course. Many referred to it as ‘*unnecessary, unimportant, dull, irrelevant, or silly*’.
- Some students will simply not be committed to studying the course: they may not be interested in it, have no choice or have been forced to take it. Many view teaching as a last resort – something to depend on if all else fails.
- Some colleagues in the department behave as if students are studying only their course. Others, therefore, have to compete for the students’ time and energy, whereby the students inevitably become ‘selectively negligent’ in their studies, deliberately neglecting those components or courses which they perceive to be dispensable.
- Insufficient government funding of pre-service teacher training resulted in the course being understaffed and in an intolerable staff-trainee ratio. Until four years ago I was the only person in charge of the whole course, and felt overworked and ‘burnt-out’. I also had a feeling of isolation and frustration because I didn’t have anyone to turn to for advice, guidance and inspiration.
- I had to set up a syllabus practically from scratch. My predecessor seemed to have lost interest in the course years before she resigned and I couldn’t draw on her work.
- I had too busy a training schedule because ridiculously little time was allotted to the course (only 45 hours, plus some practical work).
- On top of everything, the contract I was on obliged me to pursue an academic career to earn academic qualifications for running the course (i.e. M.A. and Ph.D.).

### 3. The development of a pre-service course

By force of circumstances, I had to somehow put up with this ‘sunburn’ approach. The way things were, the choice was very limited though: sink or swim. I opted for swimming. I realized pretty early on that it would take a long time to overcome some of the external constraints imposed on the course. While waiting for the negotiations with the Faculty administration and the Ministry of Education to produce some useful results, I decided to swim my way out by what we call subversive teaching. I knew that if I put my mind to it, I could promote and popularize the course at the micro level, i.e. trying to do my best in the training room. *Easier said than done!*

I was a brand new trainer with seven years of language teaching experience across different age and proficiency levels. Teaching English and German was something I could always shine at but becoming a teacher trainer touched me far more personally and profoundly. I was forced to realize that language teaching skills and teacher training skills are not necessarily the same unless, of course, a teacher training programme mirrors common language classroom practice. But this 'mirror model', if pushed too far, may result in what is usually termed 'the craft model', 'cookbook approach', a flashy 'bag of tricks', 'quick-fix approach', and so on. I wanted to link theory to practice or vice versa.

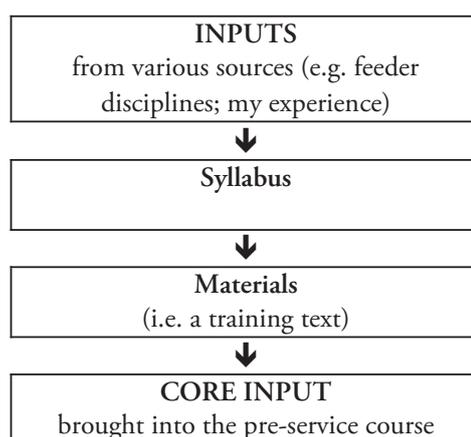
During the first two or three years the course lacked 'the big ideas' which would form meaningful wholes, establish some threads between large informational input chunks and thus make the course coherent and enable the students to see the whole picture. I couldn't help my students to see this whole picture and 'scan the horizon' because I myself only had a worm's-eye view of the situation. My command of the subject material (i.e. my knowledge base about teaching) was poor, and I had to plunge into a sophisticated accumulation of knowledge about second and foreign language learning/teaching. This was fraught with problems – the field is immense. Luckily, there are some seminal works which give authoritative surveys of the most important developments and present relevant theoretical concepts. I came to realize that being enormously well-read and keeping abreast of current developments in the field is an important attribute of a teacher trainer. It is a life-long task which resembles a jigsaw puzzle with an infinite number of pieces, whereby you map out your knowledge base piece by piece. I think it is only when you have managed to sketch at least a rough outline 'theory-map' that you can gain confidence as a trainer and thus professional credibility. It is easy to draw a parallel here between a language teacher and a language teacher trainer. Just as a reasonable language proficiency is probably a prerequisite for mixed-mode, varied and flexible teaching, so is the teacher trainer's command of the subject matter the necessary attribute which will enable mixed-mode, varied and flexible training.

