ELT games and teacher beliefs:
The use of games in teacher education in Oman

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ABSTRACT ————————————————————————

Teacher education programs are powerful socialization agencies which play a pivotal role in helping student teachers to become informed and dynamic agents of positive change in English language teaching (ELT) education systems around the world. This paper focuses on one such system, that of Oman, which is governed by various theoretical and practical shortcomings that have resulted in poor English language competence among students for several decades (Al-Issa, 2005a; 2005b; 2005d; 2008). This paper discusses 11 games that were used to help 18 non-native English speaking student teachers (NNESSTs) in Muscat Intermediate Teacher Training College (MITTC) to reflect on and confront their own belief systems concerning classroom management, language learning and language teaching. The use of games was implemented in two different ways: first, to train the student teachers in the course "Professional English" and, second, to teach pupils in whose classes the student teachers did their practice teaching. Two self-report questionnaires (pre-practicum and post-practicum) were used for data collection. It was found that the use of games enriched the student teachers' command and understanding of "Professional English" (as opposed to "Elementary English" which is the focus of the national training curriculum) as well as resulted in a change in perspectives on the nature of their work as ELT practitioners. Nevertheless, some beliefs about language teaching also persisted.

KEYWORDS: *non-native English-speaking student teachers, Muscat Intermediate Teacher Training College, Professional English, games, teacher education, language learning, language teaching, classroom management*

Introduction

Students in Oman receive nine years of formal English language instruction but they exit the rigid and centralized system with an inadequate level of English language proficiency. According to Al-Issa (2002; 2006b; 2007b), Omani students suffer from various problems mainly associated with factors like low motivation because students do not see the rationale behind learning English.

Moreover, there is the problem of insufficient time allocated to English language teaching (ELT) in the national curriculum, as well as the problem of product-based and textbook-based instruction which minimize exposure to English and restrict creative and authentic use and practice of the language.

Teachers thus find it hard to bring any of their own knowledge and skills to the classroom as the largely teacher-proof national textbook is the center of the teaching-learning process.

A further problem is exam-oriented and memorization-based learning which defeats the purpose of learning English for multiple and functional purposes. This influences students to believe that learning English is just another fact-based subject rather than a language which involves many skills to be learned.

An additional problem is mixed-ability and large classes (35-50 students per class) which generally force teachers to adopt conservative teaching approaches. This prevents them from organizing pair and group work activities, limits the students' participation time and limit attention to individual differences and other classroom management-based problems.

Lastly, there is the problem of conflicting and multiple cultural backgrounds of teachers—Arabs (Egyptians, Jordanians, Syrians, Sudanese, Moroccans and Tunisians) and non-Arabs (Indians, Pakistanis and Sri Lankans). These teachers sometimes teach the way they were taught—English through Arabic and teaching through the Grammar Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method. They are not necessarily intrinsically inferior approaches to the teaching of language but the main problem points to how these strategies combine (sometimes unsuccessfully) with Omani students' own cultural expectations of teaching and learning.

All these factors hinder the successful English language policy implementation in Oman which emphasizes the importance of preparing students for use of English as a *lingua franca* in and outside Oman and for functional purposes such as studying science and technology, conducting business, traveling, analyzing and understanding culture, pursuing higher education and finding a white-collar job (Al-Issa, 2002; 2005c; 2007b).

To help address these issues, this paper discusses 11 games that were used to help 18 non-native English speaking student teachers (NNESSTs) in Muscat Intermediate Teacher Training College (MITTC) to increase their exposure to "Professional English" (PE) in a compressed training program and (through the use of these games), to confront the various negative beliefs they bring to the training program about classroom management, language learning, and language teaching which can negatively influence their performance during their training and after graduation.

The problem: A brief look at the MITTC ELT Curriculum

The target teachers in this paper are graduates of the English Language Teaching (ELT) Curriculum of Muscat Intermediate Teacher Training College (MITTC). Graduates of this institution usually join MITTC at the age of 18 and exit it two years later as full-time teachers of English. They spend two years studying the English language and subjects related to ELT. This is in addition to studying other Arabic-medium subjects such as Arabic language, psychology, social studies and others.

