



## The iLessonPlan: a lesson planning tool for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Alages Andre**  
School of English  
Manukau Institute of Technology

Learning technologies increasingly play a key role in enhancing teaching, learning and assessment. However, it is common practice for English Language trainee teachers to use hard and or soft copies of sample lesson plans presented in a table or list format in the classroom and for feedback. This is the conventional approach used to plan lessons. This approach compounds the complex and complicated process involved in planning ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) lessons. Also the approach does not take advantage of new learning theories and new learning technologies. This paper reports the findings of an ongoing project where a lesson planning tool was designed and developed to replace the conventional approach. This tool, the iLessonPlan, is a prototype interactive online lesson planning tool. In this paper, the design of the iLessonPlan is described, a prototype version is demonstrated and feedback on the use of the tool is presented.

Keywords: interactive lesson planning tool, iLessonPlan, planning ESOL lessons,

### Background

Lesson plans serve to ‘provide a means of formalizing learning activities and a framework for teachers to reflect in a deeper and more creative way about how they design and structure activities for different students and help achieve constructive alignment between theory and practice’ (Littlejohn, 2003; Conole & Fill 2005 as cited in Conole, 2007, p. 87).

Although learning technologies increasingly play a key role in enhancing teaching, learning and assessment, it is common practice for ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers to use hard and or soft copies of lesson plan templates presented in written form. This is a conventional approach used to plan lessons. The term ‘lesson plan’ as used in this paper refers to ‘a description or outline of the

‘objectives a teacher has set for a lesson,

activities and procedures the teacher will use to achieve them and the order to be followed, and

materials and resources which will be used’ (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1993, p. 210).’

## Statement of problem

Planning an ESOL lesson is a complicated and complex process for ESOL trainee teachers. A typical lesson involves teaching language skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and or language features: Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation. Each skill and feature is divided into microskills. In Reading some examples of the microskills are 'Identify main ideas', 'Identify specific information', 'Identify sequence of ideas'. In Grammar, they are 'Use the present simple tense correctly'; 'Use the present continuous tense correctly' etc. In planning the lesson, the trainee has to take into account several factors: background information about their students (age, gender, nationality), their level (PreElementary, Elementary etc), time allocated for the lesson, number of students in a class, the microskill to be taught, aligning learning outcomes with various learning activities, and the resources and equipment for them.

Trainees face several issues in planning lessons as they lack the knowledge required. For example they have problems in identifying and recalling key components in the lesson plan e.g. background class information and especially teaching procedure. Another is in comprehending the lesson structure and flow (from warmer, activities and wrap-up in the teaching procedure) and how it fits together into a well planned lesson. Confusing terms used in the lesson plan e.g. language skills and language features pose another difficulty. Also understanding the concept of learning outcomes linked to the design of learning activities is a real challenge to the trainees.

It is common practice for trainees to make use of hard and or soft copies of sample lesson plans to use in the classroom and for feedback. Sample lesson plans are generally presented in either a table or list format. The former is illustrated in [http://www.englishraven.com/files/Lesson\\_planning\\_sheet\\_641321.pdf](http://www.englishraven.com/files/Lesson_planning_sheet_641321.pdf). A list of 'generally agreed components of a lesson plan' is provided in <http://teflbootcamp.com/tefl-skills/tefl-lesson-planning/>

Trainees can use either format and after completing the information required, they submit the plan

to their tutors for feedback. Based on the feedback, the lesson plan is revised and then delivered. After delivery trainees complete their reflection of the lesson. This is the conventional approach used to plan lessons. This approach compounds the complex and complicated process involved in planning ESOL lessons as discussed above. Also the approach has inherent limitations in that it is not interactive, intuitive or user friendly.

Planning lessons is a time consuming process as it involves accessing and assembling hard and soft copies of materials and resources required from different locations e.g. resource centers and online repositories. Moreover materials are available in different formats e.g. audio and video files, images etc. Time and effort spent in accessing, collecting and assembling materials from different locations also impacts on planning a lesson. Using the conventional approach to planning lessons does not in any way make this process easier.

