

Lesson Planning for Language Teaching

By **Bam Dev Sharma**
bamdevsharma45@gmail.com

Abstract

It is universally accepted that effective teaching is the outcome of an effective lesson plan. It is the signpost of teaching learning activities. Lesson plan becomes a blueprint as it consists of content, methodology, objectives, and process through which measurable and achievable objectives can be attained. Lesson plan, as a means of teaching, cannot only support teachers; it also provides good feedback and systematic growth in the process of teaching and learning. This article highlights a lesson plan as an instrumental objective of teaching: both innovative and worthwhile for teachers, especially in the field of language teaching. Besides the accompanied sample of lesson plan, can give an outline how a teacher can make lesson plans interactive to engage students in purposeful teaching learning tasks.

***Keywords:** Lesson planning, communicative approach, collaboration, role play, co-operational teaching, reflective teaching*

Introduction

Over the years, there have been several transformations in English language teaching with the aid of diverse technological advancement, modifying methodologies of teaching. Many language experts and teachers, who teach language or literary texts, tend to believe that lesson plans and class activities yield better outcomes in teaching and learning performances. The efficacy of this, as they give reasons, rests on that students are aware of teaching materials and then go along with the teacher's teaching plan, at the same time they interact with them without any hesitation.

This idea is becoming more practical and it is not supplanted with reason. Lesson plans and class activities are often instrumental for the effective class--- irrespective of class size, course, and level. Good lesson plans furthermore not only creates good preparation on behalf of the teacher, but also relieves his pressure of teaching, thereby providing grounds of reflective thinking. Teaching to the students is also learning on part of the teachers. It is obvious that teaching learning is an interdependent task through active participation and systematic procedures. Brown (2014) in this connection asserts:

Teaching cannot be defined apart from learning. Teaching is guiding and facilitating

learning, enabling a person to learn, and setting conditions for learning. Your understanding of how people learn determines your philosophy of education, your teaching style, approach, lesson design and classroom techniques. (p.8)

Considering the fact that teaching learning is a by party task between the students and teachers, an effective lesson plan becomes a crucial element which provides a structure of teaching and learning at the same time giving the room as to how lessons can be imparted for effective outcomes.

Rationale

Lesson plan and class activities are prerequisites for teaching for several reasons: systematic class progression, class feedback, maintaining teacher and student relationship, reflecting teaching on part of teacher, proper monitoring of class, and activities or planning are some of the apparent advantages. Taking this into consideration, Jeremy Harmer (1996) holds opinions that lesson planning is an art of combining different elements in the class, and making students familiar with various activities and planning of teaching whether they are of small or larger magnitude of teaching. Further, Ur (1996) is making suggestions that lessons are just like show or menu and they give actual shape of the class teaching.

In the same vein, Savage (2015), specifically states:

A lesson plan is a written document that outlines key features of the sequence of teaching that will result in your teaching something and your student learning something. It needs to have the following elements as minimum: learning objectives, learning activities, resources, differentiation strategies and assessment strategies. (p.3)

Similarly, Serdyukov& Ryan (2007) contend that a good lesson plan, according to them, has five basic elements that considerate teachers should take into account as: lesson description, goals and objectives, materials and tools, procedures, and reflective assessment and evaluation. This all indicates the importance of lesson plans. If there is no good lesson plan, the teacher never comes to the right objective of his teaching. Such a class is eventually expected to crash without making any right pursuit of teaching and learning.

Making a lesson plan is not, however, enough for a good teacher. He has to make several reflective approaches to how his class is going on. A lesson plan is the mere skeleton, but there may arise several other elements to make class effective. Among these include communicative approach, collaboration and cooperative teachings have been innovative approaches. It is believed that if a teacher fails to make a good lesson plan, a good journal could help them to see how they are moving through their reflective teaching. Kaye (1992) thinks that collaboration and cooperation can bring out new products of combination of

different elements. This is all because of the effective lesson planning. Similarly, Skinner (1994) suggests some modes of teaching that a teacher has to encounter in the process of learning which he names as: direct teaching, inquiry, discussion, and action learning. Somewhat similar ideas are expressed by Mohammad Aslam (2003) who emphasises four basic elements of teaching: naming, selection, gradation, presentation, and repetition.