At times during my first years I had problems with my teaching that I just didn't know how to handle. I was okay as long as I was well prepared (e.g. spending all weekend preparing my Monday lecture) and it helped me if I had plenty of OHPs to talk from. The whole course was rather a loose collection of some seemingly 'important' topics in the form of informational (i.e. theoretical) input usually provided via lectures. When I was a student I resented what my teachers put me through in lectures, and yet there I was doing the same thing to my students.

Speaking for myself, it was only when I started to feel reasonably comfortable with the vastness of the field (i.e. 'enlightened', principally eclectic, healthily skeptical about or even immune to the most recent cults on the scene) that I was able to attend to the trainees and take into account their needs and expectations. In other words, I was ready to start thinking about the methodology of the course. As a result of becoming more 'knowledgeable' about certain theoretical concepts I am now able to enjoy the performance side of the course.

The course syllabus was gradually improving in terms of its coherence, and hopefully, its relevance. The content component of the syllabus (i.e. what is to be learned) was selected, justified, graded and thus given a format and a principled orientation. Eventually it dawned on me that a syllabus is nothing but ‘*a statement of a teaching ideal ... and that it can predict very little about what will be learnt.*’ (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, 84–5). Although this is to a certain extent true, it is still very reassuring to have a syllabus for at least two reasons: (a) Everything cannot be learnt in one go, so we have to break down the acquisition of ‘the professional competence’ into manageable units; (b) It makes the learning of teaching appear manageable.

Anyhow, the contents of the syllabus were derived from different sources which all provided different inputs. The core input consisted of various applied theoretical findings elaborated in feeder disciplines for which I drew on extensive secondary sources (i.e. books which summarize and interpret research), on teachers’ EFL manuals, my own experience and ideas, etc. The process is summarized in *Figure 1* below:



*Figure 1: A process of syllabus design.*

Although there were some good teachers’ manuals available on the market, I could not find one which would really suit my purposes. I think this is probably due to every single pre-service teacher training course being so specific that it could be compared to an *ESP* situation in the language teaching sector. In this respect all (British-produced) training texts written for the global market share the same fate as their ELT-textbook counterparts, i.e. they are aimed at everyone and at the same time at no one.

There are at least three types of textbooks used in the methodology course of an EFL teacher training programme. One type of textbooks, produced by knowledgeable professionals in the field, present relevant theoretical concepts and often furnish sample presentations and materials to assist the teacher trainee. Such books deal with the content of teacher training courses directly and are, therefore, a good source of the core input for a training programme.

The other kind of text, used primarily by the trainer, does not deal with the content directly, but it concentrates rather on ways of transferring the content to trainees. There are also textbooks of a third type which cut across both areas.

Over the years of ‘master-less’ apprenticeship, my *‘theory of language learning and teaching’* has been shaped and re-shaped and become more and more explicit. As a pre-service trainer I now, philosophically, subscribe to the following credos:

- Trainers should provide access to good current practice and theory (by providing both ‘external’ and ‘personal’ input).
- Good theories generate practice, and *vice versa*.
- Theory can be made interesting and relevant to trainees.
- Experience is necessary but insufficient as a basis for development.
- It is important to give trainees as active a role as possible (‘learning by doing’).
- The methodology applied for a pre-service course should to some extent mirror current practice in schools.
- Trainers should be able to purposefully exhibit a wide range of teaching styles and thus be able to teach to different learning styles of their trainees.
- Teachers need to understand the relationship between theoretical principle and practical technique.
- It is important to raise the theoretical and critical awareness of teachers by encouraging them to conceptualize their practices.
- Trainees will be better off with an explicit set of ideas about language learning.
- The pre-service teacher training methodology should be based on a range of procedures to recover and make explicit trainees’ ‘hidden theory’ and then to examine it in the light of current understanding as it is set out in the literature on language learning, applied linguistics and allied disciplines.
- A great many of a teacher’s choices spring from established principles of language learning and teaching.
- Trainees should be given the opportunity to examine their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching (‘reflective practitioner’).
- Trainees should be given the opportunity to practise the teaching of English in a controlled way so that they will emerge as confident and competent classroom teachers (i.e. being able to plan, implement and evaluate appropriate learning experiences for their students).

