

BACKWARD DESIGN IN LESSON PLANNING

Dilshoda Mahkamova,

PhD Student of Namangan State University

mahkamova.dilshoda@mail.ru

Abstract; Today's modern teaching methodology offers language educator a new kind of approach to apply in the classroom to connect content knowledge to real-life situations with the help of planning classes differently from the traditional standardized way. This article discusses one of the most productive ways of planning-Backward Design. Lesson planning using backward design significantly influences students' understanding of the concept and promotes purposeful classroom engagement through realistic classroom learning. As the assessment is planned separately in this design, it provided teachers with an improved understanding of students' learning, the achievement of learning standards and, subsequently, scaffolding them to achieve greater learning performance. The other benefits include improved academic achievement and increased confidence of teachers. Some challenges were limited evidence of transferring students' learning to their everyday lives; more time requirements in the planning phase; teachers' limited knowledge in setting instructional goals; and developing reliable assessment tools and essential questions.

Key words; Backward design, desired result, assessment evidence, learning plan, transfer of learning.

ОБРАТНЫЙ ДИЗАЙН В ПЛАНИРОВАНИИ УРОКА

Дилшода Махкамова,

Докторант Наманганского государственного университета

mahkamova.dilshoda@mail.ru

Аннотация; Сегодняшняя современная методология преподавания предлагает преподавателю языка новый вид подходов, которые можно применять в классе, чтобы связать содержательные знания с реальными жизненными ситуациями с помощью планирования занятий, отличного от традиционного стандартизированного способа. В этой статье рассматривается один из самых продуктивных способов планирования — обратное проектирование. Планирование урока с использованием обратного проектирования существенно влияет на понимание учащимися концепции и способствует целенаправленному участию в классе посредством реалистичного обучения в классе. Поскольку в этом проекте оценка запланирована отдельно, она позволила учителям лучше понять процесс обучения учащихся, достичь стандартов обучения и, как следствие, помочь им добиться более высоких результатов обучения. Другие преимущества включают улучшение успеваемости и повышение доверия учителей. Некоторые проблемы заключались в ограниченности свидетельств переноса

обучения учащихся в повседневную жизнь; больше времени требуется на этапе планирования; ограниченные знания учителей в постановке учебных целей; и разработку надежных инструментов оценки и основных вопросов.

Ключевые слова; обратный дизайн, желаемый результат, данные оценки, план обучения, передача обучения.

DARS REJALASHDA BACKWARD DESIGN USULIDAN FOYDALANISH

Dilshoda Mahkamova,

Namangan davlat universiteti doktoranti

mahkamova.dilshoda@mail.ru

Annotatsiya; Bugungi zamonaviy o'qitish metodikasi til o'qituvchisiga darslarda qo'llash uchun yangi turdagi metod va usullarnilarni taklif etadi, bu esa an'anaviy standartlashtirilgan usuldan farqli o'laroq, darslarni samarali rejalashtirish yordamida talabalarga bilimlarni hayotiy vaziyatlar bilan bog'lash imkonini beradi. Ushbu maqolada darslarni rejalashtirishning eng samarali usullaridan biri - Backward dizayn usuli muhokama qilinadi. Bu usuldan foydalangan holda darsni rejalashtirish talabalarining kontseptsiyani tushunishlariga sezilarli ta'sir ko'rsatadi va sinfda o'qitish va o'quvchilarning til o'rganish muhitini yaxshilaydi. Ushbu dars rejalash usulida baholash alohida rejalashtirilganligi sababli, u o'qituvchilarga o'quvchilarning o'rganishi, ta'lim standartlariga javob berishi va keyinchalik ta'lim samaradorligini oshirish uchun ularni mustahkamlashini ta'minladi. Boshqa afzalliklarga o'quv yutuqlari va o'qituvchilarning ishonchini oshirish kiradi.

Kalit so'zlar; Backvard dizayn usuli, kerakli natija, baholash usullari, dars maqsadlari, baholash rejasi.

