GILE Journal of Skills Development

Re-Thinking Teachers' Roles for One-to-One Teaching: The Hungarian Perspective

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Abstract

While teacher training generally focuses on preparing trainees for teaching groups of students, during their careers teachers will face situations where they need to teach students in one-to-one situations. Private language teaching is a large, but often informal industry; therefore, its scale tends to be underestimated. The lack of research and teacher training in this field leads to clients (or learners) being misled easily by untrained tutors or people claiming to be professionals without any training in teaching. This review of the literature focuses on this vast, but largely abandoned area of language teaching to create a framework for the discussion of one-to-one teaching by clarifying the terminology with a focus on interpreting teachers' roles in one-to-one teaching based on the most popular English teacher training books in the Hungarian context. The implications of this review are relevant for any stakeholder involved in language teaching and learning. Within our theoretical framework, we have defined three main roles in three professional areas: instructors are course managers (course management), teachers (professional competencies), and supporters (social-psychological awareness and skills), being primarily responsible for course design, facilitating learning, and creating a supportive atmosphere, respectively. One-to-one teaching is unique and deserves not to be on the periphery of teacher training.

Keywords: teacher roles, individual instruction, one-to-one teaching, professional development, personalised learning, theoretical framework

1. Introduction

According to internet-based surveys (Biró, 2020; Lannert & Sinka, 2009) on representative samples of Hungarian language teachers, it is safe to say that almost three-fourths of teachers (the majority being language teachers) are involved in teaching private students. Nevertheless, this aspect of teaching is generally not the topic of university or other teacher training programmes in Hungary. This is exactly why the authors have chosen to focus on teachers' roles in one-to-one teaching in the Hungarian context. It is difficult to find any programme that offers training specifically in teaching students one-to-one (e.g., a blended online course is offered by International House). Not only is there a lack of training in this area, but very little is known about this form of shadow education (Bray, 2007), whether it is supplementary to mainstream education or a form of adult education.

While this review aims for a general, broad overview of teachers' views of their roles as one-to-one teachers, the authors are fully aware that the underlying system is much more complex, with the interplay of an almost infinite number of variables that may influence teachers' roles and decisions in any given context. For the time being, it is important to be aware that in one-to-one situations, the teacher may have a variety of educational backgrounds, qualifications, and experience and the learners may also be of any age (from primary schooler to adult) and may bring to the lesson a variety of intentions and predispositions. They may be preparing for a professional presentation, a job interview, or a language exam or may need extra support as learners with special educational needs or language anxiety. Teaching may occur online or face-to-face in various circumstances ranging from an office, the learner's or the teacher's home, school to even a café. In all these situations the common denominator is – ideally – the expertise of the teacher, which guarantees conscious and careful management of a safe learning environment by adapting the methods, materials and personal reactions to the situation, none of which can be performed adequately without being professionally prepared.

In this paper, we will first describe the terminology for one-to-one teaching that we are using throughout the article. Next, we provide details on how we went about analysing teacher roles in this context including the three research focuses examined in this study. This is then followed by a general overview of the literature, after which we draw up the proposed framework for rethinking teacher roles in one-to-one teaching situations. In the conclusions, we summarise this framework and suggest avenues for further research.

1.1. Terminology

The terminology related to one-to-one teaching can be confusing: apart from one-to-one teaching, the terms private teaching or tutoring may be used to cover minor meaning variations. It is difficult to decide on the ideal term, especially as in everyday conversations, the more general term private teaching is the most frequent, both in British and American contexts based on Google n-gram plots (Davies, 2014) that is, on frequency counts based on millions of books written over the past five centuries. For this article, to stress the focus on the individual aspect compared to groups, the term 'one-to-one' teaching will be used. In this kind of teaching context, simply put, there are two people involved, one that is more knowledgeable about the subject (that is, concerning English as a Foreign or Second Language or the language taught) and another one who – for some reason – is in the position of wanting to – or having to – learn it. Maybe it is safe to refer to them as a private teacher and a private student, or teacher and student for the sake of simplicity and to distance it from pure coaching in this article.

In this paper, it will be assumed that a teacher is a person with at least a master's (MA) degree in teaching a foreign language, who educates people in a formal school or language school setting or works as a freelancer private teacher. Harmer (2015) noted that teachers can act as

"tutors to individuals" (p. 117), helping them, for example, in class or with individual writing - giving students "undivided attention to help them with their work" (p. 117), still, it can be argued that tutoring members of a group in or outside of class for a brief episode is different from planning and conducting a one-to-one course. A person may teach one-to-one with some teacher's qualification (e.g., CELTA, that is, Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) or without any teacher's qualification. Further research would be necessary to reveal the respective proportions and the discussion of whether or not teaching without a degree in a one-to-one setting is ethical is beyond the scope of this paper.

It should also be noted that language coaching is not the same as language teaching. A language coach is a person who has expertise in a specific language or languages and may have some background in teaching methodology, linguistics, or a related field. They may also have additional training or certification in coaching techniques and/or mental health, or psychology. While a teacher may also have these certifications and a coaching approach, what is relevant here is that teachers – as understood here – are those professionals who also hold a degree in teaching.

2. Method

This study aims to provide a framework for discussing and reframing one-to-one teachers' roles and responsibilities. This is necessary for further research in this field as roles discussed in the literature do not fully apply to the one-to-one context, the terms may be irrelevant, outdated or lacking when it comes to new technologies and approaches. Where relevant, the paper reaches back to teachers' shared background by first reviewing the literature used in teacher training in Hungary (Brown, 2015; Harmer, 2015; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2024), see Appendix A. We concentrate on the Hungarian context because this is a unique context in terms of language learning, and we have found no studies examining teacher roles in one-to-one teaching in this specific context. The perspectives from this review will be compared to the specific literature concerning one-to-one teaching (e.g., Wilberg, 1987; Wisniewska, 2010) and some new developments to reveal areas where special training would be required.