If we agree that a teacher’s classroom actions and procedures are determined by his attitudes, intentions, beliefs and values, then this, and other assumptions listed above, call for a different and appropriate methodology of a course.

We usually identify three levels of teachers’ thinking and action, each level being rooted in the one beneath it (see *Figure 2*):

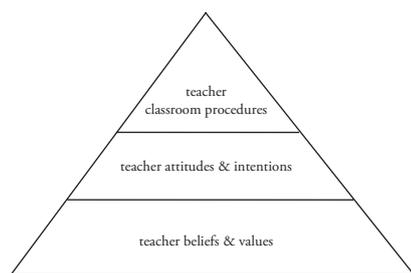


Figure 2: Three levels of teachers' thinking and action (Scrivener 1994, 11).

Drawing on this notion, Bolitho (1996) writes:

*For real and lasting change to take place in an individual, there must be movement in a teacher's thinking below the surface level of classroom behaviour. If the reason for change at this level is not understood at the deeper levels, the change is unlikely to last. The process is likely to take time, and ... [...] there is pressure to evaluate courses instantly and to demonstrate their effectiveness in achieving the desired change. Yet the true impact of an INSETT course can only be felt at classroom level, after the course is over.*

Though Bolitho is referring to in-service training, there is no doubt that the same goes for pre-service too.

We may liken the diagram above to an iceberg whereby its tip represents the observable classroom procedures whereas a teacher's beliefs and values remain hidden deep below sea level (see Figure 3). The trainer is trying to find ways to fish out the trainees' personal and implicit attitudes and values.

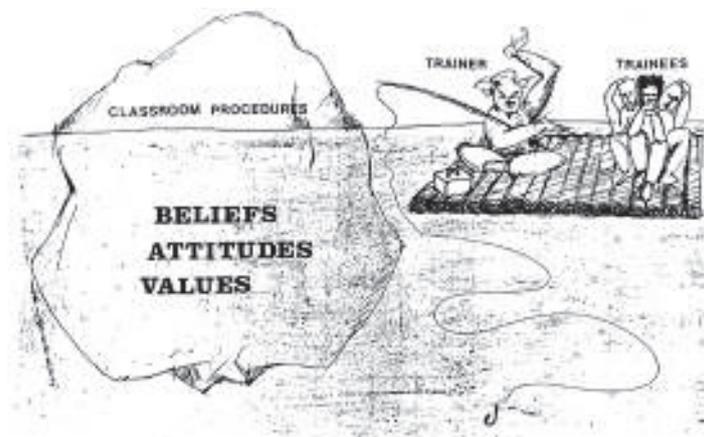


Figure 3: The 'iceberg' metaphor: making the implicit explicit.

As said earlier, subscribing to this philosophy of training calls for a different methodology. This brings us to various models and approaches to teacher training which have appeared on the scene. As they are well-known, I am going to present them very sketchily, highlighting their main features.