Introduction

Today's learners have various obstacles in the learning process, because of underlying pitfalls in designing curriculum and textbook-driven syllabuses. Language educators often tend to conduct their classes on the basis of standarlized lesson plans resulting in not much efficiency and low learner motivation which afflictces students'content knowledge also. In order to tackle this problem and adequately prepare students to meet curricular standards, teachers must reach beyond past practices of teaching for curriculum exposure and utilizing books as curricular guides[6;260]. This requires a paradigm shift in which textbooks are one of a variety of teaching tools rather than the sole basis for daily teaching[1;14]. As teaching moves further into the 21st century, more focus should be given to the

output of the instruction rather than activities and instructions. Our lesson planning and delivery should make sure that students can expand their learning experience to include meaningful learning. Designing curriculum and instruction that scaffolds meaningful learning is a fundamental change for many teachers and may require retraining of teaching methods. One design approach that has been highly useful for retraining teachers to design curriculum and planning lessons for scaffolding learning is the backward design approach.

Literature review

The lesson planning approach using backward design leads to a deeper understanding of the content and enables students to connect it to new situations. It allows teachers to plan and teach toward the end goal[14;12]. Developing instruction that targets such a level of understanding requires thoughtful planning and the backward design steps can serve as a guide. Authors Wiggins and McTighe (2006) argue that you cannot plan how you're going to teach until you know exactly what you want your students to learn; backward design planning focuses on learning outcomes, and standards and the assessments for accomplishing those standards. According to the author, backward design is an instructional framework for developing curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Developed almost 20 years ago by Wiggins and McTighe, the framework focuses on teaching and assessing students to encourage understanding of main ideas and transfer of knowledge through authentic performance [14;15]. Planning instruction with a clear vision of its outcomes is the highlight of the framework; thus, identifying desired results and conceiving assessments comes before the development of learning activities [12;105]. These assessments then guide the development of the learning activities (i.e., instruction and activities). With the learning outcomes clearly articulated as assessments, creating learning activities that scaffold understanding toward those outcomes is a more straightforward process. The ideas of the author provides a useful account of how lessons and curriculum are planned in backward design way. Unlike other standard types of lesson planning, this framework requires the educators to think deeply about the learning outcome and assessment types to

apply in the lesson before assigning the lesson goals and activities. According to Wiggins and McTighe, [14;19] transfer of learning in backward design refers to the ability of students to apply knowledge and skills learned to a new situation or other contexts. Students are said to have fully understood the concept if they can apply it to other contexts. Transfer of learning takes place when other existing knowledge, abilities, and skills affect the learning or performance of new skills or tasks [13;191]. This concept is also supported by the research of the group of researchers (Amy Childre Jennifer R. Sands Saundra Tanner Pope) that students' prior knowledge and experiences are organized into schema, patterns, and connections for understanding and remembering. Key to all applications of constructivism is that children need opportunities to connect their prior knowledge and experiences with new information through their own thought processes and through interactions with others and the environment [9;199]. Such opportunities allow students to use their schema as a basis on which to build a framework for understanding new ideas and information. Through this gradual building or scaffolding of knowledge and skills, students can be supported to move beyond root knowledge and develop depth of understanding. A study by researchers found that when the learning standards of the lessons are achievable and realistic, transfer of learning seems to take place. Further, motivation, learning environment, and realistic learning goals have a significant influence on the transfer of learning [10;728].

Backward design benefits teachers by shifting their teaching from content-centered to learning-centered courses, which actively engage students in active learning [4;329]. So, it promotes student-centered learning by encouraging active participation of the students rather than a simple teacher-centered lessons. Further, Jozwik et al. stated that backward design focuses on teaching and assessing students to encourage understanding of main ideas and transfer of knowledge through authentic performance [8;35]. When lessons are planned and delivered using backward design, it broadens students' understanding with long-term transfer of understanding [7;151].

Materials and methods

Applying this approach in classrooms with students involves four key steps.

Step 1; Identify Learners Knowing your learners is foundational to designing curriculum[2;121]. Prior knowledge, experiences, and interests students bring to the classroom—as well as special learning or behavioral needs—influence student learning. Thus, learner needs should be considered throughout all steps of the design process. *Identify Classroom Needs.* First, identify the class targeted with the curricular unit. Beyond general information such as grade and subject, it is important to consider the contextual variables that impact your students and shape their experiences outside of school. Consider such factors as community location, resources, socioeconomic level, extracurricular activities, and educational background, all of which have an immense impact on students and the prior knowledge and schemas they bring to the classroom.