The English Curriculum for Intermediate Teacher Training Colleges (1986) states that

The course (Professional English) covers basic E.L.T. theory as it relates to the Omani curriculum, without complex terminology, and then provides trainees with an understanding of some key E.L.T. procedures used at Elementary level (Classes 4 and 5) in order to provide as input for the observation sessions (in addition to the course in Teaching Observation and Teaching Practice) and basic techniques to exploit in team-teaching. Trainees are expected to do a lot of discussion, to concentrate on improving their language accuracy at Elementary level, and to acquire the specific phrases necessary for educational and E.L.T. methodology (p. 22).

It is evident that the aims of the program are narrow and confined to preparing teachers of English for a particular (basic) stage—Elementary classes—where the pupils are essentially beginning learners of English. Oman lacks local English teachers and the aim of opening this college was to expedite the process of producing a qualified national teaching pool. However, while the above aims may satisfy the needs of the stakeholders, they fail to satisfy the needs and ambitions of the student teachers and their trainers to tackle higher level issues concerning ELT discourse embodied in "Professional English". The literature on English language teacher education has stressed the need for non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) not only to be proficient in English but also to be proficient in ELT discourse (Fradd & Lee, 1998). However, the Omani context may not be an ideal context for this to happen because of time limitations, to say the least. While non-native English speaking student teachers (NNESSTs) in other countries usually spend four years at the university prior to graduating as qualified teachers of English, Omani student teachers spend half of this period.

One solution: Games in ELT

There is, therefore, a need to address the student teachers' desire to improve themselves and become capable teachers of English. But because of the limited training provided them, their motivation is generally low. One way to enhance their motivation level is through the use of games in the classrooms. There is rich literature on language games in ELT as well as their powerful role in supporting learning among learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL). In fact, it has been found that games can indeed enhance students' affective and cognitive development and improve class dynamics and teacher and teaching adaptability in the classroom (Lengeling & Malarcher, 1997). However, these games thus far have generally been targeted towards meeting the ELT learners' "General English" (GE) needs—learners who are learning English mainly for general purposes such as those at public or private schools.

This paper proposes a number of games which have been tried with student teachers at MITTC and have been found to be successful in motivating these teachers at the "Professional English" (as opposed to "General" or "Elementary" levels). In other words, the aim of the games is essentially the same which is to help the student teachers to enhance their proficiency in English. However, it is a specialized kind of English that is needed here, one that the student teachers themselves need to speak and use as professionals in their field. In addition, it

also seeks to find out how games have been used by the student teachers in the school where they did their practicum. Apparently, training does not have to be always about teaching practice and formal lecturing or serious discussions. Teacher training should be first and foremost about creating opportunities and contexts for language and knowledge acquisition, critical thinking and reflection which all form a part of the teacher's overall professional development. The use of games, however, may run counter to teachers' over-all and specific beliefs about the classroom and how it should be managed. While they may be effective, these games must also be investigated in terms of their capacity to affirm and/or change the teachers' belief systems.

Research questions

The following are the research questions for the study:
1. What effect did the games have on the target student teachers' learning of "Professional English" (PE)?
2. How did the games help the student teachers confront their beliefs about classroom management, language learning and language teaching?

The games

In addition to helping the student teachers gain a better understanding of and enhance expertise in their PE (see Appendix 1), all games were intended to show the student teachers that meaningful change and creative and innovative planning and teaching are possible and welcome in the English language classroom. The games were chosen because they serve a variety of purposes, e.g., to show student teachers how
● to use their analytical skills
● to purposefully complement the mandated textbook
● each lesson is different and how English language learning is not just about memorization but about comprehension as well
● language is about conveying ideas and messages using the appropriate language and hence about communication
● to plan activities that can promote student centeredness
● to promote the importance of receptive skills
● language is complex whose use requires creativity
● language requires internalization, thinking and analysis

Data collection and analysis

The sample for the survey used for the purpose of this paper consisted of 18 student teachers. All of them completed the questionnaires and returned them to me. The first questionnaire (pre-practicum) was distributed among the student teachers towards the end of the second term while the second questionnaire (post-practicum) was distributed towards the end of the fourth term.