## The iLessonPlan

To address the issues, the iLessonPlan (iLP) tool was designed and developed to provide an approach to lesson planning to replace the conventional approach. The iLP is a prototype interactive online lesson planning tool. The iLP was created to be intuitive, trainee friendly and capable of running online or offline via a standalone browser. The tool designed with an inbuilt lesson plan template captures the process of planning a typical ESOL lesson in an explicit and well organized manner.

### Purpose of the iLP

The purpose of the tool was to help trainees understand the process of planning a typical ESOL lesson. Trainees here refer to ESOL trainee teachers enrolled in an ESOL Certificate Programme in New Zealand. The tool has an inbuilt lesson plan template which assists them to complete a lesson plan. It also gives the trainee an interactive soft copy of the lesson plan.

Using the tool would enable the trainees to:

1. Develop their knowledge of lesson planning by:
  - i. Identifying and recalling key components in a lesson plan.
  - ii. Following the structure and flow of the lesson plan
  - iii. Getting just in time help with difficult terms used in the lesson plan.
  - iv. Using learning outcomes as a basis to design learning activities.
2. Plan and prepare their lesson plans more effectively and efficiently by:
  - i. Using a tool that is intuitive and trainee friendly.
  - ii. Engaging with a tool that promotes active learning and interaction
  - iii. Using a tool that provides an authentic learning experience
  - iv. Reducing the time, cost and effort spent in planning lessons.

### **The iLP: an overview**

The tool facilitates the process of planning a lesson. The tool is a vehicle for the lesson plan itself as the template is embedded in the tool. In producing an interactive lesson plan, it is ready for feedback and ultimate use.

The tool is composed of Parts 1-6 as seen below and in Screenshot 1. The key components of a lesson plan are found in Part 2: Class Info (Screenshot 2) and Part 3: Teaching Plan.

### **Parts of the iLessonPlan tool**

Part 1: Intro provides an overview of the iLP

Part 2: Class Info identifies

1. Class level
2. Time allocated
3. Student profile – number of students, students' ages, gender and nationality.

Part 3: Teaching Plan includes

1. Main teaching point
2. Learning outcomes
3. Resources and Equipment
4. Teaching procedure
  - i. Warmer
  - ii. Activity 1, Activity 2
  - iii. Wrap-up

Part 4: Summary – should read Lesson plan as it comprises Part 2 and 3 and it can be printed and kept for future reference.

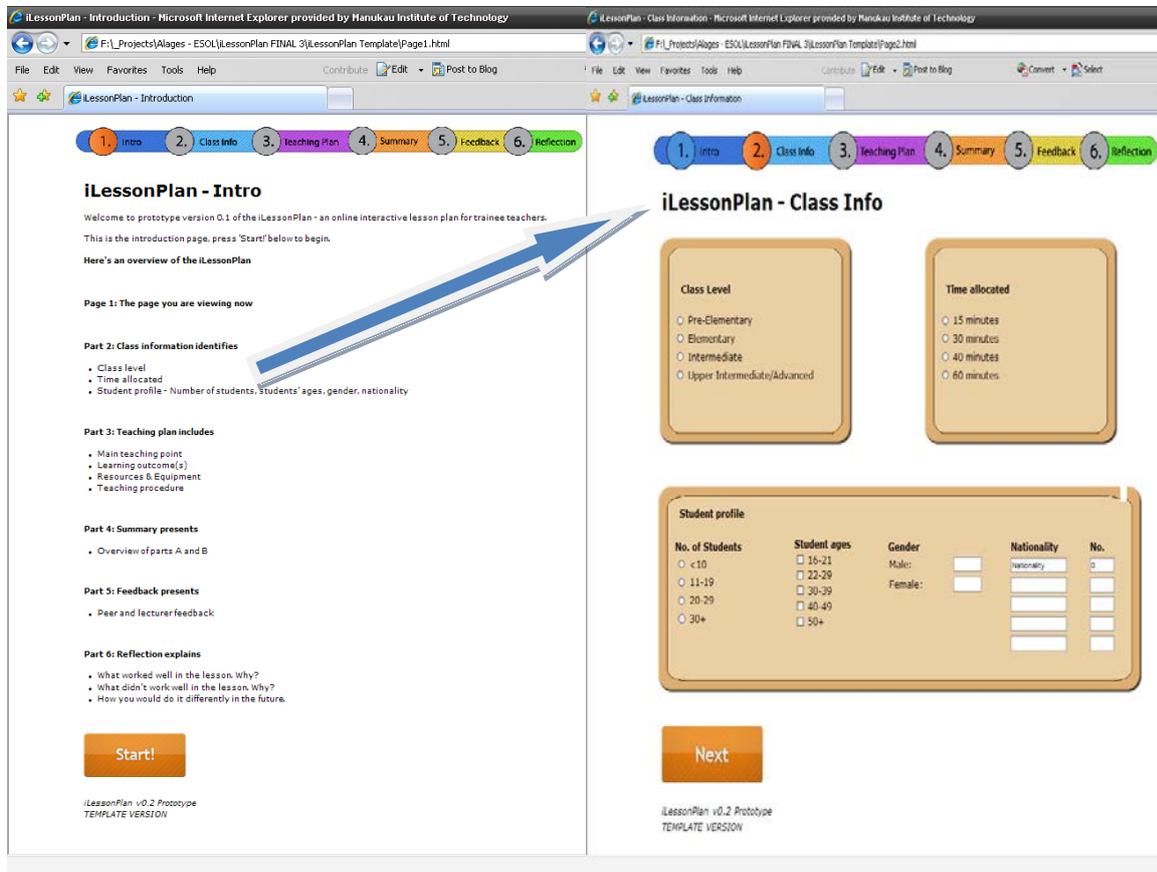
Part 5: Feedback presents Peer and Lecturer Feedback

