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ABSTRACT

The practicum is widely accepted as an integral part of the master's degree program for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (MATESOL) throughout the United States. While research has provided some insight, there is no clear consensus as to what the practicum's objectives should be. Moreover, the student clientele of MATESOL programs is extremely heterogeneous with respect to such factors as nationality, career goals, previous professional preparation, and prior teaching experience. Given the absence of uniform program objectives and the wide range of student needs, abilities, and goals, MATESOL practicum objectives should be based as much on student needs as on program philosophy. The setting of practicum objectives should be seen as a dynamic, ongoing process in which goals may change from semester to semester and from student to student. (23 references) (MSE)

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TESOL PRACTICUM: BRIDGING THE GAP
BETWEEN STUDENT NEEDS AND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Practicum is widely accepted as an integral part of MATESOL programs throughout the United States. However, there is no clear consensus on what the objectives of practicum should be. Moreover, the student clientele of MATESOL programs is extremely heterogeneous with respect to such factors as nationality, career goals, previous professional preparation, and prior teaching experience.

The author argues that given the absence of uniform program objectives and the wide range of student needs, abilities, and goals, MATESOL practicum objectives should be based as much on student needs as program philosophy. This paper discusses salient MATESOL student needs, examines how such needs may affect the framing of practicum objectives, and suggests ways in which these objectives can be identified, implemented, and assessed.

TESOL Practicum: Bridging the Gap Between Student Needs and Program Objectives

The Directory of Professional Preparation Programs in TESOL in the United States lists 120 institutions that offer programs leading to a master's degree in either TESOL or a TESOL-related field (Frank-McNeil, 1986). Of those programs, approximately 85% report having a practicum requirement, and of these 85%, roughly half allow no grounds for exemption, while the remainder exempt only those students who have had prior teaching experience (Richards & Crookes, 1988).

These figures underscore the conviction voiced by Richards and Crookes (1988) that practicum is considered to be a salient component in the preparation of TESOL professionals because it provides "the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as an effective language teacher"(p.9). Still, Richards and Crookes have also noted that there is a "lack of agreement on objectives for a practicum"(p.23) among administrators of MATESOL programs.

That there is a lack of consensus regarding the objectives of the MATESOL practicum is not surprising for two reasons. First, as has been pointed out by Cyphert (1977), Jarvis (1983), Richards and Hino (1983), and Stern (1983), little empirical data exists (beyond what has been derived from questionnaire or survey data) to support the contentions of such theorists as Richards, Freeman, and Gephard

concerning the goals and objectives of teacher preparation programs in foreign language education.

In other words, most of the prescriptions offered by leaders in the field are based more upon common sense or intuition than upon quantifiable evidence. That is not to say that such prescriptions are either untrue or without value. Still, the lack of empirical evidence continues to hinder efforts to validate claims that MATESOL program objectives satisfy student needs. However, as Brown (1983) has observed, "The search for relevance in LTE (Language Teaching Education) programs has perhaps been thwarted somewhat by overzealous attempts to find analytical solutions"(p.57). Indeed, it can be argued that viewing LTE more as art than science captures the essence of an activity that does not lend itself well to empirical analysis because it involves so many different learner, teacher, and culture-based variables.

Second, there exists a tremendous range of local, institutional, departmental, and individual philosophies, interests, resources, and priorities that both shape and constrain the organization and implementation of MATESOL programs. In other words, each MATESOL program is in many ways a unique entity whose parameters are defined by a combination of variables that can (and do) shift from term to term. From a student standpoint, such variety can be an advantage, in that it allows an aspiring teacher of ESOL to select the program - and practicum experience - whose objectives, facilities,

and options most closely match her/his educational and professional needs.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to which objectives for any given MATESOL practicum should be pursued to meet the needs of a student clientele whose personal and professional backgrounds are likely to vary widely with regard to such factors as nationality, type and amount of previous professional preparation and/or actual teaching experience, and career goals. In other words, the instructional goals and objectives that are set by MATESOL practicum programs should not only reflect program goals that are based on sound theoretical foundations, but also the perceived goals and needs of the TESOL practicum students who are exposed to them. The balance of this discussion will discuss some of these student-centered variables of need, examine how such variables may affect the framing of a MATESOL practicum curriculum, suggest ways in which practicum objectives can be shaped to fit the needs of MATESOL students, and propose various means by which practicum objectives can be identified, implemented and assessed.

