



High school N. 190 after Galust Gyulbenkyan

RESEARCH PAPER

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SEPARATE STAGES OF LEARNING

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YEREVAN 2021

INTRODUCTION

In my research paper I am going to introduce learning objectives and separate stages of learning. These two topics are the bases of teaching technique. Entering a new class every teacher must be able to work with students who can have different English knowledge levels. It can be a daunting experience even for an experienced one. That is why it is important to be aware of separate stages and learning objectives to achieve our main aim. The overall goal of each teacher must be the following:

- . to be able to perform the new material in an obtainable way
- . to make the students see what they are doing and why they are doing that
- . to learn how and when to use their knowledge and experience
- . what difficulties they can have if they do not learn now

Learning is the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences. The ability to learn is possessed by humans, animals, and some machines; there is also evidence for some kind of learning in certain plants. Some learning is immediate, induced by a single event (e.g. being burned by a hot stove), but much skill and knowledge accumulate from repeated experiences. The changes induced by learning often last a lifetime, and it is hard to distinguish learned material that seems to be "lost" from that which cannot be retrieved.

Learning objectives describe the measurable skills, abilities, knowledge, or values that students should be able to do or demonstrate as a result of a completing a program of study, a course, or lesson.

Learning objectives are student-centered rather than teacher-centered, in that they describe what the students will do, not what the instructor will teach.

If you inform students what is expected of them, and provide both instruction and an opportunity to apply the learning, this can help student achievement, and provide opportunities for assessment. For legal education, learning objectives can help students read dense texts and focus on the essential learning concepts. If you do not tell them what they will be expected to do, then they are left guessing what you want.

The lesson Objectives

The objectives must be clear to students. They ALL must know **WHAT** they are learning and **WHY** they are doing it. They also need to see the point of the objectives in the bigger picture; that is, how they relate to the last lesson's learning, the course they are following and the big overall goal. This means that you can't simply write the objectives on the board and hope that the students copy them down. It implies that you have fully explained them in context; the students have engaged with them and can explain them to any observer.

The objectives and outcomes must be differentiated for the individual student. All the learners should be able to see where they are and what they need to do to get to the next level. This should link into subject standards and progression where possible. It is crucial to have high expectations of what can be achieved and engage the students with that belief.

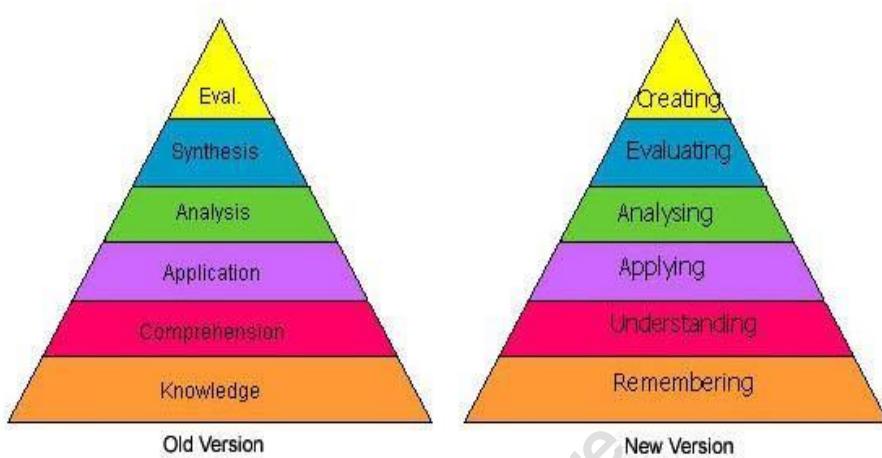
SUCCESS CRITERIA for achieving the outcomes need to be negotiated with the students for optimum engagement to enable them to be clear about what it will look like and feel like and sound like when they have made that progress.