Part 6: Reflection explains

- i. What worked well in the lesson and why?
- ii. What did not work well in the lesson and why?
- iii. How would you do it differently in the future?

Screenshot 1: iLP-Intro p.1

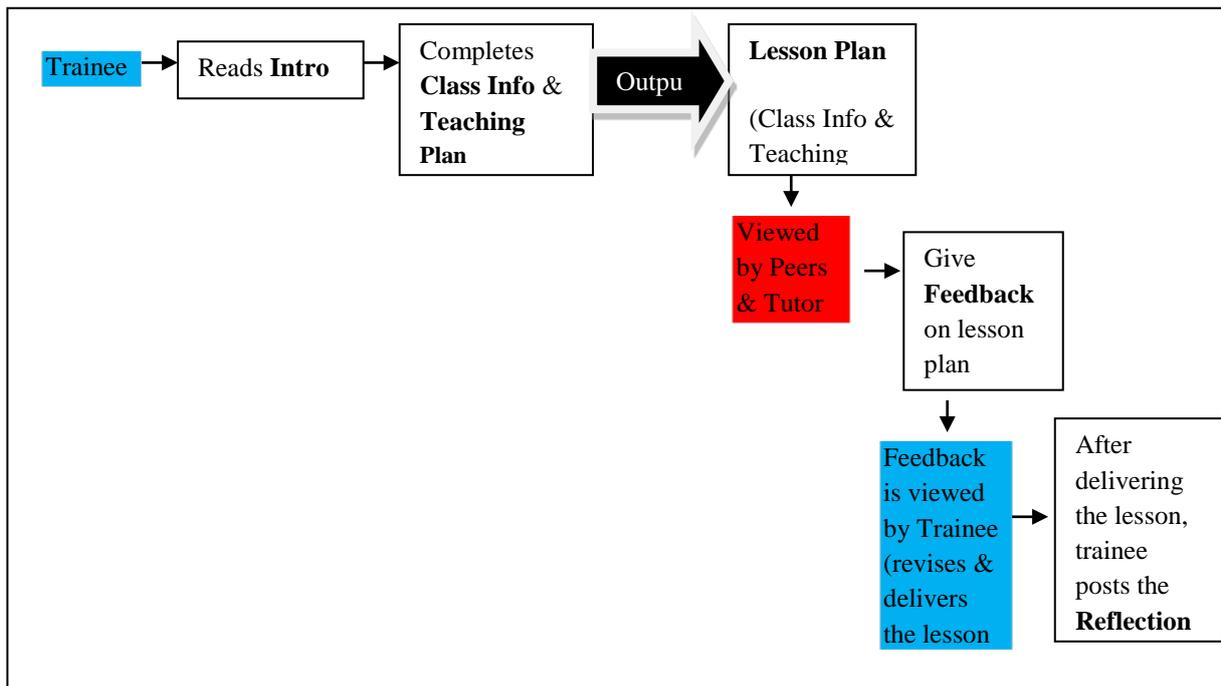
Screenshot 2: iLP-Class Info p.2



### Using the iLP

An overview indicating how the tool is to be used is presented in the flowchart below. The three users of the iLP are the trainee, his/her peers and tutor. The process starts when the trainee reads Part 1: Intro to get an overview of all the parts in the tool. Then he/she clicks **START** which takes him/her to Part 2: Class Info (inbuilt lesson plan template). After filling in the information required about his/her class, the trainee clicks **NEXT** to Part 3: Teaching

### Using the iLP: the process



Plan (inbuilt lesson plan template) and completes the template following the instructions given. Next he/she clicks SUBMIT and the OUTPUT is Part 4: Summary (to read Lesson plan in the next phase of the iLP development). The lesson plan comprises information in Part 2 and 3 which can be printed or saved as a file for future use. If the trainee omits some information then a popup window will appear indicating that some fields have not been completed in. When all the information has been completed then the trainee is able to submit the lesson plan (The iLP is stored in a remote server where the trainee gets access to it when he/she is logged in).

At this point the peer and tutor view Part 4: Lesson Plan and click NEXT. This takes them to Part 5: Feedback which they complete. Then they click NEXT. (Now the plan is stored on the remote server (web server). The trainee can download a version of the plan to keep it locally if he/she wishes).

The trainee views the feedback and then revises the lesson before delivering it to a class. After delivery the trainee posts his/her reflection. (At this point, the iLP is stored on the remote server permanently (unless the trainee wishes to delete it). Peers can view and submit the plan (but not edit it). They can also submit comments or feedback which is also kept on the remote server. These may be moderated or disabled by the trainee who submitted the plan).

### Discussion of the iLP

The iLP comprises six parts which are described below:

Part 1: Intro

Part 2: Class Info

Part 3: Teaching Plan

Part 4: Summary

Part 5: Feedback

Part 6: Reflection

Part 1: Intro provides an overview of the six parts in the iLP. The aim is to give a broad description of the iLP, what trainees can expect to see and how it works. (Refer to Screenshot 1: iLP-Introduction p.1).

