

**SELF-STUDY RESEARCH:
EXPLORING MY LESSON PLANNING DESIGN**

**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree Seminar
and English Bachelor's Degree of Universidad Alberto Hurtado**

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Dedication

This research thesis is dedicated to my loving parents, Claudia and Tomas, to my brothers Mateo and Fabian and to all my family. Thank you for all your support and trust all these years.

This is also dedicated to my partner Alexis, who gave me all his support during this year, encouraging me not to give up. To his mother Ivonne and his father Cristian who is not here in earthly life but in our hearts. Without your support and love, this could not be possible.

And thank you to my friends, that always believed and supported me, with little love words.

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is not education at all.”

-Aristotle.

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Abstract

The aim of this self-study research was to reflect on my own development during my teaching practice, analyzing the lesson planning and its features in EFL. The data collection tools were based on lesson plans from a semester, personal journal analysis, feedback from the tutor about the lessons from the same semester. The results showed that that learning objectives had a disconnection with backward design in my lessons, which is an approach used in UAH to show a model and a structure to follow. In addition to these results, I found that the scaffolding process in the role of the teacher in different moments of the class was null, but this happened at the beginning. At the end of the lessons, there was a scaffolding instruction and also was aligned with learning objectives.

Keywords: Lesson Planning, Learning Objectives, Backward Design, Scaffolding.

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1. Introduction

This self-study research aims to focus on my learning process and how the experiences I have had throughout these years have shaped my training as an English teacher-trainee. My main concern about English in teaching practice is the design of lesson plans for students to become engaged cognitively and effectively in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

For this purpose, I will explore my practices and analyze the instruments used during my English degree. In addition, I will refer to different lesson plans, feedback, and personal journals to better understand my performance as a teacher trainee and how it influences the topic of interest.

Last year was supposed to be my last semester and the submission of my thesis. However, due to issues with my research project I could not finish my teacher training. This experience has given me the opportunity to reflect on how ready I am to graduate and think of my teaching practices. One of the practices which have been more challenging for me in my teacher training was my lesson planning design.

During my teaching training, specifically in the teaching Methodology subject, I have been struggling with the lesson plan. I received feedback from different teachers of the UAH (Universidad Alberto Hurtado). In their comments, they stressed that the main issue with my lesson plan design was the learning objectives and how is aligned in the lesson plan of backward design.

Furthermore, this is important to make sense in a lesson to offer clear objectives for students to achieve the expected results. I have been thinking about my teaching practices and I arrived with some doubts about what things I should change to engage and encourage my students. I am interested in analyzing systematically the design and drafting of my lesson plans.

2. Literature Review

To understand how I plan my lessons; I have explored the theory on lesson planning with learning objectives in the literature which is with what I open this section. I continue presenting the theoretical grounds that support the lesson planning itself and backward design that is part of the approaches applied at UAH. These include the syllabus of the methodology subject. Finally, there is explained the role of scaffolding as an important part of students' learning. Thus, the understanding of these concepts will provide me with a clear framework that will help me analyze my data.

2.1 Lesson Planning and Learning Objectives

Based on Farrell (2002), teachers may ask themselves before entering a classroom, what direction they should go, this means that every content teacher will drive in a lesson must be crafted according to students' needs and purposes for their learning. Thus, this author retains that teacher usually have to plan what they want to do in their classrooms instead of opening the book without a learning objective to achieve at the end of the class.

Wiggins (2005) argues that teachers begin with and remain focused on the inputs (textbook, time-honored activities, etc.) instead of the output which are the desired results. He claims that it is a fundamental act of our profession to craft a proper lesson plan with learning experiences to meet specified purposes. Farrell (2002) maintains that lesson planning will depend on a clear objective oriented to diverse students' interests,

large classes, and previous knowledge and follow that path to reach the learning objectives.

According to Richards (1998), an objective is a written explanation of how learners will move toward those specific objectives. Furthermore, he stresses that a successful lesson is related to how effective the lesson is planned by the teacher that before you plan your lesson, you first need to identify the learning objectives to develop learning strategies and get feedback on student learning. Moreover, this author points out that lesson planning can be defined as a daily decision that teachers have to make to achieve the outcome successfully.

Notwithstanding, Ur (1996) identifies that many teachers ask themselves why lesson plans should be elaborate day by day and not to improvise each day. For this reason, she states that it is fundamental to point out a reminder of thoughts and ideas are an essential part to guide your lesson plan. In addition, Ur (1996) highlights that writing about what to cover in a lesson is important to put into practice what was systematically elaborated for learners to go beyond from general to particular in a class. Besides, Richards (1998) argues that lesson plans are aids for teachers to consider a structure in advance so they can search the pros and cons that can occur during the lessons.