Example from an English Functional Skills lesson

OBJECTIVE: To recognise the power of different types of language
OUTCOMES: I will be able to:

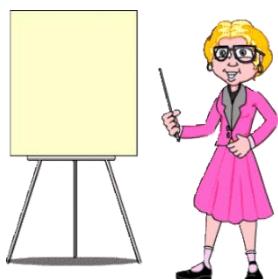
- . Use formal and informal language
- . Explain how to speak and write in appropriate language (Level 1)
- . Teach others how to use a range of writing and speaking styles appropriate for different audiences

The Theory behind the teaching: Bloom's Taxonomy



Learning objectives should be brief, clear, specific statements of what learners will be able to do at the end of a lesson as a result of the activities, teaching and learning that has taken place. They are sometimes called learning outcomes. The Learning objective or objectives that you use can be based on three areas of learning: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Learning objectives define learning outcomes and focus teaching. They help to clarify, organize and prioritize learning. They help you and your students evaluate progress and encourage them to

take responsibility for their learning.



A lesson aim is a very general statement of what the overall goal is in a lesson – the intention behind the teaching. The lesson objective/objectives are the measurable stages that a learner will go

through and need to achieve in order to achieve the overall goal. Aims are like strategy, objective are like tactics.

As part of your planning you need to decide what your students need to be able to DO after they have learned something that you have taught. Beginning your planning with the learning objectives will also help you ensure that your tasks and activities are appropriate and will help your students achieve their objectives.

A learning objective must not include the phrases 'to know' or 'to understand' but instead active verbs such as 'state', 'explain', 'outline', 'list' or 'describe'. Avoid using verbs that are difficult to measure objectively. The following verbs are difficult to assess and measure and therefore should be used with caution:

Know, comprehend, understand, appreciate, familiarize, study, be aware, become acquainted with, gain knowledge of, cover, learn, realize.

Know and understand do not specify any overt 'doing' and although knowing and understanding underpin learning, objectives are always written using active doing verbs.

They are statements of what you want your learners to do and should



- . Be stated clearly
- . define or describe an action
- . Are **measurable*, in terms of time, space, amount, and/or frequency.
- . Be differentiated

Examples of Measurable Action Words (examples)

Explain	Demonstrate	Analyze	Formulate	Discuss
Compare	Differentiate	Describe	Name	Assess
Evaluate	Identify	Design	Define	List

You can make your learning objectives difficult, demanding or challenging by changing the active verb that you use (see detailed table below) to a more complex, involve higher order thinking; or you can add specific conditions or limits.

Putting the theory into practice

The following lists and tables contain examples of active verbs which describe the sorts of things you want your students to be able to do and may help you to write useful learning objectives.

Set 1: Based on the '3 areas of teaching'

Knowledge

analyse	arrange	calculate	circle	cite
classify	compare	contrast	compare	define
describe	diagram	differentiate	group	identify
interpret	itemize	label	list	match
name	outline	plan	record	revise
select	solve	state	tabulate	give examples
evaluate	recognise			

Skills

adjust	assemble	chart	collect	use
draw	employ	establish	illustrate	imitate
interact	locate	maintain	measure	modify
operate	organise	rearrange	return	set up
practice	manipulate	master	fit	perform
demonstrate				