Two five-point Likert scale questionnaires consisting of 17 items each were used for data collection (see Appendix 2 & 3). The pre-practicum questionnaire had two aims: (1) find out the student teachers' perceptions the games as these were used in training and (2) then find out how these games have changed their beliefs about various facets of ELT work.

For the post-practicum questionnaire, the aims were (1) to find out the student teachers' perceptions of the games as they were used in practice teaching and (2) to see whether the games had any impact on their beliefs as future teachers. The two questionnaires were analyzed against each other using descriptive analysis (SPSS 12.0) to identify any possible correlation.

Discussion

The surveys sought out views on three major areas: classroom management (items 1, 2 and 3), language learning (items 4, 5, 6 and 7) and language teaching (items 8 to 17). Classroom management refers to issues concerning learners' behavior, discipline, respect and motivation. Language learning refers to the process of language acquisition and development with minimal direct interference from the teacher or the teacher trainer. Language teaching refers to the different roles played and approaches used by the student teachers in their teaching. In the following sections, key findings are presented and discussed in the context of what these mean to the student teachers' beliefs about ELT

Classroom management

Almost all 18 student teachers agreed in items 1 and 2 in both questionnaires that playing language games was fun, motivating, challenging and competitive indicating a significant correlation between the first and second items in both questionnaires (see Tables 1 and 2 for pre and post-practicum means and standard deviation). It must be noted again that this correlation concerns the use of games in teacher training (specifically in the PE course) as well as their use in actual classes where the student teachers taught. These could mean that the student teachers saw the wisdom or seriousness behind the use of games in teaching and learning even if affirming their effectiveness means a subtle acceptance of the need for more variety in teaching and learning in the Omani classroom.

Much of the teaching in a typical Omani ELT classroom is serious, formal and conducted via "chalk and talk" where the textbook is the focus of the entire process (Al-Issa, 2006a; 2006b; 2007a). As mentioned earlier, English is treated like any other fact-based school subject and considered by many students a mountain to climb (Al-Issa, 2006b). Al-Issa (2007a) found that the Omani ELT syllabus lacks challenge and flexibility and that teachers experience great difficulties using some of their own professional knowledge to complement the syllabus because it is largely teacher-proof. Students are confined to the language of the "sacred" textbook as this is what they are tested in at the end of each semester (Al-Issa, 2006a; 2006b; 2007a). Hamachek (1999) argues that being "flexibly adaptive" (p. 208) is when teachers meet their students' needs, thus it is one of the top

Table 1
Means and standard deviation for pre-practicum survey

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
1	18	4.00	5.00	4.8333	.3835
2	18	4.00	5.00	4.7778	.4278
3	18	4.00	5.00	4.4444	.51131
4	18	4.00	5.00	4.7778	.4278
5	18	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.0000
6	18	4.00	5.00	4.8889	.32338
7	18	3.00	4.00	3.8889	.32338
8	18	4.00	5.00	4.7778	.4278
9	18	4.00	5.00	4.1667	.38348
10	18	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.51450
11	18	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.0000
12	18	3.00	5.00	4.6667	.5941
13	18	3.00	5.00	4.6667	.5941
14	18	4.00	5.00	4.7222	.46089
15	18	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.51450
16	18	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.0000
17	18	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.0000

