



THE IMPORTANCE OF LESSON PLANNING IN TEACHING

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 11 th July 2023 Accepted: 10 th August 2023 Published: 14 th September 2023	Modern teaching methodology proves that the lesson productivity in education may often be boosted by providing a number of factors one of which planning lessons ahead effectively. It usually requires teachers to master some teaching techniques together with becoming more attentive to what and how are they bringing the content to the class.
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INTRODUCTION

Today's world has put a number of requirements for bettering the education of the population in each and every country. Effective teaching process is the foundation on which any person, society, or country progresses. Meanwhile, it is the concern of every tutor, EFL teacher or a language instructor to enhance teaching techniques so as to boost lesson productivity. In the recent research, as Womack, Hanna, and Bell (2012) explored key factors to improve teaching efficiency, they came across mainly four reasons, the primary one being an appropriate lesson planning. It is thought that this strongly connects to the way a teacher plans how to take the learners to a designated destination till the end of the lesson.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of scholars try to convey the meaning of 'lesson planning'. According to J.Harmer (1991) "The best teachers are those who think carefully about what they are going to do in their classes and who plan how they are going to organise the teaching and learning." Moreover, Callum Robertson Richard Acklam (2000) claim that "A lesson plan is a framework for a lesson. If you imagine that a lesson is like a journey, then the lesson plan is the map. It shows where you start, where you finish and the route to take to get there. Lesson plans are the product of teachers' thoughts about their classes; what they hope to achieve and how they hope to achieve it. They are usually, though not always, in written form." However, Kriegel (2018) mentions that "A good lesson plan is a living document. It is not set in stone, but rather it is a guide that keeps you-the classroom practitioner-engaged and thinking about what you are teaching. Meanwhile, one of the most outstanding scholars in teaching methodology T.Woodward (2001) means by planning" everything a teacher does when she SAYS she is planning! For example, listening to students, remembering, visualising, noting things down, flicking through magazines, rehearsing, or drinking tea while staring into space and deciding".

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As mentioned above, planning your teaching ahead can be just like a guidance through which a teacher leads the learners to the final destination. Likewise, T.Woodward (2001) mentions other factors that lead language instructors to think of their lesson beforehand, planning every detail.

- Planning things ahead before the lessons serves to reduce teacher anxiety about the process and in turn motivates giving them further confidence to teach.
- It boosts the confidence of students giving them a feeling of aim, progression and understanding.
- It clarifies the area where you need to do more exploration.
- It mentions about arranging materials, managing time and flow of activities appropriately.
- Students will gain an idea about what are they going to learn in the lesson, if the part of the lesson plan is shared to learners.
- Planning can help us to start activities on time, keeping the process in mind together with easing answering students' questions.
- Working on planning before and after the lessons encourages to reach a balance in presenting a variety of materials, content and interaction patterns throughout the course.
- Planning courses and any kind of lesson encourage to establish your own teaching style, for the reason that it involves examine various resources, materials and teaching aids to sort out beneficial and vital ones of them. Despite its numerous advantages, planning the lessons ahead has a number of shortcomings because of which some educators would not want to plan (Woodward, 2001).

- ✓ Thinking about the lesson process for a long time ahead may be waste of time for the reason that when it happens, many things may change on the way, making previous plans irrelevant or inappropriate.
- ✓ Planning in much details may cause rigidity, limiting teachers' ability to meet learners' needs in the lesson process.
- ✓ If the planning is done in accordance with the set ideas by an examiner or lesson observer, not learner needs, in that case this serves as an only documentation, not a fruitful working document.