<b>Ellis</b> (1986); <i>Activities and procedures for teacher training</i>	Offers a full range of teacher training activities which mirror classroom practices. In his model, the teacher training practices are divided into <i>experiential</i> and <i>awareness-raising</i> . The latter involve different <i>activities</i> and <i>training procedures</i> .
<b>Ramani</b> (1987); <i>Theorizing from the classroom</i>	Describes an approach which relates practice to theory in an INSETT seminar (based on a video-taped lesson).
<b>Richards and Nunan</b> (1990); <i>Second Language Teacher Education</i>	A valuable source book on classroom observation, supervision, teacher self-evaluation, and teaching practice. The book reflects the shift in orientation from teacher training to teacher education.
<b>Wallace</b> (1991); <i>Training Foreign Language Teachers</i>	The author writes about three major approaches to teacher training: (1) the craft model; (2) the applied science model; and (3) the reflective model. He differentiates between two kinds of knowledge: (a) received knowledge and (b) experiential knowledge. He offers a good overview of modes of teaching and learning.
<b>Woodward</b> (1991); <i>Models and Metaphors in Language Teacher Training</i>	Introduces and exemplifies in detail a training strategy called 'loop input'; it includes many other strategies which encourage the sharing of course content between participants.
<b>Woodward</b> (1992); <i>Ways of Training: Recipes for teacher training</i>	Contains a rich repertoire of process types (e.g. lecture, discussion, etc.). The author talks about three course models: (a) 'the market place' (where everyone has something to offer and something to gain); (b) 'the greenhouse' (where there is a protected environment and plenty of preparation for life outside); (c) 'the interactive circle' (where everyone learns from everyone else in a non-hierarchical way). Interesting activities on <i>Input</i> , <i>Reactions to information</i> and <i>Moving on from input</i> .
<b>Parrott</b> (1993); <i>Tasks for Language Teachers</i>	A resource pool of task-based activities designed to encourage trainees to value their own experience, beliefs, opinions and knowledge, and to reflect on these.
<b>Freeman and Cornwell</b> (1993); <i>New Ways in Teacher Education</i>	Contains 46 different activities that trainers can use in helping trainees learn to teach. The activities represent a departure from the knowledge-transmission model of education.
<b>Richards and Lockhart</b> (1994); <i>Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms</i>	Introduces teachers to ways of exploring and reflecting upon their classroom experiences, using a structured approach to self-observation. Each chapter includes thought-provoking questions and activities appropriate for group discussions or self-study.
<b>Dufeu</b> (1994); <i>Teaching Myself</i>	The last part of the book deals with teacher development and considers how teachers relate to participants in their teaching.
<b>Vale and Feunteun</b> (1995); <i>Teaching Children English: A training course for teachers of English to children</i>	Contains a wide variety of input and training tasks which are of five types: practical tasks, observational tasks, teaching tasks, discussion tasks and recording tasks.
<b>Campbell and Kryszewska</b> (1995); <i>Towards Teaching: An exploration of teaching skills</i>	A collection of activities for teaching practice and language development.
<b>Nunan and Lamb</b> (1996); <i>The Self-directed Teacher: Managing the learning process</i>	The text uses a task-based approach, and the material presented is well supported by theory and research. It prepares teachers to make independent decisions in key areas such as lesson planning, teachers talk, group work, error correction, resource management, and evaluation.
<b>Balloch</b> (1996); <i>Teacher Development Resource Book</i>	A 'treasure chest' of thought provoking, 'one off' materials for short staff training sessions, combining serious examination of professional issues with a touch of humour and the opportunity for individual input.

Medgyes, and Malderez (1996); <i>Changing Perspectives in Teacher Education</i>	It describes the setting up and development of a foreign-language teacher-preparation programme (i.e. the Centre for English Teacher Training, Budapest).
Willis and Willis (1996); <i>Challenge and Change in Language Teaching</i>	This collection of papers includes the following themes: theories of change, a lexical view of language, task-based language learning, experience-driven teacher training, etc.
McGrath (1997); <i>Learning to Train: Perspectives on the Development of Language Teacher Trainers</i>	The volume brings together 20 papers dealing with the provision of formal training programmes for language teacher trainers.
Lubelska and Matthews (1997); <i>Looking at Language Classrooms. A teacher development video package (4 video cassettes + Trainer's Guide)</i>	The Trainer's Guide includes photocopiable tasks which develop teachers' awareness of both theoretical and practical issues and encourage teachers to reflect on their own practice.
Tanner and Green (1998a; 1998b); <i>Tasks for Teacher Education: A reflective approach</i>	Employing a reflective and task-based approach, it enables trainees to develop their awareness about teaching and about themselves as teachers. It is for pre-service and in-service teachers of English working with a trainer.
Richards (1998); <i>Beyond Training: Perspectives on Language Teacher Education</i>	The book surveys research and theory on second language teacher development, examines different approaches, and offers many practical suggestions for the kinds of activities that can be used in teacher education programmes.
Roberts (1998); <i>Language Teacher Education</i>	Based on a broadly social constructivist perspective, the book suggests a framework for planning pre-service and in-service programmes, and is illustrated with case studies from a range of training situations.
Malderez and Bodoczky (1999); <i>Mentor Courses: A resource book for trainer-trainers</i>	This practical resource book provides a collection of materials (i.e. in-session activities) for use on mentor courses.
Gebhard and Oprandy (1999); <i>Language Teaching Awareness: A Guide to Exploring Beliefs and Practices</i>	A practical book to use in pre-service and in-service programmes, courses, and workshops. The text discusses and illustrates activities teachers can use to gain awareness of teaching, including observation, action research, keeping journals, exploring with a supervisor, and connecting their personal and professional life.
Habeshaw <i>et al.</i> (1984); <i>53 Interesting things to do in your seminars and tutorials</i>	A rich collection of tried-and-true procedures and techniques to be used in your teaching; addressed primarily to teachers in higher education.
Gibbs and Habeshaw (1989); <i>Preparing to teach: An Introduction to effective teaching in higher education</i>	The book contains a set of ideas and methods to help new lecturers to prepare to start their teaching.
... and other books from the <i>53 Interesting things / ways to do ...</i> series	
<b>BOOKS WHICH DEAL WITH PRESENTATION SKILLS</b>	
Hoff (1992); <i>I can see you naked</i>	Some golden rules and tricks of the trade ' <i>to turn a good presentation into a great presentation</i> '.
Powell (1993); <i>Presenting in English</i>	It teaches students how to become successful presenters at conferences or meetings. The book is organized in seven sections (e.g. getting started, using your voice, exploiting visuals, etc.).
Levy (1997); <i>Presentation Tips and Techniques</i>	Ready-made ideas and tips to improve your presentation skills.
McGee (1998); <i>Perfect Public Speaking</i>	Provides a guide to mental and physical preparation for speaking in public (e.g. openers and closers, voice projection, body language, rapport with the audience, etc.).