Table 2
Means and standard deviation for post-practicum survey

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
1	18	4.00	5.00	4.7778	.4278
2	18	4.00	5.00	4.7778	.4278
3	18	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.97014
4	18	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.5145
5	18	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.0000
6	18	2.00	5.00	4.1111	.90025
7	18	2.00	5.00	3.9444	.80237
8	18	4.00	5.00	4.7222	.4609
9	18	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.48507
10	18	3.00	5.00	4.2222	.64676
11	18	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.5145
12	18	4.00	5.00	4.8333	.3835
13	18	4.00	5.00	4.8333	.3835
14	18	2.00	4.00	2.3333	.76696
15	18	2.00	4.00	2.3333	.76696
16	18	2.00	4.00	2.3333	.76696
17	18	1.00	4.00	2.1111	.96338

personality traits associated with good and effective teaching. The use of games (among many possibilities, of course) may help the student teachers become flexibly adaptive.

Similarly, Kim (1995) argues that learning should not be always serious and that it is a misconception to think that one cannot learn and enjoy themselves at the same time. In addition to being entertaining (Richard-Amato, 1988), amusing, interesting (Ersoz, 2000), and adding fun and variety to the ELT classroom (Kim, 1995), games are also considered a welcome change of pace and a refreshing element in TESOL which helps break the language classroom routine (Dobson, 1980; Kim, 1995).

However, while all student teachers agreed in item 3 of the pre-practicum questionnaire that playing some of the games helped them understand some possible classroom problems and ways of managing them, almost half of them (in the post-practicum questionnaire) disagreed with the statement that the games helped them maintain good classroom control and develop a positive rapport with their pupils. What can explain this disagreement?

Some of the games used by the student teachers required the pupils to actually physically move in different directions in the classroom and sit in groups and pairs. This generated some noise which some student teachers found annoying and disturbing. Numrich (1996) analyzed diaries kept by 26 student teachers during their practicum and found that controlling learners when they talk is one of the teachers' early preoccupations while teaching. The concept of discipline and control in the Omani and many other similar Arab and Asian cultures is associated with learners as being quiet during the lesson and as obedient recipients of knowledge from the teacher. Some of the student teachers found it hard to free themselves from this strong belief given the Omani context in which they teach where learners always sit in rows while teachers stand or sit in front of the class (Al-Issa, 2002).

As far as developing a positive rapport with the pupils is concerned, one can argue that it is sometimes hard for student teachers in such a short period of time to establish a close relationship with the pupils. Besides, relationship between teachers and young learners (below 12 years of age) in a context like Oman and many other similar Arab countries is usually formal and is mainly confined to respect and obedience shown by the pupils to their teachers who are ultimate figures of authority. The relationship seldom requires learners to demonstrate a sense of cooperation with the rest of their peers.

Language learning

There is a significant correlation between the answers given to items 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the pre-practicum questionnaire and the post-practicum questionnaire. What this means is that both in their training and teaching, all student teachers agreed that working in pairs through language games was helpful and useful for language improvement. All student teachers further agreed that the games both helped them develop better competence in PE and helped their pupils practice their English. All of them also agreed that playing some of the games encouraged

them and their pupils to deploy a wide variety of language skills. Moreover, most of the student teachers agreed that playing the games helped them and their pupils learn from their mistakes and that of others. These positive correlations could mean that the student teachers have seen the impact of language games on their ability to engage in communicative work in the classroom through pair work, cooperative learning and real-life use of English.

These results confirm past research which says that, because learning English is perceived as hard and sometimes frustrating (Ersoz, 2000), games "help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems that at times seem overwhelming" (Uberman, 1988, p. 21). Games, therefore, promote cooperation amongst students (Ersoz, 2000; Rixon, 1981) and combine work and play (Lee, 1979). Similarly, the student teachers' positive appraisal of games which make use of pair work can also be explained by the claim that games do indeed help create a meaningful and useful context for language use (Kim, 1995; Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby, 1984) because they help positively influence students' attention, involvement, interaction and achievement in language learning. Games enable a relaxed atmosphere which consequently both promote use of language rather than mere thinking about its form (Lee, 1979) and help learners remember things faster (Uberman, 1988).