In addition, Farrell (2002) points out that unit plans have an objective that follows a sequence of related lesson plans by a common objective. He states that a well-developed lesson plan starts with a clear and appropriate objective. The three components of learning objectives are performance, conditions, and criteria. This is followed by the desired results which must be reached at the end of the lesson. He maintains that this can

help the teacher have a clear idea of the materials to use, the contents to cover, the timing, and the activities that they will use and apply. The teacher has the responsibility to establish a specific objective (Zhao & Orey, 1999). However, students' interests must be enlisted through the teacher's ability to communicate with them and achieve their feelings and conceptions. (Zhao & Orey, 1999) Teachers must consider students' needs when planning for the achievement of the curriculum objectives.

McCutcheon (1980) lists two reasons for planning lessons. The first is an internal reason; connected to the confidence the teacher can develop inside the class for students to learn the subject better. Also, to know if classes are going to work and keep in mind what do your students need to learn and in what order. The second is the external reason which is related to the expectations of an institution or a guiding teacher. This reason is to have control before the lesson begins. Ur (1996) says that thinking about your lessons and evaluating yourself if the class was good or not is a good way of questioning why it happened and what can you do to fix it in, next class.

Furthermore, the learning objectives in my case, have to follow a certain structure to be well-written according to the parameters established by the UAH. For this structure (V-O-C), first is the verb which is an action verb (measurable and observable) is the one to be developed throughout the class and it is a cognitive skill (McCutcheon, 1980). The cognitive skill is an essential part of the structure of the learning objectives. It communicates the performance by the learner as intended in the lesson plan (Ashmore & Robinson, 2015). The communicative situation applies a meaningful purpose related to a real context situation. Then is the object, the focus on concrete actions. Finally, the

communicative situation specifies the meaningful purpose related to the real context (Gebejes, 2020).

On the one hand, Brown (1994) highlights the necessity of an evaluative component that shows you as a teacher whether students are learning or not. Consequently, this can also show the adjustments that have to be made for the next lesson. On the other hand, Ur (1996) says that the most important criterion to have when evaluating a lesson is student learning.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, clearly, well-planned lessons can maintain the focus of the class and maximize the time of learning. It can also increase students' interest in the class so they can have more learning opportunities. In other words, it is a description of what the learner must be able to do at the end of the lesson. Learning objectives are built from the unit objectives which are more broad statements. (Ashmore & Robinson, 2015)

2.2 UAH Methodology Course

The UAH's course design in Methodology Course aims at developing macro perspectives in the organization of courses, units, and classes with a strong practical focus on lesson planning. The central elements of this course are to develop decision making, organization of learning, and material design and adaptation.

This planning scheme is oriented from the Backward Design perspective. This model allows a broad understanding of how learning events and evidence can be planned coherently. In this course, UAH students are expected to learn how to plan coherent and

aligned classes, adapt this planning to other models, select and adapt materials and connect all with the Chilean English Curriculum Framework. (Bases Curriculares Idioma Extranjero Inglés).

This course contributes to the graduate profile of UAH students to gain important knowledge and theoretical background, and the most important variables that teachers will face when teaching a foreign language. This is fundamental for the student to make critical decisions about their teaching to foster an effective learning environment. This will be demonstrated by the reflective process that students require to design and make decisions in their own process of planning.

This process favors and contributes to the complete exit profile by comprehending the whole educational process thus contributing to being involved with the local educational system in critical and proactive terms.

In the UAH planning scheme, Backward Design (Wiggins, 2017) is taught as the model for planning a unit with a strong practical focus on lesson planning. It is divided into three stages. The first stage is to identify desired results. The second stage is to determine the acceptable evidence and the last stage is to plan learning experiences and instruction. (Wiggins & Mctighe, 2005). Thus, stage three has three sub-stages. Therefore, the UAH structure of the lesson plans has been organized into a) Learning objective, b) Pre-stage, c) While-stage and d) post-stage. The learning objective is presented first, and it must relate to the entire lesson.

Taken from Syllabus Methodology III; 2019. (see Appendix A)

2.3 Backward Design

Wiggins and McTighe (2005) identify ways to increase the understanding of learners through the creation of courses around specific well-designed goals. Backward Design is, as the authors claim, the product versus process approach, which places importance on the result of the learning course rather than the process itself. Furthermore, it is a benefit for us to make our goals more specific and concrete in terms of assessment evidence as we start to plan a unit or a course (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Cho and Trent (2005), stress that, in Backward Design the concept “authentic” is the difference between other curriculum approaches. Here, the assessment method is related to real-life contexts and life experiences complemented with educational aims and the development of specific content.