THE PRACTICUM STUDENT: IDENTIFYING NEEDS

The student population of any one master's program in TESOL is likely to reflect a vast range of backgrounds, experiences, abilities, needs, and goals. This diversity can be attributed to three factors.

First, there are a relatively large number of MATESOL programs to choose from, due to a rapid increase during the last two decades in

the number of institutions offering advanced degrees in TESOL. Evidence of the continued proliferation of these programs can be seen when we compare Blatchford's 1982 tally of the number of North American institutions offering master's degrees in TESOL (78) with Frank-McNeill's 1986 figures, which list 120 such programs representing every geographical area of the country, as well as Canada and Puerto Rico. This growth reflects both an acknowledgment of the increasing importance of the profession and an attempt to draw an ever-widening circle of potential clients into the field.

Second, requirements for admission to MATESOL programs differ radically from institution to institution. England and Roberts (1989) report that of the MATESOL programs responding to their questionnaire, only 12 required a minimum of one year's prior teaching experience, while 49 did not require any. In addition, 40 of 63 respondents did not require a specific undergraduate major, while 18 required a major in English language, Education, or Linguistics. These figures are not entirely unexpected, since as of 1986 only 25 North American institutions offered programs leading to undergraduate degrees in TESOL (Frank-McNeill, 1986).

Third, international student enrollment in MATESOL programs has increased dramatically. For example, fully 72% of the respondents to Day's (1984) survey of graduates of the MATESOL program at the University of Hawaii, covering the 13 year period from 1967 to 1979,

identified themselves as Caucasians and, presumably, native English speakers. However, Roberts and Shields (1988) point out that during the 1980s, a growing number of non-native (NNS) students has enrolled in MATESOL programs, so that "in many places, the non-natives outnumber the natives"(p.1). Support for this observation can be found in the results of the above-mentioned survey of 123 MATESOL programs by England and Roberts (1989), in which the 63 respondents reported that of the 2401 students enrolled, 42.5% were NNS. According to England and Roberts, of these 1021 NNS students, the four major language groups were Chinese (27%), Japanese (15%), Spanish (15%), and Korean (7%). They also report that 82% of all NNS graduates in programs where such statistics were kept have returned to their countries, where 58% teach ESOL full-time and 17% train teachers, write texts, or work in some other ESOL-related field.

To summarize, we can draw the following conclusions about today's clientele of MATESOL practicum programs:

1. The majority enter with little, if any, formal and systematic preservice training in TESOL.
2. A substantial percentage will be relatively lacking in ESL teaching experience [Both Day (1984) and Roberts & Shields (1988) report that the majority of their subjects had two or less years of experience].
3. Many are international students, most of whom plan to work in ESOL or a related field in their home countries.

4. A substantial majority of all graduates [Day (1984) reports 81% in his study] will take ESL teaching positions, in venues ranging from university to pre-school.

Given these generalizations, we can identify three categories into which most MATESOL students will fall with respect to practicum program needs:

1. Professional preparation and experience.
2. Career goals.
3. Native language of student (NS or NNS of English).

Each of these categories can, in turn, be divided into subcategories.

Professional Preparation and Experience

In terms of professional preparation, practicum students can be placed into one of several groups along a continuum that ranges from no preservice teacher preparation [i.e., undergraduate majors or minors outside of Education, Foreign Language Education (FL), Bilingual Education, or ESOL (ESL/EFL)] to comprehensive preservice teacher preparation in ESOL. In terms of professional experience, students range from having no teaching experience (excluding limited tutoring or substitute teaching) in any field to having extensive teaching experience in ESOL.

