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Yamshynskaya Nataliia Valentynivna Lecturer, National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Prosp. Peremohy, 37, Kyiv, 03056, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0518-3657>

Kryukova Yelyzaveta Serhiivna Associate Professor, PhD, National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Prosp. Peremohy, 37, Kyiv, 03056, <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7408-9584>

Kutsenok Neonila Mykhailivna Lecturer, National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Prosp. Peremohy, 37, Kyiv, 03056, <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7111-0088>

Meleshko Inna Viktorivna Senior Lecturer, National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Prosp. Peremohy, 37, Kyiv, 03056, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7414-7828>

EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING AND ITS ROLE IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPING STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS

Abstract. The role of the English language is constantly growing because the knowledge of it can guarantee the possibility to communicate with either familiar people or business partners in any country abroad. Proficiency in a foreign language is essential for both personal and professional growth of every person. All these factors explain the necessity to provide effective lessons where ESL students can obtain and master their language competence. However, many ESL teachers face the problems with choosing effective teaching strategies and designing a lesson plan aimed to enhance productivity of their students. This paper aims to highlight the importance of lesson planning that will help to control the process of language acquisition and thus make right decisions as for the ways of development of ESL students' language skills. The authors state that a lesson plan provides teachers with a general outline of their teaching goals, learning objectives, and means to accomplish them. That is why if a teacher has a well-designed lesson plan, he/she will be able to achieve the lesson's outcomes. The readers of the paper will become familiar with some ideas on how to structure a lesson plan and what set of activities should be chosen to develop the main language skills: speaking, reading, writing and listening. The survey was conducted by the authors with the aim to collect ESL teachers' opinions on the role of teachers in structuring a classroom environment



and what impact a good lesson plan has on the achievements of their students. The findings showed that most teachers are aware of the importance of lesson planning and its components that must be definitely taken into account; their role in lesson management. However, more than half of the responders do not design a lesson plan on a regular basis and have difficulty with time limitations at the lesson planning.

Keywords: lesson plan, classroom management, teaching strategies, learning strategies, lesson outcomes, language skills

Ямшинська Наталія Валентинівна викладач кафедри англійської мови технічного спрямування №2, Національний технічний університет України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського», просп. Перемоги, 37, м. Київ, 03056, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0518-3657>

Крюкова Єлизавета Сергіївна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри англійської мови технічного спрямування №2, Національний технічний університет України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського», просп. Перемоги, 37, м. Київ, 03056, <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7408-9584>

Куценок Неоніла Михайлівна викладач, Національний технічний університет України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського», просп. Перемоги, 37, м. Київ, 03056, <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7111-0088>

Мелешко Інна Вікторівна старший викладач кафедри англійської мови технічного спрямування №2, Національний технічний університет України «Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського», просп. Перемоги, 37, м. Київ, 03056, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7414-7828>

ЕФЕКТИВНЕ ПЛАНУВАННЯ ЗАНЯТЬ З АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ТА ЙОГО РОЛЬ В УПРАВЛІННІ КЛАСОМ ТА РОЗВИТКУ МОВНИХ НАВИЧОК СТУДЕНТІВ

Анотація. Роль англійської мови постійно зростає, адже її знання може гарантувати можливість спілкування як зі знайомими людьми, так і з діловими партнерами за кордоном. Володіння іноземною мовою необхідне як для особистісного, так і для професійного зростання кожної людини. Усі ці фактори пояснюють необхідність забезпечити ефективні уроки, на яких студенти, що вивчають англійську мову як другу (ESL) можуть отримати та опанувати свою мовну компетенцію. Однак багато вчителів ESL стикаються з проблемами вибору ефективних стратегій навчання та розробки плану уроку, спрямованого на підвищення продуктивності діяльності їхніх студентів. Ця стаття має на меті висвітлити важливість планування уроків, яке допоможе