Richards (2013), points out three curriculum approaches: Forward, Central, and Backward Design. The first, Forward Design is focused on classroom activities rather than establishing learning outcomes in a course. On the other hand, Backward Design is favorable in language learning because outcomes have been already determined. Therefore, this author argues that this approach is not focused enough on the actual process of learning as Central Design does. Mohsenifar (2008) argues that backward design enhances the design of the curriculum that will facilitate the adoption of a skill-based syllabus. As noted by Richards (2013), Backward Design starts from a specification of learning outcomes and decision making on methodology. In addition, the skill-based syllabus must be developed from learning outcomes and can be beneficial due to its focus on behavior and skills that can be applied in many situations.

McTighe and Thomas (2003) claim that curriculum developers must diagnose specific learning outcomes that learners have to achieve at the end of a course or unit. Wiggins and McTighe (2005), maintain that teachers must find the most appropriate teaching processes and classroom activities to achieve the set goals. Therefore, the teaching process must work in coordination to achieve coherence in the curriculum so students can gain long-term knowledge. Richards (2001) argues that this curriculum approach aims to ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive.

Backward Design is focused on the outcome rather than the process, this is an advantage of the approach on the flexibility when assessing and planning classroom activities. The same author found that, since the outcome is identified at the beginning of the unit plan, the teacher can understand better where the learning process is going and with an anticipation of time to modify the techniques or activities during the unit or lesson.

In stage one, in UAH lesson plan, teachers have to make decisions about the understandings students have to reach, the knowledge and skills they must develop along with the unit and throughout the lessons. Stage two is composed of the task that teachers must design to have evidence of their learning. Finally, stage three is about the lesson plan. In this third stage, the learning objective must be connected with the skills planned and mentioned in stage one (Wiggins, 2017).

Moreover, at the end of the unit, the last learning objective is the same planned in stage two. The lessons made before were to scaffold the learning of students to reach the main task that will be the evidence to know if the results were the desired ones.

The pre-stage is when teachers present and activate prior knowledge. The While-stage is about meaning-focused input and fluency. The post-stage is when students must produce; it is focused on language practice, functions, and language production.

2.4 Scaffolding process during the class

There are a great number of studies that describe the role of scaffolding and its importance. Therefore, Ellis (2003) explains that teachers should communicate with low-level proficiency learners to regulate the demands of tasks and scaffold the interaction to reach a successful outcome. Raymond (2000, p.176) says, “The ZPD is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance. Likewise, Mckenzie (1999) expresses that the scaffolding process clarifies the purpose of scaffolding is in which the teacher models and demonstrates how to solve a problem for their students.

Furthermore, Wood, Ross, and Bruner (1976) define the role of the teachers as facilitators of student learning. These authors Scaffolding consists of a process to describe the type of help offered by a teacher or peer to support learning (Wood, Bruner, and Ross, 1976). In this process, the teacher assists students to master the activities of the different moments of the class, which students initially were unable to develop independently.

Teachers are seen as helpers to go beyond students' capability. The learning objective must be presented at the beginning so students can be concerned about the goals to achieve at the end of that lesson. (Mckenzie, 1999)

In addition, Vygotsky (1978) claims that changes in learning and in the cognitive process, are culturally and socially based. Learning is a social process rather than an individual one and occurs in the interaction between individuals. Besides, this author discusses scaffolding as a tool that facilitates students' ability to build on prior knowledge and internalize new information. The activities provided in scaffolding instruction are just beyond the level of what the learner can do alone (Olson & Pratt, 2000). In fact, these authors claim one example, which is to consider a situation in which a student is unable to spell a particular word. In this situation, the teacher could 'help' by providing accurate spelling. Otherwise, they could 'scaffold' how to think about the spelling by, for example, fostering the student to think about the sounds of the word and how they could be represented. Of course, there are times when on-the-spot 'help' is a valuable kind of assistance. (Raymond, 2000)

Hence, the same author defines scaffolding as qualitatively different from 'help' in that it is aimed at supporting students to tackle future tasks in new contexts or to know how to reflect, not simply what to think. At the same time, Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning involves a communicative process whereby knowledge is shared, and understandings are constructed in culturally formed settings.

The literature presented in this section suggests that the teacher has an important role in students' learning and that theory must be mastered in practice so students can achieve the desired results.

3. Research Question

What are the characteristics of my lesson plans and in my practice?

4. Research Methodology

This chapter will describe the research methodology, the data collection instruments, and the data analysis that I will use to answer the research question: what are the characteristics of my lesson plans and in my practice.

LaBoskey (2004), states that self-study research is an investigation that studies professional practice in different situations or contexts. Thus, the objective of this study is for pre-service teachers to better understand, comprehend and promote the teaching-learning process. The research question will focus my attention on the lesson plan features, what promotes backward design, the learning objectives, and the scaffolding process during the lessons.

