



Student Teachers' and Teacher Educators' Perspectives on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan in the teaching of English Language at University of Namibia

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Abstract: This study explored the perspectives of student teachers and teacher educators on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan in the teaching of English language at the University of Namibia (UNAM), with a particular focus on final-year student teachers preparing to teach Grades 4-7. Its primary aim was to explore both teacher educators' and student teachers' perspectives on what defines a quality lesson plan. Using an interpretivist approach and qualitative case study design, the research gathered data through interviews with 21 participants, including 20 student teachers and one English lecturer. Participants of this study agreed that a well-crafted lesson plan should have clear, measurable learning objectives that direct both teaching and assessment, a solid introduction, main content, and conclusion, as well as effective time management and alignment with the curriculum and learning goals. Furthermore, the participants emphasise the importance of formative assessments for offering feedback and adjusting teaching strategies accordingly.

Keywords: quality, English Language, lesson plans, pre-service student teachers, University of Namibia.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the importance of well-structured lesson plans in fostering effective teaching and learning has been emphasized (Harris & McGinty, 2022). Lesson planning, particularly for pre-service teachers, plays a crucial role in shaping their teaching practices and student engagement (Smith et al., 2020). With the increasing demand for quality education, it is essential to assess whether pre-service teachers are equipped with the skills to design effective lesson plans that align with curriculum standards and foster active learning (Jones & Peterson, 2021).

Lesson planning is the process of designing and organizing a structured guide for teaching a lesson. It involves identifying clear objectives, selecting appropriate content, and determining the methods and materials needed to achieve these goals. A lesson plan typically outlines the sequence of activities, the resources required, the timing, and the assessment strategies to evaluate learners' progress. According to Edwards and Martin (2023), lesson planning involves defining the learning objectives, choosing and organizing the subject matter, and establishing the procedures to be followed. It serves as a roadmap for teachers, ensuring that each lesson is purpose-driven, focused, and aligned with the curriculum and learning outcomes. In essence, lesson planning helps teachers effectively manage classroom activities, providing structure and clarity to the teaching and learning process.

The concept of lesson planning is rooted in Gestalt theory, which emphasizes that learners better understand concepts when they are presented with organized units of information (Brown & Green, 2022). This framework is foundational to how lesson planning is approached in educational theory. According to Brown & Green (2022), lesson planning involves structuring instructions to facilitate learners' comprehension of broader concepts.

Lesson planning is influenced by two main streams of thought. Herbart's theory, which focuses on the importance of content and structured units in guiding learning, contrasts with John Dewey's approach, which centers on the learners' experiences and how these influence their engagement with the material. Additionally, B.F. Skinner's behaviorist theory highlights the role of behavior modification in the teaching-learning process (Williams, 2020; Taylor, 2021). These evolving educational theories

emphasize the dynamic nature of lesson planning, where different perspectives are integrated to enhance the learning experience. According to Edwards and Martin (2023), lesson planning involves defining objectives, selecting and arranging subject matter, and determining methods and procedures. Edwards (2023) outlines the lesson planning process in three phases: pre-learning (activities before the lesson), delivery (content delivery), and post-learning (assessment of learning). This structured approach is crucial for ensuring effective lesson execution.

Lesson planning not only defines the content, but also includes materials, methods, time allocation, and evaluation strategies (Davis & Miller, 2021). White (2022) argues that lesson planning helps prevent time wastage by organizing teaching systematically, while Lee (2020) asserts that it provides step-by-step directions for the teacher to ensure understanding. The process is essential for effective teaching, as it involves decisions about the form and content of instruction, considering learners' needs and developmental stages (Chen, 2023; Davis & Lee, 2022). Johnson & Taylor (2021) also emphasize the importance of lesson planning in meeting diverse learner needs by ensuring content is appropriate and accessible.

A quality lesson plan is considered integral for achieving optimal learning outcomes. Bailey (2016) highlights that skilled teachers manage instructional design to maximize teaching and learning. According to Richards (2018), effective lesson planning directly influences a teacher's ability to deliver a lesson successfully. Chickering & Hermann (1996) note that lesson planning helps teachers utilize resources and materials efficiently, while Stronge & Roberts (2020) assert that lesson planning is crucial for classroom management and meeting learning objectives. Klein (2019) identifies several benefits of lesson planning for student teachers, such as helping them understand the curriculum's learning objectives, select appropriate materials and methods, and design activities that align with the syllabus. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2010) also recognizes lesson planning as an essential skill for teachers, though it often takes time to master.