контролювати процес опанування мови і, таким чином, приймати правильні рішення щодо шляхів розвитку мовних навичок студентів ESL. Автори стверджують, що план уроку надає викладачам загальне бачення їхніх навчальних цілей, навчальних задач і засобів їх досягнення. Тому, якщо викладач має добре складений план уроку, він/вона зможе досягти поставлених цілей уроку. Читачі статті познайомляться з деякими ідеями щодо того, як структурувати план уроку та який комплекс завдань слід обрати для розвитку основних мовних навичок: говоріння, читання, письма та аудіювання. Авторами статті було проведено опитування з метою зібрати думки викладачів ESL щодо їх ролі у структуруванні класного середовища та впливу ефективного плану уроку на досягнення їхніх студентів. Отримані результати показали, що більшість викладачів усвідомлюють важливість планування уроку та знають його складові, які обов'язково потрібно враховувати; свою роль у керівництві уроком. Однак більше половини респондентів не розробляють план уроку на регулярній основі та відчують труднощі з часовими обмеженнями під час планування уроку.

Ключові слова: план заняття, керівництво класом, стратегії викладання, стратегії навчання, результати уроку, мовні навички

Introduction. The modern fast-paced world demands that society constantly adapts to new realities and challenges in the social, economic, and political spheres of our life. Thus, it requires a new generation of human beings who are able to adjust to these changes. Recently everyone can observe that a foreign language's role is continuously increasing worldwide. The main aim of the teaching process for ESL teachers is to develop four types of skills in their students: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. ESL students should be equipped with these language skills fully, which will give them a chance to expand their communication and get a better job in the labor market. ESL teachers should investigate and implement approaches aimed at improving the effectiveness of the foreign language teaching/learning process. The era of digital technologies provides teachers with a wide range of materials to teach: printed books and online recourses are available for use with different purposes at each stage of the lesson. However, it depends on the teacher how to create an original lesson plan that will include useful activities focused on the development and further mastering of ESL students' language competence. It means that every ESL teacher is able to design his/her lesson plan oriented firstly to his/her students' demands and requirements. Lesson planning is a very important stage while preparing for the lesson. While being immersed in the lesson design process, ESL teachers should be aware of the components of the lesson plan and principles of selection of exercises on the development of language skills in order to fully achieve the outcomes of the lesson. However, many ESL teachers face the problem of understanding the necessity of developing lesson plans on a daily basis, what components must be taken into consideration to get a well-developed plan, and



how these factors will influence the progress of their students. Many ESL teachers have doubts when choosing activities and formulating tasks for students. Accordingly, there is a need to raise the awareness of English teachers in universities in Ukraine about the techniques of effective lesson planning.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Numerous studies were carried out to prove the importance of lesson planning as the instrument that gives the teacher greater confidence and freedom in teaching.

Jianping Shen, Sue Poppink et al. (2007) claimed “lesson planning allows teachers to explore multiple aspects of pedagogical content knowledge. In developing lesson plans, teachers have opportunities to think deeply about the subject matter, including the way the subject matter is represented in particular textbooks or in such aspects of the curriculum as standards and benchmarks.

The work of Milagro Piñeiro Ruiz (2009) presented the basic principles and components of lesson planning by organizing them into three different stages: before planning, while planning, and after planning. He described the main aspects which should be taken into account by ESL teachers at each stage of lesson design..

Danielson C. (2011) suggested that teachers must have great control over teaching elements. She also claimed that “Teachers don’t teach content in the abstract; they teach it to students. In order to ensure student learning, therefore, teachers must not only know their content and its related pedagogy, but the students to whom they wish to teach that content”. She insisted that to achieve positive outcomes from the lesson, teachers should be aware of the individual needs of their students in order to plan appropriate learning activities.

Fadliyana Mohamad Fathil1, Azidah Abu Ziden et al.,(2021) examined novice ESL teachers' lesson planning practices and their lesson planning system preferences. Based on their findings, they concluded that the practice of preparing a daily lesson plan is fundamental to the effectiveness of the lesson. The use of specific tools in supporting the preparation of daily lesson plans is also given attention in line with current technological developments.

According to Md. Hafiz Iqbal, Shamsun Akhter Siddiqie, et al. (2021) “Theory-based lesson plan, seating arrangement in the classroom, monitoring class activities, and teaching experience are essential for designing and implementing lesson plans in the classroom”. In their work, they studied potential contributors to lesson plans and designed a policy for effective lesson plans.