Learners in teacher and textbook-centered and large ELT classrooms, as it is the case in Oman, hardly find a chance to practice the use of English in a meaningful and useful way. Their exposure is confined mainly to the use textbook(s) and teacher's language. Strategies such as learner-centered and independent learning rarely, if ever, have a place in the classroom. Games in this sense can help provide a classroom context where students can use language communicatively.

Language teaching

There is a positive correlation between items 8–13 of the pre-practicum and post-practicum questionnaires. The student teachers essentially felt that the games used by their trainer as well as those they used with their own students showed creativity, adaptiveness, variety and enthusiasm in the classroom. These findings affirm that of Larcabal's (1992) which also showed that language games help create 'creative freedom'. Intelligent, good and effective teachers are those who create spaces for their students to think and work creatively. This can be achieved partly by going beyond the textbook and expanding the realm of language exposure.

Moving beyond the syllabus is unwelcome and sometimes deemed unacceptable by some ELT inspectors because the end-of-semester exams are largely based upon the mandated textbook (Al-Issa, 2006a; 2006b; 2007a). Numrich (1996) found that preservice teachers are concerned about teaching creatively and in a varied way. Hence, effective and intelligent teachers are those who are in a position to translate their "pedagogical knowledge" and "pedagogical content knowledge" (Shulman, 1986) into ways that allow them to address their own concerns as pre-service teachers. This can take the shape of thorough planning (Hamachek, 1999; Mullock, 2003) or use of flexible and diverse teaching methods

to cater to a variety of student needs and concerns (Mullock, 2003). Games, therefore, help teachers supplement lesson plans (Lengelin & Malarcher, 1997) and create useful and meaningful language contexts for their learners (Wright et al., 1984) which help them develop communication skills in a stimulating and interesting way (Larcabal, 1992). These contexts can go beyond what a traditional Omani ELT classroom offers.

It must be noted, though, that there is no significant correlation between items 14, 15, and 16 of the pre-practicum and the post-practicum questionnaires. While the student teachers felt that games used in their training helped them learn PE from other sources (and not just the syllabus), they felt that the games they played with their students did not use language beyond what the syllabus required, was not challenging enough and did not really use any new language items. This reflects tension in training and practice: the use of games for teacher training may be deemed useful and creative but when it comes to using them with students, the culture of the classroom dictates conditions which prevent them from deploying similar useful and creative ways to teach.

Hence, failure to introduce new language beyond the textbook during practicum can be attributed to a number of reasons mainly associated with student teachers' "... different interacting sources of knowledge" (Borg, 2003, p. 104) which may come in conflict with each other or with those they have learned in their training. Such sources include subject matter knowledge, knowledge of immediate classroom environment, knowledge of instructional techniques, knowledge of learners and knowledge about teaching and learning derived from prior experience (Borg, 2003). For example, student teachers—because of lack of experience, ineffective training or superficial understanding of the subject matter—usually prefer to adhere to the textbook as they feel safe by doing so (Al-Issa, 2005a); or the student teachers might have started teaching in a manner similar to the way they were taught when they were young. Positively, this failure to introduce new language in the games with pupils while the student teachers themselves thought that the games used with them in the training went beyond textbook expectations could mean that they are 'growing' in the profession. There is evidence in the literature that suggests that teachers 'grow' as they reflect on the way they were taught and try to embrace this attitude of openness during practice teaching where new ways of teaching and learning have also been introduced (Eisentein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997).

Indeed, Lee (1979) and Richard-Amato (1988) argue that games can be a rich source of introducing new language. Introducing new language items beyond the prescribed textbook and one which is above the learners' level refers mainly to vocabulary, phrases, sentences, spelling, pronunciation and grammar. Languages develop through good exposure to new and relevant items and their use in meaningful and interactive situations.