Part 2: Class info comprises the following elements as illustrated in iLP. (Refer to Screenshot 2: iLP-Class Info p. 2).

1. Class level is one of many factors that need to be considered when planning a lesson as it significantly affects selection of learning outcomes, resources used and the teaching procedure.
2. Students are grouped into classes based on their levels: Pre-Elementary, Elementary, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate and Advanced. Descriptors for each level are provided for the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. One example for reading is Pre-Elementary where a student is described as having 'little ability to read English' and is 'able to match isolated words to picture prompts' (Descriptors used at the selected tertiary institution). This information is crucial for trainee ESOL teachers as it impacts on selection of relevant materials and resources to use.
3. Time allocated for the lesson is another important consideration as this helps trainees plan the number and type of activities that can be completed within the time frame given: 15, 30, 40 and 60 minutes.
4. Student profile includes information about student numbers, students' ages, gender and nationality. Establishing student numbers helps trainees prepare the required number of handouts, and plan suitable activities. Also student numbers can be used to plan how students work on activities: individually, in pairs, groups or the class as a whole. Adequate provision can also be made in terms of furniture and equipment e.g. chairs and tables, computers, headsets etc. Having knowledge of the approximate age group of students, gender and nationality is useful in enabling trainees identify potential topics of interest, their students' cultural background and learning styles.

Part 3: Teaching Plan comprises four key elements: Main teaching point; Learning outcome; Resources; and Teaching procedure. Content is made accessible to the trainees in two ways so that they can 'progress from teacher directed activity to self-regulated activity' (McLoughlin 2002:149). One is by deconstructing terms using explanations and examples. Another is by clarifying instructions given in the rubric using key questions.

Scaffolding is provided in terms of task support when suitable. According to McLoughlin (2002:149),

Designing scaffolds for learning involves conceptualizing new roles for learners and teachers in fostering task engagement, social interaction and peer feedback ... support must be designed in a principled way in order to ensure that learners progress from teacher-directed activity to self-regulated activity.

