

CHAPTER II: TECHNIQUES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

* **Aim:** is used for larger units of teaching: ‘By following the course, students can communicate about their personal lives such as family and friends, school, home, etc. in all four skills, using simple English.

* **Objective:** the learning and management purposes of particular techniques

* **Task:** refers to a specialized form of technique or series of techniques closely related with communicative curricula and have communicative goals/ focuses on the authentic use of language for meaningful communicative purposes beyond the language classroom.

* **Activity:** refers to virtually anything that learners do in the classroom/ (classroom activity: a reasonably unified set of student behaviors, limited in time, preceded by some direction from the teacher, with a particular objective.) It includes role-plays, drill, games, peer-editing, small-group information-gap exercises, etc.

* **Procedure:** actual moment-to-moment techniques, practices, and behaviors that operate in teaching a language according to a particular method.

***Technique:** a superordinate term referring to various activities that either teachers or learners perform in the classroom/ includes all tasks and activities. And they are planned and deliberate/ a practical procedure to help students learn a foreign language.

* **Exercise:** refers to a particular combination of a technique and data in a course book or supplementary material. For example, in the case of a passage on elephants with blanks to be filled in, the technique is close or blank-filling and the data is the passage on elephants.

1. A knowledge of good techniques and how to adapt them is essential for successful language teaching and learning.

- teachers should know a range of basic techniques and adapt them for different students and purposes.

- teachers start with the main technique that takes much of the time to achieve the main objectives of the lesson. Then add techniques before and after the main technique to achieve other objectives.

2. There are three basic decisions in planning a technique to use in a class:

1. Identify objectives.

2. Choose and adapt a technique to achieve the objectives.

3. Select suitable data (texts, sentences, visuals, pictures, mimes, actions, real objects, etc.) to use with the technique.

4. A technique can consist of seven features:

1. Objectives: what students will learn.

Product/learning/performance/(Nunan) real-world objective: is concerned with what students should be able to do after instruction.

Process/management/(Nunan) pedagogic objective: is concerned with activities that students should take in the classroom to achieve product objectives, course goals, and so on.

Typical management objectives are:

- choosing a 'warm-up' technique to liven up the students at the beginning of a lesson.
- choosing a 'cool-down' technique to get the students quite after a lively classroom language game.
- introducing a new technique to students.
- getting a technique to produce response used as data in a following technique.

Objectives should contain three parts: "preface", "verb", and "description of the behavior".

- "Preface": At/by the end of this unit (learners are expected to).
- "Verb": articulates the behavior or activity the student should do.
- "Description of the behavior": indicates the competency that students should demonstrate.

Performance objectives should contain three parts: performance or behavior, conditions, and standards:

- performance: what the student will be able to do.
- conditions: describe the important or specific condition under which the student will demonstrate that performance.
- standard: express the criteria of acceptable performance (how well the student will have to perform to reach those criteria).

Objectives should be similar in some way to learners' needs and objectives, occupational and academic. Equally important, objectives should always be expressed in communicative or functional terms rather than grammatical terms such as *by the end of the lesson, the students will be able to express habits/make appointments*. Moreover, formulating objectives require that one take into account such factors as *time pressure, course length, and scope, and institutional constraints*.

Effective objectives should contain *comprehensiveness, consistency, attainability* (within levels of English competency and content knowledge and experience, and time availability), *suitability* (responsive to students' needs), *validity, specificity* (kind of outcome and content or skill contained in **one objective should be clearly distinct** from those mentioned in others), *observability and measurability*.

2. Technique: the basic procedure.

- Answering questions

- Dictation with key words
- Substitution drill with table
- Same or different with pictures (information-gap technique so students can't look at each other's pictures and must explain them orally)
- Listen and perform
- Write True statements (likes and dislikes)
- Class survey
- Guess the action

3. Data: language samples and visuals used with the technique.

4. Guide: ways of guiding students' attention in the data: questions, grids, key words, pattern on the board such as question (it makes students look for particular information in the passage), a list of true/false statements, a list of word definitions (if students have to find words with the same meaning in passage), etc.

