

From the author

I've been walking in the field of English Language Teaching for more than 20 years now.

My first job was teaching mixed-nationality groups in a language school in central London. I don't think I had much idea what I was doing or where I was going. I offered a pork pie to a Muslim student in a class on food vocabulary, and put my hand through a paper wall in a Japanese restaurant where I had been invited to join my students for supper. But it wasn't all bad. I dressed up as one of Cinderella's ugly sisters in a Christmas pantomime, and that seemed to go down well, especially when one of my balloons burst.

Later, things got a little more serious. I studied for an RSA DipTEFLA, a practical advanced qualification for language teachers (now known as the DELTA) and later did a Masters in ELT, continued teaching, worked as a director of studies, trained teachers, and opened a language and teacher-training school in Barcelona, where I am now. I train teachers and run the business. I also work as a moderator for Trinity College London CertTESOL courses, and write. Perhaps it's about time I did another pantomime?

That's my story, then.

ELT is very diverse and I've met lots of teachers, at different stages in their teaching careers, with different stories. Eduardo, Elena and Jack are made-up examples who represent differing personalities and differing attitudes to the profession, but all three of them would benefit from a thoughtful analysis of their current work situation and a commitment to their further development.

Eduardo has had a stable job for the last ten years, working for a good institution. He doesn't want to risk losing it. He is required to attend in-house workshops regularly, some of which he finds useful. He engages with colleagues in discussions about school policy on areas such as assessment and the syllabus. He considers himself a reflective teacher, and is quite critical of his own teaching. He cares a lot about his students and job satisfaction, and occasionally suffers from stress.

Elena has just completed her first term as a teacher of English at her local state school in Slovenia. She teaches secondary-age children. The first year is proving to be tough, but she is enjoying it and gaining confidence. It can be difficult to get the students to speak English in class and she

feels the syllabus is a bit of a constraint, with its emphasis on grammar, but she is excited about next year and trying out some new ideas she has. A scholarship is available to attend a short teacher-development course in the summer, and she is wondering whether to apply.

Jack has taught in six different countries for periods ranging from three months to two years. He has worked with all age groups and taught business English to adults. He likes to take on new challenges and believes he learns through experience. He focuses on earning enough to finance his travels. He becomes friends with some of his students, but doesn't spend too much time thinking about his classes or his students' learning. He gets on well with his colleagues but tends to be a professional loner and rarely participates in developmental activities.

When I look back over the years, I think there's something of me in all three of these teachers.

I wanted to write a book for teachers with 30 *days'* experience and 30 *years'* experience: for teachers as diverse in their situations and attitudes as Eduardo, Elena and Jack.

The Developing Teacher is a book, but it is a book of 'activity', so the main aim isn't reading, it is *doing*. Doing things on your own, with your students, with your colleagues and with your school; things which are interesting and fun, and which help you to understand your teaching better. In other words, multiple activities that have an impact on you and the people who work with you.

Another reason I wrote this book was for my own development. The process of writing things down, shaping and organising my ideas, and getting feedback from colleagues and editors, has helped me learn more about myself, about writing, about teaching and about teacher development.

So let's keep walking. Developing. We're all bound to get somewhere. Step by step.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Clavin". The signature is stylized, with a large, sweeping initial 'D' and a long horizontal line underneath the name.