The last finding for this section concerns the use of Arabic in the classroom while games were being played. Both questionnaires revealed opposing results. The student teachers noted that their trainers did not use Arabic in the classroom while this was not the case when they themselves played the games with their pupils. This could be explained by the fact that the student teachers were assigned

to teach young children whose proficiency in English is extremely limited. Most pupils in Omani public schools come from home backgrounds which provide limited English language exposure to their children prior to joining school (Al-Issa, 2002), which results in the teaching of English through Arabic. I attended some of the classes during the student teachers' practicum and observed that some of the student teachers used Arabic mostly for explaining certain individual lexical items and for giving instructions. Use of the students' mother tongue in such cases has its advantages and disadvantages. It deprives the learners of maximum exposure to and practice of the target language, but it also helps them understand key concepts better which can, in fact, lead to better comprehension skills in English.

Conclusions and recommendations

This aim of this paper was to find out about student teachers' perceptions of classroom management, language learning and language teaching through issues arising from the use of games in the classrooms. The findings in this paper complement findings from other papers (Freeman, 1993; Almarza, 1996; Richards, Ho, & Giblin, 1996; Sendan & Roberts, 1998; Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000) about the impact of teacher education on ELT student teachers' beliefs. In this case, the use of games in teacher training and practice teaching was investigated to find out more about student teachers' beliefs about their own work and how creativity and innovation in language teaching can further be explored.

Various training contexts call for the generation of different ideas. It is important that student teachers and educators equally see the value and effectiveness of games and their contribution to second language teacher education. According to Wright et al. (1984), games "... must be regarded as central to a teacher's repertoire" as they "... provide intense and meaningful practice of language" (p. 1). A similar idea is also forwarded by Lee (1979) who argues that games should be treated as central, rather than peripheral, to the foreign language teaching program. After all, teacher education should be about creating appropriate and meaningful contexts for development which encourage and stimulate critical thinking and analysis, exploration, creativity, innovation and informed decision-making. These contexts have their implications for the establishment and continuity of a strong EFL/ESL teacher education program and the education and preparation of good, dynamic and effective teachers for the future.

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Appendix 1: The Games

Jumbled terms

Aim: Allow further exposure to target terminology.
Consolidate and practice spelling of target terms.

Procedure: Trainer prepares a list of terms, which the trainees have had and jumbles the letter. Trainees either working individually or in pairs attempt to rearrange the letters. Papers can be exchanged later for peer marking.

Example terms: omcunicmtaiev nihtgeac = communicative teaching, gaulnaeg qstniicauo = language acquisition, ganemtci rdaob = magnetic board, rategt aglanueg = target language, peteitrtnoi = repetition, enmcacihla lisdrl = mechanical drills, and so on.

Spot the errors

Aim: Allow exposure to and familiarize with ELT texts.
Introduce new terminology.
Train trainees into the skill of marking written work.

Procedure: Either individually or in pairs, trainees are given a copy of a text taken from a TESOL book or article. This text is then rewritten or retyped by the trainer where some mistakes are added to it. Examples of such mistakes can include grammar, spelling, word order, choice of vocabulary, punctuation and so on. Trainees are required to spot the errors and preferably mark them using the International Marking System.

Example text: The most affective communication practice is that which is build up around the people, places, and things which with the students are familiar. As far as possible; it should take into acount their age level, individual interests, hobies, the work they does or the other subjects they studying, the locality in which they lives, and as many other detail relevant to their daily lives as possible. this, of course, requiring the teacher to spends a fair amount of time getting to knew the students personaly, so that he may guides the practice into those areas in which they would be most eager to express themselves in real-life comunication? (From Cosgrave, 1980, p. 119)

Order and match

Aim: Allow further exposure to target terminology.
Allow exposure to (model) lesson plans.
Consolidate understanding of aims and rationale behind various teaching techniques.