Research Focuses

1) Which of the teachers' roles identified through the review of the teacher training literature are meaningful in a one-to-one teaching situation and how?

2) What are teachers' additional roles in a one-to-one situation?

3) What implications can be formulated for one-to-one teaching based on the findings for language teachers, language learners and teacher training programmes?

First of all, the most relevant literature is scrutinised in line with the research focuses, and following this, the answers to the questions are presented in aggregate in the conclusion section. Based on the comparison of the literature on teachers' roles in the classroom and in one-to-one settings, three major areas emerge, and they align nicely with the main pillars of Scrivener's (2011) "enabler" (p. 18) role. "**The enabler**" encompasses the multifaceted role of the teacher as a professional who is able to "create the conditions that enable the students to learn for themselves", who "knows about the subject matter and about methodology" and is "confident enough to share control with the learners" (Scrivener, 2011, p. 18), and in the meantime, is responsive to learners' ideas and feelings and constantly adapts to them in planning, switching between methods and building an encouraging learning atmosphere.

The emerging three **areas of expertise that also apply to one-to-one teaching are**:

1) Course management

2) Professional competencies

3) Social-psychological awareness and skills

The first area, **course management** concerns the situational context, organisational procedures, technical and administrative duties and how much these are controlled by the teacher, the student and/or external factors. The second area includes the **professional competencies** that the teacher brings to the situation, including knowledge of teaching methodology, the language itself and a growth mindset to maintain and expand their knowledge and skills. The third one can be broadly described as the teacher's **social-psychological awareness** of themselves and the learner, (language-)learning related psychological factors **and skills** to overcome potential issues, and most importantly, the teaching approach and personal characteristics they need to establish a positive working relationship with the learner. After a general overview, teachers' roles will be discussed along these three main areas of knowledge, skills and competence.

3. A General Overview

A shared characteristic of teachers is that they bring their beliefs (views, conceptions, and perspectives) of their roles as teachers partly from their personal experience and partly from their shared backgrounds as trained professionals in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and their professional practice (Borg, 2007). EFL teachers in Hungary in teacher training programmes not only have a shared cultural background but based on the requirements for the methodology final exam readings and topics (see Appendix A), it was concluded that there are three teacher training coursebooks used in almost all major universities and training programmes (editions may differ): Ur (2024), Harmer (2015), and Scrivener (2011). Therefore, first, these resources were consulted on the roles or functions of teachers (listed in Table 1.) even though these books focus on teaching groups of learners and contain little guidance for one-to-one teaching. While Brown (2015) is also among the most frequently used coursebooks for teachers, it does not have an explicit section on teachers' roles, though it does mention the teacher's role being mainly "facilitation of change and learning" (p. 90). We have chosen these three books as these seemed to be the most popular English teacher training materials used in the Hungarian context.

TABLE 1. LISTS OF TEACHERS' ROLES FROM ENGLISH TEACHER TRAINING MATERIALS

	English Teacher Training Materials		
Roles and functions	**Ur (2024)**	**Harmer (2015)**	**Scrivener (2011)**
	Instructor	Controller	Explainer (gives lectures and tasks)
	Activator	Monitor and evidence-gatherer	
	Model		Involver (involves students by giving tasks, organises, and controls activities)
	Provider of feedback	Prompter and editor	
	Supporter	Resource and tutor	
	Assessor	Organiser/task-setter	Enabler (guide, counsellor or a resource of information)
	Manager	Facilitator	
	Motivator		

Source: own compilation, based on Ur (2024, pp. 17–18), Harmer (2015, pp. 116–117), and Scrivener (2011, pp. 16–19)

Due to the overlapping meanings of these terms, it was necessary to deconstruct the meanings of these terms and based on their often-vague descriptions or definitions devise a new system (see Appendix B) to be able to build on existing terminology and find a way to adopt it (especially with larger-scale future research projects in mind, focusing on one-to-one teaching). The critical literature review process in this paper leads from roles as described in teacher training materials to what roles are required for one-to-one teaching, along with the elements of knowledge, competencies and skills required to fulfil these roles.

Further research was reviewed concerning potential roles for one-to-one instructional contexts. Examples of this literature include studies focusing on one-to-one instruction (e.g., Wilberg, 1987; Wisniewska, 2010) and language coaching (e.g., Kovács, 2022). The chapters of Wisniewska's (2010) book are centred around each of the five – mostly student-focussed – roles she identifies from the teacher's perspective (1) conversation partner, (2) observer and listener, (3) feedback provider, (4) mentor and guide, and (5) learner), highlighting the importance of understanding these roles in a one-to-one context. According to a more complex but earlier view (Wilberg, 1987), since both the instructor and the student are present in various roles at the same time, a one-to-one relationship is a many-to-many situation. There is no way to characterize all one-to-one teaching by one role or set of roles and these roles will dynamically shift, overlap, and change depending on the aim of the course, the student's age, level, the setting (etc. - probably an infinite list). Still, raising awareness of the variety of possible roles and approaches one can take may help teachers discover more about their identity as teachers and contribute to their professional growth by highlighting areas for development.

4. Course Management

It is difficult to describe the role of the teacher in a one-to-one situation due to the multitude of different types of courses, learner needs and the variety of contexts. The student may be a young person needing someone to check their homework and practice, it may be an exam preparation course, or they could be a businessperson preparing for a new role, presentations, and reports to submit. The teacher may work for a language school or could also be a freelancer. All these situations will require a different set of roles. The teacher may be expected by students to be a "controller" (Harmer, 2015, p. 116) in the sense that the teacher may give students information

about the course content, and how learning goals can best be achieved or negotiate mutual expectations, rules or norms for the sessions. For the one-to-one situation, the term "manager" (Farrell et al., 2021, p. 19; Ur, 2024, p. 18) is not applicable in the sense of managing group dynamics.