These categories can be further combined to produce six relatively distinct student types with regard to anticipated practicum needs. [A seventh type, students having both preservice TESOL preparation and ESOL teaching experience, is omitted from consideration in this

discussion, as the practicum requirement is frequently waived for students meeting these criteria (England & Roberts, 1989)]. Figure 1 lists these categories.

 Insert Figure 1 here

Career Goals

Students' career goals within TESOL can also vary widely. On the one hand, many NNS students, such as those surveyed by Roberts and Shields (1988), are scholarship students under obligation to return home to teach in their countries' school systems. Other students, in contrast, have career goals that are either much more uncertain or are immediately unattainable, as in the case of students who are seeking a specific position or employment in a specific locale in which few vacancies exist. Given this diversity, MATESOL practicum instructors in the process of planning their courses to might consider the following questions:

1. In what venues will their students be likely to practice their craft? Will they be working in a country (or school) in which English is the dominant language? Will they teach in an elementary, secondary, university, language school, or company setting?
2. In what capacity will they serve their employers? Will they be teachers, teacher trainers, teacher supervisors, program

administrators, or curriculum developers? Or will they serve in some other capacity, or in a combination of roles?

Native Language

Among NS MATESOL students, command of spoken English presumably will not be a major concern. For many NNS students, however, command of spoken English may be a source of concern as they approach that point during the practicum experience when they conduct their first English class under the scrutiny of their supervising teacher. Moreover, this feeling of concern may be especially acute if they anticipate eventually teaching in a program that demands spoken English fluency.

Obviously, such concerns about fluency, if legitimate, must be addressed by the practicum instructor well before the NNS student conducts an ESL class. But even if such student concerns are unfounded, the practicum instructor must still address the issue, as an imagined lack of fluency, or fluency without confidence, can have just as harmful an effect on both novice teacher and ESL students as a real lack of fluency.

THE PRACTICUM CURRICULUM: ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES

Constituents of Language Teaching

Freeman's (1989) constituents of language teaching provide a useful framework within which the practicum instructor can assess student needs and formulate course objectives. Freeman identifies these constituents as Knowledge, Skills, Attitude, and Awareness.

According to Freeman, Knowledge encompasses subject matter (the "what" of teaching), as well as characteristics of the learner (the "who") and the learning environment (the "where"). Skills include the ability to select methods, use techniques, manage a classroom, and so forth. Freeman defines Attitude as "the stance one adopts toward oneself, the activity of teaching, and the learner one engages in the teaching/learning process"(p.32). Freeman characterizes Awareness as "the capacity to recognize and monitor the attention one is giving or has given to something"(p.33). In Freeman's vision of language teaching as a decision-making process, Awareness functions as "a superordinate constituent"(p.33) that acts as both a trigger and a monitor of attention to the teacher's (or teacher-trainee's) Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude.

In an earlier work, Freeman (1982) makes a distinction between teacher training and teacher development. The first two constituents of his 1989 model, Knowledge and Skills, can be viewed as the subject matter of what he identifies as teacher training. That is, they provide the background information (the "know") and techniques (the "know-how") of language teaching. From the standpoint of the practicum instructor, training, or what Richards (1987) terms the microapproach to teacher preparation, is accomplished through "direct intervention... to work on specific aspects of the teacher's training (and) is focused on specific outcomes"(Freeman, 1989, p.39).

The practical importance of these two constituents to the preparation of ESOL teachers is clearly reflected in the literature. For example, Richards and Hino (1983), in a study designed to address the issues of needs assessment and evaluation in ESOL teacher preparation programs, report that their subjects (115 expatriate English teachers in Japan) ranked teaching and preparation of instructional materials as the duties they most frequently performed. Similarly, Day (1984) reports that teaching, materials preparation, and curriculum design were the most frequently listed duties of the practicing ESOL teachers who responded to his survey.