The approach that will be applied in this study is a qualitative one. According to Creswell (2012) qualitative research, is one in which the researcher often makes knowledge prerogatives based principally on constructivist perspectives. This means that personal experiences and the interpretation of their meaning intend to develop a theory or pattern to analyze and find data to arrive at conclusions.

Thus, this approach was considered appropriate, due to the research interest I have on lesson plans of my teaching practices, which arrives from the necessity to be aware of the problems that I had when designing it in the methodology subject at University.

4.1 Data Collection Tools

In this study, two instruments will be used: (1) artifacts and (2) narratives which are described below.

4.1.1 Artifact Analysis

Artifacts help identify different elements that a researcher is interested on to develop in an investigation (Samaras, 2011) it includes newspapers, personal journals, documents that can provide data about the area of interest for the study. In this study, I will use seven lesson plans to show a timeline of my experience and the decisions made during my training process.

At the same time, it will help me to detect with the lessons the main gaps when planning and compare it with the UAH planning scheme. This is to know if I am following the guidelines while designing a lesson plan or not. For this, I will focus on two elements as mentioned above: lesson plans and the UAH planning scheme (see section 2.3)

4.1.2 Narratives

Narratives report life experiences describing details of individual involvement and are coded by themes, which has a context or a setting to make sense to the reader (Saldaña, 2016). I will use two types of narratives: feedback and reflective journals. First, a reflective journal is a means of personal thoughts, collection of ideas, reflections, and experiences that a student have on the learning and training process (O'Connell, 2011). This exercise of writing requires a deep thinking to challenge old ideas with new incoming information and reflect about future actions.

The amounts of journals to be analyzed were seven and they are from the first semester of 2020 made for the practicum subject. Second, feedback received from the tutor teacher as Hattie and Timperley (2007) define, a way to provide information related to the task or process of learning that fills a gap between what is understood and what is needed to be known.

4.2 Data Analysis Approach

Regarding the qualitative approach, it employs the term coding, which is a process of taking unstructured data and systematically categorizing excerpts to find themes and patterns for analysis. Saldaña (2016) defines a code as a word or short phrase that captures the essence of elements to be categorized and analyzed on your material. These patterns can have two results: group them together or not, because they can be used

exactly like one or they might also have something in common, even if those common codes are different from each other.

The first process in the data analysis is the planning of the data collected. Hence, this will be focused on the concept-driven data analysis term, which analyzes the codes and categories taken from the research literature also previous investigations or themes (Saldaña, 2016). This contains the artifacts and narratives mentioned before to build the thematic coding.

Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that codes are labels for assigning units of meaning. In the same line, Richards and Morse (2007) point out that coding is not only labeling what you have in your data to be analyzed. It has to be with a process that permits you to connect with your data, the data with your ideas, and all the data relating to that idea.

My coding scheme is going to be about the features of lesson objectives: I will go lesson by lesson finding common themes according to the literature review (see Section 2) and highlighting them to arrive with the ones of my interesting (See Appendix B).

Coding is a cyclical performance. In the first cycle you get your first impressions, taking notes, noticing which elements to code are page by page, linking ideas; grouping your data, etc., this process is called descriptive coding (Samaras (2011). In this first cycle I describe the main features established for learning objectives. I started to find different themes in the seven lessons that have their feedback received from the tutor. Personal journals were also mentioned in this first cycle (see Appendix B).

The second cycle is called theoretical coding and it is to expand the codes to understand the patterns. This means that all previous codes will be related to a specific core or central category to reflect what the study is about (Samaras (2011)).

The main ways to code can be by frequency, similarity, differences, sequence, and so on. I will use codes and organize them in logical categories as a guide to find connections and contrasts in my findings in a more reliable and structured way. In this second cycle, I selected the most frequent patterns that in the case of learning objectives were cognitive skills and communicative situation (see Appendix C).

Through the analysis of the data collected and the thematic coding made, two themes were selected for the first finding, three for the second finding and six for the third finding. These codes were designated not only from the data collected but also from the literature review chosen for this research to draw conclusions based on the data collected with supporting evidence. I also added as an important factor in this analysis, extracts from feedback received from tutor. Thus, at first, I centered my attention in lesson plans and then I checked feedback as a way of not letting the feeding interfere with your analyses.

5. Research Findings

In this section, there are findings on the characteristics of my lessons for the EFL. First, I will present the findings of the learning objectives in my EFL lesson plan. Then, I will continue with the results on the learning activities linked to learning objectives. Finally, I will present the outcomes regarding the scaffolding process when planning.

5.1 Structure of learning objectives in EFL lesson plan

I was particularly interested in exploring how successfully designed the learning objectives were. These learning objectives, as explained in the literature review (Section 3.1) consist of specific statements of observable learner behavior or action that can be measured upon the achievement of educational activity. This statement has a structure that is important to follow to have a well-designed learning objective: Verb + Object + Communicative Situation (Gebejes, 2020). These characteristics were sought in the learning objectives of the seven lesson plans analyzed, which have their feedbacks and reflective journals corresponding to the lesson plans.

