

ABWE English Language Ministries  
ESL/EFL Teaching Competencies Guidelines  
May 2019

### **Introduction: Central Ministry Focus for English Language Ministries**

Equipping English teachers in ministry with resources and professional development opportunities resulting in excellence in teaching and culturally appropriate outreach.

### **Philosophy of Ministry**

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is a God-given opportunity to show Christ and to make Him known in countries around the world and in North America. We believe that in order to gain the respect of students and to earn the right to be heard concerning the Gospel, we must display excellence in teaching English. “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus ...” Colossians 3:17.

Our philosophy of ministry is further elaborated in the book *An ESL Ministry Handbook: Contexts and Principles* (Credo House Publications) by Michael Pasquale. In it the principles of English language ministry and the principles of learning and teaching are given. The principles of English language ministry are 1) Be ethical, 2) Be hospitable, and 3) Be in prayer. Those involved in English language ministry must be ethical, i.e. we must do what we say we are doing. We must avoid a “bait-and-switch” mentality by advertising English classes, but not delivering what we promise. We must be excellent English teachers. Those in English language ministry must also practice hospitality. Love must be evident in all we do. Classes should involve relationship-building and involve personal ministry. We also need to be in prayer. Prayer must be given for our students and for our teachers. Prayer must be an integral part of our churches and our English language ministries. The principles of language learning and teaching can be remembered as “Be prepared to teach the ABCs.” We as teachers must be prepared to teach. We must understand what our students’ attitudes or motivations for learning English are. We must stress that students need to be diligent in their work and encourage them to communicate in English as much as possible.

These principles, as spelled out in *An ESL Ministry Handbook*, are applicable to all English teaching contexts – formal classroom settings in schools or churches, one-on-one tutoring situations, and short-term English language outreach.

### **Helpful Definitions**

- *English as a Second Language* (ESL): teaching English in a context where English is the main language (e.g., teaching English in the US and Canada).

- *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*: teaching English in a context where English is not the main language spoken (e.g., teaching English in China).
- *Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)*: training teachers to teach English in an ESL setting.
- *Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)*: training teachers to teach English in an EFL setting.
- *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)*: a cover term that includes both TESL and TEFL and is also the name of the professional organization for TESOL teachers.
- *English Language Learner (ELL)*: a student of English as a second or foreign language.
- *English Language Teaching (ELT)*: the teaching of English to people whose first language is not English.
- *First Language (L1)*: a speaker's first language (or "mother tongue")
- *Second Language (L2)*: a second language, a foreign language, or a target language.

### **A Rationale for ESL/EFL Teaching Competencies**

English language ministries are one of the most popular tools used by churches and missionaries today for outreach to the community. However, ministry-based English language outreach has recently come under increased scrutiny from both within and outside the Christian community due to lack of professionalism. Often teachers in ministry settings lack training. This is a grave concern to the Christian community because it affects our witness. Those outside our community charge us with a lack of ethics and integrity. Are we teaching English, or are we using it as bait for gaining new converts? The goal of a Christian English teacher should be to be an excellent English teacher.

There is a statement on the wall in Training Room 1 at the ABWE International Headquarters: "If we value excellence, we must value training." Excellence is one of ABWE's core values, and training is one of the components that produces it. If we value excellence in English language teaching, we must value training for English language teachers.

We will follow the program standards as prepared by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) and the international TESOL organization.

Six Content Standards:

- 1) Language Proficiency: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational
- 2) Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures and Concepts from Other Disciplines
- 3) Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs
- 4) Integration of Standards in Planning, Classroom Practice, and Use of Instructional Resources
- 5) Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning
- 6) Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics

(ACTFL 2013, TESOL 2010) See Appendix A for more detail on the six content standards.

**Levels of Preparation**

Level 1: Short Certificate in TESOL (fewer than 100 hours)

Level 2: Average Certificate Program (100 hours or more)

Level 3: Undergraduate program with TESOL emphasis (minor or major) or graduate certificate/diploma program in TESOL

Level 4: Master's program with TESOL emphasis (M.A. or M.Ed)

All missionaries (includes Student Ministries and Adult Short-Term) should have training appropriate to ministry assignment. The English Ministries Team is available to help English teachers succeed in English language teaching. We highly recommend training as a professional development step to increase effectiveness.