Procedure: Trainer prepares a lesson plan, which includes the activities and the corresponding aims. This is then cut out into slips and is jumbled. Trainees are arranged either in pairs or groups in order to attempt to order the lesson steps first and then to match each step with the corresponding aim. Different lessons can be given to different groups where they can switch slips after completing one task. In subsequent classes, allocated groups of trainees can design their own slips and exchange. Alternatively, a simplified version of this game can take the shape of providing jumbled lesson steps where the trainees are required to order them.

Match

Aim: Consolidate understanding of meaning of ELT terms.

Procedure: Trainer prepares a list of terms with jumbled definitions. Trainees either in pairs or individually are given copies and are asked to match each term with its corresponding definition. Trainer can include extra definitions, which do not correspond with any term for the sake of confusion.

Example terms and meanings: Terms: Imitate, pause, mime, sequence, utterance, chorus, illustrations, lexis.
Meanings: Copy, stop for a short time, acting without language to show meaning, a group of things happening in order, a spoken sentence, the whole class, pictures, vocabulary.

Out of the bag

Aim: Consolidate ability to explain technical terms.

Procedure: Trainer prepares some folded slips with terms written on each one. Slips are put in a plastic bag. Trainees are divided into two to three groups, depending on the size of the class. A student from each group at a time comes before class and picks a slip from the bag, unfolds it and then explains the term written on it. The explanation can be supported by examples for clarity sake. This can be made clear by the trainer prior to the commencement of the activity. Marks out of five can be given to each trainee. Marks gained by each group are added up to declare the winner.

Example terms: Classroom management, interactive teaching, receptive and productive skills, teacher centered, mixed ability classes, approach, fluency and accuracy, language in context, attention span, interpersonal skills, dictation, etc.

Exchange

Aim: Allow exposure to and familiarity with ELT texts.
Allow further exposure to target terminology.
Introduce new terminology.

Procedure: Trainees are divided into three to four groups, depending on the size of the class. Each group is given a text extracted from a basic ELT book or article to read and form as many questions as possible. The range of questions can vary and can include True/False, WH, MCQ, sentence completion and so on. Later groups exchange texts and questions and are asked to correct any mistakes that might be found in the questions and follow this by answering the questions. The exchanged papers are returned to the original groups for marking the answers.

The panel/What would you do?

Aim: Generate discussion about most commonly occurring classroom management problems and propose suitable solutions.
Allow further exposure to target terminology.
Introduce new terminology.

Procedure: Trainees are divided into groups and are given a number of problem cases related to classroom management. They are required to study each problem at a time and suggest a suitable solution. A panel of preferably three students is designated to listen to the different solutions reported back by the groups and to give marks accordingly. The group,

which receives the highest marks, is the winner. The mark can be out of five. The members of the panel can either give a mark each where the average is worked out, or they all agree on one mark. However, it is advised that the marks and the total mark are revealed at the end of the activity to help add more suspense to the activity. Also, since the trainer is obviously more experienced, he/she can jot down his/her own mark and compare it with the panel's mark and work out the average.

Example problem cases: Two students swearing at each other;
A student chewing a gum;
A student harassing his/her neighbor;
A student arrived ten minutes late for class;
A student repeatedly forgets his/her textbooks;
Two students fighting;
A student stole his/her neighbor's stationery item;
A student repeatedly does not do his/her homework.

Dictation

Aim: Help student teachers master spelling of ELT terms.

Procedure: Trainer picks a text from an ELT reference book and dictates it to the student teachers. The student teachers see the text when they correct their mistakes or exchange papers and correct others', or do both. The number of misspelled and missing words is counted up and a score is arrived at.

Bingo/Lotto

Aim: Allow further practice of and exposure to ELT terms.

Procedure: Each student teacher has a word-card on which there are several ELT terms arranged under one another. The trainer has all the words in random. S/he reads them out. Anybody who has the same word on his/her card as s/he hears it from the trainer can tick/cross the word on his/her card. The first student teacher to have his/her words covered is the winner.

Make a sentence

Aim: Practice putting and using different ELT terms in context.