This first finding was about the features of my learning objectives when planning my lessons for EFL classes. The lessons that I did were not the same as what I preached in the journals. Even though I received feedback on some aspects, that feedback did not make an impact on my practice. Part of the results from the implementation of my methodological process demonstrates a lack of involvement regarding communicative purposes and cognitive skills in my learning objectives. Moreover, it was shown that in

the different lesson plans analyzed, there were common mistakes about the characteristics that represent the learning objectives. In the case of the learning objective structure, the cognitive skill is the action verb (see Appendix D).

For instance, in one of the lessons, the learning objective can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1

“Students will be able to write the positive and negative effects of natural exploitation resources in order to create an anchor chart”.

It can be noticed that there is no communicative situation or cognitive skill. In Figure 2 can be seen an extract from feedback. The results of this coincide with the feedback given by the practicum tutor about this lesson.

Figure 2

Tutor: “The lesson objective lacks a skill. This is an activity; you need to change this for a communicative situation”.

This example showed that, even if I received feedback on the mistake I made, I did not put it into practice for the next planning since it was not meaningful feedback for me.

However, in the journals made before submitting that lesson plan, an extract below of Figure 3:

Figure 3

“In this lesson, it was pivotal to consider that the objective is focused on the fulfillment of a productive task (...) this learning objective was chosen with the purpose to make connections among the unit topic and students’ reality”.

Figure 3 can show that I knew the theory for a well-designed learning objective, I knew the structure, but I did not internalize it as a path to follow in all the lessons.

Therefore, there can be seen contradictions among the three instruments analyzed. The first was the lesson plan itself which shows that over the years I did not put into practice the components of a learning objective and it was difficult for me to differentiate it from an activity. This is also related to the lack of exercise with this structure and the sequence that lessons must follow to be achievable.

The second was the feedback received from the practicum teacher. It demonstrates that there was a lack of constant practice in my lesson plans. Also, in the feedback received, there were several aspects that I had to fix, and I did not take them into account. In the last part of the lesson planning, feedback became relevant for me so as it was instructive and meaningful, I applied them to the lessons.

5.2 Learning objectives linked with stages of a lesson

When designing a lesson, there are different aspects to consider. The most important is to have the learning objective of the lesson aligned with the activities that are going to be presented during that class.

There was a trend in my lessons. I could realize that in the pre-stage, there was no link either with the learning objective or with the activities of the while and post-stage. It also showed my reflections on these connections in the journals analyzed that correspond to those classes. It was shown that the information about the activities of the different stages of the class. It is apparent that in the first lessons, very few of the pre, while, and post stages were associated with the learning objectives (see Appendix E).

In Figure 4 there is an extract of a lesson objective analyzed in-depth to show examples of the mistakes.

Figure 4

“Students will be able to describe habitats’ characteristics to express preferences in order to advise a classmate.”

Figure 4 showed a negative result with the objective that was not clear. First, if someone does not know what the unit is about, they will not realize the habitats of were or of who is talking about. Second, the verb does not represent the main topic and looks like an activity. Thus, it is difficult to discover what the lesson is about. Finally, the learning objective must inspire you to plan the other parts of the class.

The example above was mentioned to connect with the next example of the pre-stage of the same lesson. It can be noticed that there were gaps in the first part of the lesson and that it was not related to the learning objectives (see Appendix E). In Figure 5, It was also isolated with the next two parts of the class (while and post)

Figure 5

“Students will see an image projected on the board. They have to recall vocabulary from past units and the teacher will be writing their responses on the board.”

In the activity of Figure 5, I posted 12 images of landscaping, and the learning objective was not established about what the lesson was going to be about.

The topic was the natural world. Nevertheless, in this planning was not specified the theme and were not written the words that they were supposed to recall in that stage. This pre-stage was isolated and not linked with the learning objectives. This happened because it was also not aligned with the topic of the unit.

This inconsistency at the beginning may be because activities were not thought of as a development for learning. In addition, activities were recycled from previous lessons that were not working as a progression for the goal set. But, in the last lessons, there were positive results and learning objectives, and the stages were aligned.

Interestingly, there were also differences in the journal written and in the planning about the link of the classes and the objectives. In the journals can be seen that connections were made with the stages and learning outcomes. Even in those planning in which it was not reflected, I wrote that stages related to the class. There was a misconception about what I was writing and what was planning. For instance, a part of a journal is posted in Figure 6 and says:

Figure 6

“(...) the first activity seeks students to demonstrate previous knowledge (...) in this way, students should use both subject and organizational knowledge to be successful in fulfilling the class objective.”