In the context of planning for instruction, the process is divided into two levels: macro-level and micro-level planning. Macro-level planning includes the design of the syllabus and scheme of work, which outlines learning objectives, competencies, and topics for the entire school term or trimester (Muthusamy, undated). This level ensures consistency in meeting curriculum standards. In contrast, micro-level planning focuses on daily lesson plans derived from macro-level planning, guiding teachers in the day-to-day execution of lessons. Muthusamy (undated) describes the lesson plan as a mental and emotional visualization of classroom activities, acting as a guide to ensure systematic teaching. These two levels of planning: macro and micro, are interconnected, with the lesson plan serving as part of the micro-planning that is aligned with the broader educational goals and objectives outlined in the syllabus and scheme of work (Jensen, 2001).

This study specifically focused on the micro-level planning of English language lesson plans for final-year pre-service student teachers at the University of Namibia, Khomasdal campus. It examined the quality of their lesson plans for senior primary grades 4-7, rather than the broader macro-level planning associated with the syllabus and scheme of work.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF LESSON PLANNING CONTEXT IN NAMIBIA

During teacher training, student teachers are required to develop lesson plans as part of their School Based Studies (SBS), also known as teaching practice. These lesson plans are typically written using a standardized university template and are developed under the guidance of a mentor teacher or lecturer, who evaluates and observes the student teacher's classroom performance based on these plans (Klein, 2019). At the University of Namibia (UNAM), student teachers enrolled in the 4-year Bachelor Honors Degree in Upper Primary Education (grades 4-7) undergo school-based studies from their second year until their final year. As Freeman and Cornwell (2002) highlight, teaching is not learned merely through instruction; instead, practical, hands-on experience in real classroom settings is essential for enhancing lesson planning and teaching skills, contrasting with campus-based micro-teaching sessions.

Throughout their training, English major students at UNAM engage in lesson planning and presentations, both in micro-teaching classes and during their SBS at schools across Namibia. After

completing a year of lectures in their major subjects and fundamental education modules, students begin their school-based studies in the second year, progressing to their final year when they plan and teach 60 lessons (Scott, 2013). Teachers are essential for quality education, serving as agents of change. Onyara (2013) emphasizes the significance of quality teacher training in enabling teachers to deliver effective education and pursue professional development. The success of English language teaching is closely tied to the effectiveness of English teachers (Nampala, 2013; Nkandi, 2013; Onyara, 2013), underscoring the expectation that teacher training institutions equip student teachers with both theoretical knowledge and practical lesson planning expertise.

A well-structured lesson plan takes into account learners' prior knowledge, learning styles, and interests, setting clear objectives to guide the lesson. McEwan (2002) asserts that these elements are crucial for successful teaching. The Ministry of Education in Namibia also recognizes the importance of quality lesson planning. In 2019, Minister Anna Nghipondoka emphasized the need for research into factors contributing to poor English performance at the NSSCO level, identifying the ability to properly interpret the syllabus and prepare effective lessons as key issues. Understanding what constitutes a high-quality lesson plan is vital for improving education in Namibia. Jackson and Davis (2000) argue that well-planned lessons are fundamental for effective teaching. The Namibian English syllabus for grades 4-7 sets out national standards, including learning objectives and competencies that all upper primary learners must meet. While the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) designs the curriculum, teachers are responsible for interpreting the syllabus, developing a scheme of work, and structuring lesson plans to help learners achieve these objectives (Cicek, 2013).

Although research has consistently shown that effective lesson planning and delivery significantly impact learner achievement (Ascher & Frucher, 2019), there is limited data on the specific characteristics of a quality lesson plan. This study seeks to evaluate whether the lesson plans created by final-year student teachers at UNAM align with quality lesson planning criteria, contributing to a clearer definition of what constitutes an effective lesson plan in the context of Namibian education.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

A lesson plan is a critical document that outlines how a teacher will meet curriculum goals and objectives (Akpan, 2021). Designing a lesson plan involves a comprehensive process that outlines the steps for teaching and learning activities, ensuring no aspect is overlooked. According to UNESCO (2003), lesson planning is a structured method that helps teachers organize and plan the teaching activities aimed at achieving the learning objectives. Yurtseven (2021) emphasizes that lesson planning involves a purposeful and goal-driven approach to determine the time, resources, methods, and content required for effective lesson delivery.