**TEXTBOOKS DESIGNED FOR METHODOLOGY COURSES WHICH CUT ACROSS BOTH THE CONTENT AND THE 'INPUT-TRANSMITTING' SIDE OF A TRAINING COURSE**

- Hubbard *et al.* (1983); *A Training Course for TEFL*
- Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty (1985); *TESOL Techniques and Procedures*
- Doff (1988); *Teach English: A training course for teachers*
- Nunan (1991); *Language Teaching Methodology: A textbook for teachers*
- Omaggio Hadley (1993); *Teaching Language in Context*; and Rieken (1993); *Teaching Language in Context: Workbook*
- Bowen and Marks (1994); *Inside Teaching*
- Brown (1994); *Teaching by Principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*
- Scrivener (1994); *Learning Teaching*
- Gower, Phillips and Walters (1995); *Teaching Practice Handbook*
- Ur (1996); *A Course in Language Teaching*
- Harmer (1998); *How to Teach English*
- Johnson (2000); *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*

All these sources, many of them being of non-EFL origin, have something in common – they represent the ‘modernist’ or ‘progressive’ tenet of teacher training as opposed to the ‘traditionalist’ one. We can polarize these positions on teacher training as follows:

**‘Traditionalist’**

- the knowledge-transmission model
- the craft model
- the applied science model
- received knowledge only
- intake equals input
- input tackled via lectures only
- trainees passive recipient
- the ‘*mug and jug*’ training model
- ... etc.

**‘Modernist’ / ‘Progressive’**

- the reflective approach
- self-reflection
- exploring trainees’ assumptions
- making the implicit explicit
- developing awareness
- developing received knowledge
- linking theory to practice
- using a range of teaching modes
- ... etc.

A pre-service teacher trainer can reap benefit from this rich collective pool of ideas turning them into his ‘tool kit’ for handling received, experiential and group input. The ideas contained in the above sources range from ‘conceptual’ (i.e. shaping your teaching philosophy) to very down-to-earth ones for immediate use in training. One could visualize these approaches and models on the *approach-method-technique* hierarchy, or categorize them along some teacher training lines (e.g. along certain continua, on the ‘three Ps’ model, or the three-part skills model used to teach the receptive skills, etc.).

What is of a particular value about the sources mentioned above is that we can derive some generative taxonomies from them. A well-known set of such taxonomies is based on Ellis’ model and enriched with ideas from Parrott, Wallace and Woodward (see *Figure 4*).