Above all, lesson plans and engaging activities play a significant role. This brings out teaching learning support in the class. Since a teacher is in search of many supporting materials, he can make use of the internet, blog, websites, and other teaching and learning materials much more confidently than those who are devoid of a good lesson plan. Eventually, this can make class more interactive as well as productive.

Specifically, lesson planning in language has a lot to do for several reasons: It should not be just about the information but the whole activities should be meaningful in the context. In the better pursuit of language teaching, many experts have come through the content based teaching unlike the form based teaching that was so much in vogue in the past. Since syntax and surface level of understanding can enrich some informative ideas of language, it, however, would not make a teacher competent. Briton (2003) supports this approach of teaching because it is closer to language acquisition rather than language teaching. Effective teaching can only be possible when the teachers identify teaching objectives, different activities, thereby involving students and taking their feedback.

Specific advantages of lesson plan

Lesson planning and organised activities can help in following ways:

- Empowering teacher
- Reflective teaching professional growth
- Collaboration and cooperation in teaching
- Diversity in teaching
- Integration of all skills to incorporate real situation
- Encourage better participation on behalf of students
- Apply project based learning
- Use experimental teaching and learning
- Sharing teaching techniques to others
- Getting feedback from others.

Sample lesson plan

Understanding flowers and learning language

Level: Class (6)

Language focus: Grammatical structures, parts of speech, tense, vocabulary understanding, speaking and writing

Objectives: By the end of the lesson or the activities, the students will be able to:

- Describing gardening and flower vocabularies
- Understanding grammar and sentence structure and punctuation and parts of speech
- Writing small paragraph
- Writing small report of what they did after the lesson is over
- Involving in role plays
- Several other optional skills

Materials needed:

Chart paper

Pencil

Gardening vocabularies

Some blank sheets

Some conditions:

- There should be less than twenty students or at least twenty.
- The room should be spacious to move and do different activities.
- If possible, collect some original flowers. If it is not possible, bring pictures of the flowers.
- Keep the cut flowers in a box. There should be twenty flowers in excess.
- The students in all together should be in twenty (in four groups). If there are more than that, you can fix the group accordingly.

Time: 20-30 minutes

Warming up (Oral activity)

1. Introduce the main activities and lessons. (This can help them respond to questions orally).

Tell the students that they are going to learn about gardening, flowers, their sizes and colours and then would be engaged indifferent language activities. Before the activities, collect some twenty flowers from the books or any other resources. Then, initiate them in the questions orally:

What is the size of the rose?

What is the colour of a sunflower?

Why do people keep gardens in their houses?

What flowers are symbols of love?

How many flowers do they have in their garden at home?

What is the purpose of keeping flowers in the garden?

Why do people compare flowers with beauty?

Why are flowers so common in love poems?

Why do people feel relaxed and happy to see the flowers?

2. After these short answer questions, let them discuss with their friends.
3. Then, divide the students in four groups, each containing five and engage in language activities.

Vocabulary Understanding: (30-45 minutes)

1. The teacher can ask them to collect as many words as they can. Now, give them a blank sheet and pencil so that they can collect words related to garden and flower. After they collect, tell the meanings of the vocabulary they have confused. After this, give your list of the vocabulary list you have prepared to each of the students and tell the meanings. The list could consist of: flower, grass, weed, thorn, shrub, sepal, petal, leaf, vein, stem, bud, twig, bucket, spade, vase, fence, wall, and so on. It is preferable to introduce them to some colour words like, green, violet, brown, red, purple, yellow, grey, white, and so on. Some verbs like grow, sprout, shine, water, prune, plant, dig, bloom, grow, graft, spray, water, pluck, sprinkle, trim, damp, moist, humus, shrub, herb, and so on.
2. Another vocabulary understanding work the teacher can do with the students is: the teacher can write words on one column on the page and ask them to match them. But the words should be given not in order. This will support them to understand vocabulary.