Step 2; Identify Curricular Priorities Determine State and Local Standards. State and local standards will focus on the unit. Some teachers have more freedom in this decision, whereas others have strict parameters. For instance, some school systems publish pacing guides to outline curricular requirements; in some schools, teachers work in teams to determine content to target; in yet other schools, individual teachers determine how and when they will address specific standards. Regardless of how curricular priorities are chosen, the steps of the process work the same; The standards serve as the learning goals that will shape the instructional unit. *Create Essential Questions.* According to Bulgren, essential questions frame the standards of the unit in a way that hooks or engages learners and serves to bridge the standards and the curriculum by guiding students in creating meaning around the standards[2;133]. Well-written essential questions pique student curiosity and draw them into the subject, encouraging learning beyond rote memorization. Ideally, an essential question is not answered after a single lesson but is continually revisited throughout a unit. What should be most clear to students from the essential question is that their job is inquiry, not just a simple answer[14;25]. Revisiting the essential questions throughout a unit keeps

students focused on the “big ideas” so that they continually consider how the various learning tasks and content contribute to their understanding of the major goals or standards of the unit. *Identify Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills*. Because scaffolding student learning is critical to the development of schema and student understanding, examine your standards and consider if there are prerequisite knowledge and skills students need to accomplish the identified learning standards[3;261]. Failing to consider necessary prerequisite knowledge and skills is a frequent mistake of beginning teachers, but it also occurs with experienced teachers. For beginning teachers the mistake may involve failing to recognize prerequisite content knowledge or skills needed to accomplish a standard (such as a teacher creating a unit on budgeting without first ensuring students have prerequisite math knowledge and skills). For experienced teachers, the gap is more often in recognizing the enabling skills that students need to convey content in the manner requested. Students might perform poorly when expected to engage in debate, research, or group work, not because they fail to understand the content but because they do not have the skills for conveying knowledge in the manner requested. If the class does not possess prerequisite skills, consider how to proceed.

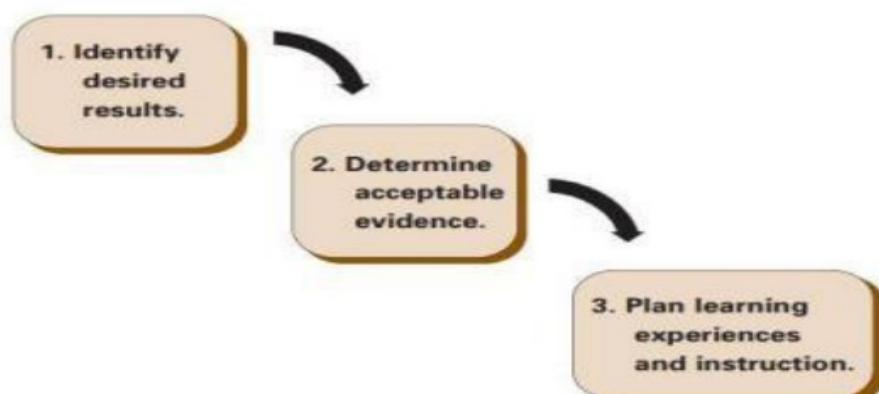


Fig.1. Three key stages of backward design Note; adopted from G. Wiggins and J. McTighe (2005, p18).

Step 3; Design Assessment Framework. In this step, you develop the assessments used to determine if students have mastered the standards. The key question is “What evidence will demonstrate student understanding of the unit

standards?” Evidence is never a single assessment product [11;124]. Ongoing and frequent assessment is fundamental to scaffolding student understanding. Also key is a framework of assessments that gradually build students ability to use knowledge and skills at increasingly sophisticated levels. The aim is to move students beyond the recall of memorized facts to a deeper understanding of the meaning of content in applied contexts and about other concepts. The understanding targeted within each unit varies depending on the standards, but students can reach a deeper understanding through assessments that require explanation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, and self-evaluation. To target this depth of understanding, build an assessment framework including the following types of assessments[14;90].