The goal of the article. The article studies the difficulties for ESL teachers in lesson planning and classroom management. It outlines some challenges and ideas on how to create a great lesson plan taking into account modern teaching and learning strategies. In addition, the goal of this work is to collect ESL teachers’ opinions on the role of teachers in structuring a classroom environment and what impact a good lesson plan has on the achievements of their students.

To reach these aims, the following tasks are to be completed:



1. to outline the main principles and components of the lesson plan and research the main criteria for the choice of tasks and activities aimed to develop students' language skills more productively;
2. to establish ESL teachers' views on the role of well-planned lessons in the process of language acquisition with the help of surveys and interviews;
3. to outline recommendations to teachers of English for delivering lessons more effectively using a variety of activities and tasks in a lesson and a series of lessons.

Presentation of the main material. The studies of a great number of researchers prove the fact that every lesson should be carefully planned by ESL teachers if they are focused on students' achievements and want to reach the lesson's outcomes fully. A clearly planned lesson can assure both ESL teachers and students that they work in accordance with the syllabus and that their activities are concentrated on the development of certain language skills and are under the control. They are both aware of the stages of the lesson and what material they must work on. There are a lot of commercially developed lesson plans that ESL teachers can use in their work. However, if the teacher is a creative person and is deeply involved in his/her work, he/she will always try to develop something original and unique, which will be considered as his/her individual teaching materials. The teacher is more aware of his / her students' level of knowledge, their individual needs, and what skills are needed to be developed. Finally, a lesson plan must meet the demands, certain goals, and outcomes the ESL teachers put before themselves in each lesson.

With this aim in mind, an ESL teacher must answer some questions at the preparatory stage:

- What are the aims and objectives of the unit?
- What syllabus material should it include (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, reading, speaking)?
- What is the format or structure of the unit and how is it organized?
- What types of exercises or activities does the unit contain?
- What is the purpose of each exercise?

If you are working on the design of a lesson plan and you want to adapt an existing one, there are some suggestions mentioned in the work of Major J. and Howard J. (2004) :

1. Add activities to those already suggested.
2. Leave out activities that do not meet your learners' needs.
3. Replace or adapt activities or materials with: - supplementary materials from other commercial texts - authentic materials (newspapers, radio reports, films etc) - teacher-created supplementary materials.
4. Change the organisational structure of the activities, for example, pairs, small groups or whole class. Modern technology provides teachers with access to tools that enable professional results in materials production. Computers with Clipart, internet access and digital pictures offer unprecedented means for publishing high-quality teaching materials.



Hamer J. (2007) proposed the model of the lesson that includes the following stages: ➤ Introduction; ➤ Presenting the task; ➤ Observation; ➤ Feedback; ➤ Follow-up Activity on the Topic.

Thornbury S. (2005) lists six criteria for a speaking activity, summarized as follows:

- Productivity: it provides conditions for autonomous language use
- Purposefulness: it has a clear outcome, especially one which requires learners to work together to achieve a common purpose
- Interactivity: it requires learners to take into account the effect they are having on their audience
- Challenge: it stretches their available communicative resources
- Safety: it does not involve too much risk or likelihood of failure
- Authenticity: it bears some relation to real-life language use

Speaking is one of the leading skills, which ESL students should possess to be able to speak fluently with other people for different purposes.

Poghosyan, N. (2018) discussed stages for reading activities. They are the following: pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities. Moreover, he gave some advice on what activities can be implemented at each stage.

Basturi H. (2017) emphasized the importance of teaching and testing writing because it is very important for ESL students to know how to write a good composition, where they are ready to express their thoughts and share their experiences and feelings. Basturi listed skills that can help students to do this and also gave examples of tasks to develop this language competence during the ESL lesson.

The ESL teachers should take the recommendations mentioned above into consideration when they are going to design a lesson plan. These recommendations are practical and include useful set of tasks and activities focused on the development of definite students' language skills.

With the aim to get an opinion of ESL teachers, who work at a technical university in Ukraine, about lesson planning process we carried out a study and a series of ZOOM meeting was conducted.