- All Student Ministries team members are strongly encouraged to have training equivalent to Level 1 if they participate in ESL.
- All Adult Short-Term missionaries are strongly encouraged to have training equivalent to Level 1 if they participate in ESL. Level 2 training is a highly recommended professional development step for those involved in English language ministries (teaching, class preparation, grading, etc.) 20 hours or more a week.
- All career missionaries involved in ESL are strongly encouraged to have at least Level 1 training. Level 2 training is a highly recommended professional development step for those involved in English language ministries (teaching, class preparation, grading, etc.) 20 hours or more a week. For those who are primarily involved in ESL then Level 3 or 4 is recommended. Those missionaries involved in a formal school teaching environment will need at least Level 3 training to be able to teach in most international schools. Level 4 training will open many doors of opportunities.

- In every case, the program director will consult with the Regional Director to determine the necessary level of training for the English teacher.

#### Level 1:

- In general, the Level 1 requirement can be met through a training seminar that covers the following key areas:
  - **Linguistics:** nature of language, phonetics, grammar, etc.
  - **Language Acquisition:** key models, relation to curriculum
  - **Pedagogy/Methods:** syllabus and lesson plan design; lesson planning in the following key areas: reading, writing, listening, speaking; basic assessment strategies
  - **Culture:** training in cross-cultural classroom maintenance; interpersonal communication
- Examples of programs that can satisfy this requirement:
  - [Essentials of TESOL](#) from Biola University,
  - [Teaching English Language Learners the Good News](#) from PCA or NAMB,
  - [Building Bridges to English](#) from ReachGlobal,
  - [Exploring the World of English Language Teaching](#) from Future Learn of Cambridge Assessment English,
  - See Appendix B for a comparison of these programs.

#### Level 2:

- In general, the Level 2 requirement can be met through a training seminar that covers some of the following key areas:
  - **Linguistics:** intermediate-advanced training in phonetics, morphology, syntax, or semantics
  - **Language Acquisition:** philosophy of language acquisition and relation to language teaching methods (historical and current)
  - **Pedagogy / Methods:** Further training in producing listening, speaking, reading, writing lesson plans; curriculum development; advanced assessment strategies
  - **Culture:** training in areas of sociolinguistics
  - Primary focus is on applying the theoretical to the practical
- Can be met through taking a certificate program such as [CELTA \(Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults\)](#).
- The [International House](#) offers the CELTA (and DELTA, see below) certificates in-class and online.
- For more information on Level 2 programs contact the English Ministries Team at [tesolconsultant@abwe.org](mailto:tesolconsultant@abwe.org).

Level 3:

- Can be met through earning an undergraduate degree with either a TESOL major or minor.
- Can be met through completing a [DELTA](#) (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) course.
- Can be met through earning a graduate certificate/diploma in TESOL
- Schools such as Cornerstone University, The Master’s College, Moody Bible Institute and Cedarville University offer undergraduate programs in TESOL.
- Cornerstone University also offers an Associates of Arts degree in TESOL and a graduate diploma. The graduate diploma can be earned completely through online courses.

Level 4:

- Can be met through earning a graduate degree with a TESOL emphasis (either MA TESOL or M.Ed with a TESOL emphasis).
- Cornerstone University, Moody Bible Institute, and Biola University offer graduate programs in TESOL. Cornerstone University offers their MA TESOL program completely online or through a combination of online and short residency (2 day).

### References

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### **English Ministries Team**

The English Ministries Team is available to assist teachers and administrators. We want to connect teachers with the resources and the professional development opportunities that will equip them to teach English well. For more information contact us at [tesolconsultant@abwe.org](mailto:tesolconsultant@abwe.org).