* A technique is sometimes defined by its guide (with the list of word definitions, there would be no matching technique)

* Not all techniques have guides (basic dictation technique: it has only procedure and a passage, which is the data, but no guide)

5. Response: student behavior produced by the technique: written answers, grids filled in, pictures arranged in order, blanks in a passage filled.

* responses in comprehension: the work is done inside the student's mind. We can't see or hear them trying to listen to or read English, so the response gives the indirect evidence of comprehension process through answers to questions, boxes ticked, blanks filled, a set of sentence strips put in the correct sequence to make a paragraph, etc.

* responses in production: when students do a writing technique, the response is an actual piece of writing, and if they do a speaking technique, the response is what they say and how they interact.

* Important reasons for making sure students give clear response:

- the response give feedback on whether the objectives have been achieved.
- students who know what response to give get additional help or guidance in doing the technique.
- a clear response helps teachers and students compare and check work easily.

6. Work arrangement: how students are arranged to do the technique: individual, pair, small-group, teacher/whole class (T/WC), etc.

- Party: where students move around the room talking to different students

- Rows: where students sit in rows to pass messages or go up to the board in sequence in a team game. m

7. Time: how long the technique takes in the lesson.

5. A lesson is a sequence of techniques.

Advantages of technique sequencing: each technique in the chain takes advantage of the previous technique and prepares for the next technique. Often, the student response for one technique can be used as data for the next one. In this way, there is a continuity and flows of students' activity.

* The only important stages of a lesson are a short beginning (opening), a long middle, and a short end (closing).

- Opening the lesson: teacher chatting with students followed by a quick 'warm-up' or revision game to get all students to concentrate on the learning target for the lesson.

- middle of the lesson: one or more techniques to achieve the objectives of the lessons.

- ends of the lesson: teacher-led talk about aspects of the lesson.

* Control: means how much freedom the teacher and the technique give the students to use their own language and ideas and to manage the procedure themselves.

* Presentation is much less important than meaningful practice, because students don't really start to learn a new language items until they use them in controlled ways.

Ways of controlling a technique (who chooses; teacher or student?):

- Topic and text: who chooses the topics that students speak, write, listen or read?

- Language: grammar and vocabulary: who chooses the grammar pattern used to express the topic?

Who chooses the vocabulary students use?

- Procedure/activity: who chooses what students actually do?

- Time: Who controls the time for different activities within the technique?

Controlled technique:

- Warm-up: mimes, dance, songs, jokes, play, etc to get students ready for the lesson.

- Dialogue/narrative presentation: reading or listening passage presented passive reception.

- Drill: typical language activity involving fixed patterns of teacher prompting and student responding, usually with repetition, substitution, and other mechanical alterations.

- Dictation: student writing down orally presented text.

- Review: teacher-led review of previous lesson as a formal summary.

- Question-answer, display: activity involving prompting student responses by means of display questions (i.e., teacher or questioner already knows the response or has a very limited set of expectations for the appropriate response)

Semicontrolled techniques:

- Brainstorming: free/undirected contributions by the students and teacher on a given topic, to generate multiple associations without linking them; no explicit analysis or interpretation by the teacher.

- Story telling: presentation of a story by teacher or student used to maintain attention, motivate, or as lengthy practice.

- Question-answer, referential: activity involving prompting of responses by means of referential questions, (i.e., the questioner does not know beforehand the response information).

- Information transfer: application from one mode (e.g. visual) to another (e.g. writing), which involves some transformation of the information (e.g. student fills out diagram while listening to description)

- Information exchange: task involving two-way communication as in information-gap exercises, when one or both parties must share information to achieve some goal.

- Wrap-up: brief teacher or student-produced summary of point and/or items that have been practiced or learned.