Attitudes

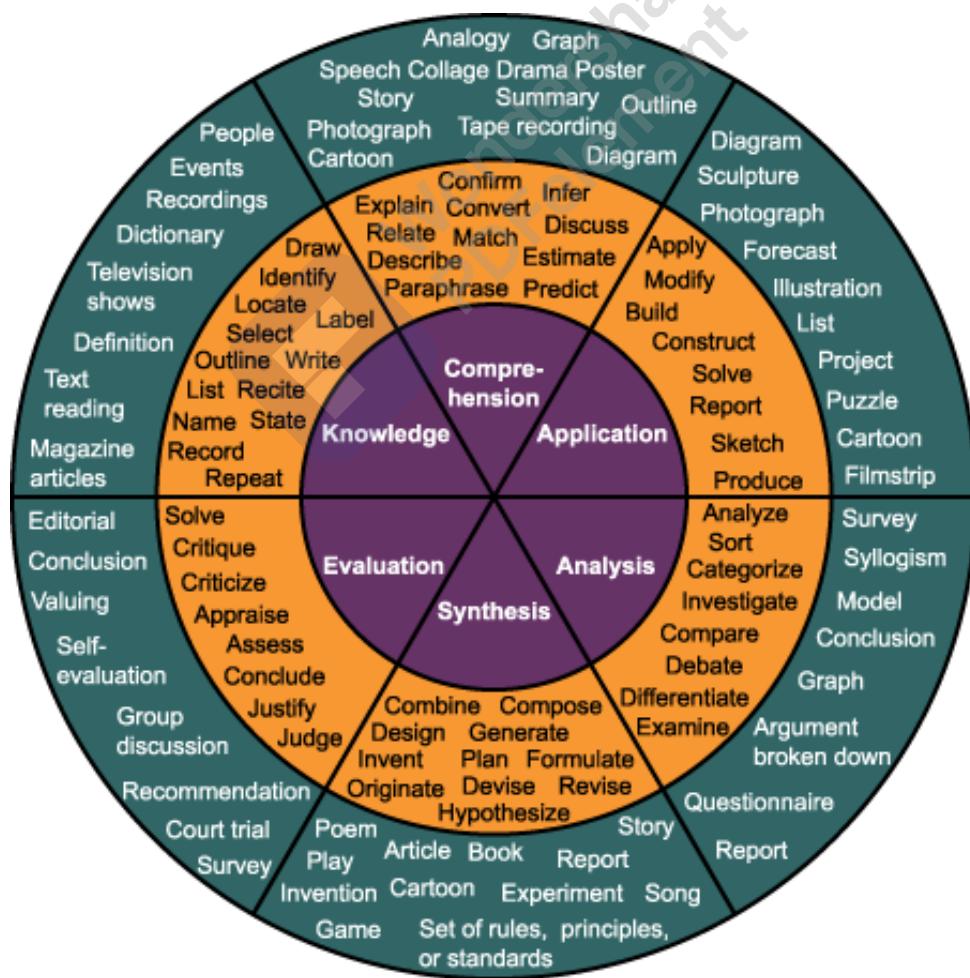
accept	adopt	advocate	approve	assess
Challenge	characterise	choose	criticise	defend
Evaluate	formulate	judge	justify	manage
model	persuade	recommend	resolve	select

Set 2: Based on increasing level of difficulty and challenge (Blooms Taxonomy)

Emphasis – link to Blooms Taxonomy	Relevant Action Verbs to use in your lesson objectives:
Knowledge 'To find or remember information memorizing information'	Tell, uncover, show, state, define, name, write, recall, recognise, list, label, reproduce, identify, acquire, distinguish, state, order, locate, repeat, count, describe, enumerate, find, match, read, recite, record, select, sequence, state, view
Comprehension 'To understand the information and restate in your own words, paraphrasing, summarizing, translating'	Comprehend, appreciate, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, formulate, explain, classify, translate, extrapolate, convert, interpret, abstract, transform, select, indicate, relate, experiment, simple comparisons, demonstrate, explain, reword, discuss, cite, conclude, describe, discuss, estimate, generalise, give examples, locate, make sense of, paraphrase, predict, report, restate, review, summarise, trace
Apply/Application 'To use information to solve problems, transfer abstract or theoretical ideas to actual situations, identifying connections and relationships and how they apply '	Assess, change, chart, choose, demonstrate, determine, develop, establish, produce, relate, report, select, show, use, try, diagram, perform, make a chart, put into action, build, report, employ, relate, draw, construct, adapt, apply, sequence, carry out, solve, prepare, operate, generalize, plan, repair, explain, predict, instruct, compute, use, implement, solve,

Analysis	Analyze, study, combine, separate, categorise, detect, examine, inspect, discriminate, take apart, generalise, scrutinize, estimate, compare, observe, detect, classify, discover, explore, distinguish, catalogue, investigate, breakdown, order, determine, differentiate, dissect, contrast, examine, interpret, identify, dissect, characterise, correlate, diagram, illustrate, infer, limit, outline, point out, prioritise, relate, separate, subdivide.
Synthesis	Write, plan, integrate, formulate, propose, specify, produce, organize, theorize, design, build, systematize, combine, summarize, restate, argue, hypothesise, predict, create, invent, produce, modify, extend, design, formulate, develop, build, compile, discuss, derive, relate, generalize, conclude, combine, précis, discuss, integrate, conclude, adapt, categorise, compose, construct, create, design,
	generate, incorporate, integrate, modify, organise, perform, propose, reinforce, reorganise, rewrite, structure
Evaluation	Evaluate, interpret, decide, solve, rate, appraise, verify, assess, test, judge, rank, measure, appraise, select, check, evaluate, determine, support, defend, weigh, judge, justify, attach, criticise, weigh up, argue, choose, compare and contrast, conclude, critique, defend, predict, prioritize, prove, reframe,

Blooms Taxonomy with actual teaching and learning ideas and strategies:



Writing Learning Objectives correctly – checklist

Does the learning objective reflect a step in achieving an overall lesson aim?