## **Appendix A: Expanded Six Content Standards for Levels of Competence: Level 1 and Level 2**

### Level 1:

#### Standard 1: Language Proficiency: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational

- Understand basic elements of the nature of language
- Describe the phonetic sounds of English consonants and vowels
- Understand basic English word and sentence formation
- Describe the kinds of English morphemes
- Understand the basic forms and functions of English grammatical structures.
- Understand lexical and syntactic semantics

#### Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures and Concepts from Other Disciplines

- Understand the relationship between language and culture
- Understand the differences in classroom behavior (of teachers and students) across cultures
- Understand how to evaluate and use English stories in ESL instruction

#### Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs

- Understand relevant language acquisition theories (primarily second language acquisition)
- Understand and use simplified versions of language teaching models such as TPR (Total Physical Response) and Grammar Chants, etc.

#### Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning, Classroom Practice, and Use of Instructional Resources

- Understand how to construct an effective lesson plan
- Understand how to teach a simple lesson centered on reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking
- Understand how to use tools effectively in an ESL classroom (e.g. picture dictionary, etc.)

#### Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning

- Understand how to use simple ESL assessment models
- Understand how to adapt lessons based on assessment results

### Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics

- Understand what it means to be a teacher
- Understand ways to continue development as an ESL teacher
- Understand ethics and TESOL

### Level 2:

#### Standard 1: Language Proficiency: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational

- Understand how and why language changes over time
- Compare and contrast the phonetic sounds of English with another language
- Understand the phonological structure of English in comparison to another language
- Compare and contrast English discourse rules to that of another language
- Understand sociolinguistic variation in English (e.g. style, dialects, etc.)

#### Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures and Concepts from Other Disciplines

- Compare and contrast cultural practices and perspectives among cultures
- Understand how to use the Bible in cross-cultural situations

#### Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs

- Compare and contrast language acquisition theories (both first and second language acquisition)
- Understand the relations between language acquisition theories and language teaching models
- Understand how to use various language teaching models effectively

#### Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning, Classroom Practice, and Use of Instructional Resources

- Understand how to integrate a lesson with speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities
- Understand how to use more tools effectively in the ESL classroom (e.g. easy readers, computer programs, etc.)

#### Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning

- Understand how to use ESL assessment models
- Understand how to reflect on the results of student assessment and adjust instruction accordingly

Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics

- Understand how to develop professionally as a teacher
- Understand ways to develop as an ESL teacher
- Understand ethics and TESOL

### Appendix B: A Comparison of Level 1 Training Programs

Program	Format	Timing	Cost
<a href="#"><u>Essentials of TESOL</u></a> from Biola University, There is no certificate granted for this one module, but Biola plans to add modules and give a certificate upon completion of all modules.	Online, not facilitated*.	Flexible start date. Flexible completion date. About 10-20 hours.	\$24.99
<a href="#"><u>Teaching English Language Learners the Good News</u></a> from PCA or NAMB, Attendee is provided with a copy of <a href="#"><u>Teaching English Language Learners the Good News</u></a> . Includes training on sharing your faith. A certificate is given.	In person, interactive format.	Specific dates. Check the website. 12 hours on a Friday- Saturday.	Usually \$50-\$75
<a href="#"><u>Building Bridges to English</u></a> by ReachGlobal, Includes training on sharing your faith. A certificate is given.	Online, facilitated*.	Write to <a href="mailto:ESL@efca.org"><u>ESL@efca.org</u></a> for course dates. About 5 hours per week for 5 weeks.	\$75
<a href="#"><u>Exploring the World of English Language Teaching</u></a> from Future Learn of Cambridge Assessment English, If you want documentation, the costs are: \$39.00—statement of participation, \$59.00—certificate and transcript.	Online, facilitated*.	Specific dates. Sign up on the website for course dates. About 2-4 hours per week for 6 weeks.	Free without a certificate.
<a href="#"><u>Fundamentals of TESOL</u></a> , from TESOL Intl. Assn., A certificate is given.	Online, not facilitated*.	Flexible start date. Must complete within three months of start. Total of 60 hours.	\$450 for TESOL members. \$540 for non-members.

In a facilitated\* course the learner can ask questions and get responses from the instructor.

If you are interested in more training options, contact [tesolconsultant@abwe.org](mailto:tesolconsultant@abwe.org). All of these links were current in May 2019.