While some classroom management issues (e.g., how to plan, begin or end a session, how to establish or maintain rapport, how to handle critical moments, whether or not to allow the student to share personal stories) are relevant and require careful planning and consideration, in one-to-one contexts, these are not so complex as to require 'management'. Rather, we propose that for one-to-one teaching, the term 'management', or the teacher as **course manager** – in the sense of organisation and control – could rather be used to encompass administrative, procedural, organisational and design-related duties, tasks and roles. It is not to mean control but an understanding of the elements of the learning environment and the responsibility for introducing them to the learner for discussion. Wanting to manage all the possible aspects of the teaching situation though is a characteristic of the traditional view of "the transmission teacher" (Scrivener, 2011, p. 14), which still persists in many cultures, Hungary included. According to Scrivener, professionalism on the part of the teacher is shown rather by having enough confidence to negotiate, "share control with the learners, or perhaps hand it over entirely" (p. 18). Students' assumptions need to be taken into account when deciding on what approach to take as a teacher – if it is very distant from the teacher's stance, it is probably best to find a good compromise in agreement with the student, which also enhances language learning autonomy.

4.1. Situational Context for Learning

In a one-to-one teaching context, **management of** the components of the situational or virtual **learning environment** may involve practical issues such as the time and the location of the sessions (Goodyear, 2008). The physical setting also has an influence on learning and thinking processes, for example, how the teacher and learner are seated in relation to each other (Wisniewska, 2010), if it is a distraction-free environment (Schmidt, 2020), or if they are walking and talking (Turner, 2017). The physical aspects of the environment, such as furniture, space and air quality have been found to influence the comfort level and, thus the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Puteh et al., 2015). The ease of access to information (e.g., materials, learning resources, tasks, communication, dictionaries, etc.) and sharing information is crucial to maintaining an efficient learning environment free from unnecessary annoyance. If a learning management system is used, it should be discussed with the students or taught to them if needed. All of these factors discussed so far affect reducing or increasing the cognitive load (Choi et al., 2014) and influence the efficiency of one-to-one sessions.

The length of the course, the flexibility of the sessions, and how they can be cancelled or rescheduled are only some of the administrative issues that should be settled at the beginning when working with a learner (whether it takes the form of a contract, or informal notes based on a brief discussion depends on the situation). What might be interesting for employers is that "adult learners of English attribute their successes to a great extent to their employer" (Kálmán & Gutierrez, 2015, p. 599) if they establish a corporate culture that advocates ongoing development and life-long learning, both of which contribute to employees' professional development.

4.2. Planning Procedures, Tracking Progress and Managing Feedback

Teaching one-to-one is not a simplified form of whole-class instruction, and it necessitates a different strategy for both long-term planning (syllabus, long-term goals) and short-term planning (lesson plans). Lesson plans or weekly plans have either different meanings or may not even be interpretable, given the dynamic nature of the one-to-one context, where materials or topics for lessons can be brought by the student or the teacher, or both, depending on the

student's needs, aims or interests. **Instructional design management** in one-to-one instruction focuses more on the student's needs as the input for designing content (Wilberg, 1987), while the teacher may select the language forms, techniques, or tasks to best support them towards reaching their goals. For this, an introductory exploratory conversation is necessary to construct a learner profile, and a conscious ongoing observation or monitoring of the learner's progress. According to Gardner and Miller (1999), a profile will "describe the learner's needs, wants and abilities; record the learner's goals and study plans; document actions taken to fulfil the study plans; and record learning outcomes" (p. 84). Instead of trying to design a course for a given learner as an outsider, a one-to-one course plan can be built together with the student on a shared platform for planning (e.g., a co-editable document) and adjusted, if needed, as the course progresses. One-to-one instruction permits the teacher to operate in this manner and calls for an "enabler" kind of teacher (Scrivener, p. 18), who functions more as a guide, counsellor, or information resource. For teachers, this requires a fundamental shift from typical classroom language teaching practices (Wilberg, 1987).

Students, especially adult professionals, may enter the one-to-one situation with a language learning background or with expectations that may be unhelpful or unrealistic considering their present (e.g., job-specific) language needs (Kovács, 2022; Wilberg, 1987). It may take some time to adjust to the learning situation and make the shift from a passive, 'teach me' kind of attitude to a more productive, engaged presence with a willingness to take the initiative for their learning. The teacher can actively encourage learning by providing gradually more and more space for autonomous learning to take place with the development of learner responsibility, allowing for flipped lessons (Strelan et al., 2020) and adapting the pace to what is most suitable for the student (Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Kovács (2022) suggests that language coaching is especially useful in this respect, to support adults' learning experiences by guiding them upon entering the learning situation. Language coaches may help learners to clarify their needs and expectations, set realistic goals, and overcome barriers of learning by discussing previous learning experiences and adjusting their attitudes. This supplementary process helps the learner maintain motivation and provides a framework for beginning or closing the language course or period of learning.

When it comes to planning procedures for one-to-one lessons, in addition to creating a learner profile based on needs analysis; designing a framework for the course and having a plan for improving learner autonomy, it is important to keep track of what has been done and in the light of this, how the course should continue. Time should be devoted to reflection, and opportunities to give and receive information about mutual expectations and the perceived efficiency of the course. The teacher may provide continuous feedback channels (e.g., learning journals, quizzes may close with a few feedback questions), or devote time for feedback during sessions in the form of short interviews, written questionnaires, checklists or any other form. This is not about learner progress but more about what has been done, what seems to be working, how the responsibilities are shared, how teaching- and learning-related tasks are shared (e.g., who brings the materials, topics, tasks, or who designs vocabulary sets and how) and what might need to be done differently in the future.