Performance Tasks or Projects. Create one or two tasks or projects that require students to demonstrate depth of understanding of major or overall unit concepts. This assessment will serve as the anchor to your unit. A performance task or project should challenge students to use the content in a flexible way to answer or solve problems that mirror real life. A detailed rubric should be developed to clarify expectations, guide student performance, and encourage student self-assessment.

Oral or Written Prompts. These are open-ended questions that move beyond memorized facts by requiring students to explain, analyze, and/or evaluate. Prompts are similar to essay questions, but always require critical thinking to develop and justify a response. Prompts are most effective when used as a more formal assessment (i.e., typical test conditions).

Quiz or Test. Although teachers usually use tests at the end of a unit as a summative assessment, tests are best used as a formative assessment to gauge if students have gained the knowledge and skills needed for activities and assessments that target deeper understandings. Include tests or quizzes for vocabulary, knowledge, and skills students need to accomplish prompts and performance tasks or project assessments.

Informal Assessments. Informal assessments are the means for preparing students for all other assessments. Use a variety of informal assessments such as observations, class activities, discussions,

and teacher questions throughout the unit to reveal student understanding or misunderstanding, and determine any need for additional instruction[6;280].

Step 4; Create Learning Activities This final step integrates information from all prior steps into a sequence of lessons that guides students toward accomplishing the desired understanding and assessments. As you move through building a sequence of lessons, continually refer to student learning needs (Step 1), standards (Step 2), and assessments (Step 3) to maintain your focus. Design and Sequence Learning Activities. Keep in mind these key considerations as you plan your learning activities; How will you encourage immersion in and exploration of the essential questions? How will you use learning activities to build knowledge and skills, and promote deeper understanding? How will you prepare students for accomplishing the project and prompt assessments? To translate these questions into practice, consider utilizing the following components to facilitate the scaffolding process;

- Engage students with essential questions and unit vocabulary
- Break instruction and activities into manageable parts
- Weave assessment across the unit

Begin the unit by engaging students with the essential questions and key unit vocabulary. Engaging students with the standards and essential questions using techniques such as visuals, problems to solve, and controversial issues not only generates interest and excitement, but makes the learning meaningful [14;90]. Provide instruction of key vocabulary prior to reading and learning activities so that when students encounter vocabulary within the learning activities they have a base understanding on which to build. Beginning with the essential questions and vocabulary provides opportunities to connect with student prior knowledge and experiences to build new schema and to address misconceptions so that students are not building knowledge on faulty bases. Break instructional parts of the unit into manageable elements; divide class time into mini-instruction, activity, and reflection/discussion sessions to actively immerse students in the content. Breaking up instruction in this way not only provides students an opportunity to develop

schema by utilizing the new content, but also eliminates the risk of frontloading a unit with instruction that diminishes student engagement. Instead, give students opportunities to make the content meaningful by connecting it to real life. Personalize the learning by creating opportunities to see how the information relates to what they know and to their lives— their past, present, or future [5;108]. Learning activities should encourage students to apply information, make interpretive judgments, and/or synthesize information to generate knowledge and gain understanding of the larger issue [2;121].

Results and Discussions

Almost all the teachers agreed that backward design is an important aspect in connecting classroom learning to real-life experience and transferring learning. According to surveys among school teachers, Backward design lesson planning is the most effective plan as it primarily focuses on students' learning and understanding. Students are somehow made to think critically and make real-life connections with the concepts that they are learning. Thus, enhancing students' comprehension of the concept leads to the transfer of learning. In the objective section of the lesson plan, distinct goals that cover knowledge, understanding, and skill competencies help teachers to design lessons that prepare students to use classroom learning in new learning situations. Therefore, learners are somehow made to be more critical, analytical, creative, and able to relate to real-life situations.

Conclusion

Research findings confirm that lesson planning through backward design plays a significant role in transforming teaching from content-centered to student-centered instruction. This paradigm shift ultimately promotes a deeper understanding of the content taught and upholds the transfer of learning. However, in reality, there were limited evidence of the transfer of learning. The school curriculum demands a minimal platform for students to apply their learning. Backward design promotes students' understanding through realistic classroom

learning. The essential questions that teachers embed in their lessons greatly influence realistic classroom learning.

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