

# Lesson Planning in Foreign Language Teaching

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**Rustamova Adash Eshankulovna**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PhD., associate professor, Samarkand state institute of foreign languages

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## **Abstract:**

Adult English language learners typically have limited availability for attending language classes. A well-constructed lesson plan serves as a valuable resource that aligns both the instructor and the learners with the lesson's goals and, if designed and implemented correctly, allows learners to effectively achieve their objectives. A lesson consists of a cohesive set of activities centered on a single teaching aim at a time. A teaching objective specifies what learners will be capable of doing by the end of the lesson.

**Keywords:** lesson planning, teaching objectives, assessment, formulation

“Instructors utilize the insights gained from a needs assessment to formulate these objectives. For instance, if learners express the goal of “understanding written communication from my children’s teachers,” an objective might state that “learners will be able to interpret a child’s weekly homework form” or “learners will be able to read notes that their children’s teachers send from school” [2; p.3].

**\*\*What Are the Essential Components of a Lesson Plan?\***

A lesson plan specifies the enabling objectives needed to achieve the main lesson objective, the required materials and equipment, and the suitable activities to meet the objective [1; p.3]:

- Enabling objectives encompass the foundational skills (including language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) and life skills (which include cultural information) necessary to fulfill the main objective.
- Materials and equipment should be identified and acquired well in advance of class to ensure that planned activities can be executed as intended. These items may consist of real-world materials (like bus schedules and children’s report cards), visual aids, teacher-made handouts, textbooks, flip charts and markers, overhead projectors, tape recorders, etc.

- Activities should transition from more structured forms (e.g., repetition) to less structured or free formats (e.g., interviewing one another). They ought to vary in type (e.g., whole group, paired, individual) and modality (e.g., speaking, listening, writing).

a. **\*\*What Are the Stages of a Lesson?\***

“Effective lesson design starts with a review of material already covered. New content is then presented, followed by chances for learners to practice and evaluate what they are absorbing. Typically, a lesson includes the following stages” [1; p.3]:

- Warm-up/Review—encourages learners to utilize what they have learned in prior lessons.
- Introduction to a new lesson—directs the learners’ focus on the aim of the new lesson and relates this aim to their personal experiences.
- Presentation—presents new concepts, checks learner understanding of the newly introduced material, and models the tasks that learners will undertake during the practice phase.
- Practice—affords learners opportunities to practice and apply the newly acquired language or information.
- Evaluation—allows both the instructor and learners to determine how effectively they have grasped the lesson.

**\*\*What Are Some Practical Considerations in Planning Lessons?\***

An effective lesson plan encompasses considerations beyond just the content to be taught (the objective) and the methods for teaching it (materials, equipment, and activities). The following elements must also be considered and planned for [2; p.1]:

- Sequencing—Do the activities logically progress, enabling learners to build on their existing knowledge? Do the activities flow smoothly? Are the transitions between activities seamless?
- Pacing—Are the activities appropriately timed and varied to keep learners engaged and enthusiastic?
- Gauging difficulty—Do the learners possess sufficient skills and knowledge to complete the planned activities? Are the instructions clear?
- Accounting for individual differences—Do the activities permit learners of diverse proficiency levels to receive additional attention as needed, whether they are below or above the norm? Are all students actively participating?
- ✓ Assessing the balance between learner and teacher talk—What is the ratio of learner talk to teacher talk? Does the lesson provide opportunities for students to engage, generating and initiating language?
- ✓ Timing—Was the duration allocated for each segment of the lesson adequate? If the planned session wraps up early, is there an alternative activity prepared? If the lesson wasn’t completed as intended, how can adjustments be made for the next class to cover the remaining content?

Most of these elements of lesson planning are gained through experience; therefore, it’s crucial for the teacher to reflect on the lesson after each class. Consider the following questions [2; p.3]:

- What aspects were successful? Why?
- What elements did not go as expected? Why?
- If given the chance to repeat it, what would I modify?

- What insights have I gained about my students that I can incorporate into future lesson planning?

A lesson plan serves as a guide for a classroom session. It outlines the goal (the lesson's objective) and charts the path (activities for each phase of the lesson). It is beneficial for both novice and experienced educators. New instructors should document the specifics of each activity—possibly even write them out verbatim. Experience will inform how in-depth a lesson plan needs to be. Sharing the plan with students (for instance, by writing the objective and a brief overview of activities on the board) helps maintain focus for both the teacher and the students on their destination, the means of getting there, and their arrival.

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