4.3. Course Content, Resources, Materials

One-to-one English language teaching presents a unique opportunity to tailor learning experiences to individual students. **Materials design and content management** in a one-to-one context is an ongoing process. It relates to the question of control in that the material (tasks or content to be dealt with during the lesson) may come from a variety of sources. Students may provide the course content if they need support from the teacher in preparing for a professional presentation, or a job interview or if they need sessions that are supplementary to another

course. In other types of courses (e.g., exam preparation), teachers have a greater role in designing or selecting materials. However, in general-purpose one-to-one courses aiming at language skills development, it is a matter of negotiation between the teacher and the student. It may even vary from session to session depending on the flexibility of the teacher and the autonomy or agency on the part of the student. While the materials themselves may come from various sources, the teacher's role in pre-teach elements for efficient scaffolding for the student to approach it successfully, in organising, selecting and adapting those materials for optimal learning, providing explanations, and designing related practice materials and other activities (quizzes, tests) remains crucial.

In terms of roles and responsibilities, Scrivener's (2011) "involver" (p. 18) kind of teacher cultivates learner engagement by collaborating with students to choose materials that resonate with their goals and interests and try to find activities that will work for them (Scrivener, 2011, p. 18). The teacher is an "organiser or task-setter" (Harmer, 2015, p. 117) for engaging tasks and providing clear instructions or demonstrations. This approach necessitates active cooperation between students and teachers and may pose a challenge for the teacher as it might be impossible to plan in the long run and prepare for the lessons in advance (Alexa, 2021). A different view is put forward by Ur (2024), claiming that it is largely the teacher's responsibility to make the lessons interesting, and boring lessons indicate their failure in their role as a "motivator" (Ur, 2024, p. 18). She continues to state that the teacher as an "instructor" (p. 17) provides teaching materials and tasks, moreover, as an "activator" (p. 17), encourages the learners to use English themselves. Nevertheless, Ur (2024) also underlines that twentieth-century teachers see themselves more as "facilitators" (p. 16) than lecturers or 'tellers' who teach facts and students may choose freely from activities offered by the teacher or the lesson may be a conversation with a loose structure. Overall, it is best to have a balance between teacher-initiated instruction and a learner-centred approach where learning is based solely on students' input, especially when it comes to teaching individual language courses.

Wilberg (1987) argued that students in a one-to-one situation benefit most from producing their own personalised collections of the kinds of materials (texts, videos or other content) that they need, in other words, a portfolio, that is, an organised set of data that they can use. It is useful to keep track of content generated during the session or collect ideas for further sessions (Harmer, 2015), and it also promotes learning by serving as a beneficial tool for displaying the learning progress of the student (Tomlinson, 2017).

4.4. Digital, Technical Competences

Recent requirements from teachers in terms of technological knowledge include the ability to adapt to new technological advances. With the ever-increasing progress of new technologies, one-to-one teachers are often asked to teach online, which requires new methods, new instructional strategies, and a different approach (Hasper & Barkhuizen, 2023). It is another emerging field that deserves much greater attention in teacher education. Some of the essential elements of the complex, situated knowledge required for thoughtful pedagogical uses of technology are captured by the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) framework (see Koehler et al., 2013). As for the knowledge of technology, these days it includes, for example, the ability to use online resources, manage online communication and provide a platform for structuring materials and sharing them with learners, it might involve using learning management systems, videoconferencing tools, adapting to the use of AI (e.g., using chatbots for multiple purposes, using large language model-based tools and applications, AI-based image or video generation) for teaching purposes (including planning, course design, materials design or assessment). Taking into account that teachers are advised not to overlook its dangers, the use of AI may be particularly useful for promoting learner autonomy (Crawford

et al., 2023). The list of technological advancements that could be employed favourably in education is endless and would deserve another article as technology introduces a new set of opportunities and challenges relating to each of the teaching-related topics discussed in this paper. In addition, technological expertise must be combined with knowledge of the content to be taught and pedagogical considerations. For this reason, if teachers are to be **digital, technical designers** of language courses in the future, teacher training should move towards integrating technology for teachers in a meaningful, practical way.

5. Professional Competencies

The competence of the "teacher as professional" (Macapinlac et al., 2021, p. 19) encompasses methodological knowledge and skills to teach the target language. This is supplemented with linguistic expertise, or communicative competence that is not the same as a native speaker's knowledge of the target language. It is a more conscious, structured knowledge that makes scaffolding possible, that is, empowering the learner to build upon what they already know to improve their language skills.

Establishing a friendly, supportive learning environment with a sense of humour and adopting an open-minded, student-centred approach are among the features that describe the personality and approach of a teacher who can establish a positive learning atmosphere. All of this can be refined through reflective practices and continuous professional development.

5.1. Methodological Knowledge and Competence

While there is ample research and theoretical background to teaching groups of students, teachers in a one-to-one situation have few resources to rely on as even teacher training materials focus only on teaching groups (e.g., Harmer, 2015; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2024). Wilberg (1987) suggested that the reason behind this is the opportunity in larger groups to simply disregard some needs as all the needs of all of the students cannot be met anyway, whereas in a one-to-one situation disregarding the student's needs is simply not an option. Teaching one-to-one is therefore just as complex as teaching groups and requires knowledge of a set of different methodological approaches, as is the case with groups so that teachers can select the right alternative options for the given situation, depending on the learner's needs. While **trained teachers** bring an enormous amount of knowledge about teaching methods to a one-to-one teaching context, only part of that knowledge will be relevant and, in some ways, it will not be enough. While knowing how to develop group dynamics will be of little use, relevant knowledge will include knowledge about characteristics of individual learners (e.g., depending on their age groups), learning styles and strategies, how to approach teaching skills, such as speaking, listening, reading or writing and how to develop intercultural or global competence. In addition, trained teachers will, ideally, be able to structure a course, or a lesson, select relevant sources for skills development, explain grammar and vocabulary, and suggest techniques and design materials for practising the language (see "prompter" in Harmer, 2015; and "supporter" and "activator" in Ur, 2024). They will have information about language exam requirements and how to prepare for exams. The indicators of teachers' expected or ideal competencies have been described in various types of teacher competence frameworks (e.g., Muñiz, 2020; Symeonidis, 2019).