Materials and methods. A mixed-method research design was used in the study: quantitative and qualitative data were obtained from the surveys completed by teachers of English from Technical University of Ukraine (48) and from interviews in Zoom sessions. 10 questions based on Likert scale and multiple choice (prompts 9, 10) were used in a survey. The Likert scale was chosen because it can guarantee data quality and it is easy to understand and implement. To measure central tendency, we calculated the median (Mdn) and to show the spread of the responses we calculated the Interquartile Range (IQR) for the prompts which used a Likert scale. The survey covered the issues related to teachers of English views on alternative assessment during the pandemic. This research complies with ethics, all respondents volunteered to participate in the survey and gave their consent.

According to the results of the survey, most of the respondents (45%) were ESL teachers with more than 20 years of experience teaching English. We can suggest that being for such a long period in the profession they feel themselves more confident and have enough experience and knowledge in how to provide effective lessons and what should be done to build a lesson plan, which will be helpful in realization of lesson's goals and outcomes (Figure 1).

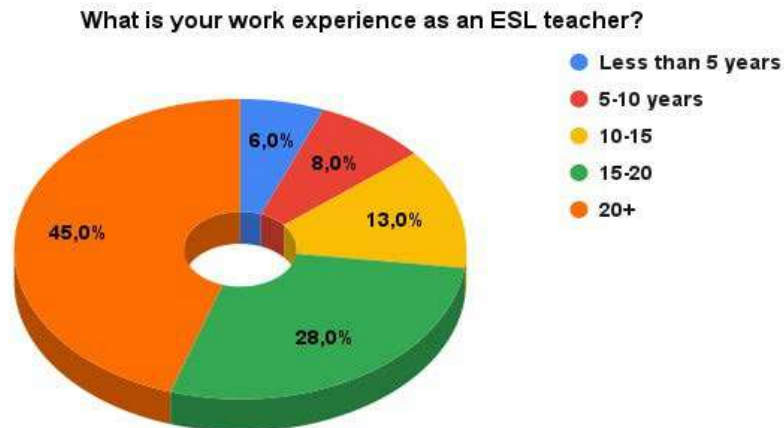


Fig. 1. Indicating teaching English experience of the responders

The findings of the survey showed that most responders evaluate the importance of an effective lesson plan for the improvement of ESL students' language skills as high and very high (54% and 32% correspondingly). It proves the fact that a lesson plan serves as a guide for an ESL teacher on how to control what the students are taught and find the right strategies to do this and achieve the lessons' aims effectively (Figure 2).

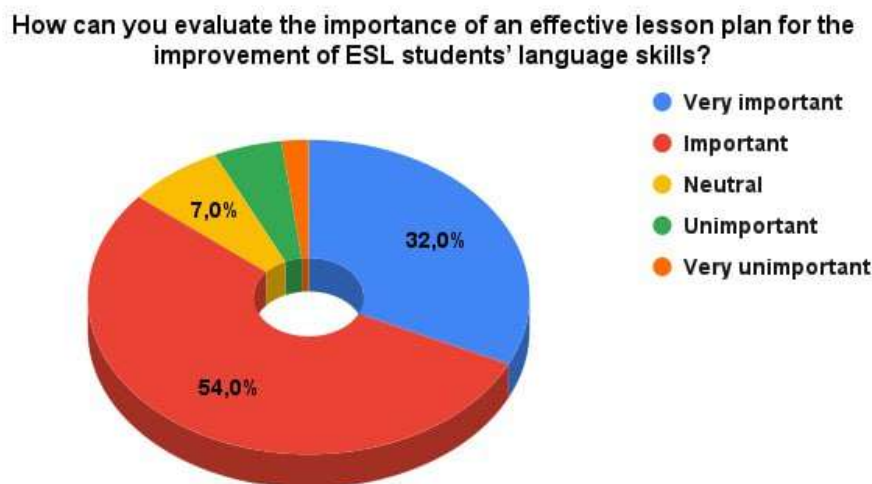


Fig. 2. Evaluating the importance of an effective lesson plan for the improvement of ESL students' language skills



The results of the survey showed that the majority of teachers (36%) are sometimes satisfied with their lessons. The percentage of those who are always satisfied with the classroom management is 19% and unfortunately it is not so high (Figure 3). Based on these findings, we can conclude that there is a real need in searching methods and techniques, which teachers will be able to adapt in their lesson design and finally get a well-planned plan. The feeling of satisfaction with the work you do must be a main motivation for everyone. The teachers are not the exception. However, the teacher must have enough knowledge and experience to provide effective lessons.