Free techniques:

- Role-play: relatively free acting out of specified roles and functions.

- Problem-solving: activity involving specified problem and limitations of means to resolve it; requires cooperation on part of participants in small or large group.

- Simulation: activity involving complex interaction between groups and individuals based on simulation of real-life actions and experiences.

- Interview: a student directed to get information from another student or students.

- Discussion: debate or other form of group discussion on a given topic

- A propos: conversation or other socially oriented interaction/speech by teacher, students, or even visitors, on general real-life topics, authentic and genuine.

CHAPTER 8 PLANNING LESSONS

I. Pre-planning

Before making a lesson plan, factors to considered are:

- language level of our students
- their educational and cultural background
- their likely level of motivation
- their different learning style.

4 main **planning elements** to consider:

- **Activities:** is what students do in the class such as the way they will be grouped, whether they are to move around the class, research on the internet or involve in a boisterous group-writing activity. The first planning thought should focus on what kind of activity is the best for a particular group of students, which could offer the best chance of engaging and motivating the class. The best lessons consist of a variety of activities.
- **Skill:** we need to make a decision about which language skills we wish our students to develop. We need to plan how students are going to work with the skill and what sub-skills to practice.
- **Language:** we need to decide what language to introduce and have the students learn, practice, research or use. Once the language is the main focus, teachers tend to plan lesson without a variety of activities which may not achieve our aims
- **Content:** Lesson planners have to select content which provokes interest and involvement. Teachers can substitute course book's topics with other appropriate topics.

II. Format of a lesson plan

Essential elements of a lesson plan:

1. **Goals/aims:** You should be able to indentify an overall purpose or goals that you attempt to accomplish by the end of the class period. It is generalize, but it serves as a unifying theme for you.
2. **Objective:** Explicit statement of your objective help you to
 - a. be sure that you know what it is you want to accomplish
 - b. preserve the unity of your lesson
 - c. predetermine whether or not you are trying to accomplish too much
 - d. evaluate students' success at the end of the lesson

Be sure that your objective is observable, verifiable.

3. **Materials and Equipment:** Good planning includes knowing what you need to take with you or to arrange to have in your classroom because it's easy for teachers to forget to bring class a poster, some handouts left on the desk at home, workbooks students gave the other night, etc.
4. **Procedure:** Your plan should include:
 - a. an opening statement or activity as a warm-up
 - b. a set of activities and techniques in which you have considered appropriate proportions of time for
 - i. whole-class work
 - ii. small-group and pair work
 - iii. teacher talk: the variety of language sometimes used by the teachers when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners.
 - iv. student talk
 - c. closure.
5. **Evaluation:** Evaluation is an assessment, formal or informal, that you make after students have sufficient opportunities for learning. It is needed to determine whether your objectives are accomplished. However, not every lesson has to end with a quiz. Evaluation can take place in the course of regular classroom activity.
6. **Extra-class work:** It is effective to find application or extensions of classroom activity that will help students do some learning beyond the class hour.

III. Guideline for lesson planning

1. How to begin planning

- Be familiar with the factors (1): the curriculum students are following (2) the overall plan and tone of textbooks
- Based on the above factors, determine what topic and objectives of the lesson.

- Of the exercises in the textbook, decide which one you will do based on the objectives drafted.
- Plan step-by-step procedures for carrying out all techniques

For inexperienced teaching, it is often useful to write a script of your lesson plan which helps you to be more specific in your planning and can prevent classroom pitfalls where you get all tangled up in explaining something or students take you off on a tangent. However, the partial script should cover:

- introductions to activities
- directions for a task
- statements of rules or generalizations
- anticipated interchanges that could easily bog down or go astray
- oral testing techniques
- conclusions to activities and to the class hour

2. Variety, Sequencing, Pacing and Timing

4 considerations come into play:

- a. Is there sufficient **variety** in techniques to keep the lesson lively and interesting?
- b. Are your techniques or activities **sequenced** logically? Elements of a lessons should build progressively toward accomplishing ultimate goals.
- c. Is the lesson as a whole **paced** adequately? Pacing means the lesson is neither too long nor too short; your various techniques flow together; providing a transition from one activity to the next.
- d. Is the lesson appropriately timed, considering the number of minutes in the class hour?