Trained teachers are often armed with a set of techniques and activities that work well in a classroom environment but become boring or monotonous in a one-to-one setting, especially online. What is worrying is that existing research shows that around half of those who offer one-to-one sessions do not have the professional background to do so, as they are not trained teachers (Biró, 2020). Presently, techniques for one-to-one teaching are under-researched and are usually not part of the university curriculum for teacher training, which is a questionable

practice, as these same teachers will be required to teach one-to-one in language schools, for example, without any further training. This opens a broad avenue for further research in the field of teaching methodology regarding teaching languages one-to-one and teacher training with this focus.

5.2. Communicative Competence in the Target Language

A language teachers' competence is certainly not confined to methodological knowledge, they also represent a **model of a competent language user**, to represent a "prototype of the English speaker" (Ur, 2024, p. 17) to students – hopefully not exclusively, meaning that they are only one out of the many that they encounter as learners (compare: "resource" or "prompter" ; Harmer, 2015, p. 117). It is important that teachers can model the language by producing appropriate samples of spoken and written language, in a natural and "extremely clear" (Harmer, 2015, p. 118) manner. It may be argued, however, that it is not enough for teachers of a foreign language to be communicatively competent (including discourse, linguistic, actional, sociocultural and strategic competence; see Celce-Murcia et al., 1995). They need a more acute awareness of language levels to be able to converse with students in a way that "the struggle for meaning - the negotiation of meaning" (Harmer, 2015, p. 118) provokes genuine language understanding and learning (compare "supporter" (Harmer, 2015, p. 18). They need to be able to provide interesting and relevant, but at the same time, comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982), which is only slightly higher than the learners' existing level of knowledge and can trigger language learning (Harmer, 2015). The language awareness that teachers need to be able to monitor their level of language production even in casual conversations is, in a way, beyond being able to model the language and being communicatively competent.

In addition to language competence, professionally competent teachers can be expected to be able to have knowledge of pedagogical grammar so that they can provide clear explanations about the language (e.g., its sounds, letters, vocabulary, grammar and communicative use) - as suggested by the roles "explainer" and "involver" (Scrivener, 2011, pp. 17–18) or "instructor" (Ur, 2024, p. 17). Further, increasingly important competencies that can be developed in one-to-one contexts just as well as in groups include awareness of social-cultural rules and norms, and global (Divéki, 2018) and intercultural competence (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Huber et al., 2014).

5.3. Evaluation and Assessment of Learning

Given the traditional transmission role of the teacher as a source of knowledge, teachers may feel tempted to overcorrect errors and mistakes, giving accuracy higher priority over students' ability to become competent communicators (Ur, 2024; Wilberg, 1987). This view is further strengthened by teacher training materials, stating that "error correction" is essential along with "the provision of approval and confirmation" (Ur, 2024, p. 17). Students may also expect to be corrected, an expectation coming from earlier language learning experiences (Kovács, 2022; Wilberg, 1987). While students need the teacher to be an "assessor" (Ur, 2024, p. 17) to provide information on what they are doing right and how they can improve, highlighting errors too frequently or improperly may disrupt the flow of the session or even result in the student's decrease in self-confidence and willingness to produce language (spoken or written). Harmer (2015) represents a 'softer' approach with the role of feedback provider under "monitor" and "evidence gatherer" (p. 116) of language learned and mistakes made. A good teacher should provide clear and positive feedback, as receiving encouraging feedback has a positive effect on increasing intrinsic learner motivation and supports learner autonomy (see Noels et al., 1999), while being fair, honest, and showing respect for the learner (Scrivener, 2011). Wisniewska's (2010) term, "feedback provider" (p. 138) covers all of the above concerning one-to-one

teaching: (1) correcting mistakes, (2) giving encouraging comments, praising or (3) encouraging, motivating and supporting learning.

According to Wilberg (1987), it is nearly impossible to measure a student's progress in a one-to-one course, but tracking students' progress may be useful to give and get feedback on how far the student is from their goal (e.g., a language exam, a promotion), what they have already achieved, what activities have proved to be most useful or what language area still needs to be learned. It is often thought to be up to the teacher as an assessor to decide if or how, and with what frequency and purpose assessment is to be carried out. However, some one-to-one sessions (e.g., tutoring, supporting the preparation for a meeting or a job interview) may not require any form of testing to take place. In other types of one-to-one contexts, it may be less risky and more efficient in **assessor** role to gather information and provide delayed feedback (Harmer, p. 116). The procedures for assessment, that is, the way information is obtained about the student's achievements might take a variety of forms from formal (e.g., written or oral tests) to informal quizzes, journals, or ticking off 'can do' statements. It may take the form of systematic observation and feedback, journals, and ranking activities (Graves, 2000). Teachers may opt for re-teaching or allowing the student to "reformulate his or her own content at a new level of awareness, skill and linguistic competence" (Wilberg, 1987, p. 4), if correction is really necessary. Another option is to work together with the student on their work in progress and help edit their work (e.g., producing written drafts and presentations). Editing can prevent error correction in that it aims to propose alternatives and not to correct errors (Harmer, 2015).

In the long run, the purpose of the teacher should be to provide the student a sense of agency and support in performing this analysis for themselves and enable them to become autonomous learners by being able to identify the language forms that they need, notice the progress that they have made and find areas for improvement for themselves.

