EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING

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Abstract: Absolutely, each teacher brings their own unique style to their classroom, and the guidance provided in this chapter isn't meant to be rigidly prescriptive. Instructors should feel empowered to plan lessons in a manner that aligns with their teaching philosophy, while consistently considering overarching unit, yearly, and overarching educational goals.A lesson plan serves as a roadmap. Well-structured lesson plans have a higher likelihood of maintaining student engagement and sparking curiosity. Moreover, with a clear plan in place, classroom management becomes more manageable, as it maximizes instructional time and minimizes uncertainty regarding student expectations

Keywords: in-service educators, lesson goal, effective lesson, plan for the day, Bloom's Taxonomy, Bailey's principles, Tyler's four steps.

1 INTRODUCTION

Language teachers rely on a wealth of professional knowledge and experience as they develop, execute, and reflect on their lesson plans. They consider theoretical concepts in second language acquisition, such as the importance of comprehensible input and students' motivations, as outlined by Brown (2007), while also integrating their own beliefs about language learning processes. Additionally, they draw from best practices in teaching various language skills including reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary.

Central to their planning process is a deep understanding of their students' characteristics, the prescribed curriculum or textbook, and the cultural and institutional context of their teaching environment. They also take into account practical factors such as the availability of resources like time, space, and materials, as well as any constraints that may impact their instructional approach.

This comprehensive understanding informs the decisions teachers make throughout the lesson planning process. They carefully craft their plans, implement them in the classroom while being flexible to deviations as needed, and assess the effectiveness of their plans post-lesson. In essence, their professional knowledge and contextual awareness guide them in creating meaningful learning experiences for their students.

This excerpt delves into the importance of lesson planning for English language instructors, emphasizing the crucial role of preparation in ensuring effective teaching. Richards (1998) underscores the significance of lesson preparation, stating that the success of a teacher in delivering a class often hinges on the quality of lesson planning.

While some instructors meticulously outline their daily plans, others may prefer to plan mentally. However, lesson plans serve as organized documents that guide instructors in addressing issues, providing structure, and outlining the content to be covered. Richards (1998) suggests that lesson plans help educators anticipate challenges, create a roadmap for teaching, and ensure clarity in instruction.

Lesson plans can take various forms, including handwritten or digital formats, and may adhere to specific templates mandated by schools. Regardless of format, a well-structured lesson plan should include essential components such as objectives, instructional strategies, required materials, assessment methods, and potential homework assignments.

Clear and concise objectives form the foundation of a successful lesson plan, delineating the desired learning outcomes for students. Shrum and Glisan (1994) advocate for objectives that articulate observable behaviors, particularly in language acquisition, and recommend using action verbs aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy to facilitate effective teaching and assessment.

In essence, effective lesson planning is crucial for English language instructors to facilitate meaningful learning experiences and ensure student success in language acquisition.

When teaching English language learners through content-based instruction or content and language integrated learning, it's essential to establish both language objectives and content objectives for each lesson. Similar to language objectives, content objectives should specify what students will accomplish and be observable and measurable. Ideally, there should

be alignment between the content objective and the language objective(s).

Here are examples of content and language objectives:

(Content Objective)

- Learners will explain the reasons for the U.S. Civil War.

(Language Objectives)

- Learners will accurately use the simple past tense to write and talk about the U.S. Civil War.

- Learners will define vocabulary related to the U.S. Civil War (e.g., civil war, secession, confederacy, slavery, abolitionist, emancipation proclamation).

- Learners will use suffixes (-ion, -ist) to determine a word's part of speech.

- Learners will present a clear thesis statement in the introductory paragraph of their essay and clear topic sentences in each supporting paragraph.

By clearly articulating both language and content objectives, educators can ensure that language development is integrated seamlessly into the learning of subject matter, fostering deeper understanding and language proficiency simultaneously.

2 METHODS

There are several methods for organizing lessons. Tyler's (1949) rational-linear structure is the most often used paradigm for lesson preparation. "The four sequential steps in Tyler's model are: (I) defining objectives; (II) choosing learning activities; (III) organizing learning activities; and (IV) defining methods of evaluation."Despite data that shows instructors seldom perform the logical, linear procedure stated in the phases, Tyler's model is nevertheless extensively employed (Borko & Niles, 1987). For instance, Taylor (1970) observed that teachers primarily considered the demands and interests of their pupils when they organized their classes. More importantly, he discovered that teacher preparation programs did not adequately educate instructors in lesson planning.

Yinger (1980) created a different approach that involves phased planning in reaction to these observations. The first phase, known as "problem conception," is when planning begins with a cycle of discovery that integrates the teacher's objectives, expertise, and experience. In the second phase, the issue is resolved and a solution is found. The plan's implementation and assessment are part of the third stage. According to Yinger, this process is becoming normal, with each planning event being impacted by past events as well as potential future events. He also thinks there's a role for taking into account how each teacher's experiences have influenced this continuous planning process.