That Knowledge and Skills are also perceived as salient needs by practicum students is evident from the research of Brinton and Holten (1989), Gebhard (1990), Richards and Hino (1983), and Roberts and Shields (1989). For example, Brinton and Holten (1989) report that their subjects (novice MATESOL students enrolled in practicum) commented most frequently in their practicum journals about issues of lesson organization, techniques, and methods and activities. In terms of actual change brought about during the course of a 16 week practicum experience, Gebhard (1990), in a participant observer study involving practicum students, reports observing alterations in such Knowledge and Skills-based patterns of teaching behavior as use of classroom space and teaching content.

Among ESOL teachers who have graduated from MATESOL programs, a similar pattern of concern for and appreciation of preservice

preparation in Knowledge and Skills can be seen. In evaluating how useful their coursework was in preparing them to assume their teaching duties, subjects in both the Richards and Hino (1983) and Roberts and Shields (1989) studies rated applied courses - and in particular practicum courses - very highly. In fact, of the 33 items most frequently cited by Richards and Hino's subjects, four of the top five categories were practice teaching (#1), classroom management (#2), materials writing/selection/adaptation (#4), and methods analysis (#5).

Attitude and Awareness, on the other hand, comprise the content of what Freeman terms teacher development. These constituents make up the more affective component of the teacher education equation that Richards (1987) calls the macroapproach to teacher preparation in that they move beyond training to deal primarily with the subjective and idiosyncratic "why's" of teaching. Thus, the practicum instructor's role in teacher development is more indirect, as its purpose is to "generate change through increasing or shifting awareness"(Freeman, 1989, p.40).

Gebhard (1990) speaks of how this change is facilitated through manipulation of "the patterns of interaction between the participants in the practicum (student teacher, teacher educator, ESL students)" (p.118). He reports observing evidence of change through three avenues afforded by practicum: (1) multiple activities (e.g., reading, discussing, and observing, as well as practice teaching), (2)

opportunities to discuss genuine issues in teaching (through conferences, journals, seminar meetings), and (3) break from established patterns (i.e., opportunities to practice teach a variety of courses in a variety of instructional settings to students representing a variety of proficiency levels). According to Gebhard, these activities stimulated professional growth and development in the subjects of his study because they provided them with "the means through which to make decisions about how to change their teaching behavior"(p.126).

Interestingly, there is some evidence that even novice MATESOL students enter the practicum experience conscious of the need for examining their Attitude and Awareness. For example, three of the nine recurring themes contained in the journal entries analyzed by Brinton and Holten (1989) were Student Population (age, language background, expectations, motivation, etc.), Role of the Teacher, and Awareness of Self.

Plotting Student Needs Against Course Objectives

By combining the learner characteristic variables of Professional Preparation and Experience, Career Goals, and Native Language shown in Figure 1 with Freeman's constituents of language teaching, Figure 2 (below) is produced. In this figure, Professional Preparation and Experience is shown under the heading **Student Type**, while the variable of the influence of Native Language on fluency and confidence is located under the heading of **Linguistic Factors**.

 Insert Figure 2 here

The following examples illustrate how this matrix can be used to match projected practicum objectives with anticipated student needs. The setting for this illustration is the MATESOL program at a mid-sized midwestern state university. In this two year program, a one semester practicum is offered to second year students. Practicum is required of all students, regardless of previous teaching experience. Due to the limited number of NNS's residing in the community, all practice teaching takes place in a course in the university's intensive English program, which is taught by the practicum instructor. The student profiles given below are composites of recent graduates of the program.

Example 1 – Student A fits category 1b in Figure 2 (NNS with no preservice teacher training/development and no teaching experience). Student A was taught English by NNS teachers in an EFL environment. She plans to return to her country to teach EFL in a public high school.

Example 2 – Student B fits category 2a (NS with several years of experience teaching junior high social studies in the U.S.). He wants to teach ESOL in an American school overseas.

Example 3 – Student C fits category 6a (NS student with two year's experience teaching ESOL in a commercial language school).