Nevertheless, in most of the journals, I mentioned the importance of connecting the stages with the learning objectives, but I did not mention them in the first ones, because I did not find them relevant. I thought that my lessons were aligned between them and the learning outcomes, but when I put them into practice, they were not. An example can be seen in Figure 7, retrieved from the feedback received from the tutor:

Figure 7

Tutor: "I don't see the relationship between the pictures you showed in the pre with this activity of the while. I think it is important to connect them to see a transition, especially for this level of students".

The comments above showed that even if the two stages talk about the natural world, the activity of the pre had no relation with the while and post-activity which were linked between them. I was not linking in the planning, the tutor corrects it on the feedback but in the journals, I establish that there were aligned.

However, based on the latest journals from the lesson plans with its feedback analyzed (see Appendix E), the steps for planning a lesson in backward design were introduced and developed over time, putting special emphasis on learning objectives and which must be taken into consideration.

Therefore, even if there were many activities that were disconnected from the learning objectives, in the end, there was a progression, there was learning. I started to read again about backward design and the feedback received by the practicum tutor. I

started to highlight the mistakes in the planning so, in the end, I did not fail again in the same aspects.

5.3 Scaffolding process in different moments of the class

Scaffolding consists of a process to describe the type of help offered by a teacher or peer to support learning (Wood, Bruner, and Ross, 1976). In this process, the teacher assists students to master the activities of the different moments of the class, which students initially were unable to develop independently. Teachers are seen as helpers to go beyond students' capability (see section 2.4).

Furthermore, there are two instances on which I will focus my attention. These aspects are related to the inconsistency with my planning, feedback received from them, and the journals I wrote. These two aspects that are part of the scaffolding process were: teacher as an assistant of learning and teacher modeling the activities of different moments of the class. For the first part of this analysis, the teacher as an assistant was established only in the last lessons, but not on the first of them (see Appendix F).

In this finding, it can be seen in Appendix F the first lessons that I did not mention the features that give you a report of a teacher who wants to facilitate learning. The extract below shows a lesson in which the pre-stage does not promote it: *“students will see an image projected on the board (...) students recalling information from past units and teacher writing their answers on the board”* If we turn to this statement, can be seen teacher does not mean to guide and assist students in learning for themselves. The activity had no strategy for students to go beyond these images. Teachers have to give the tools

for students to focus on the activities so the activities can become meaningful, and they can explore beyond (Lipscomb, Swanson, and West, 2010).

On the contrary, in the journals, I felt strongly about it. I mentioned in every entry the importance of the construction of a bridge that connects with what students already know to arrive at something they do not know. For instance, a citation of the journal said: “(...) when they have any obstacles, the teacher will be giving them the tools but only after they tried to solve the problem autonomously (Jones, 2007)

In fact, feedback reveals how this situation negatively affected my lesson, since the comment said:

Tutor: More scaffolding is needed to do this activity. Are they really analyzing it?”

Thus, this feedback reflects that there was a lack of scaffolding process, in this case, the teacher as a helper. Whenever teachers are scaffolding students’ process of learning, it is important the recurrent accomplishment of the goals or a clear instruction of activity so frustration can be controlled (Vygotsky, 1978). This increases motivation through autonomous learners and makes their time and effort more productive and with a purpose (Vygotsky, 1978). It is important to facilitate students’ comprehension in an activity for them to follow the model and to be part of their own learning. (Lange, 2002)

Modeling the activities is important in scaffolding. Hogan and Presley (1997) define modeling as teaching performance that demonstrates how one has to think, feel or act in a given situation. In my lesson plan was shown that there was a lack of modeling in some parts of the lessons (see Appendix G).

Strong evidence of modeling was found when focusing my attention on how I modeled the activities during my lessons. In the first three lessons, there was a lack of demonstration on how to achieve the activity. The next example corresponds to an activity of the while-stage of the lesson. Besides, students were supposed to write a letter to Greta Thunberg mentioning how the Chilean environment protection is. For that purpose, I gave them a format of a letter to use and add new information to it. The skeleton said:

“Dear Greta:

In Chile there are few people, who recycle and reuse the thrash
in order to have less pollution,

Best Regards,

XXXXXXX”

However, in the same part, I asked them to write a letter but add extra information, so the teacher gave me feedback about it telling me that I did not include it in the example:

Tutor: “Your Example must have 5 lines. When presenting the format of a letter, you do not have to forget the formalities: “I hope this finds you well”.

With this, I can conclude that the more explanations teachers make, the better students understand. These explanations must openly address students' comprehension about what is being learned, why and when it is used and finally, how (Lange, 2002). As the student is progressing in his/her knowledge, explanations are going to be only keywords and prompts to help students to remember important information.