5.4. Continuous Professional Development

The teacher may be methodologically, communicatively and interculturally more competent, still, language learners (adult professionals or not) will also bring their in-depth knowledge of a given field to the lessons. Teachers may be trained in some 'Englishes', such as EAP (English for Academic Purposes), Business English or other uses of ESP (English for Specific Purposes). Still, it is impossible to always have a trained professional who is also an English teacher. Content or technical knowledge may not be part of the English teacher's professional expertise, which means that lessons may become a collaborative effort with substantial learning for both parties. This, in turn, requires both participants, the teacher and the student, to approach the teaching situation with patience and an open mind, accepting that learning will occur on both sides, and it does not have to be a highly specialised field; teachers of teenagers will also learn about video games, influencers, the newest series or any other topic that the learner may find interesting. Content or technical knowledge is not the only area, though, for lifelong learning and professional development.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is essential to maintain and enhance teaching effectiveness and involves a bottom-up process initiated by the teachers themselves as there are few communities to help teachers with a one-to-one focus. Professional collaboration is a key component of CPD, encompassing methodological, linguistic, technical/content knowledge, and reaching out for various forms of support. The latter may include working with pedagogical assistants, psychologists, language coaches, and teacher educators. The process could include mentorship (Berbain et al., 2023), conducting research (Borg, 2007), reflection (Macapinlac et al., 2021; Norton, 1994; Wolcott, 1995), and collaborative problem-solving (Dunn & Shriner, 1999). Self-efficacy (Zólyomi, 2022) and emotions play a crucial role in this development

(Samnøy et al., 2023), acting as catalysts that can either encourage or hinder engagement in CPD or seek the support of a professional community. The two major communities and international associations include TESOL and IATEFL.

6. Social-psychological Awareness and Skills

This last main section delves into the critical areas of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and well-being, the teacher's ability to understand and manage their own emotions and empathise with their students' emotional states, all of which enable the teacher to be a **supporter** of learning. It covers a brief overview of the psycholinguistic factors that influence learning and touches upon the related fields of language coaching and counselling, and the essential practices for establishing rapport, maintaining motivation, and upholding professional boundaries.

6.1. Self-awareness, Emotional Intelligence and Well-being

Emotion permeates all facets of the profession, some challenging, some rewarding, still, teaching is mostly perceived as a stressful, overwhelming job, maybe less so in a one-to-one context. Grit, which is the power of perseverance (Duckworth, 2016) and resilience are characteristics that make a language teacher "emotionally well-adjusted, open to change and resilient to burnout" (Hiver, 2018, p. 12), which is necessary, looking at the list of personal characteristics that teachers are expected to have. Out of the three teacher training materials, Scrivener (2011) provided the most comprehensive description of the characteristics of teachers. The list includes flexibility, patience, paying attention to and adapting to learners' needs. Additional personal qualities of teachers from more recent studies that could have a considerable effect on their ability to establish a supportive and motivating environment include "teacher charisma" (Win & Kálmán, 2023, p. 260) communicated through "nonverbal immediacy, humour, caring, and confirmation" (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2014, p. 137). Further characteristics of charismatic teachers listed by Peták and Kálmán (2022) include "knowledge, preparedness, and positive character traits (e.g., approachability, caring, empathy, kindness, patience, etc.)" (p. 283) alongside the willingness to build caring and trusting relationships with students, which in turn contributes to students' motivation. It is undoubtedly difficult to decide for oneself if these characteristics are true or not. Feedback from mentors, colleagues, and most importantly, the students themselves is incredibly important. In their effort to develop emotionally, and professionally, and how to take and learn from feedback, teachers are **role models as learners** and set an important example whether it is grit, resilience, flexibility, patience, kindness or the importance of being prepared. The well-being of both teachers and students is another prerequisite for an efficient learning environment.

6.2. Awareness of the Psycholinguistic Factors that Influence Learning

Psycholinguistics is a multidisciplinary field focused on how people perceive, understand and produce language. Apart from psychology and linguistics, it has connections with biology, neurology, sociology, and language pathology (Traxler & Gernsbacher, 2006). Its findings shed light on cognitive, emotional aspects and linguistic rules and processes that affect any language user's experiences and thus language learning outcomes. Although it is a complex field, language teacher training usually incorporates some of the most influential theories that affect foreign language learning so that teachers have a better understanding of what is (or is not) happening as a result of their lessons (see Chaika, 2023; Omar & Fasial, 2023; Purba, 2018). This process requires the teacher to be an **observer**, who can reflect and act upon their observations to adjust their approach or procedures. Being an observer means nurturing attentive listening and seeing behind the curtains as the learner produces their output (Tomlinson, 2017). Once the teacher actively listens to the learner and tries to understand them, a myriad of opportunities opens up whereby the teacher can personalise instruction.

Some examples of areas where psycholinguistic awareness could help include, for example, 1) developing cognitive strategies to improve memory or provide easier access to information, 2) identifying language processing issues or learning difficulties so that students can get support from a specialist, 3) noticing language anxiety or limiting beliefs (Mercer & Ryan, 2010) due to previous learning experiences, and 4) identifying the level of difficulty of learners processing a text. Such awareness could help the teacher as a professional to support the learner. Alternatively, if the teacher cannot take action after noticing the issue, they can seek help from other specialists.