According to Bailey's (1996, p. 38) research, instructors who teach English as a second language sometimes stray from their initial lesson plan for the following intriguing reasons, which are presented as principles: (1) " Provide everyone's good." When a student brought up a topic that the teacher thought would be important to the other pupils, the teacher here was willing to stray from the initial class plan. 2) "Lead in the present." When they feel it is appropriate for the class, teachers occasionally decide to completely scrap the lesson plan and talk about an unforeseen incident. (3) "Additionally the topic of the lesson." In order to facilitate the lesson's advancement, teachers alter their methods during the instruction. (4) "Accept instructional styles."To meet the needs of students who have different learning styles than those initially listed in the lesson plan, teachers may deviate from it.

Instructors may choose to modify the general model. According to Shrum and Glisan (1994), learners "can gradually begin to take on more responsibility in determining what is covered as well as in the design of the classes themselves" as lessons in languages progress and they become more proficient. English language instructors should be aware that language courses could differ from subject classes in that the same ideas would have to be emphasized repeatedly using various techniques.

Before preparing their classes, language instructors can find it helpful to respond to the following requests:

• What and why do you wish your students to learn?
• Are all of the tasks required, worthwhile, and appropriate in terms of level?
• Which supplies, tools, and other items will you use, and why?
• Which kind of interaction—pair or group—will you promote, and why?
• What directions must you provide, and how (written, verbal, etc.) will you provide them?
• How are you going to assess students' comprehension at each step of the lesson?

Since every educational setting is unique, the lesson plan shouldn't be viewed as a "how to" or prescription. The next stage after creating the plan is to put it into practice by instructing the class.

There are numerous ways to arrange the additional exercises in your session. For example, reading and listening activities that require receptive skills are typically completed before speaking and writing tasks that require productive skills.According to Richards & Lockhart (1996) Simpler tasks frequently lead to more intricate and challenging ones. A language class has typically been structured according to the Presentation-Practice-Production paradigm. In this style, the teacher

explains and provides examples of a particular language form or function to the students first. After that, pupils carefully rehearse the form or function, sometimes through drills or fill-in-the-blank exercises. Lastly, through an interactive activity, kids can express themselves more effectively using language .

More recent methods of teaching languages, such task-based learning, suggest a different order of activities. Task-based learning centers on students completing assignments that emphasize meaning communication above the application of certain forms or functions. Students should find this work engaging and relevant to their everyday lives. It ought to have a conclusion, like producing a poster or coming to a decision. Students who finish the assignment and attain this goal are given priority. Students only begin to analyze the language they used to perform the job after they have finished it.

An alternative approach to lesson organization is to apply the flipped model. The basic idea behind a reversed class is this: assignments that were previously completed in class are now completed at home, and assignments that were previously completed as homework are now finished in class. Rather than giving lectures and introducing new ideas in class, the instructor gives students resources to read, watch, and revise independently of class—often in the form of videos—that clarify the content. This gives free class time to ensure students spend most of their time in class performing exercises and doing activities that apply the material. This translates to more time utilizing a language in a foreign language classroom.

The teacher's job is to keep an eye on, help, and grade the students while they are studying. In addition to outlining the benefits of the classroom-flipped paradigm, Bergmann and Sams (2012) offer helpful implementation advice.

Engaging in the process of lesson planning empowers teachers to make deliberate choices about their teaching methods. Following the lesson, the written plan serves as a record of what transpired and prompts reflection for educators. Many teachers annotate their plans, noting which activities succeeded, which didn't, and what adjustments they'd make for future implementation. Here are some questions to guide your reflection on constructing and executing your lesson plans:

Learning Objectives

✓ Did students grasp the lesson's objectives? If not, how might you enhance clarity in communicating these objectives?

✓ Did the learning activities enable students to achieve the lesson objectives? What evidence supports the attainment of these objectives?

✓ If the activities fell short of meeting the objectives, what modifications to either the objectives or the activities would facilitate success?

Materials

✓ Were the chosen instructional materials suitable for the students' age and proficiency levels?

✓ Were supplementary materials readily available (e.g., poster paper, scissors, markers)? If not, how can you ensure their availability in the future?

✓ Were there sufficient materials for all students to participate?

✓ Did the technology used function properly? If not, who should be notified for technical assistance?

✓ Were you proficient in utilizing the classroom technology? If not, where can you acquire technical training?

Reflecting on these aspects can enhance the effectiveness of future lesson planning and implementation.

Here's procedures section of the reflection on lesson planning:

✓ How long did the presentation segment last? Was this duration appropriate or overwhelming for students?

✓ If deemed excessive, how could the information be spread across multiple sessions in the future?

Selected Activities:

✓ Were the chosen activities suitable for the students' age and proficiency levels?

✓ Was the sequence of activities appropriate, or could it be improved?