Do your lesson activities ensure that students will achieve their objective and your overall aim?

Is the learning objective measurable?

Is the learning objective student-centred?

Have you used effective, action verb that targets the desired level of performance?



Walking into a class of new students sometimes can be a daunting experience, even for an experienced teacher. So all teachers use lesson plans to give the class direction. But the lesson plan has other benefits, both for us as teachers and our students. Some of the reasons for planning lessons include:

- . allowing the teacher to time the individual components .
- . providing for a logical progression of activities .
- . showing students that some time has gone into preparing their lesson .
- . enabling the teacher to see whether there is a balance of activities and skills within the lesson.

Planning will take a lot of time for the new teacher, initially perhaps as much time to plan one lesson as the lesson itself. But this time is worth investing. Tried and tested lesson plans can be repeated with other classes and adapted to suit other levels. Also there is nothing like the feeling of a good lesson when students are learning in a positive atmosphere that you have helped to create. This is unlikely to happen by chance. The purpose of a lesson plan is to provide us with a lesson framework. Our lesson will need to include a variety of components, because students will quickly get bored if we just do one thing (30 minutes of dictation is not very inspiring), and the plan helps us order these components. This order should be logical and enable us to see a link between each of the components, which leads us to achieve the aim of the lesson plan. We need to consider four elements in our planning which are listed in the boxes below:

1.LESSON AIM

What do we want to achieve in this lesson?

2.THE CLASS

How many students, ages, sexes, group dynamics etc.

3.HOW TO ACHIEVE THE LESSON AIM

Which combination of activities will be successful?

We will

4.THE UNEXPECTED

What will we do if something goes wrong?

look closely at these elements in more detail as we progress through this

section. Here are what is needed in a lesson plan, so let's look at how we can plan the various stages of the lesson. There is no hard and fast rule, but we might want to try the following which many teachers find effective. These are the stages of a lesson into 5 components:

- STAGE 1- ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY
- STAGE 2-PRESENTATION
- STAGE 3-STUDY
- STAGE 4-PRACTICE
- STAGE 5-WARM DOWN

Let's look at each in turn.

STAGE 1-ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

When the class arrive, they may not be in tune or ready for English. This stage helps to 'warm them up' and engage them, so that they are receptive to the lesson when it begins in earnest. Briefly it gets the students speaking, wakes them up mentally and enables them to get ready for what is to come. An engagement activity usually takes no more than 5-10 minutes, sometimes less, and it allows a time buffer between the start of the classroom time and the start of the lesson proper (think of all those students who come in late and the teacher has to repeat themselves!) There are many engagement activity ideas that can be used. Some will fit into the theme of the lesson if the teacher is really in tune, others will just be a good activity that wakes the students up.

STAGE 2-PRESENTATION

This stage is designed to introduce the theme to the class, leading them into the lesson. If the teacher wishes it can be combined with the Engagement Activity.

When learning languages at school, this was the part that seemed to be missed out. There was often nothing preceding ‘open your books at page 54’. The result was that the teachers often failed to engage their students into what followed, leading to some students losing interest and shutting off mentally. The basic idea behind the ‘presentation’ stage is that if the teacher primes students he/she warms them to what follows. It aids learning, as the brain is activated, ready to find out more. It should be lively, predominately oral, and take no longer than about 10 minutes. The best way to create good engagement activities is to select a main activity or theme for the ‘study’ part of the lesson and work backwards. For example, imagine you have selected a reading activity, which is a section from Nelson Mandela’s autobiography, ‘Long Road to Freedom’ for your study component. Here is an example of an engagement activity:

‘Yes’ or ‘No’ game.

Students ask you questions to guess who they are going to read about. You can only answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’. When they have guessed the person, put picture of Nelson Mandela on the board and invite students (in pairs or small groups) to discuss the following questions:

- a) What do you know about Nelson Mandela?
- b) Is he a popular figure in your country?