6.3. Language Coaching and Transferring Roles

Focusing on learner autonomy is arguably a more achievable goal in one-to-one teaching, where there is more time for the teacher to become a "supporter" (Ur, 2024, p. 17), or in Harmer's (2015) terminology, "prompter" (p. 117), to give guidance for learners on how to become more independent as learners and create the conditions to "enable the students to learn for themselves" (Scrivener, 2011, p. 18). With autonomous learning taking place in the classroom, the teacher can remain in the background and intervene only if necessary. In such a lesson, decisions are shared and negotiated with the learner, be it goals, activities or materials for class use, and the teacher is only there to guide the process or provide information when needed (Scrivener, 2011). It should be acknowledged, though, that while autonomy (self-determination, self-regulation) is key to developing independent, intrinsically motivated learners (Benson, 2009), not all learners are equally ready for autonomy. First, learners need to become aware of the nature of the learning process, change their attitudes so that they are ready to take on responsibilities as learners and then enjoy the freedom that comes with transferring roles and increased responsibility (Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Regarding the roles that can be transferred, for one-to-one lessons, they include choosing the material and deciding on the procedure for learning, being a source of information and knowledge, assessment and error correction (Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Supporting this process is essentially what coaching does.

However, there is perceivable resistance from teacher training institutions towards coaching as it embraces the ambiguity and uncertainty of our knowledge about language learning processes and the vulnerability of the teacher (Kovács, 2022). Nevertheless, shifting the focus from teaching to enhancing learning through metacognitive strategies, placing more focus on reflection, planning and individual goal-setting, or helping students overcome individual learning-related difficulties has the potential to support teachers' professional development. **Language coaching**, as defined by Kovács (2022), is "a learner-led process aimed at creating optimal target-language acquisition while working towards effective international communication skills in order to reach future-related goals" (p. 289). Elements of the coaching process may form a part of the teaching process by blending coaching tools that support learning with a professional language teaching framework. In other words, while coaching may be a part of teaching and teachers can acquire coaching skills through learning about language coaching, the professional, methodological, linguistic and cultural knowledge that teachers are trained in, cannot be replaced. As Harmer (2015) put it, "In the end, teachers are (or should be) facilitators – helping their students to achieve their goals, whether by coaching them, teaching them or tutoring them" (p. 117).

6.4. Relationship with the Learner

In trying to reach an optimal outcome in learning, it is essential to establish a good rapport with the learner (Bleistein & Lewis, 2015). Having a close and positive relationship with the learner helps build trust and understanding and thus maintain motivation. While this friendly atmosphere is crucial for effective learning, keeping professional boundaries is key in order to retain mutual respect towards one another.

Regarding the characteristics of teachers, Scrivener (2011) lists them as "features which create a positive relationship and atmosphere" (p. 16). Depending on the type of one-to-one session, teachers may take on different approaches in terms of how much they would like to present as figures who are in control or rather guide the learning process more indirectly. In a one-to-one instructional setting, it is important to consider the weight of the responsibility that the teacher has as the sole conversation partner. While the lessons should take place in the context of an atmosphere conducive to spontaneous, comfortable, and casual learning interactions, having informal conversations with the learner is not enough (Wilberg, 1987). The language used by the teacher should be adjusted to the learner's level and at the same time, respond to the learner's input in an authentic manner. The teacher should be observant and maintain a comfortable "balance and rhythm of speech and silence" (Wilberg, 1987, p. 9) as if it were "a dance. Your student is your partner [...]" (p. 8) which requires "sensitive adjustment and awareness of pace, rhythm and step" (p. 9). Moreover, teachers should sensitively adjust their questions and responses to the learner's language level and skills, both to provide a comprehensible model and to facilitate the learner's participation in the conversation. The way learners establish contact with speakers of the target language will affect the learner's motivation and attitude towards the language, which in turn affects self-regulation (Dörnyei et al., 2006).

7. Conclusions and Further Research

With this theoretical paper, we aimed to 1) investigate teacher roles that can be interpretable and meaningful in one-to-one teaching situations based on the teacher training literature, 2) examine additional teacher roles in one-to-one teaching situations, and 3) formulate implications for one-to-one teaching based on the empirical background. To achieve these aims, we carefully synthesised the literature to be able to draw up a framework for reconsidering one-to-one teachers' roles. To answer our first question concerning teacher roles based on the teacher training literature, we can conclude that there are three major professional areas, namely, course management, professional knowledge, and awareness of social-psychological factors and skills whereby teachers are expected to mainly act as course managers, teachers per se, and supporters, respectively.

As course managers, teachers are responsible for managing the course itself, the learning environment, the instructional design, materials and content, and designing the use of digital and technical tools. Teachers intend to establish an ideal context where learning can happen, and they create a course outline based on the learner's input. Additionally, in their course manager role, they take the learner's needs into account when designing content but ideally are also open and flexible towards incorporating content and materials provided by the learner. If need be, teachers also provide the technical support needed and design an online environment upon request.

The teacher role includes facilitating the process of language learning by providing guidance and instruction when needed using scaffolding. Trained teachers possess the ability to use methodologies that are suitable for the learner and if one does not work efficiently, then flexibly turn to another. Instead of acting as a resource of knowledge who is responsible for transferring the knowledge to the learner, the teacher supports the learner in discovering what areas of language are necessary and guides the learner in finding models of competent language use and materials. The teacher role also covers gradually shifting the assessor agency to the learner and enabling them to perform self-assessment, which has a role in promoting motivation and learner autonomy. Additionally, the teacher is a reflective practitioner (Grasha, 2002) who is up-to-date, open to continuous professional development and seeks opportunities to develop professionally.

Being a supporter means serving as a model for the learners by showing the history and background of being an open-minded learner. In addition, the supporter role also covers being

an observer, that is, being aware of the psycholinguistic factors that influence learning and thus adapting to the learner's needs. It also includes enhancing the learner's ability for self-assessment, providing opportunities for feedback (both ways) and learning from the learner. The teacher ideally has a coaching attitude when learners get stuck, identifies learning blocks or learning difficulties, and maintains a professional distance but also provides a friendly and open atmosphere, while is able to build trust and highly promote learner agency and autonomy. The supporter teacher can shift between roles as appropriate and transfer roles to the learner by increasing learner responsibility.