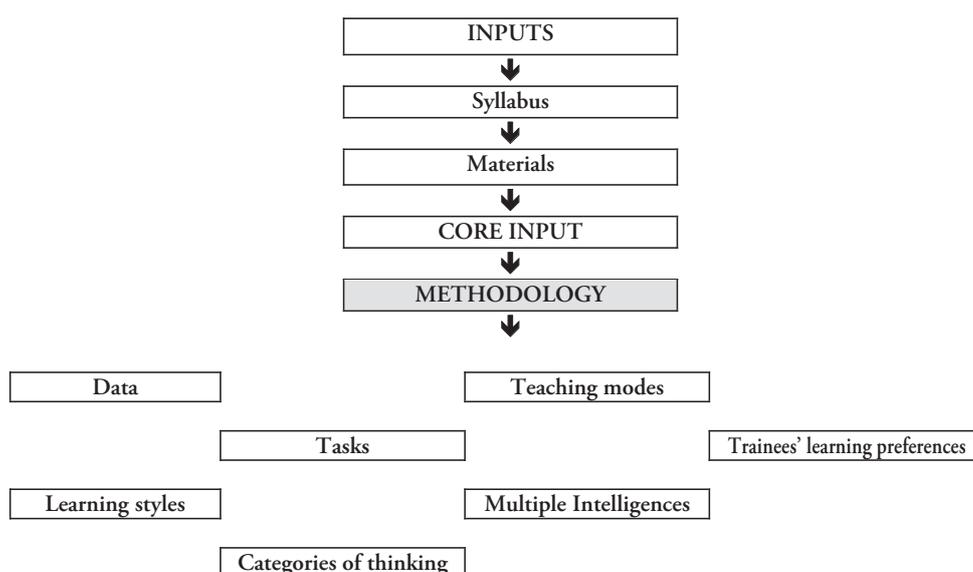
<b>TYPES OF DATA</b> (ways of providing data; sources of information) (Ellis, Woodward)	<b>TYPES OF TASKS</b> (Ellis, Parrott)	<b>TEACHER TRAINING PROCEDURES</b> (i.e. teaching modes; process types) (Wallace)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• video or audio recordings of actual lessons</li> <li>• transcripts of lessons</li> <li>• classroom teaching</li> <li>• peer teaching</li> <li>• micro-teaching</li> <li>• reading</li> <li>• ELT textbook materials</li> <li>• lesson plans</li> <li>• case studies</li> <li>• samples of students' written work, etc.</li> </ul> <p><i>We can class sources of information about teaching as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The written word:</b> whole books, selected chapters and extracts, articles, handouts, lesson plans, lists and random arrays, essays, charts, diagrams, teachers' books, coursebooks, EFL tests and exercise, lesson transcripts, practice books, grammar books, diaries, case studies, teachers' magazines, bibliographies, etc.</li> <li>• <b>The spoken word:</b> Coursebook and teacher-produced tapes of texts; dialogues; drills and songs; samples of native and non-native language on tape; taped lessons and lectures; samples of pronunciation features; films and TV programmes; interviews with native and non-native speakers, 'experts' and professional people; guest speakers, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Pictures:</b> Published teaching resources such as wallcharts, flashcards, picture stories, games and cartoons, as well as teacher-made magazine picture libraries, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comparing</li> <li>• preparing</li> <li>• evaluating</li> <li>• improving</li> <li>• adapting</li> <li>• listing</li> <li>• completing</li> <li>• rearranging</li> <li>• reading</li> <li>• listening</li> <li>• watching</li> <li>• speaking</li> <li>• writing</li> <li>• drawing</li> <li>• ticking</li> <li>• numbering</li> <li>• teaching</li> <li>• matching</li> <li>• comparing</li> <li>• ordering</li> <li>• ranking</li> <li>• classifying</li> <li>• selecting</li> <li>• recalling</li> <li>• producing</li> <li>• recording</li> <li>• gathering data</li> <li>• putting forward arguments</li> <li>• adding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brainstorming</li> <li>• buzz groups</li> <li>• CALL</li> <li>• case study</li> <li>• cross-over groups</li> <li>• distance learning</li> <li>• elicitation (Socratic technique)</li> <li>• feedback session</li> <li>• field study</li> <li>• formal lecture</li> <li>• game</li> <li>• gapped lecture</li> <li>• group work</li> <li>• guided reading</li> <li>• informal lecture</li> <li>• jigsaw learning</li> <li>• lecture</li> <li>• lecturette</li> <li>• open learning</li> <li>• project</li> <li>• pyramid group (snowball group)</li> <li>• role play</li> <li>• self-help group</li> <li>• seminar</li> <li>• simulation</li> <li>• task-based learning</li> <li>• tutorial</li> <li>• tutorless group</li> <li>• workshop</li> </ul>

Figure 4: Generative taxonomies for designing teacher training activities.