3. Gauging Difficulty:

You should put yourself in your students' shoes and anticipate their problem areas when facing certain techniques. Some difficulty is caused by **tasks**; therefore, make your direction crystal clear.

Another difficulty is **linguistic**. Use the i+1 principle

4. Individual Differences:

Your lesson plan should take into account the variation of ability in your students.

- a. Design techniques that have easy and difficult aspects or items.

- b. Solicit responses to easier items from student who are below the norm and to harder items from those above the norm
- c. Try to design techniques that will involve all student actively
- d. Use judicious selection to assign members of small group.

5. Student Talk and Teacher Talk

STT should be maximized. TTT should be minimized.

IV. Tip for Lesson Planning

1. Keep checking time in a lesson as short as possible
2. Some lessons will have management objective as the main objectives.
3. The purpose of your lesson plan is to guide you, the teacher. But another teacher who share your ideas and training should be able to follow it.
4. Give techniques names and use these names on our lesson plan with the students
5. Put data for the board on the lesson plan.
6. Visualize students doing the techniques when you plan.
7. Be realistic with timing you plan.
8. Don't write obvious things on your lesson plan.
9. Keep a good balance between data from the course-book and data produced by teacher and student.
10. "Variety" is an important principle of lesson planning and management.
11. "Flexibility" is an important lesson principle.
12. Tell the students the aim of the lesson and the objectives of each technique.
13. Make sure any pictures you prepare for a lesson can also be use with many other techniques and learning objectives.
14. See the lesson you are planning as part of a sequence of lessons.
15. Get a full overview of the course-book to help you plan.
16. Integrate homework into the lesson.

V. 6 Steps in planning a lesson

1. Decide on the main aim of the lesson.
2. Identify 2 or 3 objectives that will help achieve the main aim.
3. Select and adapt one or two main techniques to achieve these objectives.

4. Refine and tighten up objectives after adapting the techniques.
5. Select extra techniques to use before and after the main technique, if there is time.
6. Decide how to open and close the lesson.

VI. Planning a sequence of lessons

1. Before and during: a scheme of work for weeks or months of lessons is only a proposal of what we hope to achieve in the future. We still need to revisit this scheme constantly to update it.

2. Short and long-term goals: In for students to stay motivated, they need goals and rewards. While a long-term goal may be to master the English language, it can seem distant possibility at various stages of learning cycle. Therefore, students need short-term goals, such as completion of some piece of work, rewards such as success on small, staged tests, or taking part in activities designed to recycle knowledge and demonstrate acquisition. That way we can hope to give our students a staged progression of successfully met challenges.

3. **Thematic strands:** one way to approach a sequence of lessons is to focus on different content in each individual lesson. Themes can carry over for more than one lesson, or at least to reappear, so the students perceive some coherent topic strands as the course progress.

4. **Language planning:** we want to propose a sensible progression of syllabus elements such as grammar, lexis, and functions, and to have sufficient opportunities for recycling or remembering language, and for using language in productive skill work.

5. **Activity balance:** the balance of activities will determine the overall level of student involvement in the course. If we get it right, it will provide the wide variety of experience to meet different learning styles of the students in the class. For example, students should not have to role-play every day or we expect every lesson to be devoted exclusively to language teaching. Or, reading class was on Fridays; presentation class on Mondays, or speaking and writing on Wednesday. What we are looking for is a blend of the familiar and the new.

Planning a successful sequence of lessons means taking all these factors into consideration and weaving them together into a colorful but coherent tapestry.

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