Therefore, to do this type of activity, as a teacher I must dissect the format with students for them to get it right (Lange, 2002). This means that modeling must be significant for students to reproduce it, so they can go beyond when writing this letter and also use their knowledge with another vocabulary to complement it.

6. Discussions of the findings

While I was analyzing data, I realized that the main error made when making decisions about my lesson plan was the lack of training. This was one of the reasons for which I failed in different years the methodology subject and it was difficult for me to return and get the practice. On the one hand, I was not engaged with the subject and on the other hand, I was always trying to avoid this subject because of my lack of confidence. Likewise, I did not understand how to do a well-structured learning objective of the Backward Design which is the first step to learn how the lesson plan works for this model.

The finding section highlighted three important findings. The common pattern was the disconnection between what I did and what I said I was going to do. I never did the connection between stage 1, stage 2, and stage 3 in backward design.

To recap the stages, the first must contain the intended knowledge and skills to be applied before planning the various activities in the whole unit (Wiggins, 2017). In Stage 2, are reflected the performance goals, here is explained the final task that students must achieve. In Stage 3, the skills that were mentioned in Stage 1 are the skills to be developed as a progression in the different lessons.

Nevertheless, the issue with this part of the planning was that I did not associate the learning objectives with the first part of the backward design. This part plans the skills that are going to be developed through the whole unit in the last part.

My main mistake was to invent the learning objectives without consulting Stage 1 to follow the evolution along with the lessons. I think this happened because the units that I planned were not applied to a real classroom and only for a mark in the Methodology subject. I did not have the opportunity to apply them to real students. I think that when you put into practice planning in a class is easier to find the mistakes.

Feedback was an important fact when analyzing the data because I discovered that it was not meant for me until I started to apply it in my lessons. I started to read my latest lessons and consider the tutor's feedback. Also, my classmates were a huge help for me to notice some mistakes that my tutor or I did not realize. So, in the end, feedback became significant for me.

In addition, when teachers give feedback is for you to be concerned about the mistakes you made so you can correct them (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). If feedback does not prime to reducing the difference between current understandings and goals, students are likely to close the gap by overstating their status or claiming various attributions that reduce effort and engagement. (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Even if you are trying to make it in a better way for the next lesson, practice is crucial when planning a unit or a lesson. Finally, in journals I thought the learning objective was accurate and successfully designed for the class, but this can demonstrate that practice goes beyond theory.

Furthermore, Ur (1996) says that thinking about your lessons and evaluating yourself if the class was good or not is a good way of questioning why it happened and what can you do to fix it in, next class. In all the journals there is promoted a communicative situation and a cognitive skill, but in the lesson planning, it is not

established. The findings corroborate the aspects of the disconnection between what I reflect on and what I did in my lessons. It also includes feedback which at the end helped me to find the adequate structure for me to understand, and it was backward design.

7. Research Implications

When I started to plan and decide the topic to be developed in this self-study research, I was not feeling capable of doing it, since I failed the seminar subject last year. During last year, I chose a topic that was not representative of me, neither in my practice nor in my performance during my years as an English teacher-trainee. Therefore, this year I chose a topic that arrived from a question that I made to myself: Why did I fail, and which were the gaps that in those years I did not fill.

Developing this self-study research means for me a change regarding lesson plans because I was always trying to avoid the situation in which I had to create lessons. This happened to me because I was always having problems when designing classes and usually the feedback and the grades were not very encouraging.

The findings referred to the lack of knowledge about the planning scheme the UAH promotes for a student. Furthermore, the collection of data and its analysis revealed the main aspects that were essential to meet the requirements of the research question. Moreover, the findings had a connection with the literature review which was carefully selected for this research to facilitate a deeper interpretation of the data results.

Finally, this research helped me to become more self-aware of my beliefs as an English teacher-trainee and how the findings affected my decision-making in the past. The different findings made me realize that there were elements that I was not paying attention to when planning and applying lessons. Even if the lessons were not applied to

real classes, it was important to overlook aspects that were not beneficial for my teaching practice and even for my students.

Therefore, I realized that this self-study research encouraged my personal growth as a future teacher because it considered the self-reflection upon beliefs and the importance of any decision made by the teachers, in my case a teacher-trainee. This self-study also made me know that in the last lessons I had more security, and it was meaningful for my future practices.

8. Conclusions

This self-study research was focused on my learning process and an investigation of my own experiences throughout the years as an English teacher-trainee. This research was addressed with the intention of finding information regarding my teaching practice during the design of lesson plans. The outcomes of this research study revealed how I have managed my own learning process and the steps I lack.

The literature used for this study was about the keywords used in the UAH planning scheme and the models to follow. I centered my attention on the findings in lesson planning and that topic was followed by the backward design.