How often are you satisfied with how your English lessons are organized?

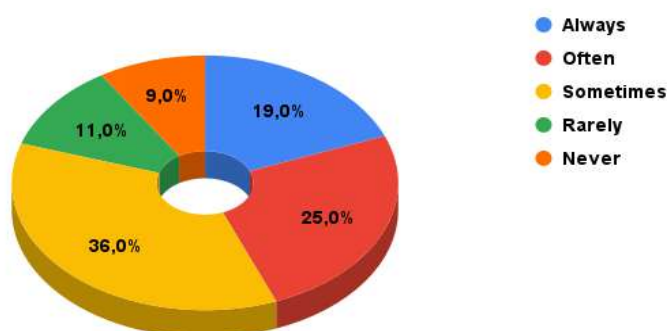


Fig. 3. The level of satisfaction of ESL teachers with the organization of their lessons

The calculation of the medium (Mdn) and the Interquartile range (IQR) shows that most of the respondents agreed with the necessity to adapt lesson delivery as needed (Mdn =2, IQR = 2) (See Table 1). Based on these findings we can conclude that ESL teachers accept the idea about flexibility of a teacher as for the choice of activities to teach new concepts and lead meaningful discussions during the lesson.

Table 1

ESL teachers' opinion on some questions of the survey

Survey questions	SA	A	N	D	SD	Median	IQR
Do you agree that ESL teachers should always adapt lesson delivery as needed?	29	41	17	9	4	2	2
Do you agree that in order to develop different language skills an ESL teacher should select a coherent set of activities that cover a period of classroom time?	25	39	15	12	9	2	1,25

Accordingly, the majority of ESL teachers (39%) agreed that in order to develop different language skills an ESL teacher should select a coherent set of activities that cover a period of classroom time (see Table 1). There is a great number of scientific works/studies that offer the classifications of tasks and exercises

that are concentrated on the development of a certain language skill. That's why ESL teachers should be aware of these instructions on how to implement the tasks in their lesson plan as productively as they can.

The results of the survey showed that only a little percent of the respondents are unfamiliar or very unfamiliar (9% and 7% correspondingly) with the components, which the lesson plan should include. The majority of the teachers (43%) claimed that they are familiar with it and use their knowledge in lesson design (Figure 4). A correctly structured lesson plan will increase the teachers' confidence in themselves and make the lesson more meaningful creating a productive learning environment.

Are you aware of the components which the lesson plan should include?

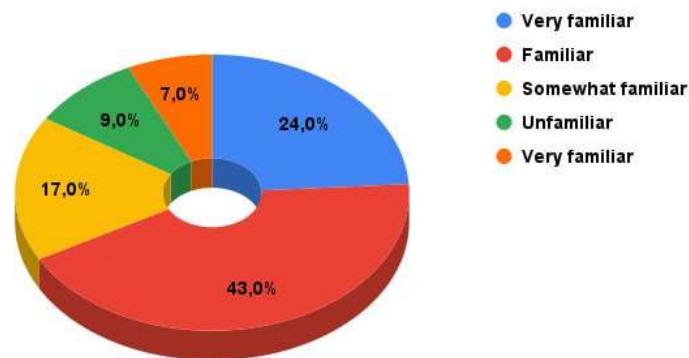


Fig.4. Awareness of ESL teachers of components of the lesson plan

Difficulties with planning follow-up activities on the topic were noticed by the most responders (32%) (Figure 5). This part of the lesson should include tasks aimed to show for a teacher what learning material proved easy for students to learn and what aspects would require reviewing and revising in the next lessons. Thus, the thinking of activities for this part of the lesson is a significant part of the lesson plan and demands from ESL teachers their experience and knowledge of their students' needs and efforts should be made for their appropriate inclusion in the lesson plan.