Effective lesson planning ensures that subject content is chosen and aligned with learning objectives, integrating teaching activities, techniques, time management, and assessment strategies (Thornbury, 1999). Akpan (2021) argues that well-structured lesson plans contribute to achieving the stated learning objectives, minimizing potential challenges during implementation. Ukeje and Aisiku (2022) note that effective planning allows teachers to anticipate and address possible issues, improving teaching efficiency. Okwori (2011) highlights that effective lesson planning shapes the future of education, ensuring curriculum goals are met and resources are efficiently utilized.

Research supports the idea that effective lesson planning significantly enhances classroom outcomes. Admin (2018) emphasizes that how teachers plan affects student learning outcomes. Harmer (2007) stresses the importance of teacher competence in lesson planning to enhance teaching quality. Research by Miyakawa et al. (2018) confirms that unclear learning objectives lead to missed opportunities for student learning, further emphasizing the need for clear, concise objectives when designing lessons.

Ding and Carlson (2013) stress the importance of following established guidelines for lesson planning, especially for novice teachers. Their research found that only 5.2% of lesson plans were rated as "good," highlighting the need for ongoing mentorship and training to improve lesson planning skills. Priandika et al. (2022) also emphasized the importance of clear learning objectives in achieving positive learning outcomes. Furthermore, the study by Putri and Sari (2021) explored innovative

methods like e-learning platforms to improve learning outcomes, underscoring the relevance of adapting lesson plans to modern educational needs.

Empirical studies provide valuable insights into the role of clear learning objectives, teaching strategies, and resource management in lesson planning. A study by Sutherland and O'Neill (2020) examined the perceptions of teacher educators, revealing that they view lesson planning as central to creating meaningful learning experiences. The study emphasizes the need for a structured approach, incorporating various teaching strategies, assessment methods, and resource management to meet learning objectives. Similarly, Khun, Anderson, and Yost (2021) found that student teachers in Thailand valued clear learning goals and the need for flexibility in adapting lesson plans based on students' progress and classroom dynamics.

Lee and Tsai (2021) investigated the impact of mentorship programs on student teachers' lesson planning in Taiwan. Their study found that providing feedback on lesson plans significantly improved the quality of the plans, and regular mentorship increased the confidence of student teachers in designing effective lessons. This aligns with Ding and Carlson's (2013) findings, highlighting the importance of mentorship in fostering lesson planning skills.

O'Neal (2020) analyzed lesson plans created by student teachers in the U.S., showing that those with more teaching experience designed more comprehensive and detailed plans compared to those in the earlier stages of their programs. This suggests that hands-on teaching practice plays a key role in developing the ability to create effective lesson plans. Nadiyah et al. (2020) conducted research among Indonesian student teachers and found that while they aligned lesson content with syllabi, they often overlooked formative assessment strategies, suggesting a gap in training that should be addressed in teacher preparation programs.

Van der Merwe and de Kock (2019) studied student teachers in Namibia, revealing that while they understood the importance of having a structured lesson plan, they faced challenges in aligning lesson content with learning outcomes. They also struggled with selecting appropriate resources and strategies for engaging learners, particularly in large classrooms. This study emphasized the need for more practical experience and focus on aligning teaching strategies with specific learner needs and curriculum objectives.

Similarly, Lissari (2018) stressed the importance of professional development programs, emphasizing that workshops and mentorship are crucial for teachers to create effective lesson plans. Damayanti (2018) also found that while teachers' lesson plans typically covered the necessary components, the quality of these plans varied, highlighting the need for more structured and supportive guidance in lesson planning. The characteristics of a quality lesson plan are depicted below:



Source: Akpan, (2018).

A quality lesson plan should have a few key components, according to Akpan (2018):

Unambiguous Goals: Every class should have quantifiable, precise goals that spell out what the students should know at the conclusion of the session.