To answer our second question, after examining teachers' additional roles in a one-to-one situation, we came to the conclusion that the teacher is responsible for creating a learning space and an opportunity for the learner to develop. The teacher needs to establish a learner profile that is in-depth and detailed enough in order to be able to personalise the materials and the course to the individual. Besides this, the teacher is required to teach learning skills for more autonomy and agency and create personalised instructional and digital content design.

In the following, to answer our third question, we will describe the implications that can be formulated based on the findings for language teachers, language learners and teacher training programmes. With the skill of reflective observation and careful planning, teachers can tailor instruction based on their learner's needs. However, this undertaking may not be as easy as it sounds. As has been mentioned, adapting to the learner's needs requires a complex set of skills including careful observation, not to mention the need for in-depth professional knowledge. Continuous professional development necessitates a greater investment of time and energy, the teacher may feel alone with their questions as it may be difficult to ask for help – and identifying the appropriate time to ask for help is yet another issue –, reach out to a community, and there may be a lack of professional support from colleagues. It is imperative to establish good rapport and build a trusting relationship to get and give appropriate feedback, as the student is the most reliable source of knowledge on how to increase the efficiency of their learning in a one-to-one context.

From this theoretical review, we have also seen that the literature is scant regarding one-to-one teaching, and the materials used in the classrooms are typically not designed for one-to-one situations. In these unique situations, the teacher has more responsibility in choosing the appropriate materials, as regular textbooks may become boring due to them being designed for whole classrooms and lacking a personalised design completely. Moreover, adapting to the learner's needs often means extra work for the teacher and it also probably requires more planning than anticipated. Due to the fact that teachers sometimes may not have support for continuous professional development, teachers may have to rely more on themselves. Overall, we can claim that one-to-one teaching situations are markedly different from regular classroom teaching in many aspects, and language policy makers could implement the necessary changes in teacher training to prepare teachers for one-to-one teaching situations that are not at all rare in their practice.

While the present study focuses on teaching English as a foreign language, it is reasonable to assume that the discussion of terms and roles in this article may apply to teaching and learning other languages, as well, the only difference being the assumed teacher training background knowledge. Based on this review of the literature on knowledge, skills and roles of one-to-one teachers, further empirical studies are planned for a more in-depth understanding of one-to-one language teaching.

As in every review, it is imperative to be aware of potential biases that may have had an effect on the study. Selection bias may have occurred as we have chosen only three books that are used as English teacher training materials. Our choice was informed by the fact that these three

books are the most popular ones in the Hungarian context; therefore, the proposed theoretical framework is to be addressed carefully. We did not take a step further to mitigate this potential bias as the original aim of the study was not to generalise but to serve as a clarion call for initiating discussion on the matter.

As a further research avenue, it may be beneficial to create course outlines that are in line with the various roles of teachers and are suitable for one-to-one teaching contexts. In a follow-up questionnaire study, we investigate teachers' perceptions of their roles in one-to-one teaching situations. Besides quantifying this information, it would be imperative to dig deeper into this phenomenon and gain an in-depth insight into the following areas of investigation: how teachers approach planning, what materials they use, how their workload could be eased, what their challenges and difficulties are, what extra training would be beneficial for them (if at all), what training they already have and whether it is sufficient, how teaching skills need to be approached differently, and finally, how not to shift into coaching-only mode. This list, of course, is not extensive but contains some key examples to which if we find an answer, we may produce more effective one-to-one teaching processes. We are convinced that the time is ripe to focus our attention more to one-to-one teaching situations due to its unique characteristics and to enhance professional cooperation.

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Declaration Statements

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Appendix A

TABLE 2. REQUIRED READINGS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY FINAL EXAMS AT 10 MAJOR HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITIES WITH EFL TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND TEFL COURSES

	Universities and Courses with EFL Training Programmes	Readings			
		Harmer (2015)	Scrivener (2011)	Ur (2024)	Brown (2015)
1	Debreceni Egyetem	✓	✓	x	x
2	Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem	✓	✓	✓	x
3	Eszterházy Károly Katolikus Egyetem	✓	✓	x	✓
4	Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Miskolci Egyetem	✓	✓	x	✓
6	Nyíregyházi Egyetem	Not provided on the website			
7	Pannon Egyetem	Not provided on the website			
8	Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem	✓	✓	x	x
9	Pécsi Tudományegyetem	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Szegedi Tudományegyetem	✓	?	✓	?
11	CELTA course: Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages	✓	✓	✓	x
Total		9	8	4	4

Note. ✓ = it is required, x = it is not required. Trainings may use different editions of the same book indicated above. Apart from the above sources, other materials may be used during the courses, but those were indicated for fewer than three institutions or not indicated on the reading list available on the university website.

Source: own compilation, based on the official websites of the universities.

Appendix B

TABLE 3. A FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSING TEACHERS' ROLES IN ONE-TO-ONE TEACHING CONTEXTS

Professional Areas	Required Skill, Knowledge, Competence	Main Role	Role
Course Management	Establish the ideal situational context for learning	**Course Manager**	Environment manager
	Planning procedures, tracking progress and managing feedback		Instructional design manager
	Content, resources, materials		Designer of materials and content
	Digital, technical competencies		Digital, technical designer
Professional Knowledge	Methodological competence	**Teacher**	Facilitator
	Communicative competence		Instructor (resource, model)
	Evaluation and assessment of learning		Assessor
	Continuous professional development and openness to professional collaboration		Reflective practitioner
Awareness of Social-psychological Factors and Skills	Self-awareness, emotional intelligence and well-being	**Supporter**	Role model as a learner
	Awareness of the psycholinguistic factors that influence learning		Observer
	Language coaching and transferring roles		Language coach
	Establish rapport, maintain motivation and keep professional boundaries		Relationship manager

Source: own compilation, based on the review of the literature.