

# Lesson planning and classroom management: Two sides of the same coin



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This webinar + the accompanying handout may be downloaded from  
the Presentations section of:

<http://numamarkee.com/publications>

# THANKS



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to be here in Bangkok today.

# Outline of the talk

What is a lesson plan?

What is classroom management?

How does classroom management  
interact with lesson planning?

**Any brief comments or questions?**

What does a good lesson plan look like?

An empirical example

**Any brief comments or questions?**

An empirical example of classroom management:

Giving oral instructions

Conclusions

# What is a lesson plan?

A lesson plan is a **written statement** of what **you**, the teacher, **think will happen** in a class that you are going to teach in the near future

Learning how to write good lesson plans is a particularly important skill for new teachers

At first, writing a good lesson plan is going to be difficult and very time consuming:  
You will probably want to plan your every move and to control every moment in the class

As you become more experienced, you won't need to write everything down anymore — in fact, your “lesson plan” may end up being just a series of notes to yourself — and you will be able to concentrate more on **managing the flow** of the lesson

# What is classroom management?

Classroom management is the **art** of **interpreting** your lesson plan in real time in such a way that your lesson flows **smoothly** and **naturally**

Good classroom management involves **interpreting** and **implementing** your lesson plan in such a way that you are able to **achieve your goals and objectives** in an **efficient** yet **flexible** way

This means that sometimes what **actually happens** in your class **does not reflect** what your lesson plan **said should happen**

**This phenomenon happens very frequently!**

More specifically,  
depending on the outcomes of the split second decisions that we constantly have to make as teachers this can be **either** a **good** or a **bad** thing

## How does classroom management interact with lesson planning?

In the technical applied linguistics literature, this distinction between our **written intentions** and what we **actually do** in the classroom is often referred to as the difference between **a task-as work-plan** and **a task-as-activity**



See:

Coughlan, P. and Duff, P. (1994). Same task, different activities: Analysis of SLA task from an activity theory perspective. In J.P. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskyan approaches to second language research* (pp. 173-194). Norwood NJ: Ablex.

## How does classroom management interact with lesson planning?

So, there is frequently some **tension** between our **intentions** and what we **actually do**

Getting the right balance between these two levels of planning is a **delicate** matter

This is particularly true when we use **communicative/task based approaches to foreign language teaching** because these approaches tend to be **student-** rather than **teacher-**centered

Consequently, as teachers, we have to be ready to give up some control at **both** levels of **task** and **activity**

And we have to do this in a way that is **pedagogically valuable** so that students can simultaneously **communicate** in English and **learn new language** in the process

## How does classroom management interact with lesson planning?

Achieving this **desired balance** is a skill that has to be **learned**  
and **constantly refined over time**

Even experienced teachers don't always get this right

But it's vital for all teachers to be able  
to recognize potentially valuable teaching/learning moments  
and to know when, if necessary,  
we should temporarily abandon our lesson plan  
and seize a pedagogical moment on the fly





ANY BRIEF COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS?

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

There are many considerations to bear in mind  
when developing a lesson plan

For present purposes, I will concentrate on just **three** characteristics  
that all good lesson plans have:

Good lesson plans tell the teacher and/or students:

1. what is to be achieved in each task
2. how the task is to be achieved
3. how a task relates to the next

Note that Characteristic #3 provides a framework for  
**grading** and **sequencing** material in a **succession** of tasks

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

For present purposes, I'm going to use the lesson plan that you have on your handout to exemplify these three principles in action

Note:

This is a short version of this lesson plan

The complete long version is also available for download from the Presentations section of:

<http://numamarkee.com/publications>

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

Let's now look at Task 1 and concentrate for the moment the first two of the three criteria that we identified before:

These are:

1. what is to be achieved in each task?
2. how the task is to be achieved

Picture description task 1: (focus on fluency; small group work)  
how the teacher should set up the task

how the students in the small groups should plan to do the task  
and what their task is

how the student at the blackboard should interact  
with the students in small groups  
as s/he draws the picture

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

The continuation of Task 1 on page 2 also specifies:

what standards of graphic accuracy must be achieved by  
Beginners, Intermediates or Native Speakers/Very Advanced speakers of English  
to judge whether the finished task has been successfully completed  
in the debriefing work in Task 2

what the teacher's role should be  
during the implementation of the picture description task  
and how to manage the classroom activity  
in a non-interventionist way

what language this task can be expected to generate:

Imperatives; the language of spatial relationships; the language of description  
(present tense, present continuous); figurative language;  
repair (comprehension checks, clarification requests, circumlocution)

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

Task 2 on page 2 specifies:

Task 2: Debriefing task (focus on accuracy; teacher fronted)

The bullets in this task describe  
how the teacher should debrief the students

Similarly, Task 3 on page 2 specifies:

3. Dialog writing task (focus on accuracy; pair work)

# What does a good lesson plan look like?

## An empirical example

Let's now examine how  
the **third criterion** of good lesson planning  
is also integrated into these materials:

These three tasks also illustrate  
how the principle of **grading** and **sequencing  
across tasks** is implemented in these materials :

More specifically, the lesson moves from:

a **focus on fluency mediated by small group work** in Task 1

to

a **teacher fronted focus on accuracy** in Task 2

to

a **focus on accuracy mediated by pair work** in Task 3

Etc. etc.