Extensive Timing: To guarantee a seamless presentation of the material, the lesson plan should have a well-structured schedule that allots sufficient time for every task.

Effective Teaching Strategies: To sustain student interest and accommodate varying learning preferences, a range of teaching strategies should be used in accordance with the learning objectives and requirements.

Assessment Techniques: To determine how well students have understood and completed the class goals, the lesson plan should include assessment techniques.

Learner Tasks and Assignments: Tasks and assignments have to be purposeful, in line with the goals of the class, and intended to improve learning.

Resource Integration: To improve the learning process, the plan should include the right instructional aids and resources, such as technology, visual aids, and supplemental materials.

Policies for Classroom Management: Good classroom management techniques should be described, including how the instructor will manage interruptions and preserve a supportive learning environment.

Flexibility and Adaptability: An effective lesson plan is flexible enough to accommodate the teacher's needs in response to unforeseen difficulties or changes in the classroom.

These characteristics make the teaching process more efficient and student-centered by guaranteeing that the session is well-structured, interesting, and supportive of reaching learning objectives.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm, seeking to understand the subjective experiences and perspectives of student teachers involved in the lesson planning process. Interpretivism posits that reality is socially constructed, with meaning emerging from individuals' lived experiences (Creswell, 2016). This philosophical stance helped explore how student teachers at the University of Namibia designed their lesson plans, including the challenges they encountered and the factors influencing their practices (Bryman, 2021).

A qualitative case study approach was used, which was ideal for gaining a comprehensive understanding of teacher educator's and student teacher's views on what constitutes a quality lesson plan (Creswell, 2016). This design allowed for an in-depth examination of the experiences and planning practices of final-year student teachers as they created English lesson plans. It provided a detailed picture of their competencies, challenges, and strategies in lesson planning, offering a valuable insight into how they applied educational theories in their lesson planning practices.

The study was conducted at the University of Namibia's Khomasdal campus, which offers training for teachers in both pre-primary and primary education. The university, as one of the oldest teacher-training institutions in Namibia, provided a rich context for exploring how student teachers at this institution developed lesson planning skills.

The population for this study consisted of full-time, registered final-year student teachers majoring in English at the University of Namibia, specifically those training to teach grades 4–7 in senior primary education. Additionally, one English lecturer who trains these student teachers participated in the study, providing a professional perspective on the training process. The student teachers' active involvement in lesson preparation made them the ideal group for assessing the quality of their lesson plans.

The study involved a sample of 21 participants, including 20 final-year student teachers and one English lecturer. The sample size was chosen to ensure a manageable yet representative group that would allow for in-depth qualitative analysis. The participants were selected based on their academic

status as final-year students majoring in English and their direct involvement in lesson planning for senior primary education.

In-depth, open-ended interviews were conducted with the student teachers and the English lecturer. These interviews allowed the researcher to explore the participants' views on what they thought were the characteristics of a good lesson plan. The unstructured interview format provided flexibility, enabling the researcher to probe deeper into specific issues that arose during the interviews.

The researcher obtained permission from the University of Namibia to collect data from the final-year student teachers and the English lecturer. After receiving ethical clearance, consent letters were sent to the participants, informing them about the study and ensuring their voluntary participation. The data collection process included interviews, with the researcher ensuring that the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that involves identifying patterns and themes in the data. The analysis was guided by the research questions and triangulated with data from multiple sources to ensure validity. The findings were presented under specific research questions, and the data was categorized into themes for further analysis.

The researcher adhered to ethical procedures outlined by the University of Namibia, ensuring that all participants gave informed consent and were aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and the researcher ensured that all data, including lesson plans and interview responses, were kept secure and not linked to any individual participant. Ethical standards were upheld throughout the study to ensure the integrity of the research process.

5. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The presentation of findings will be done under two sub headings. The first one is on teacher educators' views on the characteristics of a good lesson while the second will be on student teachers views on the same.

5.1. Teacher Educators' views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan

The teacher educator was asked about her views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan. Participant 20 indicated the information shown below:

"A quality lesson plan is one that has the correct topic/skill filled in as it is the topic or skill that needs to be introduced during the introductory phase of the lesson. A quality lesson plan should have clearly thought about teaching-learning activities and assessments that are in line with the learning objective and basic competencies as indicated in the English syllabus for grade 4-7".