In this research, a qualitative approach was used to analyze the data collected from the lesson planning that corresponded to the first semester of 2020. These lessons were not applied to any class because of the pandemic situation.

The other source of data was the feedback received from the practicum tutor and followed the analysis of my personal journals. With these three tools, I could do thematic coding. Thus, with the cycles of coding appeared infinite themes to use and analyze but I chose the most important and the ones that reflect my own performance during this English degree.

The findings revealed that there was a disconnection at the beginning of all the lessons, but through feedback and the linking with backward design, it became easier to follow the organization.

Hence, the use of the correct structure with backward design helped me connect the lesson objectives with the activities and how to help my students to reach the goals through scaffolding during the classes.

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10. Appendices

1.1 Appendix A

(Syllabus, Methodology 3, 2019)

Universidad Alberto Hurtado

Facultad de Educación

Carrera Pedagogía en Inglés

1. Course Description:

This methodology course aims at developing macro perspectives in the organization of courses, units and classes with a strong practical focus on lesson planning. Decision making, organization of learning and material design/adaptation are the central elements in this course. The planning will be studied from the perspective of Backward Design, as this model grants an ample understanding of how learning events and learning evidence can be planned coherently. In this course, the students will learn how to use this model in order to plan coherent classes, adapt this planning to other models, select and adapt materials, and to connect everything into the local English curriculum framework (Bases Curriculares Idioma Extranjero Inglés).

2. Contribution to the graduate profile:

This course allows the student to gain important knowledge and theoretical background regarding the most important learning variables that come into play in the classroom when teaching a foreign language. This is fundamental for the student to make critical decisions about their teaching to foster an effective learning environment. This will be demonstrated by the reflective process that students require to design and make decisions in their own process of planning. This way, students are expected to integrate their learning experiences with those of their ELAB one by interacting with real context and the diversity they face on a regular basis in their schools. This process

favors and contributes to the complete exit profile by comprehending the whole educational process thus contributing to intervene the local educational system in critical and proactive terms.

3. Methodology:

The course aims at enhancing learning by providing hands-on workshop sessions. In the workshops, students are expected to participate actively in a moderated discussion and apply in a practical way the content discussed. Lectures on theoretical notions will provide the space for discussion and contrast with the real needs of the classroom students experience in their ELABs and practicum. Active participation in the design will be essential to the progress in order to design and demonstrate management of all the elements that make up an appropriate English class. Assistantships will be compulsory to all students for practical sessions on how to plan.

10.3 Appendix B

Checklist for data analysis

First coding cycle

Sub Category
LO - Cognitive Skills
LO - Non-Cognitive Skills
LO- Communicative Situation
LO - Non-communicative situation
LO- V-O-C
LO- Non- V-O
LO- Related to activities
LO- Not Related to activities
ACT PRE not focused on objectives
ACT PRE focused on objectives.
ACT PRE ALIGNED W/ LO
ACT PRE skill
ACT WHILE not focused on objectives
ACT WHILE focused on objectives.
ACT WHILE ALIGNED W/ PRE
ACT WHILE skill
ACT POST not focused on objectives
ACT POST focused on objectives
ACT POST ALIGNED W/ WHILE
ACT POST skill

10.4 Appendix C

Second Coding cycle

Class	Activity of Pre stage connected to Learning objectives	Activity of While stage connected to Learning objectives	Activity of Post stage connected to Learning objectives

10.5 Appendix D

Table 1

Lesson N°	Cognitive Skill	Communicative Situation
1	✓	X
2	X	X
3	X	X
4	X	✓
5	X	X
6	✓	✓
7	✓	✓

10.6 Appendix E

Table 2

	Number	The activity of the Pre-stage is connected to Learning objectives	The activity of the while-stage is connected to Learning objectives	The activity of the post-stage is connected to Learning objectives
Class	1	X	✓	✓
	2	X	X	✓
	3	X	X	X

	4	X	✓	X
	5	✓	X	X
	6	✓	✓	✓
	7	✓	✓	✓

Journals	1	✓	✓	X
	2	X	X	X
	3	✓	✓	✓
	4	X	X	✓
	5	✓	✓	✓
	6	✓	✓	✓
	7	✓	✓	✓

10.7 Appendix F

Table 3

Class	PRE-STAGE Teacher as an assistant	WHILE-STAGE Teacher as an assistant	POST-STAGE Teacher as an assistant
1	✓	X	X
2	X	X	✓
3	X	✓	X
4	X	✓	✓
5	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓

10.8 Appendix G

Table 4

Class	PRE-STAGE Teacher as a model	WHILE-STAGE Teacher as a model	POST-STAGE Teacher as a model
1	X	✓	X
2	✓	X	X
3	X	X	✓
4	✓	✓	✓
5	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