ANY BRIEF COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS?



# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

Let us now see how one teacher (me) interpreted and implemented this lesson plan through a variety of classroom management techniques

For present purposes, let us analyze how T:

gave oral instructions that interpreted the written instructions in the materials that we have just looked at

# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

Teachers' oral instructions are extremely common  
(typically, all lessons begin with them)  
but they are also quite complex things

Most importantly, they are **not** just word for word oral versions  
of the written instructions found in materials  
like the ones we have just looked at

In fact, giving good instructions is a complicated business  
and must be part of the classroom management skills  
that **all** teachers need to develop

That is,  
all teachers have to figure out how to react to  
unexpected developments  
as and when they occur

# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

Here is an overview of how I gave the oral instructions that re-interpreted the written instructions for Tasks 1 and 2 on your hand out

The complete set of instructions I gave in the demonstration class lasted just under 11 minutes

During this time, 16 different sets of events had to be managed by T

# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

Of these 16 events, **four were unexpected:**

More specifically,

In **Event 4**, **Sandra** (the student at BB) **curtseyed**  
(not important from a classroom management perspective,  
but got a laugh from the other students)

In **Events 7, 11 and 14**, respectively, **three different students** **came in late**  
(very important from a classroom management perspective)

The **first student** came to class **5 1/2** minutes late

The **second student** came to class **8** minutes late

The **third student** came to class **11 1/2** minutes late

These last three events **affected the implementation**  
of the lesson quite considerably  
**and so had to be managed on the fly by T**

# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

Here are the details of what each event was  
and how long it lasted

## NOTE:

In the slides that follow,  
each **event** is identified by the time codes in the video  
and are highlighted in **magenta**

Unexpected events are highlighted in **light blue**  
and marked with double **red** asterisks

# **An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions**

Here are the events:

## **Event 1**

T gives a general introduction  
to the demonstration lesson: 1.47-2.48

## **Event 2**

T describes Task 1 in more detail: 2.48-3.08

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# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

## Event 5

T distributes the handout  
and gives instructions: 3.56-4.24

## Event 6

T sets up the groups: 4.34-4.54



# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

## Event 7

T gives the students in groups time to plan  
what they are going to say  
and explains the expected standards  
of graphic accuracy: 4.55-5.20

\*\*Unexpected Event 1: Late Student 1 comes in at 5.13-5.27\*\*



## Event 8

T gives the student at BB her instructions: 5.28-5.58



# **An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions**

## **Event 9**

T repeats his instructions for Late student 1  
(in hearing of whole class): 6.00-6.40

## **Event 10**

T tells the students in groups to start planning  
and explains how to do this: 6.40-7.10

# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

## Event 11

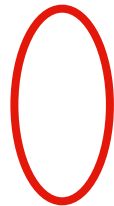
T gives student at BB more instructions  
about how to get information so she can draw the picture: 7.10-8.12

\*\*Unexpected Event 2: Late Student 2 comes in at 8.08\*\*



## Event 12

T repeats instructions for late Student 2 (to Student 2): 8.12-8.48



# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

## Event 13

Students in groups plan their instructions: 8.48-11.11

## Event 14

T gives information to whole class about  
how much time each group will have: 11.09-11.35

\*\*Unexpected Event 3: Late student 3 comes in at 11.30\*\*



# An empirical example of classroom management: Giving oral instructions

## Event 15

T deals with Student 3 and tells her to ask other group members  
what the task is: 11.30-11.45



## Event 16

T gives final advice and starts Task 1: 11.48-12.21  
"start with big picture → move on to details"  
T starts Task 1 at 12.18



# Conclusions

Lesson planning and classroom management  
are complementary aspects of planning

Lesson plans (= task-as-workplan) represent  
our written intentions of what we intend to do

Classroom management (= task-as-activity)  
is how we interpret our written intentions in real time

Classroom management therefore involves  
constantly making important,  
split second pedagogical decisions  
throughout the course of every lesson we teach

**Good classroom management is a learned skill  
that must be constantly refined throughout  
teachers' professional careers**

KHOB KHUN KRUB!

THANKS FOR LISTENING AND GOOD LUCK!

ANY QUESTIONS?