Participant 21 further stated that:

A good quality lesson plan is planned out in such a manner that even if you the designated teacher is sick and there is a replacement for you, the lesson planned will still be carried out the same way you would have done by just following the well detailed lesson plan. No component or let me say aspect of a lesson plan is trivial or least important than the other as they are all important building blocks that cements all the pieces together to make is a quality and effective lesson plan."

However, Participant 21 singled out the following components as stated below:

".... completing the topic correctly so the introductory phase is correct. Time allocation is also important as time is a great factor in deciding how much content one includes in the lesson because too little or too much content will be a problem. The content and teaching method planned for the day is quite crucial as it's the heart of the lesson and if poorly done the whole lesson is a fail. Reinforcement is also crucial as it informs the teacher as to how much content the learners took away from the lesson are some of the components of a lesson plan."

5.2 Student teachers' views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan

Student teachers were asked about their views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan. Participant 3 stated that:

“To me a quality lesson plan is the one with a teaching method to be used, which activities to be given, the time needed to deliver that particular content and how to ensure that the learners understand and all these must be based on the English syllabus for grade 4-7”

Participant 1, was echoed saying the following characteristics of a good quality lesson plan:

“I am going to say that learning objectives, basic competencies and lesson objectives as the ones that are important because they are the ones that indicates what the aim of the lesson being planned for is. They guide you on what to teach and will help you establish questions for prior knowledge.”

On the other hand, Participant 12 made a comment to indicate what constitutes a quality lesson plan as listed below:

“An interesting introduction designed to arouse the interest of the learners as you can't just start teaching without making it known what the lesson is going to be about. If you fail to introduce your lesson properly, then it will be difficult to teach the content of the lesson which is done in development.”

Participant 12, 13, 16 and 19 all echoed that the development phase is important. Participant 19 stated during the interview as follows:

The development for me is crucial, it is like the heart of the lesson as it is the phase where new teaching learning takes place. This is where teaching happens that determines if the lesson was successful or not. If the development phase of the lesson planning and presentation is a success then the whole lesson was a success in my opinion.

In addition to the aforementioned comments stated, Participant 13 stated the following:

“It is important to test whether or not your learners understood the teaching so assessing if new learning has taken place based on the presentation of content that I taught is the important thing for me”

Participant 7 during the interview answered as indicated:

“Conclusion is where the knowledge is delivered”,

Whereas participant 5 indicate that:

“I have learned in class that prior knowledge is important to know as it helps inform me as a teacher on what strategies I will choose to use in the lesson during lesson planning and presentation.”

On the other hand, participant 6 indicated that

“All the components of the lesson plan are important as each different component holds a specific significance to the lesson planning and presentation”

Additionally, participant 14 stated that

“teaching methods/strategies/approaches are important as they direct the lesson and give a sense of order and structure”

These are the views of the participants of this study regarding what constitutes a quality lesson plan.

6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section explores the views of both teacher educators and student teachers on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan. Based on the data collected, the discussion is organized into two main themes: teacher educators' views and student teachers' views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan, with each theme further broken down into subthemes.

6.1. Teacher educators' views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan

Teacher educators play a pivotal role in shaping the lesson planning skills of student teachers, significantly influencing their understanding of what constitutes a high-quality lesson plan. According to Richards & Rodgers (2021), a well-designed lesson plan is vital for guiding the teaching and learning process, as it outlines the objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment methods

essential for effective lesson delivery. The teacher educators in this study emphasized various key aspects, with clearly defined learning objectives being one of the most frequently mentioned characteristics of a quality lesson plan. For example, Participant 20 highlighted the importance of having a clearly defined topic or skill, which is essential during the introductory phase of the lesson. This underscores the need for well-defined goals that align with curriculum objectives, providing direction and focus for the lesson.

Clarity in teaching-learning objectives is consistently recognized as a critical component of a quality lesson plan (Richards & Rodgers, 2021). Research by Kraft (2022) further emphasizes that well-defined objectives are crucial for guiding both teaching and learning, as they serve as a clear roadmap for what students are expected to achieve. Clear objectives also play a vital role in ensuring that lessons are aligned with curriculum standards and learners' needs (Nguyen, 2021). As Participant 20 suggested, when the learning goals are clearly outlined at the beginning of the lesson, students can better anticipate the focus and know what is expected of them, which helps improve engagement and focus (Zhang et al., 2020).