Using scaffolding also illustrates the associative approach to learning where concepts are built 'step by step' (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007, p. 221). The key elements in the Teaching Plan are explained below:

1. Main teaching point refers to language skills and language features. The former refers to reading, writing, listening and speaking and the latter to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Each language skill and feature is subdivided into microskills which are accessible using the dropdown menu. When trainees mouse over language skills, the dropdown box lists the four language skills and when each of these skills is moused over, the microskills appear.

In moving the cursor over reading, the microskills listed are 'Identify main ideas', 'Identify specific information' and 'Identify sequence of ideas'. When the trainees mouse over writing, a dropdown box lists the microskills e.g. 'Begin every sentence with a capital letter. End every sentence with a full stop'. (It is important to note that NOT ALL microskills are listed as the iLP was designed to be a prototype). The advantage provided by the drop-down menu boxes is an example of task support which is one of the 'core elements of support for the learning process in environments mediated by technology' (McLoughlin &

Oliver, 1998 as cited in McLoughlin, 2002, p. 4). The design feature facilitates quick and easy selection of items and clarifies the terms used by providing examples.

2. Learning outcome/s specify what students will be able to do after the lesson. Task support is provided in the rubric in each element: explanations of the instructions and examples of answers clarify to trainees what is required. The outcome/s relate to the microskills selected by the trainees under language skills and features.
3. Resources include materials used in the lesson which are subdivided into physical and digital resources. The former refers to hard copies of text: brochures, schedules, newspaper articles etc and the latter to websites, media, images, sound files etc. Digital file upload is a design feature to facilitate the lodging of files such as scanned copies of reading and listening comprehension questions, audio and video clips on a server. Equipment includes items, tools or other objects used in the lesson: computers, document cameras, whiteboards, markers, etc. Utilizing the digital file upload feature has several benefits. One is that it is a time saving tool as files can be uploaded quickly. Another is that it saves cost making copies of CDs for sound files and DVDs for video files. It is also friendlier to the environment as it reduces the amount of paper used. Storage and retrieval of files is also a plus point as it is just a click away.
4. Teaching procedure describes the four steps involved in teaching a lesson.
  - i. Warmer introduces the topic to students in a fun and engaging way. The purpose is to interest students in what they are about to learn in the lesson.
  - ii. Activity 1 is a task that relates to the learning outcome. The term 'task' refers to 'an activity which is designed to help achieve a particular learning goal' (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992, p. 373). The learning goal or the learning outcome/s is / are established with reference to the language skills or language features selected. Retrospectively, the term 'task' should be used instead of 'activity' as it is a more accurate description of what is involved in planning a lesson.
  - iii. Activity 2 is the same as in (ii).
  - iv. Wrap-up summarizes the lesson, or assesses what students have learnt.

Part 4: Summary presents an overview of Parts 1 and 2. It was designed to be viewed by other trainees so that they can post feedback on the lesson plan in Part 5 Feedback.

Part 5: Feedback includes peer and lecturer feedback. The importance of feedback is supported by all three learning approaches. Feedback facilitates learning 'whether that feedback comes from within, a teacher, or a peer. When provided the opportunity for revision, students can achieve at higher levels and reach deeper understandings' (Driscoll, 2002).

Part 6: Reflection describes the trainee's reflection on the lesson conducted. This involves looking 'back on teaching, calling some aspect of it into question, analyzing it, evaluating it and making plans for improvement' (Cook, 1998, p. 1). Reflection is essential to improving one's practice as a teacher. This is supported by the situative approach to learning where 'People learn by participating in communities of practice, progressing from novice to expert through observation, reflection ...' (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007, p. 221). Reflection is also considered a critical activity in the constructive (individual) and constructive (social) approaches to learning.

### **Design of the iLP: Criteria used**

The design and development underpinning the iLP is based on learning theories and applied research in elearning. The criteria and rationale used in the design are explained below.