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Root | To suck water |
| Stem | To support plant |
| Leaf | To make food |
| Soil | To give necessary elements of food |
| Flowers | To grow into seed |
| Seed | To make new plant |
| Bud | Before it becomes a flower |
| Branches | To help expand and grow plant |
| Chlorophyll | Helps in photosynthesis |
| Sepal | The lowest green part of the flower |

3. Odd words out: Teacher can engage the students to find odd words out as the following for further enhancement of vocabulary knowledge:
 - Root/stem/leaf/water
 - Sprout/grow/germinate/ fade
 - Rose/ pansy/ creeper/ marigold
 - Garden/prune/dig/ graft
 - Puck/smell/sent/fragrance
 - Basket/ spade/scythe/weed
4. Guessing Meanings: Guessing meaning can be a good drilling exercise of vocabulary. This enhances their power of guessing.

When small plant starts to grow from seed (rsptou)
Before the flower (udb)
The color of sunny rays (weloylo)
The color of brinjal (lvtioe)
The lowest part of the part underground (toor)
Cutting the branches of the tree (eunrp)
The instrument that is used for digging in the garden (edpsa)

Understanding tense grammar (30 -40 minutes)

Ask the students to use the correct tense. You write on the board some structures, then you give them to you. This may include using singular and plural, present tense, past or future.

As

The seed (enter/enters) the ground.

The plants (sprout / sprouts).

It begin/begins to grow.

The stem and branches start/starts to grow.

Then, the buds begin/begins to bloom.

Finally, the flowers (appear/appears) in the garden.

Making right sentence structure: It is good skill for students to make right and ordered sentences out of the jumble words.

Bloom/flowers/in/morning/flowers/ the

Roots/foods/provide/plant/to

Seeds/some/days/sprout/the /ground/

Chlorophyll/helps/ plants/ food/make

Cares/plants/ everyday/gardener/

Understanding adverbs of frequency: The teacher can teach adverbs of frequency by writing them on the whiteboard and giving them examples. He can use adverbs like these so that students understand properly:

Adverbs of frequency past time adverbs Recent time adverbs Future time adverbs

Always

yesterday

just

soon

Never

ago

already

tomorrow

Sometimes

last night

yet

tonight

Hardly

in 1985

lately

next time

After they have some ideas about adverbs, give them some samples and ask them orally or let them write.

Examples: She never drinks wine.

She drank wine last night.
She has already drunk wine.
She will drink wine tonight.

Understanding parts of speech: (20-30 minutes) Teacher can give one sample of a page related to the lesson plan and ask them to find out words in different parts of speech. This will enhance their grammatical understanding.

Sample passage:

What a nice garden! What a beautiful flower! These are common expressions of human beings whenever they see beautiful gardens and flowers. Ever since the dawn of human civilization, flowers and human beings have had their close connection. Flowers, gardens, plants, and trees influence various activities of human beings. A garden is a combination of different plants and flowers; it is often planted in front of the house. It generally occupies a piece of land surrounded by walls or fences. Generally, it is said that a house without a garden is compared to a man without personality. There are many flowering plants in the garden. But, people cannot keep all the plants because of space problems and their varying interests in flowers. Commonly, though, we see rose, tulips, pansy, dahlia, sunflower, and marigold. All the flower plants have different natures and sizes and produce different flowers in colour and shape. Flowers have two things prominently: they have fragrance and beauty. Usually, people keep attractive flowering plants which appeal to people and show the beauty of the garden. It is believed that blooming flowers can change people's mood, thereby making them happy and cheerful. Rose is preferred by many people since it is more attractive than any other flower. Comparatively, a rose plant lives longer than any other plants as well, for it has a strong stem, and it falls in the shrub family. A rose plant has thorns and can bear the hardship of weather conditions. There are various types of rose flowers in colour and size. Rose is one of the most liked flowers because it is used as an expression of love and good feeling. It is often preferred in making bouquets as well. Rose is also full of fragrance. Comparatively, rose flowers don't fade as compared to other flowers. It is supposed to be the king of the flower.

The teacher can do various activities out of the passage as the following:

Finding parts of speech:

| Noun | pronoun | adjective | verb | adverb | preposition | conjunction |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Flower | it | good | live | often | in | since |

Understanding punctuation (20 30): Understanding punctuation is a great skill for the students when they learn grammar. Teachers can give them some ideas about punctuation marks and how they are used. Initially, he can ask the students to pick some punctuation marks from the passage. Then the teacher writes sentence in one column and punctuation

marks in the other and asks them to match the following.

| Sentences | Punctuation Marks |
|--|--------------------------|
| Do you enjoy gardening | . |
| What a nice picture | ? |
| I bought pencil copy and pen | ! |
| The teacher said Complete your homework | ; |
| It is chilly this morning it will rain soon | “” |
| You must be careful in two things health and study | : |

Reading comprehension (20-30 minutes): The teacher can ask the students to read the passage for twenty minutes and ask them true or false questions from the reading passage.