Moreover, aligning lesson objectives with broader curriculum goals ensures that lessons maintain consistency and coherence. Miller & Taylor (2021) argue that alignment helps student teachers remain focused on essential content and skills, preventing deviations from the curriculum. However, overemphasis on specific goals may limit creativity and narrow the scope of learning (Guskey, 2022). Additionally, vague or poorly written objectives can reduce their effectiveness, leading to confusion or lack of motivation among students (Paige, 2023). In diverse classrooms, unclear objectives can create ambiguity, making it difficult for both students and teachers to achieve desired outcomes. To be effective, objectives should be specific, measurable, and appropriately challenging, providing clear guidance for both learners and instructors.

Ultimately, this discussion highlights that a well-crafted lesson plan involves more than just managing classroom activities. It is about ensuring that all components of the plan are aligned with the broader educational framework. As Savas & Savaskan (2020) suggest, clarity in lesson objectives ensures that assessments are meaningful and aligned with the lesson's purpose, supporting both teaching effectiveness and student achievement.

Detailed lesson components, such as the introduction, development, and conclusion, are essential for enhancing student engagement and achieving learning objectives (Brown, 2022; Jones & Parker, 2021). The introduction connects new content with prior knowledge, the development phase delivers core material and allows for practice, while the conclusion reinforces key concepts and assesses learning (Liu & Sui, 2021). Participant 21 stressed that all parts of the lesson plan must be equally important and carefully integrated to ensure a cohesive and effective learning experience (Becker et al., 2021). The development phase, in particular, plays a key role in facilitating learning through varied instructional strategies like collaboration and multimedia, promoting deeper engagement (Becker et al., 2021).

The conclusion phase is also vital for consolidating learning and ensuring students understand the material (Davies & Rees, 2020). However, over-reliance on rigidly structured plans can limit flexibility and spontaneity, potentially reducing responsiveness to students' needs (Nguyen & Richards, 2022). Detailed plans can also be time-consuming and may not address diverse learning styles if too rigidly applied (Liu & Sui, 2021). Excessive focus on structure may lead to a teacher-centered approach, overshadowing student-driven learning (Guskey, 2023). Balancing structure with flexibility is key to a dynamic teaching approach.

Effective time management is another key element of a quality lesson plan, ensuring student engagement and the achievement of learning objectives. Research highlights that a well-paced lesson prevents content from feeling rushed or overwhelming, allowing students to engage fully (Harris & McGinty, 2022; Miller & Thomas, 2021). Participant 21 emphasized that balancing time and content is crucial, as too little or too much can disrupt pacing and hinder learning (Miller & Thomas, 2021). Proper time management also facilitates smoother transitions between activities, enhancing student participation and engagement (Smith & Roberts, 2020). However, overly rigid time structures can limit flexibility, preventing deeper exploration of topics and reducing overall engagement (Nguyen &

Liem, 2021). Thus, careful pacing ensures students have enough time to process and reflect on the material without feeling rushed (Johnson et al., 2022).

Aligning lesson plans with the syllabus and learning competencies is crucial for ensuring that instructional content is relevant and supports the achievement of educational goals (Baker, 2022). Participant 21 emphasized the importance of designing lesson plans according to syllabus requirements and grade-level competencies, ensuring that learning objectives are effectively met. This alignment provides clear guidance on what students need to learn and supports the progressive development of skills (Miller & Thomas, 2021).

Empirical studies shows that proper alignment prevents the teaching of content that is either too advanced or too simplistic, which can lead to confusion or disengagement (Harris & McGinty, 2022). It also ensures consistency in teaching and assessment, allowing for effective monitoring of student progress and creating a structured learning experience (Miller & Thomas, 2021). Additionally, aligning lessons with the syllabus allows for systematic progression, reinforcing key concepts and building on previous learning (Smith & Roberts, 2020).

6.2. Student teachers' views on the characteristics of a quality lesson plan

The perspectives of student teachers regarding the characteristics of a quality lesson plan are crucial for understanding how they approach and design effective teaching strategies. This section discusses the views of student teachers on what constitutes a quality lesson plan.