Procedure: Trainer divides class into groups. Each group is given a list of ELT terms. Student teachers are given a specific time to make sentences using the terms. Trainer collects the papers and writes the sentences on the board. The number of mistakes, which includes spelling, grammar, choice of vocabulary, word order and punctuations is counted up and a score is arrived at.

Terminology square

Aim: Allow further practice of and exposure to ELT terms.

Procedure: Trainer prepares sufficient copies of the Terminology Square, which include TESOL terms. Students, preferably working independently, are expected to find those terms and circle them. The terms can be in either a vertical or horizontal position, upwards or downwards, or diagonally.

Example terms: Competence, discipline, elicit, plural, evaluate, skill, gestures, memory, aural, motivation, variety, scan, skim, context, oral, realia.

G	E	S	T	U	R	E	S	E	L	C	E
N	V	A	R	I	E	T	Y	G	A	H	C
Z	A	C	O	N	T	E	X	T	R	S	N
R	L	Q	D	L	M	S	P	R	U	C	E
E	U	V	R	I	G	K	U	F	A	A	T
A	A	D	K	S	C	I	P	L	I	N	E
L	T	S	E	F	Y	L	C	A	Y	R	P
I	E	L	I	R	U	L	O	R	W	O	M
A	H	I	O	L	E	V	M	O	H	A	O
T	S	M	N	P	L	U	R	A	L	L	C
D	E	L	I	C	I	T	A	X	U	E	B
M	O	T	I	V	A	T	I	O	N	A	I

Appendix 2

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Playing games in the classroom was fun.	15	3			
2	The games were motivating, challenging, and competitive	14	4			
3	Playing some of the games helped me understand some possible classroom problems and ways of managing them	8	10			
4	Working in pairs and groups was helpful and useful for my PE improvement	14	4			
5	Playing the games helped me practice my PE	18				
6	Playing some of the games encouraged me to use all language skills almost equally	16	2			
7	Playing the games helped me learn from some of the mistakes my classmates and I made		16	2		
8	The games were a helpful and useful complementary activity	14	4			
9	Some/all of the games stimulated my thinking	3	15			
10	Playing some of the games helped me see that different lessons can be planned in different ways	9	9			
11	I will use an adapted version of these games and other games with my pupils in the future	18				
12	The trainer showed a lot of enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to help us improve our PE	13	4	1		
13	The trainer showed a lot of knowledge and creativity in designing the games	13	4	1		
14	Playing the games helped me pick new PE from sources other than the syllabus	13	5			
15	I found the PE in some of the games challenging	9	9			
16	New PE was introduced through the games	18				
17	The trainer did not use any Arabic while playing the games	18				

Appendix 3

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Playing games in the classroom was fun.	14	4			
2	The games were motivating, challenging, and competitive	14	4			
3	The games I played with my pupils helped me maintain good classroom control and develop a positive rapport with the pupils		8	2	8	
4	Working in pairs and groups was helpful and useful for my pupils' language improvement	9	9			
5	The games helped my pupils practice their English (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, pronounciation, and the four skills)	18				
6	Some/most of the games I played with my pupils encouraged them to use more than one language skill at the same time	6	10		2	
7	While playing the games I encouraged my pupils to correct their own and their classmates' mistakes	3	13		2	
8	The games were a helpful and useful complementary task	13	5			
9	Some/most of the games I played with my pupils stimulated their thinking	2	14	2		
10	The games I played with my pupils added variety to my teaching/lesson planning	6	10	2		
11	I used an adapted version of the games and other games with my pupils	9	9			
12	I tried to show enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to help my pupils improve their English	15	3			
13	I tried to show knowledge and creativity in designing the games	15	3			
14	Some/most of the language used in my games was beyond the textbook language		3		15	
15	The games I played with my pupils sometimes/mostly included challenging language		3		15	
16	The games helped introduce new language items to my pupils		3		15	
17	I did not use any Arabic while playing the games with my pupils		3		11	4