✓ Did the transitions between activities flow smoothly? If not, how could they be improved?

✓ Were instructions for the activities clearly understood by students? If not, how can clarity be enhanced?

Variety of Formats:

✓ Did the lesson incorporate various formats (e.g., whole class, individual work, pair work, group work)? If not, why, and how could more variety be introduced to achieve the same objectives?

✓ Did all students actively participate? If not, what strategies can be implemented to ensure inclusivity?

Pair or Group Work:

✓ How were pairs or groups formed? Could alternative groupings have been more effective?

Motivation:

✓ How did the lesson stimulate learners' motivation?

Options for Processing Information:

✓ What options did students have for processing information or demonstrating their understanding?

Teacher vs. Student Talk Time:

✓ What was the ratio of teacher talk time to student talk time? How could student engagement through language use be increased in future repetitions of the lesson?

Interactive Decisions:

✓ What interactive decisions were made during the lesson, and what were the outcomes?

Reflecting on these questions can provide valuable insights for refining future lesson plans and instructional strategies.

3 CONCLUSIONS

The last step in preparing each lesson is for the teacher to assess the lesson's effectiveness (or failure) once it has concluded. According to Ur (1996), it's critical to reflect "Whether or not it was an excellent one or a bad one, and why" is a question to pose after a session . She claims that self-development is the goal of this type of reflection. Naturally, the phrases "being successful" and failing are associated, and each teacher's and student's interpretation of them will be different. However, according to Brown (1994), a teacher cannot evaluate the students' performance or determine what needs to be changed for the following session if there isn't an assessment element in the class.

Evaluation is defined as "a personal or professional assessment that you provide after learners have enough chances for learning" by Brown (1994) in the context of lesson design. Ur (1996) states that as student learning is the primary reason for having a class in the initial place, it should be the primary criterion for evaluation. Ur states that although assessing the extent of learning from a session could be challenging, it is still possible to create a reasonable estimation. This assumption may be grounded "on our understanding of the lesson, the kind of exercise students took part in, as well as certain casual test tasks that provide feedback on understanding" .

After completing a lesson, teachers can find it helpful to consider the related questions:

- In your opinion, what did the learners truly learn?
- Which tasks yielded the best results? least prosperous? Why?
- Did you complete the lesson on schedule?
- If any, what adjustments will you be making to the way you teach, and why?

At the conclusion of each session, teachers may additionally pose learners four additional inquiries to gain more insight into the success of the lesson; the responses can help teachers design lessons for the future:

- In your opinion, what was covered in today's lesson?
- Which section was simple?
- Which aspect was challenging?
- What adjustments would you advise the instructor to make?

I have concentrated on the ordinary decisions that language teachers (pre-service and in-service) have to make about lesson planning. As every teacher is different, so are our planning styles, thus the recommendations in this section are not intended to be restrictive. While maintaining constant awareness of the annual, tenn, and unit plans, teachers must permit themselves to organize in their own unique way. A plan for a lesson is similar to a road map, as noted by Bailey (1996), "that outlines where the instructor intends to go in a class, hopefully taking learners together" . Teachers should pay particular attention to the last half of this phrase since it may be necessary for them to make "in-flight" adjustments in response to changing circumstances in the classroom. As Bailey (1996) accurately notes, "A qualified instructor's thinking in use includes handling these deviations to optimize learning and instruction chances" when it comes to implementing lesson plans. Lesson ideas that have been carefully considered will help pupils stay focused and be more likely to become interested. In addition to maximizing efficiency and reducing misunderstanding about expectations, a well-defined strategy will facilitate classroom management.

As demonstrated in this volume's discussion, crafting lesson plans is a multifaceted endeavor. There are conceptual considerations, such as determining the essence of our lesson plan. What lies at its essence? Is it the subject matter we impart (as in forward design), the instructional activities we utilize (as in central design), or the lesson objectives alongside their associated evaluations (as in backward design)? Universal Design for Learning (UDL) prompts us to recognize that the notion of learner diversity encompasses more than disparities in age, skill level, and cultural or linguistic background. Learners vary in how they perceive and process information, articulate their understanding, and participate in the learning process. UDL furnishes us with principles for addressing this diversity of learners at all stages of our instructional plans.

Additionally, there's a multitude of practical considerations to address for each lesson: What are the specific objectives we aim to achieve? Which activities

are most suitable and when should they be implemented? How should we allocate time for each activity? What grouping strategies will best facilitate learning? What materials are essential for effective instruction? How will we evaluate student comprehension? Moreover, can these tasks be accomplished within a single class session, or will students need to complete some assignments outside of class? Approaching these decisions during the lesson planning stage can enhance our teaching practice, although adjustments may still be necessary as the lesson unfolds. Establishing a clear vision for our lesson beforehand enables us to make more informed decisions as we teach. The advantages of effective lesson planning are manifold, making it an indispensable skill for every educator to cultivate.

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