Clear learning objectives are essential for effective lesson planning, guiding teaching strategies and student assessment. Studies show that well-defined objectives provide clarity, helping students understand expectations and enabling teachers to measure progress (Brophy, 2023; Harris & McGinty, 2022). Participant 3 emphasized the importance of including teaching methods, activities, time allocation, and strategies to ensure student understanding, highlighting the central role of clear learning objectives. Kain (2021) further notes that explicit objectives align teaching and assessment with lesson goals, leading to better engagement and comprehension.

Clear objectives allow teachers to tailor teaching methods and activities to help students meet desired outcomes, fostering active participation and a sense of purpose (Harris & McGinty, 2022). When students know the goals in advance, they can focus on key concepts, making the lesson more meaningful and improving motivation (Brophy, 2023). This approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical theories, which emphasize structured, goal-oriented lesson planning (Jones & Peterson, 2021). Overall, clear learning objectives are seen as a critical component for successful teaching and learning.

Detailed lesson components, including the introduction, development, and conclusion, are vital for structuring an effective lesson (Jones & Peterson, 2021). A well-organized lesson plan ensures smooth content delivery and active student engagement (Brown & Green, 2022). The development phase is particularly crucial for interactive learning and deeper understanding, while the introduction captures student interest and the conclusion reinforces key concepts (Harris & McGinty, 2022).

Student teachers, such as Participant 19, emphasized the importance of the development phase, describing it as the core of the lesson where active learning occurs. Jones and Peterson (2021) argue that this phase is essential for delivering content in an engaging and interactive way, using teaching strategies that cater to various learning styles (Boud & Lee, 2020). Additionally, Participant 14 highlighted the importance of teaching methods and strategies, noting that a well-structured lesson with diverse approaches keeps students engaged, caters to different learning preferences, and enhances overall success (Miller & Thomas, 2021).

Effective time management is crucial for lesson planning, ensuring that each phase of the lesson is delivered at the right pace. Participant 3 highlighted the importance of allocating appropriate time for content delivery, which prevents rushed lessons or unnecessary delays (Boud & Lee, 2020). Research supports that proper pacing helps maintain student engagement, with Brophy (2023) emphasizing its role in allowing students to absorb material at a manageable rate. Effective time management also

enables active learning and real-time adjustments based on student progress (Harris & McGinty, 2022; Kain, 2021).

Assessment and evaluation are essential in lesson planning, even if not explicitly mentioned by all participants. Participant 3 noted that evaluating student understanding throughout the lesson is key to ensuring content is grasped. Ongoing formative assessments, such as quizzes and questioning, provide immediate feedback and help guide further learning (Brophy, 2023; Boud & Lee, 2020). Integrating assessments into lessons ensures continuous evaluation, fosters student engagement, and supports a responsive teaching environment (Harris & McGinty, 2022; Johnson et al., 2022).

The introduction and conclusion phases of a lesson are also critical for student engagement and understanding. A well-planned introduction captures student interest and links new material to prior knowledge, setting a positive tone for the lesson (Miller & Christensen, 2022). Participant 12 emphasized the importance of an engaging introduction, which motivates students and clarifies the lesson's objectives. The conclusion reinforces key concepts, helping students consolidate and internalize the material (Brophy, 2023; Miller & Christensen, 2022). Together, these elements ensure a cohesive learning experience that enhances student outcomes (Kain, 2021).

7. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that both teacher educators and student teachers agree on the essential components of a quality lesson plan, although they highlight different aspects based on their roles. Teacher educators emphasize clear, measurable learning objectives, which are crucial for guiding instruction and enhancing student engagement. They also stress the importance of the lesson structure, including the introduction, development, and conclusion, as well as effective time management and flexibility to address student needs. Furthermore, aligning lessons with the curriculum and learning competencies is vital for relevance and progressive learning.

Student teachers similarly value clear learning objectives to guide teaching and assessments, and recognize the importance of time management and flexibility to maintain engagement and meet objectives. They also emphasize the role of formative assessments in providing feedback and adapting teaching strategies, as well as the significance of strong introductions and conclusions in stimulating interest and reinforcing learning.

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