- Rose is an herb.
- Sunflowers are smaller than tulips.
- Dahlia has yellow leaves.
- Buds are kinds of roots.
- Fragrance is the synonym of odour.
- Flowers produce seeds.

Answering the questions (20-30 minutes): The teacher can write some questions and ask the students to give answers either individually or in group.

- Where is the garden generally located?
- How can we compare gardens with human beings?
- Why do people choose different flowers in the garden?
- What rose plant is botanically grouped?
- Why is the rose plant most liked by people?
- Which plant can bear hardships and different weather conditions?

Telling the answers in group by agreeing or disagreeing: The teacher can ask some statements in yes+ pronoun + verb or no+ pronoun + negative + verb, orally to the students:

- Rose has a fragrance.
- Tulips are available in the rainy season.
- Garden is surrounded by a wall and fence.
- Flowers can appeal to human beings.
- Flowers have similar shapes and colours.
- Pansy is used in expression of love.

Understanding words from the text (15-20 minutes): There may be some words in the passage to which the students have confusion in meanings. The teacher can clarify the meanings and ask them in groups to make sentences.

Expression: language used to mean something

Dawn: early part of evening

Influence: affect

Fence: iron rods to cover certain land or building in order to protect

Appeal: attract,

Fragrance: smell

Fade: to finish, to exterminate

Hardship: difficulty

Shrub: one category of the kingdom of plant

Varying: differing

Blooming: flowering, becoming bigger and bigger from bud

Idioms related to the flowers (15-20 minutes)

Teachers can give some examples of these phrases and ask the students to make sentences using these phrases in their sentences.

Bed of roses (good and favourable time)

Rose and thorn (having good and bad thing)

Rest on laurel (rely on fame and success)

Nip the bud (foil the plan)

Thorn in his side (trouble for him)

Let grass grow under feet (to remain idle)

Sprouting plant (still growing or emerging)

In bloom (in full success)

Teaching comparison and contrast (15-20 minutes): In this section, the teacher can teach comparison and contrast comparing two flower plants. Ask the students to come to the front and pick two flowers from the boxes, and ask them to compare.

Rose lives longer than tulip

Sunflower is taller than the rose.

Teaching transition words (20- 30 minutes): The teacher can ask the students to find some transition or connecting words used in the passage and discuss them with the students. Then he can sort out two categories of transition words and ask students to write sentences or speak them orally.

Contrastive transition

However

Yet

Although

In spite of

Despite

Transition used in reason

because

therefore

since

so

in order to

Examples: However, it was raining, the children kept on playing in the yard.

She was an intelligent girl therefore she obtained grade A.

Writing: (20-30 minutes)

The teacher can engage the students to write paragraphs. First, he will ask the students to write freely whatever they know about the lesson and different activities they were engaged in. After that, the teacher can give some ideas about paragraph writing skills: giving some topics like "Use of flowers" "Gardens and human beings" and so on. For this, the teacher can give some ideas about paragraph writing like topic sentences, logic, development, coherence, examples, and conclusion by giving them one sample so that they can see how to proceed.

Sample paragraph

Books are important for human beings. (topic sentence)

They give us information about different things of the world. (d 1)

They make human beings learned and knowledgeable. (d 2)

Besides, books also become our companions in the journey. (coherence)

We can also take examples of how important books have been to the people. (example 1)

Booker T. Washington and Richard Wright tell that by reading books, they changed their lives. (example 2)

That's why books are important things for men. (conclusion)

Completing a letter (10-15 minutes): The teacher can give some format of letter giving them the following sheet with blank space. Ask them to fill appropriate words and see each other's sheet and correct.

Date:

Place:

Hi.....