She would like to return to that country to work in a government-sponsored teacher training program.

Example 4 – Student D fits category 6b (NNS with several years of experience teaching EFL in his country at the secondary school level.). He is a product of the same educational system, one in which English is taught primarily through the grammar-translation method. He is sponsored by her country's Ministry of Education and is expected, upon graduation, to supervise all secondary school EFL teachers in a relatively poor and remote province of the country.

On the basis of these profiles, we can project which practicum objectives should be emphasized for each student. For example, Student A will almost certainly need attention in the areas of Knowledge and Skills, regardless of the amount of MATESOL coursework she had completed prior to practicum. In terms of Attitude and Awareness, she will also need attention, although her NNS status might provide her with useful insights into the language learning experience. As for Linguistic Factors, her oral fluency (real or perceived) will need to be taken into consideration when arranging her practice teaching tasks, although knowledge of her career goals may lessen her instructor's concerns about her being adequately prepared to teach in her chosen venue.

In the case of Student B, Knowledge and Skills specific to TESOL are needed, although his non-ESOL teaching experience will likely give him useful insights that can be applied to the ESOL classroom.

However, he almost certainly will be deficient in the areas of Attitude and Awareness as they apply to TESOL. Given his career goals, the practice teaching setting may or may not provide an instructional setting that is entirely suitable to his needs, as he may well be eventually required to teach middle school or even primary-aged children.

Student C, with her relatively extensive background in TESOL, poses an entirely different challenge for the practicum instructor. As the student most experienced in TESOL, her needs would seem to be focused more in the realm of sharpening already-developed skills. Nevertheless, she should be encouraged to reexamine and, if necessary, readjust her Attitude and Awareness. Finally, as her ultimate goal is to become a teacher of TESOL, the practicum instructor might wish to assign her tasks beyond practice teaching (e.g., observation of other practicum students or evaluation/refinement of curriculum and materials used in the instructor's ESL class).

Student D's needs are extremely specialized in the area of skills. He must be well-versed in teaching techniques and methodologies. Moreover, as he will presumably wield considerable influence over the teachers he will oversee, he should be encouraged to closely examine his own Attitude and Awareness. In terms of Fluency and Confidence, he, like Student A, might benefit from a carefully structured and closely supervised practice teaching task. Finally, as his career

expectations are in many ways parallel to those of Student C, he should attend to the same tasks beyond practice teaching that she does.

Upon gathering relevant information concerning her/his students, the practicum instructor should now be able to develop a curriculum that is appropriate to both course objectives and student needs.

PRACTICUM SUPERVISION: OBJECTIVES SET VERSUS OBJECTIVES MET

Ideally, the practice teaching component of practicum serves as the capstone of the MATESOL program. In terms of the constituents of language teaching, practice teaching provides the medium through which MATESOL students can apply their knowledge and practice their teaching skills. Moreover, practice teaching provides a setting within which attitude can be shaped or adjusted and awareness can be enhanced.

From the standpoint of the practicum instructor, supervision of student teacher performance is equally crucial to accomplishing the objectives of practicum. Gephard (1984) has identified several functions of preservice teacher supervision, including:

1. guiding or directing student teaching,
2. offering suggestions on how to teach,
3. modeling teaching,
4. advising,
5. evaluating student teaching performance.

The supervising practicum instructor must be prepared to assume any or all of these roles when observing the teaching performance of her/his students.

In recent years, many alternatives to traditional methods of preservice supervision have been offered. Abbott and Carter (1985), for example, assert that observation procedures of foreign language teaching should be modeled along the lines of what Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer et al. (1980) term "clinical supervision," while Williams (1989) advocates that classroom observations "should as far as possible be developmental rather than judgemental"(p.85).

Freeman (1982) has identified three approaches to observing in-service teachers that can be applied to preservice observations as well. These are:

1. the Supervisory Approach,
2. the Alternatives Approach,
3. the Non-Directive Approach.