What part of the lesson causes more difficulties for you to select exercises and activities?

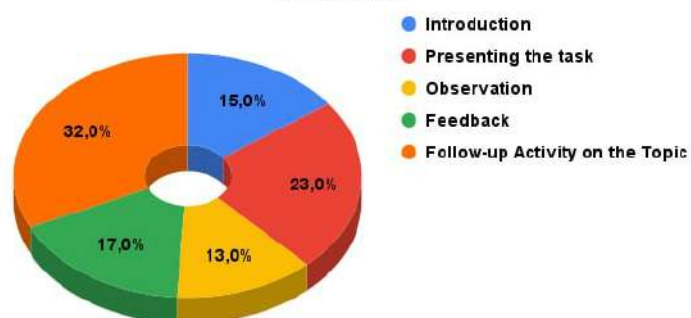


Fig. 5. The part of the lesson that causes difficulties for the ESL teachers with choosing exercises for it



In addition, a significant part of ESL teachers (23%) stated that they have a problem with presenting the task. To achieve an appropriate response on any task, the students must be clearly instructed what they should do and how it should be done to achieve good results from the lesson. It depends on the art of the teacher how to formulate the task in the way that makes it possible to get the response from the students that will meet the teacher's expectations.

The results of the research showed that for 41% of the respondents time limitations were one the main challenges while organizing the lesson. It is a significant problem for teachers when teaching matter is organised in a time-frame. The teacher must be very skillful to be capable of sharing the class time in the right proportion to different activities at a class. Only in this case, she/he will be able to achieve the outcomes of the lesson and the lesson will be considered effective for students who expect improvement of their language skills at every lesson. In addition, a significant percent of ESL teachers (32%) (Figure 6) said that a large group of students in the classroom seems to be a second problem for them while organizing a lesson. Some teachers are not used to working with a large group of students and can be satisfied with his/her work in such conditions.

What other challenges for ESL teachers while organizing a lesson do you consider the most difficult

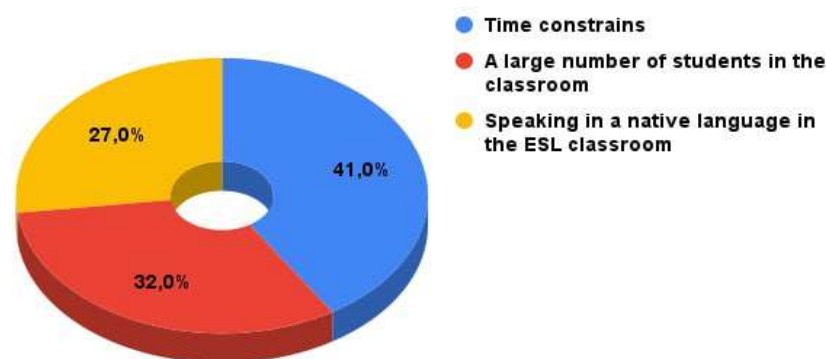


Fig. 6. Opinions of ESL teachers about other challenges they face while organizing a lesson

Conclusions and suggestions. Delivering effective lessons is a major task before ESL teachers. Thus, researchers are constantly discussing the importance of designing lesson plans. The goal of this is to persuade teachers to plan their lessons carefully to achieve lessons' outcomes and as a result, ensure significant students' achievements.

A lesson plan seems to be a road map for both teachers and students. Having a lesson plan in front of them teachers are able to control what language material students need to learn and can guarantee that all activities and tasks will be done effectively during the class time.

ESL teachers should be aware that the process of developing lesson plans includes some steps. For each step, there are certain tasks and activities, which are



more effective and productive to develop language competencies in ESL students. In addition, while designing a lesson plan it is very necessary for teachers to keep in mind some criteria and factors which will influence a choice of exercises to improve writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills. Only if a teacher follows these recommendations, it is possible to create impactful lesson plans for ESL students' success and progress.

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