STAGE 3-STUDY

This is the lesson core. It may be a reading, writing, speaking or listening activity that you have chosen or a combination of them in some form. Whatever you choose, the activity should act as a base for some sort of analysis or study and there should be a link, thematic or otherwise with the engagement activity.

So the students study an area or a particular skill, also that they prove they have grasped the area under analysis in a task or series of tasks.

The tasks may be a series of practices around a grammar focus, for example, or they may be more broad based to improve all round competencies in the language. Having selected the Mandela reading, see how it can be used as a revision of past tenses in the following way: Students underline examples of the past simple. Then circle the past continuous.

Compare them on the board, eliciting answers from the class about form and usage.

Prepare ‘controlled’ exercises ensuring students understand the difference between simple and continuous. One way of doing this is through a ‘cloze’ exercise where students fill in the missing word in a sentence with the correct form of the verb. For example: ‘I _____ (read) the section on the Study Stage at the moment.’

Students mark each other’s work as you all go through the answers as a class.

Alternatively, if your lesson focus is on language development, then you could use the text differently:

Pre-teach new language to students

Students read text and answer set questions in controlled environment

In groups, discuss answers to broader conceptual questions which deal with the underlying message of the text.

Notice in both of the above the mention of ‘controlled’ exercises. These are tasks that allow a limited response only and serve to ensure that the target language is being used accurately. It is important that this focus on accuracy is done before any work on fluency is undertaken.

STAGE 4-PRACTICE

This is the phase that allows the students more freedom to use what they have learned in the study phase and practices it in different contexts. This phase generally contains more open tasks (rather than the controlled practices that characterised the earlier stage) that allow for a natural use of the target language. This phase is often referred to as a free practice.

It is important that students can use the target language outside of controlled exercises and that they have the opportunity to explore the language. They are more likely to speak and write naturally if they have the opportunity to practise in the classroom.

There are a variety of ‘freer’ tasks depending on what you wish to practise. These include games, class discussions, free writing tasks and communication activities.

Returning to the theme highlighted earlier, we can continue with the revision of the past tenses, which provides us a good opportunity to use

narrative tenses. For example, put the phrase: 'It was a dark and stormy night...' on the board. Ask your students (in pairs or small groups) to prepare the continuing story. Or if you would like to continue the theme of Nelson Mandela, have students write a short summary Stage 4 - Practice paragraph of what they have read, detailing their own thoughts on his experiences. If you have introduced any new language, now is a good time to see if students can recycle it and use it in a productive exercise. Then students present their stories or texts to the rest of the class and write up a neat copy for homework, to be handed in next lesson.

The 3 main stages of the lesson; presentation, study and practice will work particularly well when you have a structured language point to work through. It provides an excellent model for teaching lower ability groups, but may be found a little predictable for more advanced groups. As you get more confident you can adjust the order, or even have different phases repeated. If you have a very imaginative higher level group, you might lead in with the practice phase and the narrative idea 'It was a dark and stormy night...' and give them 10 minutes to prepare something. Go around the class eliciting a sentence each on the board to complete the story. Analyse grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure etc. together using the board work as a prompt. You could return to the freer practice by asking students, in groups, to tell each other about the scariest thing that has ever happened to them. But that all comes later.

STAGE 5-WARM DOWN

The final part is a warm down stage. This is often overlooked by teachers and it is probably the most omitted part of plans when things don't run to time. But it is here that you and your students can take a breath. You can use it as a recap of the main points of the lesson, or if your lesson has been quite work focused then it can be a good chance to do something lighter. Again, that list of activities we looked at earlier in this section will come in useful:

CONCLUSION

I can surely say that everything I have written about is very interesting, useful and important. I will pass my paper to every teacher in our department to have a look at hopping each of them to find an answer at least to one question concerning teaching technique or lesson planning. But also I found some problems judging from my own experience. Entering a new class a teacher must deal with different students with different English knowledge levels. In fact a class can be divided into many groups and sometimes it is difficult to use the same approach and method for all of them. A teacher has to take into consideration that fact and have something special in the lesson plan for each group. That is very important because a teacher must keep the students active and mentally open for learning English. Working with one group a teacher is risking to lose students interest and wish to learn. A theory is one thing putting it into practice is another thing. I would like our textbooks and school program to be more productive and systematically well-organized.

Although it was a very useful experience which motivated me to work even harder and be not only a teacher but also an instructor or a guide for my students.

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