Gebhard (1984) expands on Freeman's three approaches to posit five models of supervision:

1. Directive - The supervisor's role is to "direct and inform the teacher, model teaching behaviors, and evaluate the teacher's mastery of defined behaviors"(p.502).
2. Alternative - The supervisor's role is more non-judgmental than in the Directive model. In it, the supervisor offers "a variety of alternatives to what the teacher has done in the classroom;"(p.504).

Thus, the supervisor limits choices and reduces anxiety, but keeps the teacher's responsibility for decision-making intact.

3. Collaborative - The supervisors role is to actively "work with teachers but not direct them"(p.505). The collaborative supervisor sees teaching as "a problem-solving process that requires a sharing of ideas between the teacher and the supervisor"(p.505).

4. Non-Directive - Unlike the Collaborative model, this approach does not place supervisor and teacher "in a sharing relationship"(p.506). Instead, the supervisor assumes the role of sounding board for the teacher as she/he attempts to analyze performance in order to focus awareness on the teaching process and its consequences.

5. Creative - This approach utilizes "a combination of supervisory behaviors from different models"(p.508).

In a practicum populated by students whose goals and needs are as diverse as those of the above-mentioned Students a through D, which supervisory approach - or approaches - would be most appropriate?

In order to meet individual needs, the practicum instructor's supervisory style should be Creative, in that she/he will likely have to shift from, for example, an initially Directive model for Student A (a NNS ESOL teaching novice) to a Collaborative or perhaps Non-Directive approach for Student C (an experienced NS ESOL teacher). Thus, the practicum instructor must be flexible enough to shift from

one supervisory mode to another as circumstances, experience, and instinct dictate. In other words, the practicum instructor should vary supervisory strategies along a directive to nondirective continuum that corresponds to each student's professional growth. In this way, support can and gradually give way to self-reliance.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Clearly, the type of practicum experience described here cannot be accomplished without a great deal of effort, creativity, and flexibility on the part of the instructor, especially in view of the severe time constraints that are likely to exist [England & Roberts (1989) report that the typical practicum lasts one semester]. Given the very real possibility that practicum will be the only practice teaching opportunity that some students will have, extensive preparation is necessary to reconcile individual student needs with course objectives, if not prior to the first class meeting, then certainly as early in the term as possible.

Ideally, the process of identifying student needs should include conducting in-depth interviews of all students, first upon entering the MATESOL program, and then just prior to the commencement of practicum. In this way, questions pertaining to program expectations, career goals, and amount and type of prior ESOL training and/or teaching experience can be answered.

Furthermore, followup questionnaires can be administered to graduating students, as well as to program graduates who have

accumulated TESOL experience. Such a procedure, as pointed out by Roberts and Shields (1988), provides a means of ongoing needs assessment that can aid in developing, evaluating, and revising an MATESOL program.

Once practicum begins, course work assigned prior to, during, and after the practice teaching experience, itself, must be designed to ensure that students are not only given adequate preparation for their teaching tasks, but also that they are provided with an ongoing opportunity to talk about what Gebhard (1990) calls "real teaching issues," so that they are "given the means through which to make decisions about how to change their teaching behavior"(p.126). In addition, more specialized knowledge - and the opportunity to use it - in such areas as observation etiquette (for when students observe their peers or other classes) and the use of classroom behavior coding systems (which students can use when observing classes, and which may well be used when they, themselves, are evaluated by their employers) should also be provided.

In conducting practicum, the instructor should not only take individual needs into account, but should also be alert to exploit the unique abilities and experience that every MATESOL student brings to the course. For example, even novice NNS student teachers, as foreign language learners living in an unfamiliar culture, can provide first-hand insights into the needs and sensibilities of ESOL students in general that are beyond the experience of most of their NS

counterparts. More experienced MATESOL students, on the other hand, possess an expertise that can be used to, for example, model technique or otherwise share teaching knowledge.