#### ***1. Building concepts and competences step by step facilitates learning***

In the iLP, the process of planning a lesson was deconstructed into six parts. Each part was further segmented and in some cases sub-segmented to make it simpler and easier for trainees to understand key components and important stages in planning a lesson. This is based on the associative approach where learning is understood as 'building concepts or competences step by step' (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007, p. 221). Two examples are

provided: Part 2: Class Info and Part 3: Teaching Plan. The former includes: Class level, Time allocated and Student profile – number of students, students’ ages, gender and nationality. The former comprises: Main teaching point, Learning outcomes, Resources and Equipment and Teaching procedure – Warmer, Activity 1, Activity 2 and Wrap-up.

## 2. *Sequencing and structuring information in a learning workflow promotes effective learning*

The rationale is that there is a logical progression of content from general to specific which students can relate to. This strategy is used consistently in the design of the iLP. For example providing an overview of the iLP: Part 1 Introduction helps trainees anticipate what they are about to read and gives them a logical framework to follow the progression of the lesson from start to finish. (Refer to Screenshot 1: iLP-Introduction p.1).

## 3. *Active learning and interaction engages learners more effectively*

The concept ‘active learning’ refers to learners as ‘active participants in the knowledge construction process’ ... and ‘using technology tools "to think with" facilitates working with ideas and learning from that process (Scardamalia, 2002 as cited in Driscoll, 2002). Technology tools provide "the means through which individuals engage and manipulate both resources and their own ideas" (Hannafin, Land, & Oliver, 1999, p. 128 as cited in Driscoll, 2002). In using the iLP, trainees are required to plan their lesson taking into account: class level, time allocated and details of student profile. The considerations inform their decisions on type and difficulty of teaching materials, type of resources, design of learning activities etc. The ‘technology tools’ mentioned above are exemplified in the interactive trainee interface: navigation buttons, drop down menu boxes, text boxes etc.

Encouraging active learning can be implemented by designing activities which require learners to share and debate ideas, give and respond to peer feedback, reflect on the tasks and activities etc. Chickering & Gamson (1987) highlight ‘Encouraging active learning’ as one of the seven principles for best practices in undergraduate education. Trainees are required to provide feedback on their peers' lesson plan and complete their reflection of the lesson after it has been conducted.

Not only do learning activities promote active learning, they also enhance interaction as it is considered a ‘key value proposition’ in ‘technology mediated learning’. It is perceived as ‘the defining attribute for quality and value in online learning experience’ Wagner (2006: 44). The term ‘interaction’ has several definitions depending on the context of use. The term ‘instructional interaction’ in Cowley et al (2002) is used here as it relates to a pedagogical context. The term refers to:

... an event that takes place between a learner and the learner's environment. Its purpose is to respond to the learner in a way intended to change his or her behavior toward an educational goal. Instructional interactions have two purposes: to change learners and to move them toward achieving their goals (Wagner 1994).

Incorporating interaction in learning activities keeps learners engaged and motivated. Activities that foster interaction provide opportunities for dialogue and feedback between learners, peers, and others (instructors and the world at large). The importance of feedback is supported by the three approaches to elearning theories: the associative ‘(building component skills into extended performance)’, constructive ‘(integrating skills and knowledge, planning and reflecting)’, and situative approach ‘(developing identities and roles)’ (Beetham, 2007, p. 27). Feedback informs learners of their progress and stimulates them to reflect on areas for future progress (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).

These activities also encourage consolidation and integration of knowledge, skills and performance. Providing ‘interactive environments ... and opportunities for reflection’ is supported by the constructive (individual) learning approach. Arranging the use of ‘collaborative environments’ and giving learners ‘opportunities for discussion and reflection’ is based on the constructive (social) approach (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007, p. 222). In the iLP, trainees interact with content when they use hyperlinks to access multimedia resources and drop-down menu boxes for explanations of terms used e.g. language skills and features. Interaction with instructors and peers is seen in the feedback given to trainees in Part 5 Feedback which includes ‘Peer and Lecturer feedback’. (Screenshot 1: iLP-Introduction p.1). Also interaction can be seen when trainees are able to redo their lesson plan (Part 2 and 3) and submit it for feedback.

#### **4. Authentic learning activities engage learners readily and meaningfully**

'Authentic activities are real-world tasks that a person can expect to encounter on the job, in the home, or in other social contexts (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993, p. 72-75 as cited in Woo, Herrington, Agostinho & Reeves, 2007). As these activities are directly related to students' real-life experiences, they see the relevance between what is being taught and what they are required to do in a real life task. Consequently they engage with the tasks much more readily and meaningfully.