However, Callum Robertson Richard Acklam (2000), without some kind of planning, a lesson could be just as chaotic and could leave the students with no clear idea of what they were doing or why. This kind of uncertainty is not good for effective learning or class discipline. One of the most important reasons to plan is that the teacher needs to identify his or her aims for the lesson. Teachers need to know what it is they hope to achieve in the class, what it is they want the students to be able to do at the end of the lesson that they couldn't do before. Mentioning the importance of the lesson planning and comparing it to the map of the driver who is driving the learners on his bus to some place, the authors assure that each and every driver should know where and how to take the passengers to the place. Then they give a number of reasons justifying the importance of planning:

- ✓ Planning is a sign of professionalism. Students expect teachers to be professional. If teachers are prepared, the students can tell. They also know if they are not prepared. Planning is a way to help gain the respect of the students.
- ✓ By planning teachers are considering their teaching situation and particular students. However good their teaching material or course book may be, it is unlikely that it was prepared for the particular students. Planning gives them the opportunity to tailor their material and teaching to their class.
- ✓ As we have seen, lessons need to have certain elements and principles. Planning encourages teachers to consider these points and ensure they are included in the lesson.
- ✓ Planning gives the teacher a chance to predict possible problems in the class and think about ways to deal with them. By thoroughly researching the target language and being prepared for difficult questions, for example, the teacher can feel confident in the classroom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The authors also discuss the principles of planning which teachers should bear in their mind always while planning:

Aims. One of the main principles of planning is establishing a clear aim for your lesson. It is important that aims are realistic. If the subject is too difficult for the students, then they can become frustrated and lose motivation. However, if the subject is too easy, the students may become bored. Bored and frustrated students can often cause discipline problems. So it is important when planning to think about the particular class.

- What do the students know already? If a teacher is planning to introduce completely new language items allow more time than if they are revising or extending a topic the class are already familiar with
- What do the students need to know? If the students are studying for an exam, for example, then you may need to focus on different skills and language than for a General English class. Do their aims suit that need?
- What did they do with the students in their previous class?
- How well do the class work together?
- How motivated are the students?

Variety. As we have seen, it is important to try and keep the students engaged and interested. Providing variety in a lesson and a series of lessons is a way of achieving this. Repeating the same kinds of exercises can become monotonous and demotivating for students. Where possible it's a good idea to try and vary the kinds of activities, materials and interactions.

According to Jeremy Harmer (1991), when the teacher sits down to plan what they're going to be doing, one of the things they need to have in their heads is, how can I vary the pace of the class? How can I vary the kind of thing that's going to happen so that sometimes maybe the students will be silent, sometimes they'll be loud, sometimes they'll be talking to me, sometimes they'll be talking to others, sometimes I'll do a bit of writing, sometimes they'll do a bit of reading. If you vary the patterns of student to student interaction, if you vary the kind of activity the students are involved in, if you vary the kind of material they're looking at ... there's a good chance that most of the students will remain engaged and involved. If you don't build variety into your plan the danger is that they'll switch off at some stage. The author tries to draw readers' attention to the importance of implementing different kinds of activities aimed at integrated skills during classes. While planning the provision of the principle of variety is the key to students' engagement and motivation.

The third principle we should follow while planning the lessons is flexibility. Although a teacher plans well or even excellently, they never actually know exactly what's going to happen in a class until it happens. Exercises may take longer or shorter than anticipated, the students may be more or less interested in a topic than they expected, something unexpected may happen during the lesson. In these cases if the teacher sticks rigidly to their plan the careful preparation may actually have a negative effect. So, every and each teacher is required to be more flexible in the process of both teaching and planning.

CONCLUSION

A lesson is like a journey. If the road ahead becomes blocked, it's no good trying to carry on, teachers have to find a different route. Careful planning is very important but teachers need to be able to adapt their plan during the lesson to suit the circumstances. This is something that becomes easier with experience, but in the planning stage it is often a good idea to consider extra optional or alternative exercises. Then, if the prepared material runs short or a teacher thinks the class might not respond well to a particular activity, they have something to fall back on. Similarly, teachers need to be aware of what is happening in and around the class. Students may raise interesting points and discussions could provide unexpected opportunities for language work and practice. The teacher needs to be flexible enough to be able to leave the plan if such opportunities arise.

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