



## EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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**Annation:** *This article examines the importance of learning foreign languages as a Guarantee of professionalism. An effective lesson plan refers to the roadmap the teacher adopts to make his lesson successful in producing the desired results. The process of designing a lesson plan starts with identifying the needs of the students, determining the objectives or standards the students need to attain, and selecting the approach and methods that best suit the learning situation.*

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**Introduction** .This article is an introduction to how lesson planning should be designed. First, we will try to define what a lesson plan is. Then, the rationale behind the process of lesson planning is discussed. A case is made for developing a coherent approach to learning and teaching. Teachers at this stage are invited to think of their personal theory of how the teaching and learning processes take place. This should normally be applied to the way they design lesson plans. A list of the components of lesson plans is presented before we turn at the end of the article, to the merits of lesson planning for teachers as well as for learners

**What Is A Lesson?** Here is a situation to understand what is intended by the term “*lesson*“: *Suppose you go out of your home, close the door and to your surprise, you realize that you forgot the keys inside.* Obviously, this experience teaches you a lesson: you should never close the door before you make sure that the keys are in your pocket, or at least you have a plan B in case you forget the keys (i.e., having a double copy of the keys somewhere.)This is a lesson learned from experience. But we can also learn by studying. Books, the internet, and myriads of other sources of information can teach you lessons.

**What is effective lesson planning?** “*Lesson planning is the art of combining a number of different elements into a coherent whole so that a lesson has an identity.*” In other words, lesson planning is the process of selecting and organizing a coherent set of activities that cover a period of classroom time. Each lesson has an identity. If one has a look at different lesson plans, one can be sure that these lesson plans cover specific points of the syllabus or that they are designed for specific types of learners. Effective lesson plans require the teacher not only to set learning and teaching routines but also to visualize the lesson before it is actually delivered. Lesson plans can be also viewed as a set of classroom routines. According to Yinger (1980), lesson planning can be described as: “*decision-making about the selection, the organization, and the sequencing of routines*”. Research suggests that expert teachers use routines to make parts of their teaching more automatic. This automaticity helps these teachers free their working memory for other more difficult parts of their teaching process.

According to Scott Thornbury, there is a long legacy of visualization in athletics as a means of performance preparation. In this regard, the story of Marilyn King, a pentathlon athlete who, after a crippling accident, ‘visualized’ herself back into Olympic-standard performance, is



frequently mentioned.

Successful athletes run the race in their minds several times before they actually run it in real life. They use a technique called mental rehearsal to run through their performance, over and over again. Like these successful athletes, teachers may benefit from delivering the lesson over and over in their heads before coming to the classroom. This will have the positive double effects of:

- Anticipating the potential problems that they may encounter while delivering the lesson;
- And deciding on the best options to address these problems before they actually occur.

Accordingly, lesson planning can be viewed as the ability of the teacher to visualize and forecast how the lesson delivery will take place. It is the cognitive process of thinking about what will happen in the classroom when delivering the lesson, making decisions about what, why, and how the teaching-learning process will occur.

What do language teachers teach?

Language teachers are required to teach both

1. The language system: the grammar and lexis
2. And the language skills: the receptive skills (i.e., listening and reading), the productive skills (i.e., speaking and writing).

Lesson's objectives have to be SMART:

- S – Specific – Specifies precisely what the learner will know or be able to do.
- M – Measurable – The desired behavior can be observed by the end of the lesson.
- – Attainable – Learners will be able to complete the task within the allotted time and under the given conditions.
- R – Relevant – Relevant to the learners' needs.
- T – Time-bound – Must be completed by the end of the lesson.
- Lessons include:
  - An opening that includes:
    - A warm-up: a motivating activity that puts the students in the mood of learning (e.g., a tongue twister, chanting, etc)
    - A lead-in – a short activity that prepares the learners to the topic of the lesson by relating the learners' prior knowledge with the new one.
  - The lesson:
    - A presentation stage: when the new knowledge is presented either through explanation or guided discovery.
    - A practice stage where the learners are invited to appropriate the new knowledge.
    - A production stage in which learners use the target language in suitable situations.
    - A closing stage includes a follow-up activity that aims at reviewing, summarizing, or expanding the newly learned knowledge.



This procedure is typical of most types of lessons.. First, learners encounter new information. Then, they try to clarify it. After that comes the phase when they have to remember and internalize this knowledge. The final phase consists of the learners' attempts to fluently use the new knowledge.

One of the most important principles of effective teaching is to **Keep It Short and Simple**. It is important to manage your teaching as simply as possible. Simplifying teaching doesn't mean discarding quality teaching. It means caring for what is essential.

So that a lesson can follow the above KISS principle, teachers may use the following tips. Teachers should:

- Avoid long explanations.
- Avoid providing too many details.
- Avoid talking too much about exceptions.
- Sequence activities from easy to more challenging.
- Target the essential elements.
- Vary the activities – variety is the spice of life.
- Opt for guided discovery.
- Optimize exercise items – an exercise with 20 items may be time and effort-consuming without necessarily being effective.

**Mode of Work:** There are three modes of work that can generate a number of interaction patterns in the classroom.

1. Individual
2. Pair work
3. Group work

#### **Interactions According To The Different Modes Of Work**

If we take the participants in classroom interactions (i.e., students and teachers) into consideration, we may deduce that there are three possible types of classroom interactions:

- Teacher – Student
- Student – Teacher
- Student – Student

It can be argued that the more the initiative comes from the students, the more the teaching-learning process is learner-centered.

When the focus is on learning, learners are free to ask and answer questions, make decisions about their learning, participate in discussions, initiate conversations, access resources, and be responsible for their progress.

#### **To sum up:**

- A lesson plan is a unified set of activities that cover a period of classroom time.
- Before designing a lesson, teachers must formulate their own personal philosophy of



learning & teaching.

- Do you think that students learn because we explain the target language to them?
- Do you think that students learn because they discover how language works with the help of guiding questions?
- Do you think that only after learners had tried to do a task using their own linguistic resources that accuracy-oriented activities should be introduced?
- Lesson plan components include among other things class profile, objectives, procedure, mode of work, timing, etc.
- Objectives have to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.)
- Procedures and activities should follow the KISS (Keep It Short and Simple) and The 3 Es (Ease, Economy, and Efficacy) principles.
- The exposure/presentation stage shouldn't take too much time. More importantly, the students have to practice and use the target language.
- Teachers sometimes have to be flexible. Lesson plans are not to be implemented come hell or high water.

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