Such sets of taxonomies can act as a check-list which trainers can refer to when planning training activities. You could conceive of these taxonomies as a substitution table allowing for the formation of large numbers of mixed-mode training procedures. This generative 'substitution table' can be further cross-fertilized by adding additional taxonomies to the existing 'columns' and thus expanding the parameters which can determine the way you handle a particular input item. The new 'columns' might include some of the following:

SURVEY OF TRAINEES' LEARNING PREFERENCES (A QUESTIONNAIRE)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lectures</li> <li>films/videos</li> <li>transparencies</li> <li>quizzes</li> <li>writing assignments</li> <li>questionnaires</li> <li>self-assessments</li> <li>field trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>questions and answers</li> <li>class discussion</li> <li>cartoon without captions</li> <li>group brainstorming</li> <li>round table activities</li> <li>in-class reading</li> <li>out-of-class reading</li> <li>problem-solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>debates</li> <li>panel discussions</li> <li>role plays</li> <li>visualizations</li> <li>jigsaws</li> <li>others?</li> </ul>
THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES THEORY	LEARNING STYLES	CATEGORIES OF THINKING (i.e. cognitive load)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logical-mathematical</li> <li>Linguistic</li> <li>Spatial</li> <li>Musical</li> <li>Intrapersonal</li> <li>Interpersonal</li> <li>Bodily-kinesthetic</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visual</li> <li>auditory</li> <li>kinesthetic</li> <li>tactile</li> <li>group / individual</li> <li>holist / serialist</li> <li>analytic / global</li> <li>field-dependent / independent</li> <li>introvert / extrovert</li> <li>reflective / impulsive</li> <li>thinking / feeling</li> <li>intolerance / tolerance of ambiguity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge</li> <li>Comprehension</li> <li>Application</li> <li>Analysis</li> <li>Synthesis</li> <li>Evaluation</li> </ul>

We will now add the 'methodology' component to the syllabus design process outlined in *Figure 1*. If this component draws, among other things, on the above-mentioned taxonomies, then the structure may look as follows:



This framework can offer a trainer a lot of food for thought. Whenever you bring in an input item, you can test it against these taxonomies and see how you can tackle it. This is not a mechanical process, however. As we know, substitution tables usually allow for a large number of 'correct' or 'true' sentences, whereas some combinations are 'wrong' or impossible. The same applies to the teacher training activities generator above. Certain input items will probably be more appropriate to be tackled in some 'established' or 'conventional' ways. You simply can't drop them through certain 'slots' because they seem to defy methodology. There are things which trainees have to learn, but which are not, in themselves, particularly interesting or capable of being made interesting. This does not mean they should not be done, but it means that other techniques rather than '*making work interesting*' should be used. This means that some motivation is in most cases necessary before trainees can find work interesting.

Still, it is worth experimenting because the substitution table technique allows not only for a large number of 'correct' sentences, but also for a number of unusual or 'funny' combinations. Change and adjust activities to suit your mood, your trainees, and your personality. Be on the lookout for new ideas, and if anything strikes your fancy, put it into your ideas file; apropos, some of the best language teacher training ideas come from non-EFL sources.

## 4. Conclusion

I have outlined only some of the ways in which the input the trainer brings into the pre-service teacher training course can be made interesting and relevant to trainees. The use of generative taxonomies can ensure a wide variety of input and different ways of handling it. In the long run, this approach will help the trainer extend his teaching repertoire enabling him to make choices as to which option to use. Having a variety of different ways of doing things can lessen boredom and enables the trainer and trainees to 'make lemonade from lemons'.

One could claim that if the communicative approach to language teaching appears to be dominant at present and if a training course is, at least to some extent, to echo classroom practice, then it follows that teacher training should also take up some 'communicative' features.

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