I am quite fine. It was great fun for us toin the lesson " Understanding flowers plants and learning language skills" conducted by our English language teacher on

We twenty students in the class and were in different skills and activities. We

some flowers from the books or magazine papers and them into one box. Our teacher taught us different flowers and their natures. Besides, we were asked to and make a

..... These activities were really but we managed them because our teacher assisted us in many ways. The activities done while learning were not only informative but

things for us to be involved. What great fun for me....to flowers and colour them. After the drawing, our hands were with different colours and we..... clean.

I have taken and would like to ...send you soon.

Wishing you happy time

Best Regards

Role play (30-40 minutes)

Role play is a good skill which is supposed to enhance the speaking skills of the students.

For this, the teacher can give them one sample and engage the students to involve themselves in their roles. Then he can give some roles to the students based upon their language skills and efficiency.

Gardener and visitor

Visitor: How big is the garden?

Gardener: It is three acres in size.

Visitor: How many types of flowers are here?

Gardner: There are fifteen varieties of flowers in the garden?

Visitor: How do you care for them?

Gardener: I come here early in the morning and water them.

Visitor: Do you enjoy the work?

Gardener: Yes, I do. I enjoy caring for small plants. They are like small children.

Visitor: Thanks for your information.

Gardner: You are welcome.

After this sample, you can ask the students to write role play and engage them into it.

Optional activities:

The teacher can assign the students to other optional activities at his discretion. Such optional activities can include many things and would need time accordingly.

Writing small report

Number of Students:

Date:

Teacher:

Activities done: (Main activities/ optional activities)

Personal reaction (Did you like it or not?)

What knowledge did you get?

Would you like to do such activities again?

Drawing painting of the flowers and name different parts

Game related to flowers: Collect twenty pictures of twenty flowers. Now, divide the class into two groups (Group A and B, each comprising ten students). Give ten flowers to each group. One group shows the picture and another group guesses it.

Write twenty sentences in a separate sheet and ask in a group to find out which ones are grammatically sound sentences and which are wrong ones. Divide the students into two groups.

Ask the students to write rules for them regarding flowers and gardens.

Things to do

Things no to do

Watering the plants.

Love the plants

Making the garden clean.

To throw litter in the garden.

Plucking the flowers roughly.

Playing in the garden.

Ask students to find websites where flowers and plants are available.

Ask the students to collect many flowers and write their names and past on the walls.

Ask the students to visit and take photographs of the flowering plants in their neighbourhood.

Comparing flowers with humans. Give them some samples of how flowers can be compared with human beings giving some examples and then ask them orally or in written form.

Flowers are compared with beautiful girls.

Flowers are attractive faces of the people

Conclusion

Almost all language teachers and educationists see the importance of lesson plan as the direction of teaching learning activities. In language teaching, however, this seems to be of great importance because language teaching is done through prescriptive and descriptive activities. It is by that nature effective lesson plan helps not only teaching, but making students aware, thereby creating language: understanding syntax, words, collocation, and semantics. Furthermore, lesson plan in language teaching is such a bilateral teaching learning process through which students interact, share, make feedbacks. This evidently helps in learning a language.

References:

Aslam, M. (2003). *Teaching of English*. Foundation Books: New Delhi.

Briton, D.(2003). Content based instruction. In *Practical English Language Teaching*. (Ed), D. Nunan. New York: MCGraw Hill, 199-224.

Brown, H.D. (2014). *Principles of Language Teaching and Learning: A Course in Language Acquisition*. Pearson Education. Inc.

Harmer, J (1996). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. (2nd Ed). London: Longman.

Kaye, A. R. (1992). Learning together apart. In *Collaborating Learning through Computer Conferencing*. Ed. A. Kaye. 1-24. Berlin: Springer–Verlag

Savage, J. (2015). *Lesson Planning: Key Concepts and Skills for Teachers*. Routledge.

Serdyukov, P&Ryan, M. (2007). *Writing Effective Lesson Plan: The 5- Star Approach*. Pearson.

Skinner, D. (1994). Modes of Teaching. In Kirk and R. Glaister (Eds). 5-14. Scotland's

National Curriculum: Scottish Academic Press.
Ur, P (1996). *A course of Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Contributor's Details:

Bam Dev Sharma has been teaching poetry and stylistics at RR Campus over the last twenty-two years. He has published several research articles in the national and international journals. He is a published poet and children's writer whose several books have been published internationally and can be found in amazon.