

THE STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSON AND ITS ORGANIZING

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Annotation: The importance of unit plans cannot be overestimated since unit planning permits the teacher to direct the development of all language skills on the basis of the new linguistic material the lesson involves. That is why, whenever possible, the teacher should make his pupils values of his pupils aware of the immediate values of his lesson if he hopes to keep and stimulate their interest in language learning which is very important in itself.

Key words: *acquisition of new information, unit plan, class-periods, achieving the objectives, observing a lesson, types of portfolio, comprehensible criteria, clear objectives, selective and significant pieces, students' self-reflection pieces.*

You know that teaching and learning a foreign language is ensured: 1) through methods and techniques, i. e. acquisition of new information about a linguistic or language phenomenon to acquire some knowledge; drill and transformation to form habits on the material presented; making use of the habits acquired in various language skills. The choice of techniques for realizing each of the methods is determined by the principles which govern teaching and learning this subject in schools nowadays; 2) with the help of various teaching aids and teaching materials now in use; 3) by means of different arrangements of pupils' language learning: work in unison, mass work, work in small groups, in pairs, individual work with programmed materials and individual cards; 4) taking into consideration the stage of instruction, pupils' age, their progress in language learning, their intellectual development, the linguistic and language material, time the teacher has at his disposal. All these points answer the question how to teach and to learn this subject.

To utilize all these points effectively systematic and careful planning is necessary.

The foreign language teacher plans all the kinds of work he is to do: he plans the essential course, the optional course (if any), and the extra-curricular work.

The first step in planning is to determine where each of his classes is in respect to achievements. It is easy for the teacher to start planning when he receives beginners.

Though the teacher does not know his pupils yet, his success will fully depend on his preparation for the lessons since pupils are usually eager to learn a foreign language in the 4th form (or the 2nd form in a specialized school). Planning is also relatively easy for the teacher who worked in these classes the previous year (or years) because he knows the achievements of his pupils in each class. He is aware of what language skills they have acquired. Planning is more difficult when the teacher receives a class (classes) from another teacher and he does not know the pupils, their proficiency in hearing, speaking, reading, and writing.

The teacher begins his planning before school opens and during the first week. He should establish the achievement level of his classes. There is a variety of ways in which this may be done. The teacher asks the previous teacher to tell him about each of the pupils. He may also look through the pupils' test-books and the register to find out what mark each of his pupils had the previous year. The teacher may administer pre-tests, either formally or informally, to see how pupils do with them. He may also conduct an informal quizzing, asking pupils questions in the foreign language to know if they can understand them and respond properly, or he has a conversation within the topics of the previous year. After the teacher has determined the achievement level of his classes, he sketches out an outline of the year's work. In making up his yearly outline the teacher consults the syllabus, Teacher's Book, Pupil's Book, and other teaching materials and sets seems to him to be realistic limits to the content to be covered during the course of the year. In sketching out an outline of the term's work the teacher makes a careful study of Teacher's Book, Pupil's Book, teaching aids and teaching materials available for this particular form. Taking into consideration the achievements of his class, he compiles a calendar plan in accordance with the timetable of a given form.

When the teacher determines the pupil's homework he should take into account that the subject he is teaching though important and difficult is not the only one the pupil learns at school. The realities of schools militate against more than 20-30 minutes of every day homework in a foreign language. This requires the teacher to teach in class rather than test. Practice proves that pupils do their homework provided they know exactly what to do, how it should be done, and that their work will be evaluated. Besides, pupils should know that six twenty-minutes' work at their English on consecutive days is more effective than two hours at a stretch.

The unit plan, therefore, involves everything the teacher needs for the detailed planning of a lesson (class-period), namely: the objective (objectives) of each lesson, the material to work at, and the exercises which should be done both during the class-period and at home to develop pupils' habits and skills in the target language.

The unit plan includes nine columns:

1. The number of class-periods.
2. The objectives of each period.
3. Language material.
- 4 – 7. Language skills.
8. Accessories.
9. Homework.

The importance of unit plans cannot be overestimated since unit planning permits the teacher to direct the development of all language skills on the basis of the new linguistic material the lesson involves. He can lead his pupils from reception through pattern practice to creative exercises, and in this way perfect their proficiency in hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. He can vary teaching aids and teaching materials within the class-periods allotted to the lesson. Unit planning allows the teacher to concentrate pupils' attention on one or two language skills during the lesson; in this case the class hour is divided into two main parts: a period of 20—25 minutes, during which he takes his pupils through a series of structural drills or other exercises

supplied by the textbook, and a period of 20—25 minutes during which the teacher engages the class in creative exercises when they use the target language as a means of communication.

The teacher should bear in mind that pupils lose all interest in a language that is presented to them by means of endless repetitions, pattern practices, substitutions, and so on, and which they cannot use in its main function of exchange of information through hearing or reading. That is why, whenever possible, the teacher should make his pupils values of his pupils aware of the immediate values of his lesson if he hopes to keep and stimulate their interest in language learning which is very important in itself. When a pupil is convinced that learning is vital, he is usually willing to work hard to acquire a good knowledge of the target language. It is well known that some pupils see little value in much of their school work in a foreign language and feel no enthusiasm for their work at the language. Careful unit planning helps the teacher to keep pupils' progress in language learning under constant control and use teaching aids and teaching materials more effectively and, in this way, make his classes worthwhile to all of his pupils.

All this should be done by the teacher if there are no teacher's books to the textbooks. If there are such books the teacher's planning should deal with

- (1) the study of the author's recommendations;
- (2) the development of these recommendations according to his pupils' abilities.

The teacher tries to adapt the plan to his pupils. He may either take it as it is and strictly follow the authors' recommendations, or he may change it a bit. For instance, if he has a group of bright pupils who can easily assimilate the material, the teacher utilizes all the exercises involved in Pupil's Book and include some additional material or stimuli pictures, objects for the pupils' speaking within the same class-periods. If the teacher has a group of slow pupils, he needs at least one more period to cover the material, he also omits some exercises in Pupil's Book with asterisk designed for those pupils who want to have more practice in the target language. The teacher may also

increase the number of oral exercises and give pupils special cards to work on individually and in pairs.

The teacher therefore thoroughly studies the plans in Teacher's Books and adapts them to his pupils.

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