Ten key characteristics of authentic activities were identified by Herrington, Oliver, & Reeves, 2003; 2006, p. 5-6). Of these four are linked directly to the iLP.

- i. 'Authentic tasks have real-world relevance.' The iLP can be used by teacher trainees not only during the course of their training but also when they start their teaching. Key elements in the lesson and the logical order and sequence in which they are presented match those used in the classroom. Including authentic tasks and activities is based on the situative approach to learning as they help develop practice in work place communities. Also it contributes to developing their identities in the roles they will soon embrace in the work place.
- ii. 'Authentic tasks comprise complex activities to be investigated by students over a sustained period of time.' For trainees, preparing and planning a lesson is a challenging and time consuming task. Selecting and creating suitable and relevant learning activities, considering the level of the students, their prior knowledge, their learning styles and topics of interest, to achieve stipulated learning outcomes is a skill that improves with time and practice.
- iii. 'Authentic tasks provide the opportunity to collaborate.' This encourages interaction which in turn engages students more effectively in their learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Interaction which includes interaction with content, instructors and peers features highly in the iLP. Collaborative work is typical of social constructive approaches' (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007, p. 221) to learning.
- iv. 'Authentic tasks provide the opportunity to reflect.' Reflection, which ties in with the social individual and constructive learning approach, is essential in improving future performance. 'Students who analyze and reflect on their learning are more effective learners; that is, they are more able to acquire, retain, and apply new information and skills' <http://www.nclrc.org/sailing/chapter2.html> Thinking through the lesson and identifying what worked well and what didn't provides valuable input for future lessons. This is the rationale for including Part 6 Reflection in the iLP.

#### **iv. An interactive trainee interface enhances learning from multimedia**

'An interactive trainee interface appears to have a significant positive effect on learning from multimedia' (e.g., Bosco, 1986; Fletcher, 1989, 1990; Stafford, 1990; Verano, 1987) as cited in Najjar (1998). He explains that 'An interactive trainee interface may allow learners to control, manipulate, and explore the material or periodically asks learners to answer questions that integrate the material.' This design principle is strongly supported by a variety of studies. See Najjar (1998) for details.

The interactive trainee interface in the iLP comprises design features and functions as listed below:

- i. Navigation buttons facilitate easy and seamless movement between sections and pages. On top of each page are menu options: 1. Intro, 2. Class Info, 3. Teaching Plan etc which also function as navigation buttons. Navigation buttons are also present at the end of each page: Start on Page 1 Introduction; Next on Page 2; Submit on Page 3 etc to enable easy movement between pages and sections. (Screenshot 1: iLP-Introduction p.1).
- ii. Sub-menus provide a planning pathway for selection of resources and materials in relation to class levels, time allocation, and student profile. (Screenshot 2: iLP-Class Info p. 2).
- iii. Drop-down menu boxes enable quick selection of items and provide task support to trainees e.g. definitions and or explanations of terms and concepts used.
- iv. Hyperlinks expedite access to multimedia resources: websites, images, podcasts, video clips etc.
- v. Text boxes record responses to instructions given: 'Describe the teaching plan', 'Provide feedback' etc.
- vi. File attachments enable quick and easy upload of digital files: scanned copies of text and or images, audio and video files etc.

#### **5. Rules for good design enhance usability of the iLP**

- i. Utilizing a colour scheme to enhance readability. White background with black text was chosen to create a better contrast and highlight and to increase the readability of the text. Bright colours for the navigation buttons on top of the page made them distinct against the white background. The colour scheme was repeated on each page for consistency. The overall effect aimed for was an uncluttered slate to make it visually appealing.
  - ii. Using panels to chunk information enables information to be chunked graphically thereby making it reader friendly. In Part 2: Class Information, there are three panels: Class level, Time Allocated and Student Profile. In Part 3: Teaching Plan there are four panels: Main Teaching Point, Learning Outcome, Resources and Teaching Procedure. Each panel is further segmented into sub-sections e.g. Teaching Procedure is subdivided into Warmer, Activity 1, Activity 2 and Wrap-up.
  - iii. Presenting overviews of the content is an effective means of presenting information which helps trainees anticipate what they are about to read and therefore make more sense of the information (Part 1: Introduction - iLP Template and Sample). These elements also facilitate scanning which saves trainees time in reading the text (Morkes & Nielsen 1997). The overview also provides a framework for the sequential progression of the components into a structured work-flow.
  - iv. Highlighting headings, subheadings and key points makes them prominent and distinguishes them from the rest of the text. Bulleting (e.g. Part 1: Introduction and Part 3: Teaching Plan in [iLP Template and Sample](#)) and numbering points (e.g. Part 3: Teaching Plan in [iLP Sample](#)) enhance scanning.
  - v. Writing concisely. Short phrases and sentences ranging between 2-17 words per sentence were used in the [iLP Template and Sample](#).
6. *Using the iLP reduces time, cost and effort in planning lessons.*