Similarly, extensive microteaching tasks involving both novice and experienced student teachers can provide a students with a forum for sharing expertise with their peers. Also, practice teaching, itself, may occasionally be done via a team-teaching format, wherein less experienced NS and NNS students pair with their more experienced classmates.

Finally, the process of classroom supervision can be utilized to encourage what Williams (1989) feels should be a learning environment that is more developmental than judgmental. To accomplish this, the clinical supervision cycle of pre-observation (to set observation parameters), observation (to collect performance data), and post-observation (to provide feedback and set the stage for the next cycle) described by Goldhammer et al. (1980) should be used on a regular and consistent basis for all practice teaching activities involving all MATESOL students, regardless of experience.

The practicum instructor might also wish to explore the possibilities of peer supervision. Such a procedure might take place within the framework of team supervision suggested by Segar (1966). According to Segar, team supervision offers a way to eliminate obstacles in the supervision of new teachers, because "when more than one person is involved in supervision of the new teacher,

different opinions of what constitutes good teaching can be discussed more freely than when only one person supervises"(p.252). Thus, in the context of a practice teaching experience, team supervision has the dual advantage of easing stress on the novice teacher, while at the same time allowing other, more experienced students to provide valuable input. This, in turn, fosters a learning environment that both values student contributions and responds to student needs.

CONCLUSION

As was reported above, Richards and Crookes (1988) note a "lack of agreement on objectives for a practicum in TESOL"(p.23), and conclude that individual TESOL practicum programs need to formulate uniform sets of objectives. This recommendation is commendable as far as it goes. However, when formulating objectives for TESOL practicum, we should not lose sight of the fact that objectives set, either by department or by individual instructor, do not always address the needs of the student. Consequently, instead of viewing the establishment of practicum objectives as a process that is either static (by department consensus) or idiosyncratic (by personal philosophy of the practicum instructor), it should be seen as a dynamic, ongoing process in which goals may change from semester to semester and from student to student.

That is not to say that practicum objectives are not affected by such practical considerations as number of students enrolled, size of the local NNS population, or availability and variety of practicum-

accessible ESOL programs. Nor is it to be inferred that the philosophy of the MATESOL program or the personal preferences, beliefs, strengths, and limitations of the practicum instructor should not play a significant role in the formation and implementation of practicum objectives.

The idea of basing MATESOL practicum objectives on student needs is not novel. Nor are we lacking insights into what those needs are and objectives should be, as witnessed by research such as that of Richards and Hino (1983). Still, it is not enough for TESOL professionals to develop and validate "more relevant models of ESL/EFL teacher training"(Richards & Hino, 1983, p.322) if these models are taught in practicum solely as universal or generic principles of teaching skills and competencies. Rather, we must develop and validate practicum models whose relevance lies not only in their sound theoretical and practical bases, but also in their flexible application on a semester-by-semester and student-by-student basis.

As ESOL educators, we value the quality of flexibility, not just in ourselves, but in our students as well. As ESOL educators, we also subscribe to the notion that we should be responsive to the needs of our students in both what we teach and how we teach it. As TESOL educators, should we not do the same thing when we plan, execute, and assess the practicum experience of our MATESOL students?

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- Type 1. No preservice teacher preparation and/or experience.
- Type 2. Preservice teacher preparation and/or experience in a teaching field other than ESOL/FL.
- Type 3. Preservice teacher preparation in FL.
- Type 4. Teaching experience in FL.
- Type 5. Preservice teacher preparation in ESOL.
- Type 6. Teaching experience in ESOL.

Figure 1

MATESOL practicum student preparation/experience, by type

Student Type (as shown in <u>Figure 1</u>)	Areas of Potential Need			
1 through 6, a & b*	CONSTITUENTS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING			
	<i>Training</i>		<i>Development</i>	
	Knowledge Skills Attitude Awareness			
	LINGUISTIC FACTORS			
	Fluency		Confidence	
	CAREER GOALS			
	Venue		Capacity	

* a=NS; b=NNS

Figure 2

Anticipated student needs