Hosting the iLP on the internet provides several advantages which are not possible utilizing the conventional approach.

- i. Trainees have quick and easy access to a wealth of materials in different formats (text, audio and video files, images etc) and resources (search engines, websites, social networks, portals, forums, libraries, dictionaries etc) which they can use to plan their lessons. Providing materials in different mediums caters to their students' diverse learning styles ([Chickering and Gamson 1987](#); [Kilby 2009](#); <http://www.fgcu.edu/onlinedesign/designDevc.html>). Also 'Information presented in more than one medium is recalled better by learners.' ([Beetham and Sharpe 2007:226](#)).
  - i. Accessing materials and resources online reduces time, cost and effort compared to accessing them in different physical locations.
  - ii. The web provides the means for trainees to store, retrieve, share and replicate iLPs for future use.
  - iii. The iLP would be available 24/7 and can be translated into any language using Google translation.

### Testing the iLP

It is important to note that the iLP is a work in progress. At this stage of development it is a prototype lesson planning tool and it was trialed with only a small group of trainees to show proof of concept. As facilities for proper html testing were unavailable, nine trainees used a pen and paper version of the iLP out of which one third provided feedback. Also due to the small sample size, it was decided to collect qualitative data to identify the trainees' response to using the iLP. They were asked to answer three questions:

1. Did you find the iLP useful in planning your lesson? Why / Why not?
2. What do you think are the advantages of the iLP?
3. What do you think are the limitations of the iLP?

Two of the respondents found that the iLP helped them to plan their lesson in terms of providing a good structure whereas one did not find it useful. Their feedback is as follows:

Feedback 1: 'I found the iLessonPlan useful in the way it helped me structure my lesson, step by step. It clearly outlines the exact requirements needed to plan a lesson'.

Feedback 2: 'It's easy to identify the requirements applicable to your lesson plan, has good structure and would

only require minimal training if any but this would be dependent on the trainee’.

Feedback 3: ‘... would much prefer to be given a copy of info/plans etc ... didn't find lesson plan useful in planning because it never crossed my mind to use it’.

Feedback on the iLP was also collected from 2 ESOL lecturers and an ESOL teacher. Their feedback was based on

my presentation of the iLP, ‘Design and use of an iLP’ at the ‘Community for Languages and English for Speakers of Other Languages 2010 Conference’. As the feedback was given verbally it is summarized below.

A senior lecturer from a NZ tertiary institution that coordinates the Graduate Certificate and Diploma in TESOL said, ‘Why wasn’t this done five years ago? It seems logical to put a lesson plan online’. Another who had taught the CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) programme identified with the problems faced by ESOL trainee teachers and said the iLP is ‘a good tool to use as it addresses the problems trainees face in planning a lesson’. The ESOL teacher mentioned how easy it would have been to plan a lesson if the iLP had been available to her when she did her teacher training two years ago.

It is acknowledged that the feedback on the use of the iLP has been collected from a small sample size. Generally the feedback has been positive however, further in-depth evaluation needs to be conducted using a bigger sample.

## Conclusion

The iLP has considerable potential as the design, creation, use and trialing of the iLP indicate that the tool is proof of concept and is worthy of further development. Proper testing of the tool was not able to be done due to the unavailability of the facilities required. This will be addressed in the next phase of development where a website will be developed to host the iLP. Additionally, a formal evaluation of the tool will be conducted and the outcomes will be utilized to further develop and refine the tool.

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